12-2010

CENTERING THE VOICES OF SOUTH CAROLINA'S EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION TEACHERS: A MULTI-CASE STUDY EXAMINING HOW THEY SELECT AND ARE INFORMED BY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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A Dissertation
Presented to
the Graduate School of
Clemson University

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In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy
Curriculum and Instruction

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by
Lenna Corley Young
December 2010

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this dissertation is to contribute to the existing literature focused on quality early care and education (ECE). Specifically, this study examines two main research questions: (1) How do teachers in South Carolina licensed, privately-funded ECE programs select professional development opportunities and (2) How does participating in professional development inform their practices? These questions are particularly significant in light of the minimal requirements for teachers to enter the ECE field in South Carolina. Due to the low entry requirements for ECE teachers, professional development can play a key role in transforming minimally qualified individuals into teachers who care for and educate the state's youngest children for future success.

The review of research literature found few studies focused squarely on privately-funded ECE settings and even fewer studies incorporating the voices of ECE teachers regarding professional development. This study uses a multi-case methodology involving four privately-funded ECE centers in South Carolina. Through single- and cross-case analyses, assertions emerge suggesting that teachers are most likely to select training based on content and that delivery approaches are most likely to determine whether the professional development will inform their teaching practices. This study centers teacher voices within the research arena, a sphere of influence where they are not typically found, but where they are needed to aid ECE advocates and policy makers to better understand the complexities surrounding required professional development within ECE settings in South Carolina.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the four most influential people in my life...

...My husband, Lance. This work is dedicated foremost to him. For the past thirty years, his love has grounded my very being, and his faith and belief in me have propelled me further than I ever imagined for myself. Without his encompassing care, unwavering support, and many sacrifices of time and energy, especially during these past five crazy years, this work would not exist. Lance, with my deepest love, I thank you!

...My sister, Cindy. This work represents another step in our journey as sisters that sprang from a childhood entwined with numerous curiosities and the oddest of peculiarities that remarkably, and thankfully, led to our friendship. I rely on your unconditional love and genuine acceptance more than you probably know.

...My parents, Margaret and Wilbur, both of whom have left me during my doctoral program – one through death and the other through advanced dementia. This work represents a culmination of their unselfish commitment to my education and their unrelenting encouragement for me to continually seek my potential.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Well over a decade ago, a friend advised me to seek a more purposeful career path rather than relying on serendipity. However, serendipity, or what I prefer to think of as God's plan that surpasses human understanding, has marvelously placed me amongst the following people who I gratefully acknowledge for their roles in the completion of this dissertation and my doctoral program of study.

Acknowledging those most responsible for and supportive of this study must begin with the directors and teachers who opened their centers and their hearts to me. I hope their voices never stop echoing in my thoughts because their words motivate me to define how we can best insure the success of the children of our state – our very future!

Over five years ago, I met two exceedingly dedicated early childhood leaders in our state who have continually graced me with their time and knowledge: Deb Nodine, Director of South Carolina's T.E.A.C.H. and Millie McDonald, Director of South Carolina's Center for Child Care Career Development. One of the greatest pleasures enmeshed in this study was working with them, particularly in regards to the implications of the study's results. I am most appreciative of the energies they shared, and I am elated over their reception of the study's results and recommendations.

Each doctoral student's journey is different. My journey spanned five years and included both personal trials and professional accomplishments, and each member of my committee played key roles through the highs and lows. Dr. Dee Stegelin, my chair and advisor, was with me from my first deliberations over applying for the doctoral program to traveling to Reggio Emilia, presenting at conferences and working on state boards. As

a student in one of her first classes at Clemson University, Dr. Eckhoff's encouragement led me to explore issues within the private sectors of early care and education that contributed to this study and to what I believe will be my future research agenda. Dr. Grimes helped me through the initial proposal process setting the stage for the remainder of this study. Dr. Rosenblith's style of teaching has led me to think deeper and more critically, and her close readings of and supportive input to this study helped me shape a manuscript far superior to what I could have done on my own. I gratefully acknowledge each member of this committee for sharing her unique experience and expertise and for encouraging my persistence through to the end.

Since entering my doctoral program, I received tremendous support from colleagues at work. Carey, Elizabeth, Mark, and Gina Marie at Greenville Technical College and Dr. Buckhiester, Martha, and Jackie at Tri-County Technical College made numerous accommodations for me as I struggled to balance work, life, and school.

And finally, my doctoral journey involved the love and patience of dear friends. Rose, thank you for our weekend chats and random adventures that were often just the breaks I needed. Pam and Charles, Margaret Ann and George, Louise and Dave, and Elaine and Clarence, thank you for your support and for taking care of Lance and me these past five years. Dave and Clarence, I owe special thanks to you for coming to my aid at just the right time. As this study concludes and until my next undertaking begins, I look forward to re-joining all of you in the realms of friendship and life!

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Advocates and policy makers agree that quality early childhood education (ECE) matters in defining young children's future success. Early childhood advocates point to studies linking evidence of the vast benefits of quality ECE to the development of young children (Nores, Belfield, Barnett, & Schweinhart, 2005; Schonkoff & Phillips, 2001). Researchers also point to studies linking quality ECE to young children's positive learning outcomes (Broidy et al., 2003; Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997; National Research Council, 2000). Major news agencies publicize the need for quality ECE with articles such as "A Consensus about Childcare: Quality Counts" (Rabin, 2008) that includes quotes from leading researchers in the ECE field. Additionally, community leaders point policy makers to economic reports predicting a potential 12% return on every tax dollar spent on quality ECE in their communities (Rolnick & Grunewald, 2003; Schunk, 2006).

Despite the agreement that quality ECE matters, questions remain about the blend of components required to produce quality ECE. One component, teacher[1] qualifications, is often the subject of studies examining quality in ECE (Burchinal & Cryer, 2003; NICHD ECCRN, 2002; Saluja, Early, & Clifford, 2002). Teachers shoulder much of the responsibility for the design and implementation of the curriculum. For that reason,

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[1] In this study, the term *teacher* is inclusive of all persons directly responsible for the care and/or education of children in the classroom. Other titles such as childcare providers, caregivers, and assistant teachers are included in references to *teachers*.

researchers specifically target teacher levels of professional development (formal education, training, and credentials) as an essential component of providing quality care and education for children aged birth through pre-k (National Research Council, 2000).

While definitions of professional development vary throughout studies (Buysse, Winton, & Rous, 2009; Maxwell, Field & Clifford, 2006), research methods employed to explore the degree of effectiveness of professional development are predominately quantitative. However, it may not be adequate to rely on analysis of only quantitative data to determine the full impact of professional development on quality ECE. Hatch and Barclay-McLaughlin (2006) recommend including "enough contextual detail and sufficient representation of participant voices that readers can place themselves in the shoes of the participants" (p. 499). To fully understand the impact of professional development, advocates and policy makers need to hear the voices of the ECE teaching workforce to place them in the shoes of those who actually experience professional development. Only the voices of ECE teachers who experience the ground zero effects of their professional development choices can provide the contextual details that will offer clearer understanding and richer descriptions of how they select and experience professional development and of how their selected professional development informs their teaching practices.

This dissertation presents a multi-case study examining how teachers in South Carolina's privately-funded ECE settings select professional development and how the selected professional development informs their practices. Through the use of interviews, focus groups, artifacts, and observations, the study incorporates the voices of teachers

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whose levels of professional development rarely elevate their perspectives and insights into the research arena. This first chapter presents the rationale for the study, specifies the problem studied, describes its significance, and presents an overview of the methodology used.

Rationale for the Study

Like other states across the nation, the required education and professional development levels of the ECE teaching workforce in South Carolina vary depending on whether the teacher works in a state, federal, or privately-funded early care and education setting. South Carolina's publicly funded pre-k programs require teachers to hold a state teaching certification representative of completing a four-year, specifically designed, bachelor's degree program. In federally funded programs such as Head Start, teacher credentialing is gradually increasing to include lead teachers holding four-year degrees (Statutory Degree and Credentialing Requirements for Head Start Teaching Staff ACF-IM-HS-08-12, 2008). These requirements are in sharp contrast to those of teachers caring for and educating children enrolled in South Carolina's privately-funded, state-licensed early care and education programs (i.e., programs with no significant federal or state funding and subsequent oversight).

In South Carolina's privately-funded, state-licensed early care and education programs, the Department of Social Services (DSS) stipulates through its regulatory guidelines that teachers may begin work with as little as a high school diploma or General Education Development (GED) certificate and six months of experience as a

caregiver (Department of Social Services). These teachers care for and teach children birth through preschool age.

South Carolina's DSS regulatory guidelines also set the required professional development level for teachers in privately-funded, state-licensed early care and education programs. Per these guidelines, teachers in South Carolina licensed early care and education programs must complete 15 clock hours of professional development each year. DSS regulatory guidance for center-based programs for young children states:

> At least five clock hours shall be in child growth and development, and at
> least five clock hours shall be in curriculum activities for children
> excluding first aid and CPR training. The remaining hours shall come
> from the following areas: Guidance, Health, Safety, Nutrition or
> Professional Development and must include blood-borne pathogens
> training as required by OSHA. (Department of Social Services, Section K
> (5) (c))

DSS professional development requirements do not call for teachers from an early care and education program, either collectively or as an individual, to engage in any orchestrated plan of training to meet specific goals. Instead of requirements for intentional selection of training, teachers can individually choose any combination of training delivery options to complete the 15 clock hour requirement as outlined above. Delivery options include state-registered workshops and conferences, in-service training, professional organization conferences, and college coursework (Center for Child Care Career Development, 2009).

Given the lack of intentionality and the piecemeal selection of training to meet the 15 clock hours, it seems unlikely that the professional development experiences will meet levels of duration and intensity sufficient to influence or change teachers' beliefs and practices. It also seems unlikely that the near future will find the state's legislature increasing regulatory requirements for teachers in privately-funded, state-licensed, early care and education programs[2]. Therefore, the 15 annually required clock hours of professional development are the primary means of preparing minimally qualified individuals as teachers capable of caring for and educating the state's youngest children for their future success in school and in life. Furthermore, if research findings can be generalized to South Carolina's privately-funded, state-licensed early care and education teachers, the state's current DSS regulatory teacher qualification requirements cannot be relied upon to support the future academic success of children enrolled in these programs (Barnett, 2003; Whitebook, 2003).

Two voluntary initiatives are currently underway in South Carolina to increase the quality of ECE state-licensed programs. The Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.) scholarship program awards funding to teachers to enroll in college and to earn college credit towards early childhood credentials, associate's degrees, and four-year degrees (D. Nodine, personal communication, June 8, 2009). The second initiative placed South Carolina as the first state in the nation to offer a tiered reimbursement plan for vouchers tied to Block Grant funding through the state's Advocates for Better Care

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[2] Recent legislative sessions have produced no significant work on behalf of the state's youngest children attending privately funded, state-licensed early care and education programs. Spring, 2009, South Carolina's legislature voted down a proposal to increase the state's tax on cigarettes (the lowest in the nation) to fund quality efforts. Spring, 2005, a quality rating system was vetoed by the governor.

(ABC) program. The tiered plan awards higher reimbursement rates to programs meeting higher educational qualifications for directors and teachers and achieving higher environmental rating scale scores (B. Hunter, personal communication, May 28, 2009).

While the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship and the ABC tiered reimbursement programs can influence the selection of professional development for enrolled privately-funded, state-licensed programs, both programs are voluntary, and, in the case of T.E.A.C.H., an enrolled center does not necessarily equate to all staff participating. Therefore, the level of knowledge, skills, and abilities of teachers in privately-funded, state-licensed early care and education programs is essentially reliant on the DSS annual requirement to complete 15 annual clock hours of professional development. Determining how teachers select these required professional development clock hours and how these inform their practices are the central foci for this study.

A vast amount of quantitative data is available to determine the number of hours, the subject matter, and the delivery method of professional development completed by South Carolina's ECE teaching workforce (M. McDonald, personal communication, June 8, 2009). Additional data is available to track teachers and ECEs utilizing the T.E.A.C.H. program. Researchers can compile these data points into many formats to provide a workforce survey of qualifications and professional development levels. However, such quantitative data points and the subsequent analysis can only address questions regarding narrow, descriptive aspects of regulated, structural ECE quality. Research focused solely on regulatory ECE quality has limited use in a profession calling for more intense studies of the contextual aspects of professional development that impact teacher practices and

thereby affect children's learning outcomes (Martinez-Beck & Zaslow, 2006; Sheridan, Edwards, Marvin, & Knoche, 2009).

Statement of the Problem

This dissertation addresses the problem of the lack of research documenting how teachers in South Carolina's licensed, privately-funded, early care and education programs select professional development to meet regulatory requirements and how their selections inform their teaching practices. With no evidence to indicate near-future strengthening of the South Carolina's DSS regulatory policies, the state is heavily reliant on 15 clock hours of required annual professional development and voluntary enrollment in T.E.A.C.H. and ABC programs to increase and ensure a quality ECE teaching workforce in privately-funded programs. Yet, to date, researchers have not examined how teachers select these 15 annual clock hour requirements or how their choices inform their practices. This lack of understanding can have a direct and negative impact on decisions by advocates and policy makers as they consider the quality of early care and education available for young children.

Purpose

The purpose of this dissertation is to extend the literature focused on quality ECE. Specifically, the project examines how teachers in South Carolina's licensed, privately-funded early care and education programs select professional development to meet regulatory requirements and how these choices inform their practices. Through qualitative inquiry, this study is inclusive of the voices and the perspectives of those working as early care and education teachers. An understanding of how teachers select and how their practices are affected by the required 15 clock hours of professional development is essential to South Carolina's ECE advocates and policy makers as they consider the quality of care and education for the state's youngest citizens.

Significance of the Study

This study's significance is grounded in the premise that the level of quality in an ECE program is directly related to the level of professional development of teachers. Therefore, understanding how teachers select and are informed by professional development is beneficial to ECE advocates and policy makers. Increased understanding of the elements influencing teacher selection and implementation of professional development can affect how advocates design and offer professional development opportunities and how they engage with ECE teachers through professional development efforts. Additionally, an understanding of how professional development is currently selected and how it informs teacher practices can aid policy makers in considering future changes aimed at increasing quality in South Carolina's privately-funded early care and

education programs. While Chapter 2 situates the study within existing research literature focused on quality and professional development in ECE, the following discussion presents the significance of this study in terms of why research is needed to illuminate and to define the connection between quality and professional development and how such research can ultimately influence greater school success for young children.

Significance of Studying Structural and Process Quality

Studies measuring the effectiveness of programs for young children include two dimensions of quality: structural and process (Ackerman & Barnett, 2006). Structural elements of ECE quality are the regulatory provisions or the governed aspects of an ECE program that have no *direct* impact on child outcomes (Cassidy et al., 2005a). Structural elements include, but are not limited to, requirements for adult to child ratios, group sizes, and teacher education/training (Ackerman and Barnett, 2006; Cassidy et al., 2005a; Phillipsen, Burchinal, Howes, & Cryer, 1997). Process elements of ECE quality focus on the actual activities and teacher-child interactions that children experience as the result of teacher practices (Ackerman and Barnett, 2006; Cassidy et al., 2005a). Process elements include, but are not limited to, schedules offering a variety of large and small group activities, frequent and meaningful teacher-child interactions, and the availability of developmentally appropriate activities (Ackerman & Barnett, 2006). Studies of the two dimensions of quality have demonstrated the linkage between structural elements and process elements as well as the linkage between process elements and children's learning outcomes (NICHD ECCRN, 2002; Phillipsen et al., 1997).

Research specifically targeting the link between structural elements of professional development and process elements is needed by "policy makers and practitioners alike [who] are turning to the research on professional development of the early childhood workforce and asking a series of very precise questions" (Martinez-Beck & Zaslow, 2006, p. 9). Martinez-Beck and Zaslow (2006) identify one such series of questions as: "What systems need to be in place to support early childhood professional development? How can such systems ensure that professional preparation translates into practices in the early childhood classroom or group?" (p. 10). For policy makers and practitioners in South Carolina, consideration of Martinez-Beck and Zaslow's (2006) series of questions reveals a lack of research linking structural elements of ECE quality (selection of required professional development) to process elements (how the selection informs practices). This dissertation begins to fill that gap in research for advocates and policy makers in South Carolina.

Lack of Research Studying the Impact of Professional Development

Adult-child ratios, group size, and teacher qualifications/training have been consistently linked to quality ECE. These three structural elements of quality are referred to as the "iron triangle" and are most often included in state regulations for ECE settings (Phillipsen et al., 1997). When the iron triangle is stringently applied and enforced, it is likely to influence an increase in quality ECE (Phillipsen et al., 1997). However, researchers point to the lack of research focused on the training portion of the ECE workforce (Curenton, 2006; Snow, 2006) as problematic since "little research to date has

provided the foundation needed to understand the impact of training and to develop specific hypotheses about training" (Maxwell, Field, & Clifford, 2006, p. 33). Using Maxwell's and his colleagues' (2006) definitions developed to aid researchers in defining and measuring professional development, training is one of three components of professional development: education (activities in the formal education system), training (activities outside of the formal education system such as workshops, conferences and in-service training), and credentials (activities that may or may not include the formal and the training arenas but are awarded by an organization not providing the basis of required knowledge for the credential). In South Carolina, the 15 clock hours of required professional development represent one piece of the state's regulated iron-triangle, and by Maxwell, Field and Clifford's (2006) definition, the 15 clock hours can be accomplished through any combination of the three components (i.e., training, education, and credentials).

In their call for research on professional development, Sheridan and her colleagues (2009) note that the field needs "findings documenting personal theories of change, supportive relationships among participants, and practitioner acceptance/ resistance to change" (p. 378). This dissertation extends existing literature by initiating investigation in South Carolina to understand the impact of teachers' selection of training on the quality of ECE programs in the state's privately-funded, state-licensed programs. The research design includes the means to seek the voices of teachers in order to help build an understanding of influences and barriers to professional development informing teaching practices.

**Lack of Research Linking South Carolina's Early Care and Education
Teacher Professional Development Requirements to Process Quality**

South Carolina Child Care: Survey of the Workforce 2000 (Marsh, 2001)

presented "South Carolina's first comprehensive examination of the quality of South

Carolina's child care workforce" (p. i) as a means "to understand the level of quality of

the state's current child care services" (p. 1). With no implied criticism, it is, however,

important to consider the broad, yet limiting, implications of a report relying solely on the

analysis of descriptive workforce characteristics and narrow structural elements of ECE

quality to determine the overall quality of the state's current child care services. The need

certainly exists to quantify the size and characteristics of the ECE teaching workforce

(Burton et al., 2002), and South Carolina's 2000 Workforce Survey fills that need. Yet,

ECE advocates and policy makers need more.

Currently, there is a lack of research literature on the *impact* of South Carolina's

ECE teacher professional development requirements on teacher practices (M. McDonald,

personal conversation, June 8, 2009). As previously noted, researchers are calling for

studies linking ECE teacher required training (by definition, this is SC's 15 clock hours

of professional development – a structural element of quality) to ECE teacher practices (a

process element of quality) that positively affect children's school readiness (children's

learning outcomes). This study provides an initial venture into researching this link in

South Carolina.

Data Reflecting South Carolina Children's Early Learning Outcomes

According to data from *South Carolina Kids Count, First Steps to Success 2008* (South Carolina Kids Count, 2008), 20.8% of children in first grade in South Carolina were identified as "not consistently demonstrating readiness for first grade," and 15.8% were over-age for third grade. Of third graders, 22.8% performed below the state's basic level in reading, and 13.3% of third graders performed below the state's basic level in math. Of students entering first grade, 21.6% did not consistently exhibit readiness in self-control, and 22.5% did not consistently exhibit readiness in social problem solving. While South Carolina's indicators for children's readiness for school are trending upwards, 20% of children performing below the minimum standards for basic academic skills can equate to significant costs to the state in terms of students needing special services upon entry into school or later in their school career. Of equal concern is the impact on student human potential as it is becoming clear that the early years are critical to a child's development and the child's later success in life (Bowman, Donovan, & Burns, 2000; Schonkoff & Phillips, 2001). For children enrolled in South Carolina's privately-funded ECE centers, their readiness for school and their success in life can be significantly influenced by the quality of care and education they experience at the hands of a teaching workforce whose entry requirements include little to no experience or education.

Research Questions

This study focused on how four early care and education centers in South Carolina selected and experienced professional development during 2009. It is presented

as a multi-case study that examined the experiences of each center, primarily through its

directors and teachers, in selecting and participating in state-required professional

development activities. The two main research questions examined in this study are:

1. How did teachers at the four centers select professional development to meet 2009 state requirements?

2. How did their professional development selections inform their teaching practices?

Supporting sub-questions that the research examined include:

- What contextual elements in each center influenced decisions surrounding selection of professional development?

- What motivated directors and teachers in the selection of professional development?

- How did the availability of enrollment in the voluntary ABC program affect selection (delivery method and content[3]) of professional development?

- How did director and teacher views about the connection between professional development and quality affect their professional development selections?

- What elements of professional development (e.g., approach, content) most informed teacher practices?

- What influences within the center most informed teachers as they strived to adjust their practices based on how they were informed by professional development?

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[3] While the Department of Social Services mandates "child growth and development" and "curriculum", the content is not mandated. For example, a teacher could complete five hours in child growth and development with content on infants versus toddlers or preschoolers. Curriculum content could include methods related to literacy, creative arts, play, emerging math skills, approaches to learning, etc.

Overview of the Methodology

The research questions led to selecting a multi-case study research design for the current study. When considering research questions, Yin (2009) noted that "how" and "why" research questions "favored the use of case studies" (p. 10). Case study research "builds an in-depth, contextual understanding" (Creswell, Hanson, Clark, & Morales, 2007, p. 245) and may include descriptions and comparisons of multiple cases to "provide insight into an issue" (Creswell, 2008, p. 478). The current study seeks to build an understanding of how teachers in South Carolina's privately-funded, ECE workforce select professional development and how their selection inform their teaching practices.

To "provide diversity across contexts" selected cases in multi-case studies can include "both typical and atypical settings" (Stake, 2006, p. 23). As noted earlier in this chapter, privately-funded ECE centers in South Carolina have the option of participating in a tiered reimbursement program designed to improve quality through requirements more stringent than those established by the state. Selecting cases where teachers are both enrolled and not enrolled in the ABC program ensures that the uniqueness of each case contributes to providing an understanding of "something having lots of cases, parts, or members" (Stake, 2006, p. vi) through the analysis and cross-analysis of various forms of the collected data.

For advocates and policy makers in South Carolina, the results of the analysis of data from this multi-case study bring first-hand insight into how a state regulation supports (or does not support) its intended purpose, i.e., quality early childhood education. Collected data include field notes from visits to the four selected settings

where interviews were conducted, classroom environments were observed, and artifacts were collected. Additional data was requested from state agencies to include lists of trainings completed by the centers. The researcher maintained currency with Clemson University's Institutional Review Board requirements and received approval to conduct research prior to any collection of data or site visits.

Researcher Disclosure

From 1987 until 1998, I held positions as both administrator and training and curriculum specialist within the Department of Defense's military child care system. My assignments were in large child development centers, before and after school programs, and family child care provider programs. During that time, I was responsible for ensuring a level of quality for all auspices that led to achieving or maintaining child development center accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and military child care certification. These responsibilities included implementation of a highly prescribed, comprehensive training program based on teachers' individual education plans. In 2007, the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agency (2009) ranked the Department of Defense's child care system as number one among the 50 states and the District of Columbia in overall rankings of child care standards and oversight.

I recognize that my exposure to and work within a system that is so highly regulated and regarded could be construed as researcher bias in two areas: (1) a bias towards high levels of intentionality in selecting professional development opportunities

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and (2) a bias towards quality as determined by NAEYC and military child care standards. Yet, even in that highly regulated system, I continually observed wide disparities among teachers' transference of training into their teaching practices. Those phenomena first led me to question what makes the difference between what teachers incorporate into their practices and what they seemingly disregard. I also recognize possible bias as a result of my filtering data through my white, middle-class background. While I believe my intentional studies and reflections have expanded my cultural competencies, I recognize the value of outside critique and sought such, particularly through my committee members.

Since leaving the Department of Defense, I began work as a teacher educator at a two-year college and have participated in providing training to the South Carolina ECE teachers through professional organization workshops or on my own by registering my training with the state's regulatory agency. Again, I have experienced the phenomena of disparity in transference. Additionally, during the context of work within programs regulated by South Carolina DSS, I also questioned the method by which teachers selected training. These recent experiences have influenced this current study and represent my attempt to address the observed phenomena.

Overview of the Study

The remaining chapters of this dissertation include a review of the research literature in Chapter 2 addressing professional development in ECE settings, measures of ECE quality, relations between structural and process quality, and effective determinants

of the ECE teaching workforce. Chapter 3 outlines the methodology followed for the study with supporting information regarding the selection of the multi-case study approach. Single case analysis results are outlined in Chapter 4 followed by the study's cross-case analysis presented in Chapter 5. This dissertation concludes with a full discussion of the study's results and implications in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Early care and education (ECE) teachers' qualifications matter in determining the level of quality provided by ECE programs for children aged birth to pre-kindergarten (National Research Council, 2000; Fukkink and Lont, 2007; Saracho and Spodek, 2007; Kagan, Kauerz, & Tarrant, 2008). Yet, less than 30% of states have established minimum preservice qualifications for teachers in early care and education settings, and the requirements for ongoing annual training hours average less than 14 hours per year (NCCIC, 2007). Minimal entry requirements and low requirements for ongoing training coupled with the uncertainty about how professional development actually impacts quality have led advocates and researchers (Zaslow et al., 2006) to call for research exploring the role and the impact of professional development on quality ECE. This study begins to fill that gap in research by examining how teachers in South Carolina's privately-funded, state licensed ECE settings select professional development and how their selections inform their teaching practices.

This chapter presents the review of literature that informed the research questions and the design used for the study. Following a presentation of the operational definition of professional development as it applies to ECE, the chapter proceeds to the assumptions and the supportive theoretical framework grounding the study. Next, extant literature relevant to the background of professional development and the issues of quality in ECE settings are reviewed. Then, guided by the study's research questions, the chapter

presents the systematic review of the empirical literature relevant to examining the selection of professional development by teachers in South Carolina's privately-funded, state licensed ECE settings and how these selections inform their practices. The chapter concludes with a summary of the implications of the literature on the study's research design.

Operational Definition of Professional Development

Maxwell, Field, and Clifford (2006) reviewed select empirical studies in an effort to define professional development for research studies focused on professional development in ECE settings. They concluded that "no common definition of professional development exists" (p. 22). Based on their research, they found that the predominate definition of professional development consists of three components (education, training, and credentials) and defined these components as follows:

> Education is defined as the professional development activities that occur within a formal education system…Training is defined as the professional activities that occur outside the formal education system. Training activities do not lead to a degree and may sometimes be referred to as in-service or informal training. Credential does not clearly fall into either the education or training category because the organizations that grant credentials are typically not the same ones that provide the requisite knowledge. (p. 23)

For the purposes of this study, professional development and its three components (formal education, training, and credentials) will be operationally defined as outlined by Maxwell, Field, and Clifford (2006) but with additional consideration of formal education and specialized training.

The operational definition of professional development used by Kagan, Tarrant, Carson, and Kauerz (2006) included the same primary components as Maxwell, Field, and Clifford (2006) with additional emphasis on formal education with ECE content and by distinguishing between training and specialized training:

> Formal Education refers to credit-bearing coursework provided by an accredited educational institution, including 2- and 4-year colleges, and universities. Formal education may or may not include studies related to child development and early education; when it does, it is referred to as formal education with ECE content. Training includes all educational activities that take place outside of the formal education system. Specialized training refers to training in topics directly related to child development and early education. (p.3)

South Carolina's requirement for 15 annual hours of professional development can include each of the three components described above. For this study, the term professional development is used as inclusive of all three components as defined above. When appropriate or relevant, the terms education, training, or credentials will be used as a description but will remain a component of the more inclusive term of professional development.

Theoretical Framework

Theories of andragogy, motivation, and pedagogy underpin the study's central, overarching assumption that professional development is linked to children's positive learning outcomes. Thus, these theories guide the development of this study's research. To examine these theoretical underpinnings, the study's basic assumption is presented in this section as three succinct, progressive assumptions: (1) professional development is a product of adult learning, (2) professional development motivates teachers to implement high quality early care and education, and (3) professional development promotes pedagogy equated with children's positive learning outcomes. Each of these assumptions is examined below through the lens of the relevant underpinning theory.

Professional Development is a Product of Adult Learning

The assumption that professional development is a product of adults learning the knowledge needed to adjust their teacher beliefs and guide their teaching practices raises a key question. How do adult learners learn? Two seminal names in consideration of this question and of adult learning theory include Malcolm Knowles and Jack Mezirow. While the term andragogy is often credited to Knowles (1984) who defined it as "the art and science of helping adults learn" (p.43), Baumgartner (2003) cites various works tracing the term's origins to the early 1800s but credits Knowles with making the term part of the vocabulary in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s. Knowles' (1984) theory of andragogy includes five principles with implications to this study, which are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1

Knowles' Principles of Adult Learning Theory with Implications to this Study

Principles	Implications
1. Adults are self-directed	Inquiry process is more effective than direct transmission of knowledge
2. Adults are experienced	Adults prefer opportunities to apply their experiences while learning
3. Adult readiness to learn is linked to their need for knowledge	Needs and interests are starting points for learning
4. Adult orientation to learning is problem-centered or competency-based	Life or work is more effective as the framework for learning versus theory
5. Adults are internally motivated	Learning will be enhanced when linked or applied to the adult's life or work

Critiques of Knowles' andragogy question whether the principles actually support a theory or whether the principles are merely a set of assumptions (Hartree, 1984). Additionally, Merriam (2001) pointed to continual questioning of whether the principles are attributable to adult learners only. Despite criticisms, Knowles' principles have persisted and have provided the launching pad for theories, research, and discussion of adult learners as self-directed learners. One such theory with broad implications to professional development in general and to this study in particular is Jack Mezirow's theory of transformational learning.

Mezirow's theory of transformational learning includes two dimensions: (1) the transformation of meaning schemes and (2) the transformation of meaning perspectives (Mezirow, 1991). Transformative learning is often prompted by a problem, an experience or a dilemma that causes the person to question the meaning of what he or she already believed to be absolute. Mezirow's transformational learning rests on the process of

using prior interpretation to construct a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one's experience in order to guide future actions. This process taps into the learner's values, beliefs, and assumptions as a filter to making sense and thus transforms the meaning of these experiences. Mezirow viewed this transformation as the result of learning and as unique to adulthood (Merzirow, 2000).

Implications to this study. Both Knowles' principles of andragogy and Mezirow's concept of transformational learning point to the need to consider the instructional content and methods used when delivering professional development to adults. Additionally, whether positive or negative, the context of teachers' work and life experiences can provide the basis or launching point for how professional development informs their practices. Further considerations of adult learning theory may also point to the need for teacher professional development experiences to include time to reflect on new information in order to support the construction of new and revised interpretations.

