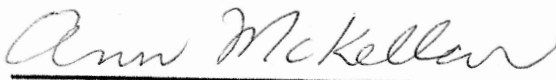# ACCEPTANCE

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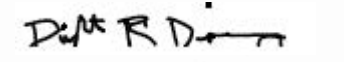
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A COLLABORATIVE SUPPORT-TEAM APPROACH IN EDUCATING PRESCHOOL-

KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS FOR SCHOOL AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SUCCESS.

by

Stephanie Michelle Minardi

A Dissertation

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate thoroughly the effectiveness of a collaborative support team approach toward a whole-child's developmental foundation, identify preventive strategies in meeting the needs of all developmental domains, and report on the significance of individual differences and self-awareness on beliefs and perceptions of early-childhood education. The study took place in a small community in Southern California with a diversity of socio-economic status ranging from extremely wealthy to poverty. This small district consists of five elementary schools in which preschool programs are located on three of the five campuses. The study had 231 surveys completed by parents and or caregivers. There were 52 staff members inclusive of: five preschool teachers; two transitional kindergarten teachers; seven kindergarten teachers; five school psychologists; the Speech Pathologists; two occupational therapists; zero physical therapists; one adapted physical education teacher; twenty behavior specialists; and six administrators. The Kindergarten Readiness assessment was administered to all incoming Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten students, this data provided information on actual students' academic functioning. The teachers were provided with the Social, Academic, and Emotional Behavior Risk Screener (SAEBRS) to evaluate their students individually in the areas of social, academic, and emotional behaviors. After collecting the Quantitative data, 10 participants were selected to participate in personal interviews in order for the researcher to identify trends in relation to their beliefs and perceptions on the whole-child's development, early-childhood school readiness and success, and the effectiveness of a collaborative support-team approach to early-childhood education.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

The first day of kindergarten can be a life changing experience, not only for the child but also for the family. Due to the importance of the event, the transition experience is crucial for all persons involved (Bassok & Latham, 2017). In the past two decades, there has been a dramatic shift in requirements for kindergarten (Bassok & Latham, 2017). Kindergarten initially began as a child-centered experience where children were encouraged to self-direct themselves to preferred activities and explore their environments naturally full of hands-on experiences (Miller & Almon, 2009).

Today, kindergarten is comprised of standards on literacy and mathematics skills to better prepare students for success on standardized assessments in the future (Miller & Almon, 2009). Today's kindergarteners typically spend a minimum of 30 minutes or less engaged in free play and self-exploration (Miller & Almon, 2009). With the required standards for kindergarten, the shift has now focused towards preschool preparedness. There has been a dramatic increase in preschool enrollment for children three to five years between 1990 and 2011, rising from 1.2 million to 2.9 million (Current Population Survey, 2015).

In public schools in most states, preschool curriculum and standards have shifted from exploration and nurturing to literacy, math, and rigid routines (Bassok & Reardon, 2013; Kornrich & Furstenberg, 2013; Miller & Almon, 2009; Otterman, 2009; Reardon, 2011). The curriculum shift has led to a range of theories and variety of interpretations by educators, school districts and state departments (Goldstein, 2007; Graue, 2009; Hatch, 2002; Jacob, 2005; Kagan & Kauerz, 2007; Pianta, Cox, & Snow, 2007; Stipek, 2006). Due to the range of interpretation, it has created inconsistencies in expectations from preschool and kindergarten teachers, and this has attributed to the discrepancies in perceptions on school readiness (Goldstein, 2007; Graue,

2009; Hatch, 2002; Jacob, 2005; Kagan & Kauerz, 2007; Pianta, Cox, & Snow, 2007; Stipek, 2006).

Government acknowledgement of the achievement gap in the populations is a start in attempt to address the needs of children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Investing and improving the nations early childhood education programs is the challenge that is apparent (Best, 2006; Burrow, 2011; Chatterji, 2006). The High/Scope Perry Preschool longitudinal study beginning in 1960 identified African American boys born into poverty that were identified as high-risk for school failure. The boys were randomly divided into two groups. One group received a high-quality preschool program and the other group no preschool. Interviews over the years and information provided through school records and social services found that the boys who received the high-quality preschool program resulted in long-term success in school, achievement of a high school diploma, they were involved in less crime, able to obtain and maintain a job, and financial stability (Lipina & Colombo, 2009; Schweinhart & Weikart, 1993). All children can benefit from early childhood education; however, studies have found strong support for the long-term benefits of high-quality early education and experience. High-quality preschool programs address development in cognition, social-emotional and physical (Follari, 2007). Studies such as the High/Scope Perry Preschool Study and Head Start studies have consistently demonstrated long-term benefit in children identified as high-risk (Lipina & Colombo, 2009).

Statement of the Problem

Previous studies indicate that students who do not have a positive early school experience, tend to do poorly in school (Harradine & Clifford, 1996; Higgens-Hains et. al., 1987). Investigations indicated that the lack of collaboration and communication between

preschool and kindergarten teachers has caused a breakdown in the educational system in relation to preschool and kindergarten (Bassok et al., 2017; Harradine & Clifford, 1996; Higgins-Hains et. al., 1989).

This study investigated the existing research on early childhood education and development in the attempt to gain a deeper understanding of the importance of addressing the whole-child's development, the importance of understanding the impacts of poverty and self-identification of one's unknown personal biases, and to broaden further, the understanding of school readiness to families, teachers, and stakeholders. The study analyzed preschool, transitional kindergarten, kindergarten teachers, service providers, and parental perspectives of school readiness, developmental foundations, the importance of understanding the impacts of poverty and self-identification of one's unknown personal biases, and the importance of a collaborative support-team approach in educating young children.

The ongoing research in early childhood development suggests that early childhood educational success is closely associated to success in later years (Rimm-Kaufma, et al., 1999). Policy maker's primary focus is academic achievement and in order to mitigate the achievement gap between those who are economically advantaged and disadvantaged academic skills should be developed as early as possible (Stipek, 2006). Some states are now developing and investing in preschool programs—in the attempt to mitigate that very gap—but the assessment of development in young children still takes into consideration only the academic skills as a measure of school readiness (Mashburn & Henry, 2004). Though some trends showed that school readiness improvements were made through a more comprehensive approach that addressed both academic and social-emotional and overall developmental skills, yet on the other hand are accountable for that failure (Mashburn & Henry, 2004). Kendall (2003) emphasizes

that collaboration is essential in creating a network of educators and collaborative practices in early education. This will allow for consistency of assessment practices and creating an environment for young children to feel successful, thrive, and have a positive experience (Kendall, 2003).

Policy makers tend to favor academic skills as a measure of accountability over social-emotional and overall developmental skills, as they are much easier to be assessed (Miller & Almon, 2009). Assessments for non-academic skills can be much more time consuming and require ongoing observations and often the collaboration of a team of educational and service-related professionals such as speech therapists, behaviorists, occupational therapists (Miller & Almon, 2009).

Kindergarten's primary focus is on school readiness as per the academic skills and expectation set forth by No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (Graue & DiPerna, 2000). Students are expected to begin kindergarten academically prepared and ready to participate in formal instruction (Graue & DiPerna, 2000). Despite the attempts of NCLB (U.S. Department of Education, 2001), many students are not progressing significantly and are not becoming proficient readers (Payne, 2013). Following NCLB, the Obama administration targeted school reform with, *Race to the Top* providing monetary incentives for schools that were staffed with high quality teachers and increased test scores (AARA Outreach, 2009). To further address this aspect of education, President Obama signed school reform Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) on December 10, 2015, which reauthorized NCLB. The ESSA was designed to guide efforts in supporting equal opportunity for all with the drive on all students' improvement (United States Department of Education, 2015).

Despite many philosophical beliefs supporting the education of young children by learning through natural exploration, play, and naturalistic experiences, early childhood education has become, purely academic to meet the Common Core standards driven academics (Bassok & Reardon, 2013; Kornrich & Furstenberg, 2013; Miller & Almon, 2009; Otterman, 2009; Reardon, 2011). Researchers, educators, and parents of early childhood education students are pressured to make the paradigm shift restructuring preschool curriculum (Bassok & Reardon, 2013; Kornrich & Furstenberg, 2013; Miller & Almon, 2009; Otterman, 2009; Reardon, 2011).

Preschool settings and educational expectations differ significantly from kindergartens. For a successful and positive experience, the shared goal should be configuring a transition process that could address, beside the academic readiness, the multitude of feelings that young children experience in moving from preschool to kindergarten and evaluate emotional growth side by side to academic growth. Transition activities should be implemented as both preventive measure to explore stressors such as anxiety, sadness, excitement, and anticipation and to enhance—by creating a learner friendly environment—that very academic readiness that is tested as a measure of school readiness, as the two mutually influence each other (Makin, 2000).

The focus of this study is to highlight the different components that affect school success. One of the main elements is a successful transition from preschool to kindergarten, and that requires collaborative practices with exit and entry criteria (Hains et al., 1987), training for teachers, collaboration time for preschool and kindergarten teachers to meet and discuss programs, curricula, and school readiness (Mashburn & Henry, 2004). Parents should also be involved to ensure that school readiness and developmental foundational skills are reinforced in the home (Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2000).

Purpose of the Study

The researcher aims to highlight a few aspects that are often disregarded, yet, may have a major impact on long-term school success. The purpose of this research is to explore, analyze, and identify the effectiveness of support staff teams working in collaboration with preschool, transitional kindergarten, and kindergarten teachers in developing and enhancing quality educational programs, termed the collaborative support-team approach. Secondly, the study explores, analyzes, and identifies the current research supporting the importance, of high quality early-childhood education and experience and ensuring high quality early-childhood education by targeting the development of the whole-child and addressing all developmental domains (cognition, communication, social-emotional, motor, and overall adaptive development). Third, it aims to enlighten all stakeholders and elaborate the importance of understanding the impacts of poverty and self-identification of one's personal unknown biases, beliefs, and perceptions and how they have a significant whether positive or negative impact on a child's early or first time experience in school. Lastly, by looking at the data of this single district's early childhood programs, to identify the importance of collaboration and the future development of a systematic transitional approach as students matriculate through the early educational system (Burrow, McKelvey, 2011).

Research Questions

1. Does the collaborative support-team team approach in early childhood education have positive effect on the development of whole-child?

2. Do parent and school staff perceptions, impact positively or negatively the success of a collaborative support-team approach on school readiness and school success?

3. Do personal biases and poverty negatively affect student school experience and success?

Theoretical Framework

In conjunction with the acknowledgement and owning of one's own personal biases, a good educator should research who their students are (Gorski, 2017; Payne, 2013; Sönmez & Ceylan, 2017). A strong educator will have an in-depth understanding of the populations whom they educate (Gorski, 2017; Payne, 2013; Sönmez & Ceylan, 2017). Possessing knowledge, understanding the labyrinth of extensive cultural differences, from religious divide to variances of economic status within the United States of America is broad, and ever changing (Payne, 2013). The Theoretical Framework of this study was based on the work of Ruby Payne (2013); she has extensive research and publications on students living in poverty. Her eminently practical approach in working with students stems from years of working with and in the public education system. Payne's goal as outlined in *A Framework for Understanding Poverty: A Cognitive Approach* is a practical approach to guiding educators to reach all of their students in their diverse classrooms (Payne, 2013).

Students of poverty often have standardized scores that are significantly lower than middle or upper socioeconomic class peers (Howard, 2010). The past 20 years in education focused on achievement data and test scores; emphasizing the students of poverty as the lowest (CDE, 2015; Howard, 2010; Reardon, 2011). According, to Payne (2013), educators must conceptualize the importance of the experiences that children encounter at a personal level, which in turn can affect learning and thinking of their students. To meet the needs of students, the educator must understand what strategies to use. To know the most effective strategy, the educator must understand what resources are needed and which are stable (Payne, 2013).

Resources as defined by Payne (2013), range from none to all of the following: Financial, emotional, mental/cognitive, spiritual, support systems, relationships/role models, knowledge of hidden rules, and language/formal register. Educators need to understand that poverty is not just monetary, and poverty can fluctuate in any of the described resources domains. Educators must understand the diversity amongst their students and while embracing differences being able to offer equity in educational opportunities. Poverty is not only finances. Money is only but one element of poverty (Kiernan & Mensah, 2011; Payne, 2013). Poverty or lack of resources is fluid and should be monitored frequently by educators to ensure the needs of the whole-child are being met (Payne, 2013).

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is to identify the variations in expectations and beliefs of preschool, transitional-kindergarten, and kindergarten teachers, support staff providers, and parents on issues related to, school readiness, developmental foundations, parental involvement, early-intervention, collaborative support-team approach, understanding personal biases, and impact of grade level transitions on early childhood experience. Ultimately, this study demonstrates the importance of a collaborative support-team approach to early childhood education. This study could attribute to expansion of the collaborative support-team approach to educating children.

This study focused on a single district preschool, transitional-kindergarten, and kindergarten teachers' and parent's expectations and perceptions on school readiness and the impact of a well-balanced developmental foundation. Additionally, in order to provide a model to possibly expand the collaborative support-team approach in educating children to other districts. Lastly, to emphasize the importance in educating all stakeholders on the impacts of

poverty and understanding one's own personal biases and how they affect children. Concluding

with teacher's and parent's expectations and beliefs in recognizing personal biases, parental

involvement, early intervention, impact of transition, and the collaborative support-team

approach will be analyzed. In conjunction with the previously discussed supportive research,

this study might prompt a wider awareness of the significant impact of a successful early-

childhood education experience—in all stakeholders and elicit a response in school planning and

administration.

Definition of Terms

At-risk: Primarily children who experiences are living in poverty, exposed to emotional

or physical abuse and/or trauma, and familial history of incarceration, gangs, and substance

abuse.

Class: A categorization term used to identify people by an identified label or

commonality, typically by financial status, race, ethnicity, or gender. For the purpose of this

research, the term is used when referencing to financial status.

Common Core: The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are standards, kindergarten

through grade 12, that were developed to ensure that all students graduate with the knowledge

and skill set to be successful adults prepared to enter college and/or the workforce (Karge &

Moore, 2015). The CCSS takes in the digital native and twenty-first century world in

consideration. The CCSS standards emphasize real-world learning and understanding by

synthesizing information for deeper understanding, thinking, and problem solving.

Early childhood education: A branch of education theory which relates to the teaching of

little children from birth up to the age of eight which is traditionally about 3rd grade (Luis,

2018).

Socio-Economic Status: Socio-economic status is a term used to identify a class or sub-class of people based off of income or finances, educational level, occupation, where they reside, and property ownership.

Poverty: A class of people who live with minimal to none of the basic living necessities, money, food, access to medical care, minimal to no education. The U.S. government definition is based off total household gross income and total number of residents in the home.

School readiness: Is not merely an assessment, in this research developmentally appropriate and preparedness for transitioning to school.

Whole-child: Overall adaptive development in the areas of cognition, communication, social, emotional, and motor development.

Well-being: The state of being happy, healthy and prosperous (Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary, 2019).

Universal Preschool: Public funded quality preschool to all children.

Limitations

The researcher notes two potentially identified limitations in this study, which may affect the interpretation and generalization of findings to other educational programs and global populations. First, the study was conducted in a single district, so the sample size is small and reflective of only a small, single city population. Second, the preschool settings are limited to special day class settings, enrichment, and district preschool programs hence, in the study there is no representation of private or federally funded programs.

Delimitations

This researcher has identified two potential delimitations, which may minimize generalization to other programs. First, the participants are limited to seven kindergarten teachers, two

transitional-kindergarten teachers, and five preschool teachers two of which are special

education, two district preschool programs, and one preschool enrichment program (special

education preschool teachers co-teach enrichment program). Second, the location of the study in

conducted in a single city with a population of 22,000 in Southern California.

Summary

This study is organized into five chapters. The first chapter provides background on the

purpose and significance of this study; it describes a theoretical framework and introduces the

research questions.

Chapter 2 will provide the historical relevance and conceptual framework. The literature

review will offer significant support of the importance of a well-balanced developmental

foundation and demonstrate the negative impact of developmental foundation gaps on school

readiness and success. The literature presented enhances awareness on the importance of

identifying unknown personal biases and how they may indirectly or directly impact how

educators address the needs of the whole-child. Understanding the importance of early

intervention and education, parental engagement, and a systematic transition from grade level to

grade level will further expand this aspect of this research. Additionally, the literature review

supports the importance of a collaborative support-team approach to early childhood

development and the impact of a child's first experience in school and its association to

academic success in later school years.

Chapter 3 addresses the problem statement, research questions, and conceptual

framework. This mixed-method study presents sources of data, explained and synthesized. Data

analysis, assessment tools, and sampling methods are defined.

Chapter 4 clearly presents the quantitative data analysis results that were identified on the survey, the Social, Academic, and Emotional Behavior Risk Screener, and the districts Kindergarten Readiness assessments. The qualitative analysis of this study identified themes that emerge from the textual coding based on parent, teacher and service providers surveys responses.

Chapter 5 discusses key conclusions and findings as a result of this study. Moreover, conclusions provide implications for policy and practice and recommendations for additional or ongoing research.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Preschool has been in the spotlight in education. There has been a call for universal preschool or preschool for all children (Barnett & Frede, 2010; Rose, 2010). This is an international movement, which started as an intellectual understanding to use public funding to ensure high-quality preschool is available to all families (Barnett & Frede, 2010; Rose, 2010). Similarly, to the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) or Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the focus is to close educational gaps and provide opportunities for all children (Barnett & Frede, 2010; Curran, et al, 2015; Rose, 2010). Whether the aim of research is to close educational gaps or examine early intervention to ensure the well-balanced developmental foundation of all children, this literature review will support the importance of this study's focus on researching the impact on early childhood education and meeting the needs of the whole-child. The research problem focuses on the advantages of a concept similar to the Universal Preschool Program philosophy and within that intellectual frame analyzes in particular the importance of the long-term effects of high-quality early education, early intervention, social emotional development, and the impact on long-term academic success

All changes will require the full support of administration, teachers, parents, students, and the community, especially when attempting to incorporate social skills and behavior intervention district-wide for the preschool, transitional kindergarten, and kindergarten students. When initiating and further developing changes, it is essential for leaders to remember they are the experts (Senge, 2012). Leaders must know how to persuade involvement from all stakeholders prior to attempting any change (Fullen, 2010).

Fullan's (2010) approach to a system-wide reform explains how change becomes possible when educational leaders take all stakeholders into consideration. They first must build

a collective capacity, one which individual teachers, schools, and districts are committed to by working together collaboratively. With collaboration comes the ability to increase staff members' effectiveness, and with both trust and collaboration, the focus shifts from individual competition to the betterment of the whole system. Changing for that system betterment requires a deliberate coordination of leadership focused on shared goals held by all stakeholders (Fullan, 2010; Senge, 2012). Fullan's work stems from some of the largest educational systems including the United States, United Kingdom, and Canada (Fullan, 2010).

