PREPARING EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONALS TO BE LEADERS IN HIGH-

QUALITY INCLUSIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS: A CASE STUDY OF ONE

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

by

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Preparing Early Childhood Professionals to be Leaders in High-Quality Inclusive Early

Childhood Programs: A Case Study of One Community College

Thesis directed by Instructor, Alissa Rausch

ABSTRACT

High-quality inclusive early childhood programs serve children with developmental delays/disabilities alongside children without developmental delays/disabilities, something that has historically challenged the fields of early childhood education (ECE) and early intervention/early childhood special education (EI/ECSE). A current movement suggests the challenges can be attributed to insufficient leadership within early childhood programs. This study explored how one community college prepared recent graduates from the Colorado Director's Certificate program to be leaders in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs. The research used a case study methodology. The results from the study were used to provide the ECE department at the community college with recommendations for their preparation of early childhood professionals to be leaders in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs and ultimately increase the percentage of children enrolled in programs serving children with and without developmental delays/disabilities and their families.

The form and content of this abstract are approved. I recommend its publication.

Approved: Alissa Rausch

DEDICATION

To Natalie – for your love throughout my adulthood and professional endeavors. You force me to question my intentions and the decisions I make. This is yours as much as mine.

To Citlali - for your curiosity. You have asked questions that no one else could think to ask. You and your sister have been my inspirations.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Chapter one introduces this case study. The introduction includes: (a) the foundation for the case study; (b) an overview of the problem of practice that grounds the case study; (c) a background for the case study; and (d) the limitations of the case study.

The Foundation for this Case Study

Inclusive early childhood programs serve children with developmental delays/disabilities alongside children without developmental delays/disabilities (Barton & Smith, 2015; IDEA, 2004; U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, 2015). Despite ample research, and the passage of the section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (1973), the American's with Disabilities Act (1990), and the Individual's with Disabilities Education Act (1986) the percentage of children with developmental delays/disabilities participating in inclusive early childhood programs has increased less than six percent since 1986 (Barton & Joseph, 2015). For more than 30 years, advocates have worked to increase inclusion, but research has shown their efforts were less successful than previously thought (Barton & Joseph, 2015; DEC, 2014; Odom & Mclean, 1996). Recent publications suggest the paucity of inclusion is attributable to inadequate preparation of early childhood professionals who are leading early childhood programs (DEC 2014; DEC 2015).

In 1993, the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the professional organization for the field of early intervention/early childhood special education (EI/ECSE) created the recommended practices (RP) for professionals in EI/ECSE. In 1996, the professional organization published *Recommended*

Practices for Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education (Odom & Mclean, 1996). The RPs were intended to support professionals with the implementation of evidence-based practices (EBP) designed to improve the outcomes of children with developmental delays/disabilities. The authors thought the RPs would increase the inclusion of children with developmental delays/disabilities in early childhood programs (Odom & Mclean, 1996; Sandal, Hemmeter, Smith & McLean, 2005). More than twenty years after the creation of RPs, EBPs have not been normalized into the program practices of early childhood professionals. Subsequently, children with developmental delays/disabilities are not provided with the high-quality inclusive experiences they are legally entitled to (DEC, 2014; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services U.S. Department of Education, 2015; Smith & Barton, 2015).

The practice of inclusion in early childhood programs is supported by three pieces of federal legislation: the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (2004), the Americans with Disabilities Act (2008) and the Rehabilitation Act (1973). IDEA states:

Each public agency must ensure that— (i) To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are nondisabled; and (ii) Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. (IDEA, 34 C.F.R. §303.114, 2004)

ADA states:

> A place of public accommodation is a [public or private early childhood program]
>
> (ADA, 28 C.F.R. §1.2000)… even if a separate or special program for individuals
>
> with disabilities is offered, a public accommodation cannot deny an individual with a
>
> disability participation in its regular program. (ADA, 28 C.F.R. §3.4200)

The Rehabilitation Act states:

> No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States, shall, solely by
>
> reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the
>
> benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving
>
> federal financial assistance or under any program or activity conducted by any
>
> executive agency (Rehabilitation Act, 29 U.S.C. § 504(a), 1973)

Collectively, IDEA (2004), ADA (2008) and the Rehabilitiation Act (1973) mean early childhood programs cannot discriminate against children with developmental delays/disabilities and all children have equitable access to general education classroom curricula to the maximum extent appropriate. Unfortunately, even with the three federal statutes and research providing evidence-based strategies to support the implementation of high-quality inclusive practices the inclusion of children with developmental delays/disabilities remains elusive for a majority of young children (Barton & Smith, 2015).

There are three underlying criteria of inclusion: Access, participation, and systems of support (DEC/NAEYC, 2009). In their most recent publication of RPs, DEC (2014) identified leadership as the core tenet of implementing the three underlying criteria for the

inclusion of children with developmental delays/disabilities (DEC, 2014). The RPs are

designed to guide early childhood programs with EBPs designed to overcome the obstacles

inhibiting inclusion (Barton & Smith, 2015; DEC, 2014).

In Colorado early childhood programs, leadership is an expectation of early childhood

program directors (Colorado Childcare Rules and Regulations, 2016). While many scholars

in the fields of ECE and EI/ECSE agree that program management is a responsibility of

directors (DEC, 2015; Kagan & Bowman, 1997; Muijs, Aubrey, Harris & Briggs, 2004), they

also believe directors should espouse a wider range of *elements* for leadership that fosters

high-quality inclusive early childhood programs (DEC, 2015: Kagan & Bowman, 1997).

Elements are the knowledge, skills and dispositions of educational content (CEC, 2012;

DEC, 2014; NAEYC, 2007; NAEYC 2009). The sentiment is central to the concerns of

vocal advocates of high-quality inclusive early childhood programming (DEC, 2015).

DEC (2015) proposes that the elements for leadership in high-quality inclusive early

childhood programs should be learned through professional development (PD) (Buysse,

Wesley & Skinner, 1999; DEC, 2015). PD is delivered through pre-service training, in-

service training and practice in context (NAEYC/NACCRRA, 2011; NPDCI, 2008; Snyder,

Goffin & Winton, 2016). In Colorado, early childhood program directors develop the

elements for leadership while earning their state mandated Colorado Director's Certificate

(Colorado Childcare Rules and Regulations, 2016).

Between 2011 and 2015, the Colorado Director's Certificate was earned through in-

service PD (Colorado Childcare Rules and Regulations, 2010; Colorado Childcare Rules and

Regulations, 2016; Colorado's Early Learning Professional Development System Plan (n.d.). The certificate included, and for any student earning their certification at a Colorado community college, continues to include ten college courses. Two of the courses are written with personnel preparation standards designed to develop the elements Colorado community colleges have deemed important for leadership in early childhood programs (Colorado Childcare Rules and Regulations, 2016; Colorado Common Course Numbering System, 2016; Colorado's Early Learning Professional Development System Plan, n.d.). However, the literature indicates the course standards may not be designed to develop the elements for leading high-quality inclusive early childhood programs (Colorado Common Course Numbering System, 2016; CEC, 2012; DEC, 2014; DEC, 2015).

Traditionally, the personnel preparation standards for courses at institutions of higher education (IHE) are developed around the professional expectations defined by a field's professional organizations. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), DEC and CEC are the professional organizations who influence the creation of the personnel preparation standards guiding the development of PD for EI/ECSE and ECE at IHEs.

Personnel preparation standards are utilized for all levels of higher education. NAEYC provides guidance for personnel preparation standards for developing leadership for associate, bachelor and graduate degrees in ECE, but none of the professional organizations provide guidance for leadership in EI/ECSE through personnel preparation standards until early childhood professionals enter a graduate degree program (CEC, 2012; Stayton, Miller

& Dinnebeil, 2003; NAEYC, 2007; NAEYC, 2009). The literature published by NAEYC, DEC and CEC suggests Colorado community colleges and the professionals who design their courses do not have personnel preparation standards that will develop the elements for program directors to lead high-quality inclusive early childhood programs.

Understanding the Problem of Practice: Inclusion in Early Childhood Education

In 2012, only 42.5 percent of children with developmental delays/disabilities were included in early childhood programs, up from 38.8 percent in 1985 (U.S. Department of Education, 1987; U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, 2014). This case study considered the issue a problem of practice rooted in ECE personnel preparation. Guided by four research questions, it explored one community college's preparation of early childhood professionals to be leaders in high-quality inclusive programs. The research focused on graduates of the Colorado Director's Certificate program and the faculty at the community college who taught the courses.

The courses in the director's certificate are developed around guidance from expectations published by professional organizations (CEC, 2012; DEC, 2014; NAEYC 2007; NAEYC, 2009; Colorado Common Course Numbering System, 2016). Literature suggests the expectations do not guide the development of community college courses designed to prepare early childhood professionals to be leaders in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs (CEC, 2012; Stayton et al., 2003; NAEYC, 2007; NAEYC, 2009). The DEC (2014; 2015) position affirms that the problem of practice will persist if personnel

preparation programs like the Colorado Director's Certificate program do not prepare early childhood professionals to be leaders in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs.

Background of the Case Study

The community college where this research study was conducted has an annual enrollment of approximately 10,000 − 11,000 students. These students come from more than 60 countries, bringing with them a diverse range of racial, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds. A majority of the students are non-traditional learners. Doescher & Beudert (2010) define a non-traditional learner in higher education as a student who has delayed enrolling in post-high school education. Non-traditional learners are typically the primary caregivers of dependents, working full- or part-time while attending school part-time, have low basic academic skills, limited financial resources and view their work as a job rather than a profession. Non-traditional learners in higher education are much more likely to leave school before graduation than traditional learners. Research has shown early childhood professionals who pursue credentials at community colleges demand well-planned, intentional instructional strategies targeted at developing relevant and applicable knowledge, skills and dispositions (Cho, 2016; Garavuso, 2014; Hyson, 2003; NAEYC, 2007; NAEYC, 2009).

There are approximately 300 to 400 students annually enrolled in ECE courses at the community college. The demographics are similar to those college-wide. Students take courses to earn a degree or certificate. The department offers two different degrees: the Associate in Arts, and the Associate of Applied Sciences. They offer three different

certificates: Level 1; Level 2; and Colorado Director's Certificate. This study addressed students who earned their Colorado Director's Certificate at the community college. The Colorado Director's Certificate program includes the following ten ECE courses.

ECE 101: Introduction to ECE

ECE 102: Introduction to Early Childhood Techniques

ECE 103: Guidance Strategies for Young Children

ECE 111: Infant and Toddler Theory and Practice

ECE 205: Early Childhood Health, Safety and Nutrition

ECE 220: Curriculum Methods and Techniques

ECE 238: ECE Child Growth and Development

ECE 240: Administration of Early Childhood Care and Education Programs

ECE 241: Administration: Human Relations for ECE

ECE 260: The Exceptional Child

The faculty participants who taught these courses all had adjunct status. The adjunct faculty had diverse professional and personal backgrounds. They all held graduate degrees in fields related to ECE and a career technical education (CTE) certificate.

The case study explored the preparedness of early childhood professionals in the Colorado Director'a Certificate program at a community college to be leaders in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs. A specific definition of the term leadership as it relates to this study emerged through the applied methodology. There were four questions guiding this research:

1. What do semi-structured interviews with the faculty at the community college and document analyses of their course learning materials reveal about how the faculty at the community college and graduates of the Colorado Director's Certificate program define leadership for high-quality inclusive early childhood programs?

2. What do semi-structured interviews with the faculty at the community college and document analyses of their course learning materials reveal about how the instructional strategies they use develop early childhood professionals' elements for leading a high-quality inclusive early childhood program?

3. What do semi-structured interviews with graduates of the Colorado Director's Certificate program at the community college reveal about how the elements for leading a high-quality inclusive early childhood program are developed while they complete their certificate?

4. What recommendations can the findings from this research provide to the community college for enhancing their preparation of early childhood professionals to lead a high-quality inclusive early childhood program?

Limitations

There are four categories of limitations identified in this study: (a) the faculty participants; (b) the graduate participants; (c) the research design; and (d) the researcher's role in the research.

The faculty had different personal and professional backgrounds. They had backgrounds in special education, mental health, education leadership and ECE program

leadership. Their personal backgrounds were equally diverse. The faculty also had a diverse range of professional expertise and comfort with the courses they taught. Some taught one course multiple times others taught many courses a few times. They taught courses with different delivery models. Course models included a practicum, face-to-face and online. Due to the diversity, this study recruited the faculty who had at least three semesters of experience teaching courses in the director's certificate.

Three limitations were identified for the graduates who participated in the research. First, the graduates completed the certificate at different paces, taking anywhere from three semesters to nine semesters to complete the courses. Second, they had different academic goals. The goals ranged from an interest in a bachelor's or associate's degree, not wanting additional education, or were no longer interested in ECE. Third, the graduates may have had different experiences while taking the courses. They may not have taken their course from a faculty member involved in the study and may not have been as engaged in the course.

There were two primary methodological limitations. First, the case study collected retrospective data. Experiences could have changed the way a faculty member taught, or recall teaching the course if or when the graduate took it. Graduates may have had experiences affecting the way they understood their experiences over time. Second, there were a small number of participants. While case studies do not require large sample sizes and procedures were set up to mitigate some of the problems occurring with small sample

sizes, this could still be problematic. The results cannot be used to generalize for all students who graduate from the Colorado Director's Certificate program at the community college.

Insider research involves risks (Trowler, 2011). One that was of particular concern for this study was the power dynamic between the researcher and the faculty. The researcher was a full-time faculty member at the community college while the faculty members were adjunct. The research had a close relationship with the ECE department chair, who decides whether or not the adjunct have opportunities in the community college. This was mitigated by limiting the researcher's contact with the faculty during the research. The faculty was informed that their personal interview or results would not be shared with the community college.

The power dynamic between the research and graduates was also a concern. The graduates were aware they were participating in research that would be communicated to the ECE department. This was mitigated by limiting the researcher's contact with the graduates. Additionally, the selected graduates were not familiar with the researcher and were not enrolled at the community college during the semesters the research was conducted.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature is organized into five sections. The first section is a description of the DEC RPs as a theoretical framework molding the expectations for a high-quality inclusive early childhood program. The theoretical framework conceptualizes the rationale for courses in the Colorado Director's Certificate designed to develop the elements for leading a high-quality inclusive early childhood program. The second section presents the current research on inclusion in early childhood programs. The findings highlight the value of inclusion for all children (Buysee, Goldman & Skinner, 2002; Cole, Mills, Dale & Jenkin, 1991; Cross, Traub, Hutter-Pishgahi & Shelton, 2004; Rafferty, Piscitelli & Boettcher, 2003; Strain & Hoyson, 2000). The third section discusses current research on leadership. It presents the recent researcher in EI/ECSE placing leadership at the forefront of the conversation on high-quality inclusive early childhood programs (CEC, 2012; DEC, 2015; Goffin, 2013; LaRocco, Bruns, Gupta & Sopko, 2014). However, the research specific to EI/ECSE is limited. The fourth section addresses personnel preparation standards for PD related to leadership. The literature illuminates the barriers caused by current standards. The barriers may create challenges for community colleges to prepare early childhood professionals enrolled in the certificate program to be leaders in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs (CEC, 2012; Colorado Common Course Numbering System, 2016; DEC, 2014; DEC, 2015). The final section addresses PD and the instructional strategies used in PD. The literature identifies certain PD instructional strategies as more effective at guiding the development of

elements for leading high-quality inclusive early childhood programs than others. The literature reviewed provides evidence suggesting the elements for leadership early childhood professionals develop while earning their Colorado Director's Certificate at a community college may not prepare them to be leaders in early childhood programs including children with developmental delays/disabilities.

The Division for Early Childhood Recommended Practices

The RPs (DEC, 2014; Odom & McLean, 1996; Sandall, Hemmeter, Smith & McLean, 2005) are the gold standard of practices for the effective inclusion of children with developmental delays/disabilities in early childhood programs (DEC, 2014). The *Recommended Practices in Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education* (2014), published by DEC is used as the theoretical framework for this literature review. There are two reasons for using the RPs as a framework. First, DEC, the professional organization for the field of EI/ECSE stresses the use of RPs to support high-quality inclusive early childhood programs. Second, the RPs define leadership positions, such as early childhood program directors as the foundation for successful, high-quality inclusive early childhood programs (DEC, 2015).

The RPs are the field of EI/ECSE's guide for promoting high-quality inclusive early childhood programs (DEC, 2014). The RPs were initiated with the passage of Public Law 99-457 in 1986, which amended what is presently called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). P.L. 99-457 extended the mandate of the rights of all children to free and appropriate public education from kindergarten through twelfth grade to children birth

through 21 years old (Rous & Smith, 2011). Shortly after the passage of P.L. 99-457, DEC's

members recognized the need for a unified understanding of high-quality, effective practices.

In 1991, DEC initiated a task force to create the first set of RPs. The task force decided it

was important to draft the RPs with a broad base of *stakeholders.* Stakeholders included

discipline experts, practitioners and families. The task force used six criteria to guide the

selected practices: research based or value based; family centered; multicultural; cross-

disciplinary collaboration; developmentally and chronologically age appropriate; and

normalization of characteristics and practices that may be perceived as exceptional (McLean

& Odom, 1996). The first set of RPs was completed in 1993 (Odom & McLean, 1996;

Stayton et al., 2005). The RPs were comprehensively defined and described in Odom and

McLean's (1996) book *Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education Recommended*

Practices.

Although initially considered best practices for EI/ECSE, the authors determined the

standards were not intended to suggest one practice was the best for all children and families.

Rather, the standards for practices were recommendations for practices individualized for

children and families (Odom & McLean, 1996). The first set of RPs contained 14 strands

with a total of 415 practices (McLean, n.d.). The writers of the 1993 publication expected

them to be the future for EI/ECSE stakeholders. They discovered a few years later that their

expectations we not accurate. In response to advancements in research, policies, and

recognition for the slow adoption of RPs by stakeholders, a revision of the RPs began in the

late 1990s (Odom et al., 1995; Gurlanick, 1997).

The second set of RPs was created with the intention of incorporating new EBPs and increasing the adoption of the practices by stakeholders (McLean, n.d.; Snyder, Thompson, McLean & Sandall, 2002; Smith, McLean, Sandall, Snyder, & Ramsey, 2005). Following a field validation and focus groups, seven strands with 240 practices were identified and defined (Sandall, Hemmeter, Smith & McLean, 2005; Smith et al., 2002). Two books designed to support the adoptions of RPs by stakeholders were published in 2005 (Hemmeter, Smith, Sandall & Askew, 2005; Sandall et al., 2005). DEC continued to search for additional techniques for expanding the dissemination of the RPs (DEC, 2014; Hemmeter et al., 2005).

The third set of the RPs (DEC, 2014), which is considered the current set, consists of eight strands. Beginning with leadership (see Appendix D), the practices are outlined in the following order: assessment; environment; family; instruction; interactions; teaming and collaboration; and transition (see Figure 1). The authors of the RPs note that practices within the strands are not isolated. High-quality inclusive early childhood programs demand the constant evaluation and integration of RPs across strands when appropriate. In many cases, practices from one strand cannot be teased apart from practices in other strands. For example, RPs of instruction are dependent on the inclusive environment, assessment, interaction, teaming and collaboration, and family. DEC (2014) states, the RPs "bridge the gap between research and practice…support[ing] children's access and participation in inclusive settings and natural environments and address cultural, linguistic and ability

diversity (p 2)."
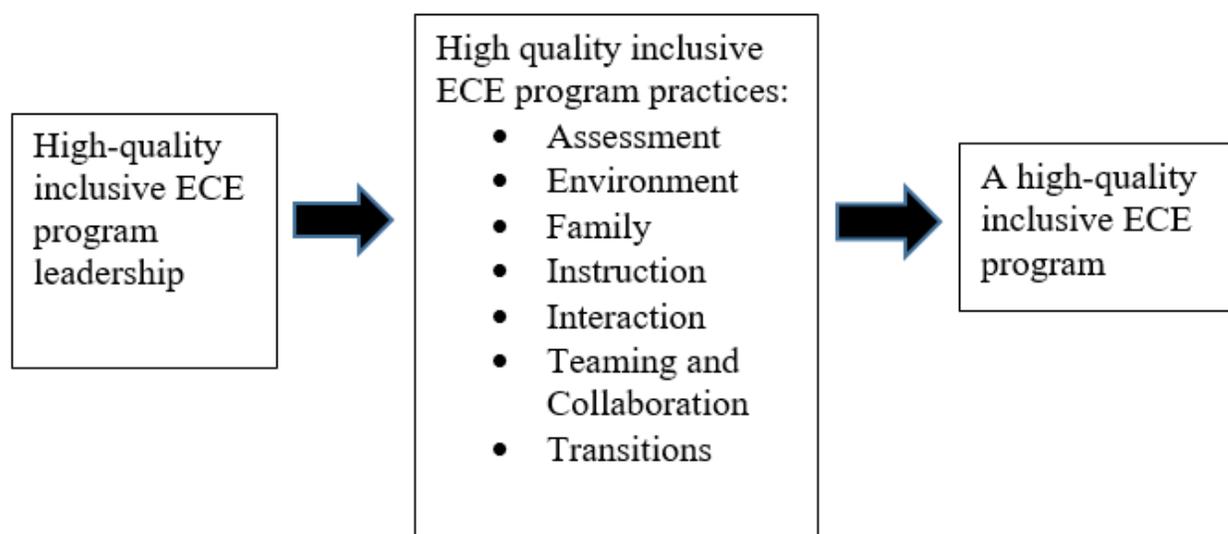
Figure 1.1. The conceptual framework of DEC Recommended Practices.