Professional Development Motivates Teachers to Implement High Quality

Can professional development motivate teachers to adjust their practices? Merely participating in professional development offerings to accumulate required hours is not enough. Teachers participating in professional development must transfer what they have experienced in professional development to the ECE setting through their practices. Provided the duration, intensity, and content of the professional development opportunities are sufficient, what is the likelihood that teacher practices are changed by their professional development experiences?

Business models of transferring learning from professional development to practices in the workplace involve multiple factors (Holton, Bates, & Ruono, 2000), including motivation (Gegenfurtner, Festner, Gallenberger, Lehtinen, & Gruber, 2009). Since this study considers the influence or transference of teachers' professional development experiences into their workplace practices, theories based on adult motivation in the workplace provide a foundation for this particular underpinning of the study's theoretical framework. Specifically, Vroom's VIE expectancy theory, a cognitive theory of motivation, suggests that the overall motivation to transfer learning into the workplace is a product of three main components: value (V), instrumentality (I), and expectancy (E) (Vroom, 1964). Expectancy theory is often called upon to help explain why (or why not) workplace initiatives are translated into practice (DeSanctis, 1985). It should be noted that since motivation within expectancy theory is a product, all three components must be present for motivation to exist, and because the level of motivation is a product of the three, a high or low V, I, or E will affect the level of motivation.

Implications to this study. Table 2 illustrates the implications of VIE expectancy theory related to this study. The definitions and the descriptions of the three components of expectancy theory are presented along with an explanation of how the definitions translate to this study. As a theory of individual motivation, expectancy theory informs this study's assumption that professional development could motivate teachers to adjust their teaching practices based on their professional development experiences.

Table 2

Components of Vroom's VIE Expectancy Theory and Implications to this Study

Component	Description	Implication to an ECE Professional Development Participant
Value	Value of expected outcome to the individual	Do I value the positive children's learning outcomes that may result from implementing what I've learned?
Instrumentality	Perceived likelihood by the individual that good performance will lead to the desired outcome	If I implement quality initiatives, will children's positive learning outcomes be assured?
Expectancy	Perceived likelihood by the individual that effort will lead to good performance	If I try, can I implement quality initiative?

Professional Development Promotes Pedagogy Equated with Children's Positive Learning Outcomes

Is the pedagogical basis for the professional development content empirically linked to positive learning outcomes? It is difficult to imagine an early childhood educator or advocate who is not familiar with Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP). The influence of this statement of practice published by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has increased significantly over the past 20 years. Accrediting bodies for early childhood teacher educator programs rely on NAEYC's standards for producing teachers for children aged birth through eight. Publication of methods and practices referencing DAP's three cornerstones (age, individual, and cultural appropriateness) include international as well as national professional journals. DAP is the foundation of NAEYC's highly coveted center-based accreditation. And, for this study, DAP is the pedagogy assumed to be equated with children's positive learning outcomes because sanctioned, professional development

opportunities for South Carolina's ECE teachers rely on DAP as the pedagogical foundation (M. McDonald, personal communication, June 8, 2009).

It should be noted, that empirical studies supporting DAP's effectiveness are limited and results from these studies are mixed (Horn, Karlin, Ramey, Aldridge, & Synder, 2005). This lack of specific data linking DAP to positive children's outcomes plus the "all or nothing" approach of some DAP advocates have likely been forces behind articles such as "Foucault and the Early Childhood Classroom" (Cohen, 2008) and "Skinner Meets Piaget on the Reggio Playground: Practical Synthesis of Applied Behavior Analysis and Developmentally Appropriate Practice Orientations" (Warash, Curtis, Hursh, & Tucci, 2008). Nowhere have debates about DAP been more evident than in discussions and publications focused on how we teach children to read (Dickinson, 2002). The scope of the commentaries and critiques of DAP is beyond this study, but it is mentioned in this section to acknowledge that, while one of the study's assumptions presumes a pedagogy for children supported by DAP, there is not unanimity of the presumption among all early childhood professionals.

Implications to this study. This study considers the impact of professional development on quality in early care and education settings and presumes that this quality provides for children's positive learning outcomes. Therefore, the content of professional development opportunities is germane to the study. This is especially true for considering the impact of specific professional development subjects such as methods for fostering literacy, math, and social skills.

A summary of this study's theoretical framework is presented in Table 3. Following the table, a review of pertinent background literature informing quality early care and education is presented to begin positioning the issue of professional development's impact on quality early care and education.

Table 3

Summary of Implications of the Study's Assumptions and Theoretical Framework

Assumption	Major Thesis	Implications to Current Study
Professional development is a product of adult learning	Andragogy (Knowles, 1980, 1998) Transformational Learning Theory (Mezirow, 1978)	Delivery, context, content, duration, and other aspects of professional development
Professional development motivates teachers to implement high-quality early care and education	Motivation (Vroom, 1964)	Professional development participant self-efficacy, values, needs, beliefs, and goals
		Policies and support in the early care and education programs employing the professional development participants
Professional development promotes pedagogy equated with children's positive learning outcomes	Developmentally Appropriate Practice (Bredecamp, 2002)	Effectiveness of professional development
		Content and subject of professional development directing participants in pedagogical methods and practices

Review of Pertinent Background Literature

The theoretical framework presented above provides the theories grounding this study. The following literature review of the pertinent, extant research literature is

presented to contextualize the overarching focus of this study, i.e., the effects of selection of professional development and how it informs teacher practices in relation to quality in ECE settings. The review provides specifics about professional development and quality, but, because professional development and quality are multifaceted and complex topics, this review's main emphasis falls on the interconnectedness between the two in ECE. The review reveals broad themes that are synthesized to provide support for the search parameters of the empirical review of research literature that follows this section.

Defining and Measuring Quality as it Relates to Professional Development

In the conclusion of their book "The Early Care and Education Teaching Workforce at the Fulcrum: An Agenda for Reform," Kagan, Kauerz, and Tarrant (2008) state "The ECE workforce is in a precarious state, caught in the balance between creating a new, equitable, and systemic approach to professional development, and languishing even more deeply into a quality crisis" (p. 146). Inherent in their statement is the overarching focus of this study. That is, professional development is believed to have a profound impact on quality in ECE programs. It is unlikely that anyone would argue against the need for quality in ECE programs, but defining quality, measuring quality, and determining precisely what impacts quality are multidimensional and complex constructs.

Defining quality. Like the definition of professional development, most researchers consider finding a common definition of quality within the research literature a challenge and cite the lack of such as a problem (Vandell and Wolfe, 2000; Mashburn

et al., 2008; Pianta, Mashburn, Downer, Hamre, & Justice, 2008). Without a definition, comparison of studies becomes difficult (Zaslow et al., 2006). However, Ramey and Ramey (2006) disagree about the lack of consensus regarding what constitutes a high quality program. They point out that it is usually clear what is and what is not quality, and they refer to the ensuing "pseudo-debate" as allowing complicity. They further argue that determining quality cannot be relegated to program elements such as program structure, staff credentials, administrative incentives and levels of resources (p. 356). Instead, they argue that quality must be measured in terms of common "observable features" including "how the staff and children behave throughout the day and the safety and health of the environment" (p. 357). Their references to program elements and observable measures are directly tied to what is commonly referred to as structural and process quality.

Structural quality. Rather than providing a general definition of quality, studies measuring quality often include two dimensions of the term: structural and process (Ackerman & Barnett, 2006; Cassidy et al., 2005a; Mashburn et al., 2008; Pianta et al., 2005). Structural elements of ECE quality are the regulatory provisions or the governed aspects of an ECE program that have no direct impact on child outcomes (Cassidy et al., 2005a) and include, but are not limited to, requirements for adult-child ratios, group sizes, and teacher education/training (Ackerman & Barnett, 2006; Cassidy, et al., 2005a; Phillipsen et al., 1997). As introduced in Chapter 1, these three structural elements of quality have been consistently linked to quality ECE and are referred to as the "iron triangle" (Phillipsen et al., 1997). The iron triangle represents the structural elements of

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quality that are most often included in state regulations for ECE settings. When

stringently applied and enforced, they are likely to influence an increase in quality ECE

(Phillipsen et al., 1997).

Process quality. Process elements of ECE quality focus on the actual activities

and teacher-child interactions that children experience as the result of teacher practices

(Ackerman & Barnett, 2006; Cassidy et al., 2005a). Process elements include, but are not

limited to, schedules offering a variety of large and small group activities, frequent and

meaningful teacher-child interactions, and the availability of developmentally appropriate

activities (Ackerman & Barnett, 2006). These observable elements of quality are

described as "actual experiences that occur in child care settings, including children's

interactions with caregivers and peers and their participation in different activities"

(Vandell & Wolfe, 2000, p.3).

Linking structural and process quality. Linking structural and process quality is

critical in the discussion of the impact of professional development as a catalyst for

higher quality that ECE advocates believe drives positive children's outcomes. The link

between structural elements and process elements as well as the link between process

elements and children's learning outcomes have been the subject of numerous research

studies (Cassidy, 2005a; NICHD ECCRN, 2002; Phillips, Mekos, Scarr, McCartney,

Abbott-Shin, 2000; Phillipsen et al., 1997).

While results vary in intensity, the results confirm that elements of structural

quality and elements of process quality relate positively to children's learning outcomes

(Dearing, McCartney, & Taylor, 2009; Mashburn, et al., 2008; Pianta et al, 2005;

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Peisner-Feinberg et al., 2001). The variations in results may be due to study design and measurement of quality as Zaslow (2006) found when she extended an existing meta-analysis and found 10 methodological concerns, one of which was, "ambiguity as to whether the measure reflected an aspect of quality or a child outcome" (p. 591). Perhaps this is indicative of the beginning of this discussion in that defining elements of quality is not pure. Ramey and Ramey's (2006) argument that the issue of defining quality is a "pseudo-debate" may hold some merit, but the variations in research suggest that, at a minimum, while a common definition of quality is not used, quality in ECE programs does translate into positive children's learning outcomes.

Measuring quality. Assessing ECE classroom and program quality using scaling instruments furthers the discussion of defining quality, specifically the elements of structural and process quality. In writing about standardized observational tools, Pianta (2006) identified a number of scales designed to measure elements of quality to include the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale – Revised (ECERS-R), Classroom Practices Inventory (CPI), Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observations (ELLCO) Toolkit, Observational Record of the Caregiving Environment (ORCE), and Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS).

The revised ECERS-R replaced the original 1980 rating scale and today, the ECERS-R is used in major studies as well as in over 30% of the states for varying aspects of assessment of quality as it relates to state licensing and regulatory requirements (Frank Porter Graham, 2009). In addition to its use as a tool for assessing global quality, ECERS-R facilitates the application of licensing and regulatory initiatives, research

studies, and consultative endeavors (Cassidy et al., 2005b). Despite the wide-spread use of ECERS-R, there is a distinct and critical difference between ECERS-R and other tools such as CLASS and ELLCO. The scores from CLASS and ELLCO are derived in total from observation of teacher-child interactions (Pianta, 2006) as opposed to ECERS-R scores that are not totally derived from observation of process elements of quality. This distinction calls into question whether rating scales, in this case ECERS-R, measure structural or process quality and whether these elements of quality can be linked to children's outcomes. The distinction and consideration are important (Pianta, 2006) as environmental rating scales often provide the measures of quality in research designs considering the impact of quality on children's outcomes (Cassidy et al., 2005b; Jackson et al., 2006; Mashburn et al., 2008; Pianta et al., 2005).

NICHD Early Child Care Research Network (2002) found support between structural and process elements of quality and children's outcomes. In particular, teacher training, child-staff ratios, and teachers' behaviors (interactions with children) were all related to children's cognitive gains. Cassidy et al. (2005b) coded ECERS-R's subscales based on definitions of structural and process quality and found 56% related to structure and 44% related to process. Because of the relationship between structure, process, and children's outcomes, Cassidy et al. (2005b) pointed out that states using ECERS-R as part of their regulatory guidelines may actually be measuring more than they realize.

Rating scales with massive numbers of elements within the subscales influenced Cassidy et al. (2005b) to examine ECER-R's seven subscales to determine if the possibility of scoring a smaller number of subscales could predict a significantly equal

score than if all subscales are scored. Using data from 1,313 classrooms, the subscales for activities/materials (nine items) and language/interactions (seven items) were found to serve as a proxy for the larger scale. In consideration of the demands of large scale research studies and, in particular, consideration of the use of ECERS-R by state regulatory personnel in multiple ECE settings, the options for the use of two scales versus seven present time and resource saving options.

Derision may exist regarding the definition of quality and the tools for measuring quality, but based on the number of studies measuring quality, it is reasonable to assume that quality can be measured. For this study, measuring quality is important, but two other facets must also be considered. First, when we measure quality, what role does professional development play? Second, what evidence do we have that quality leads to children's outcomes?

Link between Professional Development and Quality

The question that has loomed before policy makers and advocates alike is what level of professional development is required of teachers to achieve quality practices that lead to positive children's learning outcomes. Using the current study's operational definition of professional development, this question includes education, training, and credentials.

Correlational research examining the links between teacher practices and child outcomes suggests that teachers with formal education (bachelor's degrees) inclusive of specialized coursework in early childhood education exhibit practices facilitative of

children's learning outcomes (Burchinal, Cryer, and Clifford, 2002; Clarke-Stewart et al., 2002; Saracho & Spodek, 2007; Vu, Jeon, & Howes, 2008). However, correlational research seeking to predict classroom quality and children's learning outcomes found contradictory associations and suggested professional development could enhance teacher-child interactions for teachers without formal education (Early et al., 2007). In reviewing contradictory studies, Early et al. (2007) suggested that research generally supports higher levels of teacher education particularly when it includes specialized early childhood development, but "there is insufficient research addressing 'thresholds' to support a specific cut point" (p. 560). Close scrutiny of research also reveals differing populations (Early et al., 2006, Early et al., 2007). Coupled with issues of teachers self-reporting education and training and the reported difficulty with finding common definitions of education and training (Maxwell, Field, & Clifford, 2006; Early et al., 2007), reasons for contradictory information become understandable.

How does contradictory information inform this study? Despite the contradictions, the research provides evidence of links between professional development and quality. However, the research is not clear about how much professional development is needed to equate to quality. For this study, it is useful to look closer at the specifics of these researcher methodologies and results to glean the various aspects of quality impacted by professional development and the possible influence on this study's research design.

Definitions of variables in studies are critical (Maxwell, Field, & Clifford, 2006; Early et al., 2007) to interpretation and generalization of results. Clarity about the

population seems critical in that early childhood education encompasses many auspices including non-profit, for-profit, Head Start, public pre-k, private pre-k, state-licensed, faith-based registered, military child care, and corporate-sponsored ECE settings, as well as lab schools at institutions of higher education. The regulatory requirements vary across these venues (Ackerman, 2004). Research focused on teachers in public pre-k programs who possess a state certificate and a bachelor's degree upon entering the position will vary greatly as compared to research focused on ECE teachers in privately-funded, state-licensed programs. While contradictory results exist, there is strong evidence in research focused on "caregivers" (Early et al., 2007; Fukkink & Long, 2007), or teachers, in programs that are not state or federally funded, to confirm the link between their professional development and increased quality for the purpose of this study.

Link between Quality and Children's Learning Outcomes

This final link is critical because, if professional development does not support quality (though research suggests it does, as established above) and if quality does not support children's learning outcomes, this study would be for naught. Once again, the complexities of measuring an outcome, this time children's learning outcomes, must be considered. In particular, models of Bronfenbrenner's ecological development remind us of the vast and various impacts on children's lives and their learning. Therefore, research in this area must be mindful that results seemingly linking quality (or not) may actually be results influenced by other factors in children's lives. For instance, Belsky et al. (2007), using data from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development

Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development, sought links between children's early childcare experiences and children's functioning through sixth grade to determine associations involving quality of care over time. They found evidence that, although parenting was a stronger and more consistent predictor of children's development over experiences in early care settings, the higher the quality the child experienced in the early care setting the higher the child's vocabulary score. Similarly, high-quality interactions between early care teachers and children can result in positive children's outcomes related to school success (Burchinal & Cryer, 2003; Mashburn et al., 2008; Peisner-Feinberg, 2001).

The overarching focus of this study is an examination of the selection of professional development and how the selection informs teacher practices. The proceeding review establishes the interconnectedness and the importance of the linkage between professional development and quality in ECE settings. Thus, this literature review turns to the common aspects of professional development. If professional development can be situated in the quest for quality, what aspects of professional development should we consider?

Common Aspects of Professional Development

The conceptual framework presented by Buysse, Winton, and Rouss (2009) includes references to many contextual factors of professional development such as access and outreach, evaluation, policies, resources, and organizational structures. At the core of professional development, as shown in their diagram (Figure 1), are the who, the

what, and the how. This framework is used to organize the review of the pertinent

background literature on professional development for this study.
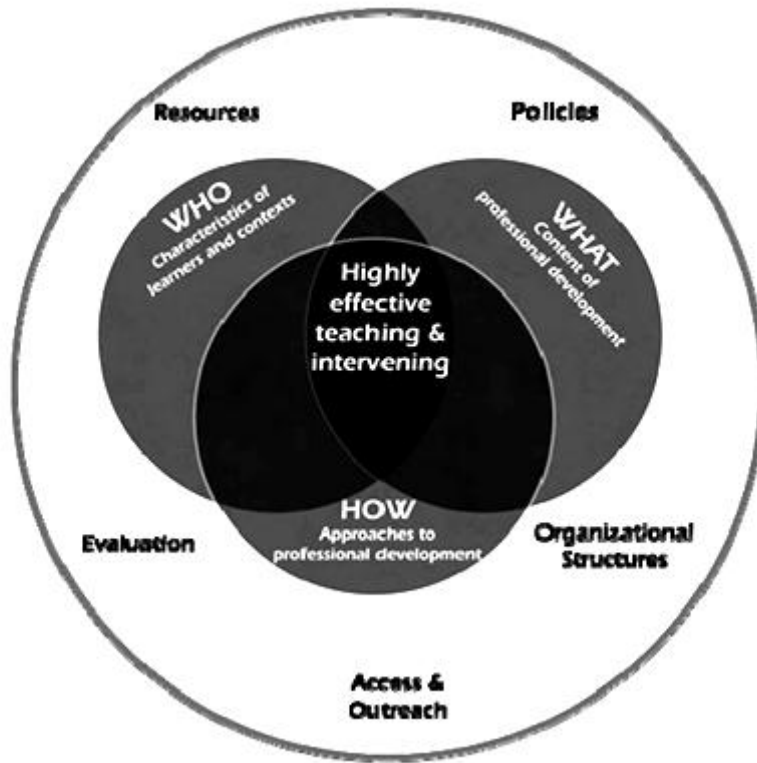
Figure 1

A Conceptual Framework for Professional Development (reprinted) (Buysse, Winton, & Rouss,2009)

Who: characteristics of teachers and context. Results of research focused on

professional development consistently report the characteristics of teacher participants.

However, attention to the context of the teaching workforce where only few occupations

earn less than ECE teachers (US Department of Labor, 2008) is also needed to provide

greater understanding of the link between professional development and the practices that

influence children's outcomes (Buysse, Winton, and Rouss, 2009; Weiss et al., 2005).

By extracting educational attainment data from the Current Population Survey, Herzenberg, Price, and Bradley (2005) found alarming evidence that ECE workforce qualifications are actually declining in center-based ECE settings. Information from 60,000 households, collected annually, revealed the following in 2004:

- Over 25% of center-based ECE teachers and program leaders across the United States have incomes below 200% of the poverty line.

- Only 30% of center-based ECE teachers had at least a four-year degree, 41% had some college, and 26% had completed 12th grade.

- Center-based teachers and staff comprised 39% of the early childhood educator workforce in 2004.

- The number of center-based programs tripled from 1983-2004, yet, within the industry, the number of college-educated teachers and administrators in ECE dropped from 40% to 19%.

- The number of young teachers and administrators with higher college degrees decreased from 1983 to 2004.

- If the decline in younger teachers and administrators without higher college degrees continues, it will exacerbate efforts to maintain a qualified ECE workforce as older teachers and administrators begin to retire.

The data from Herzenberg, Price, and Bradley (2005) is in sharp contrast to Barnett, Epstein, Friedman, Boyd, and Hustedt's (2008) data in *The State of Preschool 2008.* While the workforce in center-based care was experiencing a decline, state-funded preschools were making "impressive progress" (p. 4). This progress is supported by a teaching workforce with a bachelor's degree as a minimum compared to center-based care teacher pre-service requirements in which a degree and experience are typically not required. The contrast in the context between teachers in center-based and state-funded

pre-k programs may begin with the difference in qualifications, but adding the consideration of income levels can inform analysis and discussion of research results.

The issue of low wages for teachers in center-based ECE programs is not new, and the likelihood of increased income for center-based teachers is diminished in an industry that has low entry qualifications (Kagan, Kauerz, & Tarrant, 2008). Women comprise 97% of the ECE workforce (Saluja, Early, & Clifford, 2002), and it is difficult to ignore the question of whether low wages play a role in reinforcing social constructions about the value of women's work and, in particular, the value of caring for others (Ackerman, 2006). If low wages and lower socioeconomic status are predominate as characteristics of teachers in center-based programs, it is reasonable to assume that they and their work are an almost invisible sphere with low influence in policy making and the research impacting the ECE industry. Such may begin to explain the rare presence of their voices and the scant research focused on privately-funded, state-licensed ECE programs.

What: content of professional development. In its recently revised standards for teacher preparation, NAEYC (2009) describes content knowledge in terms of how teachers will use it to "design, implement, and evaluate experiences that promote positive development and learning for each and every child" (p. 15). If NAEYC's position provides the definition of the use of content knowledge, the question remains about the specific content knowledge teachers need. The variety of ECE systems presents a challenge to those offering professional development in terms of determining content. In a special edition of *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, Goffin (1996) noted that no

contributor argued for the notion that child development knowledge in and of itself was sufficient. In the same edition, Stott and Bowman (1996) acknowledge the diverse views of child growth and development and raise the concern for teacher interdisciplinary content knowledge.

Additionally, any discussion of the specifics of content knowledge needed by ECE teachers must consider the implications of *whose* knowledge we include and how the knowledge is situated from historical, social, and cultural perspectives. This postmodern perspective requires teacher understanding of current issues shaping the field of early childhood education and of the link between knowledge and power (Ryan & Grieshaber, 2005). When this discussion is juxtaposed with the characteristics of our ECE workforce and the context within which they live and work, the consideration of professional development content becomes broader and more complex. With many in the ECE workforce representing marginalized sectors of our society who live outside the sphere of influence, this study cannot ignore how the typical, middle-class, dominant culture's ideas of growth and development may be received during professional development sessions.

It is relevant at this point to note particulars regarding the content of professional development in South Carolina. Per the state's regulatory guidelines, teachers in ECE settings must complete 15 hours of annual professional development including at least five clock hours in child growth and development and at least five clock hours in curriculum activities for children excluding first aid and CPR training. The content of professional development opportunities is monitored by the Center for Child Care Career

Development (CCCCD). Trainers submit a description, participant learning objectives, and a general outline of the training for approval to CCCCD. (M. McDonald, personal conversation, June 8, 2009). In addition to earning clock hours for attending training, ECE teachers can earn clock hours by completing college coursework. CCCCD's website provides a listing of college courses from across the state's network of two- and four-year colleges with a breakout of the number of hours applicable to the regulatory categories (M. McDonald, personal conversation, June 8, 2009).

With findings suggestive of ECE teachers specifically lacking the content knowledge to promote early literacy (Cunningham, Zibulsky, & Callahan, 2009) and ECE teachers in general having minimal levels of professional development (Bowman, Donovan, & Burns, 2000), the reason why states require specific numbers of professional development hours in areas that are generally content laden is more clear. Yet, professional development sessions lean towards one-time occurrences with disconnected information (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000), and states with requirements regarding delivery methods inadvertently sanction these one-shot methods (NCCIC, 2009). Therefore, if teachers select professional development without attention to any intentionality, they may not select opportunities that match the needs of the children in their care (Vesay, 2009).

A key concern inherent in this current study is not what content knowledge base ECE teachers need but rather, in South Carolina, the question is whether 15 professional development clock hours including five hours of child growth and development and five hours of curriculum activities promote the content knowledge base required for quality

care and education. The low number of 15 annual hours, coupled with the an unprescribed selection of non-systematic professional development allows little to no time for trainers to veer from the normative, developmental theory that often categorizes children into deficit roles (Lubeck, 1996) such as "not ready" and "at risk."

How: the approaches to professional development. States with requirements regarding approved delivery methods for professional development for ECE teachers include a hodgepodge of choices. One-time, non-sequenced choices for professional development include adult education coursework at institutions of higher education, vocational programs, audio-visual materials, reading materials, conference workshops, distance learning, and/or in-service training provided by the center director (NARA, 2009). These methods of delivery are in contrast to more systematic, ongoing forms of professional development including mentoring, coaching, mentor-coaching, technical assistance, and web-based programs such as MyTeachingPartner (MTP) (Pianta et al., 2008).

The one-time, non-sequenced approach is typical, and it is reasonable to assume variations of this approach are familiar to many. With evidence that a one-shot delivery approach may be effective in conveying specific information for a specific practice (Ginsburg et al., 2006; Sandholtz, 2002), the one-shot delivery approach is not viewed as highly effective for transferring learning to overall classroom practices (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000; Onchwari & Keengwe, 2008). Due to the lack of effectiveness of one-shot delivery approaches, there have been calls for, and recognition of, more systematic approaches to professional development (Kagan, Kauerz, & Tarrant, 2008).

Systematic approaches involve teachers planning their selection of professional development often with the assistance of a supervisor or mentor. Such intentionality requires more personal interaction that could include mentoring. The concept of mentoring is derived from Homer's *Odyssey*, when Odysseus appointed Mentor to educate, to advise, and to nurture his son when Odysseus headed to Troy (Whitaker, 2002). Thus, mentoring suggests an involved relationship between two people. Mentoring has gained prominence in the business world, and the nature of teachers' passion for learning and their desire to help others learn seems to situate mentoring squarely in the field of teaching (Weaver, 2004).

An analysis of 79 studies of adult learning methods and strategies informs considerations for professional development in terms of participant involvement, number of participants in each session, and need for repetitive sessions (Trivette, Dunst, Hamby, & O'Herin, 2009). Trivette et al. (2009) found support for simultaneously addressing an intervention across 10 or more hours on different occasions and with a small number of participants. The use of active learner participation through some sort of intervention would point to the need for professional development to provide a more involved role for the participant such as through a mentoring-coaching relationship. The mentoring-coaching relationship would also provide hands-on help when the understanding and assimilation of knowledge requires 10 or more sessions. The mentor relationship also plays a role in online professional development. MTP is an online professional development aid that provides resources to teachers and works best when supported by mentors or consulting teachers (Whitaker, Kinzie, Kraft-Sayer, Mashburn & Pianta,

2007; Landry, Anthony, Swank, & Monseque-Bailey, 2009). Teacher practices were

positively impacted when mentoring and intensive, instructionally linked feedback were

included suggesting the positive impact of the mentor relationship.

Conclusion

The interconnectedness of quality and professional development are influenced by

many contextual factors as described in the conceptual framework at Figure 1. While

recognizing these factors, this study focuses on how professional development influences

quality, specifically the effectiveness of selecting professional development and how

professional development informs teacher practices. The background information

presented above supports a search for empirical literature that informs the study of the

effectiveness of professional development on the level of quality in ECE settings. Based

on themes found in the background information, the empirical literature must be

examined with an eye toward how quality is impacted by the context of the workforce as

well as the content and the delivery methods for the professional development of teachers

in ECE settings.

<center>**Systematic Review of Pertinent Empirical Studies**</center>

Method of Selection

The auspices of the educational setting can significantly influence the quality of

professional development and its influences on teacher practices and can influence

research results on the effectiveness of such (Vu, Jean, & Howes, 2008). Therefore, the

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initial goal for this systematic review was to search for empirical research literature specific to examining the effectiveness of professional development interventions in early care and education settings versus publicly funded settings such as Head Start, state-funded preschools, or public schools.

The time period for empirical research literature was set for 2001 through 2010 based on two significant influences in early care and education: (1) publication of *Eager to Learn* (Bowman, et al., 2000) in 2000 calling for increased attention to the care and education of young children and (2) passage of the federal No Child Left Behind legislation and the subsequent Good Start, Grow Smart initiative in 2002 providing impetus for increased attention to the professional development of caregivers and teachers. Additionally, the results of two critical analyses are available that included studies predominately prior to 2001. Both studies (Fukkink & Lont, 2007; Saracho & Spodek, 2007) concluded that professional development matters to quality in early care and education settings.

The parameters of the initial search found limited (four) quality research studies with target populations and research questions focused solely on privately-funded, state-licensed child care settings. This observation of limited available research was also noted by Fukkink and Lont (2007) in their search for literature for inclusion in their meta-analysis. Their speculation about the limited number of studies specific to ECE settings ranges from the difficulty of studying an industry with a high population variance due to turnover rates in employment to a critical theorist's eye for possible lack of interest in low-income women and children who are outside the sphere of political influence.

The parameters for selection of literature were then widened to consider studies

with target populations inclusive of privately-funded, state-licensed child care settings

along with populations from Head Start or Even Start. After this selection of literature

was complete, 16 studies were finally selected for inclusion in this review of the most

pertinent empirical research.

Presentation of Themes

Analysis of the selected literature is presented below in a format that follows and

informs the three theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of the study.

1. *Approaches to professional development* include researcher selected
   means of delivering professional development with attention to their level
   of efforts to address adult learning theory.

2. *Content of professional development* presents the teaching practices
   researchers sought to impact in terms of alignment with developmentally
   appropriate practices.

3. *Context of professional development* presents the research involving
   inclusion of the influences on teachers' characteristics and work
   environments and how these influence the effectiveness of professional
   development.

Approaches. The limited research evidencing effective professional development

interventions designed to change early childhood teacher instructional practices had led

to calls for researchers to study various approaches to professional development. The

approaches to interventions in the selected empirical studies included various forms of in-

service training.

Workshops. Two studies relied on specifically designed workshops or modules.

Unlike workshops at conferences, these in-service trainings were highly structured and

grounded in theory and practical application. The Literacy Environment Enrichment Program (LEEP) focused training for preschool teachers in the area of early literacy development (Dickinson & Caswell, 2007). After delivering the program to participants (30 teachers in the intervention group) in two, three-day intensive sessions, LEEP was found to be a predictor (r=.60) of classroom observation and rating scales assessments (Dickinson & Caswell, 2007). Similarly, four, two-hour modularized trainings with combined didactic teaching and experiential learning activities resulted in enhanced center-based and family child care teacher (n=1,298) attitudes and increased perceived competence toward inclusion (Cronbach's alpha = .822) (Baker-Ericzen, Mugeggenborg, & Shea, 2009).

