DOES GENDER OF THE EDUCATOR INFLUENCE TEACHER-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS AND GENDER ROLE BELIEFS: A RESEARCH STUDY

BY

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Abstract: The field of early childhood education is a primarily female-dominated occupation with a very small occurrence of male early childhood professionals in the classroom. This presents a potentially problematic issue considering the current concern about boys being in crisis during their early school years. Specifically, it is often questioned whether these struggling students would perform better for same-gendered educators. The purpose of the current study was to understand whether or not gender of the educator influences the relationships they have with the students in their classrooms. Additionally, educators' attitudes and beliefs about students' traditionally gender-normed behaviors were also measured to see if this was related to the gender of the educator. In the current study, three one-way ANOVAs were conducted, along with paired sample t-tests, in order to determine if there were any associations between educator gender and the closeness/conflict of their relationships with students, and if their gender was related to their beliefs about gender roles. The first ANOVA examined differences in teacher-child closeness, which was broken down into four categories to capture child gender and positive/challenging (i.e., male positive, male challenging, female positive, female challenging). Results indicated that for positive relationships with female students, female educators reported significantly higher closeness than the male educators reported. The second ANOVA examined differences in teacher-child conflict, which was broken down into the same four aforementioned categories; results for challenging relationships with male students indicated that female educators reported significantly more conflict than male educators. The third one-way ANOVA revealed no significant differences between male and female educators in their views of traditional and non-traditional gender-normed behavior. Collectively, the findings from this study suggest that there are some salient differences in the relationships male and female teachers form with their students.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The field of early childhood education is one of the most female dominated occupations in the United States (Sumison, 2005). According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, only 2.3% of preschool and kindergarten teachers are male (2014). Thus, there is a serious deficit in positive male influences in the early childhood education setting. Beyond the concern of the lack of male presence in the classroom, there is also a concern that boys generally are not thriving in school (Reichert & Hawley, 2010). According to Cornwell, Mustard, and Van Parys (2013), it is apparent that boys have begun to lag significantly in subjects behind girls, comprise most of the students within remedial programs, and account for most of schools' disciplinary troubles. This apparent gender gap has made professionals and researchers look at some of the root causes of these issues among young male students and the general achievement gap the exists between boys and girls in early childhood

Without a positive male influence in the classroom to show young boys that education is a place for both genders, boys may feel out of place in the classroom leading to behavioral difficulties (Merrett & Taylor, 1994; Rashid, 2009). These studies and various others have found that boys are often reported as more difficult to handle in the classroom when compared to girls (Holmlund & Sund, 2008). Reported levels of conflict are also higher in kindergarten classrooms when the teacher is a female and the students are male (Jerome, Hamre, & Pianta, 2009). These levels of conflict have the potential to negatively affect the relationship between the educator and

their students. Further, a study done through National Center for Education Statistics found that girls are substantially more amenable to learning within current classroom expectations and practices than boys, which may affect teachers on a subconscious level when scoring assessments (Cornwell, Mustard, & Van Parys, 2013). Most research focuses on these specific areas when looking at boys in crisis in early childhood education; however, one overlooked area of the issue is the role of traditional and non-traditional beliefs of gender-normed classroom behavior and its influence on the relationships that are formed between educators and students. Because the field of early childhood is traditionally more concerned with being child-centered, teachers are typically more concerned with following the child's interests instead of forcing them to follow interests that are specific to their own genders (Blaise, 2009).

This gap in the literature needs to be filled so existing early childhood educators and future professionals may be able to narrow, or even close, this gap between their male and female students. Research over the relationships that female educators have with their male and female students and alternatively, the relationships that male educators have with their male and female students will facilitate educators own explorations of the relationships occurring in their classrooms. This can raise awareness of any biases that may occur due to these relationships. Additionally, studies that look at beliefs and attitudes of educators and investigate the differences between the beliefs of male educators and female educators and how those beliefs may affect the relationship between the educator and students may also help educators address biases and facilitate them in looking toward inclusive ways of teaching in a gender flexible, non-biased way (Warin & Adriany, 2015). The current study will explore gender role beliefs and teacher-student relationships in classrooms of both male and female early childhood educators.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Theoretical Framework

In order to understand the importance of the gender gap in early childhood teachers and outcomes for boys, it is important to first understand the theoretical models that guide the work of early childhood educators as they seek to foster their students' development. Two theories that inform this study are social cognitive theory and attachment theory.

Social Cognitive Theory

Social cognitive theory is grounded in the belief that people, specifically children in this case, learn by observing the people around them (Bandura, 1986). The resulting behaviors can become central to the person's identity (Bandura, 1977). Specifically, Bandura was interested in how the observed behavior can be reproduced and influenced by three different aspects: personal (high or low efficacy), behavioral (how the people around the individual respond to behaviors), and the environment (aspects of the environment that allow the behavior to be successful). For this study, the last two aspects of behavioral and environment will be closely examined. The behavioral aspect of social cognitive theory is concerned with how the people around the individual respond to their behaviors. If children are scolded for a behavior, in theory they learn to understand that the behavior is not something that is acceptable to the person who scolded them. Conversely, if children are praised for a behavior, then they should understand that this behavior is acceptable to the person who praised them. According to Social Cognitive Theory,

this is how people learn what is and is not socially acceptable to their peers and superiors, and how they should act in certain situations. Environmental factors that affect a person include any aspects of the person's surroundings that impact the success of that person completing the behavior correctly (Bandura, 1982). For example, children cannot be successful in an environment that does not support his or her essential needs, or that does not allow them to express themselves. Furthermore, other environmental factors may affect the individual's behavior such as media, peers, and other role models in the individual's life.

Given this theory, it has been suggested that boys may become more behaviorally difficult than their female peers because boys do not have a positive male role model in the classroom (Skogli et al., 2013). Therefore, it may be important to have positive male role models in early childhood classrooms to model positive behaviors on a regular basis. When boys do not have a male to learn school-accepted behaviors from, they may act in an unacceptable way. This could put a strain on the teacher-student relationship, and may create teacher-student conflict.

Social cognitive theory can also be useful when looking at teacher beliefs in relation specifically to their gender beliefs, attitudes, and expectations. Social cognitive theory views the development of personality, and thus beliefs and attitudes, as a cognitive-affective system that results from the combined actions of different and distinct experiences over the course of the lifespan (Caprara, Vecchione, Barbaranelli, & Alessandri, 2013). Thus, it can be deduced that each educator will have unique viewpoints on their respective beliefs and attitudes based on their own experiences. However, inherently there are specific differences that occur in the lifetime, and specifically in their own school experiences for male and female educators (Kalaian & Freeman, 1994) regardless of outside experiences. Thus there will likely be inherent differences between male educators and their female counterparts' respective gender beliefs, attitudes, and

expectations they place upon the students in their classroom. Bussis, Chittenden, and Amarel (1976) discussed the importance of understanding that teacher beliefs about the children and their learning have an intense influence on the learning environment of the classroom, which can have pervasive effects on the students. As was stated earlier, children are less able to be successful in environments that do not support their essential needs; therefore, it is essential that educators are able to understand their own beliefs and attitudes, and confront and address the issues that may affect their students due to their respective beliefs. Educators will likely have a predisposition to certain gender beliefs based on how they were raised and treated during their lifespan, which they may use to inform the way they treat their students, as well as how they manage their classroom.

