

Child care directors' perceptions of pedagogical leadership roles

by

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Abstract

Pedagogical leadership encompasses the directors' role in the instructional practices within child care centers, including supporting teachers in the implementation of curriculum. Research has shown that child care directors' perceptions of their role in addition to their knowledge, experience, and beliefs affect the type of teacher-child interactions and instruction that they encourage and support within their centers. It is the quality of these teacher-child interactions that affect child outcomes in addition to overall program quality. Therefore, directors' failure to provide pedagogical leadership, inclusive of curriculum implementation support, can negatively affect children's growth and development and child care quality.

This study utilized a survey informed by the literature to examine child care directors' characteristics, including education, experience, and pedagogical beliefs, and the influences these had on their perceptions of their leadership role and their curriculum implementation support activities. The results showed that directors' developmentally inappropriate pedagogical beliefs negatively influenced their use of curriculum support strategies. Thus, lower developmentally inappropriate pedagogical beliefs predicted the use of a greater number of curriculum support strategies. These results have implications for early childhood professional development as well as director involvement in Quality Rating Improvement System initiatives via support, training, and additional activities.

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Dedication

To Roger, Roger Jr., and Remy, the three most important people in my life. It is done. I know you are just as happy, if not happier, than I am. Thanks for always believing in me.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Introduction

Research increased our understanding of child development (Institute of Medicine and National Research Council, 2000) and the role of high-quality early childhood care and education in improving child outcomes (Ramey, Sparling, & Ramey, 2012; Schweinhart et al., 2005). In response, Quality Rating Improvement Systems (QRIS) and other initiatives emerged across the nation. These initiatives create and implement various approaches for early childhood quality improvements (National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance, n.d.) with the goal of improving child-outcomes.

QRISs often target early childhood pedagogical practices as part of their efforts to improve quality and some incorporate recommendations and requirements related to early childhood curriculum (The Build Initiative & Child Trends, 2017). These approaches often target teachers while excluding the role of the child care director. However, research showed that in order to affect change, which is the overarching aim of QRIS initiatives, the inclusion of early childhood leaders is a crucial component (Bloom, 1992; Flemming & Love, 2003; Tout, Epstein, Soli, & Lowe, 2015).

Pedagogical leadership encompasses the directors' role in the instructional practices within child care centers, including supporting teachers in the implementation of curriculum (Abel, Talan, & Masterson, 2017; Coughlin & Baird, 2013; Katz, 1997; National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2018). Child care directors' perceptions of their role (Granrusten, 2006) in addition to their knowledge, experience, and beliefs affect the type of teacher-child interactions and instruction they encourage and support within their centers

(Gordon, Soskinsky, & Colaner, 2019). Therefore, exploring directors' characteristics, in addition to how they perceive their role as pedagogical leaders, can provide insight into their ability to support QRIS-driven curriculum initiatives.

Theoretical Framework

Child care directors approach curriculum implementation support in a variety of ways. How they execute this task is influenced by interactions between the directors and the contexts in which their pedagogical knowledge and abilities were developed, in addition to the contexts in which they are put into practice. The theoretical framework used in this study to examine directors' perceptions of their role in supporting the implementation of a curricula develops as related to individual characteristics was Process-Person-Context-Time (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006).

Pedagogical support related to curriculum implementation is a proximal process, or an increasingly complex series of interactions between the director and elements of their environment over time, that influence curriculum practices within their center (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). The relationships and interactions between directors and teachers are key components of this process. Additionally, expectations within their centers and the systems in which these facilities exist, shape and guide directors' perceptions of their roles related to curriculum implementation, thus comprising the context in which their development as pedagogical leaders occur.

Individual characteristics of directors potentially influence the development of clarity within their role supporting the implementation of curricula. The PPCT framework recognizes both resource characteristics such as education and experience as well as force characteristics such as beliefs as influences on this process. Increased director education has been associated

with higher quality early childhood centers (Mims, Scott-Little, Lower, Cassidy, & Hestenes, 2009; Mujis, Aubrey, Harris, & Briggs, 2004). In the case of pedagogical leadership, directors draw from knowledge gained in their post-secondary education to facilitate changes necessary to increase quality within their centers. Directors' educational knowledge becomes a necessary resource for the effective support and implementation of early childhood curriculum.

Furthermore, directors' continued efforts to gain knowledge of current quality-yielding strategies aids in their facilitation of effective pedagogical support throughout their career. Utilizing this evolving knowledge base becomes another resource informing effective curriculum implementation support throughout their development as pedagogical leaders.

In addition to their educational background, directors' experience also influences their pedagogical knowledge and skills, and beliefs related to their role. Their pedagogical ability not only transforms over time, but their tenure in the field of early care and education can serve as a resource characteristic. This field-based experience has been associated with an increased understanding of the challenges of their roles and responsibilities as early childhood leaders (Rodd, 2013). Directors can draw from these past experiences to realize the impact their support, or lack thereof, can have on effective curriculum implementation.

Finally, beliefs influence directors' perception of their role of supporting curriculum implementation. Beliefs about early childhood best practices affect the type and amount of curriculum-based support provided by directors (Harrist, Thompson, & Norris, 2007; Rohacek, Adams, & Kisker 2010). These pedagogical beliefs develop and change overtime and function in an interrelated manner, adapting as directors move through various contexts throughout their careers.

This framework was utilized in two ways. (1) To guide a review of the literature related to early childhood directors' leadership roles and, (2) to steer the evaluation of the characteristics and pedagogical leadership beliefs of child care directors employed at centers that participate in QRIS initiatives. The overarching purpose of this investigation was to get an increased understanding of individual characteristics associated with child care directors' perception of their role in early childhood pedagogy.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

The Move Towards Quality

There has been an increasing focus on the need for, and impact of, high-quality early care and education (Campbell et al., 2014; Child Care Aware, 2015; U.S. Department of Education, 2016). As a result, child care centers that were once evaluated by the quality of structural components are now assessed based upon components related to process quality (Norris & Horm, 2015). So instead of determining quality based on indicators such as ratio, group size, and teacher qualifications, assessments are based on those elements of care that are more closely experienced by children, such as the quality of teacher-child interactions and opportunities for play. This transition from a structural to process focus is often a result of the implementation of Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) initiatives. Most recently as part of these efforts, states are looking for additional means to improve quality and, as a result, overall child outcomes.

To achieve this, early childhood stakeholders are devoting funding to initiatives that have a high probability of successfully supporting such efforts (Tout et al., 2015). One such resource recently receiving increased attention is early childhood curricula and many states have implemented curricular initiatives as key components of their quality improvement systems (The Build Initiative & Child Trends, 2017). One benefit of focusing on curriculum is that it, unlike more recognized research-based indicators of high-quality such as low teacher-child ratios, small group sizes, and qualified staff, has little to no transference of cost to parents and families (Burgess & Fleet, 2009).

Pedagogical Leadership and Curriculum Initiatives

Pedagogical leadership plays a large role in the implementation of curriculum within the early childhood setting (Abel, et al., 2017). This type of leadership focuses on the aspects of teaching and learning that occur in the early childhood setting (Abel et al., 2017; Coughlin & Baird, 2013; Katz, 1997). It includes supporting teachers in the implementation of curriculum, the execution of high-quality teacher-child interactions, the assessment of children's learning, and in development, data usage, and family engagement (Abel, et al., 2017; Coughlin & Baird, 2013; National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2018).

