

COMPARING ENTRY-LEVEL CHILD CARE  
TRAINING DELIVERY METHODS

By

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TRAINING DELIVERY METHODS

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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION

#### Problem Statement

The emergence of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is a time of rapid and continual change, not in only in our personal lives but especially in the workplace. Changes in the American family and the economy have rapidly increased the need for child care. Women, especially with children under the age of six years, have entered the workforce, which has changed American culture. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (2001), of the mothers with children under the age of six, 65 percent entered into the workforce utilizing centered-based child care as their primary source of child care for their preschool children.

In the field of early care and education, child care professionals and their employers are faced with the need for continual improvement of their knowledge and expertise to ensure children's safety, and to provide quality care on a daily basis. Results from national studies, such as the Cost, Quality and Outcomes Study and The Perry Preschool Project, have convinced the federal government and many states to raise standards for early childhood teachers. They have indicated mediocre to poor quality child care exists in many of our programs in the United States, and have shown

that quality child care is associated with positive child outcomes (Cost, Quality & Child Outcomes Team, 1995; Schweinhart, 2004).

Continuing education is a requirement of many states' child care regulatory agencies for licensure. States' quality-tiered programs emphasize lifelong learning for directors and teachers of early childhood programs by encouraging increased education with higher subsidy reimbursement to the program (Ackerman, 2004). School readiness for America's young children is the current message emphasized by the federal government, which is requiring child care professionals in some programs, such as Head Start and public preschool, to acquire college level education (Ackerman, 2004). The importance of being knowledgeable regarding the most current research-based information for classroom practices is also being emphasized by parents seeking quality care for their children (Cassidy, Buell, Pugh-Hoese, & Russell, 1995; Powell, 1980).

The importance of child care quality has also spurred research examining factors that strengthen the workforce and improve child care quality (Gable & Halliburton, 2003). Several research studies have found that child care quality is based on some commonly agreed upon factors. These factors are key predictors of quality and include adequate staff education and training specifically related to child care (Bowman, Donovan, & Burns, 2001; Honig & Hirallal, 1998; Scarr, Eisenberg, & Deater-Deckard, 1994). According to Snider and Fu, (1990), it is essential that child care staff are sufficiently trained for their roles with children in the classroom and make a strong case for the improved staff qualifications required by minimum licensing requirements. The study explains that higher quality classrooms result from child care professionals' having



more knowledge of developmentally appropriate practices acquired through formal education and/or training.

Education and training of child care professionals prior to employment in a child care setting is often a requirement in other countries, but the U.S. has not supported a national policy to require minimum educational standards for professionals in the field of early care and education (Ackerman 2004; Gable & Halliburton, 2003; Moss, 2000).

According to Gable and Halliburton (2003), the lack of minimum educational standards is one factor that can negatively impact child care quality due to substandard professional development requirements. A study conducted in the state of Missouri showed that child care professionals believe some training and education is needed prior to caring for children (Gable & Halliburton, 2003). According to Bowman et al., (2001), positive developmental outcomes for children are associated directly with professional development of child care professionals.

Entry-level child care training is one way to educate child care professionals prior to or within the first few months of employment. However, there are barriers that prohibit child care professionals from obtaining entry level training. For example, the age of the workforce, according to Saluja, Early, and Clifford (2002), is 39 years of age on average. These older students have the challenge of juggling their job, family responsibilities and classes (Ackerman, 2004; Gable & Halliburton, 2003). In addition, this older workforce receives low wages, limited or no benefits, and inflexible work schedules, which make furthering their education a challenge.

A policy paper written by Reisman, Moore and Fitzgerald, (1988) stated that the

turnover rate was approximately 18%, for all occupations but 40% within the field of early care and education. “Given that newly hired child care staff are under-educated and unfamiliar with the state’s licensing requirements, a quality workforce is a priority to achieve developmentally appropriate classroom practices,” according to Nancy vonBargen, Director of the Oklahoma Division of Child Care, (personal communication, March 8, 2005). In addition to improving the quality of newly hired child care professionals, it is imperative to retain professionals in the field.<sup>1</sup>

A study conducted by Lynch (1993) showed that those who stay with their first employer longer than three years are much less likely to leave their jobs. With respect to training, employees given some formal on-the-job-training were less likely to leave, while those receiving off-the-job-training were less likely to stay. In a Pennsylvania study of the professional development system for the early care and education field, several factors that lead to lower site turnover were revealed. One factor was whether there were opportunities for professional development for center staff (Iutovich, Fiene, Johnson, Koppel & Langan, 1997).

One approach that Oklahoma has taken to enhance retention of newly hired employees in the ECE field and prepare them for their role in the classroom, is to mandate entry-level training prior to or within three months of employment through a variety of delivery methods (Oklahoma Division of Child Care, 2003). This study examined the effectiveness of entry-level training in Oklahoma as provided by the Center for Early Childhood Professional Development (CECPD) in the course of preparing newly hired staff for not in their roles as a child care professional. It also compared

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<sup>1</sup> Retention is negatively impacted by lack of preparedness in the classroom. Turnover of child care professionals could also be attributed by other factors, including low compensation, limited or non-existent benefits, unsupportive organizational climate, and high stress.

different delivery methods in terms of how the course content is acquired and applied to classroom practices. In addition, there was further examination of the preferred delivery method, on-line courses, for comparisons to standards of best practice.

