Investigating Leadership Styles of Childcare Directors

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INVESTIGATING LEADERSHIP STYLES OF CHILDCARE DIRECTORS

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in

The School of Education

by

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to contribute to the literature on childcare director’s leadership styles and director’s self-perception. For leaders in childcare to be effective they must possess skills, characteristics, and traits of effective leadership which have been identified in the seminal literature of Bass (1995) and Burns (1979). This quantitative study examined early childhood leaders self-identification with the leadership styles in *The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)* (Bass & Avolio, 1995) as well as other demographic variables which could contribute to early childhood leaders’ self-perception of leadership styles. This study was to break apart the three overarching leadership styles from the *MLQ* which include *transformational*, *transactional*, and *passive/avoidant*, to support leaders in childcare to develop their leadership skills to more closely align with characteristics associated with transformational leadership.
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Significance of Study

Early childhood education revolves around the developmentally appropriate practice guidelines (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009) which are in line with current knowledge about the brain, in that the effects of one’s experience and environment affect the growth of the brain and the “neuronal network during the early years of life…influencing the efficiency and nature of learning throughout life” (p. 2). It is crucial to understand, comprehend, and advocate for high quality programming for young children as the brain develops rapidly and “the most rapid synaptic growth is between birth and 6 years” (p. 23) making education at this developmental stage important. Early childhood education is attracting considerable interest due to the evolving research focused on brain development and the effects of early education on child development (Bergen & Woodin, 2017; Bergen & Coscia, 2001; Zadina, 2014; Zull, 2011). The high-quality care, or lack of, that children receive, ultimately affects their brain development. How can we improve these situations? It begins with leadership

When developing professional leadership competencies for the field, the definition of leadership should include not only administrative roles in center-based programs but also those roles filled by infrastructure staff… child development and pedagogy for teaching young children, ECE systems, adult learning, organizational development, and advocacy (Whitebook, Kipinis, Sakai, & Austin, 2012, p. 9).

In the next few years, it is likely we will see a rise in urgency for childcare centers to be rated as having high qualified directors and teachers as the push for early childhood is a hot topic in legislature. The research surrounding early childhood leadership is lacking as most leadership studies focus on K-12 leadership. The aim of this study is to contribute to the literature about early childhood leadership styles and the director’s self-perception.
**Purpose**

In 2014 Louisiana lawmakers passed ACT 868, moving childcare licensing from the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) to unify the early childhood systems and K-12 education. However, ACT 868 did not address leadership credentials, qualifications, or “leadership development opportunities” (Douglass, 2018, para.2), which is a key concern for early care directors who acknowledge having received no training prior to assuming a leadership role (Bloom, 1997; Douglass, 2018; Muijs, Aubrey, Harris, & Briggs, 2004). For leaders in early care to be effective, the skills, characteristics, and traits of effective leaders must be identified in order to outline educational requirements and create leadership opportunities to support leaders in early childcare.

**Louisiana Administrative Pathway**

The path for a K-12 administrator is very clearly defined. To be an administrator in the public-school system requires a master’s degree, state certification, five or more years of classroom teaching at elementary school level, minimum of 27 semester hours of graduate credit. Within the 27 semester hours, 3 semesters in each of the following courses: theory of educational administration, school principalship, supervision of instruction, educational research, history/philosophy of education, school curriculum, school law, school finance, school personnel administration; 3 semester hours in one of the following courses: school facilities, school community relations, and program development and evaluation; passing the Praxis II School Leaders Licensure Assessment. In recognition of the importance of ongoing professional development, new principals are required to participate in a two-year Principal Internship Program once hired (Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2006).
The LDOE Bulletin 137 has a brief listing of documentation and qualifications a director should have. The *Louisiana Early Learning Site Regulations* mandates that each center have a director “who is responsible for planning, managing and controlling the center’s daily activities as well as responding to parental concerns and ensuring that minimum licensing requirements are met” (p.19). The minimum qualifications as are stated and outlined by the state is that the director be at least 21 years old and meet one of the following requirements: (a) a bachelor's degree and 12 credit hours of child development or education, (b) an associate of arts degree in child development or closely related area, (c) a national administrator credential, (d) a child development associate credential (CDA), (e) a diploma from a post-secondary technical early childhood education training program approved by the Board of Regents or correspondence course approved by the Licensing Division, (f) three years of experience as a director or staff in a licensed early learning center. All the above-mentioned qualifications (a-f) can be in a comparable setting, subject to approval by the Licensing Division. They must all include at least one-year experience in a licensed early learning center and depending on the requirement the individual has met, will need a certain amount of professional development (clock hours) in child development (*Child Care Licensing Information*, n.d.).

**Conceptual Framework**

The aim of this study is to broaden the current knowledge of early care leadership styles and director’s self-perception of their styles. Torquati, Raikes, and Huddleston-Casas (2007) found that “motivation was a robust predictor of intention to stay in the childcare profession” (p. 273). The conceptual framework for the present study considers the Herzberg two-factor theory (*Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959*), Self-Determination Theory (*Ryan & Deci, 2000*), and Self Perception Theory (*Bem, 1972*). The Herzberg will explain the relationship between
childcare directors and teachers. The Self-Determination Theory will explain the motivational factors related to early care professionals, and Self-Perception will explain the director's ability to determine their own abilities.

The Herzberg Theory is a model of job satisfaction and motivation that can be referred to as motivation verses hygiene (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959) The Self-Determination Theory “speaks to the conditions that promote the assimilation of both information and behavior regulations” (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 76). All the theories will be considered to examine the relationship between leadership style and self-perception, hence the Self-Perception Theory.

The Herzberg Theory is applicable to this study as previous research has found that leadership styles affect staff job satisfaction and motivation (Allen, 2018; Boru, 2018; Miscenko, Guenter, & Day, 2017; Coleman, Sharp, & Handscomb, 2015; Parsons, Reid, & Crow, 2003; Torquati, Raikes, and Huddleston-Casas, 2007). The seminal research supporting this theory examines the questions of “What do people want from their jobs?” (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959, p. 113). The study found that when people were happy it was related to tasks in their jobs that led to professional growth “motivators” or “satisfiers” and unhappiness was related to the work conditions such as unhealthy work environments, the “hygiene” or “dissatisfiers”. Improvement of the work environment improves the hygiene surrounding the job, and this includes the leadership and employer motivation. The motivators within the early childcare setting can include pride of one's work, appreciation from others, pay, security and benefits (Gall, Beins, & Feldman, 1996).

The Self-Determination Theory is applicable in this study as motivation resonates with the human need of competence, relatedness, and autonomy. These concepts “appear to be essential for facilitating optimal functioning of the natural propensities for growth and
integration” (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 68) while understanding the three outcomes of amotivation, intrinsic motivation, and extrinsic motivation within this theory. Similarly, Boru (2018) conducted a qualitative study to examine motivation and identified two themes (1) internal motivation and (2) external motivation. These themes suggested that highly motivated people generally are more productive and want to succeed as “their physiological and psychological needs can be motivation source for people” (p. 763) and the study noted principals’ fairness and ability to communicate produced “positive communication on teacher motivation” (p. 772).

Self-Perception Theory can be used as a framework for the present study as directors “know their own attitudes, emotions, and other internal states partially by inferring them from observation of their own overt behaviors and/or the circumstances in which the behaviors occur” (Bem, 1972, p. 2). In this study directors were asked to assess their personal leadership behaviors in order to determine which leadership style most represented their leadership (Herman, Zanna, & Olson, 1987).

Definitions

This section defines the broad terms found in this study to provide the reader with a reference to their unique meaning related to leadership. Transformational leaders are those who are focused on problem solving and collaboration with others to improve the organizational performance (Hallinger, 1992) and “broaden and elevate the interest of their employees… generate awareness and acceptance of the purposes and mission of group...” (Bass, 1995, p. 21). Transactional leaders “contracts exchange of rewards for efforts, promises rewords for good performances…takes corrective action.” (Bass, 1995, p. 22). Passive/Avoidant leaders “avoid specifying agreements, clarifying expectations, and providing goals and standards to be achieved by followers.” (Avolio, Bass, & Zhu, 2004, p. 106).
Research Questions

In order to investigate the overarching questions about leadership styles and the director’s self-perception the following questions will be investigated:

1. What leadership styles do early childhood leaders self-identify with? (*MLQ 5X Short self-form*)

2. What other demographic variables contribute to early childhood leaders’ self-perception of leadership styles? (*demographics & MLQ 5X Short self-form*)
CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In a review of the literature on the topic of leadership the findings are that this is a complex topic which has been studied across many disciplines producing many diverse definitions, approaches, and theories. Beginning with the seminal works of James MacGregor Burns who explored leadership as “one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth” (1979, p.2) with leadership being “ the reciprocal process of mobilizing, by persons with certain motives and values… in order to realize goals independently or mutually held by both leaders and followers.” (p. 425). Burns wrote about leadership from many different perspectives including structure and power, types of leadership, social sources, and moral leadership during his career (Burns, 1979). A more recent seminal researcher, Bernard Bass (1995) wrote “There are almost as many different definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept” (Bass, 1995, p.11). That being said, through the recent advancement of researchers such as Bass and Burns there is a vast amount of cutting-edge insight and knowledge pertaining to such questions that will be examined further here as to what makes a good leader, productivity of leaders, differences in leader and manager, and the evolving definition of leadership.

More recently Peter Northouse, a professor of communication at Western Michigan University (2016), highlights two overarching definitions of leadership. The first being research based to say, “trait or a behavior…information-processing perspective or relational standpoint.” (p.1) and the second, in layman’s terms “Leadership is a process whereby an individual influence a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.” (p. 6). These definitions revolve around human connections and communication which is likeminded with the seminal work of Burns in that “the effectiveness of leaders must be judged not by their press clippings but by actual social
change measured by intent and by the satisfaction of human needs and expectations.” (1979, p.3). Communication and relatability to other humans is a key to quality leaders, as leaders must form relationships through communication efforts so as to get to know and understand their team members for the benefit of the group.

