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A survey of elementary principals, kindergarten teachers, and kindergarten parents focusing on preferences for academic or developmental programming at the kindergarten level

Dudley L. Humphrey
University of Northern Iowa

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**A survey of elementary principals, kindergarten teachers, and
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developmental programming at the kindergarten level**

Humphrey, Dudley Lynn, Ed.D.

University of Northern Iowa, 1993

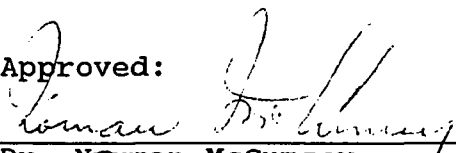
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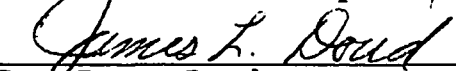
A SURVEY OF ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS,
KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS, AND KINDERGARTEN PARENTS
FOCUSING ON PREFERENCES FOR ACADEMIC OR DEVELOPMENTAL
PROGRAMMING AT THE KINDERGARTEN LEVEL

A Dissertation
Submitted
In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

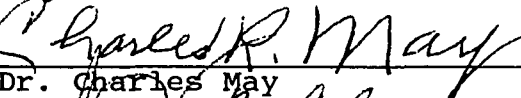
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December 1993

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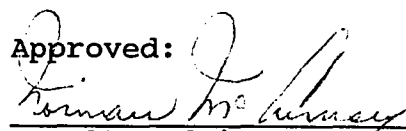
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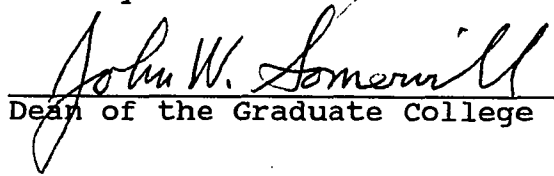
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Faculty Advisor



Dean of the Graduate College

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ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this study was to determine the preferences regarding instructional practices at the kindergarten level and investigate the relationships of these preferences among elementary principals, kindergarten teachers, and kindergarten parents. A survey of a systematic sample of 217 Iowa public elementary schools provided perceptual data from 148 (68%) of these schools. Elementary principals, kindergarten teachers, and kindergarten parents were asked to complete a questionnaire based on the Hitz 1986 Oregon Department of Education questionnaire which provided insight to their preferences on developmental and academic instructional practices at the kindergarten level. Of the population, 132 principals out of 217 (61%), 137 kindergarten teachers out of 217 (63%), and 524 kindergarten parents out of 1,085 (48%) returned completed survey material.

After completion of descriptive statistics, the investigator applied inferential statistical analysis to complete cross group comparisons on the items 1-12 common to all three questionnaires. These items were designed to elicit responses showing a preference for developmental or academic kindergarten programming. Analysis of variance, F value, was used for these 12 items. In addition, the F test was also used on the summative group mean scores to

determine whether the three group means were significantly different from each other at the .05 level. The Scheffe' multiple comparison procedure was then used to determine which pairs of groups had statistically different means.

The analysis of variance of the summative score for items 1-12 indicated a significant difference among group means, $F(2,761) = 170.73$, $p = .001$. The Scheffe' multiple comparison procedure indicated that the following pairs of groups were significantly different at the .05 level: (a) principals and parents, and (b) teachers and parents. On the 1-5 Likert scale utilized with the 12 items (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree) elementary principals scored a summative mean of 3.84 (S.D. .46). Kindergarten teachers scored a summative mean of 3.89 (S.D. .49), and kindergarten parents scored a summative mean of 3.19 (S.D. .48). The principal and teacher summative means placed them nearly in the response of "agree" with developmental instructional practices at the kindergarten level. The parent summative group mean placed them nearly in the response of "neutral" which does not show strong support for either developmental or academic instructional practices at the kindergarten level.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Well, and don't you know that in every task the most important thing is the beginning, and especially when you deal with anything young and tender.

Plato, The Republic

A recurring theme in contemporary literature dealing with education and lifelong learning is that the early years of a child's life are crucial. What a child will or can become and the style with which he/she will face learning and life itself, is directly influenced by the quality of his/her early childhood. There is no more precious natural resource for the future than today's young child and each child has the right to a sound beginning both at home and in their kindergarten school experience. For most children their first year of public school experience is kindergarten.

Kindergarten programming in the United States has undergone significant change since its beginning during the 19th century. Early kindergartens in the United States were highly influenced by the 19th century German philosopher Froebel. Froebel viewed human development as an unfolding process which should not be thwarted by a highly structured school program (Wolf & Kessler, 1987). Kindergarten was

viewed as a time for promoting social and emotional development to help prevent later adult maladjustments. Up until 1950 kindergarten specialists advocated curriculum programs that included free and organized play, stories, art, music, snacks, rest periods, and craft work (Wolf & Kessler, 1987). Five-year-old children came to kindergarten to learn how to play with other children, to listen attentively to an adult, to tie shoes, to explore, and to experiment. Parents sent their children to kindergarten because they knew their children would enjoy it and gain from the experience. Teachers of kindergarten were secure in their knowledge of how best to teach their classes. School administrators saw kindergarten as a way to ease children gently into "real" school. This was evident from the first major national survey of kindergarten practices conducted by the National Education Association (1925), which found that the kindergarten day devoted 36% of the time to physical education, 33% to general arts, 16% to general assemblies, 6% to music, and 9% to literature and language.

Those times have changed. The delightful, low-key, unpressured year of getting ready for learning has turned into a year of preparation for first grade (Connell, 1987). A 1983 survey by Nall demonstrated the impact of the kindergarten and preschool revolution that had been in

motion for the past two decades. He surveyed 400 kindergarten teachers in 200 midwestern cities and found that the majority of children entering kindergarten at that time had spent a year or more in a nursery school or day care center. As a result, parental expectations were higher and children entering kindergarten were more advanced academically. The most significant change found by Nall's study was that kindergarten programs had become more knowledge and skill oriented and had less play as a result of increased preschool experience.

An Oregon survey of elementary principals and teachers (Hitz, 1986) also found that kindergarten programs were becoming more academic in nature even though principals and teachers felt this move was inappropriate. The findings of these studies supported the idea that kindergartens are changing toward an academic focus and suggest that parental expectations may be impacting this change toward more academic programming at the kindergarten level (Connell, 1987; Hitz, 1986; Nall, 1983; National Education Association, 1925; Wolf & Kessler, 1987).

Hitz's investigation and findings had significant impact on early childhood education practice in the state of Oregon and was the research which had the most significant influence on this study. This study replicated selected portions of Hitz's work relevant to elementary principal and

teacher preferences for kindergarten programming and extended his work by incorporating a kindergarten parent component which is designed to determine parental preferences for developmental or academic kindergarten programming.

Purpose of the Study

One purpose of the study was to investigate and identify the views held by elementary principals, kindergarten teachers, and kindergarten parents regarding instructional practices at the kindergarten level. Schools sampled in this study were selected from the population of all Iowa public school districts which had one or more elementary principals and kindergarten programs. All sizes of school districts were represented in this study. Additionally, the relationships among the views of elementary principals, kindergarten teachers, and kindergarten parents were examined. Specifically, the views of elementary principals, kindergarten teachers, and kindergarten parents were determined and compared using relevant portions of Hitz's Oregon Department of Education questionnaires which were designed for use with elementary principals and kindergarten teachers. These questionnaires were adapted for use with kindergarten parents.

The following questions bring the statement of purpose into sharper focus:

1. Do elementary principals, kindergarten teachers, and kindergarten parents prefer a developmental or academic approach to instruction at the kindergarten level?

2. Are there differences in preference among elementary principals, kindergarten teachers, and kindergarten parents regarding developmental and academic approaches to instruction at the kindergarten level?

The following 13 null hypotheses will be tested to answer the two questions listed above.

1. There is no significant difference between the principal, teacher, and parent mean response concerning devoting at least half of their teaching time to child-chosen activities.

2. There is no significant difference between the principal, teacher, and parent mean response concerning assuming that children are motivated to learn without tangible rewards.

3. There is no significant difference between the principal, teacher, and parent mean response concerning showing more interest in how children work and play than in what they produce.

4. There is no significant difference between the principal, teacher, and parent mean response concerning providing substantial workbook and other seatwork activity in order to prepare children for first grade.

5. There is no significant difference between the principal, teacher, and parent mean response concerning administering reading readiness tests to all kindergarten children early in the school year.

6. There is no significant difference between the principal, teacher, and parent mean response concerning involving all children in formal reading instruction.

7. There is no significant difference between the principal, teacher, and parent mean response concerning encouraging dramatic play as a means of enhancing cognitive and social development.

8. There is no significant difference between the principal, teacher, and parent mean response concerning requiring completion of all tasks and activities.

9. There is no significant difference between the principal, teacher, and parent mean response concerning providing a period of time for free play each day.

10. There is no significant difference between the principal, teacher, and parent mean response concerning using privileges, grades, prizes and other rewards to motivate children.

11. There is no significant difference between the principal, teacher, and parent mean response concerning requiring all children to take part in every activity.

12. There is no significant difference between the principal, teacher, and parent mean response concerning providing children with considerable open-ended materials and experiences.

13. There is no overall significant difference between the principal, teacher, and parent mean group response concerning preference for developmental or academic programming at the kindergarten level.

Significance of the Study

Kindergarten programming and parent involvement in education are currently very significant topics in both the nation and Iowa. Recent mandates and priorities of the Iowa Department of Education place a high priority on both early education and parent involvement. This is evidenced by the Department of Education's requirement that parents/guardians be involved on the state mandated district level Resource Advisory Committee For Early Childhood Education. One of the tasks each school district in Iowa was expected to accomplish through this resource advisory committee was to study, report, and recommend to both the local board of education and the state department what the committee views as appropriate programming for kindergarten age students. According to Susan Donielson, chief of this agency's Division of Instructional Services, the Iowa Department of Education is interested in learning parent/guardian views

relative to their preference for developmental or academic programming for kindergarten youngsters. Such information would be of value to the Iowa Department of Education as they continue planning and developing policy for early childhood education. Donielson agrees that there is very little research information available pertaining to parent preferences of kindergarten programming. More knowledge and information in this area would assist the Department of Education in making better and more informed decisions at the state level (see Appendix A).

During a telephone interview on August 1, 1989, Randy Hitz, former early childhood specialist for the Oregon Department of Education (currently Dean of the College of Education, Health and Human Development at Montana State University) and author of "Issues in Kindergarten Education: A Survey of Elementary Principals, Kindergarten Teachers, and First Grade Teachers" (Hitz, 1986) indicated a similar desire for information relative to parent views of kindergarten programming. Hitz stated that he believed kindergarten parents were the most significant missing element in his 1986 Oregon study, and that if he were to do this study again he would incorporate a parent component to compliment the principal, kindergarten teacher, and first grade teacher surveys done at that time.

This study was conceptualized as a research project to further Hitz's work and as a contribution to the literature as well as to the Iowa Department of Education and those responsible for kindergarten programming at the local district level. Understanding parent preferences and viewpoints and their relationship to kindergarten programming will provide a knowledge base for more informed decision making at both the state and local level.

Basic Assumptions of the Study

For the purpose of the study the following assumptions were made:

1. There are distinguishable differences between developmental and academic based kindergarten programming.
2. Kindergarten parents, elementary principals, and kindergarten teachers can recognize the differences between developmental and academic based kindergarten programming.
3. The instruments used identify and accurately describe approaches to kindergarten programming which could be characterized as developmental or academic in design.

Limitations

The following conditions may limit the results of this study:

1. The principal may select the teacher to participate rather than following the prescribed selection procedure.

2. The principal or teacher may select the parent to participate rather than following the prescribed procedure.

Definitions

For the purpose of this study the following terms were defined:

1. Academic based kindergarten: A kindergarten program characterized by the direct teaching of specific, discrete skills. The daily schedule is often broken into many small segments. The majority of the instructional materials are the kindergarten level of major publishers and often rely heavily on worksheets and workbooks. These skill-based kindergartens make limited use of concrete materials, have much paper-and-pencil oriented work, and offer little opportunity for conversation among children and between children and adults.

2. Developmental based kindergarten: A kindergarten program characterized by an environment that promotes learning activities characterized by age appropriateness and individual appropriateness. Goals emphasize maintenance and development of a positive disposition toward learning rather than the learning of discrete skills. Experiential learning and linguistic competence are of primary significance. Child-initiated activities, rather than teacher-driven activities, are allowed in expanded blocks of time.

Activities are designed to accommodate a wide range of abilities.

3. Kindergarten program: A public school educational program designed to serve primarily 5 and 6 year old students. Generally, but not always, considered the first year of a public school's regular educational program.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

As indicated in Chapter I, this study focused on the views of elementary principals, kindergarten teachers, and kindergarten parents regarding instructional practices at the kindergarten level. In order to provide effective kindergarten programs, interested persons must be aware of the views held by elementary principals, kindergarten teachers, kindergarten parents, and the professional literature relative to the issue of kindergarten programming.

This chapter reviewed the literature related to: (a) changing kindergarten programming; (b) academic vs. child-centered, developmental programming; (c) pressure toward academic programming; (d) source of pressure toward academic programming; and (e) parent influence.

Changing Kindergarten Programming

The first kindergarten (children's garden) was opened in Blankenburg, Germany in 1837 by Friedrich Froebel (Educational Research Service, 1986). Froebel, often referred to as "the father of kindergarten" (Woodward, 1979), believed that learning should be a process of human development. His theory centered upon natural growth, and the unfolding of inner to outer self. Froebel's educational philosophy for young children was based upon the nature of

the child, and emphasized sensory learning and creative self-activity.

When the kindergarten was brought to the United States by Froebel's followers, it was promoted as a social service to the poor (Educational Research Service, 1986). Wolf and Kessler (1987) credit Anna Bryan and Patty Smith Hill with establishing the trend for the development of the 20th century kindergarten in the United States. Hill was highly influenced by G. Stanley Hall's concept of human development as an unfolding process which should not be thwarted by a highly structured school program. As head of the Kindergarten Training Department of Teachers' College, Columbia University, Hill exercised great influence on the development of progressive kindergartens throughout the United States. The first United States kindergarten was a German-language private school established in Watertown, Wisconsin, in 1856 by Margarethe Meyer Schurz, a follower of Froebel (Cutright, 1981; Morrison, 1980). In 1860, Elizabeth Peabody established the first English-language kindergarten in the United States in Boston. The first public school kindergarten was founded in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1873 by Susan E. Blow with the cooperation of the St. Louis superintendent of schools, William T. Harris (Educational Research Service, 1989; Morrison, 1980).

In Iowa, private kindergartens were established in Des Moines and Cedar Rapids in 1876. The first public kindergarten in Iowa appeared in Des Moines in 1884. By 1900, 12 Iowa cities had established kindergartens. Among them were Cedar Rapids, Waverly, Dubuque, West Waterloo, and Webster City (Finkelstein, 1988).

The Froebel-influenced kindergartens of the late 1800s and early 1900s were play oriented (Goffin & Stegelin, 1992). They are often described as child-centered and characterized as pleasant, familiar experiences where five-year-olds spent half a day playing together in small and large groups. Students became familiar with the symbols of words and numbers and anticipated the first grade and the commencement of formal schooling. There was no need to hurry them into early academic achievement as there would be plenty of time for academic achievement later on (Connell, 1987; Seefeldt, 1985).

These kindergartens gave way to reformation during the 1920s. Dewey's progressive approach emerged during this time (Goffin & Stegelin, 1992). Wolf and Kessler (1987) further describe the early 20th century (1920s) progressive kindergarten movement as promoting a curriculum that was geared to social and emotional adjustment rather than academic achievement. These progressive early childhood educators advocated programs that included free and

organized play, stories, art, music, snacks, rest periods, and craft work.

Jean Piaget, a well-known European biologist, became interested in observing the behavior of his own children and devoted himself to studying their behavior. These unique studies, which began in the 1920s, employed a clinical-interview approach to child interaction (Cohen & Rae, 1987). He was interested in how children learn, and he continued his work by observing and interviewing many children. Piaget developed a theory about how children reason and learn. American educators learned of Piaget in the late 1950s and were influenced by his work (Read, Gardner, & Mahler, 1993).

Piaget concluded that young children learn by constructing their own knowledge. They do this by moving from one level of understanding to another, correcting earlier inaccurate perceptions. Constructivism is central to Piaget's theory. He felt that knowledge is not taught but must be constructed through an active mental process. Learning does not entirely depend on maturation, which is a biological process. In Piaget's constructivist model (also referred to as the Organismic, Cognitive-Developmental Model) learning comes from within if it is true understanding (Cohen & Rae, 1987; Read et al., 1993).

In constructing knowledge, Piaget believed that children move through four different stages. In the first stage, sensorimotor (0-2 years), intelligence is based on perceptual experiences. The second stage, preoperational (2-7 years), exhibits the onset of a sophisticated language system, egocentric reasoning, and thinking is perception bound. The third stage, concrete operational (7-10 years), shows thought being reversible and the ability to solve concrete problems develops. Also, conservation becomes inoperative, logical operations develop, and thinking is experience based. The fourth stage, formal operational (11 years to adulthood) is characterized by the formulation and testing of hypotheses, abstract thought, deductive reasoning, hypothetic-deductive reasoning, and thought no longer being perception bound. The work of Piaget has had significant influence on contemporary developmental programs (1960s to the present) including the High/Scope Project which is discussed later in this chapter (Cohen & Rae, 1987; Read et al., 1993).

Early concepts about development were expanded in the 1930s and 1940s by Arnold Gesell (Wolf & Kessler, 1987). Gesell's child development point of view is used to support present-day movements advocating a nondirective and child-centered approach to the education of young children. Gesell, a pediatrician, proposed a normative or

developmental approach in which child development was described as progressing through predetermined and inevitable stages. The child's intelligence and potential were thought to be fixed and determined at birth. A key element in the normative or developmental approach was the description of typical or normal behaviors exhibited at successive chronological ages.

Events during the 1950s and 1960s also affected the world of kindergarten. In 1957, the Soviets launched the first successful man made satellite, Sputnik, into outer space. The American public called on the public schools to improve upon and meet this challenge (Connell, 1987; Seefeldt, 1985). Schools responded by making curriculum more difficult and moving more difficult content lower in the grades. This change in the lower grades has remained relatively permanent (Connell, 1987; Shepard & Smith, 1989). Kagan (1990) describes kindergartens as having become increasingly sophisticated domains--miniature first grades.

The 1960s, influenced by the political and social arena of the Great Society, produced the era of the disadvantaged child and the deficit approach to providing early childhood education programs (Elkind, 1986a; Goffin & Stegelin, 1992; White, 1991). Programs such as Head Start and Home Start appeared on the early childhood education scene and helped propel academic content into kindergarten programs (Goffin &

Stegelin, 1992; Seefeldt, 1985). Other changes during the 1960s included the addition of cognition to the curriculum which previously emphasized social-emotional and physical development and the curricula debate between teacher-directed instruction and child-directed activities (Schweinhart, 1988).

A position statement by the Board of Directors of the International Reading Association on reading and writing in early childhood reflected a changing trend in preschool and kindergarten programs. The Board of Directors wrote in 1986: "Thus early childhood is an important time for learning about reading and writing. We are just beginning to appreciate the nature and significance of this learning" (International Reading Association, 1986, p. 82).

The Educational Research Service (1986) conducted a survey of 1,082 kindergarten teachers and found that 62% of them describe the focus of their programs as preparation with emphasis on academic readiness and social preparation for later schooling. Another 29% of the teachers in this national sample indicated that their programs extended beyond readiness to specific academic skills and achievement. Child development was the basic focus in only 5% of the kindergartens studied.

Hatch and Freeman (1988) completed an analysis of kindergarten report cards in 76 school districts in Ohio

which were selected in a random sample of 331 districts. Two of the four purposes of the study were to determine: (a) what kindergarten children were expected to know and be able to do, and (b) what philosophies of early childhood education or theoretical orientations were evident. The researchers found that the major academic emphasis was on work habits, reading readiness, and math readiness. Kindergartens in Ohio public schools, they found, were moving toward an academically oriented program heavily influenced by the behaviorist approach.

Smith's 1986 study of kindergartens in the state of California revealed a similar finding: "Although kindergarten classrooms in California offer both didactic and experiential activities, the number of times offered combined with the number of children participating show a preponderance of didactic experiences for each kindergarten child over time" (p. 2). Although the study indicated that "a pedagogical clash between developmental education and behavioristic programs in kindergartens across the nation" (p. 2) still exists, the evidence pointed to a significant change in program orientation in kindergartens (Smith, 1986).

Hitz and Wright (1988) completed a study in Oregon which found that kindergartens there were becoming more academic. Their study pinpointed two ironic situations.

First, kindergarten practitioners had adopted practices that most of them considered developmentally inappropriate. Second, though there was substantial agreement on what should not be done, commitment to the alternative developmental philosophy was incomplete.

Kindergarten has changed since being introduced to the United States in the 1800s. Few would argue that what is now taught and expected to be learned in many kindergartens is profoundly different from what it was two decades ago (Roberts, 1986). The shift from play and group adjustment oriented settings to kindergarten classrooms characterized by the direct teaching of discrete skills and specific expectations for achievement is being reinforced by recent calls for reform of public education (Elkind, 1986a). Holloman (1990) and Karweit (1988) characterized the major changes in kindergarten over the past 20 years as expanded enrollments, more academic curriculum, older students, and longer school days for kindergartners. Steinberg (1990) indicated kindergarten has become a skill based, academically oriented program. In most communities, it is no longer a part-time play-oriented introduction to school. It is real school. Children go for the whole day and spend a significant proportion of their time in academic pursuits. Individuals who support developmental programming have worked to include kindergarten as part of the early

childhood program (along with the primary grades) and to advocate for developmentally appropriate learning settings in kindergarten. Traditional early childhood educational practices are being challenged by those who advocate for academic success (May & Thompson, 1988), school readiness, standardized testing, and the inclusion of kindergarten classrooms in those efforts (Goffin & Stegelin, 1992). Educational reform across the country indicated a mixed picture of kindergarten education. Some states are developing kindergarten policy that is reflective of developmentally appropriate practice, while others define the kindergarten population within the confines of the larger elementary school (Kunesh, 1990). Kindergarten issues are at the forefront of the great educational reform debate and represent an enlarged and broadened philosophical struggle between the developmentalists on one hand and the academic/school readiness advocates on the other (Goffin & Stegelin, 1992). The kindergarten classroom is a place where these philosophical differences must be addressed.

This section of Chapter II has focused on the changes that have taken place in kindergartens since their beginnings. The next section focuses on two of the most discussed and debated issues currently facing kindergarten educators and advocates.

Academic Vs. Child-Centered, Developmental Programming

Determining appropriate program goals, content, structure, and instructional strategies are critical, substantive, and divisive issues in the field of early childhood education. Early childhood education programs are typically characterized as academic or developmental, depending on whether the focus is growth in academic skills or growth across a broad range of developmental areas, including the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional domains. Such labels are of little use, however, in determining program appropriateness. A high quality, early childhood program supports the growth of academic skills as an integrated part of the child's total development (Warger, 1988).

