

**Women, Children and Educare in Groutville: A  
Feminist Analysis of a Community  
in KwaZulu-Natal**

by

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I hereby declare that all the material incorporated into this thesis is my own work except where specific reference is made by name or in the form of a numbered reference. The work contained has not been submitted for a degree at any other university.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Leanne Elizabeth Browning

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis focuses on childcare at two levels. Firstly, at the broader level of theoretical debate and policy making, and secondly, by examining the way in which it impacts on the lives of women in a specific community in Natal. It locates the demands for childcare in a broader feminist discourse and examines the way in which the demand for childcare is being articulated and responded to at different levels in South Africa. Some of the key concerns of a feminist theory that form the basis of a gendered analysis of society are outlined. It is argued that there is a need to broaden the focus in discussions about the crisis in the provision of care and education of young children to include mothers and women at the centre of the debate. Patterns of childcare provision in South Africa up to and including the time that the research was carried out are examined. It is shown that access to care, and the extent and quality of provision varies in type and degree across regions, provinces and between different race and class groups. An exploration of some of the current policy debates at that time is provided. The research which was carried out in Groutville in 1989 formed part of a programme of community development. A socio-economic profile of Groutville is developed. A description of patterns of childcare strategies and womens' responsibilities within the home and the distribution of household tasks within the family in Groutville is examined. The significance of the research for policy in South Africa is then outlined, a brief assessment of the first phase of the research project is made and some suggestions which might improve the provision of childcare in areas such as Groutville are provided.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

Since 1990 many organisations in South Africa that were involved in the struggle against apartheid have changed their focus to that of ensuring the transformation of the country into, hopefully, a more democratic South Africa. Political organisations, unions and civics are demanding a democratic representative government which will establish 'a new and democratic dispensation that replaces the racist and undemocratic apartheid constitution and addresses the legacy of apartheid in the broader socio-economic sphere' (ANC,1993,3). There are a number of researchers and practitioners who have been working in the educare field to ensure that the most disadvantaged group in South Africa, the black, rural women, have access to good quality care and education for their children. Black women living under apartheid rule have experienced oppression not only on the basis of their race but through their experiences of sexism as a system of domination in which women are discriminated against and subordinated in every area of public and private life, have inferior access to education and employment and are excluded from decision-making and governance at all levels of society. The provision of childcare for these women has been one of the most neglected areas of policy development and provision in South Africa.

Whilst at the level of public discourse there is some commitment to developing policies and practices that address the fact that 'gender discrimination has either excluded or subordinated women's participation in all socio-economic and political institutions'

(ANC,1993,2) this still remains at the level of what? and how? Clearly, this public debate is still to be translated into concrete structural, legislative and constitutional gains for women and to impact on the day to day lives of women living in both urban and rural South Africa.

Gender issues such as equality within the workplace, sexual harassment and abuse, and representation of women on local, regional and national structures, have been part of public debate on a number of different levels such as newspapers, magazine articles, television, political debates, for at least the last decade. Nonetheless, the way in which they are addressed still remains within the domain of women's issues and is not integrated into all aspects of public debate, policy-making and implementation.

Although the gender issue has gained ascendancy in both activist and academic discourses, it is still primarily ghettoised into the women's movement and women's conferences and/or gender panels at mainstream conferences (Hendricks, 1993,86).

The African National Congress (ANC) Policy Guidelines for a Democratic South Africa assert that the Bill of Rights and principles of non-racialism, non-sexism and democratic accountability should permeate all policies and every level of government. The proposed Bill of Rights states 'women should be allowed to take their rightful place in every area of South African life without impediment or discrimination, the law should take into account the reality of the lives that women lead and the contribution they make to society through maternity, parenting and household work' (ANC,1993,8). Yet there are very few concrete gains that have been made in moving towards achieving these goals - the ANC policy guidelines accept this when stating that 'we in the ANC acknowledge that we still have a long way to go in remedying this state of affairs' (ANC,1993,7). The National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) which was launched

in December 1990 by the National Education Coordinating Committee (NECC) to develop alternative education policy options for a future education dispensation in SA, also failed effectively to integrate gender issues into all aspects of its policy review and development<sup>1</sup>. Despite efforts by some unions to address concerns of women, worker gains have been limited largely to issues related to maternity benefits<sup>2</sup>. The concern articulated in the ANC policy document for the inadequate way in which gender issues are being addressed is echoed by Shamim Meer in her article 'Are women winning the fight?' in which she asserts that 'Besides making statements about women's oppression the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) has done little to put words into action' (Speak,9/1991,6).

One demand articulated by women's organisations, lobby groups and spokespersons is for improved childcare facilities. It is framed largely within the argument that women's responsibility for children impinges on all aspects of their lives and prevents them from full participation in all aspects of political, economic, social, and civic society. It is evident that there is totally inadequate resource allocation to childcare in all sectors - government, local authorities, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) - and this reflects a basically sexist attitude. Early childhood educare is regarded as women's work and consequently undervalued in a male-dominated society. It is therefore crucial that the issues that directly impact on women's lives are prioritised by trade unions, political organisations, civil society, universities, and grass root structures.

The provision of childcare particularly for black children has been grossly neglected by the state - estimations indicate that 33% of White 0-6 year olds and 7% of Black children of the same age group have access to formal care in pre-schools, creches or

organised home-based programmes (NEPI,1992,15). State neglect of childcare provision must be located within a set of policies and practices that historically failed to address the need for housing and basic services and infrastructures within black, Indian and coloured residential areas, health facilities, education provision and hence a '...lack of concern with the conditions under which African labour power is reproduced generally' (Cock et al,1984,36).

The apartheid policy of segregation instituted by the Afrikaner Nationalists in 1948 excluded all "non-whites" from formal political processes within the state. Its economic policies and practices ensured that access to services was based on race. Consequently the provision of housing, health, pension and welfare services for the black community has been seriously neglected.

Since the early 1990s the demand for a comprehensive state policy with respect to childcare provision has increased and a co-ordinated effort by NGOs such as Training and Resources in Early Education (TREE) and Grassroots and mainstream pre-school bodies such as the Natal Teachers Society (NTS) have increased the pressure on the state to respond to these demands. In addition, the election (in 1994) of a Government of National Unity (GNU) has placed in a position of power a government that is clearly supportive of such demands. Nonetheless, it is not the only issue that the state has to consider. Any current and future demand for childcare provision will have to compete for limited resources with demands for housing, education, electricity, and water. It is therefore clear that effective child care policy development and implementation must articulate with the broader goals of social transformation. In addition, to this an efficient and effective system of delivery of services must be developed and hence it is

necessary to address concerns of how and who will deliver these services as well as what form it should take. It is these issues that current policy debates must address.

This thesis focuses on childcare at two levels. Firstly, at the broader level of theoretical debate and policy making, and secondly, by examining the way in which it impacts on the lives of women in a specific community in Natal. The research carried out in Groutville in 1989 formed part of a programme of community development, the nature of which is outlined in Chapter 4. The first phase of the programme had two aspects. Firstly, an assessment of conditions at Nandi, a creche in Ward 1 in Groutville, the committee of which had approached CORD (a research and development agency based at the University of Natal, Durban) for assistance in financing and building a childcare centre. Secondly, a research project that aimed to document childcare patterns in Groutville. One of the broader research agendas was to include as many men and women from Groutville in the research process to enable them to identify the nature of the problem with respect to childcare and to provide possible solutions. One key aspect of the community programme was to facilitate the empowerment of the community by providing training in research. The broader objective was to provide the type of care appropriate to the needs of the community through an integration with existing childcare patterns within the community. Through the experience gained from the initial research project into childcare it was hoped to generate community controlled and directed research to address other issues such as community facilities, health care, clean water supplies and roads. This thesis reports on the second aspect of the programme, namely the research project.

The nature of CORD's community development programme, in general, and the research project, more specifically, were informed by a particular understanding of community development and participatory research both of which are outlined in Chapter 4. Whilst the research was concerned with women as mothers the issue of gender was not central to the content and process of the research itself. The focus of the project was the child rather than the gendered social context of educare. The project aimed to understand the childcare strategies adopted by women and the way in which responsibilities were divided in the home and to provide education and care for children. Whilst gender issues were addressed at the level of experiences of rural women the project did not have a feminist political agenda in that it did not have as one of its transformatory goals the liberation of women from their responsibility for childcare and household.

This thesis locates the demands for childcare in a broader feminist discourse and examines the way in which the demand for childcare is being articulated and responded to at different levels in SA. It argues that childcare is currently conceptualised predominantly in terms of the education of pre-school children and the reality that childcare also impacts on women's lives through their responsibilities for children within the household is not addressed. In addition, the reality that many women through lack of access and/or through choice will not enter the formal job market and will need support in their role as mothers, is not taken into account. In the context of the apartheid legacy of racial discrimination in provision of childcare as well as patriarchal conceptualizations of mothering and childcare, the development of childcare policy is a complex process. The gender insensitive way in which current policy debates are being framed as well as competition for state funding will combine with this reality to

ensure that a gender sensitive and comprehensive childcare programme will be difficult to realise.

The concept of childcare is used in the first chapter and throughout this thesis in an inclusive way to refer to all care of children whether in formal care or at home in the care of mothers, domestic workers, neighbours or relatives. It encompasses the need for education and care provided both formally and informally in schools or within the home. In the late 1980's it became common practice in South Africa to refer to the care and education of children from birth until entry to primary school as educare. Children usually enter school at about 6 years of age therefore educare policy reviews, debates and implementation have commonly dealt with the age cohort 0-6yrs. Hence, the terms 'childcare' and 'educare' are treated as synonymous throughout this thesis. The term 'pre-school education' is commonly used to refer to the age cohort 3-6 years who attend a formal education programme daily from 8am to 12noon. The term 'creche' refers to the all-day care of both babies and children usually under the age of 3 years. It is important to note that in the early 1990's the term 'early childhood development (ECD)' was replacing the use of the term 'educare' in the emerging policy debates. Given that this thesis focuses on childcare policies and practice prior to 1990 and the policy debates of the early 1990s this term has not been adopted.

Section 1.2 of Chapter 1 sets out some of the key concerns of a feminist theory that form the basis of a gendered analysis of society and which provides a framework within which a feminist perspective on childcare is outlined. It argues that there is a need to broaden the focus in discussions about the crisis in the provision of care and education of young children to include mothers and women at the centre of the debate. Section

1.3 looks at some key aspects of the struggle for childcare in other countries and provides some comparative data within which to frame the analysis of child care provision and policy which is outlined in chapter 2. It will also inform the analysis of the specific reality of the women and children in Groutville - the area in which this research project was carried out.

Chapter 2 maps patterns of childcare provision in South Africa up to and including the time that the research was carried out. It shows that access to care, and the extent and quality of provision varies in type and degree across regions, provinces and between different race and class groups. An overview of existing policy highlights that there is no coherent policy for the development of a comprehensive educare programme that will benefit both women and children in the country. An exploration of some of the current policy debates at that time is provided. This provides a backdrop against which the analysis of the existing childcare scenarios in Groutville are examined in Chapter 6 and the recommendations made in Chapter 7.

Chapter 3 describes the Kwazulu-Natal region in general and education provision in particular. It also provides a description of Groutville and hence provides the context within which the discussion on research methodology and analysis of the data may be located.

Chapter 4 gives a description of CORD and the context within which the need for the research project emerged. It details the research process including the research co-ordination, the selection and training of fieldworkers, and the compilation, description and administration of the questionnaire.

Chapter 5 deals with the socio-economic data and provides the backdrop against which the data on childcare is examined in Chapter 6. It provides a socio-economic profile of Groutville and how it relates to and impacts on childcare. It discusses the nature of the household, in terms of size, and membership, in terms of sex, age and contribution to income to the household, focuses on access to education and examines employment and income levels.

Chapter 6 provides a description of patterns of childcare strategies and examines women's responsibilities within the home and the distribution of household tasks within the family.

Chapter 7 returns to debates raised in Chapter 1 and the policy debates in Chapter 2 and discusses the significance of the research for policy in South Africa. It provides a brief assessment of the first phase of the research project and makes some suggestions which might improve the provision of childcare in areas such as Groutville.

## **1.2 Feminist Debates and Childcare**

Differences and distinctions on the basis of gender have always occurred though their meaning and significance have varied from one place to another. Gender relations between men and women, have varied across time, between areas, cultures and classes but in most times, places and cultures, men have been in a more powerful position than women. Feminist theory has analyzed and attempted to explain the causes, dynamics and structures of women's oppression. In this section some of the

key concerns of feminism are outlined and provide a framework within which the specific issues that relate to childcare are addressed.

Feminist theoretical debates have been variably located within either a Liberal, Marxist, Radical, Socialist or Post-modern paradigm. The different kinds of feminism 'reflect the varying social and class positions of the women who took up the cause of feminism, as well as their different experiences and influence by other movements' (Friedman et al, 1987,4). It is not pertinent to this thesis to explicate the specifics of each paradigm but suffice to note that all these paradigms provide various conceptualisation of women's oppression and articulate the need to struggle for women's liberation. The paradigms differ with respect to how they conceptualise the form and causes of this oppression, and how the struggle against it should be waged.

Clearly there are broad principles that underpin the notions of feminism regardless of the ideological framework within which one is operating. All these feminist paradigms examine aspects of women's lives - biological, social, economic, psychological, political and historical- in order to understand how they are affected by ideological and material forces. The notion of power is also a central concern within all of these paradigmatic frameworks in that it relates to control over one's life, body, and access to and control over allocation of crucial material and non-material resources (land, credit, schooling, political power) thus impacting on women's ability to manage both their personal and public lives. This is significant in that the goal of feminism is to end patriarchal domination and has within it a vision to end fundamental inequalities between men and women. The nature of this liberation is variously articulated within the different feminist paradigms. For some feminists the need to address male violence would be prioritised

whereas others would focus on transforming the economic subordination of women in the household and the economy. It is in this context that the issues of childcare are examined in this research project. A discussion of the policy implications of the feminist debates on childcare are discussed in section 1.4 in this chapter and again in the section on current childcare policy and practices in chapter 3.

The concept "patriarchy" ie the rule of the father, has been central to feminist debates in that it has been used to explain women's oppression in universalised terms across both time and space. A patriarchal society has been defined by Maggie Humm (1989,200) as

A system of male authority which oppresses women through its social, political and economic institutions. In any of the historical forms that patriarchal society takes, whether it is feudal, capitalist or socialist, a sex-gender system and a system of economic discrimination operate simultaneously. Patriarchy has power from men's greater access to, and mediation of, the resources and rewards of authority structures inside and outside the home.

Patriarchy provides a useful framework within which to conceptualise the form and impact of women's oppression and liberation but is only useful when it is understood in terms of its complex articulation with colonialism, imperialism, capitalism, and racism. Women's relationship to men must be understood as a complex articulation with that of political and racial inequality, poverty and cultural experiences.

'Many social scientist have moved decisively away from the assumption, or presumption of "sameness" that underlies any argument about the existence of a unitary women's perspective - held by an identifiable social category, "women" ' (Moore,1989,39). One of the central debates within feminist theory is the need to recognise the differences of

power and resources between women. It has addressed itself in a limited way to the different experiences of women in terms of ethnicity, race and class. Moore (1989,39) argues that whilst it is important to acknowledge that there can be 'no analytical meaning in such concepts as the "position of women" the "subordination of women" and "male dominance" when applied universally' it does not mean that women are not discriminated against. What it does mean is that 'the nature of that subordination must be investigated and specified, and not assumed.' (Moore,1989,39).

Feminists such as Millett (1970) and Mackinnon (1982) have attempted to understand and explain the uneven distribution of power between men and women and the marginalization of those activities in which women predominate. They have argued that women do not participate fully in economic, political and cultural life because they have occupied specific roles and positions which have been intrinsically linked to their responsibility for caring for the children and the home. This view naturalized and expressed as the belief that '...because women bear children, it is their responsibility to care for them and children are the chief function of a mother's existence' (Moore,1989,38).

There are many different approaches to the issue of childcare within the feminist movement but all agree that the most important step is to challenge the idea that women should be solely responsible for childcare. Marxist feminists have argued that women will never be equal to men until childcare is a social responsibility (Barrett,1980). Mitchell (1971) argues that having and rearing children should be valued and equated with paid work. Chodorow (1978) in her examination of mothering and nurturing argues that it is the way in which children relate to mothers as the main

caregiver that needs to be examined in order to break the current patterns of childcare in society.

Central to all these debates is the notion that women's responsibility for the domestic sphere has affected the way they enter the "public" world of work and politics, the way in which they are brought up, the way in which they are treated and what is expected of them. 'In western society, it is particularly hard to escape what seems like an inexorable, and naturally given, link between women and childcare, because the dominant cultural conception of "woman" overlaps almost completely with that of "mother" ' (Moore,1989,39). This has a number of consequences for women which are outlined below.

The way in which women have entered the labour market has largely been determined by their responsibility for childcare and the household, and expectations about women's roles. Access to education, the type of education that women receive, the nature of the job market and employer attitudes are all determined by perceptions about women. Men have entered into wage labour at faster rates than women (Maconachie,1993), and have tended to occupy higher status and better paid positions. The fact that women have been and are responsible for childcare means that they usually occupy the least stable, most unskilled, badly paid jobs. Women are associated with domestic work and roles - women's nurturing function/role underscores the notion that women are better equipped for nursing and primary teaching. Even though women are entering the labour force, are earning money and are often household heads without male support, work in the home is still seen as their work and their wages as "pin money", and the responsibility for childcare remains women's.

Secondly, men have not taken care of domestic life but have control of the economy. This has consequently given them the base from which to take political control. Women are often excluded from the public sphere of politics. They are seen to be more concerned with issues around the home and family, have time and mobility constraints, lack confidence, and are often not taken seriously or supported by men. Women are prevented from engaging in the political arena because the role accorded to women and the "double shift" result in a lack of time and energy. Hence, women are isolated within the household and lack political space. Regardless of race, class or location women carry the primary responsibility for childcare and the household. The way in which women engage with this reality and the form that resistance to this oppression should and can take is contested.

Thirdly, women's entry into production has also affected their position within the home. On the one hand, it has given them greater independence and money but on the other hand it has meant that women face a "double shift", that is, they work at home and at work. Women usually earn less than men and are in insecure employment and are therefore dependent on male income. The power that men have as a result of this usually extends to other spheres as well, for example, relationships, family dynamics, and decision-making processes in the household. Whilst in some contexts this is beginning to change, the central concern of this research is that in the main it remains the same for most women living under patriarchal domination.

Fourthly, women are socialized into expectations that their primary role will be one of wife and mother. Once women have accepted and internalized this expectation, the continuation of the existing sexual division of labour is ensured. Women make choices

within the limits of socially constructed expectations. The internalization of sexist ideology begins at home and it is reinforced through an education system that imparts a particular set of gendered values, expectations and knowledge. The way in which schooling is organised, the way knowledge is presented - all contribute to patriarchal and capitalist divisions of labour. Schooling through the provision of material skills and ideology plays an important role in the construction of an ideology which relegates girls and women to a unique position in the family and a specific place in the workforce. According to Elliott and Kelly (1980) studies show that the type of education provided for boys and girls has been informed by different views about their role in society. Women (and men) are brought up to accept and internalize beliefs about themselves, what is acceptable behaviour, values, and ambitions. In addition, religion and culture play an important part in shaping ideas about gender roles. These ideas and beliefs serve to maintain the status quo and male dominance.

Finally, women's responsibility for childcare/domestic sphere has taken on a particular meaning - "work" outside the home is ascribed economic value and considered important whereas "work" within the home is not. This view of domestic work and childcare is held by both men and women. Women internalise the view that their roles as mothers and housewives is not important.

The issues discussed above are central concerns of Feminist debates the origins of which are within a white Western middle-class context. The need to extend these conceptualisations of women and childcare to include the experiences of the women who are the focus of this research project, that is, black rural women, is crucial. This thesis provides data on the specific experiences of women living in Groutville - a black

rural community in Natal. Sociologists such as Bozzoli (1991) and others (Boserup 1970) have highlighted the need to understand the specificity of the experiences of women from a variety of different contexts.

Bozzoli (1991) raises a number of crucial issues that point to the inadequacy of conceptualising childcare only in terms of demands for formal childcare in the context of women engaged in the formal job market. She questions the assumption that women want to forego the rearing of their own children even when confronted with the economic implications of not "working". She argues that it is inadequate to make assumptions about women's roles in terms of the stereotypical approaches which present women as victims and only see liberation in terms of white Western middle class women's struggles. It is important to acknowledge the flexibility of women's roles and identify the variety of skilled tasks that women carry out - including mothering and household functions. Women play a crucial role in caring for, nurturing and teaching their children and this must be acknowledged. It is in this context that women are often in control and are not subordinated by men. The family is increasingly being recognized as the sphere of life where women have considerable power to make and implement decisions on a variety of domestic matters (Bozzoli,1983). The issue of power is a crucial one and is explored further in Chapter 6.

Bozzoli (1991) raises concerns that there has been a failure to understand the nature of women's life strategies in retaining their identity as wives and mothers. According to Bozzoli (1991) the black, rural women living in the Western Transvaal village of Phokeng whose life stories Bozzoli based her work on, must not be seen as passive

recipients of a particular set of circumstances.'For them, employment in formal industry - where opportunities were in any case extremely limited - or domestic service was not compatible with their other aims: constructing their own households and retaining or creating independence for themselves' (Bozzoli,1991,19). She asserts that these women have retained access to relatively fertile land and manipulated local politics in order to avoid being forced to accept full proletarianisation. Based on these experiences she theorises that we need to explore the reality that women choose the informal sector<sup>3</sup> such as washing, hawking, dressmaking, gambling, traditional medicine, liquor brewing, so that they can manage both children and the household, as well as contributing to the household income. '...perhaps for many newly proletarianised women today, the informal sector was attractive mainly because of its flexibility, its base in the home, its origin in rural skills, its comparatively high profitability (in relation to urban wages) and its compatibility with their household and personal ambitions ' (Bozzoli,1991,36).

.Clearly the issues that Bozzoli (1991) raises impact directly on childcare debates. The conceptualisation of the provision of childcare as one in which women are freed to go to work in the formal labour market must be challenged. For many women this is unlikely to be the case. In terms of access to education, survival of the household and high unemployment, many women and particularly rural women are unlikely to enter the formal job market. Consequently the need to develop a holistic approach to childcare policy and provision must be addressed.

Gender oppression in South Africa has taken on specific forms as a result of the complex articulation of race, class and urban - rural divide. It is crucial to take into

account the way in which colonialisation and consequent urbanisation have had an effect on class and gender differences. As European sexism was added to patriarchal elements in indigenous cultures, sex roles took on new forms and women remained outside of political power. Consequently it is necessary to understand the specificity of women's experience in South Africa and that of specific women but nonetheless it is important not to deny that there are parallels with struggles elsewhere in the world which can inform the struggles in South Africa. The debate vis a vis the imposition of a Western feminist way of understanding on the specific African experience of black women in South Africa is significant in that the childcare debate has its roots and form in the struggles of middle-class Western European and North American women.

