

NC Early Childhood Professional Development Research

2008



The North Carolina Institute
For Early Childhood
Professional Development



Research Overview



Early Childhood Professional Development: How It Matters to Child Care Quality

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Overview of Presentation

- Defining Professional Development
- National and State Education and Training Requirements
- What Research Tells Us about Education, and Training
- Why the Contradictory Findings?
- Education an Important of the Quality Puzzle

Defining Professional Development

- Education – within the formal education system
 - Level of education
 - Content of education
 - Major
 - Coursework
- Training – outside the formal education system
 - Type
 - Content
 - Amount of time

Professional Development Requirements

- Good Smart, Grow Smart Initiative – requires states to have a professional development plan (training and education) to increase child care teacher qualifications
- 37 states do not require center-based teachers to have pre-service training
 - North Carolina
 - Private ECE centers - no preservice requirements but must enroll in NC Early Childhood Credential classes within 6 months of employment

Professional Development Requirements

- Title I and IDEA — all teachers must be highly qualified
- Early Head Start — CDA by 2010
- Even Start — majority of staff must have AA degree
- State Funded Pre-K — 86% of teachers have BS; 13 states require BS & ECE training
- Head Start reauthorization requires 50% of Head Start teachers to have BS degree by 2013; assistant teachers must have AA degree

Does Education Matter?



Arnett (1989)

- Bermuda College Training Program Study
 - 4-year degree related to higher quality interactions compared to teachers with some college;
 - BUT even teachers with some college courses (2 courses) had more positive interactions

National Child Care Staffing Study (1990)

- BA teachers more sensitive, less harsh, less detached & provided more appropriate caregiving than teachers with AA, some college, or high school diploma
- However, no difference by the content of the degree

Helburn (1995)

- Cost, Quality, & Child Outcomes Study
 - Teachers with 4-year degrees more sensitive, more responsive, & had children who had higher level skills
 - Teachers with 2-year degrees more sensitive than those with less education

NICHD Early Child Care Research Network (2002)

- NICHD Early Child Care Study
 - Positive relationship between education of teachers and children's cognitive skills

Saracho & Spodek (2007)

- Critically examined (qualitatively) 40 studies on relationship between education and quality
- Teachers with more education provided high or moderate quality, more appropriate practices, better instructional activities, and positive responses to families
- Teachers with BS degree were more responsive, provided more activities that promoted language and emergent literacy than teachers without BS

Early, et al., (2007)

- Early, et al., (2007) argue that in several studies when other variables are entered into the analyses positive teacher education findings disappear; that is, other factors are accounting for the positive outcomes

Early, et al., (2007)

- Secondary Data Analysis
 - Re-examined data from 7 major studies using common analyses and found that neither teachers' level of education nor their major predicted differences in quality of classroom or child outcomes
 - 8 of 27 analyses resulted in associations, but 2 were negative
 - Early HS & NICHD—more educated teachers had higher quality & significantly higher with BS degree

Early, et al., (2007)

- NICHD—No difference between AA & BS degree
- Head Start Evaluation teachers with BS lower in quality (FACES study).
- No study found association between highest degree & receptive language; few reported association with reading or math

Kelley & Camilli (2007), National Institute for Early Education Research

- Study examined 32 studies of education and quality in a meta-analysis & found that higher levels of education related to higher quality in interactions, classroom quality, etc.
- Teachers with degrees yielded largest effect sizes
- Outcomes approximately .15 SD higher in classrooms with teachers with BS degrees

North Carolina Rated License Assessment Education Findings (2007)


- Positive correlations found for directors and teachers between education level and quality assessment scores

Continual Education

- An increase in program's quality score over time was associated with director's enrollment in a college course
 - Directors in programs with lower scores at first assessment more likely to take course.

ECERS-R Scores by Education Level (2008) (7-point Scale; n=2825)

High School	4.68
Some College	4.93
2-Year Degree	5.14
4-Year Degree in Other Field	5.26
4-Year Degree in ECE/CD	5.30
Graduate Work	5.32


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- Bachelors degree in field significantly higher than high school, some college, or an Associates degree
 - Associates degree significantly higher than some college (credential)
 - Some college significantly higher than high school (however, only 22 in this group; so not very meaningful)

Relationship Between Formal Education and Quality (Tout, Zaslow, & Berry, 2002)