Assessments of program outcomes have been difficult, largely due to the lack of data and newness of universal preschool around the nation. The Darling-Hammond (2010) study aims to highlight side-by-side, with the literature, a few successful steps that could propel further development in the offerings. Darling-Hammond (2010) highlighted precise examples of the extreme differences in quality education and programs within the United States and on how to strive for a successful reform. In this work, it is clearly confirmed what is needed to make the above changes that will eventually result in equal education for all. For example, one of the focus of Darling-Hammond's (2010) research is on maintaining that all staff have ongoing opportunities for high-quality professional development and that expertise will provide educators with the skills necessary to address all student's needs. Therefore, it is crucial for school leaders to educate themselves on understanding and gaining knowledge on human behavior, not only vis-à-vis the importance of promoting changes in the actual system but also and foremost in order to grasp the specific long-term developmental needs of their students. Building on small but essential changes, offering staff trainings on the effects of trauma, building sensitivity awareness, respect for cultural differences, and collectively working on building awareness as whole is crucial. School leaders should bear in mind that educating and assisting all staff,

students, and families, as well as understanding the developmental domains will be key in addressing the unique needs of all subgroups (low socioeconomic status, poverty, homeless, foster youth, special needs, English Language Learners, multiple cultures, etc.). Leaders must also be aware of the influence of technology in the 21st century learners that has changed the experience of educators and students. With widespread technology access and the increasing globalization trend of education—as technology expands access to information to learners worldwide—leaders must provide the staff, students, and families the resources to access technology in order to grow together as a learning community (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

The following literature review provides supportive evidence for the importance of early childhood education and deepens the current understanding of long-term positive effects of a collaborative support-team approach to education as a form of preventing educational gaps. Many studies also support that early education and early intervention are closely associated with long-term academic success (Barnette, 1995; Bassok, et. al., 2017; Chetty et al., 2013; Yoshikawa et al., 2013). The researcher has operational defined the collaborative support-team approach as it is has been created in this school district. The collaborative support-team approach has developed by strategically utilized support staff working in collaboration to meet the needs of all students. The researcher and the districts special education team have found that with the increase of inclusive practices in the district (full-inclusion) that support-staff were able to proactively identify needs in a more global capacity. This has resulted in an increase of preventative practices in meeting the needs of the whole-child prior to child demonstrating a significant developmental or achievement gap. The researcher believes it is necessary to take a deeper look into the programs such as the preschool, transitional kindergarten, and kindergarten

classrooms, curricula, and collaborative support-team approaches that are in place in the current education system in order to identify processes in meeting the needs of the whole-child.

Departing from the Universal Preschool Programs literature review, the aim to identify and expand on five main categories or themes, and within each of them expansions of the main ideas in subcategories. The categories or themes are: Historical benefit of preschool instruction, early childhood brain development, high-quality programs and services (early social-emotional development, prevention and early intervention, communication, meeting basic student needs, sensory-processing); parental involvement, universal preschool, teachers' perceptions and beliefs, and leadership change and process.

Historical Benefit of Early Childhood Education

According to Ostroff (2014), educators should focus on the importance of how movement and attention work in unison, enhancing how children relate to learning. Kindergarten was initially conceived in the 1830's in Germany. The birth of Kindergarten is as literal as its name; from "German Kinder-Garten (1840), literally children-garden, garden of children, a metaphoric name from Kinder children (plural of Kind child; see kin (n.) + Garten garden (from suffixed form of PIE root *gher- (1) to grasp, enclose". The term was coined by German educator Friedrich Fröbel (1782-1852) in reference to his method of developing intelligence in young children (Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary, 2018). In the 1940's, Kindergarten teachers were required to play piano and sing the majority of the school day (Ostroff, 2014). Young children would spend their day exploring the gardens and playing together (Ostroff, 2014). Educators of young children empirically knew what cognitive scientists have observed in later years in the lab that active play and movement are at the crux of children's learning (Ostroff, 2014). Active play and experiential learning are seen as key factors in developing the ability to

stay on task and by consequence academic success is positively influenced (DiPerna & Reid, 2007). The experiential learning that happens in young children can be linked to human evolution. Anthropological studies have assessed that the ancestors have existed and survived hundreds of years and have learned how to adapt—by experiencing firsthand how to successfully hunt for food, avoid predators, and migrate from place to place (Medina, 2012).

Learning by doing and learning by experiencing in ever changing environments is exactly what kindergarten education was developed for: educate children by training their innate faculties through the complimentary self-expression, creativeness, collective involvement, and motor activity. Brain research supports that the human brain is set up to operate best in ever changing environments (Gray, 2013; Medina, 2012). This research indicates also that the average learner needs a shift in focus every 10 minutes. Just as the ancestors of the past who survived as hunters and gathers, the brain has evolved to sustain survival. This is why the brain constantly scans the environment and naturally gravitates to instinctual things that may trigger the fight or flight mechanism in the brain (Medina, 2012). By incorporating movement into the educational strategies in kindergarten, we could elicit similar responses and enhance long-term successful learning strategies in children (Medina, 2012).

As for learning, cognitive scientists support that the best predictor of learning is not the amount of time spent on a task but the level of attention and focus devoted to doing that task (Clark, 2013; Gray, 2013; Medina, 2012). This supports the fact that lessons need to be created to revisit themes over time. Learners have opportunities to see a theme over a period time, which allow the multi-modality approach of learning present in the brain to acquire new information, formulate new contexts, and connect to previously learned material (Clark, 2013; Gray, 2013, & Medina, 2012).

Lastly, in support of high-quality early childhood education is developing well-rounded foundational skills for self-regulation, which begins during the first five years of life (Galinsky, 2010). This theory supports that early childhood education plays an essential role in fostering self-regulation of children's thinking and behavior. Critics of kindergarten with the primary focus on heavy academic curriculum believe that academic content is not developmentally appropriate and that children this age need play exploration as learning experiences (Duncan, 2011; Elkind & Whitehurst, 2001; Zigler, 1987, Zigler & Bishop-Josef, 2006). Documentation of brain development, why children may appear overly active in a classroom setting where they are expected to be quiet, sit and pay attention, further supports this research study's efforts to incorporate a collaborative support-team approach to teaching to address all developmental areas (Medina, 2012).

Early Childhood Brain Development

Over the past 10 years, human brain studies have begun uncovering more information on brain functions than what was discovered over the past 100 years (Gonzalez & Widmeyer, 2007; Le Doux, 2012; Shore, 1997). At birth, synapses begin forming connections in the brain as an infant experiences the world (Gonzalez & Widmeyer, 2007; Shore, 1997). According to Gonzalez and Widmeyer (2007), synapse connections, which are used consistently in everyday life, are reinforced. They are protected with consistent repetition so that they become ingrained in the brain as a permanent pathway or circuitry (Gonzalez & Widmeyer, 2007). According to Gonzalez and Widmeyer (2007) and Shore (1997), by the age of two, toddlers have acquired the equivalent amount of synapses that an adult possesses. By the age of three, children have active synapse pathways more than two times that of an adult. The high quantities of synapses remain throughout the first 10 years of life as children explore and experience their world (Gonzalez &

Widmeyer, 2007). However, when a child enters adolescence, nearly half of the synapses are discarded or pruned. Educators continue to question how the brain knows which synapse to prune or discard and which to keep (Gonzalez & Widmeyer, 2007). Researchers express that by learning how the brain functions in maintaining or pruning certain connections, educators can utilize curriculum, activities, and lesson plans that foster connections that are more likely to be useful in future learning and therefore in academic success (Gonzalez & Widmeyer, 2007; Payne, 1997).

Research on early brain development only furthers the importance of how critical it is for early childhood education both intervention and exploratory experiences. As found by Gonzalez and Widmeyer (2007), early childhood experiences activate the brain and create neural pathways. Newly acquired information enters the brain in the form of chemical signals and gets stored along these pathways. Gonzalez and Widmeyer (2007) and Payne (1997) found that with repetition of particular experiences, the pathways are strengthened and solidified. Once the pathways are strengthened, they take on a so-called protected status, and therefore they are not pruned away as they have been reinforced by repeated use. These solidified pathways are those that will remain protected and continue through adulthood (Gonzalez & Widmeyer, 2007).

Due to these findings, brain researchers strongly emphasize the importance of quality experiences and responsive care for very young children and further support that with these early experiences and repetition, the brain forms stable, neural pathways (Gonzalez & Widmeyer 2007). Furthermore, these studies explore that liminal space between quality experiences and responsive care that according to this research can be achieved only with a collaborative approach to address all areas of development in high-quality programs.

High-quality Programs and Services

In a longitudinal study by Horacek et al. (1987), 90 students who were identified as high-risk were randomly assigned to intervention preschool programs or a control group. Average-risk peers were also randomly assigned to these preschool programs. This longitudinal study on the children supported the use of early intervention programs for students at risk. Findings indicated that school failure in math and reading reduced to 16% when students were enrolled in both a preschool intervention program that continued into a school-age program (Horacek, et al., 1987).

Research supports that all children benefit from quality early childhood education programs. High-quality curriculum is the foundation of any educational program (Follari, 2007; Lipina & Colombo, 2009). When children are provided opportunities for early education, in high-quality research-based curricular programs coupled with well-trained teachers, these programs are positively linked to future educational success (Follari, 2007; Lipina & Colombo, 2009). The Federal Government's efforts to address the War of Poverty in 1965 developed Head Start that was designed by a committee of early childhood experts. The goal of Head Start was to provide young children and their families of poverty opportunities to education, health, development, and mental health (Lipina & Colombo, 2009). Similar to the Head Start program, the High/Scope Perry Preschool program was launched in 1962 and described itself as placing a much stronger emphasis on education than Head Start (Lipina & Colombo, 2009). A longitudinal study that focused on children living in poverty in the Ypsilanti School District in Michigan that were enrolled in the High/Scope Perry preschool program, went a step further and tracked the initial participants and the control group until age 27 years old (Lipina & Colombo, 2009). This longitudinal study found that the High/Scope Perry Preschool students demonstrated

long-term benefits. Hence, when a preschool program was considered high-quality results supported a pronounced long-term benefit to "at risk" children (Lipina & Colombo, 2009). Educators are faced with the difficult task of designing their programs to meet the whole-child's needs for: opportunities, quality instruction, positive experiences, and constant care of all aspects of development that are relevant in school success. For those reasons a collaborative team approach seems necessary as many areas of expertise are involved. Follari (2007) further elaborated on high-quality early childhood program curricula and added that they must address three primary developmental areas: physical (health & nutrition), cognition, and social-emotional development.

According to the California Preschool Foundations (2008), not only should high-quality curricula be based on children's developmental areas, but they also need to be developed with guidelines to ensure fidelity. Preschool foundations are vital to ensure the fidelity of curricula implementation. The foundations provide written guidelines to assist educators by providing a clear understanding of the scope and sequences of the activities that should take place in the classroom (CDE, 2008).

Early Social-Emotional Development

Early childhood research supports the notion that during the first five-years of life children are building their self-esteem while at the same time developing their foundation for problem solving-skills (Nelson, et al., 2006. At birth, newborns begin experiencing the world and begin developing a sense of security (Nelson, et al., 2006. According to many researchers, the first five-years of a child's life establish the foundation for their sense of security, success, motivation, and self-esteem (Erikson, 1959; Nelson, et al., 2006. These experiences will be the

start of their developmental foundation that they will carry with them through their academic careers and their entire lives (Erikson, 1959; Nelson, et al., 2006.

Historically, developmental foundations of children have been studied and theorized. Erik Erikson's (1968) theory of psychosocial development expanded on the Freudian theory of psychosexual development. Erikson's eight stages of psychosocial development begins at infancy where the seeds of identity initiate, and a child begins to see themselves as unique and separate from their parents. They begin to identify and develop those preferred characteristics that they see in parents or those around them. When a child begins to lose interest or usefulness of others' characteristics, the stage of identification ends and identify formation begins (Erikson, 1968).

Erikson (1959) believed that human beings are innately motivated to achieve competence in areas of their lives. Within the eight stages there is: 1) Trust verses Mistrust (birth to 12 months), 2) Autonomy verses Shame and Doubt (ages 1-3 years), 3) Initiative verses Guilt (ages 3-5 years), 4) Industry versus Inferiority (ages 5-13 years), 5) Identity verses Role Confusion (ages 13-21), 6) Intimacy verses Isolation (ages 21-39 years), 7) Generativity verses Stagnation (ages 40-65 years), and lastly stage 8) Ego Integrity versus Despair (ages 65 and older). It is Erikson's belief that at each stage of psychosocial development we as humans encounter a crisis that we must figure out how to overcome, if not, the psychosocial development may be impacted. Erikson (1959) also expands that crisis are individualized and can be influenced by cultural expectations and beliefs, and importantly, survival needs.

Jean Piaget is widely known as the father of early childhood development (Forrester, 1992). Piaget (1936) disagreed with the notion that intelligence is a fixed trait. Piaget's theory of cognitive development synthesizes that cognitive development is a process based on

biological maturation and experiences and interactions within one's environment. Children create constructs and understandings that formulate schemas as children interact with and experience their environment. Their schemas are challenged with discrepancies for what they know occur, this is discovery when the child will accept new things. Piaget identified the Stages of Cognitive Development: 1) Sensorimotor (birth to age 2 years), 2) Pre-operational stage (ages 2-7 years), 3) Concrete operations (ages 7 to 11 years), and lastly 4) Formal Operations (11+ to adolescence and adulthood). Piaget's theory supports the notion of readiness—meaning that until biological maturation occurs, certain concepts should not be taught.

Similarly, to Piaget, Vygotsky has made significant contributions in the analysis of cognitive development in the field of psychology. Cognitive development can be identified as how thought processes are formulated which begin in early childhood, through adolescence, to adulthood. Thought processes are developed in language, mental imagery, reasoning, thinking, memory, decision-making, and problem solving. Parents and educators can better enable themselves in catering to the unique individual needs of each child by understanding the learning process and growth impact a child's cognitive development. Piaget and Vygotsky concurred that societal influences were barriers or boundaries that affected and influenced cognitive growth. However, this is where philosophical beliefs sever (McLeod, 2018).

Vygotsky had strong beliefs that children absorb input from their environment. By experiencing their environment, children develop connections to their environment, which create symbolism. The environment children grow up in and what children are exposed to in their living environments have a direct influence on what children think about and how they think (McLeod, 2018).

Vygotsky's component of cognitive theory begins with no set phases that one must accomplish to advance to the next stage. Cognitive development has a direct link to social interactions. Children need to experience and develop skills in collaboration with peers on their own self-exploration; this will lead to the development higher mental functions. Parents and educators should act as a catalyst by incorporating guided learning where children and collaborative partners co-construct knowledge (McLeod, 2018).

Vygotsky (1987) expresses the differentiation in language. The three forms of speech are: social speech beginning at age two years for external conversation; private speech develops around age three which is self-directed and a component of intellectual functioning; and thirdly, silent inner speech typically around age seven which is used for self-regulation and problem solving.

Vygotsky's first component of cognitive theory he terms private speech. This self-talk or speaking to oneself which is essential to children in thinking about a solution or problem solving. As children age, self-talk may silence and internalize as it drives cognitive development. This private speech continues into adulthood by mentally analyzing strategies and formulating solutions and learning (Vygotsky, 1987). The zone of proximal development (ZPD) is Vygotsky's second component of his cognitive theory. The ZPD is developmentally just higher that current functional level of development. The ZPD is ideal for teaching and children able to acquire new information by making connections to previous experiences in their environment that they have experienced (Vygotsky, 1987). Collaborative learning with guidance from adults is experiential in learning, cognitive, and social development (McLeod, 2018). Vygotsky's final component is scaffolding (Vygotsky, 1987). Educators should offer guidance and assistance and

facilitate learning to guild children in developing solutions on their own (McLeod, 2018; Vygotsky, 1987).

Historically, early childhood development and developmental domains have been researched in an attempt to discover how personalities develop, how children learn, and what affects their learning potential. The theorists coupled with todays and tomorrows research continue to guide educators in meeting the needs of the whole-child and building insight on the external and internal influences in a child's developmental foundations (Piaget, 1936). Preschool children with significant challenging behaviors are an ongoing concern in the recent years. According to Conroy, Brown and Olive (2008), an estimated 8% to 25% of preschoolers are exhibiting severe behaviors at a degree that significantly impede their social competence. The outlook for preschoolers who live in poverty is even more disconcerting, with the prevalence of challenging behaviors approaching 30% (Kupersmidt, Bryant, & Willoughby, 2000; Qi & Kaiser, 2003).

When significant behavioral concerns are not addressed in a timely manner, they tend to persist and further develop into later childhood, adolescence, and adulthood maladaptive behaviors (Lipsey & Derzon, 1998). Early challenging behaviors are closely associated with a multitude of later concerns and predictors of peer rejection (Bryant, Vizzard, Willoughby, & Kupersmidt, 1999; Wood, Cowan, & Baker, 2002), academic problems (Kazdin, 1993; McClelland, Acock, & Morrison, 2006; Raver & Knitzer, 2002), delinquency and substance abuse (Campbell, 1995; Reid, 1993), and poor mental health (Pierce, Ewing, & Campbell, 1999). Children who are exhibiting challenging behaviors test parents' or their guardians' parenting skills on an on-going basis (Hinshaw, Han, Erhardt, & Huber- Dressler, 1992; Qi & Kaiser, 2003; Rimm-Kaufman & Wanless, 2012). Families that deal with those issues report a pervasive

significant impact on all family members, on their social-emotional wellbeing, on disruption of family roles, daily routines, and activities (Fox, Vaughn, Wyatte, & Dunlap, 2002). There are also reported feelings of isolation and withdrawal from community events and settings (Fox, Vaughn, et al., 2002; Joachim, Sanders, & Turner, 2010). Children with challenging behaviors not only negatively affect their family and their home environment but their educators, who report feeling distressed and strained (Smith & Fox, 2003).

There has been an alarming increase of school suspensions and expulsions in both public and private preschools due to significant maladaptive behavioral concerns (Gilliam, 2005). More and more often teachers are reportedly requesting assistance, as they lack knowledge on effective intervention for addressing challenging behaviors at school (Hemmeter, Santos, & Ostrosky, 2008; Jones, 2009; Stormont, Reinke, & Herman, 2011). Schools are also lacking consultative skills to educate families of children with challenging behavior so that they could insure the consistency of intervention implementation within all environments (McWilliam, 2010).

When challenging children are removed and excluded from school and have no access to early education settings or learning opportunities, they widely lack in both basic pre-academic skills and social competencies (Gilliam, 2005; Skiba & Peterson, 2000). Furthermore, exclusion not only negatively affects and strains the child's development but the whole family system, which should support social competencies (Fox, Vaughn, et al., 2002; Helburn, 1995; Webster-Stratton, 1988).

Educators and families of children with challenging behaviors need comprehensive research-based approaches and strategies to be equipped to both prevent and address these challenging behaviors at a young age (McWilliam, 2010). Essential, for example, is to facilitate and support the development of children's positive social-emotional and behavioral development

(Foot, Woolfson, Terras, & Norfolk, 2004; Fox, Benito, & Dunlap, 2002; Jones, 2009) because if challenging behaviors become solidified in children's behavioral repertoires, "they are not likely to decrease in the absence of intervention" (Horner et al., 2002, p. 423).

Research continues to support that when students enter school there are significant differences in academic achievement and social-emotional development between students with higher and lower socioeconomic statuses (Abenavoli & Greenberg, 2016). Furthermore, research indicates that this gap can increase overtime if not addressed (Abenavoli & Greenberg, 2016). Social-emotional readiness and learning go hand-in-hand and early childhood education must foster the development of both and of the whole-child, therefore improving children's positive first time classroom experience. Research supports that addressing the needs of the whole child will benefit children academically and result in long-term academic and post-school success (Abenavoli & Greenberg, 2016). This ongoing research on fostering the development of the whole-child provides policy makers with strong evidence of the importance of high-quality early education and over time that should improve accessibility for public funded universal preschools for all (Abenavoli & Greenberg, 2016).

There is a multifaceted complexity from biological, developmental, and environmental factors that contribute to the social-emotional development of young children (Hack et al., 2004; Horner, et al., 2002). Researchers and scholars of the past and present continue to discover and support the multitude of factors that can lead to and maintain the prevalence of challenging behaviors in children. When the underlying factors are coupled with personalities, characteristics, and practices, behaviors may either mitigate or exacerbate. Biological factors can range from genetic disorders, neurobiological differences, and health conditions (Hack et al., 2004; Horner et al., 2002). Deficits in developmental factors range from cognition, language,

and social-emotional skills (Campbell, 1995; Lavigne et al., 1996; Qi & Kaiser, 2003). Environmental factors are child maltreatment, deprivation, poverty, detrimental parental characteristics and practices (Campbell, 1995; Lawler & Gunnar, 2012; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). Despite what is uncontrollable, there is vast literature replete with information on prevention or mitigation of young children developing challenging behaviors (Hamre & Pianta, 2001; Howes & Hamilton, 1992; McWayne, Hampton, Fantuzzo, Cohen, & Sekino, 2004). Information on creating positive parent/teacher practices, characteristics, and quality teacher-child and parent-teacher relationships have been studied by a variety of researchers (Hamre & Pianta, 2001; Howes & Hamilton, 1992; McWayne, et al., 2004). Addressing these factors cumulatively by taking advantage of a team of experts would mitigate the damages created by those situations and potentially improve long-term success.