Since the role of the director includes supporting the implementation of curriculum, and effective leadership is associated with increased early childhood program and service quality (Bloom, 1992; Muijis et al., 2004; Rodd, 2006; Siraj-Blatchford & Manni, 2007), it is natural to assume that the pedagogical role of the director would be incorporated into QRIS initiatives. However, few of the state initiatives have focused on directors and their role in early care and education reform. Of the forty-one initiatives featured on The Quality Compendium website (The Build Initiative & Child Trends, 2017), only eleven reported that curricular training was part of their state's early child care and education improvement system. Only one reported information related to the role of the director in curriculum implementation, stating that they are required to document the use of the state's developmental learning standards. Additionally, only three states, Illinois, Texas and Louisiana, had established criteria for what a director should know about developmentally appropriate early childhood curriculum and how they should support curriculum development and/or implementation within their role as an administrator.

This limited focus on the directors' role is also found in early childhood curriculum implementation research. Where several studies evaluate curriculum implementation, most only

focus on the role of the teacher (DeRousie & Bierman, 2012; Ntumi 2016; Okewole, Abuovbo, & Abosedo, 2015). If directors' actions are explored, it is often within the context of teachers' experiences. In these instances, directors are viewed as a barrier to curriculum implementation due to their failure to provide training and support. Similarly, where some quality improvement initiatives evaluate curriculum implementation, most only evaluate the role of the teacher (Louisiana Department of Education, 2019a; New Jersey Center for Quality Ratings, 2017). Those that do incorporate the role of the director do so by requiring activities such as participating in curricular training or completing evaluations of curriculum implementation as part of their QRIS criteria (New Jersey Center for Quality Ratings, 2017). None looked at the directors' role in supporting criteria typically associated with curriculum implementation, such as using the curriculum to guide experiences that support and facilitate children's learning and development, arranging the classroom environment, creating daily schedules, and including families in their children's learning and development (National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning, 2019).

This limited focus on the role of early childhood directors in curriculum implementation research and QRIS policy initiatives is perplexing. Flemming and Love (2003) identified child care directors as the leaders of early child care and education organizations and declared that it is their leadership that generates organizational change. Additionally, Tout and colleagues (2015) stated that the directors' role in quality improvement pursuits is necessary for their success. They identified leadership as a foundational piece of quality improvement initiatives, suggesting that such initiatives include program features that increase the capacity of directors as leaders. They pointed out that directors' roles have evolved beyond the implementation and enforcement of minimum standards as outlined in child care licensing regulations, and into that of "change

agents.” In line with this idea of directors as agents of change, Bloom (1992) identified child care directors as the “gatekeepers to quality” and studies found that

children made better all-round progress in settings where there was strong leadership, the adults had a good understanding of appropriate pedagogical content, and a trained teacher acted as a manager and a good portion of the staff were (graduate, teacher) qualified (Siraj-Blatchford & Manni, 2007, p. 1).

QRIS Expectations and Director Characteristics

Directors’ characteristics, including type of education and knowledge of current practices that improve quality, affect the pedagogical style facilitated and curriculum used within their centers (Gordon et al., 2019). Thus, in addition to exploring directors’ pedagogical beliefs, it is also important to take into account how QRIS expectations align with early childhood professional recommendations and director characteristics. In evaluating director requirements within QRIS initiatives, the alignment between expectations and evidence is an important consideration. Research has shown that centers with higher levels of quality have directors who have more formal training, prior experience, and longer tenures in early childhood education (Tout, et al., 2015). Thus, directors’ level of education and prior professional experience, in addition to their pedagogical beliefs, are explored.

Directors’ Education

Positive associations have been found between higher levels of director education and program quality (Muijis et al., 2004; Ryan, Whitebook, Kipinis, & Saki, 2011; Whitebook & Sakai, 2004) with higher levels of quality found in programs where directors’ hold bachelor’s degrees or higher (Mims et al., 2009). However, licensing regulations usually serve as the foundation for QRIS initiatives (National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance, 2018), and most only require directors to have a high school diploma. Where several states provide additional options for minimum criteria including prior experience, early childhood certification,

degrees, or specific combinations of education and experience, these options fail to increase the minimal education requirement and, in some cases, lessen them (see Kansas Department of Health & Environment, 2019; Mississippi State Department of Health, 2017; Texas Health & Human Services, 2019). Furthermore, even fewer have requirements specific to leadership via coursework or certification (The Build Initiative & Child Trends, 2017).

Conversely, early childhood professional organizations recommend directors have, at minimum, a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or a related field, that includes coursework focused on leadership or program development (Abel, 2019; Abel, Talan, & Magid, 2019; National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2018). In response to these suggestions, some states have incorporated additional criteria including bachelor's degrees as part of their efforts to increase quality. However, they do not require that these degrees be in early childhood education or a related discipline (see Louisiana Department of Education, 2019b), nor do they specify the need for administrative coursework of any type.

Currently the early childhood workforce aligns more with licensing regulations than it does with professional recommendations in relation to education. In the United States, child care is comprised of women from lower socio-economic backgrounds who have informal training (Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, 2018; Ramey & Ramey, 2007). A recent study found that one third of early childhood center directors did not hold a post-secondary degree (McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership, 2018). This, in addition to the minimal state requirements for directors, is of concern. Particularly since directors' level of education has been found to have a direct impact on their capacity to assist and inspire teachers (Bloom & Abel, 2015). This includes their overall ability to establish and maintain high-quality early childhood programs.

Directors' education and ongoing development of knowledge related to quality improvement approaches also affects their pedagogical practices. Mims et al. (2009), found an association between higher scores on assessments of program quality and higher director education levels and enrollment in college courses. Based on these findings, they posited that directors' level of education affected the level of care provided by teachers, hypothesizing that directors with greater levels of education had an increased ability to lead and support teachers. This assertion was supported by Summers (2006) who found that directors with more specialized education reported using a greater variety of strategies to support teachers' curriculum implementation. Additionally, Gordon, et al. (2019) found that the more involved directors were in the field of early care and education – as determined by holding a degree in early childhood education, communicating with other directors regarding quality improvement tactics, and enrolling staff in professional learning – the more they subscribed to a child-centered pedagogy. This demonstrates the impact degreed and involved directors could have in QRIS initiatives.

However, a “leadership gap” has been identified within the field of early childhood education. This gap, initially apparent between the education levels of early childhood and elementary administrators, has grown to include a gap between early childhood teachers and administrators. It is attributed to the absence of “consistent policies and support for improving the qualifications and competencies of those who lead early childhood programs” (Abel, 2019, p. 50). This gap also exists in a broader perspective. Funding for early childhood leadership development is absent compared to that of funding provided within the K-12 education (Goffin, 2013).

Ongoing Professional Development

In addition to formal education, this leadership gap affects early childhood professionals at all stages of their careers. It is also present in the availability of ongoing professional learning for early childhood professionals currently serving in administrative roles. Early childhood educators of all experience levels lack opportunities for professional learning focused on developing leadership skills (Douglass, 2018; Ramgopal, Dieterle, Aviles, McCreedy, & Davis, 2009; Taba et al., 1999). This is of concern because without adequate pedagogical knowledge directors could lack the ability to provide pedagogical support, including supporting the implementation of curriculum.

