

**CHILDCARE DIRECTOR LEADERSHIP:  
A CRUCIAL CONNECTION TO QUALITY CARE AND EDUCATION**

by

Cynthia June Popovich

B.S., The Pennsylvania State University, 1976

M.S., University of Pittsburgh, 1984

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of  
School of Education in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Education

University of Pittsburgh

2016

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

This dissertation was presented

by

Cynthia June Popovich

It was defended on

February 4, 2016

and approved by

Dr. Patricia Crawford, Associate Chairperson, Department of Instruction and Learning

Dr. Charlene Trovato, Associate Chairperson, Administrative and Policy Studies

Dr. Karen Vander Ven, Professor Emerita, Psychology in Education

Dissertation Chair and Advisor: Dr. Cynthia Tananis, Associate Professor, Administrative  
and Policy Studies

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# **CHILD CARE DIRECTOR LEADERSHIP: A CRUCIAL CONNECTION TO QUALITY CARE AND EDUCATION**

Cynthia June Popovich, EdD

University of Pittsburgh, 2016

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe child care center directors' perceptions of their role as leaders. Survey and semi-structured interview questions were used to collect data on how child care directors describe themselves as leaders, how they are prepared and supported for leadership development, and to recognize barriers to leadership development.

A survey was distributed in to 36 directors and the return rate was 23 surveys. Descriptive statistics are used to display the data. A focus group of seven directors were interviewed for 30 minutes using semi-structured interview questions. Data from this session was audio recorded, transcribed, and presented in narrative form.

Directors perceive themselves to be both managers and leaders and are very relationship-based while managing their staff. Despite indicating that they have high job stress, low salaries, work long hours, and often feel isolated in their position, they agree (78%, n=18) that they do not want to leave their job and (69%, n=16) are not disillusioned with the field. Directors agree that they like dealing with broader issues in the field (87%, n=20), and (82%, n=19) that they need to become involved in the wider early childhood community, but only (30%, n=7) held any leadership positions in professional associations or groups outside of their centers. A definition

of leadership collectively written by 23 directors is offered for further consideration. More than half of the directors agreed that they felt confident and self-assured when they became a director (61%, n=14), and they felt prepared for the kinds of issues that they faced (57%, n=13). Approximately 2/3 of the directors (65%, n=15) indicated that they had little leadership or administrative training before becoming a director.

Directors are leaders in their centers, but not in the wider field. Early childhood training systems must respond to and provide opportunities for director leadership both in centers and in the wider early childhood community of practice where system-wide changes are needed. The voices of directors need to be included in order for any solutions to the problems in the field of early childhood care and education are to be resolved.

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## PREFACE

I would like to first thank my parents who provided me with more than I could ever understand at the time. As second generation immigrants whose parents came from a poor country, they really understood the value of education and made that possible for me. My dad would tell me countless times, “No one can ever take your education away from you.” I am still not sure how they were able to send me to college, but they did. They sacrificed so that I could have a good future. They would be proud to know that I have accomplished as much as I have.

Thank you to my husband Dave (We Are...Penn State!) who I have been blissfully married to for 40 years, and our three accomplished daughters, Laura, Sarah, and Rachel. You have made my life full of love, fun, laughter, and really great parties. Thank you also to my extended family for your love, support, and good times and to my friends who always lift me up and even help me with my statistics and proof reading when needed.

Thank you to my professors and students who have helped me to re-examine my perspectives, search for the evidence, and become less judgmental. And, thank you to my colleagues with whom I work and admire every day. Especially, thank you to my committee and study group who has guided me along this long journey.

Most especially I would like to thank Dr. Karen Vander Ven who has inspired me from the moment that I first had her as a graduate professor. She influences my life everyday as I work to improve the lives of children, youth, and their families. She has taught me many things

but most importantly the value of play and activities for not only children, but for adults as well.

Let the playing continue!

## **1.0 OVERVIEW**

### **1.1 A DIRECTOR'S STORY**

While delivering surveys to directors for this study, I visited a for-profit, privately owned child care center in an isolated part of an old mill town. All of the buildings on the street were boarded up except this center and one other building. A very friendly director invited me to tour her center. She did what she could to make the once abandoned building look like a child friendly center. The space was huge and the toys and equipment were sparse. She had 57 children from infants to age five on her roster. Her biggest worry was not being able to pay staff enough to want to stay. It was during the summer and she mostly had young high school graduates (and some younger) caring for the children. There did not appear to be any intentional activities for children going on. The director said that these teachers were the best staff that she could find to work for the wages that she had to offer. She said she had a lot of problems with many staff calling off and sometimes they just did not show up. This is especially a problem when they do not show up for the opening shift which begins at 7:00 am. When she is called by irate parents who need to get to work, the director must get dressed and drive 45 minute to get to the center. The director said that this happens a lot so she just plans on opening and closing the center at 6:30 pm if the parents are on time. The staff will not work beyond their shifts because there is no extra money to pay them. This director also cleans the center and prepares the



breakfast, lunch, and 2 snacks a day. She said that she knew that several staff members were going to leave at the end of the summer and she was always looking for new staff.

This story characterizes what some child care directors face every day and is not a demonstration of director leadership. Rather, it is a story of a director who is barely surviving each day. Worrying about compensation, staffing issues, and staying in compliance with regulations consumes the day. There is little energy to do much more than keep the children safe and fed.

While some child care directors have more resources than others based upon the type of center they run, many directors must make do with what little resources that they have. Based on findings from the literature review in chapter two, this director's story is all too familiar for many directors who must cope with the few resources that they do have. Leadership both in their centers and in the early childhood field in general is often not on the minds of directors who are just trying to deal with managing a group of teacher/caregivers who are underpaid and are expected to perform at a high level in order to provide quality care and education for young children.

Because director leadership is closely related to the quality of care provided, it is important to learn how child care directors view themselves as leaders and how professionals in the field of early childhood care and education need to respond in order to develop better leadership strategies both in centers and in the field.

The story above also illustrates some of the challenges in early childhood care and education (ECCE) today. The broader context of child care is characterized by a poorly paid, very unstable, and an unevenly prepared workforce (McCartney & Phillips, 2008). Because of the low status, it is difficult to attract individuals to the field of early care and education.

Further, those that do enter the field and rise to supervisory and administrative positions may not realize from both their upbringings and experience that they have the potential to develop the ability to provide desperately-needed systems-changing leadership. They remain immersed in the daily demands of the job by managing their centers and not recognizing that furthering their leadership capacities would improve the quality of their center as well as the field of early childhood care and education.

## **1.2 INTRODUCTION**

The significance of early childhood care and education is broadly recognized as supporting children's healthy development and early learning leading to later academic and adult success. Research shows the efficacy of high quality programs for children's later school and future life success (Whitebook, Howes & Phillips, 1989). More recently researchers, using data from a longitudinal study on early care and youth development involving 1,300 youth, found that children who spent more time in high quality child care in the first five years of life produced better math and reading scores in middle school (Dearing, et al., 2009). Additionally, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (2006) documented that there are positive results related to quality care: children demonstrated better cognitive function and language development during the first three years of life; children interacted more positively with other children at age three; and children demonstrated greater school readiness at four and a half years of age.

Quality programs are related to higher graduation rates, higher grade point averages, higher monthly earnings, and more success socio-economically compared to control groups

according to a High Scope Report (2007). Additionally, the importance of brain development in the first five years of life (National Research Council, 2000) coupled with a focus on pediatric health through the promotion of educational and socio-emotional needs of young children (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2007) has brought attention to the importance of quality child care especially for low income families. Encouraging positive brain development in the early years contributes to the attributes that lead to greater academic and social success and the possibility of attaining greater economic stability in the future (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). Therefore, it is important to recognize that the institutional framework to support the benefits of early childhood care and education exists within center-based care.

Center-based child care will continue to expand according to the outlook of the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2009). Parents are increasing their preference for a more formal setting for their children believing that it will provide a good foundation before they begin school. In the same report, it states that the demand for center-based care and staff will increase with the implementation of pre-K programs for three and four year old children. In Pennsylvania, for example, approximately 11,000 children who meet economic guidelines have been enrolled in the Pre-K Counts program since May, 2008 with enrollment expected to increase. All components of these programs must meet or exceed nearly every benchmark set by the National Institute for Early Childhood Research (PA Dept. of Education, 2007-2008). Additionally, more middle class families are insisting on preschools for their children that provide excellent care and appropriate educational opportunities.

The Universal Preschool Movement (Kirp, 2007) has been energized by research findings with more data showing the importance of early education. As trends show that the country is moving toward preschool education for all children, Kirp raises concerns about the quality and

kinds of programs these will be. He points out that experienced and appropriately trained teachers are needed as well as evidence-based curricular approaches. Early childhood care and education directors who are leaders will also play a part in this trend to increase not only programs, but also to provide quality.

Quality care and education is important for positive outcomes in children's health, overall school success and attaining brain development. The key, however, to these positive outcomes for children in child care centers is linked to director leadership. A concern for policy makers, training institutions, curriculum planners and directors themselves is to know how to increase leadership ability in order to improve the quality of center-based care as well as to recognize the opportunities that are available as leaders to institute positive changes in the wider field.

There are differences and similarities within all of the ECCE sectors which can cause some misunderstanding. Child care programs intersect with the various other ECCE early programs and can combine services and funds by offering child care, pre-K and Head Start services all within the same program. To establish some clarity, the term ECCE program is used throughout this paper unless the research study or literature refers to one specific sector of the field.

### **1.3 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

Articles and studies reviewed in preparation for this study consistently reported that the literature on director leadership is limited. Since 1984, approximately twenty-four studies on the topic of director leadership (Appendix G) were found and reviewed in order to learn more about their purpose, sample size, methodology and findings. Others may exist but were not reviewed for

this study. However, this literature review is a solid representation of the studies that are most cited. A recent report (Tout, Epstein, Soli & Lowe, 2015) on quality improvement initiatives verified that the research on leadership in the early childhood education field is still scant. There are, however, data documenting an initiative called Taking Charge of Change which is a leadership training model offered to directors in Illinois through the McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership at National Louis University (Bloom, Jackson, Talan & Kelton, 2013). A report of this initiative after 20 director cohort groups found positive results such as directors' personal growth, self-esteem, and increased knowledge and skills in operating quality programs.

Since many of the studies that were reviewed are somewhat dated, it would be beneficial to collect data on current directors; specifically, directors in one individual sector such center-based child care. Questions such as how directors view their leadership positions, how are directors prepared to become directors, and what are the current barriers to director leadership all need to be explored in a more current context.

#### **1.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

A review of literature on director leadership indicates that there is a problem in identifying how leadership is defined. This might not seem like a big omission, in line with the fact that in the past 50 years, leadership scholars have not produced a clear profile of the ideal leader (George, Sims, McLean & Mayer, 2011). However, there is agreement in the field of early childhood care and education that there needs to be more research on directors. Much concern exists as to whether directors are primarily functioning as leaders or managers. Although both management and leadership skills are necessary, studies demonstrate that it is the leadership of the director

that is the important element in outstanding child care centers (Pipa, 1997; Culkin, 1994; Reckmeyer, 1990), that staff prefer leadership behaviors manifested by their director (Burch, 1987), and that there are leadership characteristics that directors who operate quality centers have in common (Bobula, 1996). As the job of a child care director has become increasingly more complex and more difficult in recent years (Bloom, 2000), directors who are functioning primarily as managers of centers by taking care of the day-to-day issues that arise, are not able to provide the quality that is needed for children to achieve the care and education that is possible within a troubled system plagued by low wages, unqualified staff, lack of funds among other issues. Thus, there is a need to build on current work and to extend the knowledge of director leadership and how to increase it.

## **1.5 PURPOSE OF STUDY**

The purpose of this study is to explore and describe child care center directors' perceptions of their role as a leader. The study will seek to learn how center-based directors describe themselves as developing leaders how they are prepared and supported for leadership development, and their perceptions of barriers to leadership development.

Information from this study will contribute to the knowledge base on child care director leadership as well as open new avenues for research in the field. Policy makers, designers of training for directors, state departments of education and child development, higher education faculty, program planners and directors themselves are all stakeholders and would find this study useful.

## **1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The key research questions of this study are:

1. How do center-based child care directors describe themselves as developing managers and leaders?
2. How are center-based child care directors prepared and supported for leadership development in their work?
3. What are the barriers to leadership development as described by center-based child care directors?

## **1.7 RESEARCH METHODS AND DESIGN**

A mixed methods approach, qualitative and quantitative, was used for this study. Data from a researcher-designed survey was programmed into a spreadsheet for analysis using the computer program EXCEL. Data was also collected from a focus group of seven directors. The thirty minute discussion using semi-structured interview questions (Appendix I) was recorded and transcribed by the researcher. Descriptive data was analyzed and displayed on tables and figures. The transcription from the directors' group was coded and themes were identified.

The seven directors in the focus group were asked to return the survey which was also distributed in person to twenty-nine other directors in various geographic areas and PA Keystone STAR levels within one county. Details and procedures of the research method and design are expanded upon in chapter 3.

## 2.0 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Throughout the well documented history of early childhood care and education (ECCE) beginning in the 1800s, it is evident that politics, economics, and culture have influenced child care as it exists today. Child care evolved as a service, first to support poor working women, then as a means to support the U.S. economy. Children from poor families were the recipients of government funds to support child care programs. The changing roles of women throughout history influenced the quantity of child care available (Lacarides & Hinitz, 2000). In addition, new research on the importance of brain development has provided evidence that the first five years of life are a time of enormous growth of linguistic, conceptual, social emotional, and motor competence (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000; Bowman, et al, 2001). Currently, providing prekindergarten for all 4 year old children is a national consideration.

What has been less recognized in history is the dilemma that exists between the promising, but demanding, careers of those who have the potential to make needed systemic changes in the field and their inability to move beyond daily administrative demands into leadership roles where they would be in the position to make important contributions in the wider field. Such lack of perceived potential for career advancement is one reason that child care workers leave the field (Johnson & McCracken, 1994).

This situation highlights some concerns that further study can address. Given that leadership and administration tasks are both similar yet different, it would be helpful to know



what role both play in quality childcare. Also, the barriers that prevent directors from becoming leaders not just in their centers but in the broader field of early childhood care and education need further examination. Finally, how can directors develop further into leaders when they must handle so many everyday administrative challenges?

## **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This review of literature begins with a discussion of the terminology that is used in the field of ECCE and will be followed by an historical account of child care as it has evolved in the United States since the 1800s. Some major events that have shaped child care programs will be examined. There is a particular emphasis on the political, economic, social, and cultural impact of child care and how decisions that were made and societal beliefs throughout history have helped define the programs that are in place today.

The third section will explore issues that impact the ECCE workforce such as preparation and professional development, compensation, and turnover and retention by focusing on the individuals who work in early childhood programs with young children age three to five. This review will illustrate how these topics serve as barriers to quality care and education for young children.

Finally, there is a discussion about the current status of ECCE directors as leaders of their programs and how their leadership is related to quality. Directors of ECCE programs may or may not work directly with the children in their centers but are responsible for overseeing the many details that are necessary in operating a program (Pianta, 2012). Referring to some of the challenges that were presented in the child care story at the beginning of this review, the

contributing factors to a director's inability to accept the available leadership positions will be explored.

## **2.2 TERMINOLOGY IN THE FIELD OF EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION**

The terminology that is used in the ECCE field has caused some confusion and has created communication issues. The field of early childhood does not have a nationally agreed-upon vocabulary to describe the many different job roles associated with the work of caring for and educating young children (Kagan, Kauerz, & Tarrant, 2008). A report was commissioned by the National Research Council (2012) to address the lack of a uniformly accepted definition of the early childhood workforce (Bowman, et al, 2001). This report entitled *Eager to Learn: Educating our preschoolers* determined that any individual who is paid for the care and education of children age birth through five and is not in kindergarten is a member of the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) workforce. This definition was derived from focusing on the function of the work provided regardless of the program or setting in which it occurs. Thus, the term ECCE workforce was the adapted term from this report which was intended to provide a clear definition of who is in the workforce and how the quality of services could be improved. According to this definition, individuals who work in the various programs that serve young children such as child care centers (both non-profit and for profit), preschools or nursery schools (half day programs), Head Start programs (federally funded full or half day for children age three through five), and prekindergarten programs (federal and state funded full or half day programs for children age 4 and 5) should be referred to as the ECCE workforce.

However, in many studies and in the literature, this is not the case. Most studies concentrate on individuals who work hands-on with young children from one particular sector of the field such as center-based child care, preschool, Head Start or pre-K programs (Pianta, 2012) even though the education of young children occurs across all of these programs. The studies in this review refer to the ECCE workforce based on the program in which they work. For example, individuals who work in child care centers are referred to as childcare workers, childcare staff, early childhood teachers, caregivers, or teachers (Whitebook & Darrah, 2013).

Adults who have the responsibility for overseeing early childhood programs are also referred to as directors, administrators, supervisors, coordinators, or teacher-directors. With the integration of pre-K programs, the program leader may also be called principals or superintendents (Pianta, 2012). Unless a study specifically states otherwise, leaders of ECCE programs in this review will be referred to as directors.

## **2.3 HISTORY OF EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES**

### **2.3.1 Introduction**

The history of child care has provided the current foundation for early childhood programs and also helps in planning for the future (Pianta, 2012). It is suggested that the need to understand the history of early childhood care and education is necessary because it provides a rootedness to current policies and practices (Nutbrown, Clough & Selbie, 2008). Interestingly, the ECCE workforce is referred to as being ahistorical because when new ideas, concepts, or debates are

presented, it seems as though they are being presented for the first time (Isenberg & Jalongo, 1997). This means that nothing has really been learned from the past and similar debates continue all over again about the same issues. Nonetheless, issues such as federal and state government investments in child care, access to programs, appropriate curriculum, teacher preparation, professional development, low wages, and high educator turnover have been topics of concern for many decades (Pianta, 2012).

As mentioned, the field of ECCE in the United States evolved based on political, economic, societal, and cultural factors and on the needs of the country, families, and cultural opinions about women working outside of the home since the late 1800s (Lascardes & Hinitz, 2000). The history of child care in the United States is well documented from the middle 1800s through current times (Lascardes & Hinitz, 2000; Hymes, 1991; Nutbrown, Clough, Selbie, 2008). The following section will describe how child care has changed from early programs that provided just basic physical care in programs to currently where child care programs are expected to provide both appropriate care and education.

### **2.3.2 Child Care Beginnings**

In the United States, society and culture have played a role in the earliest formal child care that was offered for young children. In the early 1800s, women of financial means wanted to perform a social service in their communities by caring for children of working wives and widows who were economically disadvantaged in society or physically or emotionally unable to care for their own children (Scarr & Weinberg, 1986). The first recorded “day nursery” were the Boston Infant School (1828) and the Nursery for the Children of Poor Women in New York City (1852) (Lascardes & Hinitz, 2000). At that time, young children were cared for in conditions

that were considered custodial, meaning that the care was considered low quality and non-educational. The term custodial care is described as “taking custody” of children while mothers were employed (Lascardes & Hinitz, 2000, p. 360). The custodial care that was offered at the time focused basically on the physical needs of children such as toileting, eating, and staying safe and was not motivated by a belief in the importance of early education (Scarr & Weinberg, 1986).

Volunteer child care for young children of poor families that were operated by religious organizations continued to grow until the 1920s. It was then that a new form of early childhood education was introduced, the nursery school, which served four and five year old children in the private sector. This new form of education continued to provide care and a safe environment but added educational goals as well (Spodek, Saracho & Peters, 1988). Additionally, interest in the field of child study increased as institutes of higher education began to add child development study into the curriculum as well as laboratory nursery schools in order to conduct research. Of interest during this period is the insistence that the early childhood workers in these nursery schools did not want to be referred to as teachers, but rather as child development specialists. This trend is currently reversed with ECCE workers wanting to be identified as teachers in order to identify more with teachers in primary schools (Spodek, Saracho, & Peters, 1988).

An important event that occurred during the late 1920s was the initiation of the National Association for Nursery Educators (NANE) which eventually changed its name in the 1960’s to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Currently NAEYC is the nation’s leading organization for early childhood professionals with the mission of promoting excellence in programs for young children birth through age eight (NAEYC, 2014). A small group of early childhood educators originally founded NANE out of concern for the many

nursery school and child care programs that were starting for young children and were being staffed by individuals without any knowledge of child development. In 1934, this group of early childhood educators eventually became very active in the administration of early childhood programs of the Works Project Administration (WPA). The WPA was a relief measure created by the federal government for the purpose of providing jobs for unemployed teachers (Morris & Morris, 1996). The early childhood educators associated with NANE were concerned because only 6.5% of the teachers who were hired had any knowledge or experience teaching young children (Lascarides & Hinitz, 2000). The number of WPA programs for young children of low income families increased in number from 1934 to the beginning of World War II in 1941. Eventually there were 1,900 federally funded centers serving 75,000 young children (Lascarides & Hinitz, 2000).

At the beginning of World War II, many of the WPA child care programs began to phase out. However, more government support became available through the Defense Public Works Law, known as the Lanham Act (Cryer & Clifford 2003; Hymes, 1991). The funds were intended to support a nationwide program of child care centers with the intention of enabling mothers who had young children to work in factories in order to support both their families and the war efforts. The child care centers were operated locally and varied in service and quality. Some centers remained open for 24 hours, 6 days a week in order to accommodate all factory work shifts. Between 1943 and February, 1946 approximately 52 million children received federally funded child care services (Scarr & Weinberg, 1986). The funds for child care began to decrease by the end of the war. When the funds finally ended, 26 states wrote to the Federal Works Administration requesting that their child care centers remain open for the mothers who were the sole income providers for their families and for the mothers who had husbands who

were still overseas. Funds were extended for approximately 1,000 centers until July, 1946, but eventually many of the centers had to close because operating them was too expensive without government support (Michel, 1999).

Government support for child care occurred during World War II that influenced the expansion of child care nationally. According to Hymes (1979) who has documented this early history, Edgar Kaiser, a manager at a Portland Oregon shipyard, was responsible for a federal contract that would manufacture ships to be used for the war. He was able to negotiate with the federal government for the cost of operating child care centers for the young children of the women who worked in the shipyard. He also recognized that it would be necessary to provide child care for the workers in order to maintain a profit and meet post war production deadlines.

Initially, Kaiser assumed that anyone would be able to care for young children. After seeking the advice of Lois Meek Stolz, who was the director of the Child Development Institute at Columbia University Teachers College, he began to understand child care in a more professional light and as an integral part of a young child's development. Lois Meek Stolz eventually became the director of the Kaiser child care programs (Kirp, 2012). Kaiser and Stolz made it their mission to provide the best child care that was possible knowing that this would enable the workforce to be able to concentrate on their jobs as well as to reduce absenteeism of workers.

At the height of ship building, there were 1,005 young children who were in Kaiser child care programs which were located right next to the entrance of the shipyard (Lascardes & Hinitz, 2000). Furthermore, the children ages birth through age 5 had access to 24 hour care which served all three working shifts. They were cared for by teachers who all had college degrees and adequate salaries, a full time registered nurse who administered to sick children, and a

nutritionist who planned snacks and meals. Also, the rooms for the children were spacious and colorful with child sized sinks, toilets and furniture and housed many books, musical instruments, easels, and carpentry equipment. The outdoor space provided sandboxes, swings, climbing equipment and the daily schedule consisted of story time, play time, meal time and nap time all arranged to fit in with the rhythm of a child's day. At the end of each work shift, a hot meal was available to be taken home for each family. The fees for this service were affordable for the working women due to the funds provided by the federal government. Hymes (1979) indicated that many mothers noticed that their young children had more language and were more self-reliant than before they entered child care. This type of child care was considered the best model available at the time integrating both nurturance and early education based on current child development research (Kirp, 2012). But, again, when the war ended, these child care programs were closed and women who worked during the war were now expected to return home to resume caring for their children and their home. And, for the few centers that were able to remain open, quality suffered.

Because of the rise of child care centers during World War II and the initiation of NANE/NAEYC, there was now some national attention on the quality of care for all ECCE programs (Hymes, 1991). Child care as a means of providing not only care but also early education was now a topic for consideration. It has been suggested that if the publicity of the Kaiser child care program focused more on the value of early childhood education and less on how child care was provided to help the economy in time of need, that ECCE would look very different today (Kirp, 2012). In other words, the idea that young children of poor and/or working class families would benefit from early and appropriate educational experiences could have been



better promoted during this period. Instead, child care was viewed as a temporary fix to an economic problem.

### **2.3.3 Child Care and Early Education**

After the government intervention in child care and the inception of a national organization, the philosophy of child care continued to change. The difference between what was considered “nursery school” and “child care” became more distinctive (Isenberg & Jalongo, 1997). Nursery schools closely resembled the early day nurseries of the 1800’s only now they served families who wanted to provide some socialization outside of the home and who were able to pay for early educational opportunities (Isenberg & Jalongo, 1997). Nursery schools for children ages three to five years are typically shorter in duration, mostly half day programs, and are expected to focus on the developmental needs of children and the promotion of children’s social, emotional and intellectual development (Cahan, 1989; Wrigley, 1991). Child care, on the other hand, offers full day and year round service for children often from 6 weeks in age through school age and is traditionally focused on the needs and schedules of the working family. The distinction between child care, which accommodate the needs of working families, and nursery schools, which address the developmental needs of children, are often blurred (Cryer & Clifford, 2003).

In 1954, the federal government again allocated funds for the support of child care programs (Gable, 2014). The funds came in the form of a child care tax credit for working mothers who were widowed, divorced, or separated regardless of their income. Mothers who were receiving subsidy from the government and who had children over age three, would now have to work and needed child care. According to Gable (2014) this is currently the federal

government's only contribution to low income parents for a portion of their child care. It was also difficult for poor families even to afford the co-pay for child care even with a tax credit. In addition, there was concern for the quality of care that was being offered in programs for low-income children, especially the care offered to infants and toddlers (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 1997).

The High Scope Perry Preschool Project began in 1962 as a study into early childhood education and is still gathering data on the first children in this study. This well-known, often quoted, longitudinal study followed a group of 123 children who were born into poverty (Schweinhart et al, 2005). Children ages 3 and 4 were randomly divided into 2 groups: one group participated in a high quality preschool program based on a participatory learning approach while the second group received no preschool. Findings from this study indicated that children who attend high quality programs have higher test scores, fewer behavior problems and lower rates of grade repetition. In a recent phase of this study, 97% of the students who are still living were interviewed at age 40 (Schweinhart et al, 2005). This data also shows that students who had the high quality preschool experience were more likely to have a job, committed fewer crimes, and were more likely to have graduated from high school.

President Lyndon B. Johnson initiated the War on Poverty in 1964 (Morris & Morris, 1996). As a part of his efforts to end poverty, he appointed a panel of experts to address research showing that there is negative impact on a child's ability to succeed in education if they live in poverty (Ziglar & Barnett, 2011). The panel developed a program for three to five year old children called Head Start, a comprehensive child development program for economically disadvantaged families (Head Start, 2014). Head Start programs were designed to support the emotional, social, health, nutritional and psychological needs of children. Parents were

encouraged to participate in their child's education and many were hired to work in the classrooms. Head Start programs currently still serve poor families and have expanded to include Early Head Start which serves children birth to age three. These programs continue to exist today. The initiation of Head Start brought issues of young children's development into the forefront of the nation and the term early childhood education began to be more readily used (MacEwan, 2013). Other ECCE programs began to increase in number nationally. However, the federal government and early childhood experts continued to disagree on any further policies for young children that involved standards, regulations, or licensing issues (Lascarides & Hinitz, 2000).

The late 1960s provided the first Federal Inter-Agency Day Care Regulations developed to provide safe environments and quality sites for low income children (Morgan, 2014). However, these regulations were not mandated by the federal government and only served as examples of best practices for states to follow. These regulations continued to be a source of conflict between the states and the federal government for the next decade. The disagreements centered mostly on adult-child ratios and maximum group size and were never resolved.