Bret Bogenschenider (2016), like Burns, views leadership as a science, being that leaders can be observed in every profession as leaders leads to productivity, hence “Leadership science refers to the general study of causation of leadership behaviors and results” (p. 34). In a recent review of literature, Bogenschenider provides a general theory of the epistemology of leaderships which is broken into four propositions a.) object person, b.) subject group, c.) project, d.) adversity. “An object person causes the subject group to proceed with a project despite adversity with decisive effect” (Bogenschenider, 2016, p.28). To explain this in real time, he plugged in Steve Jobs’ leadership with the hypothesis “Steve Job [object person] caused the Employees of Apple [subject group] to proceed with the I-Phone [project] despite Supply-Chain Problems with Decisive Effect [adversity].” (Bogenschenider, 2016, p. 29). Hence if there is no object person to promote and empower the subjects to produce or create a product how will products be produced, and the cycle continue. Yes, there are hundreds of definitions pertaining to leader or leadership however:

leaders including followers to act for certain goals that represent the values and motivations-the wants and needs, the aspirations and expectations- of both leaders and followers. And the genius of leadership lies in the manner in which leaders see and act on their own and their followers’ values and motivations (Burns, 1979, p. 19)

These are theories, traits, behaviors and skills that make up a leader, but, ultimately, successful leaders influence people to achieve a common goal even when there is difficulty.
Leadership Theories and Styles

Implicit leadership theories are conceptualized as everyday images of what leaders are like including traits, skills, and behaviors. In the literature there are many ways to explain the reasons people become leaders and how they excel (Charry, 2012). Some researchers have found that leadership falls under one of three categories “leadership as process or relationship, leaderships as combination of traits or personality characteristics, or leadership as certain behaviors [skills]” (Amanchukwu, Stanley & Ololube, 2015, p. 7). Many researchers note that effective leaders generally possess knowledge and understanding of one’s inborn traits and skills which define a person such as “intelligence, alertness, insight, responsibility, initiative, persistence, self-confidence and sociability” (Northouse, 2016, p. 20). This is not to say that later in life, one cannot cultivate certain traits, it just may be more difficult than someone who has inborn traits. The inborn traits possessed by a leader can be further developed and molded through education and lived experiences. For example, if throughout one’s childhood, education and experiences, one's inborn traits further develop “intelligence, alertness, insight, responsibility, persistence, self-confidence and sociability” (Northouse, 2016, p. 20). This person is more likely to be a leader, than someone who is hasty, surrendering, unsociable, and irresponsible. Now, this is not saying one cannot work hard to develop other traits and learn skills to be a leader, it just may be more challenging than someone who has innate traits.

In general, skills that one possesses are learned beginning at birth through cognitive, physical, and emotional development which filters through different areas of the brain. As skills develop throughout life, certain administrative leadership skills may emerge including technical, human, and conceptual (Northouse, 2016). These three skills are explained as **technical** which refer to one’s knowledge about a specific area or activity, **human** being the knowledge of
working with people and conceptual meaning one is creative, insightful or possesses vision for generating an idea. Each of these three administrative skills can be more pronounced in different people, depending on the level of effectiveness. For example, someone who has strong conceptual and human skills, but lower technical skills will generally thrive in a top leadership position and surround themselves with people who possess as technical skills. A person with low conceptual skills and high technical and human skills will thrive in a low-level supervisory leadership position as a strong leader must have a vision to be successful in leading a team. While skills are developed to accomplish a task, they work in conjunction with one’s personal traits to benefit the whole leader, allowing for effective leadership to emerge prompting skills and traits to work together for the benefit of leaders.

Charry (2012) provides an explanation of leadership theories relative to eight different types/styles that have unfolded in the literature over the years. They include a) “Great Man”, b) trait, c) contingency, d) situational, e) behavioral, f) participative, g) transactional/management, and h) relationship/ transformational. “Great Man” refers to those who are born leaders or the mindset that leadership is believed to be inherent (Amanchukwu, Stanley & Ololube, 2015). This is the same as saying when there is a need for a leader one will emerge.

Leaders who tend to utilize their specific personality or behavior such as initiative, creativity, or self-confidence (Charry, 2012) align with the trait theory. Contingency leadership is situational and looks different depending on “the right balance between behaviors, needs, and context” (Charry, 2012, para.11). For example, leadership in a chemical plant is contingent on production and safety, verses leadership of a lawn company is contingent on customer satisfaction and safety. Situational theory is based on being able to judge which leadership style is needed based on the situation and behavioral leadership is a learned role that can be geared
towards task (facilitating accomplishing goal) or relationship behaviors (Northouse, 2016). 

Management/transactional is the theory where organization, supervision and productivity of the group is the focus. These leaders are primarily called managers.

For leaders who want to empower the participative or relational/transformational theories would be the model. Participative leaders allow others to interject allowing for empowerment of the group members. Relational/transformational provides “individualized support, shared goals, vision, intellectual stimulation, culture building, rewards, high expectations, and modeling” (Hallinger, 2003, p. 335) where leaders and followers, are motivated, inspired and valued as the primary focus is on the process of achieving positive outcomes (Bush & Glover, 2014).

Other research suggests the most common styles are autocratic, laissez-faire, bureaucratic, charismatic, and transactional (Amanchukwu, Stanley, & Ololube, 2015). To understand the differences in these styles, autocratic demands the most authority which is sometimes referred to as dictator. This style of leader focuses on themselves and has complete and utmost control over their staff or team. On the other end of the spectrum is the laissez-fair or delegative leaders who grant full autonomy to their staff. This leader is hands off and allows the staff to make decisions. Now there are some styles which fall in between autocratic and laissez-faire, such as the bureaucratic leader who is focused on following strict rules, policies, or procedures necessary for safety purposes. This type of leader is needed in situations where high levels of safety or security are necessary such as banks or chemical plants. Another middle of the road leader is referred to as charismatic. A charismatic leader uses their personal abilities to empower, persuade, and motivate their staff or team in specific ways that are specific for their
shared vision. Transactional leaders motivate their followers with rewards if the followers satisfy an agreed upon condition.

The literature is clear that transformational leadership works the best and has a “positive impact on work performance” (Rusliza & Fawzy, 2016, p.206) and gains commitment from the followers. Avolio and Bass created the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire to evaluate the full range leadership theory. This instrument has been found to be valid and reliable at measuring “the full-range theory of leadership” (Antonakis, Avolio, & Sivasubramaniam, 2003). This instrument assesses leadership styles and outcomes.

**Leadership Development**

Developing leaders looks different in every person and profession. Some people are born with traits, some develop skills, and some gravitate towards certain careers which require different styles. No matter the reason, leadership “exists to profoundly connect us to each other in achieving those true narratives that promote the common good by building morally healthy and sustainable local and global communities for the benefit of humanity” (Caulfield, 2013, p. 279). In recent work, researchers have found a multi-domain approach to leadership development that connects one's past experiences to current identity as:

*A whole-person leader is one who incorporates leadership knowledge, skills, and abilities across domains into a behavioral repertoire that can be adapted to varying challenges, allowing the leader to be effective in any domain. A multidomain approach to leader development can help to explain how a leader can use roles outside of work to enrich his or her leadership* (Vogelgesang Lester, Palanski, Hammond, & Clapp-Smith, 2017, p.134).

In a recent study that interviewed black women principals (Lomotey & Lowery, 2014) they found that the women’s leadership role at school outstretched into the community, in that they were committed to social activism and spiritual epistemology. The study found that the role the
women played in the community, “enhances the ability of these leaders to be transformative; their spirituality motivates their actions” (p. 337).

Different research has examined similar questions such as “Am I a leader?” (Miscenko, Guenter, & Day, 2017), “who am I as a leader?” and “what does effective leadership look like for me?” (Clapp-Smith et.al., 2019, p.11). These questions contend that to deepen awareness of leadership identity within a multidomain approach, one should reflect on the above-mentioned questions across multiple domains (e.g. work, community, friends and family). Researchers have identified four components of the multi-domain leadership identity including a) meaning b. strength, c) integration, and d) level (Clapp-Smith, Hammond, Vogelgesang Lester, & Palanski, 2019; Hammond, Clapp-Smith, & Palanski, 2017; Miscenko, Guenter, & Day, 2017; Schyns, Kiefer, Kerschreiter, & Tymon, 2011; Vogelgesang Lester, et. al., 2017). *Meaning* has been identified as looking at one’s identity in relations to implicit leadership theories. This includes individual experiences that have constructed one’s traits and competences as a leader (Clapp-Smith, Hammond, Vogelgesang Lester, & Palanski, 2019; Epitropaki, Sy, Martin, Tram-Quon, & Topakas, 2013). *Strength* refers to how one views themselves and *level* has different identities including personal (traits that makes one different from others), relational (relationships with others) and collective (group membership). *Integration* may intermingle across work, community, family and friends. In the 2014 study conducted by Lomotey and Lowery the black women principals integrated their community, work and spirituality to promote social activism and spiritual epistemology. In 2017, Miscenko, et.al, looked at leaders who examined their identity, which allowed for positive strengthening and awareness of one’s own identity as a leader, leading to increased motivation and support.
Researchers Schyns, Kiefer, Kerschreiter, and Tymon (2011) studied leadership as it relates to social awareness and employed a broad definition for social awareness in that leaders and followers should be aware of those around them to the extent that everyone might not have the same images of leadership. This involves intrapersonal competences, social and self-awareness, which are important components of leadership affecting how one can adjust to various social contexts. This study combined drawing exercises where leaders applied personal knowledge, cognition, about the implicit leadership theory they were operating under. The study found that after applying cognition, through drawing exercise, motivation emerged to develops a “deeper understanding of the context of leadership” (p. 405). Then through discussions and motivation, leaders were motivated to adapt their behavior to the context which they operated under, resulting with new behaviors allowing for growth of one’s leadership skills.