Paths to Leadership

Like their education, variability is found in directors' paths to their leadership positions as they are rarely straightforward (Mitchell, 1997). Previous experience for many early childhood directors was employment as teachers prior to assuming leadership positions. In a survey of 1,530 early childhood program administrators, 42% held teaching positions prior to becoming a director (McCormick, 2018). Additionally, teachers reported that directors with more time teaching in the classroom used a greater variety of strategies to support curriculum implementation (Summers, 2006).

Rarely do early childhood educators plan to become leaders within the field (Rodd, 2005, 2013). Those that do become leaders have a disinclination to be labeled as such because of their "preferred status as educators and child care developers" (Siraj-Blatchford & Manni, 2007, p. 6). Many teachers who have transitioned into leadership positions have reported that they were not prepared for the role and associated responsibilities (Rodd, 1998; Mujis et al. 2004) and that working with adults was difficult (Waniganayake, 2001).

The amount of time directors have been employed in the early care and education field affects their perception of their leadership. Stage-based models of early childhood leaders' career development have been created and outline the changes directors experience throughout their time in the field (Katz, 1995, as cited in Rodd, 2013; Rodd, 2006, 2013; VanderVen, 1991). These models explore the development and expansion of directors' knowledge, insight, and competence associated with their leadership roles and responsibilities. At the entry level, directors associate nurturing characteristics with leadership, seeing their role as one of assistance and support (Rodd, 2013). Those with between three and ten years in a leadership position believed that knowledge, expertise and experience were required to understand their role, meet job requirements, work effectively with others, and influence outcomes. Finally, those with greater than ten years of experience held wider perspectives regarding leadership and recognized the importance of confidence and empowerment in effective leadership. This was associated with the knowledge and experience they had gained. It was not until this stage in their development as leaders that directors were able to understand the complexity of their role and to envision the future for their programs and the children, families and teacher they serve. In order for directors' leadership ability to grow, their experience must be ongoing, cumulative, and increase in complexity. However, the field of early childhood education is full of variables that lead to increased turnover (Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, 2016). These result in early childhood professionals, including directors, not attaining the time in the field needed to understand, develop, and implement the complex activities associated with pedagogical leadership.

Perception of Role

Similar to role preference and the differentiation between teacher and leader, role clarity has also been found to have an impact on director perceptions of leadership responsibilities. Granrusten (2006) found that awareness, content, function, and consciousness of role were key influencers of directors' development of identity. In this study, directors who were consciously aware of their identity were quick to identify themselves as either leaders or teachers when questioned. In contrast, directors who were uncertain about their identity struggled to identify their role although they did ultimately choose between a leader or teacher identity. Furthermore, directors who identified themselves as teachers focused on elements of their role related to the staff and children of their own center. Those who identified themselves as leaders focused on business and economic aspects of their position. Thus, pedagogical leadership ability is also dependent on the extent to which the leaders view themselves as pedagogues.

This lack of identity and role awareness has the potential to become problematic. Bloom (2007) underscored self-awareness as the initial step in developing relationships with others and an "awareness of self and others" has been identified as a fundamental element within early childhood leadership (McCormick, 2018). Consequently, directors' role-uncertainties could affect relationships with staff. A director who is unaware of their role and responsibilities could fail to provide the support needed by staff in order to effectively implement curriculum. For example, directors who see their role as the leaders of a business may only complete managerial tasks such as scheduling, payroll, and billing, and neglect to participate in activities related to the center's instructional practices because they fail recognize themselves as pedagogical leaders.

Beliefs

In addition to an individual's level of education, employment background, and preferential or perceived role, directors' beliefs can influence their role as pedagogical leaders. Beliefs, or assumptions and judgements related to individuals' perceptions of the realities around them, have the power to influence both thought and action (Fives & Buehl, 2016). Moreover, beliefs are also responsible for the construction of individual views related to various aspects of early childhood care and education, including views of children, child development, the learning environment, curriculum, and the role of the teacher (Jensen, 2004).

In a study of early childhood perspectives regarding quality, leaders of child care centers believed that leader support was an important component of quality care and education and identified mentoring as facilitative of progress and accomplishment (Harrist et al., 2007). In addition to being supportive, leaders thought that it was important that they provide professional learning opportunities for staff, another component of pedagogical leadership. Child care center leaders believed that they held the responsibility to improve staff characteristics as part of ensuring quality through the alteration of the characteristics of their staff. They also named professional development and training as the primary vehicle for staff change specifically for the purposes of expanding their standards-based knowledge and field-based requirements. Leaders shared the overarching belief that "trained and educated caregivers are more likely to follow developmentally appropriate practices, to provide a stimulating curriculum, and to be aware of individual differences and special needs of children and families" (Harrist et al., 2007, p. 318), all of which are aligned with elements that require pedagogical leadership support.

However, the type and conveyance of support offered is also belief dependent. Directors' epistemological beliefs affect their behaviors as leaders (Brownlee, Tickle, & Nailon, 2004).

Directors who viewed knowledge as multifaceted and learner-developed were more likely to lead in ways that supported the development of others' epistemological beliefs. Directors who viewed knowledge as straightforward and transferred from an authority figure to the learner, used leadership strategies that included performance-based incentives or penalties.

Dichotomous viewpoints like these are prevalent throughout explorations of child care leaders' beliefs. For example, while some leaders focused on developmentally appropriate practices (Harrist et al., 2007), others identified quality as related to meeting child outcomes, or more specifically kindergarten or school readiness (Rohacek et al., 2010). The latter pinpointed readiness as a primary goal of their programs with academics as the key focus. Rather than concentrating on developmental growth or individualization as often done in programs that implement developmentally appropriate practices, participants in this study equated quality to children's acquisition of specific knowledge types – those related to rote learning such as the recognition of colors, numbers, and letters (Rohacek et al., 2010).

Another aspect of pedagogy in which leaders' beliefs differ is teacher-child interactions. Child care leaders voiced beliefs that nurturing interactions that facilitate children's social and emotional development and a sense of security are necessary components of quality (Harrist et al., 2007; Rohacek et al., 2010). Directors defined a quality program as one in which “teachers treat children as if they were their own” and discussed children feeling happy, loved, accepted, well cared for, safe, and experiencing feelings of belonging as part of their early experiences (Rohacek et al., 2010, p. 21). Yet, when specifically discussing the desired social-emotional skills they expected children to gain, the focus became a combination of skills found in developmentally focused programs with those that would be more beneficial in academic settings.

Directors' beliefs associated with quality teaching practices were also found to be inconsistent. Some directors viewed child-directed activities as a hallmark of quality, while others felt that teacher-directed activities were indicators of superiority (Rohacek, et al., 2010). Directors in the former group described high-quality programs as those that "understand that individual children learn and develop differently and take individualized approaches to supporting healthy child development" (p. 22). Directors in the latter group measured quality by the "achievement of certain cognitive milestones" with the development of these skills being implemented during times when "children sit down, and teachers teach" (p. 22). The teachers in this group also reported negative responses regarding curricula-embedded opportunities for play. Similarly, variability was found in how child care directors identified their learning environments and activities related to child-initiated or direct instruction, with some directors reporting prominence of child-initiated activities coupled with varying levels of direct instruction, while others reported using primarily direct instruction with minimal focus on child-initiated activities (Gordon et al., 2019).

