

EXPLORING AN HISTORIC TRANSITION IN
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN ONTARIO

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Graduate Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto

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Abstract

This predominantly qualitative study looks at the current changes in early childhood education in Ontario, Canada from an early childhood education leadership perspective. The analysis and recommendations resulting from my dissertation adds to the growing body of work examining the rapidly changing landscape of the early years. My dissertation utilizes a constructivist lens to reconstruct perspectives surrounding matters of importance in a field that is on the cusp of obtaining true professional recognition.

With the advent of a self-regulating body (College of Early Childhood Educators) and a shift in management from the Ministry of Children and Youth Services to the Ministry of Education, the study highlights some of the changes occurring in the early years sector, both institutionally and professionally. The ensuing data was collected through 35 interviews of early years champions and 167 surveys from various early years teacher-educators and practitioners, revealing strong topics of discussion that add to the cacophony of voices heralding demands that the early childhood educator be perceived and treated as an equal participant in the education system.

Of the 8 themes that emerged from the data analyzed, 3 were the focus of this study. The first theme focused on leadership, including characteristics of leaders and themes of emerging leadership; the second on professionalization of the early years sector (Feeney, 2012): for

example, consistency in terminology, pay equity, universality, and issues regarding the current infrastructure; and the third theme investigated was intellectualization as part of the professional process: for instance, current curriculum focus, higher-learning demands, ongoing learning, the value of lab schools, faculty responsibilities, and specialization as a means of differentiated staffing (Zigler, Gilliam, & Barnett, 2011). This study also includes miniature profiles of the early years leaders interviewed, and a synopsis of their personal journeys to leadership.

In the concluding chapter, the recommendations presented suggest various ways that current and emerging early years leaders can make positive impact within this transforming sector. Empowerment of self, recognition of professional status, and a view to the long-term visioning of education provides the impetus for change.

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the value of meditation and mindful practice. Thank you to my external examiner, Pam Whitty, for your highly respected perspective.

Dedication

To Kian: my present, my future. It is for *your* grandchildren that I seek change.



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Chapter One

Introduction

We are our own living legacy. Our hearts, our souls, our very being tells the story of how we came to this moment and what we wish to pass along.

(Winick, Journal entry 2008)

The landscape of the early years of childhood is undergoing a historic shift in Ontario and elsewhere. As a registered early childhood educator, I wanted to capture these changes through the eyes of the leaders of this transition. This period of transition is also a time of crisis for the early years sector, particularly in areas of funding and capacity, and in light of efforts to stabilize full-day kindergarten. As we go through this time of transition, we also need to look at our ongoing learning concepts and reflect and reconstruct our ways of supporting professionalism and professionals within the early childhood education sector.

Personal Background, Professional Background:

A Melding of Two Halves Into a Whole

I have a lifelong fascination with *authoritative voice*: while I was a compliant child, when my siblings and friends would play school, I would sit at the back of our imaginary classroom, facing the wall, becoming a defiant student, consciously avoiding my turn at the front of the classroom. I had a strong desire to avoid an educator role, and this aversion continued well into adulthood, despite the fact that I was given repeated opportunities to teach. It was after I had children of my own that I stopped fighting becoming an educator, although during my Master's of Education thesis (Winick 2005) I coined a phrase –“the path of most resistance” – to describe my contradictory journey to becoming an educator. It was there that I came to the realization that I was an authoritative voice, a strong leader within the

field of early learning, and that it was a positive place to find myself. It was also the first time I allowed myself to not only view myself as an actual educator, but as an educator of high calibre.

Research Questions

Ideas of educational leadership, champions, and voice as authority each draw me closer toward my passion to understand the mechanisms behind transformational change. The theory of educational leadership has been, and continues to be, explored both theoretically and practically.

However, the concept of *living legacy* (Winick, Journal entry, 1993), the concept of the unconscious and conscious awareness of gifting nontangibles to future generations and the passing of these gifts in a leadership role, is one that needs to be returned to on a regular basis in order to understand this passing down or along process from the personal perspective of those who enact change within large groups or organizations.

Therefore, it is because of my interest in the persona of an ECE leader that I asked what the current educational leaders of Ontario see as necessary in the shift in management and supervision for the early years sector. This then led to some queries into what might spur an educator to develop and implement transformation in curriculum focus. How would an individual ensure that the various stakeholders would have equal voice in education policy creation? Who would be willing to take up these challenges and how might they present themselves as leaders in their field of choice? Reflection of this historic transition has ultimately led me to the proposed research questions:

1. Who are the champions of Early Childhood Education in Ontario during this transformational period?
2. Why are these individuals considered leaders within the educational community?
3. What do they identify as being the most significant development of the new face of ECE in Ontario, specifically in relation to preservice and inservice training programs?

Thus, this study has created a miniprofile and historical landscape of current early years leadership in Ontario, focusing on why these particular people were chosen to participate, the future as they see it, and concluding with recommendations for preservice and inservice early years-related programs.

The Melding of Two Halves Into a Whole Continues

I have had a lifelong search for positive educational experiences, despite the fact—or perhaps because of the fact—that my own educational experiences as a child were largely negative. When I was a very young child and I envisioned a typical teacher, I would see a disembodied voice booming “wah, wah, wah, wah, wah.” My memories of my own childhood teachers encompass the abuser, the flamboyant, the caring, and everything in between. My kindergarten teacher, for instance, told my parents that I would never amount to anything because I could only draw stick figures.

At the same time, I was raised to be quiet, subservient, and meek, despite the fact that my own matriarchal role models didn’t exemplify this model of docile female attitude (hooks, 2000). Gratefully, as an adult I went against these early investments instead of

succumbing to them, and consciously raised my own daughter and son to be strong and full-of-voice individuals. I consciously fashioned the adult-me to model myself after what I saw rather than what I was taught. Therefore, from one who was marginalized and without voice, I have become one full of voice (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1997; Gilligan, 1993).

Quite soon after graduating with my ECE diploma, where I immediately knew I was home in educational focus, I was invited to become a sessional ECE faculty member. I knew even then that I needed to not only be a mentor but a role model of what I felt I wanted to see in high quality ECEs.

Unfortunately, this led to another influence on my inquiry into authoritative voice as I observed monotonous teaching from some colleagues at the college level and those who facilitated community workshops and consultation. Poor teaching skills can seem as if the teacher is using a can opener to pry ajar the top of a student's head, pouring rote information into the brain, then closing it up, and pressing the start button. Such a teacher is characterized by a lack of innovative thinking, and someone who uses the same handouts for over 20 years, excludes new research, and hopes that the semester will just end as quickly as possible, and without any major issues to deal with.

My own pedagogical perspective and pedagogical leadership stance has been influenced by my ability to reflect and grow based on the teachings and ideas from great thinkers. These great thinkers were both formal and informal teachers. For example, I can clearly pinpoint the time periods when my teaching abilities were impacted by the works of Parker Palmer and Martin Buber, and by reconstructivist thinking. But I also know with

certainty that my parents, friends and other relatives, as well as my own colleagues and students have affected my pedagogical approach just as much as my formal influences.

During 23 years as an official ECE, I have observed many pedagogical changes in Ontario's early child education field. When I first began my career as an ECE, I was taught to use themes, circle time and time-outs. However, just a few short years later, I was teaching my own students to use a much more child-centred approach, and my role as educator took on a facilitation role in the learning process. More recently the changes have taken an even more holistic path and there is a recognition and acknowledgement of the importance of supporting the whole family rather than just the child as a separate entity. Some of the programs offered to the communities reflect these views: Ontario Early Years, Best Start, Toronto First Duty and many high quality childcare centres.

While it is mandatory that each adult working in direct contact with children in a childcare setting must be a registered member of the Ontario College of Early Childhood Educators (OCECE), registration is not limited to only that group within the sector. Many high quality early years multiservice, multisector agencies have mandated that all staff who hold a diploma in early childhood education must be a member of the College; some agencies have even gone to the point of only hiring Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs). Those who were employed by these agencies prior to this period without the related diploma have, for the most part, been grandfathered in. As well, many others in the sector who are not in direct contact with children have chosen to become registered early childhood educators of Ontario, all for a variety of reasons. As a non-practicing early childhood educator, it was not mandatory that I register with the College, but I felt it was the appropriate thing to do as a leader. I am exceptionally proud to be an early childhood educator and of the work that is

being done in my sector of choice. This work is being done not only by the leaders, advocates, and policy makers, but also by those who work directly with children on a daily basis and who face the multitude of changes currently happening. Equally, I have the highest regard for teachers, educators and voices of authority, and the utmost respect for those in these positions. This does not ignore the fact that individuals in these positions have disappointed me often and that I had an innate awareness that this disappointment was not right nor should it inform my own professional world.

When I first began my Ph.D. journey, it was with the mindset of focusing on literacy, specifically how fathers at risk support their young children's literacy development. However, with the expert guidance of my Ph.D. supervisor, I quickly came to realize that while I was an expert in many areas of early childhood development, it was time for me to look at the policy aspect and take up the charge of being involved in the necessary changes in my chosen sector. This actualization of professionalization is not something that I foresee coming to full fruition in my lifetime, and perhaps not even in my students' lifetime, but with baby steps, focusing on the fact that the ultimate goals of equality and equity will be felt within the Ontario early years sector, the future of early childhood education will be spectacular.

Looking back I see that with each passing piece of my journey I have gained so much more than degrees, diplomas, certificates, and letters after my name. I have become a strong educator myself and a leader within this field. Therefore, it is with a full understanding that my educational journey was not always a positive one that I want my future students and the students of my fellow teacher-educators to experience education as the most positive and meaningful process we can make it to be for them.

Rationale and Background

We are at a historical moment when it has become urgent to raise the question: What are the possibilities for institutions for children and young people? (Dahlberg & Moss 2005, p. 2)

Early Childhood Education worldwide is still quite young as a formal option, with approximately 120 years of directly related early childhood education history behind it. During the mid-1990s, recommendations were presented to Ontario's provincial government by a number of early years leaders and leadership groups on the necessity for a self-regulating body of early childhood educators. Consequently, the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007* passed legislation in the Government of Ontario. In order to facilitate the professionalization of the early childhood educators and to make possible the partnership of early childhood educator and kindergarten teacher in the formal school kindergarten setting, the Ontario College of Early Childhood Educators (CECE) was granted status in 2009. The impacts from this mandate affect professional status, self-regulation, and set requirements and measures to ensure quality practice. On May 18, 2010, the *Full Day Early Learning Statute Law Amendment Act, 2010 (Bill 242)* (Legislative Assembly of Ontario, 2010) received Royal Assent in the province of Ontario, and was enforced as of June 3, 2010. This Act directs the Ministry of Education to ensure that full-day early learning kindergarten (FDK) is available for all children in Ontario, ages 3.8–5.4. As well, the Act states clearly that the implementation will occur in phases from 2010 to 2014. This Act also states that kindergarten classrooms employ the use of Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECE) as true partners in the program. For example, throughout the Act where the word teacher is mentioned (in relation to such items as duties or hiring needs), early childhood educator has been added (e.g., teacher, early childhood educator; teacher or early childhood educator;

teacher and early childhood educator). Another example of the teacher and early childhood educator being perceived as equal in classroom status is in the clear wording around the teacher not being the ECE's mentor or supervisor (Sections 277.47(4) and 277.48(3)).

However, the current feeling among the early years sector is that RECEs are not perceived as true partners and are thus used as assistants.

This component of inclusion of RECEs in the school-based classroom is evolving but there are still many questions, learning curves and processes that need to occur in order for this to be a fully functioning component. In the same Act, the Ministry of Education was mandated to take over the management and supervision of early childhood education in Ontario (previously under the Ministry of Children and Youth, MCYS). This component was also enforced in steps beginning in September 2010 for a small percentage of FDK, and for all kindergarten programs to be full day by September 2014, with MCYS managing and reporting back to the Ministry of Education during the transitional periods. As of the date of this study, management has now been fully transferred to the Ministry of Education, with MCYS supporting the transfer of knowledge and direct supervision in a variety of ways. These current events have added significantly to an historic period in the early years of Ontario.

The ramifications of these two changes, however, are still being met with mixed reviews from all sides and interested parties. While the province undergoes recurring changes and continued metamorphosis resulting from these changes, leaders within the education community are primed to assist those who are working within the framework of the early years education system in understanding the various expectations and resulting impacts. Without access to all of the information and the understanding about how these changes will

affect their current and future prospects, early childhood staff are understandably concerned and experiencing stress about their own job stability and evolving roles. It is necessary for the educational leaders to assist in the process of understanding and embracing the current and immediate-future transformations in early education in Ontario. Not surprisingly, while the province begins its third year under these changes, leaders within the education community are already out in full force in their efforts to assist the in-program staff in understanding the positive impacts.

Childcare Crisis

At the same time, the ECE sector is in crisis as the Ministry of Education focuses on stabilizing full-day kindergarten. This leaves the 0–3.8 age group in a holding pattern. Unfortunately, this situation will not resolve itself, nor will the journey to resolution come without major fallout among the childcare centres, large and small. The Pascal Report (2007) makes many recommendations to address this fallout, but there has been strong pushback from the larger multiservice, multisector, multisite agencies. Their voices are strong and have created a ripple effect across the province. At the same time, the issue of for-profit childcare is not being fully addressed either. For high quality programs to survive, there needs to be a focus on stopping for-profit care in Ontario.

The issues that were in place when I began the dissertation process are still part of the current scene. For example, historically, the early childhood educator role has not been understood outside of the early years sector. Alongside this, the earning power of an ECE is significantly lower than their Ontario College of Teachers' (OCT) counterpart.

A third influential issue arises from the fact that early childhood education came from the welfare state. In the following quote from Kaga, Bennett, and Moss (2010), the authors

provide an historical perspective explaining ECE as a service for the underprivileged, while kindergarten was viewed as an enrichment opportunity:

In every country, early childhood care and education (ECCE) services embody two different options: care and education. The former was often developed as a welfare measure for working-class children who needed care while their parents were at work; the latter as kindergarten or pre-primary education, providing middle-class or all children with enriched educational activities prior to formal schooling. (p. 15)

Added to this mix is a fear of the early years being absorbed into the education sector, and the uniqueness of what we have to offer dissipating. And yet, despite any positive change that might be occurring within the sector, childcare is still in crisis. There are many sides to the issue of childcare, and its concerns. Two of the most significant ones are funding and capacity.

Funding refers to the “bum in the seat” versus the “bum on the cot” scenario. The government provides a fixed amount of education funding per child based on related costs (e.g., building maintenance, teacher salaries, support staff salaries, administrative costs, supplies). Costs per child in a school setting are the same for each child and each school, but there is a wide variation in costs for childcare centres.

The second component is capacity. Currently in Ontario we only have licensed childcare spots for 20% of our children who potentially need childcare (Government of Canada, 2011). Where are the other 80% of the children in this category? Is a parent not returning to work? Are their children on wait lists? Is the child with a grandparent or other relative, or with alternative unlicensed providers?

All children in Canada have the right to an education. As an example, a 7-year-old knows they can, and will, go into Grade 2 in September. Why doesn't a 2-year-old have that same right to accessing quality care and education?

At the same time, the impact on household income can be quite significant. Consider the scenario of a parent returning to work after maternity or parental leave. They may start with a gross yearly salary of \$40,000. Quality fulltime infant childcare in Ontario can cost between \$1,400 and \$1,600 per month. When that parent subtracts transportation-associated costs and other work-related expenses, that \$40,000 gross might net \$5,000.

International Influence

Internationally, the research shows a strong emphasis on the need to ensure high quality programs that include appropriately trained professionals (Bennett, 2004). With an inclusion of a strong background in quality educational philosophy and theory, this call for highly skilled early years educators equates to the desire for the highest quality programming for children 0–12 years of age (Bennett, 2004; Moss, 2004). Without a strong base for education and training, including integrated ongoing professional development, Canada will not be able to compete in the international market of childcare on an equal basis, as high quality child care and education facilitated by intellectually trained and educated professionals has been proven to have a long term impact on the economics of society.

There are already comparisons between the Canadian model of education for ECE professionals and various European models (Penn, 2010). The Canadian model focuses on early childhood educators obtaining a diploma, and therefore being seen as separate entities from practicing B.Ed. degree-holding teachers. Various countries (e.g. France and Australia) have amalgamated the training and education of early childhood educators into B.Ed.

programs, making all education-related positions obtainable through the B.Ed. process. In these programs, a qualifying student enters the B.Ed. program where they choose a specialty: infant/toddler, preschool, kindergarten, primary, junior, or intermediate. Thus all educators are on equal ground in perception and in execution. Equally, the specialization-style streaming allows for the specific grounding in the age-related theories that are typical for each age grouping. At the same time, there are a multitude of research articles and texts focusing on the need for strong leadership and the intellectualization of early childhood educators (Bennett, 2004, 2007; Biddle, 2012; Espinosa, 2010; Feeney, 2012; Goffin & Washington, 2008; Hnatiuk & Gebretensae, 2005; Jensen & Hannibal, 2000; Jones, 2007; Kaga, 2007; Kagan & Hallmark, 2001; Moss, 2004; Penn, 2010; Rigby & Neuman, 2005; Zigler et al., 2011). Both of these points speak of the need to mentor and nurture future leaders, and to see ourselves as equals to other forms of educators.

Provincial and Federal Views on Early Childhood Education Training

Currently in Ontario, a prospective student may obtain his or her early childhood education status through 24 colleges, each of which offers a myriad of options such as full-time, part-time, fast-track, combined with a B.A., or apprenticeship. There are also a number of Bachelor of Education programs that specifically target the early years (Brock University and Nipissing University are two examples); as well as Master's and Ph.D. programs that allow the student to focus on the early years age groups (OISE/UT being one of the academic institutions with these options).

In Canada, as in most industrialized countries, education “birth to death” is fragmented and not universally accessible. Canada lacks a centralized system of education and care. In fact, Canada ranks quite low internationally when it comes to supporting the

early years. Canada recently tied for second last worldwide on early years-related issues, with Sweden in first place (Friendly, 2011). In Canada's educational system, education systems are under the control of each province. This means there is not only a separation of design among the provinces, but also separation of financial support and a disjointed voice, leading to a lack of ability to make major impact through national change. Each province must then create its own path to educational success without the direct insight or support of experiences from other provinces. While education ministers and leaders might each engage in conversations with their counterparts in other provinces and find similarity in intentions as a result of these conversations, the resulting framework for each province reflects only a small amount of likeness. Despite this fragmentation, each province has taken up the challenge of full-day kindergarten, often in partnerships with early childhood educators. Ontario was the only province to initially include and support the extended day as part of the full-day kindergarten program. This additional piece of the extended day in Ontario, however, is appearing to be more of a wraparound piece rather than a truly seamless day.

The visionary insights of educational leaders have had significant influence on the new direction in Ontario's educational perspective. These leaders include but are not limited to: Fraser Mustard, Margaret McCain, Charles Pascal, Stuart Shanker, Kerry McQuaig, Martha Friendly, Donna Lero, Linda Cameron, and Jane Bertrand. Each of these leaders has been a driving force behind a number of research-based documents that are influencing current changes in how education is viewed in Ontario. Many previous documents are available from as far back as 1944, which shows dedication to the integration of early years needs and Ministry of Education objectives.

Ontario Early Childhood Education Options

When focusing specifically on the preservice training and education for early childhood educators prior to 2010, community college diploma programs were primarily the norm. In addition, there were a minimal number of postsecondary undergraduate and graduate programs that were dedicated to ECE but which did not generate a college diploma. Actually, the mere fact that these diploma-based programs were labeled training programs instead of education programs denotes the undervaluing of early years practitioners. Overall, the vast majority of programs offered were diploma-based, and most were found in the college system. At the same time, while there were some university-level programs offered, there was little movement or bridging between the college diploma and the interest in continuing into the university system. For example, some of the options include:

- OISE/UT offered, and continues to offer, a Master's in Child Study and Education;
- Nipissing University has a Bachelor of Arts in Child and Family Studies;
- Ryerson University has a Bachelor of Arts, Early Childhood Education and a Master of Arts, Early Childhood Studies;
- York University provides a Bachelor of Arts in Children's Studies;
- University of Guelph provides both a degree in Child, Youth and Family and in Family and Child Studies;
- Charles Sturt University (Ontario Campus) offers a Bachelor of Early Childhood Studies, A Bachelor of Education (birth to 5 years), and a Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood and Primary); and,

- Seneca College of Applied Arts and Technology has a Bachelor of Applied Arts, Child Development.

However, by September 2010 there was already the addition of:

- A Ph.D. in Early Childhood Education at OISE/UT;
- George Brown College's consecutive program in collaboration with Ryerson University (4-year program, with 2 years in the college degree program, then direct access to the third year of the degree program), as well as a fulltime Bachelor of Applied Arts, Early Childhood Leadership Program; and,
- Nipissing University's concurrent education program for early childhood education graduates now culminating in a Bachelor of Arts-Child and Family Studies, with a Bachelor of Education Primary/Junior.

These represent just a few of the newest offerings for a degree-level program focusing on the early years. This rapid appearance of postsecondary early childhood programs, especially at the graduate level, is an indication of a current need and focus on the importance of supporting the early years to the fullest potential. Currently, the choices for early years related diploma and degree options have begun to burst open (Winick, 2012) and the indication is that more options and bridges between programs are being developed to meet the needs of society.

Early Years as a Core Component of Education

What came to mind when I first began to develop this study is how these early learning-focused programs will need to adapt due to the inclusion of the early years in the Ministry of Education's mandate. What will happen to those trained and educated prior to any training changes? Will Ontario follow the European model of all education preservice

training coming under the same degree-mandated expectation, with all of its current benefits available for *all* educators? What will these preservice and inservice training and education programs look like to ensure that the original (e.g., early years, primary, secondary) focus of each separate program are respected and not diminished through amalgamation?

We are truly at an historic crossroads in early childhood education. It is important to reflect on what is happening as it is happening in order to move forward in a positive fashion. This reflection will impact not only the programs that service very young children and the curriculum that is implemented, but will also have a ripple effect out and into the preservice and inservice training and education programs for the educators of young children.

I believe that early childhood education is exactly that, early education, not *pre*-education. ECE is not a precursor to learning or a primer for starting the education process. I also believe that education should be perceived as a continuum, not a leveling or static system. And at the same time education goes hand in hand with care. As an early childhood educator I see and acknowledge the theoretical necessity of nurturing as a core component of education.

We also need education to care for and nurture ourselves as educators, and then to care for and educate people around us in the formal education system (from birth through adulthood) and eventually to life-concluding education and care. Figure 1 illustrates my understanding of how this works, with each person and family having unique and ever-changing needs.

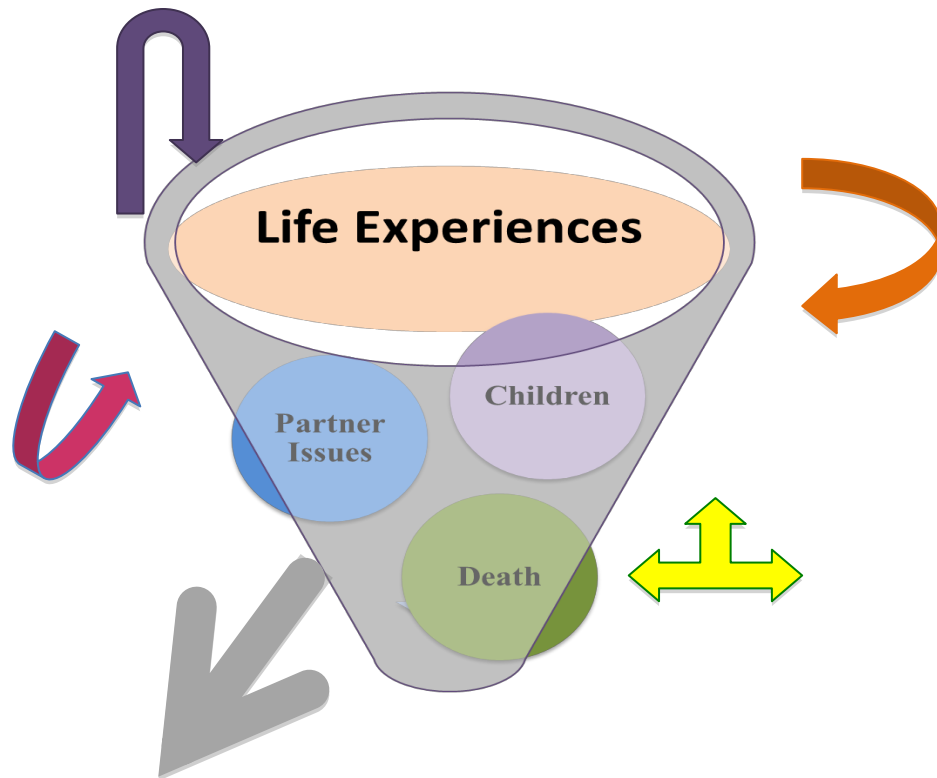


Figure 1. Life experiences model.

In this model, we recognize that equality does not occur in early years issues when it comes to access, funding or costs. It is as if equality does not have the same meaning as equal. It is important to understand that without sufficient funding, fair wages, and rights for RECEs and those who need a specific support (e.g., speech and language therapy for a child with special needs) there will not be the means or the options to access what they need in relation to what others might need. Equality not being the same as equal is about knowing what one person needs to access to what they need, not necessarily what another individual/family might need. It is almost about having equality of having needs met, not having what another has equally. For example, what one family might need for their child with special needs will be different than another family with a child needs, even if the child

has a similar special need. Both families need equal access to the supports necessary for successful family functionality. Access to affordable high quality childcare is another prime example of equality not meaning equal. To assume a blanket need for each family with their unique dynamics is an insult to the individuality of human development as a totality. Each family has distinctive needs and demands on their daily lives. By offering affordable childcare options that can be adapted to form individual family plans of support, including connecting the family to the community supports that they specifically need, we provide the higher level of structure to a thriving society (Friendly, 2011).

Hidden Dangers Within

It is also important to note that this is a very exciting time for the field of early childhood education in Ontario, with such a strong interest and focus on the changes occurring in the profession and its impact on lifelong needs. There are conferences, symposia, workshops, and a plethora of research projects examining what is happening from a wide variety of angles and perspectives. However, this high level of interest is also fraught with hidden dangers.

One such example is the fact that many documents have been published by or about early childhood educators with the designation ECE added to their name. Under the revised education act, anyone working directly with children between the ages of 0–12 in Ontario who holds an early childhood education diploma must be registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators and be designated as RECEs. Those who are not registered and who use the ECE designation can face financial penalties. But do the educators know that their names are being included in the documents in this way? Do they realize they are being marginalized by this simple act and could be penalized by the actions of others? Could

school boards, schools or even research teams be held responsible? When others write about an RECE and name that individual, but only put ECE as their official designation it might be considered an infringement of title usage. So would these RECEs be put at financial and professional risk? Would the authors? Do the RECE professionals even realize that they have a voice on this point? It is important to realize that early childhood educators traditionally do not assert themselves, do not like to make waves. This is not a generalization made lightly, but an observation borne out of more than 35 years of experience. Add to that a system that is often fraught with the lack of and/or weak leadership training in our education training programs. The result is a sector fragmented between those with insight on the current and upcoming apex and those on the edge of professionalism but not necessarily having the ingenuity to make that leap.

Susan Morris, RECE, ECEDH, says, “Somebody needs to be sort of explaining all of this because some of this stuff coming down based on the political climate – we’re twisting in the wind.”

Theoretical Framework

As a researcher, I wonder how current early childhood education training programs will be affected by the inclusion of the early years in the Ministry of Education’s mandate. Related discussions occurring universally include the importance of developing educational leadership as a core component of teacher-development (Bennett, 2004, 2007; Goffin & Washington, 2008; Hnatiuk & Gebretensae, 2005; Jones, 2007; Kagan & Hallmark, 2001; McCain & Mustard, 1999; McCain, Mustard, & Shanker, 2007; Meitlicki, 2010; Moss, 2004; Neugebauer & Neugebauer, 1998; Rigby & Newman, 2005). The current ECE leadership in

Ontario is viewed as a core component of the acceptance and implementation of the adjustments needed in light of recent government changes and includes the acknowledgement that there is a large amount of expertise in the educational community that needs to be respected and tapped into in order to assist the transition for direct contact staff.

I started out thinking that I would talk with early years leaders to get a small glimpse into personal influences on their leadership development. I thought we would discuss how preservice and inservice programs need to adapt to the morphing landscape of the early years in Ontario.

At the same time, I hoped that the survey data would support any themes that might emerge from the interviews. Instead, as was evident from the amount of data collected, the focus grew exponentially from this source, too.

Institutional Leadership

Change and evolution of curriculum does not occur by chance but instead by conscious choices made by those who lead within an institution (Fullan, 2007). Leaders are able to influence those around them through various skill sets (Fullan, 2001; Gardner, 1995; Sergiovanni, 2000) and it is with an interest in the persona of an ECE leader and “educational connoisseur” (Eisner, 1997, 1998, 2002) that I asked my interview participants, the current educational leaders of Ontario, what they saw as necessary in the shift in management and supervision (see related discussions in Chapters Four to Eight).

I have looked at the criteria of leadership in a three-fold manner: first, theories of understanding educational leadership (Fullan, 200, 2007; Gardner, 1995; Noddings, 2003; Palmer, 1983; Sergiovanni, 2000); second, characteristics of educational leaders from a

teacher development perspective (Ball, 2000; Cameron, 1998; Campbell, 2003; Danielewicz, 2001; Dewey, 1990; Fullan, 2001; Gardner, 2008; hooks, 2000; Kessler, 2000; Kosnik & Beck, 2009; Miller, 2006; Noddings, 2003; Palmer, 1983; Sergiovanni, 2000); and third, specific criteria representative of potential interview participants. As well, I undertook an historical perspective of early childhood education training during the preparation for my research, both pedagogically and in terms of specific documents that influenced changes within Ontario's educational field. These sets of criteria are explored in Chapter Five.

The Role of Education and Professional Status

Traditionally, one of education's purposes is to create citizens who will fill necessary roles in the community that they will ultimately work within. This concept of "official knowledge" (Wotherspoon, 1998), including both the transmission and flow of information between student and knowledge sources, can also be driven by an industrial need. An example of an industrial push can currently be seen through the inclusion of early learning in full-day kindergarten and the oversight of training and supervision being blended into the Ministry of Education's mandate. As well, in education, official knowledge can also come through practices such as professional development, mentoring, and supervision and from both traditional and nontraditional sources (Wotherspoon, 1998). However, Wotherspoon (1998) also states that "A strong correlation that exists between social privilege and success in education and life beyond school" (83) and then goes on to state that a university degree holds much more status than a college diploma, and has a more scholarly focus than a college program.

Therefore, with a shift from a diploma-dependent field with minimal expectation of ongoing professional development to a mandate of a degree and ongoing professional

development, early childhood educators could ultimately gain in more ways than just receiving a different piece of paper upon graduation from a degree program. This point reflects a concern for those early childhood educators who will not benefit from a new regime of education requirements. It is not realistic to expect graduates to return to continue their schooling, unless by choice. However, if positions available 10 years from now require applicants to have a university degree, for instance, how will that impact current 2012 college graduates? Similarly, while current hiring practices in postsecondary institutions require a graduate degree for new hires, not all nongraduate degree faculty members will be retiring in the next 10 years. What will happen to diploma-program teacher-educators who do not have a graduate degree if all early learning preservice training shifts to a degree program? These kinds of questions are being presented among current and recent graduates and faculties of diploma early learning programs, and need to be respected and addressed fully in the coming changes and transformations.

The concept of teaching as having professional status from an industrial perspective (Wotherspoon, 1998) is also often a heated debate. While educators may consider themselves professional, the lack of an awareness of the need for self-governance is a driving force in professional status. There is a similar concern in the ECE sector; only this group of educators has the daunting task of also battling against a perception that their job is that of “babysitters”. While adding the voice of the ECE to the formal voice of teachers in a school setting might not add a lot of noise, it might be more significant now that the clamour for professional status covers educators of children in all age ranges.

Leadership, Teacher-Educators, and Program Curriculum

Many educational theorists support the concept of nurturing and supporting leaders within a specific education field (Diero, 1996; Jensen & Hannibal, 2000; Katz & Katz, 2009; Kessler, 2000; Kosnik & Beck, 2009; Miller, 2006; Noddings, 2003; Osguthorpe, 2008; Paley, 2001; Palmer, 1983; Rubin, 1991; Sergiovanni, 2000; Van Manen, 1986, 1991). For example, Lilian Katz is a North American ECE educator who is dedicated to the enhancement of early care and education. Katz's work *Intellectual Emergencies* (Katz & Katz, 2009) offers professional and personal epiphanies from the teaching world. The ensuing 12 principles of effective teaching and 21 epiphanies from Katz's teacher-educator experience create a picture of what Katz might consider the foundation of an ECE leader:

#12: We cannot have optimal environments for children in preschools, child care centers, and schools unless the environments are also optimal for the adults who work in them.

#13: Cultivate your own intellect and nourish the life of your own mind.

#16: Always assume that the people you work with have the capacities for greatness, creativity, courage and insight.

#17: Never underestimate the power of ideas! (Katz & Katz, 2009, pp. 46–47)

As an early childhood education professor, I have observed changes over the last two decades in the theoretical underpinnings for curriculum implementation by direct contact staff in early childhood education. At one time, faculty members in preservice ECE programs focused their teaching on the theories of Piaget, Erickson, Kohlberg, and Maslow (Blaxall, Kilbride, McKenna, Warberg, & Yeates, 1996; Marion, 1995; Sroufe, Cooper, & DeHart, 1992). Early childhood education curriculum was mostly teacher-directed and teacher-choice until the 1980s with the introduction of such curriculum perspectives as High-Scope (Morrison, 2009) which was centre-based and child-directed in the choices of materials and

equipment offered within each educational centre. In the early 2000s, curriculum shifted even further toward the understanding of early brain development and its impact on the future capabilities of society's youngest members (McCain & Mustard, 1999; McCain et al., 2007). Currently, it appears that the majority of preservice programs utilize the theories of Dewey, Vygotsky, Gardner, social constructivism, Katz, and Holistic education (Blaxall et al., 1996; Miller, 2006; Shipley, 1998). This new set of curriculum perspectives is much more emergent in flavour, with many programs encouraging the implementation of the Reggio philosophy of curriculum (Bennett, 2004; Carter & Curtis, 1994; Fraser, 2000).

The work of Gardner has had a profound impact on the ECE community with germane work on multiple intelligences, emotional intelligence, and educational leadership (Gardner, 2006, 2008; Gardner & Laskin, 1995; Goleman, 1995). These particular concepts have taken a forefront position in preservice programs around child development and curriculum development (Carter & Curtis, 1994; Fraser, 2000; Hill, Stremmel, & Fu, 2005; Shipley, 2002). Along with Gardner's work, Vygotsky's contribution of the concepts of scaffolding and zone of proximal development is now introduced as seminal work in preservice programs (Fraser, 2000; Hill et al., 2005; Shipley, 2002). Vygotsky's sociocultural theory is built on Piaget and Dewey's foundational development theories of constructivism (Morrison, 2009). Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) (Morrison, 2009) encourages early childhood educators to develop curriculum based on the children's developmental needs rather than the teacher's choices of focus. However, even this concept (DAP) is being considered to be an outdated view, and instead educators are looking at child-initiated and teacher-facilitated programming as the favoured pedagogical framework. As well, there is an integration of an understanding of the intrinsic details of neuroscience in

order to best support our youngest learners (McCain et al., 2007). In understanding new theories and how these pieces fit into and among existing frameworks, development leaders within the ECE field are able to continue to enhance and push their counterparts into the higher level thinking of research and development. As preservice and inservice educators teach with a theoretical perspective, so will their early childhood education students think with a theoretical perspective, which will ultimately enhance the curriculum implemented in early childhood programs (Carter & Curtis, 1994; Espinosa, 2010; Hill et al., 2005; Jensen & Hannibal, 2000). It is imperative that leaders be aware of existing theoretical practices, and continue to stay attuned to changes in the current practice that informs their professional knowledge.

Introducing Reconstructivism

My theoretical framework is also highly inspired by a Reconstructionist perspective and philosophical approach (Janks, 2005) in that I believe that in order to find the path to full professionalism the ECE sector must reinvent parts and shift others. Change is difficult, and at times very painful, but those who are unwilling to reconstruct their professional ideas, perspectives, and perhaps even some of their underlying ideals, may find themselves sinking in a sea of adaptation. This theoretical concept is defined further in Chapter Three.

Feminist Theory Impacts

I am greatly influenced by feminist theory. I *am* a feminist, and believe that the female psyche is grounded in a unique perspective (Estés, 1995). I see the world through my feminist eyes, and look for equality in every nook and cranny. I speak from a feminist perspective and stand up for inequality. Through the various archetypes that permeate

feminist theory (Belenky et al., 1997; Estés, 1995; Gilligen, 1993; hooks, 2000) I have grown in my abilities to use voice as a strength, and to view the world from a perspective of transformation instead of crisis. I see my abilities as capabilities and no longer depend on others to defend my rights. Instead, I take up the challenge of the concept of rights as a right, not a privilege, and I am able to construct knowledge out of the various constructs around me.

Methodology as Part of Theoretical Framework

As I developed the proposal for this study, I quickly saw that I was working with a grounded theory analysis framework. This study will be able to provide a framework for other research studies to begin from. As well, the suggestions that come from my work are providing both short-term and long-term recommendations for change within the training and education programs for ECEs and kindergarten teachers. While presenting the results and analysis of my data collection at conferences and as a guest lecturer, many of the educators present expressed interest in what was being recommended based on the analysis. As well, upon subsequent meetings, these individuals have shared how each of their own institutions had already begun implementing change.

Early Childhood Education as a Unique Sector

Education should truly be birth to death, not just kindergarten to Grade 12 and then postsecondary. Education needs to include prenatal, parenting, children of 0–3.8 years of age, gerontology, and special needs too. It is an inclusive package. ECEs have embraced this perspective for its practicality and are proactive in supporting education throughout the spectrum of ages. For example, the Ontario Early Years Centres and The Best Start Centres

(as only two examples of many) offer prenatal classes, parenting classes, and programs for parents. Another example is how the York Region Family Literacy Collaborative (a subcommittee of the York Region Child & Family Collaborative) is working on supporting inclusivity of the parents' childhood experiences as an extension of supporting the immigrant child's journey into the Canadian school system.

Current Documents of Influence

Briefly, a number of documents additionally define my theoretical framework: the three Early Years Studies (1999, 2007, 2011), the CECE Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice (2011), the Pascal Report (2007) and its predecessors, the ELECT document (2007), and the revised Day Nurseries Act (DNA) (Ministry of the Attorney General, 1984). Each of these documents is significant on its own, but when looked at as a group, they provide the context of how the early years in Ontario is both influenced and governed. These documents are explored further in Chapter Two.

Role of the College of Early Childhood Educators

For the purpose of my dissertation, it is important to state clearly that the CECE is for public protection and for ensuring that the RECE professionals meet the standards for providing high quality service for the children and families that attend their programs. On the other side of the proverbial coin, professional associations speak for and provide professional support and advocacy for the individual early childhood educators (those registered in CECE, and those who work outside of that scope) within the sector. There are a few organizations that provide this kind of professional support, each coming from a different perspective and voice. For example, the Association for Early Childhood Educators of Ontario (AECEO),

L'AFESEIO, the Atkinson Centre for Society and Child Development, Childcare Resource and Research Unit (CRRU), Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care (OCBCC), Family Support Institute Ontario (FSIO), People for Education, The Best Start Resource Canada, and Child Care Human Resources Sector Council (CCHRSC) all provide various education- and research-based support for different components of the early years sector. However, it is the Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario (AECEO) and the L'AFESEIO that are the only professional associations in Ontario that speak specifically for the individuals in the early years sector.

The Use of Storying in, and Impetus to, Leadership

Discussions about educational leadership and what that perspective encompasses are intense and vital to the momentum of change (Fullan, 2001, 2007; Gardner, 1995; Noddings, 2003; Palmer, 1983; Sergiovanni, 2000). Gardner (1995) talks about “storying” as the impetus behind leadership and that it is a story that an audience will connect with, and therefore since it is the story that must resound with their intended audience, true leaders use storytelling as the core of their craft. The use of story is one that intrigues me, as a narrative inquirer and a storyteller. It is through the practice of storying that audience members (e.g., listeners, viewers, readers, learners) can connect with leaders on a personal level. Therefore, with this view of storying as a core component of leadership practice, it was important for this study to gather the stories that the interview participants chose as the ones they felt most significant to share.

Fullan (2001) feels that leadership is about tackling what might have been at one time the unimaginable and yet necessary for the intended audience. Fullan (2007) and Sergiovanni (2000) have looked into the causes and implication of educational change but also the

ramifications of not fully understanding the needs of that change. Both of these theorists see leadership of change as a core component of further transformation and vision. The how and why of these changes is a key element to my research questions in developing the participants' specific perspective of possible impacts of current early years issues, including presenting core recommendations for an integrated training and education program that must cover early learning to secondary specialties.

Introduction to Leadership Criteria

Interestingly, a pattern of particular criteria for those in a position of educational leadership arose out of various readings. Criteria included wholeheartedness (Cameron, 1998; Kosnik & Beck, 2009; Palmer, 1983); caring and mindfulness (Kessler, 2000; Miller, 2006; Noddings, 2003; Sergiovanni, 2000); innovation (Danielewicz, 2001; Gardner, 2008; Kosnik & Beck, 2009; Palmer, 1983); ethics (Campbell, 2003; Fullan, 2001; Gardner, 2008; Sergiovanni, 2000); community building (Kosnik & Beck, 2009; Palmer, 1983); advocacy (hooks, 2000); mentorship (Palmer, 1983); being someone who teaches as they live (Dewey, 1990; Kosnik & Beck, 2009; Palmer, 1983); being one who continues to learn and teach in multiple ways (Ball, 2000; Palmer, 1983); and, being someone who uses current research to inform practice (Dewey, 1990; Kosnik & Beck, 2009; Palmer, 1983). Each of these characteristics are utilized and embodied by educational leaders and are supposedly, according to the mentioned theorists, at the very core of their values and principles. It was interesting to see each of these characteristics emerged from my interview participants, as noted in Chapter Five.

Educational Initiatives

In Ontario over the last 10 years, a number of educational initiatives have focused on the field of early learning. For example, Ontario Early Years Centres (McCain & Mustard, 1999), Best Start (Bertrand, 2007), and the implementation of full-day kindergarten and the seamless day (Pascal, 2007) have been current agents of community change. Each of these initiatives has shown leadership in vision, execution, and implementation. Concurrent to these initiatives has been the passing of legislation for the registry of the College of Early Childhood Educators. This too has taken great vision, fortitude, and strong leadership power. However, the seeds of the current journey that the field of ECE finds itself in may have been sown with a report by LaPierre (1979), “To Herald a Child”, that looked at how best to support all children’s learning in Ontario.

Ultimately, this grouping of initiatives provides a small glimpse into a field full of strong leaders in Ontario. It is these particular individuals that I feel need to be highlighted as the proponents to the new directions in ECE in Ontario. It is these particular individuals that could inform the current practices within the preservice and inservice programs utilized at this time. It is these particular individuals that I wished to focus upon in order to understand what leaders see as priorities for the field of ECE, while creating portraits of the ECE leaders in Ontario, circa 2010. This is an historic point in the ECE timeline for Ontario and it is significant, for future reflection, to understand who the leaders were during this transformation and what their thoughts were on relevant changes needed in order to best support the overall field of educational preservice, inservice, professional development, and higher learning programming.

Implications and Scope

I set out for this study to focus on teacher-educators in preservice ECE and B.Ed. programs, however, it was the ECEs themselves, as the voice of a rising sector, who championed this study and rose out of the din. Therefore, this study is about early childhood education and early childhood educators. Early childhood education is not babysitting. It is not focused primarily on full-day kindergarten or childcare. It is not about before- and after-school programs, Best Start, OECY, multisector/multiservice agencies. All of these areas, agencies, and programs are components of early years issues, and while I will talk to these components at times, it is early childhood education as an overarching sector that this study was most interested in examining.

I also felt that this thesis had a specific audience in mind, those who I felt would be most interested in my data and analysis, and who might benefit from my findings. Each group related to the sector of early learning and care: college ECE teacher-educators; inservice ongoing learning practitioners; early years professional associations and organizations; College of Early Childhood Education; and, registered early childhood educators.

Professional Development

Professional Development (ongoing and continuous learning) for early learning educators as it stands today is mostly elective unless the home affiliation or organization states that ongoing professional development is mandatory. Then these professional development opportunities are sometimes, but not always, supported financially by the organization in some manner, whether fees involved are covered by the agency, time in lieu is provided, or a recognition certificate is offered; and even then, the expectation of

continued employment is put upon the employee. However, most of the professional development opportunities offered to early childhood educators are not outcome-based but more attendance-based (with attendees receiving a certificate of attendance). We are fortunate to have some early learning professional development centres across Ontario in smaller regions/cities (Kitchener, Halton, Guelph, as some examples) but there is not anything large scale or broadly accessible. In a very timely fashion, the AECEO recently began working on a professional development framework. They are looking to provide a template of high quality outcome-based professional development opportunities, in various access modes, and with recognition beyond the attendance certificate. As well, some unions have additional qualification (AQ) courses for their members, and this extends to the RECEs in the kindergarten classroom. However, we have to actualize the professionalization of our own sector. Consequently, the next question would then be: how will the CECE manage mandated professional development?

Ultimately...

This study originated from my own expertise and experiences in the field of ECE, which consequently influenced what I looked at, and how I looked at each issue. However, I was able to investigate from a wide range of perspectives and to include a multitude of voices that differed from my own. The analysis and results provide readers with the opportunity to take the information and either utilize the recommendations in some manner or further the research begun here.

Terms and Definitions

There are a number of terms and definitions that will be used throughout my dissertation. Some of these terms have already been mentioned but all help to frame my work. These include the concepts of living legacy, constructivist thought, educational connoisseur, voice as authority, educational reconstructivism, educational leadership, social justice, and professional development. Since some have already been defined, I will only address those not previously mentioned or defined.

Living Legacy

Living legacy is a concept that I first explored as a Family Educator in the Jewish supplemental education system. As I developed programs for families, I inevitably facilitated sessions on traditions, rites, and rituals. The first time I asked a group of parents and grandparents to bring in artifacts or heirlooms, I was confronted with questions of how this was to be done if there were not concrete items of historical significance to share due to family history of being holocaust survivors or immigrants of war-torn countries. I had to reexamine my own concepts of what I was trying to teach through the sharing of the stories behind these artifacts. It was then that I came upon the concept of living legacy.

Unfortunately, I can no longer find the originating sources for this concept but recall many conversations with others on the concept and perhaps we coined the phrase ourselves based on others' work. The basic premise of a living legacy is that which we pass on or down whether on a subconscious basis, or with intention, but which does not hold concrete form. This concept of living legacy has influenced my thinking of leadership in that what we do has a ripple effect on those around us, and those around those individuals, and so on, working much like a meme.

Made aware of ourselves as questioners, as meaning makers, as person engaged in constructing and reconstructing realities with those around us, we may communicate to students the notion that reality is multiple perspectives and that the construction of it is never complete, that there is always more. (Greene, 1995, pp. 130–131)

Constructivist Inquiry

I, the qualitative researcher, am a constructivist inquirer (Schwandt, 1994) in that once a phenomenon is discovered, the impact both on me and the community that I work within is explored. Thus, in a socially constructed context this allows me, as the researcher, to see how the educational leader infuses their own constructive knowledge into an understanding of developing pedagogy. I feel that this is profound, both for understanding the connection between history and present, and for connecting to the significant influence of who we are as individuals in creating links with our students.

Educational Connoisseurship

Educational connoisseurship (Eisner, 2002) is the acknowledgement of an individual's amassed expertise in educational concepts:

Connoisseurship is the art of appreciation. Connoisseurs notice in the field of their expertise what others may miss seeing. They have cultivated their ability to know what they are looking at. Educational connoisseurship addresses itself to classroom phenomena; just as individuals need to learn how to “read” a football game, so too do people need to learn how to read a classroom or student work. (Eisner, 2002, p. 187)

My research arose from the perspective of an inquiring RECE, bringing my connoisseurship of early years expertise together with experience in related research. Therefore, based on my years of experience in the field of early childhood education, my expertise, education, and analytical approach to learning and teaching, I take the perspective of an educational

connoisseur throughout my dissertation. In Chapter Three the concept of educational connoisseurship is defined further.