Attachment Theory

According to Bowlby (1982), attachment behavior is any form of behavior that results in a person attaining or maintaining proximity to some other clearly identified individual who is conceived as better able to cope with the world. However, attachment behaviors are indicative of different types of attachment in which people can interact, which could result in different outcomes in the relationship. There are four theorized types of attachment. These include: secure attachment, anxious-avoidant insecure attachment, anxious-resistant insecure attachment, and disorganized – disoriented attachment (Bretherton & Ainsworth, 1974). A secure attachment is demonstrated when the child will explore freely while the caregiver is present, knowing that they are a secure base to extend from, may be upset when the caregiver is absent, but happily welcomes their return (Sroufe & Waters, 1977). Children with anxious-avoidant insecure attachment often avoid or ignore their caregiver. They show little emotion when the caregiver leaves or returns, and they do not explore their environment to any extent regardless of whom

else might be around (Sroufe & Waters, 1977). Children who are identified as anxious–resistant tend to be clingy and difficult to comfort; they are in distress and often show resentment to the caregiver in response of the caregiver leaving them (Carlson, Cicchetti, Barnett & Braunwald, 1989). The newest attachment style, the disorganized-disoriented attachment, is exemplified by children seeming confused or exhibiting disoriented behavior when interacting with their caretaker (Ainsworth, 1990).

Attachment theory assumes that children use their relationships with significant adults to organize their experiences (Howes, Phillipsen, & Peisner-Feinberg, 2000). Typically, attachment theory also assumes that the individual being identified is the parent; however, there are many other prominent figures and role models in young children's lives. At home, the secure base is the parent and in the early childhood setting it is the educator who is the primary caregiver for the child (Colmer, Rutherford, & Murphy, 2011). One such figure is the educator in their classroom. The educator presenting a combination of responsive, warm and positive interactions, while offering the students continuity and consistency in the classroom as their primary caregiver, facilitates the development of a secure attachment relationship (Sims, 2003, cited in Murphy & Colmer, 2008).

The quality of attachment relationships forms the basis for emotional development (Colmer et al., 2011). If children feel emotionally secure with their teacher, they can use the teacher as a secure base and a resource for exploring the learning opportunities in the classroom (Howes et al., 2000). Thus, drawing upon attachment theory, the teacher-child relationship will affect the child's emotional security, an important component in a child's success in school (Bowlby, 1982). Adults sometimes perceive children's behaviors negatively and as attention seeking when they are actually a form of communication about the perceived quality of safety in

the teacher-student relationship (Colmer & Murphy, 2011). When using attachment theory as a framework, it gives educators a way to look deeper into the motivations behind children's classroom behaviors (Flory, 2005).

Literature Review

Gender Based Expectations

Gender based expectations refers to societal expectations for gender- and age-appropriate behaviors, processes that may be at work from infancy (Hoffman & Hurst, 1990). This study is specifically referring to an educator's preconceived notions about how girls might act versus how boys may act in the same situations. Research suggests that these expectations can feed into the perceived misbehavior of boys in the classroom (Bhana, 2009). For example, if two opposite gender children are performing the same task, the teacher might expect both to do the task in the same way, but if the boy cannot perform the task according to the expectations set forth, he will be reprimanded based on unrealistic expectations. Frequent reprimands might make the boys act out further, eventually leading to a pattern of behavior (Morhard & Starting, 2013). Typical behaviors for boys and girls between the ages of three to eight often differ from each other. This is apparent when analyzing the types of play a young girl engages in versus the type of play a young boy engages in.

Although there are many exceptions, typically developing early childhood boys are often participating in rough and tumble play, superhero play, and play that involves physical aggression (DiCarlo, Baumgartner, Ota, & Jenkins, 2015). This is in stark contrast to the expectations that are found in most American early childhood classrooms. Students of both genders are generally expected to keep their hands to themselves, gently play with their friends, and not be aggressive towards their peers while inside the classroom and during school hours.

The educators of their respective classrooms hold the students to these standards, thus their perceptions of aggressive type play will implicate the types of rules that the students must adhere to.

Another commonality within American classrooms is the presence of female early childhood educators. It can be inferred that if these are the rules and expectations of most early educators, and most early educators are females, that generally female early childhood educators are the professionals holding these expectations for their students. However, research shows that male early childhood educators have a more positive outlook on aggressive type play, in both social and academic scenarios, than their female counterparts (Bosacki, Woods, & Coplan, 2015). The role of gender expectations in how students behave at school and socialize with their peers can be a significant indicator in the nature of the relationship between the teacher and the students in their classroom, especially when the teacher and students are of the opposite gender.

Educators' Traditional and Non-Traditional Gender Beliefs/Attitudes

Gender beliefs and attitudes draw from classically and widely used gender stereotypes (Martin, 1990). Gender beliefs/ attitudes does not necessarily have to do with gender identity; gender identity is the process by which one comes to believe they are male or female, whereas conforming to a gender role is following a set of expectations regarding which behaviors are appropriate for persons of one sex (Lewis, 1987). Gender beliefs include what one believes about gendered expectations and how they organize what each gender is supposed to do and what they should act like. Gender attitudes can be used interchangeably with beliefs, but can also specifically be used to discuss the feelings that one has towards a gender, or how that gender may act. Delamont (1990) found gaps in the literature concerning teachers' beliefs towards gender roles, which could be predictive of teacher behaviors that would, in turn, shape the

students' perceptions and behaviors. However, research that does explore teachers' beliefs on gender roles demonstrates that teachers prefer that boys and girls adhere to conventional gender roles, and further, that children who do not adhere may challenge a teacher's comfort with gender expectations (Cahill & Adams, 1997). Both Cahill and Adams (1997) and Blaise (2005) demonstrated that teachers on average have a more feminist point of view about adult gender roles, but tend to have more traditional gender roles in mind for children. The authors also concluded that educators tend to be more lenient in cross-gender behavior in girls than they were with boys. Multiple studies have shown that teachers' beliefs affect their attitudes about classroom practice (Cahill & Adams, 1997), thus their beliefs and attitudes towards gender roles and expectations may inform whether the student-teacher relationship is classified as close or conflictual.

Teacher-Student Relationships

The quality of the teacher-student relationship refers to the working connection that the educator in the classroom has with the student, including any attachments, conflicts, experiences, and perceptions of each other. Teacher–student relationships in the primary grades have the potential to provide children with social support and emotional security (Howes et al., 2000). Students with more positive teacher–student relationships are better able to access and realize the learning opportunities available in classrooms (Howes & Smith, 1995), build constructive peer relationships (Howes, Matheson, & Hamilton, 1994), and adjust to the differences later on in older grades (Birch & Ladd, 1997; Lynch & Cicchetti, 1992; Pianta & Steinberg, 1992). Thus, teacher-student relationships appear to serve a regulatory function with regard to children's social and emotional development (Pianta, 1999) and therefore have the potential to have a positive or

negative influence on children's ability to succeed in school. Because these relationships are so vital to children's success, it is important to ensure that they are positive and close.

However, research from Jerome, Hamre, and Pianta (2009) has indicated that even in kindergarten, the levels of teacher-student conflict are higher for male students. Furthermore, the levels of teacher-reported closeness were lower between female teachers and male students and this gap in closeness between males and females increases as the students continue in their development (Jerome et al., 2009). Gender imbalance may also affect the teacher-student conflict between female teachers and male students, while lowering teacher closeness between female teachers and male students. Gender imbalance is defined as one gender dominating the other gender in a certain situation (Hannula, 2008). In early childhood classrooms, the gender imbalance is tipped in favor of females, as most early childhood educators are females. Thus the teacher-student relationships could be considered unbalanced, which may have an adverse effect on the students.

While understanding how important these teacher-student relationships are, it is also equally as important to understand that research demonstrates that male students typically do not have as good of relationships with their female teachers as their female peers tend to have (Furrer & Skinner, 2003). Close teacher-student relationships are defined as having warmth, trust, and open communication; this fosters the student's development for motivation to learn, and can be indicative of future academic gains (Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Hughes et al., 2008; Roorda, Koomen, Spilt, & Oort, 2011). Conflictual teacher-student relationships are defined by mistrust and discordance, which correlates with later school difficulties and being socially withdrawn from their peers (Hamre & Pianta, 2001). An established relationship between the teacher and

student could help the teacher understand the student's learning style, and in turn influence the teacher's approach to teaching that student.