In the South African context gender oppression has been overlaid by racial oppression. Differences with respect to class, race, geographical location, political ideologies and ethnicity have all impacted on policy and practise. White women have predominated in the financial and service sectors whilst black women occupy the most menial jobs such as domestic workers. The migrant labour system recruited men to work in the mines and women were left responsible for agricultural production. Women relied on often inadequate and infrequent remittances to support themselves, children, the aged and unemployed. As the situation deteriorated women were forced to enter wage labour or became increasingly dependent on money from men. Therefore black women were incorporated in wage labour much later and on worse terms than men, usually as farm labourers, in domestic service and in the manufacturing sectors of textiles, clothing and food. Bozzoli (1983) expressed the point that proletarianization specifically discriminated against black women.

As a consequence of westernisation and urbanisation the form of the black family is moving from one where it was economically self-sufficient, with strict division of labour according to sex, and the work place was not separated from the home to one in which it relies on income from the formal job market and the division of labour is no longer strictly defined according to age and sex. In the cities, production in the economic sense has moved out of the home, so that the home and work-place have become separated. Coupled with this is the fact that women are entering the labour market on a large scale to supplement the family income (Pretorius C. 1987,25). In addition to this, women as single parents and heads of households are entering the labour market, both formal and informal, to support their families. Despite the fact that many rural women will not enter the formal labour market many of them are finding ways to supplement household incomes through informal sector activities. Consequently, the need for childcare to support these women must be addressed. Whilst little research is available to support the assertion that men are beginning to assume more responsibility for tasks traditionally defined as "women's work", it would be a serious omission if this possibility was not acknowledged.

I will return to these issues in chapter 2 when I discuss the current provision of childcare in South Africa and the debates that are informing the emergence of a more coherent policy for the provision and co-ordination of childcare.

### **1.3 The Impact of Feminist Debates on Childcare Provision - Comparative Data**

In many countries feminist debates have influenced childcare provision to varying degrees and in a variety of different ways. An analysis of some of this comparative data is useful in that it can inform the development of policies and practices in South Africa. Most of the literature dealing with childcare debates is "first world" in that it deals with the issue in the context of white, middle-class contexts, and hence, is not directly relevant. Nonetheless, it provides some theoretical considerations of value. The experiences of women in the United States of America (USA) and Britain are particularly pertinent in that the central concern of this thesis is that feminist debates about childcare must impact on childcare policy and provision, and it is in these countries that this has been the case, albeit in a limited way.

As early as 1969 childcare was a major issue in most of the advanced industrialised societies (particularly America and Britain) where feminist struggles were being engaged at both the public and private level. The demand was being made for facilities established by law adequate to the needs of children from pre-school years through to adolescence to be used by all income levels. Control of facilities should be vested in parents and community-staffed committees, open to all children and charges be based on a sliding scale according to income. Care should be available to all children regardless of parents' economic status. These demands were opposed on the grounds that parents lost control over their children and families were weakened. In addition, it was argued that costs would be too high and that such politics threatened 'limited government and personal liberty' (Coote and Campbell, 1982,39).

The battle for full-time, free, parent-controlled, non-sexist facilities has been waged in Britain since early 1970s. Some feminists argued that childcare programmes 'should counter positively the conditioning of children into restructuring sex roles, and to encourage the formation of strong friendships among the children and adults other than their own parents' (Coote and Campbell,1982,39). In the 1970s nurseries and playgroups were set up with funds from local councils and employers, as well as self-help projects.

The goals of the projects were to ensure that all women participated in the management and that decent wages were to be paid to caretakers. The problem of raising sufficient funds meant that they had to rely on voluntary workers or pay inadequate wages. Consequently, this meant that they had to struggle for workplace nurseries. This was perceived as potentially problematic as it allowed employers undue control over women workers in that women may have had to put up with inadequate wages and working conditions because they had nowhere else to leave children if they resigned.

In the mid 1970s the debate shifted to that of full control of facilities by parents and the involvement of the welfare state in funding projects. It was argued that there was a need for the state to accept its responsibility to fund programmes. The struggle also shifted its focus to include demands that fathers accept responsibility for childcare and that local governments and councils accept responsibility for funding facilities. In 1980s the need for comprehensive childcare for all under 5s was recognised by unions, the Labour Party and the Equal Opportunities Commission. Nevertheless, facilities were closing down because of cuts in government expenditure and the lack of prioritisation of childcare. In July 1980 The National Child Care Campaign was launched in order to

ensure that the provision of childcare was placed high on the agenda in terms of national and local levels of government and policy making.

At present state involvement in the provision of care in Britain and North America is limited and the struggle for universal access to care continues. The provision of care for under 5s is not as extensive as in Japan and most European countries where the participation of women in the labour market is relatively higher. In the UK, USA and Canada state involvement in the funding and regulation of facilities is limited to the provision of programmes for 5yr olds attached to state schools. Most facilities are supported by communities and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). In the UK there are playgroups involving mothers.

Whilst the provision of care in Japan, Europe and Ex-Eastern Bloc countries has been in response to the need for women to participate actively in the labour force, this has not been framed within the struggle for women's rights, in general, or the debate about reconceptualising childcare as the responsibility of both parents, in particular. It is in the context of extensive state involvement in the provision of care, a high demand for female participation in the labour market and high levels of industrialisation that there is almost universal provision of care for 3 to 6 year olds in these countries. This is also made possible by the relatively small numbers of under 5 year olds. In addition, the provision of care for under 3s is framed within the notion that formal care may have 'possible negative developmental effects' (NEPI,1992). This has underpinned the government involvement in providing financial support and regulation of home-based care, thus enabling women to remain at home to care for young children but limiting the

opportunities of those women who wish to return to work soon after the birth of their babies.

Access to care in the less developed countries is low with minimum state involvement and is largely the responsibility of the family and community. This is in the context of under-development and the resultant widespread poverty where families are unable to pay for care, as is the case in Groutville. Access for under 3s is minimal. In countries such as Kenya, Jamaica, Zimbabwe and India the low levels of development, the rural conditions within which most families live, and the lack of state resources to fund childcare programmes has necessitated the development of alternative and cheap childcare provision that is appropriate to the rural context (NEPI, 1992). The imposition of an expensive and inappropriate Western model has not been possible. Consequently, the provision of care emphasises multi-sectoral community development initiatives that use the organisation of playgroups as the opportunity to access mothers for health, sanitation, and food garden programmes. It is this kind of programme that is pertinent to the conditions that prevail in Groutville.

#### **1.4 Implication of Feminist Debates about Childcare for Policy and Practice**

The goal of feminist struggle is to ensure that women participate actively in all aspects of society - political, social, economic and cultural - and consequently, a number of needs relating to childcare have been identified.

Firstly, the provision of childcare facilities to free women to enter the job market. In order for women to participate actively in the formal job market, they need access to

maternity leave. Whilst this is not the focus of this research, it is important to note that the conditions of maternity leave are totally inadequate in South Africa (Budlender, 1991) and in many countries worldwide (Beechey and Perkins, 1987). In most cases women have to return to work soon after the birth in order to ensure that they do not lose their jobs. When women return to work not only are they faced with the problem of finding someone to care for their children but they are usually unable to pay the costs of good quality care for their children.

The second demand is for the sharing of domestic labour including care of the children within the home. The care and welfare of children is perceived to be a social responsibility and fathers must take on their responsibility for the care of children and the household. Feminists such as Coote and Campbell (1982) argue that childcare is not the way to make women's dual role as mother and worker easier but a first step in challenging society's view that the sole responsibility for childcare necessarily rests with the women. In addition to this, centres must be community and parent controlled if they are to serve the function of challenging sex role socialisation.

The issue of childcare is not only about providing facilities for those women at work and to free women trapped at home by responsibilities for children and the household. The reality that women may choose to be with their children, choose to engage in informal sector activities, and not have access to the formal job market, must be taken into account in childcare policies and practices. The debates around policy formulation have been limited largely to the needs of working mothers and need to be broadened to encompass the issues raised by Bozzoli. The lives of both children and mothers "in the home" must be improved through health and development programmes that work

with the mothers to enable them better to care for their children's needs. The provision of childcare needs to be understood in terms of women's particular contexts and the way in which it will affect them. I will return to this issue when examining the urgent situation with respect to childcare in Groutville.

Chapter 2 maps the existing patterns of childcare provision in terms of facilities, governance and funding. It provides an overview of current policy in terms of educare as well as the current debates that will inform policy development and implementation in the future. This will provide a framework within which to examine the data on existing childcare practices in Groutville which are analysed in chapters 6 and 7.

## **Chapter 1 - Footnotes**

1. The integration of gender issues into policy review and development in NEPI has been discussed by Wolpe (1993).
2. The nature of the struggle for maternity benefits has been discussed by Budlender (1991).
3. Bozzoli (1991,1) defines the informal sector as 'a transient and loosely defined set of activities which pass in and out of the lives of people, rather than as a fixed and reified "thing" '. I am aware that there are wider set of debates around this issue but it is not the purpose of this thesis to engage with these debates.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE EXISTING SCENARIO - PROVISION AND POLICY

This chapter provides a review of the existing situation in terms of access to childcare, provision of services, and type of facilities and care, that were available in South Africa at the time that the research was carried out. It examines childcare policy of the late 1980s and early 1990s and how it has impacted on childcare provision, and explores the debates as reflected in the Education Renewal Strategy (ERS) and NEPI documents, as well as ANC and COSATU related policy debates around childcare, all of which will inform the development and implementation of future policy, that is, post 1994.

#### 2.1 Introduction

'The vast majority of African, Coloured, and Indian children in South Africa have no access to pre-school programmes of any kind, and a significant number (possibly as many as 25% in urban areas) are cared for by untrained child-minders (excluding family members) while their mothers work.' (NEPI, 1992, 15). The task of providing care for these children is an enormous one considering that in 1991 it was estimated that there were 6.4 million children (18% of the total population) aged six or younger, half of which were below the age of three. Of these at least 5.3 million (ie 83%) were African (Atmore, 1993, 119). Educare provision is inadequate regardless of race but significantly worse for black children - it is estimated that 33% of white 0-6 year olds as opposed to 7% of black children of the same age cohort have access to some form of

formal care (NEPI,1992,15). Only 2% of black children under 3 years are in some form of formal care (ANC,1994). With the increasing numbers of black women moving into full-time employment there has been a growth in the provision of care for black children, of formal institutions such as day care centres and of facilities that are not registered and are run by untrained personnel. Nonetheless, this care in terms of access alone remains totally inadequate (Van Den Berg and Vergnani,1987,2). This clearly has implications for women if you take into account the reality that the proportion of women in employment has increased from 17.8% in 1939 to 32.4% in 1980 and was estimated at 34.8% in 1987 (Plaatjies,1992,89).

The nature of the care available to children prior to entry to formal schooling varies with the age and race of the children, special needs, urban-rural location and whether the facilities are funded and/or controlled by the state, private enterprise or community members. The demand for and provision of formal early childhood care is such that a range of models for the care and education of children has emerged. The kind and form of the programmes varies according to the needs of the community that it is serving, the type of care and education offered, and the cost of running the programme, the capacity of the community to pay for care as well as government policy.

## **2.2 Current Policy**

Educare (like the education system as a whole) is not controlled by a national governing body, but is devolved to the provincial level or to the private sector. However unlike most of the education sector, educare provision is not state controlled and state subsidy of educare has been minimal and based on a racial system that has privileged

those facilities that serviced white children. Limited state support is based on a belief that the responsibility for the child in the pre-school years is that of the parents'.

The provision of educare in South Africa has been fragmented and is not framed within a coherent and integrated policy for the development of a comprehensive programme of care appropriate to the needs of the children, the communities within which they live and the needs of the country in terms of education, the economy and issues that impact directly on women. This is reflected in the fact that historically the type of care, the degree and kind of government and local authority support for and contribution to the development of educare facilities has varied both over time and space, that is, between regions and provinces and between different groups based on race and class.

In most urban areas there are a number of well-resourced pre-school facilities run by tertiary-trained teachers providing care for mainly white, middle-class children whose parents are better able to afford to pay the high fees necessary to maintain the facilities in the context of minimal state support. These schools are usually open from 8am to mid-day thus necessitating that alternative care is found for children in the afternoon. This either involves additional expense for formal after-school care or informal care within the home provided usually by mothers or domestic workers. The financing of these facilities relies on parent fees and in most cases partial state subsidies which pay teachers' salaries. This is significant in that teachers salaries represent as much as 80% of the running costs. Pre-schools usually provide education for the 3-6 year olds and the focus is on the needs of the child. Consequently, these facilities do not adequately provide for the childcare needs of working mothers who are forced to make alternative arrangements for the care of their children in the afternoon.

In addition to this, there are a limited number of full-day programmes which, in most cases due to inadequate income from low fees, offer significantly poorer-quality facilities with usually unqualified teachers. These centres are mostly used by parents who can only afford minimal fees and have no alternative care available for their children. It is the mothers who are in employment and need full-time care for their children who use these facilities and it is this area of care that is the most under-serviced as well as under-resourced. Consequently, women are either forced to leave their children in the care of untrained and sometimes unsuitable care-givers both formal and informal such as grandmothers, neighbours and siblings, or to make the choice to remain at home to care for their children with the consequent economic and personal implications.

The area least catered for is the provision of support for mothers who choose to remain at home to care for their children or have no alternative but to do so. They are left to deal with their children alone or with the minimum of support. Likewise domestic workers, grandmothers as well as other relatives who care for children in their mothers' absence do so without any training or support in the form of co-ordinated programmes of play or education.

The field of educare has a fragmented history and its development continues to reflect these schisms. What is clear is that despite the fact that the support for pre-school care for white children in the form of partial state subsidies and fees has been greater than for other groups, it remains inadequate. The provision of salaries, subsidies, and teacher training is not framed within a national policy, and has been and continues to be totally inadequate for the needs of both women and children in South Africa.

There are a number of central tenets of policy and provision that continue to plague the development of a coherent policy on child care, development and education.

Firstly, the former Nationalist Government's policy on the provision of care and education for children prior to school-going age was grounded in the philosophy that the responsibility for the child is that of the parents and by implication the mother. Linked to this was the notion that care and education is women's domain and therefore is undervalued in a male world. This clearly articulates with the feminist concern that the responsibility for childcare has been and continues to be both perceived as, and actually is, women's responsibility. Current provision and support continues to operate within this paradigm.

Secondly, the debate about educare is framed within a limited understanding of the importance of pre-school education for the preparation of children for school. It is not based on an integrated/holistic approach to child development. It sees education and development in terms of preparation of the child for formal schooling. This reflects a technicist concern for the education of pre-school children. This is contained in the ERS document thus - 'The value of pre-primary education in improving performance in the ordinary school is universally acknowledged. This is the case particularly with learners from disadvantaged backgrounds who frequently are not school ready when reaching school-going age' (ERS,1991,63). The ERS recommendations in terms of future policy is the integration of a bridging year into the first school phase of seven years. The report goes on to claim that "severe budget restrictions" have impinged on this field of government support and that general policy for ordinary school education should be developed before pre-primary education can be considered.

Thirdly, the separation of the policy, provision and funding of education, health and welfare has contributed to disparities in provision and a lack of coherence in educare policy and its implementation. Provision has been distributed across a range of departments, bodies and different structures which serve different concerns for each of the various "population groups", and even for different geographical regions (Van den Berg and Vergnani, 1987,2). Provision for the black rural child in South Africa being the most neglected. The focus of childcare provision has been on preparing children for school and not providing for all aspects of child development, that is, physical, social, psychological and intellectual. This has resulted in a fragmented national policy with disparate policies and practices across regions, between race groups and different ages. Whilst providing for pre- and post- natal care of the mother and child it does not provide for health care and nutrition of toddlers and pre-school children. Health authorities tend to provide for physical development and not the integrated needs of the child.

Fourthly, access to educare has been constructed historically on both class and race grounds. Up until 1990 state pre-school facilities prevented black children from attending by laws based on the policy of segregation. Since early 1990s many pre-schools that receive state subsidies have begun to admit children of other race groups. Provision has been 'inversely proportional to need, most resources being provided for those sectors of society that are the most advantaged' (Van Den Berg and Vergani, 1987,2).

Fifthly, the majority of support by the state has been in the form of subsidies for facilities set up and managed by others. It has largely shifted the responsibility for

funding and managing facilities to the community and to the private welfare sectors.

Whilst at the same time the state has exercised control through

insistence on standards that are inflexible and totally unrealistic thus further consolidating inequality and deprivation and inhibiting the provision of non-state facilities and services (Van Den Berg and Vergani,1987,2).

### **2.3 The Existing Scenario**

The following discussion deals with the formal provision of care available up to and including the early 1990s for children from birth to school-going age and includes very little data on the informal care that numerous children receive from grandmothers, family members, domestic workers, neighbours, play groups or unregistered facilities. There is very little information about the nature of care that is provided in these contexts. This reflects the reality that childcare has been largely perceived in terms of a dominant model of the provision of pre-school education for the 3-6 year age group and hence, research has failed to provide a more comprehensive picture of the way in which women cope with their responsibility for children. In addition to this, the majority of texts that deal with education provide no more than a passing comment of a line or two on the pre-school scenario - this is the case in Peter Kallaway (1988).

Substantial research has dealt with the educational aspects of pre-school education dealing largely with the link between pre-school education and school performance, that is, in terms of school readiness. Dr D Weikert of the High/Scope Education Research Foundation, USA argues that children who attend quality educare

programmes are twice as likely to complete high-school, half as likely to need specialised education, significantly less likely to commit offences by the age of 15 and significantly less likely to have children whilst still teenagers. Local educare experts Biersteker, Rickards and Robb (1994) in an article entitled 'Early years are the key' provide a strong argument for the value of pre-school education in ensuring the intellectual, physical, psychological and emotional development.

There is a large amount of unpublished material on educare in South Africa by writers such as Rickards, Atmore, Biersteker and Plaatjies (Phillips and Wentzel, 1993). In 1987 Van den Berg and Vergnani edited a collection of articles on the pre-school child in South Africa. Most of the articles address the importance of pre-school education for the child but few provide qualitative data or analysis of the existing situation with respect to formal or informal care. A document prepared by NEPI in 1992 provided the first comprehensive data on the situation to date. Consequently, this thesis draws heavily on this document when examining the existing educare scenario.

### **2.3.1 Access**

Approximately 9% of children in SA aged 0-6 years have access to some form of care (Biersteker, 1992). It is estimated that of these children the majority are of the 3-6 years age group and only approximately 14% of the 3-6 years age group and 2% of the 0-3 years age group have access to centre care. This does not take into consideration that for some mothers the quality of the care available might be totally unacceptable and therefore, the percentage of children who have access to good quality care that integrates all their needs, will be significantly lower.

The provision of care also varies between urban and rural areas with the access rate lowest in the rural areas. Less than 4% of children ages 0-7 years in rural areas have access to some form of centre care (ANC,1994). The highest proportion of black children under the age of six live in rural areas, with the heavily populated rural areas of Transkei, Kwazulu, and the Northern Transvaal amongst the worst serviced areas in South Africa (ANC,1994). This has serious implications for women living in these areas in that they are the least likely to enter the formal job market but being the most disadvantaged group in South Africa they receive the least support in their role as mothers. In addition to this, they are the least likely to have access to education and consequently, are forced to find alternative ways to support their families and care for their children. Nonetheless, the fact that they are not in waged labour gives them the opportunity to care for their children themselves.

Children with special needs are the most inadequately provided for with only approximately 2000 children in some form of institutional care, half of these being white. Caring for children with special needs is a particularly demanding responsibility in terms of time, money and extent of specialised care that is needed. Again it is the most disadvantaged communities who are least able to access the resources to provide this care and who receive the least support from the state or provincial authorities.

### **2.3.2 Extent of Provision**

State support for childcare facilities has been limited particularly in the case of black children. State support has tended to be in the form of pre-primary classes attached to

primary schools, subsidies for pre-schools and special education programmes. This has not only varied between races but with departments and geographical region.

In the 1950s and 1960s the state provided subsidies based on income for "poor white" children. There was no central government support for black children and only limited local authority involvement which differed significantly between provinces. This articulated with the goals of apartheid legislation which prioritised the needs of the white community and was reflected in the unequal spending across race on all aspects of social welfare and particularly education. In the 1970s provincial support in terms of teacher salaries, subsidies, establishment of pre-primary classes attached to primary schools was increased for white children but by the 1980s began to diminish - pre-primary education being excluded from department budgets. This was largely a consequence of a state policy that located the responsibility for childcare within the family and limited state responsibility to providing minimal financial assistance.

All the nineteen education departments operated within a policy of providing education for young children to varying degrees but none developed a policy that integrates all the needs of children and communities within which they live. The only education department that established and financed pre-primary schools for 3-6 year olds was the Transvaal Education Department (TED) this being framed within an education policy that prioritised the value of a good foundation in the pre-school years. Nonetheless, this care was not available to **all** children in the province and the department subsidisation of these facilities was reduced significantly in the last few years. The House of Representatives(HOR) and Delegates(HOD), Cape, Transvaal and QwaQwa education departments all provided some support for pre-primary classes for 5 year-olds, the

House of Representatives provided limited subsidies for school readiness classes conducted after hours in school premises - as many as 66% of Indian 5 year olds attended such classes. The Department of Education and Training (DET) supported the Bridging Period Programme (BPP) - a programme which attempts to identify those children who will not cope in Sub A and therefore should attend a preparation class. This programme reached a limited number of children.

What is significant is that in most education departments, state support decreased in recent years. This was the result of a number of interrelated factors. Firstly, state policy differentiated in terms of race when allocating resources. It also had to take into account the increasing demand from a range of sectors for access to limited funds. Allocation of state funds to educare had to compete not only with other sectors within education but with other sectors such as health and housing. Since the early 1990s the need to address the crisis in these sectors and ensure a redistribution of resources to the most disadvantaged groupings had to be addressed. Secondly, an educare policy that conceptualises the role of the state in childcare provision as minimal and largely the responsibility of parents, particularly mothers was still in place. Thirdly, the feminist movement in South Africa has not developed in the same way as Western countries such as USA and the Britain. The imperatives of national liberation resulted in the prioritisation of liberatory goals, that is, the end of apartheid at the expense of the specific demands to address issues that relate to women's liberation (Horn,1995). Fourthly, accelerated urbanisation has given women greater access to wage labour although the entry of black women into the labour market is a relatively recent phenomenon. The need for formal childcare facilities particularly for black children is

consequently only an emerging demand made by unions though it can be expected to increase significantly in the next few years.

Welfare and health departments have to varying degrees provided some support framed within the notion that 'the provision of full-day services for the children of working mothers is regarded primarily as a community responsibility within the welfare domain' (NEPI,1992,24). In terms of the Child Care Act all facilities that provide care for more than 6 children must register in terms of health and safety requirements (NEPI,1992,24). Local authorities monitor the programme. Welfare departments provide per capita subsidies to facilities that meet these requirements based on a means test for white, coloured and indian children attending registered full-day centres - there was a significant disparity in subsidy ranging from 20-61 cents per day for African children to R4.66 for white children (NEPI,1992,25). The equalisation of the subsidy is believed to be imminent but what is not clear is what standards will be applied in terms of qualification to receive the subsidy. In many cases most facilities in black communities will not meet the current standards and thus will not receive state subsidy.