Supporting Evidence?	
Yes	Blau (2000); De Kruif, McWilliam, Ridley, & Wakely (2000); Honig & Hirallal (1998); Howes, Whitebook, & Phillips (1992); Phillipsen, Burchinal, Howes, & Cryer (1997); NICHD ECCRN (2000) (quality at 24 & 36 mos but not 6 or 15)
No	Phillips, Mekos, Scarr, McCartney, & Abbot-Shim (2000); NICHD ECCRN (1996—quality at 6 months)

Relationship Between Formal Education with ECE Content and Quality (Tout, Zaslow, & Berry, 2002)

Supporting Evidence?	
Yes	Blau (2000); Honig & Hirallal (1998); Howes, Whitebook, & Phillips (1992); Phillipsen, Burchinal, Cryer, Clifford, & Howes, (2002); Phillips, Mekos, Scarr, McCartney, & Abbot-Shim (2000); Howes, (1997)
No	

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- In K-12 teacher education teacher qualifications (education, experience, & measure of knowledge) account for larger share of variance than any other factors

Content of Education and Quality: Snider and Fu (1990)

- Snider and Fu (1990) examined CD/ECE degree, content, and practicum experience in relation to understanding of DAP practices by rating vignettes
- CD/ECE degree with 10 or more content course in CD/ECE scored best
- Those with 10 or more content courses in CD/ECE AND practicum experience scored better than students with fewer courses and practicum experience.
- Some vocational training in CD scored better than no training

Snider and Fu (1990)

- Participants that scored best had been in classes that covered:
 - Planning, implementing, and evaluating developmentally appropriate content
 - Creating, evaluating and selecting materials
 - Creating learning environments
 - Curriculum models
 - Observing and recording behaviors

Does Training Matter?



Norris (2001)

- 70 family child care providers
- Providers who participated in continual training (as opposed to intermittent) had higher FDCRS scores
 - Learning and Activities
 - Basic Care

Burchinal, Howes, & Kontos (2002)

- Secondary data analysis
- Included only family child care homes
- Providers who participated in workshops:
 - had higher overall FDCRS scores
 - lower detachment scores on CIS

Burchinal, Cryer, Clifford, & Howes (2002)

- Re-examined Cost, Quality, and Outcomes study
- Training included in-service workshops, community workshops, and workshops at professional association meetings
- Higher ERS scores (ITERS and ECERS-R) and CIS
- Training contributed to quality even after controlling for education
- Training alone was not equivalent to BA

Fukkink & Lont (2007)

- **Meta-analysis of 17 studies from 1980 to 2005**
- **Training increased caregiver competency in terms of “knowledge, attitude, and skills”**
- **Positive outcomes for children**
 - Secure attachment
 - Language development
- **Still, not all training is effective**
 - Depends upon course curriculum

Possible reasons for null findings (Early, et al., 2007)

- Why no associations?
 - Teacher preparation programs
 - Lack of support for teachers to implement what they know
 - Best teachers w/o degree may be attracted to these programs because they pay more

Are the Quality Gains of the BS over the AAS worth the cost?

- Fuller and others would argue that our money could be spent in better ways in the early childhood field
- Are we adequately measuring what we get with a BS degree?

Measurement

- Education, training, and credential
 - Common definitions across studies needed
 - Amount/Content
 - How is it reported? Maxwell, Field, & Clifford, 2006
- Child Care Quality
 - Most commonly used measures include the Environment Rating Scales and the Caregiver Interaction Scale.
 - NICHD uses the HOME and ORCE
Tout, Zaslow, & Berry, 2006

How do education and training
interact with other
classroom factors?



LoCasale-Crouch et al., 2007

- Study of 692 Pre-K classrooms indicate variable quality with the best profile below “good” quality
- Majority of teachers had BA degrees
- Cluster analysis indicates multiple factors may work in tandem to produce high quality emotional and learning environments (e.g. ratio, wages, teacher supports).
- Children of color and children in poverty are the least likely to be in the best quality

Other Supports Needed

- **Teacher Preparation Programs** (e.g. Snider & Fu, 1990)
- **Mentoring/Supervision** (e.g. Howes, James, & Ritchie, 2003)
- **Work Environments** (e.g. Lower & Cassidy, 2007)
- **Salary and Benefits** (e.g. Helburn, 1995; Phillips, et al., 2000)

Challenges

- Teacher Personal Challenges (Ackerman, 2004)
 - Cultural relevance
 - Nontraditional learners
 - Salary constraints
- Institutional Issues
 - Articulation of credits from community colleges
 - Capacity of teacher education programs
- Needs
 - Scholarships
 - Special advisors
 - Child care/on-line classes?