2006

What professionals and parents value as important to childcare quality

Margarita Espinosa

WHAT PROFESSIONALS AND PARENTS VALUE AS IMPORTANT TO CHILDCARE QUALITY

A Thesis

Presented to the

Faculty of

California State University,

San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

in

Psychology:

Child Development

---

by

Margarita Espinosa

March 2006

WHAT PROFESSIONALS AND PARENTS VALUE AS IMPORTANT TO CHILDCARE QUALITY

A Thesis

Presented to the

Faculty of

California State University,

San Bernardino

by

Margarita Espinosa

March 2006

Approved by:

[redacted]

Amanda Wilcox-Herzog, Chair, Psychology — 2/6/06 Date

[redacted]

Sharon Ward

[redacted]

David Chavez

ABSTRACT

Professionals view sensitive and responsive interactions that facilitate children's play and guide social-emotional development as key factors in a quality child-care center. Parents, however, view components of practicality as important such as cost and location as key when choosing a child-care center. The purpose of this study was to evaluate how parents might choose a childcare facility, and to gauge the usefulness of an informational brochure designed to help parents understand factors professionals feel should come into play when choosing a childcare program. To achieve this purpose fifty-six students were asked to participate in an early childhood childcare survey to compare the importance of professional versus practical child-care issues. Students completed an Early Childhood Survey consisting of 25 pre-test questions pertaining to curriculum, teacher education level, experience, and income. Participants were then asked to read an Early Childhood Childcare Information Brochure. A post test consisted of 37 questions about curriculum, teacher education level, experience, income, and demographics. The findings suggest that demographics (family income, education, etc) did not dictate how participants rated professional versus practical factors,

that professional factors were deemed more important on the post-test than the pre-test (suggesting that the brochure had an influence), and the brochure was less of an important influence when participants had taken ECE/CD courses prior to participating in the study.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background

With the dramatic increase beginning in the 1970's of mothers with preschool age children entering the labor force, concern over the quality of non-maternal care experienced by young children and the consequences of such care for future development, has also risen (Berk, 1985). Maternal employment limits the degree to which parents can provide care and thereby increases reliance on alternative providers. Between 1950 and 1990, the percentage of mothers with pre-school-age children who were employed quadrupled, from 14% to 58% (Singer, Keiley, Fuller, & Wolf, 1998). More than two thirds of all children, ages 3-5, now spend an average of 19 hours per week in the care of a nonparental adult. More than 60% of all young children attend a formal center or preschool prior to enrolling in kindergarten (Singer, Keiley, Fuller, & Wolf, 1998). In 1995, 10% of infants, 25% of toddlers, and close to 40% of 3-year-olds in the United States received childcare in center-based settings (Burchinal, Roberts, Riggins, Zeisel, Neebe, & Bryant, 2000).

This represents a societal change in how young children are raised in this country, and ignited a major controversy among professionals about the impact of early group care on very young children's development. Public programs aimed at widening childcare options, and altering the type or quality of care selected, have grown rapidly over the past decade (Fuller, Kagan, McCarthy, Caspary, Lubotsky, & Gascue, 1999). Finding and paying for high-quality childcare are daily concerns as many parents struggle to keep their families together and to help their children acquire the skills necessary for a successful life (Curtis, 1997).

As an increasing number of children experience daily nonmaternal caregiving in daycare centers, family daycare homes, and with babysitters, child development researchers have turned considerable research attention to the effects of nonmaternal caregiving on children (Howes, 1983). The guidelines for developmentally appropriate practice outlined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children emphasize the importance of programs that provide sensitive and responsive interactions that facilitate children's play and guide children's social-emotional development (Kruif, McWilliam, Ridley, & Wakely, 2000). Such programs are usually based on

interpretations of Piaget's developmental theory and frequently focus upon child-directed learning and informal learning practices. Developmental psychologists and educators have, for many years, debated the effects of different instructional approaches on young children's learning and social-motivational development (Stipek, Feiler, Daniels, & Milburn, 1995). Many child development experts fear that a proliferation of early childhood programs that focus on basic skills may have more negative than positive effects on children (Stipek, Feiler, Daniels, & Milburn, 1995). Higher quality child centered programs encourage children to explore the environment around them with teachers who facilitate learning through child-directed activities and have been found to enhance children's development. Children who are in DAP programs benefit by having lower levels of stress, lower levels of anxiety, and higher scores on measures of creativity and positive social behavior.

Childcare research also suggests that experience as a mother or as a teacher is not a good predictor of effective teaching (Howes, Whitebook, & Phillips, 1992). Most of the child development research directed towards identifying characteristics of effective teachers suggest that education is a better predictor of effectiveness than

experience (Howes, Whitebook, & Phillips, 1992). Caregivers with specialized training in early childhood education, child development, or daycare were observed to have a higher frequency of positive social interaction with children, exhibiting more praising, comforting, responding, questioning and instructing than caregivers without such training (Arnett, 1989). The current evidence has pointed to the importance of course work and training experiences, specifically in the area of child development and childcare. These experiences have been related to some positive caregiving behaviors; such as more social interaction with children, fewer interactions with other adults in the setting, and less frequent use of authoritarian management techniques (Berk, 1985). The findings of the Cost, Quality and Outcomes Study (Howes, 1997) indicated that teachers with bachelor degrees in ECE were more sensitive than teachers with less training. The same study also showed that teachers with at least associate degrees in ECE were more responsive and engaged in less frequent use of authoritarian management techniques than those with less training. Teacher education level is so consequential that the NAEYC has included this component in its outline of developmentally appropriate practices.

Professionals place a heavy focus on curriculum type and teacher training as important components of quality. Parents, on the other hand, tend to choose childcare settings based on personal factors rather than via an analysis of quality factors. For instance, parents are more influenced by practical considerations such as cost and location (Peyton, Jacobs, O'Brian, & Roy, 2001). In addition, attention to practicality vs. more professional definitions of quality seems to be impacted by demographic factors such as income and marital status. For example, single parents rank practical factors such as cost and location higher in importance than do married parents, who rank quality higher (Peyton, Jacobs, O'Brian, & Roy, 2001). Married parents with higher levels of education and higher incomes) on the other hand, have been found to emphasize quality characteristics more in keeping with professional wisdom when choosing a care arrangement such as provider relationship with child, educational emphasis, physical environment, equipment, and staff training. In addition, it appears that parents who work long hours are the most influenced by practical issues [e.g., location, hours of operation, availability, cost] (Peyton, Jacobs, O'Brian, & Roy, 2001).

In summary, it appears that professionals in the field of childcare seek different experiences for children attending childcare than do parents. Professionals advocate for instructional quality and well-educated teachers, whereas parents are often times more interested in matters of practicality.

When choosing childcare, parents need to consider quality (child-centered) instead of practicality (fees, hours, location and availability). Research stimulated by the NAEYC guidelines for quality care provides some support for the validity of developmentally appropriate practice. Developmentally appropriate practice has been found to be associated with teachers' willingness to share authority/decision making with children, lower levels of stress and anxiety in children, and higher scores on measures of creativity and positive social behavior (Stipek, Feiler, Daniels, & Milburn, 1995). Children in child-centered programs are favored on most motivation-related measures. Preschoolers in child-centered programs are also more likely to choose a basic skills task over another kind of activity, suggesting that they find learning about numbers and letters interesting. Children who are allowed considerable freedom to initiate tasks and complete them without

pressure to conform to a particular model or to get the right answers, choose more challenging tasks, are less dependent on an adult for approval, and evidence more pride in their accomplishments (Stipek, Feiler, Daniels, & Milburn 1995; Schweinhart & Weikart, 1998; Burts, Hart, Charlesworth, Fleege, Mosley, & Thomasson, 1992; Miller & Bizzel, 1983).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to evaluate how parents might choose a childcare facility, and to gauge the usefulness of an informational brochure designed to help parents understand factors professionals feel should come into play when choosing a childcare program. Professional factors (child-centered & ECE/CD teachers) are related to positive developmental outcomes for children, which helps parents make good decisions about childcare for their child. Parents or future parents should base their decisions about childcare according to empirical data rather than convenience or other notions of quality (i.e. experience).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Professional Choice Factors

Curriculum

NAEYC (1979) emphasizes the importance of sensitive and responsive interactions that facilitate children's play and guide children's social-emotional development as being appropriate child development practices for teachers. According to Dodge (1995), high quality programs enable children to acquire the characteristics that enable them to succeed as learners. High quality programs are achieved by the use of Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum. A well-defined curriculum framework provides early childhood educators with a structure for planning a program that encompasses all aspects of a child's development and meets professional standards. The components of quality care are based on an understanding of child development and on a recognition that each child is an individual with unique needs, interests, and learning styles. Preschool programs that use traditional curriculum resources often focus on busy work activities, offer packaged lessons, a different theme each week, and ditto sheets. These inappropriate practices take the focus

away from the child. A program that is age appropriate means that all decisions are guided by an understanding of normal sequences of growth typical for children within a given age group. A developmentally appropriate curriculum allows for individual preferences, temperament, interests, learning styles, cultural background, and provides strategies for satisfying individual needs.

The National Education Goals established by The Goals 2000: Educate America Act of 1994 and the position statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children provide evidence for the belief in the importance of early childhood education (Lunenburg, 2000). Children's early years has been an interest of studies which have shown that appropriate programs for young children can make a difference in academic, economic, and social enrichment during early childhood development. Children's preschool experiences are designed to provide cognitive and social enrichment during early childhood development. According to Lunenberg (2000), the effects of early childhood appropriate programs on long-term out-comes are reduced school dropout rates and increased employment. Once children's achievement patterns are established, there is a high degree of continuity from that point forward, and early attainment sets boundaries

on later attainment. A disadvantaged learner may be hindered by gaps in understanding that may be difficult to overcome, because of the cumulative nature of topics in the early curriculum such as reading and mathematics when the child gets off to a slow beginning in the early school years. Studies of high quality childcare indicate that preschool experience is related to positive functioning in the early elementary grades (Lunenburg, 2000). Poor quality care is associated with poor functioning, both during kindergarten and during later schooling. A valid curriculum model provides the theoretical framework needed to operate an effective early childhood education program (Lunenburg, 2000).