Another challenge for parents is adoption. Parents from the United States of America who adopted children from international countries were reporting an increase in children with significant behavioral and emotional issues (Batki, 2018; Purvis & Howard, 2015). As reported by adopted parents, pediatricians (behavioral/emotional disorder diagnosis) and school in the USA there is an increased percentage of adopted children from international countries who show significant behavioral emotional issues (Pitula, De Pasquale, Mliner, & Gunnar, 2017). Pre-adoptive risk factors such as developmental level at arrival and post-adoptive environment, which was the amount of time spent in daycare, would be a predictor of behavior concerns and school readiness (Purvis & Howard, 2015).

Another risk factor for behavioral concerns and poor school readiness is found in children who spend a majority of the day in daycare (Jacobs, Miller, & Tirella, 2010). Developmental assessments were administered at the 12 month and at five years old; these studies showed that

children who spent extended time in daycare had more difficulty with their social-emotional control (Jacobs, et al., 2010; McGoron et al. 2012). Results also indicated a strong correlation between later school problems and children who exhibited deficits in the areas of attention, executive functioning, and sensory processing (Jacobs, et al., 2010). However, when children participate in a high-quality preschool program, this can support children who exhibit delays in attention, emotional development, sensory processing and are at an increased risk for school problems. In addition, participation in a high-quality preschool program may mitigate the risk factors of spending too much time in daycare.

To further emphasize the importance of high-quality preschool experience it evidenced by research findings from children spending too much time in daycare. Again, children presented with higher levels of poor social-emotional control, attention, executive functioning and sensory processing (Jacobs, et al., 2010; McGoron et al. 2012). These identified deficits are directly linked to risk factors such as peer victimization. Peer victimization is when maladaptive social skills or poor social-emotional control coupled with impulsivity and poor sensory-processing result in the inability to formulate appropriate peer interactions and relationships causing undo harm on peers (Monks, et al., 2005). The effects of peer victimization correlate to cognitive, social skills, and attachment profiles as the ongoing research in relation to social skill development continue to see is also a risk factor (Monks, et al., 2005). Researchers have begun to investigate aggression and victimization in young students and results have supported significant differences depending on the age of the child (Monks, et al., 2005). For instance, the nature of aggression and the types of victimization tend to differ among younger children and older children. According to Monks, Smith, and Sweetham (2005) who studied 104 children ages five to six years old, there are particular roles taken in victimization. Monks, Smith and

Sweetham (2005), utilized a cartoon methodology in order to elicit peer nominations for aggressor, victim, and defender. The areas assessed were: 1) social cognitive abilities, 2) executive function skills, 3) attachment profiles of aggressors, victims, and 4) defenders. Findings from the study were quite different in elder children. The identified victims did not exhibit poor performance on the social cognitive tasks nor had insecure attachment qualities. The identified defenders were found to perform above average on the social cognitive tasks (Monks, et al., 2005). With today's high focus on bullying, this research supports the negative effects of preschool age victimization and correlates it to social cognitive skills, executive functioning, and attachment profiles as discussed above.

Prevention and Early Intervention

Stefan and Miclea (2012) focused on the implementation of a program that would prevent conduct problems in preschool children. Stefan and Miclea (2012) implemented a multi-focused, community-based intervention program in preschool settings. The prevention program served all preschool students as an intervention for a target group who was at-risk. The intervention and prevention programs were found to be of high importance in fostering and promoting appropriate developmental skills to deal with school transition and promoting academic success (Stefan & Miclea, 2012).

Case, January and Paulson's (2011) study analyzed 28 peer-reviewed journal publications between 1981 and 2007 and found that intervention programs that focused on social skills and were implemented classroom-wide were effective for all students. The social skills intervention programs were implemented in the standard populated classroom, which are typically composed of students who are considered socially appropriate and inappropriate. Results strongly supported that receiving early intervention at an early age resulted in a more positive outcome.

These results strongly suggest that when resources are focused on young students (primarily preschool and kindergarten) in a classroom-based social skills intervention program, the intervention was successful (Casey et al., 2011).

Functional behavioral assessments (FBAs) and behavioral intervention plans (BIP's) were implemented as a preventative measure to address an ongoing national concern of the over representation of a protected class or subgroup from being referred for disciplinary actions and special education testing (Lo, 2006). The FBA results suggest that interventions should be developed for the elementary student participants of this study (Lo, 2006). The BIPs were to include: 1) social skills training, 2) differential reinforcement, and 3) a self-monitoring program. The BIP's focused both on the target behavior and on replacement behaviors. Results strongly suggested that implementing the BIP and the procedures prior to and during placements may effectively minimize or even eliminate the abundance of referrals, in turn reducing educational restrictiveness—suspension, discipline records, and special education for these students (Lo, 2006).

Preschool education and social skill development have a positive benefit in school success. Gulay (2014) utilized the Personal Inquiry Form and Social Skills Form to obtain data on 521 first grader participants from different areas. The survey results indicated that of the 21 skills examined in the survey, the only noted difference among the child participants was the frequency of specific social skills such as greeting others, introducing oneself, introducing others, mentioning their name, complementing, answering questions, collaboration, preferring to talk when angry rather than reacting physically, reconciling, sharing, and collaborating. This is why it is important to look further into additional variables such as socioeconomic level, family variables, gender, and age, which may affect social skill development. Results suggest that by

looking deeper into these different variables on social skills, we might find a guiding role in identifying the deficiencies in social skills and absolve or correct the deficiency in development (Akman, Gulay, Kargi, 2011; Gulay, 2014). Lastly, it is important to broaden the research on social skills, both at the preschool and at the primary levels, in order identify those needs and fill the gaps, so children can achieve healthy social development (Akman, Gulay, Kargi, 2011).

Ladd (2005) examined social communication behaviors and play interactions of preschool age children with and without hearing loss in public preschool programs. This evidence supports that those early peer relationships and peer interactions influence social acceptance and improve a child's ability to form social relationships later in life. Hence, early peer interaction increases social acceptance and academic success (Ladd, 2005; Foster & Miller, 2017). The data collection took place as children played in dyads during unstructured table activities acknowledging the importance of early peer relationships and social acceptance. This coupled with well-trained teachers and support staff, and community involvement equal success and acceptance (Conners-Burrow, et al., 2013).

Cooperative Learning

The importance of effective, cooperative learning is demonstrated revealed when cooperative learning is implemented by utilizing the five elements (Slavin, 2014). The five elements are: 1) forming interdependent teams, 2) setting group goals, 3) ensuring individual accountability, 4) teaching communication and problem-solving skills, and 5) integrating cooperative learning with other structures (Slavin, 2014). Creating collaborative teams is the fundamental step and the ideal composition that should be preferably a cross section of the class (high and low achievers, mixed gender, mixed ethnicity) representing the ideal diversity in a collaborative group formulation (Slavin, 2014). Secondly, Slavin (2014) emphasized that

teachers need to focus on building comradery and a sense of belonging; a shared team goal (or vision) needs to be developed by and within the group. This shared goal will focus on the targeted final product of what the assignment or goal may be (Slavin, 2014).

Slavin's third step is to ensure individual accountability. Accomplishment is evaluated by reinforcing the importance of individual accountability. Another important aspect is assigning challenging work to students, work that requires common efforts to find solutions or answers, and make sure not to move too quickly to another task until the first is addressed. Students may learn from trial and error and by utilizing the support of one another. They should also realize that they could ask for help or direction but not for the answers, therefore understanding that a bit of a struggle is the process that will help them learn (Slavin, 2014).

Slavin's fifth step is to teach communication and problem-solving skills, first noting where or what the focus will be on teaching: 1) active listening, 2) explaining ideas and options, 3) encouraging teammates, and 4) completing tasks. Slavin (2014) expresses that students should be encouraged to explain their findings in a full statement and go beyond single-word answers. Students need to be able to explain not only to the teacher but also to their peers and make sure that their peers understand. Cooperative learning is a great strategy in working towards mastery, building social and communication skill, and fostering the importance of working as a team to accomplish a goal. Additional research findings support that by incorporating cooperative learning, students learn more, feel more successful, enjoy school, enjoy the subject they are studying, and equally as important learn to like and accept one another for all their differences (Doolittle, 1995, Gardener, 1969; Slavin, 2014). Again, this study further supports research on the benefits of a collaborative approach to teaching and learning (Doolittle, 1995; Gardener, 1969; Slavin, 2014).

Communication

Payne discussed the impact of resources and how resources can change over one's lifespan. Cognitive development can flourish with resources or intervention and preventative resources in nine domains (Payne, 2013). The nine domains are financial, emotional, mental/cognitive, spiritual, physical, support systems, relationships/role models, knowledge of hidden rules, and language/formal register (Payne, 2013).

Financial Resources

Financial resources are the monitory resources that a family has to purchase health care, healthy food, be available for medical attention (medical, dental, vision, etc.) (Payne, 2013). When the basic foundational necessities are not available for nurturing the body and providing health care, students and families are not able to focus on schoolwork, as the primary goal is survival. However, despite the fact that a family might be having monetary instability, the basic needs may be met if other resources are available to assist in meeting basic needs (Payne, 2013).

Emotional Resources

Emotional resources are significant according to Payne (2013); this is how well a family is able to demonstrate enough internal control to make appropriate decisions in a multitude of situations. When families are in state of crisis and a decision must be met, it is important to consider if a family has enough internal control to make appropriate decisions and not resort to self-destructive or inappropriate behaviors (Payne, 2013). There is a high percentage of substance, emotional, or physical abuse within families lacking skills and abilities in emotional resources. Many families need facilitation and support outside of the immediate family, as many family members may be physical or emotionally unavailable to make appropriate decisions (Payne, 2013).

Similarly, to emotional availability Payne (2013) indicated that a family might lack the mental or cognitive resources to deal with everyday functioning situations. Many families who do not have others for support may have a difficult time making decisions in the best interest of their children or family member, if they lack the intellectual capacity. A parent with a significant learning disability or compromised intellectual capacity may struggle in making complex or everyday decisions. It is important for educators to recognize and offer support and guidance to these families, so they understand their rights and the rights of their child or children (Payne, 2013).

Spiritual Resources

Payne (2013) expresses that those who lack spiritual resources may have given up hope and feel they are at a never-ending loss. They may make rash and detrimental impulsive decisions. Families who have spiritual resources can believe in a divine power. They have the support of their place of worship and its community in times of need (Payne, 2013).

Physical Resources

Families with adequate physical resource according to Payne (2013) have the ability to get where they need reliably. They are able to get up every morning and get to work on time. They are able to get to doctor when they need to and make appointments that are scheduled rather than having to rely on the emergency room. Health and actively being able to hold a job are examples of physical resource (Payne, 2013).

Payne (2013) describes how family and friends or surrogate family members are an essential resource to many. If a family has no other family members within close proximity to fill-in or assist in unexpected situations or emergencies, that puts undue pressure, and they can influence other personal resources. For instance, if a child wakes with fever but parents cannot

miss work, then extended family, and friends, or surrogate families are exceptional resources to step in and assist. Without a strong support system, minor issues can become major barriers (Payne, 2013).

Positive quality role models according to Payne (2013) are of high value in families and critical when there is a long familial history of incarceration, substance, alcohol, or physical abuse. Children who grow up witnessing criminal behavior as acceptable typically follow the same path, unless they are exposed to alternate paths and taught alternate choices and avenues. Children who witness and are taught alternate options and positive outcomes are provided with alternate paths around barriers and therefore are able to focus on learning (Payne, 2013).

Payne (2013) discusses the impact on hidden rules. Communities are explicit about the rules of acceptance are the hidden rules of specific environments. Families aware of hidden rules can better fit in and acclimate to given situations and environments. Hidden rules vary depending on the environment and situation. For instance, unspoken community rules govern which specific attire, language, or volume at school, church, and public settings is considered appropriate (Payne, 2103). The public educational system, settings, and behavioral expectations were developed and normed by middle-class white America. For school success, a student is assumed to know and understand the hidden rules and what is appropriate and what is not. To comply with school expectations and maintain school success, students must adhere to these hidden rules. One of the most influential and crucial rules is language and vocabulary usage. Foul language is forbidden at school. A child who comes from a family who frequents foul language in everyday conversation may innocently use such language in conversations with a teacher (Payne, 2013).

Furthering the importance of language, Payne (2013) discussed the ability to switch from formal to informal register to coincide with the appropriate environment. A child who has been exposed to a variety of registers is much more equipped in adapting to any given environment and be appropriately accepted. Those who can switch register from formal in speaking at an interview, to speaking to a professor, to speaking to a friend playing basketball at the park can create a sense of belongingness in any given group. This ability is imperative for social acceptance and social well-being (Payne, 2103).

Payne (2013) emphasizes that educators must embrace and understand not only the materialistic deficits of poverty but also the mindset of those who experience and live in poverty. Families in poverty may experience tragedies, unexpected job losses, or setbacks. This sort of poverty is typically situational and families with resources in place have the support to move beyond setback. Then there is generational poverty and the many variances in-between. Generational poverty can also be described as learned helplessness such as generations of family reliance on government assistance. Children who live in generational poverty have no other means of comparison and because of lack of resources to guide them out of poverty. Children, who have experienced generational poverty because of lack of resources over time, generally have only a minimal understanding of the social rules of poverty. They do not have the language and exposure to social norms outside of their immediate neighborhood (Payne, 2013). People who experience generational poverty typically have narrow conception of opportunity because poverty is all they have even known or experienced. Because of this, families of generational poverty are ill equipped to see views besides those in their immediate area and situation hence, which makes it virtually impossible for them to navigate outside of the generational poverty path and break the cycle (Payne, 2013).

Today educators are not only responsible for academics, but they also must develop personal awareness. Educators understand all aspects of their students' upbringing and understand what makes them who they are. The importance of understanding the diversity in the educational system in the United States of America is crucial to the success of all of the students and the future as a society. Educators not only have the moral obligation to educate all but they also need to acknowledge and be sensitive to differences.

Poverty, according to Payne (2013), whether generational or situational, is all around us and support systems can vary from time to time. Therefore, it is important for educators to expose and educate all children to a wide array of modalities because language, choices, exposure and experiences differ. As per Howard's work (2009), the educational system is formulated on a middle-class American perspective and many of the students of poverty and diversity are not only striving to learn academics (alphabet, mathematics) but also the unspoken rules regarding language and behaviors.

Payne (2013) categorizes language as having five registers which she terms: frozen, formal, consultative, causal, and intimate. Each register has its appropriate hidden rule and its appropriate place to be used for social acceptance and success. Payne (2013) emphasized how communication is key in all cultures and regardless of what culture you are from there are expectations and language (body or verbal) that is interpreted appropriate or not pending a given situation or audience. Payne (2013) expressed the importance of students' abilities to discriminate between language used at home and language appropriate at school.

Frozen register is a language that is precise and always repeated the same and does not change. Reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, the Lord's Prayer, or the Bill of Rights are examples of frozen register. The Formal register (Standard English) is used when students are in class,

attend a lecture, or interact in the workplace. Consultative register is the everyday conversational language with correct grammar and complete sentences omitting slang. Causal register is relaxed and non-rule following language; slang, is common or abbreviated words, and choppy sentences are common. Non-verbal communication is very important in causal register, in fact it is as important as verbal speech. Lastly, there is the intimate register, which is only used with lovers and considered inappropriate with anyone else (Payne, 2013).

Payne emphasized that communication is an area of development that must be addressed in the educational settings. Educators should acknowledge that diversity is an asset and should capitalize on it. Children must be taught socially appropriate language this will give all students the opportunity to be exposed to all forms of registers of language (Payne, 2013). Children of generational poverty have often only had access to casual register (in their immediate neighborhood) and are therefore at a significant disadvantage when entering school (Payne, 2013).

Middle-class American school students are expected to speak in Standard English or the formal register. Most children of non-generational poverty come to school knowing expectations of school and classroom language and behavior. The majority of these children will quickly be able to switch from one register to another, demonstrating their abilities to fit in to their environment naturally without social awkwardness (Payne, 2013). Research from Hart & Risley (1995) found that a typical three-year old middle-class child has a larger vocabulary than that of adults of generational poverty.

Meeting Basic Student Needs

The whole-child's developmental foundation must be taken in consideration when identifying a student's individual basic needs. In order to provide a strong support system and

specific programs to support the education of disadvantaged children, teachers and administrators must recognize the importance of a strong developmental foundation. They also must acknowledge that many students enter school without a well-balanced developmental foundation. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory recognizes that when basic needs are not met, it is virtually impossible for higher order of functioning, such as learning, to take place (Maslow, 1962; Rafini, 1994). Educators must consider not only children's developmental needs but also the hierarchy of those needs, for basic needs must be met first in order to achieve a strong developmental foundation (Maslow, 1962; Raffini, 1994).

Many children who live in poverty enter school well behind peers in all core academic areas as well as in general knowledge. Research supports a strong correlation between poor academic achievements in the early grades and a wide range of social emotional problems inclusive of: 1) high school completion with diploma, 2) increased risk of unintended pregnancy, 3) increased criminal activity, and 4) jobs with low salary (Rafini, 1994). Despite the ongoing, steady increase in the number of publically funded preschool programs designed to help support the education of disadvantaged children, the social well-being, with support from social workers has been minimally involved in these preschool programs (Rafini, 1994). Because of the public outcry of support and policymaker interest, these early childhood programs have increased. This research further supports the need for high quality early education that targets the development of the whole-child by the incorporation of a collaborative support-team approach.

When students are enrolled in high-quality preschool enrichment programs coupled with a positive school experience, the result is a long-term academic success (Rafini, 1994). This results also in minimizing truancy and delinquent behaviors, teenage pregnancy, high professional employment, and income range (Rafini, 1994). Hence, high-quality preschool

enrichment programs are directly associated to both long-term academic success and enhanced social wellbeing (Smith, 2013).

Sensory Processing

Another aspect of the whole-child's developmental needs is providing support and expertise from occupational therapists. Sensorimotor development must occur for adequate processing and coordination of sensory experiences for the development of sensorimotor schemas (Eldgridge, 1996). Piaget (1952) defined a schema as: "a cohesive, repeatable action sequence possessing component actions that are tightly interconnected and governed by a core meaning" (p. 7). Sensorimotor development should be addressed for appropriate social-emotional development to occur. To best meet the needs of the whole-child, a multidisciplinary team or collaborative practices should be a part of the early childhood education system. According to Eldridge (1996), if sensorimotor development is not appropriately addressed, the result is deficits in emotional and relational development. The impact of these deficits complicates and impairs self-concept and relationships. Educational programs which included support from occupational therapists, will develop sensory-processing, social functioning, self-regulation, fine motor and mobility skills, and functional daily living performance in children, who will exhibit stronger abilities in all of the developmental domains (Eldridge, 1996). For example, according to Case-Smith (1996) study, there were 26 preschool children who received weekly OT therapy as part of their typical preschool program. These children were assessed at the beginning of the school year and then again at the end of the school year to determine the effectiveness or benefit of OT therapy. Findings indicated significant raw and scaled scores improvement in all areas (Case-Smith, 1996; Eldridge, 1996).

Parent Involvement

Studies by (Gartrell, 2012; Lupin, 2009; Shonkoff, 2011) have found that brain psychologists have further supported Maslow's research that children who do not: "1) have their safety needs met experience chronic toxic stress, 2) see the world as a threatening place, and 3) show an unhealthy pattern of survival behaviors (fight or flight) in everyday situations" (Lupin, et al., 2009). This further supports that without any adult figure to directly meet their safety needs, these children tend to experience great and lasting difficulties with healthy brain development (wired differently) and social relations (due to being wired differently). The second life-skill discussed in these articles is the emerging executive functioning. People will work on this life-skill their entire life. Young children are in the emerging and early development of utilizing executive functions. Executive functioning is the ability to use one's psychological processes with a group of essential mental capacities identified (Gartrell, 2012; Shonkoff, et. al., 2011). Executive function is what governs the thought processing and judgment making and it enables us to use reasoning to resolve problems. The connection is impaired if basic needs are not met at a young age. In the society, if connections are impaired, it is difficult to succeed socially, emotionally, and academically. Children need to feel safe and be able to trust in order to flourish in life. It is important to build and ensure that a sense of security is developed at a young age (Gartrell, 2012; Shonkoff, et. al., 2011).