In academically focused programs, the teacher clearly defines the content of the day's academic sessions. Children are provided with a sequenced series of activities that gradually build competence in reading, language concepts, and understanding of basic number concepts. Instruction is deliberate and systematic, and children practice using newly taught concepts. These concepts and skills are further reinforced during the unstructured portions of the program.

Warger (1988) further stated that although teachers, not children, determine the objectives of each day's

systematic lesson, in good academic early childhood programs, children are actively involved. The majority of instruction is conducted in small groups, with a small amount of follow-up worksheet activities. Children constantly respond to teacher's questions and to each other's comments. They receive clear and immediate feedback on their responses and are provided with additional practice if necessary. Good academically focused programs also include time for play, socialization, and art.

Egertson (1987) viewed an academic kindergarten as usually characterized by the direct teaching of specific discrete skills, particularly in reading and math, which children are expected to master before going to first grade. The daily schedule is usually broken into many small segments, often because it is believed that children do not have a sufficient attention span to enable them to work longer at a task. The majority of the instructional materials used in these classes are the kindergarten level of major series in reading and math. Often teachers use additional workbooks for phonics.

If interest centers are used, they are designed primarily to teach specific skills. Time for active exploration in the arts, science, or social studies is limited. Other common characteristics of academic programs include: (a) limited availability of, or independent use

of, concrete materials; (b) much pencil-and-paper-oriented independent work; and (c) little opportunity for conversation among children and between children and adults (Egertson, 1987).

Kindergarten programs derived from a child development orientation may exhibit some of the characteristics of skill-based kindergartens. They are, however, driven by an entirely different philosophical viewpoint. The child-centered kindergarten does not base activities on the learning of discrete skills, but rather follows the mission of moving each child as far forward in his or her development as possible. Goals emphasize the maintenance and development of dispositions that will increase a child's desire to go on learning (Katz, Raths, & Torres, 1987).

The child-centered kindergarten offers experiences to children in a physical setting which has been carefully designed to increase the likelihood that these experiences will occur. Linguistic competence is a primary goal, and language experiences appropriate for each child's stage of literacy development underlie the entire curriculum. Conversations among children and between children and adults are viewed as important to the development of linguistic competence. Independence and responsibility are promoted by child-initiated activities and expanded blocks of time which allow children to finish projects. Materials are logically

organized, usually into several interest areas containing many options from which children self-select activities. The complexity of the materials range from easy to difficult, so that a wide range of abilities is accommodated (Egertson, 1987).

Proponents of the developmental, child-centered focus emphasize that their programs fit the way young children learn in general and accommodate the specific developmental needs, abilities, and interests of individual children (Warger, 1988). Knowledge about how young children learn is the key to operationalizing this standard. Duncan (1987) and Seefeldt (1985) argued that the kindergarten classroom must involve a curriculum that has play and language activities that accommodate different rates of child growth and development. Young children begin to construct meaning from concrete experiences with the materials, objects, and people in the world around them. They learn primarily through sensory experience and action like exploring, manipulating, creating, dismantling, and reconstructing things in their environment. Children grow cognitively and socially through collaborating with others, discussing their actions, restructuring and analyzing their actions to discover why and how, and applying what they are learning in ways that are personally meaningful. Knowledge and concepts develop through reconstruction of actions, activities, and

interactions. Whatever is taught or told to the young child is understood in direct proportion to the sum of that child's related experience (Cowles, 1974).

The learning activities within developmental programs are highly experiential, involving active exploration of the classroom environment, guided discovery, concrete experiences, and structured and unstructured play. Academic skills are developed within this framework, and a variety of formats are used for the learning activities, including independent activity and teacher-led, small group instruction (Kostelnik, 1992). The role of the child in such a program is active and initiating. The child chooses activities of interest and, with teacher guidance, works to plan, carry out, and evaluate learning activities (Day, 1988; Day & Drake, 1983, 1986).

Many leaders in early childhood education uphold the maturational or developmental point of view and oppose the behavioristic and academic trend in preschool and kindergarten education. For example, a leader of the Association for Childhood Education International writes:

The restlessness and anxiety of our times have been expressed in trying to force down in the curriculum learnings for which the child is neither physiologically nor psychologically ready and for which he sees no need. We have a mountain of evidence to prove that a perfectly "normal" child--I.Q. 100--cannot learn to read until he is about six years six months old. Any attempt to drive him may result in some evidence of reading but at an excessive cost in physiological and psychological damage and at great

risk of impairment of his interest in reading. When the time comes he can master it readily. (Hefferman, 1960, p. 316)

Elkind and Lyke (1975) also questioned approaches which result in increased emphasis on academic, cognitive development:

Despite the current emphasis upon cognitive training, most early education programs maintain their traditional child-centered and informal approach to classroom organization. At the elementary school level, however, the new emphasis on structural management systems for learning is being extended downward to the kindergarten classrooms. The result is that children from early education programs come bounding into kindergarten classrooms as autonomous creatures used to a lot of self-selected learning experience, only to be met by a classroom teacher who in many instances, must get them through a programmed learning experience. (p. 396)

Ames and Chase (1974) wrote, "One of the most sensible reasons for not pushing either the so-called cognitive development (thinking) of your preschooler or his other usual behaviors is that it doesn't work" (p. 3). These authors pointed out that "both research efforts, which have been extensive, and government efforts which have been expensive, to raise the intelligence quotients of bright or not so bright children, or to improve the reading ability of the non-reader have been disappointingly ineffective" (p. 3).

Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programming are rooted in the efforts of such pioneers as Friedrich Froebel, Patty Smith Hill, Maria Montessori, John

Dewey, Jean Piaget, and Erik Erikson (Cryan & Surbeck, 1979; Elkind, 1986a; National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1986; Schweinhart & Hohmann, 1992). Contemporary advocates of appropriate developmental approaches include individuals such as Lilian Katz, Constance Kamii, David Elkind, Lawrence Schweinhart, Carol Seefeldt, Bernard Spodek, David Weikart, and Daniel Walsh. Most notable among organizations advocating developmental programming is the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

The NAEYC (1986) has gone on record to support developmentally appropriate teaching strategies for teaching four and five year olds. Curriculum derives from many sources such as knowledge base of various disciplines, society, culture, and parents' desires. The degree to which both teaching strategies and the curriculum are developmentally appropriate is a major determinant of program quality. Developmentally appropriate programs are both age appropriate and individually appropriate. That is, the program is designed for the age group served and implemented with attention to the needs and differences of the individual children enrolled.

The NAEYC does not see knowledge as something that is given to children as though they were empty vessels to be filled. Children acquire knowledge about the physical and

social worlds in which they live through playful interaction with objects and people. Children do not need to be forced to learn. They are motivated by their own desire to make sense of their world. Teachers of young children should prepare environments that provide stimulating, challenging materials and activities for children. Then, teachers should closely observe to see what children understand and pose additional challenges to push their thinking further (Chaney, 1988). The NAEYC (1986) acknowledged that it is possible to drill children until they can correctly recite pieces of information such as the alphabet or the numerals from 1 to 20.

However, children's responses to rote tasks do not reflect real understanding of information. For children to fully understand and remember what they have learned, whether it is related to reading, mathematics, or other subject matter areas, the information must be meaningful to the child in context of the child's experience and development. Learning information in meaningful context is not only essential for children's understanding and development of concepts, but is also important for stimulating motivation in children. If learning is relevant for children, they are more likely to persist with a task and to be motivated to learn more. (NAEYC, 1986, p. 4)

Katz (1987, 1988a) has used the term disposition to learn. She contends that lectures and workbooks cannot instill curiosity and continuous interest, which are dispositions, or tendencies to respond to experiences in certain ways. Dispositions are learned mainly from being around people who have them, and they are strengthened if

learners get ample opportunities to express them. In Katz's words:

Dispositions can be thought of as habits of mind or tendencies to respond to certain situations in certain ways. Curiosity, friendliness or unfriendliness, bossiness, and creativity are dispositions or sets of dispositions rather than skills or pieces of knowledge. There is a significant difference between having writing skills and having the disposition to be a writer.

Dispositions are not learned through instruction or drill. The dispositions that children need to acquire or to strengthen--curiosity, creativity, cooperation, friendliness--are learned primarily from being around people who exhibit them. It is unfortunate that some dispositions, such as being curious or puzzled, are rarely displayed by adults in front of children. (Katz, 1987, p. 1)

Educators at every level want children to acquire and strengthen many different dispositions. Educators would like to see children disposed to be curious, interested, friendly, involved, absorbed, creative, cooperative, charitable, helpful, and hardworking. Katz (1988a) stated that "we now have evidence that the development of such inclinations, which we might collectively call the disposition to learn, can be hampered or halted by practices commonly used to stimulate learning in three other categories of learning" (p. 14) often referred to as knowledge, skills, and feelings. Knowledge is the facts, concepts, information, and stories children acquire primarily by having someone tell it, point it out, or teach it. Skills are relatively small units of action such as

social skills, handwriting skills, motor skills, and others too numerous to mention. Skills can be learned through trial and error, observations, instructions, directions, and coaching, and they can get better with drill and repetition. Feelings, according to Katz, are not goals in themselves, but by-products of interaction. When a child works with others, accomplishes something difficult or challenging, and contributes something to the life of the group, the child's increased feelings of self-esteem and self-confidence are a natural side effect. Katz contends conflict among the instructional practices appropriate in the different categories of learning does not mean that a choice must be made between the learning disposition and skills. Educators must:

Help the learner acquire the skills needed, and at the same time, strengthen the disposition to use those skills. There's little use in children having reading skills if they recoil at the sight of a book, but neither is there much use having the disposition to read if a child doesn't have the skills. (Katz, 1988a, p. 14)

Katz (1988a, 1988c) has argued that for a curriculum to be appropriate, it must consider both the normative and dynamic dimensions of development. The normative dimension tells us what children can and cannot do at different ages and stages. The dynamic dimension has to do with the effect of early experience on later functioning. "Just because children can do something does not mean that they should.

Four-year-olds can do rote counting, and five- and six-year-olds can work on worksheets and workbooks. But should they?" (1988a, p. 14).

Katz (1988a) has contended we now have evidence that some early childhood practices undermine the disposition to go on learning. She charges that the push-down phenomenon can:

Produce results that confirm the damaged disposition hypothesis. The push-down phenomenon involves children in types of learning activities for which they are not developmentally ready. It is usually a decontextualized academic activity, unrelated to life outside a particular lesson. The great danger of pushing this abstract, academic approach down into kindergarten is what she has termed the damaged disposition hypothesis: Introducing children to formal academic work too soon and too hard enables them to acquire skills, but does so at the expense of the disposition to use the acquired skills. (p. 15)

Katz has pointed to longitudinal studies of Miller and Bizzell (1987) which looked at students who were enrolled in various kinds of preschool and kindergarten programs. Academically-oriented programs did produce immediate gains in test results, but the long-term consequence was academic burnout in students followed through ninth grade and beyond. The disposition to go on learning--the most important outcome for education at every level--had been damaged. Willert and Kamii (1985) have supported the kind of teaching which enhances children's desire to read and write.

Katz (1987, 1988c), Seefeldt (1985), and Shepard and Smith (1986) have supported a learning environment for young

children that promotes interactive learning and educational play within an intellectually oriented approach in which children interact in small groups as they work together on projects. The younger the children are, the more informal the learning environment should be.

David Elkind (1986a, 1989) and Nancy Karweit (1992) have contended young children do not learn in the same ways as older children and adults, and that they learn best through direct encounters with their world rather than through formal education involving the inculcation of symbolic rules. He concluded that given the well-established fact that young children learn differently, the conclusion that educators must draw is a straightforward one: The education of young children must be in keeping with their unique modes of learning. He alleged that across the United States, educational programs devised for school-age children are being applied to the education of young children as well. Elkind (1986a) and Seefeldt (1985) have offered as evidence programs advocating children entering formal schooling at age four, extension of kindergarten to full days, nursery schools becoming prekindergartens, introduction of curricula (including workbooks and papers) to kindergartens which were once reserved for first grade, and writers encouraging parents to teach reading and math to infants and very young children.

Elkind (1986a) has termed these practices as the miseducation of young children. This miseducation is the harm that comes from exposing young children to formal instruction involving symbolic rules. Elkind feels we miseducate children whenever we put them at risk for no purpose. These risks are both short-and-long-term. The short-term risks derive from the stress, with all its attendant symptoms, that formal instruction places on children. The long-term risks, according to Elkind, are of at least three kinds: motivation to learn, intellectual, and social. In each case, Elkind feels the potential psychological risks of early intervention far outweigh any potential educational gain.

Elkind (1989) has contended the aim of developmental education is to produce thinkers who are creative and critical, and to create students who want to know, not students who know what adults want students to know. To promote this aim and to avert the miseducation of young children, Elkind (1986a) has encouraged educators to reassert the essential differences between early childhood education and formal education and to insist on its importance. This will involve reeducating parents, administrators, and legislators regarding what is sound education for young children.

Perhaps the best known and most often cited program supporting developmental practices for young children is the Perry Preschool Project based in Ypsilanti, Michigan, and the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation which oversees it. Schweinhart and Weikart (1986a, 1986b) have contended that high quality early childhood education such as the Perry Preschool Project can reach at risk children early and improve their chances for academic and lifelong success, with society benefiting as well. The Ypsilanti Perry Preschool Project in support of early childhood education offers basic findings which the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation says indicated high quality early childhood education enables families and communities to improve the life chances of their children. Long-term research shows that young adults, 19 years old at the time of follow-up, who attended a high quality preschool program made greater gains in education, employment, and social responsibility than similar young adults who did not attend preschool (Berrueta-Clement, Schweinhart, Barnett, Epstein, & Weikart, 1984).

In education:

Fewer classified as mentally retarded (15% vs. 35%)
(p. 26)

More completed high school (67% vs. 49%) (p. 31)

More attended college or job training program (38% vs. 21%) (p. 31)

In the world of work:

More held jobs (50% vs. 32%) (p. 47)

More support themselves by their own (or spouse's)

earnings (45% vs. 25%) (p. 49)
 More satisfaction with work (42% vs. 26%) (p. 53)

In the community:

Fewer arrested for criminal acts (31% vs. 51%) (p. 64)
 Fewer arrested for crimes involving property or
 violence (24% vs. 38%) (p. 64)
 Fewer minor offenses (2% vs. 15%) (p. 66)
 Lower birth rate (64 vs. 177 per 100 women) (p. 69)
 Fewer on public assistance (18% vs. 32%) (p. 49)

Schweinhart and Weikart (1986a) have further stated
 that these gains lead to substantial economic benefits for
 the community.

An investment in preschool returns \$7 for every \$1
 invested (based on one year at preschool after
 adjusting for inflation and discounting at 3% to
 estimate present value). High quality early childhood
 education helps children become successful adults. It
 also reduces major social and economic problems within
 a community. Preventing lifelong problems in high-risk
 children is a better community investment than
 attempting to correct them. (Berrueta-Clement, et al.,
 1984, p. 90)

Schweinhart and Hohmann (1992) have written that the
 High/Scope K-3 curriculum is a developmentally appropriate
 curriculum which views children as active learners who learn
 best from activities that they plan. The curriculum had its
 origins in the High/Scope Preschool Curriculum, developed by
 David Weikart and his colleagues in the 1970s and used in
 High/Scope's landmark Perry Preschool Program. The K-3
 curriculum is designed for five- to nine-year-olds, and was
 developed in the context of public school expectations for
 the early elementary grades. It is based on the child
 development ideas of Jean Piaget and the curriculum views

children as active learners who learn best from activities that they themselves plan and carry out. The teacher's role is to observe, support, and extend children's activities as appropriate. The teacher arranges activity centers, maintains a daily routine that provides active learning experiences in all areas, asks questions, and engages children in key experiences that help them learn to make choices, solve problems, and actively contribute to their own intellectual, social, and physical development. This curriculum differs from typical K-3 teacher-directed instruction by emphasizing the child as a self-initiating active learner. Schweinhart (1988) has written that he believes child-initiated activity is very important. In writing about his views he quotes developmental psychologist Constance Kamii, "the authoritarian teachers and the rewards and punishment inherent in direct instruction prevent children from developing autonomy" (cited in Schweinhart, 1988, p. 7).

Walsh (1991) has summarized what many developmentalists advocate in the following points: (a) children are intrinsically motivated to make sense of the world, (b) making sense out of the world is a very active process, (c) learning is a social activity, and (d) unevenness is the rule in development.

Another group of early childhood professionals contend that a kindergarten program for economically disadvantaged children must include effective teacher-directed academic instruction as well as child development experiences. Douglas Carnine, Linda Carnine, Joan Kamp, and Paul Weisberg (cited in Warger, 1988) have suggested that while developmental activities meet some of the immediate needs of economically disadvantaged children, effective academic instruction anticipates the children's needs for competence and confidence in later grades. This intervention, called "direct instruction," focuses on students' academic competence. Direct instruction approaches to teach low-income children were developed based on a didactic approach using the behavior modification principles of B. F. Skinner (Peck, McCraig, & Sapp, 1988). In this approach, curriculum developers program instruction for the teacher and children, breaking down academic skills into small incremental steps of increasing difficulty. Teachers use verbal praise or token rewards for correct responses. Advocates of direct instruction contend most five-year-olds from a low-income background enter school with far fewer skills and concepts than their more advanced peers. Delaying academic instruction for disadvantaged students because they are not ready only widens the gap. Narrowing this performance gap requires early, intensive intervention.

Kindergarten is viewed as a critical transition from a child-centered preschool to a content-centered first grade.

Carnine, Carnine, Kamp, and Weisberg (cited in Warger, 1988) stated a typical direct instruction kindergarten program intervention begins with an assessment of students' skills and knowledge to ensure that instruction begins at the appropriate level. Flexible ability group activities are composed of short segments that focus on specific skills or combinations of previously taught skills. Teachers explain, demonstrate, and ask questions for 15 to 20 minutes in each subject area. These short segments closely approximate the attention span of kindergartners. The lessons provide children with a great deal of active participation. Direct instruction can take as little as one hour a day. The academic content of a direct instruction kindergarten program focuses mainly on the areas of language arts and mathematics.

Carnine, Carnine, Kamp, and Weisberg (cited in Warger, 1988) have offered research by Weisberg in Alabama, findings from Seattle, and the Direct Instruction Follow Through results as evidence of direct instruction's effectiveness. The results reflect the following diverse benefits of well-implemented direct instruction programs: "achievement gains, IQ gains, increased placement in gifted programs, reduced retention, reduced absenteeism, reduced dropout

rates, and increased acceptance to college" (p. 89). These advocates of direct instruction have suggested the benefits are probably one-fifth of what is possible if students were to receive effective instruction after 2nd or 3rd grade. That children from low-income backgrounds benefit from beginning direct instruction in kindergarten is evident across a variety of measures. These supporters have contended that the benefit is evident, both at the end of 3rd grade and in high school. Becker (1977), Bereiter and Kurland (1981), Gersten and White (1986), Pearson (1984), and Roehler and Duffy (1981) have also provided support for the educational benefits of direct instruction.

Direct instruction curriculum materials (e.g., Mastery Reading, Mastery Spelling, DISTAR Language, DISTAR Arithmetic) are designed to engage the teacher and students in frequent verbal exchanges (Warger, 1988). The teacher gives a brief explanation, possibly models a skill, and then asks a series of quick questions to make sure the students understand the explanation. The teacher moves immediately to guided practice, again with frequent questions that prompt the steps that constitute the skill or strategy. Finally, students work independently. This process of modeling, guided practice, and independent practice works with various subject area content. Advocates of direct instruction such as Carnine, Carnine, Kamp, and Weisberg

(cited in Warger, 1988) have added that: (a) direct instruction teacher's guides specify the exact wording of explanations and questions that tend to work well with a wide variety of students, (b) direct instruction responds to the time dilemma facing kindergarten teachers by having academic instruction done in small groups in all subject areas, (c) assessment involves both identifying children who particularly need intensive academic instruction and requires ongoing monitoring to identify students who are not learning successfully or at an acceptable rate, (d) direct instruction can work in diverse situations, and (e) direct instruction can benefit students in lasting ways.

A specific example of direct instruction is the Bereiter-Englemann Model for direction instruction (Cryan & Surbeck, 1979; Peck, et al., 1988). Described as an academic preschool program, this model was originally developed in the early 1960s by Carl Bereiter and Siegfried Englemann. This program was based upon the idea that academic readiness in children does not just develop while you wait. Englemann felt that the maturationist practice of following children's inclinations and patterns in a play oriented program is inappropriate--particularly for disadvantaged children. The Bereiter-Englemann Model was one of several selected for both Head Start and Follow Through Planned Variations. Englemann and Bereiter have

offered their model as an alternative to other teaching methods and classroom philosophies. They assume that every child can achieve well in school with adequate instruction; and conversely, that children fail in school as the direct result of poor instruction. This program places heavy emphasis on a highly structured, teacher-directed format to teach specific skills in reading, language, and arithmetic. Commercially available instructional materials called DISTAR were developed by Englemann and form the core curriculum for the model. The lessons develop skills based upon instructional objectives arranged in a hierarchy of successive complexity. Testing of children's mastery is frequent. Groups, organized according to level of accomplishment, spent 20-30 minutes on each of the curriculum areas. The teacher follows very specific directions as to what to say and what to do. The importance of reinforcement is stressed and the program focuses on getting children to respond properly, given the right stimulus. The curriculum calls for rapid-fire repetition, heavy work demands, and frequent total-group verbal responses. The academic activity periods are interspersed with music and art instruction.

Thus, two different views or models (developmental, child-centered and academic, teacher-directed) of educating the child have each influenced the content and structure of

kindergarten programs and ideas about the appropriate age to start school.

Research on the efficacy of academically and developmentally focused programs has indicated that both types can produce significant gains in IQ score, academic achievement, and general school success (Gersten & Keating, 1987; Schweinhart & Weikart, 1986a). The implication is that no one approach or program type is best. Various aspects of both cognitively oriented, developmental programs and direct instruction programs can be found in the federally supported Head Start programs in each state. Positive findings from studies on both sides of the instructional issue validate the importance of programs like Head Start and other early intervention programs, especially for the disadvantaged (Cohen & Rae, 1987).

Children learn best through a variety of approaches that are chosen to meet their individual needs. A wide range of effective prekindergarten and kindergarten programs have in common the following components:

1. Small group, total group, and individual activities.
2. Both teacher-directed and child-initiated activities.
3. Time allotted each day for skills groups based on children's abilities.

4. Language development opportunities--including both speaking and listening comprehension (Warger, 1988, p. 107).

The above list is intended to serve as a set of basic elements of effective programs. If a program does not require much work in the area of language development, or if it relies exclusively on individualized one-on-one activities without any small group activities, there is a good chance the program is unbalanced and should be revised. Day and Drake (1983; 1986) have described a developmental and experiential program which is an example of the application of these common components. In it children spend one-third of each day on independent activities planned by the teacher, one-third in teacher-directed small group instruction, and one-third in free choice activities.