The RPs have become the guiding framework for adopting EBPs in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs (see Figure 1.1). The framework of the RPs illustrates the importance of PD that builds the elements for leading a high-quality inclusive early childhood program. Following the framework, high-quality inclusive early childhood programs begin with leadership which enables the use of the other EBPs. With the leadership outlined by the RPs, children with developmental delays/disabilities can have access to high-quality inclusive early childhood programs (DEC, 2014).

High-quality Inclusive Early Childhood Programming

There are three federal laws supporting the inclusion of young children with developmental delays/disabilities in early childhood programs. ADA (2008) and the Rehabilitation Act (1973) protect children with developmental delays/disabilities from

discrimination. IDEA (2004) provides rules and regulations for EI/ECSE. While ADA (2008) and the Rehabilitation Act (1973) are valuable assets for advocates of inclusions, the field of EI/ECSE is grounded by the rules and regulations of IDEA (2004).

IDEA regulation §303.114 states, "to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are [to be] educated with children who are not disabled" (IDEA, 34 C.F.R. §303.114(i), 2004). Clarifying what is meant by "maximum extent appropriate" (IDEA, 34 C.F.R. §303.114(i), 2004), the legislation specifies that "special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from regular educational environment [should] occur only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily" (IDEA, 34 C.F.R. §303.114(ii), 2004). Section § 300.42 defines supplementary aids and services as "aids, services, and other supports that are provided in regular education classes, other education-related settings, and in extracurricular and nonacademic settings, to enable children with disabilities to be educated with children who are not disabled to the maximum extent appropriate in accordance with §303.114" (IDEA, 34 C.F.R. §300.42, 2004). IDEA's emphasis on inclusion has fostered a formal collaboration between DEC and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

In 2009, DEC and NAEYC issued a joint position statement on the inclusion of children with developmental delays/disabilities in early childhood programs. Recognizing the academic, social and legal conditions, the two leading organizations for educating young

children wrote a collective interpretation of inclusion in early childhood programs

(DEC/NAEYC, 2009). The definition stated:

> Early childhood inclusion embodies the values, policies, and practices that support
>
> the right of every infant and young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to
>
> participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families,
>
> communities, and society. The desired results of inclusive experiences for children
>
> with and without disabilities and their families include a sense of belonging and
>
> membership, positive social relationships and friendships, and development and
>
> learning to reach their full potential. The defining features of inclusion that can be
>
> used to identify high-quality early childhood programs and services are access,
>
> participation, and supports (DEC/NAEYC, 2009, p. 2).

The joint position statement established a unified definition for the fields of ECE and

EI/ECSE. It provided language that could meet the challenges of normalizing inclusion

(Smith, Barton & Rausch, 2015). Stakeholders could articulate the obstacles inhibiting high-

quality inclusive early childhood programs, and advocates could speak more clearly on

practices that can eliminate the research to practice gap (DEC/NAEYC, 2009).

There were three themes framing the joint position statement: Access to,

accommodations enhancing participation in, and structural supports for an early childhood

program:

1. *Access* can be increased through adaptations to materials, classroom environments,

   technology and embedded learning opportunities (DEC/NAEYC, 2009; McWilliams

& Casey, 2008; Sandall & Schwartz, 2008). Access allows children with developmental delays/disabilities equitable opportunities to participate in all classroom activities.

2. *Participation* refers to accommodations for individual children. Accommodations support children's engagement and adjust learning activities that meet the individual interests of a child (DEC/NAEYC, 2009; McWilliams & Casey, 2008; Sandall & Schwartz, 2008).

3. *Program structural supports* are intentional systems developed around collaborative relationships. Supports require programmatic coordination with a unified mission (Barton & Smith, 2015; DEC/NAEYC, 2009).

These three features defined the quality of inclusive early childhood programs and began to address the importance of leadership from all stakeholders.

The role of directors as leaders is highlighted in the joint position statement and subsequent documents with a call for the creation of program conditions enhancing the availability of resources improving a child's access to the classroom curriculum (Colorado Childcare Rules and Regulations, 2016; DEC, 2014; DEC/NAEYC, 2009). The literature identifies the importance of leadership which fosters policies and procedures allowing practitioners to implement practices increasing participation (DEC, 2014) and encouraging collaboration with the major stakeholders who are committed to a high-quality inclusive early childhood program (DEC, 2014; DEC, 2015; DEC/NAEYC, 2009).

Inclusion in High-quality Inclusive Early Childhood Programs

More than three decades of research has provided a large body of empirical evidence

supporting inclusion as the recommended practice for children with developmental

delays/disabilities (Gurlanick, 2001; Odom, 2002; Barton & Smith, 2015). Research strongly

supports five conclusions:

1. Inclusion does not need to look the same in every early childhood program; there are

    multiple methods of structuring a high-quality inclusive early childhood program

    (Odom & Diamond, 1998; Odom, Horn, Marquart, Hanson, Wolfberg, Beckman et

    al., 1999).

2. Inclusion is beneficial for children with and without developmental delays/disabilities

    (Buysee, Goldman & Skinner, 2002; Cole, Mills, Dale & Jenkin, 1991; Cross, Traub,

    Hutter-Pishgahi & Shelton, 2004; Rafferty, Piscitelli & Boettcher, 2003; Strain &

    Hoyson, 2000).

3. The features of access, participation, and supports a high-quality inclusive early

    childhood program provide children with wide ranges of disabling conditions the

    opportunity to develop stronger social, pre-literacy, math, and art skills more than

    children in low-quality or segregated classrooms (Daugherty, Grisham-Brown &

    Hemmeter, 2001; Grisham-Brown, Schuster, Hemmeter & Collins, 2000; Grisham-

    Brown, Pretti-Frontczak, Hawkins & Winchell, 2009; Odom & Diamond, 1998;

    Rafferty et al., 2003).

4. With the correct policies, resources and unified beliefs, high-quality inclusive early

    childhood programs do not decrease the developmental outcomes of children without

disabilities (Dinnebeil, McInerney, Fox & Juchartz-Pendry, 1998; Lieber, Hanson, Beckman, Odom, Sandall, Schwartz et al., 2000; Mulvihill, Shearer, Van Horn, 2002; Purcell, Horn & Palmer, 2007; Stroiber, Gettinger & Goetz, 1998).

5. High-quality inclusive early childhood programs can be less expensive than programs segregating children with developmental delays/disabilities (Odom, Hanson, Lieber, Marquart, Sandall, Wolery et al., 2001; Odom, Parrish, Hikado, 2001).

The research has fueled advocates' work to enhance the quality of inclusion. However, there are many obstacles maintained through the research to practice gap that leaders fight to overcome (Smith et al., 2015). Smith, Barton & Rausch (2015) organize the common obstacles inhibiting the implementation of RPs into three categories: (a) attitudes and beliefs, (b) policy and procedures, and (c) resources. The obstacles remain in place because of the research to practice gap (DEC/NAEYC, 2009; Fixsen, Naoom, Blase, Friedman & Wallace, 2005).

Between 2015 and 2016, the U.S. Department of Education and Department of Health and Human Services issued five joint policy statements to assist state, local and program leaders: Suspension and Expulsion; Inclusion; Family Engagement; Dual Language Learners; and Assistive Technology. One of the continuous themes found across all of the joint policy statements is the pivotal roles of leadership to overcome obstacles and bridge the research to practice gap. The policy statements go beyond providing resources; they provide recommendations supporting leaders with creating systems of support and services for high-quality inclusive early childhood programs (ED/HHS, 2016). The policy statements are

enhanced by the DEC (2015) position statement on leadership. The joint policy statements

and the DEC (2015) position statements articulate the importance of professional

development (PD) that can develop the elements for leading a high-quality inclusive early

childhood program (DEC, 2015; ED/HHS, 2016).

Leadership

Northouse (2009) recognizes that the term *leadership* holds a different definition for

different people and can vary across different contexts and conditions. He says, "as soon as

we try to define leadership, we discover that leadership has many different meanings"

(Northouse, 2009, p.2). In this literature review, leadership is defined as the individual and

collective actions taken to influence the desired outcome (DEC, 2015; Snyder et al., 2012).

A leader espouses unique leadership qualities, applies leadership methods and is defined by

their specific organization's structure and culture (DEC, 2015; Kagan & Bowman, 1997;

Muijus et al., 2004). The research conducted for this study explored how each research

participant defined leadership, and how it was reflected in interviews and document analyses.

Leadership in High-quality Inclusive Early Childhood Programs

DEC's (2015) position statement on leadership and RPs (DEC, 2014) points out that

the wealth of evidence supporting inclusion will be less effective in an early childhood

program if the leader(s) does not have the elements of leadership that allow them to support

the implementation of EBPs. Strong leadership can create the conditions for bridging the

research to practice gap (DEC, 2014; DEC, 2015). The leadership strand of RPs "addresses

the responsibilities of those in positions of program authority and leadership related to

providing services to children who have developmental delays/disabilities and their families

(DEC, 2014 p. 5)." It alludes to the value of leadership in high-quality inclusive early

childhood programs (DEC, 2015).

An accumulation of research from across multiple fields has begun to identify the

characteristics and responsibilities of effective leadership applicable to the elements for

leading a high-quality inclusive early childhood program (DEC, 2015). Research on

leadership in business and K-12 education recognizes leadership and management as

inseparable (Billingsley, McLeskey & Crockett, 2014; DEC, 2015). This belief is embraced

in the DEC (2015) position statement on leadership (DEC, 2015).

The literature on leadership in EI/ECSE and ECE distinguishes management and

leadership specific to the field (DEC, 2015; Kagan & Bowman, 1997). Management roles

involve day-to-day operations and the utilization of program resources (Muijs et al., 2004;

Yukl, 2013). It does not require social engagement or leadership (Muijs et al., 2004). Kagan

and Bowman (1997) recognize that leadership involves social engagement and specific

qualities. They, and other scholars, emphasize that the roles and responsibilities of a leader

in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs rely on their adaptability to situational

conditions in the program (Derman-Sparks, Leeheenan & Nimmo, 2014; Kagan & Bowman).

Derman-Sparks, LeeKeenan and Nimmo (2014) note, personality qualities of leaders

include "having the courage to lead, cultivating imagination, willingness to engage in

ongoing self-reflection and growth, practice what one preaches, embracing learning from

mistakes (Derman-Sparks et al., 2014, pp. 29-30)," and accepting misfortunes as catalysts for

change (Derman-Sparks et al., 2014). Leaders do not need to manage, and a manager does not need to lead (DEC, 2015). However, management and leadership are often a dual expectation (Culkin, 1997). The distinction between the roles of leaders and managers highlights one of the complexities of leadership in a high-quality inclusive early childhood program.

The work of Derman-Sparks, LeeKeenan and Nimmo (2014), and other scholars impress the need for leaders to develop a critical consciousness of the power they hold within their positions (Bloch, Swadener & Cannella, 2014; Nicholson & Miniates, 2016). The RPs (2014) highlight an importance for leaders to understand their power and use it to fostering collaboration.

Nicholson and Miniates (2016) investigated the complex nature of leadership in early childhood programs, and the challenges of power directors must reconcile in order to collaborate. They point out that leadership is not restricted to select persons, nor is it binary (Nicholson & Maniates, 2016). Programs are not limited to positioning leaders and followers in their traditional roles. Rather, under certain conditions, leaders follow and followers lead. A high-quality inclusive early childhood program should have systems of supports and services distributing leadership, which means followers and leaders will include families, teachers, support staff, administrators and other stakeholders (DEC, 2015; DEC/NAEYC, 2009; Nicholson & Maniates, 2016). The researchers found it is important for directors to understand and to be conscious of the power dynamics that may occur within the leader-follower relationship. Power can disturb collaboration and hinder the success of leadership

(Nicholson & Maniantes, 2016). Because of the responsibilities placed on directors by their program and local and state policies (Colorado Childcare Rules and Regulations, 2016, 7.702.42; DEC, 2015), they are inherently expected to possess power (Culkin, 1997). Balancing power with leadership qualities promotes the successful systems of supports and services important for high-quality inclusive early childhood program (DEC/NAEYC, 2009; Nicholson & Maniates, 2016).

The Colorado Director's Certificate Program

Beginning May 1st, 2011 (Colorado Childcare Rules and Regulations, 2011), directors of early childhood programs in Colorado were required to complete thirty college credits specific to ECE. The intent of the requirements was to increase the quality of ECE in the state (Colorado's Early Learning Professional Development System Plan, n.d.). In February of 2016, the credentials necessary to earn the Colorado Director's Certificate expanded to include alternative pathways with in-service PD. Early childhood professionals who have attended the community college in the past were not on an alternative track (coloradoofficeofearlychildhood.com). The circumstances of early childhood professionals who were not earning the Colorado Director's Certificate at a community college is beyond the scope of this study. However, whichever track directors take to earn their Colorado Director's Certificate they follow the requirements outlined in the current Colorado Childcare Rules and Regulations (2016). The Rules and Regulations state:

The director of the center is responsible for administering the center in accordance with licensing rules. The director must plan and supervise the child development

program, plan for or participate in the selection of staff, plan for orientation and staff

development, supervise and coordinate staff activities, evaluate staff performance,

and participate in the program activities. (Colorado Childcare Rules and Regulations,

2016, 7.702[E])

Early childhood program professionals pursuing the Colorado Director's Certificate

at a community college must take the ten courses discussed in chapter one to prepare them

for the responsibilities outlined in the childcare rules and regulations (Colorado Childcare

Rules and Regulations, 2016). Two of the courses focus on leadership. ECE 240:

Administrators of Early Childhood Care and Education Programs "provides foundational

knowledge in early childhood program business operations, program development, and

evaluation. This course covers administrative skills, ethical decision making, risk and

resource management, and components of quality Early Childhood Education (ECE)

programs serving children ages birth through 12 years" (Colorado common course

numbering system, 2016, ECE 240). ECE 241: Administration: Human Relations for Early

Childhood Education "focuses on the human relations component of an early childhood

professional's responsibilities. This course includes director-staff relationships, staff

development, leadership strategies, family-professional partnerships, and community

interaction" (Colorado common course numbering system, 2016, ECE 241). The course

descriptions broadly address the concepts the literature identifies as important for leadership

in early childhood programs. However, the influence of DEC/NAEYC's (2009) position

statement on inclusion and the DEC (2015) position statement on leadership is not clear

(Colorado Childcare Rules and Regulations, 2015).

Despite the call for leadership in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs

(DEC, 2014; DEC, 2015), the guidance from NAEYC, CEC and DEC does not clearly

support community colleges (CEC, 2012; NAEYC, 2007; NAEYC, 2009; Stayton et al.,

2003). The NAEYC personnel preparation standards do not appear to address DEC RPs and

the CEC personnel preparation standards are restricted to beginning and advanced training,

providing minimal guidance for the preparation of early childhood professionals who are not

pursuing a bachelor's or graduate degree (CEC, 2012). That said, a small body of literature

suggests the elements of leadership for high-quality inclusive early childhood programs by

professional organizations and research could be generalized for all early childhood

professionals (Hyson, 2002; Stayton, 2003). Evidence of possible generalizations are found

by blending the leadership strand in RPs (DEC, 2014) (see Appendix B) and the NAEYC

(2007) program administrator competencies (see Appendix D), which are intended to apply

to all leaders in early childhood programs, with the CEC advanced specialty set of personnel

preparation standards for early childhood specialists (CEC, 2012) (see Appendix C), which

target early childhood professionals earning graduate degrees. Figure two conceptualizes the

blending of the professional organizations' expectations. The expectations signify the unique

elements specific to leadership that early childhood professionals should develop in

personnel preparation programs.
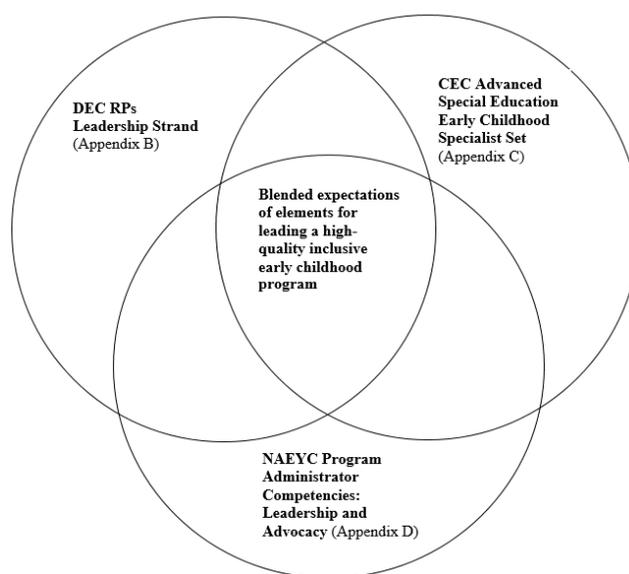
Figure 2.1. Blending professional organizations' expectations for leadership in a high-quality

inclusive early childhood program.

ECE Personnel Preparation Standards

Personnel preparation standards (called standard competencies in the Colorado

common course numbering system, 2016) are used to design and implement programs and

classes (Stayton, 2015), measure a student's outcomes, and hold institutions of higher

education (IHE) accountable for teaching the elements of educational content considered

important for professional success in the field (Cochran-Smith, 2005; Hiebert, Morris, Berk

& Jansen, 2007; Irons, Carlson, Lowery-Moore, Farrow, 2007). In a 2012 study completed

by Stayton, Smith, Diethrich and Bruder, the conclusion was drawn that IHEs and state

licensure/certification requirements rely on personnel preparation standards created by

professional organizations to determine a field's expectations for credentials. When

professional organizations do not provide personnel preparation standards for specific

educational content in the field, IHEs and states do not have precedent to offer the necessary credentials (Chen, Mickelson, 2015; Cochran-Smith, 2005; Sobel, Chopra & DiPalma, 2015; Stayton, Smith, Dietrich & Bruder, 2012). If IHEs are invested in designing credentials without personnel preparation standards, they most likely will adapt personnel preparation standards that are available for other credentials (CEC, 2012; Sobel et al., 2015), and blend them with other expectations from professional organizations (DEC, 2015; Sobel et al., 2015). In the case of community colleges, adapting personnel preparation standards creates multiple barriers that can interfere with the preparation of early childhood professionals to be leaders in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs (Chandler, Cochran, Christensen, Dinnebeil, Gallagher, Lifter et al., 2012; Sobel et al., 2015; Stayton, 2015; Stayton, Miller & Dinnebeil, 2003).

Literature provides evidence for the existence of three barriers embedded in the personnel preparation standards available to community colleges. The barriers may inhibit community colleges from preparing directors to be leaders in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs. These three barriers are:

1. The development of DEC's (Stayton et al., 2003) recommended practices for PD, NAEYC's (2009) preparation standards for professional preparation, NAEYC (2007) program administrator competencies and CEC's (2012) early childhood specialist set of preparation standards independent of one another.

2. The ambiguity of blended personnel preparation standards between ECE and EI/ECSE.

3. The omission of personnel preparation standards developing elements of leadership for high-quality inclusive early childhood programs applicable to community colleges.

Barrier 1

Personnel preparation standards began to impact ECE and EI/ECSE in the early 1990s. In 1993, DEC, NAEYC and the Association of Teacher Education (ATE) released a position statement on personnel preparation standards for early education and early intervention (DEC, 1993). The seminal document provided six recommendations "derived from empirically defensible knowledge and clearly articulated philosophical assumptions about what constitutes effective early education and early intervention (DEC, 1993, p. 1)." The two-page position statement was considered a base for credentialing guidelines aimed at preparing professionals for working in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs (DEC 1993; Stayton, 2015; Stayton et al., 2003). In 1998, the joint position statement was reaffirmed with no changes (Stayton et al., 2003). Since then, DEC, NAEYC and ATE's standards for preparing early childhood professionals have been designed independently of one another (CEC, 2012; NAEYC, 2007; NAEYC, 2009; Stayton et al., 2012)

As the fields of ECE and EI/ECSE evolved in the 2000's, accountability dominated the landscape of education (Norris, 2010). NAEYC, CEC, and DEC, with other professional organizations related to educational responsibilities with young children and families, were working to enhance professionals' effectiveness in implementing EBPs (Bruder & Dunst, 2005; Stayton, 2009; Stayton, 2015). In 2003, NAEYC published *Preparing Early*

Childhood Professions: NAEYC Standards for Programs. The book provided support for utilizing the personnel preparation standards in associate, baccalaureate and graduate ECE degrees. The text included input from CEC/DEC and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). The information provided by CEC/DEC was specific to CEC's common core personnel standards for knowledge and skills with some additional specialized standards specific to early childhood. Rather than standards, DEC offered a brief overview of recommended practices for personnel preparation that promoted the first set of RPs (Hyson, 2003).

The recommended practices for personnel preparation that DEC provided for the NAEYC text were detailed in DEC's 2003 publication: *Personnel Preparation in Early Childhood Special Education: Implementing the DEC Recommended Practices* (Stayton et al., 2003). The publication emphasized the changing nature of the professional roles, services and PD in the field of EI/ECSE. The editors provided a detailed overview of seven categories of personnel preparation recommended practices. Each chapter of the book provided two case studies of university programs implementing a specifically recommended practice. This text was a framework for institutions invested in EI/ECSE degree and non-degree PD programs (Stayton et al., 2003)

DEC's second set of the RPs was published in 2005. The revised RPs provided information to support early childhood professional's use of RPs in early childhood programs (Sandall et al., 2005). The publications did not include updates for personnel preparation

standards, but they offered additional guidance for using the NAEYC/DEC/ATE (1993) standards.