In September 1986 the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) published two position statements regarding developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs. The first position statement was one providing guidelines for developmentally appropriate practice in programs serving children from birth to 8 years of age. The second statement focused upon appropriate practice for children in programs for 4 and 5 year olds. Descriptions of developmentally appropriate practice in the NAEYC publication reflect, essentially, an informal approach to early childhood education that places

an emphasis on child-directed learning as opposed to teacher-directed learning. Since there has been some debate about the appropriateness and effectiveness of different approaches to early childhood education, this literature review will demonstrate the utility of developmentally appropriate practice. Appropriate childcare allows the child to learn and explore their surroundings freely. Inappropriate childcare does not encourage the child to learn and explore freely, the teacher instructs the child on how to learn and think (Fowell & Lawton, 1992).

Stipek, Feiler, Daniels, and Milburn (1995) conducted a study that demonstrated the benefits of early childhood education approached from a DAP philosophy. The children were from 32 classrooms and there were 122 girls (63 in didactic and 59 in child-centered classrooms) and 105 boys (60 in didactic and 45 in child-centered classrooms). The mean age was 58 months for the 123 children in their last year of preschool. The 104 kindergarten children had a mean age of 72 months. Of the 227 children, 28% were Latino, 24% were African American, 6% were Asian, and 41% were white. A 47-item observation measure was used to differentiate child-centered and didactic classrooms. Also used in the study were Stipek, Daniels, Galluzzo, and

Milburn's (1992) ECERS (Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale), and Hyson, Hirsh-Pasek, and Rescorla's (1990) Classroom Practices Inventory, which consisted of 47 ratings of classroom instruction and the social climate according to an observational measure.

Other factors measured in this study were: achievement, perceptions of ability, expectations for success, enjoyment of school and school-like activities, preference for basic skills tasks, preference for challenge, and dependence on the part of children. Achievement was measured looking at children's number and letter/reading skills. Perceptions of ability were measured by asking children (1) how smart they were and how good they were at (2) numbers, (3) letters/reading and (4) art. Three tasks were used to assess expectations for success. Enjoyment of school and school-like activities was measured by asking children to point to one of five faces ranging from a big frown to a big smile. Next children were asked whether they would like to do a basic skills task or an activity involving shapes. Children choosing rows of numbers with more objects, or choosing rows with fewer objects measured preference for challenge. Children's dependence was measured by their reliance on the experimenter when working on a task.

The results of this study revealed that children in the didactic classrooms performed better on the letters/reading achievement test than children in child-centered programs. However, children in didactic programs had more opportunities to fail, which fostered relatively negative cognitions about their competencies. Children in child-centered programs rated their abilities higher, had higher expectations for success on school-like tasks, selected a more challenging math problem to do, showed less dependency on adults for permission and approval, evidenced more pride in their accomplishments, and claimed to worry less about school. Although the results of this study favored child-centered programs overall, the results suggest that some useful skills (e. g., letter/word recognition) may be effectively taught using didactic methods. Particular goals need to be considered when making instructional decisions because different approaches may be better suited for achieving different goals.

The High/Scope Preschool Curriculum Comparison Study investigated the effects of preschool programs among marginalized children by monitoring the lives of 68 children in a longitudinal study. Schweinhart and Weikart (1998) investigated three curriculum models, Direct

Instruction, the High/Scope curriculum and Nursery Schools approaches. Direct Instruction had the teacher present activities, the children responded, and it emphasized positive reinforcement of correct responses. In the High/Scope Curriculum the teacher and child planned and initiated activities and worked together. The traditional Nursery School approach had children initiate activities and the teachers responded to the children's interests. The reported study was based on the High/Scope Perry Preschool Project which began in 1969 and now includes data through age 23. The curriculum models were implemented independently and to high standards, in two-and-a-half-hour classes five days a week and home visits every two weeks by the program staff. The current study followed sixty-eight 3 and 4 year olds born in poverty who were randomly assigned to one of the three groups. The High/Scope and traditional Nursery School program were both DAP, since they both encouraged child directed learning. According to this study, the High/Scope and Nursery School curriculum had major advantages over the Direct Instruction group.

For example, select results show that only six percent of either the High/Scope or the Nursery School group needed treatment for emotional impairment or

disturbance during their schooling, as compared to 47 percent of the Direct Instruction group. Forty-three percent of the High/Scope and forty-four percent of the Nursery School group at some time engaged in volunteer work, compared to 11 percent of the Direct Instruction group. Only 10 percent of the High/Scope group had ever been arrested for a felony, however 39 percent of the Direct Instruction group had. Seventy percent of the High/scope group planned to graduate from college, compared to 36 percent of the Direct Instruction group. The results show that young people born in poverty experienced fewer emotional problems and felony arrests if they had attended a preschool program based on child-initiated learning activities focused broadly on children's development, rather than scripted direct instruction focused specifically on academics.

It appears that scripted teacher-directed instruction, touted by some as the surest path to school readiness, may only purchase a temporary improvement in academic performance at the cost of a missed opportunity for long-term improvement in personal and social behavior (Schweinhart, & Weikart, 1998). However, child initiated learning activities seem to help children develop their social responsibility and interpersonal skills so that

they become more personally and socially competent. Fewer of these children needed treatment for emotional impairment, disturbance, and had fewer arrests for felonies as young adults.

An important observation is that the direct instruction program in the High/Scope study did not actually harm the children's social development, because there is no evidence that the direct instruction program children engaged in more delinquency than they would have if they had not attended the preschool program. Schweinhart (1986) surmised that the presence of social behavior goals and child-initiated learning activities in the nondidactic programs could account for the differences.

Miller and Bizzell (1983) studied the long-term effects of four preschool programs. Children who attended 4 Head Start prekindergarten programs for 1 year from 1968-1969 in Louisville, Kentucky. Four classes in Traditional (non-didactic), Bereiter-Engelmann and DARCEE (didactic programs that stressed small-group activities that were designed to teach basic language and math concepts through direct instruction), and two classes in Montessori were involved in the study. The total sample at the end of prekindergarten consisted of 214 children. The

Preschool Inventory (PSI) is a test of basic skills, concepts, and vocabulary for preschool children. The PSI was administered to all children at the end of the first 8 weeks of prekindergarten, end of prekindergarten, and the end of kindergarten. California Achievement Test scores were obtained from the school system at the end of first and second grades. The Stanford-Binet Intelligence Test was administered after the first 8 weeks of prekindergarten and then at the end of prekindergarten, kindergarten, and first, second, and eighth grades. The WISC-R was administered in seventh grade.

According to the findings, at the end of prekindergarten, children in all four programs showed no difference in achievement or IQ. However, there were differences that emerged at the end of the second grade follow-up data which clearly shows program differences in school achievement - both reading and math - that were still present at the end of sixth grade. The differences present at the end of sixth grade were that boys were reading slightly above grade level at sixth grade and were significantly higher than other groups in math at seventh and eighth grades. The Montessori group had a lower retention rate, higher school success ratings, and the highest percentage of high school graduates than children

in the other programs. Males from the 2 nondidactic programs were significantly higher in achievement than males from the 2 didactic programs. Males from the Montessori group were consistently the highest group. Females from the 2 didactic programs were slightly but not significantly higher. As the Montessori group and the Traditional group did not teach through direct instruction they therefore, can be considered developmentally appropriate programs.

These findings suggest that when scores were examined by sex, the superiority of Montessori was shown to occur primarily for males. The individual attention within the structured sequencing that typified the Montessori classes may have caused boys to respond better. In general the boys who had the two nondidactic and individualized prekindergarten programs were outperforming those who had the more academic group programs. Miller and Bizzell (1983) state that one possibility is that boys are typically less mature than girls at age 4 and may be more susceptible to the effects of group instruction offered in the B-E and DARCEE programs and less ready to profit in a lasting way from the excellent skill training offered in these programs. Boys may simply have needed the more

individualized and slower-paced instruction given in the nondidactic programs.

A study conducted by Burts, Hart, Charlesworth, Fleege, Mosley, and Thomasson (1992), shows the effects of curriculum type on stress in 101 children in developmentally inappropriate classrooms and 103 children in appropriate classrooms. The teacher questionnaire was used to measure two subscales (Teacher Beliefs Scale and Instructional Activities Scale). The Teacher Beliefs Scale consisted of a 37-item questionnaire that had teachers tap into their philosophy regarding developmentally appropriate practices as outlined by NAEYC. The instructional activities scale contained 34 items used to determine how frequently teachers perceived children participating in various classroom activities. The Teacher Questionnaire was returned by 204 teachers who were ranked according to their scores from the extremes of appropriateness to inappropriateness on the most reliable factor. The most reliable factor was titled Developmentally Inappropriate Materials and Activities and included: workbooks and ditto sheets, flashcards, seatwork, and whole group activities. Another measure used was the Classroom Child Stress Behavior Instrument, which documented manifestations of stress in child behaviors.

Some of the manifestations of stress recorded were nail biting, physical hostility/fights, tremors or tics, and nervous laughter.

According to Burts, Hart, Charlesworth, Fleege, Mosley, and Thomasson (1992), boys in inappropriate classrooms exhibited more total stress behaviors when compared to boys in appropriate classrooms; girls did not. More stress was observed in inappropriate classrooms versus appropriate classrooms during waiting, transition, and workbook/worksheet activities. Workbook/worksheet activities may have more negative consequences for males, since boys generally are less skillful at paper and pencil activities, and they seem to enjoy them less than girls. Inappropriate classrooms place an emphasis on achievement type activities, which may also contribute to the greater stress, exhibited by males. Some scholars note that males seem to prefer to play with blocks, tools, cars, and trucks while girls prefer to play with scissors and paper, paints, chalkboards and so forth. Since girls were more skillful at paper and pencil tasks, girls were found to be more advanced than boys in pencil manipulation skills. However, not all girls are advanced in school like tasks and therefore, developmentally appropriate activities need to be considered in order that these girls may feel

comfortable in an activity they choose. These findings support the contention by the NAEYC that developmentally appropriate curriculum allows for individual preferences and provides strategies for satisfying individual needs, and individual patterns of growth. Each child is a unique person with his or her own interests and learning styles. Developmentally appropriate activities for both boys and girls are child centered and child directed, which allows the child to choose the activity they feel most comfortable with.