Research has shown that educators are affected by the beliefs of the systems in which they exist. For example, teachers' conceptualizations of play affected the types of play they facilitated within their classrooms (Rentzou et al., 2019). Those from cultures that viewed play as a driver of social emotional development held beliefs that the purpose of play was to facilitate such development. They also implemented play in their classroom under this pretext. This idea of transference of beliefs through practice could be as much of a reality for directors as it is for teachers. The fundamental views of a culture can then affect their beliefs, thus affecting their pedagogical beliefs and related activities, including their leadership support.

Because directors' perceptions of their leadership roles affect their practices, and such practices affect early childhood care and education quality, they are worth exploring. Additionally, since directors' leadership abilities are influenced by their education, experience, and pedagogical beliefs, these constructs also warrant further investigation. This includes how these elements affect role-specific beliefs and curriculum implementation support, which is a substantial portion of pedagogical leadership.

Research Questions

This study aims to examine the factors associated with the differences in early childhood directors' perceptions of role related to curriculum implementation within child care centers. Variables explored will include directors' level of education, professional experience, and beliefs related to early childhood pedagogy and quality. Three primary questions will be evaluated:

- 1) Is there an association between directors' perception of their pedagogical leadership role and their education, experience, and pedagogical beliefs?
- 2) Is there an association between directors' perception of their administrative leadership role and their education, experience, and pedagogical beliefs?; and
- 3) Is there an association between directors' curriculum implementation practices and their education, experience, and pedagogical beliefs?

Chapter 3 - Methodology

The purpose of this study was to explore directors' perceptions of their pedagogical and administrative leadership roles as well as curriculum implementation practices. Predictor variables including directors' level of education, professional experience, and beliefs related to early childhood pedagogy and quality were evaluated.

Procedure

A survey was disseminated to child care program directors using the Qualtrics online survey tool. Questions within the survey were informed by the literature about director characteristics, beliefs related to quality and pedagogy, and roles related to leadership and curriculum implementation. Descriptive and correlational analyses were examined prior to conducting a separate hierarchical regression for each hypothesis. Instructional Review Board Approval #10043 was received on February 6, 2020.

Participants

Participants were selected from early care and education programs in Louisiana. A list of Louisiana licensed child care centers and programs was compiled from information found on the Louisiana Department of Education's Louisiana School Finder website at louisianaschools.com and sorted to select those that currently hold a Type III license. Selecting only Type III programs provided a sample of directors and administrators of early childhood care and education settings across the state of Louisiana that are required to participate in QRIS initiatives as part of their licensure. These programs are also eligible to participate in Louisiana's Early Childhood Curriculum Initiative (see Louisiana Department of Education, 2019c). Furthermore, programs associated with K-12 settings, or PreK 4 programs that exist in elementary school

settings were removed since the administration within these programs are typically principals and not program directors.

Contact emails for the directors/administrators of each of these programs were then compiled and duplicate emails removed. An email was sent to 818 directors/administrators, 11 emails were not viable when sent resulting in a total of 807 emails distributed. Of these 194 responded, with a total response rate of 24%. Out of the total number of respondents, only 162 completed the survey and of those, two were no longer working in an early childhood center or program. This resulted in a total number of 160 early childhood center program directors/administrators (or a 20% usable rate). The following results are based upon this total.

Of the 160 administrators that fully completed the survey, 83.1% identified themselves as Type III center directors, 8.1% identified themselves as directors of Early Head Start or Head Start centers, 8.8% identified themselves as both Early Head Start/Head Start and Type III center directors (Head Start/Early Head Start centers in Louisiana are also licensed Type III centers, explaining those who identified themselves as both). One hundred and fifty-one of the directors were female (94.4%) and nine were male (5.6%). The majority of directors were white (50%, n=80), 44% were black/African American (n=71), 1.3% were Hispanic/Latino (n=2), .6 percent were American Indian (n=1), .6% reported that they were some other race or ethnicity (n=1), and 4.4% did not answer or identify their race/ethnicity (n=7). Seventy percent were 45 years of age or older; 35.6 % (n=57) were 55 years or older, 34.4% (n=55) were 45-54 years old, 19.4% were 35-44 years old (n=31), 10% were 24-34 years old (n=16), and .6% were 18-24 years old (n=1).

Measures

A Qualtrics survey was used to collect quantitative data to document participants' characteristics, pedagogical beliefs, leadership roles, as well as curriculum support practices.

Director Education. Participants answered questions regarding their level and type of education. Questions included *What is the highest level of education completed?*, *Do you hold a degree in early childhood education?*, and *Are you working on a degree in early childhood education?* A continuum was established related to participants' highest level of education, ranging from less than high school (1) to holding a doctorate (8). On average directors' highest level of education was 5.39 (SD=1.414, min=2, max=8) representing an Associate's degree and the most common level of education completed was a Bachelor's degree (see Table 1).

A continuum was also established related to the participants' highest level of education specific to early childhood, ranging from no early childhood education degree (1) to a graduate degree in early childhood education (5). On average, the highest early childhood degree completed was 1.97 (SD=1.505, min=1, max=5), or working on a degree. However, the majority of participants reported that they did not have a degree in early childhood education (see Table 1).

Table 1. Director Education

Variable	n	%
Highest level of director education		
Less than high school	0	0
GED	2	1.3
High school diploma	18	11.3
Some college (no degree earned)	27	17
Associate's degree	23	14.5
Bachelor's degree	51	32.1
Master's degree	34	21.4
Doctorate	4	2.5
Highest early childhood education degree		
No early childhood education degree	107	67.3

Working on a degree in early childhood education	4	2.5
Associate's degree in early childhood education	12	7.5
Bachelor's degree in early childhood education	17	10.6
Graduate degree in early childhood education	19	11.9

Director Experience. Participants answered questions related to their tenure within the field and time spent in administrative and teaching positions, including *How long have you been working in early childhood education/child care field?* and *How many years have you served in an early childhood administrative role?* As indicated in Table Two, directors in this sample had a substantial amount of experience in the field of early childhood with more years as an administrator than a classroom teacher.

Table 2. Director Experience

Variable	N	M	SD	Min	Max
Years employed in the early care and education field	158	20.20	10.79	1	52
Years employed as a teacher	151	11.69	10.64	0	46
Years employed as an administrator	157	14.39	10.29	1	46

Pedagogical Beliefs. Participants' pedagogical beliefs were evaluated using statements from Charlesworth's Teacher Beliefs Scale (Charlesworth, Hart, Burts, & Hernandez, 1991). Eighteen statements were included, nine representing early childhood developmentally inappropriate practices (DIP) and nine representing developmentally appropriate practices (DAP). Participants rated each statement on degree of importance within the early childhood

care and education setting, from *not at all important* to *very important*. Examples of the types of statements in this section included:

- *It is _____ for activities to be responsive to individual children's interest;*
- *It is _____ to provide the same curriculum and environment for each group of children that comes through the program;*
- *Workbooks and/or ditto sheets are _____ in the classroom; and*
- *It is _____ to provide many daily opportunities for developing social skills (i.e., cooperating, helping, talking) with peers in the classroom.*

The Likert-type rating scale ranged from 1 to 5 (1 = *not at all important*, 2 = *not very important*, 3 = *fairly important*, 4 = *very important*, and 5 = *extremely important*).