Burrow and McKelvey (2011) emphasized the importance of parental or guardian involvement in education, especially in today's digital world, where the apparent closeness is in reality isolation in a virtual word that has little to do with true human interactions. Parental or guardian involvement in education is essential in developing successful relationships between preschool children's social outcome and media viewing habits in the home (Burrow &

McKelvey, 2011). Hyperactivity, aggression, and social skills were measured in the classroom environment (Burrow & McKelvey, 2011). Students' media viewing habits were measured by parent/caregiver reports on amount of time spent watching television, content, and ratings of videos and/or movies student watches (Burrow & McKelvey, 2011). Teachers also reported on classroom behavior and students who viewed inappropriate content were associated with higher scores in hyperactivity, aggression, and lower social skills (Burrow & McKelvey, 2011).

However, the duration of time spent viewing television and or videos was not directly related to the identified maladaptive classroom social-emotional and behavioral outcomes (Burrow & McKelvey, 2011). Moreover, this indicates a need for parent education in the negative effects of inappropriate television/video use (Burrow & McKelvey, 2011). Parents must be educated and be a part of their child's education from a young age (Burrow & McKelvey, 2011). Schools can support parent education classes addressing how inappropriate video and television exposure relates to significant behavioral and social concerns at school (Burrow & McKelvey, 2011). The collaborative support-team approach is required to fully address and attend to the emotional and relational issues, as well as coordinate the work with family and school (Burrow & McKelvey, 2011)

Universal Preschool

Despite the attempts of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), many students are not progressing significantly as result of not becoming proficient readers (Payne, 2013). Following NCLB, the Obama administrations also targeted school reform with "Race to the Top," providing monitory incentives for schools that were staffed with high-quality teachers and increased test scores (Fact Sheet: The Race to the Top, 2009). To further address this problem, President Obama signed the school reform Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) on December 10, 2015, which replaced

NCLB. The ESSA will guide efforts in supporting equal opportunity for all with the emphasis on all students' improvement in both academics and social behavior (United States Department of Education, 2015).

Political leaders are now acknowledging the achievement gap between wealthy and poor families. Politicians are predicting that early education is key in closing that achievement gap. Public expectations are high in the success of early childhood education. In his 2014 State of the Union address, Obama renewed his goal in increasing the annual prekindergarten spending by 7.5 billion. Governor Andrew Cuomo and Mayor Bill de Blasio supported extending preschool to all children formulating a plan for a universal prekindergarten system. In New York, full-day prekindergarten programs increased from 20,000 to 53,000 by fall 2014. Other states are following, such as California, Florida, and Michigan who plan to increase subsidized prekindergarten programs (Neuman, 2014; Sherfinski, 2013).

According to Neuman (2014), universal preschool for all is enthusiastic; however, it must be balanced with the quality of what goes on in the classroom. In 2010, Neuman and colleagues observed and studied how content-rich instruction was being implemented (Neuman, Kaefer, & Pinkham, 2014; Sherfinski, 2013). Content-rich instruction involves students learning through literacy rich environments. Students are acquiring knowledge about print by being immersed in literacy practice (Neuman & Wright, 2013; Sherfinski, 2013). Content-rich instruction allows content learning to occur which becomes meaningful to the student as they are gaining new abilities that allow them to better understand their world by developing schemas.

There are five research based principals about the development of schemas which are necessary in constructing basic knowledge networks and enhancing children's cognitive development—integrated instruction, guided instruction, teacher interaction and scaffolding,

play and exploration with realia and role playing, nurturing with high expectations building confidence and self-esteem (Neuman, 2014; Sherfinski, 2013). Universal early childhood education opportunities and quality curriculum and instruction that meets the development needs of the whole-child are equally required to empower the success of all children despite their social economic statuses.

Teacher's Perceptions/Beliefs

Sonmez and Ceylan (2017) analyzed teacher's perceptions on student involvement and student well-being on preschool children. The qualitative study focused on five preschool classes and focus-group interviews from seven of the preschool teachers. The study found that teachers view student involvement in class primary by the child's body language, facial expressions, and verbal expressions (Sonmez, & Ceylan, 2017).

Cavanaugh (2017) analyzed results from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study (ECLS), a longitudinal study with nationwide representation of 15,000 kindergarten students and nearly 3,000 kindergarten teachers, to determine the teachers' perceptions of the students' kindergarten readiness when entering and exiting kindergarten. The study first defined kindergarten readiness by identifying students' ability levels in reading and math and how a child approached learning in school. Secondly, it analyzed the teachers' educational backgrounds, experiences, and views. Additionally, the study analyzed how students' demographic backgrounds affected teachers' perceptions and beliefs and how that could affect school readiness (Cavanaugh, 2017).

Findings from Cavanaugh (2017) supported that a teacher's educational background, years of teaching, years in the education field, gender, and if they were considered highly qualified status, had an effect on the teacher's perceptions of students' readiness. The study also

found that students' backgrounds played a significant factor at the beginning of the school year in regard to students' readiness levels in reading, math, and on how the students approached learning. Findings indicated that students' demographic characteristics such as gender, age, ethnicity, English spoken in the home, social economic status, and childcare center or preschool, had an impact when students began school. Additionally, the study found that when teachers emphasized their focused primarily on enhancing their students' academic scores, students' academic assessment scores presented with more academic growth in reading and math. However, when the teacher's primary focus was on a student or students' behavior, academic assessment scores demonstrated less academic growth in reading, writing, and math (Cavanaugh, 2017).

Leadership & Change Process

The researcher of this study will assess how fostering the developmental foundation of preschool, transitional kindergarten, and kindergarten students by incorporating a collaborative support-team approach, must take place in order to benefit the majority of students. By gaining the trust and ensuring the longevity of support for the change that is implemented, educators must have all stakeholders become active participants and supporters of the project (Reeves, 2009). Reeves focuses on learning from examples of good leaders who have led schools and or districts through successful change. This can be accomplished by creating a condition for change, implementing how to assess and how to determine and measure the level of readiness for change it is imperative. Self-assessments used to determine personal readiness for change, as well as assessments to determine readiness for organizational change within the environment, should be set in place. Furthermore, cautionary notes on strategic planning need to include details on the implementation process of change and even the reality of issues that may arise

from day-to-day. Lastly, it is necessary to focus on how to sustain changes and reiterate the importance of maintaining focus on priorities and values for the good of all and not just for a small group or yourself (Reeves, 2009).

Senge (2012) provides many case studies (individual, classroom, schools, and communities), diagrams, tables, charts, and illustrations that highlight systems thinking, as well as other research-based practices. The clear descriptions and the systematic manner presented in Senge's study is very useful for leaders as the information provided is supported by precise examples and research. Senge describes how schools can adapt, grow, and change in the fast-paced world that strives for perfection. Senge provides the tools that today's leaders need and present, as well, what can be expected for tomorrow's leaders. Senge et al., (2012) pushes the learner to focus on the five disciplines and reiterates the importance of gaining expertise, building trust, and incorporating all stakeholders to build and gain a shared vision (Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Lucas, Smith, Dutton, & Kleiner, 2012).

Sergiovanni (2007), Rethinking Leadership, is an excellent source that looks at the 21st century leader. Specifically, he assesses what qualities the 21st century leader should possess and need to develop, which strong interpersonal skills such as compassion and sensitivity are relevant, and he stresses the ability to be a skilled listener in the diverse society we live in as one of the most relevant characteristics. Today's leaders need to possess all skills necessary to build and nurture relationships and accept differences; they must also be experts in the diverse community they represent (Sergiovanni, 2007). The importance of effective leadership and the importance of a leader's value system must support their ideas to further meet the unique needs of the ever-changing diversity in the community, are also emphasized. An effective leader should acknowledge that the 21st century learner requires a 21st century leader. This should

prompt leaders to sensitively address ethical decisions and to fully understand the challenges of being ethical in the times, as leaders are asked to make ethical decisions on a daily basis (Sergiovanni, 2007).

Sergiovanni's (2007) work supports my research that it is urgent to make a difference in early childhood education, resulting in growth as a community to meet the needs of all students by changing the current system. Focusing on professional growth for school leaders to increase sensitivity is paramount and school leaders need to understand the importance of self-reflection as a tool to grow and internalize the path to make change productively (Reinhartz, & Beach, 2004).

Summary

In this chapter, the literature review has provided research in the following areas: historical research on early childhood education, early childhood brain development, high-quality programs and services, early social-emotional development, prevention and early identification, cooperative learning, meeting basic student needs, sensory processing, parent involvement, universal preschool, teachers' perceptions and beliefs, and leadership and the process for change.

Preschool is currently in the spotlight, as is a child's early years of development. The chapter begins by emphasizing the need for policy makers to acknowledge the importance of early childhood education, whether to close the educational gap or to provide opportunity and equal access to programs and services. Fullen (2010), Senge (2012), and Sergiovanni (2007) have identified and developed frameworks to guide leaders to a successful system reformation.

The history of documented early childhood education dates back hundreds of years. In the 1700's, German educator Friedrich Frobel termed his method of developing intelligence in

young children as "Kinder-Garten." From Frobel's term, the conception of kindergarten in the 1830's began.

Anthropological studies have assessed human behavior and determined that the ancestors have existed and survived for hundreds of years and have the ability to adapt by learning and doing. First, they have demonstrated their ability to successfully hunt and gather, avoid predators, and migrate from place to place. Secondly, humans learn by experiencing, such as exploration in the garden, which is precisely how early education began. Early childhood education focuses on the development and training by a child's innate faculties through the complimentary self-expression, creativeness, collective involvement, and motor movement.

Further research on brain development identifies at birth that the brain has an abundance of synapse connections that form; those that are consistent, and reinforcing are ingrained and become permanent neuropathways. By the age of three years, children have active synapse pathways that are more than two times that of adults. The high quantity of synapses remain and develop until the age of ten years. By adolescence, nearly half are discarded or pruned away. Hence, brain research supports the importance of exploring and engaging children from birth. Studies on high-quality early childhood programs and services provide evidence that children who have barriers which are removed do better academically. Evidence demonstrates that children living in foster care, poverty or both scored higher on reading and writing achievement tests and social-emotional rating scales when they participated in high-quality early education programs and received early intervention services.

Studies on meeting basic needs such as Maslow support the historical and anthropological evidence that basic needs must be met in order for a child to meet higher order needs. When a student is devoid of hunger or safety then the child can focus on learning.

Social-Emotional development, parental involvement, teacher and school experience, and sensory processing are all impacted by a child's early development. Programs and services that focus on the development of the whole-child can offer support and growth in all developmental domains and adaptive ability: cognition, communication, motor, and daily living.

This literature review strongly supports the importance of a collaborative team approach in early childhood education. Educators of young children empirically know what cognitive scientists researched and observed; that is, the labs that encouraged active play, movement, exploration and discovery propel student learning. This research supports the importance of a well-balanced, developmental foundation and has demonstrated the negative impact of developmental foundation gaps on school readiness and school success. The literature also emphasizes the importance of identifying underlying biases and how they may indirectly or directly impact how an educator addresses the needs of the whole-child. Additionally, literature supports that a child's initial experience and beginnings in school has a long-term impact on school success in later years. This literature review has provided evidence of the importance of a collaborative support-team approach to early childhood education. This literature review presents with findings that are similar in outcome and projected for this research study.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The researcher examined teachers, support staff, and parental perceptions on the effectiveness of the collaborative support-team approach on early childhood education and the connection to meeting the needs of the whole-child. This mixed methods research design incorporated Payne's (2013) framework, *Understanding Poverty: A Cognitive Approach* to create the lens through which to view this research. The research stresses the importance of comprehending personal biases and the impact of poverty to identify and overcome barriers in meeting the needs of the whole-child.

The primary purpose of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of educators' and parental beliefs or perceptions of the effectiveness of a collaborative support-team approach in early childhood education and its effectiveness on children's development and enhancement of their developmental foundation. Secondly, the researcher's goal is to broaden the awareness on the importance of positive early childhood school experience and the interpretation of school readiness. This research departs from the interpretation of academics as specific criteria of school readiness and analyzes the other hidden factors that ultimately influence the academic performance. This study investigates preschool, transitional kindergarten, and kindergarten teachers; service providers; and parental perspectives on school readiness, school success, and the effectiveness of the collaborative support-team approach to enhancing developmental foundations in early childhood education. The researcher examines the research questions in light of the data obtained from the surveys, interviews, teachers' responses on the Social, Academic, & Emotional Behavior Risk Screener (SAEBRS), and students' results on the kindergarten readiness assessment.

Research Questions

1. Does the collaborative support-team approach in early childhood education have a positive effect on the development of whole-child?

2. Do parent and school staff perceptions positively or negatively impact the success of a collaborative support-team approach on school readiness and school success?

3. Do personal biases and poverty negatively affect student school experience and success?

Setting and Participants

To assess the effectiveness of the collaborative support-team approach on enhancing the development of the whole-child and the impact on school readiness and school success by embedding a collaborative support-team approach in early childhood education programs, the researcher selected five preschool teachers, two transitional-kindergarten teachers, seven kindergarten teachers, and the parents of the 533 students to participate in this research project.

To assess the effectiveness of the collaborative support-team approach on enhancing the development of the whole-child.

The study was conducted in a single city with a population just under 22,000 in Southern California (U.S. Census, 2010). The socio-economic status (SES) in this small 6.7 square mile radius ranges from below poverty to very wealthy. The composition of staff participants was the teachers of seven kindergarten classes, two transitional-kindergarten classes, and five preschool classes, three special education preschool classes, two district preschool programs and one enrichment program (co-taught by the two special education teachers). Additionally, five school psychologists, the speech pathologists, two occupational therapist, one adapted physical education teacher, twenty behavior specialist and six administrators support this program.

Classroom Grade	Description	Number of students/Ratio
Preschool	General Education: Income based and Fee based	1 adult-8 students –Total =24
Preschool	District Enrichment	1 adult-8 students –Total =24
Preschool	Special Education	1 adult-4 students –Total =16
Preschool	Special Education	1 adult-3 students –Total =12
Preschool	Special Education	1 adult-2 students –Total =9
Transitional Kindergarten	General Education w/inclusion	1 adult- 26 students –Total =26
Kindergarten	General Education w/inclusion	1 adult- 26 students –Total =26
Kindergarten/1st Combo	General Education w/inclusion	1 adult- 26 students –Total =26

Figure 1. 1. Classroom Participant Descriptors

This study was conducted in 2018-2019 in a small district that serves 3,553 students. Among the 3,553 students, 74% are classified as low income (LI), 29% English language learners (EL) and 16-18% Special Education (SPED). Ethnically, 70% are Hispanic, 8% are White, 4.2% are Filipino, 4.0% are African American, 3.9% are Asian, and about 5.0% are not reported.
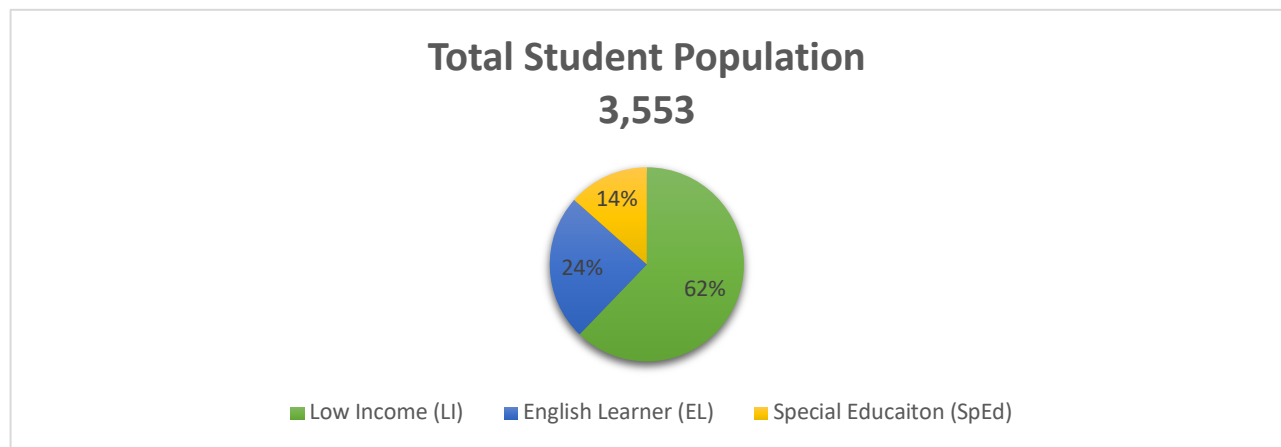
Figure 1. 2. Student Population

Of the districts diverse population there is a very high percentage of students identified as a high-need population (74% LI, 29% EL, 16% SPED). With 16-18% of the district's population

identified as special education (SPED) with current Individualized Education Plans (IEP's). The

district appears to be over identifying for special education, hence the collaborative support-team

approach was created and implemented into the early childhood education programs.
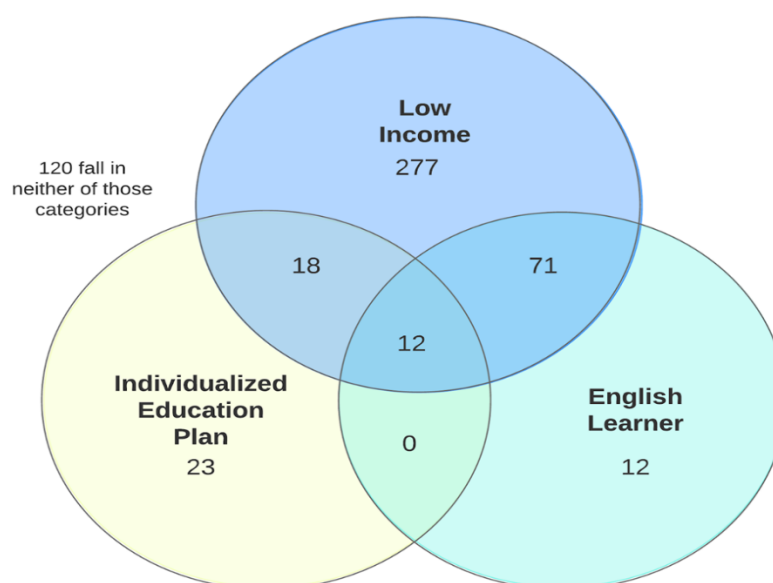
Figure 2 1. Demographics and Protected Classes

The district is composed of five elementary schools: School A, School B, School C, School

D, and School E. The total student participant population at School A is 155 students. The

population is identified as 77.4% Hispanic, 7.1% Asian, 7.7% African American, 1.9% Filipino,

5.8% White, and 0.0% Other. The EL population is 11.0%. Approximately 68.4% are

identified as LI, and 5.8% have IEP's. Of the total participants, 66 or 42.9% are female and 88

or 57.1% are male. There are 31 three-year olds, 55 four year olds, 49 five year olds, and 20 six

year olds.

The total student participant population at School B is 154 students. The population is

identified as 87.7% Hispanic, 1.3% Asian, 2.6% African American, 1.3% Filipino, 7.1% White,

and 0.0% Other. The EL population is 20.1%; 75.3% are identified as LI; and 22.7% have IEP's.

Of the total participants, 66 or 42.9% are female and 88 or 57.1% are male. There are 32 three

year olds, 46 four year olds, 62 five year olds, and 14 six year olds.