Cryan and Surbeck (1979) have developed a similar list of commonalties across the variety of early childhood programming options. They would, however, add the value of parent involvement in early childhood program development. Parent involvement is seen as a key ingredient leading to parent participation, input, and shared decision-making which all help assure success of children in school.

Barnett and Escobar (1987) have acknowledged that various types of programs have demonstrated immediate and short-term effects on a range of child and family outcomes

for handicapped and disadvantaged children and a few studies provide evidence of long-term efficacy. They cautioned, however, that because the number of sound longitudinal studies is uncomfortably small the nature and extent of the long-term effects of early intervention are not clear. Interpretation of the evidence, therefore, is highly controversial.

Regardless of the approach which is ultimately chosen, Steinberg (1990) has asked schools to consider a basic operating assumption. She stated that, "the operating assumption in many schools is that the child must be made ready for the curriculum" (p. 9). If this is true in a school, it has tremendous impact on how a child encounters the school and its curriculum.

This section of Chapter II has discussed the issues of academic and developmental programming at the kindergarten level. The next section focuses on pressure toward more academic programming in kindergarten programs.

Pressure Toward Academic Programming

One of the most dramatic changes that has occurred in kindergarten is the change from what was originally called a children's garden to what some early childhood contemporaries call a hothouse (Elkind & Lyke, 1975; Gallagher & Coche, 1987) or a pressure cooker (Seefeldt, 1985). The change most talked about is change to increased

academics in the kindergarten. Many writers address this pressure toward a more academic kindergarten program and see it as a major issue in kindergarten programming.

Kamii (1985) observed that most teachers trained in the child development tradition believe that some of their children are not yet ready to learn how to read. Yet these teachers feel compelled to give phonics lessons simply because they are expected to produce acceptable test scores, and this pressure is working downward even to some classrooms of 4-year-old children. Meisels (1991) has stated we have ended up with chaos in the garden of children by:

Assuming that the school curriculum and organization is monolithic and unchangeable. Rather than tampering with the system, and insisting that the academic curriculum of the later grades be flexible enough to accommodate the varied needs of students developing at different rates, we've tampered with entry ages and our children's developing psyches. (p. 32)

Mitchell (1990) has written that schools generally "ignore what's known about the way children learn and still red shirt kindergartners and subject first through fourth graders to a barrage of standardized tests" (p. 25). High school practices many times dictate what goes on in elementary schools. In a special Newsweek report (April 17, 1989), Kantrowitz and Wingert quoted Ernest Boyer as having said "we have made remarkable breakthroughs in understanding the development of children, the development of learning,

and the climate that enhances it. However, too often what we know in theory and what we're doing in the classroom are very different" (p. 51). Intense, early pressure can take an early toll.

Schweinhart (1988) has suggested the emphasis on educational reform has placed a new focus on performance and the pressure to expect academic achievement in kindergarten has increased. Schweinhart has cited David Elkind as "having argued emphatically that children are harmed by such pressure, both in education and in American society as a whole" (p. 10). Technological advances have given children more access to information, making them appear more sophisticated. Elkind has strongly suggested that the way young children relate to the world has not changed. Seefeldt (1985) has described the children's garden as becoming a pressure cooker where two workbooks in a 2 1/2 hour session, with a maximum of 10 minutes of play, are not uncommon. She continued by saying that at four- and five-years-old, children are ready for school, but not for academic pressure. Elkind (1986b) has indicated the social dynamics behind the pressure to place young children in education programs appropriate for school-age children now are clear. He pointed out that many changes in our society have not been accompanied by adequate provisions for out-of-home child care and schools are looked upon to provide this.

Katz (1988a) has written that educators are in a dilemma. The findings of research, which refute early academic emphases, put educators in this dilemma. The dilemma is whether to do what is in the long-term interests of children or do what is right for their career. Connell (1987) has pointed out that too often today's kindergarten teachers are issued, against their better judgment, the workbooks to go with a specific K-6 or K-8 program adopted by their school or district. The results of this are often watered-down first grade tasks because the individuals who write such programs often have little or no current teaching experience in today's kindergartens.

Goffin and Stegelin (1992) have listed as one of three kindergarten practices being subjected to scrutiny "a renewed concern among educators regarding the discrepancy between current practices and the unique ways in which young children learn" (p. xi). Schweinhart (1988) has felt Froebel's vision of kindergarten as a children's garden in which preschoolers play is just as valid as it was in the early 1800s. According to Schweinhart, the Gesell Institute expressed the general opinions of the early childhood education field when it declares that "most five-year-olds are not ready for academic kindergartens and the developmental kindergartens should serve all children, not just those ill-prepared for academic competition" (p. 10).

Children are not unaffected by this move toward more academic kindergartens. Bridgman (1989) related that research has shown that when children, especially the very young, are forced to learn concepts before they are ready they may suffer from stress, inattention, or a lack of self-esteem. They may even experience physical problems such as nervous disorders, poor eyesight, and inadequate neurophysical coordination. David Elkind (1986a) pointed to the possibility of long-term motivational, intellectual, and social problems as risks of inappropriate early childhood education. Katz (1988c) saw the main risk associated with the early introduction of academic work as undermining children's dispositions to continue using skills and being learners. She suggested the challenge for educators is to help the learner with both the acquisition of skills and the strengthening of desirable dispositions.

Educators, kindergarten teachers in particular, are feeling pressured toward academically oriented kindergarten programs. Vann (1991) found that more and more kindergarten teachers are finding themselves defending their school's kindergarten curriculum and themselves as kindergarten teachers. Two-thirds of the teachers interviewed in a recent study of Ohio kindergartens (Hatch & Freeman, 1988) said that what they do each day is in direct conflict with their beliefs about what young children need. Teachers seem

to feel they have little choice but to step up formal instruction. The explanations that the Ohio informants offered for the shift to increasingly academic kindergartens clustered into five categories: (a) change in children, (b) expectations of parents, (c) accountability to the district and state, (d) proliferation of published materials, and (e) expectations of society.

Educators in an Oregon study (Hitz & Wright, 1988) expressed similar concerns over a perceived increased emphasis in academic skill development in Oregon kindergartens. The most striking response was the agreement--reported by 61% of the principals, 64% of the kindergarten teachers, and 72% of the first-grade teachers--that emphasis on academic skill development had increased. Only 2% or less of all groups indicated a decreased emphasis on academics. These figures are consistent with results found in a similar survey conducted in British Columbia (Mayfield, 1981). Ironically, Oregon teachers and principals favored the developmental statements over the formal academic ones when asked which they felt were preferred approaches for kindergarten programming.

The Ohio and Oregon studies clearly pointed out the conflict kindergarten educators experience between what they see happening in kindergarten education (increased academic emphasis) and their preference for a more developmental

approach to kindergarten programming. Educators are feeling pressured to move their kindergarten programs toward an academic focus at the same time their judgment supports developmental programming.

The National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (1987) have urged kindergarten teachers and administrators to guard the integrity of effective, developmentally appropriate programs for young children and to not yield to pressure for acceleration of narrowly focused, skill-based curricula. Karweit (1988) summarized some of the concern for the future of early childhood programs by pointing out that if early childhood educators perceive a trend toward the hothousing of four-year olds (Hills, 1987) and believe that hurrying children in this way is injurious (Elkind, 1986a), then appropriate and effective alternatives to such practices need to be presented. She argued the concept of developmental appropriateness must underlie all activities, strategies, and lessons. Otherwise, current pressures are likely to push and shape the preprimary program until it is little more than a pint-sized first grade.

This section has discussed pressure for more academic programming in kindergarten. The next section discusses sources of this pressure toward more academic programming at the kindergarten level.

Source of Pressure Toward Academic Programming

The exact source of pressure for academic kindergarten programming is unclear. The literature has yielded several possible sources. This downward shift of academic expectations into lower and lower grades is a source of concern for parents, teachers, and administrators.

The possible sources responsible for the move toward more academic kindergartens clustered into roughly 11 categories. They are:

1. Expectations of the school district (Hatch & Freeman, 1988; Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1989; Steinberg, 1990).
2. Expectations of post-kindergarten teachers (Bryant, Clifford, & Peisner, 1991; Steinberg, 1990).
3. Expectations of parents (Bredenkamp, 1987; Bridgman, 1989; Bryant et al., 1991; Elkind, 1986a; Hatch & Freeman, 1988; Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1989; Katz, 1987, 1988a; Schultz & Lombardi, 1989; Vann, 1991; Wolf & Kessler, 1987).
4. Community expectations (Bridgman, 1989; Bryant et al., 1991).
5. Administrative expectations (Bryant et al., 1991; Kamii, 1985; Katz, 1988a; Schultz & Lombardi, 1989).

6. Accountability/test scores (Hatch & Freeman, 1988; Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1989; National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1988; O'Neil, 1988).
7. Legislatures/policy-makers (Bridgman, 1989; Hatch & Freeman, 1988; Katz, 1988a; Schultz & Lombardi, 1989).
8. Back-to-basics movement (Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1989; Willert & Kamii, 1985).
9. Societal changes (Elkind, 1986a; Hatch & Freeman, 1988).
10. Published materials (Connell, 1987; Hatch & Freeman, 1988).
11. Changes in children including preschool and media affects (Bridgman, 1989; Elkind, 1986b; Hatch & Freeman, 1988; Katz, 1988b; Wolf & Kessler, 1987).

Parents were the single most cited possible source of this pressure to move kindergartens toward an academic focus. Hatch and Freeman (1988) found parents to be one of the five most commonly cited explanations offered for the shift to increasingly academic kindergarten programs. Katz, Raths, and Torres (1987) in their publication stated "The intense academic 'push' in the community (studied) was consistently attributed to the parents" (p. 16). The parents were also described as lacking understanding about the concept of developmental readiness and the screening procedures. Interestingly, the same publication cited

concern from parents about the regular kindergarten program. Parent concerns about the regular kindergarten curriculum included:

1. Pressure for academic achievement is too great for the children.

2. Classes are too competitive, too rigorous.

3. Children should not be expected to read by the end of kindergarten.

4. Regular kindergarten should be more like the optional kindergarten.

5. Children who had a year in the optional kindergarten would not be challenged when they went on to attend the regular kindergarten.

6. Many children have had as many as two years of preschool before entering kindergarten and the curriculum may not be responsive to this.

7. A child who is held back from entering kindergarten might find it insufficiently challenging when starting a year later than the normal age (p. 60). This publication clearly pointed out differences in perception concerning parental pressure for more academic kindergarten programming.

The NAEYC has suggested virtually all parents want the best for their children. They want them to get off to a good start so they will succeed in life. However, most

parents do not fully understand how young children learn. Sue Bredekamp (1987) has suggested that parents make negative comments about developmentally appropriate practice and pressure teachers into inappropriate practices for several reasons, all motivated by wanting the best for their children. The reasons were: (a) economic pressure, (b) parents' own needs for self-esteem, (c) grandparents' expectations, and (d) competition between siblings and cousins. Additionally, parents are often bombarded by the media with conflicting and confusing messages about what is appropriate for young children and what they should do to help their children learn. Children's exposure to the media also plays a part. Because children have access to expanded information about the world through the media, parents assume that they fully understand what is presented and that they are ready for more abstract learning. Finally, early childhood programs themselves are extremely diverse with many emphasizing highly structured, academic curriculum that other early childhood professionals would find inappropriate. The array of choices is confusing to parents deciding about a program for their child.

David Elkind (1986a) has suggested some parents may feel guilty about leaving their young off-spring in out-of-home care and place their youngster in a high-pressure academic program.

If the child were not in such a program, the parents tell themselves, he or she would fall behind peers and would not be able to compete academically when it is time to enter kindergarten. From this perspective, high-pressure academic preschool programs are for the young child's own good. (p. 634)

A major study conducted by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and published in March of 1989 found that about 20% of the kindergarten classes observed met the criterion set as developmentally appropriate even though kindergarten teachers and principals surveyed rated themselves as quite knowledgeable about developmentally appropriate practice for 5-year-olds. Bryant, Clifford, and Peisner (1989) reported that principals and teachers both think that social skills development is the most important aspect of kindergarten, yet their observations showed the social skills area in need of the most improvement. Kindergarten principals and kindergarten teachers were asked to indicate sources of influence on their kindergarten program using a 1 to 5 Likert style sources of influence scale. On this scale a 1 represented "not at all" and a 5 represented "very much influence." Principals rated parents 3.18 and teachers rated parents 3.16 on this scale. The ratings given parents by principals and teachers placed them between "somewhat" and "much" on the influence scale.

This section has focused on sources of the pressure for more academic programming in kindergarten. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the importance of parent

influence and the role of parents in kindergarten programming.

Parent Influence

It is clear that parents are seen as an influence upon kindergarten programming. Several authors (Bredekamp, 1987; Bridgman, 1989; Bryant et al., 1989; Elkind, 1986a; Hatch & Freeman, 1988; Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1989; Katz, 1987; Katz, 1988a; Schultz & Lombardi, 1989; Vann, 1991) have suggested parents as being one significant source of pressure for more academic kindergartens. Conversely, Katz et al. (1987), in the only study found which actively sought the views of parents on this matter, found that the parents in her study were concerned about too strong an academic focus in their child's kindergarten program. There appears to be a significant amount of perceptual data from school personnel, but a major lack of information gained from the parents themselves. It is difficult to gain a clear picture of parent views of kindergarten programs when actual data from parents is lacking.

The importance of the role of parents in programming for early childhood and kindergarten is well supported. Few would argue against the notion that parents are a child's first teacher and the parent has tremendous impact on the child's attitude toward and performance at school.

The literature abounds with individual writers and organizations supporting the importance of parent involvement in early programming. Becher (1986) has indicated parent involvement is critical in facilitating children's development and achievement and in preventing or remedying educational and developmental problems. She went on to say research reports indicate that parents involved in child care and educational programs develop positive attitudes about themselves, increase self confidence, and often enroll in programs to enhance their personal development. They also are more positive about school and school personnel than uninvolved parents, help to gather community support for educational programs, and become more active in other community activities. Cummings (1990) found that in high-quality early childhood programs, there is a frequent exchange of information between parent and school about the child, parenting, education, and community services. Parents take an active part in their child's program and make decisions about their child's learning. The National Association of Elementary School Principals (Sava, 1990) has stated "parent involvement is of basic importance to the success of all elementary school programs, and for an early childhood program it is crucial and should be a high priority for the principal" (p. 21). Parents play a continuous and crucial role in their children's

development according to Binkley (1989) and, "if you can win their support, all in the school community--children, teachers, administrators--gain" (p. 16). Epstein (1987) would remind us that researchers, practitioners, and policy makers consistently rank parent involvement high among the components of effective schools.

Two decades of research on family environments show that children have an advantage in school when their parents continuously support and encourage their school activities. Kahn (1987) echoed Epstein's view of research and said all of the reform literature in the last two years affirms the central role of parents in their children's education. She quoted former Education Secretary Bennett as having said, "The single best way to improve elementary education is to strengthen the parents' role in it, both by reinforcing their relationship with the school and by helping and encouraging them in their own critical job of teaching the young" (p. 10).

The NAEYC's (1988) position statement on parent-teacher relations advocated that teachers view parents as partners in the educational process. Teachers have time for periodic conferences with each child's parents. Parents' visits to school are welcomed at all times, and home visits by teachers are encouraged. Teachers listen to parents, seek to understand their goals for their children, and are

respectful of cultural and family differences. Allen and Freitag (1988), Bartusek (1991), Bennett (1986), Bridgman (1989), Brown (1989), Kunesh (1990, 1991), Mitchell (1990), Molnar (1991), Moles (1982), Moore (1991), Schultz and Lombardi (1989), and Sevener (1990) added similar support for the importance of parent involvement. Vandergrift and Greene (1992) have reminded us that improving parent involvement among at-risk populations is one of the most challenging tasks facing educators. For many of these parents, school brings back memories of their own failure. Some feel uncomfortable, embarrassed, even guilty when they walk into a school. Others do not feel valued by the school.

Changing family life further impacts the level of parent involvement with their child's school. The structure and function of the American family continue to undergo significant changes, and educators must be prepared to deal with the implications of increasing divorce rates, teenage pregnancies, and single-parent homes--all of which create emotional difficulties that children carry with them into their classrooms (Rubin & Borgers, 1991). The changes in the composition of the American family, as well as shifts in the roles and responsibilities of family members, tend to weaken the family support system essential for children's healthy development. This places a greater burden on the

schools to provide children with a stimulating, supportive environment that may not be available in their homes. Zimiles (1986) provided similar views relative to divorce, never married mothers, single parent homes, and changing roles. He emphasized that the "swirl of social change has altered our ideas about the role of early education and has added a measure of instability and stress to the lives of children and their caretakers" (p. 205). According to Zimiles, "early education has come to serve many purposes but, as it expands, there is the danger that the special needs of young children will be overlooked both by professionals and parents" (p. 205).

Several writers pointed out changes brought about by the growing number of middle class women in the work force. More than 50% of U.S. women are now employed outside the home, and it is estimated that by the year 2000 between 80% and 90% of women will be in the work force. This change has tremendous impact on the need for out-of-home care and the purpose of early programs for children. Special consideration must be given when schools work to involve working families. Some of these parents may see parent involvement as an additional pressure. Employed parents have different needs than parents who are not working. Child care services can support the relationship between employed parents and their children through flexible

scheduling and times for parent visits, parent education, formal and informal communication, and informal gatherings (Bronfenbrenner, 1985; Elkind, 1986a; King, 1990; Mitchell, 1989; Schweinhart & Weikart, 1986a).

Accommodating the various family structures and changes is important to successful parent involvement in their child's school experiences. Coleman (1991) and Kagan (1989) have suggested that in order to reform and improve education significantly, schools must reach beyond the schoolhouse doors to families, to communities, and to other social institutions that serve children and their families. She further indicated we cannot separate care and education, and we must honor parents.

Several approaches, models, how-to lists, and suggestions have been developed in an effort to help schools work toward increasing parent involvement. Studies of early education programs initiated in the 1960s (Winter, 1985) showed that working with the family, rather than bypassing the parents, is the most effective way of helping children get off to the best possible start in life. Kagan (1990) took this further and suggested that America get parents ready to parent. "While we tacitly acknowledge that parents are the first and most important teachers of children, America has done little to support parents in that role" (p. 277). She applauded the corporations and states (most

notably, Missouri) that are providing parenting education and offering support to families with young children.

Powell (1986) reviewed the findings of selected studies of parent education and support programs and reports:

1. Parent education programs have strong short-term effects on children.
2. Programs have immediate positive effects on maternal behavior, parental competencies in reading infant cues.
3. Use of positive and facilitative language interactions with the child.
4. Open and flexible childrearing attitudes.
5. Awareness of roles as educators. (p. 48-49)

There was, however, no convincing evidence that one particular program was significantly more effective than another. He suggested that the process of implementing a program may be as important as the curriculum content. Perhaps the primary functions of a curriculum are to stimulate parents to look more closely at their relationships with their children and to encourage interaction among parents and between parents and program staff.

Henderson, Marburger, and Ooms (1987) have identified the following seven principles as being essential to a parent-school partnership.

1. Every aspect of the school climate is open, helpful, and friendly.
2. Communications with parents are frequent, clear, and two-way.
3. Parents are treated as collaborators in the educational process, with a strong complementary role to play in their children's school learning and behavior.

4. Parents are encouraged, both formally and informally, to comment on school policies and (on some issues) to share in the decision making.
5. The school recognizes its responsibility to forge a partnership with all families in the school, not simply those most easily available. This includes parents who work outside the home, divorced parents without custody, and families of minority race and language.
6. The principal and other school administrators actively express and promote the philosophy of partnership with all families.
7. The school encourages volunteer participation from parents and the community at large. (pp. 12-13)

One of the most discussed parent programs is Missouri's New Parents as Teachers (NPAT), also known as Parents as First Teachers. Several authors (Kennedy, 1991; Meyerhoff & White, 1986; Nichols, 1987; White, 1987, 1991; Wilson, 1991) suggested this as a program worthy of study and consideration for implementation. The model program was a cooperative effort of the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and four school districts. The Danforth Foundation of St. Louis contributed funds for consultative services. The goal of the Parents as First Teachers Program was to demonstrate that education can get children off to the best possible start in school--and life--through a partnership with the home that begins at the onset of learning. Parents as First Teachers offers the following services from the third trimester of pregnancy until the child reaches the age of three (Winter, 1985):

1. Information and guidance before the baby is born to help first-time parents prepare themselves psychologically.

2. Information about things to look for and expect in a growing child, and guidance in fostering language, cognitive, social, and motor skill development.
 3. Periodic checkups of the child's educational and sensory (hearing and vision) development to detect possible problems or handicaps. If serious problems are discovered help is sought from other agencies or professionals.
 4. A parent resource center, located in a school building, which provides a meeting place for parents and staff, and facilities for child care during parent meetings.
 5. Monthly hour-long private visits in the home or at the center to individualize the education program for each family.
 6. Monthly group meetings with other new parents to share experiences and discuss topics of interest.
- (p. 23)

Personnel at each district site included a district administrator who provides overall program supervision in addition to other duties, a teacher/director, a parent educator, and a part-time clerk-typist. The teacher/director, who is also a parent, was responsible for program planning and materials development, and shares responsibility for home visits and group meetings with the parent educator. Both were trained in child development and early childhood education, and were skilled in working with adults.

Each of the sites also included an advisory committee made up of health care and social service professionals, as well as representatives of religious and civic organizations. These committees helped to build a broad base of community awareness, involvement, and support. A

state supervisory committee provided guidance to the program.

Parents as First Teachers seems to have worked. Parent responses to questionnaires and telephone interviews by an independent evaluation team indicated that families highly value the services they are receiving and are proud of their children's accomplishments. The best evidence of parent enthusiasm for the program may well have been the low attrition rate. Families openly credited the project with reducing the stress and increasing the pleasure of child-rearing (Winter, 1985).

According to Burton White (1987), consultant to the project, the findings strongly suggested that education has to start at the birth of a child. "Project children (all first-borns) performed at the 75th percentile on standardized tests of mental processing, and at the 85th percentile on comparable tests of school-related achievement, at three years of age" (p. 16). White felt these findings, when combined with the overwhelming evidence of our severely limited capacity to remediate linguistic and intellectual deficits from the third birthday on, a new direction for education was indicated. The four NPAT pilot programs ran from 1982 to 1985 and hundreds of subsequent ones have been initiated in Missouri since.

The first of the national educational goals has stated that by the year 2000 all children will come to school ready to learn. Parents play an absolutely critical role in accomplishing this goal. A review of the literature has clearly shown that parents are perceived as an influence on programming at the kindergarten level and that parents are valuable partners in the educational process. Boyer (1992) and Kagan (1992) have suggested a healthy start for children and empowered parents as essential ingredients to achieving that all children will come to school ready to learn national goal. Acknowledging the important role of parents and recognizing their impact on kindergarten curriculum builds a strong case in support of finding out what parents view as appropriate programming for their kindergarten child.