An average total score for each type of belief was obtained for this question by adding up the total questions for each belief type and dividing it by the total number of items per type. Mean scores for the Developmentally Appropriate Beliefs scale was 4.519 (SD=.415) with a minimum score of 3.2 and a maximum score of 5. Mean scores for the Developmentally Inappropriate Beliefs scale was 2.767 (SD=.837) with a minimum score of 1.13 and a maximum score of 5. With lower scores indicating lower levels of agreement regarding beliefs about pedagogical practices and higher scores indicating higher levels of beliefs about pedagogical practices. Cronbach's alpha for the developmentally inappropriate pedagogical beliefs scale was .864 and .871 for the developmentally appropriate pedagogical beliefs scale.

Correlations among predictor variables were often in expected directions (see Table 3). Directors' highest level of education was significantly related to their highest early childhood education degrees as well as their developmentally appropriate beliefs. Their highest early

childhood degree significantly correlated with the length of time they have been teaching. The years of experience variables were all significantly related with each other.

Table 3. Correlations among Predictor Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Highest level of director education	1.000	.460**	-.058	-.100	-.085	-.102	.215*
2. Highest early childhood education degree		1.000	.188*	-.045	.191*	.012	.158
3. Years in the field			1.000	.752**	.511**	-.146	.062
4. Years in administration				1.000	.417**	-.091	.023
5. Years teaching experience					1.000	.042	-.202
6. Developmentally Inappropriate Pedagogy						1.000	-.067
7. Developmentally Appropriate Pedagogy							1.000

Leadership Role Perception. Participants rated a series of statements regarding their role based on level of agreement with a rating of 1 being the lowest representing *strongly disagree* and 5 being the highest representing *strongly agree*. Statements represented two leadership types, pedagogical and managerial/administrative. Examples of the types of statements included:

- *It is my job to support teachers in the implementation of the curriculum by reviewing the lesson plans they have developed and providing constructive feedback;*
- *It is my job to hire, manage, and supervise staff;*
- *It is my job to develop a shared vision with teachers and staff to guide quality improvements within the program;* and
- *It is my job to enroll children and develop and manage classroom rosters.*

An average total score for each type of leadership role was obtained for this question by adding up the total questions for each leadership type and dividing it by the total number of items per type. Lower scores indicated the level of disagreement and higher scores indicated the level of agreement regarding the leadership roles presented. Cronbach’s alpha was .878 for the administrative role scale and .939 for the pedagogical leadership role scale. Directors strongly believed that both types of responsibilities were part of their job (see Table 4).

Table 4. Leadership Role Perception

Variable	M	SD	Min	Max
Administrative leadership role	4.522	.762	1	5
Pedagogical leadership role	4.605	.724	1	5

Directors' beliefs about their pedagogical leadership role were significantly related to their administrative leadership role ($r=.749$, $p<.000$).

Curriculum Implementation Practices. Participants answered questions related to ways they supported their staff in implementing the program's curriculum, including *Who assists teachers in the implementation of this curriculum?* and *How have you supported staff development and learning related to the use of the curriculum?*

Variables were created to represent the support of teachers in curriculum implementation. An initial variable was created to represent the total number of individuals by role who assist teachers with the implementation of the curriculum. This variable was created by totaling the number of people reported and had a range of 0 (no one) to 4 (four individuals), or one for each person (director, other administrative staff, other staff teacher assigned to role) assigned to assist teachers with curriculum implementation. On average directors reported 1.4438 individuals involved ($SD=.73328$) and ranged from zero to three individuals supporting teachers in curriculum implementation. As indicated in Table Five the director most often had this responsibility.

A second variable was created to represent the number of staff training methods related to curriculum implementation. Participants selected up to three types of staff training, creating a range of 0 to 3, or one for each type used. Training types included the director paid for training, the director required staff to attend training, and the director provided in-house training themselves. On average, directors employed 1.2563 ($SD=.88486$) strategies with a range from 0 to 3. Requiring staff to attend outside training was most often utilized (Table 5).

A third variable was created to represent the number of mentoring and coaching supports utilized to support teachers in the implementation of curriculum. Mentoring and coaching types

included, the director paid for outside mentoring and coaching, the director required mentoring and coaching, and the director provided mentoring and coaching themselves. This provided a range of 0 to 3 or one for each support used. Directors used less than one mentoring/coaching strategy ($M=.7813$, $SD=.82927$, $min=0$, $max=3$). Again, utilizing outside supports was the most common response.

The final variable in this section was created to represent the total types of curriculum implementation support used and include both staff training and mentoring and coaching supports. Adding both of these together provided a range of 0 to 6 types of curriculum implementation supports. On average, directors used 2.0375 strategies ($SD=1.42371$) with a range from 0 to 6. As indicated in Table Five directors were more likely to utilize training supports than the more intensive mentoring/coaching options.

Table 5. Curriculum Implementation Supports

Variable	n	%
Individuals offering curriculum implementation support		
No one has the responsibility	11	6.9
Director	106	66.3
Other administrators	69	43.1
Other staff members	31	19.4
Teacher assigned the responsibility	25	15.6
Staff training methods of curriculum implementation support		
Required staff to attend training provided by outside sources	90	56.3

Director provided training in-house	59	36.9
Paid for staff to attend training	52	32.5
Coaching/mentoring curriculum implementation supports		
Required staff to participate in mentoring/coaching by outside sources	57	35.6
Director conducting coaching/mentoring in-house	48	30.0
Paid for outside source to provide mentoring/coaching	20	12.5

Note: Directors could select more than one option

Correlations among the outcome variables indicated that curriculum support practices by administrators were not significantly associated with either their perceived pedagogical leadership role ($r=.039$) or administrative leadership role ($r=.057$).

Data Analysis

The first section of the survey measured demographic information. The second section measured participants' current and previous positions and experience and the third section measured participants' education and professional engagement. The fourth section evaluated participants' activities related to curriculum support to provide their perception of role through their reported execution of job-embedded activities. The fifth section measured participants' pedagogical beliefs and the sixth session will measure their perception of role. Sections two through five answered the study's research questions. Correlations between predictor and outcome variables were examined. Multiple regression analysis was conducted, and three regressions were run, one for each outcome — curriculum implementation practices, pedagogical leadership role perception and administrative leadership role perception.

Chapter 4 - Results

As indicated in Table Six, correlations indicated some significant associations between predictor and outcome variables. Directors' highest level of education was negatively correlated with their perceptions of their administrative leadership role but positively correlated with their curriculum implementation supports. Directors' perceptions of their pedagogical leadership role were positively correlated with developmentally appropriate beliefs and curriculum implementation supports. While director's developmentally inappropriate beliefs were negatively associated with curriculum implementation supports.

Table 6. Correlations for Outcome Variables with Predictor Variables

Variable	Highest Director Education	Highest EC Education	Years in the Field	Years in Admin.	Years in Teaching	DIP Beliefs	DAP Beliefs
Pedagogical Leadership Role Perceptions	-.073	-.026	-.054	-.10	-.018	.022	.198**
Administrative Leadership Role Perceptions	-.170*	-.109	-.084	-.001	.083	-.025	.073
Curriculum Implementation Support Practices	.211*	.101	.065	.095	-.112	.245**	.270**

** . Correlation is significant at the .01 level

* . Correlation is significant at the .05 level

Research Question 1

The initial research question explored *whether there was an association between directors' perception of their pedagogical leadership role and their education, experience, and pedagogical beliefs?* Hierarchical regression examined the impact of experience (years in field, years in classroom, years in admin) entered on the first step, director's highest level of education

and highest level of early childhood education entered on the second step, and directors' developmentally inappropriate and developmentally appropriate beliefs were entered on the third step to predict directors' perception of their pedagogical leadership role. Results were not significant with all variables in the equation [$F(7,118)=.723, p=.653$] (Table 7).