Between 2005 and 2008 CEC and DEC collaborated to create a specialized set of early childhood beginner and advanced preparation standards (Lifter et al., 2011). The CEC's specialized set of preparation standards were based on DEC's 2005 RPs. The field validation of the standards was completed by members of DEC and NAEYC (Cochran, Gallagher, Stayton, Dinnebeil, Lifter, Chandler & Christensen, 2012), but the standards themselves did not reflect a blending of standards with the NAEYC personnel standards (Hyson, 2002). The revision of the NAEYC (2009) personnel standards encouraged the use of blended standards. The DEC RPs informed CEC's 2012 specialized set of advanced early childhood preparation standards (Stayton, 2015). Together, the DEC (2014) RP's leadership strand and the CEC (2012) advanced preparation standards for leadership in early childhood offer rough guidance for IHEs. Figure 2 conceptualizes the relationship between the sources, and how the blending of standards could potentially develop the elements of leadership necessary to lead high-quality inclusive early childhood programs.

Barrier 2

Since the initial collaboration, NAEYC and DEC's efforts to blend personnel preparation standards have been discrete (Chandler, Cochran, Christensen, Dinnebeil, Gallagher, Lifter et al., 2012; Stayton, 2015). Publications released by scholars affiliated with the organizations identified present work being completed by DEC and endorsed by NAEYC, but it is not widely available (Chandler et al., 2012; Chen & Mickelson, 2015;

Stayton, 2015). In a 2012 study, Lifter and her colleagues cross-walked the CEC specialized

set of preparation standards for early childhood with the NAEYC personnel preparation

standards. The study found that the two sets of standards aligned with one another for a

majority of elements, but not all. The CEC specialized set was determined to be inconsistent

with NAEYC's standards addressing:

1. Becoming a professional and the individual elements of knowing and understanding
   diverse family and community characteristics.

2. Understanding positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation of
   their work with children.

3. Understanding content knowledge, appropriate early learning standards, and other
   resources to design, implement, and evaluate meaningfully, challenging curricula for
   each child.

Representatives from NAEYC leadership were not involved in this project, and the

results were not published as either standards or a position statement. Lifter et al. (2011)

reported that the discrepancies identified between the organizations' expectations for PD

provided evidence that early childhood professionals are not learning educational content

blending the NAEYC standards with the CEC standards and DEC RPs. Stayton (2015), and

Chen and Mickleson (2015) recognize the partnerships between DEC and NAEYC but

reaffirm the need for more unity across the professional organizations. The growing

recognition of leadership as a driver for high-quality inclusive early childhood programs

illustrates a greater need for blended personnel preparation standards. Blended standards

should address the needs of all early childhood professionals and outline the elements for leading a high-quality inclusive early childhood program (Chen & Mickleson, 2015; DEC, 2014; Kagan & Bowman, 1997; Lifter et al., 2011).

Barrier 3

The third set of the RPs (2014) emphasizes leadership. To date, the only standards that address the elements of leadership for high-quality inclusive early childhood programs are within the CEC specialized set of advanced level EI/ECSE personnel preparation standards (CEC, 2012). DEC has drawn attention to the need for preparing early childhood professionals for leadership with the position statement on leadership (DEC, 2015). Referencing decades of research, the position statement identifies five forms of leadership leaders should possess to sustain a high-quality inclusive early childhood program: community, conceptual, pedagogical, advocacy, and administrative knowledge and skills (DEC, 2015; Kagan & Bowman, 1997).

According to Crompton (1997), community knowledge and skills involve understanding how to influence policy changes, how to access local resources, when to access those resources, and how to allocate those resources to improve the quality of inclusive services and supports. Kagan and Neuman (1997) use the term conceptual knowledge and skills to represent a leader's capacity to be innovative and act against status quo policies that have created barriers for high-quality inclusive early childhood programs. Katz (1997) identifies pedagogical knowledge and skills as a leader's ability to use their research and expertise to support high-quality inclusive early childhood programs, bridge it

into program practices and problem solve using evidence-based analyses. Blank (1997) says that advocacy knowledge and skills leverage resources so that early childhood programs can become more effective in meeting the needs and interests of all stakeholders. Culkin (1997) describes administrative knowledge and skills as the responsibilities of management to provide a high-quality inclusive early childhood program with the necessary means to maintain the essential components of a functional program. Current personnel preparation standards for EI/ECSE do not address the five forms of leadership (CEC, 2012).

CEC (2012) does not include the five forms of leadership in their specialized set of standards. DEC (2015) and NAEYC (2007; 2009) recommend the use of the five forms by professionals in the fields of ECE (Kagan & Bowman, 1997; NAEYC, 2007; NAEYC, 2009) and EI/ECSE (DEC, 2015). The generalizability of the five forms within both fields may provide opportunities for instructors of community college courses to develop early childhood professionals' elements for leading a high-quality inclusive early childhood program. However, if the instructional strategies used for PD are not effective the elements may not be learned (Winton, Snyder & Goffin, 2016).

Professional Development

Stated earlier, early childhood professionals earning the Colorado Director's Certification complete ten courses, two of which develop directors' elements of leadership. ECE 240: Administration of Early Childhood Care and Education Programs (see Appendix E); and ECE 241: Administration: Human Relations for ECE (see Appendix F) are built around competencies that can be infused with the RPs in the leadership strand (DEC, 2014;

Colorado common course numbering system, 2016) (see Appendix E). For example, ECE

240: standard 11 – "discuss practices/issues related to working with other stakeholders in

early childhood programming (Colorado common course numbering system, 2016, ECE

240)." And RP: L.6 – "leaders establish partnerships across levels (state to local) and with

the counterparts in other systems and agencies to create coordinated and inclusive systems of

services and supports (DEC, 2014, p. 6)." Both references align with the community

leadership (Kagan & Bowman, 1997).

Although NAEYC, CEC and DEC have not created unified personnel preparation

standards community colleges can use to guide the creation of courses developing the

elements for leading a high-quality inclusive early childhood program, there is the potential

to equip early childhood professionals with other leadership standards or expectations (DEC,

2015). Given The faculty autonomy for course instruction (Sipple & Lightner, 2013), and

the vague wording in the community college standard competencies (Colorado common

course numbering system, 2016) (see Appendix E, see Appendix F), they have the ability to

teach the elements for leading a high-quality inclusive early childhood program based on

their personal definition of leadership (DEC, 2015; Winton et al., 2016).

The barriers created by current personnel preparation standards may be hindered the

faculty awareness of the elements for leading high-quality inclusive early childhood

programs. The barriers may influence IHEs and faculty members to base instructional

strategies on the elements of leadership in ECE rather than the elements of leadership in

EI/ECSE (Colorado common course numbering system, 2016; NAEYC/NACCRRA, 2011; NPDCI, 2008; Winton et al., 2016).

The Paradigms of Professional Development

Scholars in the field of ECE generally define PD differently than scholars in the field of EI/ECSE. The separate definitions represent separate paradigms for PD. Because of the separate paradigms for PD, IHE and the faculty may take different philosophical positions on effective PD. The field of ECE, led by a collaboration between the professional organizations of NAEYC and the National Association of Child Care Resource Referral Agencies (NACCRRA), define PD as:

> A continuum of learning and support activities designed to prepare individuals for work with and on behalf of young children and their families, as well as ongoing experiences to enhance this work. These opportunities lead to improvement in the knowledge, skills, practices and dispositions of early education professionals. Professional development encompasses education, training, and technical assistance (NAEYC/NECCRRA, 2011, p. 5)

The definition commonly used in EI/ECSE comes from the National Professional Development Center of Inclusion (NPDCI). In contrast to NAEYC and NACCRRA, NPDCI is a research focused, grant-funded center, not a professional organization. A research center cannot speak for an entire field the way a professional organization can. That said, many researchers have referenced NPDCI, and there are no other definitions of PD in EI/ECSE commonly referenced in literature (Winton et al., 2016; NPDCI, 2008). NPDCI states:

Professional development is facilitated teaching and learning experiences that are transactional and designed to support the acquisition of professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions as well as the application of this knowledge in practice. The key components of professional development include:

1. The characteristics and contexts of the learners (i.e., the 'who' of professional development).

2. The content (i.e., the 'what' of professional development).

3. The organization and facilitation of learning experiences (i.e., the 'how' of professional development (NPDCI, 2008, p. 3).

While the two definitions discuss the importance of PD and its multiple contexts, their perspectives appear to be different. The NAEYC/NECCRRA definition regards PD as opportunities to expand an individual's range of specific knowledge, skills and dispositions. Their definition compliments the intentions of NAEYC's personnel preparation standards. NPDCI's definition views PD as a process that is systemic and ongoing, similar to the philosophical base of RPs (NAEYC, 2011; Winton et al., 2016). The different paradigms and Colorado common course numbering system's consistent references to NAEYC may influence the instructional strategies used by instructors at community colleges.

Delivering PD

Winton, Snyder and Goffin (2016) use the EI/ECSE paradigm to critically evaluate traditional PD in ECE and EI/ECSE. They use a comprehensive collection of information found in research on PD in ECE and EI/ECSE to argue that the status quo of PD is

systemically broken. They find that the current instructional strategies used in PD do not prepare early childhood professionals to bridge the research to practice gap. The researchers call for "transforming ECE's fragmented PD into coherent and aligned systems (p. 61)." They view the traditional instructional strategies used for PD and the delivery structures as troubled by the neglect for important details, disrupting the implementation of EBPs "within the context of broader early childhood systems-building initiatives (Winton et al., 2016, p. 61)

Winton, Snyder and Goffin's (2016) position proposes that effective PD requires leaders to identify the *who* (characteristics and contexts of the early childhood professionals and the children and families they serve), *what* (what professionals should know and be able to do; generally defined by professional competencies, standards, and credentials) and *how* (the approaches, models, or methods used to support self-directed, experientially-oriented learning that is highly relevant to practice) of PD. Once leaders have identified the components, instructional strategies can be selected, and EBPs will be successfully implemented and sustained (Winton et al., 2016).

Evidence-based Instructional Strategies for PD

Nearly 30 years of research on PD in ECE and EI/ECSE has provided IHEs and the faculty with a large body of evidence to support the effectiveness of their selected instructional strategies (Irons et al., 2007; Showers, Joyce & Bennet, 1987; Snyder, Hemmeter & McGloughlin, 2011; Winton et al., 2016). McCollum & Callet (1997) define instructional practices on a range of least effective to most effective.

The least effective instructional strategies for teaching knowledge and professional skills are rooted in an overemphasis on personnel preparation standards (Irons et al., 2007; Winton et al., 1997; Winton et al., 2016). Literature proposes that personnel preparation standards have reinforced ineffective instructional strategies such as lecturing, reading, videos and discussions to develop early childhood professionals' knowledge. It suggests common ineffective instructional strategies intended to develop early childhood professionals' skills are modeling of, and observations of exemplars (McCollum & Catlett, 1997; Winton et al., 1997). The work of McCollum and Catlett (1998), and reiterated by Winton, Snyder and Goffin (2016) recognizes ineffective instruction strategies frequently used to develop early childhood professionals' capacity to close the research to practice gap through leadership includes providing materials supporting classroom instruction and creating lesson plans (see Appendix O).

Research shows that effective strategies require early childhood professionals to synthesize information and actively apply their professional skills and knowledge in a meaningful professional context with support from content experts (Winton et al., 1997). The use of effective instructional strategies is especially pertinent to early childhood professionals pursuing a Colorado Director's Certificate at a community college (Colorado Childcare Rules and Regulations; Doescher & Beudert, 2010). Some scholars believe that the elements of educational content are better retained, especially by non-traditional learners when highly effective instructional strategies are used (Cho, 2016; Doescher & Beudert, 2010; Garavuso, 2014). Other scholars have noted early childhood professionals are more

likely to retain the elements for leading a high-quality inclusive early childhood program if they have practice in context, such as a mentorship, coaching, a community of practice and/or TA (Gallagher, 1997; Kontos & Diamond, 1997; Winton et al., 2016).

Applying Effective Instructional Strategies Developing the Elements for Leadership

There is a growing body of literature supporting the use of highly-effective instructional strategies fostering early childhood professionals' ability to bridge the research to practice gap in early childhood programs (DEC, 2014; Gallagher, Steed & Green, 2014; Snyder et al., 2011). Common themes of highly effective instructional strategies are their application in context and active collaborations with peers and skilled professionals (Cochran-Smith, 2005; Winton et al., 2016)**.**

Technical assistance (TA) is one instructional strategy involving practice in context. It requires early childhood professionals to collaborate while using knowledge and skills they are learning in their professional environment. (Snyder, Hemmeter & Fox, 2015; NAEYC/NECCRRA, 2011). Highly effective TA is practice based. It includes collaborating with mentors, consultants, and peers. TA allows early childhood professionals to develop elements of leadership through work with skilled professionals (Gallagher, 1997; NAEYC/NECCRRA, 2011; Snyder et al., 2015). TA demands collaborative problem solving and brainstorming (Showers et al., 1987; Snyder et al., 2015). It may also include case studies, role-playing, guided reflection and practice with feedback. Research has provided evidence that effective TA can be face-to-face or web-mediated (Bishop, Snyder & Crow, 2015; Oborn & Johnson, 2015), but different TA models have different degrees of

effectiveness (Winton et al., 2016). For example, there is strong evidence identifying coaching to have the most potential for improving, sustaining and bridging research to practice gap (Fox, Hemmeter, Snyder, Binder & Clarke, 2011: Snyder et al., 2011). Like TA, coaching involves practice in context.

Snyder, Hemmeter and Fox (2015) found coaching depends, first and foremost, on a collaborative, trusting and supportive partnership between the coach and the early childhood professional. The partnership is built around the early childhood professional's individual strengths, needs, knowledge, skills and targeted learning outcomes. The coach and early childhood professional enter an ongoing process of co-creating goals and action plans developed around observations, reflection, and feedback (Artman-Meeker, Hemmeter & Snyder, 2014; Snyder et al., 2015). Research studies offer evidence that the performance-based coaching model also applies to web-mediated coaching (Bishop et al., 2015; Oborn & Johnson, 2015).

While the literature strongly promotes the instructional strategies involving practice in context through TA and coaching, the two are not commonly used in IHEs (Buettner, Hur, Jeon & Andrew, 2015; Gallagher et al., 2014; Han, 2012). They are considered resource intensive (Buettner, Hur, Jeon & Andrew, 2015). Challenges are particularly relevant to early childhood professionals who are non-traditional learners and/or live in rural communities (Snyder et al., 2015), which accounts for many students earning course credits from community colleges (Doescher & Beudert, 2010).

Conclusion of the Literature Review

Thirty years have passed since the passage of P.L. 99-457. Despite the support of federal legislation for EBPs, there has been a shockingly meager increase in the percentage of young children with developmental delays/disabilities included in high-quality early childhood programs (U.S. Department of Education, 1987; U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programming, 2014). Historically, DEC has been at the forefront of movements to improve inclusion. Their third set of RPs and the position statement on leadership have demonstrated the field of EI/ECSE's recognition for leadership as a key to increasing inclusion (DEC, 2014). However, IHE, community colleges, in particular, may be unable to formally address the preparation early childhood professionals to have the elements for leading a high-quality inclusive early childhood program without personnel preparation standards.

The Colorado Director's Certificate program requires the PD many early childhood program directors in Colorado must earn. There are ten courses included in the Colorado Director's Certificate program with the potential of focusing on developing the elements of leadership (Colorado Childcare Rules and Regulations, 2016). Unfortunately, without the guidance of personnel preparation standards developing the elements of leadership, early childhood professionals at community colleges are dependent on IHEs and the faculty awareness of professional organizations' expectations. Without awareness, the instructional strategies they used may be based on their personal definition of the elements of leadership.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This research used a case study methodology to explore how one community college was preparing early childhood professionals to be leaders in high-quality inclusive ECE programs. It focused on early childhood professions who had completed the Colorado Director's Certificate program and the faculty members who taught the ten certificate courses while the graduates were enrolled in the program. Chapter three provides an overview of: (a) qualitative research; (b) the participants who were involved in this research; (c) the methods employed; (d) data collection; (e) data analysis; (f) coding iterations; and (g) ethical considerations applied to this research.

Qualitative Research

Case studies are a qualitative approach to gathering rich-data that reveals information regarding a problem bounded by specific conditions (Creswell, 2013; Fusch & Ness, 2015; Gillham, 2000; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). They are driven by an in-depth inquiry with multiple sources of data collection with the purpose of finding common themes specific to the case. Case studies welcome iterations to data collection as new themes begin to emerge (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2014).

The case study for this research was bound to one community college. Themes emerged from interviews with the faculty and graduates through iterations of interpreting the data. The research was a deep inquiry into the preparation of graduates of the Colorado Director's Certificate to be leaders in high-quality inclusive ECE programs. The results from this research were specific to the ECE department at the community college under

exploration. Interviews and document analyses were used to understand how the faculty

defined leadership, the elements of leadership graduates developed, and the instructional

strategies the faculty used to teach their courses. The research findings were used to write

recommendations for the ECE department at the community college. The recommendations

were designed to enhance instructional practices for preparing early childhood professionals

to be leaders in high-quality inclusive programs. The recommendations were shared with the

community college's ECE department. The results of this research are not generalizable to

the work other community colleges or director preparation programs around Colorado.

Participants

This research did not focus on the individual participants. The researcher collected

data from two distinct populations with the intent of identifying themes across populations

and providing recommendations applicable to the ECE department at the community college

rather than the interests of individuals.

There were two populations of participants involved in this case study. One

population of participants were faculty members at the community college who taught

courses in the Colorado Director's Certificate. The second population of participants were

the graduates who had completed all ten courses of the Colorado Director's Certificate

program at the community college. After a comprehensive recruitment of eligible

participants, eight faculty and 16 graduates were identified.

The faculty members and graduates who received a consent form and case study

description were asked to schedule an interview with the research assistant responsible for

interviewing. Six faculty members and seven graduates were interviewed. At the end of the study, each participant received a $20 gift card for Amazon.com.

The Faculty

The eight faculty members were initially contacted for the study through an email to their personal email account from the lead researcher's community college email account. The personal contact information was accessible to the lead researcher from the community college records. Three of the faculty responded. The faculty responded to questions from a three-question screening questionnaire (see Appendix F) that could not be retrieved from the community college records. The faculty who answered the questions with "yes" qualified for the study. All three of the faculty qualified. After qualifying for the study, they were formally invited to participate in the study and given a consent form by the lead researcher (see Appendix L). They were told to read the consent form thoroughly, initial each page and then sign if they agreed to participate. The three of the faculty signed and physically returned their consent form to the lead researcher within one week.

Two of the five faculty members who did not respond to the initial email were contacted by the lead researcher through their personal phone number. Neither faculty members answered the call. A voice message was left for both of them. They were asked to return the lead researcher's call, send a text message to the lead researcher's phone or respond to the initial email. Both responded to the email, signed and physically returned their consent form to the lead researcher.

One of the three remaining faculty members who had not responded was approached directly at the community college during a visit. She was asked if she was interested in participating. She said she was and then responded to questions on the screening questionnaire. She answered all of the questions with "yes," qualifying her for the study. She returned it less than 24 hours with each page initialed and the bottom of the document signed.

The remaining two faculty members who did not respond to the initial email or phone call were not contacted again. At the end of the research recruitment phase, six faculty members had signed and returned their consent form. All six faculty completed the study. At no time during the study did the remaining two faculty members respond to the lead researchers request for participation.

Graduates of the Colorado Director's Certificate

The second population of participants were early childhood professionals who had graduated from the Colorado Director's Certificate program at the community college within a year before the research. Graduates were recruited from a list of students who have started courses after 2011 and completed the course work between the fall semester of 2015, spring semester of 2016 and the summer semester of 2016. The list was compiled in the community college database called Academic Intelligence©. Sixteen students qualified under those criteria.   Every student was initially contacted through their personal email address by the lead researcher. Fifteen of the 16 emails were sent successfully. One of the email addresses was not active. Five of the 15 graduates responded to the lead research expressing their

interest in participating. The five participants received a responding email with questions from a screening questionnaire (see Appendix M) that could not be answered based on information in Academic Intelligence©. They were also given the graduate consent form (see Appendix N) and a description of the case study. If they could answer "yes" to the questions, they were told to read the study description and the consent form thoroughly, initial each page, sign the bottom of the document and physically delivered it to the lead researcher's office at the community college. Two of the five graduates responded to the email and physically returned the consent form. The three graduates who did not respond were asked once more via email to respond.

The three graduates who did not respond after expressing an initial interest, in addition to the eleven graduates who did not receive, or did not respond to the initial email were contacted through their personal phone number listed in Academic Intelligence©. Thirteen of the 14 phone calls were either answered by the graduate or directed to a voicemail system. Four graduates answered the call. A voice message was left for nine graduates. One graduate did not have a working phone number. She was the same graduate who did not have an active email address in Academic Intelligence©. The four graduates who answered the phone call were asked questions from the questionnaire to determine their qualification for the study. All four of the graduates qualified and expressed an interest in participating in the study. They were emailed the consent form with the case study description, told to read them thoroughly, initial each page, sign the bottom of the document

and physically delivered it to the lead researcher's office at the community college. Three of the four graduates signed the consent forms and returned them.