Social Justice

Social justice and the link to educational leadership and/or reform need to be key components of this study. Without an approach that addresses the failure of the business bottom line approach of government, systemic change cannot occur (Fullan, 2001, 2007; Gardner, 1995; Kezar, Carducci, & Contreras-McGavin, 2006; Palmer, 2007; Wotherspoon, 1998). Social change demands reconfiguring diminishing and overstressed budgeting. However, the divide between those with money and those in need of support continues to grow wider. The plea for social justice for equality and equity for the most marginalized persists, and ways to change this attitude of elitism must be addressed in order to find the financial means to successfully complete the transformation needed in the early years sector.

I feel it is important to include who the stakeholders are in my dissertation. While I am talking about the sector based on the individuals working within it, my work will still be impacting a larger circle of stakeholders. This list is not inclusive in scope, but is reflective of the large circle of influence possible: RECEs, ECEs, other early learning style educators/facilitators, teachers, children, parents/families, professional associations, universities and colleges, Ministries, and unions.

Moving Through This Study

I felt it was imperative that I focus on my participants, both interview and survey, in understanding their perspectives on current early years issues. Therefore, I devoted Chapter Four to profiling the study participants and ensuring their voices came through clearly. These individuals represent the impetus to my work: the authoritative voice. I showcase who they are and what they represent as early years leaders. As well, I look at why they are viewed as leaders and their own perceptions of impacts on that leadership stance. Thus, in Chapter Four I have compiled a miniprofile of each of my interview participants, and a summary of the survey participants.

In Chapters Five, Six, and Seven, I examine the top three themes that emerged from both major methods of data collection (interview and survey): Leadership; Professionalism of the Early Learning Sector; and the Intellectualization of the Early Learning Sector. While I touch on other emergent themes in these three chapters, I acknowledge that although a large amount of data connected to the themes was not analyzed in full for this study, it does offer many opportunities for further analysis and discussions.

Chapter Eight will provide a summation of the study and its results, thoughts about future research, and recommendations for change within ECE and/or B.Ed. programs for ECEs and/or kindergarten teachers. I hope that this chapter is reflective of my own experiences and knowledge-building throughout the course of this project as well. I have seen tremendous growth in my own professionalism and professional persona. This is something that I did not foresee having as great an impact as it has.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has provided the concrete opportunity to examine and identify a large component of the early years leadership during this historic transformation period in Ontario. Participants, interviewed and surveyed, shared stories of impact, experience, expertise, and perspective. I have been given the opportunity to take these stories and create a living legacy portfolio for others to explore.

Change is inevitable in the field of education. Stress is also inevitable during this time period. However, with careful attention to the reason we are in this field, for the children and their families through the provision of high quality education and care opportunities, we, the educators, will be able to look back at this tumultuous period and see a piece of history as it played out in studies such as this one.

Working on the premise that in creating community (Palmer, 1993), while teacher-educators role model pedagogy in practice, this research will also impact ECE leaders in bringing an awareness of using life-as-work pedagogy in both the formal school setting and the early learning environment. As Dewey (1990) states: “Knowledge is no longer an immobile solid; it has been liquefied. It is actively moving in all currents of society itself” (p. 25). Thus, as well as highlighting and documenting who the educational leaders were during this historical period, the voices presented through this research study convey a direct link to recommendations for developing emerging preservice and inservice early childhood focused programs in Ontario. In light of *The Full Day Early Learning Statute Law Amendment Act, 2010 (Bill 242)* (Legislative Assembly of Ontario, 2010) certificate, diploma, undergraduate, and graduate programs should take a proactive stance and decide how their vision of programming needs to change in order to reflect the current societal

needs. Ultimately, the expectations from this research include the initiation of conversations around changes needed in current ECE and formal educational programs in Ontario; collective thoughts on the future of educational preservice, inservice, professional development, and higher learning programs; and finally, recommendations of what these future programs should or might look like. Future research possibilities include asking whether or not the recommendations were implemented, in some format or version predicted by the initial research project's participants; examining what is currently happening and whether it is working; if it is not, examining what is missing and what further recommendations are required. As well, future participants could include focus groups reflecting a variety of future educational leaders: graduating classes of ECE diploma students, Baccalaureate students, B.Ed. students, Master's of Teaching students, and perhaps even graduating Ph.D. students.

Chapter Two Literature Review

Historical Exploration

This historical exploration reflects the journey of both the sector of early childhood education itself, as well as the history of leadership within the education community. In order to move forward in an informed fashion, it is often helpful to understand where we came from. Without reflection, the future is isolated from a full understanding of the impacts of changes incurred, and continued growth may be stymied.

The face of early childhood care and education has continuously undergone dramatic changes since its historical appearance on the education horizon. In the 1830s, Froebel's theories of child development piloted the *kindergarten* as a place for children to use specific materials in order to learn and play (Ozmon & Craver, 1999). However, on its own, Froebel's developmental theories stand still in time and perhaps lack full relevance in a technologically bound society. Through further research and developmental foci, many other developmental theorists and activists have had an impact on how early learning and care education might be implemented, including Rousseau (as cited in Ozmon & Craver, 1999), Locke (as cited in Jacobsen, 1999; Ozmon & Craver, 1999; Titone & Maloney, 1999), and hooks (as cited in Titone & Maloney, 1999). Even more currently, Vygotsky, Gardner, and the Reggio Emilia pedagogical approach provide a deeper and more child-initiated, teacher-facilitated method to early learning. Each of these philosophers/theories created an impact on a field in motion and its continued growth.

While looking at the sector historically, it should be with the understanding that the training of early childhood educators began as early as the 1800s (Jacobsen, 1999; Ozmon & Craver, 2008; White & Coleman, 2000; Titone & Maloney, 1999). Equally, it is also important to repeat that the field of early learning and care as a *formal* option is still quite young. Therefore, there is much growing and work still to be done in achieving an accepted place in society as a recognized, relevant and necessary sector in North America and even more specifically in Ontario, where it is publicly funded and supported. White and Coleman (2000, pp. 34–57) provide the pieces for the following brief education timeline that shows how young the formalized field of early childhood education truly is:

1896 John Dewey started the Laboratory School at the University of Chicago.

1911 Margaret and Rachel McMillan founded an open-air nursery school in Great Britain.

1924 *Childhood Education*, the first professional journal in early childhood education, was published by the International Kindergarten Union (IKU).

1926 The National Committee on Nursery Schools (now called the National Association for the Education of Young Children, NAEYC) was initiated by Patty Smith Hill at Columbia Teachers College.

1933 The Works Projects Administration (United States) provided money to start nursery schools so that unemployed teachers would have jobs.

1950 Erik Erikson published his writings on the “eight ages,” or “stages” of personality growth and development.

1952 Jean Piaget’s *The Origins of Intelligence in Children* was published in English translation.

1955 Rudolph Flech’s *Why Johnny Can’t Read* criticized schools for their methodology in teaching reading and other basic skills.

1968 B. F. Skinner wrote *The Technology of Teaching*, which outlined a programmed approach to learning.

1984 The High/Scope Educational Foundation released a study that documented the value of high-quality preschool programs for low-income families.

Add to this list the following details specific to Ontario's historical path:

1944 Minister of Education issues Programme for Junior and Senior Kindergarten and Kindergarten Primary Classes of the Public and Separate Schools.

1979 La Pierre submitted his report "To Herald a Child" with the Ontario Ministry of Education.

1999 McCain and Mustard publish "The Early Years Study."

2007 "Early Learning for Every Child Today: A Framework for Ontario Early Childhood Settings. Best Start Expert Panel on Early Learning" informally known as (*ELECT*) is published.

2007 McCain, Mustard, and Shanker publish "The Early Years Study 2."

2007 "With Our Best Future in Mind" is published.

2007: Ontario College of Early Childhood Educators is established.

2010 *Full Day Early Learning Statute Law Amendment Act, 2010 (Bill 242)* receives Royal Assent.

2011 McCain, Mustard, and McCuaig publish "The Early Years Study 3."

The focus in Ontario in seeing the early childhood sector become a core component of the Ministry of Education creates many positive possibilities for those who work within this field, currently and in the future. For example, the view that childcare is simply formal babysitting should dissipate, salaries should reflect education and training, and continued professional learning should no longer be only a personal desire but also a professional mandate for all educators. This shift in management matches the ripple effect of change internationally that includes a renewed focus on training and continuing education of early childhood educators. In order to produce the highest level of early learning and care, there is a need for effective preservice programs, inservice training, professional development, and higher level training. Viewing the strong members of the current ECE leadership in Ontario as a core component of the acceptance and implementation of the adjustments needed in light

of recent government changes includes the acknowledgement that there is a large amount of expertise in the education community that needs to be respected and tapped into in order to assist the transition for direct contact staff (working directly with children and families) from one ministry to another.

In 2006, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) invited all of its member countries to participate in sharing their current policies on early childhood education (Bennett, 2007). Two reports, “Starting Strong” (OECD, 2001) and “Starting Strong II” (OECD, 2006), issued by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) ensued from the data collected from these policy briefs. While most of the eight key elements in “Starting Strong” (OECD, 2001) focused on global issues such as universality, public investment, and stable frameworks focusing on long-term agendas, element #6 stated: “Appropriate training and working conditions for staff in all forms of provision is central to quality in (ECE)” (p. 1). The second report, “Starting Strong II” (OECD, 2006) added further elements to the original by identifying the need to support development, acknowledging the importance of the role of parents and families, and promoting the need for vigorous government support and involvement. As the demand for strong early learning and care grows so should the emphasis on high quality implementation by educators be a priority for the overseeing government agencies. Both of these reports speak to the issue that early childhood educators have the responsibility to positively impact the future of society through a strong and highly intellectual approach to educating the very young.

According to McCain and Mustard (1999) the early years (0–6 years old) are the most crucial for brain and other developmental areas (i.e., social, cognitive, language, fine/gross motor, self-help). Quality guidance (as opposed to other means of critical skills development, such as punishment) during these formative years is one of the strongest criteria for optimum support. It should logically follow that support for ECEs should be championed to the fullest in order to produce high quality professionals to staff the various early years programs. Thus, each of the previously mentioned reports and their findings also indicate a need to address the direction of preservice and inservice programming by the managing government agencies, a commitment to a higher standard of training and ongoing professional learning, and a desire to generate higher quality ECE leaders in an ever-changing and demanding environment. These reports reflect the changes that will ultimately occur through *The Full Day Learning Amendment Act (Bill 242)* (Legislative Assembly of Ontario, 2010) and the need to look at current ECE preservice and inservice training programs in order to maximize the transition of ECE in Ontario from a diploma-mandated field to possibly an undergraduate- and graduate-focused sector.

Bennett (2004) developed broad based guidelines respecting child-centred learning, diversity, family culture, and societal dynamics for a UNESCO policy brief on early childhood. These guidelines also allow for each country to decide on the more focused guidelines concerning curricula based on national (versus global) needs. In this report, Bennett (2004) emphasizes high quality programs that include appropriately trained professionals. However, Bennett (2004) goes on to state that staff need “advanced knowledge of child psychology and strong pedagogical training” (p. 2). Bennett (2004) also refers to the need for national policies that address child-staff ratios that define staff as “trained

professionals who will lead children toward the attitudes, skills and knowledge valued in a particular society” (p. 2). From these lines of reasoning there appears to be an indication of a need to see specific core subjects as part of any educational training program.

Furthermore, another UNESCO policy brief, “The Early Childhood Workforce: Continuing Education and Professional Development” (Moss, 2004) points out that despite differences across countries, preservice training is improving. However, there is now the growing need for ongoing support for both “job requirements and to support career mobility” (p. 1). Moss (2004) focused on four different types of support needed for front-line staff: “inservice training; study further for a higher level of academic qualification; for new roles and jobs in early care services; and continuing learning and research by early care workers”(p. 1). Concurrently, Kaga (2007) looked at French requirements for training of preschool teachers. It was stated that in France it is noteworthy that staff have “appropriate training and support, including adequate remuneration and working conditions” (p. 1). Kaga (2007) felt that this training and support creates a direct and strong link to elementary entrance for the children who come from such early years programs. In Kaga’s (2007) paper it was also documented that the preschool programs (for 2–5-year-olds) are administered by the education sector, and that currently 80% of the children in these programs are in public institutions, which denotes the programs are cost-free. The most significant difference between French and Canadian preschool teacher training is that France has an integrated training program for preschool and elementary teachers, with both types of educators entitled to the same opportunities of optional and mandated ongoing training and support. It is interesting to note that a recent article, “A Model for Canada—A Look at European Union Policy on Early Childhood Education and Care” (Penn, 2010) focuses on the European Union

Policy discussed in the beginning of this paragraph as a recommendation for a model for Canada. Each of these three authors focuses on the need for local governments to support leadership development in preservice and inservice programs in order to best support the children they will ultimately teach. Ontario now has the opportunity to adopt this model with the enforcement of *The Full Day Amendment Act (Bill 242)* (Legislative Assembly of Ontario, 2010). Therefore, there needs to be a call for educational leadership to have a strong and dominant voice in policy development of emerging preservice and inservice programs. Equally, this leadership input should be shared with the professionals who will be most influenced by these changes.

When talking about education in general, especially in light of moving responsibility for the early years from the Ministry of Children and Youth Services to the Ministry of Education, Wotherspoon (1998) offers a Canadian point of view on the role, or purpose, of education. This analysis includes the significance of ongoing professional learning or professional development. Upon further examination of our postsecondary education system, colleges and universities, which fall under the purview of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU), there appears to be a disconnect between accreditation for preservice learning and the inservice learning offered for early childhood educators. If the training and/or education is done through one Ministry and the ongoing learning expectations are mandated by the professional colleges (such as the CECE), while the actual implementation of quality, and soon-to-be-recognized, ongoing learning options are not overseen by any Ministry, then how can the colleges and universities have a direct influence on options available unless through an individual institution's choice? Wotherspoon (1998) states: "Post-secondary institutions are usually granted considerable autonomy, once they are

accredited through provincial legislation, to set programs and course requirements, hire faculty or instructors, and establish and enforce academic standards” (p. 68). This also speaks to issues such as faculty and instructor quality, full time versus part time status, and continuity amongst academic standards (the last point not typically seen as an issue among early childhood education programs).

It is clear that it is the people most involved in the various educational institutions (i.e., researchers, educators, students, administrators) who are also the stakeholders of the outcomes of those institutions (Wotherspoon, 1998) who, therefore, should have the highest level of influence on what is offered, and how. Unfortunately, in the field of early learning and care, inservice ongoing learning options are not under the purview of the education system, or any ministry’s purview. Instead, local practitioners have taken on the professional development facilitator role. This, in turn, has created a system of practice-related workshops that has a vast spectrum of quality options (from high to poor quality), which in turn impacts the quality of service that the participants ultimately employ. Thus, as Wotherspoon (1998) states: “We therefore come to identify success and failure, and learn to deal with them, as products of our own efforts” (p. 84). But if early childhood educators are to be recognized as true educators by the Ministry that oversees their professional practice, in conjunction with the CECE’s professional expectations, then it follows that the inservice options should be formally recognized, and the facilitators be equally formally recognized in a congruous manner. This is necessary as “teachers have progressively gained professional status through better training, improvements in teaching and learning conditions, and greater input into sophisticated educational matters, despite barriers to the fulfillment of all their aspirations” (Wotherspoon, 1998, p. 108).

Influential Documents

A 1944 document issued by The Ministry of Education of Ontario, “Programme for Junior and Senior Kindergarten and Kindergarten Primary Classes of the Public and Separate Schools” appears to have the flavour of an ECE-primary teacher blending. This document acknowledges an awareness of long-term impacts that begin in the early years, and appears to be a result of a focus on the impacts of war on health and the labour force. With the move from a male-dominated labour force to one that fully includes the presence of women, the need for care of the youngest children was being acknowledged. While the majority of the document focuses on daily scheduling and specifying the equipment in the room, there is also mention of the intent of the teacher in the kindergarten room: “The teacher should beware of the fairly common fault of talking down to her pupils, and thus depriving them not only of one of their chief sources of new words, but likewise of the inspiration to use them.” (Ministry of Education of Ontario, 1944, p. 65) This quote speaks to not only the specialization of the kindergarten teacher, but also to the point that the young child is very different from the older child and needs a different mindset to be fully and appropriately supported. This, once again, could point toward an acknowledgement that working with younger children should be a specialization and a call for separate Ministry support.

Laurier LaPierre (1979) was commissioned by the Ontario Public School’s Men Teacher’s Federation to write a report on the state of early childhood education, which resulted in “To Herald a Child: The Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Education of the Young Child.” It is interesting to note that a large number of outcomes in this report are still in contention today. The issue of supporting parents as having rights, and children having separate rights, speaks to the current concern of parents trying to navigate through a

potentially two-tiered system of early childhood education programs. With the majority of the early years programs being expected to be housed within schools as discussed in the “Modernizing Child Care in Ontario Discussion Paper” (Ministry of Education, 2012), while others only receiving marginalized acknowledgement of support, this could result in a system where some parents are forced to choose a childcare setting that is not fully supported by the Ministry of Education due to high enrollment or other mitigating factors (e.g., rural area).

The early years of childhood are the key to sound and joyful development of the self. I have been told many times that all preparation for later learning begins in infancy and continues through the early years. Would it not be wise, then, to recognize the fact that a child has an inalienable right to his day care centre, his nursery school, his kindergarten, and to his school? It is time that we outgrew the notion that children begin school because they have attained a certain chronological age. If the school’s function is to promote development, it should be remembered that age is a state of the individual and the school should be ready to meet this challenge, whatever the age of the child.

It then becomes imperative that opportunities for education prior to age five should not merely be a downward extension of present programmes. They should have as their foremost concern the well-being of the child and should not be geared to the administrative convenience of adults. If I have learned anything since the work of the Commission began, it is that the world of the child is fragmented and ought not to be. (LaPierre, 1979, p. 18)

Also addressed in the LaPierre Report (LaPierre, 1979) is the need to tackle teacher education from a quality assurance perspective. Included in this quality educational process is the need for more courses focusing on child development, using a child-centred play-based approach (for all grades in the primary division) and the importance of inservice ongoing professional learning for all teachers in the Kindergarten to Grade 3 program. LaPierre (1979) subsequently recommended that anyone associated with this age group should have a specialization in early childhood education that could include the current RECEs in the Full Day Kindergarten (FDK) program if this document had sway in current conditions.

The LaPierre Report (LaPierre, 1979) discusses the impression of early childhood educators as babysitters, and that this assumption of the role of ECEs in the junior/kindergarten programs needs to be corrected through the expertise of the supervisors of preschool and primary teachers. In fact, it is the report's recommendation that anyone involved in working with the very young should have a background in ECE. This would imply that even principals, supervisors, and curriculum experts would be required to have a background and expertise in the early years. Therefore overall, the LaPierre Report (LaPierre, 1979) shows an early awareness of the significance of early childhood experts as part of the formal education system.

The next set of noteworthy documents begins with the first "Early Years Study" (McCain & Mustard, 1999) and signifies a momentous period in the early years for Canada. This initial report represents the understanding of the necessity of supporting the early years and its impact on long-term economics from a scientific perspective; and thus, in some ways legitimizing the need to support the early years from a political standpoint in a way that had not been achieved through previous reports. The "Early Years Study 2" (McCain et al., 2007) added the neuroscience of the developing brain to the equation of supporting the early years in order to achieve long-term financial stability. The most recent report, "Early Years Study 3" (McCain, Mustard, & McCuaig, 2011) focused on the policies needed in order to successfully sustain the early years. It is fascinating that each of these reports utilizes a plethora of research focusing on the early years in terms of long-term economic stability. The importance of strong early years support leads to high functioning adults, with the ability to not only be financially independent but also to give back to the community that supported them in those first crucial years.

One document that is currently under Ministry of Education attention is the Day Nurseries Act (DNA), which is now outdated and in dire need of attention but is, and always has been, unique in Canada, and even in Ontario's expectations of consistently higher expectations than in other provinces. Currently, a significant amount of this regulatory document addresses structural and health and safety issues, not the actual quality of the education or care offered. The full document is massive in physical size and is entrenched in legal terminology. The accompanying documents are many in number and scope, each attempting to guide the reader through the maze of minute expectations. It is important to note that each of the provinces is currently undergoing its own transformation and addressing its legislation on how to move forward in supporting the early years. However, in Ontario with the move of the early years into the Ministry of Education, the current state of the DNA is contradictory with the expectation of having early years components in school classrooms, and also impacts what is occurring in childcare settings as part of the ramifications of full-day kindergarten. For example, classroom size, outdoor space, sleeping areas, and staffing requirements are just a few of the areas that need updating and relevance to the current model of early years education in Ontario. Furthermore, with 4- and 5-year-olds moving from childcare centres to full-day kindergarten, childcare centres are forced to adapt their physical sites and their programs to only meet the needs of infants, toddlers, and preschool age children. The financial effects are many, as the needs of the younger ages demand lower ratios of adults to children, vastly unique programming space, as well as distinctive programming materials.

Education is a field dominated by curriculum, educational philosophies, and bureaucratic demands. The attempts to bridge these three divides is plentiful but I often wonder if, in the zeal for our appreciation of strong pedagogical and related documents, we early years professionals rush into finding ways to use these documents before fully and truly understanding them for their best intentions. Equally, with the movement toward new theoretical and research influences as a trend in the early years sector there is often a rush to implement the newest favourite as quickly as possible. In prescribed methodology style theories, this works as follows: formula taught, formula followed, and then formula assessed using provided formula-related assessment tools. However, with a more child-initiated, teacher-facilitated theory such as emergent curriculum (Carter & Curtis, 1994; Fraser, 2000; Gandini, Hill, Cadwell, & Schwall, 2005; Wein, 2008) there cannot be a preset formula. How then do we support a massive sector of early years educators who want to implement this child-initiated, teacher-facilitated curriculum theory as quickly as possible? This can be especially challenging if we take into account the varying levels of understanding, learning styles, and learning needs of the implementing educators. We do this by creating strong and pedagogically sound documents that assist educators in understanding the theory, the implementation process, and possible ways to assess learning and the successfulness of the curriculum theory. However, then, these documents, too, often become iconic in perception and are accepted and used without full comprehension of intent and usage. We examine these documents with a critical eye, not with disrespect but with more of an understanding of how we can reinterpret their usage in a changing landscape.

One example of a successful but perhaps at times misunderstood document is *Early Learning for Every Child Today, 2007* (ELECT), with Jane Bertrand chairing the crafting of this document. This assessment document or tool is designed to assist in connecting children's learning to developmental growth to educational expectations through an understanding of current best practices in curriculum implementation. This document is unique in that it acknowledges the various programs throughout the early years sector:

Ontario's early childhood settings, including child care centres, regulated home child care, nursery schools, kindergarten, Ontario Early Years Centres, family resource programs, parenting centres, readiness centres, family literacy, child development programs in Community Action Program for Children, Healthy Babies Healthy Children and early intervention services. (Bertrand, 2007, p. 1)

As well, there is an upfront acknowledgement that this document works in conjunction with the DNA, Early Years Centre guidelines, and the Ontario Kindergarten Program. This means that while the ELECT is intended to work with the Kindergarten Program, its sole purpose in actuality is to be used in a more broad connection to the early years sector in totality. With principles steeped in child development and parents as true partners in the education of young children the ELECT provides another clear message that early years supports are vital to long-term success.

However, if we are going to take the viewpoint that the DNA is restrictive because it is so outdated, then perhaps we also have to see the ELECT as being constrictive because of its possible misuse. It is often seen as a starting point for *documentation* (as a teaching tool in play based/emergent curriculum) instead of as a fluid support for said documentation. While acknowledging the multitude of workshops on understanding and using the ELECT, the questions then become: who is presenting these workshops (which takes us back to the

question of quality professional development facilitators); what is their objective; and how is the message being received? Further questions include: does there need to be a precursor of a sound understanding of play-based and/or emergent curriculum by the participants or the facilitator or both in order to fully understand how to use such documents as the ELECT first; do these workshops even take into account the impact of emergent and/or play-based pedagogy; and if so, then is the link between documentation in play-based learning and using the ELECT to support true emergent documentation made clear? As a final point, are we using the ELECT for assessment purposes or as a guideline in interpreting our classroom documentation for supporting assessment demands? The supposition that the ELECT is the starting or pivot point for documentation creates a static list of indicators of behaviour that is full of jargon, the antithesis of play-based learning. Documentation should begin from, and flow from, children's actions and discoveries. By observing what the children do in their play the educators can then reflect on the notes they have taken and use such documents as the ELECT to support growth and development. Rich programs go beyond the standards, so why plan to the standards? Therefore the ELECT should be utilized as a reference tool instead of as the basis or impetus of assessment.

Another significant document for the early years especially in Ontario is "With Our Best Future in Mind: Implementing Early Learning in Ontario" (Pascal, 2007). This report was published prior to the *Full Day Kindergarten Amendment Act (Bill 242)* (Legislative Assembly of Ontario, 2010), and was one of the major influences, and impetuses to this change in management. In this report, Pascal (2007) positions the early years sector clearly in the purview of the education continuum, using current evidence-based research. With the inclusion of an early childhood educator as an equal partner of the teaching team in the

kindergarten classroom, the stage was set to move forward in viewing the early years as equally valid and equally needing sustainability from the Ministry of Education. Pascal (2007) proposed that Ontario meet the high benchmark standards achieved in other countries for early learning and care (p. 4). If we are to compete in a global market then we need to adhere to high standards that will produce the strongest results for long-term sustainability. Furthermore, this report explains the viewpoint that education should be a birth-to-age-12 project, not one that isolates the early years as a separate and social services component, thus relying on what have been intermittent and fluctuating funding sources. The strength of this report lies in the overt acknowledgement of expertise that comes from early childhood educators, thus legitimizing the wealth of knowledge and leadership that exists within this sector.

The 18 recommendations included in the report (Pascal, 2007) represent the clearly set out plan currently being utilized for the transfer of the early years from the Ministry of Children and Youth Services to the Ministry of Education. Included in these recommendations is the recognition of the early childhood education diploma or degree as a valid educational necessity for people working with children from birth to age 12.

This acknowledgement of the current status of the early years sector is reflected in a June 2012 discussion paper, “Modernizing Child Care in Ontario” (Ministry of Education, 2012), addressing the Ministry of Education’s plans in supporting the move to a sustainable and high quality childcare system. The very fact that this discussion paper exists shows great strength and a commitment to improving the early years system in Ontario, and in a timely fashion, considering that the Ministry of Education has had the early years as part of their mandate for only 3 years. Currently the childcare system is in distress: with funding formulas

not supporting families in a timely or accessible fashion, plus the issue of 4- and 5-year-olds now in the kindergarten programs adding to the stress of childcare centres having to rely on infant, toddlers, and young preschoolers to fill their spaces.

As well, the “Modernizing Child Care in Ontario” (Ministry of Education, 2012) discussion paper indicates (but does not outright state) a movement to update and improve the DNA to reflect quality care and the movement toward objective assessment of programs based on research-based quality indicators. Currently the assessment tools being used are more of a checklist style (e.g., The Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale, Revised, The Infant/Toddler Environmental Rating Scale, Revised, and the Brigance Inventory of Early Development). The shift to having the DNA address the assessment of the *quality* of a program through an understanding of what a quality program entails will hopefully minimize the questionable practices of many weak early childhood settings that are sometimes found in programs where profit rather than strong care and education of children is the priority of practice.

As a point of clarification, it is important to understand the different types of childcare centres available for parents and families (excluding home care, either licensed or private). The differences between municipal, not-for-profit, and for-profit childcare centres, and even lab schools, may seem minor but in reality are substantive in approach. Municipal childcare centres are run and are currently additionally funded (beyond parent fees) by the municipality. Typically a municipal centre will have a high percentage of subsidized spots and as a rule provide high quality education and care. Lab schools are childcare centres associated with a postsecondary educational institution. These centres are of extremely high quality, both in staffing and in programming. Lab schools are supported by the faculty of the

connected early childhood and/or education departments, but unfortunately are undergoing tremendous strain as they are not viewed as being financially viable (as is the case in childcare overall), by the institution's administration. There are currently closures at these sites on a frequent basis. These centres need to exist in order to provide excellence in care, examples of quality programming for students, and provide locations for ongoing early years-related research. At this point there are approximately half of the original lab schools still operating, with the most recent closures including Loyalist College in the summer of 2012, and Niagara College setting the closing date of their lab school in the spring of 2013. On the other hand, George Brown College has numerous lab schools, citing corporate partnership as a major factor in sustainability. Not-for-profit centres are exactly that, nonprofit. Their primary focus is on providing education and care for the children enrolled in their programs, and all funds are used to maintain the program (physical site, salaries, materials, and all other program related items). It is not assumed that all not-for-profit centres are of high quality, but the majority of centres are strong in what they provide. However, for-profit centres, or privately owned businesses, are in the business to generate profit. Typically, quality is marginalized and there is a high turnover of staff. At present, there is great concern in the early years community that more and more for-profit centres will be taking over valuable community sites and impacting quality of care.

This "Modernizing Child Care in Ontario" (Ministry of Education, 2012) discussion paper also asks for feedback from parents and early years members but it is vague around the expected response, especially considering the complexity of issues presented. And yet the 23 questions for feedback appear to be extremely open-ended, perhaps too much so. It might have helped if the ministry could have given some direction for parents and non-advocates to

understand what the focuses specifically will be. While most advocate groups have read, discussed, and created a quick-response document for both the Ministry of Education and their own agency or organizational members, it is not guaranteed that everyone else in the sector is a member of an advocate group or that they have read and understood the implications of what was sent out from their organizations. As well, I wonder if this was a true consultation since the “Modernizing Child Care in Ontario” (Ministry of Education, 2012) discussion paper was presented during the summer months, the Ministry will not include a vetting process once recommendations are in place and will instead simply put forward a list of policy changes once the feedback process has been completed. There was a strong response to the “Modernizing Child Care in Ontario” (Ministry of Education, 2012) discussion paper from the following organization sources (which can be found on each agency’s website):

- OCBCC
- City of Toronto
- Andrew Fleck Child Care Services
- CUPE Ontario
- YWCA
- YMCA
- AECEO
- Today’s Family Early Learning and Child Care
- Macaulay Child Development Centre
- Ontario Public School Board Association
- Ontario Municipal Social Services Association
- Family Day Care Services
- Home Child Care Association of Ontario
- Jackman Child Care

- CUPE Local 79
- Canadian Federation of University Women Ontario Council
- Middle Childhood Matters Coalition
- Atkinson Centre for Society and Child Development
- Ontario New Democratic Party

There are still fears of childcare being viewed as a secondary need or unimportant service under Ministry of Education management but overall the sector acknowledges the need for a strong and united voice, focusing on keeping and supporting each other through the bigger issues rather than getting lost in individual agency or organizational minutiae. Therefore, the general consensus around the feedback on the “Modernizing Child Care in Ontario” (Ministry of Education, 2012) discussion paper was to focus as a sector on issues such as, but not limited to:

- The need for strong and consistent base funding;
- Not-for-profit support;
- Childcare as integral and important; and,
- Childcare treated as a respected part of the education continuum.

It is important to see whether asking questions in high-level policy language, and providing broad-based, open-ended feedback questions was the optimum route to go about gathering information from this discussion paper. Currently, I am seeing pushback from the advocacy/support groups that include working to unpack the components of the document into plain language and responding to requests for feedback for those in direct contact to make it more relevant to the work that they actually are doing.

Leadership

Leadership in itself engages in much research exploration, including a wide range of theories focused specifically on educational leadership, in particular from a teacher development perspective (Biddle, 2012; Eisner, 1998; Fullan, 2001, 2007; Gardner, 1995, 2008; Goleman, 1995; Sergiovanni, 2000; Sullivan, 2009; Van Manen, 1990, 1991; Wotherspoon, 1998; Zigler, Gilliam, & Barnett, 2011).

As well, the nurturance of leadership in undergraduate and graduate education (concentrating on the early years and beyond) has long been a focus of educational researchers (Ball, 2000; Cameron, 1998; Campbell, 2003; Carter & Carter, 1994; Danielewicz, 2001; Hanson, 1998; Katz & Katz, 2009; Kosnik & Beck, 2009; Miller, 2006; Noddings, 2003; Osguthorpe, 2008; Paley, 2001; Palmer, 1983), along with giving attention to the specific characteristics to be enhanced in possible future leaders. These characteristics, explored fully in Chapter Five, speak to the call for educational programs to spotlight the need to address leadership in future educators, as the average age of the current educational leadership is nearing, if not close to, the consideration of retirement. Combine this with the vast number of theoretical approaches to the concept of leadership, even within the education sector, and there is much to consider (and confuse) the researcher around what constitutes leadership development.

There are those who propose that leadership should come from top-down within the various levels of an organization, from a formula set out by the expert (e.g., transformational leadership), while others believe it should be generated from specifically identified leaders (Fullan, 2001, 2007). However, after some contemplation based on my own reflections, in combination with readings that address educational leadership and change, I find myself

apprehensive in regards to the more prescribed method to leadership approach (i.e., transformational leadership theory). These theories feel too set in a formulaic approach to leadership and change. And yet at the same time these theories seem to be conflicting in that each step is extremely vague or will contradict earlier steps (Fullan, 2001, 2007; Goleman, 1995; Sergiovanni, 2000). A variety of experts who support this approach have each tried to set out their own set of steps, but Fullan (2001) shows that they still fall into the vague or contradictory pattern. A large number of educational change experts believe that transformational leadership is perhaps not the most successful approach to educational change.

If we are to grow as persons and expand our knowledge of the world, we must consciously participate in the emerging community of our lives, in the claims made upon us by others as well as our claims upon them. (Palmer, 1993, p. 57)

Instead, the consensus from current educational change experts is that the most successful leaders need to be comfortable with who they are in their role as a leader and they need to be a strong orator, a storyteller. Also, what is recommended instead of transformational leadership is more of an ebb and flow type of engagement with issues as they arise. The impetus to lead must come from within the individual, and that individual must have a comprehensive understanding of their role during the revolution that is taking place within the individual's own practice and the sector they are leading through change (Fullan, 2001, 2007; Gardner, 1995, 2008; Goleman, 1995; Sergiovanni, 2000). Therefore, the exploration of leadership as a core component of practice shows the depth of importance of self-regulation within the emerging professional. Dewey (1990) speaks to the point that education should be a process, a movement of learning in collaboration with others and with self rather

than a stagnant didactic existence of new knowledge acquisition. Dewey (1990) states: “A society is a number of people held together because they are working along common lines, in a common spirit, and with reference to common aims” (p. 14). Given this, early years teacher-educators can and should be seen a distinct society and should be seen both as part of this bigger picture process by themselves and within the education system as a whole. And if I take this particular view of the early years being a distinct society going through a massive transition of change, then it follows that each member needs to take a leadership stance of some kind and to varying depths to reach common goals that arise along the way. Therefore, a leadership role need not be only for those in positions of obvious power or stature, but instead existing within each member of the emerging early years society.

In summary, from an examination of the sources mentioned in the previous leadership paragraphs (pp. 56–58) the focus of educational leadership should be a core component of professional practice, and individuals should have a conscious awareness that leadership comes from an internal force, intertwined with external influences, while acknowledging that change must come from within, not from external demand. An understanding that leadership is about finding new knowledge in dissonance, in conjunction with utilization of new knowledge acquisition, shows that leaders are aware that change is difficult and an arduous journey. But it is equally important to acknowledge that leadership utilizes all of the intellects in individuals. Leadership has a moral purpose and is about creating community.

Palmer (1983) states:

Community is clearly central to four issues that have long been basic to the life of the mind: the nature of reality (ontology), how we know reality (epistemology), how we teach and learn (pedagogy), and how education forms or deforms our lives in the world (ethics). (p. xiii)

Therefore, it is important to ultimately understand that leadership is flexible in style and approach but is more about attitude than a particular style.

The difference between comfort and nurture is this: if you have a plant that is sick because you keep it in a dark closet, and you say soothing words to it, that is comfort. If you take the plant out of the closet and put it in the sun, give it something to drink, and then talk to it, that is nurture. (Estés, 1991, p. 350)



Feminist Theory

According to Belenky et al. (1997), women have a unique way of interacting with the world around them. This is significant when discussing a sector dominated by females. It does not negate the strength or the inclusion of the male members, nor does it assume that all women fit into the structure set out in *Women's Ways of Knowing* (Belenky et al., 1997). Understanding the perspective presented by these researchers simply provides an additional backdrop to the possible comprehension of the majority of the membership. This text acknowledges that a vast majority of women go through various stages of interacting and understanding the world around them. It is not a stepped stage of development process as in other theories (such as Piagetian theory) but more of an ebb and flow process depending on where the individual's mindset is during each new learning component of their life. The ultimate goal is to become a constructed knower through each growth and learning period. This includes the awareness that part of this interactiveness is a core component of being a reflective practitioner, and someone who acknowledges one's own voice and uses their own lived experiences to inform their practice as an educator. The need to acknowledge the "lost

parts of the self' (Belenky et al., 1997, p. 136) brings the educator to another level of understanding of who they were in comparison to who they have become. This is an acknowledgement that truth is not a concrete or static point in time, but rather a fluid and personal expression of a moment of understanding, only to become elusive once again upon examination.

When women accept the responsibility for evaluating and continually reevaluating their assumptions about knowledge, the attention and respect that they might once have awarded to the expert is transformed....For most constructivists, true experts must reveal an appreciation for complexity and a sense of humility about their knowledge. (Belenky et al., 1997, p. 139)

Being a constructed knowledge maker is about using reflection and finding connections with others, even when those connections are not overt or positive. It is about caring about the other, with moral purpose (Belenky et al., 1997; Gilligan, 1993), through true listening and open dialogue.

Issues of Significance in a Sector Under Transformation

The questions of this study, revolving around leadership and transformation, imply that the early years sector is, or desires to be, viewed as a profession. However, this is not the case for not only the general public, but within the sector, too. Many theorists have postulated what the term professional might mean on its own, in context of early childhood education, and in relation to other sectors. Feeney (2012) explores this term of professionalism and what it currently represents for the general early years sector. There is a clear distinction between what professionalism means in society universally and what it means within a specific occupation. Feeney's (2012, pp. 7–9) criteria for the universal term are quite precise:

- A specialized body of knowledge and expertise.
- Prolonged training
- Rigorous requirements for entry to training and eligibility to practice
- Standards of practice
- Commitment to serving a significant social value
- Recognition as the only group in the society who can perform a function
- Autonomy
- Code of ethics

One of the issues associated with being recognized as having professional status addressed by Feeney (2012) is appropriate financial compensation. This is a long-debated issue for early years practitioners and one that now belongs to, and for, the Ministry of Education to resolve (with input from the early years leadership). I recall wage subsidies being relied upon by direct-contact practitioners, as their base pay was insufficient to maintain an above-poverty-line existence. However, wage enhancement subsidies are just that; subsidies and funding issues within the social services are not to be expected to be consistent or long term. In order to be seen as equal to other formal educators, this issue around wage equity continues to be at a boiling point; perhaps if pay is linked to intellectualization of the sector, pay equity will finally be realized through public and professional acknowledgment of an ECE as an equal educator to formal school teachers. This issue is explored further in Chapter Seven.

Another point of criteria that is addressed in Feeney's (2012) text is the need for rigorous requirements for training and eligibility to practice. "Since it is possible to get a job with almost no training, there is little incentive for those who want to teach in these programs to enroll in bachelor's degree programs" (p. 20). To me, this begins with how student

recruitment occurs. From my experience, at times there was discussion that only evidence of a pulse appeared to be the base requirement for entry to a college program. This might be a slight exaggeration, but other than meeting minimal grade requirements (often a passing grade for some programs, and a “C” average in others) and a police check, little else appears to be necessary when selecting incoming students. At one time an interview was mandatory, but I do not see many of the programs across Ontario still adhering to this protocol for entry. As for university programs focusing on the early years, there are the same requirements for these programs as for similar ones in the Bachelor of Education programs: an indication of an adequate academic background is the only consistent factor among each of the programs.

Ultimately, Feeney’s text (2012) recognizes the necessity for more work in our journey to professionalism but it begins in the individual, and with an awareness of what unique attributes and skills ECEs bring to the sector of education and to the ECE workplace. Many of the points raised in this text will be examined further in the analysis chapters.

Intellectualization of the sector is another core area that is being discussed, partly as a subcomponent of the professionalization of the sector, but also as perhaps a necessity of educational practice. The text, *The Pre-K Debates* (Zigler et al., 2011) has gathered a number of papers on various topics regarding issues currently under examination in the early years worldwide. One important section focused on the education level of the early years professional. There has been much thought given to increasing the minimum requirement in the early years sector from a diploma requirement for general practice to a diploma as entry level and the need for a degree for movement along the professional ladder. This would mean that a bachelor’s undergraduate degree rather than a college diploma (or even in some geographical areas simply a high school diploma) would become the norm. However, “The

substantial body of research on the effects of preschool teacher qualifications on teaching, learning, and child development has yielded mixed results” (Barnett, 2011, p. 49). In fact, a number of the research papers in this text found similar results. Then perhaps the only reason to insist on a degree is for public perception of equality between an RECE and someone registered with the Ontario College of Teachers.

At the same time, the consensus among the theses included in this text is that while a university level degree is good, it is not the primary indicator of quality education and care in the early years. It is pointed out that even a Bachelor of Education degree should not be seen as the end of learning, even after graduation.

This does not mean hiring just anyone with a bachelor’s degree and ignoring actual abilities and knowledge or the quality and content of a degree, nor does it mean that other program features including inservice professional development and supervision are important...In addition, attention must be paid to the conditions under which teacher preparation matters, which involve compensation and working conditions as well as curriculum, support, and supervision. (Barnett, 2011, p. 53)

In fact, most of the papers in this text state categorically that a strong emphasis on child development, neuroscience, and practitioner characteristics are the strongest indicators of quality teaching in the early years. And it is these indicators that should be nurtured within existing programs, instead of mandating degree versus diploma requirements. This is not the case in many European countries as they shift from a separate training and education process for those wishing a career in the early years sector to one that has anyone aiming for a career in education to attend a Bachelor of Education program, choosing an early years specialty to work with very young children.

“Professional organizations are another source of information about what teachers should know and be able to do” (Bowman, 2011, p. 56). I agree and feel that these professional organizations should (if they are not doing so already) drive the direction of ongoing professional learning that the CECE will eventually mandate, and they should begin with foundational pieces started at educational institutions and unions.

The debate needs to shift from whether a preschool teacher should have a bachelor’s degree; instead, it should focus on building and delivering proven and effective supports for teachers that lead to improved outcomes for children. (Pianta, 2011, p. 64)

Therefore, a support perspective rather than an expectation perspective should be the priority for postsecondary institutions and early years professional organizations.

Another issue of debate is the financial impact of a degree rather than diploma expectation. “If public pre-K teachers were required to have a bachelor’s degree without adopting public school salary levels, the financial consequences would be minimal” (Barnett, 2011, p. 49). However, without financial compensation, what would the incentive be for a B.Ed. to be an RECE rather than an OCT? “Education research rarely provides a basis for certainty. Still, one can be quite certain that costs will rise if teachers are required to have bachelor’s degrees and pay comparable to that of public school teachers generally” (Barnett, 2011, p. 53). Although the research does not direct a need for a Bachelor of Education degree as a necessity for quality, this cost issue might be a deterrent for a mandated B.Ed. in ECE. But conversely, without a mandated B.Ed. the possibility for equity in pay for RECEs will be minimal. This discussion will be returned to in Chapter Seven.

As mentioned earlier, what is taught is also of importance when discussing educational expectations. “The expanded knowledge base is one of the prime reasons why teachers of young children need at least a bachelor’s degree” (Bowman, 2011, p. 55). Bowman (2011) goes on to discuss the need for stronger child development knowledge and an appreciation for its complexities. Having taught in a diploma program for many years, I feel that the level of child development understanding in the early years preservice programs is quite strong in Ontario. The need to go further must come from inservice professional learning. However, Bowman (2011) also states:

Essential teacher knowledge includes a broad range of fields and content areas: from genetics and neurobiology to nutrition and health, from maternal attachment and stranger anxiety to teacher and peer relationships, from mathematics and science to sociology and economics – just to name a few.
(p. 55)

And again, I say that all of these components and many more are touched upon in the 2-year diploma program. Considering how much is taught, I believe that any more would be overwhelming and perhaps too difficult to absorb in such a short time. If the programs were 4 years in length, then it would be equivalent to a B.Ed. It is interesting to note that many colleges are offering applied degrees in order to address this gap. But it still comes down to a need for ongoing, integrated professional learning for the core work expertise to scaffold upon. “Teachers need more than an extensive knowledge component; they also need a time and place to develop practice skills” (Bowman, 2011, p. 57).

How can the teaching practices or social mechanisms that lift child development be addressed in four-year preservice programs? In addition, how do the outer bounds of such improvements compare with the cost-effectiveness of alternative strategies aimed at lifting quality?
(Fuller, 2011, p. 58)

This speaks to the need for postgraduate professional learning opportunities. Overall, the issue of higher intellectualization in the early years sector is one of utmost significance as ECEs take a much more public stance under the Ministry of Education.

Taking Pause

Emergent curriculum uses reflection as a core component of its execution. This process is often referred to as *taking pause* (Carter & Curtis, 1994; Fraser, 2000; Gandini et al., 2005; Wien, 2008). There is so much good in the world, in *our* world. Sometimes we (I) get too caught up in the chaos of the journey. Therefore, I took my own advice or remembering to take pause as part of my own practice, and to reflect on the wonder around me during this dissertation process, and through this dissertation process. I took flight in my prose and in my photography, as the dancer takes flight in their artistry.

As is the wind, so is my dance.

As is the wind, so should be my dance.

Spirit let free, back to its mother state.

Without thought, without face, without fear.

Full of joy, full of heart, full of courage.

Jump, spin, fall, laugh, cry.

The leaf falls without pre-thought,

without after-thought.

So should my hands fly and dip.

So should my hips envelop my belly and

join in the dance.

Shoulders now in the lead, then my knees.

Folding here, swaying there,

every part bursting with joy.

Fears and sorrow may join if they wish,

but never take over completely.

Partners in my life dance.

Join me you ask? Yes, I agree.

Weaving of hands, arms, bodies.

Joy is a right, not an earned privilege.

Remember this now, remember this then.

Take flight, take wing, soar through the dance.

As is the wind, so is my dance.

(Winick, Personal writing, October 2009)

Conclusion

Thought starts from the...adult and her or his experience of the world. It assumes that we are all constantly engaged in searching for meaning...in relations with others and through processes of testing, reflection and further thought. (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005, p. 98)

In summary, the early years sector is currently undergoing a massive transformation and the leadership is significant in not only inspiring the changes, but also in assisting with the learning that takes place with massive change. By understanding the historic pieces that bring the sector to the current place, as well as various concepts of educational leadership theory and professionalism, this study can appreciate this specific period of transformation. Pay equity, perception of self and sector, sector stabilization, and many other issues are affected by the current changes in Ontario's early years division. While my dissertation attempts to navigate through many of these issues, the changes for the sector are also many and rapidly occurring.

The next chapter sets out the methodology implemented and steps used to gather the data for this study.

Chapter Three

Research Design and Methodology

Introduction

The choice of [research approach] should reflect more than mere whim, preference, taste, or fashion. Rather, the method one chooses ought to maintain a certain harmony with the deep interest that makes one an educator...in the first place. (Van Manen, 1990, p. 2)

The focus area of my research is in educational theory; the potential implications of my work are intended to be supportive material for curriculum and learning in the field of early learning and care preservice and inservice programs. Connelly and Clandinin (1998) explain: “The more we understand ourselves and can articulate reasons why we are what we are, do what we do, and are headed where we have chosen, the more meaningful our curriculum will be” (p. 11). Glaser and Strauss (2009) share that the purpose of (grounded theory) research is to:

Strengthen the mandate for generating theory, to help provide a defense against doctrinaire approaches to verification, and to reawaken and broaden the picture of what sociologists can do with their time and efforts. (p. 7)

Therefore, with the premise that the field of early learning and care is fairly young, and is undergoing tremendous change, it is my impression that research being conducted during this transitional period will come together to create new ways of perceiving preservice and inservice educational options for ECEs.

In addition, with my curiosity in human reflection and my interest in making sense and creating meaning out of others’ stories and reflections, my dissertation places one of its intended focuses on the creation of an historical landscape of the current early years

leadership in Ontario. The heart of human science is one that intrigues me and uses my expertise and available skills. Also, according to Van Manen (1990), “The preferred method for human science involves description, interpretation, and self-reflective or critical analysis” (p. 4). As well, Van Manen (1990) postulates, “We gather other people’s experiences because they allow us to become more experienced ourselves” (p. 62). By asking the current leadership what they perceive as significant, both to their own maturation as leaders and to the early years sector’s direction, I can begin to understand the path undertaken for both journeys.