Table 7. Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Pedagogical Leadership

Variable	β	t	R	R ²	ΔR^2
Step 1			.060	.004	-.021
Years in the Field	-.083	-.593			
Years in Administration	.054	.408			
Years in Classroom	-.007	-.072			
Step 2			.126	.016	-.025
Years in the Field	-.091	-.618			
Years in Administration	.055	.398			
Years in Classroom	-.023	-.216			
Director's Highest Education	-.125	-1.193			
Director's Highest Early Childhood Education	.040	.364			
Step 3			.203	.041	-.016
Years in the Field	-.124	-.833			
Years in Administration	.052	.377			
Years in Classroom	.033	.300			

Director's Highest Education	-.142	-1.343
Director's Highest Early Childhood Education	.017	.154
Developmentally Inappropriate Beliefs	.005	.049
Developmentally Appropriate Beliefs	.170	1.76

Research Question 2

The second question was, *Is there an association between directors' perception of their administrative leadership role and their education, experience, and pedagogical beliefs?*

Hierarchical regression examined the impact of experience (years in field, years in classroom, years in admin) entered on the first step, directors' highest level of education and highest level of early childhood education entered on the second step, and directors' developmentally inappropriate and developmentally appropriate beliefs were entered on the third step to predict directors' perception of their administrative leadership role. Results were not significant with all variables in the equation [$F(7,117)=1.655, p=.127$] (Table 8).

Table 8. Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Administrative Leadership

Variable	β	t	R	R ²	ΔR^2
Step 1			.205	.042	.018
Years in the Field	-.272	-1.984			
Years in Administration	.110	.848			
Years in Classroom	-.178	1.751			
Step 2			.281	.079	.041

Years in the Field	-.257	-1.820			
Years in Administration	.88	.660			
Years in Classroom	-.163	1.588			
Director's Highest Education	-.193	-1.889			
Director's Highest Early Childhood Education	-.002	-.015			
Step 3			.300	.090	.036
Years in the Field	-.296	-2.036			
Years in Administration	.089	.669			
Years in Classroom	.202	1.886			
Director's Highest Education	-.211	-2.049			
Director's Highest Early Childhood Education	.006	.058			
Developmentally Inappropriate Beliefs	-.067	-.737			
Developmentally Appropriate Beliefs	.088	.926			

Research Question 3

The final research question examined whether *there was an association between directors' curriculum implementation practices and their education, experience, and pedagogical beliefs?* A three-stage hierarchical multiple regression was conducted with curriculum implementation practices as the dependent variable. Director experience was entered at stage one of regression. The director education variables were entered at stage two and pedagogical beliefs at stage three.

The hierarchical regression at step one indicated a trend toward significance [F(3,125)=2.278,p=.083] (Table 9) and accounted for 2.9% of the variance with years of teaching experience a significant predictor (p=.018). Introducing the education variables in the second step was significant [F(5,123)=2.664, p=.025]. This step accounted for 6.1% of the variance with years of teaching experience again a significant predictor (p=.022) and directors' highest level of education a trend toward significance (p=.090). Directors' beliefs about pedagogical practice were added in the third step and significantly contributed to the model [F(7,121)=2.889,p=.008]. In this step, years of teaching experience as well as directors' education were no longer significant and directors' beliefs about developmentally inappropriate practice were (β =-.174, p=.048).

Table 9. Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Curriculum Implementation Practices

Variable	β	t	R	R ₂	ΔR_2
Step 1			.228	.052	.029
Years in the Field	.192	1.424			
Years in Administration	.021	.168			
Years in Classroom	-.239	.2396			
Step 2			.313	.098	.061
Years in the Field	.147	1.068			
Years in Administration	.073	.560			
Years in Classroom	-.233	-2.327			
Director's Highest Education	-.170	1.709			
Director's Highest Early Childhood Education	.078	.749			

Step 3			.378	.143	.094
Years in the Field	.062	.445			
Years in Administration	.080	.628			
Years in Classroom	-.160	-1.547			
Director's Highest Education	.124	1.232			
Director's Highest Early Childhood Education	.085	.823			
Developmentally Inappropriate Beliefs	-.174	-1.994			
Developmentally Appropriate Beliefs	.144	1.586			

Chapter 5 - Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore directors' perceptions of their pedagogical and administrative leadership roles as well as curriculum implementation support practices. Variables including directors' level of education, professional experience, and beliefs related to early childhood pedagogy and quality were utilized to predict these outcomes. Three primary questions guided this research; (1) Is there an association between directors' perception of their pedagogical leadership role and their education, experience, and pedagogical beliefs?; (2) Is there an association between directors' perception of their administrative leadership role and their education, experience, and pedagogical beliefs?; and, (3) Is there an association between directors' curriculum implementation practices and their education, experience, and pedagogical beliefs?

Directors' Perception of Pedagogical Leadership Roles

Directors strongly agreed that pedagogical leadership was a part of their job responsibilities. However, the regression analysis did not find any significant predictors with the variables of education, experience, and pedagogical beliefs and directors' perceptions of their pedagogical roles. This is surprising because the literature stated that directors' education level (Bloom & Abel, 2015), tenure in the field (Katz, 1995; Rodd, 2006, 2013; VanderVen, 1991), and beliefs about knowledge and learning (Brownlee et al., 2004; Jensen, 2004) affected their ability to assist teachers, their perception of their leadership roles, and their behavior as leaders.

Although results of the regression analysis were not significant, significant correlations were found between directors' developmentally appropriate pedagogical beliefs and their perception of their pedagogical leadership roles at the individual variable level. Jensen (2004) found that beliefs play a role in the formation of individual's views related to various aspects of

early care and education, including child development and the learning environment. Therefore, it was possible, although not explored in this study, that directors were applying their developmentally appropriate beliefs to the classroom environment when they evaluated their pedagogical responsibilities.

Furthermore, the significance of directors' agreement with pedagogical leadership tasks as a part of their job responsibilities is worth considering. This strong agreement could be explained by shifts in their involvement in initiatives related to pedagogy created by Louisiana's QRIS initiative. Since all directors surveyed are required to participate in these initiatives per their center's license, it is possible that this participation could have affected how they viewed their role. Although not explored in this study, this premise was supported by the literature. For example, Gordon et al. (2019) found that directors' characteristics, including knowledge of current practices that increase quality, affected the pedagogical style facilitated within their centers. However, while these experiences could have affected directors' role perception, it is important to note that agreement with a practice as a part of one's role does not equate to time spent engaging in those practices within the centers. For instance, Hujala et al. (2016) found that directors' in Finland, Japan, and Singapore all wanted more time for pedagogical leadership.