In summary, it appears that early childhood centers should place an emphasis on child-directed learning. The national education goals (Lunenburg, 2000) provide evidence, as do studies reviewed previously in this paper, that developmentally appropriate experiences can foster competent functioning during the early school years, which can effect performance and adjustment. Children in child-centered programs, particularly boys, rate their abilities higher, have higher expectations for success on school-like tasks, select a more challenging math problem to do, are less dependent on adults for permission and approval, evidence more pride in their accomplishments, and claim to worry less about school. Child initiated learning activities seem to help children develop social

responsibility and interpersonal skills so that they become more personally and socially competent. Workbook/worksheet activities are inappropriate for young children and support the contention of the NAEYC of inappropriate classrooms, since some children may not have acquired the skills necessary to complete paper and pencil activities.

According to the findings on curriculum, children benefit from child-centerd care. Therefore, parents should choose a childcare program that is child-centered, that encourages child initiated learning, and which also encourages socialization and the development of emotional health. The benefits incurred by children attending developmentally appropriate programs are lower levels of stress, lower levels of anxiety, and higher scores on measures of creativity and positive social behavior. (Schweinhart & Weikart, 1998; Stipnek, Feiler, Daniels, & Milburn, 1995; Burts, Hart, Charlesworth, Fleege, Mosley, & Thomasson, 1992; Miller & Bizzel, 1983).

After reviewing the importance of choosing a curriculum that is child-initiated, we can only surmise that teachers play an important role in teachers presumptions about choosing curriculum. We can also speculate at this point that teacher characteristics play

an important role in creating a developmentally appropriate curriculum. With quality being in the forefront, particular importance is given to caregivers' training in childcare and child development. According to the NAEYC (1984), sensitive and responsive interactions between teachers and children are part of appropriate child development practices. According to some scholars caregiver education is positively associated with increased social interaction, cognitive/language stimulation, and conversation with children (Ruopp, 1979; Snider & Fu, 1990). Caregivers with specialized training in early childhood education are observed to engage in more positive social interactions with children. Formal education and very high levels of specialized training prepares teachers to be effective in the classroom. Preschool teachers with a bachelor's degree in any subject or specialized training at the college level are more effective and competent teachers (Howes, Whitebook, & Phillips, 1992). Snider and Fu (1990) suggest that formal training and supervised experience, associated with the completion of a degree in ECE/CD, provide the early childhood teacher with the knowledge and skills necessary to determine what constitutes developmentally appropriate practice.

Teacher Characteristics That Influence Child Centered Practices

Education and Training

Formal education within accredited college and university programs benefit childcare staff with economic benefits and greater job satisfaction, but more importantly, education is thought to augment the quality of the childcare process. A study conducted by Berk (1985) concluded that higher education was related to increases in encouragement, development of children's verbal skills, and the use of indirect forms of guidance. Of 13 center directors, 12 participated from small midwestern cities with a population of about 80,000. Seventy three percent of the sample had a Bachelors degree, fifty-one percent had some kind of teaching credential; of these, about one-fourth were certified in early childhood education. The caregivers had on average about three years of experience in either daycare or preschool teaching.

The Prescott, Jones, and Kritchevsky (1967) category system was used for coding teacher activity, which was divided into behavioral units. A unit was defined as an identifiable contact with an object or person; and change in the contact terminated that particular unit. The category system was applied to detailed, narrative

stream-of-behavior records of the moment-by-moment actions of the caregiver, along with the immediate environmental context of the behavior. Observations focused on a representative sampling of caregiver behavior across a range of daily center activities. Each caregiver was observed once from 9:00 to 10:00, when a variety of daily activities planned by the teachers were taking place in the centers. Each caregiver was also observed once from 11:00 to 12:00 noon, during which time children ate lunch and prepared for a midday nap. Two observers collected the observational data, during which they dictated a running stream of behavior record into a portable recorder, which was later transcribed.

According to the results, caregivers with at least two years of college were significantly higher in the use of encouragement, teacher direction, and development of verbal skills, and lower in restriction as well as in those behaviors involving care of physical needs. This means that more educated caregivers engaged in a set of behaviors which were both more child-oriented and which provided young children with greater social and intellectual stimulation.

It could be argued that the findings of this study reflect the effect of caregiver socioeconomic status

rather than the impact of education, as a number of previous studies of social class influences on parenting behaviors show behavioral differences similar to those identified for caregivers with varying levels of education (Berk, 1985). In this study, as in the case of almost all child development research, it was impossible to separate the variables of caregiver socioeconomic status and level of education. This study does show though that extended education is one factor which does make an important difference in the quality of adult behaviors directed toward children. Additonally, this study demonstrates the relevance of broad higher educational foundations for the practical endeavor of providing developmentally stimulating caregiving experiences for young children and for fostering an integration of caregiver child-oriented attitudes and behavior.

A study conducted by De Kruif, McWilliam, Ridley, and Wakely (2000), investigated the nuances of teachers' responsive and directive interaction behaviors. According to the authors, teachers could be classified into three groups: DR, DNR, and NDR. DR (directive-responsive) teachers asked why and how questions, eliciting behaviors based on the children's interests and responses, and used a variety of interaction strategies, such as modeling,

time delay, and prompts that provided assistance without intruding on the child and the activity. DNR (directive-nonresponsive) teachers often stopped and redirected children's behaviors and asked test-like questions, rather than elaborating on the children's engagement. They also used modeling, prompting with materials, or offering children clues to encourage them to respond. NDR (nondirective-responsive) teachers displayed some interaction behaviors similar to those of the nonelaborative teachers (acknowledging children's responses without elaborating on what they were doing, and praising children's efforts), however, the NDR teachers rarely attempted to elicit specific behavioral and verbal responses that would guide children to be engaged in more elaborate ways. A fourth group was identified as nondirective-nonresponsive because no one interaction predominated.

Teachers with less education tended to be more redirective and less elaborative and sensitive. Caregivers with more education had less authoritarian child rearing styles and were more knowledgeable about child development. Teachers with more ECE training were less punitive and detached with children. Therefore, it appears that personnel preparation, practice guidelines,

supervision, and teaching itself should focus on the avoidance of overly controlling teaching behaviors.

As researchers study dimensions in quality, an increasing focus on caregiver training in childcare and child development has emerged as a dimension of particular importance. Arnett's (1989) study concluded that a 4-year ECE degree is in fact related to the attitudes and behaviors of caregivers. The subjects consisted of 59 female caregivers in 22 daycare centers on the island of Bermuda. Forty-five were black; the remainder were white (8), Portugese (3), or of a mixed race (3). Forty-three caregivers had received training of some kind, and 14 had received no training. The caregivers were observed and evaluated on two different days by different observers for two 45-minute periods using a 26-item Caregiver Interaction Scale developed by Arnett. Items for this scale were developed during pilot observations in Head Start centers in the Charlottesville, Virginia area. The Caregiver Interaction Scale is a global rating system that is designed to produce information related to various socialization practices developed by the author. The scale consisted of evaluations in two 45-minute direct observations, on separate occasions and by different observers. To access differences in childrearing

attitudes, the Parental Modernity Scale (Schaefer & Edgerton, 1981) was administered.

According to results of this study, training/education was related to less authoritarian childrearing attitudes and to a more positive interaction style with children, with less punitiveness and detachment. Caregivers who had extensive training/education from a 4-year university based program, were least authoritarian, rated highest on the Positive Interaction factor, were less punitive with the children, and were less detached from the children. It is no surprise that caregivers who have completed a 4-year program in Early Childhood Education are more competent and skilled in their work than caregivers who have substantially less training/education or no training/education at all. However, it is during the first year of the program, comprised of courses in Communication and in Child Development that seems to be responsible for the positive attitude and behavior changes in interactions with children (Arnett, 1989).

Studies consistently find that caregivers with academic training/education in ECE/CD and supervised practical experience are more interactive, helpful, talkative, playful, positive, and affectionate in their

interactions with preschool children (Snider & Fu, 1990). The subjects in the Snider and Fu (1990) study were seventy-three teachers of 3, 4 and 5-year-old children, employed in licensed childcare centers in Virginia. The items included were adapted from the staff qualifications report and guidelines for teacher education published by the NAEYC (1982, 1984, 1985). Fifteen hours of teacher-child interactions, during various routine activities, were videotaped at a university child development laboratory school using the Measure of Knowledge of Developmentally Appropriate Practice (MKDAP). The MKDAP was developed to assess teachers' knowledge of developmentally appropriate practice. The MKDAP was used to collect data in two different settings: (a) during a continuing education seminar for early childhood teachers, and (b) in various childcare centers. The Teacher Information Report, adapted from the staff qualifications report and guidelines for teacher education published by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (1982, 1984, 1985), consisted of three sections: 1) information about position, 2) level of education, and 3) content covered in courses taken. The Teacher Information Report and the MKDAP were given to a group of

early childhood teachers at an education seminar on developmentally appropriate practices.

The findings showed that teacher education and training are important determinants in the quality of care given. Higher education levels were associated with several qualities of caregiver behavior - decreases in restriction, increases in encouragement, development of children's verbal skills, and the use of indirect forms of guidance. According to the results of this study, the factors that have the most effect on early childhood teachers' knowledge of developmentally appropriate practice are education/academic degree, the number of content areas covered in child development/early childhood education, ECE/CD courses taken, and the interaction of ECE/CD content and supervised practical experience. The results also showed that formal training and supervised experience, associated with the completion of a degree in ECE/CD, provide the early childhood teacher with the knowledge and skills necessary to determine what constitutes developmentally appropriate practice.

Howes, Whitebook, and Phillips (1992) concluded that both formal education and very high levels of specialized training prepare teachers to be effective in the classroom. The National Childcare Staffing Study (NCCSS)

examined quality of care in 227 (45 within each city) childcare centers in Atlanta, Boston, Detroit, Phoenix, and Seattle. Within each childcare center one infant, one toddler, and one preschool classroom teacher or teacher-director and one assistant or one aide was randomly selected to be interviewed and observed. The six staff members from each center were interviewed using six sections: personal background, childcare experience, wages and benefits, other career experience, educational background, professional satisfaction, and recommendations for improving the childcare profession. Overall quality was assessed by using the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) in each observed preschool classroom and the Infant-Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS) in each infant room.