The implementation of qualitative methodology as the primary source for particulars related to this study is based on diverse individuals’ experiences: the study participants and the researcher. By bringing each of these experiences together and creating a collection of experience that is expressed by placing a quality on each collection allows me, the researcher and theorist, to develop an overarching synopsis of understanding of current events and movement along the pathway to change. Eisner (1998) asserts:

All *empirical* inquiry is referenced in qualities....These qualities and the meaning we assign to them constitute the content of our experience....Neither science nor art can exist outside of experience, and experience requires a subject matter....experience depends upon qualities and that all empirical inquiry is, at base, rooted in them. (p. 27) [italics in original]

Further, through the articulation of Eisner’s (1988) features of qualitative study I am able to ensure that this study speaks to the relevance of current issues within the early years sector.

When I compared Janesick’s perspective of ensuring authentic research to Eisner’s perspective of ensuring authentic research, I felt that Janesick (2011) looks at a separate list of features to be paid attention to when implementing meaningful qualitative research. By looking at this study based on her criteria, it is evident that my work is founded in

relationships; focuses on understanding rather than controlling; ensures that the significance of fieldwork is equal to analysis; include the full disclosure of the researcher's involvement; perceives my participants as co-researchers; and, utilizes both the narrative and poetic form. I feel that my participants are my co-researchers because they have led the path I took with my analysis through their stories and musings. They decided which stories were of significance to them, and thus which ones they wished to be possibly shared in this thesis.

Tierney (1995) talks about pushing the limits but at the same time remembering to keep attending to the why and for whom in qualitative work. For this research project, I felt that my potential participant pool needed to go beyond the primary participants to include other teacher-educators and educational researchers, and ultimately the ECE preservice and inservice field as a whole. I felt that this attention to a wider participant group was important as a point of connection with a greater potential audience. It was my intention to define leaders as a wider group than the obvious advocates and to go beyond this well-known group to include others who stand up for the sector, children, families, and the rights of others in the early years. However, at the same time I was aware that I needed to avoid an overload of multiple voices or my work could potentially become muddled in analysis and would lose its relevance to the original queries. Mazzei (2009) also speaks of the inclusion of voice in research and states:

To think data and research differently, I am prompted to reconsider the question not just of when and what is voice or data for that matter, but how data/voice is enacted and presented by participants in the field. Instead of the one-dimensional scripts, our data may speak to us differently with a multiplicity of voices in the context in which it was presented, in the form of multi-dimensional performances in our research sites. (p. 53)

Thus, by not limiting my research to the interviews and instead also including an outer circle of input through a survey open to the sector as a whole, I have pushed my boundaries of voice through data collection and am able to present, as Mazzei (2009) explains, a “multiplicity of voices...in the form of multi-dimensional performances” (p. 53).

With a background in narrative inquiry, I utilized personal stories, both my own and my participants, as a way of informing the direction of my analysis. Tierney (1995) says that first-person writing creates the feeling that, “We no longer hesitate to write from the inside the research situation” (p. 382). It was difficult not to infuse my own thoughts and perceptions into the analysis of my work. My research is part of my continued development of self and of my field of choice. I could not separate the two as each influences the other, and thus my experience became embedded in my writing.

The research lens that was used for this study was situated mostly in the qualitative spectrum, with some quantitative components. The quantitative components are supportive data in that they do not define or induce results, but are part of the means of validation by the triangulation through volume of survey responses and support of the interview data, previous research, and related theory.

Constructivism and Reconstructivism

This study is being viewed from a socially constructed context resulting in an analysis that allows me, the constructivist inquirer, to see how educational leaders infuse their own knowledge into the development of pedagogical change. I am a constructivist looking at social constructs from a reconstructivist perspective. In other words, I have looked at the current situation of early childhood educators in Ontario in order to understand the social

context of leadership in the early years sector, and then to relate that understanding to necessary changes within this sector. As a reconstructionist, I then try to infuse my understandings with those of other alternate thinkers in order to inform new ways of understanding and movement forward.

Through an appreciation of the difference between interpretivists and constructivists (Schwandt, 1994), I have come to the conclusion that an interpretivist focuses on understanding relationships (human and nonhuman), while a constructivist takes the analysis further in order to create meaning out of the understanding of those relationships, based on one's own experience.

Constructivists are deeply committed to the contrary view that what we take to be objective knowledge and truth is a result of perspective. Knowledge and truth are created, not discovered by mind....In place of a realist view of theories and knowledge, constructivists emphasize the instrumental and practical function of theory construction and knowing. (Schwandt, 1994, p. 125)

Therefore, as a constructivist, I took my own data analysis beyond the creation of an early years leadership landscape to find connections between leadership thought and the continuing journey to full ECE professional status.

In taking this approach of understanding new knowledge and relating it even further to the originating issue of interest or focus, reflective practice acknowledges that it is important to break down problems or issues into the smallest possible components in order to fully comprehend the issue at hand and determine the path to change. New skill development takes a similar approach, especially if one is relearning an old skill in a new way. Scaffolding new learning demands an initial understanding of the steps involved in skill development and learning styles. We find the smallest denominator and create change within that first

component and then work on the next components individually and in connection to the previous steps, until the full picture has changed. Often the ultimate end, or desired end, is not visible or able to be named during the path to change. Reconstructivism takes this premise of deconstructing in order to understand even further: in putting back together the learning process, reconstructivism theory asks the participants to rethink the possible, to try to imagine the impossible possible and to even imagine what they could not have thought to imagine in the first place. Reconstruction does not mean demolition, but more of an analysis through deconstruction, then a reconstruction using reflection and awareness of possible impact on stakeholders, from all of the various involved thinkers' perspectives. Janks (2005) states that in being a reconstructivist it is important to remember:

It is hard to deconstruct texts that we agree with. It is easy to deconstruct a text that we disagree with. Our own lived experience or our own convictions serve as resources for reading against a text that offends us. ... However, when we are confronted by a text that we agree with, it is easy to imagine its positive effects, and hard to see its negative effects. (pp. 3–4)

If we continue to learn and grow in the same ways as in the past then events that we experience will continue to seem similar or even the same as before. Therefore it is important that we ask the difficult questions now, as we are in the throes of making significant changes. We are passionate about our sector, and a passion of a known way of being or doing something is often accompanied by a sense of comfort. Change, on the other hand, indicates discomfort and therefore there may be a reluctance to embrace the exploration of even further change, especially fundamental or critical change.

Hanh (1992) shares that creating change is an art: “Everything we do is an act of poetry or a painting if we do it with mindfulness” (p. 40). To me, this means creating the understanding that mindfulness should be integrated into the classroom, through pedagogy,

and through the interactions and actions toward others. It goes beyond role modeling into more of an infusion of being. This in turn creates an atmosphere of connectedness, of love with the students of that classroom (Palmer, 1993) being at the core of how the educator is in relationship with them and with others.

Educational Connoisseurship

In order to put myself in the position of deciding who is a leader (and thus a potential interview participant), and why they were chosen and/or viewed as a leader within the educational community, it was first necessary to view myself as an educational connoisseur (Eisner, 1991, 1998, 2002) and to understand the significance of being an educational connoisseur as part of the process of choosing potential interview participants. I bring more than 30 years of experience, expertise, and education specific to the early years to my research persona. Through my various experiences, education, and skill sets, I meet the requirements of Eisner's (1991, 1998, 2002) dimensions of connoisseurship (intentional, structural, curricular, pedagogical, and evaluative). By the same token, my educational connoisseurship includes working in a wide variety of positions with each of these opportunities, which afforded me the luxury of gaining connections to a strong community of educational experts and leaders.

Methodology Approach

This study could be categorized as mixed mode, using both qualitative and quantitative methods to collect and analyze data. However, the quantitative data collected through the survey was used more to provide background to the general dissertation and its participants. The results did not drive the analysis or the choices within the analysis. They

did, however, provide a rich backdrop to understanding the landscape of the time period being examined, and the themes that emerged upon analysis of the data collected. It was with intent that I used mixed mode methodology as a purposeful way to gather data both contextually and with distinct voices. In Glesne's (1999) examination of the perspective of Lincoln, Guba and Schwandt's viewpoint of epistemological lens, in comparison to Patton, Reichardt and Cook's viewpoint, Glesne (1999) states:

This does not mean...that the positivist never uses interviews nor that the interpretivist never uses a survey. They may, but such methods are supplementary, not dominant. Different approaches allow you to know and understand different things about the world. (p. 8)

According to Charmaz (2007), grounded theory is like an "adventure" (p. xi) that leads to paths unknown, and perhaps further questions to explore. Charmaz (2007) goes on to explain that "Data form the foundation of our theory and our analysis of these data generates the concepts we construct" (p. 2). Thus the typical process of a formation of hypotheses coming out of an initial research question does not fit with this particular methodology. As data is collected it is collated into theoretical codes, which continue to evolve as more data is collected. In the final analysis, further refinement is used to create a final set of coding sets, and ultimately a final theoretical analysis is presented. Charmaz (2007) explains that the methods used become of primary importance, stating: "A method provides a tool to enhance seeing but does not provide automatic insight" (p. 15). Equally, it is important to keep in mind "that situating grounded theories in their social, historical, local, and interactional contexts strengthens them" (Charmaz, 2007, p. 180).

Life stories are living and dynamic; they need to be told and retold, heard and reheard to reveal their meaning. (Miller, Bruce, & Drake, 1990, p. 28)

The criteria that Charmaz (2007) sets out for the uses of grounded theory are credibility, originality, resonance, and usefulness. My research topic is original, in that there is minimal research currently being conducted in this field in relation to the early childhood field leadership and its connection to the current historic transition. The questions utilized, both in the interviews and the survey, help to guide the reader to an understanding of where the leadership see teacher-education for the 0–5.8 age grouping educators evolving. As for resonance, I paid close attention to my coding sets to ensure that each coding represents as much meaning as possible, and that I linked my data results with the larger picture that emerged.

Charmaz's (2007) work is based on the original work of Glazer and Strauss (2009). While Charmaz (2007) has her own perspective on grounded theory methodology, it is vital to understand the originating theory. A fourth printing version of Glazer and Strauss's work (2009) begins with the simple and straightforward point that grounded theory is: the discovery of theory from data (p. 1);[the] discovery of theory from data systematically obtained from social research (p. 2);[and] generating grounded theory is a way of arriving at theory suited to its supposed uses (p. 3).

It is interesting to note that the formal methodology of grounded theory states that the best forms to use for gathering information are ones that produce the most related amount of results. Therefore, for this study I have employed both interviews and a survey as my main means of gathering data. I have also engaged in the methods of narrative, journaling, photography, and poetry. The use of arts-based methods in qualitative research is becoming more recognized as valid means of data collection. As an example, Janesick (2007) states:

The use of photography as a research tool enriches our stories as well. Thus, the text is recast with an eye to history, to the digital era, to art and poetry, and to writing skills and development, with one foot still in the trenches of day-to-day negotiations with the Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) and various public stakeholders who are our partners. (p. xii)

Timeline

The overall timeline for this study covered a 2-year and 6-month period. The ethical review process was completed by August 2010. Ethical components included the interview guide, a copy of the *Survey Monkey* survey, interview participant email/telephone script, the survey participant email script, and the Letter of Informed Consent (see Appendices A–E). I completed two mock interviews, as well as sending out a mock up of the survey to colleagues, friends, and family members for feedback. Once I received all of the responses and feedback, I was able to make changes to both as needed (minor in both) before presenting this information to my supervisor. All of the necessary components were then included in the ethical approval submission (see Appendices A–E).

Once I received approval from my dissertation supervisory committee, I began the interviews in November 2010, and opened the online survey at the end of January 2011. I felt that the timing for the survey needed to respect the demands on postsecondary faculty members, so I was conscious of avoiding mid- or end-semester requests. The survey was closed at the end of June 2011, and the final interview was completed in July 2011.

The interviewing element took 8 1/2 months to complete. The survey was open for five months, and was available during the middle portion of the interviewing time period. The formal coding and analysis of the entire datum took a further 8 months. Writing and editing of the dissertation chapters encompassed the final 7 months of the Ph.D. process.

The methodology analysis processes utilized in this study included both an informal and formal coding route. The informal analysis involved jotting down brief notes during the interviews as key concepts began to emerge (by the third interview). I fashioned a documentation of the web of themes as it developed, keeping it in close proximity on the wall in front of my computer desk (see Figure 2).

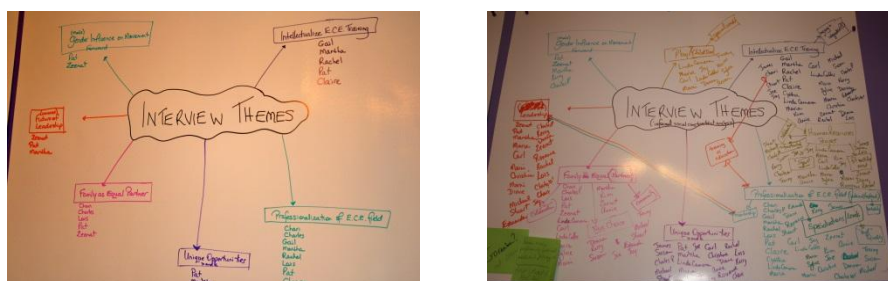


Figure 2. Informal interview theme webs.

This initial and informal analysis concluded with eight primary themes, and 14 secondary themes, with some crossover of secondary themes amongst the first level (see Table 1).

Table 1

Interview Themes

Formal/ Primary Themes	Axil/ Secondary Themes	Number of interview participants who mention theme
Professionalization of ECE field (Internal and external perspectives)	Training versus education Mentorship Specializations/levels Validity High quality	All

Formal/ Primary Themes	Axial/ Secondary Themes	Number of interview participants who mention theme
Intellectualization of ECE training/education	Ongoing and integrated Training versus education Specializations/levels High quality Validity	All
Human resources project	Collaboration True and transparent support Fit matching need Clear and consistent infrastructure	27
Family as equal partner	Collaboration True choice Community	24
Leadership constraints	Mentorship	23
Unique opportunities (pros and cons)		22
Play / child development	Inclusion of special needs	12
Gender influence on movement		6

Note. For full list of participants and primary themes see Appendix K.

The formal analysis' initial codings provided an opportunity to find and tag the *in vivo* codes. Focused coding (second major phase according to Charmaz, 2007) revealed eight substantive themes, the same eight as the informal analysis produced (see Table 1). Axial coding provided further insight of 13 subcategories, with a variety of those subcategories crossing between different main categories or themes. It is quite interesting that both the formal and informal analyses produced the same results, both for the substantive coding and for the subcategories (see Tables 1 and 2). Due to the large amount of data, and relevant

analyses, I decided to only focus on the top two themes for this study, using the other themes as influences of these two primary themes. I also decided to include an analysis chapter focusing on the theme of leadership, and another chapter for the participant profiles, as leadership was a major impetus for the study's conception. It is important to note that I was fortunate to have three peer editors who assisted me throughout the writing process. As soon as the full dissertation was completed, it was sent to a formatting editor to ensure compliance with the APA style of writing, and then sent to my core committee for further feedback. Once the changes suggested by the committee were made, I was able to send the final document to the full committee, including the external reader.

Table 2

Processes for Analysis

Formal Process	Informal Process
First level of analysis: informal	Notes taken during interviews
Second level of analysis: informal	Theme web on poster board
Third level of analysis: transcribing	First: "listening/observing" for commonalities Second: discovering themes Third: looking for quotes
Fourth level of analysis: grounded theory	First: Focused Second: Axial Third: Theoretical

In total 57 interview requests were sent out, 41 individuals agreed, six declined, and 10 emails did not garner a response. Of the 41 who agreed, 35 came to fruition.

Interviews and Surveys

As interviewing was one of the main methods for my data collection it was essential that I utilized skills previously developed in order to maintain professionalism, control (but not controlling in manner), and a conversational tone with my participants. The purposes of interviewing were to gather stories and to make sense of the phenomena that I was focusing on through those stories (Seidman, 2006). However, it was also important that I created an environment that invited conversation and yet guided the interviewee along the topic path. As for accessing participants, my experience in working in the early learning and care community for a significant amount of time once again allowed me to develop a wide contact field. Nevertheless, it was also necessary for me to go beyond the professionals that I already knew in order to avoid any perception of bias, and to ensure a rich and well-rounded perspective of the current early years leadership.

The survey was broken into five sections: demographics; understanding of current issues; organizational impacts; professional impacts; and comments on the future of early years training and education (see Appendix F: Survey Questions). The interview question guide was focused on gaining demographics, reflection on personal and professional impacts on becoming a leader, current inclusion in transformational period, future work, and personal insight into professional impacts (see Appendix E: Interview Guide).

It has been suggested that 35 interview participants (and my own experience) is higher than appropriate and manageable number for analysis (Van Manen, 1990). As well, this number of interview participants, and the inclusion of a survey to secondary participants, indicates that an intensive amount of time and work would be needed to create a full and resilient portrait of the intended group (Beattie, 2004; Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997).

However, in order to address this point I looked at the work of Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2005) who specifically explored the concept of data saturation and variability when using interviews as a study method. They state that the intent of their work relates to their impression that:

It is precisely a general, numerical guideline that is most needed, particularly in the applied research sector. Individuals designing research—lay and experts alike—need to know how many interviews they should budget for and write into their protocol, before they enter the field. (Guest et al., 2005, p. 60)

Further, Guest et al. (2005) initially share findings from related work done by various researchers, and quote studies completed by Morse, who felt that approximately 35 interviews were necessary for a sound grounded theory study. However, despite a disclaimer that their findings could not yet be generalized, they postulate that a maximum of 12 interviews was a sufficient saturation point for ensuring validity in a quality study.

Ultimately, I may or may not have reached (or gone beyond) saturation, but I feel that I most definitely have a strong base to continue the research in the future. According to Glaser and Strauss (2009), saturation occurs when “No additional data are being found whereby the sociologist can develop properties of the category” (p. 61). I feel that it was not until around the 30th interview that I felt that I was reaching the point where I was not learning anything new or different from my participants. However, I do not feel that I would have had the same strong results by only having 12 interview participants, even with the supporting results from the survey. Therefore, it was important that the saturation point for this study went beyond the results for saturation found by Guest et al. (2005).

In addition, with 34 interview transcripts from 35 interview participants (2 participants requested a combined interview) and 167 surveys to analyze, it was not feasible to do a follow-up interview with any of my participants. Therefore, saturation came from breadth and not depth.

Participants

I felt it was important to my own sense of human connectedness that the profiles of each of the interview participants were to be more personal in tone, conveying a deeper understanding and bond between the reader and the participant, specifically in having insight into personal testaments of development as a leader.

The stories of this historic transformation are valid and significant in understanding the impacts perceived by the current educational leaders. However, it was the intent of this study to go beyond creating a portrait of the period under study. As well, if there were only a handful of participants, time to study with them in-depth, and years to analyze the data, the fit would lean toward an ethnographical study. Ultimately, this particular study calls for an inclusion of as many voices as possible directly from an in depth (interview) perspective, as well as the most broad perspective possible (online survey). Therefore, the search for the most appropriate methodology ended with the decision that grounded theory best fit this study and its analysis needs.

My intention regarding participant involvement was to seek out a sampling of the leaders in Ontario through interviews and a survey. I was looking not necessarily for the most overt or obvious candidates in terms of overarching influence, but for those who might see their role as being a leader and one who infuses change. I was pleased that in a female-dominated sector, there was strong male representation among the interview and survey

groups. However, unintentionally, biases may seem to be prevalent. For example, despite a representation across the province, the majority of the leaders interviewed came from the southern part of Ontario. I do not feel that this could have been avoided unless I specifically targeted leaders in, say, the most northern part of Ontario.

The participants' involvement reflects a high level of interest in this dissertation topic and is evident by the numbers: 110 (65.9%) of the survey respondents identified themselves as being a practicing ECE in some capacity. The survey participants included everyone from diploma holders to Ph.D.s, and those with specializations in education, science, social work, and business. Likewise 16 interview participants identified themselves as either having a diploma or degree in ECE (46%).

When discussing with my dissertation committee the number of invitations to send out, it was decided that with most people's busy schedules the acceptance rate might be low. We anticipated I might end up with approximately 15 interview participants, again due to potential participant scheduling and time restraints. Therefore, instead of sending clusters of invitations out, seeing how many acceptances I received and then sending another cluster of invitations out, it was agreed upon that I would send out all of my invitations at one time and see how many participant agreements I received. Then if my goal of 15 interviews was still not met, I could continue to develop my invitation list. Originally I sent out 52 requests to participate, but in the end that invitation list expanded to a total of 57. In the end, of the 41 who accepted invitations to participate, six acceptances did not come to fruition due to their busy schedules. It is significant to me that I had my first acceptance within 3.0 hours of sending out the email invitations, and that all responses were of an extremely positive and supportive nature.

Of the original 57 interview invitations to participate, I personally knew 9 people. Of the 35 that came to fruition, I knew only 7 of these individuals prior to the interview process.

For each of the interviews, I utilized an audio recorder and also asked permission to take the participants' photographs (32 agreed). Each meeting began with an offer to read my ethics approval letter, the signing of the informed letter of consent (previously sent with the interview time and place confirmation email), and a brief background of my study intent and focus. At the end of each interview, I gave the participant a potted African violet plant and a personalized thank you note. I took some brief notes during the interview, but the bulk of the content was captured on the audio recording device. Follow-up emails were sent within a 2-day period after the meeting to thank the participant for their time and input.

Upon completion there were 34 interviews for analysis (2 participants requested a combined interview), representing a wide range of possibilities of leaders in a field undergoing metamorphosis.

The interview participants were found through a variety of means. Initially, I was able to generate a list through my own personal professional connections. Each person that I thought of in this genre (and all of the means used to find potential participants) represents a wide variety of expertise. It is important to also note that each of these professionals had impressed upon me their sense of leadership and their conviction in the necessity of giving of oneself, beyond the basics of the job, to the support and enhancement of the field of early learning and care through acts of advocacy.

Next, I read a multitude of the current reports and research. This was done on a local, provincial, national, and international basis. I looked at who was writing, who was responding, and who was reacting to these reports and research items, and added these

individuals to my potential participants list, sending them an invitation to participate. Similarly, I felt that it was important to peruse media reports to add to the potential participant list. The final mode of search used for the interview component was through recommendations. I received many recommendations of other potential interview participants, both from the participant group and others not part of the study itself, once the topic was shared.

Initially, I considered approaching a number of professional bodies in order to find appropriate and willing participants, such as community colleges and universities that offer ECE preservice programs. Ultimately, it was determined through committee discussions that the most practical approach was to begin by contacting a variety of educational leaders in the field, which also included those on the lists I had already generated through the preceding criteria. However, I foresaw a number of problems arising: how would I be able to determine whether all the potential candidates fit my criteria? How would I interview all participants directly? At best, I knew that I would not be able to interview each and every professional recommended or offering to be part of my research project. Therefore, I presented the option to meet with the initial list of potential interview participants for a face-to-face discussion-based interview, or via telephone or Skype. As well, I asked each of my interview participants for their permission to audio-record the interview. All of my interview participants chose the face-to-face option. As well, 1 participant requested that I not use any direct quotes from the interview tape/transcript, and another requested prior approval of any desired quote usage. By using the audio-recording device, and taking minimal notes during the actual interview, I was able to focus completely on the participant and to engage in conversation and the subtle encouragement of further details. As well, I was conscious about

not being strict about the questions being answered directly or in the order that I set out in the interview guide (see Appendix E), allowing for flow of conversation, stories, and ideas.

Survey

The survey was originally intended for Ontario-based teacher-educators in either ECE and/or B.Ed. programs. However, as word about the survey spread and the link was shared, the survey participants expanded into the early years sector at large and became representative of the leaders and the people on the ground. Geographically, there is a smattering of representation across the province among the survey respondents.

The survey link was shared with 23 colleges and 14 universities across Ontario that offered either an ECE diploma, and/or a related degree, or a Bachelor of Education degree, as well as with 10 colleagues of my own. After the interview process was completed, the survey was given to the 35 participants who in turn shared it with their colleagues and connected institutions. Ultimately, five organizations also received the link and one (AECEO) posted it on their provincial website. Therefore, the participant base went well beyond the formalized teacher-educator to include a wide number of early childhood educators who belonged to the AECEO.

Survey participation did not entail any disclosure of personal information except professional accreditation as a way of understanding the background of this secondary participant group while protecting the identity of participants. I felt that this allowed for comfort of response and disclosure of information. The survey focused on the impact on, and direction of, preservice and inservice training programs during this transitional phase in ECE in Ontario. The survey link was shared through an email invitation and sent to:

- Association of Early Childhood Educators of Ontario (AECEO)
- Chairs of College ECE diploma and degree programs, faculty and instructors
- Chairs of University Education degree programs, faculty and instructors
- Interview participants
- Known early years colleagues and champions.

There were 164 initial participants for the survey, with the last participant entered on May 10, 2011, and a total of 163 participants completed the full survey process.

Study Limitations

Janesick (2011) asks researchers to think about a number of issues when sharing a study's limitations. For example, I considered why I chose those particular methods. I find myself a bit of an historian and taking photographs both captures the essence of the moment and allows me to have recall of the time and event. As well, I have kept a reflective journal for many years, and find that many times I have had a breakthrough of profound understanding through this process. I also enjoy writing stories and poetry as a means of points of clarification; and therefore I included photographs and journal entries that informed and enriched my dissertation.

Another question asked is why I didn't do a check in with my interview participants during the writing process. Most qualitative studies that use interviewing, in acknowledging the participant as a co-researcher, have a common practice to check in with each participant to ensure their thoughts were analyzed correctly. However, I felt that with specific responses to the background questions, there was no interpretation or analysis involved. As for the perspective questions, I did my check-in at the time of the response. For example, if the participants said something that I felt fit a specific thread that was emerging and it wasn't

glaringly obvious, I would perhaps ask: “In other words, you mean professionalization of the sector?” As well, with respect to my participants’ extremely busy lives, I made the choice to respect their time constraints unless I needed clarification, or if they had asked to be included in any kind of follow up. As mentioned earlier, 1 participant asked that I share with them the possible quotes from the transcript that I felt would fit into my dissertation prior to actually using those quotes. Another participant asked that I not use any direct quotes from their transcript. I have respected each of these requests.

In a similar vein, I feel that the rights of my participants were protected as their involvement was voluntary and it was explained that they had the right to withdraw at any point, without penalty of any kind both in the letter of consent (see Appendix D) and during the introduction of the interview process. And equally, unless I quoted a participant or an area they have specifically mentioned, I did not identify the participant, or even the gender if it might indicate a possible individual. This relates to both the interview portion and the survey results.

A final area of study limitation is possible researcher bias. Since I have worked in this sector for more than 30 years, I have a wide and strong colleague base. I tried to go out of my comfort zone and approach individuals that I felt were out of my reach and beyond my level of expertise. As well, I listened to my colleagues, previous and newly formed, and approached other individuals that I had not thought of as possible participants prior to this time period.

Taking Pause



Sometimes we think we are looking at one thing, but upon reflection we see what truly was in focus. I thought I was taking a photo of the flower, only to see after uploading it onto my computer that the rock is truly at the heart of the picture. Similarly, initially I thought that through this study I would be constructing a landscape of this transitional period. However, after the analysis and writing, I realize that this landscape is also a study on early years professionalism.

Chapter Four

Pathways to Leadership and Emerging Themes

This chapter includes miniature profiles of the study participants. I chose this format for a number of reasons. First, since the participants represent the overarching concept of leadership, I felt it was both imperative and respectful to include some background information on what each of the interview participants shared about their perceptions of what or who influenced their path to a leadership stance. Secondly, by including this background information prior to quoting each participant in the analysis chapters, the reader has a context in which to develop a basis of familiarity with each interview participant. The profiles of each participant became a significant component of each of the interviews, both in terms of time and focus, as if taking on a life of their own. In fact, quite a few of the interview participants stated that they had not reflected on their own practice in this manner and found it quite enlightening.

Profiles: Up Close and Personal

There are many books and theories about leadership and leaders. Then there are those people who actually fill those roles. My participants were the impetus to this study; my desire was to understand those in a position of leadership. They are my mentors, whether they intended to be or not. I felt they needed to be front and centre in my dissertation, not relegated to an appendix, as if they were an afterthought. This then begs the questions: Who are they? What do they represent? What should they represent? Why are they leaders and why now? The first research question, “Who are the champions of ECE in Ontario during this transformational period?” does not speak to only those who are in the spotlight, but is a

calling to reflect on the notion that leadership comes in many forms. This also addresses the need to have leaders who overtly stand up for the early years, as well as in the many other ways that one can speak up for an important cause.

Interview Participants

An Internet search can produce the professional details on any high-profile leader in any given community. I chose to take a more personal approach to the profiles so that the reader can see how a reflective stance on true life experiences can inspire leadership. Leaders are not borne into loftiness, but instead evolve out of hard work and the ability and desire to make change.

My participants fell into a number of categories of representation; however, there were multiple sector participation among each of the individuals (both interview and survey) and cannot be placed into one group categorically (see Appendix G). Instead they represent a variety of groups in this manner:

- Community child care agencies: 7 interview participants fit this category; in the survey 60 identified with this group;
- Policy and bureaucracy: 4 interview participants; no declarations for this group in the survey;
- Community agencies: 15 interview participants; the survey identified 98, including mental health;
- Teacher-educators: 21 interview participants; the survey identified 142. This group representation includes formal, informal, academic institutions, early years agency/centres, community agencies/organizations;

- School boards: 5 interview participants; the survey uncovered 15;
- Unions: 2 interview participants; and there was one reference to being part of a union and being informed by this membership amongst the survey participants;
- Unique project: All 35 interview participants were involved in unique projects; survey unknown.
- Advocacy: 10 interview participants; survey identified two;
- Regulation: 10 interview participants; survey unknown; and,
- Research: All 35 interview participants are involved in research: survey unknown.

The profiles that follow identify the positions that each interview participant held at the time of being interviewed, and are listed as they requested as a co-researcher in this study. They are presented in alphabetical order, by last name. What follows is only a snippet of what they shared. The stories were rich, the reflections profound, and the insight empowering. As well, I have used my interview participants' real names (with their permission) to celebrate the true meaning and spirit of leadership. How can one be a leader and hide in anonymity? The time period for the interview component of this study began in November 2010 and ended July 2011. This was truly an exhilarating 9 months in my professional career.

Presenting...

Cynthia Abel. *RECE. Manager, Service Delivery Division, Ministry of Children and Youth Services(MCYS)*. Cynthia started her early years career working in a childcare program in the Region of Peel and she felt very fortunate in terms of having an employer that provided possibilities for growth. Eventually, Cynthia had opportunities in the area of fee subsidy administration as a caseworker, as a designate resource teacher, and filling in for supervisors. At same time Cynthia went to Teacher’s College part-time. Eventually, she joined the Region of Peel’s Public Works Department, as the Public Works Outreach Coordinator, specializing in young child education, designing programs from an environmental aspect. Cynthia has taught at Sheridan College as a sessional professor for 3 years. In due course Cynthia accepted a 4-month contract at MCYS to work on revisions to the private home childcare manual but found a way to also involve herself in the Ontario College of Early Childhood Educators, and the Best Start Expert Panel. Cynthia was also was engaged in the Supervisor Training Strategy, and a tri-ministry group to support Dr. Pascal’s work, after his appointment as Early Learning Advisor. She says, “Beyond this present work, there are lots of opportunities, it’s a bright future.”

Gail Baker. *Head of School, Toronto Heschel School. Director of The Lola Stein Institute*. Gail went back to her family to acknowledge their impact on the leader she is today. Gail said, “My parents always said that I was brilliant and beautiful and could do whatever I wanted.” Gail also credits her very healthy 31-year relationship, and acknowledges it as making a large difference, “Because when you are raising a family and that’s a priority you also need that kind of support for what you’re doing then or else you start to lose your voice.” Gail felt that she has been able to surround herself by very interesting, diverse people.

Gail expressed the importance of staying on top and abreast of the research in trends and being able to find practical ways of implementing them. Gail helped to establish and oversee The Lola Stein Institute, to develop curriculum and teacher training both for internal use and also for the community's access. All of this has been in addition to teaching in education for about 35 years. As for the future, Gail has a passion for professional teacher development and teacher training and she sees further development within those connected areas.

Dr. Linda Cameron. *Associate Professor, CTL, OISE/UT*. Linda stated up front that she is a postsecondary professor, researcher, and advocate, but also sees her roles as a parent and grandparent as significant in her persona as a leader. Linda stated how momentous the church experience was for her, "At age eight, I took over the children's program. I was going to it and I didn't like it and so decided at that point that I would fix children's church. The church gave me voice." Linda then explained that despite being school-phobic she was given many opportunities to be a leader during her school years. But the most significant impact with direct contact with children was having her own children. It was through the frustration of trying to find a good program for her children that Linda ended up starting Bridletowne Park Nursery School. Before having her children, Linda had been a kindergarten and Grade 1 teacher and this became the stepping-stone to her work in early childhood. In fact, her doctorate is in Early Childhood Education and applied psychology. Although she has taught all grades, her love is for the early years. She worked at Centennial College for 7 years and has both her ECE and OCT. Linda worked on a Ministry background report, which later was submitted to Dr. Pascal. Linda has had wonderful experiences with various research projects, and has spoken at many early childhood-related conferences. Linda also developed a program in the Teacher Development, Initial Teacher Education Program, on kindergarten

and preparing teachers. Linda is on the cusp of retiring but is still open to new experiences. In fact, she is currently writing a book about play with a colleague.

Dr. Maria Cantalini-Williams. *Associate Dean (Interim), Associate Professor, Schulich School of Education, Nipissing University, Brantford Campus.* Maria proudly shared that she has three children and that she feels that she is a quiet leader and a generalist but states, “If you’re going wide at least you reach a larger net of your constituency groups within your organization.” Maria was a school board early years consultant for many years, then a primary consultant, and eventually a primary/junior consultant. Maria has an undergraduate degree in psychology. One year Maria was successful in obtaining a Young Canada Works projects’ grant and ran a camp for immigrant children. Maria obtained a B.A./B.Ed. from the Institute of Child Studies, U of T. Having graduated from this program at the Institute with two parts of her primary specialist Maria was able to complete the primary specialist designation in the summer of 1983. Maria acknowledges that she worked on many committees, and did an enormous amount of volunteer work, including for the Teacher Federation. Maria stated, “I always did my job and then 25 other things that were related to curriculum development or writing.” Maria went back to OISE/UT to obtain a Master’s degree. Maria taught at George Brown College briefly. This added to her sense of the ECE world and enhanced the ability to see issues from both sets of experiences. After completing her Ph.D., focusing on the disadvantages to children born at the end of the calendar year, Maria accepted a position as a primary consultant. In between 1994 and 1998, Maria taught an early childhood course at Western University, Stratford campus. During that same period, Maria was still part of the Federation, and was asked to be the representative on the 1998 version of the kindergarten program writing committee. Maria has a multitude of

experiences as a board member, including the region's Child Care Advisory Committee. Maria has been involved with the Conestoga College Early Years Advisory Committee and the Consultants Association for Primary Educators (CAPE). Maria taught for approximately 2 years for the OISE Faculty of Education. Eventually Maria came to Nipissing University, Brantford campus but while teaching many varied courses she still attended some CAPE meetings, and was invited to be on that panel, as a member of the Quality and Human Resources Panel. As well, Maria has had extensive experience writing letters and lobbying for the betterment of early education issues.

Dr. Carl Corter. *Professor, Institute of Child Study, HDAP, OISE/UT.* Carl acknowledged the influence of his parents on his choices in life. Both of Carl's parents were trained as teachers. Carl's father went on to become a clinical psychologist interested in early childhood. Carl's mother was a very nurturing person and had thought a lot about education and on how best to raise her children. Carl feels that the two sides of nurturing and critical thinking shaped his own way of understanding and negotiating the world. Another area of influence was Carl's ability to stand up for the marginalized, which highly influences his work in early childhood education. Carl feels that this early leadership advocacy stance also led him to The Dr. Jackman Institute of Child Study (JICS). The connection came during Carl's search for childcare for his first child and the awareness of how bleak the choices were for families. This experience also set Carl on the path of working for the issues surrounding young children. Initially during Carl's academic career at the University of Toronto, he was in the department of psychology doing research in such areas as attachment. Eventually Carl engaged in research on public health and parents and young kids, and worked with Sick Kids and the neo-natal intensive care unit, with regards to low birth weight kids and parents and

family issues. At a certain point, while watching his wife's work with young children, Carl realized that he wanted to focus on supporting children and families through the education system because of its universality. It would also allow Carl to return to his interest in childcare. Carl was instrumental in establishing the Margaret Fletcher Daycare Centre, which was the University's first childcare centre. As well, Carl has had experience working as associate Dean, and the acting Dean. Carl was part of the working group that became engaged in Toronto First Duty, with partners such as the City of Toronto, the Atkinson Charitable Foundation, and the Toronto District School Board. When asked what Carl would do next, he laughingly shared that he is focusing on retiring. Carl acknowledged that there is still much to do to move current initiatives even further ahead.

Linda Cottes. *Senior VP Operations of Child and Family Services, YMCA of Greater Toronto*. Linda has been with the YMCA for 32 years, so it has been a big part of her growing as a leader. Linda explained that she had done an ECE placement with the organization and immediately applied to the YMCA upon graduation. Linda has had a leadership role within the organization for at least 20 years. In fact, Linda was a supervisor of a large childcare centre within 2 years of graduating. As the organization changed and childcare changed, Linda would adapt accordingly. Linda was part of the development of their play-based curriculum "*Playing to Learn*." After completing her ECE diploma, Linda has taken many courses from Harvard and McGill University. When the Pascal Report came to her board, Linda was part of the consultation meetings focused on the report's findings within her own organization and with a group of larger operators in the city of Toronto. Linda explained that it "really was the first time you took similar service providers, who technically is your competition, from a business world. [And] brought all of these folks

together to sort of say do you want to have a voice in this or not?” Linda continued to be the lead of the YMCAs of Ontario table, and part of the Quality Early Learning Network (QELN). Linda expressed that there is a lot of work still to be done in making a difference, and making things work as partnerships, including a vision for the future of childcare with the YMCAs of Ontario. As well, Linda feels that she will be working on the extended day program and getting ready for the child and family centres.

Moira D’Aoust. *Manager, Children’s Integration Support Services, Andrew Fleck Child Care Services.* Moira has over 36 years of experience in the field of early childhood education, including time as a manager, an ECE, a Developmental Teacher, and as an Instructor at Algonquin College. Moira is an advocate in the area of services for children and families in her community. Moira is a working member of the Preschool Speech & Language Initiative and of the MCYS task group to support Developmental Restructuring, Making Services Work for People. As well, Moira is a member of the Provincial Special Needs Reference Group to inform the Full Day Learning; and was the Chair of Best Start Special Needs Working Group, Red Flags document for her community. Moira was also a member of an Advisory committee at Algonquin College that developed a course that would bring Teachers and Early Childhood Educators together to extend their learning as it relates to special needs and special education. Moira feels that there should be a three-pronged approach in the full-day kindergarten program: child, families/guardians, and teaching teams. Moira also feels that training is a major component of that vision. Moira says, “The thread is sharing the knowledge.” In her future, Moira will be co-collaborating on a pre- and post-assessment for the manual she and Sylvie Tourigny created. Moira concluded with the

acknowledgement that she would be continuing to support and advocate for change, and to create partnerships and bridging of knowledge between sectors.

Dr. Pat Dickinson. *Program Coordinator of B. ECE Studies, Charles Sturt University, Ontario.* Pat shared that she was originally the Primary/Junior coordinator at Charles Sturt University, Ontario campus. Over time, Pat looked toward retirement until the Bachelor of Early Childhood program was approved and Pat was asked to oversee the initiation of that program. Pat started her educational career teaching junior grades in the United States. Pat and her first husband had their two boys and moved to Canada. Pat feels that her experiences as a parent were significant influences on her current perspectives. Pat ended up getting very interested in special education because of her personal experiences and a desire to “help children and parents who had gone through the same thing.” Pat also acknowledged the influence of some key educators during her educational retraining in upgrading her qualifications and in special education. At this same time Pat became very involved in parent support groups, as well as with the educational system in Halton. While Pat was at the ICS, she got her teaching certificate, thus graduating with both her early childhood and Ontario primary teaching certificate. Pat then went back to Halton as a kindergarten teacher. Pat acknowledged that she had some unique opportunities through the AECEO, which started her on the path to being seen as a leader. For example, Pat was appointed to be the AECEO representative on the Early Primary Education Project. Pat stated that she has “had a passion about trying to help those two sides see each other’s views and perspectives and their realities.” Throughout the current transitional period, Pat feels that she is able to speak from a perspective of both the early years sector and the formal educational system. In fact, Pat’s doctoral research was looking for the differences between the two

groups. Pat concluded with sharing that if she is a leader it comes from her mother reading to her every night.

Jay Fedosoff. *Supervisor and Vice-Principle for the “We Welcome the World” Centres. Leader, Parenting and Family Literacy Centres. Supervising Vice-Principal, Peel District School Board.* Jay referred to his many current credentials and roles as “A lot of learning in a short amount of time; there’s been about 11 years in education as an educator, but I’ve really never been out of school.” Jay’s father was a physical education teacher and guidance counselor in the old Etobicoke school board. Jay has warm memories of going with “dad to school when I had a day off and hanging out in the gym with the basketball team, or whatever was there, or going to the auto shop, and the computer lab as those emerged.” However, Jay first considered teaching when he stopped playing competitive hockey, started coaching kids and realized that he really enjoyed it. Then he started working with an integrated program at his high school that provided mentoring for students with special needs. With his father’s professional guidance, Jay found a way that he could combine his love for athletics with teaching. Jay attended York University in the kinesiology stream (at the time entitled Physical Education) in the concurrent education program. Once he graduated, Jay had a teaching position at the Roberta Bondar Public School, where he was identified and approached about seeking a formal leadership stance in the school. Jay was aware of the connection between this invitation and his involvement in volunteering his time, and helping out wherever he saw a need. As for Jay’s role during the current transitions, he stated that, “the early years—I think it kind of just landed in my lap. I always had a passion for [it]. I never had an opportunity to get into a teaching role in that but always thought that that model was so important for kids getting to know the school system.” Eventually, Jay was

formally placed as a vice principal at Ridgeview, which had a year one full-day kindergarten and the rolling out of the program fell to Jay's portfolio. Jay shared many stories around the positive influence of the kindergarten teacher and RECE teamwork on the program, both in the school space and on the teacher/educators' approaches to supporting the children and their families. Jay's current role in supervising the *Welcome to the World Centres* and the family literacy centres is very different. Jay reports to two superintendents: the Early Years and Curriculum and Instruction. Jay feels that they are learning as they go, but that there are a lot of really good practices in place in order for them to get where they need to be. Since Jay's current position with the PFLCs (Peel Family and Literacy Centre) is new to him, Jay sees himself, in the most immediate future, focusing on maintaining touch with the ground administrators.

Marni Flaherty. *Chief Executive Officer, Today's Family Early Learning and Child Care*. Marni is an administrator, parent, and advocate for the early years. Marni is the recipient of the 2012 YWCA Hamilton Women of Distinction Award. Marni took early childhood education at Mohawk College and upon graduation became a sales representative at a company, and is aware that she got the position *because* she was an early childhood educator. It was through this position that Marni began to understand administration and the wide range of quality in the various childcare programs that she visited. Marni had a couple of wonderful mentors who had guided her along and who suggested Marni go back into licensed childcare, but in a more administrative capacity. Marni saw that early childhood education was much broader than centre-based: that it is about children growing up in their communities. Marni began at Today's Family (previously Seven Towers) when she was pregnant with her first child, 21 years ago. Marni has spent her time developing early

childhood education programs and ensuring they have accountability, quality, caring and are meeting local needs. But Marni is also making sure there was a provincial connection, and more recently understanding the importance of a national perspective. Marni comes from a family that instilled an entrepreneurial spirit in her. Over time Marni joined Rotary, was on the board of United Way for 9 years, and currently serves on the board of the Catholic Children's Aid. As well, Marni sits on the Sector Council for the Canadian Childcare Federation, and made this connection as the Chair/Board President for the Home Child Care Association of Ontario. Marni feels that the top three qualities of a leader are "understanding your government, collaboration with other local organizations having to do with children, and the last one, which ties into branding yourself." As the CEO of Today's Family, Marni is a member of The Quality Early Learning Network (QELN). One area that Marni would like to focus on next is on working for higher wages for early childhood educators.

Christine Forsyth. *Chair of the Transitional Council to establish the College of Early Childhood Educators. B.A., (Hons), M.A., LL.M.* Christine, in her 40-year career, has extensive experience in the public, not-for-profit, and private business sectors in Canada and internationally. Christine's efforts have been focused on providing related advice to public and private clients as well as teaching at the University of Toronto and at Osgoode Hall Law School, York University. Christine is currently completing a Ph.D. degree at Osgoode Hall Law School on the use of alternative dispute resolution in professional self-regulation. Christine felt that "Being an oldest child put me in a leadership position, and I think there was a kind of a natural leadership tendency." Upon reflection, Christine said, "I think the skill is to bring people together for consensus. But I think it was a trait that was part of who I was, that was recognized and nurtured by educators, and by family." Christine's interest in

the subject of regulation stood out while she was on the transitional council and Christine feels she brings an expert knowledge in an area that others in the early years sector do not necessarily have. Christine explained that she has a passion for the principle of self-governance long with an interest in professional self-regulation as a form of devolved government, both of which influenced her professional life. In 1994, Christine was asked to be a public member on the College of Nurses of Ontario. This experience led her to being recommended by the College of Nurses to set up the College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers at the end of 1999. After this experience, the government approached Christine to do similar work for early childhood educators. Christine looks forward to her work as the Acting Director of the Canadian Forum on Civil Justice at York University. As well, Christine continues to serve on the CECE council, as she was made a public member following the end of the transitional council.

Martha Friendly. *Childcare Resource and Research Unit (CRRU)*. Martha is involved in social policy, is a parent, researcher, advocate, spokesperson, and a purveyor of knowledge and information. Martha currently teaches a course at Ryerson University. Martha feels that the most significant event that shaped her was her immigration to Canada from New York. When asked why she felt this way, Martha said that she and her husband reflect on that move often. They wonder what they would be doing if they hadn't immigrated in 1971 as both Martha and her husband were involved in the anti-war movement. Martha also feels that while she had actually done only half of a Ph.D. in social psychology in the late 1960s at the University of Connecticut, she did learn about research design and research. Martha managed to always get interesting jobs, doing research and working on issues in research. Martha shared that one of the projects that she worked on was part of the original

Head Start research studies in 1967–1968, her first experience in early childhood education. At that time Martha was working for the state of New Jersey in the Department of Urban and Community Affairs, the only time she worked for government, on juvenile justice. When Martha and her husband immigrated, they had just had their older son. Martha's husband was teaching at York University while completing his dissertation, and so Martha put her son into the York Daycare. Eventually, she got a job at the Social Planning Council, and later worked on childcare research. Martha was able to see how everything evolved in her leadership path, despite her not knowing anything about social policy or what the Senate of Canada did. As for what is next for Martha: "Other than trying to survive?" Martha has just finished writing a chapter for a book on Federalism.

Kim Hiscott. *Executive Director, Andrew Fleck Child Care Services. RECE, ECE.C*

Kim worked at the Y program and quickly realized that this was a field where there are many opportunities. Kim remembered that in her first position she had a manager who would encourage Kim to take on various leadership roles in the community sector. "And here I am, 21 years old, and I'm doing all this stuff. And it was intimidating, for sure, but right away grounded me in the thought, yes, here's your role as an early childhood educator during the day, and then here's your role as an early childhood educator to advocate on behalf of children and families, and to move our profession forward as a profession." The next step was an opportunity to start teaching at the college level at 24 years of age. Kim said that this experience gave her a chance to go and see all of the different programs and start to really observe how some students, 2 or 3 years later, were really not coping so well. This gave Kim the chance to do a lot of soul searching and thinking, and also some workshops on the stages of teacher development. By then Kim had her own children and had had a chance to step

away from the field, which she found very helpful. Kim continued to work more in the social services sector, working with parents. As well, Kim was able to do more training. She felt that this period gave her another opportunity to do some reflecting about the early years sector. It was at that point in time that she had a chance to open a program from scratch. She did a lot of research, and talked to a wide variety of people about how to make sure that the program would be successful. The overlaying message was about being very present, literally and figuratively. Kim's next pivotal move was becoming involved with the AECEO at the provincial level, eventually becoming a board member. Through Kim's work on the AECEO provincial board she was asked to join the external reference group for Dr. Pascal and Minister Broten, as an expert individual not an organizational representative. Kim feels that in her role as an executive director she needs to assist the agency with understanding what is currently happening and how these changes might impact them. She also is the Chair of Child Care Council, the local network of childcare and like-minded organizations, and in that capacity she is "encouraging people to think less territorial, less service focused, more around functions, and again, with the child and family at the centre." As an agency, they have been able to give their city of Ottawa some recommendations, write position papers for all of their programs, and be involved in their own strategic planning.