In the 1970s and the early 1980s, issues around child care remained controversial and a source of disagreement (Whitebook, 2002). A notable action by the federal government in 1971 was the successful passage of the Comprehensive Child Development Bill by the United States Congress (Comprehensive Child Development Act, 1971). This bill was designed to provide a comprehensive and an affordable system of child care which included a sliding scale payment system that would benefit poor and middle class families. However, President Nixon vetoed the bill in 1972 citing that such a bill would weaken the family structure and encourage a communal approach to raising children (Roth, 1976).

The second wave of feminism which began in the 1960s and lasted through the 1980s is credited for women making job gains and changing social attitudes toward working women. Betty Friedan (1963) was cited for calling attention to the sense of unhappiness and depression among many non-working women who seemed to be asking “Is this all there is?” Eventually the Equal Pay Act in 1963 provided women with more work opportunities as well as President John Kennedy’s appointment of The President’s Commission on the Status of Women which eventually became a part of the U.S. Women’s Bureau. Policies were now in place that would improve working conditions and advance opportunities for women. Changes in thinking about women in the workforce and new policies would eventually result in women entering the workforce in great numbers (U.S Census Bureau, 2014).

Women with young children who were entering the workforce in the 1970’s faced an inadequate supply of child care services (Whitebook, 2002). Not only was there not enough child care, a report commissioned by the National Council of Jewish Women entitled *Windows on Day Care* indicated that large numbers of children were being neglected and at best, child care centers could only be called custodial and at worst, deplorable (Keyserling,1972). This report also called attention to the expensive cost of good child care and what Gwen Morgan (Marshall et al, 2001) called a trilemma referring to the interrelationship of workforce salaries, affordability and availability of care.

The defeat of the Comprehensive Child Care Act in 1971 was followed by a lack of vision and solutions to the issues of quality and affordable child care for the nation (Whitebook, 2002). Eventually in 1981, the presidential veto became a non-issue with the introduction of the Title XX welfare reform which granted each state the right to decide on their individual child

care regulations. Currently, each state has a different set of child care regulations (Children's Defense Fund, 2013) leading to variability in quality.

Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP) became the professional standard beginning in the 1980s emphasizing that programs for young children should provide learning and opportunities to support social, emotional, physical and cognitive needs at both an individual and group level (Bredekamp & Copple, 2009). Although there has been criticism of DAP based on the lack of empirical research measuring outcomes and efficacy and the lack of attention given to diversity and cultural influences (Van Horn, Karlin, Ramey, 2012), these guidelines still remain in effect currently. Currently there are 7,000 accredited programs nationally impacting 600,000 children (NAEYC, 2015). Additionally, the practice oriented and research based journal, *Young Children*, became an important means of communicating appropriate practices about caring for and teaching young children. Also, a number of position statements addressing a variety of topics in early childhood care education and professional preparation became available (NAEYC, 2014). The literature on DAP increased at the same time that research on brain development indicated that the first five years of life were critical in terms of learning and developmental growth (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). This recognition of developmentally appropriate practices and the rapid brain growth in the early years, along with the press of working women for proper child care arrangements, generated greater demands for programs serving young children.

The *No Child Left Behind* Act of 2001 had implications for early childhood education. Vander Ven (2008) claims that this educational policy has reduced the recognition of the crucial role of play in promoting the positive development of children. With public attention on accountability and high stakes testing, there is pressure even at the preschool level to include

workbooks, homework, and tutoring which creates an academic rather than a developmental approach to learning. If the educational climate in ECCE programs does not reflect play based learning, such as the type of care that was offered in the Kaiser child care program, then young children are indeed being left behind (Vander Ven, 2008).

Research during the last few decades has shown that ECCE leads to increased school readiness, can reduce the achievement gap in low income children, and can lead to more academic success once children enter elementary school (Gable, 2014). Beneficial outcomes for children in child care are now encouraged by providing both nurturance and developmental support for early learning (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000).

#### **2.3.4 Early Childhood Education and Pre-K**

As the need for child care and quality programs continue, policy makers still often perceive a distinction between preschool and child care believing that preschool is tied to education and child care is a “fill in for parenting, a way of getting, and keeping mothers on the job” (Kirp, 2007, p. 137). This can be seen most clearly in the way publicly funded pre-kindergarten (pre-K) programs for four year old children are currently being implemented nationwide. Pre-K programs are referred to as a Universal Preschool Movement influenced by research showing that early childhood education has a substantial impact on early learning (Yoshikawa, et al., 2013).

The federal government provides funding support for Head Start programs and limited funds for pre-K programs. In Pennsylvania, for example, approximately 11,000 four year old children whose families meet economic guidelines have been enrolled in pre-K programs since

2008 with enrollment expected to grow as federal and state funds are increased (OCDEL, 2014). Quality and availability of programs raise concerns for all states.

The components of pre-K programs must meet or exceed nearly every quality benchmark set by the National Institute for Early Childhood Research (NIEER) (Barnett et al, 2013). Although program quality can be defined in a variety of ways, NIEER has defined quality according to ten benchmarks in order to measure state funded pre-K programs: comprehensive early learning standards, employing teachers with bachelor's degrees, employing teacher's with specialization in early childhood education, employing assistant teachers with a child development associate's or equivalent degrees, require at least 15 hours a year of professional development, a maximum class size of 20 children, require that staff/child ratios be no more than 10:1, provide comprehensive vision services, provide at least one meal per day, and assure state visits from appropriate agencies to ensure program quality. States vary on the quality that is provided. Being enrolled in a pre-K program does not guarantee program quality. As of 2008, only two states had met all of the benchmarks for quality and fewer than 10% of programs provided very high quality care (U.S. Dept. of Human Services, 2006).

Even though research on early childhood programs for young children is well documented and indicates that quality programs can be important to the social, emotional, physical and cognitive growth of all children, most states have made it possible for only of a small percentage of children to receive a quality pre-K education (Children's Defense Fund, 2012). The pre-K plan meets the needs of some but not all families for several reasons: there is not enough funding for all preschool aged children in each state to attend a program, all families may not meet the income guidelines, and all programs do not meet the needs of working families (Children's Defense Fund, 2012). Approximately 63% of low income families nationwide, who

have three and four year old children, were not able to attend a pre-K program because of lack of available programs (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2013).

President Obama indicated in his 2014 State of the Union address that all children should have access to quality preschool (White House, 2013). He stated that research shows that one of the best investments that can be made in a child's life is high quality early education, thus, President Obama's call for a ten year, \$75 billion dollar proposal to invest in Universal pre-K is timely and will cause much national discussion (White House, 2013).

Too few young children receive the benefits from high quality programs whether they are in pre-K programs or child care centers. It is not only pre-K programs that do not meet the benchmarks for quality (U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, 2006), but also child care centers are ranked low in quality as well (NACCRRA, 2013). Using both program standards and regulation guidelines, scores for the top ten ranking states range from 130 to 106 out of a possible 150 points. All ten states received a "C" grade and the next 20 ranked states scored a "D". The last 21 states earned a score of 60 points or less. The program standards were based on 11 items: staff background checks, center director qualifications, lead teacher qualifications, orientation or initial training on specific topics for new staff, staff with twenty-four or more hours of yearly training, planned learning activities that address specific developmental domains, adherence to recommended health practices in 10 specific areas, adherence to recommended safety practices in ten specific areas, parent involvement and written policies, staff-child ratios that comply with NAEYC accreditation standards, and group size requirements that comply with NAEYC accreditation standards (NACCRRA, 2013). Regulation standards were scored on the following items: center inspections at least four times a year, program to licensing staff no larger



than 50 centers to one license representative, licensing staff must have a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or a related field, and on-line and inspection reports must be available on-line. Although the report states that progress has been made since the initial report in 2007, more progress is needed to ensure safe and quality centers.

### **2.3.5 Summary**

Child care has taken on many forms and has served many different needs since its inception in the United States in the 1800s. Initially, it started as a volunteer service for poor mothers and their children. Subsequently child care has since expanded and diversified into many different types of programs. Primarily, child care was designed to provide a safe place to stay while mothers were at work and did not aim to serve any educational purpose.

When the federal government provided funding support for child care for a political and economic purpose, such as during war time, child care centers flourished not only in quantity but also in quality. Because these centers were well supported financially and administered by early childhood experts, they were able to provide quality programs for young children based on best child development practices. Educational gains such as improved language development especially for children from low income families were noticed by families.

Quality in ECCE programs declined when government funds were no longer available. Programs could no longer afford to retain caregivers who had a college degree or some education in early childhood. The cost of child care without any supplemental funds was too high. Nursery schools for children of middle class families were not affected and the cost was kept affordable because they were mainly half-day programs.

Research on the benefit of early childhood programs convinced policy makers at the government level that ECCE would help young children from poor families gain a head start when they entered public school. Head Start programs that were developed in 1962 are still providing education to four and five year old children today. After a disappointing defeat of a congressional Bill that would provide comprehensive child care for all families no matter what their income level, child care became a low priority issue. A national report indicating that the child care that was available was of poor quality and sometimes deplorable provided a sound reason for those who believed that women with children should stay at home and not be employed. But history shows that this was not the case. According to a report from the United States Department of Labor (2012) three out of four women with children are in the workforce and 68.8% have children who are under six years of age. From 1969 – 1996 the increase for this population was 84%. Child care centers are still the preferred choice of families for out of home care.

The early years are known as an important time for learning (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). Child care is no longer viewed as just a service for working families, but as an educational opportunity. Pre-K programs are gaining in popularity throughout all states with the promise of federal support. Unfortunately, many states are providing the programs, but the quality is being questioned (Kirp, 2012). Also, the pre-K programs are only for mostly four year olds from low income families. Unless child care can benefit the government in some way or support low income families, monetary support does not appear to be forthcoming.

At the beginning of question two, there was a reference claiming that early childhood care and education appears to be ahistorical because when any new ideas, concepts, or debates are presented, it seems like they are being presented for the first time (Isenberg & Jalongo,

1997). After a review of child care in the United States, one can question what progress has been made for all children in a country where it is said that we will “leave no child behind.”

The ECCE workforce will be the focus of the next two sections which will review some important issues that have been referred to in the child care story at the beginning of this review related to the current status of ECCE caregivers, educators, and directors of programs.

## **2.4 CURRENT STATUS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION WORKFORCE PREPARATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **2.4.1 Introduction**

There are debates in the field of ECCE about what combination of formal education, specialized training, and work experiences are the best for ECCE program staff (Bloom & Sheerer, 1992). Studies have shown that training and education of the ECCE workforce is positively related to quality care (Whitebook, Howes & Phillips, 1989; Helburn, 1995). The more training and the higher level of education, the more a staff member will provide nurturing and quality experiences for young children. According to a report by NACCRRRA (2012) training, retention and compensation are the best indicators of child care quality. All of these issues are interrelated with professional development that affect individuals who work in ECCE generally and child care center staff in particular.

ECCE workers are all underpaid but child care center workers in particular continue to earn poverty level wages. According to the U.S. Department of Labor (2012) child care workers are among the lowest paid in the United States with only twenty-four of 823 occupations having

lower average wages. This same report lists amusement park ride attendants as making more money than some child care staff. It is no wonder that the field is plagued with individuals who are reluctant to enter the field or stay in the field. Even an individual who is well trained and has a college degree has no guarantee of career advancement, higher wages, or even a job with benefits. The expectations of child care center staff in terms of knowledge of child development and appropriate practices are high and keep getting higher as the field continues to grow, but the wages continue to remain low.

The following is a discussion of some of the issues affecting the ECCE workforce, and in particular child care center workers and directors. Professional development, preparation and training are interrelated with compensation, turnover, and retention that impact the entire field of ECCE.

#### **2.4.2 Preparation and education of the ECCE workforce**

Professional development has been defined as “facilitated teaching and learning experiences designed to enhance a practitioner’s knowledge, skills, and dispositions as well as their capacity to provide high-quality early learning experiences for children” (Snyder et al, 2012 p. 188). Training opportunities will vary in content, length and intensity and often occur in the form of workshops, conference presentations, on-line classes, on-site training by the director, or on-site training from an invited presenter.

Individuals planning to work or who already work in child care centers will vary on the amount of preparation, formal education such as college credits or a degree in ECCE, and training that they are required to have. State regulations vary in the amount and type of preparation that is needed with some states requiring only a high school diploma to work in a

child care center (Barnett, 2008). Overall, state licensing policies that guide the ECCE workforce training and required qualifications are said to be inadequate (Whitebook, et al, 1993).

Child care workers who have more training and education are more likely to be nurturing, reinforce early learning skills and enhance children's learning (Howes, 1983). Also, the quality of care and instruction in center based care is higher when the staff hold a Bachelor's degree than when they do not (Burchinal, et al, 2002). ECCE staff are the key in providing positive outcomes for young children in ECCE programs (Hymes, 2003) and overall, child care workers can do a better job when they have formal education (McCartney & Phillips, 2008). Further, NACCRRRA (2012) contends that the amount of formal education, such as college credit or degrees associated with child development is a strong predictor of engagement in appropriate activities and positive interactions that help prepare young children for later school experiences. Other studies also show that better educated staff will provide higher quality care and education (Whitebook, 2003).

The National Child Care Staffing Study (Whitebook et al, 1993) is a large scale longitudinal study that began in 1998 and concluded nine years later. Data was collected from 1,309 teachers, 444 assistant teachers, and 228 center directors with samples in 5 states. The focus of this study was on how child care staff and their working conditions influenced the quality of care. Measurements used were classroom observations, staff sensitivity scales, and standardized tests that assessed children's development. One important finding of the study showed that staff who had a bachelor's degree and college level course work demonstrated the highest level of quality care (Whitebook et al., 1993). Findings from this study are instrumental in informing the design of ECCE programs especially in the areas of staff recruitment and retention.

The National Day Care Study (1979) is another well-known study that provide evidence that training is related to quality. A total of 64 child care centers in three different cities participated in the study. Measurements used were classroom staff observation tools, child behavior assessments, and standardized tests that would determine child outcomes. Higher levels of staff training were shown to be related to higher levels of center quality. The researchers indicated in their findings that it was difficult to analyze the differences in specialized training and education because both occur in a variety of contexts and the training varied according to intensity, length, content, delivery, and quality.

Despite the evidence that quality care is higher when staff are well qualified, state education requirements for child care staff range from requiring a Bachelor's Degree in early childhood education or a related field to just earning a high school diploma (NICHD, 2006; Barnett, 2008). A population survey conducted over the past 25 years found that the qualifications of ECCE educators and administrators has declined relative to the workforce as a whole (Herzenberg, et al, 2005). Additionally, in a data sample of ECCE teachers during 2000-2003, not including pre-K teachers, it was found that only 30% had a four year degree and that the least educated were more likely to be working in Head Start programs or for-profit child care. Further, training requirements range from no training requirements to requiring up to 24 hours of specialized training per year.

With the prospect of high work expectations combined with low salaries, it is difficult to attract child care center workers into the field as well as have them remain in the field. Even with states creating ECCE career plans for staff such at the Pennsylvania's Career Lattice (PA Keys- Career Development, 2014) where staff are encouraged to plan for their educational

pathways according to the position that they want to attain, attracting well-prepared staff and having them remain in the field is a concern (McArtney & Phillips, 2008).

Formal education and training of child care staff impact the quality of care and education. Other factors such as staff compensation also affect the quality of care and will be further discussed in the next section.

### **2.4.3 Compensation**

Compensation for ECCE staff is one of the most pressing issues for ECCE staff and it has been the same for the past four decades (Whitebook & Darrah, 2013) even though studies have shown that better compensation for early childhood staff is linked to higher quality care and education (Barnett, 2002). Low compensation of child care workers contributes to high staff turnover which has been shown to jeopardize the quality of care (Whitebook, 2002) as well as program stability, program quality, teacher behavior and child outcomes (NICHD, 2006).

The well-being of adults who work in ECCE is a cornerstone of the program environment (National Research Council, 2012). Low compensation has also shown that early childhood educators experience ill health and depression which are conditions that prevent adults from supporting the developmental needs and care of children (Center for the Developing Child, 2009). While studying the detrimental effects of child care workers well-being, it was reported that higher than average depression rates in child care workers were associated with compromised interactions with children (Hamre & Pianta, 2004). Another study conducted on 2,199 Head Start staff in 66 different programs found that workers had poorer physical and mental health than other U.S. women with similar economic demographics and characteristics.

Several health indicators were higher such as more unhealthy days, depression, and 3 or more physical conditions (Center for Disease Control, 2012).

Although it is expected that both preschool and child care programs provide care and appropriate learning experiences for young children (Isenberg & Jalongo, 1997), there is a difference in the compensation and job description between the staff/teachers that work in them. Although there is much variation by state, according to a report of the U.S. Bureau of Labor & Statistics (2014) preschool teachers earn a median amount of \$10.25 per hour and are expected to have at least an associate's degree, educate and care for children who have not yet entered kindergarten, teach reading, writing, science and other subjects in a way that children can understand. In the same report, child care workers are said to earn a median salary of \$9.38 per hour or a median annual wage of \$19,510 per year and are expected to attend to children and perform a variety of tasks such as dressing, feeding, bathing, and overseeing play. Pennsylvania child care workers basically follow this trend and have an hourly mean wage of \$9.88 and an annual mean wage of \$20,550. The national rates of compensation will vary according to states and programs but the standard median pay for a preschool teacher or child care worker of children ages 3 to 5 years is \$25,700 per year which is barely above the federal poverty level for a family of four (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013). Also, it is estimated that only 44 % of child care workers would be able to support themselves and their families on their own wages (Whitebook, 2013).

Because of low compensation it is difficult to attract and retain high quality individuals into the field of early childhood (Olson, 2002). Whitebook (2011) claims that due to low compensation, many women of intelligence and competence who cannot afford to work for such low salaries will not consider work in the ECCE field. There is a wage penalty for women child



care workers because the pay they receive is 31% less than that earned by other women with similar qualifications who work in other occupations (Brandon et al, 2009). As well, college students with an interest in ECCE will most likely not plan to work in a child care center. An example of this is illustrated in a study on the role of compensation in occupational selection, intention to be in the ECCE field, and turnover (Torquati et al, 2007). It was found that first year college ECCE students reported greater dissatisfaction with their practicum experiences completed in child care centers than the practicum's completed in Kindergarten classrooms. Only 9% of the students intended to work in child care centers after graduation while 43% planned to work in Kindergarten classrooms (Torquati et al., 2007). The students perceived disadvantages of working in child care sites as compensation being too low, length of work year too long, and number of hours per week too many. Thus, half of the sample of students selected out of working in child care centers before beginning their careers. Low compensation is related to low status of the field which is likely to continue to limit its appeal to college graduates (National Research Council, 2012).

As expectations for quality of child care and education are raised, the level of competence of the workforce is not increasing as well. The field needs financial support if quality is to improve (Helburn, 1995). Unfortunately, there is no indication that current policies are focused on improving compensation for early childhood educators (Guernsey et. al., 2014). Quality child care is expensive because it requires well trained and educated individuals with a good knowledge of child care and education who must earn an adequate wage if they are to be attracted to or remain in the field (Whitebook & Darrach, 2013). It is estimated that parent fees cover less than half of the full cost of child care and that 20% of the cost is carried by ECCE workers who are poorly compensated (Helburn, 1995). Furthermore, the challenge of low

wages, cost of care, quality and child outcomes, though having received much attention and study during the past 40 years, has yet to be resolved (Helburn, 1995).

The well-being of adults who work in ECCE is a cornerstone of the program environment (National Research Council, 2012). However, poorly compensated early childhood educators experience ill health and depression. These conditions of course prevent adults from supporting the developmental needs and care of children (Center for the Developing Child, 2009). While studying the detrimental effects of child care workers well-being, it was reported that higher than average depression rates in child care workers were associated with compromised interactions with children (Hamre & Pianta, 2004). Another study conducted on 2,199 Head Start staff in 66 different programs found that workers had poorer physical and mental health than other U.S. women with similar economic demographics and characteristics. Several health indicators were higher such as unhealthier days, depression, and 3 or more physical conditions (Center for Disease Control, 2012).

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Because of the low compensation it is difficult to attract and retain high quality individuals into the field of early childhood (Olson, 2002). Whitebook (2011) claims that due to low compensation, many women of intelligence and competence who cannot afford to work for such low salaries will not consider work in the ECCE field. There is a wage penalty for women child care workers because the pay is 31% less than other women with similar qualifications who work in other occupations (Brandon et al, 2009). College students with an interest in ECCE will most likely not plan to work in a child care center. An example of this is illustrated in a study on the role of compensation in occupational selection, intention to be in the ECCE field, and turnover (Torquati et al, 2007). It was found that first year college ECCE students reported greater dissatisfaction with their practicum experiences completed in child care centers than the practicum completed in Kindergarten classrooms. Only 9% of the students intended to work in child care centers after graduation while 43% planned to work in Kindergarten classrooms (Torquati et al., 2007). The students perceived disadvantages of working in child care sites as compensation being too low, length of work year too long, and number of hours per week too many. Thus, half of the sample of students selected out of working in child care centers before

beginning their careers. Low compensation is related to low status of the field which is likely to continue to limit its appeal to college graduates (National Research Council, 2012).

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#### **2.4.4 Turnover and retention**

Low wages have also been associated with high turnover (Whitebook, 2002) which is known to be harmful to children. Several studies show that children are more aggressive with peers, are more withdrawn, spend less time engaged in social activities with peers, and spend more time in aimless wandering in centers when turnover rates are high (Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes Study Team, 1995). High turnover also leads to inconsistency of care which has been found to negatively impact children's attention, security, and behavior (Whitebook & Sakai, 2003). In a field where attachment between children and caregivers is important, the annual turnover rate for child care staff is too high (Center for Child Care Workforce, 2004). Having two or three

teachers in one year for young children negatively effects program quality and interferes with attachments that young children form with their caregivers (Whitebook et al, 1990).

Centers with staff turnover rates lower than 10% annually were rated higher in combined measures of quality such as adult/child ratios, group size, and more advanced child language and pre-math skills (Helburn, 1995). In addition, children displayed more positive attitudes toward their child care situation, had more positive self-concepts, had good relationships with their teachers and demonstrated positive social behavior.

Young children in ECCE programs are at risk of receiving poor quality care and education because the ECCE workforce members are leaving the field in large numbers (Stremmel, 1991) or they are not entering the field at all (Helburn, 1995; Whitebook & Bellum, 1999). Child care workers have indicated that low satisfaction with their wages was the most important factor influencing their decision for leaving the field. In addition there are few job benefits and limited opportunities for advancement (Gable & Halliburton, 2003). Only 1 in 4 workers in center based child care have health benefits (Herzenberg, et al, 2005). The turnover rate of center based care and education workers is higher than elementary school teachers. According to Whitebook and Bellm (1999), the average annual rate of leaving child care jobs is more than four times greater than the 7% turnover found among elementary schools or 26% to 48% annually (Whitebook, Phillips, Howes, 1993).

Three main types of turnover have been identified by Whitebook & Sakai (2003). The first type is job turnover which occurs when a worker leaves the child care center but does not leave the field. An example of this would be a child care worker with a teaching certificate leaving the job to take an elementary teacher position. The second type of turnover is position turnover which occurs when a worker takes on another role within the same center, for example,

when a new classroom is added a worker may take on that new position. Moving positions within a center may be viewed as a positive for the worker and the center, but may be detrimental to the young children who have grown attached to their teacher. The third type of turnover is occupational turnover which occurs when the worker leaves not only the center but the field of ECCE. Leaving the field impacts everyone in the program (Pianta, 2012). Data shows that 42% move to other centers, 8% move to resource and referral agencies, 7 % move to K-12 education, and 21% leave the field altogether (Whitebook et al, 2001).

Whitebook and Sakia (2013) have suggested that turnover in child care centers is not necessarily a negative phenomenon in some situations. Centers may be experiencing what they term stagnation, whereby they may have workers staying at their jobs even though they are burned out or because they have nowhere else to work. In this case, turnover for some staff may actually be welcomed if they lack the skill to care for and educate young children appropriately.

Turnover and compensation of the ECCE workforce are inter-related and both impact the quality of a program. Not only does low compensation and high job turnover rates affect the appropriate care and education that is necessary for positive, relationship based child care, it impacts the inability of the ECCE workforce to improve over time (Whitebook & Sakai, 2004). In other words, workers do not stay in the field long enough to improve their skills and grow professionally.

ECCE continues to be a field where most staff, are underpaid and undervalued and is continually losing good workers because of poor wages and benefits. Directors of child care programs encounter some unique professional development challenges.

### **2.4.5 Director Preparation**

Directors of ECCE programs have the responsibility for overseeing their entire program and are said to be the gatekeepers to quality because they set the tone for what is expected in terms of teaching interactions and child outcomes (Bella & Bloom, 2003). Directors are also referred to as leaders, administrators, and teacher-directors (Pianta, 2012). Despite their crucial role, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2012) the median yearly wage for a child care director with a Bachelor's degree is \$43,950 which is higher than in 2008 when it was \$37,015. Although wages are variable based on factors such as type, size, and location of the program, center directors earn only approximately \$20,000 a year more than child care workers. The Bureau of Labor (2012) predicts that the demand for child care center directors as well as preschool directors will increase by 12% through 2018.

Director turnover is the same as center staff which is 26% to 48% annually (Bloom, 2000). When any job turnover occurs, it drains the energy of the staff. Finding a replacement for the worker may take three to six weeks and children may need to be regrouped to keep within adult/child ratios. Active staff must do more work when other staff members leave and time spent orienting new staff takes time away from working with children (Bloom, 2000). If a qualified person is not available, then someone who is less skilled may be hired. In the field of ECCE, this is often referred to as the warm body syndrome, or hiring someone just to hire someone quickly because children cannot be left unattended (Whitebook et al., 2001, 2004). As unsettling as it is when a staff member leaves, it is even more disruptive when a director leaves a program (Helburn, 1995; Whitbook & Bellum).

The preparation and professional development of directors is similar to that of ECCE staff but separate studies of directors indicate that there are also other factors involved. Most

individuals who enter the field of early child care and education are usually idealistic and eager to improve conditions for young children, but do not always have a plan for achieving professional experiences that will help them reach their goals (Bloom,1997). One study surveyed 257 directors using The Director Role Perception Questionnaire, interviews, and director's narratives to collect data (Bloom, 2000). This study focused on the director's view of their organizations, their perception of administrative roles, and the evaluation of their job. Bloom reported that less than one fifth knew that they wanted to be a child care director or actively sought after the position as a director. Bloom (2000) found that most of the directors said that other people pointed out their leadership abilities to them and encouraged them to take a director position when it was offered. Few of these directors had any administrative training and 90% were teachers in the program before becoming the director. Further, 79% felt unprepared for the kinds of issues with which they were faced and only 32% felt confident and self-assured when taking on the position of director (Bloom, 2000).

Records from the Directors Institute, a professional development and mentoring project managed by Louise Child Care from 1998 – 2001 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (Popovich, 2001) verified similar findings. Of 138 child care directors surveyed, only 8 directors, or 5%, had any previous plans for becoming a child care director. Some written comments revealed that one director wanted to utilize her elementary teacher certification and could not find a job teaching; another director indicated that her college degree was related to early childhood thus making her eligible for a director position according to Pennsylvania state regulations; and one director was promoted to the position where she was already working as a teacher when the director left. The survey also indicated that one center had three different directors in one year (Popovich, 2001).



Cooper, Droddy & Merriam (1998) believe that child care directors, who are competent in their skill and knowledge of working with young children, are not necessarily competent or knowledgeable in their understanding of working with adults. Some similarities and differences between teaching and leading according to Catron & Groves (1999) suggest that for good teaching to occur, one needs self-awareness, knowledge of developmentally appropriate practice, and ability to make effective decisions involving children. On the other hand, for good leading to occur, there must be insight into one's own personal strengths and limitations, knowledge of staff development and evaluation techniques, and the ability to make effective programmatic decisions. Leadership involves internal growth and concerns rather than management concerns which becomes an obstacle to becoming a good leader when moving from teacher to director (Larkins, 1999).