The data suggests that the model teacher had some post-secondary education, although there are relatively few teachers with college or advanced degrees. The NCCSS (Howes, Phillps, & Whitebook, 1992) report that while most teachers report some training in early childhood education, the majority of teachers received such training in high school or vocational school. The NCCSS found that only college level training was associated with effective teaching and an untrained teacher would find it difficult

to provide developmentally appropriate activities. It appears that in this study, specialized training at the college level is a better predictor of preschool teachers' behavior. The results also suggest that, to be competent, infant and toddler teachers are more likely to need college-level specialized training than are preschool teachers. It is thought that specialized training provides teachers with basic child development knowledge essential for understanding and responding to the unique, rapid course of development during this early period in a child's life.

Rhodes and Hennessy (2000) determined that caregivers that received training made significant gains in positive relationships and decreased in levels of detachment. Thirty-three caregivers participated in the study. Only twenty-nine participated in the post-test. The participants were all female. Sixteen caregivers located through the I. P. P. A. (The Irish Preschool Playgroups Association) participated in the comparison group. The comparison group was matched closely with the training group on levels of education, training, and work experience. A girl and a boy between the ages of 3.6 and 4.2 were chosen from each of the 33 childcare centers where the training and comparison participants were

employed. The Arnett (1989) Caregiver Interaction Scale (CIS) was used to rate the caregivers' interactions with the children in their care and the children's social competence was rated on the 5-point Peer Play Scale (PPS) which rates the degree of complexity in peer play. Cognitive competence was rated with the 5-point Play with Objects Scale (POS) which rates the complexity of play with objects.

The results from this study showed that the completion of a 120-hour training program resulted in higher levels of caregiver sensitivity and higher levels of play among children. The comparison group who did not receive training showed no change in ratings of sensitivity from pre- to post- training times. An important feature of the findings of the present study is despite the fact that teachers had 6 years of experience of working with children, training resulted in higher levels of positive relationship and lower levels of detachment. The comparison group that did not receive training showed no change in ratings of sensitivity from pre- to post- training times. This also adds to research findings demonstrating a positive association between caregiver training and children's developmental outcomes.

These findings suggest a positive effect for training on caregiver's interactions with children.

As reviewed, teacher education level is an important factor when relating developmentally appropriate behavior by teachers and education. According to Rhodes and Hennessy (2001) quality and competence of staff are the most important determinants of the quality of early childhood programs and the developmental outcome of children attending.

Teacher education level is important when we compare NAEYC guidelines in accordance with appropriateness of teacher behavior. Teachers who are responsive, nurturing, and sensitive tend to have reached a higher education level than teachers who are unresponsive, less nurturing and less sensitive. Experience and teacher education level can offer childcare facilities a well-rounded teacher. However, experience alone may not offer children teachers who follow NAEYC guidelines. Experience may not produce teachers who are responsive, nurturing and sensitive.

Howes, Whitebook, and Phillips (1992) stated that the definition of a good teacher based on experience and personality is problematic for several reasons. Childcare research suggests that experience as a mother or as a teacher is not a good predictor of effective teaching.

Expecting a teacher to do a good job because she loves children and is good with them ignores the real distinctions in role and job definitions between mothers and teachers. A considerable amount of research directed towards identifying characteristics of effective teachers suggests that education and training are better predictors of effectiveness than experience for providers (Howes, Whitebook, & Phillips, 1992). Spending more years in the childcare field is not a good indication of teacher's behavior. The role of experience which is less clear suggests that hiring practices, which give equal weight to experience, education, and training, may be over-estimating the role of experience in producing good teaching behavior.

Experience of Teachers

In a study conducted by Howes (1983), she states that more experience and more formal training in childcare and child development are related to "high quality" caregiving. Forty toddlers and their primary daycare caregivers participated in the study. Toddler's median age was 19.5 months. Twenty toddlers were in center care and twenty in family daycare homes. Childcare workers had worked a median of three years in the field. Two visits were made to each toddler and caregiver. On the first

visit all participants were acquainted with the observation procedure. On the second visit, a two-hour, time sampled observation was made of the toddler during free play. Three sets of measures were collected in this study: measures of caregiving conditions, measures of caregiving behaviors, and measures of toddler behaviors. The codes for caregiving conditions and caregiving behaviors were as follows: (a) facilitative social stimulation - any facilitative talk, play, with child, mediate objects by highlighting for demonstrating a toy, touch or hug; (b) express positive affect; (c) express negative affect; (d) restrict, forbid, or intrude on the child's activity; (e) positive response to toddler's talk, share, or touch; (f) ignore toddlers's requests for attention; and (g) negative response to toddlers' distress. The codes for toddlers' behavior were as follows: (a) talks, touches, or shares object with caregiver; (b) expresses positive affect to caregiver; (c) expresses negative affect to caregiver; (d) asks caregiver for something; and (e) violates adult standards - destroys property, hits, bites, kicks, or has tantrums.

According to this study, conditions of caregiving and the experience and training of the caregiver do influence the caregiving behaviors used by the caregiver. Howes

(1983) found that experienced caregivers were more responsive to children's bids for attention. Caregivers who worked under more favorable conditions (that is, with fewer children under their care, shorter hours, and combining less housework with childcare) were better able to provide "high quality nonmaternal care."

A study conducted by Van Ijzendoorn and Tevecchio (1998), which discussed differences between Dutch and European and North American daycare centers, concluded that formal characteristics of the professional caregiver appear to be the most powerful predictors of quality of care. The center care participants did not differ in terms of socioeconomic status, the ages of the children served, mother / father involvement, the size of the group, the professional education of the caregiver; experience of the caregiver in years, or the number of hours per week the child spent in daycare.

Forty-three daycare centers in the Netherlands were evaluated for an in-depth observational study. The quality of group care was assessed by the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (Harms & Clifford, 1980) which consisted of 37 items that were classified into seven categories. The Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale (Harms, Cryer, & Clifford, 1990) consisted of 35 items

that were also classified into seven comparable categories. The Caregiver Interaction Scale (Arnett, 1989) consisted of 26 items and was used to assess caregiver-child and parent-child interaction. The Child-Rearing Practices Report (CRPR; Block, 1981) assessed the quality of authoritarian and authoritative childrearing attitudes. The Njjmegen Child Rearing Questionnaire (NCRQ; Gerris et al., 1993) assessed warm and responsive caregiving. The Parent Caregiver Relationship Inventory (pcri; Van Ijzendoorn et al., 1998) assessed the perception of the quality of the relationship between professional caregivers and parents.

The results from this study concluded that less experienced and less educated caregivers who spent fewer hours per week at the center provided higher quality care. Caregivers with less experience and less education may cope better with the unfavorable working conditions and restricted career perspectives than caregivers with more experience and longer working hours. This outcome is contrary to our expectations as well as to some other studies in the same domain, in which more education was related to better quality of care (Van Izendoorn & Tevecchio, 1998), but does suggest that increased experience in not a good measure of quality caregiving.

Further research is required to document the mechanisms of the association between quality of care and formal characteristics of caregivers.

In a study conducted by Honig and Hirallal (1997), teachers independently provided responses to questions about their number of years of formal schooling, years in childcare, years at the same center, own parenting status, and how many ECE/CD courses and workshops they had ever taken. Among the 81 caregivers in this sample, ages 20 - 59, 75 were female teachers and 6 were male teachers. Each of the centers was in the northeastern United States, were moderately sized, and in urban areas. Observations of teachers took place prior to the collection of demographic information to avoid bias. The ABC (Adult Behaviors in Caregiving) scale was used during a half-hour observation. Analyzed were 9 clusters of adult behaviors. Six of these clusters were positive; language growth fostering, facilitation of child social and physical skills, promotion of concept development, positive socioemotional interactions with child, physical caregiving of child, qualitative category: individualized teacher responses. Three clusters were non-positive; negative emotional behaviors, physical caregiving of the environment, and doing nothing for child.

Honig and Hirallal concluded that teachers who had worked more years in childcare were not more likely to provide positive emotional inputs, such as hugs or smiles compared with caregivers with fewer than 3 years of experience. The authors also found that caregivers with more years of experience seemed to take on more room and toy cleaning responsibilities.

The Arnett (1989) study discussed earlier consisted of 59 caregivers in 22 day-care centers on the island of Bermuda. The study consisted of four different levels of training which included: 1) no training; 2) two courses of the Bermuda College training program; 3) the entire four-course Bermuda College training program; and 4) a 4-year college degree in Early Childhood Education.

According to the results, caregivers who completed a 4-year program in Early Childhood Education were rated higher on positive interaction and lower on punitiveness and detachment. However, Arnett did not show any relationship between experience and the four different levels of training.

Howes, Whitebook, and Phillips (1992) discussed earlier the relationship between experience and formal education. The study consisted of over 1300 teachers from randomly selected childcare centers in five representative

metropolitan areas of the United States were interviewed and observed. The National Child Care Staffing Study examined the quality of care in 1988 in 227 childcare centers in five metropolitan areas of the United States.

The study concluded that years of experience in the field of childcare was not a good indicator of teacher behavior. The study also concludes that the unimportance of experience suggests that hiring practices which give equal weight to experience, education, and training may be over-estimating the role of experience in producing good teaching behavior.

As we review the literature related to experience we find contradictions among different researchers. Howes, Whitebook, and Phillips (1992) concluded that both formal education and very high levels of specialized training prepare teachers to be effective in the classroom, but that teaching experience is not a good predictor of teacher behavior. Van Ijzendoorn and Tevecchio (1998) concluded that less experienced and less educated caregivers that spent fewer hours per week at the center provided higher quality care. According to Honig and Hirallal (1997) teachers with experience were not more likely to provide positive emotional inputs. Howes (1983), on the other hand, suggests that experienced caregivers

were more responsive to children's bids for attention. Howes also states that caregivers who were under more favorable conditions were better able to provide "high quality nonmaternal care." In conclusion, researchers contradict each other on whether experience contributes to developmentally appropriate practices for childcare workers, although most say it is not a good predictor.