Zeenat Janmohamed. *Professor, George Brown College. Secondment as Executive Director, Atkinson Centre. Advisory Capacity at Bridging Program. Ph.D. Candidate, OISE/UT.* Zeenat feels that she has always been around people in her workplace who questioned the status quo. "Part of the advocacy work that I've been involved in has just been sort of being tenacious and staying focused on what was a thought process that started about 20 years ago in Ontario." Zeenat shared that she has always been interested in doing work

beyond what was expected of her. In fact, Zeenat stated that her work in advocacy started as a student at Seneca College. By the time Zeenat graduated from her preservice program, she was on the board of the OCBCC, which eventually led to a job at the Coalition. Interestingly, Zeenat felt that she has worked closely with three or four people who have indirectly mentored her and that this mentoring has made a significant difference in her role as a leader. Zeenat also acknowledges that having variety in her work has helped to build her leadership skills, especially since she has sought out people that she has thought to be interesting. Zeenat has been at George Brown College for 15 years, which has also afforded her many different possibilities. For the last 2 years, Zeenat has been part of a small group that has worked with Charles Pascal around the full-day learning report. Zeenat also has an interest in issues of diversity and equity, using a critical framework, and tries to bring that perspective to her various leadership roles. Zeenat is also active with public speaking engagements. Zeenat feels that this is an important component of leadership as it keeps her abreast of what's happening from a sector perspective. Zeenat sees herself going back to doing more activist work in the near future, working on some of the issues that came out of Bill 242. This is in addition to "taking a risk around raising issues of racism, and homophobia." However, Zeenat then went on to explain that as she ages it doesn't matter to her about risk; it is more about supporting the early childhood sector.

Dr. Diane Kashin. *Professor, Seneca College. President, AECEO.* Diane feels that having children had such a dramatic impact on her that it led her to the field of early childhood education. Previously Diane had considered teaching high school history and did her undergraduate degree at York University in the concurrent program. But Diane chose to leave with her Honours B.A. and go to work in an office, followed soon after by the birth of

her first child. By the time Diane had her second child, she started to look into parent education because she knew she needed help and someone suggested that she look into ECE. So Diane had a meeting with the coordinator at the time, who signed her up that day. The second impact that came to Diane was the very first class she took at Seneca College: Child Development. Diane recalls thinking that she could do what this person was doing, and she could do it better. Two years later Diane was teaching Child Development. Her third impact is the successful defense of her Ph.D. thesis. Diane felt it was the hardest thing she had done besides childbirth, and that it was equally life altering. In the last 5 years, Diane has been instrumental in the conception of the Bachelor of Child Development Applied Degree program at Seneca College. Diane also acknowledges that her work with the AECEO has been an enjoyable process, going from being a board member to the President over this last year. As well, Diane is proud of her involvement with Athabasca University doing PLAR (Prior Learning Assessment Recognition) development for ECEs. In the future Diane would like to use her guiding philosophy in social constructivism to push the agenda of the early childhood educator.

Annie Kidder. *Executive Director, People for Education*. Annie stated emphatically that she is a parent, first and foremost. Annie's life experiences and travels have added to her strong and stable perspectives of advocacy in educational needs. Annie's memories of her childhood include many dinner discussions on the politics of the day, and the innate knowledge that there was, in the 1960s, an assumption that everyone had a right to have an opinion, was expected to state that opinion, and that change would occur because of that assertion of opinion. Annie's work experience as a theatre director added to her self-discoveries and a realization that there was more for her to do elsewhere. It was with the

timing of Annie's own children's experiences in the school system that Annie found her niche in the adult world of education. Annie believes that everyone "can do something versus sitting about and not doing anything." When discussing what Annie felt were the most significant achievements of her career in the last 5 years, she felt that along with the growth and excellent work of *People for Education*, it was her recognition that there is an interconnectedness of everything, and finding balance between supporting parents and being involved in advocacy. Her long-term vision includes a realization that education is part of the larger eco-system and has impact on kids and families, a "reimagining of schools, physical connections to the community; and how to define success. Therefore, shifting our own thinking." While Annie sits on a variety of partnership tables, she explained that *People for Education* is not a lobby group, but instead one that takes a communications view, and a "how to make this happen" perspective. In the future, Annie would like to continue to "advocate very strongly, in whatever avenue we feel we can, even for strong childcare, which was seen by us as outside our purview and now it isn't."

Roxanne Lambert. *RECE, Region of Durham, Director of Children's Services Division. Chair, Standards of Practice Committee, College of Early Childhood Educators.* Roxanne graduated 25 years ago from Ryerson and immediately started in the municipal childcare centres. Roxanne moved up to assistant supervisor; had a chance to do a home visitor position; was a centre supervisor; and eventually a program manager; a manager; and then her current director's position. In Roxanne's role as the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM) Roxanne has utilized her ability to look at the big picture. Roxanne feels that she had established the leadership role in the Region, as the CMSM through the Best Start Network, which she had the opportunity to co-chair. Another significant focus was

through the establishment of the College of Early Childhood Educators. Roxanne was elected to the Council, and feels it is just an honour to be involved in “the whole piece of understanding how the government’s structure works and being involved in leading and moving the College forward as it develops.” Initially Roxanne thought she wanted to be a writer, a journalist. However, after volunteering to work in a Montessori school, Roxanne realized how much she enjoyed working with children. Then after having her own children, Roxanne wanted to try to make things better for children and their families. In her role as the Chair of the Standards of Practice Committee, Roxanne has been able to utilize those early yearnings for writing through letters to the childcare community, drafting reports to committee and Council, and disseminating information to the community in various ways. Roxanne did not think that her role would be changing in the near future, but instead she will “still continue to see increased leadership responsibility as a service system manager. That education does in fact start at prenatal to 18. And particularly as a service system manager, trying to support childcare, along with the full-day kindergarten, along with the concept of hubs, services for families.”

Dr. Rachel Langford. *Director and Associate Professor, School of Early Childhood Education, Ryerson University*. Rachel never intended to be a teacher. In fact, she wanted to focus on the area of history. However, Rachel experienced difficulty in school and it was not until she was in university that she was identified as having dyslexia. “This is the nature of a learning disability is that you seem to display tremendous strengths and then unbelievable weaknesses, which often beguile people so that they don’t really understand what’s going on.” In fact, Rachel dropped out of university several times and then reached out to tutoring in an effort to complete her studies. This led Rachel to tutoring children with dyslexia; and

eventually commenced her teaching career. Once Rachel moved from British Columbia to Ontario, she was pulled back into the field and continues to be an educator. Rachel and I share a number of common impacts, including a significant one around the “conflicted feelings about the authority that is necessary to be an educator, to be a leader.” Rachel has published articles on this particular subject. Rachel’s role as the director of an academic institution is to “facilitate opportunities for people to get together and dialogue about all of the critical issues that are happening right now.” As well, Rachel has been able to contribute to discussions through position papers, newspaper editorial pieces, and speaking engagements focusing on early years issues. Rachel is proudly a member of the board of directors of the AECEO, and has been a panel participant at several of their annual conferences. Rachel shared that the School of Early Childhood Education at Ryerson University has initiated an additional qualification in kindergarten, and they have been accredited by the Ontario College of Teachers to be service provider of AQs (Additional Qualification courses). At the same time Rachel explained that they are “also pursuing discussions with another postsecondary institution on a collaborative Faculty of Ed, B.A. in ECE, and a Bachelor of Education, as well.” While Rachel was unsure of what she might be focusing on next after each of the current projects are completed, she was sure it would be in the area of postsecondary education as well as the research arena.

Dr. Donna Lero. *Jarislowski Chair in Families and Work, Professor, University of Guelph*. Donna shared that when she was a young college student she was a Head Start teacher in New York City during the first year of the program, 1965. As well, Donna was appointed the role of being a site researcher, doing evaluation. Donna’s experiences in Canada have also provided a rich backdrop to her leadership journey. Donna has been

involved in a number research projects, including the *National Child Care Study* in 1998; and *You Bet I Care*; she has also collaborated on a group of inclusion studies. Donna has been involved in the Best Start Quality and Human Resources Expert Panel. She acknowledges that “We all come to our roles in different ways and I don’t have formal training in ECE. My background is interdisciplinary and child development and family life. So my role as a researcher and as an advocate has always focused on child development and the work-family and social policy side.” However, she finds it interesting how each of us can complement each other with our various backgrounds and roles. Ultimately, Donna is quite concerned that planning around inclusion of children with disabilities keeps getting missed or sidelined with the transition to early childhood programs. When asked about Donna’s plans for the future, she says: “I think people know where I am if they want me. I am still doing this kind of thing [Donna is waving her hands and laughing] – Remember me?”

Lois Mahon. *RECE. President, Ontario College of Early Childhood Educators (CECE)*. Lois has lived in Northern Ontario, “not the real true north but at least far enough north that I think that has had an influence on who I am and my early childhood training.” Lois graduated in 1972 from Niagara College. During Lois’ time at Niagara College she and her fellow students set up JK programs and ran them in the English Catholic School Boards. During the 1970s, Lois was involved in the development of new childcare programs that focused on the inclusion of children with special needs into regular childcare programs. Lois was a member of the transitional council of CECE and feels that she was offered this position partly because of her contacts, her willingness to both travel and to speak up on issues of importance. Lois has had the opportunity to sit on at least five of the provincial advisory

committees or task forces which assists her in influencing public policy during the current roll out of changes.

Charles McCarthy. *Former Superintendent, York Catholic District School Board.*

Charles feels that he was born with a strong work ethic. Charles attended a high school taught by Jesuits and is clear in the opinion that the Jesuits influenced his work ethic and his way of seeing life. During Charles' high school and university days, he worked for a man who taught Charles the value of relationships with people and the value of how hard it is to make a dollar. But the strongest lesson that this man taught Charles was that when you trust people and have faith in them, they will produce for you. There were many educators who saw something in Charles and encouraged him. Charles has tried to reciprocate over the years. Charles feels that "my strength as an educator, as a leader, came out of when I listened to and empowered people and guided without telling." In the last 5 years, Charles spent 3 of those years working on the policies and procedures from the board. Therefore, Charles did not feel that he had a lot of direct impact. But during the 3 years prior to that period, Charles worked in Maple, York Region. Charles was a part of many initiatives coming out of the YCDSB. Charles feels that by leveling the playing field then kids, by nature, are going to be successful

Kerry McCuaig. *Executive Director, Better Child Care Education. Research*

activist. Kerry felt that the first event in her life that was significant in her leadership development was when she was involved with Organizing Working Women, a women's organization in the 1970s, which was designed to train women to be activists in the union movement. The next noteworthy influence was being the executive director for the Coalition. Kerry explained that the Coalition "brought together not only childcare operators and

childcare practitioners but also a whole range of organizations that were influenced by the availability of childcare or the lack of it.” The third influence that Kerry shared was being part of the team that developed *With Our Best Future in Mind*. This experience was somewhat of a challenge trying to balance all of the stakeholders and their needs in a fragmented sector, while keeping children and their families at the forefront of her work. More recently, Kerry has focused on research and writing. For example, Kerry worked with the Senate to do a major report on the status of early learning and childcare in Canada, following the OECD Report. As well, Kerry has worked with Fraser Mustard and Margaret McCain on the development of the “Early Years Study 2”. Kerry feels that her “main work has been popularizing the need to move from chaos to coherence in public policy and highlighting the lessons learned from other jurisdictions, and also pointing out the dangers.” More recently, Kerry has been working on “Early Years Study 3”, which will focus on public policy, “good public policy.”

Susan Morris. *RECE, ECEDH*. One of the first impacts that Susan reflects on is when it was recommended that she attend a vocational high school. Susan stood up for herself and attended the regular high school, right through to Grade 13. A second influence that Susan remembers is the time when a guidance counselor suggested that she look into working with children with special needs because of Susan’s own challenges in being dyslexic and because of her strength in being able to think “out-of-the-box.” Another quality about Susan that she shared as a significant impact is that “deep down inside I like to play. This is a job where you can take incredible moments and just play.” In addition to these noteworthy items, Susan feels that it is important to remember that in our profession we can sometimes impact others in tremendous ways without even knowing it, or by the slightest

gesture. Over the last 5 years, Susan is proud of her involvement in developing the face of Ontario Early Years in York Region. As for what Susan will be doing next, she expressed a desire to continue to find ways to support her community and her sector; and to provide strong inservice professional development opportunities.

Tracey Newman. *CUPE Local #5200 President*. Tracey was able to recall a time when she was able to stand up for a school-wide program in Grade 5. Tracey credits her strength to speak up for the marginalized to her father's guidance and sage words. A final example of Tracey's strength as a leader, and one which was the impetus to her current position, happened during a school board meeting when Tracey was able to see a situation from a nonconformist perspective, and ultimately defend that perspective. Tracey remembers having a lifelong love for being around children, and feels that in her current role, and as a former school board EA, she is finally reaching her dream of working with children, and fighting for their rights. This is in combination with Tracey's love for politics, making the best of both worlds into one. Initially, when full-day kindergarten came into being, Tracey's involvement was restricted to supporting her own local union branch. Then after Tracey took an organizing course, she was approached by CUPE national to join the summer campaign travelling to different locations in Ontario. Now "we're advocating for equality in the classroom and working on a collective agreement." Once this enormous task is completed, Tracey will be focusing on a DECE (Designated Early Childhood Educator) job description, then pay equity and job evaluations, along with all of Tracey's other CUPE related tasks.

Dr. Charles Pascal. *Premier Special Advisor for Early Learning. Professor, TPS, OISE/UT.* As an assistant professor of psychology at McGill University who was interested in applied learning, and whose wife was also developing her own professional career, Charles sought ways to find support in raising their first child who was born at the end of 1969. Charles went on to found the McGill Communities Families Centre, the first childcare centre of its kind in a Canadian university. Another important influence for Charles happened when he was the chair of the Council Regions for the Colleges. In this capacity Charles led a process called *Vision 2000*, which focused on the renewal of the mandate of Ontario's colleges. Charles also shared that being a mentor is "more important than anything. Mentoring others who think strategically, and think with equity in mind, since one of my core values is equity, either as a role model or as a cajoler or as a professor, as an educator, making a difference in how future practitioners and researchers think." Charles shared stories from when he was a college president and the Deputy Minister of Education. In this latter capacity, Charles was part of the launch of the *Royal Commission on Learning*. Until recently Charles was in the Atkinson Foundation (for 15 years), and this is where he feels that they "started inventing the future." While it is common knowledge that Charles had a lot to do with the current transitions in the early years, I asked Charles to share what he felt was most noteworthy, for his own leadership growth, during the last 5 years. Charles explained that it was unusual to be asked to stay on as the Premier's Special Advisor, "developing child and family centres and overcoming fragmentation from the 0–3.8, all the way through up to 12 years old. So I'm now kind of hands on as a partner of the Minister of Children and Youth Services."

Michael Pimento. *Former professor Sheridan College and Centennial College.*

Michael credited his wife Barb with his pathway to leadership. It was through Barb's work at Lambton College in ECE that Michael was able to truly see the ECE component. This exposure assisted Michael in realizing that he enjoyed being part of a kindergarten classroom more than the other primary and junior grades. A pivotal point in Michael's professional journey occurred when he made the decision to move into a junior kindergarten classroom. Unfortunately, this potential move became a battleground of sorts, but Michael stood up for his rights, his strengths, and his conviction that he, a male teacher, would be a benefit to children and families in this capacity. At this same time Michael had gone back to school to begin his Master's program. Michael remembers this as being the time of *To Herald a Child*, near the end of the 1970s, and how Laurier LaPierre had tried to intervene on Michael's behalf with the school board. Michael's first junior kindergarten class was so large that he ended up with an ECE as an EA, but working together as two professionals. Michael made the move to the world of early childhood education in 1986. Michael taught at Sheridan College for 2 years. Then he moved to Centennial College in 1988, where he was involved on a report to the Teacher Education Council of Ontario. Michael first came to the Ministry of Education in 2000 on secondment with the Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities, from Centennial College. Michael had program responsibility but in the Justice area (all of police foundations, preservice fire fighters, law clerk, correctional worker). Upon the move to the Ministry of Education, Michael was given a large portion of the stakeholders relations piece. In looking forward, Michael states that while working in the ministry came about from a conscious desire to do so, he is looking forward to his retirement.

James Ryan. *Outgoing President OECTA (Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association). B.A., B.Ed., M.Ed.* James remembers the issue of social justice being introduced to him as early as Grade 5 through various teachers. As well, in having grown up in the Jane-Finch projects, he was regularly exposed to issues of poverty and injustice. James ended up choosing education as a career path “because of the meaningfulness of the career.” Originally when he became involved in OECTA, it was more of a professional association than a union. James explained that in the last 20 years OECTA has transformed into a professional union. Growing up, he remembers taking on leadership roles, such as the President of the University’s Student Union, but “always felt the cry of social justice, the cry of the poor, of all oppressed groups.” James was the Chair for the Ontario Coalition for Social Justice when it was still in existence. And he has taught every grade from 1 to OAC. When James was the first Vice-President of OECTA, his primary role was as liaison between the units and social justice. As part of the executive, they supported the move to full-day kindergarten, with the lowest classroom numbers possible, and that the childcare component and kindergarten be interwoven into a seamless day.

Chari Schwartz. *Interim Director, UJA Federation Centre for Jewish Education.* Chari has only recently been seconded to her current role at the Federation. This meant a duality in roles as she was also finishing her work with the transition team, envisioning how the Federation might look in the future. Through this process Chari came to the realization that she is “invested in the concept of collaborative leadership,” and this awareness has had a significant impact on Chari’s own leadership direction. Chari shared two educational epiphanies: the transformative thinking behind family education; and having the opportunity to become a true reflective practitioner when studying with two Israeli Master Educators on

Reflective Practice. Chari is looking forward to learning about brokerage; becoming an expert in fundraising; looking at quality from a teacher's level, as well as a governance level; and focusing on true capacity within the system.

Dr. Stuart Shanker. *Distinguished Research Professor of Philosophy and Psychology at York University. Director, MEHRI, York University.* Stuart's most influential experience occurred while working at his father's business in downtown Toronto. "I saw, all around me, kids that I knew were just as bit as smart as me. And I also knew that they didn't have a chance in life." This epiphany led Stuart to the stance that "the most important thing we had to do in Ontario was give every kid an equal and fair shot." The second most influential experience for Stuart was his involvement in sports (a disciplined activity), which he now knows is so significant for a child's self-regulation. As for a third example of leadership influence in his life, Stuart extolled the virtues of his postsecondary educational connections to master thinkers. For example, at the University of Toronto, Northrop Frye was a mentor to Stuart. In fact, Frye connected Stuart with Isaiah Berlin. And in turn, Berlin introduced Stuart to a multitude of astonishing professors at Oxford. In recent years, Stuart was the first President of the Council of Early Childhood Development, at Fraser Mustard's request. At the same time, Stuart and Mustard were working together on the "Early Years Study 2." These two events led to a meeting with the Premier's Chief of Staff, along with approximately six other early years leaders. While acknowledging the importance of working with these individuals, and in having input into the direction of educational policy in Ontario, Stuart also felt the need to develop the skills to take his own work as a pure scientist and develop it into policy. Stuart felt it was very important to give credit to Premier McGuinty for engaging in this process of educational change. Stuart continues to work at

“understanding what self-regulation is, how it relates to things like self-control, self-disciplined social behaviour.”

Eduarda Sousa. *Executive Director, Association for Early Childhood Educators of Ontario (AECEO)*. Eduarda was born in Portugal and her family immigrated to Canada when she was a very young child, but she was able to learn English quite quickly. It was Eduarda’s responsibility, as the eldest child, to do the family’s banking and talk on behalf of her parents in the community. Eduarda recalls many examples of being propelled into the adult world, taking care of others on an ongoing basis. Having children of her own was always an important goal, and shortly after having her second son, Eduarda began working at the AECEO after working in the public sector within the Portuguese community on social service issues. That period helped to define her skills in advocacy. Originally, Eduarda was hired by the AECEO to coordinate the professional development activities. Seven years later she was made acting executive director and took on the position officially in 2000. When talking about her role during the transitional period Eduarda explains that the AECEO was instrumental in advocating for legislative recognition for ECEs, culminating in the inception of the CECE. As well, the AECEO was extremely dedicated to the development and support of the Full Day Early Learning Report. The AECEO was and continues to be involved in professional development, advocacy, information dissemination and being a voice on various tables in the sector.

Claire Sumerlus. *Head of School, Robbins Hebrew Academy*. Claire began her career as a kindergarten teacher in 1977. She has experience in most grades up to Grade 12, and was a counselor in the school system. Eventually the Winnipeg School Division trained Claire as a Youth Violence Prevention Expert. Throughout her career, Claire did some work

with the aboriginal community; restorative justice; restitution; and became a trainer of trainers in Conflict Resolution and Mediation. Eventually she became an administrator for a number of schools in Winnipeg, ultimately settling into a school with multiple language programs for 10 years. Looking for change, she came to Toronto, to the Robbins Academy. Claire's significant impacts begin with an early awareness of wanting to be a teacher. The final driving force for Claire was an awareness that she could never find a way to keep kids out of gangs, despite a strong relationship with these children. In the immediate future, Claire would like to raise the bar in Jewish Education, retire and go back to working with children with severe problems in an inner city setting.

Sylvie Tourigny. *Children's Integration Support Services, Andrew Fleck Child Care Services*. Sylvie has been in the field of early learning for just over 20 years, and began as an educator in a childcare centre. At one point, that centre began to partner with a neighbouring nursery school that was dedicated to children with special needs. Sylvie met her now colleague, Moira D'Aoust, who was the supervisor of the nursery school. The two programs began to implement reverse integrations, which was quite successful. Eventually that school closed down and Sylvie moved over to Andrew Fleck Child Care, which had just created the current program they offer. When Sylvie discusses inclusion in the community, she feels that we need to look at the quality of the childcare programs that include children with special needs. She would like to see an accreditation piece become necessary for all programs to ensure quality for all children. In addition to this, Sylvie is concerned that the childcare system is not being attended to fully enough while the focus is on the implementation of the full-day learning program. Sylvie works on many of the same initiatives as Moira, and continues to look forward to more opportunities in advocacy with her colleague.

Joe Trovato. *Registered Psychologist Associate, Erinoak Kids Centre for Treatment and Development.* Joe's background is grounded in developmental theory. He is a Registered Psychologist, Master's Level and he made the conscious decision not to obtain a Ph.D. in order to be devoted to working with the children who need the help. Joe initially moved to Oakville specifically to work at the Oaklands Regional Centre. Unfortunately, the clients were not as high functioning as expected and Joe felt the facility was not going to be able to fulfill its original mandate. He submitted a proposal to the government to set up an assessment service that would give functional assessments for children with developmental disabilities. Joe approached the Credit Valley Treatment Centre for Developmentally Handicapped Children (now Erinoak) and asked them to sit on his board. In turn, Joe ran a 1-day per week clinic for them for 5 years. Then in 2000 he accepted a position with what is now known as Erinoak Kids. In 2003, Joe left Erinoak to assist the Premier with setting up the Ministry for Children's Services. Joe also proudly shared that he was part of the push for the CECE. The first and most significant impact on Joe was his friendship with a child who was perceived as different. This friendship eventually led Joe to volunteering at the Child & Parent Resource Institute (CPRI) in a residence for children with dual diagnosis. Joe's second impacting experience was while training and interacting with B.F. Skinner and Lovaas in the mid- to late 1970s. The third impact that he shared was his experiences at Oaklands, as Joe was able to utilize a lot of his skills in a very practical manner. It was there that Joe was taught how to do psycho-educational evaluations. More recently, he was part of the Best Start work; a senior policy advisor for the Minister; and had opportunities to speak with both Charles Pascal and Fraser Mustard on related issues. Joe currently sits on the Minister's Advisory Council for Special Education. He is also focusing on encouraging his colleagues at

Erinoak Kids to advocate. Joe also would like to see the issues of early identification and intervention waiting lists be resolved.

Joy Vance. *Executive Director, York Child Development and Family Services, Inc. (YCD). NNEB (National Nursery Education Board, UK). RECE. RTI.* Joy came to Canada in 1989 after graduating as a qualified NNEB in England. She worked for 2 years as a nanny, while attending night school. Joy worked in childcare as a supervisor for 9 years before joining the York Region District School Board, as their Coordinator of Child Care & Community Services. Joy has experience as a board member for nonprofit childcare centres; is the Chair of the York Region Best Start Network; and sits on a multitude of early years sector tables. She also has had opportunities to write relevant position papers. When discussing impacts on her leadership journey, Joy feels that coming to Canada as a 19-year-old and starting fresh was life altering. She also felt her varied early years positions have afforded her the ability to work with many professionals from many different perspectives. For example, Joy started off in licensed childcare, and now is the executive director of licensed childcare, with exposure to Ontario Early Years and CAP-C. However, she feels that her community-based roles have afforded her the experience of making “planning tables more coherent and collaborative.” When explaining her vision of leadership, Joy shared that she feels it is about encouragement and partnerships. The necessity of sustainability plans is an ongoing issue and one Joy feels her agency will need to focus on for the foreseeable future.

Goranka Vukelich. *Chair, Department of Community Service within the School of Health & Life Services and Community Services, Conestoga College. M.A. in Human Growth and Development, Ph.D. Candidate, REGE, ECE.C.* Goranka feels that her own mother, who was an educator, had a significant impression on her perspectives of leadership. Goranka feels that she, upon reflecting on her relationship with her mother, “didn’t quite appreciate her intelligence, and the power that she had until it was too late.” However, Goranka did realize how much she did inherit from her mother in many positive ways. Her next significant memory is when she was deciding where she wanted to go for postsecondary education. Despite applying to a multitude of options, Goranka did what she felt was the unexpected and applied to Ryerson Polytechnical Institute. While she was accepted into the various universities that she had applied for, Goranka also was offered a spot at Ryerson. Another event that shaped Goranka was her graduate work at the High Scope Educational Research Institute, which was when she “started to realize that my job wasn’t to do things *for* them; it was to facilitate their doing of it.” One of the more significant things that Goranka feels she has done in her current role is to create opportunities for faculty, staff, and the community to come to work together. On a personal note, Goranka is looking forward to completing her Ph.D.

Elaine Winick, *Ph.D. Candidate, M.Ed., REGE, RTI, Family Education Specialist.* I am very aware of the pivotal pieces that have helped to shape who I am as an early childhood educator. Despite growing up in a household that was restricted financially, with a mother who had difficulty being nurturing and a father who was seriously ill all of my life, I knew I was loved. I never doubted this fact. Both of my parents, without question or hesitation, would volunteer to help others. Connected to this fact, I have always been surrounded by

strong female role models. While I was a meek and subservient child, I now emulate the positive models of my life. On the other side, I have had too many negative educational experiences. While I explored this journey later in life, the most significant was having an abusive (even for the 1960s) kindergarten teacher and having my brother and mother come to my rescue on the culminating abusive event. The next noteworthy piece of my journey was having my own children and becoming their voice in every aspect necessary for them, while still encouraging them to be independent in thought and action. I also see my Master's program as bringing me full circle in educational experiences. It was uplifting, empowering, and opened the door to a world I had thought was closed to me. And all of this with a supportive husband who loves me unconditionally, despite my eccentricity for the colour purple. Over the last 5 years I have been working on my Ph.D. Through this experience, I have had the opportunity to meet and work with many of the visionaries I read about as a young adult. I have had occasion to speak at conferences, symposia, and as part of expert panels. I am seen as an expert in my sector of choice. I am at the beginning of the end of my professional career and I wish to just get the work done. I want to teach future early years leaders. I want to continue to advocate for my grandson's children's educational options. My future is filled with research ideas. And I am excited about the possibilities.

Setting the Stage

A number of my interview participants asked why I had asked them to be an interview participant. I explained that the list was based on my own professional history, zeroing in on those individuals that I felt were my unmet mentors. For the most part, these were the individuals that I had read about as an ECE student, and whose research work I utilize in my own professional work.

With each of my interview participants I felt as though we were speaking a special language, and our conversations just flowed. I learned so much from each one of my participants and about each of their expert perspectives. For example, I gained new understanding about advocacy and funding issues from Kerry, about social policies from Martha, and about the need to see the perspective of both the early years and the school boards from Pat and Maria. As well, I was led to understand that there are many different sides and perspectives in this whole issue of the early years, its management, its structure, its members' needs (e.g., children, parents, educators, administrators, researchers, advocates, politicians, and bureaucracy). I could have listened all day and still wanted more. At one point I was in awe with the realization that I was having one-on-one time with Charles Pascal, a man of massive time demands and influence; and I also remember thinking that I was having a private lesson/lecture with *the* Dr. Stuart Shanker. I believe that doing these interviews, with all of these icons, has had a bearing on how I view my field, how I view myself as a professional, and has humbled me as a person.

In addition, this process of interviewing such key people has assisted in understanding the background work needed, and already done, to get the early learning sector to where we could have this kind of movement forward. I think it is important that the community at large understand that in order to create movement forward, there needs to be first the ideas and understandings of what is current and where the vision is going, and the steps needed in order to continue the journey to reach that vision. Then the pieces that need to be in place to get the movement forward started, keeping the momentum going and in a positive motion (rather than backwards or stuck in neutral) can begin to take shape. And it

wasn't because of just one or two people, or even one or two groups, that change can take place on this massive of a scale.

Survey Participants

The questions included in the survey were broken into five distinct categories: demographic, understanding of current issues, organizational impacts, professional impacts, and future thoughts. Geographically, the participants most represented were from Hamilton, Ottawa, Toronto, and York Region. The gender breakdown is not surprising for this field, with 95% female and 5% male participants, and the average length as a teacher-educator was over 20 years (43%).

The survey participants represent a wide variety of teacher-education institutions: College, 32%; University, 16%; Early Years Institution/Organization, 39%; and private educational institution, 16% (see Figure 3). I found it interesting that 19% of the respondents felt that they did not fit into any of the offered categories for this question as they were either retired, or worked for a school board, a community-based agency, or a childcare centre. It is unfortunate that I could not do any follow up to find out why those who worked for a community-based agency or a childcare centre did not consider their employing agency as early years-based. So much of what we do and express in our sector, from my experience, is often from a sense of isolation and disconnection to the others in the profession.

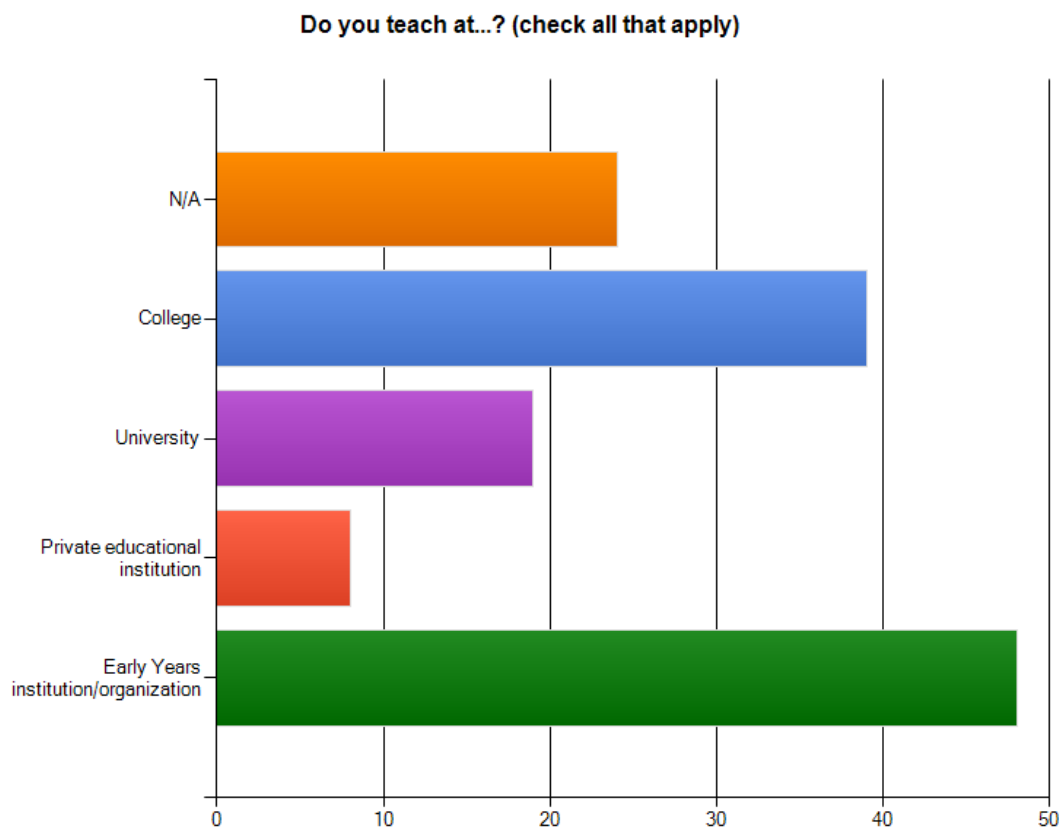


Figure 3. Teacher-education institutions.

I found the responses to the question pertaining to area of experience/expertise (see Figure 4) to be quite positive, as it appears that there is a strong focus on inservice training, whether it be formal or informal. As well, there is a strong indication that the early years sector provides a significant amount of options for training and education. The intent with informal options was in reference to such things as, for example, staff meetings, peer-to-peer support, or changes in rules and regulations. And formal could include professional learning workshops (in-house or community accessed), or through conferences and/or upgrading of credentials (educational institution-based).

Indicate which areas are part of your teacher-education experience and expertise:

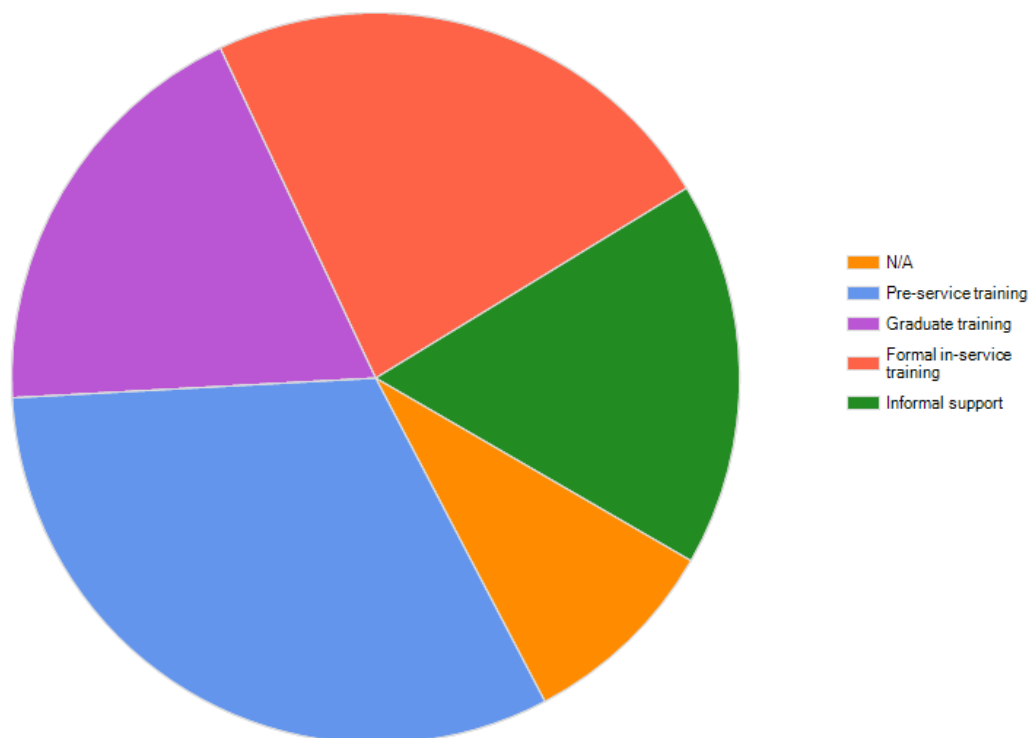


Figure 4. Teacher-education experience and expertise.

However, there were some surprises that stood out right from the beginning of the data analysis (see Figure 5). For example, there appears to be some confusion over the use of the ECE designation without being registered in the College of Early Childhood Educators (CECE), thus RECE not ECE, as well as around the use of the not-as-well-known certification designation in conjunction with being a Registered ECE (RECE, ECE.C versus RECEC). This statement in itself is confusing, and thus it must be just as confusing for those trying to navigate the new professional status process. A person can no longer use the designation of ECE in Ontario unless they are registered with the CECE. For example, this means that they cannot add the letters after their name, or be hired as a designated early childhood educator. They may say they hold a diploma in early childhood education, but they

may not indicate in any way that they are a practicing ECE. While I may no longer be in direct contact with children and/or families, I am registered with the CECE therefore I may add the designation of RECE to my professional name. Thus, the addition of the “R” indicates registration and legal usage rights. Taking this a step further, someone who has achieved certification status with the AECEO (an arduous process that results in this designated status) is currently allowed to add a “C” after their ECE. Not after their RECE, as at this point in time the CECE has not begun to officially recognize the certification process. Therefore, those who have achieved certification status and are registered with CECE must use both the RECE and ECE.C designations. While both the CECE and the AECEO are working out the modifications needed to process this blip, and any changes needed, the general early years sector is in a state of confusion or ignorance. However, if I take the perspective that the individuals who responded to this survey include the current postsecondary institution teacher-educators, I ponder why they do not know of this contradiction.

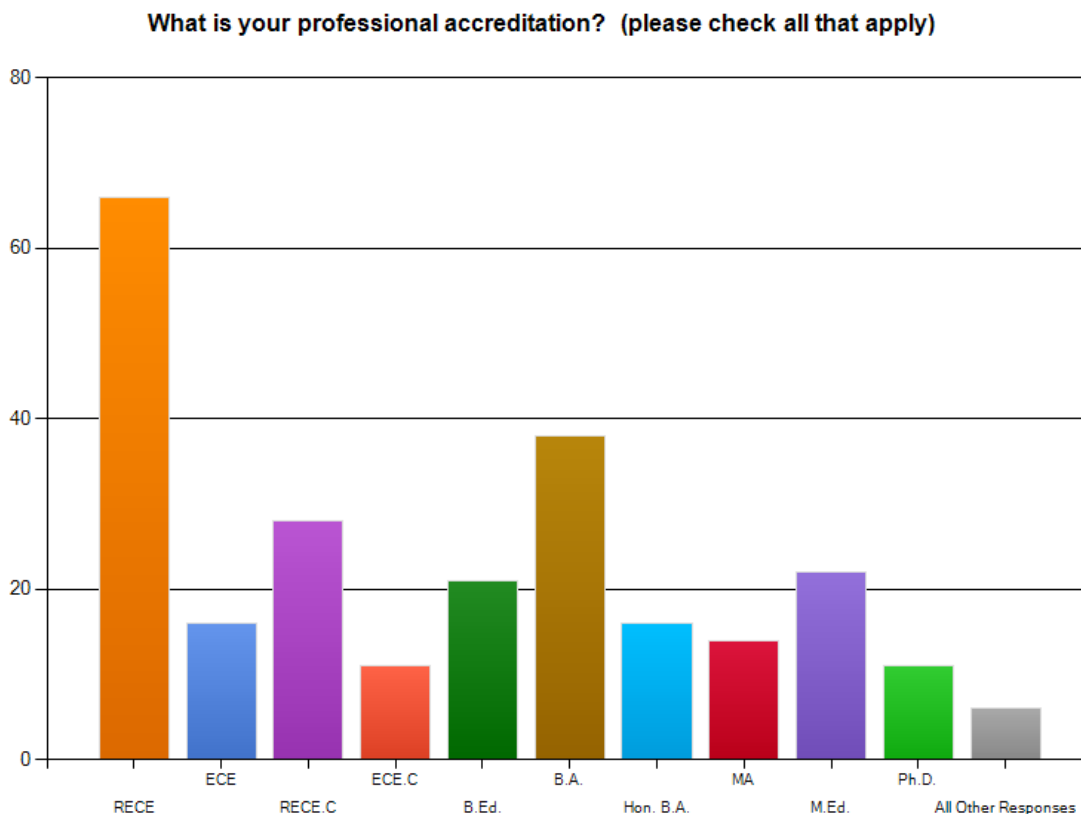


Figure 5. Professional accreditations.

The actual survey question results also show that the lowest number of participants have a Ph.D. accreditation. This states to me that it is possible that only approximately 14% of the participants may teach at the degree program level. While someone with a Master's level may teach at the degree level, including applied degrees, it is common knowledge that at least 50% of the faculty members should hold a Ph.D. Equally, the faculty in a college diploma program may hold either a Master's or Ph.D. degree, while there are still some who hold neither graduate degree or even an undergraduate degree. It is also interesting to note that more than 43% of the participants have been teacher-educators for over 20 years, supporting the notion that the leadership is growing older and that there is a need to mentor and nurture future leaders among the early years field. A pleasant surprise is that just over

29% of the participants are informal trainers, and to me, this indicates that there is a strong leadership contingency among those who work directly with children and/or families.

Emerging Themes:

Leadership Development, Professionalization, and Intellectualization of Practice

In total, there were eight themes that emerged from the analysis of the data collected (see Appendix K), but for the purposes of this study I decided to focus on three specific themes: leadership, professionalization of the sector, and intellectualization of the sector.

Chapter Five explores the theme related concept of leadership including a discussion of leadership in general, as it pertains to the early years sector in its current transitional phase.

In Chapters Six and Seven, I focus on the top two themes that came out of the analysis: professionalism and intellectualization. With the early years shift to the management of the Ministry of Education, and a strong amount of focus on making strides forward coming from the ministry, focusing on these two themes seemed most appropriate. Achieving true status as professionals and how to go about it (e.g., intellectualization of the training and education process), as well as the ongoing learning necessary to maintain professional status are now being discussed at the education institutions responsible for preservice and inservice options.

Human life needs knowledge, reflection, and thought to make itself knowable to itself, including its complex and ultimately mysterious nature. A strong and rigorous human science text distinguishes itself by its courage and resolve to stand up for the uniqueness and significance of the notion to which it has dedicated itself. This means also that a rigorous human science is prepared to be 'soft,' 'soulful,' 'subtle,' and 'sensitive' in its effort to bring the range of meanings of life's phenomena to our reflective awareness. (Van Manen, 1990, pp. 17–18)

Chapter Five

Emerging Theme: Leadership Development

The amount of rich data that I ended up gathering was more than I could ever have anticipated. Therefore, I decided to focus on three themes, and their related issues: leadership; professionalization of the sector; and intellectualization. In this chapter the focus is on leadership: understanding its meaning, its purpose, and its relevance to the early years sector. The final component of this chapter is an exploration of how each of the leaders interviewed defined the concept of leadership within their own journey to this point in time.

It is also important to explain the sudden appearance of new literature and theory in the analysis chapters. In Grounded Theory methodology, the researcher does not know what they will be discovering until they have completed their analysis of the related data. Therefore, it is not unusual for new sources for theory to be introduced in the following three chapters.

Understanding Leadership Nationally

North American examples of ECE leadership development and support are plentiful and readily available for every level of expertise and interest. For example, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) provides a multitude of opportunities for leadership development for its membership, as well as the early learning field at large. Additionally, NAEYC has a storehouse of teaching tools that address the myriad of issues that an ECE leader might wish to focus on in his or her own professional development.

Another publication that is dedicated to the early years is *Interaction* (published by the Canadian Child Care Federation), which recently devoted a volume to professional policy growth and development as well as leadership training. An article in one *Interaction* issue focused on the Alberta Resource Centre for Quality Enhancement (ARCQE). This organization focuses on “building capacity and enhancing quality of programs in Alberta” (Ferguson, 2010, p. 13). In other words, there is an awareness of the need to continue to scaffold on existing programming to effectively enhance the skill level of frontline staff. This enhancement process is completed through “community building; professional development; research and best practices; resource development and distribution; and mentorship and coaching” (Ferguson, 2010, p. 13). Leadership is provided both by the agency and through the agency.

The Childcare Exchange is an online resource that (as of October 2012) offered 255 options, including 205 articles, on the topic of ECE leadership. Among these resources are a number of research articles that directly address what an ECE leader might look like or characteristics of early childhood leaders (Goffin & Washington, 2008; Hnatiuk & Gebretensae, 2005; Jones, 2007; Kagan & Hallmark, 2001; Meitlicki, 2010; Neugebauer & Neugebauer, 1998; Rigby & Neuman, 2005; Sullivan, 2009). Professional knowledge, the necessity and impact of life experience, as well as the role of leadership in an ever-demanding field are some components of these previous studies. Rigby and Neuman (2005) interviewed six panelists and asked specific questions about their professional experiences on becoming an ECE leader. In this article, the resulting summary of responses provided insight into the personal paths that each participant took to their current leadership role and a variety of similarities amongst their journeys. For example, the significant impact of academic

training was a recurring theme. Some experience with policy making, the need for networking, and seeing the bigger picture were all important pieces for these particular panelists. Hnatiuk and Gebretensae (2005) asked seventeen respondents worldwide a series of leadership development-related questions and provided the responses in their article. Jones (2007) shared that ECE leaders convey many similarities and ultimately create community, but that there are concerns that leadership is a daunting task because it cannot be taught. As well, Jones concluded that much work still needed to be done in understanding ECE leadership. Each of these articles have provided a strong start to the creation of a portrait of what a leader might look like and how they came to this stage of their professional life.

Taking Pause



Initially when I reflected on what might represent leadership, fireworks came to mind, as though a leader had to produce something huge and spectacular for all to see. But through this study I realized that leadership comes from the unity of unique individuals creating a harmonious landscape impacting beyond the eye's perception. It is a slow process brought together by such traits as unique experiences, mentorship, and a willingness to enter into opportunities.

Leadership Characteristics

Interestingly, theoretical research shows a pattern of particular criteria for those in a position of educational leadership. Leaders are to be: wholehearted (Cameron, 1998; Kosnik & Beck, 2009; Palmer, 1983); caring and mindful (Kessler, 2000; Miller, 2006; Noddings, 2003; Sergiovanni, 2000); innovative (Danielewicz, 2001; Gardner, 2008; Kosnik & Beck, 2009; Palmer, 1983); ethical (Campbell, 2003; Fullan, 2001; Gardner, 2008; Sergiovanni, 2000); a community builder (Kosnik & Beck, 2009; Palmer, 1983); advocate (hooks, 2000); mentor (Palmer, 1983); someone who teaches as they live (Dewey, 1990; Kosnik & Beck, 2009; Palmer, 1983); one who continues to learn and teach in multiple ways (Ball, 2000; Palmer, 1983); and, someone who uses current research to inform practice (Dewey, 1990; Kosnik & Beck, 2009; Palmer, 1983).

And Those Characteristics Include

Wholehearted: Examples of theories of wholeheartedness as a factor of educational leadership include Palmer's (1983) as he talks about educators being passionate about their role in the classroom. Reflective practice (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Eisner, 1998; Fraser, 2000; Palmer, 1983; Rubin, 1991; Sergiovanni, 2000; Van Manen, 1986) is another core component of wholeheartedness. In order to fully appreciate what transpires between educator and student, the educator must first fully recognize what they have to offer and the impact on the learning environment. Rubin (1991) states: "I suddenly realized that it was not the primary exposure to a work of art, but rather the secondary contemplation, which evokes genuine understanding" (p. 49), thus likening the craft of teaching to an artistic endeavour.

Caring and mindful: The field of education, on a base level, focuses on the caring of others but does not necessarily hold a caring attitude for those directly in front of us, our education students, as individuals. Consequently, this inclusion of caring as a quality or characteristic of effectiveness of leadership is one of clear and conscious choice for many educational theorists (Kessler, 2000; Miller, 2006; Noddings, 2003; Sergiovanni, 2000). Mindfulness (Miller, 2006) is also a characteristic that is not overlooked as a conscious approach by educational leaders. Mindfulness encourages the educator to be aware of how messages are sent through even the subtlest of ways and an awareness that everything that one does carries its own message.