The one graduate who did not return their consent form and the nine graduates who had not yet responded to the initial email or phone call were contacted with a text message from the lead researcher to their personal phone number. Four of the graduates responded to the text message. The four graduates who answered the text were asked questions from the questionnaire to determine their qualification for the study. All four of the graduates qualified and expressed an interest in participating in the study. They were emailed the consent form and case study description told to read them thoroughly, initial each page, sign the bottom of the document and physically deliver it to the lead researcher's office at the community college. Three of the four graduates signed the consent forms and returned them.

The lead research attempted to contact the remaining eight graduates two more times; first with a text and then a phone call. One responded, expressed an interest in participating, but did not return her consent form. One declined the invitation to participate. The remaining six graduates with active email addresses and phone numbers did not respond to any forms of contact. After the recruitment phase, the lead research obtained signed consent forms for seven graduates. All seven of the graduates completed the study.

Methods for Data Collection

The underlying goal of this case study was to explore a case and identify emerging themes that would guide the creation of recommendations for the early childhood education department at the community college. To identify and validate the themes, the case study

used qualitative methods, collecting two data sets from interviews and one data set from document analyses.

Collecting multiple data sets is central to qualitative research. The multiple data sets enable *data triangulation* (King & Horrocks, 2010). Data triangulation corroborates the findings from one data set with the findings of the others (Yin, 2014). It allows the researcher to draw credible, transferable, dependable and confirmable conclusions from a research study with a small number of participants (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Guest, Bunce & Johnson, 2006; Sherman, 2004). The multiple data sets offer a wealth of qualitative information, creating rich-data (Creswell, 2013; Flick, 2007; Fusch & Ness, 2015). Rich-data allows for data-saturation. Data-saturation is achieved when no new themes are emerging (Creswell, 2013; Fusch & Ness, 2015; Gillham, 2000).

Data triangulation in this research occurred through the use of three data sets. The first data set came from interviews with the participating faculty members. The second data set came from interviews with the participating graduates. The third data set came from course learning materials used by the participating faculty members who taught courses included in the Colorado Director's Certificate. Once the data triangulation was completed, the research assistant, methodologist and lead researcher decided there were no additional benefits for collecting more data through follow-up interviews or other data sets based on the proposed methodology. The goal of answering the research questions was achieved through the interpretations of the three initial data sets.

Interviews

The interviews for this research were semi-structured. The semi-structured interviews asked questions based on key issues identified in the literature gathered during the proposal. The interviews included additional prompts that encourage the interviewee to elaborate (Gillham, 2000; Thomas, 2011). All of the participants completed a 15 to 25-minute interview. There were separate interview protocols for the two population of participants (see Appendix L; see Appendix M).

The interview protocol for faculty members was piloted on a faculty member who taught several courses in the Colorado Director's Certificate program at another Colorado community college. The interview protocol for graduates of the Colorado Directors Certificate program was piloted on a student currently enrolled at the community college under exploration. The student was pursuing a Colorado Director's Certificate and had completed eight of the ten courses required. The interviews were conducted by the research assistant of the study with coaching from the lead researcher. After the pilot interviews, the lead researcher and research assistant discussed the interview strategies, prompts and the effectiveness of the questions at gathering the intended data.

The research assistant conducting the interviews was a graduate student in her final semester in the University of Colorado Denver's Masters in Education program. She recorded the interviews using Zoom©, a password protected, encrypted online video conferencing program approved by the University of Colorado Denver's institutional review board before the research. The research assistant transcribed the interviews onto a word-

processed document. The research assistant and lead researcher reviewed the recorded pilot

interviews and discussed the use of the prompts. The prompts align with the questions and a

priori codes (see Appendix N) pulled from the literature review to gather sufficient data for

answering the research questions (see Appendix L; see Appendix M). The a priori codes will

be discussed in the next subsection. The prompts were statements rephrasing the questions

or stating, "tell me more about…" or "can you be more specific…?"

Following the completion of the 13 interviews, the lead researcher reviewed all of the

video recordings and transcriptions to ensure accuracy. The confidentiality of the interview

content and anonymity of the interviewee are detailed in the ethical considerations of the

subsection.

Course Learning Materials

The third data set was a document analysis of course learning materials used by the

faculty members who participated in the research study. Twenty learning materials were

collected. The learning materials included any document that described the expectations of

course learning activity. They included: assignment description, activity descriptions and

discussion prompts for in-class activities. All of the course learning materials were screened

by the lead researcher to ensure their relevance to the case study (Olson, 2012). Qualifying

documents included one or more of the a priori coding themes (King & Horrocks, 2010) (see

Appendix N) identified during the literature review and discussed in the next subsection.

Data Analysis

The transcriptions of interviews and learning materials were initially coded using ten

a priori codes (King & Horrocks, 2010; Marshall & Rossman, 2016) (see Appendix N). The

initial a priori codes were defined by the DEC/NAEYC (2009) position statement on

inclusion, the leadership strand of the DEC (2014) RPs (see Appendix B), the leadership

knowledge and skills in the CEC (2012) specialty set of personnel preparation standards for

advanced early childhood professionals (see Appendix C), the leadership and advocacy

knowledge and skills in the NAEYC (2007) program administrator competencies (see

Appendix D) and research on effective instruction strategies.

The 13 interviews and 20 course assignments were coded by the lead researcher and

two research assistants. Early in the coding process the lead researcher and research

assistants identified 13 emerging themes related and unrelated to the a priori codes. The four

interview transcripts that had been coded with the initial ten codes were re-coded using 23

codes.

The use of three coders allowed for additional triangulation. The triangulation used

during this phase was *investigator triangulation* (King & Horrocks, 2010), also referred to in

qualitative research as interrater reliability. Like data triangulation, investigator triangulation

corroborated the research findings. However, unlike data triangulation, the investigator

triangulation compared one coder's interpretations with the others' (King & Horrocks, 2010;

Yin, 2014). The investigator triangulation required intercoding agreement from the insider

perspective (lead researcher) and outsider perspectives (two research assistants). The

intercoding agreements enabled the researcher to systemically compare data interpretations, neutralizing biases and enriching data (Creswell, 2009; King & Horrocks, 2010).

The lead researcher and research assistants coded the interviews of each population of participants separately. After the initial coding had been completed, follow-up interviews were considered with the potential of addressing emerging themes with more depth (King & Horrocks, 2010; Olson, 2012; Yin, 2014). As a group, the lead researcher, research assistants and methodologist, Dr. Courtney Donovan, determined the initial interviews and assignments provided sufficient data saturation. The group decided follow-up interviews were not likely to reveal additional information on the themes that had emerged and support answers for the research questions.

Dr. Donovan assisted the lead researcher in the next phases of data analysis. First, the lead research completed the investigator triangulation. The bench mark used to determine intercoder agreement of the results was set by the methodologist at 80 percent.

The investigator triangulation began with the data exported from Dedoose© into Microsoft Excel©. The exported data included the initials of the participants, the words in the coded excerpt, the starting point of each individual excerpt and the end of each individual excerpt. The data was disaggregated by each of the 23 codes. The 23 codes were sorted into three categories: (a) codes assigned to faculty transcripts; (b) codes assigned to graduate transcripts; and (c) codes assigned to course learning activities. The process created 69 Microsoft Excel© sheets. Each sheet was then organized into three criteria: (a) Transcript

name; (b) The number assigned to the start of the coded excerpts; and (c) the assigned end of the coded excerpt.

Once the excerpts were organized, they were labeled as a *hit* or *miss*. Excerpts labeled hits required intercoder agreement by two of three coders. If an excerpt was only coded by one coder, the lead researcher reviewed it and determined whether it was potentially a hit or miss. Potential hits accounted for 9.7 percent of the coded excerpts. After being reviewed, 3.2 percent were identified as misses. The final calculations revealed an intercoder agreement of 96.8 percent, exceeding the bench mark of 80 percent, satisfying the intercoder agreement benchmark. Lastly, the codes were mapped, analyzed, interpreted and used to answer the research questions.

Code Mapping

Anfara, Brown and Mangione (2002), recommend qualitative researchers use code mapping with the goal of providing more transparency for the analysis of data. Anfara (2002) and colleagues conceptualize a three-iteration analysis. The first iteration is a surface content analysis. The surface content analysis for this research included the 23 codes used to code every document. The 23 coders provided a structure for the documents related to the literature reviewed for the research and the early emerging themes. The second iteration was pattern variables. The pattern variables were identified during the interpretation of the coded excerpts. There were four pattern variables. The third iteration, application, gave meaning to the data allowing the researcher to draw conclusions and answer the research questions. Table one illustrates the process of code mapping for this case study.

Table 3.1. Code mapping: The iterations of data analysis (Anfara, Brown & Mangione (2002)

Research questions:
Q1: Defining elements of leadership Q2: Elements developed from the certificate courses Q3: Instructional strategies for developing elements Q4 Development of elements while enrolled

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Third iteration: Application
Graduate's elements of leadership; graduate and faculty members' definition of elements of leadership; the faculty instructional practices; and recommendations for the college

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Second iteration: Pattern variables
Early childhood professional practices
Personnel development
Inclusive programming
Leadership

First iteration: Initial codes	**First iteration: Early emergent codes**
Access to inclusive programs	Emotional affect
Systems of supports and services	Program collaboration
	Administrative leadership
Leadership practices/qualities	Advocacy leadership
Program policies	Conceptual leadership
Evidence-based practices	Community leadership
Professional standards	Pedagogical leadership
Advocacy	Skills, knowledge and dispositions
Reflective practices	Early childhood professional as a leader
Technical assistance	The faculty instructional strategies
Field experience	Early childhood professional instruction
	Approaches to teaching
	Professional development
	Community partnerships
	Resources

Trustworthiness

Sherman (2004) defines trustworthiness as credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability of research findings. Credibility in qualitative research is parallel to internal validity in quantitative research. Credibility can be based on the question, "how congruent are the findings with reality (p. 64)?" To answer the question, the research must be well-versed in the most current evidence in the field. Credibility can be enhanced with the

use of a priori coding and expertise of coders (Creswell, 2013; King & Horrocks, 2010). Transferability is parallel to external validity/generalizability. The transferability of qualitative findings is based on the context of the research. It is difficult to cancel out variables which may have strongly influenced the research findings and cannot be reproduced in other settings (Gillham, 2000; Thomas, 2011; Yin, 2014). Dependability is parallel to reliability. Dependability can only occur if it is done in the same context, and even then a researcher cannot discount changes in the phenomenon. Confirmability is parallel to objectivity. Confirmability is reliant on a researcher's strict adherence to negating any personal biases.

This research involved certain degrees of trustworthiness. The research study was exploratory (Yin, 1993). Given the nature of this research study, the research findings are not transferable. Similar studies have not been conducted in the community college. Therefore, dependability was not a concern with these data.

Bias distorts the research findings (Walliman, 2011). Holloway, Brown and Shipway (2010) believe data collected through interviews inevitably include some degree of bias. The interviewer must separate themselves from their research and set their personal views to the side (Denzin, 2009; Fusch & Ness, 2015; Holloway et al., 2010). Failure to recognize personal biases will taint data and hinder the process of data saturation (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Data triangulation and investigator triangulation will negate some biases.

This research was considered an internal evaluation. The benefits of the internal evaluations include a clearer understanding of the community colleges culture and

idiosyncrasies that an outside researcher may not have recognized. The evaluation methods

were tailored to the lead researcher's understanding of limitations with the participants, the

courses and the Colorado Director's Certificate and the early childhood education department

at the community college (Creswell, 2009; Love, 1991; Seidman, 2006; Trowler, 2011).

Unlike an external evaluator, the lead researcher, as an internal evaluator had a commitment

to the community college (Love, 1991; Trowler, 2011). Risks of the internal evaluation were

biases and premeditated assumptions limiting trustworthiness (Creswell, 2009; Love, 1991;

Seidman, 2006; Trowler, 2011). This research used data triangulation and investigator

triangulation, as well as an outside interviewer to mitigate the risks of internal evaluation.

Ethical Consideration

The ethical considerations for a case study outline the "principles of conduct

(Thomas, 2011, p. 68)." The ethical considerations can be presented in the informed consent

given to and signed by participants before their participation (See Appendix I; See Appendix

J). An informed consent explains the purpose and methods of the research study, the

expected benefits, risks, explanation of measures to ensure confidentiality, anonymity, and

data retention and disposal (Seidman, 2006; Thomas, 2011).

The purpose and benefits of the study are presented in chapter one. The risks

included emotional discomfort and potential embarrassment. Despite measures to maintain

anonymity the participant risked the release of identifiable information, which could have

potentially had negative implications (Gregory, 2003; Kimmel, 1988; Seidman, 2006). The

researcher for this study limited all possible risks through assurances of confidentiality,

anonymity and the use of interview questions avoiding any known topics that could have caused participants to feel discomfort. None of the participants reported any negative experiences about their participation in the study.

All of the research material was confidential and only shared with the respective participant and coders (Seidman, 2006). The video files were saved in a password encrypted file within Zoom©. They were deleted as soon as they had been transcribed onto a document. Documents with data were stored in the password protected cloud of Dedoose©, an online program for coding qualitative data. Anonymity was maintained by using participant's initials. Coders were unaware of the proper names of any participants. The researcher excluded any personal information or specific names of organizations, institutions, locations or people related to the participant from data interpretations. During the analysis phases, the data was never interpreted looking at the codes of individual participants.

This case study was conducted as insider research (Trowler, 2011). The research included active employees in the early childhood education department at the community college. Insider research inherently carries risks related to the power differences between the researcher and the research participants (Trowler, 2011; McDermid, Peters, Jackson & Daly, 2014). To guard against the risks the interviews were conducted by a research assistant not affiliated with the community college and the findings from individual interviews were not shared with college faculty members. The faculty participants were informed the research was not an evaluation of their performance.

Participants' involvement in the study was voluntary. They had the right to withdraw at any time. They had the option of reviewing their interview recording or transcript upon request. The participants were aware of the researcher's interpretations of their interview or course learning materials before providing them for the study. The published study included the interpretations of data as it was described in the informed consent. The interpretations guided the recommendations given to the community college.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH RESULTS

The results and findings from this research revealed evidence supporting recommendations for the ECE department and the faculty who taught the ten courses included in the Colorado Director's Certificate program at the community college. Chapter four presents: (a) the results of the research; and (b) a summary of the findings.

Results

The results from the research came from three data sets. The data sets were collected through seven interviews with graduates of the Colorado Director's Certificate program, six with the faculty who taught the courses required for graduation and 20 learning materials used in the courses taught by the faculty. The three data sets were analyzed with 23 a priori codes, which were interpreted and organized into four pattern variables. This section summarizes the results from (a) the faculty interviews, (b) the graduate interviews and (c) an analysis of the learning materials.

The Faculty Interviews

Results from the faculty interviews were extracted from four of the six interview questions. This subsection outlines the faculty (a) definitions of leadership for high-quality inclusive early childhood programs, (b) awareness of the elements for leadership identified by CEC (2012), DEC (2014) and NAEYC (2007), and the instructional strategies they use to teach courses included in the Colorado Director's Certificate program at the community college.

The Faculty Definitions of Leadership

The defining characteristics of leadership for high-quality inclusive early childhood programs were based on the DEC (2015) position statement on leadership. The interpretations of data from the faculty interviews revealed six specific characteristics defining leadership for leading high-quality inclusive early childhood programs. They were primarily attributed to the leadership styles of advocacy (6/6) and administrative (4/6). The individual characteristics included: Management, resourcefulness, collaboration, inclusivity self-awareness and community engagement. Certain characteristics were mentioned more often than others.

Nearly all of the faculty discussed the importance of management, but more importantly, expanding leadership beyond the traditional roles of managing a program (5/6). This was done in a variety of ways. First, they emphasized reaching out to organizations to obtain resources for supporting children with developmental delays or disabilities (6/6). One faculty member summed it up by saying, "There has to be an openness to learning and a willingness to ask questions and again it goes back to that advocacy of asking the questions, trying to find out who the resources are for the families. Multitasking is also huge, but just also having that awareness." Many of the faculty also talked about leaders as a catalyst for unity and collaboration within a program (4/6). The faculty discussed leadership for high-quality inclusive programs as actions in classrooms (3/6), impressing the need for leaders to have self-awareness (3/6). Community engagement was touched on, but rarely (2/6). Table 4.1 provides quotes of the topics related to the faculty definitions of leadership they

discussed during their interviews. The number in the right-hand column indicates how many

of the faculty gave similar responses.

Table 4.1. The faculty definitions of leadership for high-quality inclusive programs

DEC definition of leadership	Excerpt: The faculty definitions of leadership for high-quality inclusive programs	Related excerpts for other participants
Advocacy	There has to be openness to learn and a willingness to ask questions, trying to find out who the resources are for the families, multitasking is also huge, also having that awareness	6
Advocacy	If they're a teacher, TA, parent, community member, director, if they're at a state level, I think it just takes that courageous voice to be able to be a leader in early childhood	5
Administrative	If the director doesn't lead the perfect inclusive environment or something is lacking… taking it into consideration making them know that the most important thing is maybe calling a staff meeting so everyone is on the same page, and addressing the issues whatever it can be, and again by educating… perhaps giving resources	4
Pedagogical	You know, how do you go back and figure out styles of learning, ways to individualize your teaching, so that all children are getting it	3
Conceptual	Asking them to be in this culture of self-awareness and change where it doesn't have a negative implication...not only do you need to be able to have that yourself, but you need to be able to lead others in participating in that with you	3
Community	Being a leader, means being a leader in the community, as well	2

The Faculty Awareness of Elements for Leadership

Data from the faculty interviews indicated they were more aware of elements for

leadership defined by NAEYC (2007) than those defined by CEC (2012) or DEC (2014) (see

Table 4.2). Advocacy was the most consistent leadership practice the faculty identified

aligning the expectations of the three organizations (6/6). One faculty member stated, "Once

you have a concern then you reach out to somebody that is the expert in the field that you may have concerns." All of the faculty expressed a similar belief. The faculty talked about creating an environment supporting children with developmental delays or disabilities (5/6).

The practices for creating a supportive environment are more closely related to elements for classroom practices (NAEYC, 2009) rather than elements for leadership practices (CEC, 2012; DEC, 2014; NAEYC 2007), so the data alignment with professional organizations' expectations for leadership was less transparent. Various combinations of the faculty discussed typical/atypical development (3/6), and cultural responsiveness (3/6). Similar to the data highlighting supportive environments, typical/atypical development and cultural responsiveness are not elements specific to leadership practices (CEC. 2012; DEC, 2014; NAEYC, 2009; NAEYC, 2007).

The data most accurately aligned with the professional organizations' expectations were practices addressing the legal policies supporting inclusion (2/6). One faculty member said, "making sure that they understand where their support system is to be able to pull in people or supports when they need it and the bigger picture of, like, the legal ramifications, you know, like IDEA and all that stuff needs to really be talked about more." The topic of policies like IDEA is addressed in all three professional organizations' expectations. Table 4.2 shows the alignment of data with the professional organizations' expectations of elements for leadership. The middle column provides a quote representative of the faculty. The number in the right-hand column indicates how many of the faculty gave similar responses.

Table 4.2. The faculty awareness of elements for leadership practices aligned with professional organizations' expectations for leadership

DEC RP; CEC standard; NAEYC competency	Excerpt: The faculty awareness of the elements for leadership in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs	Related excerpts for other participants
DEC RP: L1; 3; 5; 12; 13 CEC: SEECS.5.K3; S1; S3 NAEYC: 1, 6	You are not the professional at this point. You can give your insight and observations. Once you have a concern then you reach out to somebody that is the expert in the field. You'd reach out to PT, OT, things like that	6
DEC RP: L1 CEC: SEECS.5.S1 NAEYC: 6	How do you go back and figure out styles of learning, ways to individualize your teaching, so all children are getting it	5
DEC RP: L1 CEC: SEECS.5.K1 NAEYC: 3, 6	They have to have a strong culture, multicultural background so they can gather an understanding of all cultures and how they work, why they do what they and do some of them in a different diversity	3
DEC RP: L1 CEC: SEECS.5.S1 NAEYC: 6	Understanding the typical development of young children is important, what happens when children aren't typical	3
DEC RP: L3; 5; 10 CEC: SEECS.5.K2; S2 NAEYC: 2, 6	Making sure that they understand where their support system is to be able to pull in people or supports when they need it and the bigger picture of the legal ramifications like IDEA	2

Instructional Strategies Used by the Faculty

Instructional strategies were identified using the *Aligning Instructional Strategies to Desired Professional Development Outcomes* figure (Winton et al., 2016) (see Appendix O). On the x-axis, the figure has the instructional strategy's intensity of complexity rated from left to right: *low*, *medium* and *high*. On the y-axis, are the type of element being developed. The type of element, from bottom to top are: *knowledge*, *skills* and *practice in context*

(Winton et al., 2016). The data were interpreted first by the type of element being developed, then by instructional strategies and last by the intensity of complexity.

The data from interviews revealed that the faculty members developed early childhood professionals' knowledge using instructional practices that had medium complexity far more than any other type of element or complexities. During the interviews, they talked most about discussions (6/6) and learning checks (6/6). Both instructional strategies developed knowledge and use medium complexity. The development of skills was rarely mentioned (3/6). The skills addressed were done through skill practice. Skills practice used medium complexity. None of the faculty mentioned practice in context or instructional strategies using high complexity.