Most educare facilities particularly in black areas are set up and managed by parents and sectors of the communities such as the churches with the payment of fees as the main source of income. The few which receive state subsidies only get subsidies at the rate of 15%-45% of the costs involved in running the facilities. State support in the form of subsidies and salaries is only provided if the standards set by the relevant department are reached. The school is run on a non-profit basis and is managed by a parent/community committee, and the staffing and curriculum must be approved by the department (NEPI,1992,23). The Cape Education Department paid the salaries of

teachers of the five year olds as did the HOR and the former homeland education departments excluding Kwazulu. Provincial education departments, the HOR, HOD and DET all offered a limited number of private, approved pre-primary schools the option of per capita subsidies and grants for buildings to varying degrees but in all cases it was not sufficient to sustain the programme. Again it is in communities where there is high unemployment and lack of infrastructure that parents provide the resources to finance and run childcare facilities. As will be discussed later in this chapter this problem is compounded by inadequate facilities and lack of skilled staff to run the programmes.

NGOs, the private sector, trade unions, foundations and international agencies have all provided support of varying kinds and degrees. This was in the context of increasing opposition to apartheid and increasing support for the most disadvantaged communities in South Africa in the 1980s. The Urban Foundation funded black pre-school education because state provision prior to 1982 was virtually non-existent and they acknowledged the value of pre-school education for decreasing failure rates at schools (Swainson,1991,95). NGOs have largely been responsible for providing support services to community-funded and managed projects. Nonetheless it has not been a priority as it has been a low profile issue in relation to housing, health and both primary and secondary education. The effectiveness of a pre-school education programme in reducing school failure rates is difficult to measure and is only apparent in the long-term (Swainson,1991,108). Whilst some NGOs have been involved in initiating and managing facilities with some limited financial support most NGOs have provided 'technical support with the aim of promoting the development of community-based provision' (NEPI,1992,19). On the other hand it has fostered the need for NGO services

and has also provided the scope to enable NGOs to develop programmes and set up alternative support and training structures such as Grassroots in the Cape and Training and Resources in Early Education (TREE) in KwaZulu-Natal. Nonetheless, the concern that the lack of regulation of privately managed facilities will provide the context within which a number of low quality programmes may develop.

The number of employer-managed and/or funded projects are minimal. In most cases involvement by the private sector has been framed within the aims of a social responsibility programme, that is, it is not perceived as an employees' right and employers' obligation. Perceptions held by both the state and employers about who must be responsible for children is a central feminist concern which is articulated in different ways in the policy documents discussed in section 2.4. A feminist critique of these perceptions and their consequences is crucial in providing some understanding as to how this can be changed. I will return to this issue later in this chapter and in the conclusion when policy proposals will be made.

Facilities managed or supported by farmers in the agricultural sector have also been limited often providing care that is seasonal, that is, when the female workforce is needed. This allows women, who have no-one to care for their children, to earn a generally inadequate, but all the same vital, wage.

Trade union response to the childcare issue has been fragmented, limited and ad hoc and has involved negotiations vis-vis maternity benefits and parental rights. I will return to this when discussing COSATU policies in section 2.4. Foundations and international agencies have tended to focus on supporting innovative projects thereby contributing

to the production of a solid base of knowledge and experience of different types of educare programmes on which to plan for the future expansion of services (NEPI,1992). Of the funds donated by the business sector to education only 6% went to educare largely for support and training centres and not towards the costs of running centres. Foreign government aid contributes as little as 1% of the total aid available to educare mainly for training and innovative development work (NEPI,1992,30).

The majority of programmes receive no financial support from the state or provincial authorities and therefore rely on fees paid by parents that cannot afford to pay adequate amounts - amounts paid vary from about R1 to R2 per month in rural areas to R60 to R80 in Gauteng (formerly PWV) compared to R200 to R250 per month in suburban areas. In most cases parents contribute as much as 80% of the costs of running and maintaining the limited services available.

The consequences of this are serious. Firstly, staff salaries are low, benefits are limited and job security non-existent. It is difficult to attract trained staff. Staff morale and motivation is often low and staff turnover is high - those that get training often move on and there is consequently the need for ongoing staff development. The exploitation of staff (usually women) through low wages and unacceptable working conditions is also an important issue.

Secondly, programmes are usually housed in halls or informal structures - where there is often a lack of both indoor and outdoor space, sanitation and equipment. There is no space for cooking, cleaning and sleeping which creates problems in terms of hygiene, health and safety.

In addition to this, there are no feeding and health schemes for the children. There is a limited centralised fund for health and feeding schemes. In 1991 an amount of R220 million was allocated for distribution by registered charities such as non-governmental educare agencies, welfare organizations and local authority clinics. This money was to be used for food for the 'severely indigent' which included children under the age of twelve, lactating and pregnant women, the elderly, and certain unemployed people.

### **2.3.3 Quality of Provision**

The existing services for black children are plagued by numerous problems. 'Most educare facilities for the neediest children are of such poor quality that little benefit is gained' (NEPI, 1992, 33). In the context of very little choice mothers are forced to leave their children in the care of untrained staff and in facilities that are over-crowded and provide little stimulation for the children. The facilities that are available are in many cases inadequate, with unsuitable premises, lack of equipment, under-paid and unqualified teachers and high teacher: child ratios. The task of measuring the quality of childcare provision is a complex one nonetheless a number of criteria can be applied when evaluating programmes - these include the level of training of educare staff, the staff:child ratio, the management of the programme and the physical space provided. The issue of quality of care is intrinsic to the feminist demands for childcare. Consequently, the current position with regard to quality of care is central to the current debates vis a vis provision.

### **2.3.3.1 Training**

It is estimated that approximately 71% of staff in black centres are untrained as opposed to the majority of teaching staff in white centres who have some form of post-school training. Of those staff in black centres with some form of training the majority (63%) have non-formal educare training usually provided by NGO support services. Some education departments provided training as part of the lower primary courses as did DET, HOD, and some House of Assembly (HOA) colleges. Four universities and five colleges offered courses in early childhood education. There were no courses offered by DET colleges and colleges in the former self-governing states, except Tlhabane in Bophuthatswana. The opportunities for formal training are therefore very limited particularly for black students wishing to enter the educare field.

As a consequence of this, a plethora of non-formal programmes offering training and support have emerged. The demand for such training has come from the teachers themselves and setting up of such programmes has been instrumental in sustaining a limited number of good quality facilities.

The training offered includes certificates of competence, short orientation courses, inservice training or enrichment courses. The advantages of the courses are that they are in-service, appropriate to context, and offer ongoing follow-up support in terms of visits. One of the most significant aspects is that it is providing job opportunities for women who have been disadvantaged by the apartheid education legacy as well as by discrimination against women for jobs. The support services include 'advice and information, development of educational materials, management training for

committees, non-profit shops for educational equipment and supplies, resource depots for waste materials (used for activities and improvised toys), refresher workshops, development work, and advocacy activities of various kinds' (NEPI, 1992,32). Non-formal courses are also offered by seven private training centres, two universities, one local authority, and the then Bophuthatswana Education department. One of the problems with conditions that allow for easy establishment of NGOs is that monitoring of the quality of programmes offered is difficult. In addition, it is as easy for such organisations to close down and not fulfil commitments that they have made to clients. It is the uneducated that are often exploited by such operations.

#### **2.3.3.2 Ratios**

One of the most frequently used criteria for evaluation of education has been teacher:pupil ratios. In the case of educare an examination of ratios is informative. Ratios in black centres range from 1:22 to 1:59 compared to 1:13 to 1:23 in those schools controlled by the provincial education departments. Calculation of ratios is fraught with difficulties in that the average does not reflect the extremes, for example, of small farm schools. Nonetheless, what is significant, is that the kind of care that can be provided by caretakers in situations where one woman is responsible for as many as 50 children is of little educational value. The consequence is that parents are forced to leave their children in unacceptable conditions because they do not have access to other options or they are unable to pay for better and consequently, more expensive care. In some instances women may be forced to resign from employment in order to care for their children themselves. This option is not available to many women particularly under conditions of high unemployment and poverty.

### **2.3.3.3 Management and Governance**

The management of the programmes refers to the co-ordination and running of the programme usually by a committee whereas governance refers to the monitoring of programmes by local, provincial or state authorities.

Programmes managed by parents and staff are often fraught with difficulties. These include lack of support from the majority of parents who often do not have the skills, access to resources or time to contribute to the running of the facilities. In many cases committees are not democratically elected and do not operate democratically. In addition, in areas where the provision of education is poor, those groupings that can provide facilities have power because the issue is significant in community life. Consequently, the needs of women whose children attend the centres may not be prioritised and addressed. Most parents who leave their children have to travel to their places of work and leave early in the morning and return late at night and hence, do not have the time to contribute to the running of the school. In addition, they may not have the skills to enable them to do so. It also limits the degree to which mothers can make demands in terms of hours and kind of care that their children receive. They are therefore denied choices and opportunities to contribute to their children's care and to benefit from involvement in the centres. In most cases mothers do not know what their children do all day.

The need for monitoring is founded on the belief that it is necessary to have minimum standards set down by a local or state authority to ensure that children get good quality care. These standards usually deal with the extent and kind of physical space and

facilities required, staff training and staff: child ratios. In the absence of some monitoring mechanism, women are forced to leave their children in facilities that do not provide their children with good quality care. In many cases the facilities are not registered with authorities because they do not meet the standards that are set down in order to be registered. On the other hand many of the standards that are set are unrealistic and have been developed in the context of urban-based and financially well-resourced communities (Van Den Berg and Vergani 1987). In this context the state is able to exercise considerable control over departmentally controlled pre-primary schools where it pays teacher salaries and consequently 80% of costs. But democratic participation by parents is often limited, there is tension over shared control, and the curriculum is imposed.

The welfare sector often exerts control through standards that are inappropriate and constructed without consultation in the context of a well-resourced programme. Most facilities 'do not have the resources to meet the standards required to obtain subsidization, or subsidies are simply not available (thus perpetuating poor-quality provision, low salaries, poor working conditions, and high staff turnover)' (NEPI, 1992,36).

The extent and quality of care available to black communities such as Groutville is utterly inadequate. The development of alternative policies and practices that address the need for appropriate and good quality facilities has to be prioritised if this section of education is to receive its due recognition. The extent to which this is happening is addressed in the next section.

## 2.4 Policy Debates

The need for the establishment of a new policy to manage the development of a comprehensive programme of childcare provision in South Africa has been articulated by various stakeholders in the field including parents, teachers and early childhood educare organisations such as Early Learning Resources Centre and Grassroots. An active lobby of both mainstream groupings such as pre-school teachers organised through the Natal Teachers Society (NTS) and NGOs such as TREE in Natal have for the last 10 years demanded increased state and provincial as well as private sector commitment to educare provision for at least 3 years prior to entry to formal schooling.

The ANC Policy Guidelines state that 'the state must develop a framework and infrastructure to address the needs of early childhood educare' and that 'the provision and financing of early childhood educare must be undertaken by the state in conjunction with employers and the community' (ANC, 1992, 49). As was discussed in the introduction the ANC draft policy document points towards an emerging commitment to ensuring that women's rights with regard to childcare are acknowledged and addressed. The document outlines that the ANC is committed to the provision of a minimum of ten years of free and compulsory education which shall include, where possible, one year of pre-school education. This commitment is based on the belief that ten years of quality education is the minimum necessary to prepare individuals to participate in the economy and society. Whilst these proposals address the concerns of women they do so in a limited way. Under the section 'Rights of women workers' it is stated that there should be career paths for traditional women's work and the provision of childcare facilities in training, at meetings and at work.

The need for childcare facilities to enable women to participate actively in unions is supported by COSATU. It was proposed at the COSATU Second National Women's Conference in August 1992 that COSATU should explore the development of a Family Code to address the issue of shared domestic labour but nothing appears to have been done about this to date (Barrett,1993,11). According to Barrett (1993) pre-school education has also featured prominently in the demands, with June 1st having been declared 'National Childcare Day' by the Federation. However, the implementation of the demand for pre-school education, both as a means of releasing women into the productive economy and as a means of advancing education per se, has been left almost exclusively to the COSATU's Gender Forum. It is not a demand that has been integrated into the deliberations within the National Economic Forum (NEF) or any other forums. This is unlikely to change significantly until women are included in the processes and structures of policy formulation and implementation. 'The poor representation of women on COSATU's national structures determining and implementing economic policy is in part a reflection of the poor representation of women in most affiliates' national, regional and local executive structures' (Barrett,1993,17).

Dorothy Mokgalo, COSATU's Gender Co-ordinator commented in an interview with Fiona Dove that 'childcare has to be seen by employers as an economic issue. The economy is not just what is produced in the factories, it is how the society is organised. Childcare is an important way of supporting and reproducing the workforce' (Agenda,1993,21). She went on to state that the demand must be for both childcare leave and childcare facilities in the workplace and subsidised community-based facilities. It is the state's responsibility to fund facilities as well as parents' to pay

affordable fees so that they will feel 'committed to those facilities as parents and community members' (Agenda,1993,21).

## **2.5 NEPI**

The demand for increased state involvement in the provision of childcare facilities by COSATU has been echoed by those involved in the educare sector as well as the broader education sector. The production of a number of policy documents by NEPI in 1993 included a report on Early Childhood Educare. The NEPI document on Early Childhood Educare is one of the first comprehensive attempts to provide a review of the current educare scenario and begin to develop a coherent and unifying national policy that could frame the development of educare in SA. The document provides a range of policy options for consideration by those involved in policy-making and implementation. The document therefore requires serious consideration.

The NEPI report discusses the merits and de-merits of a range of policy options for the provision of care and education for children from birth to the end of the junior primary phase. A number of basic assumptions informed the analysis of viable options. These include firstly, that the state must be responsible for the provision and co-ordination of services by assisting parents. Secondly, there must be particular concern for disadvantaged children. Thirdly, there must be continuity in terms of academic programmes for school readiness at pre-school and early primary school levels. Fourthly, state spending on educare must be ongoing and increase steadily, and finally, programmes must meet the needs of the child in an integrated way to 'improve the

effectiveness of health, nutrition, education, and women's programmes through a mutually beneficial interactive effect' (NEPI, 1992,59).

Whilst acknowledging that 'it is not intended to perpetuate the problems associated with the present division of responsibility between education, welfare, and health authorities' (NEPI, 1992,60) the report makes the assumption that the administration and co-ordination would have to be located within one of the existing sectors. It therefore examines policy options that could be located in the different sectors - these include education, developmental social welfare, day care, primary health, and child and community development policy perspectives. The report also examines a range of options to improve the quality and quantity of provision, governance, finance, curriculum, and training and support services.

What is clear from the report is that no single option located within the current fragmented system of provision can address the need for a coherent and integrated option. Consequently, any future policy will have to address the need to prepare children for schooling and provide appropriate support for families, particularly mothers, to manage their responsibilities effectively. In addition, it must ensure provision of full-day care for working mothers, and address the health care needs of mothers and children. Programmes that promote the optimal development of young children and improve their quality of life in a comprehensive and holistic way must be provided. It is through the empowerment of communities, especially women, to provide better health care and learning opportunities before school, on as wide a scale as possible, particularly in rural areas and marginal urban communities, that these priorities will be addressed (NEPI, 1992,65).

Whilst the NEPI report is the first comprehensive document on educare to date which provides some excellent data and raises some crucial issues for consideration it is nonetheless limited. The review of provision focuses largely on the provision and co-ordination of formal facilities and does not provide sufficient discussion of informal care. It is in this area that women are the most active yet their reality is invisible to policy makers. Consequently, it is crucial that more research is carried out that provides more information of the way in which women are coping with their childcare responsibilities in the absence of state support.

The aspect most lacking in the report is its treatment of gender. It has failed to address the issues with clarity and insight. Firstly, it has tended largely to treat "women" as unproblematic - whilst it addresses differences across race and class it fails to look at differences in terms of women involved in the informal sector, domestic workers, and the teenage mother in an integrated and consistent way.

The NEPI report fails to locate the childcare debate firmly within a gendered perspective on childcare and the role of women in the family. Whilst referring to the link between childcare and women's work it does not develop the argument and integrate it into policy development in a consistent and creative way. The basic assumptions which inform the analysis of viable policy options for educare do not firmly link the issue of childcare with its impact on women's lives. Whilst referring to women's programmes as an aspect of community development that would benefit from an integrated approach to childcare and education in a developmental context, the report does not place a gendered analysis of childcare clearly on the agenda for consideration. It does not extend the debate to address the demand that childcare

becomes the responsibility of both men and women. By specifically linking childcare to women entering the formal job market it perpetuates the view that sees children as women's responsibility.

In addition, it fails to look at childcare as a broader struggle in terms of after-school care, holiday care, care at meetings, need for fathers to take responsibility for children, part-time work/flexi-work for mothers, state support for maternity and childcare leave, street children and pavement children (those children who come to the city with their mothers who hawk and live on the streets), and teenage mothers especially those that have to give up school to care for their children.

Whilst the report emphasises the harsh reality of racial disparities in access and provision, it fails to emphasise that the provision and quality of care available fails to provide adequately for most children of all races in South Africa. Whilst the childcare available to white children is generally better than that for black children, urban access better than rural, and provision for the 3 to 5 age group better than that for under 3s, the overall access to care is still inadequate.

The report addresses the issue of equity and redress but does not confront the issue of high cost preventing access to the poor. In the area of schooling this debate has included limiting access for white, middle-class children in order to improve access and provide support for the most disadvantaged children, that is, black children in rural areas.

The NEPI report does acknowledge the issue of women's rights. Firstly, the right to stay at home and the need to 'recognise the contribution made by women to maternity, parenting, and household work' (NEPI,1992,63). The second right deals with women's choice to work outside the home, either part-time or full-time, and the need for the provision of appropriate childcare and education facilities. As well as the consequent right to maternity benefits and childcare leave. Women's ability to work is considered vital in that it impacts on the parent's capacity to provide for their children's developmental needs in terms of payment for education, housing, and health services.

Nonetheless, the value of programmes that address all aspects of development and which incorporate women into the process of addressing the needs of their children as well as their own through possible programmes of organisation and employment is acknowledged. There is a need for appropriate context-based family education programmes to enable the primary caretaker to take good care of the children. These programmes provide the opportunity for adult literacy programmes and programmes that organise around women's issues (for example, communal vegetable gardens and related nutrition programmes) and the opportunity for women to work together on a range of projects. Women in urban areas are often isolated within their homes without the support of the extended family network or from communal living. Education programmes may deal with women's health or issues such as rape and battery.

The report also raises a crucial concern about the competing needs for the provision of high cost full day care for working mothers and the needs of the majority of children which includes the children of unemployed and rural communities. Not only will there be competing interests within the field of educare but it will also have to compete with

other programmes for state funding, for example, housing, health and education. Clearly one serious consideration is the need for existing state funding of pre-primary education to be redistributed on a more equitable basis across race, types of programme, urban-rural location and disadvantage, but the need for increased state spending will have to be addressed. In addition, this issue needs to be located within a broader debate about equity, redress and prioritisation of the needs and development of the historically disadvantaged and the broader national debates about areas of priority in terms of funding.

The report also states that a variety of programme options will have to be supported by a range of appropriately trained care-takers and field-workers. Consequently, educare programmes will have to be underpinned by a comprehensive and holistic approach to the physical, social and intellectual development of children from birth to junior-primary levels of education. Training must therefore be at a number of levels, both formally and non-formally, with equal status for job qualification and salary as well as acknowledgment for experience. This resonates with COSATU's programme of Lifelong Learning which advocates that "non-formal" and "on-the-job" training be integrated into an overall, national programme of certification. In addition to this, a range of support services are needed to sustain the effective provision of childcare and education programmes. These include advisory and information services, acquisition of equipment and educational supplies, organisational development, and advocacy (NEPI, 1992,93). One essential aspect of these services is the provision of field-workers or community-based workers who will facilitate community development programmes.

The question of policy formation is a crucial one in that any future policy will have to ensure that there is a shared, coherent and integrated vision for the development of the education field by all the stakeholders, co-responsibility between the state, community, and the private sector for finance, and maximum community control over and management of programmes. Nonetheless, the need for state support in the form of subsidies is crucial to ensure the sustainability of programmes. In addition to this, there must be maximum involvement of members of the community which will ensure choice and decision-making about programme options complemented by state control through accountability procedures.

In the next chapters the existing scenario with respect to childcare in its broadest sense is examined in a community in Northern KwaZulu-Natal. The policy concerns raised above and their implications for a black, rural community will be addressed in the context of the specific reality of the families living in Groutville. Chapter 3 provides a description of the research area. Chapter 4 details the research process and Chapters 5 and 6 provide an analysis of the data. It is in chapter 7 that I will return more specifically to the policy issues raised in this chapter.

## CHAPTER 3

### DESCRIPTION OF AREA

#### **3.1 Introduction**

In 1988 a project was initiated in Groutville, Natal by members (myself included) of the centre for Community Organisation, Research and Development (CORD), an NGO based at the University of Natal (Durban). CORD was set up to co-ordinate development projects in rural areas. One aspect of its work was the provision of educare facilities as well as the training of educare workers and the co-ordination of educare programmes. CORD entered the area in 1988 when approached by the Natal Community Development Programme (NCDP) to house the programme. The NCDP was set up to continue the work of the Natal Relief Committee (NRC) which was created and structured to respond to the September 1987 flood disasters. The project was funded by the European Economic Community (EEC). An evaluation of the NRC efforts indicated that there was a need to establish a long term development programme that would address rural poverty but that NRC was not in the position to undertake community development work. One of the NCDP/CORD projects was the childcare project in Groutville. NCDP had been requested to assist a committee to build childcare facilities in the area. An investigation of the childcare facilities available and the strategies adopted by the families living in the area was part of a broader programme of community development initiated by CORD in the area - this will be described in detail in chapter 4. The first part of this chapter provides a brief description of the KwaZulu-Natal region, in general, and its education provision, in particular. The second section provides a description of Groutville. This chapter therefore provides the context

within which the discussion on the research methodology and procedures (chapter 4) and the analysis of the data (chapters 5 and 6) may be located.

## **3.2 KwaZulu-Natal**

### **3.2.1 General**

The history of the KwaZulu-Natal region has been characterised by the power of the Zulu Royal House since the Zulu state emerged in the 1820s under Shaka's rule. Although defeated by the imperial forces in 1879, the existence of the Zulu Royal House was accommodated by Natal's colonial government. The spatial arrangement of power which endures to this day was largely the legacy of Sir Theophilus Shepstone who from the 1860s advocated a form of indirect government. This left the governance of land largely in the hands of the chiefs (Duminy and Guest, 1989, 172). In the 1880s Zululand was annexed and the Shepstone system was extended to include Africans living in Zululand. Large areas of Zululand were settled by whites in the early 20th century and in 1910 Natal became part of the Union of SA.

The partial political autonomy of African chiefs supported by Shepstone was not accompanied by economic development and increasing poverty and social inequality occurred in black areas. The KwaZulu-Natal region is characterised by uneven development. The former Kwazulu region was never consolidated as a homeland nor did it get its "independence". KwaZulu-Natal is a deeply divided region with the main antagonists being the ANC and Inkatha - Inkatha having been ostensibly established in 1972 as a cultural organization set up to preserve and vitalize Zulu cultural tradition.