Innovative: Kosnik and Beck (2009) convey the necessity of innovation in education when discussing recommendations for preservice education. In fact they adopt an approach that not only recommends innovation and awareness of the necessity of innovation, but also that teacher-educators should be role modeling the recommended approaches fluidly in their own practice. The issue of stagnation due to a lack of imagination is addressed by Eisner (2002) who links *what* is being taught, with *how* that *what* is taught:

The kind of deliberately designed tasks students are offered in school help define the kind of thinking they will learn to do. The kind of thinking students learn to do will influence what they come to know and the kind of cognitive skills they acquire. (p. 13)

Ethical: In *The Ethical Teacher* (2003) Campbell states: “Ethical knowledge relies on teachers’ understanding and acceptance of the demands of moral agency as professional expectations implicit in all aspects of their day-to-day practice” (p. 3). The concept of calling attention to the need to use moral language as one way of conveying ethical agency, on a conscious level and with intent can be found in numerous theoretical explorations, including

Colnerud (2006), Campbell (2003), Sockett and LePage (2002), Hanson (1998), and Palmer (1983). Many other theorists also see ethics as a core principle of effective teaching and consequently leadership. For example, Sergiovanni (2000) feels that: “Authentic leaders anchor their practice in ideas, values, and commitments, exhibit distinctive qualities of style and substance, and can be trusted to be morally diligent in advancing the enterprises they lead” (p. 17). Noddings’ philosophy of a *caring community* (2003) states: “We would not have to change our approach to ethics but only to the teaching of ethical behavior or ethical thinking” (p. 8).

Community Builder: Kosnik and Beck (2009) focus on creating community in their text, *Priorities in teacher education*. Palmer (1983) also spotlights community building and zeroes in on the point that without creating a relationship with students, real learning cannot happen because, “We cannot learn deeply and well until a community of learning is created in the classroom” (p. xvi) and that “Good teachers also bring students into community with themselves and with each other – not simply for the sake of warm feelings, but to do the difficult things that teaching and learning require.” (Palmer, 1983, p. xvii) Thus, the role of the educational leader has to be front and centre, not necessarily becoming friends with our students but assisting in the hard work that learning new concepts and perspectives create within an individual.

Advocate: By taking control of the world we exist within and becoming leaders of advocacy, hooks (2000) feels that: “we still have the capacity to invent our lives, to shape our destinies in ways that maximize our well-being” (p. 57). Sergiovanni (2000) speaks to the heart of leadership as “shared visions, values, and beliefs [serving] as a compass setting” (p. 1). While advocacy must first come from the heart, it should ultimately be viewed as a

professional stance and with the understanding that “leadership practice is based on goals, purposes, values, commitments” (Sergiovanni, 2000, p. 168). Equally, Kagan and Hallmark (2001) see that “Building leadership components into every single piece of early childhood and education legislation will foster the emergence of more leaders for our field” (p. 9). Therefore advocacy as part of a leadership plan needs to be a core component of preservice and inservice programs, thus a political necessity.

Mentor. On mentorship, Palmer (1983) suggests: “The teacher is a mediator between the knower and the known, between the learner and the subject to be learned” (p. 29). That *known* goes well beyond the facts and figures presented in the classroom. We all have a great deal to learn, in specifics, in context and in essence. Some of these intangibles can only be gained through the act of mentorship. Palmer (1983) refers to mentorship as “the two-way movement of persons in search of each other” (p. 59). According to Kagan and Hallmark (2001), “It is important that all practitioners in the field share their knowledge, insights, and experiences with others, and recognize that we are potential role-models and mentors—not only for junior colleagues, but also for peers” (p. 9). Here is a clear and direct charge to educators to see mentoring as a core component of their craft. Rubin (1991) states that:

Given a reasonable background, students often can learn a surprising amount by emulating the behavior of professionals. There is a rough parallel, in this regard, with curriculum, if we take curriculum to embody both what is taught and how it is taught, and if we acknowledge the importance of linkages between specific disciplinary knowledge and general intellectual processes. (p. 53)

Teaches as They Live. Both Dewey (1990) and Palmer (1983) link the need for effective educators to see the connection between life as it exists outside of the classroom with how the educator teaches within the classroom. Dewey (1990) also points out that this

connection, this bringing of life's existence into the teaching world, needs to be done in a very natural way and must not be contrived or muddled in any fashion. Furthermore, Danielewicz (2001) suggests that teaching should be fluid and consistent with the ebb and flow of life: "Pedagogy is absolutely not synonymous with methods, a collection of decontextualized practices" (p. 15). Like all students, very young children typically know when the leader is uncomfortable with their actions, when their way of teaching does not match with their way of being. If this occurs it follows that the formal lesson will most likely stay within the classroom setting versus being explored in the outer world. Rubin (1991) feels that "There is considerable danger in the assumption that imitating expert teachers will produce expert pedagogy....It is not what expert teachers do, but rather the ways in which they decide what to do" (p. 56). Equally, Van Manen (1986) shares that: "Thoughtfulness, tactfulness, is a peculiar quality that has as much to do with what we are as with what we do" (p. 12). Therefore we are always teaching in everything we do, even the slightest of gesture.

Continues to Learn and Teach in Multiple Ways: Palmer (1983) explores the concept of ongoing professional learning as a vital component of effective teaching by affirming that teachers must create change within the self in order to create change in pedagogy, ultimately creating shifts within the learning community at large. Ball (2000) states that there should not be an assumption that an educator has full subject knowledge or that the educator knows how best to teach that subject. Similarly, Kosnik and Beck (2009) agree with Ball's (2000) perspective of avoiding assumptions of expertise in either subject knowledge or pedagogical expertise in the subject. In fact, on the overall topic of professional development Kosnik and Beck (2009) recommend that educators should "seek help and collaborate" (p. 138), "grow professionally" (p. 140), and "lay the groundwork for ongoing teacher development" (p.

145). Sergiovanni (2000) offers: “Teachers are often viewed as independent artisans who use well-honed skills anchored to theories and principles. They acknowledge the contextualized nature of teaching practice by using deliberative action” (p. 137). Therefore it is with deliberate action that effective educator leaders need to continually develop their own skills, as well as the skills of those around them. On the same point, Kagan and Hallmark (2001) link the quality of continued learning to being a leader:

While recognizing that good leadership requires one to follow as well as lead, it is equally imperative to seize, if not plan, opportunities for personal growth and development that can lead to leadership roles – even if, sometimes, it means taking risks. (p. 9)

Van Manen (1986) appears to share this view when he says: “Parents and teachers are good pedagogues when they model possible ways of being for the child. They can do that if they realize that adulthood itself is never a finished product” (p. 13).

Uses Current Research to Inform Practice: Dewey (1990) refers to the way teachers need to reconnect with the available higher level thinking material and that, when this theory is consequently intertwined into pedagogy through programming, the teacher becomes the role model for using theory to think beyond the obvious. This overarching concept of higher level thinking could refer to processes developed by Bloom, Erikson or a multitude of others in order to describe the ability to think in this manner. Subsequently, there appears to be a plethora of research available on what constitutes an effective primary-level teacher-educator (Danielewicz, 2001; Kosnik & Beck, 2009) while similar work with an early childhood focus specifically is still a very new field of study. On the usage of research as part of pedagogy, Danielewicz (2001) states: “The best pedagogy gets its shape and form from its theoretical roots: a teacher puts what she knows into practice while considering the material conditions

and needs of her students” (p. 16). While the field of early learning and care continues to evolve, the research related to it also evolves. Kagan and Hallmark (2001) share that:

A pedagogical leader functions as a bridge between research and practice ... serve[ing] as interpreters of research and theory. Pedagogical leaders also shape agendas. They reflect upon, redefine, and reinterpret the realities and problems they see in early care and education practice. (p. 9)

In Human Terms

While it is important that the general list of leadership qualities be at the forefront of understanding leadership, it is also important to note the traits and characteristics of the leaders who were my primary research participants. There is a vast amount of early years expertise in Ontario and it needs to be acknowledged and respected as the voice of influence. Therefore when looking for participants, I looked for education-related professionals who might have been asked to consult on current issues, or who had been quoted by the media as experts. The list of potential participants included policy makers, decision makers, those who influence the opinion of others or policy direction, program developers, and even those who had published seminal educational work.

Each of the aforementioned categories of leadership qualities and their theoretical understandings indicate an awareness of what leaders might look like psychologically and academically but not necessarily what they might look like as individual persons. However, understanding the life structure of a leader might present further insight into the primary participants as agents of change during this transformational component of Ontario’s educational history. Therefore, it was with intent that I asked each of my interview participants to share three or more *factors* that helped to create who they are today as a leader.

As in teaching, reflective practice should be a core component of leadership. It is important to slow down and observe our own leadership, and to document our actions, thoughts, and reactions. Equally we need to question ourselves: what worked, what didn't work, and why. Van Manen (1990) explains:

Lived experience itself seems to have a linguistic structure If all experience is like text then we need to examine how these texts are socially constructed. Interpretation that aims at explicating the various meanings embedded in a text may then take the form of socially analyzing or deconstructing the text and thus exploding its meanings. (p. 39)

While I look at the text of my participants as reflective in nature, and in essence as their own narratives, I also utilize the actual content of our exchange, their storying, to bring connection to the development of leadership. It is my contention that we need to be reflective in our practice, as educators, as leaders, as professionals, as researchers, as administrators, or in any role. We need to be mindful. We tell children specifically what they did so that they can repeat it, rather than simply saying, "good job," and we need to do the same for ourselves, by taking the time to reflect on our own professionalism.

One of the first things we must accept is that we all have the potential to be a leader, one of influence and positive change. If we already accept that premise, then we need to push even further to accept our genius and nourish it. Leaders come in all shapes and sizes. Some professionals take an overt leadership role while others play a significant part in quieter ways. We, early years professionals, need to have a stronger understanding of self as leader, and develop our leadership stance within our own communities of practice, through a variety of ways, including open dialogues and personal plans of action. Interview participant Stuart Shanker spoke directly to the significance of mentors in the development of self-regulation:

You have to have these figures in your life that are guiding you. That take a genuine interest in you and challenge you. [These] figures in your life – it can be in any discipline – we need these role models. And we need people to take an active interest in us. (Stuart Shanker)



I utilized a number of different media to decide who to approach for participation in the research study (Charmaz, 2007; Glesne, 1999; Seidman, 2006). For example, I drew upon my own professional insight, networked with other colleagues and ECE experts for participant suggestions (Glesne, 1999; Seidman, 2006). It was my intention to cover a broad range of type of early years participants through the interview and survey participants: supervisors, administrators, community advocates, theorists, union representatives, and teacher-educators, informal teachers and postsecondary faculty. Each of these participants' interview responses and related survey responses came together to create a professional knowledge landscape (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) of educational leaders that ultimately developed a broad base of recommendations of preservice and inservice curriculum changes in order to encourage and nurture future leaders (Beattie, 2004; Charmaz, 2007; Glesne, 1999; Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1997).

Personal Journeys to Leadership

Fullan (2007) discusses the three types of leadership: “educational leadership (focus on pedagogy and learning); political leadership (securing resources, building coalitions); and, managerial leadership (using structures for participation, supervision, support, and planning)” (p. 210, parenthesis from source). On the other hand, Gardner (2005) says, “the personal lives of indirect leaders are not germane to their influence” (p. 10). However, it is through the understanding of their personal histories, the preceding pieces of their current lives, that we are all able to connect to these individuals on a human-to-human level, and to see connections between their personal histories and our own. I feel a strong connection to Buber’s (1970) statement, “Memory, educating itself, constructs a series of the major relational events and the elementary upheavals” (p. 72). Through an opportunity to be reconnected with their personal histories, my study’s participants have allowed their personal intricacies to unfold in an uncontrived manner, baring all so others can see who they are as human beings.

It is the storytelling nature of this study that draws me, the researcher, into a deeper respect for those in a position of leadership. Stories connect people, and bring us closer together when we find those intimate connections. Gardner (1995) says, “Leaders achieve their effectiveness chiefly through the stories they relate. In addition to communicating stories, leaders *embody* those stories” (p. 9, italics from source). Story telling is a way of perceiving pathways of expertise on a personal level (Seidman, 2006). By asking participants to expose their intimate histories in an open-ended manner, I have allowed them to choose the points they find most significant (Seidman, 2006).

At the same time, it wasn't until I had completed the analysis process that I confirmed the similarities in the themes that emerged from the personal stories. For example, a number of the interview participants mentioned the aging population of current leadership in early years, both in the interview itself and in adjacent conversations. I found it fascinating, and frightening, how many of my interview participants said they were exploring/facing/considering retirement when asked what they would be doing next. Could this be an indicator of a trend among early years leaders?

It is also interesting that a couple of the interview participants mentioned having politically charged debates in the family home, at the dinner table, specifically. It is then a question whether, as we have become a politically correct society, this learning curve is disappearing. We need to be politically astute to have voice in troubling and changing times. We also need to be comfortable in discussing politics and related issues in an atmosphere of respect and tolerance at the dinner table, in the staff room and in a community of dialogic opportunities.

Interview Themes of Emerging Leadership

For this section, on emerging leadership themes mentioned by the interview participants, it is difficult to include the survey responses clearly and responsibly. Among the survey respondents there were a few references to having children as having an impact on perspective. However, since the survey was not directed to leadership impact, it is difficult to find direct correlation between the survey responses and the following themes of emerging leadership among the participants. Therefore, I will only speak to the interview participant groups for the remainder of this chapter.

Every one of my 35 interviewees mentioned a *mentor*, or the concept of *mentoring* as an influence on who they are today. There were references and stories related to being either mentored and/or being a mentor. It is fascinating how when living those experiences we might or might not know how wonderful mentors are, but it is upon reflection that we can see the impact. In fact, Charles Pascal said, “You can quantify that in terms by the number of Master’s students and Doctoral students you had but you can’t really measure the impact of it in any short term way; it would have to be years later.” Gail Baker explained: “I surround myself by very interesting, diverse people.” Perhaps mentorship is not always obvious, but sometimes it is the subtle ways that others influence us. As Pat Dickinson described the concept of mentorship for her, it was more of a support or cheerleading approach. Michael Pimento had a similar reaction to the concept of mentoring, “having those who will stand behind you or push you or push for you.” While others saw the pieces come into a whole by looking at how mentors have impacted who they currently are, Zeenat Janmohamed shared this epiphany:

Mentorship has included everything from sort of taking an idea and learning how to speak about it, to writing, to going into a political meeting and having a conversation with the Minister, to knowing the difference between how you speak to *ministry* staff, to how you talk to *political* staff.” When it comes full circle and the one who was mentored becomes the mentor, the opportunity offers another level of understanding of self. (Zeenat Janmohamed)

Goranka Vukelich explained, “Discovering that really as an educator part of my job is to help others get to be what they need to be. Not what I want them to be.” To me, these two points are connected as I feel Goranka was referring to the need to support a mentee in the way they want or need, not how the mentor might feel the mentorship should proceed. This specific

theme suggests that perhaps we are not doing enough mentoring in our current capacities as leaders, or that we are doing a superficial job, or going on our perceptions of need. Is there enough dialogue? Is there follow through? Or follow up?

This connects to the concerns about the disappearance of the leadership in the early years sector in Ontario due to aging and a movement toward retirement. We are not in competition with each other; we need to support and nurture our colleagues, of all ages. This is a theme that I come back to in Chapter Six focusing on professionalism.

Joy Vance says, “When you talk about leadership, yes people get to take the lead by kind of encouraging, not motivate because I believe that everyone has to motivate themselves, but put things out there that there are great reasons to do this.” As Joy Vance speaks to in the quote above, engaging in *voice*, through acts of *advocacy*, was another recurring theme. Sergiovanni (2000) describes having voice and moral conscious as:

Authentic leaders anchor their practice in ideas, values, and commitments, exhibit distinctive qualities of style and substances, and can be trusted to be morally diligent in advancing the enterprises they lead. (p. 17)

In fact, a number of participants—Michael Pimento, Moira D’Aoust, Sylvie Tourigny, and Tracey Newman—specifically told stories that exemplified standing up for one’s own principles and morals, with 31 interview participants in total referring to this aspect either directly or indirectly. Each story told of doing what was needed, and necessary, without hesitation. This, then, ties back to the formal characteristics that need to be nurtured in future leaders of being moral in character, in intent and in action.



It's just something that's been in me to look at what the right thing is, and because I stand for my morals I'm quite often put in that leadership position. It's not something that I've ever sought out. It just kind of ends up that way.
(Tracey Newman)

Another recurring theme mentioned in some manner by each of the 35 interview participants was the concept of *collaboration*. This goes hand in hand with the idea that we cannot flourish in isolation. The early years are part of a continuum, conception to death, and we have an obligation to work with others for what is best for children and families. Both Kerry McCuaig and Zeenat Janmohamed specifically talked about the fact that leaders find the ways necessary to connect with others and know how to speak the language of each of the various stakeholder groups. Kerry McCuaig explained it by saying, "I learned that connection between the importance of mobilizing a constituency, and learning to message the constituents' needs, to both, to a public audience and to a political audience," while Zeenat Janmohamed said,

I think that one of my strengths *is* that I'm able to link what's happening in the policy arena to what's happening in practice. To what's happening in the theoretical, academic arena. And I think that one thing I do well is actually make the connections between the three. (Zeenat Janmohamed)

A further way of understanding leadership development is through the acquisition of *professional capacity*, with 32 interview participants speaking to this concept. Christine Forsyth stated: "You can say one could be a leader if you had expert knowledge that other

people don't have so people look to you for some guidance, information to help them." On the same point, Diane Kashin shared: "It took a lot of time and needed many problem solving skills to see it through." A few participants referred to using personal adversity or *bad* experiences to help others, creating a specialization of self-knowledge as the beginning of a pathway of expertise.

The theme of *perspectives and roles* connects to the concept of having the presence to benefit from opportunities offered. Leadership is not confined to the perspective that the emerging leader is required to have only early years experiences; in fact the opposite might be needed in order to have a more rounded understanding of how different aspects fit together. Cynthia Abel explains, "Then I went to the Region of Peel's Public Works Department and worked as the Public Works Outreach Coordinator, specializing in young child education and in designing programs with an environmental aspect." Joy Vance reflects, "Work with people, the different components of that. So seeing different angles and being able to be diplomatic because there's all these different—thinking there's only one way and so forth." Kim Hiscott summed it up by saying, "It made me realize that our field is so broad and so inspiring that the opportunities are really unlimited. So that was really an early, early on lesson." Ultimately, it is about perspectives, and using a different lens to bridge understandings between stakeholders. Both Maria Cantalini-Williams and Pat Dickinson were proud of the fact that they were able to see issues from both the ECE and school sides. But this awareness must come from a desire to understand and connect the experiences together. Fullan (2001) states, "Leaders in a culture of change realize that accessing tacit knowledge is crucial and that such access cannot be mandated" (p. 87). In total, 34 interview

participants expressed the significance and benefit from participating in opportunities as they were offered.

Taking *risks* or being gently pushed out of one's comfort zone may be a theme of its own. And yet it has the subcomponent that to the risk-taker it is nothing original in their behaviour or actions; that what they are doing is just an enforcement of common knowledge or the completion of a need for action. But if the leaders do not do this, where and when needed, then what might the impact be, and what might the field look like for the marginalized? Biddle (2012) clarifies this phenomenon by stating:

Being in relationship with colleagues calls for valuing vulnerability more than power, being comfortable with uncertainty, and relinquishing the idea that there is one right answer...It requires risk taking and experimentation over prescription and means an emphasis on learning together. (p. 23)

This explanation of the theme of relationship through risk is exemplified in Cynthia Abel's comment: "Funny, it didn't feel like a huge influence, it just felt like I was just saying what everybody else was. I don't think I was saying anything original it was simply being that vehicle of communication." Linda Cameron clarified that it is about "Having voice, even if you're afraid." Marni Flaherty's take on this theme is:

If you surround yourself with others like yourself, you aren't going to grow. You'll just keep going. But you will grow and change if you have to explain yourself to those who don't understand what you're about, and in 5 minutes. It kind of pushes you a bit. (Marni Flaherty)

In this category, 32 interview participants spoke to this aspect of leadership development.

Donna Lero called *opportunities* “transformative experiences.” The awareness that doing something out of one’s comfort zone or area of expertise is a powerful influence on who we are in later days when it is reflected upon and there is the realization of the impact that the originating opportunity had on the choice of path. Similarly, Kerry McCuaig called such opportunities “gifts.” Gail Baker stated quite clearly that she was: “Doing all kinds of things, and I had an opportunity to try things.” Goranka Vukelich felt that “interesting opportunities came my way. And I happen to have been very fortunate to have folks around me, who supported me and guided me.” Kim Hiscott acknowledged that she “quickly realized that we are a field where there are many, many opportunities to be really involved. And it gave me a chance to do it, a lot of soul searching and a lot of thinking.” Michael Pimento explained that for him opportunities were made available both professionally and experientially. Further clarification was given by Pat Dickinson that opportunities came “at a critical time” in her experience. Upon review of all of the interview transcripts, I found 34 interview participants spoke about opportunities that, in some way, transformed their learning or understanding or even leadership path. I began to wonder whether it is not just about having opportunities but taking them too, and even creating them; thus the act of willful attendance and awareness is key.

At some point leadership becomes an exercise of conscious effort. Thus the theme of opportunities goes beyond its base concept to morph into *being involved* (all 35 interview participants mentioned this aspect of leadership development). Donna Lero explains this as having “played a leadership role through *doing* research; we come to our roles in different ways.” So it appears that because you are in the midst of it, you are doing it. You are focused

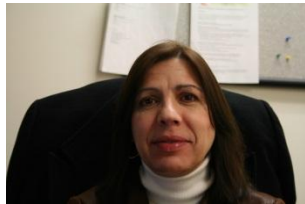
on what you are doing as opposed to why you are doing it. Zeenat Janmohamed explained her understanding of being involved this way:

But I have to say that I think that sort of taking on the roles that I *do* take on have taken extra work from me. I think that that's something that's pretty core to leadership that you can't be limited to your 9–5 work hours. That's the reality of it. (Zeenat Janmohamed)

Effort, conscious awareness, and giving of oneself beyond what is the expected seems to be at the core of leadership, and being involved represents this process through active participation and full engagement.

Our personal histories take on shape through our *family and childhood experiences*, and 16 interview participants fit into this particular category as making connections between their childhood and their leadership maturity. Jay Fedosoff said that his father, who was also a teacher taught him, “Find what you love and do what you love.” Whether it was a direct connection to educators in the family (for example, Carl Corter, Goranka Vukelich, and Jay Fedosoff) or an innate support system (e.g., Gail Baker, and me), our family ties create a foundation for who we are as adults. We know it in theory, we claim to use it in our pedagogy, but do we utilize this knowledge to support others around us in their growth and development? Some issues we cannot change or influence, but we can help to turn those barriers into the means of understanding, and in the opposite manner, turn supports into flames of passion. An example of this was found in James Ryan's story: “I didn't grow up in an atmosphere of wealth. I grew up in the Jane-Finch area, living in the projects, and I saw the issues related to poverty and related to injustice.” James fanned that awareness and turned it into a lifelong leadership quest. I also came from a geographical area immediately next to

the one that James grew up in and I observed my own parents who were always volunteering, in various ways. My mother did so overtly; and my father, despite being the most bigoted man I have known, would literally and figuratively give the shirt off his back for someone he felt needed it, regardless of race, religion or background. Upbringing and family also influence the ways we establish life skills. A number of participants mention knowing early on that they had an innate love for working with children. Stuart Shanker's life work revolves around the awareness that "being involved in disciplined activity" adds to the ability to self-regulate. In order to be highly functioning members of society, especially in a leadership role, where would we be without the ability to self-regulate?



I'm always looking for people who take a leadership stance and would like people to think about leadership as not being just about these big events. When you think about leaders its always about these women, "There's no way I could do that with a young family, I work, I only have an ECE, I have family issues." There are a million reasons not to take a leadership stance or picture themselves leading an organization or leading a movement. But leading could also be "Hey, I don't like this in my school. I'm going to talk to this parent, and then I'm going to talk to that parent, and then I'm going to find out who is the head of the parent council and I'm going to go to that meeting with these parents that I've talked to. Then we're going to go to the principal". That's leading.... Be the person behind the scenes that's talking and organizing people and showing up and handing out a little bit of background information/research. If we could just get early childhood educators to realize it's the baby steps, and you're making a difference for your children, and

you're making a difference in your children's school, and then you're making a difference where you work. That's how we all got started. But if any of us were to look back and see the road that we have travelled, and how far we have travelled, we'd be amazed by how far we've come. (Eduarda Sousa)

An extension of our own childhood experiences occurs when we become parents ourselves. The theme of *having children* was a recurring one and was mentioned by 21 participants. There were no major epiphanies stated or elaborate stories explained, just the profound statement of fact that having children made a significant difference in who we are and how we view the world, professionally as well as personally.

The final theme that emerged from the interviews was *personality*. When considering the various themes that emerged from this section of the transcripts, I initially considered these responses as aspects of the theme of taking risks. However, upon reflection, I realized that they were more related to who we are as individuals, and how we react and interact with our world *because* of who we are innately. As well, 20 interview participants mentioned this particular aspect and thus I found it significant in numbers, too. For example, Eduarda Sousa explained, "I've always taken a leadership role, from grade school all the way up. And I think it's because of my upbringing; I've just always been kind of thrust into that role." Goranka Vukelich said that she was always "Making choices myself." Jay Fedosoff readily volunteers his time and initially started with the comment that it "Feels just becoming a teacher or ECE means being a leader." Linda Cottes clarified that:

We do all those sorts of things but I think it all centres around doing the right thing and trying to do it better. And never be satisfied with the status quo. Keep going and keep moving forward. And how do you affect change?
(Linda Cottes)

Also in this category the concept of lifelong learning came up in a number of interviews. Palmer (1983), states, “To learn is to face transformation” (p. 40). It makes sense that in talking about significant impacts on who we are today as leaders, a multitude of responses would revolve around this very concept. A culminating example is given by Tracey Newman, “Life doesn’t end in a classroom. Learning opportunities exist everywhere.”

A leader is someone who is aware of or understands current issues. A leader is ready to take initiative for and create immediate change. A leader is able to see the long-term benefits that accompany short-term risks and challenges. Early years leaders take the opportunity to have politically charged conversations. We have a strong grasp of current issues. And we understand both the global perspective and the local perspective, while grasping the link between the two.

Leadership means meeting and accepting the unknowns along the way. Leadership avoids the assumption that there is magic fairy *change* dust. Leadership is about relationships, but with eyes wide open, and can only exist in a social climate. Biddle (2012) shares: “Being in relationship with colleagues calls for valuing vulnerability more than power, and relinquishing the idea that there is one right answer” (p. 23). We cannot forget about right and wrong, but need to ignore those clear-cut expectations. We should try to live with metamorphosis on an ongoing basis as a means to community building. Leadership is about process, as opposed to a final solution. Leadership understands that change is neither linear nor one-dimensional.



I've always been around people in my work place that questioned the status quo. And in that questioning process I've had the good fortune of either working directly with people or that have been in some way connected to them. Where you think about what is it that you want. (Zeenat Janmohamed)

Chapter Six

Emerging Theme: Professionalization

As leaders, if we just ask the easy questions, the polite questions, the “have a nice day” type of questions, how will we be agents of change? Instead, we need to take the opportunity to ask the difficult questions, the uneasy questions, the politically charged questions. We can ask this of others, but equally importantly, it makes change more significant if we ask these types of questions of ourselves. At the same time, we need to have the confidence to speak up for ourselves, and for what we accomplish as educators (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005; Moss, 2010).

This dissertation has gone beyond looking at preservice and inservice training and education for early childhood educators into the overarching domain of early learning and care. It is about making conscious choices: about having schools, school boards and specialists for FDK who have a formal background in ECE; about having voice within your profession; about mentoring the future of leadership, including succession prospects; and about evolving through the process of professionalism and all that that entails.

Feeney (2012) attempts to define professionalism on its own, in the context of the early childhood education sector, and then in relation to other sectors/occupations. Feeney (2012) discusses, in great length, a general list for professionalism which includes: a specialized body of knowledge and expertise; prolonged training; rigorous requirements for entry to training and eligibility to practice; standards of practice; commitment to serving a significant social value; recognition as the only group in the society who can perform a function; autonomy; and, a code of ethics. While with a quick glance it could be said that

early years education may well be considered a profession, it is also arguable whether we *clearly* meet these requirements or only in broad terms. Another attempt to explain the concept of professionalism for RECEs was shared by Sue Corke, Registrar and CEO of the CECE, in the CECE 2012 Newsletter (Corke, 2012):

Key concepts in professionalism are: judgment; quality; accountability for behaviour; ongoing competency; putting service above personal gain. (p. 6)

When you are a professional, you never really take your hat off. Being a member of a regulated profession governs how you behave, not just in your work setting but in your community. (p. 7)

Professional status does not only come from a postsecondary piece of paper, a credential or even a regulatory body. It must come from the individuals who work within the scope of practice in that particular profession and from the various representatives and agencies interconnected to the workings of the profession.

Terminology

In order to have an academic conversation on the issues of professionalism, perhaps the first area to focus on is the terminology surrounding those areas of professionalism. Through a consensus on what we want to be called, what labels we want attached to our profession, there can be a direct influence on the transformation process within the sector and a movement away from being known mostly for changing diapers and wiping dripping noses (although these are very important caregiving tasks). Early childhood education programs focus on an intensive understanding of child development, related and relevant curriculum and pedagogy, and how to work with others in a collaborative model. These pieces, in addition to a myriad of other courses, create a rich and dynamic sector of individuals who have been beaten down through a perception of being lesser than *real* educators.

Early childhood educators are educators, not babysitters. Not daycare workers. Not even childcare *workers*. We are educators. We specialize in very young children, just as primary educators specialize in the primary grades; high school educators specialize in teen development and academic topics; and special education educators specialize in issues for educating children with special needs (which is also broken down into age groups). We wouldn't call a registered nurse a baby health worker because he/she specialized in pediatrics. This aspect of terminology, and its explanation, may seem like a petty point to the layperson, but to those fighting for their rights and sense of professionalism, it is more about respect for what we do. There could be a debate that we are being too politically correct, or that we are swinging the pendulum too far in the other direction, but this is necessary in order to keep up the needed momentum of respect and acknowledgement of specialization. Some might say it is just a word, and we know what we are taught when we are very young about being taunted with words, but words have power; they hold so much meaning in this society, in this climate, in this temporal space.

Furthermore, in the terminology discussion, RECEs are employed in a sector not a field. Perhaps, we as a profession should try to look beyond the *planting of seeds and watching what grows* metaphor. It does not matter what position a person holds—RECE, assistant, supervisor, volunteer, kitchen staff, maintenance—each needs to regard themselves as part of the education system. Therefore, it is my assertion that *worker* and *front-line* designations are archaic and demeaning. We are not in a war with front-line soldiers working directly with children and families, and generals and intelligence officers telling others what to do and how to do it. We have a combination of skill sets that support the education of our youngest members of society, and in order to do that, we must achieve an acknowledgement

of expertise by others in the hopes of creating a successful partnership with those we work collaboratively with, for, and beside.

When looking at the statistical reporting of the concept of terminology as an issue that must be addressed in order to move forward, 25 interview participants spoke directly to this issue. From the survey data, four comments were made that addressed the need to reflect on the terminology used, and terminology needing to be used. Maria Cantalini-Williams spoke directly to this issue of clear and relevant terminology as being a core component of agreement amongst the members of the early years sector:

The other big step for me was to not just to always keep saying early learning and care. So to just say early learning has caused people to worry about the word, not having the word 'care'. But I always kept going back to was, "what's our field called?" It's called early childhood education. There's nothing wrong with that term. An ECE means early childhood education: educator, and education. We study early childhood education. (Maria Cantalini-Williams)



On a similar note about a call for continuity of terminology, I feel it is beneficial at this time to include an explanation of the issue surrounding the use of the term early childhood educator (see "How we view ourselves" below). There is much confusion on the entitlement of use of the term early childhood education/educator. Now that we have our own regulatory body in Ontario, the only individuals who may use the title ECE legally are those who are registered with CECE. Additionally, while we are not a new sector, we as a sector

have worked diligently to find numerous ways to upgrade our skill sets. For example, we have post-diploma programs for inclusion practices and for management. However, without a guiding body to ensure continuity, each college or organization providing these opportunities would title the resulting designations uniquely in order to show their distinctiveness in the market of continuing education. This has resulted in an unknown number of ECE-related designations: RT, RTI, ECEDH, and ECE.C, just to name a few. It is after reflection on this issue of title usage that I suggest that there needs to be clear designation within the sector, clearly defined explanation of designations, and strong modeling of the legal usage of these designations. This modeling should be coming from the leaders and early childhood education teacher-educators. How can we expect our students to follow the legal usage rules when faculty members not only avoid CECE membership but also illegally use the ECE title in their professional signature?

Perceptions, Attitudes, and Expectations

It is important that the early years sector speaks up for itself, and see what we do as valid and necessary. This acknowledgement of self worth might mean that as a collective we should focus on our own attitude in an attempt to help others to change their impression of what we do and who we are. We currently work in many different capacities: childcare centres, preschool programs, parenting programs, literacy programs, family centres, OEYCs, kindergarten classes, CAP-C programs, among other options. But as strong as we might be in our professional demeanour, we need the government to support our journey. We need to lose our sense of isolation and disconnect (see Chapter Two). The Ministry of Education recognizes the valid work we do, but now we have the opportunity to take that relationship

even further. However, in order to do that needed metamorphosis, we must reconstruct our interpretation and manifestation of our own professional personas.

How We View Ourselves

There were a large number of references to the issue of addressing how we view ourselves from both participant groups: 26 of the interview participants and 41 survey respondents. This appears to be an issue on the minds of leaders, and one that they feel needs to change in order to be viewed as professionals.

I have had the opportunity to converse with various early years professionals at conferences, symposia, workshops and related opportunities. For the most part they understand the need to state whether they are registered with CECE and are now RECEs (even if they do not follow through on this piece). However, there is a general sense of feeling disconnected somehow as to why this change in designation, with many not fully understanding the purpose of a regulating College. In fact, there appears to be some confusion in understanding: if a person is a member of the CECE then there is an assumption by some that they were automatically a member of the AECEO, or vice versa. There is still uncertainty as to what the two institutions' roles are, and what a professional can expect from each one. From CECE they receive newsletters, Standards of Practice, a registration card and certificate, but many are still not fully grasping the ramification or the true significance of each item. When asked what they expect, responses refer to desires for more money, recognition, and respect.

But I still think given the political dynamic of what's going on, it would be really helpful if more ECEs could understand and buy into the importance of the College for them. (Christine Forsyth)

There is still further need for the CECE to assist their members to understand that the role of the College is to maintain professional regulations and protect the public, while the AECEO supports the individual professionals in their ongoing profession-related needs (i.e., information, advocacy, ongoing learning, networking). An article in the 2012 CECE newsletter and a disclaimer on the website is insufficient effort of clarification. Christine Forsyth talked about the possibility of the confusion of accepting conditions as opposed to fully understanding what being a member of a self-regulatory body truly means.

There is a vast number of members who will never understand what self-regulation is, they just won't. They'll resent it, they'll hate paying the money, and they will think the College is the police or something and they will have no idea how the College relates to them personally. Or they will just be confused and may not have any animosity and it will mean little to them in terms of the work that they do on a daily basis or on the personal values of what they are doing. (Christine Forsyth)

While all of the survey participants indicated that they were aware of the current changes in the early years sector, only 67.4% had actually read the *Full Day Early Learning Statue Law Amendment Act, 2010 (Bill 242)* (Legislative Assembly of Ontario, 2010). While this might indicate that the majority of participants did not have access to the necessary document or that they were relying on others to provide the highlights, it also shows a trend to not fully informing oneself (see Figure 6). However, a much higher percentage (87.8%) had read "With Our Best Future in Mind. Implementing Early Learning in Ontario" (Pascal, 2007), with 47.5% having a high comfort level with the recommendations from The Pascal report (Pascal, 2007), and 52% fully agreeing with the recommendations.

From what source(s) did you receive information about the current changes? (check all that apply)

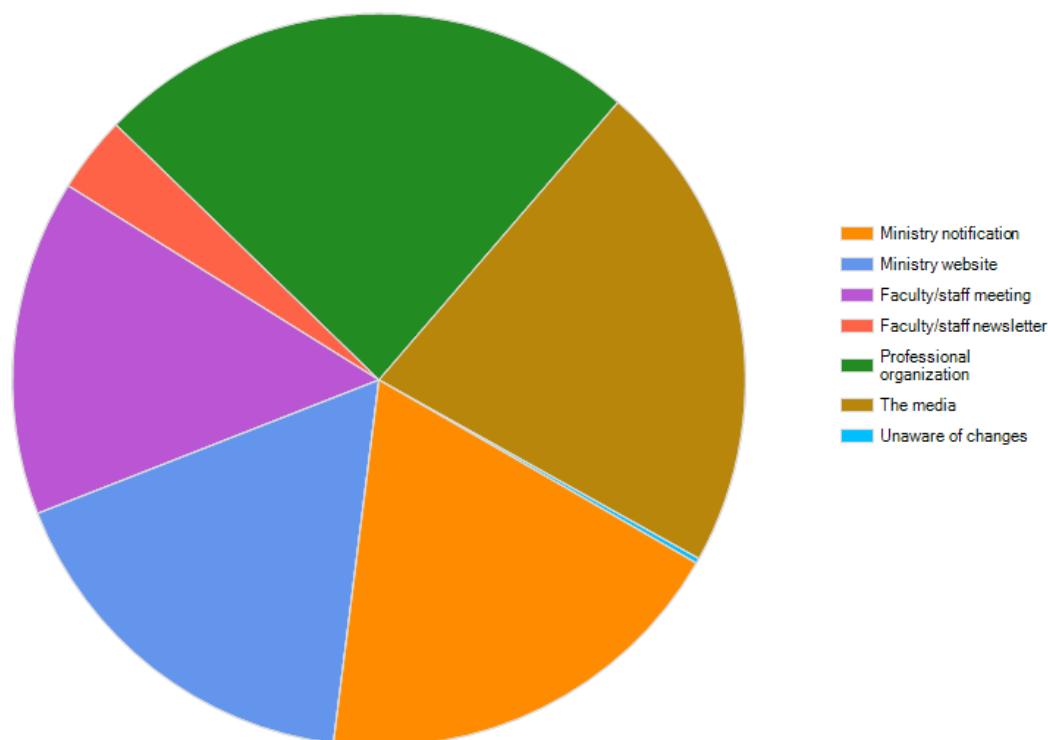


Figure 6. Sources of information.

I feel that a discussion on how we view ourselves in regard to professional status will be an ongoing conversation and will need attention on both an individual basis and as a collective effort. However, this notion that we are not merely babysitters must come from within the members before the general populace can change their perception of ECEs. As Cynthia Abel pointed out, “it is sometimes difficult for centres to see themselves as part of the process of change, versus recipients of changes thrust upon them.”

Christine Forsyth appears to be reflecting on the point that there must have been some pre-awareness of the difference between the two types of teachers that are now in the Ministry of Education's purview, but that there is a significant difference between the two types to facilitate the need for two separate self-regulating bodies:

When I look at the teachers and I can say it's curriculum based and the early childhood educators are care- and play-based....And this is interesting now that they are both under Education, but the whole principle of having the separate colleges, because you...have to believe that they're two different professions. Or else, why are there two different colleges? And somebody in the government was convinced enough that there were two separate professions with different bodies of knowledge, different values, so the government has gone to the trouble of putting in legislation. I just think that the government simply needs to be reminded, you know the Ministry of Education, needs to be reminded that they, that this government and the Government of Ontario recognize that they are two separate professions and that they should be regulated as separate professions. So maybe everybody there doesn't know that, maybe the people in the professions don't entirely know that, but that's an enormous education process that needs to take place.
(Christine Forsyth)

It is also critical for any and all early childhood education diploma holders, and other relevant early years educational status holders, to register with the CECE. Currently, only one person in each childcare classroom must be registered. Others, even if they work directly with children or families, are not mandated to be registered. Many agencies do register all their staff, but membership in the CECE would rise to more than 60,000 if all who qualify would register. And then if these individuals were also a member of their professional organizations, those organizations would not be in such financial straits and could focus on

supporting the ECE rather than spending an inordinate amount of time and work hours trying to obtain financial funding funnels. The voice of one in a small group may be strong, but few voices in a large group are lost. However, the more voices we have, and the more we understand who we are and how we are an integral component of the education continuum, the stronger the message being sent (Connelly & Clandinin, 1998).

How We Are Viewed

I have always been aware of indications that the early years educators are perceived, externally, as *lesser* than our primary educators. However, it was still disheartening to hear that awareness being acknowledged by others during the interviews and through comments made by survey respondents (see Figure 7); the open awareness that we do not have voice, that we do not have the fortitude in our own worth to stand up for our expertise, that *we* see ourselves as not worthy of respect for what we do was discouraging.



Figure 7. “How we are viewed” participant references.

It is disparaging to know we feel this way and act this way, but astonishing to hear those who work in conjunction with our sector express this attitude. Joe Trovato, who talked about the fact that we don't stand up for our own personal expertise let alone sector expertise, addressed this concept of oppression. Joe called it the "shoe watching and shuffling" approach. Charles Pascal also refers to this oppressed attitude, but from a social perspective, whereas Kerry talks to the self-defeatist attitude early years professionals often participate in:

The early childhood profession needs to be kicked up a notch in terms of professionalism. It is a fragmented, poorly paid profession ... because it goes back to the fact that this started in church basements and has always been on the social welfare side of things. And the social welfare kind of ethos is just hand-to-mouth kind of funding. Unlike education, where there is a social contract. (Charles Pascal)



You go into this because you're nice people. And because you're patient. And because you're not confrontational. That's what makes you good at your profession. But you know, like sometimes you have to be a mama bear, and really get angry on behalf of your children. And that doesn't happen enough. (Kerry McCuaig)

This insight into our lack of high profile and/or ability to be proud of what we do is prevalent in a story that Jay Fedosoff told. Jay explained how an RECE came to him to ask advice about how to talk to a parent about the stages of writing. While Jay showed great pride in how he handled the scenario, and it clearly exemplified how supportive he is in his role, RECEs have been skilled intensely in this area. The RECE in the story could have talked with the parent and then gone to Jay to describe how they had explained all of this based on *their* education and expertise. This is where the understanding of what the RECE brings to the table begins to break down.

On the other hand there are also strong indications of respect for what RECEs bring to the proverbial table. James Ryan provides his perspective of what an RECE brings to the classroom:

With the advent of early childhood educators in the classroom and how close they are to teachers, because they're like no other group that's in education. They're not educational assistants, they're not child and youth workers, they're not caretakers, they're not bus drivers—a little bit like psychologists—but they're not paraprofessionals. They're professionals. So we have this new group of professionals coming into our school system. (James Ryan)



Expectations

Whenever something that significant happens there will be resistance from all levels...No one is a push over, so even if I am passionate and committed about something, there can be discussions about conflicts but in public all have to present a supportive stance. Some people still don't buy into it philosophically; however the provincial message, the corporate message is that it's here and that it is to be supported to be successful. Sure, it may cause wrinkles but the end result is our kids are going to go into the future better prepared. (Charles McCarthy)



My dream would be for everyone in this sector regardless of whether you are an ECE but for everyone to kind of put down their baggage, put down their differences, and talk to each other for the first time openly. And honestly. And not judge each other based on what their credentials are or where they work. (Eduarda Sousa)

As is evident from the two previous quotes, and the quote from James Ryan below, there isn't always agreement between educators and related professionals. However, both Charles McCarthy and Eduarda Sousa both are clear that we need to move beyond this disagreement stage and into the let's-get-the-work-done stage. This is a period of flux, with differing approaches to education coming together to create a new vision for our children. This means working together, presenting a united public image, and creating an impetus for professionalization. We, educators of children of all ages, need to see the way to best work

with our government, bureaucracy, policy makers, and researchers. In order for this to happen we need to be able to speak to our expertise. It means picking our proverbial heads up, looking the world in the eye, and stating emphatically that we are educators, and we have important business to attend to.

We saw this particularly as a justice issue that would have the greatest impact on those communities that experience economic inequality. And that it had the potential to assist students from those communities in the long term because the changes you make in the early years in kindergarten and in the primary grades have the most profound impact of any changes you can make.
(James Ryan)

For this category there were many references from the two sets of participants that spoke directly to the point that expectations are changing and need to change (30 interview participants and 55 survey participants). Both groups stated that it is difficult to define or label the specific changes or the specific expectations that must occur. However, there was consensus that the expectations from early years professionals will need to adapt in order to meet the changing landscape of the early years professional.

Our Teacher-Educators

I was not surprised that the subject of our teacher-educators and their impact on professionalism was raised by the interview participants (see Figure 8). However, it was interesting to see in Figure 8 that a number of survey respondents also referred to the impact the teacher-educator has on the profession, and that these academics need to look at their own scope of practice in order to fully support the emerging professional.

Interview Participants

- 26

Survey Participants

- 19

Figure 8. References to impact of teacher-educators on professionalism.

Equally, there was clear reference to the topic of the role of the teacher-educator in moving the professionalism piece forward, as is evident from what Zeenat Janmohamed said:

So the activism around early childhood educators, I think I am ready to take on some of my colleagues in the colleges. Because I find that there's a gap there around knowledge, with some of them about what's happening. And a refusal to move forward, for not very good reasons. But at a disservice to early childhood students. And that's not acceptable to me.

I wonder if we, the postsecondary early childhood education teacher-educators, are doing our students a disservice by nurturing them in the mentality that they are lesser than formal school educators, and that they have less voice than formal school educators, and that we are by nature a meek and mild group. There are many new applied degree programs centred on leadership but I wonder whether, if the faculty teaching in these programs are still of the old mindset, is it truly about leadership? Faculty in the applied degrees must have a graduate degree, but that does not always account for a leadership viewpoint. Perhaps that could come out in the hiring process. If contract faculty are hired in a similar process as the full time faculty, then I do believe a leadership stance can be accounted for and expected.

However, if it is more a matter of hiring someone to fill a spot as quickly as possible, and then keep them on to minimize a search for more adequate staff, then I question the practice. It becomes an even bigger issue for the diploma process. Often we have part-time faculty who might be amazing but do not have a graduate degree or even an undergraduate degree. The messaging that we possibly give to our students is reflected in this quote:

And awful things are said about your profession and you say nothing. Awful things are written, awful: they're on chat lines, somebody writes a letter to the paper, then there's these horrible letters. And you say nothing! You don't respond. So can you imagine people saying stuff about cops, our teachers, our doctors, or whatever? Part of your professional pride would be you can't, what the hell do you know, I'm going to set you straight.... There must be something that either they're not getting the message that part of their responsibility as an ECE professional is to champion and defend their profession. Or are they being taught that they're professional, or quasi-professionals. (Kerry McCuaig)

This raises two controversial points: meeting the needs of our students and weeding out the ineffective faculty. It is a current trend that more and more degree holders are continuing their education at the college level. This means that we have higher level thinkers being instructed by diploma-holding faculty. I am not necessarily questioning their ability to teach. If we wish to bring the early years sector into a higher level thinking plane, then the faculty need to reflect that expectation. As for my second point, ineffective faculty, I apologize upfront to my teacher-educator colleagues and administrators: we need to have an expectation of excellence for our teacher-educators and some of the faculty members do not meet that standard. This disconnect to what is occurring in the field comes through in the curriculum chosen, pedagogy utilized, and even in the most subtle of messages sent to their

students. For example, what message is being sent as a role model to students if faculty members do not have enough respect for their sector to register in the CECE or to become a member of a professional organization? In fact, why isn't it the expectation that all faculty members are to be registered with CECE? A number of the participants, interview and survey, spoke directly to the impact of poor teacher-educator role models:

So if you have someone at that intellectual level and is very influential in their position, putting herself out there publicly, across the whole [institute], you know you wonder what's happening in the classes. What other misinformation is coming out? And what are we going to do about that? Okay, so you have the ECE who is working in a small centre for a long time, and who might not know or understand, but faculty? Who are educated, who you think have the knowledge because they are trying to impart knowledge, and they don't get the difference. They don't understand. Some of them do and some of them are amazing but a lot of them don't. (Diane Kashin)

And for the Good News...

Marni Flaherty and I discussed in jest about the *ECE thing*—our ability to infuse nurturing, hands on experience, and concrete components into all that we do, all the while also focusing on developmental needs— but upon reflection we both agreed that we are unique. Not better, but unique. We do put our own distinctive ECE focus spin on all that we do. As well, at times it hits me just how momentous this time period is. We're living through it, and we're part of the shaping of it. Therefore, because I do not feel that we celebrate our uniqueness enough I share some of the participants' thoughts with you, uninterrupted.