The student total student participant population at School C is 98 students. The

population is identified as 93.6% Hispanic, 2.0% Asian, 3.1% African American, 0.0% Filipino,

1.0% White, and 0.0% Other. The EL population is 28.6%; 91.8% are identified as LI; and 3.1%

have IEP's. Of the total participants, 32 or 32.7% are female and 66 or 67.3% are male. There

are 12 three-year olds, 30 four-year olds, 38 five-year olds and 18 six year olds.

The student total student participant population at School D is 51 students. The

population is identified as 68.6% Hispanic, 17.5% Asian, 2.0% African American, 5.9% Filipino,

3.9% White, and 2.0% Other. The EL population is 19.6%; 49% are identified as LI; and 2.0%

have IEP's. Of the total participants, 26 or 51.0% are female and 25 or 49.0% are male. There

are zero three-year olds, zero four-year olds, 43 five-year olds, and 8 six-year olds.

The student total student participant population at School E is 75 students. The

population is identified as 65.3% Hispanic, 8.0% Asian, 1.3% African American, 2.7% Filipino,

21.3% White, and 1.3% Other. The, EL population is 12.0%; 54.7% are identified as LI; and

6.7% have IEP's. Of the total participants, 34 or 45.3% are female and 41 or 54.7% are male.

There are zero three-year olds, 1 four-year old, 57 five-year olds, and 17 six-year olds.
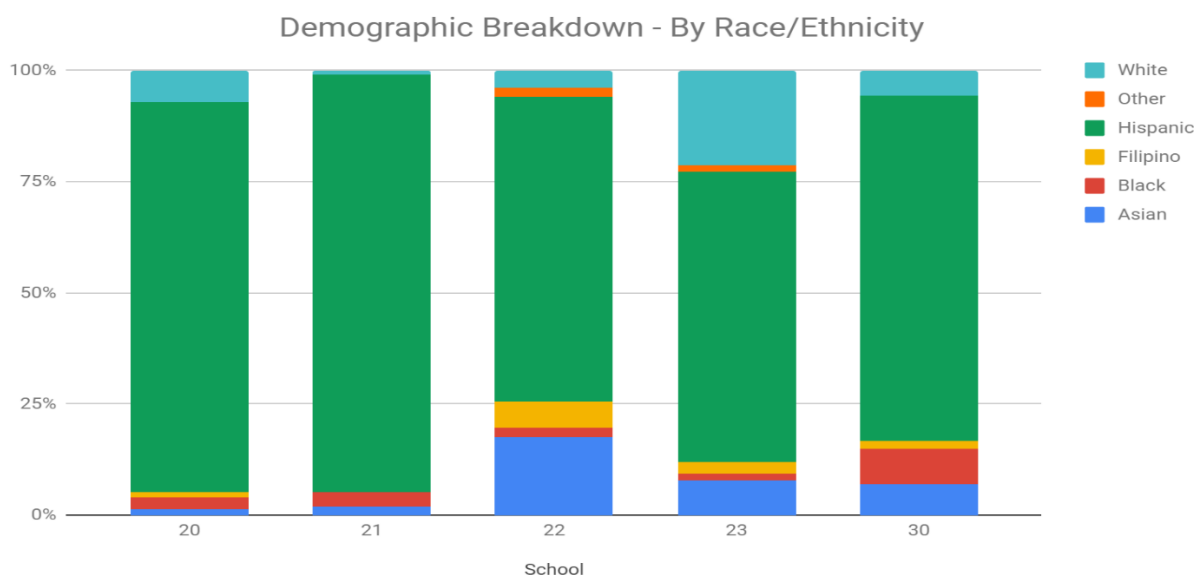
Figure 3 1. Demographic Breakdown by Race/Ethnicity

The Collaborative Support-Team Approach

The adult professionals, as described below, are the primary components of the early childhood collaborative support-team approach. The aim of the early childhood collaborative support-team is to enhance the developmental foundation in young children. Preschool, Transitional Kindergarten, and Kindergarten programs have taken a collaborative support-team approach in order to meet student needs in a unique, yet beneficial way.

Occupational Therapy and Speech

Transdisciplinary groups were designed to bring the expertise of both an occupational therapist and speech and language pathologist together in order to provide the students with the benefits of a collaborative approach. The program provides an environment and activities specifically designed to facilitate motor, sensory, and language development. The program gives each child an opportunity to explore movement, integrate and explore a variety of sensory inputs, strengthen muscles and joints, improve eye-hand coordination, follow directions, learn turn

taking, and initiate sounds/words/phrases all within a natural setting which refers to a safe play environment, with familiar peers and adults. Movement can be catalyst for motor development and communication. Therefore, the program being studied provides students the unique opportunity to move their bodies in novel ways using play-based techniques in an environment that allows for organic and fluid exchanges between peers. The service providers are present to design, facilitate, guide, and to support the teacher and staff in utilizing similar strategies throughout the school day within the classroom and on the playground.

To address the wide array of developmental needs of a diverse population, the program provides an approach to address the whole-child. Students are provided a transdisciplinary group approach to education. Embedded in the students' early-childhood education program is a 60-minute or 30-minute collaborative occupational and speech therapy prevention group that students participate in on a weekly basis. Specifically, preschool age students enrolled in special education or the enrichment program will participate two times weekly for a 30-minute group session per class in the therapy room setting. Special education classes, grades transitional kindergarten (TK) and kindergarten (K) participate two times weekly for 30-minute group sessions in the therapy room setting. Students enrolled in general education state funded preschool programs, transitional kindergarten and kindergarten programs are provided 30 minutes weekly by providers pushing in the classroom.

Collaboration is key with staff; occupational therapist, speech therapists, special education, and general education teachers join forces and collaborate together to create lessons that address developmental areas in communication, motor, sensory-processing, and sensory regulation. By pairing instruction with movement, language acquisition development increases

or enhances. Thematic lessons are created to supplement and enhance what is taught in the general education setting.

Specifically, two times weekly all special education preschool, transitional kindergarten and kindergarten and preschool enrichment program are engaged in grade level standards-based activities in the occupational therapy room with the speech therapist, occupational therapist, special education, and/or general education teacher and classified support. Students rotate through multiple centers each led by the professionals that target specific developmental areas. The collaborative support staff provides the state preschool program, general education transitional kindergarten, and kindergarten push-in support during center times.

To enhance support by incorporating technology, the district has installed Smart Boards in every classroom in the district. The occupational therapists created videos, where activities are recorded and made available for all teachers for additional reinforcement. The videos address areas of need that teachers can access at any time if they choose to do a whole-group lesson with all the professional staff above. The transdisciplinary groups are designed for that very reason: to bring the expertise of occupational therapists, speech and language pathologists, special education teachers, general education teachers, together, in order to provide the students with the benefits of a collaborative support-team approach.

The program provides an environment and activities specifically designed to facilitate motor, sensory, and language development. The program gives each child an opportunity to explore movement, integrate/explore a variety of sensory inputs, strengthen muscles and joints, improve eye-hand coordination, follow directions, learn turn taking, initiate sounds/words/phrases; all within a natural setting which refers to a safe play environment, with familiar peers and adults. Movement can be catalyst for motor development and communication;

therefore, students are provided a unique opportunity to move their bodies in novel ways, using play-based techniques, in an environment that allows for organic and fluid exchanges between peers. Service providers are present to design, facilitate, guide, and to support the teacher and staff in utilizing similar strategies throughout the school day within the classroom and on the playground.

Physical Therapy and Adapted Physical Education

The Physical Therapist (PT) and Adapted Physical Education (APE) teacher work in collaboration with special education and general education teachers to create lessons that address developmental areas in fitness, motor skills, flexibility, coordination, and safety. These sessions end with Yoga meditation and balance. The PT is a certified Yoga master and she teaches students meditative strategies and flexibility building with the aim to enhance students' awareness of self-regulation and inner balance. Students leave these lessons relaxed and ready to learn.

Preschool age students will participate two times weekly for 30-minute group sessions per class. Special education classes', grades transitional kindergarten (TK) and kindergarten (K) participate two times weekly for 30-minute group sessions. General education transition kindergarten and kindergarten participate 30 minutes weekly as a component of required physical education minutes.

Behavior Specialist and Psychologist

The Psychologists and Behavior Specialist work in collaboration with special education and general education teachers in order to create lessons that address developmental areas in the social emotional and daily living domains of development. Daily, in all preschool settings (state, enrichment, and special education), the behavior specialists join in on preschool center time,

teach a social skills lesson, and play skills. For the kindergarten classes, the behavior specialists join in on center time, one time a week, and incorporate a social skills lesson. Second Step Social Emotional Curriculum (SEL) is provided district-wide to all transitional kindergarten and kindergarten teachers.

Procedures

The researcher provided the adult participants with a survey designed to find out more information on the participants' experiences and perceptions. A potential of 533 surveys were distributed; 231 surveys were returned. The adult participants completed the survey electronically through Google Sheets; some requested a hard copy of the survey. The open-ended questions allowed the researcher to obtain more information about specific participants' backgrounds and biases. Additionally, the researcher met face-to-face with ten randomly selected participants to complete interview questions derived from trends identified from the survey results, and with those participants who request a meeting or ask for clarification.

Additionally, the researcher obtained secondary data from the district including the results of the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment that were administered to transitional kindergarten and kindergarten students by teachers or staff in the district and the SAEBRS. The SAEBRS was an assessment completed by all transitional kindergarten and kindergarten teachers for each of their students as a baseline measure for the district wide Second Step-Social Emotional Curriculum.

Instrumentation and Measures

There were three quantitative measures utilized to answer the research questions. The Likert-style survey created by the researcher, the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment developed by The California Reading Professional Development Institute (1999), and the Social, Academic,

& Emotional Behavior Risk Screener (SAEBRS) developed by Kilgus (2013), were administered

and results analyzed in an attempt to gain answers to the research questions. Figure 4.1 shows the

research question and the type of data collected to answer the questions.

Research Questions and Measures

Research Questions	Data to Answer Questions
1. Does the collaborative support-team approach in early childhood education have a positive effect on the development of whole-child? [Measure Perspective/Beliefs]	- Open-ended survey - Likert-style survey - Social, Academic, & Emotional Behavior Risk Screener (SAEBRS) - (Second Step SEL imbedded).
2. Do parent and school staff perceptions, impact positively or negatively the success of a collaborative support-team approach on school readiness and school success? [Measure Awareness]	- Open-ended survey - Likert-style survey - Social, Academic, & Emotional Behavior Risk Screener (SAEBRS) - (Second Step SEL imbedded). - Kindergarten Readiness
3. Do personal biases and poverty negatively affect student school experience and success? [Measure Awareness]	- Open-ended survey - Likert-style survey - Social, Academic, & Emotional Behavior Risk Screener (SAEBRS) - (Second Step SEL imbedded).

Figure 4 1. Research Questions and Measures

Teacher, parents, services providers, were asked to complete a Likert-style survey. The

survey aimed to identify their beliefs or perceptions of students' school readiness, school

success, developmental foundations, whole-child approach, early prevention, parental

engagement, the impact of bias and poverty, and effectiveness of a collaborative support-team

approach to early childhood education. The survey is composed of eight questions with a pre-identified Likert Scale with seven response options. Cronbach's alpha was used to demonstrate reliability among question groups.

Participant Survey: Parent, Teacher, Service Provider

Teacher, parents, and service providers were asked to complete the survey that was given as a hard copy or sent via email as Google sheets. Technology support and a computer was provided to any who request assistance. The survey had a total of 30 respondent items. The survey was composed of seven respondent demographic questions, six questions relating to school readiness, six questions relating to parental involvement, five questions related to school outcomes, and six questions related to environmental factors. The opening of the survey is to gain general information on the respondents and to identify any trends for future research. The general information questions included: respondent role identification, ethnicity, age, primary language, childcare provider language, educational level, and marital status. The content survey questions addressed beliefs or perceptions on school readiness, parent involvement, school outcomes, and environmental factors. The first section after general information asked the respondents if they believed that school readiness is a composition of many factors, is it very important for children to attend preschool, are children who attend preschool better prepared for kindergarten, are children who are exposed to formal reading and mathematics programs in preschool better prepared in elementary school, if a child's maturity level cannot be accelerated by force, and if all developmental foundations (cognition, communication, social-emotional, daily living, and motor skills) are equally important.

The next section of the survey aims to gather information on beliefs and perceptions on parental involvement. For example, if parents should teach their children the alphabet prior to

enrolling them in kindergarten, if they should teach their children math prior to enrolling in kindergarten, if they should set aside time daily for educational and enrichment activities for their children, and if parents can enhance their child's school readiness by exposing their children to educational experiences (theater, art, museums, creative activities). Other questions explore the issues of parental involvement with the educational staff and the connection between that and better success in both home and school environments, and parents' involvement with school functions as a constructive impact on a child's educational experience. The survey successively inquired about school outcomes. It explored if children who completed kindergarten were better prepared for first grade, if homework should be given daily, if children who do not pass a kindergarten readiness assessment should not be enrolled in kindergarten (if under six years of age), if children who do well academically but lack social skills and peer relationships do well in school, and if children who hit infrequently should not be punished. The final section of the survey addressed environmental factors. The program asked if basic needs (food, shelter, health, and safety) must be met in order for a child to grow, flourish, and be successful, if children who do not follow the rules lack social-emotional growth, if children who lack a healthy diet perform more poorly at school, if the home environment plays a significant role in overall development in children, if children who exhibit difficulty with coordination are likely to perform poorly in school, and if children who exhibit difficulty with self-regulation and sensory-processing are likely to have difficulty in school.

The survey was designed with pre-identified Likert Scale response options: The Likert scale was developed with an anchor of 1-7 and classified as: (SA) Strongly Agree, (A) Agree, (SWA) Somewhat Agree, (N) Neither Agree nor Disagree, (SWD) Somewhat disagree, (D) Disagree, (SD) Strongly Disagree. Cronbach's alpha was used to demonstrate reliability among

question groups. To encourage completion of the survey, a "Thank You" email was linked to full completion with a downloadable or printable $5 coupon to Starbucks, Coffee Bean, or Jamba Juice. Respondents using hard copies received a gift card of $5 to Starbucks, Coffee Bean, or Jamba Juice.

Interviews

The qualitative portion of this dissertation aimed to support the quantitative data in order to dig deeper into identifying more precise perspectives and beliefs. The open-ended survey provided more rigor to this research and was also developed to gain further insight on beliefs and perceptions on school readiness and school success, parental engagement, knowledge of early prevention and intervention, interpretation of a collaborative support-team approach to education, and confidence in the beneficial effect of a collaborative support-team approach to educating young children, why or why not?

Lastly, factors in the developmental foundation of young children were assessed—how does the lack of a well-balanced developmental system impact school success, basic needs and cognitive development, social-emotional development, communication development, sensory-motor and self-regulation, and motor development. At the end of the Google Sheets electronic survey, the researcher inserted a question to determine interest and willingness to participate in a personal interview with the researcher. If the participant was interested in participating in an in-person interview, they would write their name, phone number, and email in the blank box. Out of all identified participants, 10 were randomly selected by drawing. Participants who completed the interview as an active participant in the research study were given a surprise $25 Visa gift card for their participation.

Kindergarten Readiness Screening Tool

The Kindergarten Readiness Screening Tool was administered to all transitional kindergarten and kindergarten students in the district. The Kindergarten Readiness Screening tool used in the district is the California Reading & Literature Project: Focusing on Results, PreK-3rd grade developed by the (California Reading Professional Development Institute, 1999). The Kindergarten Screening Checklist consists of developmental domains in: Oral Communication, Story Time, General Readiness, Visual Discrimination/Reading Readiness, Auditory Memory, Vocabulary, and Mathematics Readiness.

For Oral Communication, the assessor must first establish rapport with the student and ask him or her to find their nametag, which should be laid out with a minimal of six other names.

An established adult (instructional aide, school staff member, or intern) read the story for Story Time, to three or four students seated on the floor time rug and asked the provided questions of the story. The second established adult acted as the data recorder and rated the students in the areas of attention and comprehension. The data recorder wrote any additional notes or comments that may be helpful to administration about students' learning profiles. After students completed story time, they accompanied their individual adult to the assigned assessment table. Next the adult asked student personal questions: 1) say your first and last name (you can repeat question if necessary), focus on ability to articulate name knowledge, 2) ask the student their age, 3) personal narrative is drawing a) themselves, b) ask student what they are doing in the picture, c) ask them to write their name on their drawing, d) adult with scribe what student verbalizes onto student drawing.

For General Readiness, the adult with knowledge and training from Oral Communication section supported the given student to see if they could 1) recognize their own name by

distinguishing it from six or seven other name tags, 2) write their own name; from personal drawing adult will determine if student wrote name (first and last) if it was on personal narrative drawing. 3) hold a crayon and drew a circle: adult then provides the student with a quarter sheet of paper and ask the student to draw a circle (document in notes how pencil was held, pressure to paper, utilizes opposite hand to stabilize paper, etc.). 4) cut with scissors: next, the adult will ask student to draw a triangle, if student cannot then adult will draw one and then ask the student to cut the triangle out (document relevant information as indicated above).

During the Visual Discrimination/Reading Readiness portion, the adult recorded if the child could 1) identify upper-case letters, 2) identify lower-case letters, 3) match selected upper-case letters with their lower-case forms, 4) knows sounds of consonant letters (minimal b, t, m, and s.). For the Auditory Memory, the adult read a sentence and student was asked to repeat, "The little boy is ready for school." Adult could repeat one more time, if needed.

During the Vocabulary section, several responses were requested: Does the child 1) Use prepositions properly (in, under, on, behind). The adult used a small teddy bear and box and asked the student to place bear (in box, under box, on box, and behind box). The adult 2) Made a list of something: Adult said, "I'm making a list of animals, can you help me?" Write student responses. 3) Identifying Colors: Use crayons or color pencils and document what colors are identified. 4) Identifying Body Parts: Demonstrate by verbalizing and pointing, and then ask student to touch or point to body parts (shoulder, arm, wrist, hand, fingers, knee, leg, ankle, foot, toes).

Finally, for Mathematics Readiness, the following were required: 1) Counting orally (adult can prompt or model to get student started). 2) Demonstrate one-to-one correspondence by counting objects to 10 (identify if student is touching as they count). 3) Identify more or less

(groups of objects). 4) Identify shapes (circle, square, triangle, and rectangle). Adult can use manipulative and ask student to find the shapes. Then hold a shape and ask student to name the shape. After assessment is completed, place the file documents in student folder: 1) Screening record sheet, 2) Student drawing, 3) Sheet of paper with circle and triangle cut out.

Social, Academic, and Emotional Behavior Risk Screener (SAEBRS)

An effective research supported Universal Screener developed by Fast Bridge Learning (2015) was used to identify students at-risk. There is a close connectivity between academics and behavior as well as academic, social-emotional, and behavioral problems or success. The conceptual model of the SAEBRS is grounded on the belief that a student's success in school is not solely based on academic development but should consider the multiple behavioral and developmental domains. The Social, Academic, and Emotional Behavior Risk Screener (SAEBRS) was completed by the teacher or trained staff at the beginning of the year (September) and in March. The purpose of this measure was to identify those students at-risk in socially, academically, and emotionally, or a combination of the three.

The responses were a Likert scale question response format: 0=Never, 1=Sometimes, 2=Often, 3=Almost Always. The higher the score suggested there was an elevated concern and the child was given the label of "at-risk". According to the developer FastBridge (2015), a student may present "at-risk" concern in one or all of the three domains for a Total Behavior score. The SAEBRS three domains and sub domains can be seen in Figure 5.1 below.

Social Behavior	Academic Behavior	Emotional Behavior
Arguing	Interest in academic topics	Sadness
Cooperation with peers	Preparedness for instruction	Fearfulness
Temper outbursts	Production of acceptable work	Adaptable to change
Disruptive behavior	Difficulty working independently	Positive attitude
Polite and socially appropriate responses toward others	Distractedness	Worry
Impulsiveness	Academic engagement	Difficulty rebounding form setbacks
		Withdrawal

Figure 5 1. SAEBRS Three Domains

Reliability and Validity

All Kindergarten staff and Transitional Kindergarten staff are required to administer the Kindergarten readiness assessment districtwide as a baseline measure of students' academic development. All survey participants were given written directions and informed of the survey's purpose in their native or most preferred language. If the assessor was unable to provide written directions, then an interpreter was provided to review directions, purpose, and to complete the survey with participant.