The faculty members talked about developing early childhood professionals' knowledge of practices related to social justice, policy and ethical obligations using discussions. The learning checks they addressed developed knowledge through research papers, presentations and projects. The instructional strategy of skill practice primarily occurred in lab courses, where students observed children and wrote reflections. The faculty member who spoke the most about skill practice stated, "my students actually go to various sites and they observe, they really get the hands on experience of inclusive classrooms and they always need to write reflections." Table 4.3 provides quotes representing the topics addressed by the faculty. The left-hand column shows the type of element, instructional strategy and complexity. The center column is a quote. The right column is the number of the faculty who provided similar responses.

Table 4.3. The faculty instructional strategies

Type of Element being developed: Strategy - Complexity	Excerpt: The faculty instructional strategies used to develop early childhood professionals' elements for leading high-quality inclusive early childhood programs	Related excerpts for other participants
Knowledge: Discussion - Medium	They would read serious material, like journal articles, research, new information, documentaries and they have to research two opposing arguments for that particular topic and then present it to the class. Then we sit in a circle and we talk about these topics we have those hard discussions that people might shy away from. They see multiple different perspectives and it opens their eyes. When you hear someone else talking from a place of passion it allows students to put their guards down a little bit and be curious	6
Knowledge: Learning Checks - Medium	All my students are required to do an individual learning activity of their own choice, and looking into the emotional piece of developmentally delayed for trauma and different issues that kids may be delayed	6
Knowledge: Discussion - Medium	I would bring samples of IEPs and look at what do those look like, how you read them, what that means, the legal rights for the teachers and parents and what that means for a child	4
Skill: Practice- Medium	My students go to sites and they observe, so they get the hands on experience of inclusive classrooms and they always need to write reflections	3

The Faculty Recommendations

At the end of each interview, each faculty member was asked, "what additional support do you and students need from the community college to build students' capacity to be leaders in early childhood programs including children with developmental delays or disabilities." A majority of the faculty members stated versions of the same four recommendations. Several of the recommendations were prefaced by the faculty recognizing

that the recommendation may be outside the scope of resources available to the community college.

The most common recommendation was for the college to provide more instructional supports (6/6). The faculty voiced a desire for visual media, physical props and updated literature. The faculty also talked about the benefits students would receive with more field work related to inclusion (5/6). The faculty recommended the high complexity, practice in context instructional strategy of coaching during or after the course work (5/6). For this instructional strategy, they all recognized the difficulty of coaching, but they thought it was something the college should consider. The faculty recommended more intra-departmental collaboration between the faculty (4/6). They felt there was a disconnect between courses potentially interrupting students' development of the elements for leading a high-quality inclusive program. They believed more continuity could improve student outcomes. The faculty also recommended building stronger relationships with the community, bringing in community resources, connecting with early childhood sites and establishing relationships with content experts (4/6). Only one of the faculty recommended the college become a community resource. She stated, "We can become a hub where we're hosting various things that the faculty are well-versed in." Table 4.4 provides quotes representing the recommendations offered by the faculty. The left-hand column shows the nature of the recommendation, the center column is a quote. The right column is the number of the faculty who gave similar responses.

Table 4.4. The faculty recommendations

Recommendation	Excerpt: The faculty recommendations for enhancing the early childhood department	Related excerpts for other participants
Course materials/resources	Maybe having the college provide, more of tools, video clips, games and visuals, interviews, videos, outside of books and have visuals and hands-on activities	6
Field work	One of the things I think would be beneficial for the students is for them to go and apply something right away	5
Technical Assistance	I think to have a coach who's there right beside you to help with things like lesson plans and with young children who have special needs	5
Intra-departmental Collaboration	Trying to collaborate a lot more with all of us especially around the delayed learners	4
Become a Community Resource	We can become a hub where we're hosting various different things that the faculty are well-versed in	1

Graduate Interviews

Results from the graduate interviews were extracted from four of the six interview questions. This subsection outlines the graduates (a) definitions of leadership for high-quality inclusive early childhood programs, (b) the elements for leadership identified by CEC (2012), DEC (2014) and NAEYC (2007) they developed, and the instructional strategies used by the faculty the graduates recall from courses.

Graduates' Definitions of Leadership

The interpretations of data from graduate interviews revealed four characteristics defining leadership in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs (DEC, 2015). Like the faculty, the graduates emphasized characteristics of advocacy and administrative leadership. The graduates also talked about characteristics of pedagogical, conceptual and community leadership, but less often. The characteristics they frequently spoke about were advocating, resourcefulness, inspirational, knowledgeable, open-mindedness, inclusivity and community orientation.

Advocating for families of children with developmental delays or disabilities was talked about extensively by many of the graduates (5/7). They talked about advocating in the classroom, program and community. Characteristics of administrative leadership were mentioned by all of the graduates. They recognized administrative leadership through resourcefulness (4/7), inspiration (4/7) and knowledge (3/7). The graduates also talked about characteristics of conceptual leadership such as creativeness and open-mindedness (3/7). One graduate said, "I mean somebody who's open-minded and willing to make the right changes to lead a good classroom or a good teaching environment." Graduates who talked about pedagogical leadership characteristics (3/7) such as, being able to make curriculum accommodations and individualized instruction, talked about it at length. Like the faculty, graduates rarely touched on community leadership (1/7). Table 4.5 provides quotes addressing the graduates' definitions of leadership for high-quality inclusive early childhood programs. The left-hand column shows the leadership style, the center column is a quote and the right column is the number of graduates who gave similar responses.

Table 4.5. Graduate definitions of leadership

DEC definition of leadership	Excerpt: Graduates' definitions of leadership in high-quality inclusive programs	Related excerpts for other participants
Advocacy	For me it's helpin' the parents get connected to child find, helpin' the parents learn what the milestones are that their child should be reaching	5
Administrative	Ensuring that you have the resources for the teachers, for the parents, and just have that already included in your program so it's easy access, just because I know sometimes they have a hard time accepting their kid is having these problems and they're still trying to figure out what is going to be the best	4
Administrative	I think being able to motivate the people who work for you, create a team that works well together, make people feel really good about themselves and see their strengths and want to come to work every day	4
Administrative	I really think if someone wants to work with special needs and be a director, or even a leader in the ECE field, they need to take special courses for the special needs	3
Conceptual	Somebody who's open-minded and willing to make the right changes to lead a good classroom or a good teaching environment	3
Pedagogical	No matter what lesson that you're teaching, there's always a way to incorporate, different methods to include those children with special needs	3
Community	Really cultivate relationship with the Council that you're part of	1

<u>Elements for Leadership that Graduates Developed</u>

The data from graduate interviews showed the elements for leading high-quality

inclusive programs rarely aligned with the professional organizations' expectation for

leadership. During their interviews, graduates talked only about the NAEYC (2007) standard

number six: The ability to advocate on behalf of young children, their families, and the

profession (6/6). The ideas the graduates shared related to NAEYC's standard six

overlapped slightly with the DEC RP L.1, L.6, L.7 and L.14 and the CEC competency

SEECS.5.K3. Overall, the elements for leadership that graduates discussed did not meet the

expectations of elements identified by the professional organizations. The elements the

graduates discussed were more congruent with classroom practices than leadership (CEC,

2012; DEC, 2014; NAEYC, 2007; NAEYC, 2009). Table 4.6 provides quotes addressing the

elements for leadership graduates' reported to have developed aligned with the professional

organization's expectations. The left-hand column shows the professional organizations'

expectation, the center column is a quote and the right column is the number of graduates

who gave similar responses.

Table 4.6. Graduates' elements for leadership aligned with the expectations of professional organizations

DEC RP; CEC standard; NAEYC competency	Excerpt: Graduates' elements for leadership in high-quality inclusive early childhood program developed while they complete their certificate	Related excerpts for other participants
DEC RP: L.1 CEC: None NAEYC: 6	Ensuring that we are qualified to accept any child and know that we can do our best in our program to help their development and help support the parents	6
DEC RP: L.6; 7; 12 CEC: SEECS.5.K3; S3 NAEYC: 6	We learned a lot about the resources that are out there in the community and they come to us sometimes, but there are times when we need to knock on their door and knowing how to contact and communicate	5
DEC RP: L.14 CEC: None NAEYC: 6	She taught us about learning to assess and watch kiddos in different ways because that helps you be able to keep track and keep a good record so that then you can share that with the parents, the other teachers, the teams	2

Instructional Strategies

Instructional strategies were identified using the *Aligning Instructional Strategies to Desired Professional Development Outcomes* figure (Winton et al., 2016) (see Appendix O). During the interview the graduates were asked, "what experiences did you have while completing ECE courses at the community college that developed your abilities to lead an early childhood program including children with developmental delays or disabilities?" Before answering the complete question, a few of the graduates needed additional prompts by the interviewer (3/7) such as, "were there any specific experiences…," "can you elaborate a little more…," and "did you have experiences related to the courses…" Each graduate recalled two to three experiences.

The data from graduate interviews revealed the instructional strategies they recalled, developed skills, and had medium complexity. The most common instructional strategies they recalled was discussion topics (5/7) and practice (5/7). They also talked about assignments allowing them to draw connections between the knowledge they acquired and experiences they had (4/7). Two of the three most common instructional strategies mentioned developed skills. The third instructional strategy developed knowledge. All of those three strategies were of medium complexity. One graduate recalled practice-based feedback, the only high complexity strategy mentioned by graduates or the faculty. Table 4.7 provides quotes representing the strategy used for the instruction. The left-hand column shows the type of element, instructional strategy and complexity. The center column is a quote. The right column is the number of graduates who gave similar responses.

Table 4.7. The graduate recollections of the instructional strategies

Type of element developed: Strategy - Complexity	Excerpt: The graduate recollections of the instructional strategies used to develop elements for leadership	Related excerpts for other participants
Knowledge Discussion – Medium	I know we did some administrative classes too, and in those we talked about fundraising, we talked about public speaking, putting, grants together… different things like that which you can use those to get the funding you need, or to get in touch with the resources you need to help kiddos	5
Skill: Practice – Medium	We were able to have hand on experiences with some of the children that had disabilities, like the school of the blind. I was in their world, so, that was an experience.	4
Skill: Drawing Connection - Medium	One of the projects I did in my creative curriculum class was make a lesson that would fit every child in the classroom including special needs.	3
Skill: Practice-based feedback – High	I had to videotape myself doing stuff with the kids and I was like, 'ugh, I don't want to do this,' but it turned out to be really good.	1
Skill: Drawing connections - Medium	She had us put together a resource notebook where we can go to different sites, how we can look up information. For me just having that notebook and that experience looking those things up and that knowledge has made a huge difference.	1
Knowledge: Discussion - Medium	Our teachers brought in a lot of people that would present to us, especially in the exceptional child class, she had them come in and show us what they were about and what ages they worked with, how they can help the kids and how we could get in contact with them.	1

Graduates' Recommendations

At the end of each interview, each graduate was asked, "what additional support do you need from your courses that would build your capacity to be a leader in early childhood

programs that include children with developmental delays of disabilities?" The graduates

shared similar recommendations. The recommendations were focused on personal and early

childhood program needs, as well as support for the ECE department at the community

college.

The graduates talked about the desire for more, or better resources in their early

childhood program (7/7). They felt they were under-resourced. The most common message

related to resources was that they felt they needed more to support families with children

who have developmental delays or disabilities and staff working with those children.

Support included access to specialized programs and services outside of the early childhood

program, more information for staff who could share it with families and more resources to

accommodate children in the classroom. The graduates also talked about the need for more

professional development (7/7). One graduate said, "a semester of looking at children with

special needs isn't nearly enough." Their preference of delivery was not universal, but they

repeatedly said that they and other early childhood professionals needed more than the one

course they completed while earning their Colorado Director's Certificate. Other common

topics included the need to have technical assistance from early childhood intervention

specialists (4/7) and more experience working in the field before they completed their

certificate (4/7). One graduate suggested the need to have field work that involved working

with a director rather than teachers. Table 4.8 provides quotes representing the

recommendations offered by the graduates. The left-hand column shows the nature of the

recommendation, the center column is a quote. The right column is the number of graduates

who gave similar responses.

Table 4.8. The graduate recommendations

Recommendation	Excerpt: Graduates' recommendations for enhancing the instructional strategies the faculty use	Related excerpts for other participants
Resources	The only thing that I would say is having more resources and getting more information about what way we support the children and ensuring that we are knowledgeable, that we work with the staff that you would work with	7
Professional Development	A semester of looking at children with special needs isn't nearly enough, because I believe it's harder to deal and care for those children, and teach them, than it is for any regular child	7
Technical Assistance	I think it would be nice if we could get counselors in there who could help train the actual teacher	4
Field Experience	Some of the things that they teach you in the director's program you don't really get to experience, us ones that want to be directors need a little experience going in there and seein' what it feels like to be a director	4

Learning Materials

The data collected from the learning materials were used to provide an additional data

set for data triangulation and to illuminate the instructional strategies used by the faculty to

develop graduates' elements for leading high-quality inclusive early childhood programs.

The learning materials were comprised of assignment and activity descriptions. Each

learning material was coded using the initial and emergent codes. The codes were the broad

themes found in the literature which defined the elements for practices for high-quality

inclusive early childhood programs. They were not limited to the elements for leadership

practices (CEC, 2012; DEC, 2014; NAEYC, 2007).

The learning materials addressed 20 of the 23 initial and emergent codes. The codes

of skills, knowledge and dispositions, the faculty instructional strategies, professional

standards and field experience were excluded from the interpretations. Those four codes

addressed personnel preparation at the community college rather than elements for practices

in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs. Codes identifying leadership styles were

also removed. Those codes did not identify individual elements for practices either.

Therefore, they were determined to be unnecessary for the targeted interpretations. After

removing the nine codes not relevant to elements for high-quality inclusive early childhood

programs, there were 11 codes left to complete the data analysis and interpretations of the

learning materials. Figure 4.1 illustrates the frequency of codes appearing in the 20 learning

materials.
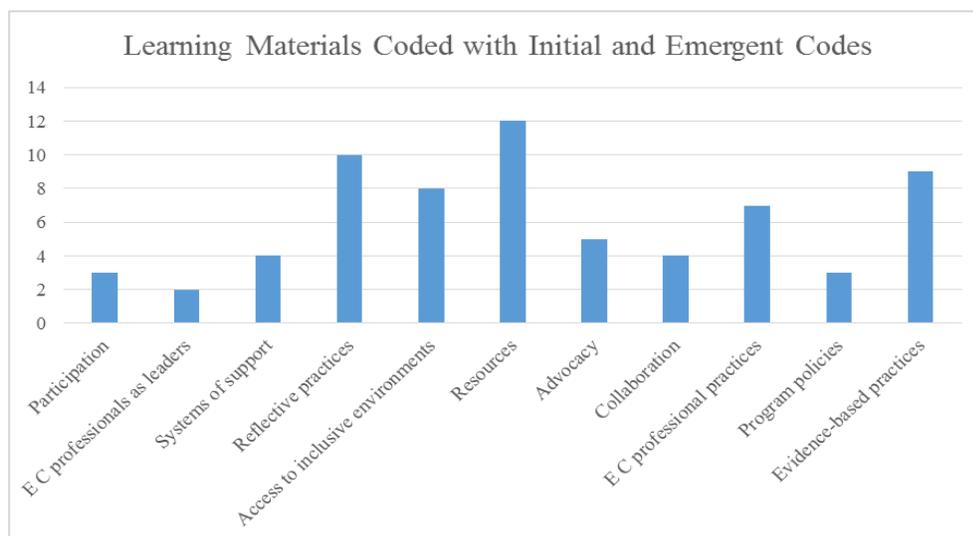
Figure 4.1. Coded learning materials

<u>Frequencies of Pattern Variables</u>

After the data analysis was completed with the 11 codes, the codes were organized

into pattern variables. There were three pattern variables relevant to developing the elements

for high-quality inclusive early childhood programs: (a) Elements for early childhood

professional practices; (b) elements for inclusive programming and practices; and (c)

elements for leadership practices. The three pattern variables were the most consistent all the

elements of practices for leading a high-quality inclusive early childhood program identified

in the literature. The learning materials focused on codes associated with the pattern variable

of early childhood and leadership practices. The codes associated with the pattern variables

of inclusive programming practices and leadership practices were assigned the least often.

Reflective practices, evidence-based practices and early childhood professional

practices were associated with the pattern variable elements for early childhood professional

practices. The codes for early childhood professional practices were assigned 29 times. The

data analysis showed the reflective practices (10/29), evidence-based practices (9/29) and

early childhood professional practices (7/29) were three of the five most frequently assigned

codes. Aggregating the three codes, plus evidence-based practices (3/29) the pattern variable

of elements for early childhood professional practices was the most common of the elements

for practices in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs.

Participation, systems of support and collaboration were associated with the pattern

variable of elements for inclusive programming and practices. The inclusive programming

and practices pattern variable was the element specific to practices supporting the inclusion

of children with developmental delays or disabilities. The codes for inclusive programming

and practices were assigned 15 times. The codes of participation (3/15) and systems of

support and services (4/15) were two of the five least frequently assigned codes. The only

code aligning with professional organizations' expectations for inclusive programming and

practices appearing frequently was access to inclusive environments (8/15). Aggregating the

three codes, the pattern variable of inclusive programming and practices was the least

common element for practices in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs.

Advocacy, early childhood professionals as leaders, collaboration and resources were

associated with the pattern variable of elements for leadership practices. Leadership

practices were relevant to elements for leadership in high-quality ECE, but they did not

specifically address the elements for practices in high-quality inclusive programs. Codes for

leadership practices were assigned 23 times. Advocacy (5/23), early childhood professionals

as leaders (2/23) and collaboration (4/23) were three of the least frequently assigned codes.

Resources (12/23) was the most frequently assigned code. Aggregated, the four codes

associated with the pattern variable were assigned more often than the codes related to

inclusive programming practices, but less often than the codes specific to early childhood

professional practices.

The DEC (2014) RPs and DEC (2015) position statement on leadership recognize

leadership as the foundation for high-quality inclusive early childhood programs, but the

leadership must have a strong understanding of inclusive programming and practices. Figure

4.2 shows that the learning materials provided by the faculty emphasize inclusive

programming (15/69) and leadership practices (23/69) the least, and the co-occurrence of codes associated with the two patterns are less common than any of the three pattern variables isolated (7/69), a majority of which included the co-occurrence of access and resources (6/69). If those were removed from the two pattern variables, there would be few co-occurrences between the pattern variables of inclusive programming and leadership practices (3/69).
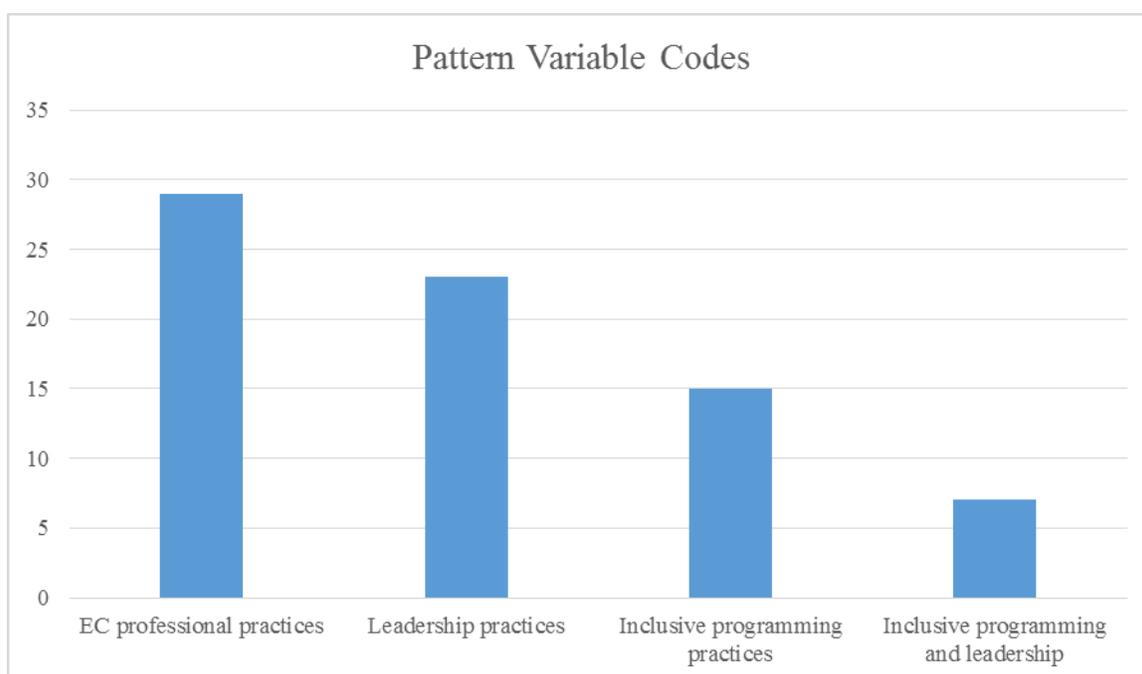
Figure 4.2. Pattern variable codes

Frequency of Instructional Strategies

After interpreting the frequency of pattern variables occurring within the learning materials, interpretations of the instructional strategies associated with the codes in each of the three pattern variables were conducted. Before interpreting the frequency of instructional strategies used for codes in the learning materials, the frequency and complexity of

instructional strategies used for each of the 20 learning materials were identified. The

learning materials were labeled with criteria from the *Aligning Instructional Strategies to*

Desired Professional Development Outcomes figure (Winton et al., 2016) (see Appendix O).