I mean these are ECEs and they are just so creative yet so nurturing, and so amazing and so undervalued and so marginalized and so disrespected in many areas. (Diane Kashin)

Having vision as an ECE/childcare is amazing and you can see the difference between that and any other kind of childcare where it's good *babysitting*, safe, etc. Really good at talking/working with parents, they're the experts. You let parents in. (Annie Kidder)



So being self-regulated is something quite exciting. It's huge. It's actually the devolution of authority from the government over to the people, over the individual members of the College to say, "you tell government what you need, and what your profession defines." (Cynthia Abel)

So we need to reclaim those really great pieces of who we are.
(Goranka Vukelich)

I think the whole early years system is changing before us and we have to look for those positive ways. Like if I look at the registered early childhood educators, I think it's fantastic that they are recognized as professionals.
(Joy Vance)

Now is a great time to be an early childhood educator. (Kim Hiscott)

The early years is where I am, that's who I am. (Linda Cameron)

I've always viewed early childhood educators as professionals who have something to say about child development, who understand families, and who are advocates for families. And can make a significant difference for a family.
(Linda Cottés)



We are a force to be reckoned with and we are the professionals; we say that we are and we want to be. I think that everything is in its place and that others are watching us and waiting for us to be there. (Lois Mahon)



The Ministry of Education is like extraordinary. Unlike the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, their capacity to take up their responsibilities and deliver it is so rapid, and so efficient. Just moving along with this efficiency that the Ministry of Children and Youth Services was never capable of doing. Now that may mean that there is less innovation and creativity but still things are happening at just an extraordinary pace. (Rachel Langford)

I think it will be well situated within that Ministry. Having the Early Learning Division makes sense. It ties in nicely, it's well-situated to moving things along. The model we're moving to is a collaborative, equal teaching partnership. And we, in the ECE field, are well versed in that. That is part of how we are trained. You look to share skills with your partner, with your colleague. You are not typically on your own. (Roxanne Lambert)



ECEs in the classroom provides a wonderful opportunity to raise awareness and perception of public value of the profession. (survey participant)

What we have to recognize, as a province, is that these individuals who have chosen this as a profession, ECEs, primary school teachers, teachers, are the most extraordinarily important figures in our children's life. And in their long-term mental and physical health. And so what we have to start doing is to—it's not so much a case of attracting the best people into the profession, because I believe we already do that—it's a case of supporting and sustaining them. And so what we have to do is recognize the important role for our society. Celebrate them in many ways, not just financially. And come to recognize...that this workforce is the guardian of the future of our society. (Stuart Shanker)

In total, there were 26 interview participants who shared their thoughts that celebrated what ECEs do and represent, and 31 survey participants who also added their ideas on this topic.

Issues of Equality and Validation

Pay Equity

Moira D'Aoust says, "I think early childhood educators are feeling undervalued. And salary and equity has not been addressed yet by CECE."



A number of the survey participants (15 in total) and interview participants (Carl Corter, Joe Trovato, Martha Friendly, Linda Cameron, Kerry McCuaig, and 21 other interview participants) mentioned pay equity as an issue needing to be addressed (see Appendix N). Research calls for the inclusion of pay equity for early childhood educators. Feeney (2012) includes this issue as part of the process in the text's examination of the professionalization of early childhood educators. While this call for equity is not new, it is becoming much more significant as RECEs become school board employees, and some childcare centres and agencies enter into the unions' folds. The concern seems to be money, the bottom line. Wages for early childhood educators depend on what the government in power sees as a priority. Instead we should focus on the support of the community membership to its fullest in order to have a high functioning society. The long-term impacts on a society are clearly linked to what is done, or not done, in the early years. McCain et al. (2011) in the "Early Years Study 3" state: "Child care, if it appears at all, is at the bottom of economic development lists" (p. 68). We know that childcare is essential for job creation, sustainability, and stimulus. Plus, the taxes that those who utilize childcare pay out of their

subsequent wages also adds to the overall picture; as do the taxes from those who work in childcare. There were many references from both sets of participants that the government saying that they do not having the financial means is not an excuse for ignoring pay equity:

The fact that there just isn't enough money that's invested in early learning and care so that you have early childhood educators that work in all sorts of settings but for the most part they are trying to make something work out of very, very little....But working conditions, wages, again goes back to the financial support or the financial investment that governments put into early learning and care. (Euarda Sousa)

You really can't get a hold on the thing as a system unless you set the wages, the fees, and you regularize the wages. (Martha Friendly)

Pay scale changes for ECE. (survey participant)

Stabilization for community childcare services, formal workplace plan by the government to ensure that there is not such a large discrepancy within the field of Early Childhood Education between those in the school system and those who chose to remain in the community sector. (survey participant)

As an ECE and parent, I hope that this will bring about more supports and resources for all young children and their families. I also hope that it will increase the profile of the ECEs scope of work in the general public and in turn receive more support and funding from the government by being associated with the Ministry of Education. ECEs are generally underpaid and there is a lack of respect and understanding for the importance of the work that we do. We can't seem to shake off that 'babysitter' image in the public. (survey participant)

It's an interesting time. We've got Early Childhood Educators working in childcare programs who are not earning a lot of money. We've got Early Childhood Educators now working in school boards who are starting to,

through the collective agreement, the process, are starting to be recognized financially in a bit of a different way. (Cynthia Abel)

The OCBCC posted on their Facebook page (August 24, 2012) a statement that the average salary for an RECE in the GTA is \$16.21 per hour. However, in reply to this posting, one Facebook response pointed out that in northern Ontario it is \$13/hour; while another respondent said that she saw a listing for London at \$11/hour, just above the minimum wage of \$10.25/hour. Once again, as in other finances-related sections of this thesis, there were many participants (both groups) who referred to the pay equity issue.

Considering what ECEs do, and the foundational work they do, it's just amazing that we paid them what we pay them, although I'm hoping that will correct itself as time goes on and to create a College, validating their skills and knowledge bases. (Joe Trovato)



One of the key things that I have as a concern is, right now the current inequities of pay. That registered ECEs will have, depending on what sector they are working in right now. And I see that as an important one to try and address. I mean we've had issues with our wage subsidy, our wage improvement funding, it varies all across Ontario. (Roxanne Lambert)

I realize that there are various recommendations on this issue from the leaders (many of them participants in this thesis, too), but in the interim there does not appear to be any significant momentum on it except for those now in the school system. Unfortunately, even the school board employee scenario creates a false sense of complacency, as it is for hours in the classroom and does not include time for preparation, meetings, professional development, and other related meeting times. I also understand the need to compromise, to acknowledge the efforts being put in by the Ministry of Education but we, *as a profession*, need to start to make noise collectively. We are taxpayers, and the taxes from our pay will help to support the very programs we work within. We educate the most vulnerable of our citizens who will one day be taxpayers themselves. We need to make a decent living for our families. We need to keep on top of the most recent and relevant research in order to best inform our practice. We need time to meet with our colleagues, both on-site and beyond our centres/rooms, in order to engage in professional discourse regarding the prevalent issues of our sector. We all need to be on equal footing, and thus avoid a multitiered early learning sector. Below is a sampling of the participant references to this concept of equal financial footing:

I think we see the same kind of trajectory that was seen in the teaching profession as well when they began to raise the standards. And that led to the 5 years and it also had an impact on salary and so on. (Rachel Langford)

Fear of power imbalances growing. (survey participant)

Teachers as leaders, and teachers as researchers. And I think when you empower teachers, and you give them the support and help them find their way, within a vision, I think that makes a huge difference. (Gail Baker)



I know we have to work on higher wages for early childhood educators. I know we do. That's really clear in my mind. So if we can get our ECEs solid in schools with full-day learning, then we can use it as a comparator, and we can then say now we have to work on the community-based ECEs. (Marni Flaherty)

To have that responsibility of another person under your care. Not just under your care but to develop them, and to nurture them, and to really have those fundamental foundations needed for the best start in life, at \$13 an hour! What kind of quality people, other than those who really have that passion in their heart, or a wealthy husband at home, can afford to do that? (Tracey Newman)

Partnership and Collaboration

The concept of collaboration is not new to the early years sector; however there was a multitude of remarks from both participant groups regarding a need to reconceptualize what collaboration and partnership in the future might look like. Just as the individual early years professional may feel and act as though they work in isolation from other components of the early years sector, so agencies and institutions will need to look beyond their individual groupings and see ways for staff and services to support whole communities.

It's a huge shift, a huge paradigm shift, and so people who work in childcare have to imagine themselves as part of a public good. And a lot of people don't. A lot of people see themselves as, "But I run a really great childcare program and my parents love me and I know what they need". And "my staff". It's not about "my staff" or "my centre" or "my parents". It's about "the staff" and "the parents" and "the community." (Zeenat Janmohamed)

Bringing formal teacher and ECE together in classroom issues? This equals a philosophical ideal but needs a clear differentiation between these two positions, both bringing strong experience from extremely fine programs, kindergarten and childcare together. When you blend two you want to have an equality of respect, and equality of relationship, and equality of commitment. But you are going to have a significant difference in salary, and that's a big problem. So clearly, for that relationship to work, it has to be a sufficient remuneration for the ECE, for them, in the long term, to be happy. When you have two people doing similar jobs but for completely different salaries, there will be issues of discontent. There is a need to deal with those wrinkles first, or if you don't they'll fester and it spreads. (Charles McCarthy)

In total, 30 interview participants spoke to this point, and 29 survey participants also mentioned partnership and/or collaboration in their comments.

Both 'camps' are so protective of their perceived turf. A lot of work has to be done in order to arrive at a truly seamless day: one over-arching ministry, and universal education not only in the school system but also in the childcare sector. (survey participant)

Will we just disappear? I don't think we will disappear. I think there will be a partnership, and I think there is a partnership. I know there are some really good partnerships happening. (Diane Kashin)

I think the idea of partnering the two professions; of early childhood educators and teachers, is also a good idea. I think both of those professions bring real strengths to the kindergarten classroom. The other issue that we have been very adamant about arguing about in terms of the partnership is that there be sufficient time allocated by the school boards. And there isn't by the way, for the teacher and the early childhood educator to have joint planning time. And that's a problem. (James Ryan)

Another point of contention raised by both participant groups is that historically we have often put funding into new initiatives then move on before they have had a chance to grow roots and show significant impact. We have many initiatives out there, and have lost others, but I also feel that there needs to be an overarching coordination of the kind of funding and inception and integration, without losing the positives that each offers. Pascal (2007) says:

Canada consistently scores low on international assessments of early learning and care...too often services are disconnected from each other. We leave it to families to bridge the gaps, avoid the overlaps, and negotiate their way, if they can. The current fragmented patchwork of early childhood services too often fails the best interests of our children, frustrates families and educators, and wastes resources. (p. 4)

Both Marni Flaherty and Kim Hiscott have given great thought to this concept and have formulated strong ideas to avoid duplication and over-creation of services.

The only piece we haven't talked about, and it's not easy, and that there's too many not-for-profit. We need to collaborate, we need to come together; we need to merge. We need to strengthen. And it's not going to be popular with the government. Nobody's going to want to do that. Boards of Directors have to figure it out. But I believe that's where we need to go. (Marni Flaherty)



The biggest gap I think that exists right now is the fact that one organization isn't responsible for a particular territory and mandated to plan.... What I would like to make sure is that there is a minimum breadth of services for every child and family and that no service or opportunity or funding doesn't come into a community without it being understood why its there. It's not that we need less services by any means, but we do need more coordination of services. And I am hesitant to use that word, because coordination means different things to different people. Encouraging people to think less territorial, less service focused, more around functions, and again, with the child and family at the centre. Not always easy. Programs are going to change. (Kim Hiscott)

Day Nurseries Act (DNA)

The DNA was established in 1949 and revised in 1984 (Ministry of the Attorney General, 1984). The DNA is outdated and its focus is no longer as germane as was originally intended. An initial question to be asked is: who has ownership of potential changes to the DNA? And furthermore, is the DNA holding back the profession? The 2012 discussion paper, "Modernizing Child Care in Ontario" circulated by the Ministry of Education alludes to the need to look at quality assurance and assessment tools, but does not directly address

the issue of the DNA's outdated relevance as noted by responses from the OCBCC, AECEO, Andrew Fleck Child Care Services, and the Atkinson Centre for Society and Child Development. While there were not a huge number of survey responses that addressed the issue of updating the DNA or indicated components that needed focus, there was a significant number of interview participants (19) who spoke to this need directly:

We need to fix provincial legislation and assure high quality for all Ontario children. Child care centres, with first-hand experience of operating under the Day Nurseries Act, are the experts on legislative and regulatory changes that are needed. But to maintain quality in every part of the province, we need strong provincial standards for licensing. (OCBCC, 2012, p. 4)

Indeed, early childhood educators have been working with legislation (Day Nurseries Act)...The revision process must include community engagement and research based decision making. (AECEO, 2012, p. 2)

In its original purpose, the DNA focuses on such things as physical space requirements (indoor and outside spaces); procedures for medication handling, storage, and dispensation; enrollment and record keeping, schedules and forms; licensing; health of staff; and even a section on "Children with Handicapping Conditions" (DN-0701-01). It appears evident that the terminology is out of date, and the focus is strictly on regulations and the various bureaucratic management pieces. It is hopeful that the Ministry of Education will address these issues of quality assurance and assessment, as well as curriculum and pedagogical focuses and implementations through an examination and revamping of the DNA.

That's another area that there should be meshing. For a 4-year-old, the Day Nurseries Act – the best parts of that should be meshed with the most appropriate parts of the Education Act. And do what's best for children. Like, why can you not have homemade snacks here but you can here? Why can you not have a bowl of soapy water here, but you can here? Why should you have

a certain number of square feet here, but not here? Why should you have ratios that are different? (Maria Cantalini-Williams)

Choices and Options

The early years covers birth to 12 years and often prebirth, too, but unquestionably it is about more than just kindergarten. While childcare is now being included in the early years media profiles, we must not forget about home care, preschools, drop in programs, parent and child programs, OEYCs, Best Start programs, literacy programs, parenting support programs, and the many other options available for children and their families in Ontario. Early childhood educators work in all of these various components, but often those without relevant qualifications also work in these capacities. The mandate for staffing qualifications can vary from option to option, outside of the childcare portion of the sector. Even in childcare, currently the only mandate is that one staff person per room must be a RECE. In home care and many of the parent support programs, qualifications are at the barest possible minimum a desire to work in the program. There might be a training session, and/or some ongoing professional development, but without legislation to the contrary, parents are at the mercy of their personal budgets and other various restrictions (such as location and waiting lists). It is with great pride that I can say that I am aware of many childcare organizations (large and small in scope) that see this issue as extremely important and expect all of their staff to have the appropriate qualifications, and to be registered with CECE. It is also important to note that these agencies assist those who do not have the necessary qualifications to work toward that end goal through upgrading options offered by the province's community colleges.

Most childcare centres now start at 18 months (toddler) for a variety of reasons: maternity leave is for 1 year, and the cost of infant care is financially a loss (and exorbitant for parents to pay). Ratios are also lower for the younger age groups. With 4- and 5-year-olds going into the school system, the childcare sector is struggling financially as it is, and having to retrofit space to accommodate more infant and/or toddler rooms creates an additional financial burden on the system. Financial support for childcare centres needs to come from somewhere, and it needs to be available now. In a variety of memos sent from the Ministry of Education to Directors of Education, consolidated Municipal Service Managers (who would forward these memos to childcare operators and related agencies) and District Social Services Administration Boards, the Ministry of Education has stated the amounts being designated for this transitional period:

On April 20, 2012, the government announced that, as part of the 2012 Budget, Ontario will provide assistance to child care operators as we move towards full implementation of full-day kindergarten in 2014-15. The total fiscal impact of this action is \$90 million in 2012-13, \$68 million in 2013-14, and \$84 million in 2014-15. (Ministry of Education, 2012)

Unfortunately, there are many issues around this funding that are still impacting the viability of childcare centres. For example, the timing of the release of funds was not immediate and therefore those agencies and centres who were struggling even with the initial FDK start up were never able to recover financially. Therefore, more and more centres are closing. This includes municipal centres that are also caught in the middle of the transition of the early years moving from one ministry to another, and support funding not being available from any of the typical sources. In this scenario, the Ministry of Education says that the municipalities should supply the emergency funds, but the municipalities say that this issue is now under Ministry of Education's jurisdiction. In the interim, centres continue to close and

families are left to struggle to find childcare for their children. Dewey (1990) states: “That this [social construct] revolution should not affect education in some other than a formal and superficial fashion is inconceivable” (p. 9). However, it seems to be, once again, on the backs of children and their families that the brunt of the change is being laden. The following participant quotes reflect this funding failure perspective:

Until we can get public opinion to be more cognizant and more ready to support that instead of sports complexes, as an example, and see that that’s a reasonable investment. (Pat Dickinson)

We keep saying to the Ministry is that you have to look at this as the system; you have to stop focusing on 4- and 5-year-olds now. That piece is over now.... You have the whole thing and it has to be a continuum and that’s the way you have to look at it. (Lois Mahon)

Don’t forget the 0–3.8 year group. (survey participant)

Pascal (2007) explains: “It would be ineffective and costly to layer a new program on top of a web of unsolved problems” (p. 5). But as was stated previously, our sector appears to be caught up in creating and implementing new programs, without fully realizing the potential of past ones. In quick succession we have had Best Start, OEYC, Family Literacy Programs, and Toronto First Duty, each of which represents the strong and extremely successful programs that have been offered in recent years. I agree that we shouldn’t layer program upon program, but we also shouldn’t reinvent the wheel or leave ineffective programming (if found to be so through thorough and detailed observation and research; and does not include any of the aforementioned programs) in place while introducing new ones.

Overall, I think it is important to point out that there was high interest in this area from both sets of participants (see Figure 9). From the related comments from the participants, there were positive references, negative issues and impacts, and suggestions of change.

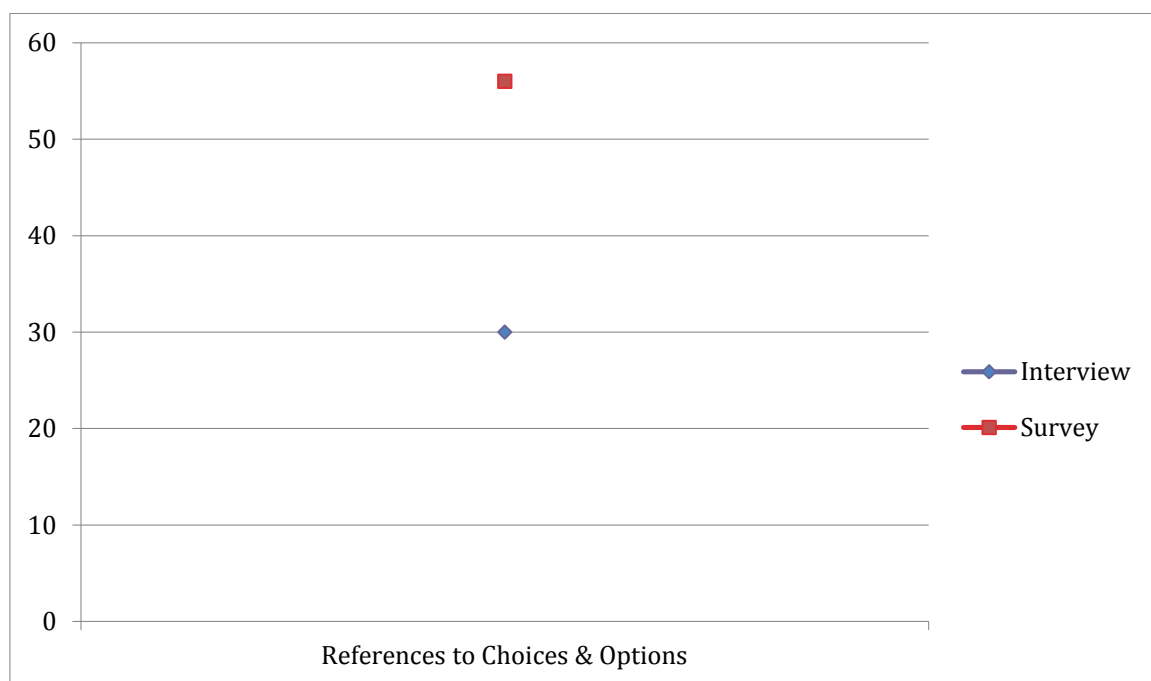


Figure 9. Participant references to choices and options as a relevant component of professionalism.

Universal Accessibility and Infrastructure

Kaga, Bennett, and Moss (2010) have explored whether or not to integrate the early years into education. In the summary section, these three researchers discuss the potential benefits of integrating the early years into the Ministry of Education. Kaga et al. (2010) speak to the resulting connection between equity, validation, and where the early years are situated:

Changed perceptions of ECCE among the workforce, parents and the wider public, including greater recognition of its pedagogical value and higher valuation of those working in ECCE. ... The creation of a stronger ECCE system that enjoys parity with and can influence compulsory education. (p. 118)

In the interview participant group there were direct references to the need to attend to the issue of equity. However, the survey participants made reference to this concept throughout their various responses to the survey questions; therefore the number in Figure 10 is not necessarily the number of people who directly referred to the issue.



Figure 10. Interview and survey references to the issue of equity.

The issue of wage equity came up over and over in interviews and along with those discussions came talk about the wage subsidy variances: those who have it; those who have had it but no longer have it; those who never had it; and those who should have had it, but it was used for other budget lines unbeknownst to them. The following statements reflect participant thoughts on the issue of wage equity:

One of the key things that I have as a concern is, right now, the current inequities of pay. That registered ECEs will have, depending on what sector they are working in right now. And I see that as an important one to try and

address. I mean, we've had issues with our wage subsidy, our wage improvement funding, it varies all across Ontario. (Roxanne Lambert)

ECEs are generally underpaid and there is a lack of respect and understanding of the importance of the work that we do. We can't seem to shake off that "babysitter" image in the public. (survey participant)

Even though I have stated this before, it needs repeating, and often: equality does not necessarily have the same meaning as equal when it comes to accessing early years services. What one family may need in terms of childcare does not mean that all families need the same option. But all families need to have access to options in childcare. At the same time, what is needed in the GTA is completely different than what might be needed in rural northern Ontario. However, the one consistent is that universal access equals universal opportunity for life long success. There is a wide range of research that supports this need for universality, with a few examples of this type of research-based evidence below:

Effective early childhood programs are: universal; available and affordable; high quality; systems funding and management. Integrating early education and care, both on-the-ground and at the systems level, avoids the added and wasteful expense of service duplications and gaps. (McCain et al., 2011, pp. 72–73)

[List of childcare related issues]: high quality child care is accessible only to a minority of Toronto's children; subsidy waiting lists for eligible families are so lengthy that low income families have limited prospects for a subsidy or a corresponding space; achieving and maintaining high quality is a struggle for service providers; child care is unaffordable for modest and middle income families, with the bulk of costs for all varieties of child care supported by parent fees; there is a very wide range of child care staff wages, benefits and working conditions; most child care remains privatized with many children in unregulated private arrangements and a growing for-profit sector; volunteer boards struggle to maintain non-profit programs; Toronto Children's Services, with a mandated role of Municipal Service Manager, has the responsibility for maintaining a high quality child care system but lacks many of the necessary levers. (Friendly, 2011, p. 2)

Zeenat Janmohamed, Charles Pascal, Diane Kashin, Carl Corter, Eduarda Sousa and 26 other interview participants mentioned a need for the Ministry of Education to make childcare a priority and a public program, and made related infrastructure comments (see Appendix N) that while having full-day kindergarten it good, it is not good enough. They argued that the more funding that is cut from essential services, the more fragmented our service system becomes. It will not right itself or suddenly become seamless and financially stable on its own.

You cannot run a good childcare system with a subsidy system. Moving it into education is moving it into the public sphere. That it's not a private family's responsibility. (Martha Friendly)

I think that as long as we live in a nation where education is considered to be in the public domain and, you know, children and youth services are considered to be private services, our welfare services, then we have to go to education. (Zeenat Janmohamed)

REMEMBER the children – educated AND cared for and nurtured. (survey participant)

A number of participants refer to the call for the Ministry of Education to take a stronger interest in the 0–3.8 age group. While they are making the noise and some actions, are they truly invested in this age group and do they fully understand the issues?

Infrastructure includes the finances, of course. But it is also the human resources, training programs, the professional development childcare resource programs, all of those things. I think we are at a point right now where the loss of, not just the loss of funding in terms of the Harper withdrawal of funds for the bilateral agreements, that notion of a national early childhood program, but other losses of funds such as the limited funds available for research on

childcare means there's less and less of that infrastructure that supports development and knowledge generation in this field....I don't see the money going to grow the field and to continue to grow the field. And it's across the field, whether you're looking at family resource programs, or the resource and research unit, of training programs, of inclusion programs, all of that.

(Donna Lero)



What kind of message are we sending parents that they have to line up at 4:30 in the morning, cry for hours or settle on an in-home provider? (Merringer, 2012). Once again, centres are closing down all around us due to financial issues. Extra funding is being provided but in increments and not up front or early enough. And if the sector does not spend all of the money, the government will claw back the difference. Is childcare getting caught in the middle of licensing and Ministry of Education expectations, demands, and biases? The childcare system is in distress; the subsidy system is dysfunctional; massive retrofits are expected both in childcare centres (to accommodate the younger age groups) and schools (to accommodate FDK); and the assessment tools needed to ensure quality education and care in our 0–3.8 age sector are lacking in relevance. Dahlberg and Moss (2005) are quite clear on their stance in this area: “Like schools, preschools should be publicly funded and children should be entitled to go to them...from birth” (p. 29). In order for this to occur, clear working partnerships need to be in place, as well as the infrastructures to support those partnerships. In the “Early Years Study 3,” McCain et al. (2011) state: “It is only through public policy that permanent and sustainable change for a better future can take place” (p. 57).

The report recommended that from zero on these services move under the Ministry of Education, to provide a continuum, to provide some coherence, at the program and policy level. We've moved childcare over to the Ministry of Education, but all of the other child and family services – the OEYCs, the Parent and Family Literacy Centres, the Family Resource Centres, Special Needs are still over there with MCYS....So while we organize them up, childcare can still be the lone wolf lost in a big Ministry, which does know nothing about it. And then you've got the poor municipalities at the local level who are trying to manage this change, with an insulting level of resources to do it. (Kerry McCuaig)

I am concerned about the way the province has implemented full-day learning. It is fragmented and all of the recommendations that Pascal has offered are picked over and pieced together to create another fragmented childcare system. (survey participant)

It's frustrating if you're in the field, and you really want to be good. It's frustrating if you're a director deciding do I put the 5 bucks here or do I put the 5 bucks there. Where is the 5 bucks? (Kerry McCuaig)

Concerned about the funding that may or may not be available for not for profit programs to revamp our programs to serve children between 0–3.8 as this is a much more expensive age group to provide care for. (survey participant)

Leadership Into the Future

While touched upon in Chapter Five, leadership and mentoring are interconnected concepts that impact on one's sense of professionalism. In order to stay abreast of current issues and changes, leaders need to emerge and take charge of groups of voices and needs. Consequently, in order to continue the chain of leadership, mentors need to support others growth in this area.

Mentorship

The concept of mentorship was spoken of by a wide number of interview participants, and a few of the survey participants (see Figure 11).



Figure 11. Participant references to concept of mentorship, as it relates to professionalism.

It might appear that 10 of 167 survey participants mentioning mentorship in some capacity is low. However, the questions included in the survey were targeted toward current issue knowledge acquisition, preservice and inservice needs. Therefore, I find 10 to be a very significant number and therefore adding to the voices from the interview group results.

Mentorship should not be a frightening word. Once the early years sector is stabilized, there will be a multitude of prospects for growth and support. Mentoring can be a formal partnership, informal relationship, or even a one-time event or support. I am aware of many mentors in my professional journey, filling each of these categories and supporting a need within my own professionalization.

Finding ways to help the leaders, and the future leaders in the field see the big picture. See how they are a part of something that is international, and absolutely fundamental to how we live out our life on this planet. So that they

can see just how critically important it is that they be informed as much as possible. That they take that role as seriously as they possible can but get the full enjoyment out of it. Because it's just the best job in the world. But at the same time it's absolutely got to be done well. (Pat Dickinson)

Miller et al. (1990) says:

It seems to be a natural human phenomenon to resist change....Many people try to avoid taking the inner journey and experiencing the pain and anguish of stepping into the unknown. (p. 31)

I often wonder if the issue is not within the current leadership, or those in position of leadership. Do our students, younger RECES, or colleagues of any kind resist seeking out mentors? Do they understand the purpose of mentoring, or the value of having mentors, both in informal, and formal ways? Do they feel that we are approachable? Or is this also part of the look down and shuffle persona? Kerry McCuaig spoke to this point during her interview:

It goes directly to the question of leadership. It's because you need to have environments to mentor leadership. And to grow leadership. So when I look at my experience, I got to develop leadership skills because I got to practice being a leader. I got to immerse in the activism and research. Very, very few people have that—I can't name you any, in fact—would have that opportunity. (Kerry McCuaig)

Do we provide these kinds of opportunities for our current students? To visit iconic sites, to meet with iconic people, to participate in leadership driven research projects? Perhaps the current leadership could be mentoring and/or inviting younger leaders and leader potentials to join them on panels, research projects, or meetings as well as meeting with these people on a regular basis to help groom them as the ones who take over when we retire.

Sullivan (2010) states:

The field of early childhood care and education is extremely diverse in terms of the people who work in the field and the families served. We must learn how to lead a diverse group of people and learn how to be led by those who differ from us. (p. 51)

There are agencies that do provide these types of opportunities, when the funding and funds for supporting these individuals are in place. Perhaps a more formal funding process and partnerships in place would be helpful in order to pursue this issue fully. Leadership development, or professional status, is not confined to the prospective or emerging leader to have only early years experience; in fact the opposite might be needed to have a more rounded understanding of how the varying aspects fit together.

Those who work in ECE are well aware of the high burnout rate. As well, with wages so low, often people will leave work to stay home with young children, or find higher paying positions in other sectors.

Our profession currently lacks an inviting career path, and people ready for change often leave the field entirely or move into administrative positions for which they have little experience or expertise. (Carter & Curtis, 1994, p. 204)

Then what occurs is that those who move into higher positions within early years agencies are chosen based on seniority rather than expertise.

Development of individuals is not sufficient. New relationships...are crucial, but only if they work at the hard task of establishing greater program coherence and the addition of resources. The role of leadership... is to "cause" greater capacity in the organization in order to get better results. (Fullan, 2001, p. 65)

What I have heard from my interview and survey participants is that there is a desire for mentorship to be formalized or be part of the scope of practice so that the learning continues beyond the theory, beyond the basic, thus supporting those moving within an

agency, or the sector at large. Equally, in the early years, and specifically with those in positions of authority, there is often a need to speak with a wide range of different agencies and organizations. Each speaks a different language, with different nuances to their understandings and needs. Without appropriate mentoring, these differences can often destroy relationships.

It goes directly to the question of leadership. It's because you need to have environments to mentor leadership. And to grow leadership. So when I look at my experience, I got to develop leadership skills because I got to practice being a leader. I got to immerse in the activism and research. (Kerry McCuaig)

That mentorship has included everything from sort of taking an idea and learning how to speak about it, to writing, to going into a political meeting and having a conversation with the Minister. To knowing the difference between how to speak to *ministry* staff, to how you talk to *political* staff. (Zeenat Janmohamed)

Involvement in advocacy group. Keeping students abreast of changes and the employment possibilities. More information sharing. (survey participants)

Leadership

Leadership needs to be from a collective of individuals in every facet of the early years sector rather than assuming only those with a high profile can be an agent of change (Sullivan, 2009). This revelation leads to another subtheme that emerged from the data, mostly from the interview participants (interview: 25, survey: 2) but nonetheless addressed as an issue: if the leaders do not speak up about the issues at hand, where and when needed, then what might the impact be, and what might the field look like for the marginalized?

Eisner (1991) speaks to this point:

I have learned that knowledge cannot be reduced to what can be said. I have learned that the process of working on a problem yields its own intrinsically valuable rewards and that these rewards are as important as the outcomes. I have learned that goals are not stable targets at which you aim, but directions towards which you travel. (p. 47)

A couple of the interview participants expressed surprise that they might be thought of as a leader, and did not overtly see their actions as having impact. But each and every participant understood that action *was* needed, both on an individual basis and as a collective profession, in order to exact positive movement and change. Wouldn't it be wonderful if more people used voice as a functioning tool for change, rather than complaining about the inequalities?

Real early childhood educators, real leaders in that, who run really well thought out programs, it's night and day in terms of what it means to kids, to parents. (Annie Kidder)

As first explored at the start of this dissertation study, the perspective that leaders have specific characteristics has a rich foundation in the research world (see Chapter Two). However, I now wonder if it is not just the innate characteristics that one holds that creates a leader, but also a blindness to barriers that might block their voice from being heard. It isn't that leaders don't care about the possible issues that might come up against what they are saying, but more that they are not focused on worrying about the barriers, and instead on the end that needs to be reached. Sergiovanni (2000) talked about: "Leaders with character, it seems, ground their practices in unique purposes and ideas and then act with courage and fortitude to advance and defend those ideas" (p. 18). The following three interview participant quotes exemplify their position that leadership must be nurtured from within the sector, thus creating change from a position of knowledge and expertise:

Who will be the stakeholders? The initial instinct is to say, go to your trustee, and go to your government official, because they're the movers and the shakers, and the truth of the matter is that nobody takes up a cause until the cause becomes so prevalent and prolific within a smaller community and within society-at-large. I think you have to look for your champions from within to spread your word to without. (Chari Schwartz)

So how does a profession that is a caring profession, that's play-based, non-authoritarian, how do they develop leadership internally to rally around their own belief and value system? (Christine Forsyth)

And I think that we could push the agenda of the early childhood educator. And my vision is for early childhood educators to stop waiting for something to be done to them but to start doing something for themselves. As a grassroots movement we need to recognize that we need to support each other. We can't give everything away like we do to children and families. It's just amazing what people do that work every day with children and the families. And the difference they make is so admirable, and so amazing. Why don't they do it for themselves or for each other? (Diane Kashin)



The issues that were raised by the leaders in this study are not new; these ideas are often spoken about, and said by many. Then perhaps this speaks to the call for those in a position of power to really listen, not just hear what is being said by countless individuals, and repeatedly. It is time for the early years sector to be taken seriously, to be seen as a valid component of the education continuum, and its members worthy of professional status.

Perhaps it also means that, as Kagan and Hallmark (2001) explain: “The demands facing today’s early childhood educators require the cultivation not only of *more* leaders, but *more* kinds of leadership” (p. 7). The more voices added to the cacophony of issues that need addressing, from as many perspectives as possible, will begin to break through the barrier of needed change.

It’s that transfer of knowledge. But it is up to those leaders. (Sylvie Tourigny)



We do all those sorts of things but I think it all centers around doing the right thing and trying to do it better. And never be satisfied with the status quo. Keep going and keep moving forward. And how do you affect change.
(Linda Cottes)

A number of the interview participants mentioned the future of leadership. From the photos included as well as the number of interview participants who mention retirement as the next phase of their professional journey, it is evident that succession is a pressing issue. This closes the circle of this section, bringing us back to the issue of mentorship and mentoring opportunities being a vital element of our sector. In order to be truly perceived and treated as professionals, both participant groups spoke to the need to have voice and be confident about our expertise, match our needs with our actions, be part of the impetus to provincial recognition and support, and see each of us as a leader within our occupation of choice.

And those of us who have been involved in those efforts are getting older and I think a key challenge, frankly, is succession. And folks like me, who are maybe 5 years or 10 years from retirement, and whose funding is not stable, some of that infrastructure is going to vanish. And it will be a shame. It will be very difficult, if not impossible, to recover. (Donna Lero)

The leadership arena in early childhood is pretty limited. And I'm concerned that there's an aging population of leaders and there is no plan around succession planning. And I've talked about this with a number of people over the last 5 years, to say we need to do something. We need to kind of train a younger generational leader so that in the next 5 or 10 years, when everybody is retired somebody needs to be in place to take over... Being a leader is taking risks. (Zeenat Janmohamed)

So we have not done, we the sort of early years field in general, have not done a good job at replenishing ourselves, at really making some of those leadership links with education. And part of it is our fault, part of it isn't. So that for example, when – I made this point to Andrea who is the Executive Coordinator of the Coalition now – is when I was there, there were 12–15 staff, and we had the capacity to take on students doing placement and mentoring them, and there were rooms for people, in the NGOs. Whose actual jobs were advocacy. They don't exist anymore. In fact, under new charitable regulations and NGO regulations, you cannot do advocacy. You can only put up to 10% of your budget on advocacy, and practically nobody does it because if you do, you get audited. So it's really put a chill on. (Kerry McCuaig)

I don't know if you noticed this but most of the people who are in the leadership positions are not young. Or even middle aged. This is a huge problem. I think the leaders in the college system are thin. Very thin. There's some people, but not a lot. And how do you get leaders? I know this is a serious problem. Some people do it as more than a job. It's more like a profession. (Martha Friendly)

Taking Pause



In the front reception area of Andrew Fleck Child Care Services' head office is this magnificent art piece. A person in the community created this piece based on the agency's second annual conference, "A Symphony of Inclusion." To me, this inspirational artwork expresses one family's acknowledgement of the impact of AFCCS's work on their daily life. We do such wondrous work in our sector; we should be singing this proudly from the limbs of our tree of knowledge.

Chapter Seven
Emerging Theme:
Intellectualization of Practice

The implementation of full-day kindergarten has had a ripple effect on the birth-to-3.8-year age group and the programs offered before formal school entrance. This may mean alternate care options for young children, play-based learning programs for family units, parenting programs, and direct access to information and health care specialists (Pascal, 2007). With the eventuality of all 3.8–6-year-old children entering the school-based full-day kindergarten programs in Ontario, early childhood educators need to have a strong understanding of current ECE objectives but also such things as an understanding beyond the current early years accountability and into the inclusion of an awareness of school systems.

I believe [early childhood education] needs to be under the Ministry of Education. It is, I think it will be well situated within that Ministry. Having the Early Learning Division makes sense. It ties in nicely, it's well situated to moving things along. And having the key piece of implementing full-day kindergarten really is the basis to make that link and that transition.

(Roxanne Lambert)

However, this shift in perspective of what the early years entails does not mean that the full focus must only be on the kindergarten program. A concern that we are spending an inordinate amount of energy on supporting the kindergarten program, and insufficient energy on support of the 0–3.8-year age group was mentioned by the vast majority of the participants, both from the interviews and the survey. At the same time, this refocusing of our attention to include kindergarten as an integral component of the early years has an impact on

how early childhood education preservice programs must be viewed as education programs, not merely as training programs.

I think in the next 5 years the climate around preservice education, around both teachers and early childhood, will be quite different than it is now.
(Zeenat Janmohamed)

With the integration of early childhood education into the Ministry of Education's mandate, changes to what is being taught to future early years educators and kindergarten teachers need to include short-term and long-term goals to meet the requirements of the changing face of the early childhood educator. While there is some ability to predict long-term implications and recommended changes, these wants must be addressed now and these changes to be implemented immediately. We must have the difficult discourse and confront the discomfort created by it in order to move on (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005; Moss, 2010).

Dodging the tough defining issues will keep the field in a state of perpetual disequilibrium. To that end, the professionals need to develop the mechanisms to define the field and to render far more precision to the professional capacities and competencies necessary to get the job done....need to recognize the realities of the diverse early childhood field. (Kagan & Gomez, 2011, p. 73)

Training is the most, single, positive indicator of quality...training in the right field is not just training. I mean you can't take an engineer and move them over to early childhood and say he's got 4 years of university.
(Maria Cantalini-Williams)

Early Childhood Programs

Content

I don't think it's high level enough. I think they are capable of a lot more. And understanding a lot more. And doing a lot more. And not just seeing themselves as wiping noses and helping with putting on boots and mitts; they really are quite capable. (Gail Baker)

Gail raises a good point here, the designation or degree shouldn't necessarily be the goal or ultimate outcome, but what is gained or learned through the process should be of the utmost importance. However, if it means shifting the focus from strictly technical training to educational foundations and underpinnings, then a degree versus diploma might be the ends to this means. Suffice it to say that an Early Childhood Education diploma is not an easy program to get through as we teach pedagogy, philosophy, curriculum planning, and issues pertaining to professionalism.

Through the analysis of the interviews and survey results there was a total of 62 survey comments directed to the uniqueness of the content taught in early childhood education programs, and another 29 direct references to this distinctiveness in perspective from the interview participant transcripts.

However, the perception upon graduation outside of the early years settings is that there is insufficient training and little to no education piece with it. Further, it appears, from these interviews and surveys, that our graduates perpetuate that impression.

Now, let me repeat myself. I have a healthy, high regard for the people in the field of early childhood education. I am always concerned, though, that again, when I look at some of these diploma programs, they just don't seem as comprehensive as I'd hoped they could be. (Joe Trovato)

Then are we taking a proactive approach and looking at our programs, diploma and/or degree, and seeing what needs to be done in order to support the emerging professional? Are faculty members challenging themselves to be as current and savvy as necessary? Is our curriculum representative of what our students need to know in order to be competitive in the job market?

Well, I think that when you go across the 24 colleges in Ontario that offer early childhood and you ask all 24 colleges how many of them embedded the new Bill 242 into their course content, I think I would fall off my chair if everybody said yes, they did. (Zeenat Janmohamed)

The survey participants had an interesting perspective on what their home institutions were doing, in light of the current changes in the early years. In asking if their faculty was making plans for changes to current program delivery (see Figure 12), only 75.7% said “yes”. While this may appear to be a high percentage of institutions adapting as needed, what about the other 24.3%? This is a disservice to their students and to the communities that their students will be employed within.

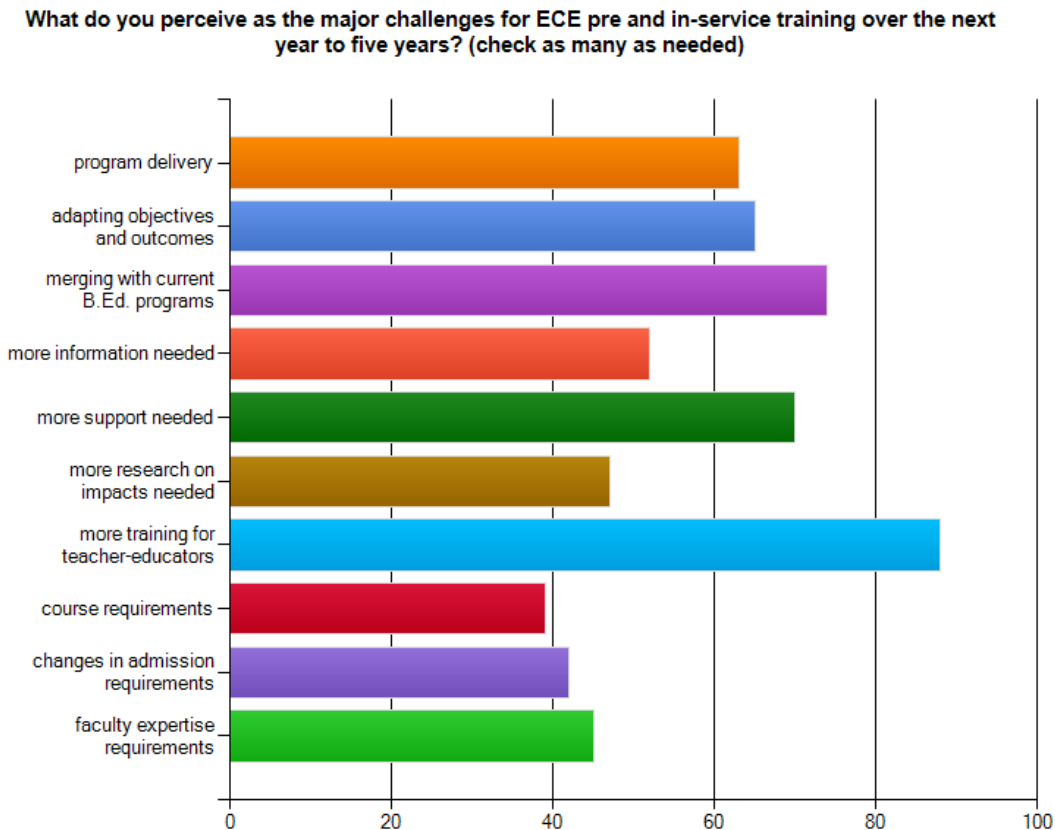


Figure 12. Major challenges over next 5 years.

Children in context

I don't know why in postsecondary education we haven't been listening to the things that we are saying to our students. Curriculum in early childhood is about relationships. Well you know what, in postsecondary it's about relationships. Like what do we think it is about? Dewey influenced education, not just early childhood education. Meaningful learning is a concept for all of us. (Goranka Vukelich)

Urban (2010) as well as Fenech, Sumsion, and Shepherd (2010) talk about moving away from the constructs of early childhood education programs that focus on supporting children's universally developing domains (thus focusing on the future, from an adult

imposed interpretation of those domains). Instead, they recommend focusing on what is needed by the children in current contexts, from a critical intellectually focused perspective. The number of times it was raised by the participants (26 interview participants and 1 survey respondent) might seem at first glance to be not as sizeable as other issues, but it does speak to the interest among early years leaders to address this perspective in pedagogy. Langford (2010) explains a possible pedagogical focus in this reconstructed early years domain:

In representing a democratic pedagogy, children, their peers, early childhood educators and families are inside and at the centre. ... This new representation acknowledges that everyone always functions inside (rather than is influenced by) social, political and economic contexts. Everyone within this democratic centre acts, reacts and responds in relations with each other in complex and entangled ways, with growing knowledge, skill, power, judgment and agency. This democratic centre brings everyone together in the common enterprise of teaching and learning, and addresses concerns about the separation of children and adults in child-centred pedagogy. (p. 121)

Similarly, Van Manen (1986) talks about seeing the bigger picture when working with children. It isn't about pouring information into their heads in a uniform manner, expecting the same results from each and every child. We teach our ECE students not to tell a child what to make when doing creatives, not to have a finished product for them to mimic, and yet we assume that children must be viewed as uniform and prepackaged for sequencing. We, as teacher-educators, need to assist our students in understanding normative development, but in context of individuality and within the child's individual spheres of familiarity.

We have such great ideas but what we need to do, and in terms of education and other stuff, we need to help our educators deepen their understandings of concepts. We're surfers, we just kind of touch on things. So why did you learn

these things, and what does or how does it fit into your classroom? (Goranka Vukelich)

I think too that what needs to happen in both areas is that people have to understand the nature of play and think of play as an art and as science and something that is extremely worthwhile. (Linda Cameron)

Understanding each other

Michael Pimento talked about his fear that while he appreciates FDK and that RECEs need to know about it, they can't do it at the expense of what they are already good at doing: "So, yes, you need to know about the Education Act, just like you know about the Day Nursery Act, because if you work for a school board, you need to know that stuff." In fact, there was a noteworthy amount of references from both sets of participants on this line of reasoning (see Figure 13).

Understanding Each Other

- 30 Interview participants
- 41 Survey Participants

Figure 13. Participant references to the importance of early years professionals and those in education but outside the purview of the early years to understand each other's expertise and knowledge base.

I also believe that RECEs should be aware of the school board documents so that if they choose to focus on related opportunities they will be cognizant of the contents of these documents. This also means that early years teacher-educators need to understand and teach

what it is to be in a school environment, and what might be some of the differences, subtle and overt, in each of the different settings. Equally, it is important that B.Ed. programs need to respect and recognize early learning and early childhood education programs as valid and stringent preservice options.

There's a thing that early childhood educators know about more than teachers. Or they are taught more about it than teachers are taught about it. Therefore we should acknowledge that that information should be an essential part of what teachers know. (Annie Kidder)

Teachers as opportunists

The best early childhood teachers are opportunists—they know child development and exploit interests and interactions to promote it, some of which may involve structured lessons and much of which may not. (Pianta, 2011, p. 65)

Educators, no matter what age group we work with, need to find those teachable moments where we go beyond the predetermined objective. This is a nurtured talent, not a didactically taught skill. Teacher-educators may be able to list the components of teachable moments, and perhaps even the steps in engaging with children in a teachable moment. However, the recognition of such opportunities and the engagement of others in a natural fashion through this process is not easily learned. This ability to facilitate this type of learning needs to begin in the preservice setting and was acknowledged by 28 interview participants and 2 survey participants.

Teacher training that encompasses all educational venues with a curricular focus for children up to the age of eight on developmental, play-based learning rather than a more academic model. (survey participant)

In fact, the ability to see our role as RECEs is significantly more than objectives, lesson plans, and classroom set up. Teaching, engaging, modeling and facilitating are about more than the obvious components of education.

The colleges and universities I think have a responsibility to engage students in lessons and activities that promote volunteerism. And give people opportunities to explore leadership roles. (Euarda Sousa)

The connection between the early childhood educator and leadership continues beyond the classroom setting into a connection to the community and the family. This ability to work collaboratively, especially with parents, caregivers and guardians makes us unique. Therefore, it is with the responsibility of an early years expert that we must bridge the worlds of theory and real life.