A descriptive study identified the most pressing job stressors and their solutions as perceived by 28 child care directors in San Diego County (Dalton, 1987). Data was gathered using group sessions, questionnaires, and comments from other participants in the program. Findings show that the director's top stressors included staff problems such as high turnover rates, lack of professional commitment of staff, unavailable qualified staff, and inadequate funding. The directors believed that improving their administrative skills would be a solution in solving some of these issues.

In summary, child care directors seem to acquire their jobs with little preparation or planning. Individuals do not plan to become directors but find that they accept the job because they were promoted or encouraged by others who believe they could do the work that is required. Many directors were teachers at their center who were recognized as having good skills working with children. Experience with administration and working with adults is different than working

with children and is often overlooked when directors are hired. It causes upheaval when a staff member leaves a center but is worse when a director leaves. A staff member may have to assume the role of the director until one is hired which will leave a group of children having to adjust to another arrangement with a new caregiver. Although the workload varies widely in terms of increased responsibility, directors have low salaries. More challenges with which directors must contend will further be discussed in the following section.

## **2.5 THE LEADERSHIP OF EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION DIRECTORS**

### **2.5.1 Introduction**

Following is a discussion that explores some leadership challenges that occur as directors' attempt to operate quality centers. First, there will be a discussion of several studies that have focused on the characteristics and leadership styles of directors. Second, will be a review of the importance of director vision and the difference between managing and leading. Next, will be a section on the way that directors handle changes that are necessary for center improvement. Finally, a presentation of conceptual frameworks that pertain to director leadership will be discussed.

## **2.5.2 Director Characteristics and Leadership Styles**

Research on the characteristics and leadership styles on directors is limited although there are several studies that provide findings on director leadership that show positive effects on programs. A child care center has what Quintin (1984) refers to as an organizational climate which is the personality of the program. Many of the studies mentioned below examine director leadership in relationship to the organizational climate including the staff and how leadership defines, initiates, and maintains the established social structure of their organization.

Preschool directors described the expectations and demands of their role in relation to the organization structure and how both formal and informal experiences helped to prepare them for leadership (Larkin, 1992). This qualitative study provides a detailed picture of the director's role and show what kinds of skills and leadership qualities are needed. In a multiple case study, 16 directors with broad ranges of experience were selected from non-profit programs. Data was collected using two semi-structured interviews. Directors were asked to describe their leadership style, educational experiences, and discuss the way their program is governed. Findings indicated that program administration is multifaceted with responsibilities ranging from housekeeping tasks to skilled communication with teachers and parents. Most directors had little formal preparation in administration and they relied on whatever educational and personal experiences that they had. Learning through trial and error was used as a method of learning about leadership. Women directors struggled with perceived tension between being an authority figure while also providing responsive support to the adults in the program. The directors indicated that their position isolated them within their organizations because they lacked peer relationships (Larkin, 1992).

Director leadership behaviors are preferred by all of the staff. Questionnaires were distributed to 65 early childhood staff in 13 child care centers in order to explore their perception of the leadership styles of their directors (Burch, 1987). The staff consistently revealed that they would prefer a director who had leadership characteristic.

The director is the person who assures the quality of the center through motivating and providing professional development for staff. In an effort to understand how directors perceive their work on a daily basis and to understand how directors develop their expertise in their work, a qualitative study (Krieger, 2001) was designed to collect data on eight directors of accredited child care centers who were interviewed twice and then observed in their center. Findings indicated that the directors worked long days that started before all other staff. Their expertise was developed haphazardly through work experiences both related and unrelated to early childhood education such as, short-term workshops or observation of a former director. Krieger (2001) mentioned that the standards that determine who is qualified to be a director vary by state and few programs exist that provide directors with training and professional preparation.

The directors of high quality programs are said to have two leadership characteristics in common. (Bobula, 1996). One characteristic is a balanced leadership style that utilized different approaches depending on the situation. The second characteristic is a mostly female approach which created healthy, responsive, and supportive work environments for the staff. Bobula (1996), in this early study of four child care directors used interviews, the Leadership Style Assessment Tool, the Early Childhood Work Environment Survey, and the SYMLOG Group Average Field Diagrams to investigate the leadership style and organizational climate. Findings indicated that common leadership characteristics were that directors created a work environment with a cohesive staff who worked together in a positive direction. Also, the directors provided

staff with strong supervisor support, opportunities for professional growth, and an appropriate physical setting in which the staff could do their work.

Some common patterns of administrators are described as: caring about their staff and the children, encouraging and supporting staff training; showing appreciation for their staff; and taking time to listen to parental concerns. These findings are from a study that explored what administrator behaviors were associated with center quality (Seplocha, 1998). Other findings revealed that directors: were collaborative in their administrative approach; they encouraged teamwork among staff; and they had strong personal values that influenced their behavior. Data was collected in this study using a case study method along with center observations, and semi-structured interviews involving six early childhood administrators of high quality programs.

The majority of directors use leadership knowledge, skills, and behaviors to be visible in the classrooms and to provide information, consultation, resources, and feedback to staff (Pipa, 1997). Ten directors of state funded child care centers were interviewed and 56 staff members were surveyed to learn how instructional practices could be improved for children. One finding indicated that practices improved when the director created a supportive environment where relationships are developed with children and their families. None of the directors had any previous access to systematic preparation in leadership knowledge, skills or behaviors. A recommendation from this study suggests that directors need to gain knowledge about current issues in early childhood education and leadership, and share this knowledge with their teachers. College and university courses were recommended to help directors learn how to establish a vision for their centers (Pipa, 1997).

Directors indicated that acting professional is important as well as having high standards for their staff and for their program. These findings were from a study conducted on six early

childhood directors (Sciaraffa, 2004). Data was collected during three semi-structured interview sessions that lasted at least one hour each. The patterns that emerged from the director's stories suggested that they all had different personal characteristics and administrative styles. Although all six directors had education in childhood development, six different career paths emerged. Characteristics and administrative styles that the directors did have in common was that they all had great concern for the children and families, high trust in their staff, and belief in teamwork. They also agreed that it was very important to nurture the staff who care in turn care for the children.

Four task performance areas of competencies that are needed by directors have been identified (Bloom, 1989, 1992). Organizational theory and leadership which includes personnel management, understanding of group behavior, and leadership dynamics is first. Second Knowledge of child development and ECCE programming which includes the principles of health, nutrition, and safety is second. The fiscal and legal issues which include laws and regulations required to operate a center, financial skills, fundraising, and grant writing are third. Being able to work with the public, understanding how to work with boards, parents, and the wider community, being aware of the resources that are available, having skill in public relations and being able to articulate and interpret issues effecting children's development, are fourth. A different interpretation of director competence is offered by Kennedy (1987). Instead, Kennedy suggests that directors need expertise in technical skills, expertise in being able to apply theory to situations, the ability for critical analysis, critical reflection and mental flexibility. Finally, they need to continuously evaluate the outcomes of their programs and be able to make revisions.

Although studies on the leadership skills of child care directors are limited, the studies that have been conducted provide information about director leadership behavior and

characteristics. In summary, child care workers have indicated that they prefer to be supervised by a director who has leadership skills. Directors share common traits such as caring, nurturing, and concern for their children and families. Their expectations for centers are high. They encourage teamwork, collaboration, and training. Directors seem to think they are good managers but have not usually had any preparation for being a leader of a center.

### **2.5.3 Vision, Management, and Leadership**

Most studies on ECCE leadership focus on directors and much of what is known is derived from studies of child care quality (Bella & Bloom, 2003; Bloom & Sheerer, 1998). One study conducted on statewide leaders identified and categorized two entry paths to leadership: the self-selected leader and the reluctant leader (Jones, 1998). The self-selected leaders were those who have always known they were leaders, or who have always believed they had leadership potential and intentionally pursued leadership roles. The reluctant leaders were not sure that they had leadership potential but had been recognized by others as having potential. If they had not been promoted into leadership roles, they might not have taken any initiative. Bruce (2001) claims that there are many incompetent leaders because they were thrust into leadership positions on the basis of technical skills (managing) and expertise with children rather than on the qualities needed to positively influence adult workers (leading).

The differentiation between management and leadership can be derived best from organizational literature from business (Bloom & Bowman, 1997). Managerial functions relate to doing tasks and setting up systems that will get the job done. Leadership functions relate to the broad view of helping a program clarify and affirm its values, goals, vision, and chart a

course to achieve that vision. A leader helps staff see what the center could become. A manager sets the tasks that will achieve that vision.

There are several examples of management and leadership knowledge that can be derived from organizational literature outside of the field that could be applied to ECCE. Bethel (1990) writes about the differences between management and leadership and claims that managers have to do lists and leaders have to create lists as well as a mission that matters – a dream, vision, or purpose that drives them according to Bethel (1990). Another example of the distinction between managers and leaders, according to Dreher (1996), is that managers handle the day to day operations, supervise workers, and balance the budget. Leaders are persons with a vision who see how the daily details fit into the larger picture. They plan ahead, facilitate change, develop people, inspire others with a vision of further possibility, and help others to fulfill their highest human potential. A final example of how the field of ECCE can benefit from learning about management and leadership from organizational literature comes from the work of Kouzes & Posner (1996). These researchers emphasized the connection between having a vision and leadership. Together, they have collected thousands of personal best stories or the experiences people recall when they are asked to think of a peak leadership experience. Among other factors, they found that the leaders stood out as having a sense of direction and a vision for the future. They developed the Leadership Practice Inventory (LPI) which was used by Love (2001) in her research on child care directors and organizational change.

Early childhood directors who are successful leaders attend to management concerns, but they also bring these concerns into a group focus through vision building (Carter & Curtis, 1998). Working with a vision requires developing oneself into a leader who inspires others to participate in and expand the vision. In their book, *The Visionary Director*, Carter & Curtis



(1998) encourage directors to develop their vision and go beyond managing to leading. Having worked with directors all over the country, they have found that directors who actively work with a vision create programs that stand out from the more common statistics on mediocrity in child care. They claim that guiding a program with vision requires more than management skills. Seplocha (1998) also found that having a vision and being focused on the larger picture was a common pattern among strong leaders of quality programs.

Rodd (1994), who writes specifically about leadership from the perspective of working in the field of early childhood education for over 20 years, agrees that leadership is about vision and influence. In her book *Leadership in Early Childhood* (1994) she defines the key elements of effective leadership as the leader's ability to: provide vision and communicate it; develop a team culture; set goals and objectives; monitor and communicate achievements; and facilitate and encourage the development of individuals (p. 3). Although directors need both management and leadership skills in order to be a director of a quality program, it is the leadership of the director that makes a difference in quality programs (Rodd, 1994).

#### **2.5.4 Directors and Change**

The ability to make positive program changes has been linked to director leadership. In the book *Blueprint for Action* it is suggested that directors must build a vision for change and have a clear, informed idea of what they want their centers to become (Bloom, Sheer, & Britz, 1991). Second, they must have the knowledge of how to translate that vision into realistic goals and expectations for staff and children. Next, they must serve as a change catalyst or one who senses the need for change by keeping informed of new knowledge and communicate it to others. Finally, they must

create the climate for change by being the key person in establishing a trusting environment for change to occur (pp. 32).

Cynthia Cavanaugh's book *Leadership and the Use of Power in Early Childhood Administration* (Cavanaugh, 1980) is a guidebook for effective leadership and power in programs. She defines leadership as planning for change as a way to improve an organization and describes power as the ability to influence others. Cavanaugh suggested that directors rely on organizational management theories for their knowledge and leadership techniques.

Exploring the organizational change process in a suburban child care center, Love (2001) designed a study based on her mentoring experience with the center. Data was gathered by using systematic written observations over a 10 month period, the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale, the Leadership Practices Inventory, and structured interviews with the director, the teachers, the coordinating site director, and the executive director of a ten site child care system. This action research revealed that systemic changes occur in centers when the director builds caring and consistent relationships with the total system and when the director empowers the staff through her leadership. In addition, director recognition of the importance of enriching and changing the program environment can positively impact the whole organization.

The ability to create positive change in centers is an important skill for director leadership. Kotter (1999), an author who writes about leadership, believes that too many people have been trained only to manage a system or make incremental shifts and have not been shown how to provide the leadership that is necessary to make bigger leaps. Kotter's ideas about change and help provide some reflection about what directors need in order to develop more of their leadership ability.

### 2.5.5 Conceptual Frameworks of Director Leadership

Several authors have explored the path or stages of director leadership. Each author has explained how a director's career path might look according to the number of years in the job and in some cases progress in development as an adult. To further present these ideas I have taken the work of these authors and expressed them in visual conceptual frameworks to help compare their ideas and to highlight in particular when these authors believe that the leadership of the director emerges. What the authors refer to as developmental stages appear as *Categories*. The *Descriptors* clarify what the authors believe to be the skills, milestones, and leadership characteristics that are present in their growth over a *Suggested Time* period. In one case (Catron & Groves, 1999), the authors also offer ideas for *Training Needs*.

The conceptual frameworks are located in Appendices A - E but a description of each is described below in order to add to the depth of these concepts. The categories have been redefined as beginning director, competent director, and mature director and well as time periods have been changed in order to present a single view that captures many of the descriptors in just one framework. This conceptual framework can serve as a point of reference for future data analysis.

Lilian Katz (1977) (Appendix A) was an early pioneer in describing the professional growth stages of early childhood teachers. Katz proposed that just as teachers need to understand how children learn, grow, and develop that appropriate staff development also depends on the knowledge of how teachers develop professionally. Although Katz's work focused specifically on teacher development, her ideas also lend themselves to experiences of directors. She claims that leadership characteristics begin to emerge when thoughts turn to broader questions in the field. For example, instead of directors wondering how they are going

to survive the day, they begin to care about how the field of ECCE will evolve and become more available and affordable for all families. Beginning to reflect on these more abstract questions will take a new teacher/director anywhere from three to five years according to Katz.

The first rendition of a five stage model for practitioner and administrative development was proposed by Vander Ven (1988, 2000) (Appendix E). The categories of these stages are: Awareness/Novice; Induction/Initial; Competency/Informed; Proficiency/Complex; and Expertise/Influential. These stages are an ongoing and repeated process in which individuals can constantly revise their thinking in line with new information and form new interactions with the world. Based on Bronfenbrenner's (1977) child ecological systems hierarchy, this model illustrates how a director is able to address more complexity as they gain more experience and learning. Directors begin to use complex mental models while performing professional tasks. This framework also incorporates an awareness of adult development with a particular focus on generativity, or concern with nurturing the next generation, as well as the ability to take initiative and become proactive in self-development

Bloom (1997) (Appendix B) conceptualized a director's career cycle based on her research of 257 highly trained directors representing part and full day programs and nonprofit and for profit centers in four states. The study included in-depth interviews with 20 experienced directors who reflected on the course of their careers. Bloom pointed out that there was little research up until this study that focused on career stages of early childhood administrators as a distinct group. Also, there was a lack of a well-articulated career lattice for those directors at different points in their careers. As a result of this study, Bloom loosely grouped the directors into three categories: beginning director, competent director, and master director. According to the career cycle, The Master Director stage is when competent leaders will emerge provided that

they remain in the field long enough. As can be seen in this conceptual framework, only 10% of directors indicated that they have reached this level.

A study designed to identify director growth and self-awareness of directors of early childhood programs was field tested from 1988-1994 at the University of Tennessee Child Development Laboratories in collaboration with child care programs in Tennessee (Catron & Groves, 1999) (Appendix C). Collected lived experiences were examined from directors who had previously been teachers. Further development of this research was supported in another study of 370 child care directors and teachers (Larson, 1997). This framework is based on Piaget's identified, predictable stages of development for children and Katz's stages of development for teachers (Anthony, 1997). According to this framework, there are predictable stages of professional development which all child care directors experience which can overlap and vary in duration. Directors may regress to a former stage if they change jobs or change an aspect of their job. A developmental task is defined for each stage as well as professional development needs. Paying attention to the developmental tasks and needs at each stage can enhance success, increase job satisfaction and prevent director burnout. It is at the Leading/Balancing and Advocating/ Mentoring stage when directors begin to explore their roles as leaders. They become aware of their personal strengths and become more involved in the preparation and training of others in the field. They feel confident at this point to share their experiences and knowledge.

Caruso and Fawcett (1999) (Appendix D) have identified three general phases that supervisors experience as they grow in their roles. In their book, *Supervision in Early Childhood Education*, they explain that supervisors undergo a process of change in how they view themselves and their jobs. Their feelings and concerns about supervision change over time.

Although there may be similar problems and frustrations during each phase, a supervisor's ability to handle problems change as they move from the beginning phase toward maturity. It is at the Maturity stage when directors become more concerned with issues in the field of ECCE rather than just the issues that impact their center. Caruso and Fawcett acknowledge that this conceptualization may need further validation and invite others to refine this initial attempt.

Conceptual frameworks are important because they can promote self-awareness and growth for directors, draw attention to the major tasks of each stage, and determine appropriate training at each level (Catron & Groves, 1999). The five conceptual frameworks that have been reviewed all share in some aspect of reaching a capacity for leadership. This capacity appears to come with the ability to achieve a level of having mastered the management of program needs so that leadership roles and opportunities become possible. The frameworks also illustrate that there is a pathway toward director leadership. Kagen and Bowman (1997) believe directors who remain in the field will begin to seek out leadership roles and opportunities. Their concern, however, is that both directors and early childcare staff may not see the value of making long-term investments in either their profession or in leadership development for several reasons; they are deterred by the lack of compensation for their work and perceived lack of opportunities for career advancement and leadership, or that they do not view their job as a profession. Work in early care and education is viewed as a short-term commitment by many, which is why turnover among staff and directors remains high.

Carter and Curtis (1998) find that directors seldom embrace the leadership potential that their position offers them. Rather, directors allow the limitations of their current conditions to constrict their imagination and creativity. There is too much paperwork and too many regulations that serve as barriers to getting beyond daily operations. They also contend that

professional development must not only include the skills of administration, business and finance, supervision, and human relations, but also the art of dreaming, organizing and improvising which are central to leadership. However, imagining a different course and cultivating leadership to pursue a different vision is not a common practice among early childhood directors (Carter & Curtis, 1998).

Several factors are said to impede leadership development (Kagan & Bowman, 1997). One is the reluctance of ECCE professionals to become involved in authoritative relationships. Because the majority of child care directors are women, it is necessary that they are comfortable with leadership roles, responsibility, influence, and authority. A second factor is a lack of systems thinking. A broader, holistic view of children and the wider network of child care services and the political and economic factors that affect them must be taken rather than a narrow, programmatic view (Vander Ven, 1992). A third factor is that ECCE professionals must learn to cooperate and collaborate with other human services. When resources are scarce as they are in the ECCE field, inappropriate competition and turf battles are common. Finally, taking on other roles outside of the classroom or center has not always been encouraged. Many who are attracted to work in the ECCE field enter because they enjoy working with children and are not interested in broader issues in the field.

Interestingly, director leadership development has been compared to human development and life experiences which are all interrelated processes and involve transformational changes over time (Sullivan, 2003). Sullivan describes the process of human development as cognitive, social, intellectual and physical change as a person matures. Leadership development is described by Sullivan (2003) as the ability to create and influence change, growth and achievement. Finally, life experiences are events and circumstances that determine who we are

as individuals and influence how we see the world. In other words, becoming a leader is a developmental process where a person creates and interprets their own life experiences. Leadership development takes time, is individual, depends on life stages, and is never complete as leaders discover and invent their own unique way of leading (Sullivan, 2003).

The five conceptual frameworks that have been reviewed from 1988–2000 have all reflected growth through developmental processes. They were originally written in a narrative format but have been resigned in table form to be able to compare some of the concepts (Appendix A, B, C, D, E). Appendix F is a compilation of all five frameworks extracting some of the more common ideas. Over the past 25 years there has been attention on other aspects of professional growth in contemporary leadership literature, most notably: leadership and emotional intelligence (Goleman, 2004, 1995); mindful leadership (Langer, 1989), leading minds (Gardner, 1995); authentic leadership (George, Sims, McLean & Mayer, 2007); and (Senge, 1996) that may serve to alter or impact the dynamics of these existing ECCE conceptual frameworks.

For example, Golman (2004, 1995) claims that intelligence, determination, and developing a vision is not enough for leadership. Rather, effective leaders must have self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills which all can be learned and attuned. Langer (1989) has offered the concept of mindfulness. According to her definition this means paying attention consciously and questioning preconceived notions. This is a skill that she claims would increase leadership effectiveness by reducing stress, unlocking creativity and boosting performance (Harvard Business Review, 2014).

Other ideas about leadership development have focused on the authenticity of being a leader. Authentic leaders have a passion for purpose, practice their values consistently, lead with



their hearts and heads, establish long-term meaningful relationships, and possess self determination to get things done (George, Sims, McLean, & Mayer, 2007). The central idea is for authentic leaders to empower other people. Senge (1996) adds to the notion of leadership development by challenging us to consider a shift in traditional thinking about leadership. He contends that change does not happen if it is driven only from the top. He claims what you will get is compliance from your staff and not commitment. Instead, he suggests that for real change to occur, the staff must have trust in the process, curiosity, and share meaningfully in responsibility. Leadership comes from many people in a center, not just from the director.

Gardner (1995) offers thoughts on characteristics of a developed leader. He believes that they must be tied to their community, in the case of a director, their center, with strong relationships between the leader and the staff which must be ongoing, active, and dynamic. Also, leaders must know their own minds and values. It is critical that leaders find time for reflection and periods of isolation which is reminiscent of the idea presented by Langer (1989) who encourages leaders to be truly present in the moment which takes practice requiring much reflection.

These are just a few of the more contemporary thoughts about leadership highlighted because of my familiarity with the ideas of the authors. One can only wonder if more knowledge about the dynamics of leadership would make a difference if directors were more aware of the impact it could have in their centers. For example, many of the ideas presented by these authors as well as others could be considered when conceptualizing new pathways toward leadership for ECCE directors. In most cases, the authors claim that the leadership skills and processes that they describe can be learned and practiced. With a knowledge of these proposed stages of director leadership, new opportunities to build on contemporary models for ECCE are possible.

### **2.5.6 Summary**

The multiple challenges that many directors endure prevent them from developing leadership which is so important in the field of ECCE. Directors as leaders could contribute in a meaningful way to the important discussions and problem solving in the field. There are issues that have been apparent for the past 40 years that inhibit director leadership such as low compensation, high turnover, and unrealistic work expectations. Directors who are not adequately prepared to assume their roles, who are reluctant to take on the role of leader in their program, who are skilled at working with young children but have no experience leading adults, who do not have visions for their programs that can be shared and implemented, who perform more as managers rather than leaders, who are not able to guide their staff in making positive changes that would improve outcomes for children, and who think too narrowly about the problems in the ECCE field, will not be able to collaborate and join other leaders in proposing solutions to the many challenges in the broader ECCE field. Directors may benefit from learning more about the process of leadership.

### **2.5.7 Grand summary**

This review of literature begins with a discussion of the terminology that is used in the field of ECCE. Although there are suggested terms that serve to clarify the many different job roles, different types of programs, and job titles of the leaders of programs, there are still no agreed upon terms in the field. The lack of an agreed upon terminology also creates speculation about the transfer of knowledge or application within the ECCE literature. For example, can the findings from Head Start research on teacher preparation also apply to caregiver preparation for

child care centers? Or, how do the findings from pre-K program research apply to research conducted on preschools? By referring to all programs for young children as early childhood care and education programs, there is the assumption that all programs are similar in scope and purpose. Different programs serve different populations and provide different services. The studies that were examined for this review used a variety of terms for programs, workers, and leaders.

It is interesting to note that when child care centers were becoming popular in the 1920s, the workers insisted on not being referred to as teachers as a way to separate the work that was done educating young children from the work that was done educating children in elementary schools. Currently, the title of teacher is the preferred term for workers in many child care centers to highlight that both care and education are a part of the curriculum.

Individuals who choose to work in child care have varying levels of preparation, experience and knowledge about best practices for young children. There is also some discussion within the field as to the type of preparation that is needed. Since worker turnover is so high, less qualified individuals are often hired. In some states this does not seem to matter since so little education and training is required in order to work in a child care center. Knowing how to fund child care programs, agreeing on what preparation and experience is needed to work in child care programs, and how to attract ECCE workers into the field remain as challenges for the leaders of the field. With a trend of moving toward preschool for all children, not just children from economically disadvantaged families, more ECCE staff will be needed to be well prepared. To date, there are pre-K programs for 4 year old children in most states, but there are not enough spaces for all children from economically disadvantaged families yet alone all children. How these programs will be staffed and funded is still a challenge to be solved.

Most of the research conducted in the field of ECCE revolves around issues of appropriate practices. One thing that has been well established in the ECCE field is how to deliver appropriate care and education to young children. The challenge lies in finding the appropriate workforce to bring these practices to children who are in ECCE programs and in particular, child care centers. A well prepared and compensated workforce is desperately needed so that reports on the quality of child care in the U.S. are not so dismal.

Along with the promise of early childhood education for all children is the problem of not enough quality workers to operate new programs. Attracting and maintaining highly qualified workers in the ECCE field remains a challenge (Olson, 2002). Through this review, it is evident that for there to be quality programs, workers must be well prepared for their job, and they must be well compensated in order to remain in their jobs and provide sufficient quality to level the educational playing field at kindergarten entry and to promote life-long learning and well-being (Whitebook, 2013).

Another finding from a variety of studies is that director leadership is related to quality programs. Yet, research also shows that most leaders function as program managers and lack the managerial and leadership skills necessary to operate a quality center. Directors must remain in the field long enough to gain the knowledge and experience that is necessary to not only operate a quality center, but to contribute their knowledge and experience in leading the field toward new solutions to the challenges in the field. But research shows that younger directors are less qualified than older directors. If turnover rates remain the same as they have for the last 20 years, many of the young directors will not remain in the field. A majority of directors according to research studies reviewed in this chapter have indicated that they never planned on becoming a child care center director and admit that they have not always felt prepared to take on the role

of leader. Many directors were previously good caregivers with knowledge on how to care for and educate young children but do not have the knowledge of adult development that is needed to lead a quality center.

Director leadership in ECCE is needed to provide a forum for reflection and proposing solutions to problems in the wider field. More research is needed to explore and describe current child care directors' perceptions of their role and to determine how they describe themselves as leaders and how they are currently prepared and supported for leadership development in their work . More research also is needed on the barriers to leadership development as perceived specifically by center-based directors. Data in these areas will contribute to the knowledge base on child care director leadership as well as open new avenues for research in the ECCE field.

The leadership of the director is recognized as being related to high quality in early childhood programs (Bella & Bloom, 2003; Kagan et al., 2008). Additionally, leaders set the tone for what is expected in terms of child outcomes and teaching practices. One of the strongest indicators of overall program quality in ECCE programs is linked to the director (Bloom, 1997). Yet, despite the recognition of the importance of director leadership to program quality, the research base on leaders of early childhood programs remains limited (Pianta, 2012).

Early childhood leaders are those individuals who have the responsibility for overseeing an early childhood program (Pianta, 2012). These individuals are referred to using a variety of different titles depending on the sector in which they work such as Head Start programs, child care centers (for profit and non-profit), preschool programs, university child care centers, and pre-kindergarten programs. Even within the same sector, such as child care programs, the person responsible for the operation of the program can be referred to as a director, administrator, site-administrator, or site-coordinator. This study was designed to collect data on the leaders of one

sector of early childhood education, center-based programs, and will refer to the person responsible for operating a center as the director.

A total of 24 research studies were reviewed from 1984 to the present time in order to become familiar with the purpose, methodology, sectors and population most often used when studying aspects of director leadership (Appendix G). All of the studies are related to some aspect of early childhood director leadership. of children's social development in child care centers (Phillips, McCartney & Scarr, 1987). More recently, findings from a study analyzing director interviews from six state funded centers indicated that a link exists between director leadership and the achievement of high program quality (June, 2007).