Figure 4.3 illustrates the findings. The x-axis indicates one of the four instructional

strategies. The y-axis indicates the frequency of the instructional strategy identified for each

learning material. The blue bar on the left is the instructional strategy and what the strategy

develops. The orange bar to the right is the complexity of the instructional strategy. Each of

the 20 learning materials is accounted for once.
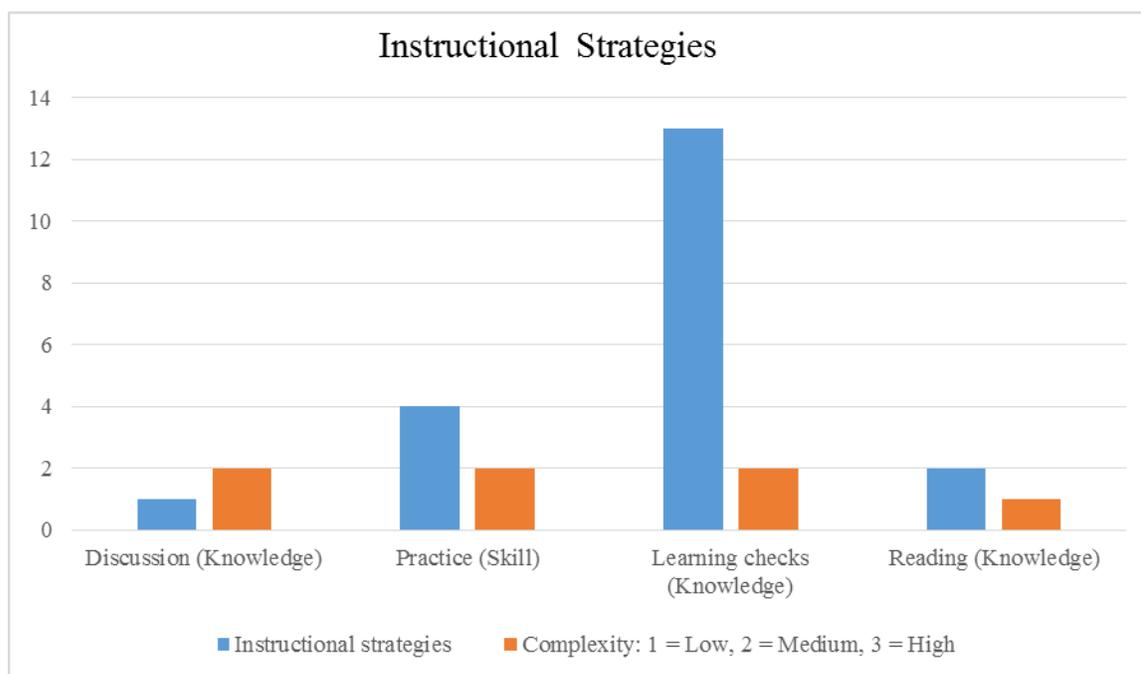
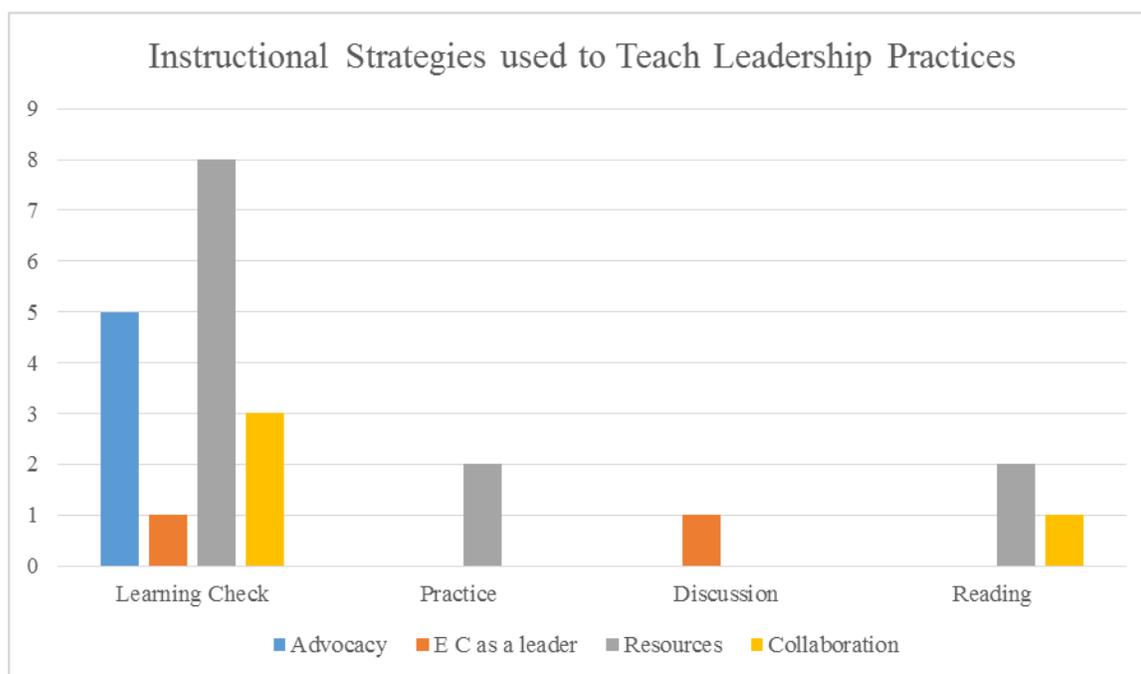*Figure 4.3.* Instructional strategies

Figure 4.3 shows the majority of the learning materials were learning checks (13/20).

The learning checks included research assignments, group projects, tests and essays. The

data indicated the learning materials were designed to develop knowledge (16/20) rather than

skills (4/20) or practice in context (0/20). Almost all of the elements were developed using instructional strategies with medium complexity (18/20). Very few of the elements were developed using instructional strategies with low complexity (2/20). None of the learning materials used instructional strategies with high complexity (0/20).

Instructional Strategies used for Codes Associated with their Pattern Variable

The interpretations looked at the instructional strategies used for each of the 11 codes. The codes were interpreted alongside the other codes associated with their pattern variable. The interpretations revealed the pattern variable of early childhood professional practices was the only one regularly addressed in learning materials other than those identified as learning checks.

Almost all of the codes associated with the variable code of leadership practices were assigned to learning materials identified as learning checks (17/23). Advocacy (5/5) was exclusively taught using learning checks. Early childhood professional as leaders (2/2) was taught as a learning check and discussion. Resources (10/12) was taught with learning checks and practice. Almost all of the codes associated with the pattern variable leadership practices developed knowledge (19/23) and were medium complexity (21/23).

Figure 4.4. Instructional strategies used to teaching leadership practices

A majority of codes association with the variable code of inclusive programming and practices were assigned to learning materials identified as learning checks (11/15). Access to inclusive programs was taught using learning checks (5/8), practice (1/8) and reading (2/8). Systems of supports and services was taught using learning checks (3/4) and reading (1/4). Participation was taught using learning checks (3/3). The codes associated with the pattern variable leadership practices developed knowledge (14/15) and skill (1/15). They used the medium (13/15) and low complexity (2/15).
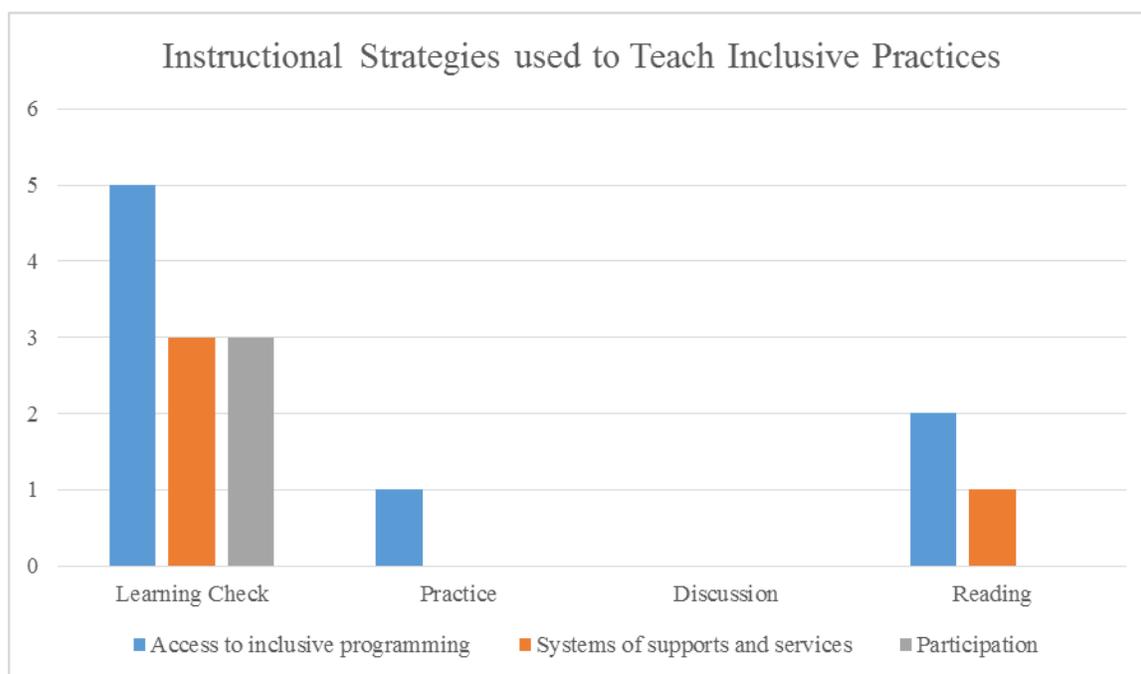
Figure 4.5. Instructional strategies used to teach inclusive practices

A majority of codes association with the variable code of early childhood professional practices were learning checks (15/29) or practice (11/29). Evidence-based practices were taught using learning checks (5/8) and practice (3/8). Reflective practices were taught using learning checks (5/10), practice (4/10) and a discussion (1/10). Early childhood professional practices were taught using learning checks (4/8), practice (3/8) and a discussion (1/8). Program policies were taught using learning checks (1/3), practice (1/3) and reading (1/3). The codes associated with the pattern variable early childhood professional practices developed knowledge (16/29) and skill (13/29). They used medium (28/29) and low complexity (1/29).
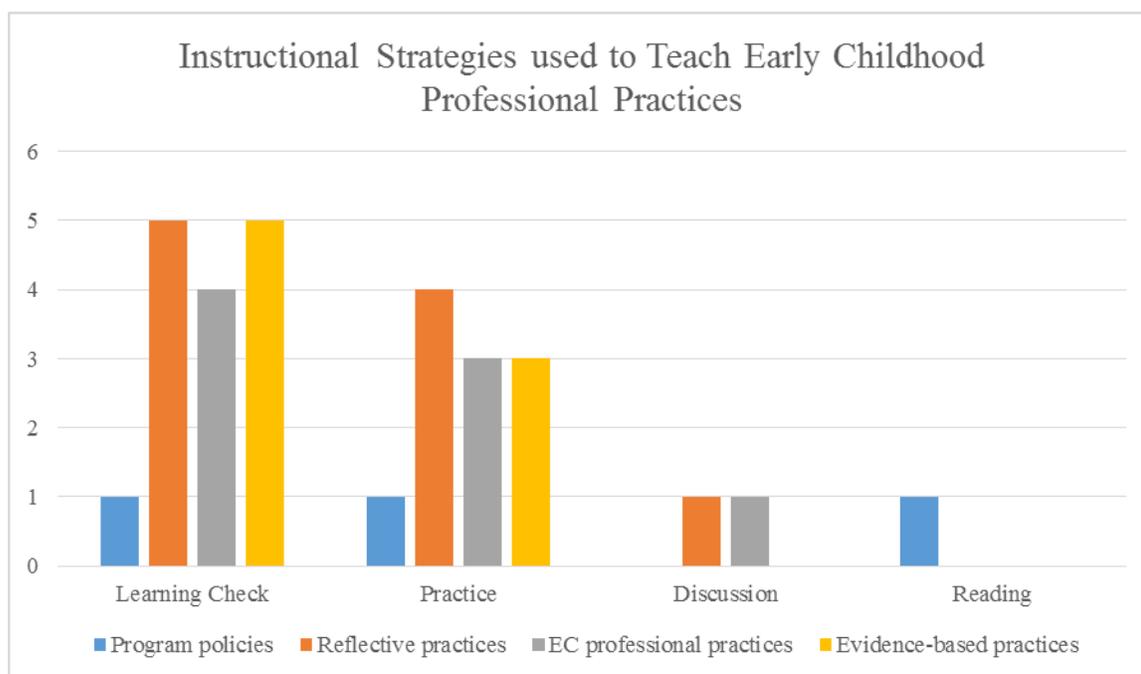
Figure 4.6. Instruction strategies used to teach EC professional practices

Summary of Findings

The findings from the research reveal insights into the preparation of graduates of the

Colorado Director's Certificate to be leaders in high-quality inclusive early childhood

programs at one community college. The conclusions are confirmed through data

triangulation. This section summarizes the findings from the three data sets combined. The

combined data sets confirm (a) the faculty definition of leadership, (b) the elements for

leading a high-quality inclusive program that graduates developed, and (c) the instructional

strategies used by the faculty.

The Faculty Definition of Leadership

An analysis of the combined data sets confirmed the faculty definitions for leadership

in a high-quality inclusive program. However, the data from the learning materials provided

evidence suggesting the faculty definitions may have emphasized certain leadership styles more than what was identified in the faculty and graduate interviews.

The faculty and graduate interview data showed the faculty and graduates believed leadership for high-quality inclusive early childhood programs required characteristics related to administrative and advocacy leadership more than other characteristics. Graduates also discussed characteristics of pedagogical and conceptual leadership, but less frequently. Neither data set indicated that characteristics of community leadership were valuable. The data revealed learning materials were much more likely to address pedagogical leaders (8/20) and administrative leadership (7/20) than advocacy leadership (2/20), conceptual leadership (2/20) or community leadership (1/20) (see Figure 4.7).

The combined data sets confirmed the faculty definitions of leadership in a high-quality inclusive early childhood program encompassed characteristics of pedagogical and administrative leadership. The faculty also confirmed characteristics of community leadership were not part of their definitions. The learning materials did not confirm the faculty definition included advocacy or conceptual leadership. The combined data sets suggested the faculty definitions included characteristics of advocacy and conceptual leadership, but they were not communicating that through their instructional materials.
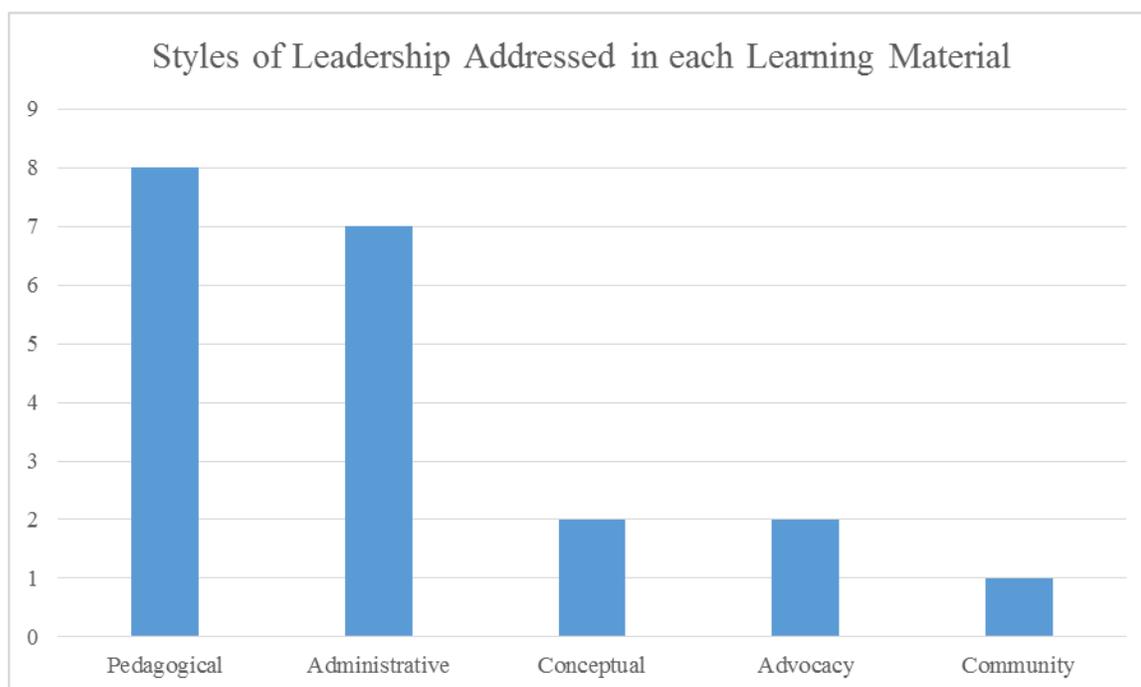
Figure 4.7. Styles of leadership in learning materials

Elements for Leadership Graduates Developed

According to the interview data, the graduates were not developing the elements for leadership that the faculty were teaching them (see Table 4.2; see Table 4.6). The learning materials suggested graduates were not learning the elements for leadership because the faculty were not teaching them, and/or using effective instructional strategies to teach them. The elements the faculty taught related to early childhood professional practices more than leadership or inclusion. Also, the instructional strategies used to teach the few elements for leadership develop graduates' knowledge through learning checks rather than skills and practice in context.

The combined data sets confirm that graduates were not developing many of the elements for leading high-quality inclusive early childhood programs that professional

organizations have identified in the literature. The data sets provide evidence suggesting graduates developed the elements for early childhood professional practices, but not leadership for inclusive programming practices. Quotes presented in Tables 4.3 and 4.7 support that conclusion.

Instructional Strategies Used by the Faculty

An analysis of the combined data sets revealed consistencies and inconsistencies between the faculty and graduates. The data from the faculty interviews and graduate interviews revealed instructional strategies involving discussions. While the faculty may have emphasized discussions in their instructions (see Table 4.3), the learning materials show only one of the 20 learning materials included discussions (see Figure 4.3).

Table 4.3 and Figure 4.3 confirm the faculty preference for instructional strategies designed to develop graduate knowledge using instructional strategies with medium complexity. Table 4.7 shows graduates did not recall the instructional strategies developing knowledge. They were more likely to recall instructional strategies developing skills.

The Graduate and the Faculty Recommendations

The combined data sets confirmed the need for more field work. The graduates recommended field work allowing them to work in inclusive settings and with children who have developmental delays or disabilities. The faculty recommended field work in high-quality early childhood programs that would prepare graduates for the challenges of inclusion. The learning materials suggested field work is an uncommon instructional strategy. The data also confirmed a shared belief among the faculty and graduates that better

professional development with instructional strategies that provided technical assistance in the early childhood program could be beneficial.

The additional recommendations were specific to the needs of the faculty or the needs of graduates. The faculty recommended more work within the community college to unify the instruction. The graduates recommended more professional development through course work and resources in their early childhood program.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This case study explored how one community college prepared early childhood

professionals to be leaders, and how prepared the college's graduates were to be leaders in

high-quality inclusive early childhood programs. Chapter five: (a) connects the research

findings with the literature; (b) discusses the implications of the findings; (b) proposes

recommendations; and (c) guides next steps.

Discussion

In 1986 P.L. 99-457 established a free and appropriate public education for children

birth through twelfth grade who have a developmental delay or disabilities. The statute set a

precedent for early childhood programs to educate children with or at risk of developmental

delays\disabilities with children who do not have a developmental delay\disability to the

maximum extent appropriate. With the support of the Rehabilitation Act (1973) and later,

the American's with Disabilities Act (2004), public and private early childhood programs

were legally barred from discriminating against children with developmental

delays\disabilities. Together, the laws, persistent advocacy and literature form a foundation

for high-quality inclusive early childhood education accessible to all children with

developmental delays\disabilities and their families.

Since 1986, DEC has worked to unify laws, advocacy and literature. Their RPs have

established a framework for supporting the implementation of EBPs in order to improve the

quality of inclusion for all young children and their families (DEC, 2014; Odom & Mclean,

1996; Sandal et al., 2005). The RPs (DEC, 2014) and position statement on leadership (DEC, 2015) identify well-trained leadership as the core tenet of high-quality inclusive early childhood programs. The position statement (DEC, 2015) stresses the instrumental role of professional development and the need for IHEs to target the development of elements for leadership in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs.

The emphasis on leadership is relatively new, but CEC (2012), DEC (2005) and NAEYC (2007) have provided IHEs with expectations of leaders for more than ten years (Colorado common course number system, 2016; Chandler, et al., 2012; Sobel et al., 2015; Stayton, 2015; Stayton, et al., 2012). Despite the availability of the expectations, their application and effectiveness for developing early childhood professionals' elements for leading high-quality inclusive programs are not well documented. The only evidence available indicates that current professional development has had a minimal impact on an increase in inclusive programming for children with developmental delays/disabilities and their families (Barton & Smith, 2015).

This case study explored how the community college prepared recent graduates from the Colorado Director's Certificate program to be leaders in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs. The research examined the faculty members' awareness of professional organizations' expectations for leadership; the effectiveness of the instructional strategies the faculty used to teach leadership, and the elements of leadership graduates of the director certificate developed while earning their certificate. The findings from the research provided three conclusions:

1. The definition faculty at the community college assigned to leadership for leading a high-quality inclusive early childhood program shared many of the characteristics of the definition provided in the DEC (2015) position statement on leadership.