Parental Choice Factors

It appears that most parents have a limited understanding of the factors professionals believe important in choosing quality care and instead are driven by their personal demographic structure. Parental choice seems to be heavily influenced by work constraints, marital status, maternal education level, and family income. The following section will discuss studies that illustrate the factors used by parents when making childcare choices.

Paulsell and Nogales (2003), discussed parents' experiences in finding and using childcare for their infants and toddlers. Thirty-one parents participated in each of 4 discussion groups. The groups averaged about 8 parents per group. A total of 8 father's participated and teenage mothers also attended at several sites. The three

main barriers to accessing good quality infant-toddler care were the inadequate supply of infant-toddler slots, the high cost of care, and the inadequate quality of arrangements they could afford.

According to parents, most infant-toddler slots were offered by family childcare providers, both regulated and unregulated. However, many parents expressed a preference for center-based care, because they believed centers maintained higher standards of quality and were monitored more regularly. In all four sites the high cost of good quality infant-toddler care was out of reach for families of low income.

Parents cited different concerns regarding inadequate quality care. Parents in several communities cited large group sizes and inadequate child-teacher ratios as indicators of inadequate care. Many parents cited a low level of interaction between providers and children as a sign of poor quality care. Other parents cited their children's unhappiness about going to childcare and their eagerness to leave as indicators that their children did not feel welcome and were not well cared for. Parents also cited unexplained bumps and bruises and their children being dirty when picking them up as concerns.

In conclusion, parents with low incomes value the same things in infant-toddler childcare that child development professionals do: warm, stable relationships with caregivers; attention to health and safety and an environment that promotes growth in all areas of development. Parents in the focus groups emphasized that knowing their child was loved in their absence - his needs met, her cries answered - made the transition to childcare easier for everyone. Parents also placed importance on confidence in one's childcare provider allows working parents to shift their focus, be truly productive, and concentrate fully on their other jobs.

A study by Singer, Keiley, Fuller, and Wolf (1998) focused on how families make initial childcare choices. In the early 1990's, 4,392 parents participated, by telephone, in the National Child Care Survey (NCCS). In the first stage the sample was derived from Los Angeles and Cook counties in California. The second stage was comprised of banks of continuous telephone numbers from the selected counties. In the third stage, parents completed a screening interview by phone whereby 69% were successfully completed by the eligible households. The screening reported on the youngest child in the sub sample of 2,624 households with a child age 6 or under who had

not yet entered kindergarten. Households were included in which the mother was present and for whom the parent provided information on whether and when the child first entered nonparental care.

The authors concluded that parents' beliefs and early literacy practices further help to predict whether young children are enrolled in center-based programs and preschools. However, we need to learn more about how and why many parents make positive selection decisions, placing their children in stimulating and warm nonparental care settings.

The purpose of a study conducted by Peyton, Jacobs, O'Brian, and Roy (2001) was to study demographic and family process factors related maternal childcare selection factors. Participants in this study were recruited at the time of a child's birth from 31 hospitals located in or near Little Rock, AR; Irvine, CA; Lawrence, KS; Boston, MA; Philadelphia, PA; Pittsburgh, PA; Charlottesville, VA; Morganton, NC; Seattle, WA; and Madison, WI. The 633 recruited families (demographically diverse in income, education, and ethnicity) included 24% ethnic-minority children, 10% mothers without a high school diploma, and 14% single mothers. Of the 633 families, 84.5% were two parent households, 78.7% were

European American, 10.3% were African American, 6.5% were Hispanic, and 4.5% were other minorities. At one-month demographic and childcare use data were obtained, at 34 months reasons for choosing a particular type of childcare arrangement were collected as a part of a telephone interview and, at 36 months mothers were videotaped in interaction with their child and filled out a questionnaire about parenting stress. At this time measures of childcare quality were also obtained through observer visits to childcare settings and caregiver reports.

Results of this study showed that cost, hours, location and availability impacted parental choice. Mothers who worked more hours and whose family incomes were lower were considered highly stressed. Highly stressed mothers based their childcare choices on practical concerns such as fees, hours, location, and availability and preference for a specific type of care. For these parents, their income and restrictive jobs drew them to choose childcare based on practicality. Therefore, there is a greater likelihood that the care their children receive will be of lower quality than the care chosen by mothers who were not as restricted by demographic factors. Mothers in high-income families and those who worked fewer

hours, on the other hand, selected care based on quality of care providers, environment/equipment, or program, factors more in keeping with characteristics professionals deem important.

This study holds serious implications for the children of mothers constrained by limitations related to income, work hours, or stressful family situations. Mothers with lower incomes and longer work hours are not only curtailed in their choices of care arrangements, but there is a greater likelihood that the care their children receive will be of lower quality than the care chosen by mothers who are not as restricted by demographic factors. The findings suggest some children from lower-income homes may experience a double risk in that they live in disadvantaged homes and are more likely to receive lower quality nonmaternal childcare.

Fong, Yuan, Yuen, and Caulfield (2003) researched why parents who have the opportunity to choose licensed and accredited childcare choose license exempt childcare, which may not be equal in quality. The study interviewed 890 families by telephone. Forty-six percent of the participants had some college, 42% were H.S. graduates or less, and 12% of the parents were college graduates. Fifty pecent of the participants were married/cohabitating, 32%

were never married, and 18% were widowed, divorced, or separated. In terms of childcare choice 52% of the participants chose licensed center-based care, 37% of chose license-exempt care, and 11% of parent's chose licensed family childcare home.

The results showed three reasons why parents choose particular types of childcare. First, some parents choose a setting based on factors important to professionals such as the facility has small number of children per provider, and there is an experienced care taker. Second, parents choose facilities because they are looking for a home-like atmosphere where the provider is a family member or relative or someone you know very well. Third, parents choose facilities for such as affordable fees and being available at times that matches parent's schedule. Parents seeking quality care (or care that matches a professional definition) were four to five times more likely to select a licensed childcare setting. Parents seeking "Home-like Environment/Trust" or "Pragmatic" reasons were more likely to use licensed-exempt care. The findings also show demographic reasons parents chose licensed versus license-exempt care settings. Parents whose child was age three or older were more likely to choose licensed centers. Parents with lower levels of education were more

likely to choose license-exempt care. Never married parents also were more likely to choose license-exempt care.

As we reflect on the literature just reviewed it appears that professionals encourage choosing a childcare center that encourages child initiated learning. According to Caruso, Dunn, and File (1992), the NAEYC guidelines for DAP is described as an interactive process between the child and the environment requiring: 1) self-initiation, 2) active exploration, 3) experimentation, 4) learning materials, and 5) play. Learning materials should be concrete rather than abstract and the children should pursue activities based on their own interests within the context of play. An environment that is prepared with the specific children in mind should provide activities that are both easy and challenging for children, enabling them to practice and consolidate skills as well as acquire new skills.

Professionals also encourage selecting childcare centers/facility environment in which teachers have training in the field of child development. The literature related to teacher education levels states that knowledge of appropriate practice is dependent upon academic training in ECE/CD rather than experience. Cassidy and

Lawrence (2000) state that without theory and research support, teachers rely heavily on experience since it is expedient, however, an overreliance on experience might not always lead to best practice.

Parents, on the other hand, are guided by personal necessity rather than absolute indices of quality. Some practical considerations for parents are: cost, hours of availability, and location. In particular, income seems to be a particularly salient factor. Peyton, Jacobs, O'Brian, and Roy (2001) state that mothers with lower incomes and longer hours have a greater likelihood that the care their children receive will be of lower quality than the care chosen by mothers who are not as restricted by demographic factors. According to Peyton, Jacobs, O'Brian, and Roy, mothers of high income and those who worked fewer hours selected quality care that resembles factors thought to be important to professionals. However, mothers of low income who worked more hours who chose care because of practical concerns such as fees, hours, location, and availability. Singer, Keiley, Fuller, and Wolf (1998) state that parents' beliefs and early literacy practices influence parents decision for center-based programs and preschools.

Parents need to be educated about important factors to consider when choosing childcare. The purpose of the

study is to investigate the utility of a brochure (Early Childhood Childcare Information) developed for this study. The purpose of the brochure is to educate participants on DAP. However, the brochure may or may not educate participants regarding childcare, since some participants will not waiver in their preconceived notions about childcare. Literature suggests that certain types of parents will view quality, child-centered curriculum, teacher education level and teacher experience differently. Based on the literature reviewed the following hypotheses were developed.

1. Practical childcare vs. quality childcare
    a. Participants with lower income; who work more hours; who are single; and with lower levels of education, will view practical childcare as more important on the pre-test and less important post-test. As compared to participants with higher income; who work less hours; who are married, and with a higher education level.
    b. Participants with higher income, who work less hours, who are married, have higher levels of education will view quality as more important on the pre-test and post-test. As

compared to participants with lower income, who work more hours, who are single, and a have higher education levels.

2. Child-centered curriculum

   a. Participants with lower income, who work more hours, who are single, have lower levels of education will view child-centered curriculum as less important on the pre-test and more important on the post-test. As opposed to participants with higher income, who work less hours, which are married, and have a higher education level.

   b. Participants with higher income, who work less hours, who are married, have higher levels of education will view child-centered curriculum as more important on the pre-test and post-test. As compared to lower income participants, who work more hours, which are single, and have a lower education level.

3. Teacher experience

   a. Participants with lower income, who work more hours, who are single, have lower levels of education will view teacher experience as less important on the pre-test and more

important on the post-test. As compared to higher income participants, who work less hours, which are married, and have a high education level.

b. Participants with higher income, who work less hours, who are married, have higher levels of education will view teacher experience as more important on the pre-test and the post-test. As compared to lower income participants, who work more hours, which are single, and have a lower education level.

4. Teacher education level

a. Participants with lower income, who work more hours, who are single, and have lower levels of education will view teacher education levels as less important on the pre-test and more important on the post-test. As compared to higher income participants, who work less hours, which are married, and have a high education level.

b. Participants with higher income, who work less hours, who are married, and have higher levels of education will view teacher

education level as more important on the pre-test and on the post-test. As compared to lower income participants, who work more hours, which are single, and have a low education level.