Directors have been referred to as the gatekeepers to quality who set standards and expectations for other teachers and staff to follow (Bloom, 1999). However, despite their important role, not all directors have the leadership capacities that enable them to function at the level that is needed to operate a quality program. The literature review reveals that instead of directors who are able to encourage their staff to work together in order to achieve common goals, some serve their programs as managers and concentrate mostly on the day to day operations. Although both managing and leading are equally essential for optimal program functioning, it is the director's ability to be competent and serve as a model for their staff as a leader (Bloom (1997). The literature shows that directors often do not see themselves as agents of change or achieve the level of complex thinking that enables them to adapt to new ways of imagining or problem solving in a complicated and constantly changing world. Finally, in a field that has no agreed upon definition of leadership, it is a challenge to incorporate this important element into education and other professional development.

The same challenges seem to be surfacing throughout the history of ECCE without any agreed upon solutions. Without leaders in the field, guiding issues and setting the agenda for change, child care center program quality will most likely remain low and young children will not receive the care and education that is possible.

### **3.0 RESEARCH METHODS AND DESIGN**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The research base in early childhood care and education contains more studies on the staff who work directly with children, mostly lead teachers, and fewer studies on leaders of early childhood care and education (ECCE) programs (Pianta, 2012). A review of the studies on director leadership reveal that most have small sample sizes, are over 20 years old, and are context specific (Appendix G). This study adds to the research on child care director leadership in a more current context.

#### **3.2 INSTRUMENTS**

Several leadership surveys are used to identify leadership practices within the field of early childhood care and education such as: The Leadership Practices Inventory (Kouzes & Posner, 2007); the Early Childhood Work Environment Scale (Bloom, 1996); and an adapted version of the Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire (Doronila, E.G., 2013). Many of these instruments collect data on teacher opinions, teacher-child interactions, as well as the quality of the center environment. Other studies and reports reviewed in the literature relied mostly on researcher-designed



measurements in the form of interview questions, group interview questions or case studies developed for a specific sector of ECCE such as Head Start.

After reviewing these and other surveys, a decision was made to create a researcher-designed survey and semi-structured questions to be used for a director focus group that would provide data to specifically address the 3 individual research questions.

### **3.2.1 Survey**

A researcher-designed survey (Appendix H) was used to collect data from the directors in the focus group of seven directors and was distributed to 29 other directors. Questions for the survey were developed based on information from the literature review in chapter two and aligned to collect data on the three research questions (Appendix L). Surveys are often used as a method in descriptive research and are familiar to most people. A limitation of using a survey is that they rely on a person's self-report of their knowledge, attitude, or behavior and are only valid depending on the honesty of the person (Mertons, 2015).

Demographic or standard background questions were designed, that according to Patton (2002), would identify characteristics that would locate the director in relation to the other directors. Pianta (2012) suggests that demographic data should be collected frequently in early childhood workforce studies in order to provide insight into general staffing patterns and to see how these patterns may change over time.

Perception data was collected through both the survey and semi-structured interview questions in order help in understanding how directors perceive issues related to director leadership. Perceptions are also important since people act based on what they believe and perceive (Bernhardt, 2000). Further, it is important to know how directors think about leadership

so we can know what is real and what is possible (Bernhardt, 2000). Additionally, careful attention was given to the length of the survey which served to minimize the chances of non-responses and encourage directors to complete the entire survey.

### **3.2.2 Semi-structured interview questions**

The world view or set of beliefs (Guba, 1990) that guides this study follows an interpretive or social constructivist perspective which is typically associated with qualitative research (Creswell, 2009; Lincoln & Guba, 2005). The purpose of interviewing is to let researchers understand more about another person's perspective and to assume that these perspectives are meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit (Patten, 2002).

The data collected captured director's experiences in the context of their work by including their voice and perspective. The directors expressed their stories and then the complexity of their ideas were reviewed in order to generate patterns of meaning or themes that presented themselves. The semi-structured questions used with a focus group of directors encouraged them to share their views within a group with which they were familiar. The interview guide (Appendix I) lists the questions that were explored.

### **3.3 POPULATION SAMPLE AND PROCEDURES**

#### **3.3.1 Focus Group**

For the focus group, a search was made for a group of directors that met regularly. Phone calls were placed and follow-up e-mails were sent to a local early childhood professional group and the local PA Keys group asking if there were any upcoming director groups. Both groups were willing to allow 30 minutes in their director groups to be devoted to the semi-structured interview questions. However, it was summer and the director groups did not take place until the fall. A phone call was received from a director who heard about this study and suggested that I attend a directors meeting of a group to which she belonged.

The program director of this group was contacted by e-mail and she requested to review both the survey and the semi-structured interview questions. After reviewing both documents, she wrote a letter of consent for the focus group to be conducted at their next meeting to be held at a child care center.

There were seven directors who attended the meeting and their answers to the semi-structured questions were audio recorded and later transcribed by the researcher. After the transcription was complete, the audio recording was erased. The directors were also given surveys to complete and return in a self-addressed and stamped envelope. It would have been better if the directors could have completed the surveys at that time but the program director needed to continue with the meeting agenda.

Focus groups are often used as a data collection method. They are group interviews that do not rely on a question and answer format but rather on the interaction that occurs within the

group (Mertens, 2015). The interaction allows for a melee of understanding of how others in the group feel about issues.

### **3.3.2 Surveys and Distribution**

Thirty-six directors were asked to participate in this study by completing a survey. Seven of the 36 directors were also in the focus group. The directors were selected from a list of early childhood programs on the PA Keys web site (pakeys.org) that were STAR facilities in Allegheny County (PA Keys, July 2015). Of the listed 386 centers listed, 108 were eliminated because they were child care homes or stand-alone after-school programs. Twenty more centers were eliminated from the list because they were identified as suspended, meaning that they were no longer licensed. There were 258 centers left from which to select for this study. Final selection of centers was based on the desire to include a variety of geographic areas, a variety of STAR levels represented, and different types of centers (for-profit, non-profit, faith-based, university affiliated).

Surveys were printed and placed in brown envelopes that were pre-stamped and addressed to a secretary in the work place of the researcher. Upon receiving the returned surveys, the secretary would open the envelope and place them on the researcher's desk. Every effort was made to keep the surveys completely confidential. There were no markings on the envelopes or surveys that would identify the directors. All of the completed surveys, transcription of the focus group, and any other written material used for the study will be kept in a locked file drawer for 5 years at which time they will be shredded.

Paper surveys were printed and distributed by the researcher in order to increase the return rate. For one week, the researcher delivered the surveys to centers in one geographic area

each day. The surveys were personally handed to the directors in a brown pre-posted envelope for easy return. Within one week after the surveys were delivered, an email was sent to all of the directors thanking them for their participation in this study and reminding the directors who did not yet return their surveys to do so by the end of the week. Out of the 36 surveys that were distributed, 23 were returned for a response rate of 64%.

Interestingly, a study of directors that was conducted in Kentucky (Hooks, et al., 2013) invited 1,789 directors using a cover letter and a link to an online survey using Qualtrics Survey Software. Directors were asked to complete the survey within 3 weeks and were then sent reminders at two and four weeks. Due to a low return rate of 9%, n=163, an additional email was sent at eight weeks which produced a new return rate of 236 director surveys. Four weeks later, directors with invalid or no email addresses were sent paper surveys by mail (n=367). Reminder post cards were sent at two and four weeks. Eighteen more surveys were mailed back from this group. Some directors from underrepresented groups were mailed a second survey and five more were returned for a total of 23 paper surveys. The total response rate for a sample of 1,789 directors was 15%. These research statistics are presented in order to demonstrate that 23 returned surveys out of the 36 that were hand delivered for a 64% return rate can be considered a good representation. Although driving to 29 different centers within one week did take some time, there was the unexpected reward of meeting directors in person. Although some directors appeared to be skeptical of a visitor asking them to participate in a study, most were very friendly and in a few cases the researcher was invited into the center for a tour.

### 3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

Following the review of returned surveys and completing the transcription of the audio taped focus group, the process of data reduction or the process of selecting, simplifying and transforming the data began. The same process has been used for the conceptual frameworks (Appendix A – F). The focus group transcription was coded for common themes as well as the director's answers describing their definition of leadership. Themes are labels and codes used for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive information that is compiled (Miles & Huberman, 1994). A combined definition of leadership using ideas from the directors is an example of this process.

The answer to each survey question has been entered into an EXCEL spread sheet. Each respondent was assigned a number. Descriptive statistics have been calculated for each question using frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations. Tables and figures have been developed to present the data. Each question will include an introduction to the question and when possible it will be compared with data from the literature review. Survey data should be displayed for clear understanding, to determine how much the data resembles results of past studies, and to determine any new trends, patterns, themes, contrasts and comparisons (Miles & Huberman, 1992). Data will be displayed in narrative form when discussing answers from the focus group.

### 3.5 LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

A limitation is a factor that could affect a study but is not under the control of the researcher (Mauch & Birch, 2002). There are several limitations of this study

#### 3.5.1 Sample size

The small sample size of directors is one limitation to this study. Table 1 below displays the samples size of directors that have provided data for the studies describes in Appendix G. Although the sample size is small, this study will add an additional number to the 21 – 40 grouping. The small sample size could also be a result of the procedure that the surveys were distributed. Since the researcher decided to deliver the surveys to each center, the number was intentionally kept to a realistic number determined to be 38 centers.

**Table 1.** Number of Directors in Study Samples

<b>Number of Directors</b>	<b>Number of Studies</b>
Under 10 Directors	12 Studies
11 – 20 Directors	5 Studies
21 – 40 Directors	2 Studies
41 – 65 Directors	3 Studies
257 Directors	1 Study

#### 3.5.2 Generalization

Child care centers are only one sector of early childhood care and education. This study can not be generalized to include other sectors of early childhood care and education such as Pre-Kindergarten in public schools or Head Start programs. There may be some aspect of director

leadership that these programs share in common but the resources and educational requirements are too variable to make comparisons among programs. For example, in Head Start programs, the director needs a Child Development Associate (CDA) which is a professional development plan requiring specific CDA courses and a portfolio assessment.

### **3.5.3 Validity and Reliability**

A researcher-constructed survey is being used for the first time so there is a lack of reliability and validity. Internal validity is not present with self-reports because the researcher does not know how truthful and reflective the directors are in their answers. Furthermore, there is no assurance that every item of the survey will be filled out completely and directors may choose to skip over questions that they perceive as difficult or personal (Salant & Dillman, 1998). Directors did skip over some questions in the survey.

### **3.5.4 Researcher Bias**

It is possible for bias to enter into this study because the researcher has been involved in some aspect of the field of early childhood care and education for the past 30 years. In attempting to analyze the research findings the researcher must be aware of preconceived notions of what the answers mean. Furthermore, it is very possible that some of the directors know the researcher and this may also bias their responses in some way.



## **4.0 PRESENTATION OF DATA**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter will present data in descriptive and narrative formats. The data collected and analyzed from the 23 surveys returned to the researcher are presented through the use of tables and figures. A copy of the survey is located in Appendix H. Data collected from the semi-structured interview questions (Appendix I) used during the focus group of seven early childhood child care and education directors is presented in narrative format. Thematic assertions discovered through an analysis of the written transcript and conceptual models are presented using tables and narrative. The thematic assertions are located in Appendix J and the conceptual frameworks in Appendices A - E. The first section below presents the demographic data from the surveys.

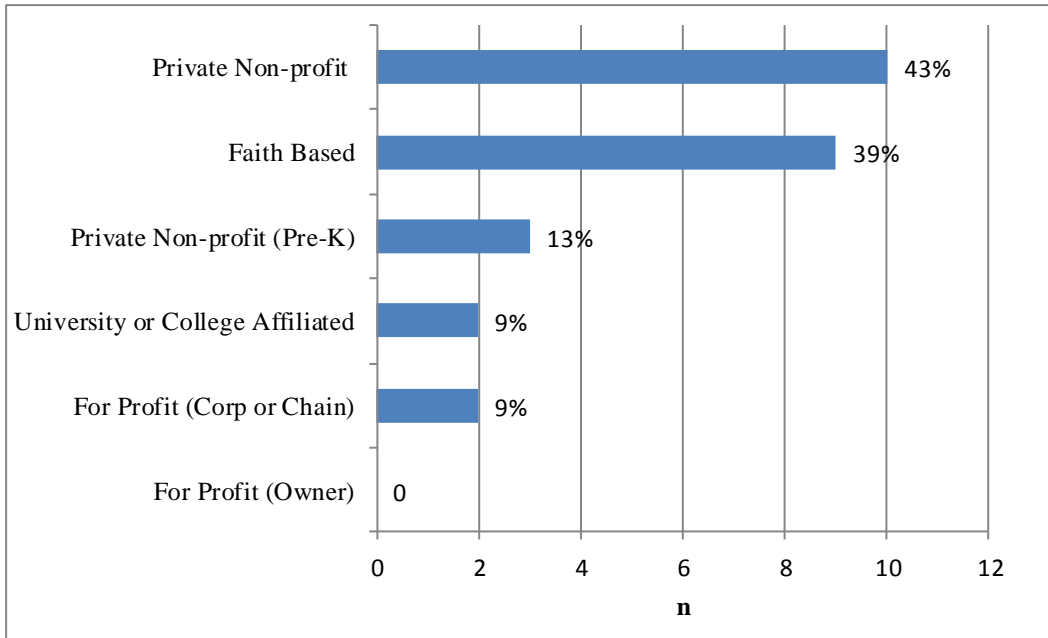
### **4.2 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

Directors were asked to answer demographic questions in order to situate them among the other directors by center type, the number of years the center has been in operation, gender, age, whether the director was a member of a quality enhancement program, length of work hours, and if they were a member of any professional organization.

#### **4.2.1 Center Type**

Although all of the surveyed directors who work in early childhood child care and education programs, there are several different types or categories by which they identified their programs. Figure 1 below displays private non-profit centers identified as independent, affiliated with a social service agency, community center or a hospital and faith-based centers. These centers encompass most (73%, n=19) of the participating center directors.

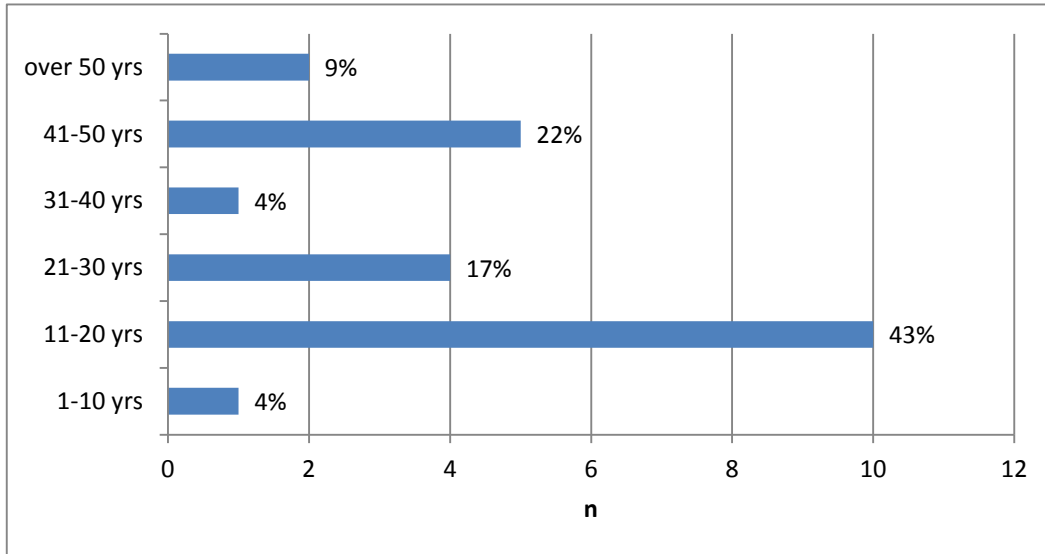
As mentioned in the literature review, there are differences and similarities within all of the early childhood education sectors which can cause some misunderstanding. Some confusion can occur when different programs intersect with different funding sources such as the presence of a Head Start Program (federally funded) within a private non-profit center (such as an independent child care center) that also has a pre-K program. This is demonstrated by one director who checked two different center types because there is a Head Start program operating within her non-profit center. There were also three non-profit centers that identified themselves as pre-K programs because of the intersection of the child care program and the pre-K program.



**Figure 1. Center Type**

#### **4.2.2 Years in Operation**

Most centers (64%, n=15) have been in operation for 30 years or less with nearly half (43%) operating between 11 - 20 years. Other centers have been in operation for over 31 years or more (26%, n=6) with two centers in operation for over 50 years (9%). There is a growing need for child care and pre-K programs for young children; however, this study was only able to included one newer center in the sample population



**Figure 2. Years in Operation**

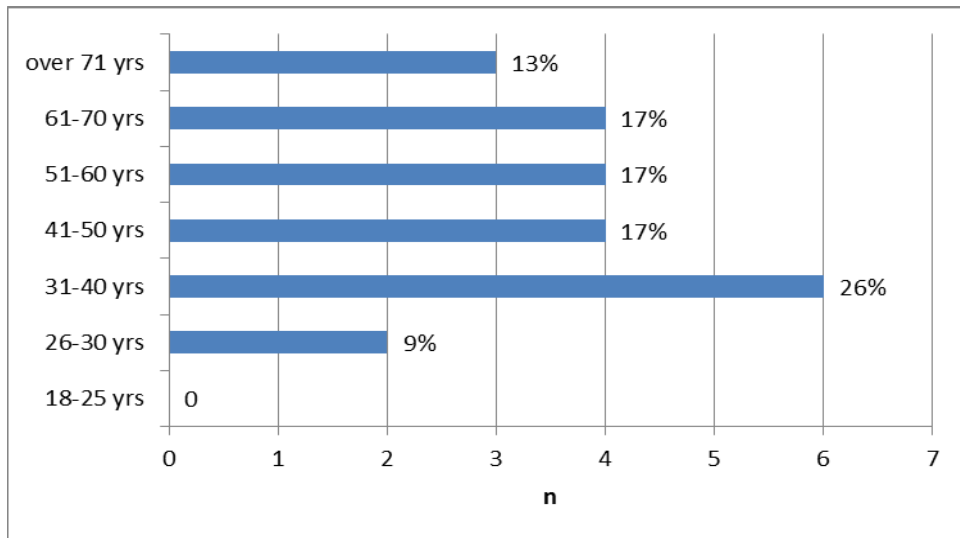
### 4.2.3 Gender

All of the returned surveys (n=23) were completed by female directors. This is very typical of the field of early childhood education where the majority of workers in the field are female. In a very large study of 1,789 early childhood child care center directors, 99% of the respondents were female (Hooks, et al., 2013). There was only one male director who actually received this survey.

### 4.2.4 Age

Figure 3 below displays (47%, n=11) of the surveyed directors as being 51 years of age or older and (53%, n=12) as 26 to 50 years in age. No one indicated that they were ages 18 – 25 years old. This is not surprising since these would typically be the years for attending college or graduating from college and searching for a job. It is interesting that only two directors are 30

years old or less in this surveyed population. This a concern considering the high number of ECCE directors who will be needed when current directors retire as well as the number of directors that will be needed for new programs that are anticipated as the need for child care grows.



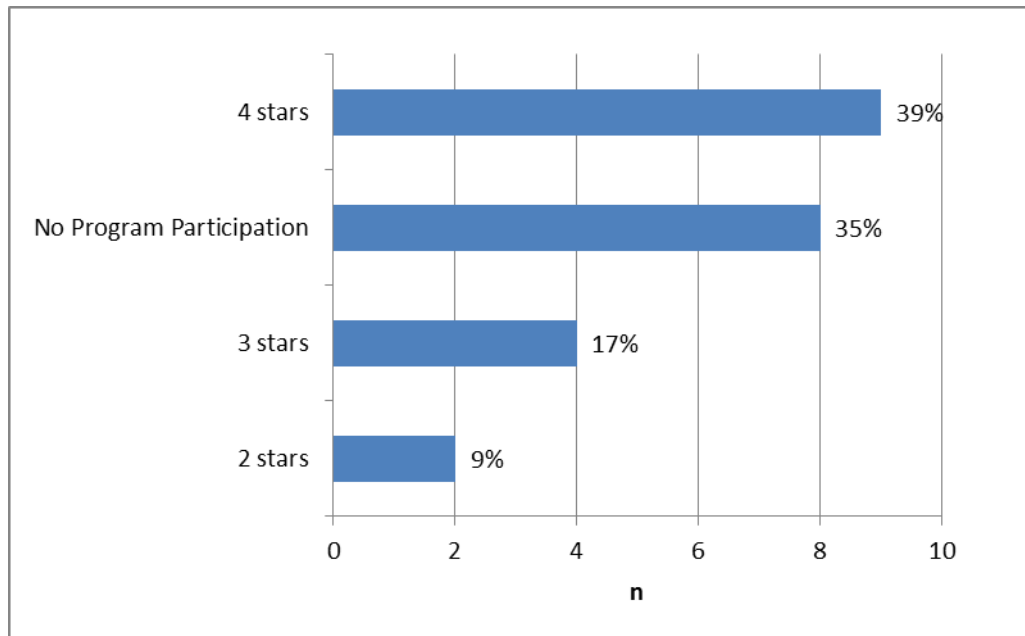
**Figure 3.** Director's Age Range

#### 4.2.5 Center Quality

There are several professionally agreed upon ways to identify the quality of programs in ECCE. One is the national voluntary accreditation system under the auspices of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Of the directors surveyed, (43%, n=10) indicated that their centers were accredited through NAEYC with (57%, n=13) not being accredited. Only seven of the ten directors of accredited centers indicated the number of years that they were accredited which ranged from two to 28 years, with a mean of 14.6 years. Nationally, fewer than 10% of preschools are NAEYC accredited and under the new standards, accreditation is said to be difficult to achieve (Fliess, 2013).

Each state also has its own quality assessment system and in Pennsylvania it is the STAR program managed by the Pennsylvania Keys in the Office of Child Development ([pakeys.org](http://pakeys.org)). More about these quality assurance measures is described in the literature review in chapter two. Figure four below shows that (35%, n=8) of the directors do not participate in STARS while (39%, n=9) have earned four STARS and (17%, n=4) have earned three stars. The centers that do not participate in STARS are most likely the faith based centers that are not eligible for the state operated program.

According to a STARS provider report (PA Keys, 2008) there are incentives for a center to participate in the program. These include the ability to apply for grants, education and retention rewards, technical assistance, professional development, health and safety materials, and mental health services. In the same report of (39.5%, n=169) indicated that the ease of the validation process was very or somewhat smooth and (36%, n=169) indicated that the process was somewhat difficult or very difficult.

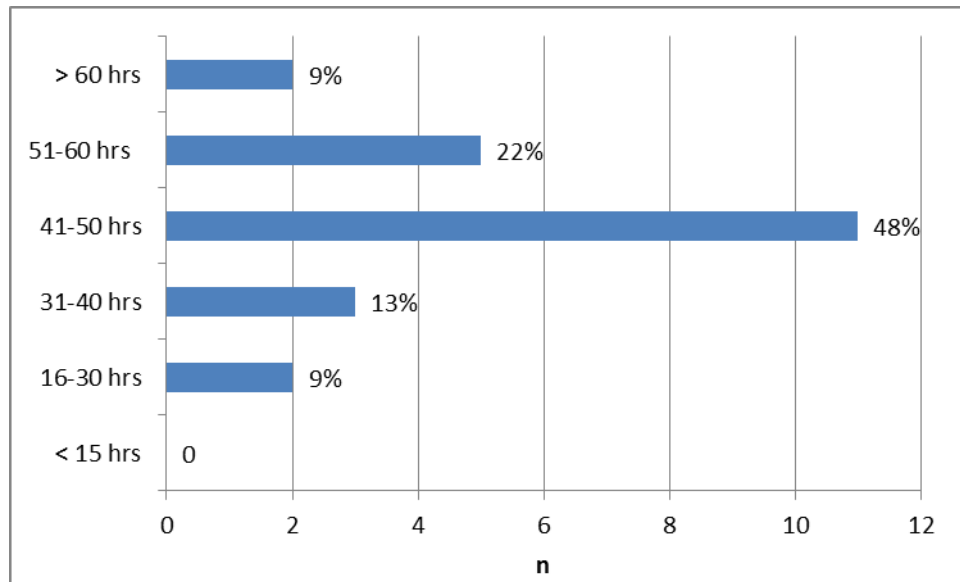


**Figure 4.** PA Keys to Quality STAR Levels

#### 4.2.6 Hours Worked

The data displayed in Figure 5 below show that (79%, n=18) of the surveys indicated that directors work over 41 hours per week with two directors saying that they work 60 hours a week. Assuming that the typical work week is generally considered to be 40 hours per week; many directors appear to be working very long hours. This is consistent with findings from a study that indicated that directors worked long days that started before all other staff (Krieger, 2001).

When the directors in the focus group were asked if they take home work with them, most of them admitted that they did, thus, making their work week longer. One director admitted that it was difficult to set boundaries. Several directors shared that, “I take work home with me. I check emails and work on payroll.” Another director stated, “I can’t always concentrate at work. I don’t like it, but the bottom line is you do what you have to do.”



**Figure 5.** Director Hours Worked Per Week

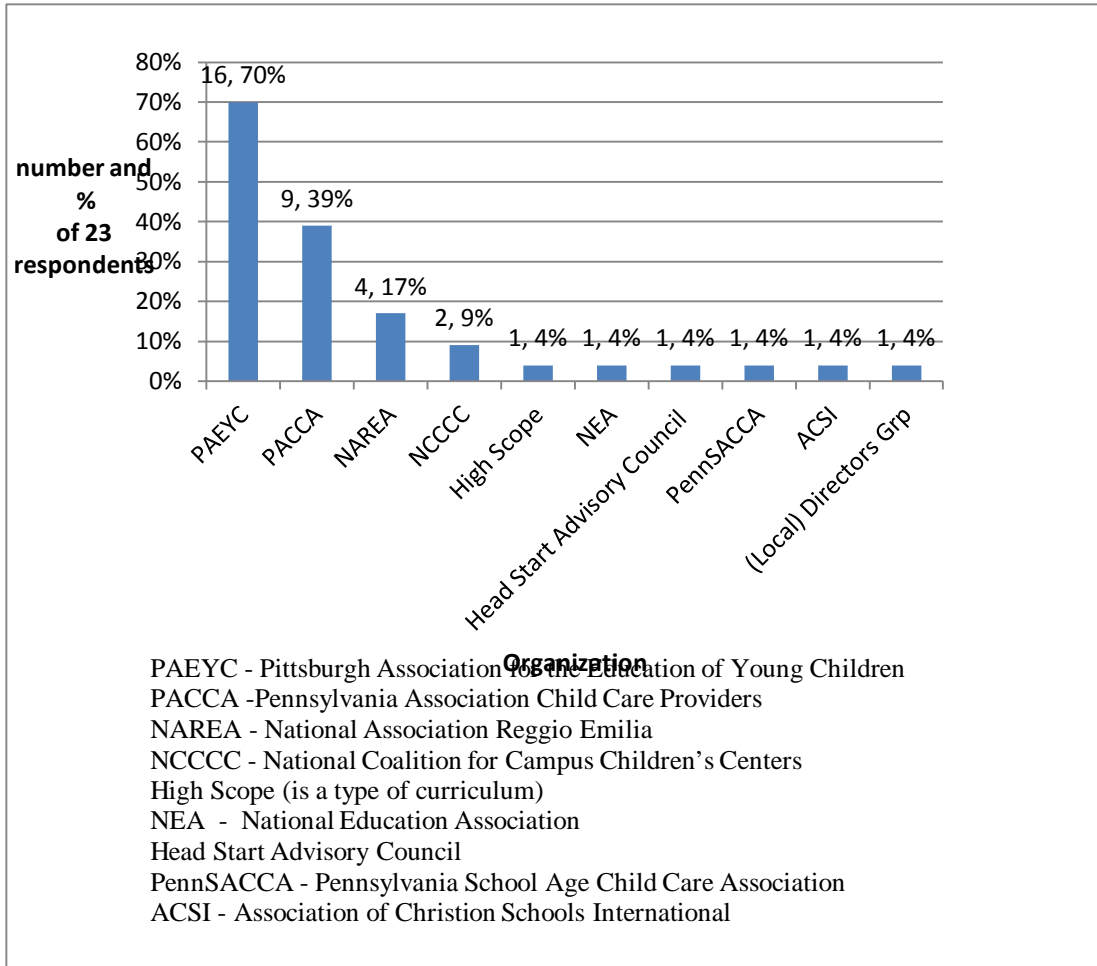
#### **4.2.7 Professional Memberships**

Directors indicated in Figure 6 that (70%, n=16) belonged to at least one professional association but only (30%, n=7) indicated that they held any leadership positions in these associations. Compared to a study that included directors and child care staff (Brandon, 2011), only 4% to 6% of respondents belonged to a professional association. The leadership positions that the directors mentioned were; board member, committee chair, conference chairs, and secretary. It is important for directors to hold leadership positions in the field and roles in organizations (Catron & Groves, 1999).