Chapter II reviewed the literature related to:

(a) changing kindergarten programming; (b) academic vs. child-centered, developmental programming; (c) pressure toward academic programming; (d) source of pressure toward academic programming; and (e) parent influence. In summary, the literature indicated that kindergarten programs have changed and become more academic than in the past. Advocates for both academic and developmental programs were cited and discussed. The research further indicated that kindergarten teachers are feeling pressured toward more

academic programming in their classrooms, often against their better judgment. Several possible sources of this pressure toward academic programming at the kindergarten level were cited. Most notable was a perception of kindergarten parents as one of the strongest sources of pressure for academic programming. Chapter II concluded with a discussion of the importance of parent participation and involvement with their child's kindergarten program.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the study was to determine the preferences and investigate the relationships of these preferences among elementary principals, kindergarten teachers, and kindergarten parents regarding instructional practices at the kindergarten level in selected Iowa public elementary schools. Elementary principals, kindergarten teachers, and kindergarten parents were asked to complete a questionnaire which provided insight to their preferences on developmental and academic instructional practices at the kindergarten level.

In this chapter descriptions are given of the study's procedures and instrumentation, population and sample, and data analysis.

Procedures and Instrumentation

In the spring of 1986, the Oregon Department of Education under the direction of Randy Hitz, conducted a survey of all elementary principals in Oregon who were identified as having kindergarten programs in their schools. All kindergarten teachers and a random sample of first grade teachers were also surveyed. One purpose of their survey was to determine teacher and administrator views regarding kindergarten curriculum.

This study was designed to replicate selected portions of the principal and kindergarten teacher surveys of the Hitz study (see Appendix B) and to extend his work by determining kindergarten parent views regarding kindergarten curriculum. Hitz's original survey instruments were subjected to a content validity check by a panel of experts and found to be acceptable. Members of this panel included: JoAnn Brewer from Northern Arizona, Christine Chaille from Portland State, Amy Driscoll from Portland State, and David Wright from Western Oregon State College. Only two survey items were modified slightly. Items #1 and #9 of the first section of each survey were modified to their present form after consultation with Hitz and reviewing Bredekamp's (1987) NAEYC guidelines for developmentally appropriate practice. Hitz felt his original items were unclear and misleading for the responder. The two changes were designed to render more accurate responses. The attached survey instruments (see Appendix C) closely match relevant portions of the Oregon surveys.

The three questionnaires used in this study (see Appendix C) were designed using Likert-type scales. Each questionnaire had the following parts:

1. Twelve statements designed to elicit responses showing a preference for developmental or academic kindergarten programming.

2. A General Information section which provided a description of the responding populations.

In addition, the principal and teacher questionnaires attempted to determine parent/guardian influences on the kindergarten curriculum and first grade influences on the kindergarten curriculum. The parent questionnaire attempted to determine whether parents felt there should be changes in their child's current kindergarten program. Questionnaires were mailed in late April so that parents would have experienced the vast majority of their child's kindergarten year.

The selected elementary principal population (selection procedures are explained later in this chapter under the heading Population and Sample) was forwarded packets of information. Each packet included: (a) one copy of the "Questionnaire for Elementary Principals"; (b) one copy of the "Questionnaire for Kindergarten Teachers"; (c) five copies of the "Questionnaire for Kindergarten Parents"; (d) cover letters to the principal, teacher, and parents explaining the importance of the study, selection procedures, directions for completing the questionnaires, and survey return procedures (see Appendix A); and (e) return mailing materials. To insure anonymity, the materials had no identifying marks other than a return

address label. The return address label appeared only on the principal's return mailing materials.

Participating principals were asked to complete the "Questionnaire for Elementary Principals" and see that the appropriate questionnaires were given to the selected kindergarten teacher and kindergarten parents. Upon return of the completed, confidential teacher and parent questionnaires to the principal, he/she was to return the principal, teacher, and parent questionnaires to the researcher in the envelopes provided.

Population and Sample

The eligible population of elementary schools included those elementary schools listed in the 1990-91 school year Iowa Educational Directory provided by the Iowa Department of Education as being a public elementary school, having an elementary principal, and having a kindergarten program. There were 800 schools fitting this description across the seven enrollment categories. A total of 217 elementary schools were included in the initial mailing. This was 27% of the eligible pool. The sample size of 217 was determined after reviewing Ary, Jacobs, and Razavieh (1985) and Borg and Gall (1983). Ary et al. has suggested that one include at least 30 subjects in a sample since this number permits the use of large sample statistics. In descriptive research, however, Ary et al. suggested the use of large

samples, particularly when the population of interest is heterogeneous. Borg and Gall supported the suggestion of Seymour Sudman (1976) that for survey research there be at least 100 subjects in each major subgroup whose responses are to be analyzed. Considering the fact that this survey research had three major subgroups (principals, teachers, parents), it was decided to follow Sudman's guidelines. Sudman's number of 100 was roughly doubled by this researcher to allow for up to 50% non-return rate. The actual rate of return was 68% (148 out of 217). Thus, the number of responses was well above Sudman's recommended minimum of 100 subjects in each major subgroup. The actual number of parent respondents was much higher because five times more parents than principals and teachers were surveyed. A breakdown of sampling by enrollment categories is shown in Table 1.

Systematic sampling procedures (Borg & Gall, 1983) were used to determine the 217 Iowa public elementary schools which provided the elementary principals, kindergarten teachers, and kindergarten parents. The systematic sample was designed to represent generalizable state wide input from all seven enrollment categories. The systematic sample of Iowa public elementary schools was selected using the following procedure. The Iowa Department of Education provided the researcher with the public and non-public

Table 1

Sampling by Enrollment Category

Enrollment Category	Number of Eligible Elementary Schools	Percent of Eligible (800) Elementary Schools	Number Selected	Percent of Elementary Schools (217) Selected for Study
0 - 249	46	6%	15	7%
250 - 399	85	11%	28	13%
400 - 599	102	13%	34	16%
600 - 999	114	14%	28	13%
1000 - 2499	162	20%	40	18%
2500 - 8999	131	16%	32	15%
9000 & over	160	20%	40	18%
Totals	800	100%	217	100%

1988-89 address file size-code order computer generated list which divided all Iowa school districts into seven enrollment size categories. After removing the non-public elementary schools and elementary schools not having a kindergarten program or elementary principal, the researcher determined how many schools in each enrollment category would be selected for the sample in order to have proportional representation from each enrollment category. For example, in the first enrollment category (less than 250 enrollment) the researcher systematically selected every third public elementary school from the computer generated

list as that is what was necessary to provide a proportional representation of the first enrollment category. The same procedure was used with the remaining six enrollment categories. Enrollment categories two and three also had every third school systematically selected. Enrollment categories four, five, six, and seven had every fourth school systematically selected.

The principal sample was a true systematic sample as explained above. However, this researcher could not control the random selection of teachers and parents. The principal was entrusted to follow prescribed procedures (see Appendix A).

Data Analysis

In the Oregon study, separate analysis and descriptive summaries of the data were completed for each group and reported as percentages. Likewise in this study, separate analysis and descriptive summaries of the data were completed and reported as percentages for each group: principals, kindergarten teachers, kindergarten parents. Conclusions were drawn from all three sets of data based on the reported percentages.

Additionally, this study completed cross group comparisons utilizing appropriate inferential statistical analysis. This cross group comparison was conducted on the items 1-12 common to all three questionnaires which were

designed to elicit responses showing a preference for developmental or academic kindergarten programming.

These 12 items made up the first section of all three questionnaires. Analysis of variance, F value, was used for these items which were responded to by all three groups. In addition, the F test was also used on the summative group mean scores to determine whether the three group means were significantly different from each other at the .05 level of significance. The F test of statistical significance was used on the null hypotheses which correspond to items 1-12 and the summative group mean scores. These 13 null hypotheses were listed in Chapter I.

The summative score was determined by adding individual responses for items number 1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 12 which were indicative of developmental preference. Items number 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11 were indicative of academic preference and were added after being assigned reverse scoring value (i.e., a response of 5 was computed as a 1 and a 4 was computed as a 2). The strongest developmental score would be 60 while the strongest academic score would be 12.

The summative score allowed an overall comparison of the three groups relative to their preference for developmental or academic approaches to kindergarten programming. Individual item scores were viewed as a way of explaining what each group felt to be especially important.

This study also provided descriptive statistics for all other parts of the questionnaires. Descriptive statistics are provided as follows:

1. The principal and teacher questionnaires each had a section of response items 1-8 entitled "In your school over the past few years, has there been an increase, a decrease, or no change of emphasis in each of these following aspects of your kindergarten program as a result of PARENT/GUARDIANS?" These items are all reported as descriptive statistics in an effort to summarize and describe principal and teacher response to parent/guardian impact on the kindergarten program.

2. The principal and teacher questionnaires each had a section of response items 1-8 entitled "In your school, over the past few years, has there been an increase, a decrease, or no change of emphasis in each of these following aspects of your kindergarten program as a result of the FIRST GRADE CURRICULUM?" These items are all reported as descriptive statistics in an effort to summarize and describe principal and teacher response to first grade curriculum impact on the kindergarten program.

3. The parent questionnaire had a section of response items 1-8 entitled "As a parent or guardian of a kindergarten child do you feel there should be an increase, a decrease, or no change of emphasis in each of these

following aspects of your child's current kindergarten program?" These items are all reported as descriptive statistics in an effort to summarize and describe parent responses to their child's current kindergarten program.

4. Each of the three groups had a "General Information" section designed to yield demographic information about each group. These items provided background information which described the populations. Therefore, descriptive statistics were used to summarize and describe each of the three groups.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

One purpose of this study was to investigate and identify the views held by elementary principals, kindergarten teachers, and kindergarten parents regarding instructional practices at the kindergarten level. Additionally, the relationships among the views of elementary principals, kindergarten teachers, and kindergarten parents were examined. The views of elementary principals, kindergarten teachers, and kindergarten parents were determined and compared using relevant portions of the Hitz (1986) Oregon Department of Education questionnaires which were designed for use with elementary principals and kindergarten teachers. These questionnaires were adapted for use with kindergarten parents.

Prerequisites for school participation in the study were as follows: Schools must (a) currently have an elementary principal, (b) currently have a kindergarten program, and (c) be a public school.

Using the criteria for school eligibility, a population of 800 schools was identified using the 1990-91 school year Iowa Educational Directory provided by the Iowa Department of Education. A sample size of 217 elementary schools was arrived at using systematic sampling procedures across all seven district enrollment categories. All principals in

this population were mailed materials for participation in the study. Of the population, 132 principals (61%) returned completed survey material.

Kindergarten teachers participating in the study were selected by the participating principals using procedures described in Chapter III of this study. Of the 217 kindergarten teachers in the sample, 137 kindergarten teachers returned surveys for a response rate of 63%.

Kindergarten parents participating in the study were selected by the elementary principal or kindergarten teacher using procedures described in Chapter III of this study. Of the 1,085 kindergarten parents in the sample, 524 kindergarten parents returned surveys for a response rate of 48%.

Demographic Data

A total of 132 elementary principals returned completed surveys. The demographic data yielded by the study (see Appendix C) for the 132 principals were tabulated and are presented in Table 2.

The demographic data on principals revealed that the majority (76%) of participating principals were male. Of the participating principals, 24% were female. The vast majority of all these principals (85%) fall into the age category 41-51+ years of age. The age category with the largest percentage was the 51 years and over category.

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics of Participating Principals--n = 132

Variable	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
<u>Age:</u>		
20-25	0	(0)
26-30	1	(1)
31-35	5	(4)
36-40	13	(10)
41-50	51	(38)
51+	62	(47)
<u>Gender:</u>		
Male	100	(76)
Female	31	(24)
<u>Experience As Elementary Principal:</u>		
1 year	7	(5)
2 years	8	(6)
3 years	10	(8)
4-5 years	12	(9)
6-10 years	21	(16)
11+ years	74	(56)
<u>Level of Most Experience:</u>		
Preschool/Kindergarten	3	(2)
Grades 1-3	25	(19)
Grades 4-6	54	(41)
Other	50	(38)
<u>Years of Elementary Teaching Experience:</u>		
0	18	(14)
1 - 5	44	(33)
6 - 10	35	(27)
11 - 15	20	(15)
16 - 20	9	(7)
21+	5	(4)

(table continues)

Variable	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
<u>Highest Degree Held:</u>		
Baccalaureate	0	(0)
Masters	97	(74)
Specialist	27	(21)
Doctorate	6	(5)
<u>Certificates and Endorsements Held: (As reported)</u>		
Educational Administration and Elementary Education	82	(62)
Educational Administration Reading and Educational Administration	34	(26)
Educational Administration and K-12	5	(4)
Educational Administration and Secondary Education	3	(2)
Reading and Secondary Education	2	(2)
Elementary Education	1	(1)
Educational Administration and Educational Administration	1	(1)
Educational Administration and Science	1	(1)
<u>How Well Prepared for Working with Kindergarten Programs:</u>		
Not at all	32	(25)
Somewhat	63	(49)
Adequately	24	(18)
Very well	8	(6)
Exceptionally	3	(2)
<u>Involved in Hiring Kindergarten Teacher:</u>		
Yes	105	(81)
No	25	(19)
<u>Specialized Training in Developmentally Appropriate Practice:</u>		
Yes	71	(55)
No	59	(45)

(table continues)

Variable	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
<hr/>		
<u>District Size:</u>		
0 - 249	13	(10)
250 - 399	13	(10)
400 - 599	27	(20)
600 - 999	14	(11)
1000 - 2499	29	(22)
2500 - 8999	22	(16)
9000 and over	14	(11)

Correspondingly, the data showed the majority of principals (56%) having 11 or more years experience as an elementary principal.

The highest percentage of principals (41%) reported having had teaching experience at grades 4-6 with 38% reporting teaching experience at the K-6, middle, high school, K-8, or special education levels. A majority of principals (60%) had from 1-10 years of elementary teaching experience.

The master's degree was, by far, the most common degree held with 74%. The most common combination of certificates and endorsements held was educational administration and elementary education. This combination was held by 62% of principal respondents. No responding principal listed a certificate or endorsement in early childhood.

Almost half (49%) of the principals described themselves as "somewhat" prepared for working with kindergarten programs. Eighty-one percent have been involved in hiring a kindergarten teacher and over half (55%) report having received specialized training in developmentally appropriate practice. The specialized training ranged from workshops, courses, seminars, inservices, and conferences to personal reading.

A total of 137 kindergarten teachers returned completed surveys. The demographic data yielded by the study for the 137 kindergarten teachers were tabulated and are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Demographic Characteristics of Participating Teachers--

n = 137

Variable	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
<u>Age:</u>		
20-25	3	(2)
26-30	12	(9)
31-35	22	(16)
36-40	21	(15)
41-50	51	(38)
51+	27	(20)

(table continues)

Variable	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
<u>Gender:</u>		
Male	0	(0)
Female	134	(100)
<u>Years Taught at Elementary, Excluding Kindergarten:</u>		
1 - 5	47	(42)
6 - 10	26	(23)
11 - 15	13	(12)
16 - 20	9	(8)
21+	17	(15)
<u>Years Taught at Kindergarten Level:</u>		
1	7	(5)
2	3	(2)
3	5	(4)
4 - 5	16	(12)
6 - 10	38	(28)
11+	66	(49)
<u>Highest Degree Held:</u>		
Baccalaureate	114	(85)
Masters	18	(13)
Specialist	3	(2)
Doctorate	0	(0)
<u>Certificates and Endorsements Held: (As reported)</u>		
Reading	1	(1)
Reading and Early Childhood	1	(1)
Reading and Elementary Education	2	(2)
Early Childhood	13	(10)
Early Childhood and Special Education	1	(1)
Early Childhood and Elementary Education	29	(21)
Elementary Education	64	(47)
Elementary Education and Reading	4	(3)
<u>(table continues)</u>		

Variable	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Elementary Education, Early Childhood, and Reading	4	(3)
Elementary Education and Special Education	3	(2)
Elementary Education, Special Education, and Reading	2	(2)
Elementary Education, Special Education, and Early Childhood	2	(2)
Elementary Education and Music	1	(1)
Elementary Education and Art	1	(1)
Elementary Education and Social Studies	1	(1)
Educational Administration	1	(1)
Educational Administration, Elementary Education, Early Childhood, and Reading	1	(1)
<u>Specialized Training in Developmentally Appropriate Practice:</u>		
Yes	97	(73)
No	35	(27)
<u>How Well Prepared to Teach Kindergarten:</u>		
Not at all	4	(3)
Somewhat	46	(35)
Adequately	38	(28)
Very well	38	(28)
Exceptionally	8	(6)
<u>District Size:</u>		
0 - 249	13	(9)
250 - 399	16	(12)
400 - 599	27	(20)
600 - 999	15	(11)
1000 - 2499	29	(21)
2500 - 8999	21	(15)
9000 and over	16	(12)

The demographic data on teachers revealed that all (100%) of the participating teachers were female. The largest percentage (38%) of these teachers fall within the 41-50 age category. Of these teachers, 58% were age 41 and over.

Considering classroom teaching experience, 42% of these teachers have 1-5 years teaching experience at elementary levels other than kindergarten. Forty-nine percent have taught at the kindergarten level for 11 or more years.

The baccalaureate degree was the highest degree held by 85% of the responding teachers. The most often reported single certificate held was elementary education. This was cited by 47% of the teachers. The most often reported combination of certificate and endorsement held was early childhood and elementary education. This combination was held by 21% of the teachers responding. A vast majority (73%) reported having specialized training in developmentally appropriate practice. This specialized training included workshops, courses, seminars, inservice, and personal reading.

Teachers were split as to how well prepared they felt they were by their college or university. Thirty-five percent felt "somewhat" prepared, 28% felt "adequately" prepared, and 28% felt "very well" prepared to teach kindergarten.

A total of 524 kindergarten parents returned completed surveys. The demographic data yielded by the study for the 524 kindergarten parents were tabulated and are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Demographic Characteristics of Participating Parents--n = 524

Variable	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
<u>Age:</u>		
20-25	20	(4)
26-30	103	(20)
31-35	208	(41)
36-40	136	(26)
41-50	51	(9)
51+	2	(0)
<u>Gender:</u>		
Male	52	(10)
Female	461	(90)
<u>Gender of Child in Kindergarten:</u>		
Male	265	(51)
Female	250	(49)
<u>Other Children in Public School:</u>		
Yes	302	(59)
No	214	(41)

(table continues)

Variable	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
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Highest Degree Held:

High school diploma	161	(32)
Advanced trade/technical training	151	(30)
Baccalaureate	159	(30)
Masters	28	(6)
Specialist	3	(1)
Doctorate	7	(1)

Child Attended Preschool:

Yes	450	(87)
No	66	(13)

Specialized Training in Developmental Appropriate Practice:

Yes	114	(23)
No	391	(77)

District Size:

0 - 249	43	(8)
250 - 399	61	(12)
400 - 599	99	(19)
600 - 999	63	(12)
1000 - 2499	110	(21)
2500 - 8999	77	(15)
9000 and over	67	(13)

The demographic data on parents revealed that the majority of those participating in the study (90%) were female. Ten percent of the responding parents were male. The largest percentage (41%) of these parents fell within the 31-35 age category.

The gender of kindergarten child was predictably about half male (51%) and half female (49%). A little over half of the parents (59%) reported having other children in public school.

There was no clearly typical highest degree earned. However, three categories each showed approximately 30% similarity. A high school diploma was the highest degree earned by 32% of the parents. Advanced trade/technical training was reported by 30% of the parents. Finally, a baccalaureate degree was reported as the highest degree earned by 30% of the parents.

A resounding 87% of the parents report their kindergarten child having attended some kind of preschool. However, only 23% of the parents reported having any specialized training in developmentally appropriate practice.

Views Held by Principals, Teachers, and Parents

In order to identify the views held, participating principals, teachers, and parents were asked to complete the modified Hitz (1986) Oregon Department of Education questionnaire (see Appendix C). The first section (12 items) of each group's questionnaire was used to determine each group's view of the 12 items. Additionally, the 12 items were treated in such a manner so as to yield a summative, developmental score for group mean comparison

across all 12 items. The scored questionnaires provided a comparison between group means on each of the 12 items as well as a comparison between group means on the 12 items in total. Hitz's modified (1986) questionnaire (see Appendix C) produced the group means and standard deviations presented in Table 5 for the 12 items and summative, developmental score.

Table 5

Views Held By Principals, Teachers, Parents

Item		Principal n = 132	Teacher n = 137	Parent n = 524
1. Devote at least half of their teaching time to child-chosen activities.	Mean	3.18	3.59	2.57
	S.D.	1.12	1.14	.98
2. Assume that children are motivated to learn without tangible rewards.	Mean	3.48	3.61	2.90
	S.D.	1.16	1.09	1.12
3. Show more interest in how children work and play than in what they produce.	Mean	3.90	4.10	3.48
	S.D.	.87	.87	1.02
4. Provide substantial workbook and other seat work activity in order to prepare children for first grade.	Mean	1.86	2.03	3.14
	S.D.	.89	1.13	1.19

(table continues)

Item		Principal <u>n</u> = 132	Teacher <u>n</u> = 137	Parent <u>n</u> = 524	
5.	Administer reading readiness tests to all kindergarten children early in the school year.	Mean S.D.	1.87 .98	1.71 1.02	2.62 1.16
6.	Involve all children in formal reading instruction.	Mean S.D.	2.22 1.07	2.25 1.27	3.30 1.14
7.	Encourage dramatic play as a means of enhancing cognitive and social development.	Mean S.D.	4.27 .76	4.58 .55	3.86 .82
8.	Require completion of all tasks and activities.	Mean S.D.	2.76 1.10	3.13 1.13	3.44 1.08
9.	Provide a period of time for free play each day.	Mean S.D.	4.57 .72	4.71 .60	4.42 .73
10.	Use privileges, grades, prizes, and other rewards to motivate children.	Mean S.D.	2.58 1.05	2.80 1.02	3.30 1.05
11.	Require all children to take part in every activity.	Mean S.D.	2.45 .96	2.51 .95	3.26 1.10
12.	Provide children with considerable open-ended materials and experiences.	Mean S.D.	4.36 .82	4.56 .64	4.08 .84

(table continues)

Item		Principal $\underline{n} = 132$	Teacher $\underline{n} = 137$	Parent $\underline{n} = 524$
Summative, developmental score	Mean	3.84	3.89	3.19
	S.D.	.46	.49	.48

Note. Likert scale used to determine mean scores was 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree.

Analysis of variance, F value, was computed for each item 1-12 and the summative, developmental score (see Appendix D for summary). The F test was used to determine whether the three group means were significantly different from each other at the .05 level of significance. Then, a multiple comparison procedure was used to determine which pairs of groups had statistically significant different means. The Scheffe' multiple comparison procedure was used.

The analysis of variance of item 1, devote at least half of their teaching time to child-chosen activity, indicated a significant difference among group means, $F(2, 777) = 59.36, p = .001$. The Scheffe' multiple comparison procedure indicated that principals and teachers were significantly more in agreement with the statement than parents and teachers were significantly more in agreement than principals.