Directors' Perception of Administrative Leadership Roles

Directors also strongly agreed that administrative leadership tasks were a part of their job responsibilities. This almost equal perception of leadership responsibilities, administrative and pedagogical, could be due to the need for both administrative and pedagogical leadership roles to work together to ensure program quality. The literature supports this premise as well. Bella (2016) suggested that administrative and pedagogical leadership are reliant on each other. She described successful administrative leadership "as being able to establish systems that protect

and sustain essential operational functions (p. 2).” For example, if administrative procedures are in place to ensure high-quality pedagogy occurs in the classroom through the use of a state approved curriculum, but directors do not support the implementation of these practices through pedagogical leadership such as provision of training and mentoring and coaching, then the likelihood that teachers will engage in high-quality pedagogy is limited. Directors seeing both administrative and pedagogical responsibilities as necessary parts of their role aligns with this idea of codependency between leadership types.

The regression analysis did not find any significant relationships between the predictor variables and directors’ perceptions of their administrative roles. Yet, a negative association between directors’ highest level of education and their perception of their administrative role was found at the individual variable level. Potential reasons for this were hard to determine based upon the literature reviewed.

Directors’ Curriculum Implementation Support

The regression analysis showed that directors' developmentally inappropriate pedagogical beliefs negatively influenced their use of curriculum support strategies. Thus, lower developmentally inappropriate pedagogical beliefs predicted the use of a greater number of curriculum support strategies. The findings support the premise that the type and conveyance of support offered is belief dependent (Brownlee et al., 2004). They also support the findings of Harrist and colleagues (2017) who found that directors shared an all-encompassing belief that “trained and educated caregivers are more likely to follow developmentally appropriate practices, to provide a stimulating curriculum, and to be aware of individual differences and special needs of children and families” (p. 318). The awareness of the directors in the Harrist study mirrors the awareness of the directors in this study in that the directors held

developmentally appropriate beliefs, or at least recognized their place in high-quality programs, and wanted to facilitate their implementation within the classroom by providing training and other pedagogical supports. Also, within the Harist study, directors identified leader support as a necessary component of quality and acknowledged the provision of professional learning opportunities for staff as the primary methodology for staff change

The regression analysis did not find any other significant predictors with the variables of education and experience and directors' curriculum implementation support activities. Yet, the higher the directors' level of education, the more likely they were to use curriculum implementation supports at the individual variable level according to correlational analysis. This is similar to the findings by Mims et al. (2009), that showed a positive association between higher program quality scores and director education levels. Based on these findings, the researchers hypothesized that directors with greater levels of education had an increased ability to lead and support teachers. This assertion was supported by prior research by Summers' (2006) which found that directors with more specialized education used a wider variety of curriculum implementation supports for teachers.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

Though associations were found between directors' pedagogical beliefs and their use of curriculum support activities, it is important to note that the strength of the association was small. This could be due to the prevalence of directors' dichotomous viewpoints as highlighted in the literature, specifically between quality as defined by developmentally appropriate pedagogy versus kindergarten readiness or attainment specific child outcomes (Harist et al., 2007; Rohacek et al., 2010). Therefore, additional research is needed to further examine the relationship between directors' pedagogical beliefs and their curriculum implementation support

practices. Further research is also needed as the modest correlations within this study make it difficult to make informed suggestions to guide practice.

Additionally, as postulated earlier, directors' involvement in broader-based activities, such as participation in QRIS initiatives, could affect their pedagogical leadership roles. Therefore, research could be conducted to more closely examine the association between directors' pedagogical leadership roles and their participation in quality improvement initiatives. It is recommended that this research be conducted in a variety of areas that have QRISs in place to further examine the impact of these initiatives on pedagogical leadership within the field of early care and education.

Finally, the results of this study were limited by the participants surveyed, i.e. directors in Louisiana only, and the specific focus of the research questions. Hence, recommendations for future research include not only examining the pedagogical leadership roles of directors within other areas but doing so through a mixed methods study that provides both a quantitative and qualitative look at directors' pedagogical leadership beliefs, perceptions, and practices. A study of this type would not only provide insight into these practices at the individual level but could also add to the current understanding of pedagogical leadership at a systemic level.

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Appendix A - Director's Pedagogical Beliefs Survey

Purpose of Survey

The purpose of this survey is to explore how child care directors' education, experience, and beliefs affect how they perceive their role as early care and education leaders.

Section 1 - General Demographics

1. What is your gender?

- female
- male
- nonbinary
- other gender (please specify)
- prefer not to say

2. What is your age?

- 18-24 years old
- 25-34 years old
- 35-44 years old
- 45-54 years old
- 55 years old or older

3. What is your ethnicity?

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
- Middle Eastern or North African
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- White
- Some other race, ethnicity or origin (please specify)
- Prefer not to say

Section 2 - Position & Experience

4. What type of early care and education program do you work for? (Check all that apply)

- Type III Licensed Child Care Center
- Early Head Start

- Head Start
- Other (please specify)

5. What is your current position?

- Center director
- Assistant director
- Curriculum director
- Early childhood coordinator
- Principal
- Other: _____

6. In addition to your administrative role, do you also work in the classroom(s)?

- I only work in administrative role and never work in the classroom
- I only work in the classroom when extra support is needed (i.e., to provide breaks, when short staffed, to briefly assist with routines and transitions)

6a. Approximately what percentage of your time do you spend in the classroom on a weekly basis? (truncated question)

- I spend less than 25% of my time assisting in the classroom
- I spend 25-50% of my time assisting in the classroom
- I spend 50-75% of my time assisting in the classroom
- I spend more than 75% of my time assisting in the classroom

- I work in the classroom as a teacher in addition to my role as an administrator

6b. Approximately what percentage of your time do you spend as a teacher? (truncated question)

- 25% of my time is spent as a classroom teacher
- 50% of my time is spent as a classroom teacher
- 75% of my time is spent as a classroom teacher
- The majority of my time is spent as a classroom teacher and my administrative duties are second

7. How long have you been working in the early childhood care and education/child care?

(please specify years and months)

_____ years _____ months

8. How long have you been in your current position?

(please specify years and months)

_____ years _____ months

9. How many total years/months have you served in an early childhood administrative role?

(please specify years and months)

_____ years _____ months

10. What positions have you held prior to your current position? (Check all the apply)

- Assistant teacher
- Teacher
- Director designee
- Assistant director
- Director
- Other (please specify)

11. How many total years have you served in an early childhood teaching role?

(please specify years and months)

_____ years _____ months

Section 3 - Education and Professional Engagement

12. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- Less than a high school diploma
- GED
- High school diploma
- Some college (no degree earned)
- Associate's degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Doctorate

13. Do you hold a degree in early childhood education or a related field (for example, elementary education, special education, or human development)?

- I do not have a degree in any field
- I am currently working to earn a degree in a related field
- I have a degree in a related field
- I am currently working to earn a degree in Early Childhood Education
- I have a degree in Early Childhood Education

14. Do you have a Child Development Associates credential (CDA)?

- I have never obtained a CDA
- I am currently enrolled in a program to obtain my CDA
- I have a current CDA
- I have an expired CDA
- I am working to renew my CDA

15. What other certification(s)/qualification(s) do you hold? (Check all that apply)

- National Administrator’s Credential (NAC)
- Louisiana Pathways Career Development System: Director
- Louisiana Pathways Career Development System: Director 1
- Louisiana Pathways Career Development System: Director 2
- Louisiana Pathways Career Development System: Director 3
- Louisiana Pathways Career Development System: Director 4
- Louisiana Pathways Administrator Certificate
- Other (please specify)

16. How many hours of professional development have you obtained in each of the following areas within the past 12 months?