CHAPTER THREE

METHOD

Subjects

This study I recruited prospective parents, parents who do not use childcare, and parents who use childcare. The study consisted of approximately 10 male students and 46 female students. Participants were of different nationalities, since there was no bias towards ethnicity. Twelve students were 18-21 years of age, 14 were ages 22-25, 9 were ages 26-30, 19 were ages 31-40, and 2 were over 40. Thirty-four students had no children, 8 had 1 child, 4 had 2 children, 4 had 3 children, and 5 students had 5 or more children. Thirty-two students were never married, 20 were married, 3 were divorced, and 1 student was a widow. Three participants worked 0 hours per week, 24 participants worked less than 20 hours, 11 worked 20-25 hours, 6 worked 25-30 hours, 7 worked 30-40 hours, and 5 worked 40-50 hours per week. One student had no reported income, 32 had less than $25,000 income, 12 had less than $50,000 income, 3 had less than $75,000 income, and 7 had income greater than $75,000. Seven students had a High School education, 24 had an Associates of Arts, 24 had a Bachelor of Arts, and 1 student had a Masters of Arts

degree. Twenty students had Child Development or ECE classes and 34 had no CD or ECE classes.

Measures

Students were asked to complete a pre-test questionnaire which consisted of 25 questions (see Appendix A). These questions pertained to curriculum, teacher education level, experience, and income. The post-test, which consisted of 37 questions, also asked about curriculum, teacher education level, experience, and income, as well as demographic questions (see Appendix C). These demographic questions considered cost, location, income, parental status, parental education and parental age. These demographic factors are thought to play a considerable role in parental choice of quality or practicality when choosing childcare. For example, parent income can influence childcare choices. Participants might choose a facility that meets their financial needs, and therefore would not be able to consider quality when making their childcare decision. On the pre-test, numbers 1-12 & 15 & 25 were coded on a 5-point scale, and questions number 13, 14, and 16-24 were coded as yes/no (1 = yes, 0 = no). On the post-test questions numbers 26-49, 52, and 55 were coded on a 5 point scale, and

yes/no for question 61. Questions 50-51, 57-60, and 62 were coded using a 1-4 scale. Question 53 was coded using a 0-2 scale, question 54 (1-6), and question 56 (1-2). In addition, once demographic variables were coded they were blocked into high and low demographic categories. This was done by measuring levels of income, education, marital status, and hours worked according to a 1-5 scale. Low demographics were coded with a score of 0. High demographics were coded with a score of 1. Participants who scored 2 or below on income, education, marital status, and hours worked were coded with a 0. Participants who scored 3 or higher on income, education, marital status, and hours worked were coded with a 1.

Procedure

Participants were asked to participate in an early childhood childcare survey. The purpose of the survey was to educate parents about the important factors to consider when choosing childcare. For ethical reasons, participants were not obligated to fill out the Early Childhood Survey. Participants were recruited to answer the pre-test questions (see Appendix A), brochure (see Appendix B) and answer the post-test questions (see Appendix C). Upon completion of the pre-test, participants were given a

brochure to read that educated participants on DAP. After reading the brochure the facilitator handed out the post-test. After completion, the post-test was returned to the facilitator. Appendices A, B, and C are based on content taken from the literature reviewed earlier in this paper.

Pre-test and post-test items were then combined to create composite variables reflective of professional and parent choice factors. Specifically, variables were combined to create Reality 1, Reality 2, Ideal 1 and Ideal 2. Reality variables reflect the sum of participant responses on factors typically touted by parents as important, whereas Ideal factors are a sum of professionally touted variable responses. Ideal 1 and Reality 1 reflect pre-test scores and Ideal 2 and Reality 2 are post-test scores. Ideal 1 was created by combining the following items on the pre-test: sensitive curriculum, play curriculum, academic curriculum (reversal of scale), exploration of the environment, experiment with curriculum, learning materials, ditto sheets (reversal of scale), the importance of education, and the importance of experience (reversal of scale). Ideal 2 combined the same items from the post-test. Ideal 1 and Ideal 2 have a

possible range of 0-65. The range of 0-65 determines the value placed on the importance of DAP curriculum.

Reality 1 and Reality 2 combined the following items from the pre and post-test respectively: fee, location, and time open. Unfortunately, questions related to these variables were not asked in the same way on the pre and post-test. Therefore, variables used to create Reality 1 were dummy coded to match the wording used during the post-test. Specifically, Fee 1 was created by examining questionnaire items 16, 17 and 18. If respondents answered yes to any or all of the above questions they were given a 1 for Fee 1. If they responded with a no to 16, 17, or 18, they were given a 0. Open 1 was created by dummy coding item number 22 in the following way; if respondents answered #1 they were given a 0, if they answered 2, 3, 4, or 5 they were given a 1. Locate 1 was created by combining numbers 23 and 24. If respondents yes to 23 and/or 24 they were given a 1, if they said no to 23 and/or 24 they were given a 0. Fees 1, Open 1, and Locate 1 were then combined to create reality 1. Reality 2 combined Fee 2, Open 2, and Locate 2 (which were all yes/no responses that were automatically coded into 1/0). Both Reality 1 and Reality 2 had a possible range of 0-3. Practical factors such as fee, location, and time open can

be influential when parents choose childcare. Parents tend to choose childcare based on personal factors as opposed to quality factors.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

The means were calculated from available data and used to replace missing values for: income, level of education, number of children, hours worked, marital status, gender, age, CD or ECE classes, prior to analysis. In the absence of all other information, the mean is our best guess about the value of a variable. This procedure is conservative as typically the mean of the distribution as a whole does not change. On the other hand, the variance of the variable is reduced because the mean is closer to itself than to the missing value it replaces, and the correlation the variable has with other variable is reduced because of the reduction in variance. The extent of loss in variance depends on the amount of missing data (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1989). The variables containing missing data were: range of income (2), level of education (1), number of children (1), hours worked (1), marital status (1), gender (1), age (1), and CD or ECE classes (3).

Descriptive Statistics

According to findings Ideal 1 had a mean of 46.50 (possible range 0-65), and a standard deviation of 4.03.

Ideal 2 had a mean of 54.62 (possible range 0-65), and a standard deviation of 4.04. Reality 1 had a mean of 2.73 (possible range 0-3), and a standard deviation of .458. Reality 2 had a mean of 2.69 (possible range 0-3), and a standard deviation of .460 (see Table 1). A difference between the mean of Ideal 1 and Ideal 2 suggests that after participants read the brochure they were more likely to agree with the suggested information about quality childcare. A difference between the mean of Reality 1 and Reality 2 indicates that participants rated practicality as less important after reading the brochure.

Table 1. Means, Ranges, and Standard Deviations

	Mean	Std. Dev.	Possible Range	Actual Range
Ideal 1	46.50	4.03	0-65	36.00-55.00
Ideal 2	54.62	4.04	0-65	39.00-61.00
Reality 1	3.35	.752	0-3	1.00-3.00
Reality 2	2.69	.460	0-3	1.00-3.00

Test of Hypotheses

Four t-tests for independent groups were conducted to compare the difference between the means of two-groups on the same variable. The first set of t-tests compared high and low demographic families on their pre and post-test

scores for both practicality and quality. Variables such as income, education, hours worked and marital status were combined to make high and low demographic groups. Possibilities less than .05 indicate that the null hypothesis should be rejected. In this case, the results for the t-test demonstrated that there were no pre and post-test differences between parents with high and low demographic qualities [Reality 1, t(54) = .1.112, p = .271; Reality 2, t(54) = 1.446, p = .154; Ideal 1, t = (54) = .411; Ideal 2, t(54) = -.526, p = .601] (see Table 2).

Table 2. High and Low Demographics

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Reality 1	1.112	54	.271
Realilty 2	1.446	54	.154
Ideal 1	-.828	54	.411
Ideal 2	-.526	54	.601

Paired samples t-tests were also conducted, which measure scores on the same person across time. There was a significant difference between Time 1 and Time 2 on Ideal scores (t(55) = -16.179, p = .000), but not on Reality scores [t(55) = -.554, p = .582] (see Table 3). Ideal

scores were higher on the post-test than the pre-test. From these results it appears that reading the brochure helps people to rely more on factors professionals deem important, but that for this sample, demographic characteristics did not play a role.

Table 3. Pre and Post-Test Differences

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Reality	.554	55	.582
Ideal	-16.179	55	.000

Additional Analyses

Independent samples t-tests were conducted to assess the impact of gender on pre-test and post-test questionnaire scores for Reality 1, Reality 2, Ideal 1, and Ideal 2. The results of the four t-tests showed that there was no difference on reality scores for men and women on the pre ($t(54) = -1.232$, $p = .223$) and post-test scores ($t(54) = .857$, $p = .395$), but that there was a significant difference between gender on pre and post-test Ideal scores (Pre-test, $t(54) = 2.236$, $p = .030$; Post-test, [$t(54) = 2.506$, $p = .015$] (see Table 4). Women viewed professional factors as more important on both the Ideal pre and post-tests than did men.

Table 4. Gender Differences

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Reality 1	-1.232	54	.223
Reality 2	-.857	54	.395
Ideal 1	-2.236	54	.030
Ideal 2	-1.972	54	.015

Independent samples t-tests were also conducted to measure the influence of Child Development or Early Childhood Education classes taken on pre-test and post-test scores for Reality 1, Reality 2, Ideal 1, and Ideal 2. The results of these four t-tests show that ECE/CD classes taken did not affect participants scores on Reality 1, Reality 2, or Ideal 2 (Reality 1, $t(52) = .106$, $p = .916$; Reality 2, $t(52) = .322$, $p = .749$; Ideal 2, $t(52) = 1.833$, $p = .072$). There was a significant difference though between people with and without ECE/CD classes on the pre-test measure of Ideal1 [Ideal 1, $t(52) = 2.747$, $p = .008$] (see Table 5). People with ECE/CD classes scored higher on the pre-test Ideal measure than those without these classes.