2. The graduates developed very few elements for leading high-quality inclusive early childhood programs.

3. In class discussions may be have been more effective instructional strategies than learning checks.

The Faculty Definitions of Leadership

The faculty defined the elements for leadership a high-quality inclusive early childhood program as characteristics of administrative, advocacy, conceptual and pedagogical leadership. During the interviews the faculty talked about administrative responsibilities, advocating for children and families and creating accommodations for children who have developmental delays\disabilities. Their learning materials emphasized the development of pedagogical and administrative leadership characteristics.

The faculty definition touched on the CEC (2012) standards and DEC (2014) RPs addressing advocacy and policy. However, their framing of leadership was more congruent with the NAEYC (2007) competencies and the NAEYC (2009) standards for preparation. In general, the elements they taught were more relevant to classroom practices than program leadership practices (CEC, 2012; DEC, 2014; NAEYC 2009; NAEYC, 2007). This was particularly transparent in the learning materials.

The data revealed information that signified the faculty might have recognized the elements for leadership differently using a personal lens versus a professional lens. For example, advocacy was shown to be meaningful, but it appeared to be primarily taught or learned through class discussions. The opposite appeared to be true for characteristics and practices related to pedagogy. That finding suggested advocacy is something the faculty may personally believe is important and teach unintentionally, but pedagogy was more important for early childhood professionals to master in a course. If that was true, then the expectations the faculty had for early childhood professionals as leaders in high-quality inclusive programs were different from their understanding of the elements the course was designed to develop.

The Graduates Developed Few of the Elements for Leading

The evidence from data collected for this case study showed graduates developed elements for early childhood professional practices (DEC, 2014; NAEYC, 2009), but did not develop many of the elements for leadership practices or inclusive practices (CEC, 2012; DEC, 2014; NAEYC, 2007). The elements for leadership graduates talked about developing while enrolled in the Colorado Director's Certificate program at the community college focused on their skills and knowledge to advocate and administrate. A majority of the graduates talked about the importance of resources that could support the inclusion of children with developmental delays\disabilities and their families. The elements of inclusion they recalled learning about involved individualizing the curriculum. Graduates developed some skills and knowledge for collaborating with families and staff.

Data triangulation suggested graduates were not developing many of the elements for leading a high-quality inclusive program according to the expectations of professional organizations (CEC, 2012; DEC, 2014; NAEYC 2007). They were more privy to classroom practices. Graduates did not talk about policies and advocating for the field as the faculty did. That was reflected by the faculty definition of elements for leadership. The faculty may not have communicated their personal expectations of leadership for high-quality inclusion because they did not feel it was an expected outcome of the course. The elements for leadership that the graduates developed appeared to be isolated to advocacy knowledge.

The Effectiveness of Instructional Strategies

The research examined the instructional strategies faculty used to develop early childhood professionals elements for leading a high-quality inclusive early childhood program. The results suggested certain instructional strategies were more effective than others. According to the literature, both instructional strategies were medium complexity and developed knowledge (Winton et al., 2016). This specific finding provided evidence to conclude that discussions may have been more effective than learning checks for the graduates.

The learning materials offered insight into the instructional strategies that were not discussed during the interviews. The results indicated that early childhood professional practices were addressed much more frequently than leadership practices or inclusive programming and practices. That was not as explicit in the interviews. The learning materials also drew more attention to the possible influence of reflective practices. The

conclusions were supported by the research completed by Exposito and Bernheimer (2012), who found that instructional strategies focused on personal relationships were more effective for non-traditional learners than alternative instruction strategies.

Implications

This section presents the implications the research findings may have on the community college's preparation of early childhood professionals to be leaders in high-quality early childhood inclusive programs. Two implications are identified:

1. The faculty members are aware of characteristics of leadership, but not the elements for leading a high-quality inclusive early childhood program. It may be challenging for the faculty to prepare early childhood professionals to be leaders in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs if they are unaware of professional organizations' expectations.

2. The faculty use instructional strategies with medium complexity and are predominantly building knowledge rather than skills. If early childhood professionals do not receive effective and sufficient professional develop at the community college, they will likely not be prepared to lead a high-quality inclusive early childhood program.

Implication One: Professional Organizations' Expectations

The expectations from professional organizations, such as standards, competencies or recommended practices guide professional development that prepares professions to be more successful in their field (Cochran-Smith, 2005; Hiebert et al., 2007; Irons et al., 2007).

Effective instruction begins with an awareness of the professional organizations'

expectations for elements important to leading a high-quality inclusive early childhood

program (DEC, 2014; Stayton et al., 2003). The literature provides evidence for three

barriers potentially interfering with the faculty participants' use of an effective instructional

strategies that can develop early childhood professional's elements for leadership (Chandler

et al., 2012; Sobel et al., 2015; Stayton, 2015; Stayton et al., 2003):

1. The professional organizations' expectations are not unified (CEC, 2012; DEC, 2014;
   NAEYC, 2007; Stayton et al., 2003).

2. Blending the professional organizations' expectations is a challenge (Chandler et al.,
   2012; Chen & Mickelson, 2015; Stayton, 2015).

3. There are not any clear expectations applicable to entry level certificate at a
   community college (CEC, 2012; NAEYC, 2007; NAEYC, 2009).

The results from this case study share consistencies with the three potential barriers for the

faculty at the community college.

1. The faculty members' understanding of elements for leading high-quality inclusive
   early childhood programs did not clearly align with the standards, especially those of
   DEC (2014) or CEC (2012). They were slightly more aligned with the NAEYC
   (2007) Program Administrator Competencies. The results showed that the faculty
   members' definition of the elements focused on pedagogy and administrative
   leadership. Advocacy and conceptual leadership were stressed in the interviews, but
   not in the learning materials. The topics addressed in the interviews satisfied four of

the six NAEYC (2007) competencies, but only four or the twelve DEC (2014) RPs and three of six CEC (2012) standards. When the interpretations were extended to include the standards the graduates recalled, the numbers fell substantially. (CEC, 2012; DEC, 2014; NAEYC, 2007).

2. The discrepancies between the faculty learning materials and faculty interviews suggested faculty could have potentially blended the organizations' expectations, but the courses in the certificate made it difficult to consistently incorporate the DEC RPs or CEC standards. The evidence from this research suggested the faculty were aware of some of the professional organizations' expectations, but they likely did not teach them because of their understanding of the elements the course was designed to develop. That may be the outcome of the Colorado Community College System's ideology centered on an ECE professional development paradigm model (NAEYC/NACCRRA, 2011) versus an EI/ECSE professional development paradigm model (NPDCI, 2008; Winton et al., 2016).

3. The omission of standards appropriate for community colleges may have been the most salient barrier revealed in the research. The learning materials the faculty shared for the research were deliberate, hinting that they are likely a better reflection of what the faculty believed early childhood professionals who take their courses should learn before completing the course. The faculty belief may be a reflection of the course designs (Colorado common course numbering system, 2016) which

emphasize the ECE professional development paradigm model

(NAEYC/NACCRRA, 2011).

Until faculty can successfully mitigate the three barriers, it will be challenging for them to provide sufficient professional development that uses effective instructional strategies.

Implication Two: Insufficient/Inadequate Professional Development

The interviews with the faculty showed they had some awareness of elements for leading a high-quality inclusive program. Their awareness was not reflected in the graduate interviews. The graduates talked about classroom practices that support high-quality inclusive early childhood programs (DEC, 2014).

When the graduates were asked for recommendations to assist the community college in preparing early childhood professionals, they talked predominately about developing more leadership skills and additional professional development. They revealed that they learned about, or understood leadership as two of the six standards identified in NAEYC's Administrator Competencies (2007), one of six CEC (2012) standards and five of the twelve DEC (2014) RPs. All the expectations were related to advocacy or collaboration. This was potentially the result of insufficient or inadequate professional development.

The instructional strategies used by faculty were almost exclusively learning checks or discussions. They did not include any practice in context. Practice in context allows an early childhood professional to transfer their knowledge or skills from the course into the field. Practice in context occurs through coaching, mentoring, communities of practice or practice-based feedback (Winton et al., 2016). The use of practice in context is especially

valuable for non-traditional learners (Cho, 2016; Doescher & Beudert, 2010; Garavuso, 2014). Non-traditional learners account for a majority of students taking courses in the Colorado Director's Certificate program at the community college. Unfortunately, practice in context is not a common instructional practice in IHEs (Buettner et al., 2015; Gallagher et al., 2014; Han, 2012), because they require a lot of resources (Buettner et al., 2015).

Recommendations

The deliverable for this case study is recommendations for the community college's ECE department. The recommendations address the implications of the research findings. This section outlines three recommendations for the ECE department.

Conceptualizing the Recommendations

At the onset of this case study RPs (DEC, 2014) were the theoretical framework for conceptualizing high-quality inclusive early childhood programming. The DEC (2015) position statement on leadership recognized leadership as the foundations for closing the research to practice gap (DEC, 2014), pressing the need for IHEs to develop early childhood professionals' elements specific to leading a high-quality inclusive early childhood program (DEC, 2015). This case study identified recommendations for the ECE department at the community college. The recommendations are conceptualized with three components preceding the implementation of the RPs (DEC, 2014).

The three components for developing the community college's early childhood professional's elements for leading a high-quality inclusive early childhood program are inter-related. One component is equipping the faculty with the awareness of the current

information available that can guide them in developing early childhood professionals'

elements for leadership. A second component is developing early childhood professionals'

elements of leadership through professional development that can be sustained without

taxing the resources of the ECE department at the community college. Components one and

two have a bi-directional relationships. Since there are not any defined personnel preparation

standards for community college (CEC, 2012; DEC, 2014; NAEYC, 2007), the faculty must

be attuned to unique individual needs and limitations of the early childhood professionals

whom with they work. A strong relationship between the faculty and early childhood

professionals will allow them to deliver more effective instruction (Exposito & Bernheimer,

2011; Garavuso, 2014). The third component is practicing leadership in the context of a

high-quality inclusive early childhood program. Practicing leadership in the context of a

high-quality inclusive early childhood program can be influenced by the community college,

but the partnership and experiences of the early childhood professional are specific to each

early childhood program. The three components are conceptualized in Figure 5.1.
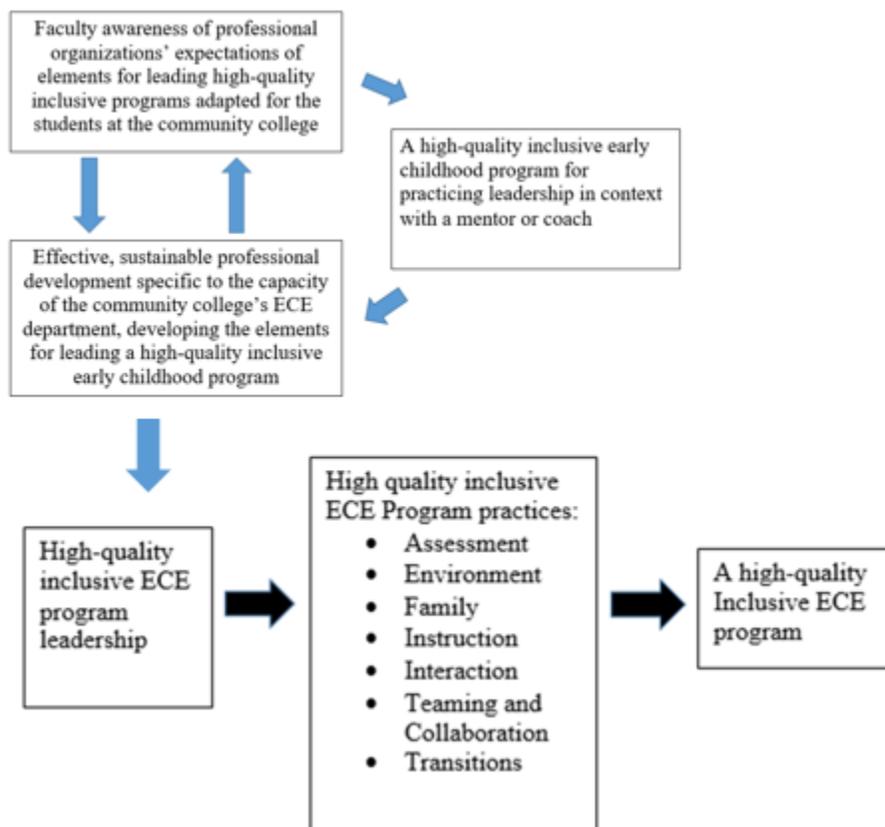
Figure 5.1. Conceptualization for developing the elements for leadership at the community

college

Recommendations

The recommendations are designed to assist the community college with their

implementation of the three processes discuss and illustrated in Figure 5.1. The

recommendations are:

1. Use virtual communities of practice (VCP) to develop and support the faculty

   member's application of effective instructional strategies.

2. Create multiple opportunities for early childhood professionals to practice leadership in the context of a high-quality inclusive early childhood program.

3. Identify effective and sustainable instruction strategies that develop early childhood professionals' elements for leading a high-quality inclusive early childhood program.

Developing the Faculty Awareness and Competency

The data from this research revealed the faculty members want more knowledge and resources for developing early childhood professionals' elements for leading a high-quality inclusive early childhood program. However, researchers have shown that developing faculty awareness and competency, especially adjunct faculty is a difficult task (Dailey-Hebert, Mandernach, Donnellie-Sallee & Norris, 2014). The primary barriers for faculty include geographic location and financial burdens (McKenna, Johnson, Yoder, Guerra & Pimmel, 2016). Recently, researchers have begun addressing the barriers of faculty PD through virtual communities of practices (VCP) (Dailey-Hebert et al., 2014; McKenna et al., 2016). VCPs at an IHE are defined as a group of faculty members working with one another online (Dailey-Hebert, et al., 2014; McKenna, et al., 2016), who "share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002, p. 4)."

VCPs are a more effective approach to faculty development than traditional models (Henderson & Dancy, 2011; McKenna et al., 2014). Traditional models are comparable to the ineffective strategies used by the faculty with early childhood professionals discussed throughout this case study (Henderson & Dancy, 2011; Winton et al., 2016). VCPs can be

used to work with the faculty and develop their awareness of professional organizations'

expectations. VCPs can also be used to address the faculty interest in intra-departmental

collaboration and professional growth.

Practice Leadership in Context

Showers, Joyce and Bennet (1987) state, "the purpose of [professional development]

is to create the conditions under which sufficient levels of knowledge and skill are developed

to sustain practice and to provide the conditions that support practice (p. 84)." During one

interview for this case study, one graduate said, "some of the things that they teach you in the

director's program you don't really get to experience, us ones that want to be directors need a

little experience going in there and seein' what it feels like to be a director." Similar

sentiments were echoed by three other graduates. One faculty member said, "one of the

things I think would be beneficial for the students is for them to go and apply something right

away." Four of the faculty provided comparable information. Without conditions that

support the development of leadership practices, researchers and the participants in this case

study suggest that it is difficult for early childhood professionals to develop the elements for

leading a high-quality inclusive early childhood programs (Showers et al., 1987).

The literature indicates that early childhood professionals achieve better outcomes

from professional development if they can have practice in context (Gallagher, 1997; Kontos

& Diamond, 1997; Showers et al., 1987; Winton et al., 2016). The expectations of directors

are complex (Bloch et al., 2014; Kagan & Bowman, 1997; Nicholson & Miniates, 2016).

Their position demands a vast array of knowledge and skills unique from other early

childhood professional positions (CEC, 2012; DEC, 2014; DEC, 2015; NAEYC, 2007). If early childhood professionals were able to practice leadership in the context of a high-quality inclusive early childhood program with the mentorship or coaching from a highly-qualified director they may be more likely to retain the elements for leadership (Showers et al., 1987; Snyder et al., 2015). The community college would need to establish dependable relationships with high-quality early childhood programs in the community in order to afford their students the opportunities for practicing leadership in context.

Provide Professional Development Meeting the Needs of the Students

Research supports practice in context as highly effective instructional strategies (Gallagher, 1997; Kontos & Diamond, 1997; Showers et al., 1987; Winton et al., 2016). Unfortunately, it is challenging for IHE's, especially community colleges to implement practice in context (Buettner et al., 2015; Gallagher et al., 2014; Han, 2012). Practice in context demands from external resources and requires community partnerships with appropriate early childhood programs (Buettner et al., 2015; Garavuso, 2014). Challenges are particularly relevant to early childhood professionals who are non-traditional learners (Garavuso, 2014; Snyder et al., 2015).

Literature shows that non-traditional learners thrive with well-planned, intentional instructional strategies targeted at developing relevant and applicable knowledge, skills and dispositions (Cho, 2016; Garavuso, 2014). This does not necessarily include practice in context. The instructional strategies used by the faculty in this case study are almost

exclusively learning checks and discussions, yet the graduates still developed elements of leadership for classroom practices.

If the faculty cannot provide practice in context due to limited resources, they should use alternative instructional strategies that are the most effective for the non-traditional learners at the community college. The data from this case study suggests discussions may be one the best alternative (Exposito & Bernheimer, 2012; Garavuso, 2014). Garavuso (2014) recognizes the strain of common barriers community college students face, but she encourages the faculty working with the students to be innovative and apply instructional strategies that create a strong relationship between the faculty and their students. Her work and the data from this research indicate discussions are one alternative to practice in context (Garavuso, 2014).

The three recommendations are a starting point for enhancing the preparation of early childhood professionals at the community college. New research and policy will continue to be published. The recommendations are intended to assist the community college in developing early childhood professionals elements for leadership in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs, which ultimately will increase the percentage of children with developmental delays\disabilities being educated with children who do not have developmental delays\disabilities.

Future Research Recommendations

This case study was the first known piece of research looking at the preparation of early childhood professionals to be leaders in high-quality inclusive early childhood

programs. This particular research focused on a case study of one community college. The future research recommendations address a continuation of work to improve the ECE department's Colorado Director's Certificate program and supports the early childhood professionals and faculty involved in it. There are three recommendations for future research.

The limitations outlined in chapter one suggest that future research may want to begin with developing a better understanding of the influence of unique identities adjunct faculty and non-traditional college students contribute to the practices at an IHE (Doescher & Beudert, 2010; Garavuso, 2014; McKenna et al., 2016). The identities of the adjunct faculty include the personal experiences/credentials that make them valuable assets to the preparation of the early childhood professionals at the IHE under investigation as well as the barriers inhibiting their professional growth (McKenna et al., 2016). The identities of non-traditional college students include their unique racial, ethnic, social economic status, ability, gender and other socially-constructed histories shaping their identity. The influence of the intersection of their socially constructed identities could potentially impact a community college's efforts to develop non-traditional students' elements for leadership in a high-quality inclusive early childhood program (Derman-sparks et al., 2014). The identities of the adjunct faculty and non-traditional college students may have significant implications that could guide recommendations for more effective instructional strategies effective for the IHE under investigation. Those implications were beyond the scope of this case study, but may be a place to start for future research.

One question that remained from this research was the effectiveness of instructional strategies used by the faculty at the community college. The results showed discussions, possibly accompanied by reflection were the most effective instructional strategies. The evidence suggests the discussions were more effective than the learning checks and observations. Given the challenges for practice in context with early childhood professionals at the community college, more discussions and reflection could be an alternative to learning checks. To eliminate some of the limitations found in this case study, the research should be conducted with early childhood professionals who are in the process of completing the Colorado Director's Certificate program.

The third recommendation for future research involves more collaboration among the faculty in the ECE department at the community college. Twenty years of research has supported the use of communities of practices as an effective approach for developing college faculty's understanding of new information (Lave & Wenger, 1991).   Recent research recognizes the barriers adjunct faculty encounter with participating in communities of practice. One solution under consideration is Virtual Communities of Practice (VCPs) (Dailey-Hebert et al., 2014; McKenna et al., 2016). Follow-up research could look at the effectiveness of VCPs to build the faculty awareness of concepts like those addressed in this case study.

Conclusion

Since 1986, the field of EI/ECSE has been continuously evolving. One constant over the years is the low percentage of children with developmental delays\disabilities included in

early childhood programs (Barton & Smith, 2015). Researchers are continuously identifying new information intended to enhance early childhood professionals' effort to make inclusive services accessible to all children and families. The DEC (2014) RPs and DEC (2015) position statement on leadership attracted attention to the need for well-trained leaders. The documents identify leadership as the foundation for high-quality inclusive early childhood education.

Leadership in early childhood programs typically begins with the program director. In the state of Colorado, many of the directors earn their credentials by completing the Colorado Director's Certificate program at a community college. The ten courses they complete, are intended to prepare them to be leaders. This case study revealed how prepared seven graduates from one community college were to be leaders in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs.

The results suggested that the graduates were not well prepared to be leaders in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs. They understood many of the characteristics of a leader, but they appeared not to have developed the elements for leadership defined by professional organizations (CEC, 2012; DEC, 2014; NAEYC, 2007). The results indicated two likely, closely linked reasons for this:

3. It may be challenging for the faculty to prepare early childhood professionals to be leaders in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs if they are unaware of professional organizations' expectations.

4. If early childhood professionals do not receive effective and sufficient professional develop at the community college, they will likely not be prepared to lead a high-quality inclusive early childhood program.

The recommendations can potentially guide the department in enhancing their preparation of early childhood professionals to be leaders in high-quality inclusive programs. Findings from the case study provide insight into next steps for future research.   This case study was the first of its kind. The results from it provide a foundation for additional research with the potential of enhancing the preparation of early childhood professionals' preparation to be leaders in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs at other IHEs.