Boys Learning Styles

Both boys and girls exhibit gender-type behaviors that influence the way that they act, play, develop, socialize, and learn (Martin & Ruble, 2009). Biological approaches emphasize the role of genes, hormones, and the brain in physical and psychological sexual differentiation (Ruble, Martin, & Berenbaum, 2006). The biological approach to looking at gender roles when combined with the socialization approach assumes that gender behaviors will be influenced by home, school, peers, and media and predict that there is a high level of gender-typed behaviors within early childhood (Halim, Ruble, Tamis-LeMonda, Shrout, 2013). There is some research that suggests that cultural context, such as gender-related expectations, may affect a student's performance (Slater, 2001). For a long while, many people have been trying to find innovative ways to better include girls in education, worrying that they were a "secondary sex" and were ill favored compared to boys. However, it is possible that the opposite is now true. Girls have begun to thrive in school, while boys are now having more difficulty (Orr, 2011).

One of the reasons that boys tend to have lower standardized test scores, college enrollment (Corbett, Hill, St. Rose, & 2008), and SAT scores could be the issue of learning styles. Boys' learning styles are more likely to differ from their educators' teaching styles. Orr (2011) demonstrated that there is a discrepancy between how the instructional styles of educators meet the learning styles of boys and girls in early childhood education. Boys tend to have a kinesthetic learning style, especially in early childhood education, which means they need a lot of big muscle movements, and rough and tumble play (DiCarlo et al., 2015). Kinesthetic learning is not a common phenomenon within the learning environment of most public schools, where

students are expected to be quiet and sit still. Whereas girls on average tend to be more dependent, cooperative, passive, and social individuals, this better conforms to adult standards and expectations, which helps girls fit into school expectations better than their male peers (Orr, 2011).

The Need for Positive Male Role Models for Boys

Children in their formative years, regardless of gender, have a need for positive role models in order to have an understanding of what is acceptable in social situations, how to handle their emotions, how to make friends, and generally how to function in various situations (Wardle, 2004). Early childhood programs attempt to achieve this with their educators through goodness-of-fit within early childhood classrooms. Goodness-of-fit is a pattern of smooth interaction between the individual and the social milieu, including family, school, and community (Berger, 2003). Thus, the child can look at the teacher and model their actions, interactions, and social cues based on how they act. It is likely that this is easier for girls in their formative years due to a dominant female culture within early childhood programs (Berger, 2003). In this case, female culture entails that women are the typical nurturer, caregiver, and are assumed to be the best fit to raise children (Berk, 2002). Though females can be excellent role models for young boys, same-gendered role models are also essential, whether that modeling is being seen at home or through educational opportunities.

Role models might come about through several different channels in a young boy's life. Positive male role models for boys could potentially be older siblings, fathers, stepfathers, church officials, neighbors in the community, uncles, grandfathers, school administrators, and teachers. The primary males in a typical child's life are their fathers and other close family members, school/church administrators, and their teachers, as these are normally the people who

the children will spend the most time with. Each person's family is composed differently and uniquely, and as such these "primary males" will likely differ from boy to boy. Regardless of who the person is, the primary males who are role models to boys in their formative years are particularly important in supporting the development of the child's competence outside the family and inside the classroom (Grossmann, Grossmann, Fremmer-Bombik, Kindler, Scheuerer-Englisch, & Zimmermann 2002.) However, primary males in many boys' lives may be missing or scarce for various reasons.

Major life events such as parental divorce and separation often lead to children living in single-parent homes. Single parent homes are a frequency due to high divorce rates throughout the United States. The divorce rate continues to be high for Oklahoma even as other states divorce rates begin to plateau (CDC, 2016). According to the U.S. Census Bureau, for the last ten years around 12 million families in the United States are considered to be single parent homes, with around 80% of those single parents being female (2006). Thus, children in these homes are less likely to have a positive male role model in their life and would need to find positive role models elsewhere, making positive role models and developmentally appropriate expectations for behavior in the classroom even more important.

The Current Study

Taking into account the above-referenced existing research literature, the current study built upon it in order to examine teacher-student relationships in early childhood classrooms. Additionally, it examined gender differences in teacher-reported quality of the relationships for classrooms with a male lead teacher when compared to classrooms with a female lead teacher. Gender differences in teachers' attitudes and beliefs about boys' classroom behavior were also assessed (see Table 1). The research questions that guided this study are:

1. Does the quality of teacher-child relationships vary by teacher gender?
    a. Specifically, does teacher- child conflict vary by teacher gender?
    b. Does teacher-child closeness vary by gender?
2. Does educator gender influence whether or not the educator has non-traditional or traditional attitudes and beliefs towards gender-normed classroom behavior?

Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 Based on literature from Jerome, et al. (2009) that demonstrates that females report higher conflict with male students, it was hypothesized that male early childhood teachers will report lower student-teacher conflict and higher student-teacher closeness with boys than female teachers in their respective classrooms.

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 Although current researchers assert that early childhood education professionals in general have a more non-traditional viewpoint on gender (Blaise, 2005), there has not been an abundance of specific research on the differences between male and female educators on their individual viewpoints. However, based on Almutawa's (2005) study on pre-service educators finding that females had slightly higher traditional views than their male counterparts, it was hypothesized that male teachers will report different attitudes and beliefs about traditional/non-traditional gender normed classroom behaviors than female teachers.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Participants and Recruitment

Participants were recruited by way of convenience sampling through public school districts and through early childhood professional organizations during the first few months of 2016. In order to recruit these participants, a contact was made through an official within the professional organizations for access to their list serves and to post on their various websites and pages that are accessed by potential participants. Every participant was the lead teacher, co-teacher, or assistant teacher of his or her respective classroom. The participants in this study were between the ages of 20-70, and taught in classrooms with 1-3 year olds and/or pre kindergarten through third grade. There were an unequal number of males and female teachers in this study. There was a target number of 25 males and 25 females, with an actual number of 16 males and 31 females who participated in the study.

Because this study was primarily looking at such a small minority, male early childhood educators, it is important to discuss what the demographics of this study looked like, additionally, these details are found within table 2 (demographics table). Initially, the study was intended to look at participants that were close in proximity to the researchers. However, it was quickly realized that there was simply not enough of a male population in the local early childhood pool of likely participants. The original recruitment was falling short of expectations. Thus, the researchers had to branch out to more and more organizations outside of their local

area. The researchers appealed to any and all male early childhood organizations to forward the survey(s) along to their members. Some of these organizations sent the survey to international organizations as well, resulting in an interesting mix of demographics for this study, which can be seen within table 2.

A small number of the participants were located in Australia and New Zealand, but the majority was located across the United States. In total, there were 47 participants who identified their gender in this study; 16 males, totaling at 34% and 31 females, totaling at 66%. The participants' racial background included 41 Caucasians (82%), 4 American Indians (8%), 1 Asian (2%), and 1 identified as other, specified as Dutch Indo (2%). The racial makeup of this study is not extremely varied; this could be due to the location that the survey was primarily taken, which was in the state of Oklahoma. Oklahoma's own racial breakdown according to the 2010 U.S. Census Bureau is as follows: Caucasian, 72.2%, Black, 7.4%, and American Indian, 8.6%. It is specifically important to note that African Americans are not represented within this study; however this is not due to researcher's choosing, as the sample was random and anonymous.