These described workshops are in contrast to workshops at conferences, which are often referred to as one-shot training opportunities and often dismissed as ineffective. Such was the focus of two empirical studies examining the impact of limited workshops. Ota, Dicarlo, Burts, Laird, and Gioe (2006) found improvement via a multiple baseline design study of two, three-hour sessions to strengthen teacher (n=6) interactions with children. On the contrary, the other study of one, two-and-a-half-hour session designed to provide teachers (n=42) with the skills to increase turn-taking talk and Socratic questions (Honig & Martin, 2009) did not find sustained improvements from the two-week to the three-month period of observation/assessment. However, the secondary data analysis of Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes in Child Care Centers Study (CQO) performed by Burchinal, Cryer, and Clifford (2002) found that routine, community and professional meeting workshops had a modest to moderate influence (.21 to .42 effect sizes range) on

global measures of classroom quality of caregivers (n= 387) and their sensitivity. The researchers caution that, while a positive influence was noted, these same caregivers who lacked formal education in the form of a college degree remained less sensitive and provided lower quality care than caregivers (n=166) with formal education degrees who did not attend workshops.

Ongoing, interactive support. Most prevalent among all of the 16 selected empirical studies examining the results of professional development interventions were research designs incorporating intensive, ongoing, interactive support and instruction. Over 50% of the selected studies added ongoing, interactive instruction to in-service professional development in the form of either coaching (Cain, Rudd, & Saxon, 2007; Brown, Knoche, Edwards, & Sheridan 2009; Rudd, Lambert, Satterwhite, & Smith, 2009), goal setting and feedback (Ivy & Schreck, 2008), mentoring (Jackson et al., 2006, Landry et al., 2009) or combinations of coaching, mentoring, and modeling (Landry, Swank, Smith, Assel, & Gunnewig, 2006; Grace, Bordelon, & Cooper, 2008; Lieber et al., 2009) with overwhelmingly positive results in improving teacher practices.

There were only fine lines of difference between the descriptions in the studies of these approaches. Whether coaching, mentoring, or modeling, teachers in the studies had access to on-site subject matter experts for reinforcement or re-teaching of skills and knowledge. Results of a case study reporting practitioners' understanding and implementation of parent engagement included anecdotal comments from participants about how the relationships and communication with the coaches helped in understanding

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key strategies (Brown et al., 2009). Such relationships may explain the finding that interactive support, such as coaching, reduces turnover (Landry et al., 2006).

Additionally, two studies provided contrasts in the effects of coaching on teachers with little to no formal education (n=48) (Cain et al., 2007) and on teachers with bachelor's degrees (n=12) (Rudd, et al., 2009). Both studies included training sessions followed up with coaching. In the case of the teachers with little to no formal education, the intervention with coaching resulted in increased occurrences and duration of joint attention between teachers and children three months after the intervention (Cain et al., 2007). Twelve teachers with BA degrees working at a university child development center exhibited a sustained increase in math-mediated language up to four weeks after the end of coaching sessions, although at a slight decrease (39.5%) from the coaching condition (Rudd, et al., 2009).

The roles of coaching, mentoring, and modeling bring to mind thoughts of subject matter experts working alongside teachers offering advice and constructive instruction. In contrast, Ivy and Schreck (2008) used a more behavioral approach with seven teachers who self-reported little to no education and worked in a low-income, non-profit center. Following teacher attendance at a didactic workshop, the researchers worked with them to set goals regarding staff-child interactions. Using a multiple baseline design across participants, results of the training, goal setting and feedback were measured and assessed. The results indicated the combination of training, goal-setting, and feedback were the most effective in increasing staff-child interactions. However, results were not sustained and showed decline over time.

Comprehensive, ongoing interventions. Implementation of statewide and/or multi-site curriculum and programs utilized comprehensive, ongoing professional development interventions. Large-scale studies examining these interventions found positive effects resulting from multi-day trainings combined with mentoring (Landry et al., 2006), mentoring combined with curriculum-based measurement (Landry et al., 2009), and workshops with detailed, follow-up site supervision (Lieber et al., 2009).

This pattern of implementing comprehensive, ongoing approaches with positive results is not unlike empirical studies excluded from this review because of their auspices, but is noteworthy for mention at this point. Considerable research has been completed on populations exclusive to state-supported pre-k programs. (The rationale for excluding these research studies from the review is based on the researcher's observations over the past 20 plus years of the intense dissimilarity between the context of teacher education and teaching environments in state- and federally-funded programs from those that are privately-funded.) Of particular interest is the research of Pianta, Mashburn, Downer, Hamre, & Justice (2008) that examined 113 public, state-funded pre-k teacher instructional practices resulting from the implementation of web-mediated, MTP with training followed by web-mediated observations and feedback. The overwhelmingly positive results of their research may be representative of the need for professional development with comprehensive, ongoing interventions focused on instructional and interactional teaching skills.

Content. Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, and Yonn (2001), concluded from a national survey of teachers that "surprisingly little attention has been given to what

teachers actually learn in professional development activities, that is, their content" (p. 923). Of the 16 professional development interventions in the studies selected for this review, 11 focused on language and literacy, one on math mediated language, one on parent engagement, one on inclusion, and two on implementation of new curricula. Researchers from this selected grouping relied almost solely on the most typical and expected means of determining what teachers had learned – observations via rating scales or classroom observations. One exception included "locating learning" following specifically designed, two full-day, sessions and eight, three-hour late afternoon sessions, when Adger, Hoyle, and Dickinson (2004) examined excerpts of participants (n=11) professional conversations to determine how participants constructed their understanding of LEEP training. The recorded quality of participant experiences as well as their reflective response led the researchers to conclude that "teachers do not so much 'take' an in-service course as they 'do' the course" (Adger, Hoyle, & Dickinson, 2004, p. 893).

The "doing" of in-service training may also be reflected in the coaching and supervision mentioned in the section above. If "taking" in-service training involves predominately lecture, reading, and some experiential learning, the presence of coaches and mentors facilitate the "doing." Such is evidenced in the implementation of a comprehensive literacy program when workshops were designed to meet the needs of the participants through a three-year implementation (Grace, Bordelon, & Cooper, 2008). Such intentionality in professional development selection is inherent in all of the selected studies, but it must be noted and considered that the *researchers* selected or designed interventions according to the changes *they* wanted to affect. This is in sharp contrast to

state required professional development that can be met by *teachers who individually* select and accumulate hours versus the completion of a specific training plan.

Context. Three of the selected empirical studies provided deep consideration of the contextual parameters of the professional development interventions. To ensure ongoing benefits for children's age-appropriate language and literacy activities, Jackson et al. (2006) cited the problem with turnover of teachers as the impetus of needing easily accessible training programs for new hires. Wasik and Bond (2001) provided materials as part of their professional intervention to offset the lack of materials in the early care and education setting. The analysis of Lieber's and her colleagues' (2009) case study of factors that influence the implementation of a new preschool curriculum gave considerable attention to the context of the intervention. Their qualitative analysis revealed nine themes including teacher characteristics (education, beliefs) and the relationships among the teachers and administrators in the targeted classrooms and centers. As expected, contextual elements of the interventions were barely evident in the more quantitative studies.

Implications to the Research Questions and Research Design

Evidence from the review of literature supports the fundamental link between professional development and quality in ECE settings. Additionally, the pertinent empirical studies selected for review lend support to professional development affecting teacher practices that impact quality. However, researchers continually pointed to remaining gaps in the research literature. These gaps correspond to one of the

overarching questions in this current study – how does the professional development of teachers in ECE settings inform their practices?

While there is no available research to provide evidence about how teachers in South Carolina select professional development opportunities to meet annual requirements, the review of literature does provide reason to consider the role of participants in the selection of professional development within research studies. Consider the contrast between the professional development selection of teachers participating in research and the professional development selection of teachers in South Carolina. If teachers are participants in a research study such as those reported in the empirical studies cited above, they would experience specific, deliberate professional development interventions. In other words, teachers participating in research studies experience intentional training designed and/or selected by the researchers to affect specific practices. Such may not be the case in privately-funded, state licensed centers in South Carolina where the criteria to meet state regulations does not include any prescriptive training other than a set number of hours spread across three broad content areas. Currently, advocates and policy makers have no research to help build an understanding of how teachers in these centers select professional development opportunities and how the professional development informs teachers' practices. Yet, the results of the selections can potentially impact the future lives of countless children based on the research linking teacher levels of professional development and children's learning outcomes.

In conclusion, the available research on the impact of professional development interventions on quality in ECE settings informs this study along the lines of the theoretical framework (summarized in Table 3) and the overall conceptual framework of professional development presented in Figure 1. Specifically, to begin filling the gap in research and to provide initial insight for advocates and policy makers in South Carolina, the research design informing this study must facilitate a dialogue of understanding about how teachers select professional development and how their selections inform their practice through inclusion of three main elements:

1. Context of professional development as influenced by teacher characteristics and work environments (the who).

2. Content of professional development and alignment with developmentally appropriate practices (the what).

3. Approaches to professional development and presence of aspects of adult learning theory (the how).

The methodology and methods used to address the research questions in this study are presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this multi-case study was to extend the literature about quality in early care and education (ECE) by exploring the role of professional development in South Carolina ECE centers. In South Carolina, teachers in privately-funded, state-licensed centers are required to complete 15 annual clock hours of professional development. To date, no research has addressed how teachers in South Carolina select their professional development opportunities or how their professional development experiences inform their teaching practices. However, when considering the minimal requirements to be a teacher in a South Carolina ECE center, the required, annual professional development becomes critical in preparing teachers to care for and educate young children. Empirical studies reviewed in Chapter 2 confirm the need for research focused on furthering the understanding of the contextual influences surrounding professional development in ECE centers. This multi-case study begins to fill that gap in research by exploring the following questions through the voices of South Carolina teachers from four ECE centers:

1. How did teachers at the four selected centers select professional development to meet 2009 state requirements?

   - What contextual elements in each center influenced the decisions surrounding selection of professional development?

   - What motivated directors and teachers in the selections of professional development?

- How did the availability of enrollment in the voluntary ABC program affect selection (delivery method and content[4]) of professional development?

- How did directors' and teachers' views about the connection between professional development and quality affect their professional development selections?

2. How did their professional development selections inform their teaching practices?

  - What elements of professional development (e.g., approach, content) most informed teacher practices?

  - What barriers or motivators within the center most influenced teachers as they strived to adjust their practices based on how they were informed by professional development?

The following sections of this chapter describe the study's research methodology including the rationale for selecting a multi-case approach, the selection and recruitment of the four cases, the research design, data collection instruments and methods, data analysis, and limitations of the study.

Research Methodology

Rationale for Qualitative Research Design

The exploratory purpose of this study and the research questions' emphasis on teacher experiences with professional development support a qualitative research design. Creswell (2008) explained that qualitative research is "best suited for research problems in which you do not know the variable and need to explore" (p. 53). Such is the case in

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[4] While the Department of Social Services mandates "child growth and development" and "curriculum", the content is not mandated. For example, a teacher could complete five hours in child growth and development with content on infants versus toddlers or preschoolers. Curriculum content could include methods related to literacy, creative arts, play, emerging math skills, approaches to learning, etc.

this study. While the theoretical framework of the overall study and the conceptual framework of professional development (Chapter 2) informed and were supported through the review of literature, the variables suggested in these frameworks are just that – suggested. Motivation, approaches to learning, and the content of professional development are recognized elements of professional development, yet the precise and intricate constructs interacting with teachers as they select and are informed by professional development are not known and call for exploration.

As reviewed in the previous chapter, the vast majority of research focused on professional development in ECE settings over the past decades has been quantitative. In considering the limitations of purely quantitative research for ECE advocates and policy makers, Welch-Ross, Wolf, Moorehouse, and Rathgeb (2006) suggest "policies and practices can benefit from research that focuses on...how does context (of professional development) influence effectiveness" (p. 387). The relationship between teacher selection of professional development and whether it informs their practices is the core of this study. The very nature of this complex relationship and the study's research questions require a methodology capable of seeking an understanding of participants' views (Cresswell, 2008; Hatch & Barclay-McLaughlin, 2006; McGee-Brown, 2006; Stake, 2006; Yin, 2009) and exploring the central phenomenon of professional development.

Rationale for a Case Study Methodology

A case study, particularly a multi-case study, is the best suited qualitative methodology for this study. Case study research "builds an in-depth, contextual understanding" (Creswell, Hanson, Clark, & Morales, 2007, p. 245) and can include multiple case descriptions and comparisons to "provide insight into an issue" (Creswell, 2008, p. 478). Additionally, Stake (2006) argues that advocates and policy makers are better informed when they have research based on "case-specific understanding of local functions" (p. v). In contrast, ethnography would have been suitable if the study of one particular culture-sharing group (such as teachers at one ECE settings) could have adequately addressed the research questions. Grounded theory research would have been appropriate if the study was focused on building an in-depth understanding of a process, such as selection, but this exploratory study sought to discover specific elements influencing teachers in their selection of professional development and how it informs their practices.

For this current study, a multi-case study methodology provided for the exploration of professional development in four different environments (Stake, 2006) and for the inclusion of the voices of teachers mostly excluded from research as evidenced in the study's review of literature. Through careful selection of four cases and data collection built primarily around the voices of teachers, this multi-case methodology provides advocates and policy makers first hand insight into how teachers in South Carolina privately-funded, ECE settings selected professional development and how it informed their practices.

Methods

Case Selection and Recruitment

Overview. "The first objective of a case study is to understand the case" (Stake, 2006, p. 2). Yin (2009), using the terminology "unit of analysis" instead of case, suggested that researchers define the unit of analysis by the study's initial research questions. Further consideration for defining the case includes attention to an in-depth examination "of a bounded system (e.g., an activity, event, process, or individuals)" where bounded "means that the case is separated out for research in terms of time, place, or some physical boundaries" (Creswell, 2008, p. 476). For the current study, the case was an ECE setting, and the case was bounded by the director and its teachers as well as time wise by the 15 annual clock hours of professional development teachers selected during the 2009 calendar year.

Stake (2006) recommends no less than four cases and no more than 10 in a multi-case study. In consideration of Stake's (2006) recognition of the multi-case study method as manageable for a dissertation study and his recommendations for numbers of cases, this multi-case study included four ECE centers in South Carolina.

Case selection. A maximal variation strategy was used to select the four cases for this study's sample. As a type of purposeful sampling, maximal variation strategy is recommended for selecting cases when the study seeks to gather various perspectives (Creswell, 2008). The strategy of selecting "both typical and atypical settings" also "provide(s) diversity across contexts" in multi-case studies (Stake, 2006, p. 23).

The primary criteria for selection of ECE centers for this study were:

1. All ECE centers were privately owned versus recipients of federal aid (such as Head Start or military child development centers) or significant state aid through the State Department of Education oversight (such as public pre-k).

2. All ECE centers were licensed centers through the Department of Social Services (DSS) in South Carolina (versus registered such as some religious affiliated centers).

Within these two primary criteria, the researcher sought maximal variation based on the research questions and the review of literature (Chapter 2). For assistance in selecting centers to achieve this variation, the researcher sought the help of agency administrators within DSS who oversee the coordination and documentation of professional development for South Carolina's licensed ECE centers. With their assistance, a listing of the more than 1,600 licensed and registered centers was first culled to a list based on the primary criteria listed above. Then, these centers were marked for sorting purposes using the following designators:

- Location in terms of population of the geographic area (urban versus rural)

- Enrollment status in the ABC voucher program to help determine service to low or high SES populations

- Size of the center as listed on the license

The researcher and agency representatives conferred multiple times to cull the list. A designator was added to find centers enrolled in the state's Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP) program. This program provides some minimal state support for private pre-k programs in areas of significantly low-SES populations, but the program remains under the regulatory auspices of the DSS. Additional designators were added to help further cull the list into a manageable recruitment list. These included:

- Religious affiliation

- NAEYC accreditation

- Service provided to special populations

With consideration of these additional designators and with input from the agency representatives, 10 centers were selected for possible recruitment and were representative of a broad spectrum of descriptors with the exception of NAEYC accreditation. At the time of the study, 113 centers in South Carolina held NAEYC accreditation. Based on available information and descriptions from DSS, the researcher determined that all but five of the 113 centers had oversight over and above that provided by DSS and sources of funding other than that typically expected in a privately-funded center to include: public pre-k or other state affiliated centers under the auspices of the Department of Education; federally funded Head Start centers, military, or other federally affiliated centers; and lab centers at institutions of higher education. When considering the small number of NAEYC accredited, privately-funded centers, the researcher did not specifically aim to include an accredited center.

Case recruitment. The agency representatives and the researcher rank ordered and grouped the list of 10 selected centers to aid in recruiting a mix of centers in regards to the descriptors. From the list of 10, the researcher, with help from the agency representatives, began contacting the ranked ordered centers using IRB-approved protocols (Appendix B). Of the first five ranked centers, three were recruited and two declined. The two that declined to participate cited current issues related to workloads. From the remaining five centers, one center was selected for recruitment to help ensure a

balanced mix between the descriptors. This sixth center accepted. Upon acceptance, the

researcher communicated pertinent information regarding participation to the four center

directors.

A matrix of the four centers is presented in Table 4. The pseudonyms assigned to

each center helped designate the centers by its distinct geographic area.

Table 4

Matrix of Basic Characteristics of Early Care and Education Centers (ECEC)
Selected for the Mutli-Case Study

	Enrolled in ABC	Low or High SES Population	Urban or Rural Area
Town ECEC	No	High	Rural
Rural ECEC	Yes	Low	Rural
Metro ECEC	No	High	Urban
City ECEC	Yes	Low	Urban

Overview of the Research Design

Adhering to a set, prescribed study protocol is "essential" in multi-case studies and is

a "major way of increasing reliability" (Yin, 2009, p. 79). Yin (2009) recommends that

the protocol should include four main elements:

1. An overview of the study to include objectives, issues, and relevant
    literature. Since this study is a dissertation, these elements, while
    summarized at the beginning of this chapter, are thoroughly presented in
    Chapters 1 and 2.

2. Field procedures to include presentation of credentials, access to case
    study sites, attention to protecting human subjects, and sources of data.
    The researcher's disclosure in Chapter 1 details familiarity with the
    subject and issues through both education and experience. The experience

is inclusive of work experience within centers like those selected for the study. The disclosure also documents the researcher's currency and conformance with the University Institutional Research Board's policies and procedures. Earlier in this chapter, the partnership between the researcher and agency representatives confirmed the researcher's access to case study sites. The following sections of this chapter detail the sources of data and instruments the researcher used to collect such.

3. Case study questions. Research questions are inherent to a dissertation, and this study's questions are included and referenced throughout the study.

4. A guide for the case study such as an outline, format for the data, use and presentation of other documentation. As a dissertation, this guide is essentially contained and presented in Chapters 3 through 6, which include the methodology, results, and discussion of findings.

Based on this study's research questions, Yin's (2009) multi-case embedded case study design was used for this study's research design. With this design, multiple cases are examined, but the data from each case are not initially pooled. Rather, the data from each case are examined individually in order to draw comparisons and contrasts. Creswell (2008) would designate this design as a multiple instrumental case study as several cases are selected to inform the issue and the research questions.

Data Collection Instruments

Yin (2009) recommends six forms of data: interviews, direct observations, artifacts, documents, archival records, and participant observations. Five of the six forms of data were collected for this study.

Interviews. Three sets of interviews were collected at each center:

- Individual interviews with each center director (Appendix C)

- Focus group interviews with at least 50% of the center's teachers who were employed at the center in 2009. Following the collection of IRB disclosure statements, participants completed a questionnaire (Appendix D) to collect relevant demographic information followed by a researcher-led focus group (Appendix E)

- Follow-up interviews with at least two teachers (Appendix F)

While interviews are typically central to qualitative research, the advantages and disadvantages must be considered (Creswell, 2008). Interviews provide the researcher an opportunity to have control over the types of information received. Additionally, by using open-ended and follow-up questions, the researcher can capture the unconstrained voices of the participants. However, those voices come with the filter of the participant and therefore, possibly provide the perception that the participant wants the researcher to hear. Interview protocols are included as appendices. The researcher used predetermined questions as guides and adjusted the sequencing of and the inclusion of follow-up questions according to the flow of conversation during the interviews. In this study, two distinct groups of participants were interviewed.

Teacher Interviews. As suggested by the research questions, teacher voices provided critical pieces of data for this study. For this study, the focus on teacher selection of professional development required gathering their insights and perspectives about how they selected professional development opportunities in 2009. Appendices E and F present the questions used to collect data from teachers. The following table presents a summary of teacher demographics. Appendix H provides a complete listing of all demographics gathered.

Table 5

Summary of Participant Demographics

	Town ECEC	Rural ECEC	Metro ECEC	City ECEC
Number of Teachers	11	8	7	3
Female	11	8	7	3
Male	0	0	0	0
Average Mean Age	31	41	32	40
Race				
Asian	1	0	0	0
Black/African American	2	8	1	3
White	8	0	6	0
Highest Level of Education				
GED	0	0	0	0
High School Graduate	2	2	1	0
Some College	3	5	3	3
College Graduate	6	1	2	0
Other	0	0	1	0
Hourly Wage				
$7.26 – $9.65 per hour	8	7	7	3
$9.65 – $10.05 per hour	2	0	0	0
More than $10.05 per hour	1	1	0	0
Full-Time	11	7	0	3
Part-Time	0	1	7	0

Director Interviews. An initial interview with the director was included for two reasons (questions used in this interview are included in Appendix C). First, the director was included as a matter of courtesy and as recognition that the director is the gatekeeper for the case (Creswell, 2008). Her acceptance of the researcher would naturally act as a key element in the researcher gaining access to the center. Secondly, research in Chapter 2 suggested that relationships and support, as contextual elements, could encourage or deter how professional development informs teacher practices. Therefore, questions were designed to elicit the director's perception of her role in guiding teacher selection of

professional development and her role in teachers' use of professional development to inform their teaching practices.

Observations. Two sets of observations were conducted at each center.

- Classroom observations when no children were present to capture elements of the classroom such as room arrangement and other environmental features

- Classroom observations (researcher's guide to observations is included in Appendix G) when children were present to record anecdotal information representative of the classroom processes and environmental elements

Observations in qualitative case studies are possible as a direct result of the study taking place in the natural setting of the case (Creswell, 2008; Yin, 2009). To counter the sometimes sensitive issue of establishing rapport (Creswell, 2008), this study sequenced the observations of teachers in their rooms with children after the focus group interviews. The rationale for this sequencing is one of providing time for the teachers to get to know the researcher and for the researcher to build trust with the teachers. Observations were open-ended and included the researcher's anecdotal notes. However, a semi-structured guide was developed to help the researcher remain focused and to help ensure consistency across observations in the study (Appendix G).

Artifacts. Yin (2009) notes that physical artifacts are more useful in anthropological research as opposed to case study research in terms of relevance. However, he points to artifacts as important pieces of data lending support to inclusion in case study protocol. For the purpose of this study, artifacts such as lesson plans and schedules provided insight into how professional development may have informed teacher practices. One assumption within the study's theoretical framework was the use

of developmentally appropriate practice. If teachers adhere to this practice, evidence can be gleaned from schedules and lesson plans to help inform the study's question regarding how professional development informs practices.

Documents and archival records. These data are important to case studies as a means of corroborating and enhancing evidence (Yin, 2009). In the current study, the state administrators' access to and willingness to provide documents regarding training served to increase the understanding of participant selection of professional development. Archival records compiling training for each of the four centers was also used to gain greater understanding of what teachers selected in 2009 and to triangulate information received during the interviews.

Participant observations. This source of data was not included based on the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. Future studies could consider including the researcher as a presenter of professional development or as a participant with case study teachers in a professional development session.

Data Collection Methods

The data collection took place over a six-week period from early April through early May 2010. The researcher visited the four centers and collected data as outlined above. With respect to the demands and complexities of ECE centers, but in keeping with the study's protocol, the researcher worked with each director to tailor the visit to meet the schedules and demands of both the teachers and director.

Each visit included the same elements of the protocol; however, to gain access to center teachers it was essential for the researcher to adjust the sequencing of collection of data out of respect for the center schedules. Rural ECEC and City ECEC visits included a sequence of the researcher arriving just before closing, interviewing the director, facilitating a focus group of 50% or more of the teachers after closing, conducting room observations without children present, and then returning the following morning to conduct room observations with children present and to interview individual teachers. Directors from Town ECEC and Urban ECEC could not arrange (or afford) for 50% or more of their teachers to stay after hours for one large focus group. The researcher worked with the center director to arrange for the same sequencing of data collection for these two centers during operating hours. The researcher arrived mid-morning, interviewed the director, facilitated three to four focus groups of teachers representing over 50% or more of the teachers over a three to four hour period, conducted room observations without children present when children were on the playground, conducted room observations with children present, and concluded with interviews of individual teachers.

All interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed by the researcher shortly after the researcher completed the data collection. Immediately upon completion of each visit, the researcher anecdotally recorded (in writing) details of the visit to include personal impressions and documentation of aspects of the data collection. The researcher's anecdotal notes from the observations along with all transcripts of interviews and artifacts were filed by case. Once compiled and checked for completeness, a

descriptive narrative was written for each case to aid in the analysis process. Participant demographics were compiled in a spreadsheet.

Data Analysis

This section details the steps used to analyze the data collected from the four cases. Yin (2009) noted that "the analysis of case study evidence is one of the least developed and most difficult aspects of doing case studies" (p. 127). With this forewarning, the analysis of each case's data and the cross-case analysis followed the systematic and prescribed methods designed by Stake (2006) for multi-case analysis. The election to proceed in this manner met two goals. First, a systematic and prescribed method supports efforts towards ensuring quality in reaching conclusions from the study. Miles and Huberman (1994) describe the issue of "reliability/dependability/auditability" with the question, "have things been done with reasonable care?" (p. 278). A systematic, prescribed method moves this study's methods towards an affirmative answer while also addressing the second goal of aiding future research on professional development. Since this study is an exploratory study into an area previously not researched in South Carolina, a systematic, prescribed method provides future researchers a method to follow to extend this study.

The Quintain. Stake's multi-case methodology begins with the determination of the Quintain. For Stake (2006), the Quintain represents the object, phenomenon, or condition to be studied. In this study, the Quintain is the required professional development for South Carolina's early care and education teachers. Specifically, the

Quintain is focused on how teachers select and are informed by the required professional development. The Quintain is further informed by the theoretical and conceptual frameworks presented in Chapter 2. A visual representation of the study's Quintain in the tradition suggested by Stake (2006) is included in Appendix I.

Identification of themes. After the Quintain is defined, Stake (2006) outlines required data about the Quintain using a Worksheet of Themes. Stake's (2006) definition of themes is essentially his terminology for using key phrases from research questions. This portion of Stake's (2006) methodology mirrors Miles and Huberman (1994) advocating for the use of conceptual frameworks to generate initial thematic elements to guard against the overload of data. They recommended conceptually clustering research questions.

For this study's Worksheet of Themes, each primary and supportive research question was identified as either "select" or "inform" and was paired with the applicable aspect(s) of the conceptual framework: the who (teacher and center context), the how (approaches), and the what (content) (Appendix J), which resulted in six themes.

Single case analysis. The next step in Stake's (2006) analysis methodology called for the researcher to study each individual case to discover the uniqueness of each case and to ensure that the ordinary events of each case were considered. Teacher focus group interviews were the primary source of data for determining the prominence of each theme for each case. The transcribed interviews of the teachers presented narratives of their human experiences as they related to the professional development they experienced to meet the state's regulatory guidelines. In particular, their interviews provided the voices

this study sought in order to seek insight into how teachers selected and were informed by professional development. In recognition of the value of the narrative data to this study, the researcher viewed the teacher transcribed voices as data in the form of their words and looked to elements of narrative analysis to better locate and interpret the prominence of each theme in their voices from each case.

Coding. Initial categories, or codes, were based on the Worksheet of Themes (Appendix J). By using the six themes, the researcher was able to begin analyzing the teacher voices to determine how their words provided insight into the research questions. To aid in coding, the researcher used the free, online Coding Analysis Toolkit (CAT) offered through the University of Pittsburgh (http://cat.ucsur.pitt.edu/default.aspx). CAT allowed the researcher to upload four files of transcribed focus group interviews, one for each of the centers. The researcher first coded all data from each of the four data sets to eliminate extraneous comments or elements of the teacher focus groups that did not address the study's research questions. The remaining elements of the four data sets were coded based on the conceptual framework to help in determining the prominence of each of the six themes. For each unit of a teacher's response from the transcription, one of the following codes was assigned using the CAT software:

- *SELECT – WHO*. The teacher's voice indicated selection of professional development was influenced by his or her characteristics as a teacher or contextual aspects of the early care and education center.

- *SELECT – HOW*. The teacher's voice indicated selection of professional development was influenced by the approach utilized by the facilitator.

- *SELECT – WHAT*. The teacher's voice indicated selection of professional development was influenced by the content.

- *INFORM – WHO.* The teacher's voice indicated teaching practices were informed by professional development through the context of his or her characteristics as a teacher or contextual aspects of the early care and education center.

- *INFORM – HOW.* The teacher's voice indicated teaching practices were informed by the professional development through the approaches of the facilitator.

- *INFORM – WHAT.* The teacher's voice indicated teaching practices were informed by the professional development through the content.

The results from this initial coding helped the researcher determine patterns and repetitions as teachers referenced how they selected and/or were informed by their professional development experiences. The Worksheets for Analyst Notes (Appendices K through N) were then used to document these patterns and frequencies and to aid in the emergence of findings from each case.

Coding reliability. To counter the highly subjective nature of the analysis of narrative data in qualitative research, Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest that coding definitions "become sharper when two researchers code the same data set and discuss their initial difficulties" (p. 64). A second researcher with experience in the field of early childhood agreed to act as the second coder for the study. After discussion with the researcher regarding the study and the codes, the second coder used the CAT software. There was high inter-rater reliability from the initial coding to eliminate extraneous comments or elements of the teacher focus groups that did not address the study's research questions. In instances where the raters disagreed, differences were reconciled through discussions of interpretation.

Inter-rater reliability for the coding of the remaining data into the six themes initially produced weak Kappa coefficients for each of the four data sets ranging from .39 to .42. After substantial discussion, the researcher and the second coder realized the difficulty imposed on the second coder's efforts to apply codes without a strong contextual sense for each unit of words within an interview as a whole. Mismatches between the researcher and coder were resolved through extensive discussions and clarification.

Emergence of case findings. The final results of coding clustered data from the teacher focus group interviews into the six themes that the researcher reviewed and transferred to the Worksheet for Analyst Notes for each case (Appendices K through N). For each case, the researcher noted the prominence of each theme. This process supported case-specific uniqueness and led to the emergence of findings for each of the cases in regards to teacher selection of professional development and how it informed their practices. Findings for each case were then triangulated through use of other data to include room observations, artifacts, documents, and/or archival records.

Contribution of case findings to the cross-case analysis. To complete the single case analyses, case findings were transferred to Stake's (2006) Worksheet of Ratings for the Expected Utility of Each Case for Each Theme (Appendix O). Here, the researcher considered each theme from each case to determine to what extent the case would contribute to answering the research questions for the overall study, i.e., the cross-case analysis. In other words, based on the individual, single case analysis, the researcher

assigned a rating of H (high), M (middling), or L (low) to indicate the expected utility of each case's themes to the cross-case analysis.