Significantly, the founder and leader of Inkatha, Chief Buthelezi, was the Chief Minister of the former Kwazulu Government. The political image created by Inkatha is a peaceful one but this contrasts directly with its activities on the ground where it has actively been involved in campaigns of violence, destruction and intimidation (Mare and Hamilton, 1987). The issue of violence and its impact on communities will be discussed in section 3.2.3.

A disparity existed between the former Kwazulu and Natal regions in terms of socio-economic conditions and growth potential. The Kwazulu economy was geared essentially towards subsistence production whereas Natal was geared to commercial production. An inter-dependency existed between the two regions in that the production capacity of Natal was dependent on labour from Kwazulu. Blacks from areas close to white areas commuted to jobs in Natal and hence, were dependent on the Natal labour market for wages. Certain impoverished Kwazulu areas had only 8% of the population aged 15-64 in local employment and consequently, the levels of unemployment and poverty were high (Krige, 1991, 16). The characteristic features of communities within which families are struggling to survive include unavailability of jobs, low salaries, lack of proper housing and facilities, lack of transport, family breakdown, teenage pregnancies. These are usually more severe in rural areas.

According to Natrass and May (1988) the KwaZulu-Natal region as a whole is falling behind the rest of the national economy in terms of per capita living standards. In 1985 KwaZulu-Natal was estimated to contain 25% of the South African population with a regional population growth that is greater than the average. It produces 15% of its

gross domestic product and receives only 13% of national finances (Sunday Times, July 11, 1993). The average black to white ratio is 8:1 with state expenditure per capita on black social infrastructure one-eighth of that of whites. Blacks in the region have substantially lower average incomes than whites. The rate of real growth in per capita black income is less than the population growth rate which means that the per capita income in the region will decline.

64% of the total KwaZulu-Natal area is rural with 57.5% of its population living in these areas. (Ardington, 1992, 5-6). Ardington (1992) provides statistical data that captures the fact that development in KwaZulu-Natal has been uneven particularly when comparing the urban and rural areas. Two-thirds of those that remain in rural areas are women and as much of three-quarters of income in rural areas consists of migrant remittances. The percentage of economically active people in the 20-59 age group in rural areas of KwaZulu-Natal is 43.7% (Ardington, 1992, 5). Based on the DET reports and the 1985 population census 70.7% of rural children are in standard 2 and below, and only 4.3% are in post primary schooling. The situation in rural areas is worse with as little as 35.2% of the population in the 20-59 age group economically active. Natrass et al (1986) paint a bleak picture of living conditions in the former Kwazulu areas with as much as 50% of households depending on a weekly income of less than R43.15 (Natrass et al, 1986, 22).

It is against this backdrop that an examination of the existing conditions with respect to the provision of childcare must be carried out. The region is characterised by high levels of poverty, unemployment and inadequate infrastructure particularly in black

communities. It is in this context that the family must feed, clothe, care for and educate its children.

### **3.2.2 Education**

The provision of educare in the region is characterised by the racial and rural-urban disparities that characterise the provision of educare in South Africa as a whole. Compared to other provinces KwaZulu-Natal has the worst provision of childcare yet the highest percentage of black children when compared with the other 8 provinces (Atmore, 1993,120). The percentages of children in educare are :- 7% in metropolitan areas and 3% in rural areas. Whilst all regions in SA have received decreased state support for educare programmes in recent years, Kwazulu has been particularly badly hit (NEPI,1992,24). In the context of large numbers of pre-school children, minimal state support, high unemployment and a totally inadequate education system, parents are expected to carry the added burden of paying for the pre-school education of their children.

The racial inequalities evident in educare are reflected throughout the education system. This is significant in that the education system within the region which rests on top of the pre-school phase is plagued by many problems. One of the most significant consequences of this is that KwaZulu-Natal has the worst matric results in the country. In 1990, the pass rate was 33% while the national average was 61% (Jacobs, 1990,77). Teacher pupil ratios are high (1:50), per capita expenditure is low, many schools are not electrified and 70% of teachers have a Standard 10 or lower qualification (Gultig and Hart, 1988).

There are high percentages of the black population in KwaZulu-Natal who have no education: 43% in the former Natal regions and 40% in the former Kwazulu regions. This is higher than other groups in the province - 13 % of whites have no education, 18 % of "coloureds" and 20 % of Indians (Krige,1991,14). This is also higher than that of blacks in the Republic of South Africa and the former non-independent homelands (37%). The implications of high levels of no or little education is serious as it impacts on access to employment and the capacity to sustain and care for a family.

There are great differences between education provision in urban and rural areas in KwaZulu-Natal. The provision of African education was controlled by the DET, the education authority in all areas outside the former homelands. The KDEC administered African education in Kwazulu providing better education facilities in the rural areas than Natal does the Department of Education and Training (DET) despite the higher per capita spending on education (R572 compared to R262 in 1986) (Krige,1991,16).

The scenario is more bleak on closer examination. Black pupils on white farms have few and inadequate facilities. 33% of the black population with the best access to education are close to large urban areas such as Durban, Pietermaritzburg, Newcastle, and Richard's Bay (Krige,1991,16). The areas where the 33% of the black population with poorest education access reside are the former rural Natal magisterial and the Kwazulu magisterial districts. They have widely scattered populations which complicate the provision of education facilities, or are particularly impoverished areas (Krige, 1991,16).

In many rural areas of KwaZulu-Natal there are few senior primary schools and no secondary schools. In urban areas only 1% of the school children live further than 10km from a primary school compared to rural areas where 32% live beyond this distance from a primary school. In certain areas the provision of schooling is particularly poor. In the extreme north, the sparsely populated Ingwavuma district has only two small pockets where more than 70% of the children reside closer than 10 km to a primary school. In some areas there is such a low population density that it is impossible to provide schools (Krige,1991,16).

Overall the number of pupils in former Natal DET schools up to Standard 5 is equivalent to 48% of the 5-15 black age group, but when former Kwazulu schools in Natal are included the % increases to 72%. In Kwazulu it is 63% of the 5-15 black age group.

<b>Table 3.1 Percentage of the 20-24 age group with Std 6 or higher education</b>		
	<b>NATAL</b>	<b>KWAZULU</b>
<b>URBAN</b>	63	75
<b>RURAL</b>	27	46
<b>TOTAL</b>	39	55

(Krige,1991,16)

The provision of secondary schooling by the former DET in KwaZulu-Natal lags behind that of former Kwazulu region and "white" Natal. In 1985 in KwaZulu, secondary scholars formed 9 percent of the total in the KDEC, while among whites, the percentage formed by secondary scholars was 43 percent. A spatial analysis of accessibility to secondary schooling shows that there is no DET-provided secondary schooling at all

in nine Natal census districts, and in a further 14 districts DET-provided secondary education does not reach as far as Standard 10. All Kwazulu census districts contain secondary schools and in some of these cases these schools offer Standard 10.

It is in the context of a totally inadequate education system that the issue of childcare must be examined. The provision of formal programmes that will maximise the early intellectual, social and physical development of the child will ensure that the child has improved opportunities for success. Nonetheless, the battle for educare must also be linked to the broader demands for improved schooling. The gains made at the pre-school level will be lost if the schooling system fails to build on them. It is also crucial that home-based programmes that target parents to enable them to contribute to their children's development are prioritised. I will return to this issue when policy options are examined in the conclusion.

### **3.2.3 Violence**

Violence in many different forms has become characteristic of life since the mid 1970s in many areas of the country. Both sporadic episodes of violence and war like conditions have affected the daily lives of men, women and children. It has resulted in disruption of services, loss of homes and possessions and loss of family members which have all affected the capacity of the family to feed, clothe and educate its members. An examination of childcare must necessarily include an examination of the extent to which violence and political competition has impacted on the community being examined. This section therefore provides a brief exploration of the violence that

ravaged and still ravages the region and explores some of its implications for childcare provision.

Natal was little affected by the pre 1985 uprisings of 1976 and 1980, and unrest on the Reef and in the Eastern Cape compared with other regions in the country (Gwala, 1989, Gultig and Hart, 1988). After the assassination of Victoria Mxenge in 1985 violence became widespread and continued for the rest of the decade. The region became and remains one of the most violent in the country. This clearly has numerous consequences which include rising unemployment, psychological effects on youth, refugees, disintegrating family and community structures and a vast "lost generation" of children who have not been in school.

There is no single explanation for the high levels of violence that have ravaged areas in the country. In trying to understand the violence and its impact a number of explanations for and likely causes of the violence have been explored by writers such as Gultig and Hart (1988, 1990), Gwala (1989), Nzimande and Thusi (1991), and Freund (1994). The political struggle between Inkatha and the ANC aligned groupings is generally considered the most significant factor. Other suggested causes of the violence are the crisis inherent in the ongoing and increasing challenge to the validity and efficacy of apartheid rule during the late 1980s and early 1990s, generational conflict, conflict over limited resources, and Inkatha's legitimacy crisis as it attempted to reconcile its commitment to nationalism and resistance to apartheid and its dependency on the state. The cult of armed resistance manifest both within the legitimate structures of the liberation movement as well as outside these structures in

the form of criminal elements that took advantage of the conditions that prevailed at the time of political crisis was also a factor in perpetuating the violence.

Gultig and Hart (1990,2) argue that the violence in KwaZulu-Natal in the mid 1980s was different to that in other areas in South Africa which was characterised by "attacks on the state and its agents". In KwaZulu-Natal it was a consequence of 'bitter confrontation between COSATU, the United Democratic Front (UDF) and Inkatha supporters' infused with the complex dynamics of bantustan politics. Whilst the violence had subsided in most parts of Natal by late 1980s it was still raging in the Pietermaritzburg area. 'The complex dynamics of bantustan politics and the peculiar role of Inkatha have been central to this conflict which has been particularly intense and unique in its longevity' (Gultig and Hart,1990,2). Nzimande and Thusi (1991,9) explore the impact of violence in Natal on schooling and provide an obviously anti-Inkatha view when they argue that '...the crux of the violence in the Natal region' is because

Inkatha is caught in a vicious circle whereby as anti-apartheid struggles intensify it becomes more dependent on the apartheid machinery for survival and as it becomes more dependent on these structures it is increasingly set against anti-apartheid organisations.

By arguing that Inkatha uses a combination of patronage and violence to assert its political influence in the region they fail to explore the multi-dimensional nature of the violence that has ravaged KwaZulu-Natal since the early 1980s.

Whilst an understanding of the causes of the violence is informative what is significant is the consequences of high levels of violence on the capacity of a family to care for children. Clearly high levels of violence disrupt communities when possessions and homes are destroyed, schooling is interrupted, and families have to live with fear of

attack or the death of loved ones. This places additional burdens on women especially as mothers responsible for the caring and nurturing of the family. The added burden of absent husbands who are involved in the fighting or who have been killed places even greater responsibility on women to financially support the family.

### **3.3 Groutville**

Groutville is a black freehold area situated about 75 kilometres north of Durban in the middle of the sugar cane belt close to the coast. The closest town is Stanger about 8 kilometres to the north of the centre of Groutville. The economic base is mixed and includes agriculture, remittances from migrants working in urban areas as well as income from residents working in surrounding areas.

A mission was established in Groutville in 1848 by Rev Colvin an American missionary. The mission controlled the land and in 1848 it decided to sell the land to the local people in an attempt to create greater community independence (Kiernan, 1987). This practice did not last long and was halted because the mission feared the paganism of the local population and the unsold land became trust land. Africans occupied land either as owners with title or as members of "tribes" settled under the Shepstonian system. Shepstone's Reserve policy - a part of the Native Land Policy - was aimed at keeping Africans within the tribal institutions on tribal, communally owned land. The occupation of freehold land by Christians or *amakholwa* was encouraged by the missionaries.

Groutville is therefore a jigsaw puzzle of different land occupation patterns. Some residents historically have ownership rights. Others have claims to the land based on communal land tenure, a system initiated by Shepstone and elaborated under apartheid. There are others who do not have "rights" at all, these are the squatters.

There have been 3 separate attempts (mid 1960s, 1972, 1979) by the Government to relocate the local population of Groutville to other areas (Kiernan, 1987). In the 1960s, as part of land consolidation plans, "black spots" were targeted for resettlement and Groutville was considered a "black spot" (Kiernan, 1987, 124). The unique feature of the freehold nature of land occupation in the area is in defiance of the apartheid policy of restricting land ownership amongst African people and consolidating African settlements into homelands. According to Kiernan (1987) there are a number of reasons why the Groutville communities refused to be moved. Firstly, 'local identity, rootedness and cultural distinctiveness', secondly, Groutville is 'akin to a white area'- 'the implicit understanding being that decision-makers would be impressed by a restrained, dignified and educated approach' and thirdly, the people of Groutville are Zulus and therefore 'an integral part of Kwazulu'. With the third attempt at relocation a proposal for incorporation into Kwazulu was made. After talks were held between Chief Buthelezi, the then Chief Minister of the Kwazulu Government, and the South African Government it was announced in the early 1980s that the people of Groutville would not be forced to move out of the area (Kiernan, 1987, 126).

Presently, two-thirds of Groutville is freehold land with the balance being trust land. The people of Groutville are made up essentially of the founding families (those who have traditionally been in the area and are land-owners and farmers) and immigrants. In

1982 it was estimated that the squatters comprised approximately 75-80% of the population in Groutville in 1981 (CORD - EEC,1989) and has remained fairly stable since then.

Groutville has a system of elected authority that contains elements of both rural tribal authorities and democratically elected structures. It is divided into six geographical areas, called wards and follows a system initiated by the mission for electing a chief for Groutville as a whole as well as *indunas* for each ward. Usually tribal authorities are appointed to a lifetime term of office. Whilst the mechanisms exist to remove elected representatives in Groutville, it is customary for the *indunas* and the Chief to remain in office for a lifetime. The most well known Chief in the area was Albert Luthuli - former president of the ANC and Nobel peace prize winner. There was no elected Chief in Groutville at the time that the study was carried out because the most recent election was being contested by a faction of the landowners on the grounds that women were not allowed to vote. It is also significant that only a small number of the squatters participated in the process despite the fact that there is no provision for squatters to vote.

The immigrants in the area are from a variety of origins. With the implementation of the Group Areas Act in the early 1960's (legislated in 1950) Africans were moved off Indian land onto land in Groutville and became tenants of land-owners. This marked the beginning of migration into the area. The area is also home to people from Mozambique who were imported for labour on the sugar-cane fields. There are also Transkeians in the area who came in search of work.

Whilst tensions developed between the founding families and the immigrant population when they first settled in the area in the early 1960s, government efforts to relocate the people has resulted in an alliance to resist these moves and greater unity between groups within the area. It would appear that landowners are aware that 'the government might use the squatters as a stick to beat them off their land' (Kiernan, 1987, 122). There is therefore a concerted effort by the landowners to work with the squatters and not to alienate them.

With the influx of migrants the limited and inadequate resources of the area have become considerably stretched. The population was officially estimated to be 30 000 in 1985 with more than 50% of the population under 20 years of age (Hambridge, 1989). It was estimated that 25% of the total population were employed and 30,8% were unemployed. 30,8% at school and 17,4% too young to be at school. Pensioners represented about 3,5% of the population.

Before the 1960's Groutville was essentially an agricultural society reliant on income from sugar cane production (CORD - EEC, 1989) but unlike many other areas Groutville's agriculture was primarily oriented to the market and not subsistence. In 1989 Groutville can be characterised as an area in transition from a rural to urban one, from an agricultural to a residential one, and the labour supply area which feeds the neighbouring town and Durban (Hambridge, 1989).

A major source of income for Groutville residents is from agriculture. Income from cane is supplemented from rent and employment. 14,6% of those employed commute daily to places like Durban, Mandini, and Isithebe (Hambridge, 1989). Others work in the

local paper and sugar mills whilst others work in Stanger in a wide range of commercial service sector activities, and light industries. Many women work as washer women or domestic servants for families in the surrounding areas. A small percentage of the population are in the professions - notably nursing and teaching. Squatter men and women work on a casual basis in the fields of the freehold farmers, or on the surrounding White and Indian owned sugar cane farms. There is a degree of self employment which includes taxi and garage owners, *sangomas* and *nyangas*, and shop and shebeen owners.

The unemployed have various strategies for survival - selling fruit and vegetables, subletting rooms, picking herbs, selling water, and selling cool drinks from their homes. Another source of income is pension and disability grants - the 1987 survey showed an increase in the percentage of pensioners from 3,5% in 1985 to 5,2% in 1987 (Hambridge, 1989). There are numerous immigrants who have no recourse to existing welfare provision.

The establishment of a mission in the area has had an impact on the education profile of the area. It gave access to some members of the community to education through the church, particularly through American Board Mission schools. This consolidated the landowner's privileged position in the economy in the area and contributed to the growth of a salaried professional class (Hambridge, 1989). In 1992, there were only KDEC schools concentrated in Groutville and along the western boundary of its magistracy (Ardington, 1992, 13) and there were no schools in the informal settlements in the area.

The resources in Groutville are inadequate and vary considerable both within and between wards - notably between those areas occupied by landowners and squatters. Houses range from brick and block structures to shacks in the squatter areas. Roads are inadequate and in bad condition, often impassable in rainy weather. The area is not supplied with piped water or electricity. Water is collected by women and young girls from the river or bought from government water tankers. The majority of homes use pit latrines. There are a number of churches which are used for community meetings as there are no community halls. Groutville does not have any parks or recreational facilities. There are a number of local stores, one local clinic and a mobile health facility that services some of the area.

Democracy is attenuated because there is no provision for squatters, who make up approximately 80% of the Groutville population, to vote. In addition to this there is a hereditary chief and no elected *induna* in one ward. In another ward there is a traditional *induna* who occupies his position through the hereditary processes. There is a consequent tension between the elected and traditional *indunas* and between the electoral constituency and the supporters of traditional authorities. Landowners reject the authority of the traditional structures and maintain control over the squatters through a system of appointed representatives.

Some of the youth in the area are organized into a branch of the South African National Students Congress (SANSCO). At a stayaway in 1989 there were a number of incidences of intimidation and violence in one of the squatter areas when a group which was not supporting the stayaway was confronted by a group of male youths. Tensions between politicized youth and "conservative" adults is evidence of generational conflict. This conflict takes political form with the older people more likely to align with Inkatha

and the younger people particularly the male youth associating with the politics of the UDF/ANC. The scenario described prevailed at the time the research was carried out - June to December 1989.

Up to and including the time that the research was carried out Inkatha and UDF/ANC supporters co-existed in Groutville which is one of the few areas that has been relatively unaffected by the ongoing violence in Natal. Groutville's community has a history of struggle against removal and resettlement and this has united the different groupings. The threat of removals still exists and combines with the partial system of democracy to contribute to the tenuous stability in the area. Stability is also aided by the symbol of political unity in its past, Chief Albert Luthuli. It is possible that this has contributed and still contributes to the cultivation of a commitment to democracy and peace in Groutville.

It was with a commitment to maintaining this peace that CORD entered Groutville in 1988 to co-ordinate a development programme that would address childcare provision in the area. The next chapter provides a description of CORD and outlines the nature of the research project on childcare that was initiated and carried out in the area.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides a description of CORD - the agency within which I was working as a researcher when the research project was carried out. It also examines CORD's working objectives and outlines the research process.

#### **4.2 The Context of the Study**

##### **4.2.1 The Agency - CORD**

The centre for Community Organisation Research and Development (CORD) was situated at the University of Natal (Durban)<sup>1</sup>. It was founded in 1987 by two researchers, Peter Derman and Clive Poultney, to work with rural communities addressing development in an integrated way. The way in which CORD worked was informed by a critique of mainstream development work as well as experiences of working on a development project at Mboza, in North-Eastern Kwazulu, where the focus was 'on the people and building structures for democratic participation' (Sibambene, 1987). CORD was formed to challenge development work that provides physical resources without investigating the way in which these will impact on other aspects of community life.

income generation. Children are also exposed to the traditions of their culture through the older members and the often rich experiences of being with their grandparents. The elderly are not always able to care for family or look after children. In this circumstance they become an additional burden for women who traditionally care for the sick and the aged.

As would be expected under conditions of high unemployment and low incomes very few households had paid domestic assistance in the morning and afternoon. Only when working mothers were in desperate need of care do they seem to have turned to unqualified domestic workers to care for their children. In addition, domestic workers are often paid exploitative wages with poor working conditions to do a job that they are ill-equipped to do (Cock, 1980).

A substantial portion of the children (38%) were cared for by someone else because their mothers were working. This care did not include any organised/supervised programme of play and food had to be provided by the mothers. Only 5% of the mothers interviewed indicated that their child was given food. Many women (30%) had no other choice or no money to pay for better care.

Some neighbours are relied on to care for children in their mother's absence. For many mothers childcare by neighbours is often a favour and therefore they cannot make demands in terms of the kind of care that is available. Nonetheless, neighbours provide an important support network in terms of childcare and household chores. In addition to this, they can offer support in the same way that a grandmother or relative living in the same home does. This is particularly important where husbands are away

temporarily as migrant labourers, or women are widowed or trapped in abusive and unsupportive marriages. The analysis of the data indicates that fathers care for children in very few instances (1.1% in the morning and 0.79% in the afternoon).

Elder daughters also assist with care of their younger siblings. Mothers rely on daughters for help with small children as well as doing tasks around the home. This has implications for the daughter if she is kept out of school to help or when she returns from school in the afternoon and her responsibilities prevent her from doing her school work. This also perpetuates the cycle of domesticity where the household is seen as the women's domain and future. According to Gordan (1993) it is common in peri-urban areas for girls to be withdrawn from schools to take care of the aged, sick or siblings resulting either in late entry into school or absenteeism. The lack of pre-schools and creche facilities means that girls are employed as child-minders, either on a part or full-time basis to free adults to work (Gordan, 1993, 36). The international literature on rural areas supports this view (Kelly, 1987 and McSweeney and Freedman, 1980).

The pattern for afternoon care shifts slightly in that there are more mothers who care for their children in the afternoon. It is probable that mothers are involved in either informal or formal income generating activities in the morning but this was not established. There was also an increase in daughters caring for children in the afternoon on their return from school. In a number of cases where a grandmother, relative, maid, neighbour, and father cared for children, it was only in the morning until the mothers or daughters returned in the afternoon. This resonates with the argument that women are responsible for childcare and that it is only in their absence that alternative care becomes a necessity.

Seven mothers (less than 1%) indicated that their child was disabled. There is no special provision for the disabled in Groutville. This parallels the national situation outlined in chapter 4. The availability of care for children with special needs is totally inadequate particularly in the case of black children. Their mothers have an additional burden in terms of special care, costs for education, and physical and emotional demands of their children which might continue for a life-time.

There were only 3 pre-school operating in Groutville when the research was carried out. They were overcrowded and provided a limited programme of care, play and education. The physical space was small and children ate, played and slept in the same room. The area outside was not fenced and there was no equipment for the children to play on. Water had to be collected and stored in drums and there were only open pit latrines for the children's use.