Most of the directors belong to the local Association for the Education of Young Children which in this geographic area there are over 1,000 members. It is the professional group that holds the professional development contract from the Office of Child Development meaning that it plans and executes many of the professional development activities and conferences in the



area. Being a member reduces registration fees for the members to attend these events. The Pennsylvania Child Care Association holds a conference each year in various parts of the state and is the second most popular group to which nine directors belong. It was a surprise to see High Scope listed as a professional association because it is actually a curriculum, not a membership group.



**Figure 6.** Professional Association Memberships

#### 4.2.8 Summary

It was to be expected that the majority of the respondents for this study would be female due to the field of early childhood education being composed of mostly females both at the director and staff level. The ages of the directors of those that are over 51 years of age (47%, n=11) and those that are under 41 years of age (53%, n=12) are approximately equal. It is important to have directors of all ages remain in the field long enough to impact the quality of programs (McArtney & Phillips, 2008). It is also important to have a new influx of directors enter the field.

Another concern is that when current directors retire there will not be enough qualified directors who will be able to replace them. Director turnover nationally is the same as staff turnover at 26% to 48% annually (Whitebook, Phillips & Howes, 1993). Since formal education is a strong predictor of quality programs (Whitebook, 2000) and there are less college graduates interested in working in child care centers (Torquati et al., 2007) replacing the current directors may be a problem in the future. Not only are college graduates not entering the field, the early childhood care and education workforce in general is leaving the field in large numbers (Stremmel, 1991) or they are not entering it at all (Helburn, 1995; Whitebook & Bellum, 1999). One of the reasons that a surveyed group of college students gave for not entering the field in addition to low compensation was that the work week was too long (Torquati et al., 2007). The findings on how many hours directors actually work per week in this study may discourage similar candidates even further.

Only seven of the directors indicated that they hold any leadership position in their communities of practice. Directors were articulate when talking about leadership and management within their centers. However, there was not much enthusiasm when they were asked about participating in groups outside of their centers. Center leadership is important for

providing quality programs, but it will not help to develop the strategies that are needed in order to help the wider field of early childhood care and education to build the leadership capacity that is desperately needed in the ECCE field to set new agendas for change.

### **4.3 VIEWS OF LEADERSHIP**

#### **4.3.1 Leadership Definition**

The first research question that guided this study was: How do center-based directors describe themselves as developing managers and leaders? In the field of early childhood care and education there is not an agreed upon definition for leadership (Pianta, 2012). Of the 23 surveyed directors all but two attempted to write their own definition of leadership (Appendix K). The definitions were coded by the researcher by identifying common themes that emerged from the definitions which are listed in Table 2 below.

**Table 2.** Themes Represented in Director’s Definitions of Leadership

<b>THEMES</b>	<b>DIRECTORS’ DEFINITION</b>
RELATIONSHIPS	Being a part of the team Relationship with staff, parent, children Supervising with a personal touch Develop rapport Trust building
SUPPORT STAFF	Be a role model Be a helping hand to staff Encourage staff Listen, support, communicate Being assessable, open, invested
MANAGEMENT	Jobs must get done
JOB CHARACTERISTICS	Multifaceted Encompassing Rewarding Challenging
VISION	Clear understanding of program goals Knowing the big picture Being aware of political climate Having a central vision
PERSONAL GROWTH	Need time to think Knowing one’s own values and strength

Using the themes above a definition of director leadership might include the following components:

Director leadership involves making an effort be a part of the team and building trust, rapport, and positive, authentic RELATIONSHIPS with staff, parents and children. Leadership involves SUPPORTING STAFF by being a role model, a helping hand, listening, supporting, communicating well, and providing encouragement. Director leadership also involves VISION building, a clear understanding of the program goals, knowing the big picture, and being aware of the political climate. Director leaders need time to be alone, time to think, and to always be aware of their own values, strength, and PERSONAL GROWTH. Director leaders make sure

that the JOBS GET DONE in their programs which are multifaceted, encompassing many types of challenging tasks, but in the end, always REWARDING.

The directors demonstrated through this definition their understanding that director leadership involves attributes of both management and leadership. Although a single definition of director leadership has yet to be agreed upon, perhaps the themes that the directors in this study offer will help to narrow a definition for further study.

### **4.3.2 Job Responsibilities**

To explore how directors describe themselves as developing managers and leaders, they were asked to respond to a series of questions about their job responsibilities. Highlighted in the literature review in chapter two was a concern as to whether directors function primarily as leaders or managers. Several authors agreed that although both management and leadership skills are necessary for directors, studies demonstrated that it is the leadership of the director that is the important element in outstanding child care centers (Pipa, 1997; Culkin, 1994; Reckmeyer, 1990). According to Bloom and Bowman (1997) managerial functions relate to doing tasks and setting up a system that will get the job done. Leadership functions relate to the broad view of helping a program clarify and affirm their values, goals, vision and chart a course to achieve that vision. A leader helps staff see what the center could become. A manager sets the tasks that will achieve that vision.

Interestingly, all of the directors believe that: guiding staff in understanding the program's values, goals, and vision; creating a climate of trust; and taking time to reflect and imagine better ways to serve children are important or very important. Also, (82%, n=20) believe that spending time planning for the future of the program and (83%, n=19) believe that

making program changes are important or very important. All of these elements are considered attributes of leaders. In addition, all of the directors believe that managing the day to day operations of the center and that supervising staff is considered important or very important which are considered attributes of managers. Vander Ven (2000) states that for director proficiency to occur, there must be a blending of managerial roles and administrative roles. According to this sample of directors, they have indicated that both management and leadership skills are important for director leadership.

**Table 3. Job Responsibilities**

	Very Important		Important		Moderately Important		Slightly Important		Not Important		Total	Mean	SD
	n=	%	n=	%	n=	%	n=	%	n=	%			
Guide staff in understanding the program's values, goals and vision	21	91%	2	9%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	23	4.91	0.29
Create a climate of trust	21	91%	2	9%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	23	4.91	0.29
Manage the day-to-day operations	20	87%	3	13%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	23	4.87	0.34
Supervise teachers/caregivers	18	82%	3	14%	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%	22	4.77	0.53
Take time to reflect and imagine better ways to serve children and families	17	74%	5	22%	1	4%	0	0%	0	0%	23	4.70	0.56
Spend time planning for the future of the program	17	74%	3	13%	3	13%	0	0%	0	0%	23	4.61	0.72
Balance the budget	15	68%	5	23%	2	9%	0	0%	0	0%	22	4.59	0.67
Make program changes	9	41%	10	45%	3	14%	0	0%	0	0%	22	4.27	0.70
Plan staff get-togethers	9	39%	7	30%	5	22%	2	9%	0	0%	23	4.00	1.00
Find substitutes	9	41%	6	27%	5	23%	1	5%	1	5%	22	3.95	1.13

### 4.3.3 Leadership and Center Issues

Table 4 below displays data showing that (87%, n=20) of the directors strongly agreed or agree that they liked dealing with broader issues in the field and (78%, n=18) feel like they have a solid theoretical foundation. Both answers are identified with leadership attributes. Katz (1977)

claimed that leadership characteristics begin to emerge when thoughts turn to broader questions in the field. Interestingly, (69%, n=16) of the directors indicated that they sometimes felt lonely as a director. Larkin (1992) reported in her study of 16 directors that most directors stated that they felt isolated in their job because they lacked peer relationships Caruso & Fawcett (1999) also acknowledged that directors felt lonely at their jobs.

The directors were divided as to whether they liked to socialize with their staff but there were differences in how strongly they agreed or disagreed. For example, only (5%, n=1) strongly agreed that they liked to socialize with their staff and (50%, n=11) agreed. On the other hand, (32%, n=7) disagreed that they did not like to socialize with their staff and (14%, n=3) strongly disagreed (55%, n=12). One director did not answer the question. Even though 69% of the directors sometimes feel isolated at their job, 46% did not like socializing with their staff.

When directors were asked if they get anxious when they have to make big decisions, 11 (48%, n=11) strongly agreed or agreed that they did get anxious and (52%, n=12) strongly disagreed or disagreed that they did not get anxious. Interesting, when asked if directors felt uncomfortable with having so much authority, (70%, n=17) indicated that they strongly disagreed or disagreed that they felt uncomfortable with having so much authority. This is a different finding than was reported in a study by Larkin (1992) in that women directors struggled with perceived tension between being an authority figure while also providing responsive support to the adults in the program.



**Table 4. Leadership and Center Issues**

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total	Mean	SD
	n=	%	n=	%	n=	%	n=	%			
I like dealing with broader issues in the field of early childhood education	8	35%	12	52%	2	9%	1	4%	23	3.17	0.78
I feel like I have a solid theoretical foundation for the work I do	7	30%	11	48%	4	17%	1	4%	23	3.04	0.82
Sometimes I feel isolated as a director	4	17%	12	52%	6	26%	1	4%	23	2.83	0.78
I get anxious when I must make big decisions	2	9%	9	39%	10	43%	2	9%	23	2.48	0.79
I like to hang around with my staff	1	5%	11	50%	7	32%	3	14%	22	2.45	0.80
I am uncomfortable with having so much authority	2	9%	5	22%	11	48%	5	22%	23	2.17	0.89
When problems arise in my center I don't take them home with me	2	9%	3	13%	15	65%	3	13%	23	2.17	0.78

#### 4.3.4 Reflections on Professional Issues

Table 5 below shows that all of the directors strongly agreed or agree that they spend a lot of time thinking about what the children and the program need. Focusing on the needs of children and the program is referred to as the consolidation phase of leadership development or teacher development according to Katz (1977). All of the directors strongly agreed or agreed that

identifying their personal strengths have really helped them in their work. This concurs with the findings of Larkin (1999) that for good leading to occur, there must be insight into one's own personal strengths and limitations.

What is of interest, is that (82%, n=19) strongly agreed or agreed that they need to become more professionally involved in the wider early childhood community yet (72%, n=6) said that they disagree or strongly disagree that they are thinking about presenting at the next local conference. Presenting at workshops or conferences is in the Advocating/ Mentoring phase of director development where directors begin to share their knowledge and experience with others (Catron and Groves, 1999).

Directors strongly agreed (26%, n=6) or agreed (52%, n=12) that they are focused on getting through each day. According to Katz (1977), that is a descriptor of a beginning director. Once directors discover that they are capable of surviving, they begin to focus on the needs of the children and the program. Organizing and mastering basic organizational skills is a developmental task of beginning directors (Catron & Groves, 1999) (Appendix C), yet, (41%, n=9) strongly agreed that they were developing basic organizational skills while (36%, n=8) said they agreed. Also, the same authors indicate that coping effectively with crisis is a developmental task of a beginning director and 56% either strongly agreed or agreed that they deal with crisis after crisis while 43% directors do not.

More experienced directors have a need for new experiences and begin to search for new ideas and materials, technique and approaches (Katz, 1977). Directors strongly agreed or agreed (87%, n=19) that they did need some new ideas, techniques, and approaches.

**Table 5. Reflections on Professional Issues**

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total	Mean	SD
	n=	%	n=	%	n=	%	n=	%			
I spend a lot of time thinking about what the children and the program need	14	61%	9	39%	0	0%	0	0%	23	3.61	0.50
Identifying my personal strengths has really helped me in my work	12	52%	11	48%	0	0%	0	0%	23	3.52	0.51
I really try to balance my job and my personal life	9	39%	11	48%	2	9%	1	4%	23	3.22	0.80
I need to become more professionally involved in the wider early childhood community	7	30%	12	52%	4	17%	0	0%	23	3.13	0.69
I need some new ideas, techniques and approaches to my work	7	32%	12	55%	3	14%	0	0%	22	3.04	0.93
I am focused on getting through each day	6	26%	12	52%	4	17%	1	4%	23	3.00	0.80
I am developing basic organizational skills	9	41%	8	36%	4	18%	1	5%	22	3.00	1.09
I deal with crisis after crisis	6	26%	7	30%	10	43%	0	0%	23	2.83	0.83
I am thinking about presenting at the next local conference	1	5%	5	23%	10	45%	6	27%	22	1.96	0.93

#### 4.3.5 Summary

The first research question in this study addressed the issue of how directors perceive themselves as developing managers and leaders in their programs. The directors in this study indicated that

they care deeply about their programs, the families, their staff and their love of the children. They spend many long hours for which they are not paid in order to do whatever is necessary to do their jobs well. Many directors work beyond the years that they could retire because they love their jobs. At least half of the directors go the extra mile to become voluntarily accredited which adds to their work load.

The themes that were identified when asked to define the term leadership reveal a mixture of management and leadership tasks. The directors have acknowledged that both sets of skills are needed in order to be successful. They understand the importance of guiding staff in creating a vision for the program and creating a climate of trust, yet they realize as well that managing the day to day operations of their program is equally important.

The directors perceive themselves to be leaders in their programs. However, their answers indicate that they have not taken advantage of being leaders in the wider field of early childhood care and education. Although 87% of the directors agree that they like dealing with broader issues in the field, and 82% agreed that they need to become more involved professionally in the wider community, only 7% actually hold any positions in the wider professional community. They recognize the importance of becoming involved, but there seems to be a gap as to actually becoming involved.

#### **4.4 DIRECTORS PREPARATION FOR LEADERSHIP**

The studies in the literature review in chapter two revealed that child care directors acquire their jobs with little preparation or planning. In most cases, directors do not plan to become directors and find that they accept their job because they were promoted or encouraged by others who

believe that they could do the required work. Many directors were teachers or caregivers at their center who others recognized as having good skills with children.

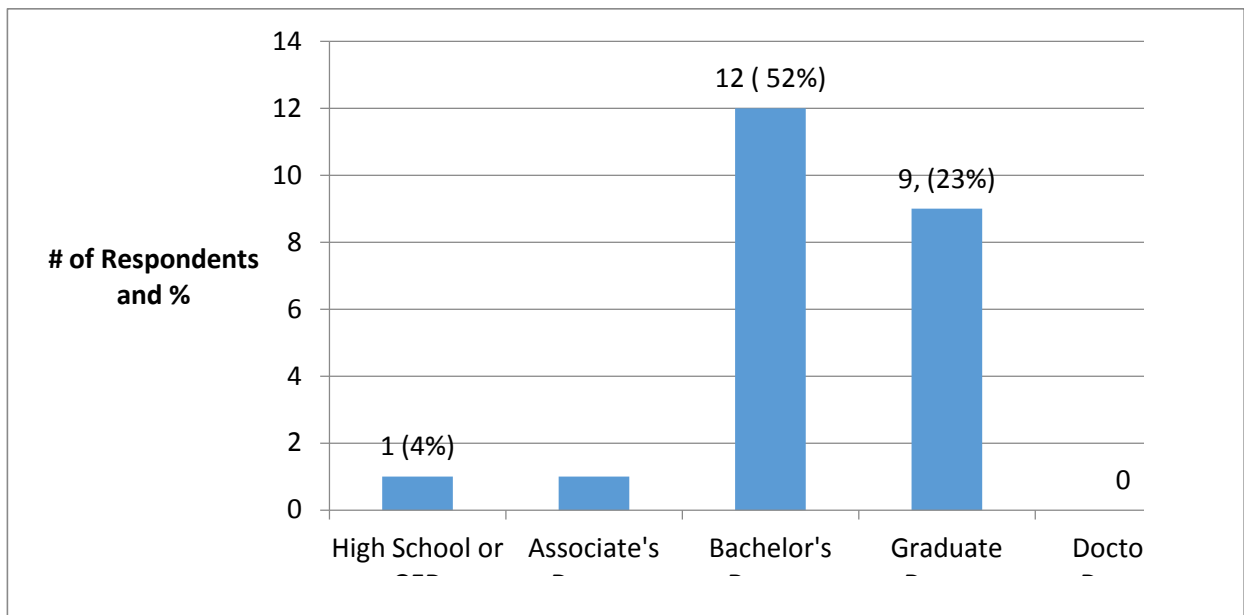
The following sections will present the data that show how the directors answered questions about their level of education, position before becoming a director, preparation for leadership, and their preferred method of professional development. A summary of the section will follow.

#### **4.4.1 Level of Education**

Formal education and training impact the quality of care and education in centers. One important finding from The National Staffing Study, a longitudinal study that collected data from 1998 to 2002, including both teachers and directors, concluded that staff who earned a bachelor degree or college level course work demonstrated the highest level of quality care (Whitebook et al., 1993). Qualifications of staff and directors have declined relative to the workforce as a whole (Herzenberg, et al., 2005). The directors who were surveyed for this study were found to be highly educated. Although requirements are different for each state, Pennsylvania regulations require directors to have at least a bachelor's degree in a field related to early childhood education so this finding was expected. A director who does not have at least a bachelors' degree must at least have an assistant or head teacher with a college degree in a field related to ECCE..

College students with an interest in working with young children will most likely not choose to work in a child care center. This is a concern considering that almost all of the directors in this and other studies that were reviewed have indicated that they were teachers before becoming directors. First year college students reported greater dissatisfaction with their

practicum experiences that were completed in child care centers than the practicum's completed in Kindergarten classrooms (Torquati et al., 2007). Only 9% planned to work in child care centers after graduation while 43% planned to work in Kindergarten classrooms. The students cited low compensation, length of the work year, and too many working hours per week as the reasons they would avoid jobs in child care. Overall, low compensation is related to low status of the field which is likely to continue to limit its appeal to college graduates (National Research Council, 2012). A lack of educated teachers will lead to a lack of educated directors.



**Figure 7.** Highest level of director education

#### 4.4.2 Position before Becoming a Director

The average number of years that the directors worked in an ECCE position is 8.5 years. Some of the positions that directors held are: group supervisor, school age program director, teacher, assistant director, assistant teacher, assistant director, group supervisor, kindergarten teacher, student teacher, substitute teacher, pre-K teacher, day camp director, day camp counselor,

ministry coordinator, head coach, educational coordinator, cluster coordinator, program coordinator, preschool teacher, preschool special education teacher, public school teacher, private school teacher, lead teacher, managing lead teacher, academy education director, toddler teacher, interim director, and adjunct instructor. This list displays some of the many different types of positions which can be held in the field of early childhood education. It also indicates that entry to becoming a director seems to require first having worked in some area of early childhood education.

#### **4.4.3 Professional Preparation**

According to the survey results displayed on Table 6 below (95%, n=22) of the directors were teachers or caregivers before becoming the director. All of the directors believe that working with adults and working with children require a different set of skills and knowledge. This belief is validated by an earlier study that states that child care directors who are competent in their skill and knowledge of working with young children are not necessarily competent or knowledgeable in their understanding of working with adults (Cooper, Droddy, & Merriam, 1998).

The number of directors who said that they felt confident and self-assured when taking on the position of director is (61%, n=14) compared to the (57%, n=13) who did not feel confident which is almost even. Many of the directors in the focus group said that they felt confident now that she has been a director. One director admitted that she currently feels confident only after being a director for a while. She said “I feel confident when I help teachers and families understand what a child’s behavior means developmentally. I also feel confident saying I don’t know”. Another director shared that “I have been doing this for a very long time and I feel

confident now in knowing what children need and in being able to guide teachers and parents. I didn't start out feeling this way. I continued professional development and to enrich myself with reading and now that I am close to retirement, I am starting to feel confident." According to these statements, it appears that confidence builds over time.

More directors (65%, n=15) indicated that they had little leadership or administrative training before becoming a director compared to (31%, n=8) that did have leadership or administrative training (34% , n=8). In an earlier study including ten directors, none of them had any previous access to systematic preparation in leadership knowledge, skills or behavior.

Leadership training is low in both studies.

Interestingly, (69%, n=15) would recommend being a child care director as a career to others. One director stated in the focus group, "I care about my program so much. I love where I am. It is something that I want to do for the community and for the children."

Only (39%, n=9) said that they knew that they wanted to be a director early in their careers and (61%, n=14) did not know. In an earlier study, less than one fifth of a group of 257 directors knew that they wanted to be a director and actively sought after the position (Bloom, 2000). Also, most directors had the position offered to them because they were good teachers in the program.

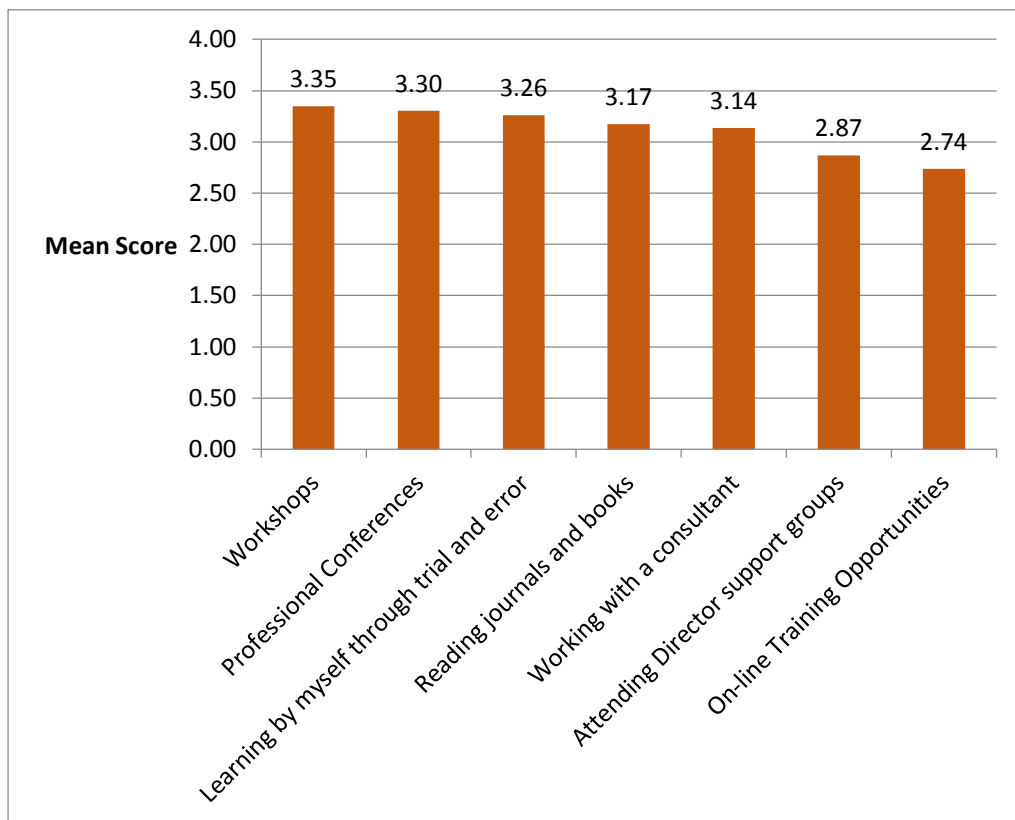


**Table 6. Professional Development**

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total n =	Mean	SD
	n =	%	n =	%	n =	%	n =	%			
I was an early childhood teacher/caregiver before becoming a director	18	78%	4	17%	0	0%	1	4%	23	3.70	0.70
I believe that working with adults and working with children require different sets of skills and knowledge	12	52%	9	39%	2	9%	0	0%	23	3.43	0.66
I felt confident and self-assured when I became a director	5	22%	9	39%	9	39%	0	0%	23	2.83	0.78
I had little leadership or administrative training before becoming a director	6	26%	9	39%	4	17%	4	17%	23	2.74	1.05
I would recommend being a child care director as a career to others	3	14%	12	55%	6	27%	1	5%	22	2.65	0.93
I felt unprepared for the kinds of issues I had to face when I became a director	2	9%	8	35%	13	57%	0	0%	23	2.52	0.67
I knew that I wanted to be a child care director early in my career in child care	4	17%	5	22%	9	39%	5	22%	23	2.35	1.03

#### 4.4.4 Preferred Method of Professional Development

The first choice for obtaining professional development is workshops followed by attending conferences. Learning by trial and error is a learning style of a beginning director (Caruso and Fawcett, 1999; Larkin, 1992), yet, 19 directors indicated (mean = 3.26) that this was a preferred method of professional development. The difference between the preferred methods of professional development was actually minimal, although the least preferred method indicated was on-line training. This is not a surprise for this group of directors who have indicated through their answers that they are very relationship oriented.



**Figure. 8** Director preferred method of professional development

#### 4.4.5 Summary

The second research question was intended to discover their level of education, what positions they held before becoming a director, learn how they were prepared for the position of a director, and learn what their preferred methods of professional development are. Earlier studies have shown that directors are leaders in their programs but have not demonstrated much leadership in the wider field. Most did not plan to become a child care director. Almost all were already teachers or caregivers at their center and also many have experience in some other aspect of work with children.

Many of the directors in this study have been teachers at their centers and there is usually not much time to get ready for the director position. Only 57% of the directors said they felt prepared for the position and only 32% felt confident upon accepting the position. Almost all of the directors believe that working with adults requires a different skill set than working with children and yet most of them started out as directors without a lot of knowledge of working with adults.

The directors seem to feel supported in their work, especially in their relationships with their staff. They seem to prefer workshops, conferences, learning through trial and error and reading journals and books as top methods of professional development. They indicated that director support groups were one of the least preferred methods of professional development. This is a professional development method that would help them to feel less isolated and perhaps connected to the wider community of early child care and education.

## **4.5 BARRIERS TO LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

The data presented in this section provides information on the third research question which is what do directors perceive to be the barriers to leadership development? Questions about work stress, reasons directors leave their jobs, reasons why staff leave their jobs, and staff turnover will be followed by a summary.

### **4.5.1 Work Stress**

It is not surprising that paying staff low wages would cause directors very high stress (65%, n=15), high stress (13%, n=3), or some stress (22%, n=5). Low wages prevent qualified staff from entering the field. This can cause high turnover of staff (74% (n=17) which is stressful for both the director and the children. With fewer qualified staff entering the workforce, there is less staff from which to choose (Whitebook & Bellum, 1999).

Regulations, licensing, and other requirements also cause stress for directors (69%, n=16). Paper work is stressful (44%, n=10) for at least half of the directors surveyed which Carter and Curtis (1999) have determined is a barrier for director leadership. The top stressors indicated by the directors in this study are similar to the stressors that were identified by Dalton (1983); high turnover of staff (46%, n=11), lack of professional commitment of staff (39%, n=9), unavailable qualified staff (61%, n=14) and inadequate funding for center (52%, n=13).

**Table 7. Work Stress**

	Very High Stress		High Stress		Some Stress		Minimal Stress		No Stress		Total	Mean	SD
	n=	%	n=	%	n=	%	n=	%	n=	%			
Low compensation for staff	15	65%	3	13%	5	22%	0	0%	0	0%	23	4.43	0.84
Regulations and requirements	7	30%	9	39%	7	30%	0	0%	0	0%	23	4.00	0.80
Inadequate funding for center	7	30%	6	26%	7	30%	2	9%	1	4%	23	3.70	1.15
Unavailability of qualified staff	6	26%	8	35%	3	13%	4	17%	2	9%	23	3.52	1.31
Finding substitute staff	5	22%	8	35%	4	17%	6	26%	0	0%	23	3.52	1.12
High turnover of staff	5	22%	6	26%	6	26%	6	26%	0	0%	23	3.43	1.12
Inadequate benefits for staff	8	35%	4	17%	4	17%	4	17%	3	13%	23	3.43	1.47
Paperwork	5	22%	5	22%	8	35%	4	17%	1	4%	23	3.39	1.16
Staff calling off work	3	13%	6	26%	5	22%	8	35%	1	4%	23	3.09	1.16
Lack of professional commitment of staff	5	22%	4	17%	3	13%	7	30%	4	17%	23	2.96	1.46

**4.5.2 Reasons to Leave Job**

Directors in this study strongly agreed or agreed that they did not want to leave their jobs (78%, n=18) and (69%, n=16) disagree or strongly disagree that they are disillusioned with the field. Directors tend to be satisfied with their jobs and the field even though they agree that their salary is too low (64%, n=13), they agree that they are stress or burned out (65%, n=15), and they agree that their work hours are too long (65%, n=14). They seem to be satisfied with their benefits

with (74%, n=17) disagreeing that there are too few. These are positive findings considering that retention of staff including directors is a national concern (McArtney & Phillips, 2008).