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APPENDIX A

Terminology

A Child with a Developmental Delay/Disability: Developmental delay/disability is socially

constructed and only relevant to the conditions that are disabling a child (Ferri, 2009;

McDermott & Varenne, 1995). As the term is used in the Individuals with Disabilities

Education Act, a child with a developmental delay/disability is a child "who is experiencing

developmental delays, as defined by the State and as measured by appropriate diagnostic

instruments and procedures, in one or more of the following areas: physical development,

cognitive development, communication development, social or emotional development, or

adaptive development (IDEA, 2004 § 300.8 [b][1]); and who, by reason thereof, needs

special education and related services (IDEA, 2004 § 300.8 [b][2]."

Council for Exceptional Children (CEC): The professional organization representing children

and families of children with exceptional needs, practitioners and advocates.

Dispositions: "Prevailing tendencies to exhibit a pattern of behavior frequently, consciously,

and voluntarily. The pattern of behavior is directed to a broad goal, rather than a limited

short-term purpose (Sheridan, Edwards, Marvin & Knoche, 2009, p. 3)."

Division for Early Childhood (DEC): A subdivision of the Council for Exceptional. DEC is

the professional organization representing children birth to five years old and families with

children birth to five years old who have development delays/disabilities or are at risk for

having disabilities, practitioners and advocates.

Early Childhood Education (ECE): Traditionally considered education for children birth to eight years old, in this paper it refers to children three through five years old.

Early Childhood Professionals: Individuals with experience working with young children, and/or are pursuing formal education related to early childhood education.

Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE): Early intervention services are provided to children who have or are at-risk of having development delays/disabilities according to the guidelines in Part B of IDEA (2004). Part B of IDEA addresses special education for children birth to 21.

Evidence-based Strategies: "[The] best available research evidence, stakeholder wisdom and consumer value (Snyder, 2006, p. 35)."

High-quality Inclusive early childhood program: An early childhood education program that maintains consistent program "practices that support the developmental progress of children with development delays/disabilities in early childhood settings…using specialized instructional strategies for meeting the individual needs of children (Soukakou, Winton & West, 2012, p. 1)." The program serves children with and without disabilities together.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2004) was originally passed in 1975 as the Education for all Handicapped Children Act (Rous & Smith, 2012). The law guarantees the education of all children birth to 21 years-old in a free and appropriate public educational environment, as well as many other rights that allow them to participate in general education to the maximum extent appropriate (IDEA, 2004).

Instructional Strategies: Approaches to teaching that are intended to produce specific

learning outcomes (Winton, Snyder & Goffin, 2016).

Knowledge: "Facts, concepts, ideas, vocabulary, and related aspects of educational culture

and practice (Sheridan et al., p.2-3)."

Leadership: The individual and/or collective actions taken to influence the desired outcome

(DEC, 2015; Snyder et al., 2012).

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC): The professional

organization representing the field of early childhood education (ECE).

Personnel Preparation Standards: Unified sets of expectations set by states or professional

organizations to design and implement programs and classes (Stayton, 2015), measure a

student's outcomes, and hold IHE educators accountable for teaching the knowledge, skills

and dispositions considered important for professionals' success in the field (Cochran-Smith,

2005; Hiebert, Morris, Berk & Jansen, 2007; Irons, Carlson, Lowery-Moore, Farrow, 2007).

Professional Development (PD): A continuum of facilitated teaching and learning

experiences that build professionals knowledge, skills, dispositions and practices. PD

includes formal education before and during a profession, trainings and technical assistance

(NAEYC/NACCRRA, 2011; NPDCI, 2008).

Recommended Practices (RP): "The most effective ways to improve the learning outcomes

and promote the development of young children (DEC, 2014, p. 2)."

Research to Practice Gap: The disconnect between the "practices that have been shown to

result in better outcomes for young children with disabilities, their families, and the

personnel who serve them (DEC, 2014, p. 2)," the practices early childhood professionals use in early childhood programs.

Skills: "Units of action that occur in a relatively discrete period and that are observable or easily inferred (Sheridan et al., 2009, p. 3)."

Stakeholders: "Individuals and organizations that have a personal interest in decisions made about the [issue]. They include people who have resources to apply to the [issue], people who make decisions about the [issue], and people who will be affected by the [decisions] (Majchrzak & Markus, 2014, p. 18)."

APPENDIX B

DEC (2014) RPs Leadership Strand

L1. Leaders create a culture and a climate in which practitioners feel a sense of belonging and want to support the organization's mission and goals.

L2. Leaders promote adherence to and model the DEC Code of Ethics, DEC Position Statements and Papers, and the DEC Recommended Practices.

L3. Leaders develop and implement policies, structures, and practices that promote shared decision making with practitioners and families.

L4. Leaders belong to professional association(s) and engage in ongoing evidencebased professional development.

L5. Leaders advocate for policies and resources that promote the implementation of the DEC Position Statements and Papers and the DEC Recommended Practices.

L6. Leaders establish partnerships across levels (state to local) and with their counterparts in other systems and agencies to create coordinated and inclusive systems of services and supports.

L.7 Leaders develop, refine, and implement policies and procedures that create the conditions for practitioners to implement the DEC Recommended Practices.

L8. Leaders work across levels and sectors to secure fiscal and human resources and maximize the use of these resources to successfully implement the DEC Recommended Practices.

L9. Leaders develop and implement an evidence-based professional development system or approach that provides practitioners a variety of supports to ensure they have the knowledge and skills needed to implement the DEC Recommended Practices.

L10. Leaders ensure practitioners know and follow professional standards and all applicable laws and regulations governing service provision.

L11. Leaders collaborate with higher education, state licensing and certification agencies, practitioners, professional associations, and other stakeholders to develop or revise state competencies that align with DEC, Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), and other national professional standards.

L12. Leaders collaborate with stakeholders to collect and use data for program management and continuous program improvement and to examine the effectiveness of services and supports in improving child and family outcomes.

L13. Leaders promote efficient and coordinated service delivery for children and families by creating the conditions for practitioners from multiple disciplines and the family to work together as a team.

L14. Leaders collaborate with other agencies and programs to develop and implement ongoing community-wide screening procedures to identify and refer children who may need additional evaluation and services.

APPENDIX C

CEC (2012) Advanced Preparation Standard 5: Leadership and Policy

5.0 Special education specialists provide leadership to formulate goals, set and meet

high professional expectations, advocate for effective policies and evidence-based

practices, and create positive and productive work environments.

Key Elements

5.1 Special education specialists model respect for and ethical practice for all individuals

and encourage challenging expectations for individuals with exceptionalities.

5.2 Special education specialists support and use linguistically and culturally responsive

practices.

5.3 Special education specialists create and maintain collegial and productive work

environments that respect and safeguard the rights of individuals with exceptionalities

and their families.

5.4 Special education specialists advocate for policies and practices that improve programs,

services, and outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities.

5.5 Special education specialists advocate for the allocation of appropriate resources for the

preparation and professional development of all personnel who serve individuals with

exceptionalities.

Knowledge

K5.1 Sociocultural, historical, and political forces that influence diverse delivery systems,

including mental health.

K5.2 Policy and emerging trends that affect infants and young children, families, resources, and services.

K5.3 Community resources on national, state, and local levels that impact program planning and implementation, and the individualized needs of the child and family.

Skills

S5.1 Advocate on behalf of infants and young children with exceptional needs, and their families, at local, state, and national levels.

S5.2 Provide leadership to help others understand policy and research that guide recommended practices.

S5.3 Provide leadership in the collaborative development of community-based services and resources.

S5.4 Provide effective supervision and evaluation.

APPENDIX D

NAEYC (2007) Program Administrator Competencies: Leadership and advocacy

1. Knowledge of organizational theory and leadership styles as they relate to early childhood work environments.

2. Knowledge of the legislative processes, social issues, and public policy affecting young children and their families.

3. The ability to articulate a vision, clarify and affirm values, and create a culture built on norms of continuous improvement and ethical conduct

4. The ability to evaluate program effectiveness.

5. The ability to define organizational problems, gather data to generate alternative solutions, and effectively apply analytical skills in its solution.

6. The ability to advocate on behalf of young children, their families, and the profession

APPENDIX E

Colorado common course numbering system: Standard competencies: ECE 240

1. Identify the responsibilities, knowledge, and skills required for early childhood program management and staff leadership.

2. Analyze program vision, mission, values, and philosophy that support administration of a quality ECE programs.

3. Analyze current local, state, and national policies and practices that promote quality in early care and education programming.

4. Analyze the role of ethical decision-making in administrative practices for EC leaders using National Association for the

    Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Code of Ethical Conduct and Code of Ethical Conduct for Administrators.

5. Describe laws, policies, and regulations pertinent to the EC profession and apply them to best practices for EC directors/administrators.

6. Discuss early childhood program practices that support optimal child development in an educational or care-giving setting for young children.

7. Demonstrate familiarity with resource management strategies in terms of fiscal management of ECE program income streams.

8. Demonstrate familiarity with resource management strategies in terms of fiscal management of ECE program expenses.

9. Identify risk management strategies for managing emergency preparedness, food programming, health, and safety operations of an early care and education program.

10. Recognize policies and procedures that promote best practices in staffing an ECE program.

11. Discuss practices/issues related to working with other stakeholders in EC programming.

12. Assess community needs for EC programming and develop a marketing strategy.

APPENDIX F

Colorado common course numbering system: Standard competencies: ECE 241

1. Demonstrate knowledge of effective communication skills for dealing with children, families, staff, other professionals, and community volunteers.

2. Define and discuss the human relations and advocacy components of an early childhood professional's responsibilities.

3. Describe the quality of an early childhood program from a human relations standpoint.

4. Examine strategies for connecting to and communicating with families and the community.

5. Analyze the components of leadership including mission, vision, goal setting, team building, and strategic planning.

6. Develop and demonstrate reflective listening and conflict resolution skills, as well as mentoring strategies to use with children, staff, and families.

7. Practice making ethical decisions using the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Code of Ethical Conduct.

8. Differentiate roles among early intervention team members and follow chain of command to address policy questions, systems issues, and personnel practices.

9. Demonstrate competence, integrity, and sound judgment within one's skill limits and request direction, instruction, guidance, and feedback for new or unfamiliar tasks.

10. Discuss personal and professional strategies for becoming a resilient early childhood leader.

APPENDIX G

Faculty participant questionnaire

Directions: Answer the following three questions by circling or answering yes of no.

1. Have you taught one or more of the following ten courses since fall semester of 2011:

   ECE 101, 102, 103, 111, 205, 220, 238, 240, 241, 260?

   Yes   No

2. If you answered "yes" for question one, have you taught one of those courses more

   than once?

   Yes   No

3. If you are selected to participate in this research study, can you commit to completing

   one half-hour interview in the months of September or October?

   Yes   No

APPENDIX H

Graduate participant questionnaire

Directions: Answer the following three questions by circling or answering yes of no.

1. Have you complete all of the following ten courses since fall semester of 2011: ECE 101, 102, 103, 111, 205, 220, 238, 240, 241, 260?

   Yes   No

2. If you answered "yes" for question one, did you receive a grade of "C" or better in all of the courses?

   Yes   No

3. If you are selected to participate in this research study, can you commit to completing one half-hour interview in the months of September or October?

   Yes   No

APPENDIX I

Faculty Informed Consent Form

Developing Leadership for Inclusive Early Childhood Programs Study

Informed Consent Form

You are invited to participate in the Developing Leadership for Inclusive Early Childhood Programs Study. The goal of the study is to gain insight as to how prepared early childhood professionals are to be leaders in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs. Your participation is completely voluntary, but it is highly valued. Your participation will help me gain a faculty perspective as I prepare for my doctoral dissertation. Participants who complete the study will receive a $20 gift card for Amazon.com.

As the researcher, I will be collecting data through one 20 to 30 minute interview with 4-8 faculty and exploring the learning materials they use to teach their students. There may be a follow-up 15 to 20 minute interviewed to gain additional information. The follow-up interview is determined based on the sufficiency of data collected during the initial interview. You may choose not to participate in the study and are free to withdraw from the study at any time. Refusal to participate or withdrawal from participation involves no penalty.

As the researcher, I will, however, treat all information gathered for this study as confidential. This means that only I will have access to the completed interviews and learning materials you provide that can be connected with your identity. After I have reviewed the interviews and learning materials, I will replace your name with your first and

last initial and remove any information specific to your personal experiences. Once that is complete, the documents will be uploaded to a private password protected online program called DeDoose©. Through the program, I will share the document with two research assistants who will help me interpret the data. In addition, when I report information, it will be reported for the entire group of research participants, never for any one individual.

There are two exceptions to the promise of confidentiality. Any information you reveal concerning suicide, homicide, or child abuse and neglect is required by law to be reported to the proper authorities. In addition, should any information contained in this study be the subject of a court order, the University of Colorado Denver might not be able to avoid compliance with the order or subpoena.

The benefits of being involved in this study include: providing a voice for faculty who want graduates of the Colorado Directors Certificate program to be fully prepared to be leaders in inclusive early childhood programs. Your voice will help me understand the additional support faculty need to prepare our graduates of the director's certificate to be leaders. Your participation will also provide me with invaluable practice and experience in conducting qualitative research. You may also enjoy the ability to provide information about your own experiences or learn about my insights into your work. If you would like a copy of the results of the study, I will be happy to provide one for you. Potential risks of being involved include the possibility that discussing certain issues about your experience may be upsetting. If this occurs, I will arrange for supportive care from an appropriate professional in your area.

If you have any questions at all about my study of the impact of the Developing Leadership for Inclusive Early Childhood Programs study, please feel free to contact me, andrew.goff@ucdenver.edu. If you have any concerns or complaints about how you were treated during the research sessions please contact. Dr. Alissa Rausch, School of Education and Human Development, University of Colorado Denver, alissa.rausch@ucdenver.edu. Thank you again.

"I have read and understand the above description of the Developing Leadership for Inclusive Early Childhood Programs Study. I have asked for and received a satisfactory explanation for any language I did not fully understand. I have had the chance to ask any questions I have about my participation. I agree to participate in the study, and I understand that I can withdraw my consent at any time. I have received a copy of this consent form." (Please sign below)

_____   _____
Signature   Date

_____
Print Name

____ I agree to be videotaped.
____I do not agree to be videotaped.

_____   _____
Signature   Date

APPENDIX J

Graduates of the Colorado Director's Certificate Informed Consent Form

Developing Leadership for Inclusive Early Childhood Programs Study

Informed Consent Form

You are invited to participate in the Developing Leadership for Inclusive Early

Childhood Programs Study. The goal of the study is to gain insight as to how prepared early

childhood professionals are to be leaders in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs.

Your participation is completely voluntary, but it is highly valued. Your participation will

help me understand the perspective of graduates of the Colorado Director's Certificate

program as I prepare for my doctoral dissertation. Participants who complete the study will

receive a $20 gift card for Amazon.com.

As researcher, I will be collecting data through one 20 to 30 minute interview with 4-

8 graduates. There may be a follow-up 15 to 20 minute interviewed to gain additional

information. The follow-up interview is determined based on the sufficiency of data

collected during the initial interview. You may choose not to participate in the study and are

free to withdraw from the study at any time. Refusal to participate or withdrawal from

participation involves no penalty.

As the researcher, I will, however, treat all information gathered for this study as

confidential. This means that only I will have access to the completed interviews you

provide with information that can be linked to your identity. After I have reviewed the

interviews, I will replace your name with your first and last initial and remove any

information that is specific to your personal experiences. Once that is complete, the document will be uploaded to a private password protected online program called DeDoose©. Through the program, I will share the document with two research assistants who will help me interpret the data. When I report information, it will be reported for the entire group of research participants, never for any one individual.

There are two exceptions to the promise of confidentiality. Any information you reveal concerning suicide, homicide, or child abuse and neglect is required by law to be reported to the proper authorities. In addition, should any information contained in this study be the subject of a court order, the University of Colorado Denver might not be able to avoid compliance with the order or subpoena.

The benefits of being involved in this study include: providing a voice for graduates of the Colorado Directors Certificate who want graduates of the program to be fully prepared to be leaders in inclusive early childhood programs. Your voice will help me understand the additional support early childhood professionals need to be prepared to be leaders in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs. Your participation will also provide me with invaluable practice and experience in conducting qualitative research. You may also enjoy the ability to provide information about your own experiences or learn about my insights into your work. If you would like a copy of the results of the study, I will be happy to provide one for you. Potential risks of being involved include the possibility that discussing certain issues about your experience may be upsetting. If this occurs, I will arrange for supportive care from an appropriate professional in your area.

If you have any questions at all about my study of the impact of the Developing Leadership for Inclusive Early Childhood Programs study, please feel free to contact me, andrew.goff@ucdenver.edu. If you have any concerns or complaints about how you were treated during the research sessions please contact. Dr. Alissa Rausch, School of Education and Human Development, University of Colorado Denver, alissa.rausch@ucdenver.edu. Thank you again.

"I have read and understand the above description of the Developing Leadership for Inclusive Early Childhood Programs Study. I have asked for and received a satisfactory explanation for any language I did not fully understand. I have had the chance to ask any questions I have about my participation. I agree to participate in the study, and I understand that I can withdraw my consent at any time. I have received a copy of this consent form." (Please sign below.)

_____   _____
Signature   Date

_____
Print Name

____ I agree to be videotaped.
____I do not agree to be videotaped.

_____   _____
Signature   Date

APPENDIX K

Developing Leadership for High-Quality Inclusive Early Childhood Programs Study

Description

The Developing Leadership for Inclusive Early Childhood Programs Study is a case study of a community college. The case study explores the elements for leadership we are currently developing in our students and how those align with the elements for leading a high-quality inclusive early childhood program. Elements are the knowledge, skills and dispositions of the educational content.

Recently, scholars in the fields of early childhood education (ECE) and early intervention/early childhood special education (EI/ECSE) have begun to press the importance of leadership and specialized training for leaders in inclusive early childhood programs (DEC, 2015). Leadership in the early childhood programs in our community is a primary responsibility of program directors, many of whom earn their leadership credentials at the community college. While there are resources to guide faculty with the preparation of leaders in early childhood programs, there are limited resources available to prepare leaders in high-quality inclusive early childhood programs. Simply said, it is not easy to prepare directors to lead a program that includes children with developmental delays/disabilities.

The goal of this case study is to identify how faculty are currently developing the elements of leadership, how those elements support high-quality inclusive early childhood programs and what additional support the community college can provide to support faculty and early childhood professionals. The need for leadership and inclusion has been supported

by laws and research for thirty years, but currently, there is nothing explicitly made available to faculty to develop the elements of leadership for directors to lead high-quality inclusive early childhood programs. With the completion of the Developing Leadership for Inclusive Early Childhood Programs Study, faculty will be provided with guidance for preparing directors to lead early childhood programs that include children with development delays/disabilities.

APPENDIX L

Interview questions for faculty participants

1. What courses do you teach at the community college?

2. How do you define leadership in early childhood education?

   a. Can you elaborate

3. What are some of the instructional strategies you use that might prepare early

   childhood professionals to including children with developmental delays/disabilities

   in early childhood programs?

   a. Tell me more about access

   b. Tell me more about systems of support

   c. Tell me more about leadership

4. What do you believe early childhood professionals in the Colorado Director's

   Certificate Program should have inorderto be leaders in an early childhood program

   including children with developmental delays or disabilities?

   a. Tell me more about collaboration

   b. Tell me more about leadership practices…can you provide an example

   c. Tell me more about advocacy

   d. Tell me more about reflective practices

5. Tell me about instructional activities and materials you have used that develop early

   childhood professionals' capacity to be leaders in an early childhood program

   including children with developmental delays or disabilities.

    a. Tell me more about field experiences

    b. Tell me more about technical assistance

6. What additional support do you and students need from the community college to build students capacity to be leaders in early childhood programs that include children with developmental delays or disabilities?

    a. Tell me more about…

APPENDIX M

Interview with graduate participants

1. What certificates or degrees have you earned at the community college?

2. How do you define leadership in early childhood education?

    a. Can you elaborate

3. During your education at the community college, what are some of the things you learned about including children with developmental delays/disabilities in early childhood programs?

    a. Tell me more about access

    b. Tell me more about systems of support

    c. Tell me more about leadership

4. What skills and knowledge do you believe early childhood professionals in the Colorado Director's Certificate Program should have inorder to be leaders in an early childhood program including children with developmental delays or disabilities?

    a. Tell me more about collaboration

    b. Tell me more about leadership practices…can you provide an example

    c. Tell me more about advocacy

    d. Tell me more about reflective practices

5. What experiences did you have while completing ECE courses at the community college that developed your abilities to lead an early childhood program including children with developmental delays or disabilities.

     a. Tell me more about field experiences

     b. Tell me more about technical assistance

6. What additional support do you need from your courses that would build your capacity to be a leader in early childhood programs that include children with developmental delays or disabilities?

     a. Tell me more about…

APPENDIX N

A priori codes

- Access to inclusive programs

- Systems of supports and services for children with developmental delays/disabilities

- Program Collaboration

- Leadership practices/qualities

- Program policies

- Evidence-based practices

- Professional standards

- Advocacy

- Reflective practices

- Technical Assistance

- Field experience

APPENDIX O

**Aligning instructional strategies to desired professional development outcomes
(Winton, Snyder & Goffin, 2016)**