What is significant is that of the sample only 9 children (less than 1%) went to pre-school. The pre-schools only provided care in the morning and therefore women in full-time employment had to make alternative arrangements for their children in the afternoon. An evaluation of these programmes was not within the scope of the first phase of the research programme and is not dealt with in this thesis. Nonetheless, it was clear to me when I visited these centres that the conditions under which the children were being cared for were inadequate. Some mothers were forced to leave their children as young as 3 years old alone at home with no adult to care for them. This concern was raised at different stages of the research process by community members as well as members of one pre-school committee. The numbers of children left alone was difficult to establish as people were reluctant to admit that they do this.

A large percentage of women (79.1%) have worked in the formal sector at some stage since the birth of their first child. Of those that returned to work after having a child (65%), the child was less than a year old and in 24% of the cases the child was between 1 to 2 years old.

A relatively small number of mothers (5.4%) had to pay for the care of their children. The amount per month varied from R2 to R100 with the average amount paid being R20 per month. Considering that the average income per individual is R80 per month, this is sizable portion of their income. What families pay or can afford to pay is clearly not sufficient to ensure good quality care. The fact that state subsidies to black pre-schools and creches is minimal, and that programmes have to rely on parent fees, means that the immediate outlook in terms of quality of care is not good.

It is not surprising then that in most cases where children were cared for by someone other than the mother no organised play was provided for the children and hence, the care provided was purely custodial. In the remaining cases the cost covered the provision of some meals, and in a few instances a limited education programme, clothing or games. Exactly what the meals consisted of and the nature of the care was not explored further.

Given that the care provided was not extensive it is interesting to note that only 3.5% of the mothers said they had any problems with the care of their children. Those mothers with problems indicated that they were unhappy with the care because it did not provide food or education for the children. It is possible that given such limited

choices most mothers have no alternative but to accept the limited custodial care that their children get in their absence.

As was noted earlier the value of good quality educare programmes lies in ensuring the healthy psychological, physical, intellectual and social development of the child. Children left in custodial care are not being given the maximum opportunity to develop in these respects. Given that most children stay with their mothers, the role of the mother in ensuring the healthy development of the child is crucial. Women must have the time and expertise to stimulate their children to ensure their physical and intellectual development.

Most women in Groutville are at home caring for their children and as the analysis will indicate later, doing most of the household tasks. Even those women who leave their children with someone else have an important role to play as in many cases the care is custodial. The picture captured from the research about the nature of interaction between mother and child is very limited and only close observation of mother-child interactions and more in-depth interviews would provide reliable information. Nonetheless, an attempt was made to establish the nature and extent of interaction between mothers and children.

Half of the mothers (49%) felt that their children were not safe where they played each day whether in their care or otherwise. Most of the children (81.9%) play in the yard surrounding the house whilst their mothers get on with their responsibilities. There are no parks or safe places for the children in Groutville to play. A smaller number (7.4%) play in the neighbour's yard or in the house (4.8%). Whilst the rest play in the street,

at school or near the river. This is particularly problematic in the case of younger children.

The lack of community facilities in Groutville impacts directly on women who are primarily responsible for caring for the children. In a large number of cases mothers felt that children played where it was unsafe but they clearly had no alternatives. The areas where they played were unsafe because of broken glass, cars on the road, and snakes. Children run the risk of falling out of trees, consuming poisonous things, drowning, and being hit by passing trains.

The need for interaction between parents and children is a crucial part of the child's nurturance and development - emotional, psychologically and intellectual. Only 8.3% of the mothers said that they play with their children. This included playing sports, singing gospel songs, doing housework and going to the fields together. In most cases (68.4%) the mothers said they did nothing with their children. A parent's time with children is often erratic and inconsistent because of the demands of the household and work. Some mothers were accompanied by their children to Sunday school or church, and went to town. Children were also present during housework, attendance at parties at gospel singing sermons and sports events.

Despite the costs involved 39% of the mothers bought their children toys. In the majority of cases these were dolls, toy cars, and plastic balls. A small percentage bought a bicycle and comics/books.

In order for women to spend time with their children doing the types of activities crucial for their development and preparation for school (for example, reading, drawing, painting) they must have the time, the know-how and the resources. The large numbers of responsibilities that women have in terms of the household and income generation mitigates against this. Consequently, the need for some programme that prepares children for school is needed. The nature of the programme must integrate with the current childcare strategies in Groutville in order both to provide care for the children of those mothers who are employed and to support women who care for their children themselves.

### **6.3 Household Tasks**

Table 6.2 shows the gender division of work within the household with mothers largely being responsible for all the tasks and with grandmothers and daughters offering limited support. Tasks are clearly allocated according to sex with boys making a marginal contribution to cooking, cleaning, washing and washing the children. The only task that boys contribute to in a significant way (and only second to the mother) is cleaning the yard. They also contribute in a minimal way to growing vegetables, collecting wood and water. Very few fathers clean the yard, grow vegetables, collect wood and do the shopping. The tasks that women do are repetitious. Meals, for example, must be prepared. Caring for babies and children and washing clothes must be done regularly. In many instances, the tasks done by men do not need to be done each day and can be done in their own time. It is interesting to note that the least contribution is by the grandfather who is the senior patriarch in the family. The allocation of responsibility within the household reflects the sexual division of labour

with men responsible for tasks associated with males and women responsible for tasks that relate to nurturing and caring for the family, particularly the children.

<b>Table 6.2 Household Tasks by Person</b>					
	<b>MOTHER</b>	<b>GRNMTH</b>	<b>DAUGHTR</b>	<b>FATHER</b>	<b>BROTHER</b>
<b>COOK</b>	77.3%	10.7%	6.4%	.2%	.1%
<b>CLEAN</b>	76.1%	9.5%	8.5%	.2%	.4%
<b>WASH</b>	78.4%	8.6%	6.9%	.1%	.1%
<b>SHOP</b>	77.1%	9.4%	4.6%	1.3%	.4%
<b>CLNYARD</b>	59.2%	7.9%	5.9%	5.1%	10.7%
<b>WATER</b>	66.3%	5.7%	13.4%	.2%	1.9%
<b>VEG</b>	53.5%	9.5%	1.6%	2.5%	2.5%
<b>WOOD</b>	45.5%	4.6%	2.7%	1.4%	2.5%
<b>CHWASH</b>	78.3%	8.9%	5.9%	.2%	.1%

<b>Table 6.2 contd. Household Tasks by Person</b>						
	<b>GRNFTH</b>	<b>RELTV</b>	<b>MAID</b>	<b>NGHBR</b>	<b>CHLRN</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>COOK</b>	-	.1%	.8%	-	-	-
<b>CLEAN</b>	-	.2%	1.6%	-	.2%	.1%
<b>WASH</b>	-	.1%	1.4%	-	.4%	-
<b>SHOP</b>	.1%	.1%	.1%	-	.1%	-
<b>CLNYRD</b>	.7%	.7%	1.0%	-	2.2%	-
<b>WATER</b>	-	.5%	.7%	.1%	1.9%	.1%
<b>VEG</b>	.2%	.4%	.4%	-	.2%	.1%
<b>WOOD</b>	.2%	.4%	.4%	-	.6%	.1%
<b>CHWSH</b>	-	1.0%	1.0%	.1%	.5%	-

As can be seen in table 6.2 above mothers have the bulk of the responsibilities (at least 70% or more) in all the tasks except cleaning the yard, growing vegetables and collecting wood. Grandmothers and daughters contribute to all the tasks - grandmothers' contribution is consistent across all tasks except for fetching water and wood which are clearly strenuous tasks that older women cannot do easily. Daughters help significantly with the major contribution to collecting water, cleaning, cooking and washing. Assistance from relatives, maids and neighbours is minimal with maids giving some help with household responsibilities. One of the consequences of this is that women do not have the time to engage in informal activities to contribute to the family budget.

There is a power structure within the home that is firmly located on a patriarchal foundation. Table 6.3 shows that in most homes (67%) it is the mother who has the responsibility to ensure that children's needs for food, clothing, hygiene, health and safety are met. Fathers are seen as meeting children's needs in 15.8% of the time despite the fact that they actually do very few of the household chores. It is possible that this is interpreted in terms of providing the income to the household as well as being the head of the household.

Nearly one third of the women (29.2%) indicated that the father is responsible for making decisions about children (the nature of such decisions was not explored). This is the number that indicated that the father meets the children's needs. The notion of the father having authority within the home is significant but not as high as would be expected. It is a possible explanation that the increase in female headed households

(where there is no husband/father that lives at home) either permanently or temporarily has resulted in women being the *de facto* head of households (where there is a

<b>TABLE 6.3 Distribution of responsibility within the home</b>				
	<b>children's needs</b>		<b>responsible for the children?</b>	
<b>mother</b>	556	67.1%	445	53.7%
<b>father</b>	131	15.8%	242	29.2%
<b>grndmother</b>	116	14.0%	111	13.4%
<b>daughter</b>	6	.7%	10	1.2%
<b>relative</b>	4	.5%	6	.7%
<b>grndfather</b>	4	.5%	-	-
<b>maid</b>	2	.2%	-	-
<b>neighbour</b>	2	.2%	-	-

husband/father) in that they do most of the survival and maintenance tasks around the home as well as carry the responsibility for the children. The question with respect to needs in Table 6.3 was referring to physical needs and the second alluding to responsibility in terms of decision making, rules and ultimate authority. Nonetheless, it is the mothers who carry the largest burden in both cases. What is unclear is whether the responsibility is a symbolic one and in what way this translates into real power in terms of decision-making powers is not understood

Campbell (1990), Field (1991), Ramphela (1989) and Bozzoli (1983) all explore the issue of power and the family. Ramphela (1989) argues that 'the family is still a major sphere in which the domination of men is secured at the expense of women. Each family is a site for individual men to oppress women in their own particular way'.

Bozzoli (1983) agrees that it is within that family that women's oppression is grounded yet she asserts that women have more power within the family than any other sphere of life. Field (1991,61) describes familial relations as matrifocal where women are dominant in a supervisory sense. Here they have control of and implement the bulk of household practical, nurturing and moral tasks. However, he argues, these women do not have sufficient tangible power and space to explore and realise their own desires, wants, needs and interests (Field,1991,62). Campbell's (1990) research indicates an increase in the number of female-headed households and of fathers playing more variable roles in families. Nonetheless, her research seems to support the picture of Groutville presented above where men's major role is economic support of the family and to lead decision-making. Despite the fact that this has been undermined by high unemployment and increasing politicisation and education of children, patriarchal ideology is still entrenched in the beliefs and attitudes of the working-class families that she studied. In the case of female-headed households women are not given the respect and authority that has historically been accorded to fathers who bear the responsibility of family support and leadership. Women appear to be accorded power within the traditionally defined female roles (Campbell,1991,13). Campbell goes on to argue that there seems to be little potential for these contradictions to spearhead change.

Hence, the significance of the sexual division of labour within the home must not be under-estimated in its power to perpetuate a generational cycle that reproduces gender relations in the home and broader society. Gordan (1993,39) emphasises this point when she notes that ' "masculinity" and "femininity" are not simply given but are repeatedly reconstituted and reformed in daily encounters, thereby entrenching unequal power relations between men and women, and reproducing hegemonic

positions regarding masculinity'. It is crucial that this issue becomes central to policy debates and implementation.

In the context of totally inadequate infrastructure, unemployment, low incomes and many demands on women in terms of childcare and the household it is disturbing to note that there are no formal support structures and networks for women in the form of sewing groups, co-operatives or communal gardens in Groutville. 39.6% of the women do not belong to any group or organisation with the majority (50.7%) belonging to religious groups. 4.6% belong to funeral committees and only 2.7% indicated that they belonged to any political organisation. The importance of religious groups in women's lives is significant but it falls beyond the scope of this thesis.

#### **6.4 General Family and Community Problems and How They Impact on Childcare**

It is not surprising that in 438 cases (52.9%) the women said that the biggest problem that they had was no money to feed, clothe and educate their families. The problems of unemployment and over-crowding are closely linked to this. When discussing the future of their children the majority (83.5%) said they were planning good education, despite the fact that access to education has not ensured the development of the community and access to high income jobs or the improvement of female wage labour opportunities. In addition, 13.4% responded that they had nothing planned for their children's future which cannot necessarily be interpreted to mean that the mother did not care about the child's future. It is possible that meeting the demands of daily life result in a short-term approach to dealing with difficulties and the inability to perceive

a long-term scenario. Clearly more detailed information would be needed to make these conclusions.

## **6.5 Conclusion**

Policy formulation and implementation must take into account the different contexts of women in South Africa. Historically, the provision of pre-school education and childcare facilities has been structured along racial lines and has failed to acknowledge the conditions of black rural communities. The above discussion has presented a picture of black women struggling to fulfil their roles in the context of high unemployment, limited access to the particular occupations, inadequate infrastructures and resources, heavy burdens within the home and the primary responsibility for childcare. The next chapter identifies the key issues that have emerged and discusses the implication for future policy development in national childcare provision as well as the specific needs of women in Groutville.

## **CHAPTER 7**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **7.1 Introduction**

The previous chapters have provided an examination of childcare provision in South Africa in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and reviewed some of the key educare policy debates that were emerging at that time. In addition, a description of a research project carried out in Groutville and an examination of the provision of childcare and the nature of childcare strategies adopted by women in Groutville was provided. The following discussion will firstly, assess the success of the first phase of the CORD research project by providing an assessment of the extent to which the aims which informed this phase of the project were realised. Secondly, some specific recommendations with respect to childcare provision in Groutville will be made. Finally, the discussion will identify some of the key issues that have emerged that must be included for consideration in the future development of policies that will govern the provision of childcare in South Africa.

#### **7.2 Assessment of the Research Project**

The research project set out to investigate existing childcare facilities and strategies adopted by families living in Groutville. In addition, it aimed to involve as many people as possible in decision-making about the development of a comprehensive programme of childcare provision in the area. A community controlled research project that trained community members as researchers was implemented.

The initial request for assistance from CORD was from Nandi creche and this became the basis on which the community research project was initiated. As a consequence the immediate crisis at Nandi was not addressed. The delivery of resources to the community was framed within a comprehensive programme of community development which would deliver in the long-term and hence, immediate and short-term needs were not addressed.

In terms of its approach to community development CORD was committed to co-operating with all groups within Groutville. This proved to be difficult given existing political, class and gender divisions within the area as manifest in divisions between tenants and squatters, for example, there were no squatter representatives on Nandi committee and one ward did not take part in the research project.

The process of including all members of the community in decision-making proved to be a difficult one. Consultation is a time-consuming and complex procedure which required that researchers work through community meetings. The setting up and running of these meetings took effort and was often difficult to sustain. In addition, participation of people in these meetings was limited by such things as gender, age and community status. Most significantly there was a tension between sustaining this process and the actual delivery of resources or facilities in the area.

With regard to the research itself a number of issues emerged. Firstly, the data gathered was largely of a quantitative nature and hence the richness of having qualitative data was lost. The inclusion of interviews that would provide insights into the

daily lives of women in Groutville as well as observation of interactions between women and children would have enhanced the understanding of key issues.

As a result of firstly, a limited theoretical understanding of issues with respect to power and responsibility within the family, and secondly, a lack of a clearly articulated feminist research agenda some key questions were excluded from the questionnaire. These included a direct question asking women if they would prefer to be with their children, an examination of the way in which breast-feeding impacts on childcare choices, and the issue of female-headed households. Whilst the distribution of labour within the home was mapped, the research did not develop an understanding of decision-making within the family, and the power and authority that informed it.

The research process was costly and time-consuming, reliant on resources within CORD and the university, and hence it would be impossible for the community to replicate it without such support. The skills gained by fieldworkers with respect to research were limited. They largely benefited as individuals from their involvement - two of whom worked on further projects in CORD.

The choice of fieldworkers was also a problematic issue with none coming from the squatter areas. Only three of the fieldworkers were elected as was necessary in terms of the goals of community controlled research. In addition, the criteria for their selection were highly contested. There was a clear tension between what was perceived to be necessary in terms of the research agenda and what some members of community wanted.

The realisation of the long-term goals of the research project and the broader programme of community development was not possible as CORD left the area when it curtailed its programmes in 1994.

### **7.3 Recommendations for Childcare Provision in Groutville**

#### **7.3.1 Support for Existing Programmes**

The few existing programmes in Groutville were totally inadequate. They were overcrowded and lacked adequate and appropriate space for children to play. There were no co-ordinated programmes of stimulation for the children. The building of adequate facilities is an expensive venture and clearly the residents of Groutville are not able to finance such a project. An added problem is the inability of the families to pay for adequate care.

The minimum level of intervention could involve a programme of training for those women currently running programmes. In addition, training workshops could be run to encourage women to care for small groups of children in their own homes.

#### **7.3.2 Co-ordination of Programmes that Integrate with Conditions in Groutville**

It was apparent from the research that the majority of children did not need full-day care as they were cared for by their mothers. Nonetheless, the care provided for those children of mothers who did work was totally inadequate. Hence, a programme of childcare provision in the area would have to take this into account. The replication of

the pre-school model would clearly not be appropriate. The organisation of play groups, for example, where each mother would take turns in caring for children should be considered. This would not involve a cost for the mothers and it would free them to do household tasks or to engage in informal sector activities to generate income for the household. This programme would have to be supported by a series of workshops to develop women's understanding of children's physical, intellectual, social and psychological developmental needs.

Clearly, there is a need for a minimum one year formal programme that prepares children for school. This must be provided and paid for by the state. The capacity of communities such as Groutville to fund educare programmes is very limited. Whilst only 14.6% of the respondents indicated that they were not prepared to pay for care, the majority of the respondents (74.9%) indicated that they would only be able to pay less than R10 a month. Consequently, programmes which rely on parent fees to pay for costs will not be economically viable.

The provision of any programme must clearly take into account the preferences and needs of the community. When the women in Groutville were asked which care that they would prefer for their children, the majority (54.3%) chose some form of institutional/formal care (see table 7.1 below). 26.1% indicated that they would prefer to care for their children themselves and the balance (13.7%) wanted their children cared for at home by a grandmother, relative or maid. The reasons provided included that the child will learn to read and write or get an education. 47.9% were concerned for their child's education. 4.8% women indicated they would prefer that there was some form of care for their children so that they could look for work. This is significantly

low enough to argue that it is not the case that many women are unable to work because they have to care for their children.

<b>pre-school</b>	36.5% (302)
<b>mother</b>	26.1% (216)
<b>creche</b>	17.8% (147)
<b>relative</b>	6.6% (55)
<b>grandmother</b>	5.7% (47)
<b>maid</b>	1.4% (12)
<b>neighbour</b>	.5% (4)
<b>no response</b>	5.4% (45)

The responses changed significantly when the respondents were asked to specify their preference with respect to childcare in terms of the age of the child. Table 7.2 below shows that the majority of mothers (57.49%) would prefer to care for children below 2 years old themselves whilst only 23.32% indicated that they would like some form of formal care for their children. The preference was for care within a creche (19.57%). On the other hand 60.27% would prefer their children in the 2-6 age group to go to a pre-school.

The fact that mothers choose to be with their children under the age of two years probably indicates that they feel that they can provide the best care for them and therefore they would like to be with them even if there was other care available. This has important implications for issues of maternity leave. In addition, it is at this young

<b>Table 7.2 Childcare preferred by age of child.</b>			
<b>0-2 years</b>		<b>2-6 years</b>	
<b>home-mother</b>	57.49% (479)	<b>pre-school</b>	60.27% (499)
<b>creche</b>	19.57% (162)	<b>creche</b>	15.22% (126)
<b>pre-school</b>	3.74% (31)	<b>home-mother</b>	11.27% (85)
<b>home-relative</b>	3.74% (31)	<b>home-relative</b>	4.00% (33)
<b>home-maid</b>	0.73% (6)	<b>plygrp-mother</b>	0.48% (4)
<b>neighbour</b>	0.60% (5)	<b>home-maid</b>	0.60% (3)
<b>plygrp-mothers</b>	0.48% (4)	<b>neighbour</b>	0.24% (2)
<b>childminder</b>	0.36% (3)	<b>childminder</b>	0.24% (2)

age that children are most demanding and their developmental needs are so great. There is therefore a need for childcare provision in Groutville to include workshops for mothers that focus on ways in which they can meet the developmental needs of their children. It is important to distinguish issues around childcare in terms of the children's ages as well as the needs of the particular group being serviced.

In both age groups the majority of respondents (about 99%) favoured the same 4 types of childcare options, namely, home-mother, creche, pre-school and home-relative. This may reflect an ignorance of the range of care options available and hence, indicates the need for involving parents more fully in discussing and planning care options for their children.

### **7.3.3 Location of Childcare Programme in a Programme of Community Development**

The discussion in chapters 5 and 6 has shown that the women in Groutville are struggling within conditions of high unemployment, lack of access to quality education, inadequate housing and lack of resources such as electricity, water and health facilities. The provision of a childcare programme must be part of a broader programme of community development that addresses these issues at the same time. The organisation of sewing groups, co-operatives, vegetable gardens and health programmes alongside a playgroup programme should be prioritised.

### **7.3.4 Care for Children with Special Needs**

The provision of care for children with special needs, such as the physically disabled, must be addressed as a matter of urgency. The caretakers of these children need training in caring for them as well as financial support to meet their special needs.

## **7.4 Policy Recommendations**

The provision of childcare in South Africa is hopelessly inadequate, particularly in black, rural communities. What has also become evident is that the issue of childcare is fraught with difficulties that must be understood in the context within which childcare will be provided. A macro-level policy must encompass the realities of different women and the development of broad policy guidelines within which programmes can be

framed is crucial. These guidelines must ensure that they address the needs of communities such as Groutville.

The analysis in chapters 5 and 6 identified a number of issues that will have to be addressed in policy development. The central issue is that many women are unemployed and even with relatively high access to education are unlikely to find employment in a labour market that is plagued by high levels of unemployment. Nonetheless there is a desperate need to provide cheap and good quality programmes that meet the childcare needs of working parents. Existing programmes must be upgraded and educare personnel must be trained.

The 1992 NEPI document on educare outlines some of the key issues that will have to be addressed if a comprehensive programme of childcare provision can be developed. It does not provide any clear proposals but outlines issues for consideration. It states that programmes for preparation for formal instruction and upgrading of the junior primary schooling system must ensure that there are long term benefits. It proposes the introduction of either pre-primary preparatory classes for five year-olds or a programme of development in the first year of formal schooling. Whilst this will prepare children for formal schooling it does not address the integrated needs of the child and the community.

#### **7.4.1 Selection of Educare Programmes**

Childcare policy must articulate with the reality that whilst the numbers of women in formal employment are increasing, many women are unlikely to enter the formal job

market. Women must therefore be supported in their responsibilities with respect to the family through such projects as co-operatives, vegetable gardens and sewing groups, as well as enabling them to get involved in a range of income generating activities in both the formal and informal sectors. The economic and social necessity and complexity of women's work in childrearing and household maintenance must be considered and valued.