The focus group of directors agreed on the notion that they love where they work and they care about their centers very much. One director stated, “It’s a passion. I feel like I am giving something. Working in education does something for the world. It helps build skills for children that will last them the rest of their lives.”

The fact that 78% of directors do not want to leave their job and in fact admit to loving their job is good for programs but may have a negative effect on the wider early childhood care and education field where leaders and policy changes are needed the most. When the directors in the focus group were asked what keeps them at their job, someone said jokingly, “The fabulous salary” and everyone in the room laughed. Another director stated that “When I get up in the morning, I want to feel excited about every day”. Yet, another claimed “How funny that we seem to feel guilty because we love our jobs. What does that say about our society if we have to rationalize that we do not do it for the money? If we said we stay at our jobs because we make a lot of money then everyone would understand.” And, “You are lucky if you love your job and if you stay at it because you are getting that love back. You feel like there is a purpose to everyday”. Finally, “It is just pure love.”

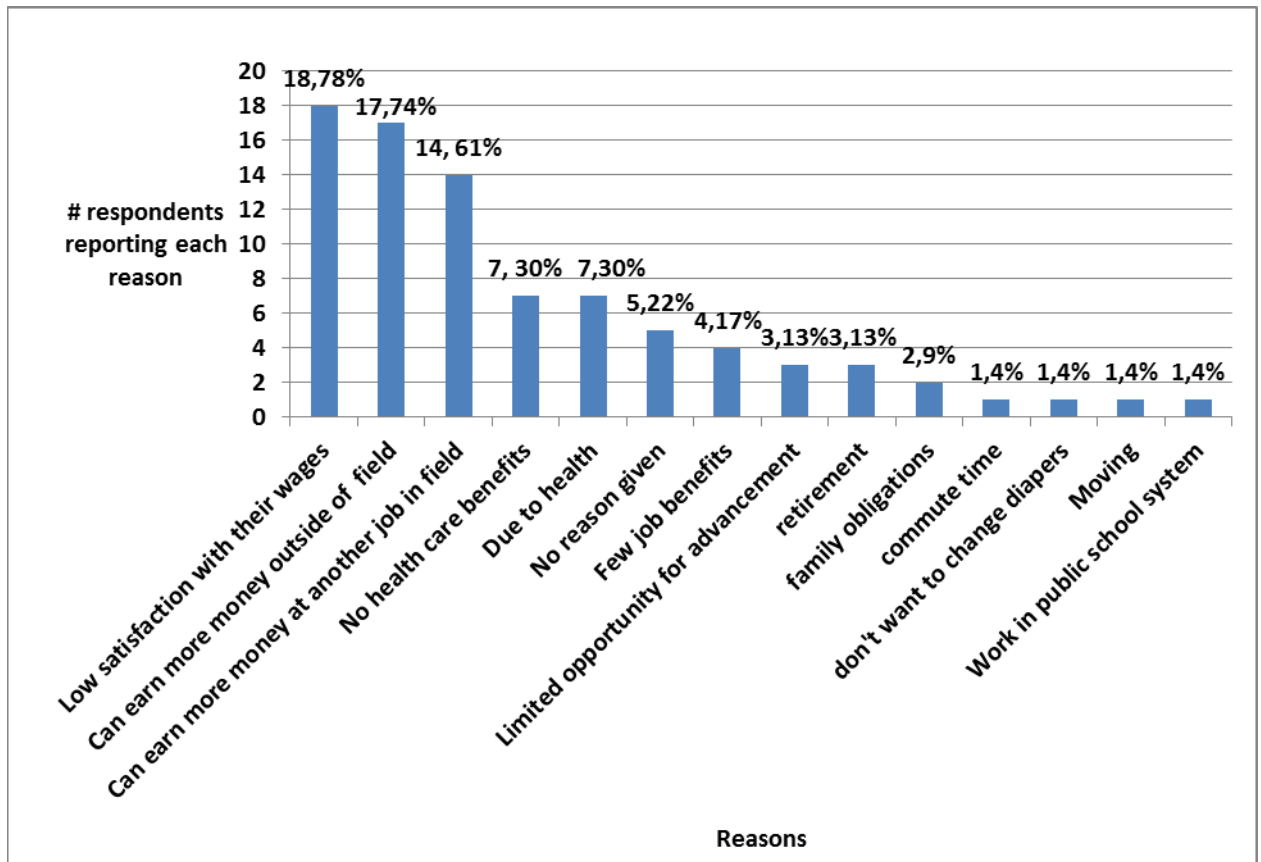
**Table 8. Reasons to Leave Job**

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total	Mean	SD
	n=	%	n=	%	n=	%	n=	%			
I do not want to leave my job	8	35%	10	43%	4	17%	1	4%	23	3.09	0.85
Work hours too long	5	23%	9	41%	8	36%	0	0%	22	2.86	0.77
Stress/Burnout	3	13%	12	52%	7	30%	1	4%	23	2.74	0.75
Salary too low	4	18%	9	41%	7	32%	2	9%	22	2.68	0.89
Retirement age	4	18%	6	27%	7	32%	5	23%	22	2.41	1.05
Want to pursue another job in the field	2	9%	9	39%	7	30%	5	22%	23	2.35	0.93
Want to pursue another job outside of the field	3	13%	7	30%	6	26%	7	30%	23	2.26	1.05
Too Few benefits	3	13%	3	13%	13	57%	4	17%	23	2.22	0.90
Not enough opportunities for leadership training	1	4%	5	22%	12	52%	5	22%	23	2.09	0.79
Disillusioned with the field	2	9%	5	22%	7	30%	9	39%	23	2.00	1.00

### 4.5.3 Reasons Staff Leave Their Jobs

The top three reasons why directors perceive that staff would want to leave their jobs are related to compensation. The literature in chapter two reviewed studies that indicated that low staff compensation has stayed the same for four decades and that they earn 31% less than other workers who have similar qualifications. In this study, only (30%, n=7) of directors listed this as a reason for staff leaving their jobs.

Often directors are unable to offer health benefits to staff and nationally only one in four early child care workers in center-based child care have any health benefits (Herzenberg et al., 2005). Again, only (30%, n=7) of the directors thought that this is why staff leave their jobs. Research has shown that staff may leave their jobs due to limited opportunities for advancement (Gable & Halliburton et, al, 2005) but according to this data only (13%, n=3) of directors indicated that this might be a reason.



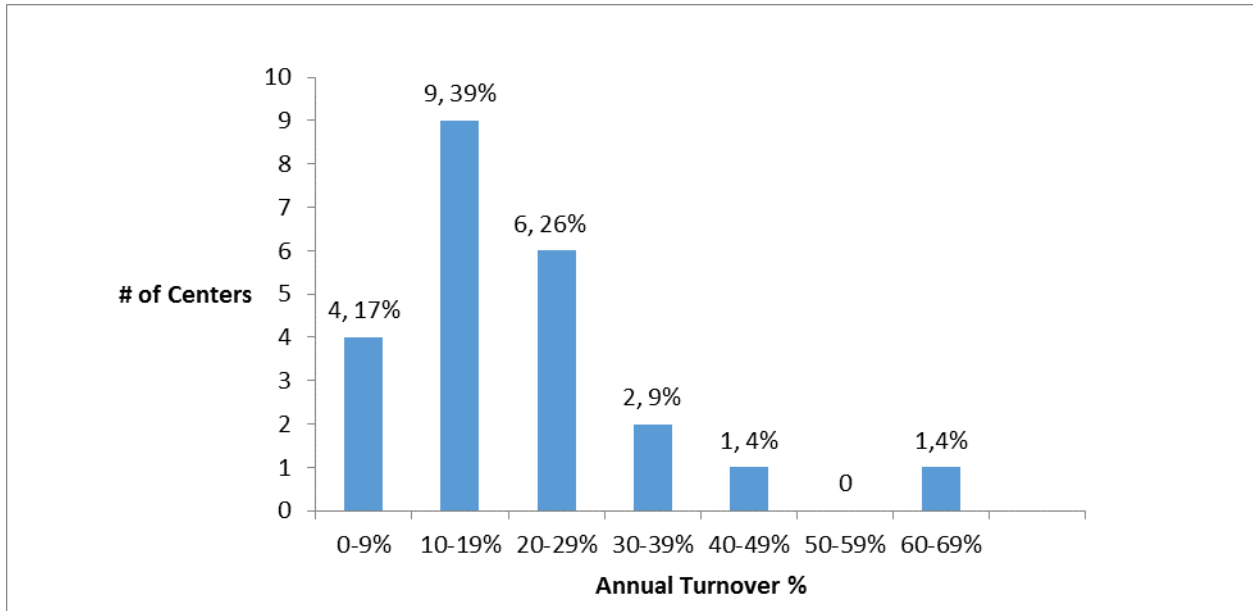
**Figure 8.** Reasons Staff Leave Their Jobs



#### **4.5.4 Staff Turnover**

Directors were asked approximately how many staff (teachers/caregivers) left their center each year. Staff turnover ranged from 5.7% to 66.7% annually. The majority of turnover rates were in the 5.7% to 30% range annually. A key outlier at 66.7% was a center with three employees, who lost an average of two employees per year. Centers with a staff turnover rate lower than 10% annually are rated higher in combined measures of quality such as adult/child ratios, group size and more advanced child language and pre-math skills (Helburn, 1995). Research has shown that the annual national turnover rate for staff is 26% to 48% (Bloom, 2000). The turnover rate in this study showed that all but one of the centers fell within the national range which. Only four centers were reported to have less than a 4% annual turnover rate.

Job turnover is a problem in the entire field of ECCE. It drains the energy of staff and hiring another teacher takes time. Having two or three different caregivers assigned to a young child each year is too high (Center for Child Care Workforce, 2004) and negatively effects program quality and interferes with child/adult attachments (Whitebook et al., 1990).



**Figure 9.** Annual turnover rate of staff

#### 4.5.5 Summary

The third research question aimed to explore what barriers are perceived by directors that interfere with their leadership development. Four areas were analyzed; work stress, reasons directors' would leave their jobs, reasons why staff would leave their jobs, and staff turnover. Seven of the ten questions about work stress directly involved staff issues which directors indicated caused at least some stress. With fewer college students preparing for the field of early education, this stress will continue as qualified staff will be difficult to find. The directors agreed that it was difficult to pay staff, to find qualified staff, and find substitutes when staff called off work (47%, n=11). Half of the directors felt that a lack of professional commitment of their staff created minimal or no stress for them. This could be interpreted that in spite of the barriers that staff and directors must face, staff are still professionally committed to the program.

The directors may perceive that there are barriers to leadership development due to stress that they must deal with in their jobs, yet 18 out of 23 directors agree that they do not want to leave their jobs, despite their long hours and low salary. All but 6 directors (74%, n=17) perceived that they have enough opportunity for leadership opportunities.

## 4.6 DISCUSSION

### 4.6.1 Introduction

This research study, *Child Care Leadership; A Crucial Connection to Quality and Education*, has provided some important information about the nature of director leadership. Leadership of the director has been closely associated with high quality care. In past studies, directors have been considered to be managers of their programs rather than leaders. They were successful when conducting the day-to-day operations of their programs, but were lacking when it came to guiding their staff in a mission or vision for the center. The findings from this study show how a group of directors today, agree that leadership is important within their programs. The findings also show that director leadership is lacking in the wider field of ECCE which is one reason so many of the same challenges exist today just as they have for the past four decades.

A discussion will be presented for each of the three research questions. The data show that some challenges in ECCE have remained the same. More is required of directors today than 25 years ago. It is not enough to be a leader in the center. Directors must also consider their role in the wider field of ECCE.

#### 4.6.2 Research Question 1

How do center-based child care directors describe themselves as developing managers and leaders?

- **Directors identify themselves both as leaders and managers but director leadership was rated higher in importance.**

Managing a center involves taking care of the daily operations of the center and all that it entails. Leading a center involves guiding staff in a shared vision for the center and strategically planning for the future of the program. Directors believe that it is important to: guide staff in their understanding of program values, goals and vision (100%), to create a climate of trust with their staff (100%), to take time to reflect and imagine better ways to serve children and families (96%, n=22), to spend time planning for the future of the program (87%, n=20), and to implement program changes (86%, n=19). They also all agree that they spend a lot of time thinking about what the children and program need. They like dealing with broader issues in the field of education (87%, n=20).

Management qualities were also highly rated. Directors believe that it is important to manage the day-to-day operations (100%), supervise staff (96%, n=21), and balance the budget (91%, n=20). These findings are consistent with the literature which states that while both management and leadership competencies are necessary for directors, it is the leadership of the director that is the important element in outstanding child care centers (Pipa, 1997; Culkin, 1994; Reckmeyer, 1990).

What is concerning is that the leadership that is needed at the broader systems level is absent. Leadership at this level would have an impact in the field as well as individual centers.

- **There is still not an agreed upon definition of leadership in the ECCE field.**

When asked to write a definition of leadership, the directors included both aspects of leading and managing. By including all of the directors' ideas about leadership, a new definition is offered for consideration by the wider ECCE community: *Director leadership involves making an effort be a part of the team and building trust, rapport, and positive, authentic RELATIONSHIPS with staff, parents and children. Leadership involves SUPPORTING STAFF by being a role model, a helping hand, listening, supporting, communicating well, and providing encouragement. Director leadership also involves VISION building, a clear understanding of the program goals, knowing the big picture, and being aware of the political climate. Director leaders need time to be alone, time to think, and to always be aware of their own values, strength, and PERSONAL GROWTH. Director leaders make sure that the JOBS GET DONE in their programs which are multifaceted, encompassing many types of challenging tasks, but in the end, always REWARDING.*

- **Directors are very relationship-based within their programs when managing their staff.**

Directors agree that they sometimes feel isolated at their centers (69%, n=16) which may lead to their need to plan staff get-togethers (69%, n=16). At least half of the directors like to socialize with their staff (55%, n=12). It is important to take care of the needs of staff but this is a management concern, not an example of leadership. Since

most directors were teachers before becoming directors, it is as if they are caring for their staff much the same way they use to care for the children.

#### 4.6.3 Research Question 2

How are center-based childcare directors prepared and supported for leadership development in their work?

- **It cannot be definitively stated whether directors felt prepared for their jobs or had any leadership training.**

Approximately half of the directors agree that they were already prepared for their job when they were hired (44%, n=10). They also agree (65%, n=15) that they had little leadership training before becoming a director. A contradiction exists in another answer where directors agree that they had enough opportunities for leadership training (74%, n=16) before becoming a director.

One director in the focus group shared that when she first started out as directors, they need clerical knowledge, grant knowledge, to know what resources are available, knowledge of accreditation and knowledge of all of the other administrative functions. Another director said that teachers who become directors, need training the most and that when teachers begin to think about becoming a director they need to know how much directors' deal with emotional issues, social issues, and other challenges. This director suggested that teachers need to sign up for director training before becoming a director.

- **Directors agree that working with adults and working with children requires a different set of skills and knowledge.**

All but one director was an early childhood teacher/caregiver before becoming a director knowledge (91%, n=21).

- **More than half of the directors felt confident and self-assured when they became directors (69%, n=14).**

A director in the focus group shared that now she feels confident knowing what children need and being able to guide staff and parents. She admitted that she did not start out feeling this way but with continued professional development and reading on her own, she is now feeling confident as she nears her retirement.

A second director in the focus group said that she felt confident when experiences just flow and it feels good. She is happy when the staff is all together sharing laughs where it feels like fun. Similarly, another director shared that she feels confident when they have classroom celebrations and they are all together feeling happy. She feels good that she has helped create this situation. Finally, a director brought up leadership in relation to confidence. She admitted that it took her decades to become a leader. She had to push herself and struggle with confidence issues. Working with difficult people previously helped her in her job as a director.

Directors feel confident when their programs are joyful and the needs of children, staff, and parents are being met. It is wonderful to feel confident with a silo of familiar people. The challenge is, however, for these directors to become involved in the wider community of directors who could support each other and make some systematic changes in the field.

#### 4.6.4 Research Question 3

What are the barriers to leadership development as described by center-based child care directors?

- **Directors are not leaders in the wider ECCE community.**

All of the directors are members of a professional organization but only seven directors held an ECCE leadership position outside of their center. Directors agree (82%, n=19) that they need to become more professionally involved in the wider ECCE community. Yet, only (28%, n=6) were thinking about presenting at the next local ECCE conference. Only one director indicated that she attended a director's group. This is unfortunate since both peer support and support outside of ECCE is vital to promoting growth and maintaining motivation (Poster, 1986).

- **Directors like their jobs and do not want to leave their positions.**

Directors (78%, n=18) do not want to leave their jobs. Even though directors work long hours during the week; 41-50 hours (48%, n=11), 51-60 hours (22%, n=5), and over 60 hours (9%, n=2); are focused on just getting through each day (78%, n=18), agree that they are stressed and burned out (65%, n=15); and that their salaries are too low (59%, n=13), they still like their jobs and would recommend being a child care director to others (69%, n=15). Only (31%, n=7) are disillusioned with the field.

One director in the focus group was joking when she said that it was the fabulous salary that keeps her at her job. Everyone in the room laughed. Other directors shared that their job is a passion and it feels like they are giving something back, that they want to do something for the community, that working in ECCE does something for the world, and that it is just pure love. One director said that she shouldn't have to feel guilty about



loving her job. She wondered what type of society we live in if ECCE directors have to rationalize that they do not necessarily work for the money.

Directors find enough satisfaction in their jobs through their positive relationships with staff and children and they feel like they are doing something good for the community. This sounds remarkably like the first child care in the late 1800s when women who could work for little or no money would take care of children as an altruistic activity for the betterment of the community. Unfortunately, directors love their jobs so much that they are not contributing to solving the problems in the field. This creates a barrier to director leadership in the wider field of ECCE.

As long as directors are willing to accept the above conditions and do not advocate for better policies for child care, the challenges in the field of ECCE will remain.

- **A barrier to developing leaders in the field is that only (39%, n=9) of the directors ever wanted to be a child care director early in their career.**

It is not a job that is highly sought after. Directors just seem to end up in the position. College students who are being educated in ECCE gravitate to public schools where the salaries are higher.

## **5.0 ACTION PLAN FOR TRANSFORMED LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

Director leadership has been defined in two ways: center leadership and field-wide leadership. Center leadership is strong among the directors in this study but field-wide leadership, which is essential to address the challenges in the ECCE field, is weak. More is expected of directors today than in the past when the field focused mainly on program development (Kagan and Bowman, 1997). Center directors must have the desire, the ability, and the commitment needed to create systemic change in the wider ECCE field as well as a commitment to individual center quality.

Based on the findings from this study, an action plan for transformed leadership development is presented below. Implementation of such a plan has the potential to improve, expand, and promote ECCE field-wide director leadership and positively impact early learning outcomes for young children.

## **5.1 BUILD DIRECTOR LEADERSHIP INTO CURRENT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT VENUES USING A THREE-TIERED SYSTEM**

### **5.1.1 Local Level**

Directors are very relationship based. The care and concern that they once offered to the children that they served as teachers is now being redirected to the care and concern of their staff. Directors said that they socialize with and are friends with their staff. Socialization that only occurs for directors in their centers is too confining and does not offer them the opportunity to grow into field-wide leaders. Directors must extend this same care and concern into the wider-field by building relationships with other directors and persons in a position to make systemic changes, such as funders, policy makers and politicians.

Director groups that provide opportunities to build relationships outside of the center are necessary to encourage interaction among peers. Directors will then be able to socialize with their peers and at the same time engage in activities that are related to their work and the wider-field. An identified professional community should be built into the professional development plan of every director. Professional relationships can help directors take important first steps to action that lead to change such as building coalitions and advocacy groups (Washington, et al, 2015).

Professional development groups such as Associations for the Education of Young Children (AEYC) must be relentless in their efforts to convince directors that an attitude of complacency toward field-wide issues is detrimental to finding solutions to ECCE challenges. State Quality Assurance groups can encourage director participation with peer groups. Local

AEYC groups can provide for the organization of these groups and assure that they are stimulating and thought-provoking so that directors will want to attend.

Director on-line book groups with opportunities for on-line discussions of books written by leaders in the ECCE field is another way to involve directors in leadership. Meetings could be arranged at the end of the on-line discussion period in order to have a face-to face discussion of the book. Appropriate credit can be awarded to the directors for their participation. The same idea could be used for ECCE staff thinking about future leadership positions in the ECCE field. This would be an opportunity for them to read literature written by field-wide leaders, meet for discussions with their peers, and receive credit for their effort.

The definition of director leadership offered in this study can act as the beginning of a wider discussion for directors and future leaders in the field. Other definitions of leadership can be analyzed and serve as a point of discussion. Directors who learn together and work together can begin to feel empowered rather than defeated by what the field currently offers to them and their staff. Director isolation must be avoided especially for those directors who are in areas that are far removed from others who are doing the same work such as the director described in the beginning of this paper.

State and national professional development programs can model this same design by planning state-wide and national focus groups for directors. Articles that describe the work of these director groups can be written and disseminated in newsletters and ECCE journals. Other action plans for state and local tiers follow.

### **5.1.2 State Level**

Action steps that are already in place need to be expanded upon such as bus trips that are taken to the state capital arranged by a local AEYC in Pennsylvania. Each year, during the Month of the Young Child which is sponsored by the National AEYC, several buses of ECCE staff are trained on how to have a discussion with their state legislatures about the importance of ECCE and the necessity of more funds being directed into early care and learning. This action could be duplicated in other parts of the state as well as serving as a model for other states. Expansion of this activity can occur by securing funding for all center directors to participate in this advocacy activity. Directors can meet others with similar interests and intent and talk to the lawmakers who control state funds. Lawmakers need to clearly hear from many in the ECCE field about the challenges facing the ECCE workforce that are impacting their youngest constituents who are not yet able to vote.

Another action that can be replicated in other states is currently being implemented by the Office of Child Development (OCD) in Pennsylvania. In an attempt to include an equal representation of ECCE stakeholders as they revise and re-vision their Quality Assurance Key Stone STAR Rating System, an e-mail was sent out asking for volunteers to serve on a statewide taskforce. Over 500 persons responded to this call and approximately 20 were carefully selected to represent the many ECCE sectors and geographic locations ([pakeys.org](http://pakeys.org)). Action plans from this group will be disseminated throughout the state through town hall meetings using webinar technology. Being present and active at these town hall meetings is a way that local directors can connect with the wider ECCE field and have a voice in expanding the role of the director.

This model of change gives those who are the closest to the actual work in the field a chance to redefine the directors' role as leaders in the complex system of ECCE. A review of the

Pennsylvania Keystone STARS Quality Rating System (Penn Child Research, 2015) shows how the quality components of this system directly relate to positive child outcomes. The first component includes supporting individual child learning as being most related to positive child outcomes. The second component most related to child outcomes involves the interactions of the teachers and families. The final component is the child care provider, including director development and director qualifications. This is the area that that does not show any clear evidence that is linked to positive child outcomes. An opportunity exists to design current research that links director leadership to child outcomes.

### **5.1.3 National Level**

Professional development groups that have been successful in encouraging director leadership should be used as models for other states. For example, The McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership in Illinois recognizes the need for early childhood leadership as the field expands (McCormick Center, 2014). Their success in training directors for leadership as well as their research on director leadership has provided important guidance in the ECCE field. Replicating professional development centers and their curriculum such as this one would expand the availability for director participation.

The time is right for collective work among all sectors of ECCE to engage with politicians, influence policy, build consensus, and develop resources that are necessary to continue the journey toward professional excellence and recognition (Allvin, 2015). NAEYC is committed to being risk-taking and innovative and encouraging ECCE professionals to advance their education, professional learning, and careers. Directors must play a critical role in this national movement.

## **5.2 PREPARE NEW TEACHERS/CAREGIVERS TO BECOME CENTER LEADERS AND FIELD-WIDE LEADERS EARLY IN THEIR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Most directors did not plan on becoming a director and were classroom teachers before becoming promoted. Being aware of this gives both professional development systems and higher education institutes an opportunity to offer early leadership programs for those persons who are just starting their careers.

### **5.2.1 Higher Education**

Higher education institutions must prepare students who are interested in Pre-K education for their role not just as teachers in a classroom, but as leaders in the wider field. It is rare in this field to think of ourselves as part of something larger than our individual programs or as separate sectors (Goffin, 2015). It is important for students to learn the skills needed to work with young children, but it is also necessary for them to learn how they fit into the larger picture in the field as leaders. Early in their careers students must become aware of the barriers in the field and learn how they can be advocates leading to improved early learning. They must enter the field of ECCE already committed to improving the field. Professional development must include the knowledge of others, knowledge of organizations, knowledge of the ECCE wider community, and the knowledge of self or personal development (Culkin, 2000). In addition, the knowledge of systems will enable all of those who work in the field of ECCE to understand how the work that they do daily impacts the whole field.

Both professional development programs and institutes of higher education must address the obstacles that prevent the recruitment of both directors and ECCE staff. Knowledge of the

economic base of child care must be recognized and studied in order to understand the importance of early care and learning for young children. An effective marketing plan has yet to be developed that will convince the community of the vital importance of providing early care and education. School of Educations and Business Schools can work together to develop a marketing plan that will inform community members and policy makers of the importance of quality care and education programs for young children.

### **5.3 EXPAND ON CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS FOR DIRECTOR PROFESSIONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT, AND THE STEPS NEEDED TO DEVELOP LEADERS**

Personal development, adult development, an understanding of larger systems issues that involve advocacy and public policy, and the ability to manage complex systems are all important topics for directors to understand. Attention to these areas of development will help directors not only in their own development, but in the development and growth of their staff. Aspects of Vander Ven's framework (2000) at the expertise/influential category as well as other director development frameworks need to be highlighted in both the education and training of directors. Professional development frameworks should be embedded into every director's professional development career pathway in order to help them track their growth and connect with other directors. Professional development systems could use director professional development frameworks as a guide and as steps to leadership development.



#### **5.4 CONDUCT MORE RESEARCH ON DIRECTOR LEADERSHIP**

More research needs to be conducted on director leadership. This study could be conducted in other geographic areas in order to increase the number of responses thus increasing the reliability and validity of the survey instrument. Other questions could be added to the survey such as:

1. How long have you been a director at your current center? Conceptual models can be used in the formulation of this question so that directors might identify themselves not only in their number of years as a director, but also identify themselves through the lenses of a variety of conceptual models. For example: organizing phase, managing phase, or leading phase (Carton & Groves, 1999) or through the Ecological Model of Development: awareness, induction/initial, competency/informed, proficiency/complex, and expertise/influential (Vander Ven, 1988, 1999, 2000)
2. What resources would you need to be able to leave your center several times a month in order to meet with director peers to strategize, set an action agenda, and advocate on behalf of the wider field of early ECCE? This question would provide information leading to what it would take to encourage directors to want to leave their centers and meet, learn, and plan with other directors.
3. Would you be willing to attend a director peer group in order to increase your knowledge of your personal development as well as your role as both a leader in your center and in the wider ECCE field? The surveyed directors in this study did not seem interested in attending director peer groups. Perhaps reworded in this way would provide more information about what would motivate them to attend.
4. Do you think you could find gratification if you worked with a group of directors more systemically in the context of field-wide changes? This question would address the

relational aspect of directors' jobs which would yield knowledge about how to help directors see that meeting with other director peers is an opportunity to form relationships and use their collective strengths to accomplish system wide goals such as increased compensation. Could directors find the same level of comfort working with their peer group as they do working with the staff in their centers?