**Leadership verses Management**

Stephen Covey, a renowned leadership authority, explains the differences between leadership and management in that “management is efficiency in climbing the ladder of success; leadership determines whether the ladder is leaning against the right wall”. Other research explains that leadership and management have many of the same qualities including the ability to work with people, influence others, and accomplishing goals (Northouse, 2016; Tobin, 2014). Both roles are vital for an organization; management without leadership has been characterized as “stifling and bureaucratic [while leadership without] management can be meaningless or change for the sake of change” (Northouse, 2016, p. 13).

The main differences are that management is focused on reducing chaos, allowing for stability in day to day organizations, accomplishing activities, mastering routines, and getting the daily job done efficiently and effectively (Northouse, 2016; Tobin, 2014; Stein, 2016). The
managers tend to rely on someone in an authority role to guide them, whereas leaders influence. Leaders focus on influencing the vision of the future, producing change, and achieving goals, to “establish direction, align people, [and] motivate and inspire[e]” (Northouse, 2016, p.14), while mangers keep everyone “on task”.

As stated earlier, Bogenschneider’s research (2016) raised the discussion of leadership verses management by applying the four propositions in that the leader is the “object person” which is part of the “subject group”. Hence managers are typically separate from the “group” and not available to communicate with employees about problems, concerns or producing change, rather managers are concerned with maintaining order and productivity. Effective leaders not only focus on the qualities one possesses, but the ability to surround oneself with those who possess content knowledge, skills, and traits they are lacking. “To manage means to accomplish activities and master routines, whereas to lead means to influence others and create a vision for change” (Northouse, 2016, p.14).

**Early Childhood Systems Within Education**

Education is a highly debated topic in the United States legislature for years. Early Childhood Education (ECE) specifically at the local level, has been an agenda item with the local legislation as the problem of closing the gap between early childhood education and formal (K-12) education (The Guardian, 2014) persists. Historically, limited research and importance have been placed on early childhood leadership (Berger, 2015; Goffin & Janke, 2013). The role of principal and director, both are positions of leading however, directors of early care seem to not have as many people surrounding them for support.

In the seminal work of Harry Wolcott, *The Man in the Principals Office* (1973), many of the same elements and relational networks present for educational leaders in the 1970’s are still
present today, but with added elements. In Wolcott’s ethnographic piece the principal still had to contend with the daily administrative task of managing the budget, achieving school wide goals, motivating teachers, children, parents, and the community, but there were no standards or high stakes for administrator to contend with. Standards and high stakes have placed more pressure on administrators, principals, and early care leaders to conduct more teacher observations and evaluations which is added stress to the job. If administrators, principals, and childcare leaders are qualified and prepared for these stressors, the task is more manageable if there is support.

Principals tend to have more people around them such as clerk, secretary, dean of students, instructional support staff, and/or assistant principal. Directors are usually the person running the entire program, cooking the food, training the teachers, paying the bills, and sometimes teaching classes.

**Early Childhood Leadership Development**

The problem many early care leaders encounter is they do not see themselves in the role of leader. This is likely due to the path taken to directorship. Many directors did not set out to be directors; they were identified because they were good teachers (Bloom, 1997; Talan, Bloom, & Kelton, 2014). Bloom refers to this as the “improvisation”, citing Bateson (1989) who defined the improvisational path as being one where the individual discovers who they are “along the way, rather than pursuing a vision…” (p. 1). This notation of the improvisational director is echoing in the research conducted at the McCormick Center (2003) which found that 90% of directors surveyed were former teachers with only 27% reported being prepared for leadership (Bloom, 1997; Bloom, Jackson, Talan, & Kelton, 2013; Talan, Bloom, & Kelton, 2014). These numbers are dated, but due to the lack of research in this area we can only speculate that this reality mirrors the current situation. The McCormick Center developed a commitment to provide
leadership and management skills that would allow early care leaders to “take charge of change”. This program views early care leaders as having the ability to “envision goals, affirm values, motivate staff, achieve unity of purpose, and foster norms of continuous improvement” (p. 5).

Early care leaders remain in the role of teacher or manager, which hinders educational quality that is linked to the leadership and the importance of development in the early years (Ang, 2012; Coleman, Sharp, & Handscomb, 2015; Muijs, Aubrey, Harris, & Briggs, 2004; Siraj-Blatchford & Manni, 2008). These leaders need to transition their mindset from the role of teacher/manager to one of leadership where change can be developed. Once change is developed and directors have more of a leadership mindset maybe the 30% staff turnover rate will decrease (NAEYC, 2004). In another study (Rodd, 1997) the leaders spent their time on a variety of maintenance task including: managing and supervising staff (34%), contact with parents and professionals (22%), staff support and development (16%), managing the budget (11%) and coordinating role (11%) (Muijs, Aubrey, Harris & Briggs, 2004). Shifting mindset to constructing change, means utilizing not only their working knowledge of child development and moral purpose, but also their personal traits and skills (Bloom, 2000; Northouse, 2016).

The need and demand for “effective leadership and appropriate training….is an increasingly important element in providing high-quality provision for the early years” (Siraj-Blatchford & Manni, 2008, p. 290). Research has found that high performing leaders in early care must be business minded, data driven, lifelong learners, all while having a clear vision to motivate, communicate and empower their staff (Coleman, Sharp, & Handscomb, 2015). These leaders must also create collaborative partnership within the community and promote family engagement. Effective leadership does not only focus on the qualities one possesses, but the ability to surround oneself with those who possess skills and traits they are lacking. The fact that
there is an absence of programs supporting leadership for the early care profession, how do we increase the leadership preparation for early childhood facilities since the push down is affecting directors, in that their centers and local schools are rated based on the teachers’ performances?

Building Leadership for Early Childhood Directors

Research suggest that “directors with greater levels of administrative training report significant gains in their level of competence and staff who work at these programs perceive the work environment to be more positive and productive” (Talan, Bloom, & Kelton, 2014, p. 2). The McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership designed a model to build professional learning communities called Taking Charge of Change (TCC). TCC incorporated small group experiences, large group discussions, presentations, discussions, and role playing as a platform for professional learning. The results from over two decades of trainings affirms that directors were empowered and left with an increased leadership practice that improved their programs. To elaborate upon that research, Coleman, Sharp, and Handscomb (2015) find that high performing leaders in early care must be business minded, data driven, lifelong learners, all while having a clear vision to motivate, communicate and empower their staff. These leaders must also create collaborative partnership within the community and promote family engagement. If programs as the two previously mentioned were incorporated to build a career ladder specific for content on “leadership history, theory and practice” (Hard & Jonsdottir, 2013, p.322), leaders would have a clearly defined working knowledge of leadership vs management.

Northwestern State University administers Louisiana Pathways (Pathways) Early Learning Center Career Development System (https://pathways.nsula.edu/lp-1-trainer-orientation/) . Pathways is approved by the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) to provide support for the early care profession but is not mandated. Hence,
the Louisiana Pathways track is a **starting point** for improving the quality of childcare in Louisiana.

Pathways offers scholarships and a variety of career ladders including classroom teachers, administrators, and family care. Regarding administration, Pathways offers five different tiers that include minimum educational and professional development requirements. The bottom tier, Director 1, where the minimum requirements is a Child Development Associate credential (CDA), Early Childhood diploma, or Early Childhood Education Ancillary certificate & 30 clock hours in approve administrative trained categories. As one moves up the tiers of director positions, Director 4 is the highest tier with the requirements being a master’s in Early Childhood, Child Development, or Early Childhood Administration and Administrator Certificate or master’s with 8 college courses in Early Childhood development and administrative certificate. The gaps and standards need to be elevated and mandated to promote high quality leadership and professionalism within the early childhood field.

**Higher Standards for Early Childhood Directors**

While Administrative Credential appears to cover content necessary to manage a childcare center, it appears that a missing component is leadership professional development. While a leader cannot be effective if they are not equipped to manage the day-to-day operation of the center, managing is not the same as a leading. There is recognition in the field that leadership in early childhood has been under researched (Wise & Wright, 2012). Rodd (2006) notes that both management and leadership are needed in early childhood programs, but there is a difference between the two. Rodd defines management as tending to daily operation of the program, while maintaining the existing condition. Leadership is forward thinking and is concerned with improvement of the organization through vision and philosophy (Rodd, 2006). It
may be said then that management focuses on maintenance and leadership on development of a vision.

There have been some strides to address the need for increased opportunities for administrators in early childhood programs. However, although there are requirements in place for entry-level qualifications, there is nothing promoting increased standards on credential career pathways for different levels of the director rankings which would promote strong leadership. Research suggest that the recognition of the need for ongoing professional development in leadership makes leadership “visible and valued” and helps the leader “dealing with the complexity of change” (Coleman, Sharp & Handscomb, 2015, p.781).