The analysis of variance of item 2, assume that children are motivated to learn without tangible rewards, indicated a significant difference among group means, $F(2, 780) = 29.39, p = .001$. The Scheffe' multiple comparison procedure indicated that principals and teachers were significantly more in agreement with the statement than parents.

The analysis of variance of item 3, show more interest in how children work and play than in what they produce, indicated a significant difference among group means, $F(2, 783) = 26.62, p = .001$. The Scheffe' multiple comparison procedure indicated that principals and teachers were significantly more in agreement with the statement than parents.

The analysis of variance of item 4, provide substantial workbook and other seat work activity in order to prepare children for first grade, indicated a significant difference among group means, $F(2, 783) = 98.63, p = .001$. The Scheffe' multiple comparison procedure indicated that principals and teachers were significantly more in disagreement with the statement than parents.

The analysis of variance of item 5, administer reading readiness tests to all kindergarten children early in the school year, indicated a significant difference among group means, $F(2, 783) = 50.49, p = .001$. The Scheffe' multiple

comparison procedure indicated that principals and teachers were significantly more in disagreement with the statement than parents.

The analysis of variance of item 6, involve all children in formal reading instruction, indicated a significant difference among group means, $F(2, 783) = 74.39$, $p = .001$. The Scheffe' multiple comparison procedure indicated that principals and teachers were significantly more in disagreement with the statement than parents.

The analysis of variance of item 7, encourage dramatic play as a means of enhancing cognitive and social development, indicated a significant difference among group means, $F(2, 784) = 51.83$, $p = .001$. The Scheffe' multiple comparison procedure indicated that principals and teachers were significantly more in agreement with the statement than parents and teachers were significantly more in agreement than principals.

The analysis of variance of item 8, require completion of all tasks and activities, indicated a significant difference among group means, $F(2, 784) = 21.49$, $p = .001$. The Scheffe' multiple comparison procedure indicated that principals and teachers were significantly more in disagreement with the statement than parents and principals were significantly more in disagreement than teachers.

The analysis of variance of item 9, provide a period of time for free play each day, indicated a significant difference among group means, $F(2, 785) = 9.93, p = .001$. The Scheffe' multiple comparison procedure indicated that teachers were significantly more in agreement with the statement than parents.

The analysis of variance of item 10, use privileges, grades, prizes, and other rewards to motivate children, indicated a significant difference among group means, $F(2, 783) = 32.17, p = .001$. The Scheffe' multiple comparison procedure indicated that principals and teachers were significantly more in disagreement with the statement than parents.

The analysis of variance of item 11, require all children to take part in every activity, indicated a significant difference among group means, $F(2, 783) = 48.53, p = .001$. The Scheffe' multiple comparison procedure indicated that principals and teachers were significantly more in disagreement with the statement than parents.

The analysis of variance of item 12, provide children with considerable open-ended materials and experiences, indicated a significant difference among group means, $F(2, 784) = 22.68, p = .001$. The Scheffe' multiple comparison procedure indicated that principals and teachers

were significantly more in agreement with the statement than parents.

The analysis of variance of the summative, developmental score indicated a significant difference among group means, $F(2, 761) = 170.73$, $p = .001$. The Scheffe' multiple comparison procedure indicated that principals and teachers were significantly more in agreement with the developmental statements than parents.

In summary, the analysis of variance for each item 1-12 as well as the summative, developmental score indicated a significant difference among group means. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected for all items 1-12 and the summative, developmental score.

Considering multiple comparison procedure results (see Table 6), the principal-parent and teacher-parent pairs of groups were significantly different on items 1-8, 10-12, and the summative, developmental score. The principal-teacher pair was significantly different on items 1, 7, and 8. The teacher-parent pair was significantly different on item 9.

Table 6

Pairs of Groups Having Significantly Different Means
(Scheffe')

Item	Pairs of Groups*
1. Devote at least half of their teaching time to child-chosen activities.	Principal-parent Teacher-parent Principal-teacher
2. Assume that children are motivated to learn without tangible rewards.	Principal-parent Teacher-parent
3. Show more interest in how children work and play than in what they produce.	Principal-parent Teacher-parent
4. Provide substantial workbook and other seat work activity in order to prepare children for first grade.	Principal-parent Teacher-parent
5. Administer reading readiness tests to all kindergarten children early in the school year.	Principal-parent Teacher-parent
6. Involve all children in formal reading instruction.	Principal-parent Teacher-parent
7. Encourage dramatic play as a means of enhancing cognitive and social development.	Principal-parent Teacher-parent Principal-teacher
8. Require completion of all tasks and activities.	Principal-parent Teacher-parent Principal-teacher
9. Provide a period of time for free play each day.	Teacher-parent

(table continues)

Item	Pairs of Groups*
10. Use privileges, grades, prizes, and other rewards to motivate children.	Principal-parent Teacher-parent
11. Require all children to take part in every activity.	Principal-parent Teacher-parent
12. Provide children with considerable open-ended materials and experiences.	Principal-parent Teacher-parent
Summative, developmental score	Principal-parent Teacher-parent

Note. Principal $n = 132$, Teacher $n = 137$,
Parent $n = 524$
* $p < .05$.

Principal and Teacher Views Regarding
Parent/Guardian Influence

The second part of each principal's and teacher's questionnaire (see Appendix C) attempted to determine whether principals and/or teachers had seen parents/guardians as having an impact on their school's kindergarten program. The principals and teachers were asked to note an increase, decrease, or no change in their kindergarten program when considering eight items relevant to kindergarten programming. The descriptive statistics on

principals and teachers from this part of the study were tabulated and are presented in Table 7.

The descriptive data from principals revealed little perceived parent/guardian impact on the kindergarten program. Principals indicated no change as their highest percentage response to six of the eight items. Principals indicated they had not seen change in academic skills development (53%), affective development (50%), motor skills development (61%), teacher-directed activities (65%), child-selected activities (63%), or play (70%) which they attribute to the impact of parents/guardians on the program. Principals split evenly between "no change" and "increase" (45% each) concerning social skills development. The only item principals indicated an "increase" was parent involvement (53%). Overall, principals did not view parents/guardians contributing to change in their kindergarten programs concerning these eight items.

The descriptive data on teachers also revealed little perceived parent/guardian impact on the kindergarten program. Teachers indicated "no change" as their highest percentage response to seven of the eight items. Teachers indicated they had not seen change in academic skills development (58%), affective development (55%), social skills development (51%), motor skills development (68%), teacher-directed activities (62%), child-selected activities

Table 7

Principal and Teacher Views Regarding Parent/Guardian
Influence

Item	Principal $\bar{n} = 132$		Teacher $\bar{n} = 137$	
	Number of Respondents	Percent of	Number of Respondents	Percent of
1. Academic skills development				
Decrease	21	(16)	16	(12)
No Change	70	(53)	79	(58)
Increase	35	(27)	32	(24)
Don't know	6	(4)	8	(6)
2. Affective development				
Decrease	7	(5)	5	(4)
No Change	65	(50)	73	(55)
Increase	50	(38)	45	(34)
Don't know	9	(7)	9	(7)
3. Social skills development				
Decrease	8	(6)	5	(4)
No Change	59	(45)	68	(51)
Increase	59	(45)	55	(41)
Don't know	6	(4)	5	(4)
4. Motor skills development				
Decrease	3	(2)	2	(2)
No change	81	(61)	91	(68)
Increase	39	(30)	34	(25)
Don't know	9	(7)	7	(5)
5. Teacher-directed activities				
Decrease	22	(17)	24	(18)
No change	85	(65)	84	(62)
Increase	19	(14)	21	(16)
Don't know	5	(4)	6	(4)

(table continues)

Item	Principal $\underline{n} = 132$		Teacher $\underline{n} = 137$	
	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
6. Child-selected activities				
Decrease	0	(0)	4	(3)
No change	82	(63)	74	(55)
Increase	42	(32)	50	(37)
Don't know	7	(5)	7	(5)
7. Play				
Decrease	5	(4)	3	(2)
No change	91	(70)	84	(62)
Increase	29	(22)	40	(30)
Don't know	5	(4)	8	(6)
8. Parent involvement				
Decrease	6	(5)	15	(11)
No change	52	(39)	45	(33)
Increase	70	(53)	70	(52)
Don't know	4	(3)	5	(4)

(55%), or play (62%) as a result of the influence of parents/guardians. Like the principal group, the only item teachers indicated an "increase" was parent involvement (52%). Overall, teachers did not view parents/guardians contributing to change in their kindergarten programs concerning these eight items.

The principal and teacher groups closely paralleled one another on these eight items. Each group saw little overall parent/guardian influence on their programs with the exception of the item concerning parent involvement. Both principals and teachers (53% and 52% respectively) reported an "increase" in parent involvement.

Principal and Teacher Views Regarding Influence by
First Grade Curriculum

The third part of each principal's and teacher's questionnaire (see Appendix C) attempted to determine whether principals and/or teachers had seen the first grade curriculum as having an impact on their school's kindergarten program. The principals and teachers were asked to note an increase, decrease, or no change in their kindergarten program when considering eight items relevant to kindergarten programming. The descriptive statistics on principals and teachers from this part of the study were tabulated and are presented in Table 8.

The descriptive data from principals revealed little perceived impact on the kindergarten program as a result of the first grade curriculum. Principals indicated "no change" as their highest percentage response on all eight of the items. Each item had at least 50% of the principals indicating "no change." Affective development and social skills development were marked 44% and 42% respectively as

Table 8

Principal and Teacher Views Regarding Influence by First
Grade Curriculum

Item	Principal $\bar{n} = 132$		Teacher $\bar{n} = 137$	
	Number of Respondents	Percent of	Number of Respondents	Percent of
1. Academic skills development				
Decrease	18	(14)	14	(10)
No Change	66	(51)	58	(43)
Increase	43	(33)	59	(43)
Don't know	2	(2)	5	(4)
2. Affective development				
Decrease	1	(1)	1	(1)
No Change	67	(52)	89	(67)
Increase	57	(44)	33	(25)
Don't know	4	(3)	10	(7)
3. Social skills development				
Decrease	1	(1)	2	(2)
No Change	70	(55)	84	(62)
Increase	54	(42)	42	(31)
Don't know	3	(2)	7	(5)
4. Motor skills development				
Decrease	1	(1)	1	(1)
No change	87	(68)	97	(72)
Increase	33	(26)	28	(20)
Don't know	7	(5)	9	(7)
5. Teacher-directed activities				
Decrease	16	(12)	19	(14)
No change	72	(56)	73	(54)
Increase	39	(30)	38	(28)
Don't know	2	(2)	5	(4)

(table continues)

Item	Principal n = 132		Teacher n = 137	
	Number of Respondents	Percent of	Number of Respondents	Percent of
6. Child-selected activities				
Decrease	1	(1)	8	(6)
No change	85	(66)	80	(59)
Increase	38	(29)	42	(31)
Don't know	5	(4)	5	(4)
7. Play				
Decrease	11	(9)	11	(8)
No change	89	(69)	94	(70)
Increase	22	(17)	22	(17)
Don't know	6	(5)	7	(5)
8. Parent involvement				
Decrease	3	(2)	4	(3)
No change	74	(58)	96	(72)
Increase	47	(37)	23	(17)
Don't know	4	(3)	10	(8)

having "increased." These were the only two other response categories to be rated over 40% by principals. While not a majority, these two percentages are large enough to merit consideration. A significant number of principals see affective development and social skills development as being impacted by the first grade curriculum. Overall, principals did not view the first grade curriculum contributing to

change in their kindergarten programs concerning these eight items.

The descriptive data from teachers also revealed little perceived impact on the kindergarten program as a result of the first grade curriculum. Teachers indicated "no change" as their highest percentage response on seven of the eight items. With the exception of academic skills development, teachers rated all other items over 54% "no change." Academic skills development was evenly split between "no change" (43%) and "increase" (43%). While not a majority, the highest percentage response included "increase." This appears to be an area that a significant number of teachers see the first grade curriculum having an impact on their kindergarten program. With the possible exception of academic skills development, teachers did not view the first grade curriculum contributing to overall change in their kindergarten programs concerning these eight items.

The principal and teacher groups closely paralleled one another on these eight items. Principals and teachers saw little overall first grade curriculum influence on their programs. Principals and teachers held remarkably similar views across both the parent/guardian and first grade curriculum impact on their kindergarten programs.

Parent/Guardian Views of Their Child's
Kindergarten Program

The second part of each parent's questionnaire attempted to determine whether parents felt there should be an increase, decrease, or no change of emphasis in eight aspects of their child's current kindergarten program. The descriptive statistics on parent views from this part of the study were tabulated and are presented in Table 9.

The descriptive data from parents/guardians revealed generally high satisfaction with the current emphasis in their child's kindergarten program. Parents chose "no change" as their highest percentage response in seven of the eight items. Of these seven items, each item had at least 61% of the parents indicating their preference for "no change." Three of these seven items had a minimum of 73% of the parents strongly indicating a preference for "no change." These three items were academic skills development (73%), teacher directed activities (77%), and play (84%). The one item which over half of the parents saw in need of change was parent involvement. Fifty-seven percent of the parents felt there should be an increase in parent involvement in their child's kindergarten. Thirty percent of responding parents felt there should be an increased emphasis on social skills development in their child's kindergarten class. Forty-five percent of the principals

Table 9

Parent/Guardian Suggestions For Change in Their Child's
Kindergarten Program--n = 524

Item	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
1. Academic skills development		
Decrease	17	(3)
No Change	374	(73)
Increase	109	(21)
Don't know	13	(3)
2. Affective development		
Decrease	2	(1)
No Change	310	(61)
Increase	96	(19)
Don't know	98	(19)
3. Social skills development		
Decrease	3	(1)
No Change	339	(66)
Increase	156	(30)
Don't know	16	(3)
4. Motor skills development		
Decrease	3	(1)
No change	356	(69)
Increase	128	(25)
Don't know	26	(5)
5. Teacher-directed activities		
Decrease	19	(4)
No change	396	(77)
Increase	56	(11)
Don't know	44	(8)

(table continues)

Item	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
<hr/>		
6. Child-selected activities		
Decrease	10	(2)
No change	349	(68)
Increase	101	(20)
Don't know	54	(10)
7. Play		
Decrease	12	(2)
No change	434	(84)
Increase	49	(10)
Don't know	20	(4)
8. Parent involvement		
Decrease	2	(0)
No change	203	(40)
Increase	291	(57)
Don't know	18	(3)

and 41% of the teachers reported having perceived an increase in social skills development due to parent/guardian influence. Generally, responding parents indicated a preference for "no change" in their child's current kindergarten program. However, over half of the parents indicated a desire for increased parent involvement in their child's kindergarten program.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

One purpose of this study was to investigate and identify the views held by elementary principals, kindergarten teachers, and kindergarten parents regarding instructional practices at the kindergarten level. Additionally, the relationships among the views of elementary principals, kindergarten teachers, and kindergarten parents were examined.

The principal and teacher results from this study were consistent with findings by Hitz and Wright (1988) in Oregon and Hatch and Freeman (1988) in Ohio. All three studies show principals and teachers as having a preference for approaches that are more developmental in nature at the kindergarten level.

This study partially replicated portions of the Hitz and Wright (1988) Oregon study and, therefore, merits further discussion. The replicated part of the Oregon study sought principals' and teachers' views on the trend toward formal instruction (see Table 10). Survey recipients were asked to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement with the 12 statements about kindergarten practice. Six of the statements reflected a formal, academic view of kindergarten, stating that a kindergarten teacher should:

Table 10

Comparison of Oregon Principals and Teachers with Iowa
Principals and Teachers

Item	<u>Oregon</u>		<u>Iowa</u>	
	Principals	Teachers	Principals	Teachers
1. Devote at least half of their teaching time to child-chosen activities.	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Agree
2. Assume that children are motivated to learn without tangible rewards.	Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Agree
3. Show more interest in how children work and play than in what they produce.	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
4. Provide substantial work-book and other seat work activity in order to prepare children for first grade.	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree
5. Administer reading readiness tests to all kindergarten children early in the school year.	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree
6. Involve all children in formal reading instruction.	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

Item	<u>Oregon</u>		<u>Iowa</u>	
	Principals	Teachers	Principals	Teachers
7. Encourage dramatic play as a means of enhancing cognitive and social development.	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
8. Require completion of all tasks and activities.	No Consensus	No Consensus	No Consensus	No Consensus
9. Provide a period of time for free play each day.	Disagree	Agree	Agree	Agree
10. Use privileges, grades, prizes, and other rewards to motivate children.	No Consensus	No Consensus	No Consensus	No Consensus
11. Require all children to take part in every activity.	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree
12. Provide children with considerable open-ended materials and experiences.	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
Summative, developmental score	*	*	Agree	Agree

Note. *Not determined in Oregon survey.

1. Provide substantial workbook and other seat work activities in order to prepare children for first grade.
2. Involve all children in formal reading instruction.
3. Require all children to take part in every activity.
4. Administer reading readiness tests early in the school year to all kindergarten children.
5. Use privileges, grades, prizes, and other rewards to motivate children.
6. Require completion of all tasks and activities.

These six items were replicated into this study as items 4, 6, 11, 5, 10, 8 respectively in the first part of each survey.

Six other statements in the Oregon study were supportive of a developmental approach and stated that a kindergarten teacher should:

1. Provide children with open-ended materials and experiences.
2. Encourage dramatic play as a means of enhancing cognitive and social development.
3. Show more interest in how children work and play than in what they produce.
4. Set aside major segments of each day for free play.

5. Devote at least half of each day to child-chosen activities.

6. Assume that children can be motivated to learn without resorting to tangible rewards.

These six items were replicated into this study as items 12, 7, 3, 9, 1, 2 respectively in the first part of each survey.

In general, Oregon teachers and principals favored the developmental statements over the formal, academic ones. A majority of Oregon teachers and principals disagreed with the first four of the formal, academic practices. There was no consensus among Oregon teachers and principals on the other two, which dealt with using tangible rewards for motivation and making children complete everything they start. Likewise, a majority of Iowa teachers and principals disagreed with the first four of the formal, academic practices (items 4, 6, 11, 5 on the Iowa survey). As in Oregon, there was no clear consensus on the other two items. In Iowa, 44% of the teachers and 49% of the principals disagreed with item 10 concerning the use of privileges, grades, prizes, and other rewards to motivate children. In Iowa, 34% of the teachers and 46% of the principals disagreed with item 8 concerning requiring completion of all tasks and activities. Teachers and principals in Oregon and Iowa were remarkably consistent in their responses to the formal, academic statements.

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Considering the developmental statements, over half of all Oregon respondents endorsed the first three developmental statements which correspond to Iowa survey items 12, 7, 3. Oregon principals and teachers split over the fourth (Iowa item 9) calling for a period of time for free play each day. Kindergarten teachers agreed that major blocks of time should be devoted to free play, but a majority of principals did not. Less than 50% of Oregon principals and teachers agreed with the last two, which supported child-chosen activities and opposed using tangible rewards as incentives (Iowa items 1 and 2). Likewise, a majority of Iowa principals and teachers endorsed Oregon's first three developmental statements which correspond to Iowa survey items 12, 7, 3. With regard to Oregon's fourth statement (Iowa item 9), a majority of both Iowa principals and teachers agreed with providing time for free play each day. Iowa principals and teachers split over the fifth Oregon statement (Iowa item 1). A majority of teachers (59%) agreed with devoting at least half the teaching time to child-chosen activities but only 44% of the principals agreed with the statement. Over half of all Iowa principals and teachers agreed with Oregon's sixth developmental statement (Iowa item 2) which stated the assumption that children are motivated to learn without tangible rewards. Once again, teachers and principals in Oregon and Iowa were

remarkably consistent in their responses to the developmental statements. Iowa principals and teachers appear somewhat more developmental in their preferences. This is indicated by Iowa responses to Iowa survey items 9, 1, and 2 which were, generally speaking, more supportive of developmental preferences than were Oregon responses to corresponding items.

However, the results of this study did not support the position that parents are one of the sources of pressure for more academic programming at the kindergarten level. Several writers (Bredekamp, 1987; Bridgman, 1989; Bryant et al., 1991; Elkind, 1986a; Hatch & Freeman, 1988; Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1989; Katz, 1987, 1988a; Schultz & Lombardi, 1989; Vann, 1991; Wolf & Kessler, 1987) have speculated that the expectations of parents was a possible source responsible for the move toward more academic kindergarten programming. Interestingly, these studies had not solicited information from parents directly.

This study supported the limited findings of Katz et al. (1987). Their 1987 study was the only study located by this researcher to have actively sought out the views of parents on the matter of kindergarten programming. They found that parents were concerned about too strong an academic focus in their child's kindergarten program.

It is interesting to note that writers who speculated on sources of pressure for more academic programming at the kindergarten level frequently included parents as a source of this pressure. However, the work of Katz et al. (1987) with a limited number of parents indicated a concern on the part of parents about too strong an academic focus in their child's kindergarten program. The 1987 study by Katz, Raths, and Torres clearly emphasized that their team heard from only some of the parents involved, and that it was not clear to what extent they were representative of parents in the district as a whole. Given this, it is worthwhile to note these parents were concerned about their child's kindergarten having pressure for academic achievement that was too great for their child, classes that were too competitive and rigorous, and a concern about children being expected to read by the end of kindergarten.

This study of Iowa kindergarten parents did not show a desire on the part of parents for increased academic skills development in kindergarten. Seventy-three percent of the parents wanted "no change" in their child's kindergarten program concerning academic skills development. This was by far the most common parent response. Only 21% of the parents surveyed wanted an increase in academic skills development for their child's kindergarten.

The data from parents in this study did not support the perceptions of school personnel relative to parents pressuring for more academic kindergartens. Parental response neither pushed for developmental programming, nor clamored for a stronger focus on academics.

It appears, based on the results of this study in Iowa, that parents are not necessarily one of the major sources of pressure for more academic programming at the kindergarten level.

Results from four individual items merit further discussion. The principal-teacher pair was significantly different on items 1, 7, and 8. On item 1, devote at least half of their teaching to child-chosen activities, the principal group mean score was 3.18 while the teacher group mean score was 3.59. Teachers preferred more child-chosen activities and their mean score places them more toward developmental programming when considering the incorporation of child-chosen activities. On item 7, encourage dramatic play as a means of enhancing cognitive and social development, the principal group mean score was 4.27 while the teacher group mean score was 4.58. Again, teachers indicated a stronger developmental preference than did principals. However, both groups scored between "agree" and "strongly agree" on this item concerning dramatic play. On item 8, require completion of all tasks and activities,

the principal group mean score was 2.76 while the teacher group mean score was 3.13. Teachers were more supportive of having children complete all tasks and activities than were the principals.

Item 9 is the fourth individual item which merits further discussion. The teacher-parent pair was significantly different on item 9, provide a period of time for free play each day. The teacher group mean score was 4.71 while the parent group mean score was 4.42. Teachers were more supportive of providing time for free play each day than were parents. However, both groups were in agreement that free play is important for kindergarten children.

All items not specifically discussed (2-6, 10-12) were consistent with regard to groups which differed. The principal-parent and teacher-parent pairs of groups were significantly different on these items as well as the summative, developmental score. These consistently divergent views of the principal-parent and teacher-parent pairs merit further general discussion.