## **5.5 DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE RESEARCH AGENDA THAT WILL PROVIDE MORE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT EARLY CHILDHOOD LEADERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

Much of what we know about directors is derived from studies of their relationship to child care quality (Barnett, et al). The research base is uneven with much more known about teachers/caregivers in the classroom than is known about directors as leaders. Most of the available research has been limited to small studies.

A comprehensive research agenda with key questions that address director leaders in their work settings and in the wider ECCE field would be valuable to policymakers and practitioners as they make decisions about programs. The focus of research should always include three important elements: compensation, preparation and professional development, and work environments that support adult learning (Barnett, 2008).

### **5.5.1 Higher Education**

One of the most crucial roles of higher education is to conduct research. Research on leadership issues that focus on early childhood care and education would command more authority if conducted among various departments. Research that is conducted between educational institutions would be even more influential.

### **5.5.2 Form Collaboratives**

Collaborations between the many departments that teach and conduct research on aspects of early childhood education and child development in universities and colleges provides a unique opportunity to share knowledge and coordinate research that could influence policy decisions in the wider-field of ECCE. The Department of Psychology of Education at the University of Pittsburgh has instituted a university-wide group of interdisciplinary faculty who meet regularly to discuss their teaching and research in ECCE and leadership. It is composed of faculty in the schools and departments who are involved in a variety of aspects of teaching and research in early childhood education such as the Department of Psychology, the Department of Instruction and Learning, the Department of Health and Physical Activity, the Program in Applied Developmental Psychology, the Center for Urban Education, and the School of Business Administration. Initially, a small taskforce met to determine who else should be included based on their involvement in ECCE and leadership. One of the goals of this academic group is to create a university-wide ECCE and leadership research agenda focusing on the wider-field of education and care for young children and the adults who work with them. This group also aims to identify the many different sectors within the wider community that have contact with the

university through student internships, student capstone projects, research projects, professional development activities, consultation, or student volunteer activities.

### **5.5.3 Form Consortia**

Another step in this process is to involve universities and colleges with similar interests in ECCE and leadership through the development of a consortia. One example that may serve as a model to be replicated at other educational institutions is a consortia that is being planned for the summer of 2016 by faculty members in the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh and faculty from the School of Education at the Pennsylvania State University. Five faculty members from each university who have conducted research in fields related to developmental psychology, child development, communities, and leadership will meet to share their work. Research agendas, collaborations, and action plans will be discussed. During the summer of 2017, another university will be invited to participate.

Bringing universities and colleges together to collaborate on ECCE research is a win for the wider field especially as the collaboration involves the many community agencies and schools that serve young children in their respective areas. Both the collaboration model within universities and the consortium model between universities will provide a critical mass of interested parties for seeking funding for further research. Without being proactive, ECCE leadership will receive little political attention.

## 6.0 SUMMARY

Director leadership has been shown to be closely related to the quality of child care. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore and describe child care center directors' perceptions of their role as leaders. A literature review was conducted by examining other research studies, articles, reports, and leadership literature.

Three research questions were developed based on the information from the literature review. First, how do center-based child care directors describe themselves as developing managers and leaders? Second, how are center-based childcare directors prepared and supported for leadership development in their work? Third, what are the barriers to leadership development as described by center-based child care directors?

A mixed methods study was then designed to address these questions. A researcher-designed survey was developed to collect data from a group of child care directors and semi-structured interview questions were developed to be used for a focus group of directors. The data was then displayed using descriptive and narrative formats.

Findings from this study indicated that directors identify themselves both as leaders and managers but they rated director leadership as higher in importance. Directors are also very relationship-based and they care for their staff much the same way that they cared for the children when they were formerly teachers/caregivers. Approximately half of the directors felt that they were prepared for their job as a director but a little more than half agreed that they had

little leadership training before becoming a director. Again, approximately half of the directors agreed that they were confident and self-assured when they became a director. One barrier to director leadership development was revealed that only 39% of directors ever planned on becoming a director in their career. Also, the indicated that they were not leaders in the wider community of ECCE and few planned on presenting at the next professional development conference. Despite all of these findings, most of the directors indicated that they did not want to leave their jobs despite working many long hours during the week as well as taking work home with them.

An action plan for transformed director leadership is offered that suggests ways that the findings from this study can be implemented. First, there is a three-tiered approach to professional development that includes action at the local, state, and national level. Second, strategies to prepare persons who are upcoming leaders in the field or are thinking about entering the field are suggested. Third, expanding and redefining conceptual frameworks of director leadership need to be used as a guide for director leadership. Fourth, more research conducted on the subject of director leadership is needed not only to confirm past studies in a contemporary context but to explore new views that will lead to change. Finally, suggestions for a comprehensive research agenda that can be initiated in higher education and include communities of practice are recommended.

Directors need knowledge and skills in becoming advocates and leaders in the broader field of ECCE. Directors who remain comfortable in their centers as good managers and leaders are not in the position to make important contributions that are needed at the policy level. Staying satisfied with the way things are by accepting low status accompanied by low compensation will not solve any of the challenges in the broader ECCE field. Loving a job is

important, but it is not enough if the field of ECCE continues to have the same challenges as it has for the past 40 years. Complacency within the center may be enough for some directors but it is not enough to provide the overall quality for children that the wider field so desperately needs.

The director in the vignette at the beginning of this paper has many professional development needs. She does not have time for staff training because there are no substitutes available to watch the children while the staff are at a meeting or in the case of this center, the staff do not stay at their job long enough to receive professional development. This director is isolated in a part of town where people usually do not go. She is also isolated from her peers and the wider early childhood care and education community. No one in this center is getting what they need; not the director who really want the children to have a safe and educational place to grow and learn, not the staff who could make more money at other jobs and often leave to do so, not the parents who have few choices of centers that they can afford, but mostly not the children who are not receiving the type of learning experiences that they so desperately need at this valuable time of rapid brain growth. Directors who are leaders in the field must work with other leaders to assure that every child is receives that care and education that is possible.

## APPENDIX A

### TEACHER DEVELOPMENT BASED ON A REVIEW OF KATZ (1977)

Table 9. Teacher Development

<i>Category</i>	SURVIVAL	CONSOLIDATION	RENEWAL	MATURITY
<i>Suggested Time</i>	Year 1	Year 2	Years 3 & 4	Years 3 – 5
<i>Descriptors</i>	<b>Concerned with getting through the day.</b>	<b>Discover they are capable of surviving. Begin to focus on needs of children and program.</b>	<b>Need for new experiences Begin to search for new ideas, materials, techniques and approaches.</b>	<b>Begin to reflect on more abstract questions. Search for insight, deeper perspective, realism. LEADERSHIP begins to surface.</b>



## APPENDIX B

### DIRECTOR'S CAREER CYCLE BASED ON A REVIEW OF BLOOM (1997)

Table 10. Director's Career Cycle

<i>Category</i>	BEGINNING DIRECTOR 30%	COMPETENT DIRECTOR 60%	MASTER DIRECTOR 10%
<i>Suggested Time</i>	Year 1	After 1 – 4 Years	After 4 Years
<i>Descriptors</i>	<p>Coping Reality shock over amount of emotional and physical stamina required to do the job. Excitement and Anxiety Acquires new administrative skills.</p>	<p>Balancing Can do required job and look to do it better. Aware of what they know and what they need to know.</p>	<p>Worry less about stresses of job Understand organizational change and their role in it. Experienced, reflective, and competent <b>LEADERS.</b></p>

## APPENDIX C

### DIRECTOR DEVELOPMENT BASED ON A REVIEW OF UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE CHILD DEVELOPMENT LABORATORIES AS REVIEWED IN CARTON & GROVES (1999)

Table 11. Director Development

<i>Category</i>	ORGANIZING SURVIVING	MANAGING FOCUSING	LEADING BALANCING
<i>Suggested Time</i>	Year 1	Year 2	Years 3 & 4
<i>Developmental Tasks</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Master basis organizational skills</li> <li>*Cope effectively with crisis (people, budgets, etc.)</li> <li>*Learn new skills</li> <li>*Adjust to new role and new self-image</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Manage specific areas of program in depth such as evaluation, curriculum, and staff development</li> <li>*Explore new areas of interest</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Blossoms as a director</li> <li>*Gains perspective about <b>Leadership</b> role</li> <li>*Identifies personal strengths</li> <li>*Developing a vision</li> </ul>
<i>Training Needs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Direct feedback</li> <li>*Join a support group</li> <li>*Gather new information</li> <li>*Attend workshops on stress, management, and wellness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Attend workshops, conferences, university classes.</li> <li>*Have access to books, journals.</li> <li>*Learn how to manage time, set goals, and prioritize and delegate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Interested in director styles and personality types as tools to gain perspective on <b>Leadership</b> roles.</li> <li>*Concerned about communication, team-building, and conflict-resolution. *Interested in leadership styles and personality types as tools to gain perspective on <b>Leadership</b> roles.</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX D

### DIRECTOR SUPERVISOR DEVELOPMENT BASED ON A REVIEW OF CARUSO & FAWCETT (1999)

Table 12. Director Supervisor Development

<i>Category</i>	BEGINNING	EXTENDING	MATURING
<i>Suggested Time</i>	NA	NA	NA
<i>Descriptors</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Anxious</li> <li>*Survival strategy is to imitate role models</li> <li>*Avoid responsibility</li> <li>*Learn by trial and error</li> <li>*In process of conceptualizing role.</li> <li>*Uncomfortable with authority</li> <li>*Developing new realizations about self.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Consolidating gains</li> <li>*Extending knowledge</li> <li>*Grapple with issues and support others</li> <li>*Strengthen personal leadership.</li> <li>*Accept <b>Leadership</b> role but are still ambivalent about it</li> <li>*May feel isolated</li> <li>*Less idealistic and more realistic</li> <li>*Decide to stay or leave the field</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Sensitivity to staff as unique individuals</li> <li>*Recognize and comprehend the depth and range of existing problems</li> <li>*Less emotionally burdened by problems.</li> <li>*Gain greater perspective</li> <li>*More concerned with ideas, relationships and broad issues</li> <li>*Have a well-defined philosophical frame of reference</li> <li>*Seize opportunities for <b>Leadership</b></li> </ul>

## APPENDIX E

### ECOLOGICAL MODEL OF DEVELOPMENT FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD PRACTITIONER AND ADMINISTRATORS BASED ON A REVIEW OF VANDER VEN (1988, 1999, 2000)

Table 13. Ecological Model Development

Category	AWARENESS	INDUCTION INITIAL	COMPETENCY INFORMED	PROFICIENCY COMPLEX	EXPERTISE INFLUENTIAL
<b>Suggested Time</b>	Novice Entry level	Continuously rethink role	Continuously rethink role	Continuously rethink role	Continuously rethink role
<b>Descriptors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Little context</li> <li>*Focus on immediate setting (micro-system)</li> <li>*Individual value systems and ideas guide practice</li> <li>*Grounded in immediate job assignment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Beginning to change</li> <li>*Gain experience</li> <li>*Address belief systems through training and supervision.</li> <li>*Continue to focus on immediate setting (micro-system)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Degree or advanced training and experience</li> <li>*Still work directly with children</li> <li>*Moving away from linear thinking</li> <li>*Experience development as multiply determined</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Formal preparation</li> <li>Supporting teachers, budgets, interagency meetings, advocacy.</li> <li>*Blending of managerial roles and administrative roles</li> <li>Focus on internal workings of program, families, neighborhood and community (meso system)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*In constant process of cognitive and personal development</li> <li>Larger systems issues such as advocacy and public policy.</li> <li>Able to understand complex systems – values of society (macro system)</li> <li>Think powerfully</li> <li>Hold <b>Leadership</b> positions in the field.</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX F

### COLLECTIVE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK BASED ON KATZ, 1977; BLOOM 1997; CATRON & GROVES, 1999; CARUSO & FAWCETT, 1999; VANDER VEN, 1999, 2000

Table 14. Conceptual Framework

Beginning Director 1 – 2 years	Competent Director 3-4 years	Mature Director 5 years & over
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Concerned with getting through day</li> <li>*Both excitement and anxiety</li> <li>*Great amount of stamina needed to do job</li> <li>*Develop basic administrative, organizational skills</li> <li>*Adjust to new role and self-image</li> <li>*Crisis management</li> <li>*Most concerned with micro-setting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*I can survive</li> <li>*I want to do this job better</li> <li>*Focus on needs of children,</li> <li>*Evaluation of program, curriculum, staff</li> <li>*Begin to search for new ideas, materials, techniques, approaches</li> <li>*Try to balance job and personal life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Can identify personal strengths</li> <li>*Develop a vision</li> <li>*Reflect on abstract questions</li> <li>*Search for deeper perspectives</li> <li>*Leadership surfaces</li> <li>*Understanding organizational change</li> <li>*More reflective</li> <li>*Concerned about team-building, conflict resolution, leadership styles</li> <li>*Mentor others</li> <li>*More professional involvement</li> <li>*May present at workshops or conduct training for staff</li> </ul>

**APPENDIX G**

**DISSERTATIONS AND STUDIES RELATED TO DIRECTOR LEADERSHIP**

Table 15. Dissertations and Studies

<b>Author Date</b>	<b>Dissertations &amp; Studies Related to Child Care Director Leadership</b>	<b>Sample</b>	<b>Measurement</b>	<b>Findings</b>	<b>Type</b>
<p><b>1984</b> <b>Quentin, G.</b></p>	<p><b>The relationship between style of leadership and organizational culture: An exploratory study</b></p> <p>Identified the relationship between styles of leadership and the organizational climate in Leaders and staff viewed workplace differently. No director rated self as friendly on SYMLOG adjective checklist.</p>	<p>20 Child Care Center Directors</p>	<p>Work Environment Rating Scale SYMLOG Values Profile Scale</p>	<p>Variables in the work climate were related to different styles of leadership. Leaders and staff viewed work differently.</p>	<p>Dissertation OCLC# 12147672</p>

Table 15. Dissertations and Studies (continued)

Author Date	Dissertations & Studies Related to Child Care Director Leadership	Sample	Measurement	Findings	Type
<p><b>1987 Dalton, P.</b></p>	<p><b>The use of the nominal group technique to identify child care directors job stressors and their solutions</b></p> <p>To identified the most pressing job stressors and solutions as perceived by center child care directors. Nominal group technique (small group problem solving method, questionnaires). Top stressors were high turnover rates, lack of professional commitment, unavailable qualified staff, inadequate funding. Top solutions were improving director's administrative skills and education of staff to improve</p>	<p>28 child care directors (questionnaire) 13 child care directors (nominal group technique )</p> <p>Child Care Center Directors</p>	<p>Nominal Group Technique (small group problem solving method) Questionnaires</p>	<p>Top stressors were high turnover rates, lack of professional commitment, unavailable qualified staff, inadequate funding.</p>	<p>United States International University, San Diego, California</p> <p>ProQuest #8816844</p>

Table 15. Dissertations and Studies (continued)

Author Date	Dissertations & Studies Related to Child Care Director Leadership	Sample	Measurement	Findings	Type
	quality.				
<p><b>1987</b> <b>Burch, R.K.</b></p>	<p><b>A comparison of teacher perceptions of perceived and preferred leadership behaviors manifested by directors of selected early childhood education centers</b></p> <p>Study explored teacher perceptions of the actual leadership behaviors and preferred leadership behaviors among a sample of directors. Purpose was to assess the frequency of actual leadership behaviors preferred by teachers. Claims there is a paucity of research on this topic.</p>	<p>65 teachers from 13 centers</p>	<p>5 point researcher-designed Likert-type Questionnaire</p>	<p>Teachers indicated they would like to see more use of management tools and leadership behaviors than had been the case. Teachers indicated that director behaviors related to related to maintaining programs and people occurred more frequently than they would have liked.</p>	<p>Peabody College for Teachers of Vanderbilt University</p> <p>ProQuest #8722527</p>



Table 15. Dissertations and Studies (continued)

Author Date	Dissertations & Studies Related to Child Care Director Leadership	Sample	Measurement	Findings	Type
	Presume that general leadership behaviors are similar to ECE leadership behaviors.				
<p><b>1990</b>  <b>Reckmeyer, M.C.</b></p>	<p><b>Outstanding child care centers</b></p> <p>Purpose of study was to generate a configuration of traits that profile or describe the makeup of excellent centers</p>	<p>5 child care centers directors centers corporate sponsor community based child care, universit y based, hospital supporte d, child care program as part of public school) 299 parent surveys 179 teacher</p>	<p>Interviews with 5 Director Small group Interviews with teachers and parents Surveys (Likert-style) teacher and parents</p>	<p>5 directors shared common traits Leadership was found to be among the commonalities along with philosophy, parent involvement, relationships, children valued, staff environment, innovation &amp; organization.</p>	<p>University of Nebraska-Lincoln</p> <p>ProQuest #9030147</p>

Table 15. Dissertations and Studies (continued)

Author Date	Dissertations & Studies Related to Child Care Director Leadership	Sample	Measurement	Findings	Type
		surveys			
<p><b>1992</b> <b>Larkin, E.</b></p>	<p><b>The preschool administrator: Perspectives on leadership in early childhood education</b></p> <p>To explore how directors describe the expectations and demands of their role in relation to organizational structure. To explore how both formal and informal experiences help to prepare administrators for leadership. To determine a detailed picture of director's role To determine what kinds of skills and leadership qualities are necessary.</p>	<p>16 preschool directors</p>	<p>Administrator Interviews of personal leadership styles</p>	<p>Administration is a multifaceted role including housekeeping to skilled communication Administrators have little formal preparation in administration Administrators rely on whatever education and personal experiences they have to provide leadership Administrators learn by trial and error. Mentors were important factors in the transition to an administrator Administrator's typical style of management was participatory. Woman administrators struggled with the tension between having to be an authority and wanting to provide support. Administrators often feel isolated</p>	<p>Harvard University Massachusetts</p> <p>Unpublished Dissertation</p> <p>Also in <i>Child and Youth Work Forum</i>, Vol. 28, Issue #1, p. 21-32</p>

Table 15. Dissertations and Studies (continued)

Author Date	Dissertations & Studies Related to Child Care Director Leadership	Sample	Measurement	Findings	Type
				and lacked peer support in their organization.	
<b>1994 Axman, M.L.</b>	<b>Analysis of leadership qualifications and skills of Head Start administrators in the state of Arizona</b>			A review of the literature supports the need for more stringent director certification and leadership preparation.	Northern Arizona University
<b>1994 Culkin, M.</b>	<b>The administrator/leader in early care and education settings: A qualitative study with implications for theory and practice</b>  To explore how administrators of quality care and education programs act as leaders.	11 Directors 8 experts in early care and education	Key-informant interviews Behavioral Scale	Found administrators to be performing a transformative leadership style. Administrators have responsibility for adult education and training for staff, for developing a means of effective communication within their program and for sustaining the vision of their organizations. Confirms other studies that have found administrators have limited or no training for their job, is responsible for complex tasks, and work with limited financial	The Union Institute, Cincinnati, Ohio  ProQuest #9502053

Table 15. Dissertations and Studies (continued)

Author Date	Dissertations & Studies Related to Child Care Director Leadership	Sample	Measurement	Findings	Type
				and emotional support.	
<p><b>1996</b> <b>Bobula, K.</b></p>	<p><b>Characteristics of administrators' leadership style in quality child care centers.</b></p> <p>What are the leadership characteristics of administrators of quality child care centers. To investigated director leadership style and organizational climate. What characterizes the leadership style of administrators of child care centers? Used Leadership Style Assessment Tool and SYMLOG group average field diagrams. Found that leadership characteristics of directors of high quality centers had a balanced</p>	<p>4 child care centers</p>	<p>Semi-structured interview Leadership Style Inventory Early Childhood Work Environment Survey SYMLOG Group Average Field Diagrams</p>	<p>Administrators have 2 characteristics in common: Balanced leadership style Female approach to supervision Staff were provided with strong supervisor support, opportunities for professional development and had appropriate setting in which to do their work.</p>	<p>Portland State University</p> <p>ProQuest #</p>

Table 15. Dissertations and Studies (continued)

Author Date	Dissertations & Studies Related to Child Care Director Leadership	Sample	Measurement	Findings	Type
	<p>leadership style and used different approaches depending on the situation. Also, had healthy, responsive and supportive work environments. They provided staff with strong supervisor support, opportunities for professional growth, and an appropriate physical setting in which to do their work.</p>				
<p><b>1997 Pipa, R.L.</b></p>	<p><b>The leadership knowledge, skills, and behaviors of directors of quality, state-funded child care centers in the San Francisco Bay area</b></p> <p>To identify and describe what leadership</p>	<p>10 Child Care Center Directors</p>	<p>Interview directors Mailed survey to 56 teachers/ 41 returned 72% about their directors</p>	<p>Directors created a supportive environment in which they established the same kind of connection with families that they do with children. Directors rely primarily on management rather than leadership knowledge, skills, and behaviors to</p>	<p>University of LaVerne, California  ProQuest #981344</p>

Table 15. Dissertations and Studies (continued)

Author Date	Dissertations & Studies Related to Child Care Director Leadership	Sample	Measurement	Findings	Type
	<p>knowledge, skills and behaviors were found among directors of quality, state-funded child care centers in San Francisco</p> <p>To determine in what ways knowledge, skills, and behaviors were similar to or different from those identified as effective in the literature.</p>			<p>operate their centers.</p> <p>Directors do not have access to a systematic preparation programs that focus on leadership, knowledge, skills and behaviors.</p>	
<p><b>1998</b> <b>Jones, M.A.</b></p>	<p><b>An examination of leadership perspectives in early childhood education: Child care center directors and statewide leaders</b></p> <p>Explored perspectives on leadership held by 2 groups of early childhood educators, child care center directors and statewide leaders serving on</p>	<p>49 Child Care Center Directors</p>	<p>Interviews: Focus groups</p>	<p>Findings revealed 2 views of the field: a micro view characterized as program-focused with limited awareness of or interaction beyond its boundaries with the field at large and a macro view characterized as having onter-organizational orientation with a high degree o awareness of and interaction with early childhood support structures</p>	<p>University of California</p> <p>ProQuest #9920236</p>

Table 15. Dissertations and Studies (continued)

Author Date	Dissertations & Studies Related to Child Care Director Leadership	Sample	Measurement	Findings	Type
	boards of associations.			and processes in the field at large.	
1998 Seplocha, H.	<p><b>The good preschool: Profiles of leadership</b></p> <p>To explore what leadership qualities are shared among directors of high quality centers.</p>	6 Child Care Center Directors	Directors were shadowed and interviewed	<p>Found that effective directors are experienced and knowledgeable in child development and early childhood education. Directors are skilled in leveraging resources and exhibit a sense of ownership. Directors maintained strong assistant and remain active in the ECE community. Directors exhibit leadership in vision and focus on the larger picture. Directors encourage and support staff training and listen to voices of parents. Directors unveiled strongly held personal values that influenced</p>	<p>Rutgers State University New Brunswick, New Jersey</p> <p>ProQuest #9834121</p>

Table 15. Dissertations and Studies (continued)

Author Date	Dissertations & Studies Related to Child Care Director Leadership	Sample	Measurement	Findings	Type
				their behavior.	
<p><b>1998 Manning, J.P.</b></p>	<p><b>The relationship of directors to quality within child care programs in Massachusetts: An exploration into some contributing characteristics.</b></p> <p>What are the shared characteristics of child care directors operating high quality programs?</p>	<p>22 Child Care Administrators from NAEYC Accredited Centers 9 Child Care Administrators from Non-Accredited Centers</p>	<p>Observations of Centers using Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale and Infant Toddler Rating Scale</p>	<p>Directors are in a pivotal position to influence the quality of child care through their training, their experience, and their roles within the center. Directors of high quality centers have statistically distinct characteristics but characteristics did not predict quality by themselves.</p>	<p>University of Massachusetts, Amherst</p> <p>ProQuest #9841894</p>
<p><b>2001 Krieger, N.J.</b></p>	<p><b>The experience of being a director in an early care and education center</b></p> <p>To describe and understand how directors who work in a variety of contexts perceive their work on a daily basis and to</p>	<p>8 Directors of NAEYC Accredited Child Care Centers</p>	<p>Interviewed 2 times each Observation of Center</p>	<p>Found that directors worked long days that began before workday began for center, directors had similar sets of routines, autonomy, and agency. Directors needed to build trusting relationships with all stakeholders in the center to do</p>	<p>New York University</p> <p>ProQuest #9992353</p>



Table 15. Dissertations and Studies (continued)

Author Date	Dissertations & Studies Related to Child Care Director Leadership	Sample	Measurement	Findings	Type
	understand how directors develop expertise in their work			their work. Expertise was developed haphazardly through work experiences, related and unrelated to early education, short-term workshops, and observation of and mentoring relationships with their former directors.	
<p><b>2000</b> <b>Culkin, M.</b></p>	<p><b>Managing quality in young children's programs: The leader's role</b></p> <p>To learn how directors view their roles and the power that personal perceptions have in shaping one's professional identity</p>	<p>Early Childhood Education Program Directors</p>	<p>In-depth Interviews Reflective Narrative Journals Collected over 5 years</p> <p>Directors' Role Perception Questionnaire -257 directors Metaphorical Analysis used</p>	<p>Metaphorical Categories: Balancing 5% Multiple Tasks and Responsibilities 7% Leading and Guiding 29% Nurturing and Protecting 15% Making Connections 8% Puzzle solver 8% Dealing with the Unexpected 4%</p>	<p>Book</p> <p>Teacher's College Press</p>
<p><b>2001</b> <b>Love, M.</b></p>	<p><b>Changing a child care system through director leadership</b></p>	<p>1 child care center</p>	<p>Over a 10 month period: Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale</p>	<p>Systemic changes occur in a child care center when the director builds caring and consistent</p>	<p>The Union Institute Pennsylvania</p> <p>ProQuest</p>

Table 15. Dissertations and Studies (continued)

Author Date	Dissertations & Studies Related to Child Care Director Leadership	Sample	Measurement	Findings	Type
	To explore the organizational change process in a suburban child care center as assessed by the center mentor		Kouzes and Posner Recalling a Best Personal Leadership Experience Structured Interview	relationships with the total system and empowers the staff and others through leadership. Also, the director's recognition of the importance of enriching and changing the child care environment positively impacts the organization	#3005173
2002 TsakoyiaS. Mendes,V.	<p><b>Directors' management challenges and coping strategies</b></p> <p>To investigate child care director management challenges and coping strategies with emphasis on college-level business courses.</p>	55 directors	Questionnaire s	<p>Director's completion of business courses and impact on ability to recruit staff and locate funding</p> <p>Directors who had taken 11 or more professional development workshops in child development or early childhood education reported high abilities in communication and retaining staff and balancing income and expenses</p> <p>Directors learned management strategies through peer advise and organized staff</p>	<p>San Jose State University California</p> <p>ProQuest #1410438</p>

Table 15. Dissertations and Studies (continued)

Author Date	Dissertations & Studies Related to Child Care Director Leadership	Sample	Measurement	Findings	Type
				meetings	
<p><b>2004</b> <b>Sciaraffa, M.</b></p>	<p><b>Profiles of early childhood administrators: Looking for patterns of leadership</b></p> <p>To conduct a systematic inquiry into the lives of early childhood administrators</p>	<p>6 Early Childhood Administrators</p>	<p>Interviews</p>	<p>The personal characteristics and administrative styles shared by all included: concern for children and families, high expectations, value of trust, respect, sense of professionalism, belief in teamwork, nurturing the nurturer and high demands.</p>	<p>Louisiana State University</p> <p>ProQuest #3182910</p>
<p><b>2006</b> <b>Sellars, T.</b></p>	<p><b>The relationships among multiple intelligences and leadership styles: A study of administrators in Kentucky child care facilities</b></p> <p>Is there a relationship among multiple intelligences and leadership styles of directors and those in training to become directors of child</p>	<p>8 Community College Child Care courses required to be a director in Kentucky</p> <p>98 participants</p> <p>15 already directors</p>	<p>Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Bass &amp; Avolio)</p>	<p>Aspiring directors - No significant relationship between multiple intelligences and leadership styles. 15 Directors – found a relationship between multiple intelligences and leadership styles. Found a viable relationship between interpersonal intelligence and an individual consideration leadership style (requires the leader</p>	<p>Spalding University</p> <p>ProQuest #3216290</p>