Topic	Number of training hours completed in the last 12 months?													
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	more than 12
child development and learning														
quality improvement <i>i.e. training related to the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), Teaching Strategies Gold (TSGOLD), or Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)</i>														

management, administrative or leadership	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	more than 12
curriculum-aligned training <i>i.e. training to use the specific curriculum used in your program provided by the publisher, a Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agency, or your Early Childhood Community or Ready Start Network</i>	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	more than 12

17. What professional activities do you participate in?

- Early childhood network meetings
- CCR&R facilitated director’s meetings
- State-level early childhood meetings and discussions
- State or local conferences (Child Care Association of Louisiana, Louisiana Teacher Leader, etc.)
- National Conferences (National Association for the Education of Young Children, Zero to Three, etc.)
- Other (please specify)

Section 4 - Curriculum Support Activities

18. What type(s) of preschool/pre-kindergarten curriculum do/does your program use? (Select all that apply)

- Louisiana Department of Education Tier 1 Early Childhood Curriculum

18a.

- DIG Develop, Inspire, Grow (Abrams Learning Trends)
- Blueprint for Early Literacy (Children’s Literacy Initiative)
- Frog Street Threes (Frog Street)
- Frog Street Pre-K (Frog Street)
- Eureka math (Great Minds)
- Big Day for PreK (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt)
- Connect4Learning (Kaplan Early Learning Company)

- Learn Every Day – The Program for Infants, Toddlers, and Twos (Kaplan Early Learning Company)
- Early Foundations Infant-Toddler (KinderCare Education, LLC)
- OWL Opening the World of Learning (Pearson Education, Inc.)
- InvestiGators Club – Preschool (Robert-Leslie)
- Little Investigators (Robert-Leslie)
- The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers, and Twos (Teaching Strategies, LLC)
- The Creative Curriculum for Preschool (Teaching Strategies, LLC)
- We Can Early Learning Curriculum (Voyager Sopris Learning, Inc.)
- Other Type I Curriculum (please specify)
- Other published curriculum not on the Louisiana Department of Education Tier 1 Early Childhood Curriculum List: _____
- In-house/program developed curriculum
- Our program does not use a curriculum, but uses daily, weekly or monthly lesson plans
- Our program uses no formal planning

19. Who selected the curriculum?

- This curriculum is mandated by the program I work for
- I selected this curriculum
- I selected this curriculum in conjunction with the teachers
- The teachers selected this curriculum
- An outside support person suggested this curriculum
- This curriculum was in place prior to my employment

20. Who assists teachers in the implementation of the curriculum in-house? (Select all that apply)

- Myself
- Other administrative staff
- A teacher assigned to this role
- Other: _____

21. How have you supported staff development and learning related to the use of the curriculum?

(Select all that apply)

- I have paid for training
- I have required staff attendance at curriculum training provided by the curricular company, my local Early Childhood Community or Ready Start network, CCR&R. or another outside source at no cost
- I have provided inhouse training where I presented the content
- I have paid for an outside source to provide mentor-coaching services (modeling, observation, and constructive feedback) related to curriculum implementation
- I have required staff to participate in mentor-coaching services (modeling, observation, and constructive feedback) related to curriculum implementation provided by the

curricular company, my local Early Childhood Community or Ready Start network, CCR&R. or another outside source at no cost

- I have conducted mentor-coaching services (modeling, observation, and constructive feedback) related to curriculum implementation myself.

22. What is your site’s 2017-2018 rating for classroom quality based on your Louisiana Department of Education’s Early Childhood Performance Profile?

- Unsatisfactory
- Approaching proficient
- Proficient
- High Proficient
- Excellent
- We did not receive a rating

Section 5 - Pedagogical Beliefs

23. What are your own beliefs about early childhood programs? Circle the number that most closely represents your beliefs regarding the importance of each item within early childhood programs.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at All Important	Not Very Important	Fairly Important	Very Important	Extremely Important

It is _____ for activities to be responsive to individual children’s interests.	1	2	3	4	5
It is _____ for activities to be responsive to individual differences in children’s development.	1	2	3	4	5
It is _____ that each curriculum area be taught as separate subject areas at separate times.	1	2	3	4	5
It is _____ to provide the same curriculum and environment for each group of children that comes through the program.	1	2	3	4	5
It is _____ for teacher-child interactions to help develop children’s self-esteem and positive feelings towards learning.	1	2	3	4	5

It is _____ for teachers to provide opportunities for children to select many of their own activities.	1	2	3	4	5
Instruction in letter and word recognition is _____ in preschool.	1	2	3	4	5
It is _____ for the teacher to provide a variety of learning areas with concrete materials (writing center, science center, math center, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5
It is _____ for children to create their own learning activities (e.g. cut their own shapes, decide on the steps to perform an experiment, plan their creative drama, art, and computer activities).	1	2	3	4	5
It is _____ for children to work individually at desks or tables most of the time.	1	2	3	4	5
Workbooks and/or ditto sheets are _____ in the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
It is _____ for the teacher to talk to the whole group and for the children to do the same things at the same time.	1	2	3	4	5
It is _____ for the teacher to move among groups and individuals, offering suggestions, asking questions, and facilitating children's involvement with materials, activities, and peers.	1	2	3	4	5
It is _____ for teachers to allocate extended periods of time for children to engage in play and projects.	1	2	3	4	5
It is _____ for children to color within pre-drawn forms.	1	2	3	4	5
It is _____ to read stories daily to children, individually and/or on a group basis.	1	2	3	4	5
It is _____ to provide many daily opportunities for developing social skills (i.e., cooperating, helping, talking) with peers in the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
It is _____ that teachers maintain a quiet environment.	1	2	3	4	5

Section 6 - Perception of Professional Role

24. What are your responsibilities in your current position? Circle the number that most closely represents your role.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral (Do not agree or disagree)	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree

It is my job to support teachers in the implementation of the curriculum by reviewing the learning goals they have developed and providing constructive feedback.	1	2	3	4	5
It is my job to manage the financial aspects of the program (i.e. follow the program budget, process payroll, collect tuition).	1	2	3	4	5
It is my job to support teachers in the implementation of the curriculum by reviewing the lesson plans they have developed and providing constructive feedback.	1	2	3	4	5
It is my job to hire, manage, and supervise staff.	1	2	3	4	5
It is my job to ensure the facility (space, furnishings, and materials) are safe, in good repair and meet programmatic requirements.	1	2	3	4	5
It is my job to support teachers in the implementation of the curriculum by modeling recommended teaching strategies (curriculum-based and/or CLASS-aligned high-quality teacher-child interactions).	1	2	3	4	5
It is my job to support teachers in the implementation of the curriculum by providing the recommended materials associated with executing the curriculum.	1	2	3	4	5
It is my job to enroll children and develop and manage classroom rosters.	1	2	3	4	5
It is my job to plan, monitor, and organize purchasing (consumables, food, classroom supplies, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5
It is my job to ensure my teachers attend professional development to improve their classroom practices.	1	2	3	4	5

It is my job to monitor and facilitate communication with parents (i.e. write and distribute newsletters, post pertinent information and required notifications, monitor parent concerns).	1	2	3	4	5
It is my job to develop a shared vision with teachers and staff to guide quality improvements within the program.	1	2	3	4	5
My job is to nurture, assist, and support the staff.	1	2	3	4	5
My job is to use my knowledge, expertise, and experience when working with the staff and in ensuring program quality.	1	2	3	4	5