      Cross-case analysis. Stake's (2006) methodology for analysis of multi-case studies leads to theme-based assertions. To generate the assertions from the single case analyses, Stake (2006) suggests a matrix charting the single case findings along with the utility of each theme (Appendix P). Miles and Huberman (1994) point out several advantages to use of matrices. In addition to requiring the researcher to deeply consider the data, it aids the researcher in making "full analyses" (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 239). Stake's (2006) matrix presents the rating from each case finding as to its utility, or importance, for understanding the Quintain through a particular theme (research question). This requires the researcher to give just due to the findings of each case while considering the study as a whole. With a system of numbers and parentheses, high marks for high importance are noted by a higher number plus parentheses to denote the utility and prominence of each finding.

      From the presentation of ratings on the matrix, the researcher was able to visually consider the findings from each case against the themes with a sense of how data reflected each theme in each case. By closely focusing on the matches among cells and headings, i.e., among the parenthetical headings and the importance ratings, the researcher was then able to formulate tentative assertions. Per Stake's (2006) recommendations, the researcher collected supporting comments and data for each tentative assertion and drafted written support for each. This exercise led to eliminating

one tentative assertion and the further editing of the wording for the remaining four

(Appendix Q).

After the four assertions were generated, the researcher met with representatives

from the state agencies who partnered with her throughout the study to provide

corroboration. The researcher and agency representatives scoured the data, the case

findings and the assertions to help triangulate the final assertions. Discussions included

their sharing of the agency's perspective and their verification of documents and archival

reports used during the study. At the conclusion of the meeting, with minor adjustments

to wording, the agency representatives agreed that the assertions were supported by the

single case findings. The four resulting assertions are presented and discussed in

Chapter 5.

Quality of Findings

While the terms and issues surrounding validity and reliability are usually

prescribed via numerical statistics in quantitative studies, Yin (2009) suggests four tests

to "establish the quality of any empirical social (qualitative) research" (p. 40). The four

tests are presented below with Yin's (2009) explanations and with methods particular to

the current study.

1. *Construct validity* – identify operational measures for the concepts being
   measured. In the current study, the concept of selection of professional
   development was operationalized through the state's regulatory
   requirements (i.e., number of hours required and what content is required).
   The issue of how professional development informs teachers relied on the
   three constructs within the conceptual framework as well as the theoretical
   framework addressing developmentally appropriate practices in which the

researcher was able to compare artifacts and observations against recommended teacher practices.

2. *Internal validity* – key for studies seeking to confirm causal relationships. While Yin (2009) writes in terms of confirming relationships, Miles and Huberman (1994) wrote of "internal validity/credibility/authenticity" and asked the question "do the findings of the study make sense?" (p. 278). For the current study, the research design incorporated elements via Stake's (2006) methodology to help ensure that the researcher presented an accurate representation of the analysis of the data. To further increase internal validity (i.e., the credibility of the study) the researcher consulted with representatives from state agencies responsible for professional development in South Carolina. Their review of the researcher's conclusions along with their offerings of additional documents aided the researcher in validating that findings and assertions evolving from the data answered the questions intended by the study. Chapters 4 and 5 include details regarding the researcher's consultations with these agencies' representatives. Additionally, multiple sources of data were reviewed to triangulate findings. These sources included the combination of room observations, artifacts, documents, archival records, and the directors' interviews.

3. *External validity* – defines the study's domain for which findings can be generalized. Yin (2009) views external validity as "a major barrier in doing case studies" (p. 43) and recommends case studies relying on analytic generalization by using broader theories. The theoretical framework situates the study within theories applicable to the research questions. Discussion of results in Chapter 6, along with rich descriptions of each case including teacher voice in Chapters 4 and 5, are intended to strengthen reader consideration for generalizing the results of the current study. These measures helped to serve the overall intent of the report to detail the methods and results of this study so a reader can reasonably determine whether characteristics and contexts of the selected centers are evident in their own areas of research.

4. *Reliability* – demonstrates that the operations of a study can be repeated with the same results. Yin (2009) recommends, and the current study incorporated, taking steps in the data collection as precise and prescribed as possible. The details in this chapter lead the reader through the researcher's protocol in collecting and analyzing data. Additionally, a system of coding was used to assist with the analysis of the prime source of data, teacher interviews. Inter-rater reliability by an early childhood education colleague was used to increase the reliability of the analysis that was foundational to the current study.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has described the study's research methodology. A multi-case study was employed to collect the voices of teachers to help answer the basic research questions – how do teachers in South Carolina's privately-funded ECE settings select professional development and how does it inform their practices. Multiple sources of data were collected from four centers with focus group interviews with teachers providing the main source of data. Through analysis of data using Stake's (2006) methodology for single and cross-case analysis, findings for each case and assertions for the study emerged. Chapter 4 presents the results of each case followed by the study's assertions in Chapter 5. This report concludes with a discussion of the results and implications in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER FOUR

SINGLE CASE FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Introduction

This chapter presents the results from the four cases exploring how teachers in privately-funded, early care and education centers (ECEC) in South Carolina selected professional development and how it informed their teaching practices. The study's design included collecting data with special attention given to the voices of teachers that are all but absent in prior research focused on required professional development. While teachers shoulder the responsibility for designing and implementing developmentally appropriate curriculum and activities, their input regarding their role in professional development has not been included in research. Yet, these teacher activities and interactions with young children are considered the cornerstone of children's social and intellectual development during early childhood.

The study's research design, as outlined in the prior chapter, followed Stake's (2006) recommendations for multi-case data analysis using themes suggested by the research questions and reflective of the study's conceptual framework (Appendix J). Data was analyzed to reveal what teacher voices said about the role of content, context, and approaches to professional development as these related to their selection of professional development and whether or not it informed their practices.

Stake (2006) cautioned against allowing the "the cross-case analysis…to dominate the report" (p. 39) and overshadow the uniqueness of each case. To highlight and to preserve the uniqueness amongst the individual cases, Stake refers to the

repetitions and commonalities found within each case as findings and sees assertions for the cross-case analyses emerging from the examination of and reflection upon these findings. In the spirit of Stake's (2006) emphasis on giving first and due consideration to each case, the results and subsequent findings of the single case analyses are presented in this chapter with the study's assertions presented in the following chapter. The final chapter offers a discussion of the implications of the study's results and recommendations for policy makers and advocates who influence requirements for professional development in South Carolina.

Case #1: Town Early Care and Education Center

The Setting

Located just outside of one of South Carolina's larger cities, Town Early Care and Education Center can be found in a semi-rural area known for its rapidly expanding population growth. As I approached the center, I was struck by the immense, new building. The director arrived and warmly welcomed me. We had previously agreed that she would arrange three teacher focus groups to meet with me during the mid-day lunch breaks and that prior to those, she and I would meet for the director's interview. Between and after the interviews, I was free to visit rooms and to gather additional information as needed.

The director and I toured the massive, 20,000 square foot center prior to the teacher focus group interviews. The many children's rooms were equipped with new, wooden, child-sized furnishings. The rooms were arranged in learning centers typical for

young children. The learning centers were well stocked with materials that appeared to be fairly new. The playground was covered with an industrial quality, impact absorbing material. It was visually clear that all of the equipment was new. The center included a commercial-grade kitchen, a teacher work room, and a large meeting room (in addition to the conference room in the reception area). The director talked about her purposeful efforts to make the center a hub for the surrounding community such as opening her center to training activities in which other teachers were invited to attend. Additionally, during the H1N1 flu season, the enrichment room was used as a location for mass vaccinations.

The center also included a gym, a library, and an enrichment room. The library room was designed for teachers to bring their children from the classroom. In the library room, front-facing shelving of quality children's books were present. The director pointed out, and I noted, minimal evidence of use in these rooms.

> *Director*: I did a training…on gross motor skills development. And, with
> our gym, the plan is the teachers are to plan activities that help children to
> develop the gross motor skills that are developmentally appropriate for
> that age...And I really wanted to see specific curriculum activities and so
> we did a little class and we went in the gym and we looked at all the stuff
> we had in there. And we gave some examples of what you can do. And…
> [I] saw it for a little bit…but I haven't seen it recently, so it's kind of
> fallen off.

The enrichment room included musical instruments and also seemed to be a point of consternation to the director.

> *Director*: We have our lovely enrichment room and we have musical instruments and we have some curriculum and we have some things for teachers to teach music, but I don't see a lot of music…They've all had a little bit of training in the fall.

What Town ECEC Teachers Said About Selecting Professional Development

Teachers at Town ECEC are well aware of the state's 15 hour requirement. When first asked about how they select professional development, they referred to the current Department of Social Services (DSS) requirement.

> *Beth*: We have our 15 hours a year offered here.

> *Diane*: You know you have to take your required training in the areas that DSS requires them in.

When I pressed teachers for more specifics about how they selected training, teachers repeatedly told of their interest in the content of the training. Specifically, they sought training relevant to their self-determined needs as a teacher.

> *Gina*: Whatever age that I'm working with is what I want to take the class in!

> *Ann*: I think of my kids first, like if I'm a preschool teacher and I'm with three year olds right now. I look at classes listed and I think more of the ages. I emphasize more on the age group I'm currently working with.

Beth: I decided to go to the infant toddler [training] over this weekend

even though I don't really have to go, just, it does have to do with

toddlers, [and] I want to learn more to help my babies.

Jane: I really focus on training for whatever age group children I'm

working with – which training will benefit the children I'm currently

serving. Like this Saturday for instance, there is an infant/toddler training

this Saturday morning. And I will come to it. There were other trainings

listed that will not be of interest to me right now because I'm in an infant

room. So I always look at how it [professional development] is not only

going to benefit me but how it is going to benefit the children I am

currently working with.

Their references to the relevance of the content to their self-determined needs also included their expressed need for new or refreshed ideas and maintaining currency in the field.

Mary: …you know how sometimes you feel like you're out of ideas? You

just need to feed off of other teachers and see what they are doing. I want

to go to some [professional development] depending on what the topic

is…because I've been in the field for a while. What you used to do a long

time ago is a different way of doing it. So you need to be up to date, see

what's new, because policies are always changing and you want to stay

current.

Kathy: I'd recommend a DSS class for everybody just because there is so

much that you don't know that you need to know.

Context, in addition to approaches to professional development did not emerge as

a strong determinant in Town ECEC teacher selection of professional development

activities. Two teachers briefly mentioned the center's new curriculum and one added

that the center may seek national accreditation. Two teachers explained how life as a

teacher who has family obligations can influence selection of professional development.

Susan: …your time is limited. If you're like me, you have family and

other obligations, so when you choose training, you try to choose

something that will not only benefit you but will benefit the children that

you're serving.

Diane: …it takes away from your outside life.

Despite those life constraints, Susan passionately voiced, "I think that it's a true

profession, a commitment that it takes for teachers to be good teachers," to which Lou

added, "We don't want to be just a field, we want it to be your career, your life."

**Content as the Dominant Theme in Town ECEC Teacher Selection
of Professional Development**

The teachers' initial focus on DSS requirements was not surprising after hearing

of the director's high level of attention to training and training requirements. As we

toured the center, she pointed to postings of trainings in the teacher work room. She

explained how her employment contracts detail the requirements to complete professional

development as a condition of employment. And, as the teachers confirmed in the focus

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groups, she provides 15 hours at the center free of charge to her teachers. Additionally, she requires new employees to complete a state credentialing course, ECD 101 through the local two-year college within 12 months of their date of hire. The center was currently hosting the site for ECD 101 for the college due to the large number of enrollees in the area.

> *Director:* We require our teachers to have an ECD credential [the result of completing ECD 101]. We purposely designed the facility to have a meeting room where we could do a lot of our own training so that we can select and choose and also, on our own, offer training that we can use the most for our curriculum.

As teachers talked more about their selections, they repeatedly indicated how their selection of professional development was based on content they perceived as providing what they needed for the children in their care. Of additional consideration, over 50% of the teachers made at least one comment referencing the role of professional development in relation to the profession.

> *Susan*: It's very enjoyable work, very rewarding work, but it is very hard. It's stressful work. You're answering not only to those children, to their parents, to the directors, to your co-workers, so…you have to think about the whole picture. You don't just take training, you know…like I need those hours so I'll take training.

> *Lou*: …The people who barely graduated high school are going into child care and saying, oh, I can do this. This is easy. But there is so much more

to it. You have to go into it with your whole heart. And people don't

realize that. I mean, we are here with our whole heart because that's what

we want to do.

The connection heard in their voices between selecting professional development

and the profession may be indicative of two theories from the study's theoretical

framework. First, Knowles (1984) theory of andragogy suggests that adult learners are

more likely to engage in learning they view as supportive of their life or work. Their

selection of professional development by content seems to convey their need for training

supportive of their responsibilities in the center. Second, the instrumentality prong of

Vroom's (1964) VIE expectancy theory offers an explanation for how the teachers may

be motivated to select professional development according to the content they see as

leading to their desired outcomes – in this case, to perform well for the benefit of the

children in their care.

What Town ECEC Teachers Said About How Professional Development Informs Their Practices

Ann could hardly contain her excitement as she talked about a training she would

recommend to other teachers related to the impact of including children's printed names

as part of a print-rich environment in her classroom.

Ann: There were such simple things we actually did implement. My co-

teacher and I went to this particular class, and we said we can't wait to get

back to the center and start it. Like you know when we would send our

kids to different areas, like they would play in different centers, we started

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putting those names up for them and they would start reading their names

and we would say like okay, four in each center because we don't want it

to be too crowded and they would pull their names and they would go to

the other center and they would say, "Hey, Miss Ann, I'm here." So you

know they would [know] their names. They picked it up so fast!

Lou also talked about a training she attended that she found beneficial.

Lou: One of the ones in particular that I like was the classroom

management one where you learned not only how to manage your kids in

your classroom, but also how you keep your centers organized and how to

set up your room and those kinds of things.

Other than Ann and Lou, other teachers found difficulty recalling the topics of

trainings they had attended. When I asked teachers about the topics covered in their

professional development experiences, the question was met with long pauses of silence

(up to 15 seconds) and some laughter at the inability to answer the question. One

exchange was particularly exemplary:

Researcher: What topics do you remember?

(15 seconds of silence)

Researcher: Tell me about the topics presented during your professional

development.

(10 seconds of silence)

Mary: I don't even remember. (laughter among teachers)

Kathy: We've done development….remember that?

Mary: Nooooo (laughter).

During another focus group, a similar exchange occurred.

Researcher: What about some of the topics that y'all have covered?

(8 seconds of silence)

Susan: We did language didn't we? There was language development.

Lou: We did parent communication.

(10 second pause)

Jackie: Before Christmas we did gross and fine motor.

While teachers indicated their understanding of training in terms of requirements and while they talked of selection in terms of content, they could barely recall the topics of their past trainings. This is in a center where the director offers trainings in-house three times a year, where the director asks for input about what training to offer, and where the director posts professional development sessions for all staff to see. If professional development has a lack of impact to the point that teachers can hardly recall topics from 15 hours of professional development, it is difficult to think how training informed their practices. With the exception of Ann and Lou, the teacher interviews provided little evidence of how professional development may have routinely informed their practices.

Context as the Dominant Theme in How Professional Development
Informs Town ECEC Teacher Practices

Evidence from field notes, room observations, the director's interview and artifacts from Town ECEC were examined to help illuminate how (or whether) professional development informed Town ECEC teacher practices. The evidence from

room observations found the fundamentals of developmentally appropriate practices but not necessarily elements of a highly functioning, developmentally appropriate curriculum. Rooms were arranged in learning centers and children's work was displayed on the walls in the rooms, yet there was little to no evidence of attention to individual children's developmental needs such as children's portfolios.

Additional evidence from collected artifacts raised the possibility that confusion may be present within the center in regards to what constitutes a cohesive curriculum supporting age-appropriate learning opportunities for children. In literature posted for families on the center's website, Town ECEC describes their curriculum as including elements from several commonly recognized curricula approaches for young children including Creative Curriculum, High/Scope, Montessori, Project Approach, and Reggio Emilia. The website also included references to how teachers are trained to use a variety of curricula and also questions why preschoolers should be limited to just one approach. In three focus groups, only two teachers mentioned curriculum.

Kathy: We have a new curriculum, so we're learning about the new curriculum, too.

Researcher: Do y'all have training coming up on the new curriculum

Mary: We had a little bit, but we're going to have more.

During my interview with the director, I learned that the new curriculum the teachers referred to was the Project Approach.

Director: We have some training coming up. What we're going to do for that one is [a local four-year university] is going to have some of their

students come out here this summer and implement Project Approach as a classroom project. So I asked them, their professor, to come and do an in-service for my teachers on the Project Approach so they will know what these students are doing this summer. So she's doing a two-hour curriculum on Project Approach and then the other three hours…I wrote a three-hour training for developmentally appropriate practices and assessing children.

The director has a strong managerial and marketing background but little to no education in early childhood. As a result of her mentioning that she wrote training for developmentally appropriate practices and assessing children for use in meeting some of the annual required hours, I later questioned the Center for Child Care Career Development (CCCCD) regarding the criteria for who develops and delivers professional development. I learned that training hours can result from certified or registered training (M. McDonald, personal conversation, June 9, 2010). Certified training is offered by trainers who meet levels of education and experience as determined by the CCCCD. In contrast, registered training is offered by trainers who do not meet these requirements. Yet, either training is accepted for credit towards annual requirements. The training record for Town ECEC revealed nearly 75% of training completed as registered versus certified.

Two early childhood colleagues were called on to corroborate my interpretation of contextual elements within Town ECEC as possible hindrances to teachers trying to apply what they learn during professional development into their practices. First,

typically in early childhood programs, children's developmental activities are integrated throughout the learning centers in their rooms versus going to another room for music or library experiences as expected by Town ECEC's director. While it is not unusual to have a separate gross motor area in addition to a playground due to extreme weather, it is not typical to "teach" music in the sense that children leave their room for a music room. The same is typical for the library. Children's books are usually presented to children in their rooms via a library center that children access during free-play time and during other times of the day. Teachers experiencing ECD 101 or other professional development training are most likely learning to incorporate these activities into multiple daily routines in the children's rooms.

In addition to the director's expectation that children will leave their rooms for music and library, her expectation that teachers will mesh a variety of approaches to curricula could lead to confusion as well as be counterproductive to achieving high levels of developmentally appropriate practices. All curriculum approaches mentioned in the center's literature require training and support for implementation. The early childhood collaborators agreed that it is highly unusual and problematic to expect teachers to blend the approaches. While all mentioned curricula approaches are accepted as developmentally appropriate, trying to mingle approaches as suggested in the center's literature is indicative of a lack of understanding of curriculum within an early childhood program.

Contributions of Case #1 to the Study

Whether considering the selection of professional development or how it informed (or not) teacher practices at Town ECEC, the director played a significant role. From their date of hire, teachers are aware of the director's emphasis on professional development. However, the director may have created confusion and hindrances due to her seeming lack of understanding of key early childhood practices. Marketing artifacts collected during the visit to the center reveal that teachers are expected to somehow blend several well-known ECE curricula approaches. Early childhood collaborators confirmed this expectation of teachers as not in keeping with best practices and as evidence that the center lacks a clearly defined developmentally appropriate approach to curriculum. This may be compounded by teachers experiencing a predominance of registered versus certified training.

The analysis of data from Case #1, Town ECEC, contributes to two findings. These findings emerged from the data collected at Town ECEC regarding how teachers selected and were informed by required professional development.

1. Teachers from Town ECEC select professional development based on content, specifically the relevance of the content to their self-determined needs as a teacher.

2. There was evidence that contextual elements within Town ECEC may hinder professional development from routinely informing teacher practices.

These findings were aggregated with those from the other three cases to aid in determining the assertions from the cross-case analysis. The assertions are presented and discussed in the following chapter.

Case #2: Rural Early Care and Education Center

The Setting

The drive to Rural Early Care and Education Center (ECEC) included traveling along a lengthy stretch of interstate and a long stretch of remote, rural state roads beyond I-95. As I travelled to the center, I was struck by the decreasing signs of activity or prosperity and thought of how this area has become known as the I-95 corridor.

A documentary, *Corridors of Shame* (Ferillo, 2005), drew attention to the dismal conditions and challenges facing schools in this and other areas along I-95. In 1993 these conditions led the citizens from eight counties to sue the state of South Carolina over unequal educational opportunities for children in those counties. The judge dismissed all three causes of action: violation of the Equal Protection Clause, the Education Finance Act, and the Education Improvement Act. After an appeal, the South Carolina Supreme Court remanded the case back to Judge Cooper for consideration of the Equal Protection Clause. In December 2005, Judge Cooper ruled that children in the plaintiffs' districts were indeed "denied the opportunity to receive a minimally adequate education because of the lack of effective and adequately funded early childhood intervention programs" (*Abbeville v. the State of South Carolina,* 2005). This ruling fueled the expansion of public 4K programs in South Carolina, some of which are located in private programs and one of which operates within Rural ECEC.

I relied on a GPS device to guide me to Rural ECEC. The device led me to turn onto a very narrow, somewhat paved road. As I approached, faded paintings of popular

cartoon characters on the cinder block building provided the first evidence that the building ahead was the center. The sand parking area (I arrived at 4:30 p.m.) was bustling with activity as families were picking up children.

Adjacent to the center, I met the director in a small metal building (much like an oversized storage shed) she used as her office. The door of the metal building was the only source of natural light and was open with no screen. Window style a/c units were installed in the walls. This is the low country of South Carolina. The question of how hot it must get in that building during the summer occurred to me as I sat down. The director was welcoming, but I first sensed some initial apprehension, which faded as we talked about the intent of my study, particularly my interest in capturing input via her voice and those of her teachers.

After the director's interview, she led me into the cinder block building. We entered near the center of the building into a large children's activity room. The director pointed towards rooms on either side of the room we were in. I realized then that the center consisted of three rooms, each adjacent to the other with doors in between. The door we entered was the primary entrance door to the center and, if you stood in a particular spot in any of the rooms, you could easily see most of the other two. The vast evidence of children's engagement in play in all three rooms eclipsed the worn look of furnishings and equipment.

Eight of the center's 10 teachers were seated in the middle (pre-k) room at child-size tables. The director introduced me and then left prior to the teacher focus group interview. I again sensed some apprehension that faded as the focus group progressed.

During the interview, I learned that the teachers stayed on their own accord (i.e., they were not on the clock). I expected them to either leave immediately upon completion of the focus group or after eating pizza that I provided. On the contrary, only two teachers left directly after the meal. And,the director and the other two teachers who were not able to stay after the center closed for the focus group came back and joined us to eat along with some of the teachers' family members. Everyone sat, ate, and talked for well over another hour. Clean up was a group effort. When I left, I felt as if I had spent time with a family.

Upon leaving, the director walked me to my car. She expressed her relief that I was staying 30 miles away in the larger city. She cautioned me to get on the road and not stop. Her words were, "there are those just looking for prey." I did not feel as alarmed as I felt mothered and cared for. I recognized these attributes as those that I sensed between her and her teachers.

What Rural ECEC Teachers Said About Selecting
Professional Development

Teachers at Rural ECEC most frequently spoke of the connection between their selection of professional development and the contextual elements of either their center or the needs of the children in their care.

> *Raenn*: Well, we are actually partners with First Steps which is the
>
> Creative Curriculum training. That's mandatory training. And we're also
>
> partners with Bridges, which has a program called the higher curriculum
>
> that we use that requires training so they have national training for SECA,

and we're members of that so we have to have like 15 hours a year for

each teacher to participate in the program.

Researcher: (upon hearing that the center also attended a regional SECA

conference and that teachers selected the sessions they attended) Why

would one topic appeal to you more than another topic?

Aleesa: Because you know, you look at, well it's not the idea that it

appeals to us. You just want more information – as much information

because we are here to serve the children. So therefore you know, you

have different children, not every child is the same so you know you want

to learn how to deal with them, in their area.

Aleesa's statement that "it's not the idea that it appeals to us" seemed to spark

other teachers' responses as they explained their selections in terms of their center or the

children in their care. Alessa's statement also points to the fine line between determining

whether to categorize their responses about selections of professional development as

based on content or context. Teachers at Rural ECEC often began their responses with

references to the subject matter or content of professional development, but their full

responses included deeper explanations about their selections being tied to contextual

elements.

Latricia: Something that's going on at your site, something that you're

doing. If they got block play, I want to go to block play so I can come

back and I can let the kids be able to go to block. If they have something

for the library, nobody likes library, but maybe this training will give me

something so that when I go back to the center I'm going to have all the kids in the library. (sounds of agreement from other teachers) So that's why I go. I specifically look at what I need for *my* class to get.

Aleesa: We have a lot of children who have asthma. [So I selected] a class on health.

Tammy: I guess 'cause I'm in the infant room, it seems so easy, but the biggest problem is trying to deal with the parents…I don't find no problem with the infants, but when we deal with the parents, you have to walk on eggshells. You have to always like I say, kiss up, you know, to let them feel, you know, comfortable and everything. And sometimes you want to say something but you have to think about is I'm saying it right? Because they so easily get offended by any little thing.

Kali: The different teaching strategies that we would use like teaching children in poverty, the work sampling,…how to do portfolios and recordings of what we see and actually detect when there is a need that you need to [address such as] this child may need more assistance in an area than the next child.

There was little to no reference or emphasis to the approaches to training they experienced. Several answers included brief or inferred references to active learning formats they experienced, but they seemed intent on telling me what they experienced and how it related to their center and the children in their care. No matter the question, they repeatedly voiced attention to the needs of their center and children.

**Context as the Dominant Theme in Rural ECEC's Teacher
Selection of Professional Development**

Buysse et al. (2009) presented a conceptual framework for professional

development that included practitioners and organizational contexts inclusive of

"qualifications, professions, experience, race, culture, and ethnicity" (p. 239). The

dynamics of these characteristics and organizational contexts seem well in play at Rural

ECEC when considering how teachers select professional development. From meeting

with Rural ECEC's director and teachers for interviews the first day and returning to

complete observations the following morning, I was overwhelmed by the feeling of

interacting with close family members as opposed to working with a "staff" or "team" of

teachers. Rural ECEC's director and teachers exhibited an easy, family-like rapport with

each other. Throughout the evening I heard easy bantering that included good-natured

joking with one another. During the focus group Kali poked fun at Raenn.

> *Kali:* (after Raenn excitedly, once more took the lead in answering a
>
> question and told about a particular training) You can tell she's been to *a*
>
> *lot* of training (lots of laughter from other teachers).

Later, Raenn, in a fun but respective manner, imitated their director.

> *Raenn*: (when asked what could prevent them from implementing what
>
> they learned about in trainings) That's like when we first started going to
>
> training, we had stuff hanging from the ceilings. And…(Raenn began
>
> laughing and the other teachers followed with lots of laughter as if this
>
> were an often repeated story)…like if it were Christmas we had
>
> ornaments. We had *all kinds* of stuff. So when we started going to

training, we started telling our director this is too much. It's too much

stimulation for the children….their work is supposed to be shown on the

walls and stuff. And she was like *(*Raenn imitating*)* "this is my center –

you do it my way" (heavy, sustained laughter*)*. So she wasn't prone to

change until actually it was a director's training that she had to go in with

me and when she started seeing…and then came back and say then, okay,

let's do it this way because these people have studied and they know what

they are talking about.

After the interview, when the director joined us for pizza, Raenn told the story again with

the director present and with more laughter and participation from the other teachers.

While humorous and fun, these interchanges also revealed evidence of the

contextual elements amongst the director and the teachers. Their family-like structure

seemed to mirror the matriarchal pattern of an African-American family. In this

community of predominately African-American residents and the center of 100%

African-American women, the director was clearly in charge with a leadership style that

included caring and loving for the teachers and the children but with a very clear,

focused, and strongly stated purpose. During the director's interview, she was matter of

fact in answering how she saw her role as the director influencing their professional

development choices:

Director:…I tell them we have to do it. We do staff trainings. And we're

involved when all the children are away. We may do a Saturday…We

actually have a printed agenda, a following of a schedule…We're going to

talk about things that is going to be directly and indirectly involved with

you and those kids and you as a caregiver. And so, it really, really helps

them…I specifically choose this month that we're going to talk about

curriculum because I may see that there is some areas that may need some

strength by one or two caregivers. I may have those [teachers] with

strengths going in these [areas of expertise], but I want everybody to feel

that you're all up there or getting there. So then, we need to say

"supervisors, we are going to observe this particular thing".

Room observations were supportive of the heavy contextual influence of the

director's intentions for all teachers to feel that "you're up there or getting there."

Through consultations with early childhood colleagues for input on the pictures and

descriptions of the classrooms, they agreed that the room arrangements, the selection and

presence of children's materials, and the posted daily schedules evidenced rooms at a

similar level of developmentally structural level of appropriate practices.

Just as the director observes her teachers to determine professional development

needs, the teachers consider the needs of their children when making their own

selections. When teachers selected their own professional development as was the case at

the SECA conference, they indicated their preference for trainings that matched the

activities they offered the children in their care at Rural ECEC. Comprehensive training

reports of Rural ECEC's selection at the SECA conference revealed the teachers selecting

over 50 hours of curriculum topic areas, like Latricia and Kali reported.

The contextual dynamics at play with the children, the teachers, and the director within Rural ECEC are complex when considering the intersections between the level of poverty in the area and the matriarchal influence of the director affecting the teachers. In the selection of professional development, the director's attention to her teachers' practices and the teachers' focus on the needs of the children in care were found as the most prominent dimensions.

What Rural ECEC Teachers Said About How Professional Development Informs Their Practices

Rural ECEC teacher focus group interviews revealed that they approach training from the onset with a mindset that they will bring back advanced knowledge, skills, and abilities and apply these to their work with their children. One particular exchange elicited multiple teachers excitedly offering how trainings had informed their practices:

Raeann: … I would let children listen to music and they would just, you know, we would just [listen], but I went to this one particular training and with this guy, he was teaching nursery rhymes… and he did the Humpty Dumpty. And they actually danced and there was a level of excitement and I see'd everybody doing it…whenever I came back to the center, I was like we need to get more music so we start dancing off Humpty Dumpty, we start rapping off all the nursery rhymes and now…Anybody can say Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall.

Kali: I'm going to get up and move (as Raeann became more animated)

(laughter among the teachers)

Raeann:…because when you get up and start dancing, you know and the

children be more proned to get something from the music.

Ava: We took Humpty Dumpty all across the center. We took the egg, we

busted it. I even dressed up as Humpty Dumpty. It went on and on with

things. We just changed them up.

Latricia: That's like being in the infant room. I went to a training. And

you know children like, babies like [are drawn to] noise. So when the lady

came in the classroom she was just making all kinds of crazy noises so,

you know, the adults, we just looked. She said, now if y'all look, just

imagine what you would do when you go in the classroom and the babies,

what are they going to do? We thought she was just crazy. (laughter

among teachers)

Researcher: Did y'all try it?

Latricia: Yea! So I do it a lot because children grasp, they just like the

noise. And I was like, what is wrong with this woman? You know, you

heard children like noises. Find something that's exciting to them, not

your voice and there they go, they're just looking to see what's going to

come next.