Table 15. Dissertations and Studies (continued)

<b>Author Date</b>	<b>Dissertations &amp; Studies Related to Child Care Director Leadership</b>	<b>Sample</b>	<b>Measurement</b>	<b>Findings</b>	<b>Type</b>
	care facilities in Kentucky?			to investigate individuals' needs for achievement and growth).	
<b>2007 June, B.J.</b>	<b>Early childhood program director leadership characteristics and program qualities</b>				Western Michigan University  Unpublished doctoral Dissertation
<b>2009 Patton, G.B.</b>	<b>Exploring the leadership styles of community based early childhood education program directors</b>	3 directors community centered child care centers	Case Study	Directors providing quality use a person-centered leadership reflecting a continuum of leadership involving multiple styles. The center with the highest quality had a well-developed vision and emphasized the vision in all aspects of leader-follower interactions.	University of Kentucky  ProQuest #3448082
<b>2009 Manganaro, M.</b>	<b>Leadership in Massachusetts early education schools: Perceptions of</b>	61 directors & 515 teachers at 56	Mixed Methods	Directors reported having higher performance ratings than subordinate	University of Phoenix  ProQuest #3393487

Table 15. Dissertations and Studies (continued)

Author Date	Dissertations & Studies Related to Child Care Director Leadership	Sample	Measurement	Findings	Type
	<p><b>leader attributes in practice</b></p> <p>To identify, examine and describe perceived leadership qualifications and performance attributes at child care centers in Massachusetts. To localize and identify a set of perceived strengths and weaknesses among directors currently practicing.</p>	schools in 34 towns		<p>ratings. Directors indicated a need for greater support and subordinates indicated a need for a sense of worth. Future research should consider emotional intelligence, human resources, human capital, and motivational issues from a geographical and contemporary standpoint.</p>	
<p><b>2010</b> <b>Fisher, P.</b></p>	<p><b>An investigation of leadership best practices and teacher morale in six community college child development centers in Southern California</b></p>	<p>6 Teachers 6 community colleges 6 directors</p>	<p>Survey method design Adapted Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire Leadership Practices Inventory</p>	<p>Directors perceived their leadership best practices at higher levels than the teachers. Perceptions of high center teacher morale is strongly linked to directors' use of leadership best practices</p>	<p>Capella University</p>
<p><b>2011</b> <b>Wise, V.L.</b></p>	<p><b>“Telling our own story” Women and leadership in</b></p>	<p>12 women directors</p>	<p>In-depth interviews</p>	<p>Found that the leadership experience for women in early</p>	<p>The George Washington University</p>

Table 15. Dissertations and Studies (continued)

Author Date	Dissertations & Studies Related to Child Care Director Leadership	Sample	Measurement	Findings	Type
	<p><b>the early childhood setting</b></p> <p>To gain a deeper understanding of how women, identified as successful early childhood leaders understand what it means to be a leader.</p>			<p>childhood is a gendered experience that is person centered, values driven, and context specific.. Although leaders value relationships and work hard to build community, they also experience loneliness, isolation and emotional strain. Work is undervalued because the field of early childhood in general is undervalued.</p>	<p>ProQuest #9502053</p>
<p><b>2012 Havlicek-Cook, K.</b></p>	<p><b>What matters in child care centers to retain high quality early childhood educators?</b></p>	<p>1 child care center church-related non-profit, private 1 child care center for-profit.</p>	<p>Mixed method design 2 Questionnaires In-depth Interviews</p>	<p>Center directors perceived leadership in teachers. Teachers felt supported by co-workers</p>	<p>University of Nebraska-Lincoln  ProQuest #3522160</p>
<p><b>2012 Huck, E.</b></p>	<p><b>How does program leadership effect teacher job satisfaction</b></p>	<p>4 child care centers 4 directors</p>	<p>Mixed method design Teachers - Works Attitude</p>	<p>Directors must be responsible for consistently checking in with center and track</p>	<p>San Diego State University California</p>

Table 15. Dissertations and Studies (continued)

Author Date	Dissertations & Studies Related to Child Care Director Leadership	Sample	Measurement	Findings	Type
	<p><b>and organizational climate?</b></p> <p>To investigate how program leadership affects teacher job satisfaction &amp; organizational climate in a for profit child care program. Find out how teachers feel about the early childhood center as a place to work.</p>	120 teachers	<p>Survey (Blueprint for Action Book)            Teachers - The Early Childhood Work Environment Survey            Directors – Program Administrative Scale            Informal focus group</p>	<p>changes needed in the community            Directors need to actively educate themselves.            Directors must take the time to reflect on their performance.</p>	<p>Dissertation /handle/10211.10/190</p>

## **APPENDIX H**

### **SURVEY QUESTIONS**

#### **Child Care Center Director Survey**

The purpose of this research study is to explore and describe child care center director's perceptions of their role and to determine how key conceptual frameworks relate to leadership development within current center-based directors. Directors will be surveyed from a number of different centers within Allegheny County. There are no foreseeable risks associated with this research study, nor are there any direct benefits to you.

This is an entirely anonymous questionnaire, and so your responses will not be identified in any way. All of your responses are confidential and will be kept under lock and key by a department secretary. The secretary whose name appears on the self-addressed stamped envelope will give the completed surveys to the researcher without any identification. Your participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time. The survey should not take more than 30 minutes to complete. Please, complete the survey within one week of receiving it. Findings for this study will be available after December 2015.

This research study is being conducted by Cynthia J. Popovich, who can be reached at [cjpop@pitt.edu](mailto:cjpop@pitt.edu), if you have any questions.

Thank you for your participation in this study.



**A. View of Leadership**

**A.1 If you are a member of any professional associations related to Early Childhood Care and Education please indicate them below.**

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**A.2 If you have held any leadership positions in the above mentioned professional associations please indicate below.**

For example:

President \_\_\_\_\_

Vice-President \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

Treasurer \_\_\_\_\_

Board Member \_\_\_\_\_

Committee chair \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

**A.3 In your work as a child care director, Indicate how important these issues are by checking the appropriate the box.**

	Very Important	Important	Moderately Important	Slightly Important	Not Important
Manage the day-to-day operations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supervise teachers/caregivers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guide staff in understanding the program's values, goals and vision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spend time planning for the future of the program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Balance the budget	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make program changes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Find substitutes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Create a climate of trust	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Take time to reflect and imagine better ways to serve children and families	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plan staff get-togethers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other _____ _____ _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**A.4 How would you describe “director leadership” to a younger colleague?**

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**A.5 As a child care center director, indicate your level of agreement with each item.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am focused on getting through each day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am developing basic organizational skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I deal with crisis after crisis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I spend a lot of time thinking about what the children and the program need	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I need some new ideas, techniques and approaches to my work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I really try to balance my job and my personal life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identifying my personal strengths has really helped me in my work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I need to become more professionally involved in	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

the wider early childhood community				
I am thinking about presenting at the next local conference	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**A.6 In terms of your training needs as a director, indicate the level of importance for each item.**

	Very Important	Important	Moderately Important	Slightly Important	Not Important
I need direct feedback to understand if what I am doing is appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I need a support group of other directors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I need a workshop on stress management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I need to better learn how to manage my time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I need to learn how to set goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I need to learn how to prioritize	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I need to learn how to delegate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

I need to attend more workshops, conferences, or some college courses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I need to learn how to communicate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I need to learn how to build teams	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I need to learn how to resolve staff and parent conflicts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I need to share what I've learned with other directors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**A.7 Indicate your level of agreement with each statement.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am uncomfortable with having so much authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I get anxious when I must make big decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I like to socialize with my staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometimes I feel isolated as a director	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I like the dealing with broader issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

in the field of early childhood education				
I feel like a have a solid theoretical foundation for the work I do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When problems arise in my center I don't take them home with me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**B. Preparation for Leadership**

**B.1 What is your highest level of educational achievement?**

- High school or GED
- Some training in \_\_\_\_\_ beyond high school but not a degree
- Certificate in \_\_\_\_\_
- Associate’s Degree (indicate major) \_\_\_\_\_
- Bachelor’s Degree (indicate major) \_\_\_\_\_
- Graduate Degree (indicate major) \_\_\_\_\_
- Doctoral Degree (indicate major) \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**B.2 What type of professional development or training has best helped you develop your leadership as a director?**

	Very helpful	Somewhat helpful	Not helpful	Do not participate
Professional Conferences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
On-line Training Opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Workshops	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working with a consultant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reading journals and books	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attending Director support groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Learning by myself through trial and error	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other _____ _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**B.3 Indicate your level of agreement with each statement.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I knew that I wanted to be a child care director early in my career in child care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I had little leadership or administrative training before becoming a director	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I was an early childhood teacher/caregiver before becoming a director	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I felt unprepared for the kinds of issues I had to face when I became a director	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I felt confident and self-assured when I became a director	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I believe that working with adults and working with children require different sets of skills and	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



knowledge				
I would recommend being a child care director as a career to others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**B.4 Indicate your level of agreement with each statement.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I have insight into my own personal strengths and limitations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have a good knowledge of staff/adult development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have knowledge of how to evaluate my teachers/caregivers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have knowledge of how to evaluate my center's program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel confident in making effective program decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am equally concerned about my internal personal growth as my program management concerns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I encourage teamwork among my staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have a clear vision for my center	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

My staff are aware of the vision for our center	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Actions taken in my program are guided by clear goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**C. Views of Barriers to Leadership**

**C.1 Indicate how much stress you experience in relation to each item.**

	Very High Stress	High Stress	Some Stress	Minimal Stress	No Stress
High turnover of staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of professional commitment of staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unavailability of qualified staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Low compensation for staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inadequate funding for center	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inadequate benefits for staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff calling off work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Finding substitute staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Paperwork	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regulations and requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**C.2 How many total teachers/caregivers do you supervise?**

- 1-5
- 6-10
- 11-15
- 16-20
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**C.3 How many of your teachers/caregivers on the average leave your center each year?**

- 1-3
- 4-8
- Over 8 (please indicate how many) \_\_\_\_\_

**C.4 What issues might lead you to consider leaving your current job as a director? Indicate your level of agreement with each statement.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Salary too low	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work hours too long	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Too Few benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Retirement age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Want to pursue another job in the field	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Want to pursue another job outside of the field	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disillusioned with the field	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not enough opportunities for leadership training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stress/Burnout	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I do not want to leave my job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Reason(s) _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**C.5 What are the reasons given by your teachers/caregivers as to why they have left the center? Check all that apply.**

- Low satisfaction with their wages
- Few job benefits
- No health care benefits
- Limited opportunity for advancement
- Can earn more money at another job in the field of early childhood care and education
- Can earn more money at another job outside of the field of early childhood care and education
- Due to health
- No reason given
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**D. Demographic Information**

**D.1 Identify your center type.**

- For-profit (Owner)
- For-profit (Corporation or Chain)
- Private Non-profit (Independent or affiliated with a social service agency, community center, hospital)
- Private Non-profit (sponsored by public school or federal/state/local government)
- Faith-based
- University or college affiliated
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**D.2 How long has your center been in operation?**

- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- Over 20 years (please indicate number of years) \_\_\_\_\_

**D.3 Were you a teacher/caregiver before becoming the director?**

- Yes
- No

If Yes, for how many years\_\_\_\_\_

**D.4 What other positions working with children have you held before you became a director? List as: Name of Position, Years in Position**

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**D.5 With what gender do you identify?**

- Female
- Male
- Other
- Prefer not to answer

**D.6 What is your age range?**

- 18 to 25 years
- 26 to 30 years
- 31 to 40 years
- 41 to 50 years
- 51 to 60 years
- 61 to 70 years
- over 71 years

**D.7 Is your center accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)?**

- Yes – For how many years? \_\_\_\_\_
- No

**D.8 What is the highest PA Keystone STAR level that your center has received?**

- Do not participate in this program
- Beginning with STARS
- STAR level 1
- STAR level 2
- STAR level 3
- STAR level 4

**D.9 Do you work in your Director role:**

- Less than 15 hours a week
- 16 – 30 hours a week
- 31 – 40 hours a week
- 41 – 50 hours a week
- 51 – 60 hours a week
- over 60 hours a week

**Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey!**

*If you have any questions, please contact Cindy Popovich at [cjpop@pitt.edu](mailto:cjpop@pitt.edu).*

## **APPENDIX I**

### **SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

- SS.1 At what point do you think leadership begins to develop? (Katz, 1977)
  
- SS.2 Talk about when you felt confident as a director? (Bloom, 1997)
  
- SS.3 What professional development needs do you have as a director? (Catron & Groves, 1999)
  
- SS.4 Describe any differences between a beginning director and a mature director? (Caruso & Fawcett, 1999)
  
- SS.5 Is there a difference between leadership development and personal development?
  
- SS.6 Describe any leadership abilities you may have had as a child?
  
- SS.7 How do you balance your work life and your professional life?
  
- SS.8 Why do you stay at your job as a director?



## APPENDIX J

### THEMATIC ASSERTIONS FROM FOCUS GROUP

Table 16. Thematic Assertions

THEMES
<i>Director Leadership</i>
I was a teacher and the director left midyear. It took me a couple of years to reframe myself as a leader.
It took me decades to be a leader. I did have some kind of need to make decisions. I had to push myself and struggled with confidence issues. I worked with difficult people before which helped me.
Leadership is side by side guiding as opposed to being top-down. You navigate your teachers to navigate their classrooms. Teachers are leaders also.
<i>Confidence</i>
I feel confident when I help teachers and families understand what a child's behavior means developmentally. I also feel confident saying I don't know, let's find out together.
I feel confident when looking back at the past year and see all we've accomplished.
I feel confident when experiences just flow and it feels good. Or when we are all together and sharing a laugh and it just feels like fun.
I feel confident when we have celebrations when we are altogether and it feels happy and good and I think it is wonderful and know I helped to create this.
I've been doing this for a very long time and I feel confident now in knowing what children need and being able to guide teachers and parents. I didn't start out feeling this way. I continued professional development and to enrich myself with reading and now that I am close to retirement I am starting to feel confident.
<i>Director Needs</i>
We start out as teachers now as directors we need clerical knowledge and grant knowledge and to know about resources available all which you don't always know. And regulations like PA Keys and accreditation and the administrative parts of things. There are many teachers who go from teaching children to being directors and need this knowledge.

Table 16. Thematic Assertions (continued)

Teachers who become directors need training the most. Teachers who are thinking about becoming directors need to know how much you deal with emotional issues, social issues, and challenges. Grooming teachers to become directors is needed if you know who that will be. Potential directors need to sign up for that kind of director training.
As a new director, I have developed tiers of coordinators with different responsibilities which I am trying out. I did this without training specific to early childhood but carried it over from my last job where I led a lot of teams. I needed and am using my past experience to make changes.
I need training specific to early childhood leadership. Business literature doesn't work in an early childhood environment. Directors can't come across as cold, mean, or dictating. Directors need to be transparent.
<i>Difference between Beginning and Mature Director</i>
I became a director suddenly and there were no policies in place. Beginning directors need something to fall back on. They can't be expected to start from the beginning.
Mature directors' deal with disappointment and anger and having someone disagree with you and learning tolerate it. Mature directors can't worry so much about being liked.
<i>Professional Development and Personal Development</i>
Leadership development is how do I do it and personal development is how do I live with it. So leadership development is the nuts and bolts of how to do things, how to communicate with people, how to get things done and personal development is how to you live with what you do. Personal development is learning not to be stressed because you have to be everything to everyone.
Learning how to balance work life and personal life for me is really tough
<i>Take Work Home With You?</i>
I am trying not to but having a cell phone makes it difficult. And I am always checking my email. The job is completely all encompassing. You want to be there for your families but you also have to set boundaries.
I take work home with me, I check e-mails and work on pay roll.
I take work home with me. I can't always concentrate at work. I don't like it but the bottom line is you do what you have to do.
I take paperwork home with me but try not to respond to emails.
Being a part of a community, it is difficult to set boundaries.
<i>What Keeps You at your Job as a Director?</i>
A fabulous salary (laughter all around!)
I care about my place so much. I love where I am. It is something that I want to do for the community and for the children.
It's a passion. I feel like I am giving something. Working in education does something for the world. It helps to build skills for children that will last them the rest of their lives.
It is just pure love.
How funny that we seem to feel guilty because we love our jobs. What does that say about our

Table 16. Thematic Assertions (continued)

society if we have to rationalize that we don't do it for the money? If we said we stay at our jobs because we make a lot of money then everyone would understand.
My son said "I want to feel like you do about your job. When I get up in the morning, I want to be excited about where I am going."
<b>You are lucky if you love your job and if you stay it is because you are getting that love back. You feel like there is a purpose to everyday.</b>

## APPENDIX K

### DIRECTORS' DEFINITIONS OF LEADERSHIP

Table 17. Directors' Definitions

1	Guide, Teacher, Problem Solver, Overseer of the Big Picture
2	The ability to lead and direct a program while encouraging staff to continue to improve the program.
3	To lead and encourage staff to become the best they can be. To guide with positive reinforcement and encouragement. To build trust with parents, children, staff and community.
4	Supervising with a personal touch. With parents, develop a rapport and earn their trust by showing a sincere interest. With staff, being accessible, open and invested.
5	0
6	Role model. I stress to my younger staff that a job is not meant to be easy. It is good to be a challenge. When I tell them certain things that need to be done, it is because they need to get done. They are not suggestions or choices, they are mandatory.
7	I see a difference between leadership and managing/supervising. Managing and supervising are part of the role but at the core has to be ensuring that there is a central vision, a clear understanding of the program's values and goals understood and valued by educators and parents. Listening, supporting, communicating and empowering all come to my mind as central to building a collaborative community. Looking for the "we". Being present and attentive and open helps create a climate of trust.
8	I am a runner so I would tell the story of the blind lead program. Blind individuals wishing to run a marathon work with a lead. This individual is tethered to them throughout the race. The guide helps blind runners meet their goals with words, encouragement and subtle movements. They do not yank, yell, or demand their alignment. Leadership should be the same. Although you are the director, you can run beside, not in front.
9	All encompassing, multi-faceted, challenging, rewarding, scary, fulfilling, wonderful to work with children, families and staff.
10	0

Table 17. Directors' Definitions (continued)

11	As a long time director of a center, I feel relationships with parents and staff are so important-respect and understanding are so important. Personalities are different and we have to be supportive of all these needs. Our goal needs to be to work together to provide our children with the best care possible. We need to help younger colleagues grow and be patient and supportive.
12	Director leadership is something that is important in the ECE setting. To be a good leader, you have to be part of the team. I believe teamwork is crucial in this setting. Ultimately, you want to grow a staff that wants your job someday.
13	Director leadership: being a professional role model. Meeting the needs of the program, staff, and families. Reaching out to the community, Being a life-long learner. Being aware of political climate.
14	0
15	Always be a helping hand to your staff, be a good role model at all times. Don't expect anything you won't do from others and always show gratitude. Be there for support and allow for training. Always have a moral booster up your sleeve and be prepared to listen.
16	Trust, collaboration, teamwork, respect. You have to trust your teachers and earn their trust. Be a director who can collaborate with each other. Be able to work as a team, never knowing which teacher is in charge. Make your staff feel empowered and part of a team. Respect all teachers, children and parents
17	It is a huge responsibility and only becomes more complicated every year. Experience seems to be the most important thing that has helped me running a center is very different than any other type of business or establishment so support and understanding from others is limited. You are much to many and it's hard to be an effective leader if someone doesn't want to be led. Know your own values and strengths and use them wisely to lead by example. To be an effective leader you need time and time is limited in the context of building because of other priorities. It is also joyful and rewarding- being with children all day is priceless.
18	If you are looking for a 9-5 job you are in the wrong filed. True director leadership is a 24/7 commitment. Learn to delegate responsibilities. The more you delegate, the more your staff takes ownership for the quality of care. A mentor of mine one said: "Hire people who can do the job better than you - otherwise you don't need them.
19	Leading a program is different from managing one. There are times when management is necessary – budgeting, staffing, enrollment, other operational tasks. Leading is walking the talk – it's going into the classroom and modeling behavior you want to see; it's staying current and active in the field and encouraging others to do so as well.
20	I feel that I support my staff. I do the behind the scenes work so that they can focus on the children and classrooms. I back them up and engage with parents. We share ideas and I encourage and support them.

Table 17. Directors' Definitions (continued)

21	In addition to managing the staff, ministering to families, supervising and staffing, we must set the tone for how tasks get accomplished. A positive, productive, cooperative team spirit must be established first by the director to enable the staff to also model these traits. When the director has the ability to show by example, correct any areas of opportunity and praise accomplishments - everyone wins.
22	Leading a team of professionals with varying degrees of experience. Fostering teamwork and a climate of caring.
23	Director leadership is multifaceted. It involves creativity, problem solving and flexibility as well as knowledge of finances, standards, child development, adult learning, emergency procedures and mentoring. Each day brings a new adventure with children, staff, parents and others.

## APPENDIX L

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS ALIGNED WITH LITERATURE

Table 18. Research Questions

Research Questions	Aligned with Literature Review
<p><b>Q.1 How do center-based child care directors describe themselves as developing leaders?</b></p>	<p><b>A.1 (Brandon, 2011)</b> Approximately 4% to 6% of child care workers belong to a professional association</p> <p><b>A.2 (Carter and Curtis, 1998)</b> Directors seldom embrace leadership potential their positions offered to them</p> <p><b>A.2,3 (Bethel, 1990)</b> Managers have a to do list while leaders have a create list</p> <p><b>A.3 (Dreher, 1996)</b> Managers handle day to day operations, leaders have a vision and fit daily details into that vision</p> <p><b>A.4 (Kouzes &amp; Posner, 1996; Carter &amp; Carter, 1998; Seplocha, 1989)</b> Leaders have a vision and fit daily details into the vision. Leaders inspire others to participate in and expand the vision. Guiding a program with vision requires more than management skills</p> <p><b>A.5 (George, Sims, McLean &amp; Mayer, 2011)</b> A review of literature on director leadership indicates that there is a problem in identifying how leadership is defined. In the past 50 years, leadership scholars have not produced a clear profile of the ideal leader.</p> <p><b>A.6 (Katz, 1977)</b> Leadership characteristics begin to emerge when thoughts turn to broader questions in the field</p> <p><b>A.7 (Catron &amp; Groves, 1999)</b> There are predictable stages of professional development which all child care directors experience which can overlap and vary in duration. Also predictable training needs.</p>

Table 18. Research Questions (continued)

Research Questions	Aligned with Literature Review
	<p><b>A.8 (Caruso &amp; Fawcett, 1999)</b> Supervisors undergo a process of changes in how they view themselves and their jobs.</p>
<p><b>Q.2 How are center-based directors prepared for leadership development.</b></p>	<p><b>B.1 (Herzenberg, 2005)</b> The younger the director the less likely they are to have a college degree. Current directors with college degrees are now entering retirement age</p> <p><b>B.2 (Larkin, 1992)</b> Learning through trial and error was mentioned as a method of learning about leadership in a case study n=16 directors</p> <p><b>B.4.a (Popovich, 2001)</b> In an evaluation of n=138 directors, only 8 directors indicated that they had any previous plans for becoming a director</p> <p><b>B.4.a (Bloom, 2000)</b> In a study of n=257 directors, less than one fifth knew that they wanted to be a director or actively sought after the position</p> <p><b>B.4.b (Bloom, 2000)</b> In a study n=257 directors, few had any previous administrative training</p> <p><b>C.4.c (Bloom, 2000)</b> In a study n=257 directors, 90% were teachers in the program before becoming a director</p> <p><b>B.4.c (Bloom, 2000)</b> Often workers are promoted into leadership positions because of their technical skills (managing) and expertise with children rather than on the qualities needed to lead.</p> <p><b>B.4.d (Bloom, 2000)</b> In a study n=257 directors, 79% felt unprepared for the kinds of issues with which they were faced</p> <p><b>B.4.e (Bloom, 2000)</b> In a study n=257 directors, 32% felt confident and self-assured when becoming a director</p> <p><b>B.4.f (Cooper, Droddy &amp; Merriam, 1998)</b> Believe that child care directors who are competent working with young children are not necessarily competent to supervise</p> <p><b>B.5 a-f (Larkins, 1999)</b> For good leading to occur, there must be insight into one's personal strengths and limitations, knowledge of staff development, evaluation techniques, the ability to make effective program</p>



Table 18. Research Questions (continued)

Research Questions	Aligned with Literature Review
	<p>decisions, and being involved with the internal growth of staff</p> <p><b>B.5 g (Seplocha, 1998)</b> Directors in a study n=6 indicated that teamwork of the staff was related to center quality</p> <p><b>B.5 g (Sciaraffia, 2004)</b> Teamwork was a common characteristic among a study of n=6 directors</p> <p><b>B.5 h-j; A.13 (Carter &amp; Curtis, 1998)</b> Directors who actively work with a vision create programs that stand out.</p>
<p><b>Q.3 What are the barriers to leadership as described by center-based directors?</b></p>	<p><b>C.1 (Dalton, 1983)</b> In a study n=28 child care directors, identified job stressors as high turnover of staff, lack of professional commitment of staff, unavailable qualified staff, inadequate funding</p> <p><b>C.1 (Whitebook &amp; Bellum, 1999)</b> Few qualified staff are entering workforce</p> <p><b>C.1 (Carter &amp; Curtis, 1998)</b> Paperwork and regulations serve as barriers</p> <p><b>C.1 (Olson, 2002)</b> Because of low compensation it is difficult to attract qualified staff</p> <p><b>C.1 (Center for the Developing Child, 2009)</b> Low compensation has shown that early childhood educators experience ill health which prevents adults from supporting the needs of children</p> <p><b>C.3 (Whitbook, Pjillips, Hows, 1993)</b> average rate of leaving child care jobs is 26% to 48% annually</p> <p><b>C.3 &amp; D.4 (Helburn, 1995)</b> Centers with staff turnover rates lower than 10% annually were rated higher in combination measures of quality such as adult/child ratios, group size, more advanced child language skills</p> <p><b>C.3 &amp; D.4 (Stremmel, 1991)</b> Young children in child care programs are at risk because the workforce is leaving the field in large numbers.</p> <p><b>C.3 (Whitebook &amp; Sakai, 2004)</b> Job turnover rates affect the inability of the early childhood workforce to improve over time. Staff do not stay long enough in the field to improve their skills and grow professionally</p>
<p><b>Demographics</b></p>	<p><b>A.3,4,5; D.3,4 (Bloom, 2000)</b> Director turnover is the same as center staff</p>

Table 18. Research Questions (continued)

Research Questions	Aligned with Literature Review
	<p>turnover at 26% to 48% annually</p> <p><b>A.4,5,14; C.1,2 (Cost, Quality &amp; Child Outcomes Study, 1995)</b> Higher quality centers tend to have directors who have more years of formal training and experience in child care programs and remain on the job for a long time</p> <p><b>A.6 (Bruce, 2001) (Bloom, 2000)</b> Often workers are promoted into leadership positions because of their technical skills (managing) and expertise with children rather than on the qualities needed to lead.</p> <p><b>A. 7,8,19,15 (Belm &amp; Whitebook, 2006; Herzenberg et al, 2005)</b> Most directors are white, females who tend to be older than their staff</p> <p><b>A.8; C.1 (Herzenberg, 2005)</b> The younger the director the less likely they are to have a college degree. Current directors with Bachelor degrees are now entering retirement age</p> <p><b>A.10 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012)</b> The median yearly wage for a child care director with a Bachelor's degree is \$43, 950 which is higher in 2008 when it was \$37,015</p> <p><b>A.14 (Krieger, 2001)</b> Findings from a study n=8 directors indicated that directors worked long days that started before all other staff</p>

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