The divergence between principal and parent responses and teacher and parent responses were consistent throughout this study. Principals and teachers were consistently more developmental in their views of kindergarten programming while parents were more neutral and did not favor either a

developmental or academic approach. The principals and teachers became even more developmental in their views if they had received any training in developmentally appropriate practices. Few parents (23%) reported having received any specialized training in developmentally appropriate practice. School districts supportive of a developmental approach may be well advised to provide training for parents in the area of developmental programming if they wish to bring the views of parents closer to the views of principals and teachers.

The views of principals and teachers regarding parent/guardian influence over the past few years on the kindergarten program were also investigated. As reported in Chapter III, principals and teachers were asked to note a perceived increase, decrease, or no change in their kindergarten program when considering eight items relevant to kindergarten programming. The descriptive data on both principals and teachers was very similar. Each group saw little overall parent/guardian influence on their kindergarten program. Two of the eight items in this part of the study merit further discussion. They are "academic skills development" and "parent involvement."

A major focus of this study was to determine whether parents were a source of pressure toward academic programming at the kindergarten level. Fifty-three percent

of the principals and 58% of the teachers indicated they had seen "no change" in academic skills development as a result of influence by parents/guardians. Only 27% of the principals and 24% of the teachers indicated they had seen an increase in academic skills development as a result of parents/guardians. Sixteen percent of the principals and 12% of the teachers indicated they had seen a decrease in academic skills development as a result of influence by parents/guardians. The descriptive statistics from principals and teachers support data reported earlier in this chapter (data which was obtained from parents) from this study that parents are not necessarily pushing for more academic kindergartens. As reported earlier, the parent summative group mean score (3.19) ranked them as neutral in their preference for academic or developmental kindergartens.

Another focus of this study dealt with parent influence upon kindergarten programming in general over the past few years. This study's review of literature showed clearly the importance of the role of parents in programming for early childhood and kindergarten. Many individual writers and organizations (Allen & Freitag, 1988; Becher, 1986; Bennett, 1986; Binkley, 1989; Bridgman, 1989; Brown, 1989; Cummings, 1990; Epstein, 1987; Kahn, 1987; Kunesh, 1990, 1991; Mitchell, 1990; Moore, 1991; National Association for

the Education of Young Children, 1988; National Association of Elementary School Principals, 1990; Schultz & Lombardi, 1989) supported the importance of parent involvement. The descriptive statistics from this study add further data in support of the importance of parent involvement.

Fifty-three percent of the principals and 52% of the teachers reported having seen an increase in parent involvement. The next highest percentage response was indicating no change in parent involvement as reported by 39% of the principals and 33% of the teachers. Only 5% of the principals and 11% of the teachers reported a decrease in parent involvement over the past few years. Parent involvement has typically been strong at the primary level. The fact that principals and teachers both reported parent involvement having increased over the past few years suggests that parents are taking a more and more active role in their child's kindergarten program. Experts in the field would view this as a positive and noteworthy trend because it increases the likelihood of home and school partnerships. These partnerships increase the chances a child will be successful in school.

The views of principals and teachers regarding influence by the first grade curriculum on the kindergarten program were also investigated. As reported in Chapter IV, principals and teachers were asked to note an increase,

decrease, or no change in their kindergarten program when considering eight items relevant to kindergarten programming. The descriptive data on principals and teachers was again very similar. Each group saw little overall first grade curriculum influence on their kindergarten program. Principals chose "no change" as their highest percentage response on all eight of the items. Teachers chose "no change" as their highest percentage response on seven of the eight items. Teachers indicated having seen an "increase" in academic skills development as a result of the first grade curriculum. This item merits further discussion.

Even though the "increase" in academic skills development reported by 43% of the teachers was not a majority, it tied for the highest percentage response on that item. This study's review of literature revealed both the expectations of post kindergarten teachers (Bryant et al., 1991; Steinberg, 1990) and published materials (Connell, 1987; Hatch & Freeman, 1988) as possible sources of pressure toward academic programming. This study's response from kindergarten teachers would support the possibility that both first grade teachers and the first grade curriculum may be partly responsible for the increased academic skills development at the kindergarten level.

It should be noted here that several authors (Bridgman, 1989; Elkind, 1986b; Hatch & Freeman, 1988; Katz, 1988b; Wolf & Kessler, 1987) suggested that changes in children, including preschool and media affects, may be a possible source of pressure toward academic programming in kindergarten. Some suggested that changes such as broad exposure to preschool and the media make children more ready for a more academic program. The demographic data on participating kindergarten parents indicated a vast majority (87%) of their children had attended some kind of preschool. This would certainly indicate a change in these children over kindergartners of 20 years ago. However, the same parents rated themselves as neutral in their preference for academic or developmental approaches in their child's kindergarten.

The views of parents regarding their child's current kindergarten program were also investigated. As reported in Chapter IV, parents were asked to give their views as to whether they felt there should be an increase, decrease, or no change of emphasis in eight aspects of their child's current kindergarten program. The descriptive data on parents revealed that they wanted little change in their child's kindergarten program. Parents chose "no change" as their highest percentage response in seven of the eight items. One of the seven items was academic skills

development. Parent involvement was the lone item that parents saw in need of change and merits further discussion, as does academic skills development.

A majority of parents (57%) saw a need to "increase" parent involvement in their child's kindergarten program. These data add support for increasing parent involvement with their child's schooling, particularly at the kindergarten level. Parents, teachers, and principals all saw parent involvement as increasing and support even greater parent involvement. This was consistent with the professional literature reports on the importance of parent involvement in a child's early years of schooling.

A vast majority of parents (73%) chose "no change" as their highest percentage response to the item concerning academic skills development. This would appear to indicate that parents are quite satisfied with the way their child's kindergarten program approaches academic skill development. However, it is important to note here that the professional literature has clearly shown a shift toward more focus on academic skills development in today's kindergartens than in the past. Assuming that Iowa's kindergartens have also experienced this academic shift, parents may actually be indicating they want no change in a kindergarten program that is more academic than they realize. Parents, when asked to agree or disagree with the 12 descriptive

statements which were indicative of developmental or academic instructional approaches at the kindergarten level, gave responses which were inconclusive and did not show overall support for developmental or academic indicators. Parents were neutral.

The General Information section for both the principal and teacher questionnaire yielded interesting information regarding training in developmentally appropriate practice. Each principal and teacher were asked if they had received any specialized teaching in developmentally appropriate practice. Fifty-five percent of the principals reported having had some specialized training in developmentally appropriate practice while 45% reported no specialized training (Table 2). Seventy-three percent of the teachers reported having had some specialized training in developmentally appropriate practice while 27% reported no specialized training (Table 3). Further analysis of these data yield interesting results (see Table 11).

Principals who reported having had some specialized training in developmentally appropriate practice were more likely to support developmental practices than those who reported having had no such training. Principals having had specialized training in developmentally appropriate practice yielded scores more positive toward developmentally appropriate practices on all 12 items from the first part of

their questionnaire than their untrained colleagues. This was also true of the summative, developmental score. Eight of the 13 scores (62%) were statistically significant at the .05 level (see Appendix E for summary). The summative, developmental score was among the scores showing a significant difference. It appears that training in developmentally appropriate practice impacted significantly how principals view kindergarten programming. This is especially important for the future of kindergarten programming when the age of principals is considered. Table 2 shows that about half (47%) of responding principals were over 51 years old. Many new principals will be coming into the field over the next 10 years and appropriate training at the college and university level will be very important. It is also interesting to note that only 26% of the reporting principals (Table 2) felt adequately, very well, or exceptionally well trained for working with kindergarten programs. Again, training of these building leaders is critical.

Teachers who reported having had some specialized training in developmentally appropriate practice were also more likely to support developmental practices than those who reported having had no such training. Teachers having had specialized training in developmentally appropriate practice also yielded scores more positive toward

Table 11

Views Held by Principals and Teachers Having Received
Specialized Training in Developmentally Appropriate Practice

Item		Principal <u>n = 132</u>		Teacher <u>n = 137</u>	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1.	Devote at least half of their teaching time to child-chosen activities.	Mean 3.52	2.76	3.67	3.32
		S.D. 1.09	1.01	1.14	1.09
2.	Assume that children are motivated to learn without tangible rewards.	Mean 3.48	3.47	3.64	1.10
		S.D. 1.21	1.09	3.51	1.07
3.	Show more interest in how children work and play than in what they produce.	Mean 4.10	3.66	4.20	3.80
		S.D. .80	.90	.84	.90
4.	Provide substantial workbook and other seat work activity in order to prepare children for first grade.	Mean 1.70	2.05	1.88	2.46
		S.D. .84	.92	1.02	1.29
5.	Administer reading readiness tests to all kindergarten children early in the school year.	Mean 1.73	2.05	1.67	1.80
		S.D. .96	.97	1.00	1.08
6.	Involve all children in formal reading instruction.	Mean 1.96	2.54	2.19	2.43
		S.D. .87	1.21	1.21	1.42

(table continues)

Item		Principal n = 132		Teacher n = 137	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
7.	Encourage dramatic play as a means of enhancing cognitive and social development.	Mean 4.47 S.D. .69	4.02 .78	4.64 .50	4.40 .65
8.	Require completion of all tasks and activities.	Mean 2.58 S.D. 1.08	2.98 1.09	3.11 1.13	3.20 1.16
9.	Provide a period of time for free play each day.	Mean 4.68 S.D. .70	4.42 .72	4.71 .62	4.71 .52
10.	Use privileges, grades, prizes, and other rewards to motivate children.	Mean 2.51 S.D. 1.06	2.66 1.04	2.74 .98	2.94 1.14
11.	Require all children to take part in every activity.	Mean 2.36 S.D. .90	2.58 1.02	2.49 .96	2.54 .95
12.	Provide children with considerable open-ended materials and experiences.	Mean 4.44 S.D. .88	4.27 .74	4.67 .53	4.26 .82
Summative, developmental score		Mean 3.99 S.D. .44	3.66 .43	3.96 .46	3.69 .53

Note. "Yes" indicates respondent reported having received some specialized training in developmentally appropriate practices. "No" indicates respondent reported having received no such specialized training. Likert scale used to determine mean scores was 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree.

developmentally appropriate practices on 11 of the 12 items (the one item had identical mean scores from both teachers who had specialized training and those who didn't) from the first part of their questionnaire than their untrained colleagues. This was also true of the summative, developmental score. Five of the 13 scores (38%) were statistically significant at the .05 level (see Appendix F for summary). The summative, developmental score was among the scores showing a significant difference. While not as evident as with principals, it appears that training in developmentally appropriate practice impacts how teachers view kindergarten programming. This teacher training may need to be planned for and provided at the local district and area education agency level due to the fact that 58% of responding teachers are over 40 years old (Table 3) and may not be planning to return to colleges and universities at this time in their life for additional training.

The findings from this study suggested (a) parents are not necessarily a major source of pressure toward academic programming at the kindergarten level; (b) expectations of post-kindergarten teachers and published materials may be a source of pressure toward academic programming at the kindergarten level; (c) principals, teachers, and parents were in agreement concerning the importance of parent involvement at the kindergarten level; and (d) training in

developmentally appropriate practices appeared to make a difference in how principals and teachers viewed the appropriateness of developmentally appropriate practices in kindergarten. This was particularly true with regards to principals.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

One purpose of this study was to investigate and identify the views held by elementary principals, kindergarten teachers, and kindergarten parents regarding instructional practices at the kindergarten level. Additionally, the relationships among the views of elementary principals, kindergarten teachers, and kindergarten parents were examined. These views and relationships were determined from results obtained from the first part of each group's questionnaire. The first part of each questionnaire contained 12 items. Each item was indicative of either a developmental or academic approach to programming at the kindergarten level. Also, descriptive data were provided for all other parts of the questionnaires. These included (a) demographic data on all three groups, (b) principal and teacher views on the impact of parents/guardians on the kindergarten program, (c) principal and teacher views on the impact of the first grade curriculum on the kindergarten program, and (d) parent views on changes they would like to see concerning various aspects of their child's kindergarten program.

The modified Oregon Department of Education questionnaire was used to identify the views held by

principals, teachers, and parents. The questionnaire, developed by Randy Hitz (1986), contained 12 Likert-type choice statements as the first part for all three groups. Each statement was indicative of either a developmental or academic approach to kindergarten programming. From responses to these statements a developmental or academic preference was determined for each group. A preference was determined for each item and for all items in total.

The second part of each principal and teacher questionnaire contained eight Likert-type choice statements. These eight statements reflected various aspects of a kindergarten program. Principals and teachers were asked to indicate whether there had been an increase, a decrease, or no change in their kindergarten program as a result of parents/guardians. From responses to these statements the impact of parents/guardians on the kindergarten program was determined.

The third part of each principal and teacher questionnaire contained eight Likert-type choice statements. These eight statements were identical to the second part of the principal and teacher questionnaire and reflected various aspects of a kindergarten program. Principals and teachers were asked to indicate whether there had been an increase, a decrease, or no change in their kindergarten program as a result of the first grade curriculum. From

responses to these statements the impact of the first grade curriculum on the kindergarten program was determined.

The second part of each parent questionnaire contained eight Likert-type choice statements. These eight statements were identical to the second and third parts of the principal and teacher questionnaire and reflected various aspects of a kindergarten program. Parents were asked whether they felt there should be an increase, a decrease, or no change in their child's kindergarten program relative to these eight statements. From responses to these statements the perceptions of kindergarten parents were determined.

The last part of all three questionnaires was a general information section from which demographic data were determined.

The results were scored in a manner consistent with inferential and descriptive statistics. Upon completion of the scoring, the data from the first section of each questionnaire were statistically analyzed using the F test of statistical significance. Multiple comparison procedure was used to determine which pairs of groups had statistically significant different means. The Scheffe' multiple comparison procedure was used. The SPSSX program was used for statistical testing. Results from all other

sections of all questionnaires were provided as descriptive statistics, also employing the SPSSX program.

Hypotheses

Thirteen hypotheses were tested at the .05 significance level in the study.

1. There is no significant difference between the principal, teacher, and parent mean response concerning devoting at least half of their teaching time to child-chosen activities.

2. There is no significant difference between the principal, teacher, and parent mean response concerning assuming that children are motivated to learn without tangible rewards.

3. There is no significant difference between the principal, teacher, and parent mean response concerning showing more interest in how children work and play than in what they produce.

4. There is no significant difference between the principal, teacher, and parent mean response concerning providing substantial workbook and other seat work activity in order to prepare children for first grade.

5. There is no significant difference between the principal, teacher, and parent mean response concerning administering reading readiness tests to all kindergarten children early in the school year.

6. There is no significant difference between the principal, teacher, and parent mean response concerning involving all children in formal reading instruction.

7. There is no significant difference between the principal, teacher, and parent mean response concerning encouraging dramatic play as a means of enhancing cognitive and social development.

8. There is no significant difference between the principal, teacher, and parent mean response concerning requiring completion of all tasks and activities.

9. There is no significant difference between the principal, teacher, and parent mean response concerning providing a period of time for free play each day.

10. There is no significant difference between the principal, teacher, and parent mean response concerning using privileges, grades, prizes and other rewards to motivate children.

11. There is no significant difference between the principal, teacher, and parent mean response concerning requiring all children to take part in every activity.

12. There is no significant difference between the principal, teacher, and parent mean response concerning providing children with considerable open-ended materials and experiences.

13. There is no overall significant difference between the principal, teacher, and parent mean group response concerning preference for developmental or academic programming at the kindergarten level.

Conclusions

The major portion of this study was devoted to an analysis of the 13 research hypotheses. The F test was utilized to determine if significant differences existed among elementary principal, kindergarten teacher, and kindergarten parent group mean scores. A multiple comparison procedure was used to determine which pairs of groups had statistically different means. Based on the data gathered from 132 elementary principals, 137 kindergarten teachers, and 524 kindergarten parents, and statistical analysis of the data, the following results were determined:

1. A significant difference was evident between the principal, teacher, and parent mean response concerning devoting at least half of their teaching time to child-chosen activities. Principals and teachers were more frequently in agreement with devoting at least half of the teaching time to child-chosen activities than were parents. Also, teachers were more frequently in agreement with devoting at least half of the teaching to child-chosen activities than were the principals.

2. A significant difference was evident between the principal, teacher, and parent mean response concerning assuming that children are motivated to learn without tangible rewards. Principals and teachers were more frequently in agreement with assuming that children are motivated to learn without tangible rewards than were parents.

3. A significant difference was evident between the principal, teacher, and parent mean response concerning showing more interest in how children work and play than in what they produce. Principals and teachers were more frequently in agreement with showing more interest in how children work and play than in what they produce than were parents.

4. A significant difference was evident between the principal, teacher, and parent group concerning providing substantial workbook and other seat work activity in order to prepare children for first grade. Principals and teachers were more frequently in agreement with not providing substantial workbook and other seat work activity in order to prepare children for first grade than were parents.

5. A significant difference was evident between the principal, teacher, and parent group concerning administering reading readiness tests to all kindergarten

children early in the school year. Principals and teachers were more frequently in agreement with not administering reading readiness tests to all kindergarten children early in the school year than were parents.

6. A significant difference was evident between the principal, teacher, and parent group concerning involving all children in formal reading instruction. Principals and teachers were more frequently in agreement with not involving all children in formal reading instruction than were parents.

7. A significant difference was evident between the principal, teacher, and parent group concerning encouraging dramatic play as a means of enhancing cognitive and social development. Principals and teachers were more frequently in agreement with encouraging dramatic play as a means of enhancing cognitive and social development than were parents. Also, teachers were more frequently in agreement with encouraging dramatic play as a means of enhancing cognitive and social development than were principals.

8. A significant difference was evident between the principal, teacher, and parent group concerning requiring completion of all tasks and activities. Principals and teachers were more frequently in agreement with not requiring completion of all tasks and activities than were parents. Also, principals were more frequently in agreement

with not requiring completion of all tasks and activities than were teachers.

9. A significant difference was evident between principal, teacher, and parent group concerning providing a period of time for free play each day. Teachers were more frequently in agreement with providing a period of time for free play each day than were parents.

10. A significant difference was evident between the principal, teacher, and parent group concerning using privileges, grades, prizes, and other rewards to motivate children. Principals and teachers were more in agreement with not using privileges, grades, prizes, and other rewards to motivate children than were parents.

11. A significant difference was evident between the principal, teacher, and parent group concerning requiring all children to take part in every activity. After the recording procedures were employed, principals and teachers were more frequently in agreement with not requiring all children to take part in every activity than were parents.

12. A significant difference was evident between the principal, teacher, and parent group concerning providing children with considerable open-ended materials and experiences. Principals and teachers were more frequently in agreement with providing children with considerable open-ended materials and experiences than were parents.

13. A significant difference was evident between the principal, teacher, and parent group concerning preference for developmental or academic programming at the kindergarten level. After recoding procedures were employed, principals and teachers were more frequently in agreement with developmental programming at the kindergarten level while parents were more neutral.

Based on the results of this part of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Principals and teachers in this study generally preferred a more developmental approach to kindergarten programming than parents. Principal and teacher mean scores (3.84 and 3.89 respectively) on the summative, developmental rating scale placed them both almost at nearly the agree response on the 1-5 Likert-type scale. A summative score of 3.0 would indicate neutral, while a summative score of 4.0 would indicate agree. Therefore, it may be concluded that elementary principals and kindergarten teachers in Iowa feel kindergarten teachers should employ practices with their students that are more developmental in nature than academic.

2. Parents in this study generally had no strong preference for either developmental or academic approaches to kindergarten programming. The parent mean score of 3.19 on the summative, developmental rating scale placed them

closest to the neutral response on the 1-5 Likert-type scale. A summative score of 3.0 would indicate a neutral score. Therefore, it may be concluded that kindergarten parents in Iowa have no strong preference concerning whether kindergarten teachers should employ more developmental or more academic approaches in kindergarten. Perhaps parents see a balance as most appropriate.

Another portion of this study was devoted to determining whether principals and/or teachers had seen parents/guardians as having an impact on their school's kindergarten program. Descriptive data were generated to address this portion of the study. Based on the data gathered from 132 elementary principals and 137 kindergarten teachers, the following results were determined:

1. Principals indicated they had seen no change in academic skills development, affective development, motor skills development, teacher-directed activities, child-selected activities, or play in their kindergarten programs as a result of parents/guardians. Principals were split between having seen no change and an increase in social skills development due to parents/guardians. The one item of the eight which principals indicated having seen an increase was parent involvement.

2. Teachers indicated they had seen no change in academic skills development, affective development, social

skills development, motor skills development, teacher-directed activities, child-selected activities, or play in their kindergarten programs as a result of parents/guardians. Like principals, the one item of the eight which teachers indicated having seen an increase was parent involvement.

Based on the results of this part of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Principals and teachers report having seen almost no change in their kindergarten programs as the result of parents/guardians.

2. The one item both principals and teachers report an increase in deals with parent involvement. Kindergarten personnel are seeing more parent involvement. This trend would be acclaimed by authors and organizations calling for increased parent involvement at the kindergarten and all early childhood levels.

3. Despite perceptual data reported earlier in this study from the literature which lists parents as a possible source of academic pressure, neither principals nor teachers reported this.

Another portion of this study was devoted to determining whether principals and/or teachers had seen the first grade curriculum as having an impact on their school's kindergarten program. Descriptive data were generated to

address this portion of the study. Based on the data gathered from 132 elementary principals and 137 kindergarten teachers, the following results were determined:

1. Principals indicated they had seen no change in academic skills development, affective development, social skills development, motor skills development, teacher-directed activities, child-selected activities, play, or parent involvement in their kindergarten program as a result of the first grade curriculum. This listing included all of the eight items principals were asked to consider.

2. Teachers indicated they had seen no change in affective development, social skills development, motor skills development, teacher-directed activities, child-selected activities, play, or parent involvement in their kindergarten program as a result of the first grade curriculum. The one item of the eight which teachers indicated having seen an increase was academic skills development.

Based on the results of this part of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Principals and teachers reported having seen almost no change in their kindergarten programs as the result of the first grade curriculum.

2. The one item teachers reported an increase in was academic skills development. Kindergarten teachers reported seeing some increase in academic skills development in their kindergarten programs as a result of the first grade curriculum. These data would lend support to writers and organizations listed earlier in this study who see post kindergarten teachers and published materials as a possible source of pressure for more academic kindergartens.

Another portion of this study was devoted to determining whether parents wanted to see changes made in their child's kindergarten program. Descriptive data were generated to address this portion of the study. Based on the data gathered from 524 kindergarten parents, the following results were determined:

1. Parents indicated they wanted no change in academic skills development, affective development, social skills development, motor skills development, teacher-directed activities, child-selected activities, or play in their kindergarten child's current program. The one item of the eight which parents indicated wanting an increase was parent involvement.

2. A resounding 73% of the parents wanted no change in their child's kindergarten program concerning academic skills development. Twenty-one percent felt the need for an

increase while 3% saw a need for a decreased focus on academic skills development.