Within the demographics, the educators were asked to specify which grade they currently taught: 14% of the participants taught in a 1-3 year old classroom, 18% taught in a Pre-Kindergarten classroom, 12% taught in a Kindergarten classroom, 16% taught in a First Grade Classroom, 26% taught in a Second Grade Classroom, and 6% taught in a Third Grade classroom. The oldest and youngest aged classrooms are the least represented within this study, with the other grades having similar amounts of teachers returning the survey.

The participants' age ranged from 22 years old to 63 years old. Similarly, there was a broad range in their years of experience as well; 12% were in their first 5 years of teaching, 9%

had been teaching between 6 and 10 years, 10% had taught between 11 and 15 years, 8% had taught 16 to 20 years, and 8% had taught for 21 years or more. 78% of the participants were the lead teacher in their classroom, 12% were co-teachers, and just 4% identified as being assistant teachers. The participants also identified their highest level of education as follows: 10% had some college or technical degree, 64% had a Bachelor's degree, 18% had a Master's degree, and 2% had a Doctorate Degree.

It is important to note that the sample is very small, especially in reference to males in early childhood; however, this is representative of the percentage of males that are actually in the workforce of early childhood education. The sample, and resulting data has more females, partly due to the fact that this is how the population truly is represented.

Procedures

After the researchers obtained institutional review board (IRB) approval from Oklahoma State University's IRB, the researchers were able to contact professional organizations and interested educators. Professional organizations that accepted the invitation to participate sent out an interest email along with a link to the questionnaire and survey to their members. Teachers who were interested filled out a questionnaire in order to assess their relationship quality with specific children in mind, but did not need to identify them outside of stating their gender. Each participant was asked to complete a total of four Student-Teacher Relationship Scales (STRS) for two boys and two girls in their classroom. The instructions to choose the children for the STRS read as followed: please reflect on the degree to which each of the following statements currently applies to a **male** child in your classroom that you have a ***challenging*** relationship with, they were then prompted with another survey that had the instructions as follows: please reflect on the degree to which each of the following statements currently applies to a **female**

child in your classroom you have a ***challenging*** relationship with; alternatively they were also instructed to choose a **male** student and a **female** student that they identified as having a ***positive*** relationship with. The participants were divided in two groups based on their gender. Their responses were statistically compared to each other in order to see if there were significant differences in the closeness and conflict of male and female teachers and the students in their classrooms, with an emphasis in how their relationships differ depending on the gender of the students and teachers.

Teachers also completed a questionnaire that assessed their attitudes and beliefs about gender roles; their beliefs in the role teachers play in relation to gender roles in the classroom, perspectives on specific gender-based classroom situations, along with demographic information.

Measures

Specifically, data from teachers were gathered using the Student-Teacher Relationship Scale, Short Form (STRS; Pianta, 1999) and a Gender Beliefs and Attitudes Scale (Almutawa, 2005) that were transferred onto an online platform through Qualtrics.

Student-teacher relationship quality. The Student-Teacher Relationship Scale, Short Form (STRS; Pianta, 1999) was used to assess student-teacher relationship quality. The STRS short form is a 15-item self-report instrument, as seen in Appendix A, which measures teacher-reported conflict and closeness between teachers and students. These questions use a 5-point Likert-type rating scale to assess a teacher's perception of his or her relationship with a student, a student's interactive behavior with the teacher, and a teacher's beliefs about the student's feeling toward the teacher. The Likert scale ranges from 1-5, with '1' meaning definitely does not apply and '5' meaning definitely applies in terms of how the questions apply to the relationship of the teacher and student. The total scale score is obtained by using raw scores from the two subscales

of conflict and closeness. The scores are then converted into percentages, with percentiles at or above 75 being of major concern. The results are charted and analyzed with other teachers' responses for this study. The STRS has test-retest reliability and internal consistency of α =.89 and it has been widely used as an indicator of the quality of the student-teacher relationship.

Gender beliefs and attitudes. Gender beliefs and attitudes were assessed using a 68-item scale, as seen in Appendix B, developed by Farrah Almutawa (2005). The researchers only used part B of the gender beliefs and attitudes scale, which was 15 items in total. Part A was excluded due to the fact that the questions inquired about how the participant felt about gender roles within society, which was not of interest within the current study. Part C of the gender beliefs and attitudes scale, although driven towards how teachers feel about students, had items that early childhood professionals might not identify with, or were very specific in their nature (i.e. were not specific to early childhood education). Part B was brief, which was ideal for the Qualtrics platform that was used to send out the survey. Part B also asked general questions about boy and girls as students in the classroom. The researchers, based on research question 2, then divided the questions into two categories: questions that were seeking traditional values and questions that were seeking non-traditional values; due to the specificity of the categories, there was one question that was thrown out due to it not fitting either category completely. These questions were divided based on reading through Almutawa's study and her guidelines for use of her assessment. She briefly described what made a question traditional or non-traditional; based on the researchers understanding, they then made judgments about the questions that were used within the current study. The questionnaire used a Likert-type rating scale with five response categories ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". Reliability was tested using data from pilot studies by Almutawa. Internal consistency was obtained using Cronbach's alpha and

was (0.5) or above for all of the scales. When the researchers for the current study adapted part b of Almutawa's survey reliability was tested again. Cronbach's alpha for the 5 item non-traditional subscale questions was .63. Cronbach's alpha for the 9-item traditional scale was .71; due to the sample size, this alpha was decided to be acceptable for the current study. This survey also includes a demographic question section, which consists of six items, bringing the total number of items on this scale to 74; however, participants only answered 36 total questions.

Demographics. The demographic section of the survey included 6 items that asked about characteristics of the participants. Items included: gender, race, grade taught, education level, job title, and years of experience in the classroom.

Data Analysis

Preliminary and descriptive analyses

Using SPSS, means, standard deviations, and ranges among all study variables for the full sample, inclusive of both male and female participants, were run as a whole during the preliminary analysis (Table 3). The expected results included that there would be a difference in the beliefs and attitudes between the male and female early childhood professionals. Another expected outcome was that the male early childhood professionals would have closer relationships with their male students than the female early childhood professionals while the female educators would have a better relationship with the female students in their respective classrooms. The teachers in the study were divided into two groups by gender; female educators were in one group and males were in the other.

Hypothesis 1

This hypothesis was tested using differential design, two one-way ANOVAs were ran: one for teacher-student conflict differences by gender and one for teacher-student closeness

differences by gender. The dependent variables, teacher-student conflict and teacher-student closeness were compared using the independent variable of teacher gender. Any differences found between male educators and female educators teacher-student conflict and closeness with their different and same gendered students were measured using t-tests due to the IV being categorical, while the DVs are continuous.

Hypothesis 2

This hypothesis was also tested using a differential design; a one-way ANOVA was utilized to explore traditional and non-traditional views by gender. The dependent variable, teacher attitudes, was compared using the independent variable of teacher gender.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purpose of the present research was to understand whether or not gender of the educator influences the relationships they have with the students in their classrooms. Additionally, educators' attitudes and beliefs about students traditionally gender normed behaviors were also measured to see if this was affected by the gender of the educator. This chapter will include the findings and outcomes of the analyses used to determine the correlation and relationships of these variables.