**Shared Leadership**

If administration can actively combine the two leadership methods, transformational and instructional, the outcome creates harmony between pedagogy and student achievement (Marks & Printy, 2003). Administrators began as teachers, so why not capitalize on their teacher’s knowledge, by collaborating with the teachers on curriculum, instruction and assessment to create shared professional instructional leadership. Instructional leadership is also defined by researchers as “pedagogic leadership, curriculum leadership, and leadership for learning” (Bush & Glover, 2014, p. 556), hence the what and instructional leadership must be present for shared leadership to develop. Instructional is focusing on what is taking place. The schools that scored low on transformational and shared instructional were either transitioning a principal, had no principal or an ineffective principal. The principals at the schools that only possessed a strength in transformational leadership were primarily focused on things other than instruction. Whereas, the principals with strong shared instructional leadership had empowered teachers into leadership roles and were partners in providing high quality learning for the students and families.
Conclusion

Leadership in education includes supervising to “cultivating a growth mindset, implementing a dialogic pedagogy, and devoting attention to the construction of teacher identity” (Allen, 2018, p.247). Effective leadership does not only focus on the qualities one possesses, but the ability to surround oneself with those who possess skills and traits they are lacking. In order for leaders in early care to be effective with the outlined educational requirements and leadership opportunities, research is still needed in this area with regards to early care leadership qualities, styles, professional training and effectiveness in serving and supporting those that follow (Zinsser, et al, 2016). As the importance and relevance of the growing body of literature in the field of ECE is on the rise, the separation gap between formal school and ECE is closing. The creation and implementation of highly developed early care leadership programs would allow for more connections to be made in relation to school leadership such as research, marketing, communication with policy maker and risk taking, to promote high-quality programs (Rodd, 1997).

Promoting leaders who are committed to creating an environment where the followers are empowered to share their expertise and leadership responsibilities is important for the field of early childhood. Leaders who are educated, set the tone for the emotional climate of the facility and will promote a shared vision. Through a shared vision, advocacy for policy and leadership, and by providing a more unified example and transition between the many areas of education.
CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the present study was to contribute to the early childhood literature as it relates to leadership in childcare. Do childcare directors possess leadership styles identified as effective? Specifically, this study sought to determine:

1. What leadership styles do early childhood leaders self-identify with? (*MLQ 5X Short self-form*)

2. What other demographic variables contribute to early childhood leaders’ self-perception of leadership styles? (*demographics & MLQ 5X Short self-form*)

Research Design

Setting, Participants and Response Rates

For the purpose of this study, the parameters for inclusion in the study included directors of childcare center in one southern state. Upon receiving approval from the university’s Institutional Review Board (See Appendix B), the researcher compiled a mass list serve of all the email addresses that could be found using the states website and data from the 2018 Performance Profile. This allowed for simple random sampling, with a normally distributed sample size (Hinkle, Wiersma & Jurs, 2003) to an extensive population that geographically represented the target southern state. The researcher sent a short email with a Qualtrics © survey link to the directors of 493 childcare facilities across the state.

The literature related to response rates for online surveys verses paper based, identifies paper-based surveys as more effective (Nulty, 2008; Saleh & Bista, 2017). However, if online surveys are distributed with a push that includes personalizing the emails and following up with an email reminder two weeks after the initial email, the response rate is predictably higher (Nulty, 2008; Saleh & Bista, 2017). Another source points to limited computer skills or access to
technology as a barrier to online surveys, but one must evaluate the particular study, goals, ethical considerations and respondents one is trying to reach to ensure they are capable of responding to the survey (Nardi, 2018).

The study employed voluntary participants; thus 90 people opened the survey, 73 consented to participate in the study and 4 people did not consent after opening the survey. Of those that consented N = 66 people completed the survey; however, 2 participants did not complete every question. The total response rate to the survey distributed to 493 of the 1030 Type III centers in the state with the population N=66 amounts to a 13.38% response rate. An average online study will have 10-15% response rate (Fryrear, 2019).

Of the study participants (N= 66) 52.4% were Caucasian, 42.9 % were African American, 3.2% Latino/Hispanic, and 1.6% other. The demographics according to a 2019 estimate by the United States Census for the state is 62.9% were Caucasian, 32.7% African American, and 4.4% other (Native, Asian, islander, other, multiple).

County. One question on the study asked the participants the name of their center. Of the directors who identified their childcare center 10 counties were identified. According to the United States Census bureau, counties 1, 2, and 10 represented the largest populations in this study (350,00 and over). Counties 4, 5, and 7 fell in the midrange (200,000 to 350,000) and counties 3, 6, 8, and 9 were in the low range (200,00 and below) (Figure 1). In regard to each counties population, County 1 had 440,059, County 2 had 391,006, County 3 had 153,720, County 4 had 240,204, County 5 had 244,390, County 6 had 129,648, County 7 had 203,436, County 8 had 134,758, County 9 had 126,604, and County 10 had 423,493.
Publicly Funded Children. In regard to the number of publicly funded children in childcare reported by the states childcare performance profile (Figure 2) County 1 had 18%, County 2 had 19%, County 3 had 7%, County 4 had 12%, County 5 had 8%, County 6 had 7%, County 7 had 7%, County 8 had 6%, County 9 had 3%, and County 10 had 13%.
**Education.** In regard to reported levels of education within our sample (Table 1) 4.5% held a high school diploma, 19.7% held a Child Development Associate (CDA), 9.1% held an associate degree, 30.3% held a bachelor’s degree, 25.8% held a master’s degree and 4.5% held a Ph.D.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School Diploma</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDA</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>62</strong></td>
<td><strong>93.9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the analysis, the crosstabulation in SPSS showed that a shift was necessary to reduce the number of cells with small frequencies, changing to the grouping of the variables “age” and “experience” as there was not a lot of variance. The age group of 18-24 and 25-34 were combined to 18-34 (Table 2). In regard to reported age levels with new grouping, 12.1% were in 18-34 age group, 15.2% -35-44 age group, 37.9% -45-54 age group, 21.2% -55-64 age group, and 9.1% 65 and older age group (note: 4.5% of participants did not respond to this question).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-34</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>37.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 and older</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>63</strong></td>
<td><strong>95.5</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Experience.** Participants were asked to identify their years of experience working in childcare as *less than 2 years, 3-5 years, 6-10 years, or more than 10 years* (Table 3). The
crosstTabulation did not show much variance; years of experience were combined into two groups 0-10 years and more than 10 years. Responses indicated that 13.6% had been in childcare 0-10 years and 81.8% had been in childcare more than 10 years. There were 4.5% of the sample that did not respond to this question.

Table 3. Years Worked in Childcare

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Experience</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 or more</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>81.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>95.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instrumentation

For this study the director’s leadership styles were measured using The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Bass & Avolio, 1995). The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ 5X Short) measures leadership behaviors and outcomes to assess the leadership characteristics to identify the respondents’ leadership style as either transformational, transactional, or passive avoidant. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire is based on years of research in “public and private organizations, from CEO’s of major corporations to non-supervisory project leaders” (Avolio, Bass, & Zhu, 2004, p. 3). The MLQ 5X Short self-form was distributed to the childcare directors across the state to measure their self-perceptions, while allowing for analysis of the directors’ leadership styles and outcomes while determining any correlations. MLQ 5X Short has several forms each consisting of a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from one (unsure) to five (frequently, if not always) and 45 questions.

There are five subscales related to transformational including idealized attributes, as this leader is “admired, respected, and trusted” (Avolio, Bass, & Zhu, 2004, p.103) but does shift their focus towards personal attributes; idealized behaviors, which are “admired, respected, and trusted” (p.103) with a shift focusing on personal behaviors including values and beliefs;
**inspirational motivation**, meaning this characteristic includes encouragement, optimism and enthusiasm; **intellectual stimulation**, is one who seeks different perspectives and new methods to solve problems; and **individual consideration**, meaning one who can understand and “sharing in others’ concerns and developmental needs and treating each individual uniquely” (p. 31).

There are two subscales related to transactional characteristics including contingent reward, as this leader often perceives themselves as a leader who “clarifies expectations and offer recognition when goals are achieved…result in individuals and groups achieving expected levels of performance” (Avolio, Bass, & Zhu, 2004, p.104); management-by-exception, means “closely monitoring for deviances, mistakes, and errors and then taking corrective action ” (p.105)

The passive/avoidant has two subscales including management by exception which is described as a passive leader who waits for things to happen before interfering; and laissez-faire which is described as a leader who avoids making decisions or being involved (Avolio, Bass, & Zhu, 2004).

The scale also measured outcomes of leaders’ extra effort, effectiveness, and satisfaction. Extra effort is when a leader can get others to do more than they are required while increasing others willingness to try harder to succeed (Avolio, Bass, & Zhu, 2004, p. 105). Effectiveness refers to leaders who can aim to meet other’s needs, and organizational requirements. Satisfaction with leadership is a characteristic that promotes the “use [of] methods of leadership that are satisfying.” (Avolio, Bass, & Zhu, 2004, p. 106).

All surveys were randomly distributed and anonymous to tap subjective perceptions of leadership characteristics (Parsons, Reid, & Crow, 2003). The data were cleaned, and the MLQ scoring key was used to group the items by scale to find the following characteristics
transformational, transactional, and passive avoidant. This self-report method had limitations including some questions being incomplete (Creswell, 2014) or “perceptual biases” (Metts, Sprecher, & Cupach, 1991, p. 169); however, self-reporting is known as the best method of assessing perception.

Ethical Consideration

Prior to beginning the study, the study was submitted to the university’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval. This is an agreement the researcher makes with the university that the research will be ethically and legally conducted. Once the IRB was approved and prior to any data being collected, participants were provided a consent form, which explained the nature of the study and guaranteed confidentiality (Saldana & Omasta, 2018). The participants were made aware they could revoke their consent at any point during or after completing the study.

Data Analysis

The Qualtrics © software used for data collection is compatible with Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The data analysis with SPSS included descriptive statistics (i.e., frequency tables and graphs) and inferential statistics (i.e., independent samples t-test, Kendall Tau-b, crosstabulation). The frequency distribution (i.e., tables, graphs) describes the number of directors related to each leadership style and the means associated with each leadership style. Kendal Tau was used to measure the correlation between ordinal variables (i.e., age and years worked in childcare, education and extra effort. Hinkle, Wiersma, & Jurs, 2003). A crosstabulation was used to analyze the relationship between variables. A t-test was used to determine if there was any significance between variables (i.e., education, characteristic of outcomes of leaderships scale).
CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

The purpose of the current study was to contribute to the literature on early childhood director’s self-perception of their leadership styles. The results of the study include descriptive and inferential statistics and graphical analyses found in the study.