The strategies clarifying researcher bias (Creswell, 2013) or reflexivity (Milinki, 1999) further assisted in ensuring that the research was reliable (consistent over time) and valid (measures what it was designed to measure and is not influenced by researcher bias). It was important for the researcher to be self-aware and disclose background and experience to the reader. When the researcher is self-aware and critical of self-reflections, they can minimize their potential biases and predispositions on the research process, and conclusions.

1. Extended Fieldwork (Milinki, 1999) or Prolonged Engagement (Edmonson, 2008): It is important in qualitative research to collect data over time and spend time with the informant. This is why this data was collected over the course of a school year.

2. Participant Feedback (Milinki, 1999): Discussion with participants or subjects confirm whether the researcher's interpretation of data is accurate. This is why the ten interviews were critical to this study.

3. Peer Review (Creswell, 2013; Milinki, 1999): To enhance the accuracy of interpretation and conclusion, the researcher had peer participation to act as the "devil's advocate" in order to enhance the accuracy of the researcher's interpretations and be aware of any oversight.

4. Pattern Matching (Milinki, 1999): The researcher predicted a pattern and from that determined if the information received either supports or did not support the predicted pattern.

From the identified themes, the researcher then developed a written description of the expectations and beliefs/perceptions of those surveyed or interviewed (Gibbs, 2012). Lastly, the researcher created a written composite summary based on the structural and textural descriptions to express the primary phenomena or feelings derived from the research questions (Creswell, 2013).

Data Collection

This study is a mixed methods study as both quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed. The researcher utilized a computer-based survey system to collect the surveys from adult participants (teachers, administrators, service providers, and parents). The

researcher met in person with parents who did not have a computer and assisted them with the data processing.

The researcher followed with quantitative discussion from ten randomly selected participants who demonstrated interest after completion of the survey. The researcher used NVivo12 to assist in the interpretation of the personal interview responses. The goal was to identify phenomena based on parent and educators' responses to the personal interview questions. The purpose of a phenomenological study was to dig deeper into identifying personal experiences, preconceived assumptions, feelings, and responses. The overall goal was to highlight the importance of identifying personal biases, broaden awareness in human differences, and minimize fear of the unknown. By formulating relative connections, together, educators, parents, and students can develop opportunity to enhance positive early childhood experiences.

Data Analysis

A range of quantitative methods proposed by Best and Kahn (2006) was considered to address the problem statement and research questions. The researcher selected the mixed methods quasi-experimental design methodology to best meet the purpose of this study, as there was neither random assignment nor a control group that diminishes the ability of equivalence. There also was no randomly assigned "placebo" group due to the researcher's beliefs of ethical equality for all students. Not offering the collaborative support-team approach to all preschool, transitional kindergarten and kindergarten programs could expose the district to the possibility of a complaint of inequality.

The researcher believes that a quasi-experimental design, "The Nonequivalent-Groups Design" was the most appropriate method to assess the argument. According to Best and Khan (2006), this type of design is frequently used in classroom experiments where the experimental

and control groups are naturally selected as the researcher here cannot assign students to specific classes. It is noted that factors such as cognitive abilities, maturity, exposure, and extraneous internal and external variables cannot be controlled which may affect scores.

The quasi-experimental design was used to compare the differences and similarities of participants' beliefs and expectations that were identified on the Likert-style survey. Percentiles were calculated and demonstrated visually with histograms. The purpose was to identify similarities and differences in participants' beliefs and perceptions on students' early childhood development and how students' early childhood experience can impact student school success.

The researcher analyzed expectations and beliefs on the importance of a well-balanced developmental foundation and its impact on kindergarten readiness and school success. The researcher analyzed the survey participants' demographics and then clustered them into groups as teachers, administrators, parents, service providers, and administrators. The mean was investigated to determine average beliefs in school readiness, parent involvement, school outcomes, and environmental factors.

The Kindergarten Readiness assessment was administered to all incoming transitional kindergarten and kindergarten students to identify baselines for each student's actual functional level on school related academic areas. Percentages and histograms were calculated to identify students' academic functional abilities by classroom.

The SAEBRS is a research supported, brief universal screener for identifying at-risk students with potential behavioral and emotional concerns (Kilgas et al., 2013). The SAEBRS was designed to be used in the K-12 setting and is grounded within the conceptual model that states school success is not only reflected by academic performance, but also social-emotional and behavioral development as demonstrated in Figure 6. 1.
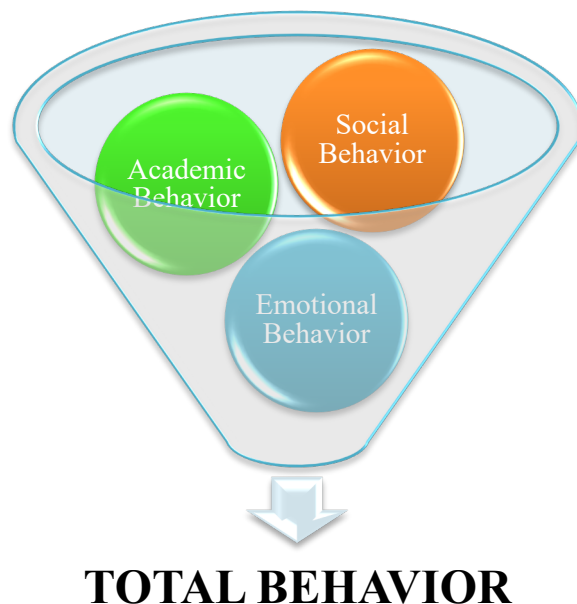
Figure 6 1. SAEBRS Total Behavior Model

The SAEBRS was provided to the participating teachers to assess their perceptions on individual students' areas of development in academic behavior, social behavior, and emotional behavior development at the beginning of the study and end of the study. The purpose was to identify teachers' perceptions of students' social, academic, and emotional behaviors, which assisted in gaining personal awareness on how each student is perceived by their teacher. After teacher participants completed the SAEBRS screener for each student, scores were calculated by totaling the scores for each student within each subscale.

A Total Behavior scale score was calculated by adding all of the subdomain summed scores and can range from 0-57. Ranges for Social and Academic Behavior range from 0-18 and for Emotional Behavior, a 0-21 summed scale score. Within each subscale, higher scores are more indicative of better student behavior. SAEBRS subscale scores can be used as continuous variables or can be classified as "at-risk" or "not at-risk" (see Figure 7). The identified areas were addressed in the classroom setting by the collaborative support-team approach in the early

childhood education settings. Percentages were calculated and presented visually in histograms to represent teachers' perceptions on individual students' development by classroom.

	At-Risk	Not At-Risk
Social Behavior	0-12	13-18
Academic Behavior	0-9	10-18
Emotional Behavior	0-17	18-21
Total Behavior	0-36	37-57

Figure 7 1. S. P. Kilgus, (2013)

As this is a mixed methods research design, the qualitative phenomenological approach was selected for this study to dig deeper into understanding "the why" of the quantitative results. According to Creswell (2013), qualitative methods of study are ideal when a problem or issue needs exploration. A range of qualitative methods for this study was considered to address this problem statement and research questions. The researcher selected the phenomenological methodology to identify the individual perceptions and beliefs. Based on Creswell (2013) defined features of phenomenological study methodology are: 1) ensuring that information is from all participants, exploring the phenomenon (educational idea), and describing rather than explaining the findings. Qualitative studies are instrumental in digging deeper into meaning, cause, or result of something. Analyzing the reasons why the adult participants experience early-childhood education differently gives a voice to the unspoken and meaning to the underlying core of something or someone. The purpose of qualitative studies was to explore in depth where little was previously known for the purpose of understanding and revealing misconceptions based on biases, partial or weak studies.

The data analysis in a phenomenology is somewhat of a systematic procedure that begins with significant statements and moves to a broader unit (the meaning), the goal being looking at the what and how. The researcher highlighted statements, sentences, and commonalities and create clusters in order to develop common themes (Creswell, 2013). The researcher utilized multiple coding procedures, beginning with the collection of participant information on demographics (ethnicity, SES, EL, race/ethnicity, gender) obtained from the participants' surveys. The open-ended survey questions completed by the participants were also be coded. After the completion of the initial coding, the researcher assigned specific segments of text to a particular code. The researcher then looked for similarities or relationships between the identified codes and how those codes relate to one another in a particular category.

Ethical Issues

This researcher has worked in the school district for 14 years. The researcher was a school psychologist at one of the elementary sites for five years. From 2010 to 2016, the researcher was placed by the superintendent as a psychologist on special assignment to oversee the special education department administratively, districtwide. For the past nine years, the researcher has hired, supervised, and evaluated many staff participants, and for the past three years, the researcher has been the Special Education Coordinator for the school district.   Due to the longevity of employment in the district, there have been long-term relationships with staff and parents.

The researcher has had a primary role in program development from the collaborative-support team approach to increasing inclusive practices. The researcher has been a front-runner in the push for inclusion and equality to all. Three grants have been awarded to assist in trainings and support for increasing inclusive practices significantly in the district. The

researcher has also facilitated the development of a continuum of programs from preschool to adult transition bring students back to district from county or non-public schools. Occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, and behavior support teams have been developed under the researcher's leadership, minimizing non-public agency costs. This has been a shift for staff, but inclusive practices have significantly increased over the past nine years. Participants will be encouraged in order to identify areas of need or enhancement to better meet the needs of the whole-student within the district's' population.

The researcher provided potential participants with her contact information (phone, email, or office time) and be available on an as needed basis. The survey was used to identify adult expectations and beliefs on school readiness and a collaborative support-team approach to early intervention. There was no direct interaction with students. The kindergarten readiness assessment is currently being implemented in the district and is done annually with all new transitional kindergarten and kindergarten students. There are no ethical issues that may harm any human identified as a participant in this study.

Summary

Chapter 3 described the methodology for this study and the participants. This researcher predicted that the students who participated in early childhood education programs with an imbedded collaborative support-team approach had significantly higher scores on kindergarten readiness tests as compared to those who did not. Additionally, it is anticipated that gaps in developmental foundations will be addressed by those high-quality programs. The survey results will compare beliefs or perceptions of early childhood programs with imbedded collaborative support-team approach. This researcher predicted that parental responses may also differ significantly depending on cultural background and educational experience. This chapter

summarized the participants, the instruments, the data collection and analysis procedures and

provided ethical considerations that were taken to heart.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The purpose of Chapter 4 is to present and interpret the quantitative and qualitative data analyses findings that were identified as result of this mixed-methods phenomenological research study. The researcher's purpose of this study was to obtain data from a large sample size of parents, teachers, service provider, and administrators who are closely associated, or are in direct contact with students who are enrolled in the districts early childhood education programs in preschool, transitional kindergarten and kindergarten. The researcher goal is to obtain data from respondents and identify and interpret identified phenomena derived from the quantitative and qualitative findings. The primary purpose of the study is to not only identify and interpret phenomena; but to answer the three primary research questions by analyzing perceptions and beliefs of the different respondents of the survey:

Research Questions

1. Does the collaborative support-team team approach in early childhood education have positive effect on the development of whole-child?

2. Do parent and school staff perceptions, impact positively or negatively the success of a collaborative support-team approach on school readiness and school success?

3. Do personal biases and poverty negatively affect student school experience and success?

Chapter 4 will present results derived from the 231 parent survey respondents and 52 staff member respondents. Staff members are inclusive of five-preschool teachers, two-transitional kindergarten teachers, seven-kindergarten teachers, five-school psychologist, four-speech pathologists, two-occupational therapists, zero- physical therapists, one-adapted physical

education teacher, twenty-behavior specialist, and-six administrators as demonstrated in (see

Figure 8.1).

Staff Member Title	Grade	Number of Respondents
Teacher-Preschool	Preschool	5
Teacher -Transitional Kindergarten	Transitional Kindergarten	2
Teacher-Kindergarten	Kindergarten	7
School Psychologist	PreK-K	5
Speech Pathologist	PreK-K	4
Occupational Therapist	PreK-K	2
Physical Therapist	PreK-K	0
Adapted Physical Education Teacher	PreK-K	1
Behavior Specialists	PreK-K	20
Administrators	n/a	6

Figure 8. 1. Participant Chart.

This chapter will begin by presenting quantitative results based off the Likert-survey

completed by survey participants. The purpose is to gain a deeper understanding of the

importance of addressing he needs of the whole-child's development, and the impacts of poverty,

trauma, transitions, and unknown personal biases on a child's early childhood education

experience. This coupled with identified phenomena on respondents' perspective and beliefs on

school readiness, environmental factors and school success will offer potential research

possibilities that could enhance the district early-childhood programs and enlighten the

importance of addressing the need of the whole-child by incorporating a collaborative support-team approach to early childhood education.

The quantitative results from the Social, Academic, and Emotional Risk Screener (SAEBRS) will identify student outliers that are identified at-risk. The final quantitative data analysis will be analyzing the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment to determine baselines student enter kindergarten.

The quantitative data analysis will finalize chapter four by identifying coded results and identifying potential phenomena. The purpose of these results is to dig deeper into identifying personal experience, preconceived assumptions, feeling, and responses. The overall goal is to highlight the importance of identifying personal biases, broaden awareness in human differences, and open minds to the unknown, and accept difference. Chapter 4 will conclude with limitation and delimitations.

Quantitative Results

The survey is comprised of three primary categories: School Readiness, School Success, and Environmental Factors. School readiness is comprised of eight sub-questions School Success is comprised of nine sub-questions. Environmental Factors category is composed of five sub-categories. When the overall mean and standard deviations were calculated with a $p < 0.05$ the primary domains of school success and environmental factors found statistically significant differences in response that service providers are more likely to agree in responses than parents.

Table 1. 1

Results: Means and SD & Statistically Significant (p-values)

	Teacher (n=18)		Parent (n=184)		Service Provider (n=26)		Administration (n=5)		
	mean	sd	mean	sd	mean	sd	mean	sd	p value
Readiness	6.31	0.9	6.42	0.51	6.47	0.5	6.53	0.59	0.73
School Success	6.26	0.99	6.16	0.7	6.6	0.36	6	1.02	0.03 *SP v P
Environment	5.18	0.81	4.94	0.88	5.43	0.54	4.96	0.62	0.04 *SP v P

School Readiness

Based on the 209 questionnaires that were collected and used for quantitative analysis, standard deviations within each group indicated in the domain of School Readiness the following: Teachers, parents, support-staff, and administrators agreed in their belief and perceptions kindergarten readiness skills were an important factor in school readiness. The overall combined mean was 6.49. Mean scores for the eight items in the School Readiness area ranged between 7.0 with a standard deviation of 0 to 5.78 with a standard deviation of 1.12. There was a statically significant difference identified on Q1 between service provider responses and parents with a *p*-value 0.002 that parents were more likely to agree similarly on the importance of kindergarten readiness affecting school readiness. On Q16, reverse as in Q1, service providers are more likely to agree that personal biases influence long-term success and overall school readiness to learn. Teacher's overall mean for the six question was 37.99, the six questions ranging between 6.05 and 6.68. Service provider's overall mean for the six questions was 38.71, ranging from 5.78 to 6.78. Parent's overall mean for the six questions was 38.62 ranging between 6.09 and 6.82. Administrator's overall mean for the six questions was 40.5, ranging from 7.0 to 6.17. These scores indicate that respondents did believe that factors influencing school readiness could impact learning (see Table 2).

Table 2.1

School Readiness Means & SD @ p=<0.05 Value Statistically Significant

Question #	Teacher		Service Provider		Parent		Administration			
	mean	sd	mean	sd	mean	sd	mean	sd	p value	
Q1	6.47	1.07	6.44	0.93	6.82	0.48	7	0	0.002	* Service provider v parent
Q6	6.68	0.95	6.67	0.68	6.76	0.51	7	0	0.55	
Q8	6.21	1.18	6.48	0.75	6.26	0.96	6.5	0.84	0.63	
Q9	6.05	1.13	5.78	1.12	6.17	1.15	6.17	1.17	0.4	
Q15	6.47	0.9	6.78	0.42	6.52	0.84	6.83	0.41	0.34	
Q16	6.11	0.99	6.56	0.75	6.09	1.13	7	0	0.046	* Service provider v parent

Note: *p <0.05

The frequency table describes the questions and participants responses by the number per response and the percentage. The frequency table is sectioned by respondent category of: teacher, parent, service provider, and administrator and individual response questions (see Table 3).

School Success

Based on the 209 questionnaires that were collected and used for quantitative analysis, percentages ranged each group indicated in the domain of School Success the following: Teachers, parents, support-staff, and administrators agreed in their belief and perceptions that many factors can impact school success. Percentages in relation to participant within their group and outside of their group varied on their beliefs and perceptions on the following: Q1, transitions, Q2, well-balanced developmental foundation; Q3, communication development; Q4, parental involvement; and Q5, their impact of a negative first time or early-childhood experience

in school. However, a highly statically difference was identified on Q10, parental involvement.

Parents at a <0.0001 *p*-value were more likely agreeable to strongly agreeing in importance of

parental involvement than teachers, service providers, and administrators.

Table 3 1

School Readiness Response Frequencies

School Readiness & Development		Teacher		Service Provider		Parent		Administration	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
How important is Kindergarten Readiness?	Strongly Agree	14	73.68%	18	66.67%	182	85.45%	6	100.00%
	Somewhat Agree	2	10.53%	5	18.52%	26	12.21%	0	0.00%
	Agree	2	10.53%	2	7.41%	3	1.41%	0	0.00%
	Neither	0	0.00%	2	7.41%	2	0.94%	0	0.00%
	Disagree	1	5.26%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
	Somewhat Disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Do you believe that social-emotional development is important	Strongly Agree	16	84.21%	20	74.07%	167	79.52%	6	100.00%
	Somewhat Agree	2	10.53%	6	22.22%	37	17.62%	0	0.00%
	Agree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5	2.38%	0	0.00%
	Neither	0	0.00%	1	3.70%	1	0.48%	0	0.00%
	Disagree	1	5.26%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
	Somewhat Disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
role in school?	Strongly Agree	11	57.89%	17	62.96%	107	51.94%	4	66.67%
	Somewhat Agree	4	21.05%	6	22.22%	63	30.58%	1	16.67%
	Agree	2	10.53%	4	14.81%	20	9.71%	1	16.67%
	Neither	1	5.26%	0	0.00%	15	7.28%	0	0.00%
	Disagree	1	5.26%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
	Somewhat Disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.49	0	0.00%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Does motor development impact learning?	Strongly Agree	9	47.37%	8	29.63%	108	51.92%	3	50.00%
	Somewhat Agree	4	21.05%	11	40.74%	56	26.92%	2	33.33%
	Agree	5	26.32%	2	7.41%	27	12.98%	0	0.00%
	Neither	0	0.00%	6	22.22%	13	6.25%	1	16.67%
	Disagree	1	5.26%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
	Somewhat Disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.48%	0	0.00%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	3	1.44%	0	0.00%
Is a collaborative support team approach important in early childhood education?	Strongly Agree	13	68.42%	21	77.78%	140	67.96%	5	83.33%
	Somewhat Agree	3	15.79%	6	22.22%	46	22.33%	1	16.67%
	Agree	2	10.53%	0	0.00%	8	3.88%	0	0.00%
	Neither	1	5.26%	0	0.00%	11	5.34%	0	0.00%
	Disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.49%	0	0.00%
	Somewhat Disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Is it important to recognize personal biases?	Strongly Agree	8	42.11%	18	66.67%	98	48.28%	6	100.00%
	Somewhat Agree	7	36.84%	7	25.93%	54	26.60%	0	0.00%
	Agree	2	10.53%	1	3.70%	33	16.26%	0	0.00%
	Neither	2	10.53%	1	3.70%	12	5.92%	0	0.00%
	Disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2	0.99%	0	0.00%
	Somewhat Disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4	1.97%	0	0.00%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%

For question directed at the importance of beginning prevention and early-intervention in preschool and kindergarten. All respondent categories (teachers, parents, service providers, and administrators) strongly believe that prevention and early intervention should begin in preschool. Teachers (T) were an overall 97.4%, Service Providers (SP) were an overall 88.98%, Parents (P) were an overall 98%, and Administrators (A) were an overall 100% in strongly agreeing with early (preschool) prevention and early intervention attributing to school success.