Research Question 1

The first research question asks whether or not the quality of teacher-child relationships varies by teacher gender; specifically, the variables of closeness and conflict were looked at. To answer this question, descriptives, including the means, standard deviations, and ranges were run for the group as a whole, then for just the male educators and then just the female educators. Paired sample t-tests indicated that overall, there was a significant difference in scores between how the group as a whole scored closeness ($p<.001$) and conflict ($p<.001$) for the challenging female student when compared to the positive females scores. Similarly, there was a significant difference between the full sample scores for closeness ($p<.001$) and conflict ($p<.001$) for the challenging male when compared to the positive male scores. Male educators had stronger closeness with the students that they described as having a positive relationship with, regardless

of the student gender, as the mean (*M*= 4.3) was the same for both the male (positive relationship) and the female (positive relationship) when looking at closeness between educator and student, as seen in Table 3. However, Table 3 also illustrates that female educators shared a stronger closeness with the female students that they described as having a positive relationship with (*M*=4.7) than they did with the male students they shared a positive relationship with (*M*=4.5). It is important to note that the aforementioned observations are not based on statistical analyses and are not meant to imply statistically significant differences.

Table 4, the correlation table, illustrates several significant correlations between the closeness and conflict of female and male students. It was found that there was a significant negative correlation (r=-.493) between the 'positive' female students' closeness and conflict with the educators, as a whole group. There was also a significant negative correlation between the female challenging students' closeness scores and the male challenging conflict scores (r=-.377), There was also a significant positive correlation (r=. 715) between male positive conflict and female positive conflict, indicating that the scores rose and fell together, at similar levels, thus educators felt similar levels of conflict with their positive students, regardless of gender.

Additionally, two one-way ANOVAs were used to explore differences in teacher-child relationships (dependent variable) by educator gender (independent variable). The first ANOVA examined differences in teacher-child closeness, which was broken down into four categories to capture child gender and positive/challenging (i.e., male positive, male challenging, female positive, female challenging). Results indicated that for positive relationships with female students, female educators reported significantly higher closeness than the male educators reported ($F=5.50$; $p<.05$). No other significant differences between male and female educators emerged.

The second ANOVA examined differences in teacher- child conflict, which was broken down into four categories to capture child gender and positive/challenging (i.e., male positive, male challenging, female positive, female challenging). Results for challenging relationships with male students indicated that female educators reported significantly more conflict than male educators ($F=6.87$; $p<.05$). No other significant differences emerged. Taken together, these findings suggest that there are some differences between the relationships with a female educator and a male student and a male educator with a male student and vice versa (see Table 5).

Research Question 2

The second research question explored whether or not educators' non-traditional or traditional attitudes and beliefs vary by gender. Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, were run in order to better understand the viewpoints of male educators and female educators in reference to traditional and non-traditional classroom behavior (see Table 3). A paired sample t-test indicated that as a whole, study participants endorsed more non-traditional roles over traditional roles ($p<.001$). Male educators' traditional roles mean was 2.1, while non-traditional was 3.8. The correlation table (Table 4) shows a significant negative correlation ($p=-.711$) between traditional roles and non-traditional roles, when run for the sample as a whole. It is important to note that the differences between male and female educators approached significance ($p=.09$), with male educators having more of a non-traditional viewpoint on gender-normed classroom behavior than their female counterparts.

A one-way ANOVA revealed no significant differences between male and female educators in their views of traditional and non-traditional gender-normed behavior. However, as previously reported both groups of educators reported, as a whole, significantly lower scores for traditional roles than they did for non-traditional roles overall. This contributes to the notion that

female and male educators do have different viewpoints on traditional/non-traditional roles; however the data does not show any significant differences that indicate either gender expects the students to follow gender-normed classroom behavior as a rule. This will be discussed further in the limitations section in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Due to the nature of early childhood professional demographics, it has been difficult to study males in the classroom and their relationships with their male and female students, as well as their attitudes and beliefs about traditional and non-traditional gender-normed behavior. Due to this, it has been questioned whether or not the gender of the educator has any effect on the relationship between the educator and the students (Carrington et al., 2007). The results of the present study indicate that there are some aspects of teacher-student relationships, which vary by child gender and positive/challenging perception (by teacher), that do differ by teacher gender. Female educators reported a more conflictual relationship with their challenging male students and congruently, male educators reported lower closeness scores than their female counterparts in relation to their positive female students. Thus the present data demonstrates an issue for teachers of both genders bonding with students of the opposite gender.

Further, the present study also explored differences in the traditional and non-traditional gender-normed views of male and female educators about the students in their respective classrooms. Overall, educators did report more non-traditional views for their classrooms. Although not significantly higher, males did report more non-traditional views than their female counterparts. This data does not match up with a case study done over males in early childhood education done by Jennifer Sumison (2005). Sumison found that the male early childhood

education professionals that she followed tended to follow, believe and model traditional masculine gender-roles to their students. Case studies, such as Sumison's, have drawbacks and benefits in the context of data. One benefit to a case study format in understanding male educators and how they compare to female educators is that the researcher will understand their subjects and students mannerisms, modeling, and actual actions and be able to judge whether the educators actions match the beliefs that the educators claim to have on surveys and if their actions and beliefs do seem to have some degree of influence on the students. While the current study did not do observations, and thus cannot know how the participants modeled behavior, the data paints a picture of non-traditional male educators that create a more gender fluid and contextually negotiated classroom, where the students are free to explore gender roles through activities and studies. A drawback of the case study format is that a researcher being present can skew the data due to educators performing differently when being studied or children acting different while the researchers are present. However, a quantitative study like the current study has drawbacks as well; because this study was a self-report questionnaire, response bias may be a potential weakness, as it is with most self-report measures. Due to this, the current study can only study what the educators report not actual actions or beliefs observed and understood. This study, unlike the case study, is able to analyze quantitative data in order to explore whether or not a male presence has a positive effect on the students, and if their gender beliefs could affect the students as well.

Female Educators' Relationships with Students

Through the STRS short form and the gender attitudes and beliefs questionnaire, an in-depth exploration of various female educators found interesting aspects about their closeness and conflict with their male and female students. Female educators were found to have more

closeness with female students that they identified as having a positive relationship with than male educators did. Meanwhile, female educators identified having a more conflictual relationship with the male students that they identified as having challenging relationships with. This aligns with the findings from Jerome, Hamre, and Pianta (2009) in which male students in Kindergarten were found to have higher levels of teacher-student conflict. However, unlike the findings in the Jerome, et al. study there was no significant data within the current study that showed that female teachers have any less of a close relationship with the male students identified as being challenging than their male (educator) counterparts; the same can be said for the female students identified as having a challenging relationship. Thus only the extreme cases seemed to fit the hypothesis for this study. To this point, it is important to note that female educators reported higher scores for both conflict and closeness with both their female and male students and their challenging and positive students as well, indicating that female educators reported extremes on both ends of the spectrum. The research on the impact of gender on mentoring-type relationships in a working environment (Sosik and Godshalk, 2000; Fowler, Gudmundsson and O'Gorman, 2007) also demonstrates that women tend to offer more emotional support and advising as mentors, while the men tend to be more focused on instrumental assistance. This research on relationships in the context of gender may present a link to the way educators perceive their closeness and conflict with their students; as seen in this study in how females interpreted their relationships in more emotional extremes and males reported more even keeled feelings.

Female Educator Attitudes and Beliefs

The attitudes and beliefs scale asked a series of questions that were flagged as either identifying with non-traditional beliefs or traditional beliefs. Overall, females tended to choose

more non-traditionally flagged answers than they did traditional beliefs. However, they also tended to side more with traditional beliefs than their male counterparts. This was not significant, and thus does not necessarily support the hypothesis that attitude and beliefs about gender-normed classroom behavior are contingent upon gender to be true. However, this finding is supported by Almutawa (2005) findings from her own study about the beliefs of pre-service teachers about gender roles in the classroom. Like the present study, Almutawa also found that female pre-service educators tended to have more traditional views about gender-normed behavior than their male counterparts.