The existing provision of educare programmes have been framed within the needs of the child and thus have failed to adequately take into account the needs of the women and the way in which educare provision impacts on their lives, such as,

- \* the provision of education and support programmes to enable parents to understand and respond to the particular physical, intellectual, social and psychological needs of their children,
- \* the provision of full-day services both centre-based and home-based in the care of childminders particularly for under 3s,
- \* health and nutrition schemes which include supplementary nutrition for babies, food distribution, health services and education campaigns,
- \* planning of programmes and projects must take into account the intersecting needs of women and children,
- \* the need to provide safe places for children to play within their communities,
- \* the care of the disabled,
- \* programmes that work with grandmothers and domestic workers, and
- \* the need to provide programmes that address teenage pregnancy and that will enable schoolgirl mothers to return to school and to fulfil their roles as mothers.

### **7.4.2 Preparing Children for Formal School**

The inadequate schooling and high drop-out and failure rates that characterise black schooling in South Africa (Hartshorne,1992) require that pre-school and educare preparation of children for formal schooling receives urgent attention (Van den Berg and Vergnani,1987). There is no doubt that the educational enrichment of children through a variety of educare programmes will make them more responsive and successful at school.

### **7.4.3 Financing of Educare Programmes**

The financing of childcare is one of the most important factors in determining the provision of appropriate and good quality childcare programmes. One of the most significant points is that the state will be unable to provide free educare for all children and there is even doubt that the state will be able to subsidise pre-school programmes for the year prior to entry to formal schooling. Communities will therefore have to pay for care as well as rely on business and NGO funding for childcare. Significantly, these sources have not played an important role in the past. In addition, educare will have to compete with a range of other sectors for finance, for example, housing which has a higher profile and priority in the Reconstruction and Development Programme(RDP) introduced by the Government of National Unity (GNU) elected on 27 April 1994. An added factor that must be dealt with is that educare will have to compete with other areas within the education sector particularly primary education which has been prioritised by the National Education Ministry. In addition, the issue of how equity will be attained and what forms of redress should be implemented particularly with respect

to black, rural communities will have to be addressed. The crisis with respect to funding of educare will not be easily resolved.

The NEPI report states that the introduction of bridging programmes, pre-primary classes and upgrading of primary schooling will cost less than the provision of educare up to school-going age. In addition to this, the provision of an integrated programme with after-school care and feeding schemes will have greater costs. Educare for the children under two years old is particularly costly because the needs of babies limit the number of children that one person can care for alone. The report accepts that the extent of state involvement in financing programmes will vary with the nature of the particular programme and the context within which it will be implemented but fails to address the following issues:

- \* the inability of parents in low income brackets to pay fees,
- \* the sustainability of programmes reliant on NGO funding,
- \* the way in which the issue of standards will be reconciled with the reality that those that will need state support usually provide the poorest quality facilities,  
and
- \* that state subsidies for home-based programmes do not apply.

#### **7.4.4 Governance of Educare Provision**

There are a number of general principles which form the basis of policy decisions about the governance of early childhood educare programmes. The NEPI report provides some consideration of a range of possible administrative structures for the implementation and financial administration of services. These range from a state

system of management and control, local authority, parastatal and non-governmental administration with state support and responsibility built into every option. The clear responsibility that the state would have would be to implement and regulate quality control over programmes within a system of consultation with all stakeholders.

The implication of such a position is that members of the community and particularly parents would be part of the decision-making with respect to the governance of childcare programmes. It is therefore crucial that there are education programmes on both committee procedures and decision-making, as well as different aspects of childcare provision that will enable them to participate more effectively in running the centres. Access to resources, skills and knowledge is not available to all members of a community to enable them to participate in decision-making structures and processes. It is also important that there is monitoring of programmes to ensure that all members of the community have equal access to participation in committees.

#### **7.4.5 Training of Educare Personnel**

The general principle proposed by NEPI is that training is co-ordinated by a single ministry regardless of what policy option is adopted in the context of autonomy and accountability on behalf of the training institution or organisation. Some control over the type and level of training necessary for the running of different programmes must be addressed. At present these range from formal training at tertiary level with pre-school programmes to formal training at the secondary level with day-care services, to non-formal training with community-based educare.

It is necessary that the informal training of mothers is also recognised as a valuable part of ensuring an integrated childcare programme within communities where it would be appropriate.

#### **7.4.6 Childcare Programmes and Improving Women's Lives**

The type of programme that is provided must articulate with the needs of the particular community. There is a need for programmes that do not negate the legitimacy of women's role as homemakers and childbearers, that support women in these roles, empower them through the provision of structures and provide them with the opportunities to do other tasks and to make choices. On the other hand it is important not unproblematically to reinforce women's roles and to challenge the notion of women's work .

Cousins and Maart (1994) state that educare can be used as an opportunity for women to develop a range of personal and professional skills and must attempt to work creatively with the *status quo*, instead of denying it in the name of utopian intentions such as "man and women should be equally responsible for childcare". They argue that it is important to negotiate women's responsibility for reproduction and childcare from a position of strength.

Programmes that involve mothers through playgroups or as paid educare workers will contribute to women becoming aware of their own strengths and potential as mothers thereby developing a positive self image and attitude to education. The integration of mothers into childcare programmes will better enable them to care for children and the

household. This will address the reality that many women are isolated within the household. It will also require the provision of resources to free women from time consuming tasks such as getting fuel and water. This will also impact on the daughters of the household who are usually required to assist mothers with these chores.

Whilst the availability of programmes which support women in their role as caretakers or frees them from childcare do not necessarily enable them to participate in and benefit from the programmes. The link between childcare and broader structures of gender inequality must be acknowledged and the distribution of labour within the home must be challenged. The continued association of mothers with the domestic sphere will ensure that girls are trapped within the same cycle and women will continue to have limited choice of occupation.

Changing the broader structural realities of gender and class oppression will require national and long term programmes that address these issues at a number of different levels. In this context the need to organise women becomes a priority. The opportunities to do this will be provided when women are brought together in home-based programmes such as playgroups. Such programmes will provide the opportunity in meetings with other women to address real and concrete issues and experiences. Again the issue of time is crucial in that women need the time and space to participate in decision-making structures. They will need to learn new ways of thinking and acting in order to bring about change and therefore need increased opportunities for education and informed decision-making. Ardington (1984,31) argues that 'despite the much changed and still changing role of women, without the introduction of large scale

community development programmes designed to develop leadership it seems unlikely they will play a significant leadership role in the future'.

The need for programmes to focus on women must be prioritised but this does not address the need to involve men in meeting childcare responsibilities within the family. The difficulty of addressing the conflict between the male role as provider and the changing role of men as an active participant in parenting will have to be dealt with. The division between traditional sex roles is becoming blurred with women becoming increasingly important as wage earners and there is increasing pressure for men to take on more parenting and household responsibilities. An additional issue that will have to be addressed is with the involvement of fathers comes the risk of men taking control of initiatives. Nonetheless the importance of the father in parenting must not be overlooked.

An added focus would be to work with both men and women to examine the issue of power and how it impacts on the household and individual lives. Kabeer(1991,10) addresses the issue of power and privilege and argues that it is necessary that there is a '...radical transformation of interpersonal relations between women and men so that women have greater power over their own lives and men have lesser power over women's lives'.

## 7.5 Conclusion

Research on patterns of gender inequality and subordination is needed to develop new policies and practices for forms of development which can improve the social, economic and political status of women. 'Generally the rural areas, and the women who live there in particular, have been disregarded and have a small political voice' (Budlender, 1992, 39). The roles of women are different in each society and their situation is determined (among other things) by legislation, religious norms, cultural values and types of productive activities of the country, community and household. Women are usually responsible in a variety of different ways for domestic work, care of children, family health, cooking and providing food and other household services. They play a major role in productive activities of the family, in farming, paid domestic labour, services, industries, and income generating activities, and in some societies they have a clear community role also.

There is a wide gap between women's high (yet unrecognised) economic participation and their low political and social power, and development strategies have usually taken the needs of the most socially and politically active as their starting point. Women are involved at all levels and hence there is a need to know in what way women are affected in different situations. Gender, like class, therefore needs consideration at every stage of a project and programme development.

## APPENDIX A

CORD - CRU  
CHILDCARE STUDY - GROUTVILLE

BRIEFING DOCUMENT  
INTERVIEWING - THINGS TO REMEMBER

1. INTRODUCTION

The way in which you introduce both yourself and the study will affect the type of response that you get from the respondent. If she is not suspicious of you and understands why you want the information and what you are going to do with it she will be open and helpful to you.

1.1 INTRODUCTION YOURSELF

When you introduce yourself you should give the following information:

- \* your Name
- \* where you live
- \* that the study is being carried out by CORD at the University of Natal AND the community represented by the researchers as members of the community
- \* that permission has been granted by the chief or induna for the study to be carried out
- \* that you were elected at a community meeting or your names were put forward by the induna

1.2 EXPLANATION OF THE STUDY

You must explain why the study is being carried out ie to collect information that will enable us

- \* to understand how people take care of their children
- \* to understand the problems that people have in coping with their children
- \* to understand how the family works together in providing for the development of the young child
- \* to understand the social and economic conditions within which the family/household and community is attempting to care for children ie both as an individual family and a community.

This information will be reported back to the community at a number of levels

- \* the community as a whole at ward level
- \* the indunas
- \* those people involved in looking after children

The community will then use this information to begin to look at the nature of the problem and ways of addressing it. This will belong to the community and not CORD.

CORD will act as a resource to the community and a facilitator to access people, resources and organisations to the community to enable it to deal with its problems.

.3 ESTABLISH IF THERE ARE YOUNG CHILDREN IN THE HOUSE

#### 1.4 ASKING FOR PERMISSION

When asking for permission to ask questions you must say that every thing you are told is confidential - that you are NOT writing the family name on the interview and that the report will provide a picture of the community and not individuals. If refused then thank the person politely and leave.

#### 1.5 ASK FOR THE RESPONDENT

The respondent should be the person responsible for the "mothering" of the child/children. It can therefore be the mother, the granny, the father, an older sibling or a relative (eg mother's sister). You must therefore establish this at the beginning. You can explain

- \* that the study is about children not YET at school
- \* you therefore want to ask questions about these children
- \* and therefore would like to speak to the person who is responsible for the young children in the family, either the mother or the granny etc.

Before you begin ask the respondent if she wants you to clarify anything. Tell her she is welcome to ask at any time if she isn't clear or has problems.

#### 1.6 WHAT IS CORD?

The respondent might ask you to explain what work CORD is doing. It will be useful to explain CORD's work both in Groutville and its other projects. CORD is a research and development centre based at the University of Natal. It works with communities to enable them to take control over development planning and delivery.

Projects in Groutville include:

Ward 2 Community Hall

Ward 5 Social Welfare Project

Primary Health Care Research

Childcare Study

#### 1.7 WHY DO YOU WANT TO ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT THE HOUSEHOLD ie the schedule

The respondent or other members of the family might question you when you start asking question about education, income etc You must therefore explain that

- \* this information is confidential
- \* they do not have to answer the questions
- \* the information is important because it will give us a picture of the economic conditions in Groutville as a whole and
- \* that the way in which we are ABLE to care for our children is affected by the conditions in the family and the community as a whole

#### . THE INTERVIEW

##### .1 THINGS TO REMEMBER

dress neatly

be polite

use simple language

don't put words in the respondents mouth ie don't give examples of possible answers when the respondent is unable to answer you

stick to the wording of the question as closely as possible

do not argue with the respondent

be confident and clear

don't be biased when writing the answers, write what you are told and not

your interpretation

- \* write down any additional information that you think COULD be useful even if it is not directly related to the question
- \* don't be critical - accept what people say, do and how they live - remember we show the way we feel by what and how we say it, our facial expressions and our body language
- \* accept if people don't want to participate, answer particular questions or want you to leave before you are finished - try to arrange another time to return
- \* don't use offensive words
- \* be honest - if you are unable to answer a query say so , you can always refer the respondents to CORD
- \* only ask questions that are applicable - people may be offended or think you are foolish if you ask questions that are clearly not appropriate to them
- \* do not be afraid to ask for more information - prompt for more details politely and carefully
- \* be aware of the time and only hurry if the respondent says or shows that he/she is tired or has had enough or needs to do something else
- \* be aware of the respondent - if he/she is bored/irritated/in a hurry
- \* be careful of odd and obvious behavior
- \* be familiar with the questionnaire - make sure the interview flows
- \* don't ask question if you already have the information
- \* even though you are interviewing the "mother" you must include any information that other members of the household give you

CORD - CRU  
CHILDCARE STUDY - GROUTVILLE

BRIEFING - FILLING IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Write an answer for every question either N/A - not applicable, U - not specified or did not respond or refused to answer.

1. THE SCHEDULE

We fill in the schedule for all the people living on the plot. We ask the respondent for the information and include any information given by the other members of the household.

1.1 THE PERSON INTERVIEWED

This must be the person who is the "mother" to the children. It can be granny, mother, sister, aunt etc. If there are 2 or more mothers in the household who care for their own children you must interview them separately but there will be one schedule for the household.

1.2 RELATION TO RESPONDENT

The respondent is the person that you interview and we code all the members of the household in terms of their relationship to the respondent.

1.3 AGE

If the respondent does not know the age of a member of the household write U for unspecified.

1.4 EDUCATION

This is the level of education completed NOT current level studying. If the answer is not known write U for unspecified, if it is not applicable then write N/A.

5 ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

This gives the current activity of all the members of the household. A workseeker is someone who is looking for work but has never worked before. Pensioner includes grantees, retired people with no pension. N.E.C. means not economic classified and includes those people with no job because of physical and mental handicaps.

INCOME AND SOURCE

Includes all money that comes into the household not only that from employment ie from informal activities, grants, pensions, maintenance etc. If the respondent does not know write U for unspecified. Note if it per week or month.

TRANSPORT

This includes to school or work on a regular basis for those people living in Groutville.

AGE SCHOLAR WENT TO SCHOOL AND TYPE OF PRE-SCHOOL CARE

fill this in for the children of the household.

## 2. THE QUESTIONNAIRE

All questions must have an answer - write N/A if it is not applicable to the respondent and U for unspecified if the respondent does not know the answer. Only ask questions that are applicable. It is O.K. To have more than one answer!!!

The following reminders are numbered with the question number to which it refers.

- 1.1 This question is important because it helps you to identify the children that you are interested in. It should correspond with the details on the schedule.
- 1.2 2.3 This is to find out who regularly or usually cares for the children. Make it clear who you are referring to ie in relation to the child.
- 1.4 This question refers to the care mentioned in 2.2 and 2.3.
- 1.5 2.6 2.7 2.8 These are not applicable if the respondent is the mother and she cares for her own children.
- 1.7 2.8 these questions are referring to the regular care mentioned in 2.2 and 2.3.
- 1.12 Mother or relative at home - usually has no training but can be involved in an organised programme and receive training.  
A childminder is a person who is paid to look after a group - usually 6 - children in her own home. She often does not have training but can get it if the childcare programme is organised. Food may or may not be provided.  
A playgroup involves a group of mothers who share looking after their children at their homes. It does not cost them anything as they each take a turn. For example if there are 5 mothers they will each have the children once a week. The mothers can get training through an organised programme.  
Creche- usually provides all-day care for babies from 0-2yrs. This is usually supervision and feeding with little educational input.  
Pre-school offers either a half day or full day programme for 3-6yr olds. This includes an educational programme and often includes food.

## APPENDIX B



2. CHILD CARE

2.1 How many children do you have who are under 8 and not yet at school? \_\_\_\_\_

2.2 Who looks after your children during the morning? (until 1pm) \_\_\_\_\_

2.3 Who looks after your children during the afternoon? (1pm-6pm) \_\_\_\_\_

2.4 Why have you chosen this type of care for your child? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2.5 Do you have to pay the person/s who look after your children?  
If YES, how much do you pay per month?

YES	NO
N/A	

2.6 What does this care of your children include? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

N/A
-----

2.7 Do you have any problems with the way your children are looked after?

Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

YES	NO
N/A	

2.8 Do you feel your children are safe while they are looked after by others?

Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

YES	NO
N/A	

2.9 Where do your children normally play?

---

---

2.10 Do you think this is a safe place for them to play?

YES	NO
-----	----

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

---

2.11 By whom would you like your children to be cared for?

---

2.12 (Give explanation then ask) Which one of the following would you choose?

	0-2yrs	2-6yrs
At home - mother		
At home - relative		
At home - maid		
Neighbour		
Childminder		
Play-group - mothers		
Creche		
Preschool		

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

---

2.13 How much would you be prepared to pay each month for childcare?

\_\_\_\_\_ per month

### 3. CHILDREN AND THE FAMILY

3.1 At what time do the mother and father of the children leave for work and come home from work?

Mother: leave for work: \_\_\_\_\_ come home: \_\_\_\_\_

Father: leave for work: \_\_\_\_\_ come home: \_\_\_\_\_

N/A
N/A

3.2 (If mother is working) How old was your child when you went back to work? \_\_\_\_\_

N/A

3.3 Who in the family makes sure all the children's needs are met?  
\_\_\_\_\_

3.4 Who in the family is responsible for the children?  
\_\_\_\_\_

3.5 Did you play with your children yesterday?

YES NO

If Yes, what did you do? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3.6 What else did you and your children do together in the last week?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3.7 What did you and your children do last weekend?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3.8 Did you make or buy any toys or books for your children this year?

YES NO

If yes, what? \_\_\_\_\_

3.9 Who does the following work.....?

Cooking \_\_\_\_\_

Cleaning House \_\_\_\_\_

Washing \_\_\_\_\_

Shopping \_\_\_\_\_

Cleaning Yard \_\_\_\_\_

Collecting Water \_\_\_\_\_

Growing Vegetables \_\_\_\_\_

Chopping/Collecting Wood \_\_\_\_\_

Washing/Dressing Children \_\_\_\_\_

3.10 What are the biggest problems you and your family have? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

3.11 How do these problems affect the way you bring up your children?

---

---

3.12 What are you planning for your child's future? \_\_\_\_\_

---

#### 4. GENERAL

4.1 Type of house \_\_\_\_\_

4.2 Do you own or rent your house/land? How much rent do you pay each month?

	TENURE			COST
	Rent	Own	Sub-tenant	Rental per month?
(i) House				
(ii) Land				

4.3 Which committees or groups do you belong to? \_\_\_\_\_

---

4.4 What are the most serious problems facing the community in Groutville? \_\_\_\_\_

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There were a number of aspects to CORD's work. Firstly, a commitment to a process of research that aims to contribute to broader debates about development whilst contributing to development at the local level. Such research was seen as providing a basis for "model building" and consequently, could inform other development initiatives locally and nationally.

Secondly, CORD organisers would co-ordinate a process to bring together different groups within a community to enable discussion of issues and options, thereby providing opportunities for building alliances between groupings. This process aimed to bring about changes in a number of different areas namely attitudes, values, and expectations, material conditions and power structures.

Thirdly, this process of community organisation would effectively result in the gathering of information that would lead to material changes in the lives of people living in the area as well as increasing the understanding of the problem and the ability of groups to work together.

Fourthly, this process would assist in building democratic structures that would work towards ensuring a more equitable distribution of resources and services. A transfer of skills to members of the community would provide an opportunity to decrease a reliance on the "experts" and encourage the use of local resources.

Whilst CORD did not publicly link itself to any political party it took a clear anti-apartheid stance which aligned it with the ANC/UDF and consequently, an anti-Inkatha position. Nonetheless, it was committed to co-operating with all groupings in the

communities in which it worked and was constantly grappling with the difficulties of doing so given the antagonism between political groupings such as the ANC and Inkatha.

The concept "community" has both a commonsense meaning and analytical meaning. It is commonly used to mean a group of people living together in an area and who have common characteristics, goals and needs. The commonsense, descriptive use of "community" often masks the contradictions and conflicts that exist in any grouping of people that live together.

The concept is used analytically by a number of academic disciplines and political positions. "Community" is a key concept in development work in that the way in which it is conceptualised informs how the development workers interact with the people inhabiting the project area. The concept is used extensively, as a concept of unity - usually in development work - but its use can be divisive - to sharpen "we" and "them". It is usually understood in terms of a group of people who have shared interests but in sociology it has several meanings. Feminist theory commonly defines community as a type of relationship between women with shared meaning and sense of belonging.

"Community" is often used to describe a group of people who live within the same geographical boundaries and the resultant implication is that these people are united and homogeneous in a number of respects. It is clear that this is not the case as communities are divided on class, race, sex, religious, material and ideological grounds and are often in direct conflict with one another. In addition to this, a community is not static. It changes over time and space adapting to the need for blending of "the old" and

"the new". In Groutville, for example, the landowners need to incorporate into decision-making processes tenants and squatters who are being propelled into the area by forces which include endemic violence, poverty and forced removals. It is therefore necessary to recognise the limitations of using the notion of "the community" and make explicit the assumptions being made when using it.

Throughout this thesis the term "community" is used in its broadest sense to mean a group of people living in a particular area.

#### **4.2.2 The Need for the Study**

CORD's entry into Groutville was in response to a request for assistance by Nandi creche which was located in Ward 1. The creche was housed in a garage on the property of a land-owner and provided care for approximately 40 children from this ward. The facilities were clearly inadequate. There was insufficient space, a leaking roof, lack of water, inadequate sanitation, inadequately trained staff, poor staffing conditions, and most importantly lack of funds to sustain and develop the facilities.

It was evident to CORD researchers from discussions with members of the creche committee (all of whom were women) that the lack of childcare facilities was not restricted to this ward. A number of meetings, at which I was present, were held in different wards in Groutville. The meetings were initiated and organised by members of the creche committee as well as other members of the community, through the different authority structures in each ward. Members of the community noted the lack of resources in the area - this included, amongst others, water, roads, and childcare

facilities. Other wards either had no formal childcare facilities or totally inadequate facilities to meet the ever increasing demand for safe care for children. The demand for childcare was articulated as a demand for better education for children and the need for programmes to care for working mothers was seen as a priority.

The project was targeted at all members of the community and therefore meetings were held in all wards. The meetings were attended by both landowner and squatter representatives but it was not possible to establish the percentages of people attending from these groupings. Meetings were held on the weekend to ensure that working people were able to attend. The majority of the people who attended the meetings were women but significantly the discussions were dominated by male speakers - largely young and elderly men. The dominance of female attendance at the meetings could have been a result of the absence of men (an examination of age structures reveals that in the 21-39 age category the male to female ratio was 1:2) but is more likely to have been a consequence of a perceived reality that women have responsibility for childcare. The goal was to involve both men and women towards a project of joint responsibility for childcare and to ensure that a broader process of community development would take place. Men's involvement was therefore seen as crucial. As I left CORD in January 1990 on completion of the research project and was therefore not involved in follow-up work, I am unable to assess to what extent this was achieved.

In order to achieve its objectives in terms of facilitating a programme of community development that responded to the needs of all people living in the area it was necessary for CORD to respond to the evident crisis in all the wards particularly those densely populated by poverty-stricken squatters and this was seen by researchers as

a prerequisite for working with the creche. It was argued that the provision of resources that benefited only one sector of the people living in the area would divide the community and result in a power struggle over control of these resources particularly between landowners and squatters. The need to involve as many sections of the community in decision-making processes was accepted by the creche committee. Whilst the creche committee was committed to ensuring that childcare facilities were made available to all children in Groutville, it did not have any members from the squatter community. The need to broaden representation on the committee was accepted and embarked upon.