Leaderships Styles

The first research question set out to identify director’s self-identified leadership style. Leadership characteristics targeted in the MLQ Short form included transformational, transactional, and passive avoidant leadership styles. The participants scored the 45 questions using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (frequently, if not always). Results from the data indicated the majority of participants self-identified as transformational, overall mean of 4.25 out of 5 with a standard deviation of .514 (Figure 3), then transactional with an overall mean of 3.63 out of 5 and standard deviation of .554 (Figure 4), and then passive avoidant leadership with an overall mean of 1.80 out of 5 and standard deviation .422 (Figure 5).

Figure 3. Transformational Mean
Figure 4. Transactional Mean

Figure 5. Passive/Avoidant Mean
The descriptive statistics describe the data from the survey as it was computed for the different types of leadership styles (Table 4). Sixty-five participants were included in this calculation.

**Transformational**

Results for the transformational characteristic included five subscales. Subscale results are as follows: *idealized attributes (IA or II (A))*, resulting in a minimum score of 1.25 and a maximum score of 5.00 (range of 5, $M=4.12$, $SD=.76$); *idealized behaviors (IB or II (B))*, resulting in a minimum score of 2.25 and a maximum score of 5.00 (range of 5, $M=4.28$, $SD=.54$); *inspirational motivation (IM)*, resulting in a minimum score of 2.50 and a maximum score of 5.00 (range of 5, $M=4.33$, $SD=.67$); *intellectual stimulation (IS)*, resulting in a minimum score of 2.25 and a maximum score of 5.00 (range of 5, $M=4.12$, $SD=.59$); and *individual consideration (IC)*, resulting in a minimum score of 2.75 and a maximum score of 5.00 (range of 5, $M=4.38$, $SD=.53$).

**Transactional**

Results for the transactional characteristics included two subscales. Subscale results are as follows: *contingent reward (CR)*, resulting in a minimum score of 1.75 and a maximum score of 5.00 (range of 5, $M=4.26$, $SD=.64$) and *management-by-exception (MBEA)*, resulting in a minimum score of 1.00 and a maximum score of 5.00 (range of 5, $M=2.99$, $SD=.91$)

**Passive/Avoidant**

The passive/avoidant characteristics included two subscales. *MBEP management by exception (MBEP)* resulted in a minimum score of 1.00 and a maximum score of 3.00 (range of 5, $M=1.65$, $SD=.57$) and *laissez-faire (LF)* resulted in a minimum score of 1.00 and a maximum score of 2.75 (range of 5, $M=1.95$, $SD=.42$).
Table 4. Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptive Measure</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transformational</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IA or II (A)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.1154</td>
<td>.75658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB or II (B)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.2782</td>
<td>.53527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.3333</td>
<td>.66650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IS</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.1231</td>
<td>.59111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IC</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.3769</td>
<td>.52871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transactional</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CR</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.2615</td>
<td>.64379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBEA</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>.90652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Passive/Avoidant</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBEP</td>
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<td>1.6538</td>
<td>.56505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LF</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>1.9538</td>
<td>.42236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Transformational Leadership Style Subscales.** Once the scales were established, a frequency analysis found the following results related to transformational leadership characteristics from the 65 participants. **Transformational idealized attribute** (IA) 16.7% of participants scored 4.50 with a mean of 4.12 and standard deviation of .757 (Figure 6); **Transformational idealized behaviors** (IB) 18.2% of participants scored 4.25 with a mean of 4.28 and standard deviation of .535 (Figure 7); **Transformational inspirational motivation** (IM) 24.2% of participants scored 5.00 with a mean of 4.33 and standard deviation of .667 (Figure 8); **Transformational intellectual stimulation** (IS) 19.7% of participants scored 4.00 with a mean of 4.12 and standard deviation of .591 (Figure 9); and **Transformational individual consideration** (IC) 22.7% of participants scored 5.00 with a mean of 4.38 and standard deviation of .529 (Figure 10).
Figure 6. Transformational Idealized Attributes

Figure 7. Transformational Idealized Behavior
Figure 8. Transformational Inspirational Motivation

Figure 9. Transformational Intellectual Stimulation
Transactional Leadership Styles Subscales. A frequency analysis found the following results related to *transactional* leadership characteristics from 65 participants. *Transactional contingent reward* (CR) 19.7% of participants scored 4.75 with a mean of 4.26 and standard deviation of .644 (Figure 11); and *Transactional management by exception* (MBEA) 16.7% of participants scored 3.00 with a mean of 2.99 and standard deviation of .907 (Figure 12).
Figure 11. Transactional Contingent Reward

Figure 12. Transactional Management by Exception
Passive/Avoidant Leadership Styles Subscales. A frequency analysis found the following results related to passive leadership characteristics from 65 participants.

Passive avoidant management by exception (MBEP) 18.2% of participants scored 1.75 with a mean of 1.65 and standard deviation of .565 (Figure 13); and Passive avoidant laissez-faire 22.7% of participants scored 2.00 with a mean of 1.95 and standard deviation of .422 (Figure 14).

Figure 13. Passive Avoidant Management by Exception
Demographic Variables and Leadership Styles

The second questions investigated the directors’ self-perception of their leadership style as it related to the different variables measured in this study. This question also analyzed the relationships between a variety of variables including the leadership characteristics in the MLQ Short form (transformational, transactional, and passive avoidant), the MLQ Short form outcomes of leadership (extra effort, effectiveness, and satisfaction), as well as the other demographic variables (age, education, and years worked in childcare). The descriptive analysis included 62 participants.

Education and Transformational Leadership. The descriptives for the comparison of transformational leadership and education (Figure 15) were as follows: high school N=3 with mean of 4.1667 and standard deviation .45369; CDA N=13 with mean of 3.9615 and standard
deviation .50627; Associates N=6 with mean of 4.4139 and standard deviation .40186; Bachelors N=20 with mean of 4.3592 and standard deviation .46426; masters N=17 with mean of 4.2902 and standard deviation .61198; and PhD N= 3 with mean of 4.3667 and standard deviation .45369.

Figure 15. Education and the mean number of Directors who self-identified transformational leadership style

**Education and Transactional Leadership.** The descriptives for the comparison of transactional leadership and education (Figure 16) were as follows: high school N=3 with mean of 3.9167 and standard deviation .26021; CDA N=13 with mean of 3.5160 and standard deviation .64942; associate N=6 with mean of 3.7847 and standard deviation .34603; bachelors N=20 with mean of 3.6917 and standard deviation .47573; master’s N=17 with mean of 3.5000 and standard deviation .47573; and PhD N= 3 with mean of 3.7083 and standard deviation .38188.
Figure 16. Education and the mean number of Directors who self-identified transactional leadership style.

**Education and Passive/Avoidant Leadership.** The descriptives for the comparison of passive/avoidant leadership and education (Figure 17) with N=62 were as follows: high school N=3 with mean of 1.8333 and standard deviation .19094; CDA N=13 with mean of 1.9904 and standard deviation .52157; associates N=6 with mean of 1.5417 and standard deviation .30277; bachelors N=20 with mean of 1.6458 and standard deviation .31603; master’s N=17 with mean of 1.9534 and standard deviation .47573; PhD N= 3 with mean of 1.8044 and standard deviation .43193.
Figure 17. Education and the mean number of Directors who self-identified passive/avoidant leadership style

**Counties and Leadership Style.** This study identified 10 counties within the state; seven of the 10 counties had more than four childcare centers respond to the survey. The following results explain how the seven different counties scored across the various leadership characteristics.

**County and Transformational Leadership Style.** The MLQ Short form includes five characteristics of transformational leadership: *idealized attribute, idealized behavior, individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, and inspirational motivation*. Table 5 shows how each county scored on Transformational Leadership Style by category. County 1 *idealized attribute* 4.55, *idealized behavior* 4.45, *individualized consideration* 4.80, *intellectual stimulation* 4.38, and *inspirational motivation* 4.75. County 2 for *idealized attribute* 3.97, *idealized behavior* 4.88, *individualized consideration* 4.09, *intellectual stimulation* 3.83, and *inspirational motivation* 4.16. County 3 for *idealized attribute* 3.81, *idealized behavior* 4.22,

Table 5. Transformational Leadership Styles per County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Styles</th>
<th>Idealized Attributes</th>
<th>Idealized Behaviors</th>
<th>Individualized Consideration</th>
<th>Intellectual Stimulation</th>
<th>Inspirational Motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>County 1</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>4.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County 2</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>4.88</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>4.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County 3</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>4.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County 4</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>4.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County 5</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>4.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County 6</td>
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<td>4.30</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County 7</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>3.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The transformational idealized attributes average scores were as follows (Figure 18)

County 1 was 4.55, County 2 was 3.97, County 3 was 3.81, County 4 was 4.30, County 5 was 3.79, County 6 was 4.25 and County 7 was 3.56.
Figure 18. Transformational: Idealized Attributes

The *transformational idealized behavior* average scores were as follows (Figure 19): County 1 was 4.45, County 2 was 4.88, County 3 was 4.22, County 4 was 4.36, County 5 was 4.25, County 6 was 4.30 and County 7 was 3.81.

Figure 19. Transformational: Idealized Behaviors
The transformational individualized consideration average scores were as follows (Figure 20)
County 1 was 4.80, County 2 was 4.09, County 3 was 4.31, County 4 was 4.45, County 5 was 4.50, County 6 was 4.30 and County 7 was 3.88.