Male Educators Relationships with Students

Like the female educators, the male educators answered the STRS short form to explore the relationships they have with the students in their classrooms. Overall, the male educators reported lower closeness for their students across the board than their female counterparts; however, they did report significantly lower conflict with their challenging male students than their female counterparts. Interestingly, the male educators reported similar levels of closeness with their challenging students, both male and female, as their female counterparts did. Overall, male educators reported more even keeled scores than the female educators did, not having as many extreme scores as the female educators reported. From an observation standpoint, the most differences identified were found in the closeness with the positive-relationship students; males had a closer relationship with the positive-relationship male students than the female educators did, while female educators had a closer relationship with the positive-relationship female students than the males did.

Saft and Pianta (2001) suggested that teachers have closer relationships with students that they felt they had similarities to, such as ethnicity. In the Saft and Pianta (2001) study, it was

found that educators had closer relationships with children of the same ethnicity as them. This could be due to educators feeling a kinship with their similar students, or a feeling of understanding or empathy for the children. Feeling a kinship with students that are similar to the educator is something that has been explored with gender as the factor as well. It could be the case the same applies with the current study, and educators feel closer with the gender they align with. Komar and Ivana (2015) explored the mentor-mentee relationship between adults and children in a community program in regards to gender and how it affects the relationship. They found, through qualitative processes, including interviews and focus groups, that gender does have an important role in the mentor-mentee relationship; however, other factors, such as age and child characteristics were also cited as factors that affected the relationship greatly. In this specific community program, all mentors and mentees were the same gender as their mentees, which is obviously not the case for most teachers and their classrooms.

Male Educator Attitudes and Beliefs

The male participants in this study answered questions from the attitudes and beliefs questionnaire that were flagged to either be traditional or non-traditional as well. Overall, the males in this study chose more answers that were flagged as non-traditional than they did for traditional answers, thus the males tended to be more non-traditional with their views on gender-normed behavior in the classroom. To this point, there was approaching significance for male educators having more non-traditional viewpoints than their female counterparts. Due to the sample size, it only approached significance and was not considered significant. This is discussed further within the limitations. This was an interesting find, as this does not necessarily align with the research that was used to organize this study. However, since the group as a whole did choose more non-traditional answers, it does support Cahill and Adams' (1997) and Blaise's

(2005) findings that early childhood professionals do tend to have a more feministic viewpoint on gender roles in general.

Limitations

One obvious limitation to this study was the lack of male participants and the overall sample size as well. The ability to recruit an adequate sample of males has been a problem with many studies looking at similar issue within early childhood education (Saft & Pianta, 2001, Sumison, 2005, Holmlund & Sund, 2008) Specifically, the sample size of the male participants affected the significance of the non-traditional beliefs of the male educators versus the female educators beliefs. It is likely that had the sample size for the males been larger, that the male educators non-traditional views would have been significantly higher than their female counterparts. Another limitation to this study was the lack of existing scales to measure the attitudes and beliefs of gender-normed behavior of educators. This is in addition to the distinct lack of research in general about males in early childhood education, making this a difficult subject to conduct research on. A third limitation was the short time frame that this was conducted in. The survey was only available to be open for about a month; had the survey been open longer, it is likely that the male sample size would be larger. In fact, after the survey close at least two more males answered the survey, but their data could not be used. Lastly, the recruitment was a limitation. It was difficult to pursue leads in male early childhood organizations because the researchers were not males. Many of the groups only allowed access to the groups so long as the person requesting access was a male in early childhood. Therefore, many requests were turned away.

Future Directions and Implications

This study is an addition to the literature and research on males within early childhood education. As stated earlier, there is a distinct lack of research about males in early childhood. This could be partly due to the fact that there is a distinct lack of males in the early childhood field, thus there just is not a large enough population to explore significant findings for large scale projects (Saft & Pianta, 2001). However, this study shows that even in small samples, there are distinct differences in the relationships male and female teachers form with their students. These relationships have an effect on the students in the classroom. If there was enough research on the subject, it would be an interesting topic for pre-service teachers to be aware of so they could be more conscious about their relationships with opposite gendered students, especially those that they have a challenging relationship with. Almutawa (2005) study primarily focused on pre-service teachers and their gender beliefs; using Almutawa's study as a guide in conjunction with knowledge about the relationships that male and female educators have with their opposite gendered students, pre-service educators may be able to detect issues they could face in the future and learn how to solve those issues before they are placed into a classroom. It would also be important to understand so teachers of both genders could discuss their differences and help one another to understand the opposite gendered student better, so it might improve relationships. Sumison (2005) discussed how her case study of a male educator helped her better understand her own beliefs about gender, and how important it was for her to understand his point of view as well. By using Sumison's case study, educators could observe one another and have exploratory conversations about their gender beliefs and how they differ from each other and what they can learn from one another. This study encourages other researchers to find more male participants and recreate this study on a larger scale to amplify these finding and more.

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Table 1

Table 1

Independent and Dependent Variables in the Current Study

Variable	Type	Description
Teacher Gender	Independent; Categorical; mediator	Demographic information
Teacher-student conflict and closeness for boys and girls[a]	Dependent; Continuous;	Mean scores on teacher self report questionnaires will be computed
Teacher Attitudes[b]	Dependent	Mean scores on self-report questionnaires will be computed

Note. [a]Each participant completed four questionnaires about his/her views on teacher-student conflict and closeness. [b]Each participant completed a questionnaire about his/her attitudes towards boys and girls in their classrooms.

Table 2

Table 2

Educator demographic information (N=47)

Descriptor	n (%)
Gender of Educator	
Male	16 (34%)
Female	31 (65%)
Racial Breakdown	
Caucasian	41 (87%)
American Indian	4 (8%)
Asian	1 (2%)
Other (Dutch Indo)	1 (2%)
Current Grade Taught	
1-3 year old classroom	7 (15%)
Pre-Kindergarten	9 (20%)
Kindergarten	6 (13%)
First Grade	8 (17%)
Second Grade	13 (28%)
Third Grade	3 (7%)
Education Level	
Some College or Technical Degree	5 (11%)
Bachelor's Degree	32 (68%)
Master's Degree	9 (19%)
Doctorate	1 (2%)
Job Title	
Lead Teacher	39 (83%)
Co-Teacher	6 (13%)
Assistant Teacher	2 (4%)
Years of Experience	
0-5	12 (26%)
6-10	9 (19%)
11-15	10 (21%)
16-20	8 (17%)
21+	8 (17%)

Table 3

Table 3

Means, Standard Deviations, and Range of Study Variables

Whole Sample	Totals Sample M	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
Traditional Roles	2.2943	0.5569	1.33	3.78
Non-Traditional Roles	3.5405	0.6942	2.00	4.60
Male Challenging - Closeness	3.9037	0.7278	1.71	4.86
Male Positive - Closeness	4.4714	0.6424	3.14	5.00
Female Challenging - Closeness	4.0714	0.7751	2.00	5.00
Female Positive - Closeness	4.5977	0.7218	3.00	5.00
Male Challenging - Conflict	3.1308	0.6670	1.25	4.50
Male Positive - Conflict	1.6220	0.4746	1.00	3.25
Female Challenging - Conflict	3.0449	0.7469	1.63	4.63
Female Positive - Conflict	1.5270	0.4719	1.00	3.63

Male Educators	Male Sample M	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
Traditional Roles	2.1389	0.6686	1.33	3.78
Non-Traditional Roles	3.8167	0.5219	3.00	4.60
Male Challenging - Closeness	3.8163	0.7250	1.71	4.50
Male Positive - Closeness	4.3297	0.4733	3.14	4.86
Female Challenging - Closeness	4.2143	0.7628	2.71	5.00
Female Positive - Closeness	4.3626	0.6622	3.00	5.00
Male Challenging - Conflict	2.7583	0.8148	1.25	4.13
Male Positive - Conflict	1.5982	0.5064	1.13	2.63
Female Challenging - Conflict	3.0096	0.5698	1.63	4.38
Female Positive - Conflict	1.5385	0.6106	1.00	3.00