Teachers continually reported how they transformed professional development

into actions beneficial to the children in their care. The motivation to do this seemed

entrenched within the contextual elements in their children's lives. Specifically their

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children's needs seemed to motivate their desire to adjust their classrooms and teaching practices. The messages they voiced merged into a mantra of "it's all about the child."

Aleesa:…not every child is the same so, you know, you want to learn how to deal with them in their area. If we do a safety training and we look at, you know, in those safety trainings, we can look at safety training and say, you know, "that's just like one of the little boys in the room," you know, or one of the little girls and we know how to handle it in a much better, professional way.

Ava: And all that training that we bring back, we do and in fact a good job on it. Our kids, like when the [program evaluators] come, they were like, we didn't even have a coach. Other places had coaches. And they were like, "y'all doing this? They're not doing this at the [public] schools." [we worked] so good because we got our materials and put our heads together and did what we had to do.

Whether focused on a specific training such as when Raeann told about Humpty Dumpty or focused on their children in general, Rural ECEC's teachers expressed how professional development helped their children. For Rural ECEC teachers, the question of how professional development informs may best be exemplified by the prevailing notion that Ava expressed in describing "training that we bring back."

Context as the Dominant Theme in How Professional Development Informs Rural ECEC Teacher Practices

During the room observations, I was struck by the numerous evidences of higher quality care and education. I found children and teachers regularly engaged in meaningful

conversations, age-appropriate play activities, and other routine activities indicative of quality. Music was included as an intentional part of the children's activities. Infant teachers were sitting on the floor, cradling children and singing. Teachers in the two- and three-year-old rooms incorporated music into their circle time. And the pre-k room insisted on altering their large group time to share the Humpty Dumpty rap with me. In an area known for limited resources (Corridors, 2005) and with the teachers' lower levels of education, it was somewhat surprising to find many evidences of higher quality care and education. The limitations of this study cannot attribute the level of quality solely to teachers' use of the knowledge and skills they have learned through professional development. However, there is evidence from this study that points to the influence of the contextual elements within the center on how professional development informs teacher practices.

First, teachers seem keenly aware of what the children from their geographic area are up against in their communities.

> *Kali*: Because like I said, some of them [children] come from – they have
> different situations and they bring their lifestyle into the day care, you
> know. And sometimes it's not a pretty picture to see...even though they are
> children, we are raising the next generation...because they are with us
> most of the time.

Plus, teachers know of the disparity between what is available to teachers in the public schools versus what is available to them in the private sector.

Tammy:…I think here [at Rural ECEC], we have more than just teaching.

We have the love for our kids, really, really, love for our kids, and like in

[public] school, like she said, they don't learn to just sit on the side and

move on and leave them back, but here, we really take those kids as our

kids and we love them. We really, really love them, so I think this is

better, really, better than [public] school…

Latricia: We need the same professional development, the same that the

school house get. We do the same thing they do. And you...don't get the

credit for it...We're preparing them to go to you, so had they not been

here, who had prepared them?

Regardless of these challenges, the teaching practices at Rural ECEC seem

directly tied to how teachers see themselves as possible change agents for the children in

their care. Throughout the interviews, the teacher voices remained centered on the

children and their profession, their life.

Shenna: I want people to know it's not just our job. Because here in our

center, we change lives here. And like, starting off, I being with children

as like, 'oh goodness,' (laughter), but I really connect with these children.

…it's not just our job. I know one thing, it's not just a job for me, it's my

life.

Raeann: …If no child is not to be left behind, even here, then treat us like

the other professionals. Offer us some of the benefits that you offer them

because beginnings start from the womb to the tomb. So even in those

transitions, look at us and say, infants to whatever age, until they get to the

public school, don't push them aside....I think the government need to

look at where they cut people's assistance off where children cannot come

to child care, they're doing more damage than they're doing good...the

brain is not being stimulated...when they been in a setting...in the home,

when you put them in [public] school and they not moving on the level

that you want them moving on, they [teachers in public school] want to

holler "this child needs special ed classes" when that's not the case!

From a strong director to passionate teachers, the interviews and supporting

documentation depict a center focused on who the children in their care will become as a

result of their teaching practices. It is not possible to precisely discern from this study

what motivates these teachers to, as Ava said, "put our heads together and did what we

had to do." However, the interviews with the teachers and the directors reveal that

teachers at Rural ECEC see professional development as their children's ticket to better

care and education.

Contributions of Case #2 to the Study

Buysse et al. (2009) present a conceptual framework depicting effective teaching as an interaction between three constructs of professional development: *who*, *what*, and *how*, with *what* and *how* focused on content and delivery. Whether listening to the voices of the teachers or the director when they spoke of professional development, few comments were heard about content or delivery. Teachers' and the director's comments were focused on the children they serve and these children's needs. Of the three constructs, selection of professional development and how it informs teachers' practices seemed squarely centered on *who*, "the characteristics and contexts of the learners" (p. 239).

The characteristics and contexts of the teachers and the director at Rural ECEC include elements that are often associated with lower quality of care such as a low SES geographic area, limited access to educational resources, and teachers with low educational achievements. Yet, evidence collected at Rural ECEC indicated high levels of quality, and teacher' voices included repeated references about what they learned through professional development and "took back" to the center and the children.

The final analysis of all data from Case #2, Rural ECEC supports two findings in the overall study.

1. Rural ECEC's teacher selection of professional development is influenced by the contextual elements of the center.

2. Professional development informs Rural ECEC's teacher practices through the teachers' and the center's organizational culture.

Case #3: Metro Early Care and Education Center

The Setting

Metro Early Care and Learning Center (MECE) is located near the center of one of South Carolina's metropolitan areas. Tucked in a residential area, this religious-affiliated center is co-located with a majestic and welcoming house of worship. The grounds and location are striking upon arrival. The quietness of the neighborhood and the grounds allowed me to hear a variety of birds chirping. The trees and greenery surprisingly belie the center's location of mere blocks from busy streets and intersections.

The center's space is distinctive in location from the main area of worship. Once in the center's space, there is a director's office, waiting area, and two main halls of rooms. One hall has rooms on either side. The other hall houses the pre-k room and another room the center will use as a kindergarten during the coming academic year. A gym is located near the director's office.

The director and I talked and toured. The center felt warm and welcoming. I observed children moving calmly from place to place, in lines, with one teacher leading and the other behind. Children's works are displayed throughout the halls, most at children's eye level. Room schedules and lesson plans are posted outside of each room.

We entered several rooms. Most of the children were on the playground. The rooms were in somewhat of disarray with toys and materials strewn on the floor. The director commented that she'd rather see that than an overly neat room where children weren't allowed to freely play. I thought to myself that I didn't disagree, but wondered

about the transitioning from one activity to another, when generally clean up is included as part of that transition.

All the rooms we visited were arranged as one would expect with learning centers shaped using child sized furnishings. The furniture seemed to be in good shape but some appeared worn. I noted a writing center in one room. All rooms seemed equipped for dramatic play. I did not see any unit blocks. Environmental print was evident throughout.

We also visited the playground. Children were very much engaged in playing on the equipment and with each other. The director commented that she would need to speak to the teachers about sitting together as the children played.

Upon the completion of our tour, we agreed that I would return in two weeks. Logistically and financially, the small size of the center and the scheduling of the teachers would not support meeting after the center closes. We agreed that I would interview teachers in small focus groups over a four hour period and complete additional room observations when I returned.

Two weeks later, I arrived to find the center filled with activity. Mothers had joined the teachers and children for a breakfast. Around mid-morning, we began a series of interviews of small focus groups with teachers relieving one another. Once the interviews were complete, I added to my room observations from the two weeks prior. The center's small size, and perhaps the religious setting, made for a very relaxed, home-like visit. I observed multiple families coming and going. They greeted one another. The director seemed at ease with all families and teachers. Children were generally well engaged with teachers and with each other.

I had been curious about how the religious aspects of the program are incorporated into the children's activities. Are there any conflicts with South Carolina regulations? I couldn't imagine any, but I was curious. And, what if a teacher does not share or participate in this religious community? How does she help guide children's spiritual growth and teach children about the stories and traditions that are generally seen as a part of religious education for young children?

Throughout the interview with the teachers, I had a strong sense that the center was "a work in progress" with a director, who had been there for less than a year, seeking to build a strong cadre of teachers with warmth and nurturance that is foundational to any education and training. The center has many initiatives going. I listened to the director talk to a rep about possibly adding impact altering materials for the playground and a rep from a food supplier, all while juggling the demands of a constantly ringing phone and a steady stream of teachers with needs. But, for me, the "sounds" of the center registered against my 15 plus years in centers and translated into a well managed, yet child-centered program. After years of working in excessively strict military child and youth programs, I was struck by the freedom the director provided me. I was welcomed in any room and could visit at my discretion. I found that refreshing as teachers were present throughout. I also found myself not really wanting to leave.

**What Metro ECEC Teachers Said About Selecting
Professional Development**

Discerning the differences in what teachers at Metro ECEC said about selecting professional development in terms of context and content seemed somewhat akin to

pondering whether the chicken or the egg came first. Metro ECEC's teachers presented a savvy knowledge and understanding of the state's professional development requirements. Additionally, they provided evidence of thoughtful and purposeful efforts in their selection of professional development with and without the aid of their director.

Contextually, they were influenced by who they are as teachers and by the characteristics and needs of their center, either directly through the director or through their own evaluation of their particular work requirements:

Lisa: We have a lot of conferences that we can pick and choose what we want to do. But this one was very...it was something that we were trying to do within the center so we could better the center. And, so everyone was, I wouldn't say required, but we were encouraged to go.

Emma: I decide [which professional development opportunities to select] by what I think I need for my class – what I see is going to help me in my classroom, so that's how I pick what classes. Like, this could help me because I'm kinda of going through this right now, so which one can help me get through this situation with my group of kids.

Natalie: Sometimes the director will tell us and sometimes we can decide.

They were also very honest about the context of their lives as it applies to selecting professional development.

Donna: To be honest, I'm a mom of three so it's whatever fell in my schedule.

Ann: I think convenience also influenced my decisions and I'm not a mom of three.

However, when the conversations turned to teachers telling about trainings they would have selected if offered, the contextual factors were eclipsed by the limited professional development offerings in their area.

Ann:…I'd like to do more of things outside. Maybe like a class to give me more direction on things to do outside the center. Like, I have infants, so it would be, I think it would be beneficial to have more ideas on what to do outside, just with them. A lot of stuff is geared more towards the preschool [age].

Donna: Well, I agree. I have the two year olds and sometimes it's really hard. The classes, they focus more on the older kids but one that I would have really enjoyed, probably from experiences this year is dealing with difficult behaviors, because it seems like, well, I took some classes on behavior and stuff, but I had some extreme cases this year. I haven't really known how to handle it.

Emma: (in response to question about training she would have liked to have attended) Probably dealing with children, maybe with their emotions, like how they could deal with their emotions, like ways to help them control them at such a young age. I don't ever remember taking a class on that. If I could, I would on how to help them control this anxiety they have in them.

Helen: I wish there was a little bit more training on behavior management

with children. I think that, not only with me, a lot of the other teachers that

are here too would have appreciated that. I think that sometimes you get

into a situation and you don't really know how to handle it. And there's a

big red line where you cross and where you can't. And, also, there are

situations you can never even think about that would come up and you

think okay! How do I handle this one? This is a new one!

Teachers reported the need for professional development in terms of infant care

and activities, but classroom management was the most prevalently mentioned

throughout their interviews. With examples related to their classrooms, their expressed

need for foundational help with classroom management pointed to their seeking and

selecting relevant and applicable training to fit their needs and those of the children and

the center. However, Metro ECEC teachers reported feeling hindered by their perceived

lack of specific content related training to meet their needs.

Context as the Dominant Theme in Metro ECEC Teacher Selection
of Professional Development

Segments from the director's interview also supported the teachers' report for the

need for training in classroom management:

Metro ECEC Director: Classroom management – they need a semester

long class. Classroom management is pedagogy, but it's also the tricks of

the trade. The teachers need to have an available tool box for them at all

times. If this child is acting out, how am I going to handle that? If this

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child is doing that, how am I going to handle that?…I have my master's in education and you're not taught that!…So, you're taking a staff who are loving and kind and compassionate, but if they don't understand child development, if they don't specifically understand what is age appropriate for a two year old…they don't understand all those pieces that go into child development that will then go into classroom management.

If there is such a need, why did these teachers and director find it so difficult to find training opportunities addressing classroom management? To gain insight into Metro ECEC teachers' repeated references to lack of training to meet their needs, I searched for available professional development options for the Metro ECEC locality. For the time span available for searching, no classroom management trainings were available for their locale. I also conferred with the state office responsible for training. In Metro ECEC's area, training is offered by agencies independent of the state office. These agencies register the trainings with the state and offer training for early care and education teachers to meet state training requirements.

As described earlier in this report, state training requirements include 15 hours of training dispersed in increments of five hours of child growth and development, five hours of curriculum activities for children, and five hours in other early childhood areas such as safety, health, nutrition, guidance, and professional development. The director's point about the direct connection between an understanding of child development and child guidance was supported through collaboration with early childhood education colleagues. However, regulatory guidelines separate the two areas. Therefore, if an

agency is trying to plan an agenda of training to meet state requirements, child guidance is not necessary since other topics (safety, health, and professional development) can meet that segment of five hours.

The fact that the regulatory guidelines separate the two seems problematic and is discussed as an implication (Chapter 6) in this study. In consideration of findings from this particular case, the requirements that separate child development and child guidance may offer a clue as to why there is a lack of training available with content specific to classroom management. Like Rural ECEC, Metro ECEC teachers voiced their desire to select professional development based on their needs as teachers and the needs of their center. One of their needs is classroom management, but they are hindered by the availability thus making their selection a function of the context of their geographic area.

At one point during the interviews, I realized that the religious aspect of Metro ECEC had not come through any of the teacher interviews. Metro ECEC fit the sample of centers as one with a religious affiliation. This raises the questions of how, or if, the religious affiliation affects teacher selection of professional development. Notes from my room observations, questions with remaining teachers, and questions of the director indicated that religious affiliation does not inform teacher selection of professional development. Through re-engaging with several teachers and the director, I learned that teachers not affiliated with the center's religious faith attended additional training to learn what they needed to know to guide children's activities and learning related to the center's religious affiliation.

Natalie: I'm really impressed here, because the teachers, I'm [a member of this religious affiliation] and most of the teachers are not, and I'm really impressed because they all, they all catch on…They just pick it up and one teacher will teach the next and it's amazing and I'm really impressed because…I don't know if I could teach in a [center affiliated with a religion different than my own].

The director confirmed that she or the on-site religious leader conducts the professional development to guide teachers from other religious traditions. While the center's religious affiliation does not seem to influence the selection of professional development to meet state requirements, it was interesting to observe the consistency throughout the rooms of evidence of such. Room observations evidenced consistent presence of religious artifacts, a print environment supportive of vocabulary particular to the religious traditions and products from children's activities indicative of learning those traditions. It was also of interest to learn that the additional training provided on site does not count towards the number of hours teachers need. If specific curriculum activities are presented with the accompanying theory of why and how these are age appropriate, it seems that efforts to document these through the proper agencies would be warranted.

What Metro ECEC Teachers Said About How Professional Development Informs Their Practices

As mentioned earlier, Metro ECEC teacher are a savvy group of teachers in their knowledge and understanding of professional development. When I asked specific questions leading to how the professional development they experienced actually informed their practices, they recalled names of facilitators as well as the approaches and other details of their experiences. Of those details, Metro ECEC teachers most often focused on the aspects of approaches to the professional development they experienced with references to how it influenced their practices.

Donna: [A local county] puts the conference on and we had a really great teacher, Patti Kiser [pseudonym], and it was very inspiring, so very inspiring.

Researcher: What about it was inspiring to you?

Donna: Her passion for teaching young children and that just kind of radiated and just was inspiring and you felt really good when you left and just her – how she used method to teach them [children]. That's what I really considered inspiring.

Researcher: Can you give me some examples?

Donna: She had all these ideas for just science and experimenting. Just all these things you would not think about, like how to make clean mud out of toilet paper – all these really exciting experiments. So it was fun to come back and try out all of these things that she did.

Helen: (responding to what she'd recommend to a co-worker) Definitely,

Dr. Pam Shiller, both the lectures she gave were very enlightening.

Researcher: Tell me more about the topic.

Helen: The brain, brain development and where the child is at that time

and what they know and how you can teach them better…she had a song

that I use it all the time with the kids now and they love it.

They also detailed approaches that did not inform their practices.

Donna: There's only been one class I didn't enjoy and it was the one

where she just read all of it.

Researcher: What was the topic?

Donna: The ECERS. She just read all of the standards. This is what you

do to get this and how many points who can get if you have this. It was an

hour and a half of her reading the standards and it was…she was a nice

lady.

Ann: You find yourself doodling.

Donna: It was very hard to sit through.

In a separate interview, Lisa also mentioned this particular training with

information corroborating the approaches Donna and Ann experienced:

Lisa: It was a lot of information and it was pretty dry. This is this and this

is this. This is what you need to do. This is what you shouldn't do.

Researcher: Were the why's explained?

Lisa: It was in a sense, but some of it I didn't think was completely

realistic. It was kind of in an ideal setting and I think that people don't

really want to listen to those why's if the whole thing is in this ideal

preschool setting, because this is a great center. We have a great center,

but some things are out of our control. And then if you look at other

centers that are not very good, the employees don't have a lot of control

over that. Like for us, we have a lot of opportunities to do a lot of things

that other centers may not because our numbers are low and our director is

really good and understanding, but even in those circumstances where we

would love to do that but we can't always do that…And, I think that

people started tuning the speaker out and talking amongst themselves

which I thought was very rude…not people from our center….I could hear

people say, 'oh, yea, when are we going to do that?'

Teachers also readily recalled examples of approaches they found unusual but helpful in

remembering content. Ann provided an example that she labeled 'extreme:'

Ann: Yea, she said, when she started off, she said, "how many of you eat that

bagged salad without washing it?" And we all raised our hands because I didn't

wash salad that came in a bag, and then she went on about how if you don't wash

it you can get, maybe disease. So she was kind of extreme. But I remembered

when I left there. And I wash my salad.

Approaches to Training as the Dominant Theme in How Professional Development Informs Metro ECEC Teacher Practices

The number of repeated references in interviews to approaches to training came through as an important aspect of professional development amongst the teachers and director at Metro ECEC. Regardless of why they select a professional development opportunity, their voices were clear in their high expectations from the experience, especially through the approaches used by the facilitator.

> *Metro ECEC Director:* If you're making your teachers spend a Saturday,
>
> at a class, it has to be good. And, that's the big issue. Who oversees? I had
>
> a trainer [at her previous center] come and teach High Scope and…I could
>
> have done a better, and I don't know the first thing about High Scope.

An examination of the education level of the teachers indicates a general level of higher education coursework and credentials, although not necessarily in early childhood. Their exposure to higher education may account for their noted savvy attention to approaches to professional development and expectations that trainings will present information in a manner that they can translate into their practices. Teachers' prior experience with higher education may also account for Metro teachers' positive remarks about ECD 101 offered through a local two-year college.

> *Debra*: One opportunity that I appreciated that I hadn't had at another
>
> center was the T.E.A.C.H. program, and I got to go and get an early
>
> childhood certificate for a semester.
>
> *Cathy*: I was lucky enough; I enrolled in the T.E.A.C.H. program. They do
>
> the ECC, early childhood 101. It was incredible. It was a great course. I

have a master's degree, but it's not in education. And for me to take this

course…it was – the whole course was memorable. She [the instructor]

did note taking [lecture], role playing, we'd get toys and play with toys.

She tried to vary it a lot...and there was free discussion...it was really

interesting to hear the stories from the centers. One day during class we

were doing classroom designs, [and] we just changed our classroom...we

were like WOW!

Regardless of the source of their focus on approaches, their voices seem to

indicate that professional development is more likely to inform their practices when

approaches hold their attention and convey information in a usable format.

Contributions of Case #3 to the Study

Teachers at Metro ECEC sought professional development to meet their self- or

director-identified needs. In particular they repeatedly expressed the desire to engage in

professional development on classroom management (child guidance). Despite the

center's locations within one of the larger cities in South Carolina, teachers had difficulty

locating training with this content.

The final analysis of the data from Case #3 contributed two findings to the study:

1. Selection is limited in terms of content by the offerings from local, multiple professional development opportunities.

2. Approaches to trainings influence how professional development informed teacher practices.

Case #4: City Early Care and Education Center

The Setting

City ECEC is located in a seemingly lower SES area in a western county in South Carolina. Streets are narrow. Homes appear in need of repair. Many businesses are boarded up. The center is on a corner lot with little to no parking. Upon approaching the center, I noticed a small space/area in front of the center, on the main road with a hand-made sign reading, "parking 5 minutes." There was room for no more than two cars at best. While only two lanes, the main road had a constant flow of traffic.

The center is surrounded by a chain linked fence. The grass is cut but not edged. A playground is behind another fence. The equipment appears old and unkempt. Faded, sparse mulch covers the ground. I climb several narrow steps to the stoop at the front door. It is locked but a door bell is next to it. One of the teachers opens the door, and I step into an area that at first appears as two rooms divided by a hallway and set up for children. The director is sitting in one of the areas. Neither area is well-lit. Upon closer examination of the room I entered, there was no evidence of children having played in the area. While somewhat set up like a preschool room, several "centers" seemed more of a storage area. One side of the two rooms also looked more administrative with a copier, computer, telephone and bulletin board of adult items.

I sat at a child-size table with the director. While chatting, several families came for their children. I noticed that each set of family members entered the door where I came in and stopped just as they entered. It appears that the regular routine includes teachers bringing the child or children to the family member. The children seemed calm

and not overly anxious to leave. The greetings and exchanges between the family members and the teachers and directors seemed warm but lacking of any specifics about the child's day.

After all the children were gone, the director and I began our interview. During the interview, the director seemed melancholy. In particular, she mentioned (and it was supported during the teacher focus group interview) that the center's enrollment had dropped drastically. The director and teachers cited economic conditions and parents wanting centers with gyms and cafeterias. As of the day of my visit, the center had less than 30 children enrolled. From what I understand, all teachers were laid off and only the four family members run the center. After the teacher focus group interview, I asked to see the rooms. I was led out the front door, around the outside, into the building behind the main part of the center. The room in back is for infants and toddlers. I took several pictures and chatted with two of the teachers.

When we finished, I asked about other rooms in the center and they told me that was it. I returned the following morning to conduct an observation with children on site. Again, I was steered from the center room of the main building. I found it curious. Children were obviously there waiting for family members when I arrived the previous day. I couldn't help but wonder what parents' impressions are when visiting the center to consider it as a possible center for their children.

The online DSS report of the center indicates it is licensed for 97 children. I could not imagine where 97 children would be. Even if the front rooms I entered were used, and even if the middle section were used all day for children, I saw space for less than 50.

The online DSS report is less than complimentary of the center. At least two dozen review and compliance issues were listed including the playground and building/structure/equipment deficiencies issues marked as "pending." Of the four centers I visited, this center fit a selection protocol calling for a range of centers with geographic and other considerations. As it has turned out, this center also presented a more extreme case of a privately-funded center and offered a balance to the other centers with more evident markings of higher quality programming.

What City ECE Teachers Said About Selecting
Professional Development

From the first question and answers with City ECEC's teachers emerged a theme of their selection of professional development as primarily a function of availability and meeting regulatory requirements.

Loretta: Well, the most times we go for those 15, it's, it be the same thing
repeated most of the time.

Gwen: And one of the 15 hours, it was at the hospital. And that was my
first time going to the ones at the hospital and it's like online like,
teaching.

With references to "those 15," it was of particular interest to hear Loretta tell how she would explain the purpose of required training to a new teacher.

Loretta: It's required, first thing, but you want to have the best for the
children so you can bring some more kids in and the talk might get
around, but you don't want nobody unqualified to fool with them.

The three teachers present for the focus group made up 75% of the teachers at the center. Four family members (the director, her sister, and the director's two nieces) were the only staff left after the layoff of all their teachers. The family members operate City ECEC with about 30 children, and they do not see evidence of any trends suggestive of increasing enrollments. These organizational elements are accentuated by attention from the South Carolina's Department of Social Services (DSS).

Throughout the interview, no matter what question I asked, DSS seemed a primary focus of the teachers as in the response to one of my closing questions, "What else would you like people in SC to know about professional development?"

> *Loretta*: Mainly, the people, they set rules for us, but most of them don't be in day care and don't know how it works. They sit down there and make a rule. My sister has changed the locks on these doors, maybe three or four time…They got a whole lot of rules for you in the legislature who makes the rules and stuff have never been in day care and never worked in day care so they really don't know what it's all about.

Parents were also cited by the three as attributable to the issues they were facing.

> *Loretta*: Parents really don't realize what's going on neither, some of them don't. They just want everything for themselves.
>
> *Tia*: It's a lot of that [the director] kicks out and parents don't even understand. All they understand is someone keeping their child.
>
> *Gwen*: Only about money
>
> *Loretta*: They think you getting rich out of it.

Tia: They think you're getting rich, but in the long run, you're not. You're

just making by.

These interchanges portrayed three teachers focused on purely fiscal and

regulatory issues versus the quality of care of the children. Even when they began

directly addressing their selection of professional development, they turned to references

of meeting requirements and the role of DSS.

Researcher: So, how do you decide what trainings to go to?

Loretta: You have to get what's available most of the time.

Tia: Yea, they don't have no option.

Researcher: So you're saying the availability is not real strong….

(collective sounds of agreement)

Loretta: Not a variety anyway.

Tia: Because I think during the summer they take a break. And you got a

lot of day cares want to get their hours in…DSS, you know, they still

gonna check around regardless unless you don't have it if no seminars are

taken during the summer.

**Context as the Dominant Theme in City ECEC Teacher Selection
of Professional Development.**

Other than Loretta speaking of the content of trainings being the "same thing

repeated most of the time" and Gwen's reference to the online approach at the hospital,

the teachers did not mention other examples of content or approaches contributing to

their selection of professional development. Their focus for professional development

seemed clearly centered on the presence of DSS and adherence to regulations. This could be a function of the DSS website reports of at least two dozen review and compliance issues including the playground and building/structure/equipment deficiencies issues that are marked "pending." Compared to other centers of comparable size and geographic location, the number of issues is more than double.

Several times during the director's interview, she expressed her concern for her business of 21 years. At one point, her voice trailed off as she talked about how things had changed over the past 21 years. She was talking about parents but reiterated how "it's totally different; just totally different." Could it be that this center's selection of professional development over the past years had not propelled them into a time when quality early care and education is typically beyond the minimum requirements in the state's DSS regulations? Somehow during the past 21 years, the teachers and director reached this point in time when City ECEC's selection of professional development seems to be a matter of availability and regulatory function.

What City ECEC Teachers Said About How Professional Development Informs Their Practices.

Despite the overall lack of thought and purposefulness in selecting professional development, there was some evidence during the teacher focus group interview that their record of selection could have informed their practices.

Tia: Now the one [conference] at [a local university], I loved that! I loved

it! And, they served you breakfast.

Loretta: You get into it more.

Tia: Yea, you get into it more, at [the local university] and then like going

to different instruction classes like you in school. I loved it!

Researcher: Did you feel different there?

(collective yeses and sounds of agreement)

Loretta: What was the name? We had to do a little exercise about the

brain. It was about the brain. She had us down doing like little kids

exercise. It was tiresome, too, but it was good, too.

Gwen: That was nice and you get your hours in, too.

Tia: And you have more opportunity, you know, getting your classes and

stuff.

Researcher: What about the conference was so different?

Tia: It was altogether different.

Loretta: We got that Greg and Steve tape. I don't know the name, but you

creep and you run, and you stop.

At this point one of the teachers retrieved a set of CDs they ordered as a result of

the session at the conference. All the CDs were still in shrink wrap except for one, and

there was general discussion about whether that CD included the song they were talking

about. The conversation turned to another session at the conference when the researcher

asked if they'd ever learned about something in professional development that caused

them to think, "I don't think so." Tia began talking about a session dealing with what the

researcher recognized as the Reggio Approach.

Tia: Yea, like how in the world do they get the children so calm and everything. They was showing pictures and stuff, but oooo,…that program…They just had so many different kind of stuff they do with their children. You know the space…Their set up is nice. They were saying like people, who write books, they fly them here to talk to the teachers. It's nice…really nice.

Loretta: Are they really learning? I don't care how nice it is, you can't make a child learn.

The general conversation revealed a seemingly weak understanding of developmentally appropriate practices. However, their excitement about the conference they attended did cause me to wonder whether circumstances at their center might be different if they had felt this excited about professional development in general.

General Lack of Evidence in How Professional Development Informs City ECEC's Teacher Practices.

The tour of City ECEC provided numerous examples of low-quality care. While all rooms except the infant room had mostly new, high-quality early childhood furnishings, arranged in a semblance of centers, the arrangements included, in all rooms, a path down the middle that would promote running. This seemingly simple observation is actually an observation of the omission of a very basic principle in classroom furnishing arrangement in early care and education settings. Other examples included the front entrance rooms in the main building containing excess toys, books, and equipment to the point that parts of it resembled a storage area. The one observation that was the

most curious was that of two old cabinet model televisions stacked on top of one another in the toddler area. When I asked about these, Gwen replied, "Oh, we don't use them."

In addition to the furnishings and room arrangements being minimally appropriate, there were other subtle signs of a children's program that has not been informed by professional development. The daily schedule was handwritten and posted immediately inside the toddler room door at children's eye height. There was no evidence of lesson plans and there were no visible evidence of any open-ended children's work. The morning after the interview, I returned to observe with children present. Two children (estimated 18-24 months) were present. They were engaged with toys in solitary play. The teacher was in another part of the room when I entered with her back to the children. During the observation, she made a few comments across the room to them. Other than that, there was no engagement between the teacher and the children. The room observations and my conclusions were affirmed by early childhood colleagues who the researcher asked for corroboration via pictures and field notes.

Contributions of Case #4 to the Study

As this report continues, the question could arise whether City ECEC contributes to the study due to how it does not directly inform the research questions. However, an examination of recurring notations finds some of the same issues at City ECEC as the other centers. The teachers at City ECEC were most excited about the conference sponsored by the local university and were most animated about sessions that offered active learning. This is not unlike the previous three centers. However, the starkest

difference lies in the lack of comments by the City ECEC's teachers regarding professionalism and the profession of early childhood. Loretta offered the one comment about "you want to have the best for the children so you can bring some more kids in and the talk might get around, but you don't want nobody unqualified to fool with them." This is the closest the dialog got to the teachers talking about the children, quality care, and professional development. Upon reflection, could the state of the center be not so much a result of the current economic condition, but a result of parents, even very young parents, recognizing that "you don't want nobody unqualified to fool with them"?

The final analysis of the data from Case #4 contributed the following to the study:

1. Selection at City ECEC is primarily a function of availability and meeting regulatory requirements.

2. There was insufficient evidence at City ECEC that professional development informed teacher practices.

Summary of Findings and Interpretations

Each of the findings from the single case analyses reflects at least one of the three main aspects of the conceptual framework: the who (teachers and the centers), the what (content), and the how (approach). Table 6 provides a visual presentation of the single case findings as they apply to the study's two main questions followed by a summative discussion.