It was also agreed that CORD would not only work with the creche but would work with the community around such issues as water, roads, community facilities, and health care programmes. Responding to the childcare initiative was therefore the basis for further organisation and development work.

The objective of the childcare programme was to provide the type of care appropriate to the needs of the community which would integrate with the existing patterns of childcare in the area. The first phase of the project therefore had two dimensions. Firstly, to assess the level of the crisis and to document existing childcare patterns. Secondly, to begin to involve as many people in the decision-making process as was possible. This involved holding meetings in the different wards as well as visiting homes and formal and informal childcare facilities in the area. The research itself would take this process forward when interviews were carried out.

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The research project was also seen as a vehicle to develop community controlled and directed research as a viable and effective means to begin to address many of the problems such as no community facilities, inadequate health care, and access to a clean water supply. It was believed that the collection of data would involve people living in the area in a process that would ultimately result in the provision of resources that were both appropriate to their needs and which they could control, manage and sustain. It was also envisioned that the research would generate other development initiatives within the community.

The childcare study had three clear objectives:

- (i) to gather data about children, childcare facilities and childcare practices,
- (ii) to empower the community through a participatory research process by enabling them to identify both the nature of the problem and its solutions,
- (iii) to provide training for some community members through a sharing of experiences between "the experts" and "the researched".

### **4.3 The Research Process**

#### **4.3.1 Participatory Research**

This research study was informed both by a particular understanding of community development as discussed earlier and by the fundamental tenets of participatory research. Participatory research has many common goals with those of feminist research but it is not by definition gender sensitive research. CORD was committed to addressing women's issues but structurally the organisation itself and the way in which

it organised "on the ground" was not gender sensitive. It was committed to understanding women's position and women as a category (ie wives and mothers) rather than the transformation of gender relations, for example, the provision of a creche versus challenging assumptions about who should be responsible for the care of children. The consequence of this being that the needs of women were not fully researched and understood.

Participatory research is a vehicle to enable members of a community collectively to create new knowledge about themselves and their reality thereby 'building an indigenous capacity for collective analysis and action and for the generation of new knowledge by the people concerned' (Hall and Kassam, 1988, 152). This articulates with the view of community development as a gathering of information that increases people's capacity to understand their problem thereby enabling them to actively participate in making decisions about solutions to their problems. Hall and Kassam (1988, 153) describe participatory research as 'an integral activity that combines social investigation, educational work and action'. Through a process of building an understanding of their reality a community can begin to challenge and change that reality.

Participatory research emerged in response to the type of traditional research that is carried out by individuals controlling both the research process and research findings with little or no sharing of knowledge and skills between the researcher and researched. The goals of participatory research therefore arise out of a critique of traditional research and a commitment to the key development objective of community empowerment. It involves a process of consultation with the community about the

necessity for and the nature of the research and emphasises community involvement in decision-making at both the formulation and implementation stages and hence in deciding what will be researched, who will do the research, what will be documented, and how the report will be used. In addition to this, the skills and knowledge that exist within the researched population are valued and there is a consequent sharing of skills and resources between the researchers and the researched. The use of elected members of the community as researchers is integral to participatory research. This is essentially because they bring to the research situation a knowledge of the community, are provided with temporary work, develop skills in social research and create a core of workers for development projects.

It is argued that through the process described above participatory research can work to effect social change on a number of levels (Hall and Kassam, 1988). Firstly, by making people aware of their own oppression - consciousness raising- it can effect a move to an analysis of this oppression and ultimately action to effect change. Secondly, participatory research through a variety of methods can stimulate a process for developing and activating collective knowledge (drama, drawing, videotapings, meetings, radio, interviews) at the level of the experiences and world view of the ordinary people as opposed to that of the dominant ideological producers. This essentially involves a process whereby research techniques are demystified, control over the research process defined and knowledge made accessible in the language and cultural form of the people from whom it comes.

According to Hall and Kassam (1988,153) the creation and dissemination of new knowledge must be linked to social transformation through a process of 'successive

movements of popular analysis over time' and thereby 'move people from looking at more peripheral contradictions in the local reality to focusing more clearly on central contradictions that actually influence and control their lives'. Consequently, there must be a move from action that addresses short-term needs to action based on strategies for bringing about fundamental social change. Therefore if participatory research is to work to effect change it is necessary to locate the particular study within an understanding of the broader processes which give rise to social inequalities. Participatory research experiences at a local level must therefore be understood within and informed by social action at the national or regional levels. The priority of local development is nonetheless central to the work of the development agency.

Whilst at the theoretical level the goals of participatory research are valuable it has to take place within particular contexts, the structural realities of which may make the goals unrealistic. Consequently, participatory research has been labelled as "romantic" or "naive" for its failure to take into account real constraints and for romanticising "community". The reality that there were deep political, class and gender divisions in Groutville which would limit the extent to which full participation in both the research process and development projects was acknowledged. Nonetheless, the core principles of participatory research were valued and gave a focus to the research project.

#### **4.3.2 Research Co-ordination**

A support group consisting of members of CORD (myself included), Community Research Unit (CRU) (an NGO that provided a research service to communities and a range of organisations) and members of the community was formed at the start of the

project in early 1989 to guide the research and to provide a skilled resource base for working through issues and problems. The support group consisted of 2 women (myself and the CRU researcher) and 4 men. Whilst the members of the creche committee were women, the members from the community who were directly involved in co-ordinating the research were young males. The dominance of men at most meetings, on committees and as community representatives must be understood in terms of male authority and located within the dominance of men as chiefs and *indunas* within Groutville. This is a characteristic feature of most rural African communities in South Africa. The nature of the social relations reflected in the allocation of power and authority ensures that women participate in issues that relate directly to the roles as wives and mothers.

The involvement of different organisations and individuals in a process of working together and sharing skills was seen as an important aspect of the study. There was considerable duplication of skills and tasks across both organisations and between individuals within the research environment. The need to bring together ideas and skills was accepted for every level of the study. Consequently, CORD worked with researchers from university and community organisations at different stages of the research project.

The initial stages of the discussion involved identifying the role of the support group and outlining the stages of the research process. The support group would work with the CORD researchers, the fieldwork co-ordinators and the area co-ordinator (member of the community) in identifying the criteria for the selection and training of the

fieldworkers, monitoring the progress of the research and addressing problems, analysing results and writing reports.

#### **4.3.3 Identifying and Setting the Boundaries of the Problem**

The first step in carrying out the study was to establish clearly defined objectives for the study and to select the research tool appropriate to meeting these objectives.

The objectives of the study as a whole were firstly, to gather demographic/socio-economic data in order to

- (i) provide a picture of the material conditions within which the child is living and within which to locate an understanding of the data gathered on the child, family and childcare
- (ii) inform the broader development initiatives in Groutville and provide quantitative and qualitative data which would
  - (a) inform the childcare initiative in the area
  - (b) enable the community to begin to take control over developing a response to the childcare crisis in Groutville
  - (c) inform a general understanding of the child in South Africa.

It was agreed that the study must provide both quantitative and qualitative data on the existing childcare patterns, the nature of care received, some level of expectation and needs for care and some understanding of the way in which the family provides for child development

#### **4.3.4 The Selection of the Fieldworkers**

The viability of carrying out a research project was initially discussed with the creche committee as well as other members of the community that CORD researchers were working with. Meetings in each ward were planned to discuss the need for such a study and to request the nominations of members of the community to be trained as researchers for the project.

It was agreed that the fieldworkers must be able to read and write Zulu and English as they would have to participate in a training programme and conduct interviews and complete questionnaires. They had to be available for the duration of the project - approximately 3 months. It was agreed that they should preferably be women and not "too young" as the women they would interview, particularly the older women, should feel comfortable to discuss issues relating to children and the home with them, those issues that are traditionally women's domain. The proposal that fieldworkers should be women and "not too young" was the subject of considerable debate as it was argued (particularly by the two male representatives from the area) that the community would nominate the researchers and it was not possible to insist on these criterion. In addition to this, the researchers were to be paid and it was argued that men should not be denied the opportunity to do the job.

As was described in the previous chapter Groutville is divided into a number of geographical areas called wards which have a complex system of authority based on elected chiefs and heredity *indunas*. The participation of the community was not uniform in all wards and this was evident in the way in which the fieldworkers were

nominated. Meetings were held in 3 wards where the desperate need for care for the children was voiced by some women and the need for the study was accepted. In the remaining 2 wards that participated in the study people were nominated by the *induna* of one of the wards and by a member of the community in the other ward. The remaining ward did not participate in the study as the *induna* did not convene a community meeting to discuss the research. The non-participation of one ward in the study was given careful consideration before the decision was made to proceed with the study. One of the key aspects of the project was to work with as many sectors of the community as was possible without alienating any grouping at the expense of peace. It was therefore agreed that the incorporation of the remaining ward would take place at any stage of the research when this became possible. The research project was carried out in the early phase of CORD's entry into the area and it was therefore agreed by the research team that the process of research would itself contribute to drawing in as many people as possible particularly those who were not yet active in community structures. It is crucial to understand this process in terms of the system of elected representatives which co-exists with traditional decision-making structures in Groutville and the need to work with the community processes and not to alienate any grouping particularly given the high levels of political tension and violence in Natal at this time. Hence, the research team met with and worked with all political groupings, the youth and the elderly, and landowners and squatters.

A significant feature of the people nominated as researchers was that there were no nominees from the squatter community. This can be partly attributed to the inadequate squatter representation at meetings. In addition to this, the need for a basic level of English and Zulu literacy effectively excluded those who had not had access to

schooling. Hence, the fieldworkers were generally drawn from among the most privileged members of the community. Few of the fieldworkers had entered the squatter areas before and there was significant reluctance to do so. The reasons not clearly articulated but often alluded to were that the squatters were unacceptable as they were dirty, violent, unhygienic. The entry of the fieldworkers into the squatter areas provided an opportunity to confront their prejudices. Despite the original criteria identified for selection, the researchers were all in their early 20's and there were approximately equal numbers of male and females.

#### **4.3.5 Training of the Fieldworkers**

An initial structured yet flexible training programme was developed by the support group - this was changed as the project progressed, the changes being determined by a variety of factors. The training was carried out on a daily basis over a six week period largely by myself and a university-based CRU researcher at a venue in Groutville with occasional visits to the University of Natal, Durban. The programme aimed to develop an awareness of social, economic and political issues in Groutville and South Africa, personal and group skills, and practical research skills. A range of people participated in the training programme and a variety of topics were covered. These included identifying the objectives of the study, research methods, sampling, analysis of data, pilot studies and how to conduct interviews. The success of the training programme was not formally evaluated but informal evaluation indicated that the programme was successful in terms of providing some basic knowledge and skills that would enable the fieldworkers to carry out some basic research supervised by experienced researchers.

## **4.3.6 Compiling the Questionnaire**

### **4.3.6.1 Choice of Research Instrument**

The type of research tool selected was an interview structured by a schedule and questionnaire. The interview was selected because it provides one of the most efficient ways of accessing large amounts of data from a relatively illiterate population. A great deal of the data required was factual and could be elicited through questioning with the fieldworkers being available to explain the questions and elicit more details where necessary. In addition to this, the target population was large and therefore a significant sample was necessary. Whilst oral evidence cannot be cited uncritically, feminist researchers such as Hillary Graham have traditionally favoured qualitative techniques which provide insights into individual experiences and their relation to broader social forces. Hillary Graham argues that quantitative research techniques such as surveys 'mask or misrepresent the position of women in patriarchal society' ...because... 'surveys restrict access to the very everyday social processes which feminist researchers most want to tap' (Graham, 1984, 113). Nonetheless, it is important to provide relevant data to support claims about discrimination against women and the need for policy to bring about change. This research project set out to gather data (largely quantitative) about the community as a whole and consequently, did not gather information on the lives of individual women. Even though some of the questions elicited qualitative information the size of the research population made it difficult to use this appropriately.

The interview is an effective means of gathering both quantitative and qualitative information from the research population. Even though the interview is costly and time-consuming it is an efficient research tool and it was agreed that the qualitative information that could not be elicited through the interview would be accessed through alternative research techniques such as group discussion and observations as the programme developed.

The effectiveness of the interview as a means of eliciting accurate information from the respondent is dependent on both the efficiency of the research tool and the ability of the interviewer to develop a rapport with the interviewee and to ensure that he/she is able to both elicit and record the required information. Considerable time was therefore spent in developing research skills. This involved both group discussion about and role-playing of interviewing skills and techniques. A briefing document for the interviewer was then drawn up by the research team (see appendix A).

The fieldworkers helped in compiling the research tool. This ensured firstly, that the knowledge that the fieldworkers had of their community informed the data gathering. Numerous questions were excluded from the questionnaire, for example, because the fieldworkers already knew the answers. Secondly, the fieldworkers who were familiar with the purpose in asking the question, assisted in informing the way in which to gather the appropriate information. In most traditional research the questionnaire is compiled by the researcher who has little or no knowledge of the community but who has a wealth of experience in research techniques, data analysis and theoretical debates.

The compilation of the questionnaire was therefore informed by the knowledge and experience of the support group as well as experienced researchers working in the university and other organisations. The fieldworkers played a crucial role in providing a knowledge of the area and the people living there. In addition, the knowledge of issues relating to children and childcare that the fieldworkers gained during the initial stages of the study as well as their direct experience of childcare as parents and siblings was useful. Significantly, it was the male members of the group that actively participated in the initial discussions. The female members had to be given opportunities as well as encouragement to speak. The nature of this group dynamic was challenged and discussed within the group. The contestation of issues was not a direct confrontation between clearly defined groups. Many issues were not resolved but were the focus of ongoing debate and challenge. For example, the division of tasks within the group was a contentious one with a group of both men and women arguing that chores such as making tea and washing up was "woman's work". On most days a small group of men did not do their chores whilst others did them reluctantly and a group of women seemed happy to do the chores for them. Nonetheless,, the issue was constantly debated and this was part of a ongoing process of challenging stereo-typical views and practices.

The questionnaire was produced in English and the answers were recorded in English. The fieldworkers translated the questions into Zulu and transcribed the answers into English. It was decided to do this for the following reasons:

- (I) all training was done in English and familiarity with the research issues and the research instrument was developed in English,

- (ii) the co-ordination of the fieldwork was carried out by myself who cannot speak Zulu and a CRU worker who could speak both English and Zulu. The co-ordination required ongoing supervision and discussion of each questionnaire with each researcher - something that I could not do if the questionnaire was completed in Zulu.

It was accepted that the comparability of all questions and answers through translation could not be ensured. An attempt was made to reduce the possibility of errors occurring by discussing each question and possible answers with the fieldworkers and discussing the appropriate translation. Role plays were then carried out in Zulu to provide the fieldworkers with the opportunity to develop the skill of translation from the written word into the spoken word and vice versa. This also provided the co-ordinators with the opportunity to discuss problems with the translation.

Both quantitative/factual and qualitative/attitudinal questions were used in the questionnaire. In the former case where a limited number of possible answers could be anticipated, "closed" questions were used to facilitate the transcribing of answers efficiently and accurately. In the case of open-ended questions the interviewer was not instructed to transcribe the answers verbatim as this would be an impossible and unwieldy task. The interviewer was therefore expected to synthesise the verbal replies and extract from them those aspects that were considered pertinent to the question being asked. The ability to do this was assumed because the fieldworkers were involved in all stages of the research process and therefore understood why the

question was being asked. Even so this does not exclude the possibility of errors in transcribing answers.

#### **4.3.6.2 Description of the Questionnaire**

The questionnaire (see appendix B) was divided into 4 sections. In the following discussion the item numbers correspond to those of the questionnaire.

##### **Section One (Schedule - Demographic Data)**

This part of the questionnaire required that the respondents provide details of each member of the household (people living in the same house). Information was gathered on age, education, economic activity, income and source, transport to school or work, age scholar went to school and type of pre-school care received. This data would both provide a context within which answers relating to childcare could be analysed and be used for other development programmes in the area.

##### **Section Two (Childcare)**

This part of the questionnaire dealt with the type and quality of care (as perceived by the respondent) that the pre-school child regularly received. The need to understand the nature of existing patterns of childcare was a crucial aspect of organising a programme that responded to an evident crisis in childcare. Question 2.6 was included in the questionnaire in order to ascertain whether the daily care of the children included food, organised play, a stimulating environment, and interaction with other children or

adults. A significant feature of a child's daily care is that he or she is provided with a hygienic and physically safe environment. Questions 2.7, 2.8, 2.9 and 2.10 were included in the survey to ascertain to what extent parents are concerned with this aspect of their child's care.

An important aspect of the broader childcare programme in Groutville was to respond to the crisis in childcare in the area and therefore questions 2.11, 2.12, and 2.13 were included in order to ascertain the type of care that parents would like for their children.

### **Section Three (Children and The Family)**

This part of the questionnaire dealt with children and the family. The family plays the most important role in the child's development particularly in the pre-school years. One aspect of parenting is the amount of time that parents have available to care for their children - a crude indicator of this being the amount of time that parents who are in employment spend at home. Question 3.1 was included in order to provide some measure of this aspect of the parent's lives. It does not take into account that those parents at home do not necessarily have or choose to spend time with their children. This aspect of parenting is difficult to assess even through observation.

Question 3.8 was included in order to ascertain to what extent parents were attempting to stimulate play as an important aspect of the child's development. This aspect should be ascertained through observation therefore this question presented only a minimum indication of the actual solution. The question did not take into account that children play with objects in the environment, as well as with one another.

Discussions about the role that different members play in the care of the child and the sexual division of labour within the domestic sphere resulted in the inclusion of questions 3.3 and 3.4 in the questionnaire. The discussion pointed to a situation where it is usually the women who make sure all the child's needs are met (question 3.3) and it is the father who is responsible for the decision-making and serves as a symbolic authority figure in the household. Question 3.9 was included to ascertain the division of labour in the household across age and sex.

Questions 3.10, 3.11, and 3.12 were included to provide parents with the opportunity to elaborate on problems in the home and the way in which they affect parenting.

#### **Section Four (General)**

One of the objectives of the study was to build a community profile which included details about roads, housing, facilities, resources, decision-making structures. The fieldworkers were familiar with most of these details but it was necessary to build on this information - especially with regards to housing (Questions 4.1 and 4.2.). Question 4.3 was included in order to ascertain the familial support base from which parents are operating. Question 4.4 was included to get a broader picture of general social problems in the area.

In some cases questions were not applicable for a particular respondent and were therefore not asked and marked N/A: if the respondent did not know the answer or refused to answer the question it was marked U - unspecified.

A briefing document (see appendix A) to accompany the questionnaire was drawn up by the research team . This document explained why the study was being done and gave guidance on how to fill in the questionnaire. Each fieldworker had a copy of the briefing document for easy reference during the fieldwork.

### **4.3.7 Sampling**

#### **4.3.7.1 The Sampling Method**

Time, opportunity and cost meant that it was not possible to interview every household in the community even if it was considered desirable. It was therefore necessary to sample the population. Attitudes, needs, aspirations and material realities are influenced by class, race, gender and a number of other factors. In this case the population varies across class, levels of poverty, landownership, and education, and therefore it was necessary to stratify the sample population.

The sampling process used for the study was based on sections of 40 questionnaires for each ward. This figure was based on proportional representation on a ward basis and stratified on the basis of type of homesteads. The main stratification was based on established housing versus squatters and land ownership (ie trust, private, church and state).

The proportional representation of wards was estimated using orthophotographs, estimates of the number of households in each ward in which the research was carried out and an estimate of the number of people living in each ward. The estimate based

on the data from the orthophotographs was updated with information from the fieldworkers based on their knowledge of the area and visual assessment of growth in the areas in which they lived. These proportional representations were further stratified within each ward on the basis of type of housing and landownership. This stratification was again carried out on the basis of the fieldworker's knowledge of the areas in which they lived and visual studies of the wards.

#### **4.3.7.2 Choice of Population**

The person interviewed was the mother of the pre-school child or children in the household or the person responsible for caring for the child(ren). It could be the grandmother, sibling or relative. Traditionally it is the women who are responsible for the domestic sphere which includes housework, the home and the children and therefore it was assumed that the mothers would have the information that was wanted about childcare and the family. This was reinforced at community meetings when it was women who spoke about problems with children. If there were two or more mothers in the household who cared for their children then separate interviews were carried out with each mother.

Whilst it is assumed that the group selected forms a valid sample, it is realised that any conclusions drawn can only be substantiated for this sample and cannot necessarily be generalized to another community in South Africa.

## **4.3.8 Administration of the Questionnaire**

### **4.3.8.1 The Pilot Study**

According to Stenhouse (1988) it is necessary to pretest the research instrument in order to modify any faults which are discovered by this exercise. The pilot also provided the practical experience to guide learning of "research skills". The pretest group had similar characteristics to those of the selected population. In this case the fieldworkers administered questionnaires to a cross-section of the residents in the 5 wards selected on the basis of type of housing but there was no formal sampling of the research population within wards.

The pilot study was carried out over three days - a total of 200 questionnaires were administered. This enabled the research team to evaluate the length of the questionnaire, ambiguous or unsuitable questions, inappropriate language, order of questions and to make it meaningful to the respondents.

The main criticism of the questionnaire by the fieldworkers was that it was taking too long to complete - 50 to 90 minutes - and the interviewees were getting impatient and restless. They found that they needed to spend some time - on average 20 minutes - explaining the objectives of the study and the objectives of the agency that was carrying it out in order to reinforce the confidentiality of the answers as well as criticisms that "nothing ever happens from research".

In some cases the fieldworkers had difficulty deciding on who to interview. During the planning stages there was considerable discussion about who the respondent would be. It was agreed that the person must be that member of the family who cares for and is responsible for the children and therefore would be able to provide the information requested. It was agreed that this person would most likely be a female member of the household - mother, grandmother, relative or elder sibling - as childcare is usually the responsibility of the women. It was assumed that in most cases the respondent would be the child's mother and the questionnaire was compiled to reflect this assumption. The fieldworkers were briefed to rephrase questions if the person being interviewed was not the mother.

Completing the schedule (section one) took up a large portion of the interview - 20 to 50 minutes - particularly for larger households. This was partly due to the design of the schedule as well as the fieldworker's lack of familiarity with it as a research tool. The fieldworkers also experienced problems in completing the schedule because the respondent did not know all the family details - most notably income of the males and the ages of the elderly. The schedule was consequently, revised and roleplays were carried out to familiarise the fieldworkers with it as a research tool.

#### **4.3.8.2 Fieldwork**

Fieldwork is the process of gathering, and organising information - collecting documents, observing, and measuring or collecting statistics. In this case the fieldwork involved administering questionnaires through interviews. The fieldwork was carried out over a 3 week period with each researcher completing on average 4 questionnaires per

day. A total of 856 questionnaires were completed. The co-ordination of the research was effected through meetings held between myself, the other co-ordinator and the fieldworkers every day in the first week and every second day thereafter. These meetings involved general discussions about problems and their resolution, as well as individual discussion with each researcher. Each questionnaire was examined and referred for follow-up where necessary.

In order to reduce non-response through refusal to answer questions the fieldworkers spent time discussing and rehearsing an explanation of who was doing research, why, and its possible outcome. The fieldworkers also returned to carry out the interview if the selected respondent was out, or if there was insufficient time to complete the interview. The ongoing co-ordination of the fieldwork ensured that inconsistencies and errors could be rectified immediately. The fieldworkers could return to rectify problems the following day.