Female Educators	Female Sample M	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
Traditional Roles	2.3689	0.4925	1.67	3.78
Non-Traditional Roles	3.4080	0.7359	2.00	4.60
Male Challenging - Closeness	3.9458	0.6581	2.43	4.86
Male Positive - Closeness	4.5397	0.7200	3.57	5.00
Female Challenging - Closeness	4.0055	0.7955	2.00	5.00
Female Positive - Closeness	4.7200	0.7658	4.00	5.00
Male Challenging - Conflict	3.3304	0.5945	2.00	4.50
Male Positive - Conflict	1.6339	0.4522	1.00	3.25
Female Challenging - Conflict	3.0625	0.8176	1.75	4.63
Female Positive - Conflict	1.5208	0.3337	1.00	3.36

Table 4

Table 4

Correlation Table

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1) Gender	-	.196	-.279a	.092	.379*	.210	.027	-.132	.033	.364*	-.012
2) Traditional Roles	.196	-	-.711**	-.296	.083	.077	-.165	.064	.253	-.087	.115
3) Non Traditional Roles	-.279a	-.711**	-	.044	-.052	-.195	.268	-.118	.004	.006	-.026
4) Male Challenging - Closeness	.092	-.296	.044	-	-.332*	-.041	.181	.347*	-.043	.134	.149
5) Male Challenging - Conflict	.379*	.083	-.052	-.332*	-	.190	-.080	-.377*	.441*	.091	-.236
6) Male Positive - Closeness	.210	.077	-.195	-.041	.190	-	-.412*	-.045	-.129	.392*	-.243
7) Male Positive - Conflict	.027	-.165	.268	.181	-.080	-.412**	-	.278	-.002	-.261	.715**
8) Female Challenging - Closeness	-.132	.064	-.118	.347*	-.377*	-.045	.278	-	-.276	.162	.150
9) Female Challenging - Conflict	.033	.253	.004	-.043	.441**	-.129	-.002	-.276	-	-.004	.090
10) Female Positive - Closeness	.364*	-.087	.006	.134	.091	.392*	-.261	.162	-.044	-	-.493*
11) Female Positive - Conflict	-.012	.115	-.026	.149	-.236	-.243	.715**	.150	.090	-.493**	-

*p < .05

**p< .01

a= approaching significance

Table 5

Table 5

ANOVA Table demonstrating differences between male and female early childhood educators

	df	F	Sig
Traditional Roles	1	1.398	0.245
Non-Traditional Roles	1	2.963	0.094

Male Students	df	F	Sig
Male Challenging - Closeness	1	0.35	0.557
Male Positive - Closeness	1	1.752	0.194
Male Challenging - Conflict	1	6.878	0.012
Male Positive - Conflict	1	0.028	0.868
Female Students	df	F	Sig
Female Challenging - Closeness	1	0.635	0.431
Female Positive - Closeness	1	5.502	0.025
Female Challenging - Conflict	1	0.039	0.844
Female Positive - Conflict	1	0.005	0.945

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: STRS Short Form

STUDENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIP SCALE – SHORT FORM

Robert C. Pianta

Child: _____ Teacher:_____
Grade:_____

Please reflect on the degree to which each of the following statements currently applies to your relationship with this child. Using the scale below, circle the appropriate number for each item.

Definitely does not apply 1	Not really 2	Neutral, not sure 3	Applies somewhat 4	Definitely applies 5

1.	I share an affectionate, warm relationship with this child.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	This child and I always seem to be struggling with each other.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	If upset, this child will seek comfort from me.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	This child is uncomfortable with physical affection or touch from me.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	This child values his/her relationship with me.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	When I praise this child, he/she beams with pride.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	This child spontaneously shares information about himself/herself.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	This child easily becomes angry with me.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	It is easy to be in tune with what this child is feeling.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	This child remains angry or is resistant after being disciplined.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Dealing with this child drains my energy	1	2	3	4	5
12.	When this child is in a bad mood, I know we're in for a long and difficult day.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	This child's feelings toward me can be unpredictable or can change suddenly.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	This child is sneaky or manipulative with me.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	This child openly shares his/her feelings and experiences with me.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX B: GENDER BELIEFS/ ATTITUDES SURVEY

Part A:

The statements listed below describes attitudes or beliefs about gender roles in society held by different individuals. There is no right or wrong answer, only opinions. Therefore please provide your honest opinion regarding each statement.
For each of the following statements, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree. Please make sure to answer each statement, even if you are not sure of your answer.

Please indicate your opinions regarding each statement by circling the number to the right of the statement that reflects your personal feelings, views and beliefs.

1= Strongly Disagree (SD)
2= Disagree (D)
3=Undecided (UD)
4=Agree (A)
5=Strongly Agree (SA)

Statement	SD	D	UD	A	SA
1. Cleaning up the dishes should be a shared responsibility between a husband and a wife.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Taking care of the children should be the primary responsibility of mothers.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Teaching as a career is more appropriate for females than males.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Males more than females should be encouraged to attend higher education.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Taking out garbage should be primarily the husband's responsibility.	1	2	3	4	5
6. A husband should be the head of the family.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Taking care of the children should not be only the mother's job.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Males would be more capable of running their own business than females.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Home economic courses are as appropriate for male students as for female students.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Males should be encouraged to enter traditionally female jobs such as teaching, nursing and secretary.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Making financial decisions in the family should be primarily the husband's responsibility.	1	2	3	4	5

Statement	SD	D	UD	A	SA
12. Fathers can be as good as mothers in taking care of the children.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Females can be as successful as males in running their own business.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Females should be encouraged to enter fields such as engineering, medicine or architecture.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Professional training should be offered equally for males and females.	1	2	3	4	5
16. A husband should not get involved in the domestic affairs of the household such as childcare and food preparation.	1	2	3	4	5
17. It would be more effective for the father to discipline the children rather than the mother.	1	2	3	4	5
18. It is not appropriate for females to enter traditionally male jobs such as construction, management and engineering.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Males should be given priority in professional training opportunities.	1	2	3	4	5
20. The best place for a wife is at home and not at work.	1	2	3	4	5
21. It can be a problem if the wife earns more money than the husband.	1	2	3	4	5
22. If a child is sick, the mother is the one who should stay at home with the child as opposed to the father.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Males and females should be offered equal job opportunities.	1	2	3	4	5
24. Males can be better in Math and Science than females.	1	2	3	4	5
25. Females can be better in Reading than males.	1	2	3	4	5
26. A husband and a wife should be equally responsible for taking care of the household.	1	2	3	4	5
27. It is more appropriate if the mother rather than the father changes the baby's diaper.	1	2	3	4	5
28. Males should be paid more than females for the same work.	1	2	3	4	5
29. Males and females should have equal opportunity for work promotions.	1	2	3	4	5
30. When a child awakes at night, the mother should be the one who attends to the child.	1	2	3	4	5
31. Male and female students should receive equal instructional attention in all subject areas.	1	2	3	4	5

Statement	SD	D	UD	A	SA
32. Part time jobs are more appropriate for females than full time jobs.	1	2	3	4	5
33. Males tend to be more competitive than females.	1	2	3	4	5

Part B:

The statements listed below describe beliefs on the role teachers play in relation to gender roles in the classroom. There is no right or wrong answer, only opinions. Please respond to each statement as you actually feel. For each of the following statements, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree. Please make sure to answer each statement, even if you are not sure of your answer.

Please indicate your opinions regarding each statement by circling the number to the right of the statement that reflects your personal feelings, views and beliefs.