The new model of preschool teaching is an intentional teacher who actively interacts with children and uses extensive knowledge of both individual and group developmental patterns and learning capabilities—skills and knowledge unlikely to be acquired outside of a high-quality collegiate-level teacher preparation program. (Bowman, 2011, p. 56)

There's behavioural and how to support teachers in the socialization of children in relation to the type of parents they [the children] have—very young, older, involved, removed, over protective, oblivious to their children's needs—social, emotional, physical, physiological, etc. We still have parents who put their 2-month-old baby in front of Baby Einstein for 6 hours a day. (Susan Morris)



I think...that teachers in the classroom have to know how to manage human resources, including parents. And the parents aren't often seen as a valuable human resource. So if I were to add anything into the mix it would be some knowledge and experience, before you go in, on how to manage human resources. (Joe Trovato)

I think we need to develop a stronger link to speaking with adults. And speaking with parents. And helping parents understand child development. I think parents would appreciate strong early childhood educators who have confidence in what they say about child development. (Marni Flaherty)

Curriculum

ECE curriculum will need to adapt. (survey participant)

The curriculum that is currently taught and then ultimately used in early years settings needs to adapt. But to what should it adapt to become? Do we lose our autonomy and focus? Do we simply become younger versions of the kindergarten program? My hope is that there is a loud and resounding *no* when this question is raised. We are experts in what we do and this expertise and uniqueness of expertise was acknowledged by a large number of thesis participants (see Figure 14). We need to formalize that piece: the identification of what we are experts at doing, and what makes us unique. And this is being done in small, scattered ways. Potentially these ideas of what an early years professional is, beyond the occupational standards, and what makes them a unique educator, will come together to create official, recognized statements of professional rank.

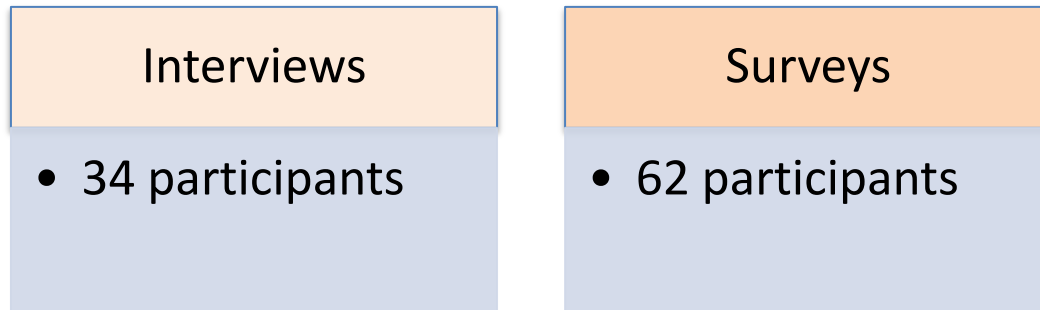


Figure 14. References from both participant groups on the issue of early years curriculum being distinct from other educational programs (i.e., older age-groups), and/or a desire to see an even stronger distinction between the early years and other age groups when in teacher-education programs.

There are concerns that while we focus on specific areas of education, these focuses do not create, or necessarily assume, a stringent enough understanding of these areas.

More (formal) teaching training re: child development; play; appropriate circles; and behaviour guidance for 0–8 year old age groups. (survey participant)

It goes back to the early childhood philosophy around the learning through play. That's the piece that's missing for—it's so obvious I didn't think of it—but for the teachers. It's that well rounded, it's not just focusing on the educational aspect. It's the physical, it's the emotional, it's the social...if the child is going to school, and they don't know how to undo their pants to go to the bathroom, then, Wow! We have to face those challenges first. It's about the well-rounded child. And again, that's a part of the ECE philosophy. (Joy Vance)

Interchange Between Elaine and Roxanne:

Roxanne Lambert: I think there should be...more of a focus on understanding child development and behaviour management of children. More of a focus on how children learn through play. The play based curriculum.

Elaine: Are you referring to one program or another, or both?

Roxanne: well, I actually haven't looked at a curriculum for a while—I mean we did focus on a play-based curriculum so if that's not standard across all ECE programs, then, yes. We should need that to be considered.

Elaine: I do not feel it is a matter of ignorance or a questioning of our expertise. I feel it is more of a need to go beyond the basics of teaching our students about these areas of learning and growing. We have what is considered a 2-year program, but in reality it is an 8-month program. We spend exorbitant amounts of time teaching the ages and stages of child development, over and over. Is it any wonder that our students then do not go beyond the memorization (and eventual disbandment) of these facts and figures?

We have a lot of work to do because one third of all certified teachers in Ontario have Early Learning and Child Development, Human Development in their curriculum; two thirds don't. (Charles Pascal)

We would want to make sure the ECEs really understand the theory behind play and how children learn. Because directive teaching is rather easy. And so making sure that the ECEs can really communicate and articulate why it needs to be a certain way. (Kim Hiscott)

Fundamental things that both sides need to have: What's the difference in the ages? What the difference in the stages? The whole notion of helping kids to critically think. (Claire Sumerlus)



Among the aspects that we need to incorporate, if not already doing so, are the various provincial documents that are part of the new Ministry of Education mandate. For example, the ELECT document needs to be part of every RECEs repertoire and should be at the forefront of their understanding of what they do in the classroom (Pascal, 2007).

Elaine: Do you think you will have to support the student who wants to eventually work in the school system any differently than another student?

Goranka: We've been having some thoughts about that and some conversations about it...I think the students will have to be informed by documents such as the ELECT document, kindergarten outcomes. That's something that we would and do introduce them to and work with.

I think over time faculties need to respond to the changing nature of kindergarten. I think the issue of full-day kindergarten, as a separate topic, needs to be covered for teachers who go into that primary stream. I think those that run early childhood educator programs also need to address the issue of what it's like to be in a school, because the school is a very different environment. From ratios alone. So both professions need to adapt and change for full-day kindergarten. (James Ryan)

Other documents that should also be part of the students' core curriculum, and on an ongoing basis allowing for scaffolding of understanding, are the CECE Code of Ethics and the Standards of Practice.

For ECEs specifically, obviously I want to see the curriculum embrace the Code of Ethics and the Standards of Practice. And brought into the forefront of the profession. As people begin to take their early childhood education they have to understand that they are part of this group of professionals and what that means. (Roxanne Lambert)

I think the thing about early childhood is that the program content has to meet the provincial guidelines around the standards and outcomes... Because it's an evolving kind of sector, it's incumbent around early childhood trainers to give their students the most up-to-date information. I think that's where we're doing a disservice. (Zeenat Janmohamed)

Once again, we need to remember to go beyond the memorization of facts and ministry expectations and think about the child in a more global way.

In the 21st century, essential teacher knowledge includes a broad range of fields and content areas; from genetics and neurobiology to nutrition and health, from maternal attachment and stranger anxiety to teacher and peer relationships, from mathematics and science to sociology and economics – just to name a few. (Bowman, 2011, p. 55)

We need to take our fundamental understandings of developmental issues and see them in a more functional manner. We need to be cognizant of current research, its implications on the work that we do, how we do it and to whom we do it for. This is higher level thinking. This is being intellectual about our practice. This will assist with the divide between training and education. And it is about sustaining each and every facet of the early years sector.

The inclusion of science, research, understanding of core issues surrounding development in a grander sense, such as self-regulation. So what we now have to do is, number one: we have to ensure that our early childhood educators are learning this new science....Point number two is we are starting to develop new models of parenting theory...But now, as we push forward, we're starting to understand parental behaviour, parenting style, in terms of this model of self-regulation....And then the third thing that we have to do with our early educators is now one of the things that we've entirely neglected is their own well-being....It's something that we've just totally ignored. And what we do is we throw them into the fire. And then leave them. (Stuart Shanker)

Approaches

ECE as a teaching profession

Rachel Langford: And I want to see changes in the profession so that our graduates want to, and seek to go in, and are excited about going in. Even at the college level you're seeing half of your student population not go on.

Elaine: They say they want to go on to be a *real* teacher.

Rachel: I know....that dichotomy is still there, it's still prevalent. I'm still hearing the word daycare, I'm still hearing the 'real' teacher. I don't know the persistence of that, despite all our attempts as teachers and educators of our students to dispel those myths. It's so prevalent and so powerful.



The issue of an early childhood education program being perceived as a stepping-stone to becoming a real teacher has long been an issue among ECE teacher-educators and was mentioned often in both methods of data collection (see Figure 15). Perhaps this is in some way connected to the previous point that ECE is not seen as an education program but more as a training program.

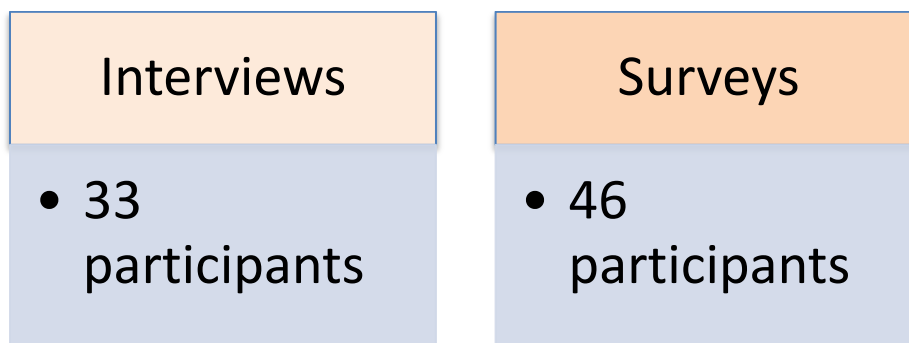


Figure 15. Perception of early childhood educators as “true” educators references.

There needs to be a stronger connection made to incoming students and to those contemplating entering an ECE program that the early years educator is a recognized teacher. By moving the early years into the Ministry of Education, the tide should begin to shift. It is up to the professionals in the sector to work with the government to bring about a shift in perception.

We have to give people the opportunity to listen and look at things from all sides. And that’s what’s missing, the ability to turn the same question around so that it can be understood. (Susan Morris)

I believe that Susan is referring to higher level thinking. As part of the awareness and acknowledgement of ECE as an integral component of the education continuum, we need to stop spoon-feeding the ECE and instead give them the autonomy to think and develop thoughts on their own. This means no longer offering make and take workshops, stopping the distributions of handouts giving RECEs prepackaged lesson plans or activities; and instead focusing on guiding them in developing their own practice, based on current research and theory.

I really do see the need to infuse Early Childhood Education, more of our developmental approach, into the way teachers are trained. Especially teachers of kindergarten-aged children. But in the same avenue I don't necessarily believe that early childhood education needs to merge into teaching. I would be afraid that we would lose that very unique approach that we have. At the same time I think it's really important, I am always excited hearing about ECEs getting their doctorate. I think that's really important as well.

(Cynthia Abel)



Responsibility

Preservice programs at two- and four-year colleges might yield discernible benefits for teachers and children if they advanced the human scale practices that are known to contribute to young children's development. The first way is...providing multiple screens through which teacher candidates move....A more efficient alternative is to recruit and select preschool teachers who display the caring qualities, verbal proficiencies, and engagement with children that are known to advance development. (Fuller, 2011, p. 61)

I feel that this is a valid point and one that is often in debate amongst teacher-education researchers (Barnett, 2011; Fuller, 2011; Kagan & Gomez, 2011; Kosnik & Beck, 2009). But where does an educational institution draw the line when recruiting potential students? I agree that the process of selecting early childhood education students should be more than just a matter of having the minimum grades (set at a relatively low number) and a pulse. I am not implying that only those with high grades are to be the successful candidates, but that the overall recruitment process needs to be addressed. This concept of taking responsibility to look at the acceptance process in early years programs was spoken directly to by 21 interview participants and alluded to by 1 survey respondent.

Ryerson. And it was the only place that interviewed me. So that was significant for me. We did not talk about my experiences with children because had we actually done that I wouldn't have gotten in because I didn't babysit. I didn't do that stuff. (Goranka Vukelich)

This does not mean hiring just anyone with a bachelor's degree and ignoring actual abilities and knowledge or the quality and content of a degree, nor does it mean that other program features including inservice professional development and supervision are unimportant. (Barnett, 2011, p. 53)

There could be and are some amazingly strong graduates that did not have high grades either upon entry or upon exit. Students need to earn the right to work with children and families. They need to earn whatever grade they deserve. But it is that earn part that I

have seen compromised over and over in many different settings. I have seen the results in the childcare settings ensuing from that slackness in the training and education process.

I think we had a whole 10 years of people saying, well you're not really good academically, but do you like kids? And then how about getting into that ECE program? So that has to change. (Marni Flaherty)

Learning to recognize that intangible that makes a good teacher. Not sure we're getting all the right kinds of people into the faculties of education. Not sure being brave about saying "you should never be a teacher." (Annie Kidder)

Ultimately, preservice programs from any postsecondary institution need to address their recruitment and assessment process for those who work with children of any age.

More information on the personal characteristics of the teachers, including their motivation, disposition, and socioeconomic variables would enable the field to better discern the impact of professional preparation on teacher quality. (Kagan & Gomez, 2011, p. 70)

Training has always been an issue with us. Luckily we do have a college system, there's 20, 22 colleges that I think offer early childhood education but we've always wanted to see the colleges coming together and working together so that's there more harmony amongst all of the programs. (Eduarda Sousa)

That's like doctors saying they only accept healthy patients. If they are already competent, if their writing skills are already fabulous, their communication skills are strong—what are they going to get? (Goranka Vukelich)



If we tell our students not to set children up for failure, then why are we setting our own students up for failure? Again, not saying we should hand them all “A” grades simply because they want that particular grade average. A student must work for the grade that he/she deserves and one that is reflective of the work exerted, but we should provide the space and assignments that allow them to flourish, without pandering to any illusions of grandeur.

Maybe some of the universities would be concerned that it would be a loss of student bodies for them. I think the other challenge could be preserving the ECE beliefs and values, the philosophy could become too teacher focused. I think it could become a concern. But there’s strong enough people out there, people like yourself, who are building their Ph.D. with both streams, that I think it could be done well. (Kim Hiscott)



They have to fix the criteria for entry....I’ve seen a tiny bit of evidence related to not stopping ineffective people who are clearly are not making it. And yet they graduate. And now it’s going to sit with the College to strip them of their right to practice when they do something so foolish or put children at risk. So we want the most qualified, the most appropriate, the most stimulating folks working with our babies. (Linda Cottes)

The Higher Learning and the Degree Debate

In looking at the participant reference to this issue it is important to remind the reader that the survey was designed to focus on preservice and inservice training/education needs, thus the results on these issues should be higher than on other issues, and there would have been concerns if the statistics here were not of such a high number (see Figure 16).



Figure 16. Results of the number of references, from both participant groups, to the issue of diploma versus degree as the standard for an early childhood educator.

A number of participants, in both methods, reported examples of cross-collaborations, either providing examples or the desire to see it occur more.

We are enhancing the coordination between our two programs. Some of the faculty are cross-appointed across both programs. Early childhood faculty guest lecture in the primary-junior program and vice versa. (survey participant)

Colleges and universities need to work cooperatively to create a degree that incorporates the ECE child development courses into the B.Ed. (survey participant)

Tracey Newman talked about the impact perception has on what is needed and ultimately required as entry to practice. If more and more early years professionals choose to obtain a degree (instead of a diploma) then that is who will be hired more readily than the entry holders and this might be an added impetus to a degree being more desirable and marketable.

As the field of ECEs changes, as it becomes more recognized, as it becomes elevated in its status, I think you will have more people wanting to do that position, therefore the pool that you're drawing upon you now can ask for higher credentials simply because there's the competitive nature comes into it. So do I think it needs to happen? No. Do I think it will happen? Yes. (Tracey Newman)

In *The Pre-K Debates: Current Controversies & Issues* (Zigler et al., 2011) there was a consensus amongst the papers' authors that a degree (rather than a community college diploma) was not inevitably a necessity but would have its advantages in ways that are not completely obvious. For example, Barnett (2011) says: "Better educated teachers are also more able to learn from professional development as they move from novice to expert teachers and adapt to advances in knowledge about learning and teaching" (p. 48). This makes sense in that maturity (due to experience and exposure to higher level thinking) brings a wealth of skills that the maturing brain cannot necessarily perform, or at the same level of performance.

However, there is still the issue of professional recognition. Previous social service sectors, such as nursing and social workers, and the teaching sector too, have seen the necessity of procurement of advanced educational degrees in order to obtain (perceived)

professional status. Then, based on this argument: is professional perspective more significant, or relevant, than one's knowledge base?

There are those amongst us that feel that early childhood education training should be raised a level. And be offered at the university level. I agree. I don't think the profession will ever be recognized or be taken seriously until it becomes a degree. I'm not suggesting for a minute that the education and training that colleges are offering now is substandard or is not, I'm not saying that at all. I'm just saying that until it's a degree that the profession is not going to be taken as seriously as any other that's out there. (Euarda Sousa)

It seems to make sense. If I look at some of the other professions—nursing, teaching—these are two professions, mainly female, that went from the requirement of a diploma to a degree. I really see that as being the future of ECEs. I think that the diploma will hold as an entry point, you know registration entry point for maybe another 10 or 15 years. But I do think it will be difficult to maintain the professionalism over the longer haul in terms of training without a degree as an entry point. (Christine Forsyth)

Included in this overall debate there needs to be an upfront discussion regarding financial impacts of early years professionals having the title of degree holder. By and large, the salary would be equivalent to others in related positions of employment. However, the authors in the text edited by Zigler et al. (2011) suggest that if the salary were not the same as primary teachers, then the financial impact wouldn't be as severe for the Ministry, school board, or childcare agency/centre. What would be the purpose for an early childhood educator to pay for and pursue a degree, rather than a diploma? Thus, the cost for the resulting education would then be on the backs of these individuals who would still be earning lower pay than their equivalents in similar positions.

If degrees are desired because of factors such as work-force professionalization or salary parity, then those reasons should be the basis of the argument, not that degrees produce child outcomes. (Pianta, 2011, p. 64)

A possible long-term impact of an expectation of a degree versus diploma for some of the early years positions, but not others, would be the further continuation and deepening of a classist system within a downtrodden sector.

I think that, unfortunately, the system has a classist approach. (Linda Cameron)

Equally, if we were to flood the market with degree holders then the expectations within the sector would have to shift and that level of degree (rather than diploma holder) would become the norm and the accepted practice. In an article I wrote about ongoing learning options for RECEs, I explored a possible repercussion of this inevitability:

With so much emphasis on furthering professional expectation in regards to educational background in early learning and care, it is a *possibility* (note the work “possibility”) that with the influence of higher and higher levels of education there would be an influence on who would be the best match for each level/position. For example, the early childhood education diploma might be the entry level for any work available. This *might* mean that the diploma holder would be the assistant in the room, and therefore the assistant program would no longer be a viable option. (Winick, 2012, p. 8)

Therefore the 2-year diploma would become the entry point. And the RECE becomes the assistant position. This relates to a discussion with Maria Cantalini-Williams and how she envisions this new partnership, along with the importance of turning the title *assistant* into having a positive connotation instead of the current negative one.

If we have this really *good* teacher education program, nobody could criticize us for walking in with limited knowledge. So, that’s where I say that there should be an early childhood degree, you know. That integrates both worlds.

And that that's the person who should be *teaching*, and then there should be an early childhood *diploma* where the person should be *working* with the early childhood teacher. And together they work together and they work hand-in-hand and they figure things out. There's nothing wrong with being an assistant. (Maria Cantalini-Williams)

The issue isn't the credential but what the credential stands for. When a credential stands for a highly developed understanding of pedagogy for young kids, a highly developed understanding of emergent learning, then great things happen. But when people say it should be staffed only with teachers, well, that's fine. Just make sure those teachers are trained in early childhood development....everything has to begin with what's best for kids...what kind of pedagogical training is necessary, understanding human development, child development and working backwards from that, how can we get the best pedagogy from the best people and what do we need to do with preservice and inservice. (Charles Pascal)

However, much needs to be done before an expectation of a degree education be the requisite for an early years position. As Christine Forsyth points out: "The College has to think long term on the entry-to-practice requirements. And right now...it's an OCAAT diploma. We have the internal agreement on trade." In spite of this, there are many ways that we can and are moving toward that end goal of a diploma as the prerequisite for entry to practice, and a degree as necessary for movement within scope of practice in the interim. One of the questions in the online survey was whether or not participants felt that early childhood education programs could be amalgamated with bachelor of education programs (see Figure 8). It is interesting to note that from one of the responses was an appeal for a change in the wording of this question in such a manner that the Bachelor of Education program would be engulfed into the early childhood education program, rather than the other way around. There

is a sense of urgency in protecting what is unique about our sector, and our preservice education programs. The fact that change of educational designation is inevitable seems to be permeating the sector. At the end of the day, though, there is also hope that this change of educational expectation will bring with it a stronger respect and understanding of what the early years professional can bring to the proverbial table.

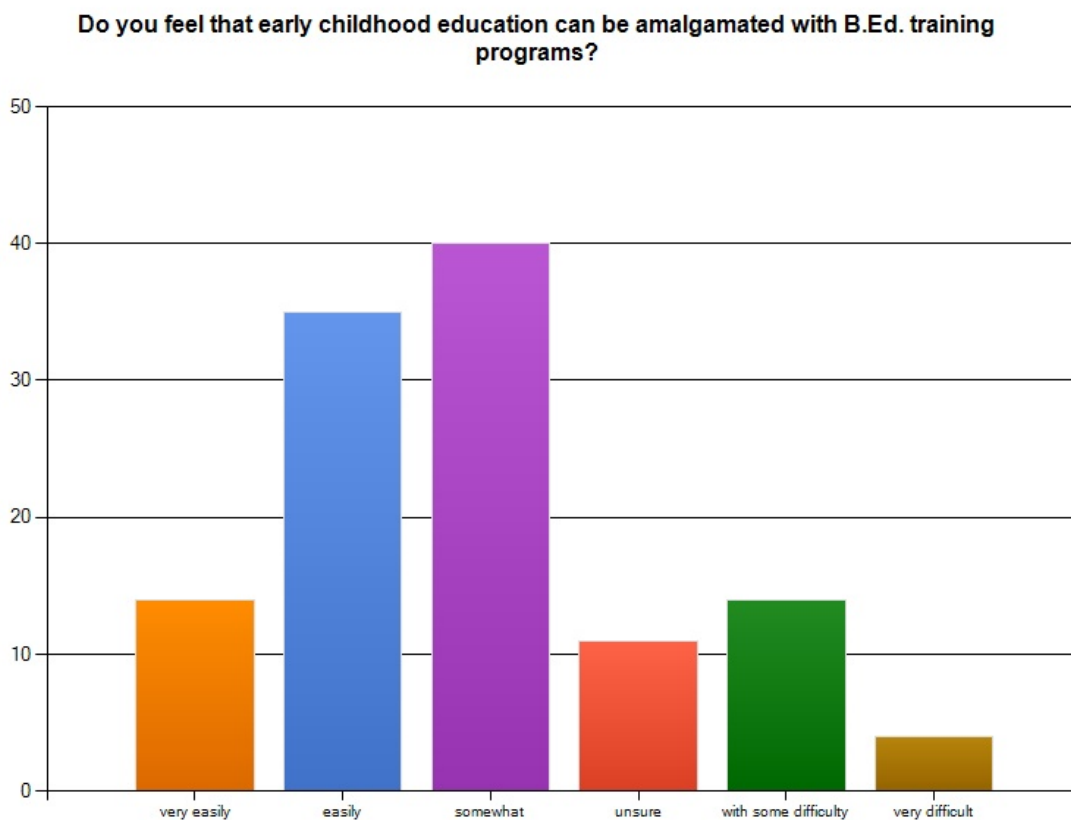


Figure 17. Amalgamation with B.Ed. programs.

Does a bachelor's degree lift children's development? The short answer is no. This does not mean that four-year programs—ideally focusing on child development—cannot potential advance the cognitive and social-emotional growth of three- and four-year-old children. However, it does mean that given the present quality of college-level programs, public dollars are wasted by requiring this credential. (Fuller, 2011, p. 60)

University wasn't always the standard for a classroom teacher. And I think that's changed because of the want for people to be in those positions has increased. So as that increase happens, you can now ask for the higher standards. So if I think it's a need--no I don't think you need a university education to truly understand how a child works and how best to teach them.
(Tracey Newman)

Therefore, there should be more of a support perspective than an expectation perspective.

“The debate needs to shift from whether a preschool teacher should have a bachelor's degree; instead, it should focus on building and delivering proven and effective supports for teachers” (Pianta, 2011, p. 64).

One of the interview participants, Linda Cameron, pointed out that the early childhood education programs are 2 years of intensive focus and are directly related to the specialization of working with younger children. However, the B.Ed. teaching programs were typically only 8 months in length (there is now a switch to a 2-year B.Ed. degree program) on everything involved in working in the teaching sector. “However, they are saying that they are more qualified than the early childhood educators” (Linda Cameron). And this flip side of the perspective puts a different spin on the difference between the diploma versus the degree education. Does it make one pathway better than the other? Some say it does, but it would not be surprising if there were agreements on this decision from both sides of the issue.

I don't want everyone to have a degree. Why would we? (Michael Pimento)



There is no rationale having a teacher who has a teaching degree that is not in early childhood. It's not best practice. (Martha Friendly)

I know that a lot of the colleges are, have now applied degrees, or are working on applied degrees. Ultimately I suspect way after we're gone all early childhood educators will need a degree. That will be the basic requirement. (Rachel Langford)

We have to begin at some point to make that movement outward in our approach to obtaining full professional status, including the options of upping the intellectual scale. Then when should we start if not now?

Delivery of Early Childhood Programs: Training, Education or Both?

Thirty-three of the interview participants, including Carl Corter and Marni Flaherty, and 46 of the survey participants mentioned that well before high school we need to start the instructing, the understanding of what education as an integral societal component means for a high functioning member of society. In fact, it is about skill building right through the education continuum, and developing that awareness of self-regulation as a core component of learning. We shouldn't wait until individuals have started an early years program to start explaining what early childhood education is in the context of overall education. It should be an emerging process, from a very young age, right through adulthood.

The emerging new version of early childhood education indicates a connection, in one aspect or another, with the formal school setting. This, to me, implies partnerships and working as a team to support the child and family. Burchinal, Hyson, and Zaslow (2011) refer to: "the importance of taking a team approach to early childhood professional

development” (p. 75). We see kindergarten teams beginning to form strong and supportive educational partnerships, schools and childcare centres bridging the divide between the two settings in ways that work for their sites, and postsecondary educational institutions having cross-appointments between their teaching faculties. The best scenario would be the two separate specialties of early years and kindergarten seeing the partnership as one of the options available for emerging professionals. The educators for each age group need a defined set of skills, whether it be for an infant, toddler, preschool, or kindergarten group. But in order to support the continued development of the child’s lifelong educational process we need to remember that learning does not come in compartmentalized pieces. Children of any age need to scaffold their new understandings on previous learning. This includes going from an infant room in a childcare centre or family program to each successive step to eventually becoming a parent of their own children.

Our future educators will most likely have the option of having both sets of credentials, whether taken separately or blended into one program. Why shouldn’t they have these options? We come into this sector because of our love of children and wanting to support their acquisition of knowledge. We do not need to compete for clients or try to best each other over which is the better sector. We are one sector, with one vision.

I think that from my personal experiences and knowing kindergarten teachers, who had their B.Ed. and their ECE—really stood out to me. (Joy Vance)

Options

Currently there are a number of options to obtaining a degree level education in the early years: applied degree at a college institution, a Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Education, or a graduate degree at a university institution. There are bridging programs from diploma to

degree (applied or theory-based), and apprenticeship programs that can be bridged to diploma attainment (with the acquisition of general education credits). As well, there are a myriad of options for post-diploma holders to continue their ongoing professional learning from different institutions and agencies. When discussing the topic of the future of early years programs, 32 interview participants referred directly to the need to address the options available for a diploma and/or a degree; and 45 comments from survey participants also directly raised this issue.

Pascal (2007) made the recommendation that kindergarten teachers hold a Bachelor of Education degree, specializing in the 0–8-years-old age grouping. In the interim, both in the Pascal Report (Pascal, 2007) and during the interview conversation, Charles Pascal explained that there should be a team of an OCT teacher and an RECE educator, to complement and support each other's educational backgrounds.

Specialized kindergarten teacher, with ECE & B.Ed. education/training in any format or configuration (e.g., adding an ECE/primary teaching division).
(survey participant)

Education for early years situated? My dream would include a global system that understands that Bachelor of Education should be Bachelor of Education, period. Regardless of where you go to school, whatever system you are using. So there needs to be a fourth arm that is called, whatever, call it ECE for now, but it needs to be part of that whole picture of training. (Chari Schwartz)



Already blending. Colleges creating baccalaureates, and colleges working with universities on degree completion. So you see a lot of action right now. People are seeing the future... However, it is not all well coordinated as a province wide system. (Charles Pascal)

The ideal, perhaps, could be the official cross-appointment of faculty between colleges and universities, between colleges and other colleges, and likewise between universities, looking at the teacher-educator as someone with distinct expertise that could be accessed by the courses offered within various educational institutions. There might even be a natural blurring or blending of some programs, with a clear choice of age focus. For example, there might be a 0–3.8 focus (strictly ECE), a kindergarten focus (blend of ECE and B.Ed.), primary (Grades 1–3 consisting of mostly OCT and some ECE/play based learning), junior, intermediate, and adult.

Preservice training overtime will have to be the university type. Colleges having affiliations with faculties of education. Not physical sites on university campuses, but the vigor of the ECE has to be addressed—not saying it has to be changed, just addressed. If those programs are affiliated with a Faculty then what I think you’ll end up with is some common understanding and perhaps some cross-teaching and cross-training so that what you get is a hybrid. (Charles McCarthy)

To be honest I’d love to see more cross-university, cross-college development of things. So it is not being done through formal channels at the program level but all of the universities, and probably colleges, too, will be seeing a tremendous change in faculty over the next few years: 5 to 10 years people will be retiring. Many programs will have a smaller mass of faculty with a particular interest in early childhood and there is no reason why we can’t have cross university, and cross college, programs where we recognize each other’s unique niches, specialties, and students can get the best of any world... It’s

hard to break out of moulds of individual silos, of individual institutions who are funded on a per student basis and all of that. (Donna Lero)

Down the road, where should it all have to be situated? I don't think it has to be situated in one institution or another; the focus has to flow from what's best for the learning environment and then see how universities and colleges cooperate. (Charles Pascal)

I think we need to do more cross-pollination between faculties of education and all the programs. (Pat Dickinson)

A number of participants mention this notion of the uniqueness of college ECE programs and the disservice it would be to eliminate this option. As well, there were thoughts around the blending potential and/or pitfalls of blending both programs, creating a hybrid system.

I love the college system, especially in Ontario, and what we are doing for early childhood education and we have the luxury to do that and I hope we don't lose it. Because it is about reflecting on what is the difference between a college program and a university program and how lucky we are that our students do take a program. (Goranka Vukelich)

My dream for early learning would be that we mesh the two worlds, both methods/teams get together and create one together, to be taught together. Early years should be meshed both in training and delivery of programs of children, prebirth to 12. (Maria Cantalini-Williams)

If you're going to blend the practice then you have to blend the formal instruction leading into it. (Jay Fedosoff)



I agree with what each of these participants have stated, including what Stuart is saying: we need to collaborate with our own sector components in order to truly become part of the education continuum, conception to death. We need to recreate how we all vision the production and management of preservice programs, at any level or type of institutions. Early years professionals need to work collaboratively with primary educators, with high school teachers, with special education specialists and with each other.

We cannot neglect children; let's say 8–17. And there are two points here, that the success of an early learning program is contingent on the success of an education program, 0–17. Or beyond....So, the success of our program is contingent on our developing the seamless model, 0–17, where we are constantly reinforcing the valuable things we've done in the early years and trying to help those kids who either didn't have those experiences, or for one reason or another, have suddenly fallen by the wayside. (Stuart Shanker)

Specialization, Laddering, and Other Ways of Movement

In the online survey, when asking questions around the impacts on college diploma programs rather than the amalgamation of Diploma of Early Childhood Education and a Bachelor of Education Degree, there were mixed results, with the highest category being those who felt an amalgamation could be accomplished with some ease (see Figure 18). This

is completely supported by the interview data (see Figure 18), and the general opinion that there also need to be options for steps, levels, bridges and specializations among the options.

Surveys

- 45 participants

Interviews

- 31 participants

Figure 18. Participant references to the concepts of specialization, laddering, or other ways of movement through the addition of expertise.

An early childhood specialist degree that is four or five years covering ages birth to eight. (survey participant)

Stronger & easily accessed bridges from ECE to B.Ed., in terms of career laddering. (survey participant)

I have always felt that we need a mix. That we need to have entry-level people, mid-level people, directors, etc. That people need to be able to access education and training, and I do distinguish between the two. So I think we need the whole ladder and I do feel that a director in an early childhood program must have a bachelor's degree and additional training in human resources, management, and that kind of thing, because they're always very complicated and multifaceted and they wear many hats; it's not a simple task. And they, if not themselves, perhaps a supervisor in their program also is the pedagogical leader. So they need a real mix and breadth, depth. And I don't think you can have that from a community college program, or any 3-year

program. I think even a 4-year program you're stretching to get all that.
(Donna Lero)

Maria Cantalini-Williams introduced the idea of differentiated staffing:

Early childhood is just like medicine. Right? There is differentiated steps;
there is differentiated training; there's differentiated roles. (Maria Cantalini-
Williams)

Then the concept of assistant would have to change in order to match the respectability of nursing assistants (if we take the premise that nursing assistants are respected). And how do we meld that with the current ECE assistant programs, without *dumbing down* our ECE diploma programs? As for the idea of the supervisor having a degree, historically this was not the case; in fact it was often a matter of seniority at an agency that moved one into an administrative position.

Part of the difficulty is in the unique staffing pattern in early childhood programs.... The field needs to look more carefully at roles, responsibilities, and the knowledge necessary for each. (Bowman, 2011, pp. 56–57)

The concept of specialization was another thread throughout the interviews:

Joe Trovato: I mean, I think the system is the same system for all of us, to a certain extent, as regulated health professionals. I think the fact that there are avenues through college systems and avenues through university systems, I think in the short run will hopefully give us enough ECEs as we need. Over time, I mean it would make sense to me that the actual content knowledge is expanded for ECEs.

Elaine: In what way?

Joe: Well, beyond kind of a 2-year college system, I think, into a developmental certification of some kind.

They may want to look at perhaps areas of specialization within ECE. So, it could perhaps be that there's a curriculum that's focused on 0–4. You know, more so than as we have all the different age groupings currently involved. (Roxanne Lambert)

I think that there will continue to be a need for the ECE diploma preservice training. It is a good entry to service. The next step is career laddering. The report recommends that that there be this and then that there be possibilities for an ECE Specialist. And that specialist then should become the recognized credential for teaching in schools for 4- to 8-year-olds, and to be the directors of Child and Family Centres. (Kerry McCuaig)

Until this point, most of the responses have mentioned the need for specializations, but aimed at post-diploma options, thus more closely related to laddering alternatives. In this scenario, upon entering, or after perhaps second semester (or first year), a student would declare a specialization, such as infant, toddler, kindergarten, special needs, administration or higher learning.

I would see it, really, as an early childhood education teacher and somebody with a diploma—certainly keep the diploma programs, but make ladders. So they can move easily. (Martha Friendly)



The new programs (referring mostly to the applied degrees), it's great that now at least we have those kinds of degrees happening in colleges. I feel the profile's going up. I don't believe it is about creeping credentialism. I always try to equate it to other ministries, the old NAEYC ladder and lattice.

(Michael Pimento)

Ongoing Learning and Supporting the Developing and Expert Professionals

In terms of ongoing PD: because there's not ever been a requirement to do that. Right? You get your diploma, or your degree, and you're done. You're good to go. But recognizing the importance of ongoing learning. I mean, that's probably been a key piece that's helped influence me is I have continued to try to take different courses and things that I have an interest in.

(Roxanne Lambert)

The term professional development implies that the person involved still needs to develop their professional persona; while ongoing, or continuous, professional learning implies that the person has reached professional status, but the scaffolding continues. If the goal is to be perceived as a professional, and terminology is a crucial component of this perception, then this aspect of the early years terminology must also morph into a more specialized term (see Figure 19).

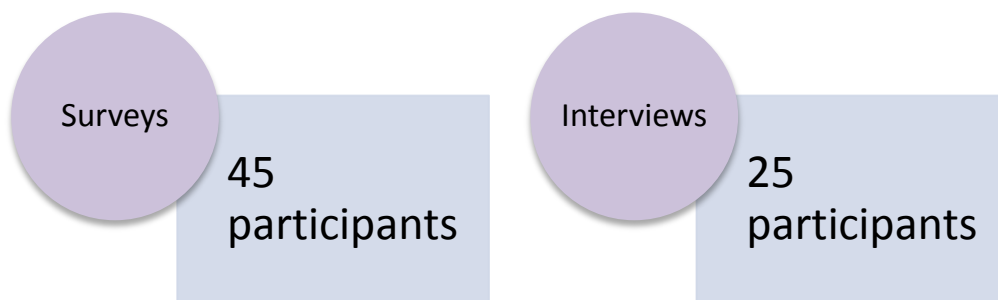


Figure 19. References from participants regarding the desire to see ongoing learning as a core expectation of practice.

The CECE has begun its continuous learning framework development. This is a pivotal piece of the professionalism journey.

I think that as we mature a little a bit we be able to look at... the importance of lifelong learning and about the importance of learning and of professional development. So those standards and those expectations will, in fact, have an influence on our members wanting and needing to participate in that kind of activity, again from a professional perspective, not only from an employment perspective....I do think it will change to some extent and I hope that what will happen is the Ministry of Education that holds preservice training and all of that high level of importance that will hold true for us and for all that we do. (Lois Mahon)

The professional learning expectations that will be part of the requirements of maintaining registration for an RECE will set the tone for what is developed and implemented province wide. The agencies and institutions that could be instrumental in developing and facilitating these opportunities could include postsecondary institutions, professional organizations and

unions. This could also be a core component in the laddering concept in professional status upgrading.

As professionals, with a self-regulating body and professional association to support our continued involvement in the early learning sector, we should participate in the direction of the integrated and ongoing learning expectations that the CECE will eventually mandate. Bowman (2011) states: “Professional organizations are another source of information about what teachers should know and be able to do” (p. 56). By being involved, by being active members of the professional associations in our province, we could conceivably have a voice in what is being offered, when, how, and even by whom.

It provides a good framework for entry to practice but there needs to be something beyond entry to practice, and that’s really where a self-regulating body, as the profession itself, can determine the continuity, what does it mean to continue in your practice. Is it that you have to take so many accredited courses a year to maintain your membership? As the body that regulates the profession, it’s actually up to the profession, the members, in fact, themselves to determine if this is enough. If I want to advance and I want to have a specialty in whatever, it’s through the regulatory body that you can actually start to do some of those things. (Cynthia Abel)

Current Models

Currently, the model for professional learning is expensive, time-consuming, and often offers an inconsistent level of quality. Cost is frequently absorbed by the participant, unless they are employed by a larger agency or the centre has external financial supports.

Because of the high adult-to-child ratios, the cost of early care and education is high, exerting downward pressure on wages and providing little incentive for additional education. (Bowman, 2011, p. 54)

The options are typically available on either a weekday evening or a Saturday. This is because there is not the means to offer options during work hours due to insufficient funds for replacement coverage.

I think there must be ongoing professional development that's required. But not stupidity, like not I go into some dumb workshop and have you sign off that I've done my PD stuff. It has to keep their mind sharp, and the curiosity, and them wanting to do better. (Linda Cottes)

We also have varying degrees of expertise. Typically professional development workshops are offered on a one-time basis, without follow up or an ongoing support mechanism integrated into the learning process. The focus of understanding the big ideas of theory and making these ideas an integral component of practice is overtaken by the Make and Take version of workshop, where each participant comes away with a bag filled with inexpensive (often plastic and/or very cheap) items that constitute a finished product-style activity in the hopes of enhancing their classroom curriculum.

So we've got our staff who work tons of hours, then they have to go to a workshop, and enjoy it. Good speakers, or whatever, they got a gift and a stamp to say that they went. I think though we need to take another look at it, and that's probably happening. I don't know how much money is poured into those places. They're my colleagues; I'm not trying to be critical. I'm not as convinced about workshops anymore. And I think we've had enough of them. Some are good and some aren't. (Marni Flaherty)

Professional learning should be both ongoing and integrated in order to make it relevant and supported. An example of an integrated learning opportunity that is cost effective for both the participant and the centre would be to view meeting time as an

opportunity for internally related professional discourse. However, this type of growth opportunity needs to occur on a regular basis, and needs to be supported by the experts from within the centre, agency, or from the communal sector.

I often wonder if it is because we don't necessarily talk to each other, or have the opportunity to be in groups engaged in professional discourse that we don't see the previous paragraph's example as a viable option. Perhaps it is also linked to that "look at our shoes and shuffle" attitude that Joe Trovato mentioned (see Chapter Six). We need to support our own expertise, and to connect with like-minded individuals in order to support the sector's intellectual needs. We can be our own champions, our own intellectual leaders, and seize opportunities for dialogue with each other on issues of interest and/or concern.

So we have to make it affordable if we want our ECEs who are out in the field now to go back to school, it has to be more affordable for them. And accessible. You can't expect them, in a low paying sector, how are they going to afford university? And have to work during any kind of professional development. Do you think we need to do anything different to support our field in professional development? Do we provide professional development in a supportive way? (Marni Flaherty)

Pascal (2007) makes the recommendation that:

The Early Years Division should support the development of management tools and establish province-wide-in-service training plan to assist school board and municipal managers, school principals, and centre directors in the establishment and operations. (Recommendation #17, p. 57)

Recently I participated in the NAEYC 2012 Leadership conference. I was amazed at the size of this conference as it is not the association's largest conference of the year, but clearly it was a widely recognized and attended one. On my first day in attendance, I took my

time to look over the workshop catalogue and read the various presenters biographies. I wrote this journal reflection around my thoughts about the options for professional learning in the United States:

When looking at the conference presenters' list, the sheer volume of options there are for early years practitioners to continue in their professional learning amazed me. I spoke with one such individual and after sharing our backgrounds I expressed my amazement of the options, formalized and recognized and supported options. I explained that in Ontario we have the diploma or the degree; then a hodge-podge of ongoing learning that is often self-paid and on your own time basis. I further explained that the AECEO is trying to create a professional learning framework, that the CECE is developing their professional learning mandate, and the unions are trying to understand the ECE needs versus the kindergarten OCT teachers' needs. The woman said: "Sounds like you are in the infancy state of PD." (Winick, Personal journal, June 11, 2012)

I could not help but be taken aback by her observation. We are struggling with minimal and outdated options and modes of delivery. We have inconsistency when it comes to relevance and expertise level. It does not mean that there are no issues in the United States or that we are in an abyss of despair in Ontario. It simply means that as we grow as a profession, we need to look at our ongoing learning concepts and reflect and reconstruct our ways of supporting within.

Future Concepts

Fleet and Patterson (2001) looked at various models of professional learning: concerns model; qualifications model; and the developmental sequence (from novice to expert) model. They feel that each of these models present a linear progression. As an alternative, they propose the empowered learner's model, creating a community of learning approach. In their study they focused on the reconstruction of the ECE role, allowing for ongoing discussion among participants on the means and related issues in this transformation, with support from the researcher/mentors.

In particular, the focus on the Sydney study as an example of rich professional development highlighted the importance of (1) valuing the learners' perceptions and knowledge in shaping the nature of inservice opportunities, (2) building on affective components including professional affirmation and personal motivation, and (3) encouraging learner engagement by focusing on substantive, relevant content. (Fleet & Patterson, 2001)

I think that there needs to be a reform of all kinds of things. So that it makes it easy for all sorts of people who are interested in our sector. Some of them have to work. You know, some of them are 20 and they don't have an alternative. So we've got to have stuff available for them. And the time, so that they can continue on. It just has to be flexible. (Marni Flaherty)

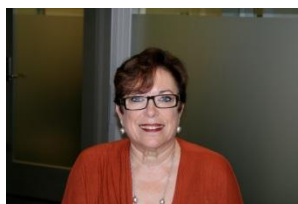
In this section, there were a number of participants that referred to this aspect of ongoing learning. In total, 24 survey respondents and 36 interview participants spoke to the need to think about how we will need to have a wide variety of options and delivery modes for ongoing learning. The references were for maintaining professional status as well as for keeping current with the demands that will most likely occur as the sector itself changes.

Diane Kashin has a strong storehouse of information on ideas for future professional learning styles and options. It is through various discussions with her on this topic that I have come to a stronger understanding that RECEs need to stop being passive consumers and expect perceived experts to magically deliver answers to ongoing issues of concern. There needs to be a stronger connection between practice and theory, which “contributes to professional growth and development. It needs to be self-directed, contextual learning that empowers RECEs” (Diane Kashin).

Delivered in small repeated doses over time, they provide opportunity for practice and feedback in contexts that are small and meaningful for the teacher. Whether described as coaching or consultation, these approaches usually combine knowledge about development in a target area...with explicit exposure to modeling and feedback on teacher behaviors that foster development. (Pianta, 2011, 65)

As we continue to adapt to new ways of learning, along with reconstructing our concepts of professionalism, we can discover astounding new understandings. However, it will be by working together, utilizing each individual’s expertise and depot of knowledge, that we will find the most successful ways of moving along this component of our professional journey.

Seems to me that there’s a great deal of responsibility that needs to be taken on inservice, so not just preservice but the inservice needs to be huge too. And then the new model of inservice that is embedded in collaborative communities that early childhood educators and teachers can learn to work together and have more opportunities to grow and develop as early childhood educators. (Linda Cameron)



Lab Schools

Teachers need more than an extensive knowledge component; they also need a time and place to develop practice skills. (Bowman, 2011, p. 57)

I felt it was imperative to include a discussion, albeit a small one, on the importance of lab schools in our teaching faculties. Early childhood education programs have a rich history of providing strong examples of excellence in teaching skills. Lab schools provide an integral component, companion and partnership between theory and practice. With so many weak options for placement, lab schools also provide a place for excellence in a childcare option for the families who access these centres. The faculty members are able to support the ongoing learning of the staff and provide access to the most current and relevant research, while the staff provides the faculty with real life issues and examples to utilize in the classroom. Other programs within the college systems are just as financially squeezed but they manage to keep their lab centres open (e.g., mechanic, landscape, scuba diving). A childcare lab school within a college setting is another way for colleges to showcase their uniqueness in preservice education and support for those programs. In analyzing the participant data, I felt it was significant that there were any references to lab schools at all. Thus, the fact that 13 interview participants and 2 survey participants mentioned the need to keep lab schools as a core component of the early years education and training programs, I felt, was a clear indication of their importance to include in the discussion in this thesis.

The other thing is that, of what we have seen through the years is that whenever colleges run into trouble the first place they go to for cuts, is early childhood program. So you have seen an almost complete shut down of things like lab schools....And it's something that we have been fighting for years now. Every time a lab school closes we are hearing, what we continue to hear, is that the quality of the placements for students are terrible. (Euarda Sousa)

In an email conversation with Andrea Calver (October 4, 2012) from the OCBCC, she shared that 12 lab schools have been closed (from 1995–2012), but 29 are still in existence. However, since a few colleges are fortunate enough to have multiple lab schools the outcome is that in reality only half of the colleges in Ontario that offer an early childhood education program have a lab school component. Half do not. These closures were primarily due to rising costs of maintaining high quality childcare programs. Once again, these centres in turn provide placements of excellence for students, high quality care for children and their families, are venues for higher learning research and are models of strong examples of staffing and program implementation. Andrea also pointed out that, “The presence of a high quality licensed childcare centre on campus is a significant advantage in recruitment of students, staff and faculty” (Personal communication, 2012).

I think another critical thing, and I said this to Charles, and I have said it to Ministry officials and I am not sure if I’m being heard, is that there must be designated funding for lab schools. Losing the 4- and 5-year-olds has a tremendous impact on financial resources and over the years we have seen a number of those lab schools close. We don’t have many left and if we don’t have good lab schools we’re missing a tremendously important asset in training. So I think that’s critical. I said it’s essential that we have high quality practicums in programs so that we can control the teaching opportunities we provide our students. (Donna Lero)

I think there is an inherent lack of value shown by the administration of the institutions. You just have to see how many lab schools have been closed over the last 10 years. And it may have to come from the Ministry, or the College stepping in and saying something. (Diane Kashin)

Faculty

I felt that the concept of faculty expertise and experience was one of significant weight to include in the pondering about the direction of the continued intellectualization of early years educators. The mere fact that 22 interview participants and 6 survey participants also felt that the calibre of the teacher-educators was also of worth reinforced my own concerns and ideas.