Of the 856 questionnaires completed, 28 were excluded due to problems with data, or inconsistencies picked up by the coders, or the computer analysis.

A number of the fieldworkers coded the data and entered it on the computer. The writing of a programme to analyse the data as well as the running of the programme was carried out by Terence Wulfsohn, a researcher employed at CORD, who continued to help me with the data analysis after he had resigned from CORD. His assistance was invaluable. In order to develop a comprehensive understanding the socio-economic data and the data on childcare, family and related issues was coded in and analysed separately. Two levels of analysis were carried out. A set of frequencies on both sets

of data and a set of cross-tabulations on the socio-economic data. The analysis in both chapter 5 and 6 deals with selected data and the detailed statistics are contained in tables or appendixes.

#### **4.4 CONCLUSION**

This chapter dealt with the choice, design and administration of the research instrument. A brief description of the key objectives of CORD were given and the need for the study was outlined. The following chapter provides an analysis of the socio-economic data obtained. The analysis of the data on childcare is presented in chapter 5.

#### **Chapter 4 - Footnote**

1. CORD ceased to exist in 1994 when funding dried up.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **ANALYSIS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC DATA**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The general picture in Groutville is that women's education has lower economic value than men's with women's salaries lower regardless of age, experience and educational level. Consequently, in many instances women are financially dependent on men. In this context they are expected to care for children and to pay for care for their children if they do work. This chapter outlines the socio-economic profile of Groutville and how it relates to and impacts on childcare and mothering. The specific context of the family in terms of who cares for children and what support from within the community is given for childcare will be discussed in chapter 6. This chapter provides the framework within which to locate that discussion.

#### **5.2 General Socio-economic**

Groutville, like many black areas in South Africa, is an area facing many crises - a lack of access to quality education, high unemployment, inadequate housing, lack of resources such as electricity, water and health facilities. It is clear in the context of racism and exploitation that all the community members are affected by this but the situation for women is generally worse than that of the men. Like the women in the peri-urban area described by Gordan (1993) the system of complex articulation of race, class and patriarchy in South Africa has resulted in black women in Groutville having fewer work options than their male counterparts. This has implications for families living

in Groutville. In the case of male-headed households women's economic contribution to the family is limited by a labour market that discriminates against her in terms of both race and gender and consequently, increases her dependency on male income. In the case of the increasing number of female-headed households where women have both the economic and domestic responsibility to sustain the family, this is particularly problematic. According to Ardington (1984,16) in 1984 only 31.3% of households in a rural community in Kwazulu were headed by a married male resident in the house. This trend is on the increase. The number of female-headed households in South Africa is rapidly increasing in 1992 stood at 1.9 million in SA (Wolpe,1993). This trend can be attributed to a range of factors including migrancy, death, divorce and women's choice. Unfortunately this research project did not establish the extent of female-headed households in Groutville - this was not identified as a significant variable when the questionnaire was drawn up.

The following analysis examines the nature of the household in Groutville and its implication for childcare. The number of people in the household has contradictory implications for childcare. If the household is large with many dependents (many small children and aged without pensions) and few members contributing to the household income, it is more difficult to feed and clothe family members as well as educate the children. This situation is unlikely to change if there are few members of the household who have the capacity to earn adequate and reliable incomes. In addition to this the more people there are in the household the more responsibilities there are for women in terms of household chores. Nevertheless, it might mean that there is support for women by other family members to care for young children and do household chores as well as contributing to the household income.

The number of people in each household in Groutville ranges from 1 to 20 with the majority (67.7%) having between 4 and 8 members. The average number of people per household was 7 with the majority (94.5%) of the household members living at home on a daily basis. This compares favourably with the rural community in Kwazulu that was examined by Ardington (1984) which had a mean household of 9.1 with the majority of the households consisting of extended family members.

5.5% of the sample do not live at home on a daily basis. This is a relatively small percentage. Unlike many other rural areas in South Africa, Groutville has access to employment in modern sectors of the economy in Stanger and Durban to which workers can travel on a daily basis. It is unlike the typical rural community that has high numbers of people, particularly men, who have left to live and work in the cities. Whilst the levels of daily commuting to Stanger, Durban and other areas along the Natal coast is high, Groutville does not appear to have high levels of migrancy. Nonetheless, an analysis of the age structure that is carried out later in this chapter reveals that in the age group 21-39 years there are far more women resident in the area than men. This suggests that males have left the area either temporarily or permanently. The data failed to reveal the extent to which women are absent from the household on a daily basis. This clearly has implication for the household especially if the mother then has to rely on other members of the family to care for her children as is the case for many live-in domestic workers in South Africa (Cock,1990).

Whilst the sample indicates that there are more women than men in Groutville (53.7% of the sample is female and 45% male) which is in accordance with the figures from the 1991 National Census (Maconachie,1993) in which women make up approximately

53% of the population, it does not reflect the trend in peri-urban/rural areas where in many developing countries women form as much as 70 percent of the population (Tshatsinde, 1993, 63). Nevertheless, this trend seems to be replicated when examining the age group 21-39 years where there is a significant increase in the female to male ratio with females exceeding males by approximately 2:1. As a consequence of the unequal way in which black men and women have been incorporated into the labour market, more young men than women are either in the cities seeking work or working (Nzimande and Thusi, 1991). This is significant in that it is in this age group that women are bearing and raising young children as well as coping with the day-to-day responsibilities of a family and household. It is also at this age that women are involved in caring for the older members of the family and the sick.

The absence of men has numerous consequences for women. They have to cope with the burden of added responsibilities and the increased work load of traditional male chores such as land clearing, growing cash crops and building houses. The survival, health and nutrition of the family is the responsibility of the women (Tshatsinde, 1993) and if they do not have access to employment opportunities they have to rely on remittances from husbands or pensions from the elderly. Consequently, they are unable to pay for transport to access health and buy food which increases infant mortality rates, malnutrition and health problems. Women are temporarily making important domestic and economic decisions but in most households headed by men, whether present or absent, the ultimate decision-making power still rests with the man (Murphy, 1993). The issue of patriarchy and its impact on power within the household is a critical one which will be explored fully when the distribution of responsibilities within households in Groutville is discussed.

There is also an increase in the female to male ratio in the 61 plus age group - this is common with women generally living longer than men. The reality is that women who may have relied on men for support for most of their lives now as widows have to rely on inadequate pensions or on their children to survive. Their income from a pension may be the only income for the family. The elderly women play a significant role in supporting their daughters/daughter-in-laws in their responsibilities for childcare and the household (this will be discussed in chapter 6) but nevertheless whilst being a support are also a financial burden. The income from pensions and welfare in Groutville forms only 4.1% of the total income.

An examination of the distribution of age groups in Groutville provides some indication of the degree of dependency in the community. The smaller the number of people who are in the income earning (20-65 year) bracket and the larger the numbers of dependent babies, scholars, unemployed and aged particularly those without pensions, the worse it is. In Groutville the largest percentage (78.6%) of the population is less than 30 years old with almost half of this group 16 years and younger. This pattern is replicated in other rural communities in Kwazulu (Ardington, 1984). Three quarters of the children are still at school and do not have earning capacity. A quarter of under 16's are unemployed or workseekers. Such a grouping is highly dependent for support on the wage earners within the household.

The numbers of people over 60 years is relatively low but 28% of the population are 6 years old and younger - this clearly has implications for a community with only 18.2% permanently employed and of those with some income the majority (84.7%) earn less than R600 a month with the average income per month being R80<sup>1</sup>. Consequently,

large numbers of dependents who do not contribute economically to the household must be fed, clothed and cared for. The financial burden on the household given low rates of employment and low earning capacity within the community is immense. The ability to pay for education and childcare is highly unlikely under these circumstances. Despite the fact that 62.1% of the sample have some level of education 74.6% have no income thus the capacity of the family to support the large numbers of youth, pre-schoolers and the elderly is limited.

In Groutville it is a daily challenge to provide a home with minimum levels of safety, protection from the elements, and hygienic conditions and nutritious meals. A large majority (87%) of the community live in mud houses and 10% in block houses. About half (55.3%) own the houses and 13.6% pay rent ranging from R1 to R60 with the majority paying between R10 and R20 per month for the house. In a community where there is high unemployment and a large percentage of the community is dependent on a minority, paying rent places an additional burden on an already inadequate household budget. This needs to be understood also in the context of the fact that 82.6% pay rent for the land on which they live - this ranges from R1 to R100 with the majority paying less than R10 - the average being R7. Only 1.9% own their land - this clearly has implication for development in the area. Whilst increasing the potential for conflict between landowners and tenants, it also has implications for the future development of the area.

According to Gordan (1993) the issue of land ownership and the repressive processes which dispossessed the black farmers of their land, result in women having even less rights to the land than men. The 1913 Land Act effectively ensured'the

proletarianisation of the independent black peasantry by initiating a process which ended rent tenancy and share cropping and substituted wage labour as the dominant land relation' (Gordan, 1993, 29). This needs to be understood in relation to the fact that many women manage the land with little or no decision-making power over land use and household issues in both the presence or absence of male members of the family. This impacts on her capacity to manage her family successfully particularly when women are often the effective head of the household in their husband's absence as migrant labourer or on his death - a frequent scenario in the context of spiralling levels of violence. What is significant is the extent to which women's power within the household extends to other spheres and becomes a challenge to male forms of governance.

### **5.3 Education**

It is in the context of large households, many young children and large numbers of scholars, unemployed and elderly that one needs to locate the discussion of education and employment. It is necessary to explore to what extent women have equal access to education and then to occupations that have high earning capacity so that they can contribute to the support of their families or support their families alone. The discussion in the next section looks first at women's access to education at different levels and in the following section looks at employment and income and the implications for women and childcare. Gender differences are assessed on levels of education attainment and occupation structure.

According to Levy (1991) since the 1950's there have been significant state reforms in scale of provision and increments in the educational infrastructure and student enrolment. While they have been 'piecemeal, undefined and unsystematic' (Levy,1991,19) they have increased the numbers of children both male and female who have access to the type of education that has prepared them largely for middle and lower levels of the labour market in unskilled and semi-skilled jobs. The entry of millions of black youth into primary and secondary education and the increasing size of the economically active population (EAP), were the most significant features of the social transformations that occurred between 1960 and 1989. Even so in 1993 only one third of 16 to 20 year old South Africans were at school and 7% were in higher education (Sunday Tribune, June 6, 1993).

The general picture for education in Groutville is that with increase in level of education there is a decrease in participation (numbers decrease). Such factors as increasing awareness that matric does not guarantee a job, violence, pregnancy, need to contribute to the family income, parents attitude, delinquency, failure, cost and responsibility for siblings all contribute to this pattern<sup>2</sup>. The data indicates a pattern of more females to males at each level of education. This generally reflects the slight female bias in the population but the percentages are in some cases slightly higher than the male to female ratio of 1:1. This is particularly evident at the level of tertiary qualification, namely degrees or diplomas. Of those with diplomas or degrees (only 0.3% of the sample) 64.7% are female and 35.3% are male - the majority of women having diplomas or certificates from teacher training colleges (Salmon and Woods,1991). Increased access to education must be linked to increased chances of

employment for it to have a positive impact on community development. The data does not indicate that this is the case in Groutville.

In South Africa violence and political unrest has disrupted schooling for all pupils but male pupils are particularly affected (Nzimande and Thusi, 1991). This may account for the slightly higher male to female ratios at the Standard 7 and 8 levels (between 51.4% to 58.4% and 40.5 to 46.7%). At the time that the research was carried out disruptions had not seriously affected schools in Groutville. The data was gathered in 1989 when Groutville was relatively unaffected by the violence that was ravaging other parts of Natal. The landowners in the area had managed to maintain a level of peace despite the fact that sections of the ANC-aligned youth were politically very active. Yet respect for adults was tenuous but still intact and there was a commitment by both sections of the youth and some adult members of the community to maintain this level of cooperation.

Many school girls become mothers before the age of 18, forcing them to leave school (Sunday Tribune, June 6, 1993). This impacts directly on their schooling experience - either ending it permanently or temporarily whilst the babies are young. This is not reflected as a trend in the data it but observation suggests that it is the reality in Groutville.

Patterns of education provision within Groutville conform to national trends. Access appears to be relatively high for both males and females except at higher levels of education where the percentage of both males and females is very low. The

implications of this in terms of employment and income-earning capacity is discussed in the next section.

#### **5.4 Employment - Occupation, Income and Income Source**

Does increased access to education for women result in equal access to jobs and income levels relative to their male counterparts? The picture in Groutville in terms of employment is a bleak one with high levels of unemployment. Of those in employment the majority are in the lower income occupations and of these the majority is women.

In the context of a highly dependent population only 18.2% are permanently employed and 1.8% self employed, 3.1% have local casual employment. 42.5% of the population are unemployed. The national levels of unemployment in 1991 were 56.4% for women and 43.6% for men (Maconachie,1993,42). 4.4% of the sample have never been in waged labour and are looking for work - this number is likely to increase given the rising levels of violence and unemployment in South Africa. 11.5% of the sample indicated that they are seeking some form of employment. High levels of unemployment affect the families capacity to feed, clothe and educate its members. It is in this context that the issue of payment for formal childcare must be examined.

The picture in Groutville with respect to employment reflects national and international trends. Despite equal access to education at all except higher levels of education, women participate in the labour market significantly less than men and in lower status, lower paying jobs. Women who are educated do not participate in the workforce at the same rate as men. In South Africa women constitute two-fifths of the paid workforce

(39.4%) (Maconachie,1993,41) yet 'women are excluded from certain occupations and are over-represented in certain sectors and job levels in agriculture and domestic sectors' (Gordan 1993,28). In 1985 the main trends in female employment were that women were clustered in manufacturing (28% of all women in formal employment), and the commercial and service sectors (Levy,1991,21). According to the 1991 national census figures (Maconachie,1993) women dominate the occupational structures as domestic workers, clerical workers, teachers and nurses but white women generally have access to higher status and better paid jobs. Black women make up 83.4% of the women employed in the service sector and 79.9% of those in farming and related activities. What is particularly significant is that 83.5% of all women are employed in either unspecified occupation or in the informal sector, that is, one-third of all economically active women are not involved in the formal job sector.

Women's labour force participation appears to be affected by the quality and quantity of education that they receive (Smock, 1982 and Kelly,1987), sex labelling of jobs (Kelly,1987 and Ram,1980) and their responsibility for the children and the household (Barrett,1980 and Mitchell,1971).

Despite equal access to education for women and men in Groutville the trend is that with increasing levels of income there are greater numbers of male earners - this replicates the national trends described above. The number of females who have no income is higher than that of the males and the pattern is that at lower levels of income there are more females earning at these levels than male. At less than R180 per month the percentages are on average 65% to 35%. There are thus twice as many women earning at lower levels than men. This shifts quite dramatically at higher levels of

income, where more males than females are earning R180 and above. This has implications for women's capacity to contribute to the care of their children and increases their economic dependency on male income. This is particularly problematic in the case of abusive marriages where women cannot leave as they are unable to support themselves and their children alone. In the case of single families or female headed households women would have to rely on minimal income from informal market activities in order to support their families.

The male to female ratio shows a distinctive and very interesting pattern particularly given the data about levels of education. It seems to indicate that men's earning capacity is not tightly linked to levels of education. They have the capacity and opportunities to earn relatively better wages despite the fact that they have low levels of education. This may be a consequence of discrimination in hiring practices and that in fact women are expected to and do carry the responsibility for child-rearing (Ram, 1980).

Women occupy lower status and lower paid jobs than men, and their opportunities for earning are less. Nevertheless, what is important to note is that the levels themselves are on the whole depressingly and significantly low. There are very few people in Groutville (male and female) earning higher levels of income and this undermines the ability of a household to feed, house, clothe and educate the children.

The average monthly income is lower for women than men and the salary ranges for women is much greater. This pattern is replicated when examining income source. Of those people with income generated from salaries and wages 62.0% are male and

37.4% are female. Many more females generate income from self-employment (77.8% female and 17.8% male) and of those with income from a welfare source 66.7% are female and 32.8% are male. Greater involvement by women in informal income generating activities provides additional income to an adequate household budget as well as allowing women to care for their children themselves. What is not clear is whether this is a matter of choice or a consequence of a lack of access to jobs and good quality care for their children. According to Ndziba-Whitehead (1993,97) self employment has become an alternative to employment with about 25-30% of the labour supply estimated to be absorbed in this area. Whilst this enables women who do not have access to the formal job market to contribute to the support of their family, it results in multiple roles similar to the double shift described by western feminists. Bozzoli(1993) points out that under these conditions women can care for their own children, particularly babies under two years. What is unclear is to what extent this is a choice that women would make if the opportunity to work with alternative childcare facilities was made available. I will return to this issue when I deal with policy options that have emerged from the research.

The sexual division of labour is reflected in the data with males dominating traditionally male-defined areas of employment and women in domestic related occupations. Male labour is better paid. Women's responsibility for the domestic sphere and their nurturing function as mothers has impacted on their access to jobs as well as the kinds of jobs that they occupy. An examination of the male to female ratio in the various occupations indicates that men dominate in the following occupations - clerk (83.3%), labourer (81.2%), messenger (66.7%), machinist (63.2%) and security (91.7%). Females dominate in the following areas - cleaner (86.5%), nurse (84.6%) and teacher

(65.0%). In many instances the type of formal occupations in which women dominate are extensions of their domestic role. It is interesting to note that whilst the men are represented in all categories even in those areas traditionally viewed as female domains females are not represented in those areas traditionally reserved for men, namely, messenger, sailor, driver, manager and electrician. Men in Groutville clearly have more mobility than women in terms of occupation choice.

Despite equal access to education women do not have equal access to a range of occupations particularly those that command higher income which means that they do not have the independence of income and the money to pay for housing, education and to contribute to the support their families.'South African society, like many other societies, has assigned certain roles for men and others for women, with the greater advantages going to the former. Thus, men have been the beneficiaries of a wider choice of jobs, greater opportunities, as well as immense power in this society' (Maconachie,1993,49). Nonetheless, the levels of employment in Groutville are generally low with widespread poverty. It is in this broader context that childcare and household responsibilities are examined in the next chapter.

#### **Footnote - chapter 5.**

1. The figure indicates monthly income per individual and not household. The household data was not calculated but would have been a more useful measure.
- 2 For more details on this issue see Morrell (1992).

## CHAPTER 6

### ANALYSIS OF CHILDCARE DATA

#### 6.1 Introduction

It is under conditions of high unemployment and inadequate resources and infrastructures, and the unavailability of labour saving devices that women struggle to meet the needs of their families for food, health, shelter, income and education (Tshatsinde, 1993). As was outlined in chapter 3, for the majority of women in Groutville a lack of a convenient and cheap water supply, high unemployment, inadequate transport services, inadequate housing, not enough pre-schools, creches and clinics were amongst their biggest problems. The analysis in the previous chapter detailed conditions of high unemployment and low incomes in Groutville. This is the context that frames childcare provision. In order to develop effective policies to support women in the future it is necessary to understand what strategies are presently adopted to meet these responsibilities.

Historically the direct responsibility for sustaining the household has largely been the women's. Women perform a multitude of tasks on a routine basis receiving little or no support from men even when tasks are physically and emotionally demanding, and without acknowledgement for the work (Murphy, 1993). According to Zinn and Eitzen ((1990) cited in Ziehl (1994)) regardless of social class, race or ethnicity family tasks tend to be strongly segregated by sex and this is not affected by whether the wife works or not. A husband does not share equally in housework even if his wife works full-time,

even if he is unemployed, and even if he professes that spouses should share equally in domestic work.

Women have to engage in a variety of activities which are frustrated by the numerous demands on their time, skill and energy, limited access to crucial resources and by both their, and other's, perceptions of gender roles and patriarchal relations. Women and men accept that childcare and the household is women's responsibility and that the man can make decisions and have more freedom of movement than women. Even where women do not accept this they are often powerless to prevent it. In many cases their responsibility for the home and children prevent them leaving.

There are a range of possible explanations. Firstly, it is in the context of a patriarchal system of male authority overlaid by colonialism, christianity and proletarianisation that expectations of women's roles within the household are framed (Bozzoli, 1991). Being a full-time mother is traditionally and socially what is expected of women by themselves, their community and broader society. Secondly, with high levels of unemployment and the lack of correlation between education levels and women's earning capacity, getting a job is very difficult with very few choices for women particularly. Finally, women may exercise the choice to be with their children particularly in the early years - this resonates with the responses that many women gave to questions about preferences regarding the care of their children. When presented with a range of options according to age, 60% of the mothers chose to care for their children of 2 years and younger themselves and an equal number chose pre-school education for the children 2-6 years old. I will return to this issue and deal with the data in the conclusion.

Women are responsible for the tasks that sustain the life of the household for example food production, water and fuel supply, childcare, care of the sick and aged. They are also responsible for maintaining the household by cleaning, washing and preparing food. They often contribute to the family budget through income generation in both the informal and formal sectors. According to Murphy (1993,6) the consequences for women is that their mobility is restricted and their energy and finances that could be invested in more productive activities are consumed. It is therefore critical that childcare is not only about the provision of childcare centres but must engage with and articulate with the need for childcare to be a joint responsibility of both parents.

This chapter provides a description of the patterns of childcare strategies in Groutville. It examines the responsibilities that women have in terms of care within the home and the consequences of this for them. This analysis shows that childcare policy development must take into account the fact that African women are struggling to survive in under-resourced, impoverished communities, with women having low education and even those with higher education still not getting access to higher paid jobs.

## **6.2 Childcare Strategies**

The general pattern of childcare in Groutville is that mothers care for children with support largely from grandmothers, siblings and other relatives. Women dominate the lives of the children and hold the home together. This is both in the absence or presence of male members of the family.

Table 6.1 shows that in the majority of the cases the children are looked after by their mothers in both the mornings (till 1pm) and in the afternoons (1pm-6pm). At least half of the women (51.7%) who care for their children do so because they "stay at home" - what was not clear was whether they had chosen to stay at home to care for their children because there was no alternative care for their children or there were no employment options.

<b>TABLE 6.1 CHILDCARE PATTERNS</b>		
	<b>mornings</b>	<b>afternoons</b>
<b>mothers</b>	66.5%(551)	75.1(622)
<b>grandmothers</b>	21.7%(180)	17.8%(147)
<b>maids</b>	1.6%(13)	1.3%(11)
<b>neighbours</b>	3.0%(25)	.8%(7)
<b>fathers</b>	1.1%(9)	.7%(6)
<b>other relatives</b>	2.7%	1.1%
<b>daughters</b>	2.2%	4.4%

Grandmothers also play a significant role in caring for children in both the morning and the afternoon - this is in agreement with Gordan's (1993) assertion that the elderly often contribute to the household as well as being supported by it. This contribution may be in either the form of household responsibilities and childcare, or in the form of pensions. The positive aspect of this is that there is the support for mothers of an extended family whether she is working outside the home or not - this is particularly important in the case of mothers in formal employment who do not have the flexibility that informal sector offers women in terms of integrating the needs of the home and