Figure 20. Transformational: Individual Consideration

The transformational intellectual stimulation average scores were as follows (Figure 21) County 1 was 4.38, County 2 was 3.83, County 3 was 4.14, County 4 was 4.23, County 5 was 4.32, County 6 was 4.00 and County 7 was 3.

Figure 21. Transformational: Intellectual Stimulation
The transformational inspirational motivation average scores were as follows (Figure 22) County 1 was 4.75, County 2 was 4.16, County 3 was 4.19, County 4 was 4.32, County 5 was 4.21, County 6 was 4.30 and County 7 was 3.81.

Figure 22. Transformational: Inspirational Motivation

**County and Transactional Leadership Style.** The MLQ Short form includes two characteristics of transactional leadership contingent reward and management by exception. Table 6 shows how each county scored on Transactional Leadership Style by category.

County 1 for contingent reward 4.83 and management by exception 3.10. County 2 for contingent reward 3.79 and management by exception 2.78. County 3 for contingent reward 4.08 and management by exception 2.98. County 4 for contingent reward 4.25 and management by exception 3.02. County 5 for contingent reward 4.36 and management by exception 2.86. County 6 for contingent reward 4.40 and management by exception 2.50. County 7 for contingent reward 3.98 and management by exception 3.38.
Table 6. Transactional Leadership Styles per County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Styles</th>
<th>Contingent Rewards</th>
<th>Management by Exception</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>County 1</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>3.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County 2</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>2.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County 3</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>2.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County 4</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>3.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County 5</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>2.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County 6</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County 7</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>3.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The transactional contingent reward average scores were as follows (Figure 23)

County 1 was 4.83, County 2 was 3.79, County 3 was 4.08, County 4 was 4.25, County 5 was 4.36, County 6 was 4.40 and County 7 was 3.98.

![Figure 23. Transactional: Contingent Reward](image)

The transactional management by exception average scores were as follows (Figure 24) County 1 was 3.10, County 2 was 2.78, County 3 was 2.98, County 4 was 3.02, County 5 was 2.86, County 6 was 2.50 and County 7 was 3.38.
County and Passive/Avoidant Leadership Style. The MLQ Short form includes two characteristics of passive avoidant leadership management by exception (passive) and laissez-faire. Table 7 shows how each county scored on Passive/Avoidant Leadership Style by category. County 1 for management by exception 1.65 and laissez-faire 1.98. County 2 for management by exception 1.66 and laissez-faire 1.94. County 3 for management by exception 1.53 and laissez-faire 1.95. County 4 for management by exception 1.71 and laissez-faire 2.08. County 5 for management by exception 1.70 and laissez-faire 2.00. County 6 for management by exception 1.65 and laissez-faire 1.83. County 7 for management by exception 1.63 and laissez-faire 1.63.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Styles</th>
<th>Management by Exception</th>
<th>Laissez-Faire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>County 1</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>1.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County 2</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>1.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County 3</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>2.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County 4</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>3.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County 5</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>2.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County 6</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County 7</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>3.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Education Level and Extra Effort and Effectiveness. Table 8 depicts the Kendall tau_b correlation determined there were statistically significant relationships between the survey instruments measures of characteristic of outcomes of leaderships scale, extra effort (MLQ 5X Short self-form) and the education of the participants which produced a .276 moderate correlation (p= .007). Then the researcher checked the t-test (Hinkle, Wiersma, & Jurs, 2003) and found a significant correlation between participants who have a bachelor’s or master’s degrees with high levels of extra effort (mean= 4.13) and effectiveness (mean=4.28).

Table 8. Education and Extra Effort Correlation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kendall’s Tau_b</th>
<th>Education Correlation Coefficient Sig (2 tailed)</th>
<th>EE Correlation Coefficient Sig (2 tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>EE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N 1.000</td>
<td>N 276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Age and Years in Childcare. Table 9 depicts the relationship between participants age and amount of time worked in childcare resulting in a moderate correlation .308 (p= .008) which is logical if you older and have worked in childcare longer.
Table 9. Age and Years Worked in Childcare Correlation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kendall’s Coefficient</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Worked in Childcare</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>Sig (2 tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>.308</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tau_b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worked in childcare</td>
<td></td>
<td>.308</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed)

Experience prior to Administration. Sixty-two participants responded when asked to identify their years of experience working in childcare before becoming an administrator (Table 10). Results were as follows less than 2 years (30.3%), more than 10 years (28.8%), 3-5 years (25.8%), and 6-10 years (10.6%).

Table 10. Years Worked in Childcare Prior to Administration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years Worked</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 10</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>28.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>95.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Figure 25, the descriptive crosstabulation for the variable’s education and years in childcare before becoming an administrator revealed participants with high school was evenly distributed between zero to five (less than 2 years and 3-5 years) and more than 10 years; CDA between zero and five years (less than 2 years and 3-5 years); Associates was 3-5 years; Bachelors 3-5 years and more than 10 years; masters’ had less than two years; PhD had more than 10 years.
Figure 25. Director’s years of experience in childcare before becoming an administrator by education level.
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The purpose of the present study was to contribute to the early childhood literature as it relates to leadership in childcare as limited research has been placed on early childhood leadership (Berger, 2015; Goffin & Janke, 2013). Specifically, we sought to determine if childcare directors possessed leadership styles recognized in the literature as effective, and which characteristics impacted the director’s leadership style. Findings from the present study echo the literature on professional development that “directors with greater levels of administrative training report significant gains in their level of competence” and growth within their organizational structure (Talan, Bloom, & Kelton, 2014, p.2). Overall, most of the childcare directors self-identified with transformational leadership, which has been identified in the literature as the most effective leadership style (Rusliza & Fawzy, 2016). This is a significant finding as the literature often characterizes childcare leaders as primarily “managers” who are unprepared for leadership roles (Bloom, 1997; Bloom, Jackson, Talan, & Kelton, 2013; Talan, Bloom, & Kelton, 2014). The largest contributing factor to these results was the childcare center directors’ education.

Leadership Styles

The first research questions set out to determine which leadership style the director self-identified, based on the characteristics targeted in the MLQ Short form. The leaders answered the questions examining their own leadership behaviors, interactions and circumstances with which these interactions took place (Bem, 1972). These overarching characteristics were transformational, transactional, and passive/avoidant. The most significant finding was that, on average, most respondents scored transformational as a characteristic with which they “fairly often” identified. The childcare directors from this study self-identified as having the ability to
“individualized support, shared goals, vision, intellectual stimulation, culture building, rewards, high expectations, and modeling” (Hallinger, 2003, p. 335) which is unrelated to a manager, but rather one who motivates and inspires others by providing a “positive impact on work performance” (Rusliza & Fawzy, 2016, p.206). This also is linked to the literature on leadership models (Bush & Glover, 2014) as this study has illuminated childcare directors’ transformational leadership styles which can inform and lead to changes in childcare leadership practices and research. Previous research (Alatawi, 2017) suggests that transformational leadership can reduce turnover, which at present in the field of childcare is 30% nationally (Casey Family Programs, 2019).

The MLQ Short form breaks down the transformational leadership characteristics into five specific characteristic areas including idealized attributes, idealized behaviors, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. The overall positive response regarding transformational leadership style resulted with the highest frequency (“fairly often”) of respondent relating specifically to inspirational motivation and individualized consideration. These two characteristics are consistent with the literature (Coleman, Sharp, & Handscomb, 2015) and connect the qualities of a high performing leader to this study's conceptual framework. These results signify the relationship to the Herzberg Theory and Self-Determination Theory as inspirational motivation - a leader who is encouraging, optimistic and an enthusiastic “clarifies expectations and offer recognition when goals are achieved…result in individuals and groups achieving expected levels of performance” (Avolio, Bass, & Zhu, 2004, p. 104). The conceptual framework, Self-Determination includes facilitating functioning of those surrounding you and the characteristic of individualized consideration includes being able to understand
one’s staff as individuals and support them to develop their strengths which promotes empowerment of staff.

The responses related to *transactional leadership* identified most of the respondents scoring this characteristic as “sometimes” present within their leadership. This is significant as leaders should want to avoid embodying the characteristics of *transactional* leadership, as this style can be more connected to “management” (i.e., supervision and productivity) (Northouse, 2016), which is how much of the literature often characterizes childcare directors (Bloom, 1997; Bloom, Jackson, Talan, & Kelton, 2013; Talan, Bloom, & Kelton, 2014). This characterization sheds light on the struggle of childcare directors who sometimes have the mindset of a “manager”.

In relation to the scores of *passive/avoidant leadership*, the respondents scored this between “not at all” or “once in a while”. This is a significant finding as previous literature (Ang, 2012; Coleman, Sharp, & Handscomb, 2015; Muijs, Aubrey, Harris, & Briggs, 2004; Siraj-Blatchford & Manni, 2008) related childcare leaders to teachers and managers which would lead to the assumption they would be more passive and “react only after problems have become serious to take corrective action and may avoid making any decisions.” (Avolio, Bass, & Zhu, 2004, p. 53). However, the childcare directors in this study scored this lower signifying they are trying to avoid the mindset of a *passive/avoidant* leader.

**Age, Education, Years Worked in Childcare, and Leadership Styles**

The second question investigated the director’s self-perception of their leadership style as it related to their education level and county. The literature says leaders must have acquired formal education and quality experiences to possess effective leadership styles and practices (O’Connor, 2011; Rich & Porter-O’Grady 2011). Results from this study indicated that those with more education were more likely to self-identify with transformational leadership than those
with a CDA or a high school diploma. This finding is consistent with previous literature, which identifies that “[t]hose with more education may be more likely to use feedback and process information from others in such a way that their self-ratings are more closely aligned with ratings from others” (Ostroff, Atwater, & Feinberg, 2004, p. 338)” . This finding is consistent with Self-Determination Theory; increased education can be viewed as evidence of an individual who is motivated and aware of what is needed to be productive in each area.