While I acknowledge that a percentage of current faculty, fulltime and contract, are incredible and brilliant, there is equally a vast number of educators (at all levels) who need to improve their skills and skill levels. If we expect our students to have a high level of intellectualization in order to provide the highest quality education to children, then we will be infusing the market with higher and higher educational requirements. Consequently, it follows that the teacher-educator faculties need to maintain the demands of the sector by keeping pace with the knowledge and expertise required to engage intellectually demanding students. Therefore, the minimum requirement for teacher-educators should be at a higher level than the students that they are teaching, which means a Master's degree at minimum. In order to speak to the course content in a relevant and meaningful way, the facilitator of new knowledge should have a strong grasp and understanding of the subject area. Equally, the teacher-educator's experience should reflect the program.

Faculty members should be engaged in community work: involved in knowing what is relevant, what is changing, and how it might impact the sector as a whole. This connection to the community has a direct correlation to research, too. In colleges, some of the faculty members are faceless and are not immersed in research as a core component of what they do. Faculty members should not only be up to date on current research, but involved in their own

research studies, too. Concurrent to this need for postsecondary institution professors to be leaders in their own expertise, they should be upgrading their own knowledge base on a regular basis. Therefore, they would consistently use and integrate relevant research into their practice. Each of these points is important not only for permanent faculty members, but for the part-time hires as well. This is important on so many levels but especially around consistency for students, quality control, and quality that is coherent among the delivery of each course from a variety of individuals.

However, there are too many part-time faculty members at both university and college institutions. While this imbalance is a massive matter to discuss here, suffice it to say, it has an impact on quality for the program and for the students' learning.

Capacity issues appeared to constrain the quality improvement efforts of many programs. Most programs reported needing more faculty members, having a primarily part-time faculty, needing more professional development for faculty, and having heavy and often overwhelming course loads. (Burchinal et al., 2011, p. 76)

An interesting point that came out of the survey query into possible challenges over the next few years was the felt need for more training for the program teacher-educators and a need for more powerful faculty expertise requirements. As the push for high intellectualization occurs, the calibre of the teacher-educator in the college and university system so too must rise.

Those who are professors of the future supply side of early learning educators, they need to be emergent learners. And so you actually need to change who is professing. So in terms of ethno-cultural diversity, in terms of their own ability to be reflective practitioners, so all the staffing for success is not just about the early learning educators but it also should apply to those enabling

the learning of early learning educators. The teacher-educators. (Charles Pascal)

I then wonder if there is a connection between inadequately matched faculty members and the concept that we teach our diploma students to be subservient, less than professionals, para-professionals. Could it be that some of the faculty members teaching in our college preservice programs are not higher level thinkers themselves, nor experienced enough? Could it also be that this is where students are getting mixed messages between in-class and in-practice as discussed earlier?

I think that the people that are teaching them need to have experience and knowledge. But really there are not very many people who are early years specialists out there. Except at the community colleges, who are then not educated to the needed level. So, it's a conundrum. (Linda Cameron)

I think what we lack, not only at an advocacy level, but we lack pedagogical leaders, in the field. Both in schools and in the childcare field. (Kerry McCuaig)

If all of these disparaging perspectives are not true, as they are in some cases, then why is that and what are we going to do about it?

Having said that, if you have faculty that are not involved and don't understand the public policy discussion, how are they supposed to deliver it to their students? And I think that there's very little kind of accountability around ECE faculty. (Zeenat Janmohamed)

And I guess the other thing is because we have been kind of scrabbling around the edges, and just basically trying to hang on, which is where things are at, is that we haven't really built the intellectual architecture. So there are scattered people around who really do think about the constructivist pedagogy and all

that kind stuff like that but I don't think it's really permeated. (Martha Friendly)

From my perspective of trying to see both worlds and see people as more similar than different so that we can work more collaboratively. I think they could have a greater awareness—faculty could. (Pat Dickinson)



Then each point is important to keep in mind for early learning educators, no matter which level of education we are talking about. Faculty members need to have had that hands-on experience. They should be going out in the field on a fairly regular basis to remind themselves of what it is like to work in direct contact rather than just from the front of a high level-thinking classroom. And as well, they need to be researchers, policy developers, learners, and colleagues of those they have groomed for the sector they belong within.

We are isolated, there is no question about that, and I wonder how much we contribute to that isolation. (Goranka Vukelich)

Taking Pause



It is not about worrying about getting to the (unknown) finish line.

It is about dreaming of the possibility of a journey.

Seeing the journey.

Understanding the journey.

Making stops along the way.

And reflecting about the journey, while on the journey.

(Winick, Journal entry, September 2012)

Chapter Eight

Discussion and Implications

Opening Discussion

This study has explored the concepts of leadership, professionalism, and intellectualization of the early years sector from a current issues perspective. The interview participants' voices resoundingly found these three areas of most significance in early childhood educators making our way as an equal partner in the education continuum. The survey participant responses supported the themes and points of contention raised through the interviews.

In summing up the findings of my dissertation it is important to focus on implications in order to ask even more critical questions and allow for the dialogue and discussion that will lead to necessary commitments of change.

Study Limitations

As with any study, there are limitations to its success and areas of concern, both for the study itself and for future implications. For this study there was an abundance of rich data to analyze and discuss, that I felt I could either touch on everything ever so briefly, or choose a minimal amount to focus on and go into depth on each of the specific points. There are always options to continue to explore themes and/or issues from the study at a future date. Therefore I felt it was the best use of my time and would produce the most significant results if I focused on two of the most relevant and pressing points in relation to what is currently occurring in the sector. As a result, ensuing from this decision there are a number of concerns that arose out of the data that were not completely explored.

The components that I touch upon in the preceding chapters but was not able to fully flesh out are important to acknowledge in an official manner:

- Sector representation: While a large number of participant voices were included here, they still represent only a minute percentage of options. It would be helpful to repeat this study but with targeted groups, for example: with ECE students; applied degree students; faculty; and/or administrators.
- Gender representation: This is a female-dominated sector, so it was not surprising that the majority of interview participants were female. Equally, considering the female-to-male ratios in the sector, I feel that the balance of representation between the genders reflects this ratio.
- Racial representation: I did not set out to explore this topic with the intent of focusing on racial representation. Therefore, when looking for interview participants, the issue of race did not factor into my choices of who to invite. Nor did I initially look at the resulting photos and remark on the overabundance of “white faces” peering back at me. I did not include a racial background question in the survey. However, upon reflection, this is clearly an issue that needs to be addressed when speaking to the future of the leadership in the early years.
- Parents as true partners: This is a point that is not fully addressed in this study. Again time and space limitations necessitated leaving this issue as a future study option.
- Special needs: Issues surrounding children and families with special needs as a necessity of inclusion in all areas of the early years is of high importance in the sector itself. The Ministry of Education (2012) acknowledged this area as one that needs attention and included it in the recent 2012 discussion paper.
- Aboriginal rights and inclusion: The issue of aboriginal education rights and needs is one of contention at this time. Simply put, this area deserves the respect of full attention rather than a brief inclusion.

- Home-based care: There are so many different variables that affect a study of home-based care, including in the area of training and education. The concerns of agency-based versus private care, nanny versus local parent/grandparent/relative, registered with Ministry versus *under the table* (therefore unknown to the Ministry) are just some of the challenges that affect the topic of home-based care.
- Teacher assessment: This is an area that the Ministry of Education already addresses with formal school teachers, and hopefully will tackle for RECEs in the DNA changes.
- Fully fleshing out preservice program needs: This includes looking at what is included already and then what is missing. I briefly touch upon this area in my analysis chapters.

Implications

This research impacts early years leaders in bringing awareness of using life-as-work pedagogy in both the formal school setting and the early learning environment. As well as highlighting and documenting who the educational leaders were during this historical period, the voices put forward in this study present a direct link to recommendations for developing emerging preservice early childhood-focused programs.

Moss (2010) speaks about the necessity to ask the difficult questions in order to bring about educational reform. Without the questions we cannot make informed decisions about change. And without change we will remain stagnant and unable to support our future.

Taking Pause



This is Kian. Kian, this is the world.

Kian (Key-an) is my first grandchild and he is 3 weeks old in this photo (at the time of completion of this dissertation he is a whopping 8 1/2 months old). Despite his very young age, right from birth he has been pulling me close and telling me his woes as only a newborn can, through his soul. Kian is providing the direction for this section of my own leadership voyage.

Leadership Implications

Working on Our Sector Communication

During a time of flux and great change it is often difficult to keep up with the various changes and the details each change encompasses. As well, possible impacts and influences can be daunting, even if those reading them are aware of further changes coming down the pipeline. It is important for those in positions of leadership to remember that there are those who might not know the details (or know them as intimately) as those in positions of knowledge. Therefore, we need to remember to talk to those around us, formally, and informally. We must explain, but also listen. We allow them the opportunity to ask questions, express fears, voice opinions. Remember, voice is a powerful healer and connector. As well, we need to include parents in this communication piece. We need to remember that the purpose of early learning is to support children and their families. The inclusion of the family

has always been a strength of early childhood education and should not be lost in the transition to the Ministry of Education management.

This impact of this implication can also to be found in the form of detailed informed education for all parties affected by current changes. We need to be better at informing invested parties on what is happening, why it is happening, what needs to and will happen next, and possible impacts. This information needs to be directed to the public, including the perspective of parents as true partners in the process. There also needs to be more education about what the RECE professional is about, their benefits and expertise, including to the teachers and administrators within the school system. Finally, there needs to be a stronger understanding of early childhood education curriculum for university programs, and a stronger understanding of school board needs for college programs.

Focusing on Creating and Sustaining Early Years Leadership in Both the Preservice and Inservice Components of Our Learning

We, as a sector, need to create professional capacity as teacher-educators by developing an area of expertise in leadership through a safe and nurturing relationship with our students. This process can be done by being involved as role models in doing research rather than simply being a recipient of research, and understanding the significance of political issues as the core of preservice and inservice learning.

We need to take ownership for our own professional growth, as well as the growth seen within the early learning sector instead of waiting for someone else to tell us what to do. Overall, the concept of leadership needs to be part of the core of preservice and inservice learning.

Professionalism Implications

There was much discussion, from both sets of participants, of the need for Early Childhood Education to be viewed as a profession, both internally and externally. It is time for RECE educators to see themselves as equal to the formal kindergarten teacher, with a strong understanding of child development, working collaboratively with other professionals and families, and curriculum philosophies.

Respecting the Power and the Importance of the Written and Spoken Word

We have been complacent much too long in accepting derogatory or demeaning terms for what we offer to the education continuum. We need to see ourselves as professionals, and this includes the way we present ourselves, and refer to ourselves in related terminology.

Making it a Priority to Ensure That RECEs Feel Supported to Give of Their Own Time and Effort

Therefore, there needs to be a transformative experience on a personal level, as well as a connection to the individual having sector impact. In order to achieve this epiphany, the sector needs to be seen as respected by Ministry of Education and as an integral component of the ministry, not simply a piece that has been added and must be changed in order to fit the new picture. Not as a bump on a face, but a newly discovered beauty mark. It is about how we view ourselves and how that will impact how others view us. The CECE must also take up their part in this area, as what is expected from a regulatory body perspective impacts how the members view themselves, too.

Equally, individual agencies and centres need to be seen as part of the process, not just part of the reaction to change. As an outcome of this connection between childcare and children/family centres with the CECE and the Ministry of Education, anyone working within the early years sector should be registered as ECE and beyond with the CECE (unless registered with the OCT). Therefore, the CECE needs to institute the creation of recognized levels of professional status as a priority.

Continuing the Fight for Equality and Validation of Our Unique Skill Sets

I want to encourage my colleagues with the following advice, gleaned through this dissertation process:

Collaboration: if you think you are doing it, reexamine it and do more. Create collaborations wherever you can. Possible options include creating partnerships between, or with, community agencies, unions, professional associations, educational institutes, research foundations, and so many others within and without the early learning sector. It doesn't always have to be a financial collaboration; it could be from an advocacy perspective, planning table, or event developer, as a few examples.

When in relationship is valued, time is available for listening, caring, accepting, and being with others. (Biddle, 2012, p. 25)

Amalgamation of programs or agencies is another example of a way of creating partnerships and collaboration. In fact, some agencies have already begun this type of amalgamation and see the value of partnering with agencies that offer differing services.

Pay equity and universal access, including the related infrastructure are not unique implicating discussion points. This is truly an issue of social justice: the average pay rate of an RECE is abysmal. Even worse are the pay scales for those not registered, but perhaps working illegally or under the table. It has to be addressed and made a priority for any government in house. Equally, parents need to have access to quality childcare options based on their unique needs, which allows them to continue in the tax-paying workforce. Having RECEs paid at a respectful level also pays in financial dividends in the long run. The argument has been made over and over: keeping this sector at or close to the poverty line is inexcusable.

It is important, whichever party is in government, that they allow this initiative (early years as part of the Ministry of Education and FDK/Child and Family Centres) take root and flourish before creating a new version. We need to have the time, funds, and supports to make this work for the betterment of our society. This includes the necessity of the upgrading of the DNA, making it more relevant and quality focused.

Developing Clear Goals and Steps for Ensuring Continuing Leadership

Mentorship should be a core component of sector responsibilities, beginning in preservice. As well, there should be opportunities for leadership development and growth, also beginning in preservice. We need to prepare for the future of leadership, as the current regime retires.

As for mentoring: be a mentor, big or small. It all makes a difference. However, when you offer, follow through. If you are asked, respond, even if you must decline. If a specific task or response is made, try to make time, but above all acknowledge the request even if it is

to decline. And if you connect with someone and offer some form of mentorship, do not later turn your back on the individual. It does not mean that you are tied to that individual for life, but do not ignore them or pretend they do not exist.

A colleague once asked why RECEs do not volunteer within their own sector. Perhaps it is because we are not used to viewing ourselves as professionals, nor have we had the voice before to see the necessity or need to actualize our own professionalism.

I want to stand up from the rooftops and shout: “It’s time to hear our voice.” It’s time that people stopped and listened to us because people don’t understand what our students, when they graduate, go out and do. And how significant it is, and how special it is. And I want to celebrate it, I want to nurture it, I want to support it, I want them to feel that they have a say in the direction of their profession. (Diane Kashin)

As RECEs, we have to want to have this new journey of professionalism. Then the creation of it will begin to happen. If we wait for others, or for tantalizing treats, it won’t happen. Yes, the CECE is our self-regulating body, but we must regulate ourselves and our community in order to take charge and see positive momentum. It is a difficult time with frightening short term impacts, but we need to see the overarching needs and long term gains for the profession. Then the children and families will also reap enormous gains.

Intellectualization Implications

Each of the following implications are part of the conversation regarding what should be part of *every* postsecondary institution that offers an ECE program, in whatever configuration they have.

Transforming Our Early Childhood Programs to Meet Our Transforming Sector

Student screening needs to be tightened up, and each prospective student should go through an interview process. Once accepted into a program, each student should be connected with a faculty member as an advisor, and mandatory follow up be part of that faculty member's workload.

Fundamental documents should be part of the core curriculum and the students' understanding of these documents scaffolded upon in each semester. These documents include the ELECT, CECE Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, *The Full Day Early Learning Statute Law Amendment Act (Bill 242)* (Legislative Assembly of Ontario, 2010), the Pascal Report (Pascal, 2007), and related school terminology and expectations (e.g., Kindergarten program curriculum guide).

We need to move from a developmental (or developing domains) model to a children in current context model, thus moving toward a critical intellectual perspective. This includes aspects such as viewing teachable moments as a valid education tool and connecting individual needs with group needs with community needs. This then translates into a discussion for the inclusion of an even stronger understanding of child development and play-based learning into B.Ed. programs, and perhaps with kindergarten being a specialization within those programs. While at the same time, there needs to be maintenance and strengthening of the individuality of areas of expertise in early childhood education preservice programs including child development, working collaboratively with colleagues (RECEs), families, and communities. This also includes the formalization of said uniqueness of a knowledge base of play-based curriculum, behaviour guidance (big ideas again, not

quick fix solution style ideas) while adapting the current curriculum to new and emerging theory regarding self-regulation and parenting.

There also needs to be an acceptance of validity of working with the younger age group, not just the JK/SK children, during practicum. As well, there is a need for kindergarten teachers to understand the 0–3.8-year age group as a precursor to understanding the psyche of the kindergarten child.

Embracing the Need for Higher Learning and Degrees

It is ironic that ECE diploma holders have always strived to be seen as professionals, to be equals to, rather than less than, their school board counterparts. However, in the evolution of that growth, the diploma holders may be regulated to the entry level of their own making by striving for equality with their OCT counterparts. But to this end, it is imperative to continue to have both diploma and degree options in the same institution, plus laddering to other institutions for continuance of education. Higher level thinking is related to theory and big ideas, not just the training component characterized by memorization of facts or terminology.

Knowledge...acts as an instrument of power. It produces power, because it informs our perception of reality. (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005, p. 18)

Creating Formal Options for Specialization and Laddering

In the discussion around supporting emerging and existing professionals to continue to expand their professional status options there appeared to be a desire to include choices for differentiated staffing and the options for specialization within the RECE designation: infant, toddler, kindergarten, special needs, administration, and higher learning institutional

positions. Why wait until graduation to begin this process? But nonetheless, there still needs to be a creation and maintenance of a high level of intellectualization in all options, including the diploma in general early childhood education option.

Developing Policies for Meeting the Current and Future Ongoing Learning Needs

Ongoing learning should be agency-supported, including the hiring of substitute RECEs to allow staff to network, research, and collaborate in a community of learning approach. This needs to be actualized now. Therefore agencies need the financial support, which in turn means that there needs to be a Ministry level framework in place for the 0–3.8-year age group, now. All of this will also impact how RECEs view themselves, whether as a professional or front line worker.

In an effort to get beyond the infancy stage of ongoing learning there should be clearly designed and designated ongoing learning venues (colleges, unions, universities, professional associations) in order to maintain quality and to ensure designation from the CECE. At the same time, the options and availability for professional discourse should include online options, such as social networks.

The CECE must mandate ongoing learning now, as part of maintaining professional status. This includes options of laddering, and acknowledgement of experience, not just expertise. As well, there needs to be a way to connect to the small stand-alone centres, too. Overall, ongoing learning should be supporting the current RECE during this transition (helping them to move forward not stuck in the mud of our previous teachings). It is not just about being better but relevant too. This is also not something that is new, but has not been accomplished successfully or sufficiently at this point.

Creating Policy Around the Inclusion of Lab Schools in Preservice Programs

As the early learning sector grows even stronger, and adapts to new management, so should the options for student high quality placements. However, faculty should not send students to mediocre or low quality centres/sites for placement. This directly impacts the need for lab schools in order to have sufficient high quality options. The support of lab schools needs to come from both the CECE and Ministry of Education through an acknowledgement of the significance and validity of these childcare centres. Then perhaps the administration of the postsecondary learning institutions will sit up and take early childhood education lab schools seriously.

Faculty Requirements

Faculty members need to have the related education, expertise, experience, and maintenance of current knowledge and curriculum in order to fully and capably support the emerging professional. There needs to be the hiring of more full time postsecondary institution teacher-education faculty members providing consistency for students, and the quality of teaching needs to be ensured and maintained. This includes the ability to do research and community work as a required part of a teaching load. As well, the ability to provide cross-teaching across programs within the same institution, across institutions, and across schools of expertise (e.g., nursing to education, and our faculty to nursing) will enhance the quality of the current, and future, preservice early childhood education programs.

Summary Discussion

I think it is important to continually ask ourselves: why are we here? For the children! If the child has had a good day when picked up by parents, the family has a better night. If the needs of the family are met, the child is supported to his or her fullest. However, that *good* day should not be exclusive of strong curriculum presented by professional educators. We need to look at our teacher-educator programs, in both early childhood education and bachelor of education programs and see the myriad of ways we can train, educate and support the future educators of young children. We also need to support them on an ongoing basis, assisting them with their own professional journeys to excellence.

While other leaders have these same conversations around the implications of my thesis research, and often, it is because these issues are fundamentally significant. Change is needed and until it happens, these issues will continue to reverberate amongst the champions of quality educational practice. It is not my expectation that each and every one, or any, of the issues explored in this thesis be championed and executed (although that would be marvelous). Instead, I add my voice to the other leaders and champions of the early years in Ontario. Let us work together in the continued journey of transformation. Let us discover, and yes, try the baby steps to big ideas changes.

Future

I have learned a great deal about who I am as a leader and how I have reconstructed my own leadership stance. I began this process of obtaining my Ph.D. hesitant to officially have voice as a leader. However, with many mentors discovered along the way through my interviews and other various connections, I proudly say what I need to say, and from a

position of constructed knowledge (Belenky et al., 1997). Through the thesis process I have found that in listening to others' voices and giving them voice, I found my own voice. Equally, I have become aware that I am now being viewed as a RECE leader within the early years sector, not only among my students and fellow teacher-educators, but also in the province as a whole. Thus, I see that I have become an authoritative voice among the early years champions in Ontario.

There is such rich and abundant data that I was unable to get to or utilize. I look forward to using more of what I collected in future research. For example, I would enjoy re-interviewing a number of my participants in 5 years to ask how we are doing, or to talk to graduating students, recent graduates, and those in mid-career about their perspectives of this transitional period. Donna Lero had a wonderful suggestion of studying successful programs as leadership models and perhaps this could be a future collaborative research study.

Conclusion

Someone once told me that there is nothing new to be invented, just old ideas brought back up to the surface again. In reality, there is not anything new being introduced in this study. Indeed, many leaders have all said what my research found over and over and over again. We hear it over and over and over again. The research proves each of these points, over and over and over again. Then why? Why is there no action occurring? Why aren't our governments taking up the call to action? What is the divide that is keeping the two sides of this issue apart? I can no longer accept financial concerns as the stumbling block when the long-term benefits have been researched and proven over and over. We, as a sector, as a collective of educators, researchers, parents, grandparents, caregivers, administrators and so

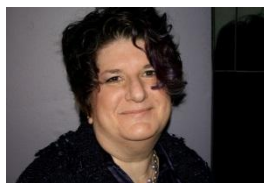
on need to stand up and demand the reasons as to why the early years are not being fully funded.

Important as they are, ideas alone will not move the agenda. They need to be married with strategically planned research-driven efforts. (Kagan & Gomez, 2011, p. 73)

This is a vision we are working toward, a long winding road kind of vision. This is not an end to be achieved in the next 10, or even 20 years, but instead another fork in the road to equality, universal access, and the maintenance of societal influence on the education continuum from conception to death.

Final Taking Pause

It is about adapting, not changing. We are aware of what needs to be done, and we now require the supports to go from infancy, toddlerhood, and childhood and into adulthood in our professionalization of the early years sector of Ontario. I have changed from the baby in the high chair, watching the world develop around me, to being a leader within my sector of choice. It is about taking it one step at a time, one crisis at a time, and celebrating the successes and accomplishments along the way.



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Appendix A
Ethics Protocol Approval Letter



UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO

OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT, RESEARCH

PROTOCOL REFERENCE # 25609

September 1, 2010

Dr. Linda Cameron
Curriculum, Teaching and Learning
OISE/University of Toronto
252 Bloor St. West
Toronto, ON M5S 1V6

Ms. Elaine Winick
Curriculum, Teaching and Learning
OISE/University of Toronto
252 Bloor St. West
Toronto, ON M5S 1V6

Dear Dr. Cameron and Ms. Winick:

Re: Your research protocol entitled, "Exploring an Historical Transition in Early Childhood Education of Ontario"

ETHICS APPROVAL

Original Approval Date: September 1, 2010
Expiry Date: August 31, 2011
Continuing Review Level: 1

We are writing to advise you that a member of the Social Sciences, Humanities and Education Research Ethics Board has granted approval to the above-named research study, for a period of **one year**. Ongoing projects must be renewed prior to the expiry date.

All your most recently submitted documents have been approved for use in this study.

Any changes to the approved protocol or consent materials must be reviewed and approved through the amendment process prior to its implementation. Any adverse or unanticipated events should be reported to the Office of Research Ethics as soon as possible.

Please ensure that you submit an Annual Renewal Form or a Study Completion Report 15 to 30 days prior to the expiry date of your study. Note that annual renewals for studies cannot be accepted more than 30 days prior to the date of expiry, as per federal and international policies.

If your research has funding attached, please contact the relevant Research Funding Officer in Research Services to ensure that your funds are released.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your project.

Yours sincerely,

Dean Sharpe, Ph.D.
Research Ethics Board Manager--Social Sciences and Humanities

OFFICE OF RESEARCH ETHICS

McMurrich Building, 12 Queen's Park Crescent West, 2nd. Floor, Toronto, ON M5S 1S8 Canada

Tel: +1 416 946-3273 • Fax: +1 416 946-5763 • ethics.review@utoronto.ca • <http://www.research.utoronto.ca/for-researchers-administrators/ethics/>

Appendix B
Interview Participant Email

(sent via email from University of Toronto account)

Subject Line: New Research Study of ECE Leaders of Ontario

Hello (name),

My name is Elaine Winick and I am currently a PhD candidate at OISE/University of Toronto (elaine.winick@utoronto.ca). I have begun the dissertation process and my research title is “Exploring An Historical Transition in Early Childhood Education in Ontario”. The focus of my research will be to create a record of the early childhood education leaders in Ontario, with a strong emphasis on the impact of Bill 242 (*Full Day Early Learning Statute Law Amendment Act*) on current early childhood preservice and inservice training. I am contacting you as one of the prominent educational leaders of the visions that are currently taking place in Ontario. I was hoping that we could have a conversation about the possibility of your participation in this research study. I will be creating a profile of my primary participants and their visions surrounding their role during this historical transition and thoughts on moving forward from this point in time. Your participation would include one face to face meeting, lasting approximately 1 hour.

If this is of interest to you, please let me know the best way to reach you to arrange a specific interview date.

Thank you in advance,

Elaine

Appendix C
Survey Participant Recruitment Email Script

(sent via email from University of Toronto account)

Subject Line: New Research Study in ECE Preservice Training Process

Dear (title),

My name is Elaine Winick and I am currently a PhD candidate at OISE/University of Toronto. I have begun the dissertation process and my research title is “Exploring an Historical Transition in Early Childhood Education in Ontario”. The focus of my research will be on early childhood education leaders in Ontario, with a strong emphasis on the impact of Bill 242 (*Full Day Early Learning Statute Law Amendment Act*, also attached) on current early childhood preservice and inservice training. Part of my study is a survey asking educational experts about their opinions of the ramifications for future training programs. It is my desire to include as many voices as possible in the final study presentation. By completing the survey you imply consent and your answers will be included in the research study analysis, and may be quoted directly. Personal information will not be included in the publishing of the study. If you have already received this email, please disregard. Your completed survey may be accessed via <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2NX2PWL> . If you are interested in a brief summary of the research (to be shared at the completion of the study), please indicate so in your email response.

If possible, I was hoping that you could also link to the questionnaire to your (faculty members/members), along with the above introduction paragraph. Your support is greatly appreciated and I hope to hear from you and your (faculty/members) on this very timely research topic.

Elaine

Appendix D
Letter of Informed Consent



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
OISE | ONTARIO INSTITUTE
FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION

Dear

Date

My name is Elaine Winick and I am a PhD student (elaine.winick@utoronto.ca) at OISE, University of Ontario, Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning (CTL), currently working on my dissertation research project. My supervisor is Dr. Linda Cameron (lcameron@oise.utoronto.ca). The research project is focused on understanding the perspective of educational leaders of current and evolving preservice and inservice training for early childhood educators, in light of the implementation of Bill 242 (*Full Day Early Learning Statute Law Amendment Act, 2010*). This study will include one interview (approximately 1 hour in length) and will revolve around your role as a historical figure during the current transitional phase.

This letter is to provide informed consent as a participant in the research project. I would ask that you read this letter carefully and sign in the place indicated if you are satisfied that you understand your role and any possible inclusions by participating in this research project. This includes the taping, videoing, photographs, and/or taking of notes during our interview conversations for this project: *Exploring an Historical Transition in Early Childhood Education in Ontario*. As this is in the preliminary stage of research collection, this data will also be used for field-related presentations and future research projects. Access to the raw data will be kept on a password-protected computer, with only the researcher having direct access.

It is understood that you were invited to participate in this research project in a volunteer capacity. If at any time you wish to withdraw you are free to do so without penalty or loss of stature with the research team. Only agreed upon personal information (in writing) will be included.

If you have any further queries I may be reached at 416.738.5698 or elaine.winick@utoronto.ca. As well, feel free to contact the office of Research Ethics at ethics.review@utoronto.ca or 416.946.3273.

Your signature below indicates that you have had the study explained, have had a chance to have your questions answered, and agree to begin the research process with the researcher as indicated above.

(name)

per

(agency/organization)

I look forward to working with you on this research project, and thank you in advance for your time and input. If you provide your email address, a summary of the research results will be shared upon completion of the research project.

Yours truly,
Elaine Winick
PhD Candidate
OISE, University of Toronto, Dept. of CTL
elaine.winick@utoronto.ca

Appendix E

Interview Guide

Based on the current transition that is occurring in Ontario for Early Childhood Education it is my wish to document this historical event and its leaders. Starting with the premise that you are seen as an educational leader and a visionary...

1. What has been your role through this transition period in ECE in Ontario?
2. How do you see your role changing as a result of the current transformation?
3. What is your “dream” for Early Childhood Education in Ontario?
4. What do you see as the challenges as we implement the changes?
5. How are the emerging changes impacting your role?
6. Who else could be involved, those that perhaps haven’t been invited to the table, to date?
7. What modifications might be required in the responsibilities of ECE training institutes – colleges and universities?
8. Any other thoughts that you would like to add?

Appendix F Online Survey Methods Questions

Exploring ECE in Ontario – by Elaine Winick, PhD Candidate

Welcome to this important survey. Completion of this survey should take approximately 10 – 15 minutes and response to questions are optional.

In light of Bill 242 (Full Day Learning Statute Law Amendment Act 2010) this research project focuses on understanding the perspective of educational leaders of current and evolving preservice and in service training for early childhood educators. Your input is greatly appreciated and valuable to this research project.

This research project has had ethical review and approval under Protocol #25609

1. Thank you for volunteering to complete this survey related to the impact of Bill 242 on ECE preservice and inservice training programs. I would like your permission to use the data you make in this survey. I will ask for some limited demographic information in order to further understand the respondents of this survey. I am gathering no personal information electronically (such as email address or internet footprints). Do you agree to allow me to use the data you supply for publication or presentation?

Yes/No

2. What is your professional accreditation? (please check all that apply)

RECE, ECE, RECE.C, ECE.C, B.Ed., B.A., Hon. B.A., MA, M.Ed, PhD., Ed.D, RTI.
Other.

3. What is your professional geographical location? (Ontario wide list provided)

4. Gender?

5. **Do you teach at...? (check all that apply)**

N/A, College, University, Private educational institution, early years
institution/organization

6. Indicate which areas are part of your teacher-education experience and expertise:

N/A, Preservice training, graduate training, formal inservice training, informal support,
other

7. Are you aware of the changes occurring in Early Childhood Education in Ontario? Yes/No
8. From what source(s) did you receive information about the current changes? (check all that apply).

Ministry notification, ministry website, faculty/staff meeting, professional organization, the media, unaware of changes, other.

9. Are you aware of Bill 242 (Full Day Learning Statute Law Amendment Act 2010)? Yes/No

10. Have you read Bill 242? Yes/No

11. If yes, what are your initial thoughts on the changes?

Very comfortable, comfortable, neutral, uncomfortable, very uncomfortable

12. Have you read **“With our Best Future in Mind. Implementing Early Learning in Ontario” (The Pascal Report)**? Yes/No

13. If yes, where is your comfort level with the recommendations?

Very high, high, somewhat, neutral, somewhat low, low, very low

14. Do you agree with the recommendations?

Fully, partially, no opinion, hardly, not at all

15. Do you feel that you will be personally affected by the passing of Bill 242?

Yes/No

16. Please describe/explain.

17. Is your school/organization/program making plans for changes to current program delivery in light of Bill 242? Yes/No

18. If yes, what plans?

19. What do you perceive as the major challenges for ECE pre and inservice training over the next year to five years? (check as many as needed)

Program delivery, adapting objectives and outcomes, merging with current B.Ed. programs, more information needed, more supported needed, more research on impacts needed, more training for teacher-educators, course requirements, changes in admission requirements, other

20. What might be the impact for those not trained under a formalized B.Ed./E.C.C. training program? (either previous graduates or future diploma holders)

21. Do you feel that early childhood education can be amalgamated with B.Ed. training programs?

Very easily, easily, somewhat, unsure, with some difficulty, very difficult

22. Any other thoughts (e.g., what do we still need to know)?

Appendix G
Cross-Referenced Agency Representation

Community Childcare Agency: Marni Flaherty, Kim Hiscott, Joy Vance, Susan Morris, Moira D'Aoust, Linda Cottes, Sylvie Tourigny

Political/Bureaucratic: Michael Pimento, Roxanne Lambert, Cynthia Abel, Charles Pascal, Goranka Vukelich

Community Agency: Lois Mahon, Donna Lero, Diane Kashin, Joe Trovato, Martha Friendly, Kerry McCuaig, Eduardo Sousa, Linda Cottes, Moira D'Aoust, Marni Flaherty, Kim Hiscott, Zeenat Janmohamed, Kerry McCuaig

Advocacy: Charles Pascal, Martha Friendly, Zeenat Janmohamed, Kerry McCuaig, Donna Lero Annie Kidder, Marni Flaherty, Joy Vance, Kim Hiscott, Diane Kashin, Eduarda Sousa

Teacher Educator: University: Linda Cameron, Charles Pascal, Rachel Langford, Pat Dickinson, Donna Lero, Carl Corter, Stuart Shanker, Maria Cantalini-Williams. College: Zeenat Janmohamed, Diane Kashin, Michael Pimento, Goranka Vukelich

School Board: Chari Schwartz, Gail Baker, Claire Sumerlus, Charles McCarthy, Jay Fedosoff

Union: James Ryan, Tracey Newman

Unique Project: Charles Pascal, Martha Friendly, Zeenat Janmohamed, Stuart Shanker, Lois Mahon, Christine Forsyth, Donna Lero, Kerry McCuaig, Goranka Vukelich

Regulation: Lois Mahon, Christine Forsyth, Diane Kashin, Cynthia Abel, Roxanne Lambert, Kim Hiscott, Linda Cottes, Goranka Vukelich

Researcher: Martha Friendly, Donna Lero, Charles Pascal, Zeenat Janmohamed, Rachel Langford, Pat Dickinson, Linda Cameron, Carl Corter, Stuart Shanker, Kerry Mc McCuaig, Maria Cantalini-Williams, Goranka Vukelich

Appendix H Regions and Institutions

Ontario Regions:

Toronto
York Region
Peel Region
Durham Region

Halton Region
Guelph
Ottawa
Kitchener/Waterloo Region

Educational “Institutions”:

OISE/UT
York University
Sturt University (Ontario campus)
University of Guelph
Seneca College
George Brown College
Public School Board
Catholic School Board
Jewish Board
Ministry of Education
Ministry of Children and Youth
Francophone community
Legal/self regulation

Ontario College of Early Childhood
Educators
Centennial College
Sheridan College
Nipissing University (Brantford campus)
Conestoga College
Ryerson University
Community agencies: i.e., childcare,
OEYC
Children with special needs

Appendix I
Interview Participant Dates and Times

Participant	Date of Interview	Length of Interview (minutes)	
Annie Kidder	February 8, 2011	36:23	
Carl Corter	February 24, 2011	47:32	
<i>Chari Schwartz</i>	<i>November 11, 2010</i>	<i>47:44</i>	<i>First interview</i>
Charles McCarthy	January 11, 2011	45:50	
Charles Pascal	November 15, 2010	44:10	
Christine Forsyth	January 31, 2011	41:25	
Clair Sumerlus	December 14, 2010	44:51	
Cynthia Abel	December 21, 2010	51:19	
Diane Kashin	February 16, 2011	51:09	
Donna Lero	February 15, 2011	44:22	
Eduarda Sousa	January 25, 2011	1:10:01	
Gail Baker	November 17, 2010	24:48	
<i>Goranka Vukelich</i>	<i>July 14, 2011</i>	<i>1:00:08</i>	<i>Last interview</i>
James Ryan	January 11, 2011	37:21	
Jay Fedosoff	May 4, 2011	1:06:41	
Joe Trovato	January 31, 2011	52:55	
Joy Vance	February 3, 2011	41:03	
Kerry McCuaig	January 13, 2011	56:56	
Kim Hiscott	February 7, 2011	48:37	
Linda Cameron	March 30, 2011	38:13	
Linda Cottes	March 25, 2011	59:20	
<i>Lois Mahon</i>	<i>November 30, 2010</i>	<i>24:19</i>	<i>Shortest length</i>
Maria Cantalini-Williams	January 6, 2011	1:30:27	
Marni Flaherty	January 4, 2011	1:04:19	
<i>Martha Friendly</i>	<i>November 18, 2010</i>	<i>1:48:36</i>	<i>Longest length</i>
Michael Pimento	December 21, 2010	1:01:47	
Moira D'Acoust & Sylvie Tourigny	February 7, 2011	1:14:22	
Pat Dickinson	December 2, 2010	1:15:58	
Rachel Langford	November 30, 2010	34:22	
Roxanne Lambert	February 1, 2011	39:14	
Stuart Shanker	January 25, 2011	58:30	
Susan Morris	February 25, 2011	1:03:45	
Tracey Newman	March 9, 2011	1:07:08	
Zeenat Janmohamed	December 6, 2010	30:57	
Total		30 hours, 04 minutes, 48 seconds	

Appendix J
Interview Time Averages

Number of Participants	Length of Interview (minutes)
2	24 – 30
2	30 – 35
4	35 – 40
6	40 – 45
3	46 – 50
3	50 – 55
3	55 – 59.99
7	1 hr. – 1:10:01
1	1:11 – 1:14:22
3	1:15:58 – 1:48:36

Appendix K

List of Interview Participants and Primary Themes

(Informal and formal analysis results)

Theme	Interview Participant
<p style="text-align: center;">Professionalization of ECE field (35)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Sub themes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Mentorship (cross over with leadership) ii. Specializations/levels iii. Validity iv. High quality v. Training versus education (cross over with intellectualization) 	<p>Chari Schwartz; Charles Pascal; Gail Baker; Martha Friendly; Rachel Langford; Lois Mahon; Pat Dickinson; Claire Sumerlus; Cynthia Abel; Linda Cameron; Maria Cantalini-Williams; Goranka Vukelich; Eduarda Sousa; Diane Kashin; Roxanne Lambert; Stuart Shanker; Carl Corter; Linda Cottes; Moira D’Aoust; Sylvie Tourigny; Marni Flaherty; Christine Forsyth; Kerry McCuaig; Joy Vance; Zeenat Janmohamed; Kim Hiscott; Joe Trovato; Charles McCarthy; Donna Lero; Annie Kidder; Tracy Newman; Susan Morris; Michael Pimento; James Ryan; Gail Baker</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Intellectualization of ECE field (35)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Sub themes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Ongoing and integrated ii. Training versus education (cross over with professionalization) iii. Specializations/level (cross over with professionalization) iv. High quality (cross over with professionalization) v. Validity (cross over with professionalization) 	<p>Chari Schwartz; Charles Pascal; Gail Baker; Martha Friendly; Rachel Langford; Lois Mahon; Pat Dickinson; Claire Sumerlus; Cynthia Abel; Linda Cameron; Maria Cantalini-Williams; Goranka Vukelich; Eduarda Sousa; Diane Kashin; Roxanne Lambert; Stuart Shanker; Carl Corter; Linda Cottes; Moira D’Aoust; Sylvie Tourigny; Marni Flaherty; Christine Forsyth; Kerry McCuaig; Joy Vance; Zeenat Janmohamed; Kim Hiscott; Joe Trovato; Charles McCarthy; Donna Lero; Annie Kidder; Tracy Newman; Susan Morris; Michael Pimento; James Ryan; Gail Baker</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Human Resources Project (27)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Sub themes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Collaboration (cross over with family) ii. Support iii. Fit matching need iv. Infrastructure 	<p>Stuart Shanker; Michael Pimento; Charles Pascal; Kerry McCuaig; Susan Morris; Charles McCarthy; Tracey Newman; Joe Trovato; Joy Vance; Martha Friendly; Annie Kidder; Linda Cameron; Marni Flaherty; Carl Corter; Linda Cottes; Moira D’Aoust; Sylvie Tourigny; Kim Hiscott; Roxanne Lambert; James Ryan; Donna Lero; Lois Mahon; Zeenat Janmohamed; Diane Kashin; Rachel Langford; Goranka Vukelich</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Family as True Partner (24)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Sub themes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Collaboration (cross over with human resources project) ii. True choice iii. Community 	<p>Chari Schwartz; Charles Pascal; Lois Mahon; Pat Dickinson; Zeenat Janmohamed; Linda Cameron; Carl Corter; Linda Cottes; Moira D’Aoust; Sylvie Tourigny; Marni Flaherty; Donna Lero; Kerry McCuaig; Susan Morris; Joe Trovato; Joy Vance; Eduarda Sousa; Stuart Shanker; Michael Pimento; Tracey Newman; Martha Friendly; Kim Hiscott; Annie Kidder; Martha Friendly</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Leadership Constraints (23)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Sub theme:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Mentorship 	<p>Zeenat Janmohamed; Pat Dickinson; Martha Friendly; Maria D’Aoust; Carl Corter; Marni Flaherty; Christine Forsyth; Diane Kashin; Goranka Vukelich; Michael Pimento; Stuart Shanker; Eduarda Sousa; Joy Vance; Chari Schwartz; Charles McCarthy; Lois Mahon; Rachel Langford; Roxanne Lambert; Donna Lero; Kerry McCuaig; Charles Pascal; Gail Baker; Jay Fedosoff</p>

<p>Unique Opportunities (22)</p>	<p>James Ryan; Susan Morris; Charles Pascal; Michael Pimento; Stuart Shanker; Goranka Vukelich; Pat Dickinson; Martha Friendly; Linda Cameron; Maria D'Aoust; Linda Cottes; Joe Trovato; Carl Corter; Christine Forsyth; Diane Kashin; Annie Kidder; Joy Vance; Roxanne Lambert; Chari Schwartz; Kerry McCuaig; Lois Mahon; Rachel Langford</p>
<p>Play/Child Development (12)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Sub theme:</i></p> <p>i. Special needs</p>	<p>Linda Cameron; Maria Cantalini- Williams; Carl Corter; Marni Flaherty; Joy Vance; Linda Cottes; Donna Lero; Tracey Newman; Moira D'Aoust; Sylvie Tourigny; Susan Morris; Goranka Vukelich</p>
<p>Gender Influence (6)</p>	<p>Pat Dickinson; Zeenat Janmohamed; Martha Friendly; Kerry McCuaig; Charles Pascal; Christine Forsyth</p>

Appendix L
Interview Participant Photos



Cynthia Abel



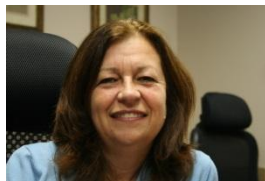
Gail Baker



Maria Cantalini-Williams



Linda Cameron



Linda Cottes



Moira D'Aoust



Pat Dickinson



Jay Fedosoff



Marni Flaherty



Martha Friendly



Kim Hiscott



Zeenat Janmohamed



Diane Kashin



Annie Kidder



Roxanne Lambert



Rachel Langford



Donna Lero



Lois Mahon



Charles McCarthy



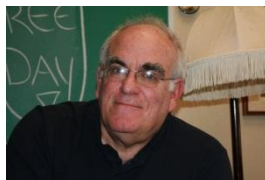
Kerry McCuaig



Susan Morris



Tracey Newman



Charles Pascal



Michael Pimento



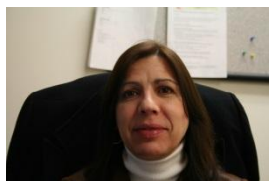
James Ryan



Chari Schwartz



Stuart Shanker



Eduarda Sousa



Claire Sumerlus



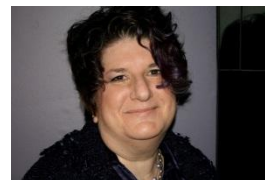
Sylvie Tourigny



Joe Trovato



Goranka Vukelich



Elaine Winick

Appendix M
Interview Participant Photos Index

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Diane Kashin	Chapter 6	Page 205
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Roxanne Lambert	Chapter 6	Page 181
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Sylvie Tourigny	Chapter 6	Page 206
Goranka Vukelich	Chapter 7	Page 227
Elaine Winick	Chapter 8	Page 276

Appendix N
Pay Equity and Infrastructure Respondents

Pay Equity Reference (23):

Cynthia Abel Gail Baker Linda Cameron Carl Corter Linda Cottes Marni Flaherty Martha Friendly Kim Hiscott Zeenat Janmohamed Diane Kashin Roxanne Lambert Rachel Langford	Donna Lero Charles McCarthy Kerry McCuaig Lois Mahon Susan Morris Tracey Newman Charles Pascal Chari Schwartz Eduarda Sousa Joe Trovato Joy Vance
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Infrastructure Reference (31):

Cynthia Abel Gail Baker Linda Cameron Maria Cantalini-Williams Carl Corter Linda Cottes Moira D'Aoust Pat Dickinson Marni Flaherty Christine Forsyth Martha Friendly Kim Hiscott Zeenat Janmohamed Diane Kashin Annie Kidder Roxanne Lambert	Roxanne Lambert Rachel Langford Donna Lero Lois Mahon Charles McCarthy Kerry McCuaig Susan Morris Tracey Newman Charles Pascal James Ryan Chari Schwartz Stuart Shanker Eduarda Sousa Sylvie Tourigny Joe Trovato Joy Vance
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Appendix O Acronyms

AECEO: Association for Early Childhood Educators of Ontario

AFCCS: Andrew Fleck Child Care Services

APA: American Psychology Association

AQ: Additional qualification course

ARCQE: Alberta Resource Centre for Quality Enhancement

B.A.: Bachelor of Arts

B.ECE.: Bachelor of Early Childhood Education

B.Ed.: Bachelor of Education

CAP-C: Community Action Program for Children

CAPE: Consultants Association for Primary Educators

CCHRSC: Child Care Human Resources Sector Council

CECE: College of Early Childhood Educators

CEO: chief executive officer

CMSM: Consolidated Municipal Service Manager

CPRI: Child & Parent Resource Institute

CRRU: Childcare Resource and Research Unit

CTL: Curriculum, Teaching, Learning (Department at OISE/UT)

CUPE: Canadian Union of Public Employees

DAP: Developmentally Appropriate Practice

DECE: Designated Early Childhood Educator (in FDK classroom)

DNA: Day Nurseries Act

EA: Educational Assistant

ECCE: Early Childhood Care and Education

ECE: Early Childhood Educator

ECE.C: Certified Early Childhood Educator (by AECEO)

ECEDH: Early Childhood Education Development Specialist

ECERS-R: The Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale, Revised

ELECT: *Early Learning for Every Child Today* (Bertrand, 2007)

FDK: Full Day Kindergarten

FSIO: Family Support Institute Ontario

GTA: Greater Toronto Area

HDAP: Human Development and Applied Psychology (Department at OISE/UT)

ICS: Institute for Child Studies (Currently JICS; part of OISE/UT)

IKU: International Kindergarten Union

ITERS-R: The Infant/Toddler Environmental Rating Scale, Revised

JICS: Dr. Jackman Institute of Child Study (formerly ICS; part of OISE/UT)

JK: Junior Kindergarten

L'AFESEO: L'Association francophone à l'éducation des services à l'enfance de l'Ontario

LL.M.: Legum Magister (Master of Laws)

M.A.: Master of Arts

MCYS: Ministry of Children and Youth Services

M.Ed.: Master of Education

MEHRI: Milton and Ethel Harris Research Initiative (York University)

MTCU: Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

NAEYC: National Association for the Education of Young Children

NGO: Non-Government Organization

NNEB: National Nursery Education Board, UK

OCAAT: Ontario College of Applied Arts & Technology

OAC: Ontario Academic Credit

OCBCC: Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care

OCT: Ontario College of Teachers

OECD: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

OECTA: Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association

OEYC: Ontario Early Years Centre

OISE/UT: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto

PD: Professional Development

PFLC: Peel Family and Literacy Centre

Ph.D.: Doctor of Philosophy

PLAR: Prior Learning Assessment Recognition

QELN: Quality Early Learning Network

RECE: Registered Early Childhood Educator

RN: registered nurse

RT: Resource Teacher

RTI: Resource Teacher/Interventionist

SK: Senior Kindergarten

TPS: Theory and Policy Studies (Department at OISE/UT)

UJA: United Jewish Association

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UT: University of Toronto

VP: Vice-President

YCD: York Child Development and Family Services, Inc.

YWCA: Young Women's Christian Association

YMCA: Young Men's Christian Association