Table 4. 1

School Success Means and SD & p=<0.05 Value Statistically Significant

	Teacher		Service Provider		Parent		Administration			
	mean	sd	mean	sd	mean	sd	mean	sd	p value	
Q2	6.16	1.3	6.44	0.8	5.8	1.51	6.5	0.84	0.088	
Q3	6.53	1.12	6.67	0.55	6.75	0.61	6.33	1.21	0.25	
Q7	6.37	1.12	6.56	0.75	6.38	1.18	6	1.26	0.73	
Q10	6.16	1.12	6.48	0.75	6.81	0.48	6.17	0.98	<0.0001	parents were significantly more agreeable to Q10 than teachers, service providers, and admin
Q20	5.42	1.68	5.63	1.21	5.28	1.76	6	1.26	0.57	

Table 5 1

School Success Response Frequencies

School Success		Teacher		Service Provider		Parent		Administration	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
home to school or between	Strongly Agree	11	0.5789	16	59.26%	96	0.4660	4	66.67%
	Somewhat Agree	4	0.2105	8	29.63%	41	0.1990	1	16.67%
	Agree	2	0.1053	2	7.41%	31	0.1505	1	16.67%
	Neither	0	0.0000	1	3.70%	25	0.1214	0	0.00%
	Disagree	2	0.1053	0	0.00%	1	0.0049	0	0.00%
	Somewhat Disagree	0	0.0000	0	0.00%	7	0.0340	0	0.00%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0.0000	0	0.00%	5	0.0243	0	0.00%
developmental foundation is	Strongly Agree	15	0.7895	19	70.37%	169	0.8086	4	66.67%
	Somewhat Agree	2	0.1053	7	25.93%	32	0.1531	1	16.67%
	Agree	0	0.0000	1	3.70%	4	0.0191	0	0.00%
	Neither	1	0.0526	0	0.00%	3	0.0144	1	16.67%
	Disagree	1	0.0526	0	0.00%	1	0.0048	0	0.00%
	Somewhat Disagree	0	0.0000	0	0.00%	0	0.0000	0	0.00%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0.0000	0	0.00%	0	0.0000	0	0.00%
development impact students'	Strongly Agree	13	0.6842	18	66.67%	144	0.6857	3	50.00%
	Somewhat Agree	2	0.1053	7	25.93%	33	0.1571	1	16.67%
	Agree	3	0.1579	1	3.70%	17	0.0810	1	16.67%
	Neither	0	0.0000	1	3.70%	8	0.0381	1	16.67%
	Disagree	1	0.0526	0	0.00%	1	0.0048	0	0.00%
	Somewhat Disagree	0	0.0000	0	0.00%	6	0.0286	0	0.00%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0.0000	0	0.00%	1	0.0048	0	0.00%
Is parental involvement important for school success?	Strongly Agree	10	0.5263	17	62.96%	177	0.8510	3	50.00%
	Somewhat Agree	4	0.2105	6	22.22%	23	0.1106	1	16.67%
	Agree	4	0.2105	4	14.81%	8	0.0385	2	33.33%
	Neither	1	0.0526	0	0.00%	0	0.0000	0	0.00%
	Disagree	0	0.0000	0	0.00%	0	0.0000	0	0.00%
	Somewhat Disagree	0	0.0000	0	0.00%	0	0.0000	0	0.00%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0.0000	0	0.00%	0	0.0000	0	0.00%
Should prevention occur in preschool?	Yes	18	0.9474	24	88.89%	196	0.98	6	######
	No	1	0.0526	3	11.11%	4	0.02	0	0.00%
Should early-intervention begin in preschool?	Yes	19	1	25	92.59%	200	0.9756	6	######
	No	0	0	2	7.41%	5	0.0244	0	0.00%
Should prevention begin in TK or Kindergarten?	Yes	16	0.8421	21	77.78%	184	0.9293	5	83.33%
	No	3	0.1579	6	22.22%	14	0.0707	1	16.67%
Should early-intervention begin in TK or Kindergarten?	Yes	17	0.8947	22	81.48%	190	0.936	5	83.33%
	No	2	0.1053	5	18.52%	13	0.064	1	16.67%
Can a bad "first experience" in school effect student's long-term school success?	Strongly Agree	7	0.3684	8	29.63%	73	0.3493	3	50.00%
	Somewhat Agree	4	0.2105	8	29.63%	37	0.177	1	16.67%
	Agree	2	0.1053	5	18.52%	36	0.1722	1	16.67%
	Neither	4	0.2105	5	18.52%	33	0.1579	1	16.67%
	Disagree	0	0	1	37.00%	66	0.0287	0	0.00%
	Somewhat Disagree	2	0.1053	0	0.00%	16	0.0766	0	0.00%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0	0	0.00%	8	0.0383	0	0.00%

Environmental Factors

Based on the 209 questionnaires that were collected and used for quantitative analysis, standard deviations within each group indicated in the domain of Environmental Factors the following: Teachers, parents, support-staff, and administrators varied in the degree of their belief and perceptions that environmental factors were an important factor in influencing student development and learning. The overall combined averages varied, indicating a range of similarly distributed responses. The strongest percentage of strongly agreeing was in Q4, "How important is it for students to have basic needs met?" The range was from administrator at 100%, parents at 86.32%, service providers at 85.19%, and teachers at 84.21%. Of the five questions in the environmental factor domain Q5 was statistically significant at a p-value = 0.047 that service providers strongly agree over parents in the belief that when a student lacks basic needs, cognitive and brain development can be negatively impacted; which can result in negatively, impacting school success (see Table 6.1).

Table 6.1

Environmental Factors: Means and SD & p-Value Statistically Significant Values

	Teacher		Service Provider		Parent		Administration			
	mean	sd	mean	sd	mean	sd	mean	sd	p value	
Q4	6.68	0.95	6.85	0.36	6.83	0.44	7	0	0.47	
Q5	6.48	1.02	6.67	0.68	6.18	1.18	5.5	2.51	0.047	Service provider were significantly more agreeable to Q5 than parents
Q17	3.47	1.9	4.07	1.54	4.17	1.93	2.67	1.21	0.16	
Q18	-	-	-	-	2.58	1.88	-	-	-	
Q19	3.84	1.8	4	1.54	4.65	1.84	3.17	2.32	0.03	

Table 7.1

Environmental Factors Frequencies

Environment Frequency		Teacher		Service Provider		Parent		Administration	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
needs to be met?	Strongly Agree	16	84.21%	23	85.19%	183	86.32%	6	100.00%
	Somewhat Agree	2	10.53%	4	14.81%	23	10.85%	0	0.00%
	Agree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	6	2.83%	0	0.00%
	Neither	1	5.26%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
	Disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
	Somewhat Disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
impact cognitive development?	Strongly Agree	13	68.42%	20	74.07%	115	55.29%	4	66.67%
	Somewhat Agree	4	21.05%	6	22.22%	46	22.12%	0	0.00%
	Agree	1	5.26%	1	3.70%	29	13.94%	0	0.00%
	Neither	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	13	6.25%	1	16.67%
	Disagree	1	5.26%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
	Somewhat Disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	3	1.44%	0	0.00%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2	0.96%	1	16.67%
pace?	Strongly Agree	1	5.26%	1	3.70%	24	12.18%	0	0.00%
	Somewhat Agree	2	10.53%	3	11.11%	27	13.71%	0	0.00%
	Agree	3	15.79%	7	25.93%	37	18.78%	0	0.00%
	Neither	4	21.05%	9	33.33%	51	25.89%	2	33.33%
	Disagree	2	10.53%	3	11.11%	9	4.57%	1	16.67%
	Somewhat Disagree	3	15.79%	1	3.70%	16	8.12%	2	33.33%
	Strongly Disagree	4	21.05%	3	11.11%	33	16.75%	1	16.67%
Do student who come from low-income family learn slower?	Strongly Agree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	10	4.88%	0	0.00%
	Somewhat Agree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	11	5.37%	0	0.00%
	Agree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	13	6.34%	0	0.00%
	Neither	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	35	17.07%	0	0.00%
	Disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	12	5.85%	0	0.00%
	Somewhat Disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	27	13.17%	0	0.00%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	97	47.32%	0	0.00%
Do students from low-income families begin school with equal language abilities?	Strongly Agree	2	10.53%	0	0.00%	47	22.82%	0	0.00%
	Somewhat Agree	2	10.53%	5	18.52%	29	14.08%	2	33.33%
	Agree	2	10.53%	6	22.22%	25	12.14%	0	0.00%
	Neither	5	26.32%	7	25.93%	61	29.61%	0	0.00%
	Disagree	2	10.53%	5	18.52%	14	6.80%	1	16.67%
	Somewhat Disagree	5	26.32%	1	3.70%	13	6.31%	1	16.67%
	Strongly Disagree	1	5.26%	3	11.11%	17	8.25%	2	33.33%

Instrument Reliability

The researcher created survey instrument demonstrated internal reliability, indicated by

Cronbach's Alpha in all three primary subdomains. Cronbach's Alpha Test measures internal

validation that the questions that compose the subscales are school readiness and development,

school success and outcome and environmental factors. Any value above 0.7 is acceptable and

validate that the questions in the researcher developed survey demonstrate reliability among

questions groups. Meaning the questions go well together and will result in questions related to

school readiness and development, school success and outcome and environmental factors (see

Table 8.1).

Table 8.1

Cronbach's Alpha Results

CRONBACH'S ALPHA RESULTS		
Subscale	n	α
School Readiness & Development	6	0.61
School Success & Outcome	5	0.57
Environment Factors	5	0.36

Secondary Quantitative Data

Kindergarten Readiness

The Kindergarten Readiness assessment is administered to all incoming transitional

kindergarten and kindergarten students as a district policy to identify baselines for each student's

actual functional level on school related academic areas. Percentages and histograms will be

calculated to identify students' academic functional abilities by classroom.

SAEBRS

The SAEBRS is a research supported, brief universal screener for identifying at-risk

students with potential behavioral and emotional concerns (Kilgas et al., 2013). The SAEBRS is

designed to be used in the K-12 setting and is grounded within the conceptual model that states

school success is not only reflected by academic performance but also social-emotional and

behavioral development. After teacher participants complete the SAEBRS screener for each student, scores will be calculated by totaling the scores for each student within each subscale. A Total Behavior scale score can be calculated by adding all of the subdomain summed scores and can range from 0-57. Ranges for Social and Academic Behavior range from 0-18 and for Emotional Behavior, a 0-21 summed scale score. Within each subscale, higher scores are more indicative of better student behavior. SAEBRS subscale scores can be used as continuous variables or can be classified as at-risk or not at-risk.

Qualitative Results

The researcher selected the quasi-experimental design methodology to best meet the purpose of this study, as there is neither random assignment nor a control group that diminishes the ability of equivalence. There also is no randomly assigned "placebo" group due to the researcher's beliefs of ethical equality for all students. Not offering the collaborative support-team approach to all preschool, transitional kindergarten and kindergarten programs could expose the district to the possibility of a complaint of inequality. The researcher believes that a quasi-experimental design, "The Nonequivalent-Groups Design" will be the most appropriate method to assess the argument. The quasi-experimental design will be used to compare the differences and similarities of participants' beliefs and expectations that will be identified on the Likert-style survey.

"How do you define Kindergarten readiness?

(P1)-P-Tk: Making sure students have all they need to build a solid developmental foundation that can lead to school success and personal self-confidence.

(P2)-A-pre-K-up: Making sure students have all they need to build a solid developmental foundation that can lead to school success and personal self-confidence.

(P3)-P-K: A important foundation to success. Students come in with learned skills a prepared to attend and lean in kindergarten.

(P4)-Psych: Looking at the whole child and how they have mastered developmental milestones that prepare them for kindergarten, such as being able to communicate their needs, being able to follow simple commands, follow a routine, and be curious about learning.

(P5)-T-K: We have students:

1) Draw themselves then rank the drawing (1=attempt; 2=stick figure; 3=beginning detail; 4=very detailed).

2) Name writing (first name and last name).

3) Identify letter names (capital and lower case).

4) Identify numbers 1-20

5) Identify basic shapes (circle, square, diamond, rectangle, oval, triangle, sphere, cylinder, and cube).

6) Identify basic colors.

7) Identify more or less, over and under, on top of, under, beneath, and next to.

8) Identify body parts.

9) Verbalize first and last name, address, phone number.

(P6)-P-Pk: If feel preschool is very important to start and stimulate a child in learning resulting is success.

What is school success?

(P1): Helping a student out anyway to make sure that they do not fall behind. Resulting in a proud, happy students eager to learn. Also, possessing a sense of self-pride and confidence.

(P2): Helping a student out anyway to make sure that they do not fall behind. Resulting in a proud, happy students eager to learn. Also, possessing a sense of self-pride and confidence.

(P3): Feeling safe and possessing the correct tools to learn.

(P4): When a student is able to make connections between their learning and future outcomes/goals.

(P5): The ability to work with other people, make friends, work cooperatively, show reading readiness, and foster a love of learning.

(P6): Being able to go to school happy and ready to learn.

What do you feel are important factors in the developmental foundation of young children?

(P1): Making sure they have support and someone to go to when then need help.

(P2): Making sure students/children have support in areas of need. Children have different background and experiences that enhance or hinder developmental areas.

(P3): Safety, support, and friends.

(P4): It is important to focus on the whole child and every aspect of development. Building skills in social emotional, how to interact with others, being able to get needs met verbally or through some form of communication and learning how to problem solve.

(P5): Being able to be read to at home. Fostering a love of books and learning.

(P6): Love, understanding, and having the correct tools.

How does a child's developmental foundation impact school success?

(P1): If they do not have the necessities they need they may not be able to follow along and keep up with their peers.

(P2): If they do not have the necessities they need they may not be able to follow along and keep up with their peers.

(P3): Safety, support, and friends.

(P4): If a child's basic needs are not met, such as safety and physiological needs, a child may already be at a disadvantage for school success.

(P5): A child needs to have basic home needs met to be able to function in school. Cognition can be developed over time.

(P6): One important foundation is a child's life to have success is having a supportive parent. I feel preschool is very important to start a child and build foundational skills for school success. Research I have read on 0-5 really support student enrolled in preschool benefits them long term.

Social-Emotional Development:

(P1): They would not make friends.

(P2): They can tend to get in trouble at school and social events and struggle with peer and adult relationships.

(P3): Being able to express who you are and how you feel.

(P4): This is important in fostering self-esteem and self-worth and to have feelings of accomplishment, which are important for school success in the future.

(P5): Some children are not ready for school due to separation anxiety. This can cause some learning issues until they feel comfortable and secure without parent in close proximity.

(P6): The lack or poorly developed social emotional skills can really impact a child/students success at school. Poor social skill lead to poor relationships with peers and adults.

Communication Development:

(P1): Communication is very important for the student o communicate when they need something. Also, for social acceptance non-verbal and verbal is important.

(P2): Communication is very important for the student o communicate when they need something. Also, for social acceptance non-verbal and verbal is important.

(P3): Being able to express who you are and how you feel.

(P4): In order for school success, it's important to have the communication skills necessary to build relationships and to get needs met.

(P5): Students need to be able to communicate basic needs such as going to the bathroom or if they are hungry. Communication can be non-verbal but it must be there to function at school.

(P6): Having an understanding and supported teacher can guide and build communication development. Very important both verbal and non-verbal.

Self-Regulation:
(P1): If they need, time if there is something wrong or something upset them. If they lack this skill, it can result in problematic behaviors.

(P2): If they need, time if there is something wrong or something upset them. If they lack this skill, it can result in problematic behaviors.

(P3): If children cannot control themselves, they struggle to learn and make it difficult for others to learn also. This is very disruptive in class.

(P4): Children have to be able to regulate their emotions and body's in order for their brain to be available for learning.

(P5): if children cannot control themselves, they struggle to learn and make it difficult for others to learn also. This is very disruptive in class.

(P6): Knowing when to give a child space.

Motor Development:
(P1): They may not be able to play with their friends on play equipment resulting is social isolation. Fine motor impacts daily living and writing skills.

(P2): They may not be able to play with their friends on play equipment resulting is social isolation. Fine motor impacts daily living and writing skills.

(P3): Fine motor skills issues can cause delays in writing. Having the necessary tools and support to participate in fine motor activities and safety outdoors on gross motor actives such as the playground.

(P4): Developing motor skills is important for children to develop the ability to move around and manipulate their environment.

(P5): Fine motor skills issues can cause delays in writing. Children entering kindergarten are expected to have already mastered many skills that in the past were taught in kindergarten. However, children now are expected to enter kindergarten with these skills developed, as they are not a component of Common Core.

(P6):   Having a set ready classroom with the support to strengthen fine and gross motor development. Fine motor for writing, and daily living skills (button pants, zip, and tie). Gross motor for safely moving about classroom setting and playground without getting hurt.

How Do You Define Parental Involvement?
(P1): When a parent is there making the best educationally related decision for their child is important.
(P2): When a parent is there making the best educationally related decision for their child is important.

(P3): Parent support working with the teacher in all areas.

(P4): Parental involvement means being an active participant in your child's schooling, which will foster children to have better social skills, improved behavior in school and adapt to school. Children will also have better self-esteem and more likely to experience school success.

(P5): Parents should know what their children are doing and learning in school. Hopefully parents can be involved and have the opportunity to volunteer in the classroom if possible, or at the least attend school functions.

(P6): Parental involvement is VERY important in a child's life. It makes them feel important, loved, and secure.

Please Define Prevention:

(P1): Taking necessary steps to stop something from upsetting the student socially. Or developmentally working in collaboration with specialist/service providers and teachers to meet the needs developmentally of the whole-child.

(P2): Taking necessary steps to stop something from upsetting the student socially. Or developmentally working in collaboration with specialist/service providers and teachers to meet the needs developmentally of the whole-child.

(P3): Being able to provide safety and happy environments.

(P4): Prevention in schools mean programs aimed at increasing children's academic success and reducing problem behaviors.

(P5): It is Stopping something before it starts is proactive. Not waiting until there is a problem or concern.

(P6): Being able to provide what is in the best to the student before things get behind. Noticing a need or weakness and quickly addressing it.

Please Define Early-Intervention:

(P1): Taking the steps to prevent the student from having any delays or deficits in learning and development.

(P2): Taking the steps to prevent the student from having any delays or deficits in learning and development.

(P3): An important factor to a successful student

(P4): programs aimed at providing the necessary skills for school success, such as addressing the developmental domains (social-emotional, motor, communication).

(P5): This is essential to identify and address problems early. Proactively address when it is small and do not wasted time until 1st or 2nd grade. Small fixes at a young age have high dividends

(P6): Recurring early-intervention makes a successful future.

What is Your Interpretation of a Collaborative S-Team Approach?

(P1): Working as a team to provide all students with their individual developmental need simultaneously using student strengths to enhance areas of weakness.

(P2): Working as a team to provide all students with their individual developmental need simultaneously using student strengths to enhance areas of weakness.

(P3): Understanding the needs of each student.

(P4): Using the different disciplines together when working with children, such as incorporating communication and physical movement to enhance the learning experience.

(P5): Support team helps the student and teacher in the classroom. Collaborative teams work together to determine what each child needs and then how the child's individual needs can be addressed so they are successful. All children learn differently.