Table 5. Early Childhood Education/Child Development Classes Taken

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Reality 1	.106	52	.916
Reality 2	.322	52	.749
Ideal 1	-2.747	52	.008
Ideal 2	-1.833	52	.072

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

Summary of Results

The primary goal of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of an attempt to educate participants about important factors to consider when choosing childcare. This goal was achieved by investigating the utility of a Early Childhood Childcare Information brochure developed for this study.

According to the results of the first t-test (comparing high and low demographic families on their pre and post-test scores for both practicality and quality), there was no difference between people classified as having high and low demographics (income, education, marital status, & hours worked) on the pre & post-test questionnaire. Based on the earlier review of the literature it was expected that participants with less education, lower SES, hours worked, or marital status would be more likely to be influenced by practical factors when choosing child care (fees, hours, location, & availability). For this sample, demographics did not influence how parents chose childcare. Participants with both low and high demographics were equally likely to use

the same factors when choosing child care. This is due to the fact that the participants were all college students. Despite the fact that the sample included people of low SES, people who were not married, and people who worked many hours, all of the participants had received at least some college education. This fact may have skewed the results and minimized the differences among the participants. Participants that might have answered differently had demographics such as: participants being educated versus non-educated and participants having high or low incomes.

The paired sample t-tests revealed there was a significant difference between Time 1 and Time 2 on ideal scores. Participants rated professional factors as being more important on the post-test than the pre-test. The brochure's purpose was to educate participants of the importance of professional DAP viewpoints. It appears from the results that this goal was met.

In the additional analyses, it appeared that women viewed professional factors as being more important than did men. This could be due to women's knowledge from ECE/CD classes. Proportionally more women (63%) than men (30%) had taken ECE/CD classes. Women's careers require courses in ECE/CD, whereas, men typically choose careers

that are not influenced by ECE/CD courses. From the sample it appears that taking ECE/CD course work is more salient than is gender.

The influence of having ECE/CD classes was measured in Reality 1, Reality 2, Ideal 1, & Ideal 2. According to the results, there was no significant difference between those participants with ECE/CD classes and those without in Reality 1 & 2, and Ideal 2. However, there was a significant difference between participants with knowledge from ECE/CD classes and those without on the pre-test measure of Ideal 1. Participants with ECE/CD scored higher on the pre-test for Ideal 1. Therefore, the importance of the brochure was inconsequential when participants had knowledge from ECE/CD classes. Participants who had ECE/CD courses had knowledge of the importance of DAP curriculum and educated teachers from their course work and there was no need to read the brochure.

The results of this study may be skewed due to the demographics of the participants (CSUSB students) in the study. In the future, restricting our sample to child bearing ages only, parents only, a larger sample size consisting of a larger age spectrum (18-40), less economic constraints (a diverse group outside of CSUSB would allow us broader economic levels), and a broader educational

level (participants with or without a college education or enrolled at a university), may be influential in responses to the questionnaire. A larger age spectrum allows the researcher to incorporate the different levels of life experiences when participants answer the questionnaire. These life experiences may be related to a change in: SES, marital status, having more than one child, different address, and having a college education. There are economic constraints because the majority of the populations in universities are acquiring education to meet career goals and economic goals. These economic constraints impact the level of financial stability. Financial stability impacts the parent choosing quality or a financial practicality because no longer is the parent faced with their economic situation dictating their decisions toward child care. Since the population of our study is enrolled in university courses their views on ECE/CD courses are skewed towards DAP. Sixty-three percent (women) of our participants vs. 30% (men) had taken ECE/CD classes. This is a factor in our study because women are more likely to choose careers that are influenced by these courses, whereas, men typically choose careers where ECE/CD courses are not a requirement.

Future Directions

The results imply that several tasks need to be undertaken in the future. It is recommended that state lawmakers formulate laws which require all child-care centers to incorporate DAP. (Facilitators will be obligated to develop DAP child-care facilities for all children irregardless of economic constraints.)

Future possibilities to educate parents regarding DAP can take many shapes.

a. Parent education regarding DAP. (Since parents will be educated concerning sensitive and responsive interactions which facilitate children's play and guide children's social-emotional development.)

    1. Brochures at time of child birth. Parents at time of child birth receive a care package that consists of some essentials for the home care of the infant. Included in the take home basket is the Early Childhood Childcare Information Brochure.

    2. High school students participating in home economics classes. Included in the course work for home economics is the foundation of DAP for child care centers. High school

students will be taught fundamental coursework in ECE/CD.

3. A college requirement course in ECE/CD. As part of the requirement for graduation, students are required to have four to eight units in ECE/CD course work.
4. Pediatricians & OB doctors having (DAP) brochures available for parents. Early Childhood Childcare Information Brochure is available in the doctor's office to read and take home. Nurses can also encourage parents to take a brochure home to read.
5. Pediatricians encouraging parents to enroll children in DAP centers. As doctors talk to parents about concerns for infant care and child care, they encourage parents to enroll children in DAP centers. Parents again will be encouraged to read Early Childhood Childcare Information Brochure.

Future possibilities need to be addressed so that parents and future parents understand the importance of a child-care center that is DAP. Having key issues addressed in the brochure such as DAP curriculum, and DAP teacher and child interaction will encourage parents views towards

quality care for their child. Hospitals, high schools, colleges and pediatricians can further enlighten parents and future parents to view sensitive and responsive interactions as quality child-care.

The field of early childhood education needs to move to the forefront. Leading early childhood education researchers need to have a voice in popular magazines such as: McCall's, Oprah, Ladies Home Journal, Parents, and Family Circle. ECE/CD research also needs to be addressed in newspaper articles, and newsmagazine shows. Any avenue that researchers can use to benefit the cause for ECE, such as radio and television, need to be further explored.

APPENDIX A

EARLY CHILDHOOD CHILDCARE SURVEY

Early Childhood Childcare Survey

If you are between the ages of 18 - 40, please fill out this questionnaire. Give a response to every item based on your thoughts about childcare. Please DO NOT leave any question unanswered; make a best guess on your assumptions about childcare.

Not Important	somewhat important	average importance	above average importance	very important
1	2	3	4	5

1. How important is a curriculum that encourages sensitive interactions that facilitate children's play and guide children's social-emotional development?

   _____

2. How important is a play based curriculum (a child-centered approach in which children initiate activities and the teachers respond to them)? _____
3. How important is a structured curriculum (academic lessons emphasizing positive reinforcement of correct responses)? _____
4. How important is active exploration of the child's environment? _____
5. How important is it for the child to be able experiment with their environment?

   _____

6. How important is the availability of learning materials for the child? _____
7. How important is to have the child complete and bring home ditto sheets important to you? _____
8. How important is the education level of the teachers to you? _____
9. How important is it for the child's teacher to have an AA degree in child development? _____

10. How important is it for the child's teacher to have a BA in child development?

    _____

11. How important are years of experience working in childcare to you? _____
12. How important is education level to you? _____

Answer the following questions with a Y/N response.

13. Are experience and education equally important to you? _____ Y/N
14. Do you believe that childcare quality impacts children's cognitive and language development? _____Y/N
15. How important is environment/equipment (availability of toys and play materials, amount and organization of space) to you? _____
16. Would you spend 75% of your income on childcare? _____ Y/N
17. Would you spend 50% of your income on childcare? _____ Y/N
18. Would you spend 25% of your income on childcare? _____ Y/N
19. Would you drive 5 miles for childcare? _____ Y/N
20. Would you drive 10 miles for childcare? _____ Y/N
21. Would you drive 15 miles for childcare? _____ Y/N
22. Would you drive 20 miles or more for childcare? _____ Y/N
23. Is childcare close to home to you? _____ Y/N
24. Is childcare close to work important to you? _____ Y/N
25. How important are the hours the childcare facility is open to you? _____

APPENDIX B

EARLY CHILDHOOD CHILDCARE INFORMATION

Early Childhood Childcare Information (in attached Brochure)

Selecting a childcare facility is one of the most important decisions parents make for their child. However, many parents are unaware of the benefits or the negative influences of childcare. There are three important qualities to look for when choosing quality childcare. When choosing childcare, parents should know something about curriculum, teacher education level and experience, and teacher-child interactions.

Curriculum

Things to look for

- Child centered – children initiate activities and the teacher responds to them. Teachers prepare the environment for active learning, remain in touch with what children are thinking, respond to children on their perspective, and help children extend their ideas. The teacher sets up several easels, 1. paint, 2. markers, 3. crayons. The child chooses 1, 2, or 3. The teacher responds to 1, 2, or 3 by asking about their painting and their choice.
- Free choice activities – children choose activities at different centers. Teachers arrange the environment with art, books, cooking, computers, house corner, library corner, music and movement, the outdoors, sand and water, and table toys.
- Cognitive & social enrichment – an interactive process between the child and the environment requiring self-initiation, active exploration, and experimentation. For example, teachers ask open ended questions such as, "What do you think will happen if...?"

Things to avoid

- Dittos – copied work sheets – such as letters, numbers or colors.
- Busy work activities – coloring, tracing, cutting, gluing cutouts, etc.
- Packaged lessons – work sheets such as letter/Aa, color/red, picture/apple, crafts.

Teacher Characteristics

Things to look for

- Post High School Education
- Ongoing training or college degree in Child Development or Early Childhood Education
- Involvement in Early Childhood Education/Child Development Professional organizations

Things to avoid

- Experience with out training
- No training in Child Development/Early Childhood Education

Teacher/child interactions

Things to look for

- Responsivity – responding to child's needs emotionally and physically. For example, when a child is crying for his parent. The teacher responds by reassuring the child that the parent will be back, telling the child she will watch the clock and tell the child as the time gets closer for pick up by parent. The teacher holds the child to comfort him.

- Involvement – observe what happens and raise more questions. Looking at a child's painting and asking, "Can you tell me about your painting?"
- Nurturance – emotionally nurture pride, self-esteem, and self-control. Child has painted a picture and begins to cry because they don't like it. The teacher comforts the child by hugging them and asking questions about why they don't like it. The teacher then reinforces to the child how beautiful it is (ie. colors in the picture, lines in the picture, etc.).