1= Strongly Disagree (SD)
2= Disagree (D)
3=Undecided (UD)
4=Agree (A)
5=Strongly Agree (SA)

Statement	SD	D	UD	A	SA
34. Teachers should encourage male and female students to enroll in some courses that do not reflect societal stereotypes.	1	2	3	4	5
35. Teachers should not use students' gender as a criterion for making educational decisions about them.	1	2	3	4	5
36. Students should be the ones who must ultimately decide the kind of gender role they prefer to perform in society.	1	2	3	4	5
37. Teachers should discourage students from acting out gender stereotypical roles.	1	2	3	4	5
38. Teachers should accept males' stereotypical behavior such as being active and aggressive.	1	2	3	4	5
39. Teachers should accept females' stereotypical behavior such as being quiet and shy.	1	2	3	4	5
40. Teachers should be involved in shaping their students' perceptions about gender roles.	1	2	3	4	5

Statement	SD	D	UD	A	SA
41. Teachers must prepare male and female students to fulfill different social roles because there are biological differences between the sexes.	1	2	3	4	5
42. Teachers should encourage male and female students to enroll in courses that reflect societal stereotypes.	1	2	3	4	5
43. Teachers should assign students to single-sex groups during class to protect females from being dominated by males.	1	2	3	4	5
44. It would be appropriate if teachers separated male and female students for certain activities such as physical education.	1	2	3	4	5
45. Teachers should model gender stereotypical behavior.	1	2	3	4	5
46. Teachers should reward male students for behaving in a gender stereotypical manner such as opening the door for female students.	1	2	3	4	5
47. It would not be appropriate for teachers to communicate stereotypical expectations to students.	1	2	3	4	5
48. It would be appropriate if teachers punished students for not behaving in a gender stereotypical manner.	1	2	3	4	5

Part C:

The statements listed below describe perspectives on specific situations in the classroom. There is no right or wrong answer, only opinions. Please respond to each statement as you actually feel. For each of the following statements, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree. Please make sure to answer each statement, even if you are not sure of your answer.

Please indicate your opinions regarding each statement by circling the number to the right of the statement that reflects your personal feelings, views and beliefs.

1= Strongly Disagree (SD)
2= Disagree (D)
3=Undecided (UD)
4=Agree (A)
5=Strongly Agree (SA)

Statement	SD	D	UD	A	SA
49. Male students generally do better in math than female students.	1	2	3	4	5
50. Misbehaving female students should be reprimanded privately.	1	2	3	4	5
51. Boys generally possess more scientific skills than girls.	1	2	3	4	5
52. It would be acceptable for male students to call out answers when the teacher asks a question as opposed to female students.	1	2	3	4	5
53. It would be acceptable for boys more than girls to be punished strictly for misbehaving.	1	2	3	4	5
54. Male students would require more eye contact with the teacher than female students.	1	2	3	4	5
55. Male students can be high achievers in math classes more than female students.	1	2	3	4	5
56. Male students more than female students would have the ability to solve sophisticated mathematical problems.	1	2	3	4	5
57. Misbehaving male students should be reprimanded publicly.	1	2	3	4	5
58. Boys more than girls would enjoy using science equipment and performing experiments in science classes.	1	2	3	4	5
59. Girls cannot perform as well as boys in advanced math courses such as calculus.	1	2	3	4	5
60. Boys and girls who misbehave should be punished in exactly the same way.	1	2	3	4	5
61. In science classes, female students generally participate as much as male students in laboratory activities and demonstrations.	1	2	3	4	5
62. Male students generally need instructional contact in the classroom more than female students.	1	2	3	4	5
63. Misbehaving girls should be punished gently.	1	2	3	4	5
64. Boys generally dominate the math classroom interactions more than girls.	1	2	3	4	5
65. Boys generally demand more attention than girls.	1	2	3	4	5
66. In science and math classes, females generally volunteer answers as much as males.	1	2	3	4	5
67. Male students generally misbehave more than female students.	1	2	3	4	5
68. Girls should have as much opportunity as boys to answer questions in all classrooms.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX C: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SURVEY

Part D:

Demographic Information

69. Please indicate your gender:
____1) Male _____2) Female

70. Which of the following best describes your racial background?

_____1) Caucasian _____2) African American

_____3) American Indian _____4) Asian

_____5) Latino _____6) other (Please specify) _____

71. Which of the following grades do you currently teach?
_____1) 1-3 year old classroom _____2) Pre Kindergarten

_____3) Kindergarten _____4) First Grade

_____5) Second Grade _____6) Third Grade

72. What is your highest level of education?
_____1) High School _____2) Some College or Technical School

_____3) Bachelor's degree_____4) Master's degree

_____5) Doctorate

73. What best describes your job title?
_____1) Lead Teacher _____2) Co-Teacher

_____3) Assistant Teacher

74. Which of the following best describes your years of experience in the ECE classroom?
_____1) 0-5 years _____2) 6-10 years

_____3) 11-15 years _____4) 16-20 years

_____5) 21+ years

75. Please indicate your age:

_____

APPENDIX D: AMMENDED GENDER BELIEFS/ATTITUDES FOR CURRENT STUDY

Part B Questions coded and adapted from Farrah Almutawa's Gender Beliefs/Attitudes Questionnaire

Questions Coded as Non-Traditional	Questions Coded as Traditional
Teachers should encourage male and female students to enroll in some courses that do not reflect societal stereotypes	Teachers should accept males' stereotypical behavior such as being active and aggressive
Teachers should not use students' gender as a criterion for making educational decisions about them	Teachers should accept females' stereotypical behavior such as being quiet and shy
Students should be the ones who must ultimately decide the kind of gender role they prefer to perform in society	Teachers must prepare male and female students to fulfill different social roles because there are biological differences between the sexes
Teachers should discourage students from acting out gender stereotypical roles	Teachers should encourage male and female students to enroll in courses that reflect societal stereotypes.

It would not be appropriate for teachers to communicate stereotypical expectations to students	Teachers should assign students to single sex groups during class to protect females from being dominated by males
	It would be appropriate if teachers separated male and female students for certain activities such as physical education
	Teachers should model gender stereotypical behavior
	Teachers should reward male students for behaving in a gender stereotypical manner such as opening the door for female students.
	It would be appropriate if teachers punished students for not behaving in a gender stereotypical manner

APPENDIX E: IRB APPROVAL LETTER

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date:	Thursday, March 03, 2016
IRB Application No	HE168
Proposal Title:	Does gender of the educator influence teacher-child relationships and gender role beliefs: A research study
Reviewed and Processed as:	Exempt

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved Protocol Expires: 3/2/2019

Principal Investigator(s):

Alissa Wadsworth	Amy Williamson
Stillwater, OK 74078	Stillwater, OK 74078

The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

☒ The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1.Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval. Protocol modifications requiring approval may include changes to the title, PI advisor, funding status or sponsor, subject population composition or size, recruitment, inclusion/exclusion criteria, research site, research procedures and consent/assent process or forms
2.Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3.Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of the research; and
4.Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Dawnett Watkins 219 Scott Hall (phone: 405-744-5700, dawnett.watkins@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,

Hugh Crethar, Chair
Institutional Review Board

VITA

Alissa Dawn Wadsworth-Hendrix

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: DOES GENDER OF THE EDUCATOR INFLUENCE TEACHER-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS AND GENDER ROLE BELIEFS: A RESEARCH STUDY

Major Field: Human Development and Family Science

Biographical:

Education:

Completed the requirements for the Master of Science in Human Development and Family Science at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in July, 2016.

Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Science in your Human Development and Family Science at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in 2015.

Experience:

Research Assistant — Fall 2015, Spring 2016, & Summer 2016
OSU-Tulsa

Professional Memberships:

NAEYC Member