Table 6

Findings from the Single Case Analyses

Center	How did teachers select professional development?	How did professional development inform teacher practices?
Town ECEC	Selection was based on content, specifically the relevance of the content to their self-determined needs as a teacher	There was not consistent or strong evidence that professional development routinely informed teacher practices
Rural ECEC	Selection is influenced by contextual elements of the center	The center's organizational culture provided strong support for professional development to inform teacher practices
Metro ECEC	Selection is limited in terms of content by the offerings of local, multiple professional development opportunities	Approaches to trainings influenced how professional development informed teacher practices
City ECEC	Selection is primarily a function of availability and meeting regulatory requirements	There was insufficient evidence that professional development informed teacher practices

How Did Teachers Select Professional Development?

Two of the four centers were most likely to select professional development based on content. For Town and Metro ECECs, the selection of content was further influenced by teacher characteristics, specifically their perception of how the content was relevant to their needs as teachers. Their needs reflected the age of the children they served or teacher self-determined needs such as the need to improve abilities in classroom management, the need for new ideas for children's activities, or the need for improved skills in classroom management. In the case of Metro ECEC, the lack of locally available professional development opportunities addressing desired content was noted.

Rural ECEC's selection of professional development was most influenced by the "who" and related contextual elements. While all four directors played key roles in

teacher selection of professional development and in whether it influenced teacher practices, the director at Rural ECEC was heavily involved in the oversight of quality programming and determined training needs based on observations of teachers' practices.

City ECEC presented unique circumstances compared to the other three privately-funded ECECs. As a result of significant drops in enrollment, City ECEC's teaching staff was reduced to four family members caring for the approximately 30 enrolled children. The director and teacher interviews led to the finding that their selection of professional development was solely a function of fulfilling the number of state required hours.

How Did Selected Professional Development Inform Teacher Practices?

The approach used by the facilitator was found as the key determinant in whether the professional development experience informed teacher practices. Approaches to trainings were evident in all four centers, but the teacher voices from the interviews at Metro ECEC revealed the strongest evidence that the "how" (i.e., approaches) most informed their teaching practices. During Metro ECEC teacher interviews, teachers not only recalled how training was delivered, but teachers also told what aspects of the professional development they had implemented in their classrooms.

At Rural ECEC, contextual elements heavily influenced both teacher selection of professional development as well as how their selections informed teacher practices. The strong, matriarchal role of the director included regular observations to determine what teachers needed and whether they were applying what she believed they should have learned in professional development. Based on room observations, teacher interviews,

and collected artifacts, there is evidence that the director's role was instrumental in the consistent, high level of care observed at Rural ECEC.

While similar in wording, there is a distinct difference in the findings for Town ECEC and City ECEC. Both reveal a lack of professional development informing teacher practices. However, the analysis of Town ECEC data pointed to an inconsistency or lack of strong evidence that professional development *routinely* informed practices. Whereas, City ECEC data revealed insufficient evidence that professional development informed practices. Town ECEC data revealed teaching practices supportive of a level of quality that would typically be considered as good quality. But the data could not confirm that the level was the result of professional development informing teacher practices. This finding was substantiated by teachers in all three focus groups at Town ECEC who could not recall topics of past professional development experiences. There was also some evidence that contextual elements of the center may have contributed to professional development not informing teacher practices. From the data collected at City ECEC, it was not possible to determine whether the observed low level of quality was attributable to professional development selection being a function of regulatory requirements or whether other contextual elements were involved such as teacher characteristics and other aspects of the center's operational procedures.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented findings and interpretations resulting from the single case analyses of a multi-case study exploring how ECEC teachers in South Carolina select and

are informed by professional development. The state of South Carolina requires ECEC teachers to annually complete 15 hours of professional development, yet, prior to this study, no research has asked how teachers select these hours or what difference it makes to their teaching practices. To place policy makers and advocates in these teachers' shoes, teacher participant voices were extensively included to not only accurately represent what teachers said but to also give voice of those who are rarely included in research. The final two chapters of this report present the cross-case analysis from which the study's assertions emerged followed by the study's implications and recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE

CROSS-CASE ASSERTIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Introduction

Using a multi-case research design, this study explored two main questions:
(1) How do teachers in early care and education centers (ECEC) in South Carolina select
professional development and (2) How does professional development inform their
teaching practices? For South Carolina, the results of this study are important because
minimal requirements for teachers to enter the early care and education (ECE) field raise
questions about the role of professional development in molding ECE teachers and their
practices. Four licensed, privately-funded ECECs in South Carolina were selected to
participate and represent the four cases in this multi-case study. Findings based on each
of the four single case analyses are detailed in Chapter 4 based on Stake's (2006)
recommendation to avoid the cross-case analysis dominating the results and thus
overshadowing the uniqueness of each case set within its own context. This chapter
continues the presentation of the study's results by presenting four assertions that
emerged as a result of the cross-case analysis:

1. Teachers are most likely to consider content when selecting professional
   development.

2. The approach used by the facilitator is the most likely aspect of
   professional development to influence teachers in determining whether the
   selected professional development will inform their practices.

3. Directors play a key role in teacher selection of professional development
   and in whether it will inform teacher practices.

4. Teachers and directors are aware of the connection between professional development and quality for young children. However, they also painfully voice their perception that others do not share such about their life's work as a profession.

The following presentation and interpretation of each assertion includes selections from the teacher participant voices that gave rise to the assertion. Teacher voices are of great importance to this study especially in light of the review of literature (Chapter 2) that evidenced the absence of their voices in research focused on ECE and professional development. By centering the voices of the South Carolina ECE teachers who took part in this study, researchers and advocates have their first research-based glimpse into how ECE teachers select and are informed by professional development.

Assertions

Assertion #1 – *Teachers are most likely to consider content in selecting professional development.*

Teachers from Town and Metro ECE centers offered the strongest support related to content as the main influence in selecting professional development.

Kathy: …you know how sometimes you feel like, you're out of ideas?

Mary: …I've been in the field for a while. So, you know, what you used to do a long time ago is, is a different way of doing it. So, you need to be up to date…I'd recommend a DSS class to everybody, just because there is so much that you don't know, that you need to know.

Diane: I really focus on training for whatever age group children I'm

working with – which training will benefit the children I'm currently

serving.

Emma: I decide by what I need for my class, what I see is going to help

me in my classroom, so that's how I pick what classes.

Teachers were also vocal about what they wanted to know about content in advance of

selecting the professional development opportunity:

Susan: Most trainings have your, have it listed and have the description of

that particular training so you pretty much know. I like those kind of

trainings instead of trying to just go by age group or just go by the title

with no description because that's when you get into trainings that you're

thinking "what am I doing here; I'm wasting my time."

While there were occasional instances when context of the center and the

characteristics of teachers emerged as influences on selection, teachers most often

referred to selection in terms of content. The assertion of selecting professional

development according to content presumes teachers can find professional development

containing the content that meets their needs. However, this presumption is challenged by

Metro ECEC's finding that the content they sought was not always readily available.

Teachers from Metro ECEC described professional development opportunities they

would have liked to have attended and most often mentioned classroom management.

Helen: I wish there was a little bit more training on behavior management

with children.

Lisa: Classroom management is a BIG one.

Emma: Probably dealing with children…maybe with their emotions…

Teachers from other centers also overwhelmingly called for content related to classroom management training as well as curriculum approaches and working with families. Other areas of content teachers looked for included:

- Information specific to the age group teachers are currently working with

- Topics of interest to individual teachers

- Regulatory requirements

- Topics to meet a teacher's self-identified need

- Topics to meet a teacher's need identified by her director

Content as the most likely consideration in selecting professional development. Adult readiness to learn is linked to need, and their orientation to learn is linked to relevant problems or required competencies (Knowles, 1984). These premises from Knowles' theory of andragogy may explain teachers in this study who most often cited content as their basis for selecting professional development. For the vast majority of the ECE teachers in the four cases, selecting required professional development was not just a function of meeting state regulations. These teachers sought and selected professional development based on the needs of the children in their care and the need to enhance their teaching competencies.

Teacher focus on content was further evidenced in their voicing concern about the content they needed but could not locate, such as classroom management in the case of Metro ECE. Metro's problem in finding sources for the content they needed also points

out two aspects of selection that are more fully addressed in the discussion of implications in Chapter Six. First, this study, while limited in number of cases, strongly suggests the lack of availability and variety for professional development opportunities for ECEC across South Carolina. Town ECEC develops their own training due to issues of availability. Metro ECEC cannot find the content they need. City ECEC reported sparse offerings in their area. Second, many teachers voiced the need to increase their skills in classroom management. The lack of availability of this subject may be the result of its inclusion in the state regulation under the categorization of "other" as opposed to under "growth and development." Regardless, the repetitiveness of these teacher references to these aspects of professional development supports the assertion that content is the most likely consideration in teacher selection of professional development.

Assertion #2 – *The approach used by the facilitator is the most likely aspect of professional development to influence teachers in determining whether the selected professional development will inform their practices.*

Teachers voiced how approaches they experienced in professional development were the most likely component to determine whether their experiences informed their teaching practices. Note the following explanations of how powerful certain approaches were (or were not) in informing teacher practices.

Lisa: It was a lot of information, and it was pretty dry…And, I think that people kind of, well I know that people started tuning the speaker out and talking amongst themselves..

Donna: …her passion for teaching young children…just kind of radiated and just was inspiring and you felt really good when you left…It was a

Patti Kiser [pseudonym] class. I know I keep talking about that. But she

was so interesting and she had all these ideas for just science and

experimenting. Just all these things that you would think about – like how

to make clean mud out of toilet paper – all these really exciting

experiments. So it was fun to come back and try out all of these things that

she did.

Researcher: So you really put those in your classroom.

Donna: Yea, I try to, yea.

While many of these comments may seem obvious, it is important to consider

their voices not just in terms of whether participants *enjoyed* the experience of attending

the professional development but to consider how the facilitator *hooked* the participant

into transferring what she experienced into her teaching practices. Two selections

provided insight into how appropriate, but "extreme," approaches to learning were

memorable:

Ann: (in conclusion to her story about the facilitator involving the

participants and then extolling the dangers of not washing bagged lettuce)

…So she was kind of extreme…but I remembered what I left there. And I

wash my salad!

Latricia: (as part of telling about the facilitator's approach to involving the

participants)…We thought she was just crazy.

Researcher: Do y'all try it?

Latricia: Yea, so I do it a lot because the children grasp, they just like

noise. And I was like, what is wrong with this woman?

The teachers also offered commentaries on examples of approaches they typically

considered as ineffective:

- Reading from PowerPoint slides

- Full lecture

- Disorganization on the part of the facilitator

Teachers also repeatedly referred to the following as approaches to professional

development that informed their teaching practices:

- Active learning activities

- Innovative approaches to presentations

- Participation in conferences

- Minimal use of lecture

- Effective use of PowerPoint

Again, for this study, these commentaries are not as important to determine

whether participants enjoyed the professional development experience; the commentaries

point to facilitator approaches that could influence (or not) teacher transference of

professional development into teaching practices.

An example of how critical this can be was provided by Lisa in her commentary

when she recants "It was a lot of information, and it was pretty dry." Her comment

referred to ECERS-R training. She went on to tell how participants visibly tuned out.

Plus, in a separate focus group interview, two of her fellow teachers echoed her exact

sentiments about the same training. The waste these three teachers experienced is compounded by the director's remarks in her interview that the center would like to achieve a higher rating with the ABC voucher program. To do this, the center will be rated using ECERS-R and the score will play into whether that higher rating is earned. Even more importantly, ECERS-R can serve centers as a tool for improving the early care and education quality for young children. Due to the approach of this facilitator during this training, it is not likely based on these and other teacher commentaries that they gained an increased understanding of the ECERS-R tool.

Approach as the most likely consideration in whether professional development informs teacher practices. To interpret how approaches used by facilitators relate to informing teacher practices, two aspects of the study's theoretical framework offer insight: andragogy and motivation. If, as Knowles (1984) theorizes, adults are self-directed and come to trainings with experience, then approaches that include mostly lecture and no means of application would not positively inform teacher practices. Therefore, the issue of whether teachers transfer what they have experienced becomes somewhat of a moot point as in the case of the three teachers and the ECERS-R training. The approach they experienced never hooked their adult learning needs and, therefore, motivation to transfer what they learned was never engaged.

In contrast, the VIE theory of motivation to transfer training to the workplace (Vroom, 1964) may account for the recurring notation in the analyses of the teacher interviews involving the selection of conferences for professional development. Three of the four centers mentioned the high value of conferences to their teaching practices as

well as to their sense of professionalism. The voice of the Director of Rural ECEC

offered the following, which is reflective of the repeated comments about conference:

> *Director of Rural ECEC*: I think, when I think back on 2009, which is so
>
> powerful, our parents, our staff, was really, really interested in the SECA
>
> [Southern Early Childhood Association] conference. And the SECA
>
> conference offered them a world of training. And we got to go and stay
>
> down at the beach and be exposed to thousands of educational
>
> professionals. They just took that as a world of knowledge that no one
>
> could have actually just said what it would have been. The professional
>
> development of it was being around people who do the same thing that
>
> you do – hearing the same thing that you are involved in day to day. And
>
> so, I could tell that 2009 actually made them excited about what was going
>
> to happen in 2010 because of that actual training for three days.
>
> *Researcher*: And it probably made them feel like a real part of something
>
> bigger than themselves.
>
> *Director of Rural ECEC*: Important! That made them feel that they are
>
> really, really making a difference in these children's lives and appreciated
>
> through a group of people who came together and say, you know, we're
>
> gonna put this conference on to let you know you do make a difference.

In the case of facilitators at conferences as referenced above or in other venues

(see Donna's comments included at the beginning of this section), teachers sensed the

value of their work along with believing in their ability to be an instrument in making a

difference. Incorporating these components into approaches to professional development cannot be underestimated. Additionally, the repeated references to such in this study support the assertion that approaches used by facilitators are the most likely aspects in teachers determining whether a professional development experience will inform their practices.

Assertion #3 – *Directors play a key role in teacher selection of professional development and in whether it will inform their practices.*

While a study is not needed to confirm the influence of directors in a center, data from this study offer support for just how critical the director's role is in teacher selection of professional development and for how professional development informs teacher practices. Directors played a key role in all four centers in the study, but in two centers, the directors evidenced particularly high involvement in teacher selection and use of professional development.

> *Director of Rural ECEC*: I specifically choose this month that we're going
> to talk about curriculum because I may see that there is some areas that
> may need some strengths by one or two caregivers. I may have those
> strengths going in these [caregivers], but I want everybody to feel that
> you're all up there or getting there…[if] we don't really observe them
> reading enough to the children. [If] we don't really observe them talking
> enough…
>
> *Researcher*: So the observations you see drive the choices?
>
> *Director of Rural ECEC*: Yes, drives the choices!

The Rural ECEC was awarded and maintains one of the only public supported pre-k programs in their county. It seems reasonable that maintaining the quality needed for such a program is understandable. However, as noted in the Case #2 findings (Chapter 4), this center maintained a consistent level of quality throughout all three of its rooms.

At Metro ECEC, teachers were quick to respond that their director played a key role in their selection of professional development.

> *Lisa*: We were actually told which ones [trainings] we should go to because they applied to something we were going to do to better the center.

> *Natalie*: Sometimes the director will tell us and sometimes we decide.

> *Helen*: I talk to [the director].

> *Cathy*: Usually [the director] recommends them [trainings] to us.

Through either making recommendations or planning for in-house, on-site training, these directors were actively involved in teacher selection of professional development.

Directors' roles in teacher selection of professional development and whether it informs teacher practices. Intentionality in planning learning opportunities for young children has recently become a popular concept in ECE. Intentionality in ECE is exemplary of assessing what a child needs, designing learning opportunities accordingly, reassessing for growth or change, and basically continuing this cycle (Epstein, 2007). Intentionality as it applies to professional development is somewhat inherent in the conceptual framework (Buysse et al., 2009) of this study when considering the Venn

diagram (Figure 1) with spheres of who, what, and how overlapping and supporting

highly effective teaching. It would seem that intentionality in either designing learning

opportunities for young children or determining professional development needs for ECE

teachers would be common practice. Yet, the field of ECE only recently began

addressing intentionally in children's learning opportunities through publications such as

Epstein's (2007). In addition, South Carolina regulations for licensed ECECs do not

include any requirement for professional development other than a set number of hours

distributed among curriculum, growth and development, and other ECE-related topics.

Despite the lack of attention to intentionality in the ECE field or regulatory

requirements for professional development of teachers, this study found evidence at Rural

and Metro ECEC of director-supported, intentional selections for teachers. Teachers from

these two centers told of turning to their directors for guidance in selection of

professional development. Additionally, teachers from both centers told of how their

professional development could improve their practices and enhance children's learning

opportunities. These centers are alike as they evidenced a higher level of ECE quality

(noted in the presentation of findings in Chapter 4) than the other two, and, yet, they

differ in teacher education level with over 50% of Metro ECEC teachers holding college

degrees compared to 12% of Rural ECEC teachers (Appendix H).

The linking and discussion of this observed intentionality and the higher level of

quality are limited by the scope of this study, but the intentionality at Rural and Metro

ECEC are somewhat reminiscent of research involving public pre-k teachers when

training is prescribed and followed up through observations and feedback with resulting

positive learning outcomes for children (Pianta et al., 2008). The role Rural and Metro

ECEC directors play in this observed intentionality also support the assertion that

directors play a key role in teacher selection of professional development and in whether

it will inform their teaching practices.

Assertion #4 – *Teachers and directors are aware of the connection between*
professional development and quality for young children. However, they
also painfully voice their perception that others do not share such about
their life's work as a profession.

A final question for each of the focus groups was "what else would you like to

share about your professional development, specifically, what would you like for the

people of South Carolina to know about your professional development?" The answers

point to teachers who "get it." They know the demands of the profession and the

subsequent need to stay current and knowledgeable. They were also most vocal in their

desire for the people of South Carolina to hear that they are professionals and that they

work within a profession where the stakes are high.

> *Helen*: I don't think that early childhood development is taken very
>
> seriously. I think it should be taken a lot more [seriously]. I think that
>
> there are a lot of people out there who do think that it's a serious thing, but
>
> also, I don't think it's taken very seriously in this state.
>
> *Susan*: I think that it's a true profession, a commitment that it takes for
>
> teachers to be good teachers. It would be good if we were looked at more
>
> as if we were true professionals. Like if you're an engineer, you're an
>
> engineer and everybody says, "oh, that's an engineer". But if you say,

"I'm a child development specialist," they say, "you're a what? You take

care of kids?"

   Lou: We don't want it to be just a field, we want it to be your career,

your life…We are here with our whole heart, because that's what we want

to do.

Teachers and directors understand the connection between professional development and quality and are aware that others do not. While interesting and heartfelt, some may ask, "How does teacher understanding of this seemingly obvious connection relate to the study's research questions regarding selection of professional development and their teaching practices?" The implications of this assertion are included in the following chapter; however, it is important to consider this specific question at this point. Within the study's conceptual framework, policies are included as an influencer surrounding the three spheres of the ecosystem portrayal of professional development (Figure 1). In spite of state policies that allow for, even promote, minimum requirements to teach in South Carolina ECECs, there is no evidence of impetus for political will to encourage legislation or policies to advocate for higher pay or benefits commonly associated with bachelor-degree-level teachers under the auspices of the Department of Education. Instead, it could be argued that the state's minimum requirements inadvertently support the low economic and low politically influential status of ECEC professionals of which the teachers and directors in this study are so painfully aware. As members of a societal culture where spheres of power coincide with social and economic status, teachers and directors in privately-funded ECECs have little to no

influence. These teachers seem frozen out of the political arena as evidenced by the lack of attention in South Carolina and even by the ECE research community. Rarely are teachers and directors from privately-funded ECECs included. Yet, there is increasing attention alerting family members, advocates, and policy makers to research supportive of the premise that early care and education matter.

Despite these conflicting messages and complex societal dynamics, the teachers and directors in this study voiced their understanding of how critical it is for early care and education teachers to understand the connection between quality, professional development, and their profession. The motivational aspects of the study's theoretical framework (Vroom, 1964) lends support to their feelings of self-efficacy and self-worth playing key roles in their decision to transform professional development into effective teaching practices supportive of quality care and education for young children.

> *Raeann*: …I say to them if there's no child left behind, start with the
> beginning and look at us, not as just a private setting, but look at it as
> professional workers and give us the opportunity and embrace us. I believe
> we should be first class (audible agreements). I really believe we should
> be first class.
>
> *Kali*: Because you told us to go to all of these trainings and what not –
> what good is it? It's like doing it when we got so much to offer these
> children, and you know, like she said, you just push us aside like we are
> babysitting service, you know. So what's the purpose of sending us to
> these trainings?

Indeed, the purpose of "these trainings" is at the heart of the research questions of this study. It is would seem that these two teachers from Rural ECEC were asking, "If you don't value us, why should we value the training?" The researcher's experience with three of the four ECECs found teachers expressing high levels of commitment to the care and education for the children they serve. Despite their sense of disenfranchisement from any sphere of influence, they press forward with determination to offer high-quality early care and education.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented four assertions that emerged during the cross-case analysis of the study's single case findings. Based on data collected from four ECECs in South Carolina, the two primary assertions were (1) teachers are most likely to select professional development based on content and (2) the approach used by facilitators is the most likely influence on whether professional development will inform teacher practices. Two additional assertions emerged from the cross-case analysis: (1) directors play a critical role in teachers' selection of professional development and whether it informs their practices and (2) teachers understand the connection between professional development and quality, but they are painfully aware that others do not. The final chapter of this report extends the discussion of these assertions by considering the implications for future research as well as recommended actions for advocates and policy makers.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Introduction

What are the implications of the results of this study for practitioners and researchers? This question is addressed in this final chapter by examining the assertions from the cross-case analysis through a discussion of their relationship to prior research literature followed by a discussion of the assertions in light of the study's theoretical framework. Specifically, these discussions present how the results of this study build on the existing knowledge base. The chapter also includes the researcher's reflections on the limitations of the study and concludes with an outline of the implications for ECE advocates and policy makers and recommendations for future research.

Discussion and Implications of the Assertions

The purpose of the study was to extend the literature focused on quality early care and education (ECE) by asking two main questions: (1) How do teachers in South Carolina's licensed, privately-funded early care and education centers (ECEC) select professional development and (2) How does it inform their teaching practices? These questions were examined using a multi-case research design. Analyses of data from the four ECECs resulted in the single case findings detailed in Chapter 4. From these findings, the following cross-case assertions emerged (Chapter 5):

1. Teachers are most likely to consider content when selecting professional development.

2. The approach used by the facilitator is the most likely aspect of professional development to influence teachers in determining whether the selected professional development will inform their practices.

3. Directors play a key role in teacher selection of professional development and in whether it will inform teacher practices.

4. Teachers and directors are aware of the connection between professional development and quality for young children. However, they also painfully voice their perception that others do not share such about their life's work as a profession.

The two main research questions were largely satisfied by the results of this study as represented in the assertions above, and the interpretations of these assertions (Chapter 5) contribute to the implications of the study. However, it is first important to consider how these results situate the current study into the existing body of research.

Relationship of Prior Research to the Study's Results

In examining results of the current study against existing research reviewed for this study, it seems important to consider two fundamental differences. These differences add complexity to the discussion of the relationship between prior research and the current study. In prior research, the content of professional development experienced by participant teachers and the approaches used by facilitators of professional development opportunities were most often prescribed by researchers via a research methodology. Additionally, based on the research reviewed in Chapter 2, it was noted that the voices of teacher participants were most often excluded from data collection.

In contrast, the research design of the current study extended the breadth and depth of existing research by including multiple sources of data collection intended to provide "enough contextual detail and sufficient representation of participant voices that readers can place themselves in the shoes of participants" (Hatch & Barclay-McLaughlin, 2006, p. 499). Not only do the results of this study begin to fill the gap in research inclusive of the contextual aspects of professional development (Martinez-Beck & Zaslow, 2006), but the current study addressed contextual aspects through the words of teachers who actually select professional development and determine whether it informs their practices. Of particular interest is the strong and pervasive result presented as Assertion #4. Teacher participants in this study clearly understand the important link between professional development and quality ECEC. However, their voices were equally clear and forceful regarding their awareness of the lack of others understanding the importance of that link and of their profession.

This study and its results also provide an occasion to consider the exclusion of direct teacher input in prior research, particularly teacher voices from privately-funded ECECs. This absence of research inclusive of teacher voices may coincide with the absence of research focused on teacher self-selection of professional development. Just as Ackerman (2006) calls for policy makers to "dismantle and reframe traditional ways of analyzing policy-related dilemmas" related to ECE teacher wages, perhaps this study should encourage dialogue among researchers to dismantle and reframe the inclusion of teachers from privately-funded ECECs to include their voices and have a more active roles in the research process. Such research could inform the ECE profession in light of

the lack of evidence of the implementation of comprehensive, ongoing professional development programs for ECEC teachers (Kagan et al., 2008).

Despite the fundamental differences between prior research and the current study, the case study of factors that influenced the implementation of a new preschool curriculum by Liber et al, (2009) was comparable to this current study. In addition to using a qualitative case study design, Liber and her colleagues (2009) found strong evidence of contextual elements informing teacher practices and experiences. Of particular note is their assertion that relationships among teachers and administrators played a key role in the implementation of the curriculum. This current study's Assertion #3 builds on their research as it reflects the same. In this current study, the directors' roles in the ECECs were found to be pivotal in not only teacher selection of professional development but additionally in how the selection informed teacher practices.

Implications of the Study's Results

Implications for ECE advocates and policy makers. One multi-case study is not enough to warrant significant changes to policy regarding state professional development requirements. However, given the convergence of views among the teachers at the four centers studied, the results of this study call for increasing the dialogue regarding professional development for early care providers so as to help guide policy change in the future. Implications based on the results of the study provide particular insight when considered against the study's theoretical and conceptual frameworks.

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Knowles' (1984) andragogy provided one of the three pillars of the theoretical framework for this study. Assertion #2 reflects the teachers' inclination towards self-direction in learning situations which helps to explain their preference for active learning as opposed to direct transmittal of knowledge via pure lecture and PowerPoint. Teacher voices supportive of Assertion #2 expressed how discussions among groups of teachers attending professional development sessions informed their teaching practices. Similar comments were also voiced by three of four directors regarding their valuing roundtable opportunities and/or direct engagement with other directors in their communities. When facilitators increase the use of active learning through group and/or roundtable discussions, they involve the adult in the learning process and allow for greater self-direction in learning.

Assertion #1 emerged from strong and repetitious references to the role content plays in teacher selection of professional development. Teachers sought content relevant to their circumstances such as the age and the particular needs of the children in their care, yet the Metro ECEC teachers and director repeatedly mentioned that professional development was not available for classroom management. Agencies and advocates responsible for the professional development offered state-wide should consider means to seek input from teachers and directors about training needs. Metro ECEC's search for classroom management training reflects such a need and calls for considering the inclusion of guidance in the category of "other" within South Carolina's ECE professional development requirements. Presenting classroom management content as a component of growth and development provides for the natural integration of these

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related content areas and could increase the number of professional development opportunities for child guidance.

As a theory of individual motivation, components of Vroom's (1964) VIE expectancy theory support the study's assumption that professional development can motivate teachers to adjust their teaching practices. The "V" or value component of expectancy theory calls into question whether teachers value children's learning outcomes that can result from professional development informing their practices. Assertion #4 supports answering this question with a resounding "yes" as teachers clearly see the link between professional development and quality ECE. The assertion also calls for developers of professional development to tap into teacher commitment to young children as a means to raise the likelihood that teachers will transfer what they learn in professional development to their teaching practices.

If I try, can my teaching practices affect quality? Self-efficacy is the central force within the "E" or expectancy component. One teacher told that what she heard in professional development sessions always sounded good "in my head," but once she returned to her classroom, she became unsure. Assertion #3 points to the pivotal point directors can play and relates to this component of expectancy theory as directors can be a force to help build teacher confidence for professional development to inform teacher practices. Facilitators of professional development could also increase teacher self-efficacy by providing time during training for teachers to reflect on what was taught and to plan for what they will do upon return to their classrooms. Guiding teachers through reflective writings could help teachers determine how they will incorporate aspects of

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professional development into their practices as well as what they could share with fellow teachers and directors.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice, commonly referred to as DAP, provided the third and final pillar of the study's theoretical framework. A review of data supporting the study's findings and assertions evidenced that there was no collected data illuminating teacher thoughts about how children learn. Basically, the evidence collected from the four centers in this study could not confirm that teachers consider this deeper side of pedagogy – the philosophical thought process that involves how we believe children learn and, thus, how we believe we should teach young children.

In contemplating the lack of teacher references to teaching and learning, the researcher considered the state's structure for professional development hours. Currently, teachers must select training to accomplish 15 clock hours of professional development in curriculum (five hours), growth and development (five hours), and five hours from safety, health, nutrition, child guidance, or professional development. Could this categorization of professional development result in such a segmented approach that teachers are not supported or encouraged to build their philosophies of teaching and learning? Or, could the lack of references to any philosophy of teaching and learning merely be indicative of the typical battle between breadth and depth of training versus education? Regardless of the answer, the absence of teacher references to how children learn calls for further consideration through future research.

Implications for future research. Based on the study's findings and assertions, additional research is called for in two main areas: intentionality in teacher selection of

professional development and analysis of secondary data collected by the Center for Child Care Career Development. Additionally, limitations of the current study must be considered as they relate to future research.

   Intentionality in professional development selection. Research cited in Chapter 2 presented evidence supporting the effectiveness of ongoing, comprehensive plans to training. Assertions from this study noted the effectiveness of directors in influencing the selection of professional development and how it informed teacher practices. Is there a link between levels of quality in South Carolina ECE settings and centers with some degree of intentionality in their selection of professional development? Kagan et al. (2008) found that "The ECE workforce is in a precarious state, caught in the balance between creating a new, equitable, and systemic approach to professional development, and languishing even more deeply into a quality crisis" (p. 146). This current study lends support to the need for strengthening and defining the professional development selection process of teachers. Despite the intense, hard work of responsible state agencies, this current study reveals that South Carolina is far from having a systemic approach to professional development. Future research focused on the impact of such could guide advocates and policy makers in actions leading to more intentionality in ECE teacher selection of professional development.

   Analysis of secondary data. The second recommendation for future research based on the results of this study involves the analysis of secondary data collected and archived by the Center for Child Care Career Development (CCCCD) to record South Carolina ECE teacher professional development hours. During the process of this study,

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the researcher learned of this massive database that to date has not been mined for the purposes of evaluating the effectiveness of the required 15 annual hours of professional development. The lack of research using this secondary data may be partially due to a previous lack of any research on the required professional development for ECEC teachers. Without such research, there were no clear variables upon which to base and develop hypotheses. This current study has revealed several variables contained within this secondary data that the researcher recommends for future study.