(P6): Seeing to the needs of each student and working as a term to address the needs. Since every student is different, differences must be taken into consideration.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Chapter 5 presents the results of the mixed methods, quantitative and qualitative data analysis. Chapter 5 discusses the purpose and provides a detailed summative report of the findings in relation to the research questions. The chapter begins with a summary of the purpose of the study and a description of the demographics of the respondents. Next, the researcher discusses and interprets the quantitative results based off findings from the Likert survey. The researcher follows with quantitative discussion and interpretation of the identified phenomena based off parent and educators' responses to the personal interview questions.

This phenomenological study was designed to dig deeper into identifying personal experiences, preconceived assumptions, feelings, and responses. The overall goal was to highlight the importance of identifying personal biases, broaden awareness in human differences, and minimize fear of the unknown. By formulating relative connections, together, educators, parents, and students can develop opportunity to enhance positive early childhood experiences. Furthering the discussion will be the Quantitative analysis of the SAEBRS to identify students who may identified at-risk or presenting with social, academic, or emotional concerns. The SAEBRS was collected as a district semi-requirement in September 2018. The SAEBRS second semi-requirement data collection began March 11, 2019 and closed at the end of April 2019. The second data collection was not mandated or pushed by administration due to unforeseen circumstances that occurred in the district, hence, there was little to no participant completion. Finalizing the study is discussion on the Quantitative analysis of the Kindergarten Readiness assessment results, which are administered at the beginning of the school year on student entry are a baseline of progress.

The researcher has also incorporated A Framework for Understanding Poverty: A Cognitive Approach (Payne, 2013) to guide the reader's view through the lens of self-awareness in diversity. The purpose was to gain a deeper understanding of the discussion of findings of similarities and differences in beliefs and impressions of the importance and impact of a collaborative support-team approach in educating the preschool through kindergarten students by addressing the needs of the whole-child.

This phenomenological study was designed to identify and propose implications and results extracted from the participants who completed the researcher developed survey. The goal was to identify parental, teacher, service provider, and stakeholder results on the beliefs and impressions of meeting the needs of the whole-child. Transcend awareness and enlightenment on the importance of identifying personal biases, understanding the impact of environmental factors, culture differences and how this can influence a child's first-time experience in school. Finalizing, with the long-term impact of a child's first time or early childhood experience in school and how it can be so deeply ingrained it affects long-term academics and overall school success. The chapter concludes with suggestions for further research and longitudinal studies. Recommendations derived through this research, which identified areas suggestive of the need for additional trainings in developing awareness and how trauma, environmental factors, and cultural difference may affect school success. Lastly, the identification for policies and procedural guidelines for parents, students, and educators transitioning into school and the communication and transition process between grade levels that student's naturally matriculate through.

Summary of the Study

This study originated to gain information on the districts collaborative support-team approach in early childhood education. The researcher's aim was to identify aspects to further elaborate on and or develop while simultaneously identifying areas, which may need to be refined, modified, or extinguished, to strengthen this district's early-childhood education experience, and develop from an early age the love for education and learning. This study investigated the existing research on early childhood education and development in the attempt to gain a deeper understanding of the importance of addressing the whole-child's development, the importance of understanding the impacts of poverty and self-identification of one's unknown personal biases, and to broaden further, the understanding of school readiness to families, teachers, and stakeholders. The study analyzed preschool, transitional kindergarten, kindergarten teachers, service providers, administrators, and parental perspectives of school readiness, developmental foundations. Additionally, the study highlighted the importance of understanding the impacts of poverty and self-identification of one's unknown personal biases, and the importance of a collaborative support-team approach in educating young children.

Demographics

This study was offered to 533 parents and 68 staff members teachers (preschool, transitional kindergarten, and kindergarten), service providers (school psychologists, speech pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapist, adapted physical education teacher, behavior therapists), support-staff (speech and language pathology assistants and behavior interventionists) and administrators. The study had 231 surveys completed by parents and or caregivers. There were 52 staff members inclusive of: five preschool teachers; two transitional kindergarten teachers; seven kindergarten teachers; five school psychologists; five Speech

Pathologists; two occupational therapists; zero physical therapist; one adapted physical education

teacher; twenty behavior specialists; and six administrators (see Figure 10).

Staff Member Title	Grade	Number of Respondents
Teacher-Preschool	Preschool	5
Teacher -Transitional Kindergarten	Transitional Kindergarten	2
Teacher-Kindergarten	Kindergarten	7
School Psychologist	PreK-K	5
Speech Pathologist	PreK-K	4
Occupational Therapist	PreK-K	2
Physical Therapist	PreK-K	0
Adapted Physical Education Teacher	PreK-K	1
Behavior Specialists	PreK-K	20
Administrators	n/a	6

Figure 10 1. Participant Chart (Minardi, 2019).

The researcher created individual packets with the content of Informed Consent for

participation and a hard copy of the Likert survey (Minardi, 2015). The surveys were sent home

in English and Spanish. A cover page with due date and incentive of a $5 gift card was on the

cover of the (9 x 12) closed envelope. Staff participants were sent the same (as parent survey)

created by the researcher in Google Forms and offered the same $5 gift card. Teacher incentives

for good classroom parent from return and staff completion of survey, SAEBRS, and

Kindergarten readiness data was a $25 gift card and classroom party of teacher's choice.

The questionnaire focused on parental, teacher, administrator, and support-staff

providers' beliefs, and perceptions in the following areas: school readiness, school success, and

environmental factors. The surveys were collected, and 10 participants were randomly selected

based off researcher-notified interest in the participation of a follow-up interview lasting

approximately 30 minutes. The researcher summarized the Payne (2013) Framework for

Understanding Poverty: A Cognitive Approach to enlighten and guide the interview

respondent's view through the lens of self-awareness in diversity. The researcher followed a

phenomenological experimental design coupled with the Framework for Understanding Poverty

This study addressed the following three research questions.

Research Questions

1. Does the collaborative support-team team approach in early childhood education have

positive effect on the development of whole-child?

2. Do parent and school staff perceptions, impact positively or negatively the success of a

collaborative support-team approach on school readiness and school success?

3. Do personal biases and poverty negatively affect student school experience and

success?

School Readiness

Based on the 209 questionnaires that were collected and used for quantitative analysis,

standard deviations within each group indicated in the domain of School Readiness the

following: Teachers, parents, support-staff, and administrators agreed in their belief and

perceptions kindergarten readiness skills were an important factor in school readiness. The

overall combined mean was 6.49. Mean scores for the eight items in the School Readiness area ranged between 7.0 with a standard deviation of 0 to 5.78 with a standard deviation of 1.12. There was a statically significant difference identified on Q1 between service provider responses and parents with a *p*-value 0.002 that parents were more likely to agree similarly on the importance of kindergarten readiness affecting school readiness. On Q16, reverse as in Q1, service providers are more likely to agree that personal biases influence long-term success and overall school readiness to learn. Teacher's overall mean for the six question was 37.99, the six questions ranging between 6.05 and 6.68. Service provider's overall mean for the six questions was 38.71, ranging from 5.78 to 6.78. Parent's overall mean for the six questions was 38.62 ranging between 6.09 and 6.82. Administrator's overall mean for the six questions was 40.5, ranging from 7.0 to 6.17. These scores indicate that respondents did believe that factors influencing school readiness could impact learning.

To address the qualitative component of this mixed-methods study the Personal Interview questions relative to school readiness were posed to teachers, parents, services providers, and administrators the following responses were discussed with respondents.

Q6-When personal interview participants were posed the question, "How do you define kindergarten readiness?" a range of answers were received. Participant (P1) described their background that they believed drove their response as a parent of a transitional kindergarten student (Tk) who did not attend preschool but, did enter school in kindergarten. She expressed, (P1): "Making sure students have all they need to build a solid developmental foundation that can lead to school success and personal self-confidence"

Another response from (P5), described what specifics kindergarten teachers identify as kindergarten readiness, (P5):

> We have students who draw themselves then rank the drawing (1=attempt; 2=stick figure; 3=beginning detail; 4=very detailed), name writing (first name and last name), identify letter names (capital and lower case), identify numbers 1-20, identify basic shapes (circle, square, diamond, rectangle, oval, triangle, sphere, cylinder, and cube), identify basic colors, identify more or less, over and under, on top of, under, beneath, and next to, identify body parts and/or verbalize first and last name, address, phone number.

School Success

Based on the 209 questionnaires that were collected and used for quantitative analysis, each group indicated in the domain of School Readiness the following: Teachers, parents, support-staff, and administrators agreed in their belief and perceptions that many factors can impact school success. Percentages in relation to participant within their group and outside of their group varied on their beliefs and perceptions on the following: Q1, transitions, Q2, well-balanced developmental foundation; Q3, communication development; Q4, parental involvement; and Q5, their impact of a negative first time or early-childhood experience in school. However, a highly statically difference was identified on Q10, parental involvement. Parents at a <0.0001 p-value were more likely agreeable to strongly agreeing in importance of parental involvement than teachers, service providers, and administrators.

For the question directed at the importance of beginning prevention and early-intervention in preschool and kindergarten. All respondent categories (teachers, parents, service providers, and administrators) strongly believe that prevention and early-intervention should begin in preschool. Teachers (T) were an overall 97.4%, Service Providers (SP) were an overall

88.98%, Parents (P) were an overall 98%, and Administrators (A) were an overall 100% in strongly agreeing with early (preschool) prevention and early-intervention attributing to school success.

To address the qualitative component of this mixed-methods study the Personal Interview questions relative to school readiness were posed to preschool, transitional kindergarten, kindergarten teachers, parents, administrators, and support staff responded to personal interview questions and discussion.

Q7, "What is school success?" a range of answers were received which appears to be based on the respondent. Parents responded similarly, with the importance on happiness, feeling safe. Parent (P3), "Feeling safe and possessing the correct tools to learn." Parent (P1) stated, "Helping a student out anyway to make sure that they do not fall behind. Resulting in proud, happy students eager to learn. Also, possessing a sense of self-pride and confidence…"and (P6), "Feeling safe and possessing the correct tools to learn". "Participants who were school psychologists or support-staff tended to focus on skill development and working collaboratively resulting in not following behind. Support staff (P2) noted the following:

 Helping a student out anyway to make sure that they do not fall behind. This will more than likely result in proud, happy students eager to learn, from my experience. Students also tend to begin possessing a sense of self-pride and confidence.

School Psychologist (P4) similarly discussed skill development to enhance school success and self-confidence.

Environmental Factors

Based on the 209 questionnaires that were collected and used for quantitative analysis, standard deviations within each group indicated in the domain of Environmental Factors the

following: Teachers, parents, support-staff, and administrators varied in the degree of their

belief and perceptions that environmental factors were an important factor in influencing student

development and learning. The overall combined averages varied, indicating a range of similarly

distributed responses. The strongest percentage of strongly agreeing was in Q4, "How important

is it for students to have basic needs met?" The range was from administrator at 100%, parents

at 86.32%, service providers at 85.19%, and teachers at 84.21%. Of the five questions in the

environmental factor domain Q5 was statistically significant at a p value = 0.047 that service

providers strongly agree over parents in the belief that when a student lacks basic needs,

cognitive and brain development can be negatively impacted; which can result in negatively,

impacting school success.

To address the qualitative component of this mixed-methods study the questions relative

to environmental factors were posed to preschool, transitional kindergarten, kindergarten

teachers, support-staff providers, and administrators. This concept was further investigated

during personal interviews. During the ten individual interviews when asked to describe

environmental factors, parents responded to the following questions.

Q8-When participants were posed the question, "What do you feel are important factor in

the developmental foundation of young children a range of answers were received?" Participant

(P1), (P3), and (P6) identified as parents in the personal interview. (P1) was a parent of a

preschool student, (P3) a parent of a kindergarten student, and (P6) described themselves as a

parent of a transitional kindergarten student. Again, there responses were similar and focused

love, understanding safety, support from adults, and provided the correct tools, and friendships.

"(P1) Making sure they have adult support and someone to go to when then need help," "(P3):

Safety, support, and friends." Lastly, "(P6): Love, understanding, and having the correct tools."

Responses differed from parents to service providers, as the service provider's tended to focus on the whole-child and supporting all areas of development. Support-staff discussed, "(P2) discussed the importance of making sure students/children have support in areas of need. Children have different background and experiences that enhance or hinder developmental areas." (P4) stated, "It is important to focus on the whole-child and every aspect of development. Building skills in social emotional, how to interact with others, being able to get needs met verbally or through some form of communication and learning how to problem solve." Hence, results support the importance of addressing the needs of the whole-child.

Summary of Findings

Throughout all 10 qualitative interviews involving participants of teachers, parents, support staff, and administrator agreed that was valuable to all children, especially those who are from poverty. Additionally, the highest percentage of all survey participants' (Teachers, 84.21%; Service Providers, 85.19%; Parent/Caregivers, 86.32% and Administrators, 100%) agreed that basic needs are essential for a child to flourish and can negatively impact a child's potential. This supports the importance of addressing the needs of the whole-child and that basic needs must be met for children to rise to their potential.

Collaborative Support-Team Approach

Research studies have demonstrated that children who participate in a high-quality preschool program result in a positive school experience which results in a well-balanced developmental foundation and long-term academic success.

Educational policy makers and stakeholders should take early childhood researchers seriously in a proactive manner in the development of universal high-quality preschool programs for all children. A program that incorporates the collaborative support-team approach educating

the whole-child. A preschool program with low student - teacher ratios, research based curriculum that is consistently implemented, imbedded social-emotional curriculum, parent education and participation, ongoing professional development and support for staff, and of high importance ongoing monitoring at the programmatic level to ensure continuous and consistent high quality in each classroom should be encouraged.

Educational policy makers should incorporate a framework, such as Payne (2013) *Understanding Poverty: A Cognitive Approach* in philosophical belief and staff development. The framework can be the guidelines for bringing enlightenment and awareness in the impact of environment factor that impact family and children's development and school success. Highlighting the impact on poverty, trauma, and how early childhood experiences impact brain neuropathway development is essential in meeting the needs of the whole-child. With knowledge of early childhood brain development educators would possesses the tools to guide students and facilitate learning into a pathway of success and self-confidence.

Implications for Future Research

In an effort to provide additional clarity regarding teacher, parental, service provider and administrator perceptions and beliefs, this research supports additional research in the following areas.

The author of this study originally intended to address the three questions by analyzing, comparing, and bring awareness to the differences in beliefs and perceptions between teachers, parents, support staff, and administrators. The goal was to identify differences and gaps and to propose policies and procedures to enhance the educational experience and success of early childhood education by expanding the collaborative practices and collaborative support-team approach in meeting the needs of the whole-child. The ultimate goal throughout this research

process has been to answer the proposed three fundamental questions: Question one: Does the collaborative support-team team approach in early childhood education have positive effect on the development of whole-child? Results from the quantitative and qualitative data analysis support the positive impact of the collaborative support-team approach and meeting the developmental needs of the whole-child. Finding in all participant domains strongly supported the importance of developing a proactive preventative approach to early childhood education beginning in preschool and incorporating early intervention strategies. Question two: Do parent and school staff perceptions, impact positively or negatively the success of a collaborative support-team approach on school readiness and school success? Results from participants varied dependent on question and respondent. However, overall support in seeing the benefit of a collaborative support-team approach in enhancing school readiness and school success. Question three: Do personal biases and poverty negatively affect student school experience and success? This researcher did predict this to be an area of need. Findings suggest that staff training on the awareness and impact on young children's brain development is imperative. All stakeholders should have` an understanding of the impact of trauma, poverty, early school experiences, identifying personal biases, and building cultural awareness is crucial in education.

Results from the SAEBRS were collected district-wide in Fall 2018 (September 2018) due to union grievance fillings as the social-emotional curriculum (a supplementary curriculum) was not negotiated only piloted and voted on by those who piloted the program was not fully implemented with fidelity. The SAEBRS was sent district-wide electronically by this researcher as a component of her job in the district as the district team leaders for the district level Multi Tired Systems of Support (MTSS) framework development. The purpose of the SAEBRS was to identify a baseline measure and identify students at-risk or outliers. With the district-wide

implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) and Second Step Social-Emotional Curriculum (SEL) and the completion of the SAEBRS union and staff grievance filing put a damper on the attempt of SAEBRS completion for the purpose this dissertation. The goal was to compare the initial SAEBRS data collection in September 2018 to SAEBRS data collection February 2018-March 2018. However, due to district circumstances discussed above this did not occur. The SAEBRS second data collection was unattainable. This researcher was only able to run an ANOVA analysis on the five submissions to determine the success of the collaborative support-team approach.

Finalizing the study is discussion on the Quantitative analysis of the Kindergarten Readiness assessment results, which are administered at the beginning of the school year on student entry. The data was inconsistently input into the districts database and was not provided to the researcher.

Summary

The result findings and suggestions for further research have strongly supported and identified the importance of meeting the needs of the whole-child by incorporating a collaborative support-team approach in early childhood education programs. Identified areas to drive staff development and awareness in meeting the developmental and educational needs of the most vulnerable and pliable population. We have to ability to make proactive changes and we as a human race should do so. An abundance of research supports the long-term effects of a high-quality early childhood education. Coupled with research supporting early intervention and prevention work, why wait? It is the responsibility of educational leaders and stakeholders to propose high quality early childhood educational programs with highly trained quality teachers.

Experienced teachers should pair with new teachers, share instructional pedagogy, and instructional practice with parents and encourage parental involvement.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Likert Scale

Likert Rating Scale

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Somewhat Disagree

3 = Disagree

4 = Neither Agree nor Disagree

5 = Somewhat Agree

6 = Agree

7 = Strongly Agree

Yes or No

Please specify (circle)

Are you a: ....
....Teacher
....Parent
....
.... Service Provider

If you are a teacher please indicate what grade you are currently teaching: ....
....
....
....
....
....(PreK   TK   Kinder)

1) How important is Kindergarten Readiness?
2) Do believe that transition from home to school or between grade levels impact school success?
3) Do you feel a well-balanced developmental foundation is important for school success?

4) How important is it for students' basic needs to be met?
5) Does a lack of basic needs negatively impact cognitive development?
6) Do you believe that social-emotional development is important
7) Does communication development impact students' school success?
8) Does self-regulation play an important role in school?
9) Does motor development impact learning?
10) Is parental involvement important for school success?
11) Should prevention occur in preschool?
12) Should early-intervention begin in preschool?
13) Should prevention begin in TK or Kindergarten?
14) Should early-intervention begin in TK or Kindergarten?
15) Is a collaborative support team approach important in early childhood education?
16) Is it important to recognize personal biases?
17) Do EL students learn at a slower pace?
18) Do student who come from low-income family learn slower?
19) Do students from low-income families begin school with equal language abilities?
20) Can a bad "first experience" in school effect student's long-term school success?

Survey

Questionnaire (In person Interview)

Are you a: Teacher, Parent, or Service Provider

If you are a teacher please indicate what grade you are currently teaching:...........(PreK   TK   Kinder)

1.What is kindergarten readiness?

2.What is school success?

3.What do you feel are important factors in the developmental foundation of young children?

4.How does a child's developmental foundation impact school success:

        a) basic needs and cognitive development

        b) social-emotional development

        c) communication development

        d) self-regulation

        e) motor development

How do you define parental involvement?

5.   Please define prevention and early-intervention.

6.   What is the interpretation of a collaborative team approach to educate?

7.   How do you define parental involvement?

Appendix B: Document/Audio Recording Protocol

DOCUMENT/AUDIO-RECORDING CODING PROTOCOL   Case ID#:

Name/Purpose of Document/Audio-recording: _____

Document Author: _____

Participants: _____

Date/Place of Document/Audio-recording Creation:

Synopsis of document/audio-recording:	Findings:
	I.
	II.
	III.
Uniqueness of situation for experience of process/phenomenon:	IV.
Potential categories/ themes:	Possible excerpts for triangulation:
	Page or Time Stamp:
	Page or Time Stamp:
	Page or Time Stamp:
Commentary (quotations, incidents, or impressions):	
Factors (factors or variables related to quantitative strand which emerge):	

Adapted with permission from Stake, R. (2006). *Multiple case study analysis.* New York, NY: Guilford Press. Retrieved from http://education.illinois.edu/circe/EDPSY490E/worksheets/worksheet.html