Things to avoid

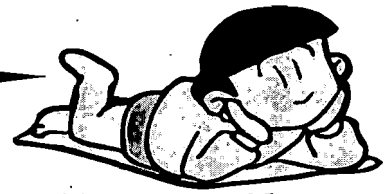
- Harshness – responding to child with inappropriate words or behavior. A child is crying for their parent and the teacher responds by telling the child, "You need to stop crying because only babies cry!"
- Unresponsiveness – not responding to child's emotional or physical needs. A child is crying for their parent and the teacher doesn't try to comfort the child by talking to or holding the child.
- Directiveness – teacher presents activities and children respond to them. In direct instruction, teachers lead small groups of children in precisely planned 20-minute question and answer lessons on language, reading, and mathematics. The teacher is concentrating on children to complete the activity correctly in 20 minutes. Children who take longer or answer incorrectly are frowned upon.

Early Childhood Childcare Information

Developmentally Appropriate Practice

Childcare is one of the most important decisions parent's make for their child. However, many parents are unaware of the benefits or the negative effects of childcare. There are several important qualities to look for when choosing childcare; parents should know something about curriculum, teacher education level, experience, and interaction between provider and parent.

CURRICULU



Things to look for

~Child centered~ children initiate activities and the teacher responds to them. Teachers prepare the environment for active learning, remain in touch with what children are thinking, respond to children on their perspective, and help children extend their ideas. The teacher sets up several easels, 1. paint, 2. markers, 3. crayons. The child chooses 1, 2, or 3. The teacher responds by asking about their painting and their choice.

~ Free choice activities~ children choose activities at different centers. Teachers arrange the environment with art, books, cooking, computers, house corner, library corner, music and movement, the outdoors, sand and water, and table toys.

~ Cognitive & social enrichment~ an interactive process between the child and the environment requiring self-initiation, active exploration, and experimentation. For example, teachers ask open ended questions such as, "What do you think will happen if…?"

Things to avoid

~ Dittos~ copied work sheets - such as letters, numbers or colors.

~Busy work activities— coloring, tracing, cutting, gluing cutouts, etc.

~Packaged lessons ~ work sheets such as letter/Aa. Color/red, picture/apple, crafts.

~Directiveness~ teacher presents activities and children respond to them. The child asks the teacher to paint a picture. Child doesn't want to compete with teachers artistic talent.

Teacher and Child Interaction

Things to look for

~Responsivity~ responding to child's needs emotionally and physically. For example, when a child is crying for his parent. the teacher responds by reassuring the child that the parent will be back, telling the child she will watch the clock and tell the child as the time gets closer for pick up by parent. The teacher holds the child to comfort him.

~ Involvement~ observe what happens and raise more questions. Looking at a child's painting and asking, "Can you tell me about your painting?"

~Nurturance~emotionally nurture pride, self-esteem, and self control. Child has painted a picture and begins to cry because they don't like it. The teacher comforts the child by hugging them and asking questions about why they don't like it. The teacher then reinforces to the child how beautiful it is.

Things to avoid

~Harshness~ responding to child with inappropriate words or behavior. A child is crying for their parent and the teacher responds by telling the child, "You need to stop crying because only babies cry!"

~Unresponsiveness ~ not respond to child's emotional or physical needs. A child is crying for their parent and the teacher doesn't try to comfort the child by talking to or holding the child.

Teacher Characteristic

Things to look for

~Post High School Education

~Ongoing training or college in Child Development or Early Childhood Education

~Involvement in Early Childhood Education/Child Development Professional Organizations

Things to avoid

~Experience with out training

~No training in Child Development/Early Childhood Education

CSUSB

Margarita Espinosa
Social & Behavioral Science Building

APPENDIX C

EARLY CHILDHOOD CHILDCARE SURVEY

Early Childhood Childcare Survey

If you are between the ages of 18 - 25, please fill out this questionnaire. Give a response to every item based on your thoughts about childcare. Please DO NOT leave any question unanswered; make a best guess on your assumptions about childcare.

Not Important	somewhat important	average importance	above average importance	very important
1	2	3	4	5

26. How important is a curriculum that encourages sensitive interactions that facilitate children's play and guide children's social-emotional development?

    _____

27. How important is a play based curriculum (a child-centered approach in which children initiate activities and the teachers respond to them)? _____
28. How important is a structured curriculum (academic lessons emphasizing positive reinforcement of correct responses)? _____
29. How important is active exploration of the child's environment? _____
30. How important is it for the child to be able experiment with their environment?

    _____

31. How important is the availability of learning materials for the child? _____
32. How important is it to have the child complete and bring home ditto sheets?

    _____

33. How important is the education level of the teachers to you? _____
34. How important is the child's teacher having an AA degree in child development to you? _____

35. How important is it for the child's teacher to have a BA in child development?

_____

36. How important are years of experience working in childcare to you? _____
37. Are experience and education equally important to you? _____
38. Do you believe that childcare quality impacts children's cognitive and language development? _____
39. How important is environment/equipment (availability of toys and play materials, amount and organization of space) to you? _____
40. Is the fee an important factor to you? _____
41. Why? _____
42. Is location important to you? _____
43. Why? _____
44. Near home important? _____
45. Why? _____
46. Near work important? _____
47. Why? _____
48. Are the hours the childcare facility is open important? _____
49. Why? _____
50. Is your income: _____ < $25,000 _____ < $50,00 _____ < $75,00 or >_____
51. What is your education level? ____High School; ____AA; ____ BA; ____ MA
52. Number of children: _____0; _____1; _____2; _____3; _____4; _____>
53. Marital Status: _____ never married; _____ married; _____ divorced

54. Hours worked; _____<20 hours per week; _____ 20 –25; _____25-30; _____30-40; _____ 40-50; _____ >50

55. Distance from home to work: _____ 5 –10 miles; _____10 – 20 miles; _____ 20 - 30 miles; _____ 30 – 40 miles; _____ >40 miles

56. Are you male _____ or female? _____

57. Age 18-21. _____

58. Age 22-25. _____

59. Age 26-30. _____

60. Age 31-40. _____

61. Have you taken Child Development or Early Childhood Development classes? Y/N

62. If you had to choose a childcare facility, what factors would be most important to you? _____

_____

REFERENCES

Arnett, J. (1989). Caregivers in day-care centers: Does training matter? *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 10,* 541-552.

Berk, L. E. (1985). Relationship of caregiver education to child-oriented attitudes, job satisfaction, and behaviors toward children. *Child Care Quarterly, 14,* 103-129.

Burchinal, M. R., Roberts, J. E., Riggins, R., Zeisel, S. A., Neebe, E., & Bryant. S. A. (2000). Relating quality of center-based child care to early cognitive and language development longitudinally. *Child Development, 71,* 339-357.

Burts, D. C., Hart, C. H., Fleege, P. O., Mosely, J., & Thomasson, R. H. (1992). Observed activities and stress behaviors of children in developmentally appropriate and inappropriate kindergarten classrooms. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 7,* 297-318.

Curtis, C. M. (1997). Factors influencing parents' perceptions of child care services. *Journal of Black Studies, 27,* 768-783.

Caruso, D. A., Dunn, L., & File, N. (1992). Cognitive curriculum practices in preschool programs: Implications for teacher preparation. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education,* 7, 27-36.

De Kruif, R. E. L., McWilliam, R. A., Ridley, S. M., & Wakely, M. B. (2000). classification of teachers' interaction behaviors in early childhood classrooms. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 15,* 247-268.

Dodge, D. T. (1995). The importance of curriculum in achieving quality child day care programs. *Child Welfare, 74,* 1171-1189.

Fong, G. F., Yuan, S. C. W. Yuen, S., & Caulfield, R. (2003, April). *An examination of child care choices by families receiving child care subsidies.* University Of Hawaii. Presented at the Biennial Meeting of SRCD, Tampa, FL.

Fowell, N., & Lawton, J. (1992). An alternative view of appropriate practice in early childhood education. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly,* 7, 53-73.

Harms, T., & Clifford,R. (1980). *Early childhood environmental rating scale.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Honig, A. S., Hirallal, A. (1997). Which counts more for excellence in child-care staff - years in service, education level or ECE coursework? Unpublished manuscript, Syracuse University. Syracuse, NY.

Howes, C. (1983). Caregiver behavior in center and family day care. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 4*, 99-107.

Howes, C., Phillips, D. A., & Whitebook, M. (1992). Teacher characteristics and effective teaching in child care: Findings from the national child care staffing study. *Child & Youth Care Forum, 21*, 339-414.

Lunenburg, F. C. (2000). Early childhood education programs can make a difference in academic, economic, and social arenas. *Education, 120*, 519-529.

Miller, L. B., & Bizzel, R. P. (1983). Long-term effects of four preschool programs: Sixth, seventh, & eighth grades. *Child Development, 54*, 727-741.

Paulsell, D., & Nogales, R. (2003). Parent perspectives. *Journal of Zero to Three, 23*(4), 32-35.

Peyton, V., Jacobs, A., O'Brian, M., & Roy, C. (2001). Reasons for choosing Child care: associations with family factors, quality, and satisfaction. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 16*, 191-208.

Rhodes, S., & Hennessy, E. (2000). The effects of specialized training on caregivers and children in early-years settings: An evaluation of the foundation course in playgroup practice. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 15,* 559-576.

Schweinhart, L., & Weikart, D. P. (1998). Why curriculum matters in early childhood education. *Educational Leadership, 55,* 57-61.

Singer, J. D., Fuller, B., Keiley, M. K., & Wolf, A. (1998). Early child-care selection: variation by geographic location, maternal characteristics, and family structure. *Developmental Psychology, 34,* 1129-1144.

Snider, M. H., & Fu, V. R. (1990). The effects of specialized education and job experience on early childhood teachers' knowledge of developmentally appropriate practice. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 5,* 69-78.

Stipek, D., Feiler, R., Daniels, D., & Milburn, S. (1995). Effects of Different Instructional Approaches on Young Children's Achievement and Motivation. *Child Development, 66,* 209-223.

Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (1989). Using multivariate statistics (2nd ed.). New York: Harper Collins.

Van Ijzendoorn, M. H., & Tavecchio, L. W. C. (1998). Quality of center day care and attunement between parents and caregivers: center day care in. *Journal of Genetic Psychology, 159*, 437-455.