One example of an issue and related variables emerging for this study involves the interpretations of findings (Chapter 4) on how the Department of Social Services (DSS) codes professional development focused on classroom management/child guidance. Teachers must complete 15 hours of professional development (five hours of growth and development, five hours of curriculum, and five hours of other). Classroom management/child guidance is grouped in "other." One ECEC was especially vocal in needing help in this area but not finding professional development focused on classroom management/child guidance. Since this content area is coded by DSS as "other," and other content areas count towards the five required hours of "other," teachers can complete 15 annul hours without content in classroom management/child guidance. Yet, this is a crucial content area for ECEC teachers and based on this study, ECEC teacher professional development may be lacking in this area. By tapping into the secondary data, analysis of the prevalence (or absence) of this content area could be analyzed against other variables such as geographic location, size, and auspices of the ECEC. Results of this recommended research could determine if the lack of available professional

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development in this area is limited to the ECEC in this study or whether this is an issue throughout South Carolina.

Another variable revealed by this study and accessible for future research through the secondary data housed at CCCCD involves the issue of certified versus registered professional development. Within opportunities for professional development that count toward the 15 hours, trainers who present training are either certified or registered. Certified trainers are those with educational credentials and experience in the field of early childhood education. Registered trainers have no real requirements other than registering with the appropriate office and turning in a complete outline and description of the session to be presented. Finding #2 for Town ECEC (Chapter 4) found no evidence that professional development routinely informed their teaching practices in a consistent manner. When the researcher consulted with the state agency representatives to aid in the triangulation of findings, discussion led to a deeper examination of the Town ECEC's compiled training by center for 2009. The center's training records revealed that almost 75% of their training was provided by registered training. By tapping into the secondary database, future research could help determine whether any correlation exists between the percent of registered versus certified selected professional development and indicators of quality.

Limitations of the study. As a dissertation study with only one researcher, the current study was limited in terms of scope. Yet, while only four centers were selected for study, the results found the same recurring themes even with the geographic, educational, and racial diversity of the participant teachers. Implications for future

research based on this limitation include extending the study to include additional early care and education centers in South Carolina to determine if the themes found in this study can be generalized across the state. Future research could also include extension to other states to assess whether the same themes are found when regulatory requirements and/or other demographics differ from South Carolina.

Final Reflections

As this study draws to a close, it is important to reflect once more on this study's two main research questions: (1) How did teachers in South Carolina's privately-funded early care and education settings select professional development to meet regulatory requirements in 2009 and (2) How did the selected professional development inform their teaching practices? The findings from the single cases and the cross-case assertions tell us that the ECEC teachers in this study will most likely select training based on content, and the approach used by facilitators is most likely to determine whether the training will inform teacher practices. The findings and assertions also highlight the importance of two contextual elements of the "who" from the study's conceptual framework. First, the role of an ECEC director can be pivotal in teacher selection of professional development and how it informs teacher practices. And second, teachers understand the connection between professional development and the quality of programming but question how others view that connection as well as their role as a professional.

At first glance, these findings and assertions appear intuitive. One could ask, "Did we need a study to learn that teachers look to content or to learn that teachers are most

informed by approaches used in professional development?" One might have assumed that teachers look to content or that teachers are informed by professional development. Yet, it is what lurks beneath these perceptions that offer the true richness of this study. Through engaging teachers, through relying on their voices, and through using their words to answer the study's questions, what at first seemed simple revealed complexities that advocates and researchers must address. Teacher voices revealed the need to consider why the state includes child guidance within the "other" category of professional development requirements. Teacher voices pointed to the need to consider the differences in professional development offered through registered versus certified trainers. Teacher voices in this study have given South Carolina ECE policy makers and advocates firsthand accounts of "contextual detail and sufficient representation of participant voices that readers can place themselves in the shoes of participants" (Hatch and Barclay-McLaughlin, 2006, p. 499).

Placing ourselves in their shoes, through their voices, begins to reveal that teachers in South Carolina ECECs look far beyond just the requirements for professional development. Their voices provide insight into the complexities of being outside the sphere of influence of policy and research in the ECE profession yet responsible for the future of South Carolina's young children. In the spirit of centering teacher voices throughout this study, this final excerpt points to the need for ECE advocates and policy makers to recognize that ECEC teachers in South Carolina are passionate about their commitment to young children and their role in providing high quality ECE for the children in their care.

Raeann: And I want them [ECE advocates and policy makers in South Carolina] to know that this is not a nanny service, to take more consideration of us because they look at us as a private setting [as if] to say you're not this because you're not on this [state funding]. Look at us as a learning environment that's offering the children the same thing [as the public schools] and even more than the public setting. And don't look at us as "they're just babysitting" but know that we have a heart to teach and to pour into these children the educational stuff to prepare them [for public school]…so don't look at us as just babysitting. Look at the [children's] results when they go to 5K to say where have they been?…We're a learning center!

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Letter of Invitation to Participants

(Letterhead or email from CCCCD or ABC)

This is to introduce Lenna Young to you as a highly qualified individual with wide experience in the field of early childhood education. She is working to complete her doctoral dissertation and, with my help, identified your center as a source of data and information regarding how you and your staff select professional development opportunities.

Your voices and opinions are critical to her study. Her study's results may very well help us answer questions such as how can we make professional development more meaningful and useful for you and your staff. Mrs. Young is most interested in what you and your staff have to say about the required 15 clock hours of professional development that you completed in 2009.

She will visit three additional centers. All information will be coded so that you and your teachers will not be identified by name or by location. As an incentive to participating in her study, she will offer your center a $200 gift certificate to Lakeshore School Supply. That incentive will be available to you upon the completion of the following:

- An initial 30 minute interview with you
- A 2 hour meeting with at least 50% of your teachers who were employed for at least 6 months in 2009. The researcher will provide pizza for those in attendance. During the meeting she will first ask your teachers to provide basic information (via a written questionnaire) about themselves that is typically collected for research purposes (educational level, income level, gender, ethnicity, age, work experience) followed by a group discussion that she will lead and record
- 30 minute interviews with at least 2 of your teachers that she will record
- Access to your classrooms for 30 minute to one hour observations when children are present when she will record anecdotal information about the the classrooms' processes and environmental elements that she observes
- Access to classrooms after children have left to record via camera elements of the classroom such as room arrangement and other environmental features
- Receipt of possible requested items such as copies of lesson plans, activity schedules, and staff policies

I ask that you give great consideration to allowing Mrs. Young to visit your center. The initial interview with you and the 2 hours interview with your staff could occur one evening with the remainder of the interviews and observations occurring the following morning.

Thank you for your consideration.

(CCCCD or ABC administrator)

Appendix B

IRB Notification of Research Protocol Validation

From:	"Nalinee Patin" <NPATIN@clemson.edu>
Subject:	Validation of IRB Protocol #IRB2010-085: In Their Shoes...
Date:	Mon, April 5, 2010 10:26 am
To:	"Dolores Stegelin" <DSTEGEL@clemson.edu>
Cc:	"lennay@clemson.edu" <lennay@clemson.edu>

Dear Dr. Stegelin,

The Chair of the Clemson University Institutional Review Board (IRB) validated the protocol identified above using Exempt review procedures and a determination was made on April 02, 2010, that the proposed activities involving human participants qualify as Exempt from continuing review under category B1, based on the Federal Regulations (45 CFR 46) for all research sites with support letters on file with the IRB. You may begin this study.

Please remember that no change in this research protocol can be initiated without prior review by the IRB. Any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects, complications, and/or any adverse events must be reported to the Office of Research Compliance (ORC) immediately. You are requested to notify the ORC when your study is completed or terminated.

Please review the Responsibilities of Principal Investigators (available at http://www.clemson.edu/research/compliance/irb/regulations.html) and the Responsibilities of Research Team Members (available at http://www.clemson.edu/research/compliance/irb/regulations.html) and be sure these documents are distributed to all appropriate parties.

Good luck with your study and please feel free to contact us if you have any questions. Please use the IRB number and title in all communications regarding this study.

All the best,

Nalinee

Nalinee D. Patin
IRB Coordinator
Clemson University
Office of Research Compliance
Institutional Review Board (IRB)
Voice: (864) 656-0636
Fax: (864) 656-4475
E-Mail: npatin@clemson.edu<mailto:npatin@clemson.edu>
Web site: http://www.clemson.edu/research/compliance/irb/

Appendix C

Director Interview Questions

1. Tell me about your center

2. Tell me about your work experience prior to coming here

3. As you know, my research focus is professional development. When you think back on 2009, what comes to mind first when you think about your teachers selecting trainings to complete their state required professional development?

4. What is your role in determining what professional development they complete?

5. What are the main things that make you decide to select (or not) a particular professional development session for your teachers?

6. Tell me about some specific instances when you saw a difference in what teachers did after they returned from professional development

7. Tell me about any instances when you thought you should have seen differences and didn't

8. Is there anything else you would like to share with me about the training your teachers participated in during 2009?

Participant Demographic Questionnaire

The following information is needed solely for the research study you are participating in. The information you share will remain anonymous.

1. Male _____ Female _____

2. Age _____

3. Ethnicity: _____ Hispanic or Latino
                       _____ Not Hispanic or Latino

4. Race: _____ American Indian or Alaska Native
                       _____ Asian
                       _____ Black or African American
                       _____ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
                       _____ White

5. Level of education: _____ GED
                             _____ High School Graduate
                             _____ Some college (if so, which college and what major:
                             _____ _____)
                             _____ College graduate (if so, which college and what
                                   degree/major:
                             _____)
                             _____ Other (_____)

6. Your hourly wage:
        _____ less than $7.25 per hour
        _____ $7.26 – $9.65 per hours
        _____ $9.65 – $10.05 per hour
        _____ more than $10.05 per hour

7. Full-time (scheduled for at least 40 hours per week) _____
                    or
    Part-time (scheduled for less than 40 hours per week)?
        _____ 1-20 hours per week
        _____ 21-30 hours per week
        _____ 31-39 hours per week

Appendix E

Teacher Focus Group Questions

Tonight, I am most interested in learning about your experiences in 2009 regarding the professional development sessions you selected and attended.

1. How do you decide what trainings to go to?

2. What sources of professional development are available to you?

3. Thinking back on last year, if you could have participated in training on something other than what you did, what would it have been and why?

4. What happened in the sessions you attended? What approaches did you experience (all lecture, hands-on activities, small group discussions, etc)? Tell me about the topics presented.

5. What training from 2009 would make you recommend to a co-worker, is any? Why?

6. Think back on your experiences in 2009, was there a moment when you said, oh wow – I'm going to do that just as soon as I get back.

7. How about the opposite, was there something you heard or saw that you thought, "I don't think so?"

8. Has there ever been a time when you wanted to change your teaching practices based on something you learned, but you were unable to make the change?

9. If you were talking to a brand new teacher, what would you tell her about the purpose of the required professional development?

10. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your professional development experiences?

Teacher Individual Questions

Thank you for participating in last night's focus group.

1. How long have you worked at this center?

2. How long have you worked in child care?

3. Last night when we were discussing professional development, did you hear anything surprising come up in our conversations?

4. If you could change anything about the professional development (requirements, number of hours, anything), what would it be?

5. Tell me about one thing that you learned in professional development trainings that:

   - Encouraged you to change something you do with the children:

   - You disagreed with:

   - You wish your fellow teachers had heard:

   - You wish your director had heard:

   - Encouraged you to change something, but you were not able to:

6. Is there anything else you would like to tell me?

Appendix G

Researcher's Guide to Classroom Observations

Provide anecdotal records for the following:

1. Basic room arrangement

2. Overview of adequacy of materials for children's learning

3. What are children engaged in while observing?

4. What are teachers doing while observing?

5. Are lesson plans posted? What do they "say" in terms of DAP?

6. Is a daily schedule posted? What does it "say" in terms of DAP?

7. Overall reactions to time in room.

Participant Demographics

Site #	Male/ Female	Age	Ethnicity	Race	Level of Education		Hourly Wage	Hrs
1	F	33	Not His-panic or Latino	Black or AA	Some College	Not Indicated	Not indicated	Full
1	F	24	Not His-panic or Latino	White	Some College	EC/EE	$7.26 – $9.65	Full
1	F	22	Not His-panic or Latino	White	HS		$7.26 – $9.65	Full
1	F	42	Not His-panic or Latino	Asian	College Graduate	BA Economics & EC Degree	$7.26 – $9.65	Full
1	F	23	Not His-panic or Latino	White	College Graduate	Associates EC	$7.26 – $9.65	Full
1	F	24	Not His-panic or Latino	White	College Graduate	ECE	2$7.26 – $9.65	Full
1	F	25	Not His-panic or Latino	White	College Graduate	EE w/ ECD	$9.65 – $10.05	Full
1	F	21	Not His-panic or Latino	White	Some College	ECE	$7.26 – $9.65	Full
1	F	59	Not His-panic or Latino	White	College Graduate and Other	Degree not indicated and CDAs (Inf/Tod and PreSchool)	$9.65 – $10.05	Full
1	F	39	Not His-panic or Latino	White	College Graduate	EE	more than $10.05	Full
1	F	33	Not His-panic or Latino	Black or AA	HS		$7.26 – $9.65	Full
2	F	49	Not His-panic or Latino	Black or AA	Some College	ECD	$7.26 – $9.65	Part 31-39 hrs
2	F	46	Not His-panic or Latino	Black or AA	College Graduate	Human Services and ECD Diploma	more than $10.05	Full

Site #	Male/ Female	Age	Ethnicity	Race	Level of Education		Hourly Wage	Hrs
2	F	35	Not Hispanic or Latino	Black or AA	Some College	ECD	$7.26 – $9.65	Full
2	F	57	Not Hispanic or Latino	Black or AA	Some College	Not indicated	$7.26 – $9.65	Full
2	F	59	Not Hispanic or Latino	Black or AA	HS		$7.26 – $9.65	Full
2	F	22	Not Hispanic or Latino	Black or AA	Some College	EE	$7.26 – $9.65	Full
2	F	21	Not Hispanic or Latino	Black or AA	HS and other	Training (CNA)	$7.26 – $9.65	Full
2	F	41	Not Hispanic or Latino	Black or AA	Some College	Not indicated	$7.26 – $9.65	Full
3	F	42	Not Hispanic or Latino	White	Some College	Not indicated	$7.26 – $9.65	Part 1-20 hrs
3	F	25	Not Hispanic or Latino	Black or AA	College Graduate	Associate Marketing	$7.26 – $9.65	Part 21-30 hrs
3	F	29	Not Hispanic or Latino	White	Some College	Associate ECE	$7.26 – $9.65	Part 1-20 hrs
3	F	26	Not Hispanic or Latino	White	HS		$7.26 – $9.65	Part 21-30 hrs
3	F	25	Not Hispanic or Latino	White	College Graduate and Other	BS Psychology/ Counseling In grad school for EE and ECE	$7.26 – $9.65	Part 21-30 hrs
3	F	50	Not Hispanic or Latino	White	Other	MBA – Accounting	$7.26 – $9.65	Part 1-20 hrs
3	F	27	Not Hispanic or Latino	White	Some College	ECE	$7.26 – $9.65	Part 21-30 hrs
4	F	55	Not Hispanic or Latino	Black or AA	Some College	Not indicated	$7.26 – $9.65	Full
4	F	32	Not Hispanic or Latino	Black or AA	Some College	ECE	$7.26 – $9.65	Full

Site #	Male/ Female	Age	Ethnicity	Race	Level of Education		Hourly Wage	Hrs
4	F	34	Not His-panic or Latino	Black or AA	Some College	ECE	$7.26 – $9.65	Full

Appendix I

The Quintain

The Quintain of Professional Development (PD) Required by Regulatory
Agencies as it Applies to the Study of How Teachers Select PD and How Their Teaching
Practices are Informed by Their Selections.

Center #1

Center #2

Center #3

Center #4

Interviews, Artifacts, Documents, Observations, Archival Records:
Collected for futhering the understanding of the who, the what and
the how in answering the research questions

Required Professional
Development in S. C.

History of PD in SC
leads to thoughts of
little foreseen future
changes

Relevant Research:
Detailed in Chapter 2;
Little to no instances of
teachers' voices included

Economic Conditions:
Quality ECD known to
support strong economic
growth; yet, teaching
workforce is underapaid
and underrepresented

Community: PD in SC
affected by serveral
agencies: CCCCD, ABC,
TEACH, DSS, 1st Steps

Issues:

Teachers low etnry level
requirements into the field
place importance of 15
hours PD in developing
teachers to positiviely
affect children's learning
outcomes

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Appendix J

Worksheet of Themes

Worksheet of Themes (Research Questions) for the Multi-case Study

Research Question 1 (Theme 1): How did teachers at the four centers select professional development to meet 2009 state requirements? *The aspects of approach and content lead teachers to select PD. (SELECT – HOW & WHAT)*
Research Question 1: Supportive Question 1 (Theme 2): What contextual elements in each center influenced decisions surrounding selection of professional development? *Contextual elements in the center influence selection of PD. (SELECT – WHO - CENTER)*
Research Question 1: Supportive Question 2 (Theme 3): What motivated directors and teachers in the selection of professional development? *Contextual elements of the individuals influence selection of PD. (SELECT – WHO – TEACHER)*
Research Question 1: Supportive Question 3 (Theme 4): How did directors' and teachers' view about the connection between professional development and quality affect their professional development selections? *Views about connection between PD and quality affect PD selection (SELECT – WHO as a professional)*
Research Question 1: Supportive Question 4 (Theme 5): How did the availability of enrollment in the voluntary ABC program affect selection (delivery method and content) of professional development? *Availability of enrollment in ABC affects selection (SELECT – Other)*
Research Question 2 (Theme 6): How did teachers' professional development selections inform their teaching practices? *Teachers characteristics and identity as a professional informed their teaching practices (INFORM – WHO – TEACHER)*
Research Question 2: Supportive Question 1 (Theme 7): What elements of professional development (i.e., approach, content) most informed teachers' practices? *Approach and content of PD informed teachers practices (INFORM – HOW and WHAT)*
Research Question 2: Supportive Question 2 (Theme 8): What barriers or encouragers within the center most influenced teachers' as they strived to adjust their practices based on how professional development informed them?

> *Barriers or encourages within the center influence how PD informs teaching practices. (INFORM – CONTEXT – CENTER)*

Worksheet 3 – Analyst's Notes from Case Report #1

Case ID: Center #1

Analyst's Synopsis: (See Visit Report for complete details.)

Situational Constraints:
- New center – barely operational for 1 year, but most teachers worked in other private settings prior to current positions

Uniqueness among Other Cases:
- Large, new center – heavily resourced
- Director selects and/or develops in-house, on-site trainings

Prominence of Research Question 1 in the case:	
Select - Content	T#2: If I could take training on something that I didn't like the different curriculum programs that are out there should...
Select - Content	T#1: That was one of my favorite ones that we did developmental milestones.
Select - Content	T#2: I'd recommend a DSS class for everybody. just because there is so much that you don't know that you need to know
Select - Content	T#1: Like I had always heard that it was a DSS rule that children were required to wear shoes! Its not! You know what like we...
Select - Content	T#1: I like trainings that have to do with research. What's new in our field. Because Its an ever changing field or society is...
Select - Content	T#6: Another one we have coming up is on assessment. And then on the Project Approach.
Select - Content	T#2: Yes, because that can cover so many different things. You can put so many subtitles under classroom management, but, that y...
Select - Content	T#3: I would say for like keep from getting stagnant because there are always new ideas out there and if everyone just stopped t...
Select - Content	T#2: Tying into what you said, I think a lot of what people need is a class just on parent communication. Because it is so...
Select - Content	T#1: We've done development developmental milestones where they need to be by what age and then we did small group activities...
Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 1: H	
Prominence of Research Questions 1: Supportive Question 1 in the case:	
Select - Context	T#1: We offer the trainings here for the teachers here because there are certain numbers of hours of training in each category t...
Select - Context	T#1: We have a new curriculum. So they're learning about the new curriculum too.
Select - Context	T#1: Id like to think ITERS and ECERS. Were going for national accreditation, so we've touched on that, but that's going to be pre...
Select - Context	T#2: Or asking (director) or (assistant director)
Select - Context	T#2: I would go to my center director and ask her for more information. She probably knows more than me and associated with a...
Select - Context	T#4: We have our 15 hours a year offered here. I've missed all of them this year.
Select - Context	T#5: You know you have to take your required training in the areas that DSS requires them in. Beyond that. I really focus on...

Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 1: Supportive Question 1: H

Prominence of Research Questions 1: Supportive Question 2 in the case:

Select - Context	T#2: Yea. Because I've been in the field for a while. So you know what you used to do a long time ago is a different way of d...
Select - Context	T#3: When I was in college, I didn't know where I was going to end up and guess looking back I would have focused more when we...
Select - Context	T#5: I mean I graduated in 2007 and there's so much new from then you know I mean, back in Michigan, we didn't have to do training...
Select - Context	T#2: I'm a current student. So my PD hours come from the classes I take.
Select - Context	T#1: I think of my kids first.. like if I'm a preschool teacher and I'm with 3 year olds right now I look at the classes listed a...
Select - Context	T#3: Whatever age that I'm working with is what I want to take the class in.
Select - Context	T#3: That kind of depends on them. Like I love music stuff that is hands-on. So if they like music and hands-on they need to...

Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Supportive Question 2: M

Prominence of Research Question 1: Supportive Question 3 in the case :

Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 1: Supportive Question 3: L

Prominence of Research Question 1: Supportive Question 4 in the case:

Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 1: Supportive Question 4: L

Prominence of Research Question 2 in the case :

Inform - Context	T#1: Just on day to day teaching duties you have to be flexible that way. You have to. What worked yesterday may not work tomorrow...
Inform - Context	T#2: When I first got out, I was thinking this is not for me You know how you're thinking everyone is cute and. I was one of...
Inform - Context	T#2: I can remember highlighting a couple of things in a packet that I wanted to take back to the classroom and do, but it all s...
Inform - Context	T#2: It also depends on your group of kids like her toddler room is completely different than my toddler room they're all about...
Inform - Context	T#3: Sometimes its hard to implement things that look so implementable on paper into real life.
Inform - Context	T#4: There are a lot times where I'm like Oh I should try and do or do this differently and then you know like she says it's...
Inform - Context	T#4: I know them well enough. But, sometimes you have those moments when you're like well you know they could half of them could...
Inform - Context	T#2: Every class that you take you are going to have moments like that. Because your classroom and your group of kids are so...
Inform - Context	T#4: Like in my class, they love to get dirty, except of a select few like there are a couple who scream and cry if anything get...
Inform - Context	T#1: How are they going to benefit from you? If you're not knowledge enough, you cannot pass on that knowledge. It doesn't matter...

Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 2: H

	Prominence of Research Question 2: Supportive Question 1 in the case :
Inform - Approach	T#2: In almost every training we do, we act out, so we remember it more. Than if you were just sitting there, the monitor was on...
Inform - Approach	T#2: Yea, kind of, especially the parent communication one, there was a lot or role playing. Umm. that helps us to um be put on...
Inform - Approach	T#3: Kind of the same thing when we were done with the curriculum ones when we are involved when they get us to make up a game s...
Inform - Approach	T#4: Its been about half and half. You have to lecture you know for the basics, but then it also helps to have the hands-on stuff...
Inform - Approach	T#2: All of them use power points. That's pretty much what it is based around. And then, they branch out. One time we were give...
Inform - Approach	T#3: It was probably when I was 23 and I just came back from a NAEYC conference in California and I was just excited and ready t...
Inform - Approach	T#1: But you know what Ask ███ she was with me with that other class. Wasn't that lady interesting? We were there for 5 hours. W...
Negative - disorganized presentation	T#2: And we kept looking and OH!... I know what it was one of the papers of the packet at the bottom it said something about it s...
Negative - disorganized presentation	T#2: For special needs, and then that but then we were based it on the regular education. And, not one time during the seminar d...
Negative - disorganized presentation	T#5: Yea, so we were talking about age groups and what they should be doing and at this age they should be doing this and we ..
Negative - disorganized presentation	T#2: Well she gave us a quiz or like a little fun thing for us to do and it was like here's the scenario and here's what they should...
Negative - disorganized presentation	T#5: It said zero to three months, a baby, and there were 3 things yea and we would circle one and shed be like no and wed be like...
Negative - disorganized presentation	T#2: So were thinking the papers got mixed up or packets got. I don't know but I remember saying(trailed off)
Negative - lecture / no interaction	T#1: Erin done a little bit of all of that. I went to one that was for directors on the H1N1.oh.. very boring. Basically he told...
Negative - lecture / no interaction	T#2: I don't well with lectures. I'm not a good note taker and I don't remember very much. But I remember if I do it.
Negative - on line	T#1: Some of the ones we did online, I felt were so weak did not touch on all the topics of which you re required like I like mo...
Negative - overuse of text or theory	T#1: And they really need more practice in school before they come out. They really don t... doing a practicum and doing student t...
Negative - overuse of text or theory	T#3: I had a whole class on classroom management; its called guiding behavior. And, even during the class I felt like it was al...
Negative - overuse of text or theory	T#3: It was we sort or tried, because at the end on the final we had scenarios and we would write which theory we would apply...
Negative - overuse of text or theory	T#1: I have a recommend for new teachers. What they do not teach in college is classroom management. Bad. it is bad to be a bran...
Inform - Content	T#1: We had a trainer that came in that told us about time out and we don't we specifically don't do time out so yea
Inform - Content	T#2: And it helps. to me it always gives you a little more experience to like I seen some, like you said new teachers, but what...
Inform - Content	T#2: I'm constantly given opportunities where I cant wait to take it back. Right now, one of the main things is literature focus...
Inform - Content	T#2: See I don't know if its a DSS rule as much as its like a fire you know (at my former center) it was like the fire marshall...
Negative - Repeated content	T#3: Same old training (laughter)
Pure - Specific content that informed	T#4: With me, we have she will tell us about, like a subject and in our book it'll give examples and what you can do. so help...
Pure - Specific content that informed	T#3: She had a tape playing with pure crying. She wanted to know how you would deal with that. And then the different cries. ..
Pure - Specific content that informed	T#1: Yes the print reach environment we talked about that there were such simple things that we actually did implement. And my co...

Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 2: Supportive Question 1: H	
Prominence of Research Question 2: Supportive Question 2:	
Inform - Context - Center policies	T#1: You know how like if you know it and then if your center was doing it wrong and you'd go to your director and say hey when I...
Inform - Context - Center policies	T#5: What was different even like we were doing like our curriculum is Creative Curriculum. And that's completely different than...
Inform - Context - Center policies	T#3: I'm sort of from the old school. I would always find a way. Whether the school would provide or not, I might just have to ma...
mentoring by other teacher	T#3: She's really good with that; she's come into my classroom to help me out too.
mentoring by other teacher	T#4: Because she says like there' the textbook way and then there's like a different way to handling things. And you always go by...
mentoring by other teacher	T#4: I have learned so much its ridiculous.
mentoring by other teacher	T#4: I know like in my classroom, my co-worker has been working with children for like 17 years or something and like I just...
Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 2: Supportive 2: M	

Findings:

I: *Teachers from Town ECEC select professional development based on content, specifically the relevance of the content, to their self-determined needs as a teacher.*

II: *Despite evidence for Town ECEC's teachers overwhelmingly positive attitude and approach to meeting South Carolina's professional development requirements, there is not consistent and strong evidence that their professional development has routinely informed their practices.*

Worksheet 3 – Analyst's Notes from Case Report #2

Case ID: Center # 2

Analyst's Synopsis: (See Visit Report for complete details.)

Situational Constraints:
- low SES area of SC commonly known as the I-95 corridor or "Corridor of Shame"
-remote area
-low SES families in economically depressed area

Uniqueness among Other Cases:
-has public 4k on site
-only 3 rooms but operates at near capacity
-level B, ABC center

Prominence of Research Question 1 in this case :	
Select - Content	T#4: SC PITC training it was a distant learning in Mullins
Select - pure	T#2: Well we basically look at what they're offering, whether its on child safety or you know um parenting things of that nature...
Selection - eval need to select content	T#3: Because you know you look at well its not the idea that it appeals to us. You just want more information as much...
Reference to ECD 101	T#4: And I went to the one in Florence. There was two sessions and they was on infants and toddlers and it was a lot of training...
Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 1: M	

Prominence of Research Question 1: Supportive Question I in this case:	
Selection - Context	T#1: With me, the trainings, we have a lot of extensive trainings through First Steps and Bridges and Creative Curriculum the...
Selection - Context	T#1: Well we are actually partners with First Steps which is the Creative Curriculum training um that its mandatory training. And...
Selection - Context	T#1: Yea, we could make them go to other trainings that's not mandatory through the First Steps, so we actually do other training...
Selection - Context	T#2: And you got newcomers, you got your newcomers. So you wanna make them feel as comfortable as possible, you know. And you...
Selection - Context	T#1: But I would have loved to have been in a training with just um teachers how to interact with..um.. teachers. We..most of...
Selection - Context	T#1: Right, but for teachers to actually be in settings and to deal with each other..um and how do we work in a classroom...
Selection - Context	T#4: Something that's going on at your site, something that you're doing. If they're having something for blocks you may have a...
Selection - Context	T#3: But um. Like health, like children and obesity, how do you deal with children with medical problems? We have a lot of child...
Selection - Context	T#3: What to eat and what not. You know. And not only making us aware, but making the parents aware too because if you got a chi...
Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 2: H	

Prominence of Research Question 1: Supportive Question 2 in this case:	
Selection - Context	T#2: Well we basically look at what they're offering, whether its on child safety or you know um parenting things of that nature '...
Selection - Context	T#3: Because you know you look at well it's not the idea that it appeals to us. You just want more information as much...
Selection Context	T#4: And I went to the one in Florence. There was two sessions and they was on infants and toddlers and it was a lot of training...
Selection Context	T#2: And also how to deal with the parents. You know, with the um as the teachers, you know. Because, you know, you have to be ho...
Selection Context	T#5: Probably keeping the kids more involved in what you're teaching them. I say like reading a book or I know I can't do much in...

Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 1: Supportive Question 2: H

Prominence of Research Question 1: Supportive Question 3 in this case :

(use notes from Director's Interview), plus…

Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 1: Supportive Question 3:
H

Prominence of Research Question 1: Supportive Question 4 in this case :

-T#1 –mentioned ABC as source of training

Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 1: Supportive Question 4:
L

Prominence of Research Question 2 in this case:

Inform - Context -	T#7: And all that training that we bring back, we do an in fact good job on it. Our kids, like when the Bridges come, they were...
Inform - Context -	T#2: Because you told us to go to all of these trainings and what not what good is it? Its like doing it when we got so much to...
Inform - Context -	T#5: I was thinking about those who don't have. Cuz a lot of kids don't get what I can give to my kids, and I, I mean some people...
Inform - Context -	T#2: I know with my room, I work with the 2 and 3 year olds, right? And, were not allowed to give them like work and stuff like...
Inform - Context -	T#1: And to enhance. You know. This child is to enhance to bring whatever in this child out to bring the best out. To help create...
Inform - Context -	T#7: And to able to meet a certain child's needs.
Inform - Context -	T#1: That's like when we first started going to training, we had stuff hanging from the ceilings. And [lots of laughter like if w...
Inform - Context -	T#5: To enjoy teaching a child. 'Cause I just took those two cups and cut it and they thought it was an egg. During napping, they...

Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 2:
H

Prominence of Research Question 2: Supportive Question 1 in this case:

Inform - Approach	T#1: The majority of it is hands-on and um role-play. A lot of it is that. So you can actually see the level of excitement and b...
Inform - Approach	T#1: And I think the SECA did all of us. So all of us was, even the ones that never been to training they was exposed to that. A...
Negative - reference to lecture	T#2: Its boring.
Negative - reference to lecture	T#4: You're really not into it. But if its really something you up doing, you get more out of it. Because, if you're just talking,...
Negative - reference to overuse of text or	T#4: I have when I was in Charlotte, a behavior plan. This little boy was off the chart. I said, this is not going to work and y...

theory	
Negative - reference to overuse of text or theory	T#2: That's when they come from the books. You know, its one thing when you read a book and a lot, you know. I know they do that...
Inform - Approach	T#4: That's like being in the infant room. I went to a training. And you know children like, babies like noise. So when the lady...
Inform - Approach	Yea, so I do it a lot because children grasp, they just like noise. And I was like, what is wrong with this woman? You know you...
Negative - reference to overuse of text or theory	T#2: But then we have to go by a book. But when you're beginning to know the children on a personal basis, the book, you know, so...
Inform - CONTENT -	T#2: Right! [collective sounds of agreement] Even making books, we made our own books and read them to the children.
Inform - CONTENT -	T#7: We took Humpty Dumpty all across the state. We took the egg, we busted it. I even dressed up as Humpty Dumpty. It went on a...
Pure - Specific content that informed	T#2: The different teaching strategies we would use, like teaching children in poverty, the work sampling, what to expect, the o...
Pure - Specific content that informed	T#3: The same thing related to the training, because we were able to bring back to the classroom and work better with the...
Pure - Specific content that informed	T#4: I have to agree with both of them. Its the training because you learn different styles how to do something because what the...
Pure - Specific content that informed	T#4: Yea, it keeps you current on everything that you do.
Pure - Specific content that informed	T#2: I went to one on children's child abuse one time and that was really good. The child abuse inside the day care. That was an...
Pure - Specific content that informed	T#2: And like, um ▮▮▮▮▮ was saying with getting the children's attention, she will even be taught how to read a book to grasp...
Pure - Specific content that informed	T#1: I did. The music. Because I would let the children listen to music and they would just, you know, we would just..but I went...
Pure - Specific content that informed	T#1: Yea [lots of laughter] I'm serious, but that music part, it just came alive, so now when I listen to the music I be more...
Pure - Specific content that informed	T#1: Yea, because when you get up and start dancing, you know and the children be more proned to get something from the music.

Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 2: Supportive Question 1: L

Prominence of Research Question 2: Supportive Question 2 in this case :

Inform - Context - Center policies	T#1: And I just think um, the infant room and the 2 and the 3 year old rooms wasn't exposed to a lot of trainings. They was ..
Inform - Context - Center policies	T#4: Some of us have had more training than others and whereas we got newcomers, they wont have as much training as we have. But...

Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 2: Supportive Question 2: H

Findings:

I: *Rural ECEC's teachers' selection of professional development is influenced by*

contextual elements of the center.

II: *Professional development informs Rural ECEC's teachers' practices through the teachers' and the center's organizational culture.*

Possible Commentary:

Reference to ECD 101	T#4: Its simple, I mean its just, you get introduction to early childhood; its a 6 weeks course, but you learn so much in that c...
Reference to ECD 101	T#4: Everything that you need to know, you can go from infants to big kids, but everything you need to know, its in there.

Worksheet 3 – Analyst's Notes from Case Report #3

Case ID: Center #3

Analyst's Synopsis: (See Visit Report for complete details.)

Situational Constraints:
- new director
- small center
- small classrooms

Uniqueness among Other Cases:
- large city location
- religious affiliation

Prominence of Research Question 1 :	
Select - Content - desired - classroom arrangement	T#1: How to make the classroom more comfortable for them or make a more successful learning environment.
Select - Content - desired - new info or ideas	T#1: Id say to keep teachers current on like new ideas and stuff. But unfortunately, when I go to these trainings, I'm not hearing...
Select - Content - desired - new info or ideas	T#1: yea that was my answer as well. Just to stay current and well informed. There's just you know lots of new information coming...
Select - Content - desired - new info or ideas	T: Oh. Because we can keep learning, because everything changes. nothing stays the same, so just keep going an learning so you ca...
Select - Content - desired - special needs	T#1: One that I thought of while she was talking is Id love to have a class that is more specific to certain developmental needs...
Select - Content - desired - special needs	T: Probably deal with children maybe with their emotions, like how they could deal with their emotions, like ways to get them to...
Select - Content - desired - special needs	T: I would do the social emotional class. I would recommend that one. Yes especially with the younger group. because they are le...
Select - Content - desired - special needs	T: More special needs, there really wasn't anything and that's what I like. There are much more prevalent now in the children than...
Select - Content - desired - special needs	T: There's a couple of things because I kept writing that about the special needs for years and now, I see a few now. You'll see a...
Select - Content - desired new info or ideas	T#2: Especially since things change all the time. Maybe more information about recent studies and maybe a broader spectrum like...
Select - Content - parents	T: Yea, yea. And maybe even a class on something like how to approach parents. You know how to talk to parents. I never had a...
Select - Content - pure	T: The first one was talking about school readiness and also talked about brain science research. And then the other two were di...
Select - Content - pure	T: Of the ones I've already had, that I've gone to, definitely the um Dr. Pam Shiller. Both of the lectures she gave was very...
Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 1: H	

Prominence of Research Question 1: Supportive Question I :	
Select - availability	T#2: The ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ thats where they hold a lot of the credit hours for the cause you have mandated by the state thats usually...
Select - availability	T#1: No the flyers that I see are basically like the subjects, art in a preschool classroom or physical education or something l...

Select - Context - Center	T: We were actually told which ones we should go to because they applied to something we were going to do to better the center.
Select - Context - Center	T: Right, everyone was supposed to go to it. We have a lot of other conferences that we can pick and choose what we want to do....
Select - Context - Center	T#1: Well um. One opportunity that I appreciated that I hadnt had at another center was the TEACH program and I got to go and ge...
Select - Context - Center	T#1: Both the centers I worked at, here and the other one, the director has been really great about letting us what is available...
Select - Context - Center	T: When I get them they come here to the director, there are papers with a whole list of classes and I just go from there.
Select - Context - Center	T: I needed that one, so I took it. Blood borne pathogens. I had to take that.
Select - Context - Center	T: Sometimes the director will tell us and sometimes we can decide. So..if .. I like special needs so I try to pick something in...
Select - Context - Center	T: They contact us and tell us where the workshops are and then we can go to them.
Select - Context - Center	T: Last year, I was a director, so I went to all the director workshops, and the theme was juggling elephants, so I thought that...
Select - Context - Center	T: And thats kind of where I was going back to like divorce and bi-racial and two moms and two dads, its like theyre teaching Ju...
Select - Context - Center	T: I talk to Stephanie. I want to say CCCC ?
Select - Context - Center	T: I was lucky enough, I enrolled in the TEACH program, they do the ECC, early childhood 101. It was incredible. It was a great...
Select - Context - Center	T: Usually ███████ recommends them for us.
Select - Context - Center	T: Um.. I think it should be more readily available to us and I know theres no money but it should be a non-expense. Does that m...
Select - Context - Center	T: Im limited to what I can take because of what it costs. And I think thats really and of course Stephanie leans towards things...
Select - Context - Center	T: Suggested! That this is what we need to take. But again, I think I happier if I could do my own, If I had a list or knew what...
Select - Context - Reference to ECD 101	T#1: I did several. I went to um.. I took the semester long class so we touched on every topic pretty much. I did the science an...

Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 1: Supportive Question 1: H

Prominence of Research Question 1: Supportive Question 2 :

Select - Context - eval need to select content	T: Well I think that one thing that people should go to that I would go to if I didn't have it in my graduate classes would be...
Select - Context - eval need to select content	T#2: I do, or even if its just something that I am just trying to figure out like new creative ideas for my children
Select - Context - eval need to select content	T: Yea, yea. Because back then you'd always teach that a family is a mother, a father, a brother, a sister, and everybody is one...
Select - Context - eval need to select content	T: I generally like to pick something that interest me and that has to with the children that I am taking care of or, yea with b...
Select - Context - eval need to select content	T: you know I wish there was little bit more training on behavior management with children. I think that not only with me a l...
Select - Context - eval need to select content	T: Yes. Also, I think um... from my other background, we need more education in diagnosing kids with developmental delays and...
Select - Context -	T#2: To be honest, I'm a mom of three so its what ever fell in my schedule.

Teacher	[laughter]
Select - Context - Teacher	T#2: If I wasn't a mom of three, Id take more time to see what piqued my interests. Um and see what is appropriate to the children...
Select - Context - Teacher	T#1: I think convenience also influenced my decisions and I'm not a mom of three. But I definitely do try and pick ones that I re...
Select - Context - Teacher	T#2: I think, well, I'm thinking on it. Id like to do more of things outside. Maybe like a class to give me more direction on this...
Select - Context - Teacher	T#1: Well I agree. I have the 2 years old and sometimes its really hard. The classes, they focus more on the older kids but one...
Select - Context - Teacher	T: I decide by what I think I need for my class what I see is going to help me in my classroom, so that's how I pick what classes...
Select - Context - Teacher	T: Mainly that you're going to learn the latest information because you could be doing this for over 20 years and you're not going...
Select - Context - Teacher	T: You know, and I don't' blame her. But I want to get certified in brain gem, but its like $400 and she said like I'm sorry, but n...
Select - Context - Teacher	T:Um 'm trying to think. I guess to meet other teachers and to see how they do things in their school. That's always nice. You ca...
Select - Context - Teacher - in school	T: I'm in grad school right now. So I take classes for elementary and early childhood education as well as emotional behavioral d...
Select - Context - Teacher	T#2: I haven't been to a conference. I've only been to the individual classes or then like I worked in a center where like on a Sa...

Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 1: Supportive Question 2: H

Prominence of Research Question 1: Supportive Question 3 :
(included in above – Context for teacher and/or center)
Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 1: Supportive Question 3: M

Prominence of Research Question 1: Supportive Question 4 :
Director did mention trying to get higher ABC rating
Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 1: Supportive Question 4: L

Prominence of Research Question 2 :

Inform - Context - PD informing profession	T: That would be development. People don't know exactly what is appropriate and what the child can and cannot do and what the chi...
Inform - Context - PD informing profession	T: I don't' think that people are pushed enough towards that. Um I have worked at centers before where I didn't know that there were...
Inform - Context - PD informing profession	T: Yes. You may be amazing with children but if you don't know a lot about the research out there, if you don't know a lot about d...
Select - Context - Teacher	T#2: If they offered them during the week during the day. Even if during the day. Some centers will shut down and do training an...
Select - Context - Teacher	T#1: that would be nice because after working all week, getting up on Saturday morning, its really rough!
Inform - Context - PD informing profession	T: That you can never learn enough and even, even me, I've had a lot of experience, but I'm still learning constantly. And taking...
Inform - Context - Informing Profession	T: The purpose of it? Well, for me personally, I think its very important for anyone working in child care to continue to learn...
Inform - Context - Informing Profession	T: I am pretty pleased about it except for that we think we should do a few more classes. Maybe about 2 or 3 in certain areas. L...
Inform - Context - Informing Profession	T: To keep on top of things that can be changing. Because I tell you, coming from I worked in Greenville before, I went to...

PD informing Profession	T: Probably. I know people would be like don't say that but I think we should have more take more classes me personally, I think...
PD informing Profession	T: Um I don't' think that early childhood development is taken very seriously. I think it should be taken a lot more I think that...
PD informing Profession	T: You're totally at a blank slate So, and, there's so many different ways to teach. You know what I mean? I think you need to...

Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 2: H

Prominence of Research Question 2: Supportive Question 1 :

Approaches	T: I have a bunch of books at home. That's my thing and I'm always reading. And from my experience, I've learned a lot about it. So...
Approaches	T: Hands-on
Inform - Approach -	T: I mean she did note taking, role playing, wed get toys and play with the tops. She tried to vary it a lot.
Inform - Approach - Reference to ECD 101	T: Well, the 101 childhood development did it all.
Active learning	T: Hands-on. Its nice to be given the PowerPoint information because like the keynote speaker at the one we went to gave us a pr...
Active learning	T#2: Um.. I had both lecture type and hands on, and I'm a hands on learner, so it was like the lecture type was never going to en...
Active learning	T#1: I went to several lectures and um.. the one that I mentioned before, the Lisa Murphy one was definitely more hands-on and...
Active learning	T#1: It was a ▇▇▇▇▇▇ class. I know I keep talking about that. But she was so interesting and she had all these ideas for...
Active learning	T: They were a mix, I would say. I did some role playing lot of lecture, one was like really boring, it was like so boring, I was..
Active learning	T: The hands-on. I like to move. Cause when someone is dictating and just talking more hands- on, the role-play, I like that.
Active learning	T: Yea, the oohy gooey lady. That's what she's called. She came and she has a book and she did a bunch of experiments with us and...
Active learning	T: Um definitely hands on. But I will say, I just saw um..Dr. Pam Shiller, and it was lectures and it was she was awesome. I didn't...
Community of learners	T: Um.(long pause). If its going to a lecture I prefer some kind of discussions too, that's why I do one of each. Because, I my...
Community of learners	T: Right and there was free discussion. There must have been 15 women in the class and it was really interesting to hear the...
Community of learners	T: Extremelyt o hear how other centers run it. This is my first time in child care. I've been in preschool or kindergarten, but pr...
Facilitator abilities	T#2: Yea, she said, when she started off, she said, how many of you eat that bagged salad without washing it? And, we all raised...
Facilitator abilities	T#1: Um her passion for teaching young children and that just kind of radiated and just was inspiring and you felt really good w...
Facilitator abilities	T: Um...I had a training at the ▇▇▇▇ and the woman there asked us to all we had a partner, and you had to make a box, like she ha...
Facilitator abilities	CI: I've been in her sessions, and you don't really know she's lecturing. T: Yea, because she kind of does hand-on. She makes you s...
Negative - lecture no activity	T: It was a lot of information and it was pretty dry. This is this and this is this. This is what you need to do. This is what y...
Negative - lecture no activity	T: It is, it is. And, I think that people kind of, well I know that people started tuning the speaker out and talking amongst...
Negative - lecture no activity	T#1: Reading from the paper, reading from the overhead.
Negative - lecture no activity	T#2: As you just said development, I remember I did a development one. And that was the one we just read off the paper [laughter...
Negative - lecture no activity	T#2: You find yourself doodling [laughter]
Negative - lecture no activity	T#1: It was very hard to sit through. But that has been the only one. They usually have um the ▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇ Childhood Assoc...
Negative - overuse of	T: It was in a sense, but some of it I didn't.

text or theory	
Negative - overuse of text or theory	T#2: Oh yea. Its a lot easier to stand up and preach how do to it than to do it. [laughter]
Negative - overuse of text or theory	T: We were going over the safety of playground equipment, like look for loose.., like I mean, some of it was just common sense....
Relevant and applicable	T#1: I um We actually had this in the class we just took, where it um ideally how your classrooms should be set up and I was just...
Relevant and applicable	T: Yea, yea the first meeting the very first meeting when it was juggling elephants because I remember that I couldn't wait to g...
Inform - Content - Desired training - family	T: Like on mothers day, everyone here has a mother, but one has two moms so do you not do fathers day, do you do them together?...
Inform - Content - Desired training - family	T: Yea, because some are open and they'll say please make two mothers day gifts or please do that. And a teacher might not think...
Inform Content	T: Child development and Dr. Shiller was on the, where the brain, brain development and where the child is at that time and what...
Inform - Content - Relevant	T: One day during class were doing classroom designs, because we just changed our classroom and this was the week before we just...
Inform - Content - Desired training - family	T: Like on mother's day, everyone here has a mother, but one has two moms so do you not do father's day, do you do them together?...
Inform - Content - Desired training - family	T: Yea, because some are open and they'll say please make two mothers day gifts or please do that. And a teacher might not think...
Inform - Content - Eval and then Select	T: My group so young. I would like, when we are doing an art activity, I would like for them to play in their centers so I could...
Inform - Content - Negative - Repeated	T#1: Um[long pause]I've signed up for a lot of classes and I go and its the same thing that I've already heard. I've been doing...
Inform - Content - Negative - Repeated	T#1: A lot of times, that's how it goes. And I would love more growth in it.
Inform - Content - Negative - Repeated	T: No, and it was so boring so boring. I was like okay I know how to wash my hands, I know how to spray the table, and all that s...
Inform - Content - Negative - Repeated	T: I will say the child development ones, where the child is developmentally, I feel like I've gotten that class a lot of times....
Inform - Content - Overuse of theory or text	T: Um.. I have heard some things that are not really that realistic. And I would, I'd be willing to try it, but in the back of my...
Pure - Specific Content that Informs	T: Classroom management is a BIG one. Because, we can do curriculum in classroom management and that way it will resolve a lot o...
Pure - Specific Content that Informs	T: There have been and I would probably say classroom management and also another thing just going back to the last question, I'm...
Pure - Specific Content that Informs	T#2: One of them was literature what types of books to read to the children. It was one of my favorite ones to do, I love to re...
Pure - Specific Content that Informs	T#2: In that literature class, that I had, they talked about how they had done a study where little boys tended to better, like...
Pure - Specific Content that Informs	T#1: Yea, I know I have. It was one that I was talking a little bit about, discipline in the classroom.
Pure - Specific Content that Informs	T#2: To be honest, doing the Magda Gerber training in Maryland, um..Every time I hear people say tummy time I go [laughter],...
Pure - Specific Content that Informs	T: Yes, yes, it was a story telling class I believe. It was did that and the lady and it was mostly about a child who is maybe m...
Pure - Specific Content that Informs	T: Um I think the oohy gooey lady. That's my favorite.
Pure - Specific Content that Informs	T: Yes, definitely. With Dr. Pam Shiller, she had a song that I use it all the time with the kids now and they love it. The ram...
Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 2: Supportive Question 1: H	

Prominence of Research Question 2: Supportive Question 2 :	
Inform - Context - Center	T#2: I think the parents. And this isn't even in my room. But sometimes we have to switch children back and forth because we might...
Inform - Context - Center	T#1: Yea, ▮▮▮▮▮▮ is very supportive, so I know I'm having the idea shed very much support that. But its been particular parent...
Inform - Context - Center	T#2: I think sometimes parents feel like their child may be the only one in there so they want specific things done like feeding...
Inform - Context - Center	T: Its hard again, private is very different than public. Private, I have a little more freedom in the classroom to do what I was..
Inform - Context - Center	T: Um. Not really that I was not able to. Because here we have the freedom to try new things. And I was at a school in ▮▮▮▮▮ f...
Inform - Context - Center	T#1: That's what they do here for like CPR and stuff and I do appreciate that.
Inform - Context - Center	T#2: No, like any time I especially with ▮▮▮▮▮▮, shes really open to things I've said even from the time she interviewed me t...
Inform - Context - Center	T#1: She's a very supportive director.
Inform - Context - Center	T: SC needs to be progressive. The curriculum is totally Stephanie is more Montessori And I've never done Montessori. I'm more in...
Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 2: Supportive Question 2: H	

Findings:

I: *Metro ECEC's teachers' selection of professional development is limited in terms of content despite the presence of local, multiple professional development opportunities.*

II: *Approaches to training influence Metro ECEC's selections of professional development as well as informs their teaching practices.*

Worksheet 3 – Analyst's Notes from Case Report #4

Case ID: Center #4

Analyst's Synopsis: (See Visit Report for complete details.)

Situational Constraints:
– Small number of teachers due to declining enrollment

Uniqueness among Other Cases:
– Small center with declining enrollment
– Remaining teachers and staff are family members
– Inner city, older building housing center in existence for over 20 years

Prominence of Research Question 1 in the case : Approach – reference to conference they attended T#2: And you have more opportunity, you know, getting your classes and stuff. T#3: That was nice; I like it. And you get your hours in, too. **Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 1: M**
Prominence of Research Question 1: Supportive Question I : T#1: You have to get what's available most of the time. T#2: Yea, they don' have no option. T#1 Considered professional development in terms of requirements and enrollment: "it's required, first thing, but you want to have the best for the children so you can bring some more kids in and the talk might get around, but you don't want no body unqualified to fool with them." **Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 1: Supportive Question 1: L**
Prominence of Research Question 1: Supportive Question 2 : **Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 1: Supportive Question 2: L**
Prominence of Research Question 1: Supportive Question 3 : T#1: Well first, they have to have that 101 and HS diploma. But most think that baby sitting, they should just come on in. But **Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 1: Supportive Question 3: L**
Prominence of Research Question 1: Supportive Question 4 : Briefly mentioned in director's interview

Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 1: Supportive Question 4: L	

Prominence of Research Question 2 :	

hers' interpretation of ent from PD	T#2: Yea, like how in the world do they get and they so calm and everything. They was showing pictures and stuff, but ooo.. that...

context – recognized high quality practice, but did not believe they could implement it

Context of needing 15 – but attends whether repeat or not. <u>T#1: Well, the most times we go for those 15, it be the same thing repeated most of the time.</u>

insight into teachers' understanding of DAP	T#2: No, I was thinking of . About um.. the nutrient class sort of like how much like a child what's bad and what's good for them...
insight into teachers' understanding of DAP	T#3: I ain't know Pop-tarts ain't good for ...
insight into teachers' understanding DAP	T#1: Are they really learning? I don't care how nice it is, you cant make a child learn. I know Oakwood has a nice place and my g...
insight into teachers' understanding DAP	T#1: I love those books.
insight into teachers' understanding DAP	T#2: I still love those books. It teaches them how to read. She was here for four years and you know, they just took them out. B...

Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 2: M	

Prominence of Research Question 2: Supportive Question 1	

Inform: Approach:

Active learning	T#1: I like that getting involved.
Active learning	T#2: Yea, getting involved. That's mainly
Conference	T#3: And one of the 15 hours, it was at the hospital. And that was my first time um going to the ones at the hospital and its...
Conference	T#3: But this one, I don't think she had that. She was way down in
Conference	T#2: You would have instructors in the classroom, but the one who teaching it, you want to talk to them. It was kind of odd, you...
Conference	T#2: Now, the one at ████████, I loved that. I loved that! And one of the people that one of the seminars that we went to this...
Conference	T#1: You get into it more
Conference	T#2: Yea, you get into it more at the ██████ and then like going to different instruction classes like you in school. I loved...
Conference	T#1: What was the last name, Smith? We had to do a little exercise about the brain. It was about the brain. She had us down...
Conference	T#1: Most of time, they know what they're talking about. They have films. And they asked you questions at the breaks of the films...
Conference	T#1: We got that Greg and Steve tape about that, I don't know the name, but you creep and you run and you stop. What was the name...
Conference	T#2: No, they were talking about it at ██████, you know that conference we went to. They was there. And they just had so many d...
Negative - lack of set up distracting	T#1: And the last one we went to, was they did a little activity; like you read it and then you look through it and you get the r...
Negative - lack of set up distracting	T#2: I thought, Lord I give up
Negative - lack of set up distracting	T#1: It was more work to it as of you finding the answer more or less of, you know.
Negative - lack of set up distracting	T#1: Yea. Hands-on is good, but have it fixed where you can sit down and I mean at a table or something. But this was in our lap...

Negative - lack of set up distracting	T#3: It wasn't organized.
Negative - Repeated content	T#1: All of them do the same thing.
Use of handouts and notes	T#1: Yea, that's good, because you can read back on what they say.
Negative - Repeated content	T#2: Really the seminars is really just refreshing on what you already know and keeping it in mind. Just like anything else, tea...
PURE - specific action taken	T#1: It was so good we went and tried to find the tape and she went on line and called. You couldn't buy just one, you had to buy...
teachers' interpretation of content from PD	T#2: I know they were talking about their 2 year old room, they were talking about they would have like 80 something children in...
teachers' interpretation of content from PD	T#2: Their set up is nice. They like saying like people who write books, they fly them here to talk to the teachers. Its nice (t...

Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 2: Supportive Question 1: H

Prominence of Research Question 2: Supportive Question 2 :

availability of PD	T#1: So they used some courses
availability of PD	T#1: Sometimes, sometimes. Sometimes, most of them be free at the library.
availability of PD	T#2: I think ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ they do it free, I think. I think they do.
availability of PD	T#3: The library charged us last year, but now its free.
availability of PD	T#1: Not a variety anyway.
availability of PD	T#2: You know, ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮, we had one or two over there.
availability of PD	T#1: Right now, ya'll have the best one. I think. But now a long time ago they used to have them you go to Holiday Inn in...
availability of PD	T#3: The one at ▮▮▮▮▮▮ they do pretty good too.
availability of PD	T#1: They was good, too, because there was a lady, I think she was from ▮▮▮▮▮. She had a master degree and she owned a day c...
references to DSS regs	T#2: Because I think during the summer they take a break. And you got a lot of day cares wants to get their hours in.
references to DSS regs	T#2: Yes, because DSS, you know, they still gonna check around regardless unless you don't have it if no seminars are taken during...
references to DSS regs	T#1: Mainly, the people, they set rules for us but, most of them don't be in day care and don't know how it works. They sit down t...
references to DSS regs	T#2: If we didn't have that fence, they could run in the street. T#1: So I don't know.
references to DSS regs	T#1: They got a whole lot of rules for you to stay in business, but have they really sit down and understand how it works.
references to DSS regs	T#2: So to me, its like to me, the people in the legislature who makes the rules and stuff have never been in day care and never...
references to DSS regs	T#3: Really, the owner spends more money out
references to parents	T#2: I think we do good here. But you know, some parents don't think that.
references to parents	T#2: I think a gym, a cafeteria, um somewhere you can pull in a parking place, you know. Stuff like that. And you know its sad....
references to parents	T#2: Well they know its a family atmosphere, but you know, you just cant please everybody. Sort of broke my heart a little bit.
references to parents	T#2: Yea, shed been here since she was a little baby, you know. And you hate to see a child like that leave. She is so smart,...
references to parents	T#1: But that what her parents want.
references to parents	T#1: And parents really don't realize what's going on neither, some of them don't. They just want everything for themselves.
references to parents	T#2: Its a lot that ▮▮▮▮▮ kicks out and parents don't even understand. All they understand is someone keeping their child.
references to parents	T#2: They think you're getting rich, but in the long run, you're not. You're just making by.
references to parents	T#1: I think that parents ought to go sometimes.

references to parents	T#2: I agree. [laughter] I totally agree. At least once or twice a year, parents ought to go for a seminar. They ought to make i...
Expected Utility of This Case for Developing Research Question 2: Supportive Question 2: H	

Findings:

I: *City ECEC's selections of professional development is primarily a function of availability and meeting regulatory requirements.*

II: *There is little evidence that teachers' professional development has informed their practices.*

Commentary:

- o inferences about making changes – or not making changes – attributed to not being able to do something (as in the case of exposure to Reggio approach) and to parents "and parents really don't realize what's going on neither, some of them don't. They just want everything for themselves...all they understand is someone keeping their child...they think you're getting rich, but in the long run, you're not. You're just making by."

- o inferences about required PD as being required and same/repeated plus, "Really the seminars is really just refreshing on what you already know and keeping it in mind. Just like anything else, teachers got to get their hours..." no evidence of self-reflection on the state of the center or individual practices

- o participants report feeling of disconnect between those setting the rules and those actually in the field: "Mainly, the people , they set rules for us...but, most of them don't be in day care and don't know how it works. They sit down there and make a rule. .."

Worksheet Rating Expected Utility of Each Case for Each Theme

	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3	Case 4
Original Multi-case Themes				
<u>Theme 1</u> How did teachers at the 4 centers select PD? (Select: Approach and Select: content)	H	M	H	M
<u>Theme 2</u> What contextual elements in each center influenced decisions surrounding selection of PD? (Select: Context – Center)	H	H	H	L
<u>Theme 3</u> What motivated directors and teachers in the selections of PD? (Select: Context – Teachers)	**M**	H	H	L
<u>Theme 4</u> How did directors' and teachers' view about the connection between PD and quality affect their PD selections? (Select: Context – Teachers & Center)	L	H	M	L
<u>Theme 5</u> How did the availability of enrollment in the voluntary ABC program affect selection? (Select: Context – Center)	L	L	L	L
<u>Theme 6</u> How did teachers' professional development selections inform their teaching practices? (Inform: Context – Teacher & Center)	H	H	H	H
<u>Theme 7</u> What elements of professional most informed teachers' practices? (Inform: Approach & Content)	H	L	H	M
<u>Theme 8</u> What barriers or encouragers within the center most influenced teachers' as they strived to adjust their practices based on how PD informed them? (Inform: Context – Teacher & Center)	M	H	H	M

H = high utility; M = middling utility; L = low utility
High utility means that the Case appears to be one of the most useful for developing a theme.

Worksheet for Matrix to Aid Theme-Based Assertions

THEMES	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Center #1 – TOWN ECEC								
Finding #1								
Teachers select professional development based on content, specifically the relevance of the content, to their self-determined needs as a teacher.	((3))	(1)	2	2		2	(3)	3
Finding #2								
There is not consistent and strong evidence that teachers' professional development routinely informs their practices	(2)	(1)	1	1		(2)	(1)	(2)
Center #2 – RURAL ECEC								
Finding #1								
Teachers' selection of professional development is influenced by contextual elements of the center.	1	((3))	(2)	((3))		(3)	1	(3)
Finding #2								
Professional development informs teachers' practices through the teachers' and the center's organizational culture.	1	(3)	(2)	(3)		((3))	(1)	((3))
Center #3 – METRO ECEC								
Finding #1								
Teachers' selection of professional development is limited in terms of content by the offerings of local, multiple professional development opportunities.	((3))	(1)	(1)	1		(1)	(3)	(1)
Finding #2								
Approaches to training influence selections of professional development as well as informs their teaching practices.	(2)	(1)	(1)	1		(1)	((3))	(1)
Center #4 – CITY ECEC								
Finding #1								
Selection of professional development is primarily a function of availability and meeting regulatory requirements.	(1)	(1)	1	1		1	1	3
Finding #2								

There is little evidence that teachers' PD has informed their practices.	1	1	1	1		1	1	(1)

A High mark indicates the Theme is an important part of this particular case study .

Appendix Q

Worksheet for Multi-Case Assertions

#	Assertion	Related to Which Themes or Factors?	Evidence, Persuasions, Reference in Which Cases?
1	Teachers are most likely to consider and to be motivated by content in selecting professional development.	1 and 3	Centers 1, 3
2	Approaches used by facilitators are the most likely component of professional development in determining whether the selected professional development will inform teachers' practices.	6 and 7	Centers 2, 3
3	Directors can play a key role in teachers' selection of professional development as well as how it informs teaching practices.	2 and 8	Centers 2, 3
4	Teachers and directors are aware of the connection between professional development and quality for young children. However, they are painfully aware that others are not.	4	Centers 1, 2

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