These results suggest that education is aligned with transformational leadership, which echo’s the call from the literature on the need for professional development for childcare leaders (Talan, Bloom, & Kelton, 2014). Although, there is programming that exists for local directors to acquire state approved professional development in the state where this study took place, this credential is not mandatory. Unfortunately, we do not yet have in childcare the elaborate system of professional credentialing for leaders as is in place for K-12 administrators. Principals in K-12 schools must have master’s degree, state certification, five or more years of classroom teaching at the school level, and a minimum of 27 semester hours of graduate credit. If our sample had these prerequisites for the position of childcare director, our results may have looked different.

Interestingly, respondents with the education level of both masters and CDA provided higher values passive/avoidant mean. This could be explained by two things: respondents holding a CDA did not have as much education and those respondents with masters’ degrees did not have as much experience working in childcare before becoming administrators (less than two years). Overall, respondents who scored the lowest for passive/avoidant leadership were those with associate degrees; this could this be related to both their experience in childcare combined with their training related to the field.
Further, results from the different counties confirms that the educational levels are related to leadership characteristics. Of the seven counties with multiple responses to the survey, county one and seven had the greatest difference in their scores as County one scored highest with the most effective style of leadership, *transformational* and county seven scored *transformational* the lowest. For County 1 *education* consisted of a CDA, an associate, three with bachelors, and four with master's degrees. Their training prior to becoming an administrator included higher education, clock hours and one person noted the Pathways Administrator Credential. The *education* for County 7 included four respondents with the following education a high school diploma, a CDA, an associate degree and a master's degree. Their training prior to becoming an administrator including clock hours, pathways, and the participant who has an associate degree said, “higher degree”. Interestingly, these two counties administrators have different educational backgrounds which could attribute to the different responses for the leadership characteristics as the literature explains the need in childcare for more professional development and implementation of rigorous requirements for directors (Coleman, Sharp, & Handscomb, 2015; Siraj-Blatchford & Manni, 2008).

County seven generally scored lower on all the elements of transformational and transactional leadership, except for *management by exception* where they scored this higher than everyone in this area. *Management by exception* is in line with a management mindset in the aspect of one looking for others to make mistakes and reprimanding hence “To manage means to accomplish activities and master routines, whereas to lead means to influence others and create a vision for change” (Northouse, 2016, p.14). This is not surprising as the lack of *education* could attribute to this.
These data showed a correlation between outcomes of leadership extra effort and the education of the respondent, as well as education and outcomes of leadership effectiveness. This meaning that the respondents with higher education particularly bachelors and masters exhibited these outcomes of leadership (extra effort and effectiveness). The amount of education the respondent received as far as education or professional development, allows one to improve one’s leadership skills such as research, marketing, communication with policy maker and risk taking, to promote high-quality programs (Rodd, 1997). The literature explains that extra effort and effectiveness can be related to a transformational or transactional leader in that these characteristics are outcomes of the leadership styles. Extra effort means one can motivate others to increase their productivity, boost others drive, and eagerness to try harder. For effectiveness the leader meets employees “job-related needs…[while] representing their organization [to others] and meeting organizational requirements” (Avolio, Bass, & Zhu, 2004, p.105).

The relationships between the various components of the MLQ (leadership characteristics and outcomes of leadership) and other variables listed in the survey concluded a correlation between the respondent age and the amount of time the respondent worked in childcare prior to becoming an administrator. This is a logical finding in that if you are older, with longer and more experience in childcare you would see some correlation of responses due to length number of years worked in childcare.

Limitations

This study initially sought to obtain data from the teachers on their directors; however, because childcare administrators were contacted first, and were needed to access contact information for their teachers, we were not able to obtain teacher data on their director.
Furthermore, we did not have locations for all center directors as some chose to not report this information.

This self-report method did have some limitations including some questions being incomplete (Creswell, 2014) or “perceptual biases” (Metts, Sprecher, & Cupach, 1991, p. 169), but self-reporting is known as the best method of assessing perception. The literature related to response rates for online surveys verses paper based, eludes to the fact that paper is more effective. However, if online surveys are distributed with a push and followed with reminders the response rate is predictably higher (Nulty, 2008; Saleh & Bista, 2017). Another source explains a limitation of limited computer skills or access to technology, but one must evaluate the study, goals, ethical considerations and respondents one is trying to reach (Nardi, 2018). This survey was distributed electronically.

**Clinical Implications**

There are implications for several stakeholder groups in early care related to the outcomes of this research – policy makers, teacher preparation programs, business owners, early care administrators, and childcare teachers. The field of early care should consider policy standards in the credentialing of their administration, considering findings from the present study and past research (Rodd, 1997). Guidance could be found in reviewing administrative credentials from both the Educational Teacher preparation programs to consider inclusion of content from the administration standards for K-12 schools (Marks & Printy, 2003) and from childcare administrator credentialing (e.g., Pathways) in the creation of an administrative certification pathway for childcare administrators or for inclusion in Birth to Five teacher certification programs. Business owners of childcare centers should consider the education level of their directors and consider characteristics of transformational leadership when interviewing potential
administrators, as hiring transformational leaders is correlated with lower turnover of employees (Alatawi, 2017). Childcare administrators seeking professional development and growth in their organization should study the characteristics of transformational leadership (Hallinger, 1992; Northouse, 2016; Rusliza & Fawzy, 2016). Childcare teachers should consider characteristics of transformational leaders when both interviewing for positions in early care environments, as these leaders are more likely to support them as a positive role model and in their own professional development, if they intend to lead in the future.

**Future Research**

This research study is an initial step toward examining childcare administrators’ self-perception of leadership style. Future research should consider the addition of childcare teacher assessment of their administrators’ leadership style to determine if administrators’ self-perceptions are apparent to their staff. Perhaps by initially obtaining teacher data, then administrator data, followed by examining the qualitative perception through interviews of directors and staff to examine the reality of the self-identified data that were collected from the *MLQ 5X Short self-form*.

The future qualitative research should investigate how much professional development childcare leaders receive monthly and annually to support their roles as administrators as this study gave insight into childcare leaders’ leadership styles and their levels of education but not continuous professional development. Secondly, what are the total numbers of children enrolled at the different sites to examine if the self-identified perception of leadership style based on enrollment numbers. Thirdly, questions pertaining to daily task and roles of directors to see if this perpetuates a shift in leadership perception. Finally, inquire as to the turnover rate per center
as this study found that most directors self-identified with transformational which should reduce turnover rate, so examining that data would be interesting.

**Conclusion**

This study adds significant value to the body of literature on early care leadership as the results suggest that education is beneficial to determining leadership styles. In general these results suggest that early care leaders who remain in the role of “managers” (displaying either transactional or passive/avoidant leadership styles) will not be able to provide the leadership needed to provide high quality of education for young children (Ang, 2012; Coleman, Sharp, & Handscomb, 2015; Muijs, Aubrey, Harris, & Briggs, 2004; Siraj-Blatchford & Manni, 2008).

In closing, research suggest that childcare leaders would benefit from educational experiences to develop their leadership skills to more closely align with characteristics associated with transformational leadership. Kellerman (2013) explains that leadership should be “conceptualized as an equilateral triangle” (p. 137); the three sides, equally important, include the leader, followers, and context. A transformational leader can inspire confidence in staff and create an environment conducive to professional growth and development.
APPENDIX A. PERMISSION TO USE MULTIFACTOR LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE

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Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire™
Instrument (Leader and Rater Form) and Scoring Guide (Form 5X-Short)

by Bruce Avolio and Bernard Bass

Published by Mind Garden, Inc.
info@mindgarden.com
www.mindgarden.com

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APPENDIX B. INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Application for Exemption from Institutional Oversight

Unless qualified as meeting the specific criteria for exemption from institutional review board (IRB) oversight, all LSU research/projects using living humans as subjects, or samples, or data obtained from humans, directly or indirectly, whether with or without their consent, must be approved or exempted in advance by the LSU IRB. This form helps the PI determine if a project may be exempted, and is used to request an exemption.

-- Applicant, Please fill out the application in its entirety and include the completed application as well as parts B-F, listed below, when submitting to the IRB. Once the application is completed, please submit the completed application to the IRB Office by e-mail (irb@lsu.edu) or for review. If you would like to have your application reviewed by a member of the Human Subjects Screening Committee before submitting it to the IRB office, you can find the list of committee members at https://lsu.edu/research/human-subjects-screening-committee-members/

-- A Complete Application Includes All of the Following:

(A) This completed form
(B) A brief project description (adequate to evaluate risks to subjects and to explain your responses to Parts 1 & 2)
(C) Copy of all Instruments to be used.

"If this proposal is part of a grant proposal, include a copy of the proposal and all recruitment materials."

(D) The consent form that you will use in the study (see part 3 for more information.)

(E) Certificate of Completion of Human Subjects Protection Training for all personnel involved in the project, including students who are involved with testing or handling data, unless already on file with the IRB. Training link: https://about.citiprogram.org/en/homepage/


1) Principal Investigator: Cynthia DiCarlo Rank: Professor

Dept: College of Human Science and Education Ph: 225578-7005 E-mail: cdiarro@lsu.edu

2) Co-Investigator(s): please include department, rank, phone & e-mail for each. If the co-investigator resides in the EU, a GDPR consent form must be signed by the co-investigator prior to study submission for IRB approval.

"If the Principal Investigator is a student, identify and name supervising professor in this space.