Based on the results of this part of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Parents reported wanting to see little change in their child's kindergarten program.

2. The one item parents saw in need of change is parent involvement. Parents would like to see parent involvement increase. This desire, along with principals and teachers reporting seeing increased parent involvement, indicates Iowa is showing an increase in parent involvement which the literature indicates is in the best interest of children, families, and schools.

3. Despite perceptual data reported earlier in this study from the literature which listed parents as a possible source of academic pressure, parents did not indicate a desire for increased academic programming in their child's kindergarten.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, and the insights gained through the process of completing this study, the following recommendations are presented:

1. Elementary principals and kindergarten teachers should actively pursue parent involvement as a key ingredient to school improvement.

2. Local school districts need to understand and accept responsibility for providing training in developmentally appropriate practice to parents. The views of school personnel (principals and kindergarten teachers) are quite divergent from parents in this area and training of parents appears to be a key factor in bringing these divergent views together.

3. Local school districts and area education agencies need to understand and accept responsibility for developmental training at the local level. Local educators, especially teachers, will need training in developmentally appropriate practices to implement such a philosophy, and advanced training at the university level may not be a personal or professional priority for them.

4. Universities, colleges, area education agencies, local school districts, and other institutions responsible for the preparation of administrators and early childhood educators need to understand the impact training in developmentally appropriate practice has on educators and their views of programming for children. Principals and teachers, particularly principals, were significantly impacted by training they received in developmentally appropriate practice. Institutions believing in the philosophy of developmentally appropriate practice must provide a strong component relating the understanding and

implementation of developmentally appropriate practices in early childhood education.

5. Any developmental training should have a solid component dealing with social skills development. Parents see somewhat of a need in this area and both principals and teachers perceive parents and the 1st grade curriculum impacting kindergarten programming in the area of social skills development.

6. A future study should be conducted to determine the status of the developmental-academic balance in Iowa kindergartens. Perhaps this could be similar to the study done in Ohio by Hatch and Freeman. Results of such a study would give a clearer picture of what Iowa parents appear to be very content with and, for the most part, not wanting to change.

7. A follow-up study with these parents should be conducted as their children progress through the grades to determine whether their satisfaction with the kindergarten holds and whether the kindergarten program adequately prepared their child for later challenges.

8. A follow-up study involving the kindergarten teachers from this study and first grade teachers in the same building may provide insight relative to the views held by 43% of the kindergarten teachers that the first grade

curriculum was seen as responsible for an increased academic skills development in kindergarten.

9. Research should be conducted that would extend into the arena of preschools and preschool parents. This would be a logical next step relative to early childhood programming and would get information directly from parents rather than relying on what preschool personnel perceive parents to want.

10. A similar study should be conducted in Iowa which would control for regional or geographic differences which may impact results.

11. Future studies should be conducted that would each focus on the other possible sources of academic pressure in kindergarten. These studies may provide additional insight into the source or sources of this pressure. Particularly important may be the idea that changes in children including preschool and media affects are a source of pressure. This study revealed that 87% of the children whose parents responded had attended some type of preschool. However, these same parents overwhelmingly (73%) wanted no change in their child's kindergarten program concerning academic skills development. The perception of changes in children being a source of pressure was not supported by this study.

12. Further studies should be conducted utilizing the Hitz (1986) Oregon Department of Education instrument for

the purpose of replicating the results of the Oregon study and this study. These studies would broaden the data base and help to insure the generalizability of results over a wider range of populations and samples. More sensitivity to educational jargon on the parent questionnaire may be appropriate. This would help insure parent understanding of the questions and, therefore, more reliable results.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
Letters and Procedures



TERRY E. BRANSTAD, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
WILLIAM L. LEPLEY, ED.D., DIRECTOR

September 25, 1989

Mr. Dudley L. Humphrey
Elementary Principal
Dike Elementary School
220 Main Street
Dike, Iowa 50624

Dear Mr. Humphrey:

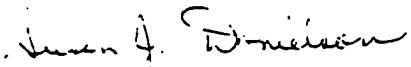
I am personally and professionally interested in your doctoral work at UNI which is focused on kindergarten education. The Department of Education has made a strong commitment to early childhood education and is constantly searching for up-to-date research in this area.

I have reviewed the 1986 kindergarten study conducted by Dr. Randy Hitz, early childhood education specialist with the Oregon Department of Education, which you provided me. I find it to be well done, interesting, and informative. Further, I agree with Dr. Hitz that the study would have been even more valuable and relevant had it gone beyond involving kindergarten teachers, 1st grade teachers, and elementary principals to include a parent/guardian component. Current research is clear on the absolutely critical role parents/guardians play in effective early childhood education. This is especially true of kindergarten education in Iowa as kindergarten is the first level of formal programming in the public schools. As evidence of the Department of Education's commitment to parent/guardian involvement we have made it a requirement that local school districts involve parents/guardians on many district level planning committees including the "Resource Advisory Committee For Early Childhood Education." While I would be interested in learning how Iowa parents/guardians respond to all components of the Hitz/Oregon study I would be especially interested in learning parent/guardian views relative to their preference of developmental vs. academic programming for kindergarten children.

Dudley, I encourage you to pursue this research with your dissertation. I would support your efforts to develop a companion study of the Hitz/Oregon work which would be an extension of Dr. Hitz's work, using his format, to include a parent/guardian component. This would be of value to the Department of Education as we continue planning and developing policy for early childhood education. There is very little research information available pertaining to parent/guardian perspectives of kindergarten programming. I am aware of various assertions and allegations concerning parent/guardian views but am not aware of any well done research in this area. There is, in my opinion, a gap in the literature here. The general knowledge base in this area is very limited and would help us make better and more informed decisions at the state level.

Good luck and let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,


Dr. Susan J. Donielson, Administrator
Division of Instructional Services, and
Chair, Child Development Coordinating Council
Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

GRIMES STATE OFFICE BUILDING / DES MOINES, IOWA 50319-0146

JEFFERSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
MASON CITY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
MASON CITY, IOWA 50401

Office of Jefferson Elementary
 1421 Fourth Street S.E.
 Phone (515) 421-4411

DUDLEY L. HUMPHREY
 Principal

April 22, 1992

Dear Elementary Principal,

I am a doctoral student at the University of Northern Iowa and am conducting research for a dissertation concerned with views of elementary principals, kindergarten teachers, and kindergarten parents regarding instructional practices at the kindergarten level. This project is very unique as it is the first, to my knowledge, to gain the views of parents as well as school personnel relative to kindergarten instructional practices. I am most pleased that both the University of Northern Iowa and Dr. Susan Donielson, Administrator for the Division of Instructional Services, Iowa Department of Education, have given their support to this project.

Your elementary school has been chosen to participate in this study through a systematic sampling procedure which will provide reliable state wide results. In this study you, one of your kindergarten teachers, and five of your kindergarten parents will each complete a questionnaire that will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Your critical role in this is to make sure that the questionnaires are completed and returned. This study is very unique in its involvement of parents and I would appreciate you working closely with the selected kindergarten teacher so that the parent portions are completed and returned.

As mentioned earlier, the participation of you as principal, the teacher, and the parents are critical to the successful completion of this study. You will each be provided with an individual envelope in which to return your questionnaires. The information provided will be treated with strict confidentiality. No individual or school will be identified in the study. Upon request I will provide you with a summary of the findings of this study. You could then share this information with the participating teacher and parents if you so choose.

I have taken the liberty of forwarding to you all materials necessary for participation in the study. Please find enclosed one copy of the "Questionnaire For Elementary Principals" (green), one copy of the "Questionnaire For Kindergarten Teachers" (blue), and five copies of the "Questionnaire For Kindergarten Parents" (yellow). You will also find enclosed 1 manila envelope, 6 business envelopes, letters to teachers and parents, and a letter describing questionnaire distribution and collection procedures. Once you, your kindergarten teacher, and kindergarten parents have completed the questionnaires please return them to me in the manila envelope.

My goal is to have all completed questionnaires returned to me by May 15. I thank you very much for your cooperation! I am looking forward to hearing from you by May 15. Should you have any questions regarding this study, please feel free to call me at Jefferson Elementary (515) 421-4411, or my doctoral advisor, Dr. Norman McCumsey at (319) 273-2674.

Sincerely,

Dudley L. Humphrey, Principal
 Jefferson Elementary School
 1421 Fourth Street SE
 Mason City, Iowa 50401

P.S. I have taken the liberty of filling in item #11, district size category, on the General Information section of your questionnaire to save you the time needed to search out this information.

EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION IN A GREAT MIDWESTERN CITY

JEFFERSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
MASON CITY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
MASON CITY, IOWA 50401

Office of Jefferson Elementary
 1421 Fourth Street S.E.
 Phone (515) 421-4411

DUDLEY L. HUMPHREY
 Principal

DISTRIBUTION AND COLLECTION PROCEDURES FOR PRINCIPAL

To insure proper research procedures please distribute and collect survey packets as described below.

Distribution

1. Please tell your selected kindergarten teacher that your school has been chosen to participate in this research study and that he/she has your permission and support. Please inform your teacher that he/she was selected to participate through a randomization procedure.
2. Please make an alphabetical list (by last name) of all kindergarten teachers assigned to your building. From this list identify the first teacher. This person has been randomly selected to participate in the study and should be given the kindergarten teacher cover letter and questionnaire. These items can be found in the business envelope marked "Kindergarten Teacher."
3. Please take an alphabetical class roster (by last name) for the identified teacher. If this teacher has an AM and PM section, select the AM class roster. If the teacher meets his or her classes on alternating days, select the class roster for the class this teacher meets on the first day of your week or cycle. From this class roster identify the parents/guardians of the children listed third, sixth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth. The parents/guardians of these students have been randomly selected to participate in the study and should each be given a kindergarten parent cover letter and questionnaire. Should you not have twelve students in the selected class please identify the parents/guardians of the students listed first, second, sixth, seventh, and eighth. These items can be found in the business envelopes marked "Kindergarten Parent."
4. It does not matter whether you personally get the materials to the parents/guardians or if you work through your kindergarten teacher to accomplish this. Please select the approach which is the most efficient for you and will most likely insure completion of the parent/guardian questionnaires.

Collection Procedures

1. Provide a secure collection area for the participating teacher and parents to return their sealed envelopes. Be sure they understand that you will return their sealed envelopes, along with yours, to me through the mail.
2. Place your completed questionnaire and the returned teacher and parent sealed envelopes in the pre-posted, addressed manila envelope and return to me by May 15.

EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION IN A GREAT MIDWESTERN CITY

JEFFERSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

MASON CITY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

MASON CITY, IOWA 50401

Office of Jefferson Elementary
1421 Fourth Street S.E.
Phone (515) 421-4411

DUDLEY L. HUMPHREY
Principal

April 22, 1992

Dear Kindergarten Teacher,

I am a doctoral student at the University of Northern Iowa and am conducting research for a dissertation concerned with views of kindergarten teachers, kindergarten parents, and elementary principals regarding instructional practices at the kindergarten level. This project is very unique as it is the first, to my knowledge, to gain the views of parents as well as school personnel relative to kindergarten instructional practices. The results of this study should provide additional information necessary to providing quality early childhood programming. Your school has been chosen to participate in this study through a systematic sampling procedure which will provide reliable state wide results. The nature of this study makes your participation extremely valuable!

While your principal will know that you are being asked to participate, he/she will not be able to identify your individual responses, nor will he/she be provided with this information from me. Your participation will involve completing the attached blue questionnaire entitled "Questionnaire For Kindergarten Teachers." This questionnaire will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. You have been provided an envelope in which to seal your completed questionnaire and return it to your principal. He/she will return all information to me using a specified procedure. The information you provide will be treated with strict confidentiality and only group data will be used. I will provide the group results to both you and your principal if you so request.

Please complete this questionnaire by May 15. Seal your questionnaire in the envelope provided and return it to your principal. When the questionnaires from your school are completed they will be returned to me in the mail. Should you have any questions regarding the study please feel free to call me at (515) 421-4411. I thank you for your time and effort in making this study a success!

Sincerely,

Dudley L. Humphrey, Principal
Jefferson Elementary School
1421 Fourth Street SE
Mason City, Iowa 50401

P.S. I have taken the liberty of filling in item #9, district size category, on the General Information section of your questionnaire to save you the time needed to search out this information.

EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION IN A GREAT MIDWESTERN CITY

JEFFERSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
MASON CITY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
MASON CITY, IOWA 50401

Office of Jefferson Elementary
1421 Fourth Street S.E.
Phone (515) 421-4411

DUDLEY L. HUMPHREY
Principal

April 22, 1992

Dear Kindergarten Parent,

I am a doctoral student at the University of Northern Iowa conducting research for a dissertation concerned with views of kindergarten parents, kindergarten teachers, and elementary principals regarding instructional practices at the kindergarten level. This project is very unique as it is the first, to my knowledge, to gain the views of parents as well as school personnel relative to kindergarten instructional practices. The results of this study should provide additional information necessary to providing quality early childhood programming. Your child's school has been chosen to participate in this study through a systematic sampling procedure which will provide reliable state wide results. The nature of this study makes your participation extremely valuable.

While the principal and your child's kindergarten teacher will know that you are being asked to participate, they will not be able to identify your individual responses, nor will they be provided with this information from me. Your participation will involve completing the attached yellow questionnaire entitled "Questionnaire For Kindergarten Parents." This questionnaire will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. You have been provided an envelope in which to seal your completed questionnaire and return it to either the principal or kindergarten teacher. The principal will return all information to me using a specified procedure. The information you provide will be treated with strict confidentiality and only group data will be used. I will provide the group results to you through your principal if you so request.

Please complete this questionnaire by May 15. Seal your questionnaire in the envelope provided and return it to the principal or kindergarten teacher. When the questionnaires from your school are completed they will be returned to me in the mail by the principal. Should you have any questions regarding the study please feel free to call me at (515) 421-4411. I thank you for your time and effort in making this study a success!

Sincerely,

Dudley L. Humphrey, Principal
Jefferson Elementary School
1421 Fourth Street SE
Mason City, Iowa 50401

P.S. I have taken the liberty of filling in item #8, district size category, on the General Information section of your questionnaire to save you the time needed to search out this information.

EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION IN A GREAT MIDWESTERN CITY

APPENDIX B
Oregon Instruments

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
 700 Pringle Parkway SE
 Salem, Oregon 97310

Division of General Education
 February 1986

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS

PLEASE CIRCLE THE MOST APPROPRIATE ANSWERS.

How long have you served as an elementary principal?

- | | |
|-------------|----------------|
| (1) 1 year | (4) 4-5 years |
| (2) 2 years | (5) 6-10 years |
| (3) 3 years | (6) 11+ years |

At what levels have you taught?

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| (1) Preschool/Kindergarten | (3) Intermediate |
| (2) Other Primary Grades | (4) Other: _____ |

How many years did you teach prior to becoming a principal?

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| (1) 0-5 | (4) 16-20 |
| (2) 6-10 | (5) 21-25 |
| (3) 11-15 | (6) 26+ |

What certificates and endorsements do you hold? Circle all numbers that apply.

- | |
|--------------------------------|
| (1) Reading |
| (2) Early Childhood |
| (3) Handicapped Learner |
| (4) Educational Administration |
| (5) Other: _____ |

How many years has your district offered kindergarten for all kindergarten age children?

- | | |
|-------------|----------------|
| (1) 1 year | (4) 4-10 years |
| (2) 2 years | (5) 10+ years |
| (3) 3 years | |

Have you ever been involved in hiring a kindergarten teacher? yes___ no___

Check the teacher qualifications you look for when searching for a kindergarten teacher. Circle as many numbers as you feel are appropriate.

- (1) Experience teaching at any level
- (2) Experience teaching elementary age children
- (3) Experience teaching primary age children
- (4) Experience teaching preprimary age children, preschool or kindergarten
- (5) Specialization in early childhood education
- (6) Specialization in reading
- (7) Other: _____

COMMENTS: _____

In this section indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement. We are interested in your OPINION. Use the following scale:

- 1 - Strongly disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Agree
- 5 - Strongly Agree

Comments related to any of these items may be written in the space provided following the list of statements.

CIRCLE THE ONE MOST APPROPRIATE

Kindergarten teachers should:

1. Devote at least half of each school day to child-chosen activities.

1 2 3 4 5

2. Assume that children are motivated to learn without tangible rewards.

1 2 3 4 5

3. Show more interest in HOW children work and play than in what they PRODUCE.

1 2 3 4 5

4. Provide substantial workbook and other seatwork activity in order to prepare children for first grade.

1 2 3 4 5

Form 581-2360(2/86)

5. Administer reading readiness tests to all kindergarten children early in the school year.

1 2 3 4 5

6. Involve all children in formal reading instruction.

1 2 3 4 5

7. Encourage dramatic play as a means of enhancing cognitive and social development.

1 2 3 4 5

8. Require completion of all tasks and activities.

1 2 3 4 5

9. Provide major segments of each day for free play.

1 2 3 4 5

10. Use privileges, grades, prizes and other rewards to motivate children.

1 2 3 4 5

11. Require all children to take part in every activity.

1 2 3 4 5

12. Provide children with considerable open-ended materials and experiences.

1 2 3 4 5

13. Have special training in early childhood education.

1 2 3 4 5

14. Have available to them more inservice activities specifically designed to meet their needs as kindergarten teachers.

1 2 3 4 5

15. Have more time to develop curriculum and share information with first grade teachers.

1 2 3 4 5

COMMENTS: (Comments related to any items should be accompanied by the number of that item.)

Check the extent to which SPECIALIZED PREPARATION in EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION is needed by kindergarten teachers as part of their preservice training. In this question we are interested in your OPINION. Use the following scale:

- 1 - Not a need
- 2 - Slight need
- 3 - Strong need
- 4 - Definite requirement

CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Art education | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. Music education | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. Physical education | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. Child development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. Curriculum development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. Kindergarten methods | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. Classroom management | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. Language development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 9. Reading methods | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 10. Science methods | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 11. Mathematics methods | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 12. Social Studies methods | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 13. Special needs children: identification | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 14. Special needs children: instruction | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 15. Student observation and assessment | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 16. History of early childhood education | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 17. Children's literature | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 18. Program evaluation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 19. Home/School Relations | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

COMMENTS: _____

Form 581-2360(2/86)

Overall, how difficult has it been for you to find well qualified kindergarten teachers?

CIRCLE ONE NUMBER

- 1. Not at all
- 2. Somewhat
- 3. Difficult
- 4. Very difficult
- 5. Exceptionally difficult

COMMENTS: _____

In your school over the past few years, has there been an increase, a decrease, or no change of emphasis in each of these following aspects of your kindergarten program AS A RESULT OF THE GRADE 1 CURRICULUM? Use the following scale:

- 1 - Decrease
- 2 - No change
- 3 - Increase
- 4 - Undecided/don't know

CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Academic skills development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. Affective development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. Social skills development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. Motor skills development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. Teacher directed activities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. Child selected activities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. Play | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. Parent involvement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

COMMENTS: _____

In your school over the past few years, has there been an increase, a decrease, or no change of emphasis in each of these following aspects of your first grade program AS A RESULT OF THE KINDERGARTEN CURRICULUM? Use the following scale:

- 1 - Decrease
- 2 - No change
- 3 - Increase
- 4 - Undecided/don't know

CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Academic skills development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. Affective development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. Social skills development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. Motor skills development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. Teacher directed activities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. Child selected activities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. Play | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. Parent involvement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

COMMENTS: _____

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE. WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE ALL THE QUESTIONNAIRES RETURNED BY APRIL 15. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR WANT TO LEARN OF RESULTS, PLEASE CONTACT RANDY HITZ, EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION SPECIALIST, 378-5571.

sb/3971Gcm

Form 581-2360(2/86)

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
700 Pringle Parkway SE
Salem, Oregon 97310

Division of General Education
February 1986

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS

PLEASE CIRCLE THE MOST APPROPRIATE ANSWERS.

AGE:

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| (1) 20-25 | (4) 36-40 |
| (2) 26-30 | (5) 41-50 |
| (3) 31-35 | (6) 51+ |

GENDER:

- (1) M
(2) F

Type of school in which you teach: (1) private (2) public

County in which your school is located: _____

How many years have you taught?

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| (1) 0-5 | (4) 16-20 |
| (2) 6-10 | (5) 21+ |
| (3) 11-15 | |

How long have you taught at the kindergarten level?

- | | |
|-------------|----------------|
| (1) 1 year | (4) 4-5 years |
| (2) 2 years | (5) 6-10 years |
| (3) 3 years | (6) 11+ years |

At what other levels have you taught?

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| (1) Preschool | (3) Grades 4-6 |
| (2) Grades 1-3 | (4) Other: _____ |

Highest degree held:

- (1) Baccalaureate
(2) Masters
(3) Other: _____

What certificates and endorsements do you hold? Circle all numbers that apply.

- (1) Reading
(2) Early Childhood
(3) Handicapped Learner
(4) Media
(5) Other: _____

To what professional organizations do you belong? Circle all that apply.

- (1) Oregon Education Association
(2) Oregon Association for the Education of Young Children
(3) Association for Childhood Education International
(4) Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
(5) Oregon Reading Association
(6) Other: _____

Form 581-2362(2/86)

List inservice experiences you have had in the last three years which were designed specifically to help you in your kindergarten teaching.

In this section indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement. We are interested in your **OPINION**. Use the following scale:

- 1 - Strongly disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Agree
- 5 - Strongly Agree

Comments related to any of these items may be written in the space provided following the list of statements.

CIRCLE THE ONE MOST APPROPRIATE

Kindergarten teachers should:

1. Devote at least half of each school day to child-chosen activities.

1 2 3 4 5

2. Assume that children are motivated to learn without tangible rewards.

1 2 3 4 5

3. Show more interest in **HOW** children work and play than in what they **PRODUCE**.

1 2 3 4 5

4. Provide substantial workbook and other seatwork activity in order to prepare children for first grade.

1 2 3 4 5

5. Administer reading readiness tests to all kindergarten children early in the school year.

1 2 3 4 5

6. Involve all children in formal reading instruction.

1 2 3 4 5

7. Encourage dramatic play as a means of enhancing cognitive and social development.

1 2 3 4 5

8. Require completion of all tasks and activities.

1 2 3 4 5

Form 581-2362(2/86)

- 9. Provide major segments of each day for free play.
1 2 3 4 5
- 10. Use privileges, grades, prizes and other rewards to motivate children.
1 2 3 4 5
- 11. Require all children to take part in every activity.
1 2 3 4 5
- 12. Provide children with considerable open-ended materials and experiences.
1 2 3 4 5
- 13. Have special training in early childhood education.
1 2 3 4 5
- 14. Have available to them more inservice activities specifically designed to meet their needs as kindergarten teachers.
1 2 3 4 5
- 15. Have more time to develop curriculum and share information with first grade teachers.
1 2 3 4 5

COMMENTS: (Comments related to any items should be accompanied by the number of that item)

Check the extent to which SPECIALIZED PREPARATION in EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION is needed by kindergarten teachers as part of their preservice training. In this question we are interested in your OPINION. Use the following scale:

- 1 - Not a need
- 2 - Slight need
- 3 - Strong need
- 4 - Definite requirement

CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER

- 1. Art education 1 2 3 4
- 2. Music education 1 2 3 4
- 3. Physical education 1 2 3 4
- 4. Child development 1 2 3 4

Form 581-2362(2/86)

5. Curriculum development	1	2	3	4
6. Kindergarten methods	1	2	3	4
7. Classroom management	1	2	3	4
8. Language development	1	2	3	4
9. Reading methods	1	2	3	4
10. Science methods	1	2	3	4
11. Social studies methods	1	2	3	4
12. Mathematics methods	1	2	3	4
13. Special needs children: identification	1	2	3	4
14. Special needs children: instruction	1	2	3	4
15. Student observation and assessment	1	2	3	4
16. Program evaluation	1	2	3	4
17. History of early childhood education	1	2	3	4
18. Children's literature	1	2	3	4
19. Home/School relations	1	2	3	4

COMMENTS: _____

Overall, as a result of your PRESERVICE training, how well prepared were you for teaching kindergarten?

CIRCLE ONE NUMBER

1. Not at all
2. Somewhat
3. Adequately
4. Very well
5. Exceptionally well

COMMENTS: _____

Form 581-2362(2/86)

In your school over the past few years, has there been an increase, a decrease, or no change of emphasis in each of these following aspects of your kindergarten program AS A RESULT OF THE FIRST GRADE CURRICULUM? Use the following scale:

- 1 - Decrease
- 2 - No change
- 3 - Increase
- 4 - Undecided/don't know

CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER

1. Academic skills development	1	2	3	4
2. Affective development	1	2	3	4
3. Social skills development	1	2	3	4
4. Motor skills development	1	2	3	4
5. Teacher directed activities	1	2	3	4
6. Child selected activities	1	2	3	4
7. Play	1	2	3	4
8. Parent involvement	1	2	3	4

COMMENTS: _____

Indicate how important each of the listed abilities is to you in your teaching. First, circle the one appropriate response in the "Importance" column. Second, indicate how well prepared you feel in this area in the "Adequacy" column. Finally, indicate where you feel you received the majority of your preparation with respect to each ability. Circle the ONE most appropriate number in each column.

<u>Importance Ratings</u>	<u>Adequacy Ratings</u>	<u>Where Preparation Was Received</u>
1 = very important	1 = excellent preparation	1 = preservice training
2 = moderately important	2 = good preparation	2 = district inservice
3 = not very important	3 = fair preparation	3 = graduate courses
4 = not important at all	4 = poor preparation	4 = experience

<u>Abilities</u>	<u>Importance</u>				<u>Adequacy</u>				<u>Where Preparation Was Received</u>			
1. Planning for instruction, including constructing lesson plans.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
2. Planning meaningful play experiences.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

<u>Importance Ratings</u>	<u>Adequacy Ratings</u>	<u>where Preparation Was Received</u>
1 = very important	1 = excellent preparation	1 = preservice training
2 = moderately important	2 = good preparation	2 = district inservice
3 = not very important	3 = fair preparation	3 = graduate courses
4 = not important at all	4 = poor preparation	4 = experience

<u>Abilities</u>	<u>Importance</u>				<u>Adequacy</u>				<u>Where Preparation Was Received</u>			
3. Preparing learning centers.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
4. Adapting curricular materials to various ability levels and interests of students.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
5. Providing instruction for the handicapped	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
6. Working with gifted students.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
7. Assessing student needs.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
8. Keeping records and charting student progress.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
9. Guiding children toward self-discipline	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
10. Handling discipline problems in the classroom.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
11. Making effective use of classroom aides.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
12. Working effectively with parents	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
13. Working with other teachers effectively	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
14. Working effectively with administrators.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
15. Curriculum/Program evaluation.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE. WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE ALL THE QUESTIONNAIRES RETURNED BY APRIL 15. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR WANT TO LEARN OF RESULTS PLEASE CONTACT RANDY HITZ, EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION SPECIALIST, 378-5571.

sb/3964Gcm

Form 581-2362(2/86)

APPENDIX C
Survey Instruments

Department of Educational Administration and Counseling

University of Northern Iowa
Cedar Falls, Iowa 50614

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS:

In this section indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement. We are interested in your OPINION. Use the following scale:

- 1 - Strongly Disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Agree
- 5 - Strongly Agree

Comments related to any of these items may be written in the space provided following the list of statements.

CIRCLE THE ONE MOST APPROPRIATE

Kindergarten teachers should:

	SD	D	N	A	SA
1. Devote at least half of their teaching time to child-chosen activities.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Assume that children are motivated to learn without tangible rewards.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Show more interest in how children work and play than in what they produce.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Provide substantial workbook and other seatwork activity in order to prepare children for first grade.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Administer reading readiness tests to all kindergarten children early in the school year.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Involve all children in formal reading instruction.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Encourage dramatic play as a means of enhancing cognitive and social development.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Require completion of all tasks and activities.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Provide a period of time for free play each day.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Use privileges, grades, prizes and other rewards to motivate children.	1	2	3	4	5

11. Require all children to take part in every activity. 1 2 3 4 5
12. Provide children with considerable open-ended materials and experiences. 1 2 3 4 5

COMMENTS: (comments related to any items should be accompanied by the number of that item)

In your school, over the past few years, has there been an increase, a decrease, or no change of emphasis in each of these following aspects of your kindergarten program as a result of PARENTS/GUARDIANS? Use the following scale:

- 1 - Decrease
- 2 - No Change
- 3 - Increase
- 4 - Don't Know

CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER

	D	NC	I	DK
1. Academic skills development	1	2	3	4
2. Affective development	1	2	3	4
3. Social skills development	1	2	3	4
4. Motor skills development	1	2	3	4
5. Teacher directed activities	1	2	3	4
6. Child selected activities	1	2	3	4
7. Play	1	2	3	4
8. Parent Involvement	1	2	3	4

COMMENTS: _____

In your school, over the past few years, has there been an increase, a decrease, or no change of emphasis in each of these following aspects of your kindergarten program as a result of the FIRST GRADE CURRICULUM? Use the following scale:

- 1. Decrease
- 2. No Change
- 3. Increase
- 4. Don't Know

CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER

	D	NC	1	DK
1. Academic skills development	1	2	3	4
2. Affective development	1	2	3	4
3. Social skills development	1	2	3	4
4. Motor skills development	1	2	3	4
5. Teacher directed activities	1	2	3	4
6. Child selected activities	1	2	3	4
7. Play	1	2	3	4
8. Parent Involvement	1	2	3	4

COMMENTS: _____

GENERAL INFORMATION - PLEASE CIRCLE THE MOST APPROPRIATE ANSWERS.

1. AGE:

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| (1) 20-25 | (4) 36-40 |
| (2) 26-30 | (5) 41-50 |
| (3) 31-35 | (6) 51+ |

2. GENDER:

- (1) Male
 (2) Female

3. How long have you served as an elementary principal (including this year)?

- | | |
|-------------|------------------|
| (1) 1 year | (4) 4 - 5 years |
| (2) 2 years | (5) 6 - 10 years |
| (3) 3 years | (6) 11+ years |

4. At what level do you have the most experience? (mark only one)

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| (1) Preschool/Kindergarten | (3) Grades 4 - 6 |
| (2) Grades 1 - 3 | (4) Other: _____ |

5. How many years did you teach elementary prior to becoming a principal?

- | | |
|------------|-------------|
| (1) 0 | (4) 11 - 15 |
| (2) 1 - 5 | (5) 16 - 20 |
| (3) 6 - 10 | (6) 21+ |

6. Highest degree held:

- (1) Baccalaureate
- (2) Masters
- (3) Specialist
- (4) Doctorate

7. What certificates and endorsements do you hold?
Circle all numbers that apply.

- (1) Reading
- (2) Early Childhood
- (3) Special Education
- (4) Elementary Education
- (5) Educational Administration
- (6) Other: _____

8. Overall, as a result of your college/university training, how well prepared were you for working with kindergarten programs?

- (1) Not at all
- (2) Somewhat
- (3) Adequately
- (4) Very well
- (5) Exceptionally

9. Have you ever been involved in hiring a kindergarten teacher?

- (1) yes
- (2) no

10. Have you received any specialized training in developmentally appropriate practice?

- (1) yes
- (2) no
- (If yes, please describe) _____

11. District size category:

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| (1) 0 - 249 | (5) 1000 - 2499 |
| (2) 250 - 399 | (6) 2500 - 8999 |
| (3) 400 - 599 | (7) 9000 & over |
| (4) 600 - 999 | |

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE. WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE ALL THE QUESTIONNAIRES RETURNED BY MAY 15, 1992. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR WANT TO LEARN THE RESULTS, PLEASE CONTACT:

**DUDLEY L. HUMPHREY, ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL
JEFFERSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
1421 4TH STREET S.E.
MASON CITY, IOWA 50401
515/421-4411**

Department of Educational Administration and Counseling
University of Northern Iowa
Cedar Falls, Iowa 50614

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS:

In this section indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement. We are interested in your **OPINION**. Use the following scale:

- 1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Disagree
3 - Neutral
4 - Agree
5 - Strongly Agree

Comments related to any of these items may be written in the space provided following the list of statements.

CIRCLE THE ONE MOST APPROPRIATE

Kindergarten teachers should:

	SD	D	N	A	SA
1. Devote at least half of their teaching time to child-chosen activities.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Assume that children are motivated to learn without tangible rewards.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Show more interest in how children work and play than in what they produce.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Provide substantial workbook and other seatwork activity in order to prepare children for first grade.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Administer reading readiness tests to all kindergarten children early in the school year.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Involve all children in formal reading instruction.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Encourage dramatic play as a means of enhancing cognitive and social development.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Require completion of all tasks and activities.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Provide a period of time for free play each day.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Use privileges, grades, prizes and other rewards to motivate children.	1	2	3	4	5

- 11. Require all children to take part in every activity. 1 2 3 4 5
- 12. Provide children with considerable open-ended materials and experiences. 1 2 3 4 5

COMMENTS: (comments related to any items should be accompanied by the number of that item)

In your school, over the past few years, has there been an increase, a decrease, or no change of emphasis in each of these following aspects of your kindergarten program as a result of PARENTS/GUARDIANS? Use the following scale:

- 1 - Decrease
- 2 - No Change
- 3 - Increase
- 4 - Don't Know

CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER

	D	NC	1	DK
1. Academic skills development	1	2	3	4
2. Affective development	1	2	3	4
3. Social skills development	1	2	3	4
4. Motor skills development	1	2	3	4
5. Teacher directed activities	1	2	3	4
6. Child selected activities	1	2	3	4
7. Play	1	2	3	4
8. Parent Involvement	1	2	3	4

COMMENTS: _____

In your school, over the past few years, has there been an increase, a decrease, or no change of emphasis in each of these following aspects of your kindergarten program as a result of the FIRST GRADE CURRICULUM? Use the following scale:

- 1 - Decrease
- 2 - No Change
- 3 - Increase
- 4 - Don't Know

CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER

	D	NC	1	DK
1. Academic skills development	1	2	3	4
2. Affective development	1	2	3	4
3. Social skills development	1	2	3	4
4. Motor skills development	1	2	3	4
5. Teacher directed activities	1	2	3	4
6. Child selected activities	1	2	3	4
7. Play	1	2	3	4
8. Parent Involvement	1	2	3	4

COMMENTS: _____

GENERAL INFORMATION - PLEASE CIRCLE THE MOST APPROPRIATE ANSWERS.

1. AGE:

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| (1) 20 - 25 | (4) 36 - 40 |
| (2) 26 - 30 | (5) 41 - 50 |
| (3) 31 - 35 | (6) 51+ |

2. GENDER:

- (1) Male
 (2) Female

3. How many years have you taught elementary, not counting kindergarten (including this year)?

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| (1) 1 - 5 | (4) 16 - 20 |
| (2) 6 - 10 | (5) 21+ |
| (3) 11 - 15 | |

4. How long have you taught at the kindergarten level (including this year)?

- | | |
|-------------|------------------|
| (1) 1 year | (4) 4 - 5 years |
| (2) 2 years | (5) 6 - 10 years |
| (3) 3 years | (6) 11+ years |

5. Highest degree held:

- (1) Baccalaureate
 (2) Masters
 (3) Specialist
 (4) Doctorate

6. What certificates and endorsements do you hold?
Circle all numbers that apply.

- (1) Reading
- (2) Early childhood
- (3) Special Education
- (4) Elementary Education
- (5) Educational Administration
- (6) Other: _____

7 Have you received any specialized training in developmentally appropriate practices?

- (1) yes
- (2) no
- (If yes, please describe) _____

8. Overall, as a result of your college/university preservice (undergraduate) training, how well prepared were you for teaching kindergarten?

- (1) Not at all
- (2) Somewhat
- (3) Adequately
- (4) Very well
- (5) Exceptionally

9. District size category:

- (1) 0 - 249
- (2) 250 - 399
- (3) 400 - 599
- (4) 600 - 999
- (5) 1000 - 2499
- (6) 2500 - 8999
- (7) 9000 & over

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE. WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE ALL THE QUESTIONNAIRES RETURNED BY MAY 15, 1992. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR WANT TO LEARN THE RESULTS, PLEASE CONTACT:

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MASON CITY, IOWA 50401
515/421-4411**

Department of Educational Administration and Counseling
University of Northern Iowa
Cedar Falls, Iowa 50614

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR KINDERGARTEN PARENTS

In this section indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement. We are interested in your **OPINION**. Use the following scale.

- 1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Disagree
3 - Neutral
4 - Agree
5 - Strongly Agree

Comments related to any of these items may be written in the space provided following the list of statements.

CIRCLE THE ONE MOST APPROPRIATE

Kindergarten teachers should:

	SD	D	N	A	SA
1. Devote at least half of their teaching time to child-chosen activities.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Assume that children are motivated to learn without tangible rewards.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Show more interest in how children work and play than in what they produce.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Provide substantial workbook and other seatwork activity in order to prepare children for first grade.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Administer reading readiness tests to all kindergarten children early in the school year.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Involve all children in formal reading instruction.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Encourage dramatic play as a means of enhancing cognitive and social development.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Require completion of all tasks and activities.	1	2	3	4	5

- 9. Provide a period of time for free play each day. 1 2 3 4 5
- 10. Use privileges, grades, prizes and other rewards to motivate children. 1 2 3 4 5
- 11. Require all children to take part in every activity. 1 2 3 4 5
- 12. Provide children with considerable open-ended materials and experiences. 1 2 3 4 5

COMMENTS: (comments related to any items should be accompanied by the number of that item)

As a parent or guardian of a kindergarten child, do you feel there should be an increase, a decrease or no change of emphasis in each of these following aspects of your child's current kindergarten program? Use the following scale:

- 1. Decrease
- 2. No Change
- 3. Increase
- 4. Don't Know

CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER

- | | D | NC | I | DK |
|--------------------------------|---|----|---|----|
| 1. Academic skills development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. Affective development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. Social skills development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. Motor skills development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. Teacher directed activities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. Child selected activities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. Play | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. Parent Involvement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

COMMENTS: _____

GENERAL INFORMATION - PLEASE CIRCLE THE MOST APPROPRIATE ANSWERS.

1. AGE:

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| (1) 20 - 25 | (4) 36 - 40 |
| (2) 26 - 30 | (5) 41 - 50 |
| (3) 31 - 35 | (6) 51+ |

2. GENDER:

- (1) Male
(2) Female

3. Gender of your child that is currently in kindergarten:

- (1) Male
(2) Female

4. Do you have other children in public school?

- yes ___
no ___

5. Highest educational degree earned?

- (1) High school diploma
(2) Advanced trade/technical training
(3) Baccalaureate
(4) Masters
(5) Specialist
(6) Doctorate

6. Has your current kindergarten child attended some kind of preschool?

- yes ___
no ___

7. Have you received any specialized training in developmentally appropriate practice?

- (1) yes
(2) no
(If yes, please describe) _____

8. District size category:

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| (1) 0 - 249 | (5) 1000 - 2499 |
| (2) 250 - 399 | (6) 2500 - 8999 |
| (3) 400 - 599 | (7) 9000 & over |
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APPENDIX D
Summary of the Analysis of Variance
of the Three Groups

Summary of the Analysis of Variance of the
Three Groups--N=148

Item	Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Probability
1. Devote at least half of their teaching time to child-chosen activities.	Between groups	2	126.83	63.41	59.36	.0000
	Within groups	777	832.02	1.07		
2. Assume that children are motivated to learn without tangible rewards.	Between groups	2	73.63	36.82	29.39	.0000
	Within groups	780	977.08	1.25		
3. Show more interest in how children work and play than in what they produce.	Between groups	2	50.51	25.25	26.62	.0000
	Within groups	783	742.74	.95		

(table continues)

Item	Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Probability
4. Provide substantial workbook and other seat work activity in order to prepare children for first grade.	Between groups	2	255.36	127.68		
	Within groups	783	1013.60	1.29	98.63	.0000
5. Administer reading readiness tests to all kindergarten children early in the school year.	Between groups	2	124.20	62.10		
	Within groups	783	963.13	1.23	50.49	.0000
6. Involve all children in formal reading instruction.	Between groups	2	198.45	99.22		
	Within groups	783	1044.37	1.33	74.39	.0000
7. Encourage dramatic play as a means of enhancing cognitive and social development.	Between groups	2	61.83	30.92		
	Within groups	784	467.71	.60	51.83	.0000

(table continues)

Item	Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Probability
8. Require completion of all tasks and activities.	Between groups	2	51.62	25.81	21.49	.0000
	Within groups	784	941.55	1.20		
9. Provide a period of time for free play each day.	Between groups	2	9.84	4.92	9.93	.0001
	Within groups	785	389.14	.50		
10. Use privileges, grades, prizes, and other rewards to motivate children.	Between groups	2	69.96	34.98	32.17	.0000
	Within groups	783	851.45	1.09		
11. Require all children to take part in every activity.	Between groups	2	107.98	53.99	48.53	.0000
	Within groups	783	871.01	1.11		

(table continues)

Item	Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Probability
12. Provide children with considerable open-ended materials and experiences.	Between groups	2	29.23	14.61		
	Within groups	784	505.18	.64	22.68	.0000
Summative, developmental score	Between groups	2	77.48	38.74		
	Within groups	761	172.67	.23	170.73	.0000

Note. Principal $n = 132$, Teacher $n = 137$, Parent $n = 524$

APPENDIX E

**Summary of the Analysis of Variance
of Principals Reporting Having Received
Specialized Training in Developmentally
Appropriate Practice**

Summary of the Analysis of Variance of Principals Reporting Having Received
Specialized Training in Developmentally Appropriate Practice--n = 132

Item	Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Probability
1. Devote at least half of their teaching time to child-chosen activities.	Between groups	1	18.56	18.56		
	Within groups	127	142.34	1.12	16.56	.0001*
2. Assume that children are motivated to learn without tangible rewards.	Between groups	1	.001	.001		
	Within groups	130	174.93	1.35	.00	.9809
3. Show more interest in how children work and play than in what they produce.	Between groups	1	6.17	6.17		
	Within groups	130	93.55	.72	8.57	.0040*

(table continues)

Item	Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Probability
4. Provide substantial workbook and other seat work activity in order to prepare children for first grade.	Between groups	1	4.05	4.05	5.25	.0235*
	Within groups	130	100.22	.77		
5. Administer reading readiness tests to all kindergarten children early in the school year.	Between groups	1	3.44	3.44	3.69	.0570
	Within groups	130	121.37	.93		
6. Involve all children in formal reading instruction.	Between groups	1	11.11	11.11	10.35	.0016*
	Within groups	130	139.52	1.07		
7. Encourage dramatic play as a means of enhancing cognitive and social development.	Between groups	1	6.57	6.57	12.36	.0006*
	Within groups	130	69.15	.53		

(table continues)

Item	Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Probability
8. Require completion of all tasks and activities.	Between groups	1	5.18	5.18		
	Within groups	129	152.48	1.18	4.38	.0383*
9. Provide a period of time for free play each day.	Between groups	1	2.23	2.23		
	Within groups	130	66.16	.51	4.37	.0384*
10. Use privileges, grades, prizes, and other rewards to motivate children.	Between groups	1	.78	.78		
	Within groups	130	143.47	1.10	.70	.4034
11. Require all children to take part in every activity.	Between groups	1	1.58	1.58		
	Within groups	130	119.15	.92	1.72	.1914

(table continues)

Item	Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Probability
12. Provide children with considerable open-ended materials and experiences.	Between groups	1	.91	.91		
	Within groups	130	87.63	.67	1.35	.2469
Summative, developmental score	Between groups	1	3.38	3.38		
	Within groups	126	24.03	.19	17.70	.0000*

*p < .05

APPENDIX F

Summary of the Analysis of Variance of
Teachers Reporting Having Received
Specialized Training in Developmentally
Appropriate Practice

Summary of the Analysis of Variance of Teachers Reporting Having Received
Specialized Training in Developmentally Appropriate Practice--n = 137

Item	Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Probability
1. Devote at least half of their teaching time to child-chosen activities.	Between groups	1	3.11	3.11		
	Within groups	133	169.66	1.28	2.44	.1207
2. Assume that children are motivated to learn without tangible rewards.	Between groups	1	.41	.41		
	Within groups	133	157.78	1.19	.35	.5577
3. Show more interest in how children work and play than in what they produce.	Between groups	1	4.12	4.12		
	Within groups	134	97.64	.73	5.65	.0189*

(table continues)

Item	Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Probability
4. Provide substantial workbook and other seat work activity in order to prepare children for first grade.	Between groups	1	8.64	8.64		
	Within groups	133	161.25	1.21	7.12	.0086*
5. Administer reading readiness tests to all kindergarten children early in the school year.	Between groups	1	.42	.42		
	Within groups	134	139.82	1.04	.40	.5281
6. Involve all children in formal reading instruction.	Between groups	1	1.48	1.48		
	Within groups	133	213.96	1.61	.92	.3399
7. Encourage dramatic play as a means of enhancing cognitive and social development.	Between groups	1	1.47	1.47		
	Within groups	135	39.98	.30	4.95	.0277*

(table continues)

Item	Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Probability
8. Require completion of all tasks and activities.	Between groups	1	.22	.22		
	Within groups	134	173.40	1.29	.17	.6837
9. Provide a period of time for free play each day.	Between groups	1	.00	.00		
	Within groups	135	48.32	.36	.01	.9429
10. Use privileges, grades, prizes, and other rewards to motivate children.	Between groups	1	1.02	1.02		
	Within groups	135	141.26	1.05	.97	.3255
11. Require all children to take part in every activity.	Between groups	1	.06	.06		
	Within groups	134	121.93	.91	.07	.7987

(table continues)

Item	Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Probability
12. Provide children with considerable open-ended materials and experiences.	Between groups	1	4.37	4.37		
	Within groups	135	51.35	.38	11.49	.0009*
Summative, developmental score	Between groups	1	1.73	1.73		
	Within groups	127	29.34	.23	7.47	.0072*

*p < .05