Michelle Grantham-Caston, PhD Student College of Human Science and Education Early Childhood, mggran19@lsu.com, 225-578-3644

3) Project Title: Early Care Leadership Styles and Staff Perspective

4) Proposal? (yes or no) NO

If Yes, LSU Proposal Number

Also, if YES, either

☐ This application completely matches the scope of work in the grant
☐ More IRB Applications will be filed later

5) Subject pool (e.g. Psychology students) Child care staff and directors

Indicate any "vulnerable populations" to be used: children <18, the mentally impaired, the aged, other.

"Projects with incarcerated persons cannot be exempted.

6) Does your study include participants (counting minors) in the EU or the three additional countries? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, UK, Norway, Iceland, Lichtenstein)

7) PI Signature Date 11-12-19

** I certify my responses are accurate and complete. If the project scope or design later changes, I will resubmit for review. I will obtain written approval from the Authorized Representative of all non-LSU institutions in which the study is conducted. I also understand that it is my responsibility to maintain copies of all consent forms at LSU for three years after completion of the study. If I leave LSU before that time, the consent forms should be preserved in the Departmental Office.

Screening Committee Action: ☐ Exempted ☐ Not Exempted Category/Paragraph

Signed Consent Waived?: ☐ Yes or ☐ No

Reviewer Signature Date
Part 1: Determination of "Research" and Potential for Risk

- This section determines whether the project meets the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) definition of research involving human subjects, and if not, whether it nevertheless presents more than "minimal risk" to human subjects that makes IRB review prudent and necessary.

1. Is this project involving human subjects a systematic investigation, including research, development, testing, or evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge? (Note: some instructional development and service programs include a "research" component that may fall within HHS' definition of human subject research).
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No

2. Does the project present physical, psychological, social or legal risks to the participants reasonably expected to exceed those risks normally experienced in daily life or in routine diagnostic physical or psychological examination or testing? You must consider the consequences if individual data inadvertently become public.
   - [ ] Yes - Stop. This research cannot be exempted - submit regular application for IRB review.
   - [ ] No - Continue to see if research can be exempted from IRB oversight

3. Are any of your participants incarcerated?
   - [ ] Yes - Stop. This research cannot be exempted - submit regular application for IRB review.
   - [ ] No - Continue to see if research can be exempted from IRB oversight

4. Are you obtaining any health information from a healthcare provider and/or participant when participant physically resides in an EU country that contains any of the identifiers listed below?
   A. Names
   B. Address: street address, city, county, precinct, ZIP code, and their equivalent geocodes. Exception for ZIP codes: the initial three digits of the ZIP Code may be used, if according to current publicly available data from the Bureau of the Census: (1) The geographic unit formed by combining all ZIP codes with the same three initial digits contains more than 20,000 people; and (2) the initial three digits of a ZIP code for all such geographic units containing 20,000 or fewer people is changed to '000'. (Note: The 17 currently restricted 3-digit ZIP codes to be replaced with '000' include: 336, 659, 933, 102, 203, 656, 692, 790, 921, 830, 631, 678, 679, 890, and 893.)
   C. Dates related to individuals
      i. Birth date or date of death
      ii. Admission date
      iii. Discharge date
      iv. And all ages over 88 and all elements of dates (including year) indicative of such age. Such ages and elements may be aggregated into a single category of age 90 or older.
   D. Telephone or fax numbers
   E. Electronic mail addresses
   F. Social security numbers
   G. Medical record numbers (including prescription numbers and clinical trial numbers)
   H. Health plan beneficiary numbers
   I. Account numbers
   J. Certificate/license numbers
   K. Vehicle identifiers and serial numbers including license plate numbers
   L. Device identifiers and serial numbers
   M. Web Universal Resource Locators (URLs)
   N. Internet Protocol (IP) address numbers
   O. Biometric identifiers, including finger and voice prints
   P. Full face photographic images and any comparable images
   Q. Any other unique identifying number, characteristic, or code; except a code used alone or in combination with other information to identify an individual who is the subject of the information.
   - [ ] Yes - Stop. This research cannot be exempted - submit regular application for IRB review.
   - [ ] No - Continue to see if research can be exempted from IRB oversight.
Part 2: Exemption Criteria for Research Projects

Please select any and all categories that relate to your research. Research is exemptible when all research methods are one or more of the following categories. Check statements that apply to your study:

☐ 1. In education setting, research to evaluate normal educational practices.

☐ 2. For research not involving vulnerable people (prisoner, fetus, children, or mentally impaired): observe public behavior (including participatory observation), or do interviews or surveys or educational tests. The research must also comply with one of the following:
   a) The participants cannot be identified, directly or statistically;
   b) The responses/observations could not harm participants if made public;
   c) Recorded information is identifiable and IRB conducts limited review – Adults only

☐ 3. For benign behavioral interventions with collection of information (verbal, written, audiovisual recording) from adult subjects who prospectively agrees and one of the following is met:
   a) Recorded information cannot readily identify the subject
   b) Any disclosure of responses outside of the research would not reasonably place subject at risk
   c) Recorded information is identifiable and IRB conducts a limited review

☐ 4. Secondary research for which consent is not required: use of identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens; The research must also comply with one of the following:
   a) Information or biospecimens are publicly available
   b) Recorded information cannot readily be identified (directly or indirectly linked); investigator does not contact subjects and will not re-identify the subjects
   c) Information collection and analysis involving identifiable health information when use is regulated by HIPAA "health care operations" or "research" or "public health activities and purposes"
   d) Research by or on behalf of Federal department/agency using government-generated or collected information. Compliant with relevant privacy protections.

☐ 5. Research and demonstration projects conducted/supported by a Federal department or agency or subject to approval by dept/agency head and that are designed to study, evaluate, improve, or otherwise examine public benefit or service programs
   a) Prior to commencing, research must be posted on a Federal Web Site or in other way determined by the Agency.
6. Research to evaluate food quality, taste, or consumer acceptance.
   a) The food has no additives
   b) The food is certified safe by the USDA, FDA, or EPA

7. Secondary research for which broad consent is required
   a) Storage or maintenance of identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens for potential secondary research use if an IRB conducts a limited IRB review

8. Secondary research for which broad consent is required. Research involving the use of identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens. All of the following are required:
   a) Broad consent for the storage, maintenance, and secondary uses
   b) Documentation of informed consent or waiver of documentation was obtained
   c) Limited IRB review that broad consent is consistent with proposed research
   d) Return of research results not included in the study plan

Part 3: Consent Forms

* The consent form must be written in non-technical language which can be understood by the subjects. It should be free of any exculpatory language through which the participant is made to waive, or appears to be made to waive any legal rights, including any release of the investigator, sponsor, institution or its agents from liability for negligence. (Note: the consent form is not a contract)

* For sample consent forms, please click here

* The IRB prefers using signed informed consent. However, if that is impractical, an application to waive signed consent can be requested below. If this waiver is requested, the IRB must be provided with the consent script that will present the information to subjects regarding the study/research. All consent forms or scripts must include a statement that the study was approved or exempted by the IRB and provide IRB contact information to participants.

I am requesting waiver of signed Informed Consent because:

- (a) Having a participant sign the consent form would create the principal risk of participating in the study.
- or that

- (b) The research presents no more than minimal risk of harm to subjects and involves no procedures for which having signed consent is normally required.

Now that your application is complete, please send it to the IRB office by e-mail (irb@tisu.edu) for review. If you would like to have your application reviewed by a member of the Human Subjects Screening Committee before submitting it to the IRB office, you can find the list of committee members here.
APPENDIX C. INFORMED ONLINE CONSENT

1. Study Name: Early Care Leadership Styles and Staff Perspective Study
2. We are interested in understanding your perspective on leadership styles and motivation. You will be presented with an online survey with questions relevant to leadership and motivation. The questionnaire should take less than 10 minutes to complete and you will receive an entry in a drawing for your participation. Your participation in this research is voluntary.
3. Inclusion Criteria: Childcare employee
4. Exclusion criteria: Not working in childcare
5. There is no risk involved with the study
6. Principal Investigators are Michelle Grantham-Caston mgran19@lsu.edu and Cynthia DiCarlo cdicar2@lsu.edu. You have the right to withdraw at any point during the study, for any reason, and without any prejudice. If you would like to contact the Principal Investigator in the study to discuss this research, please e-mail Michelle Grantham-Caston at mgran19@lsu.edu.
7. “Subjects may choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of any benefit to which they might otherwise be entitled.”
8. Please be assured that your responses will be kept completely confidential as no participants names will be collected or documented during this study.
9. “This study has been approved by the LSU IRB. For questions concerning participant rights, please contact the IRB Chair, Dr. Dennis Landin, 578-8692, or irb@lsu.edu.”
10. “By continuing this survey, you are giving consent to participate in this study.”
11. Your information or biospecimens collected as part of the research, even if identifiers are removed, may be used or distributed for future research.

_____ Yes, I give permission
_____ No, I do not give permission
REFERENCES


Douglass, Ann (2018). Redefining leadership: lessons from an early education leadership


VITA

Michelle P. Grantham-Caston, a native of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, received her bachelor’s degree at Louisiana State University, 2007. Thereafter, she taught school in Baton Rouge and wrote grants to provide more opportunities for the students she taught. As her interest for providing enriching and educational opportunities grew, she made the decision to enter graduate school in the College of Human Sciences and Education at Louisiana State University. She received her master’s degree in December 2017, educational specialist degree in December 2018.

Since 2017, she has taught undergraduate courses training preservice teachers in the PK3 Early Childhood Education program. In 2019 she became the Associate Director of Preschool Programs as the LSU Early Childhood Education Laboratory Preschool. She has presented at numerous conferences. Favorite publications include articles within National Association for the Education of Young Children’s *Young Children* and National Head Start Association Dialog.