### Conceptual Definition

It is important to define and operationalize the following terms to clarify the research topics:

**ELCCT** is defined as 20 clock hours of entry-level child care training required to be taken prior to or within three months of employment as a child care professional who is counted to meet staff-child ratios.

**Change Theory within the CPE Model** is operationalized according to Dirkx, Gilley & Gilley (2004) as cognitive, decontextualized, individualistic, and solitary processes.

**Child care professionals** for this study are defined as those staff who work with children in a child care center. The word professional will be used interchangeably with child care professional to describe the subjects of the study.

**Child care director** is defined in this study as the administrator of the child care center. The word director will be used interchangeably with child care director.

**Change in practices** is defined as behavior exhibited by the child care professional in the classroom that reflects (1) improvement in the environment, (2) appropriate learning activities for the age group, (3) increased interactions with children and parents, and/or (4) utilization of positive guidance practices.

**Knowledge base** is operationalized as having an understanding of child development, setting up the environment, appropriate interactions with children and parents, utilization of a curriculum, and compliance with licensing requirements.

**Professional Development System** is defined as a comprehensive, coordinated system of training and education which includes: a training approval system; needs assessment-based training, a system for informing the early care and education professionals of training opportunities; a registry for tracking the professional's training; program linking education and compensation; and, a scholarship program.

## **Chapter II.**

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This section of the proposal examines two theories of learning: Change Theory and Chaos Theory. The following section will discuss the importance of education, including entry-level child care/pre-service training, and how it impacts quality at the organizational level in the early care and education industry. The next section will describe educational support initiatives that are designed to reduce staff turnover and encourage continued education. The final section of the literature review will examine different delivery methods, focusing on technology-supported education and training.

#### Theoretical Framework

Change Theory and Chaos Theory suggest that method of learning, organizational acceptance of the method of learning, turbulence caused by change, feedback mechanisms, and alterations of the culture of the organization all contribute to the long term impact on both the learning of the professional (Buell & Cassidy, 2001; Doll, 2001; Goff, 1998) and the incorporation of the change into the child care industry (Buell & Cassidy, 2001).

#### *Change Theory*

A study of Change Theory in the field of early care and education demonstrates that effective learning cannot occur by focus upon the entry-level child care professional

alone. The theory also requires a focus upon the leadership provided by child care directors that either encourages or discourages learned behavior (Dirkx, Gilley & Gilley, 2004).

A classic change theory presented by Dirkx and colleagues is Lewin's three phases described as (1) unfreezing, (2) movement, and (3) refreezing. The components of the theory suggest how child care organizations unfreeze current thinking, "move" or change child care professionals' thinking, and then refreeze behavior (Dirkx et al., 2004). The assumptions by the licensing agency that must be considered are the "set of implicit conditions, principles, ethics, and expectations that define their perceptions of reality and form the basis for choosing actions and studying consequences that follow" (Dirkx et al., 2004, p.42). This step is when an agency decides to impose a change in the early care and education system to impact quality. The agency takes into consideration the field's "readiness" for a change. Prior to the implementation of training (ELCCT), most child care organizations did not implement any type of training for newly hired professionals. The reasoning for the mandatory requirement for ELCCT training helped unfreeze organizational thinking, by presenting the importance of ELCCT training as being critical to the success of the child care professional and the organization.

The second step is how the initiative is executed. In this case, change can be made through licensing regulations. For example, voluntary versus mandatory training can affect how and if change is instituted. Change at this stage can reveal barriers, and if staff are unprepared to address the obstacles, this can cause resistance to the change. One way to decrease resistance is to educate and motivate employees through communication. The child care organizations were alerted 18 months prior to the regulation taking place

and informed of the strategy for implementing the coursework. Moreover, offering various delivery methods of training, classroom, and/or Internet training can decrease resistance to the “movement”. Child care directors were given several options: (1) to submit their own entry level training coursework for approval to CECPD; (2) to have staff attend classroom/classroom instruction; (3) or to have staff take the internet training once it was implemented. Making available the choice, itself, is critical, according to Change Theory. When the change is incorporated, change has come to light (Dirkx et al., 2004).

The third step, refreezing, is how culture change would result from the use of ELCCT. Without a modification in organizational thinking, change becomes a fad and no long-term alterations in behavior occur. If organizational change does not occur in this context, child care organizations would not be in compliance with the Licensing Agency (Dirkx et al., 2004). Non-compliance is a negative strategy, which imposes upon the early care and education field of the cost of not adjusting. Alterations in individuals are usually an outcome of system change, “because individual behavior is modified by the new conforming pattern” (Dirkx et al., 2004, p.42). If organizations within the industry accept the implicit assumptions that underlie ELCCT and make training method decisions that fit the organization, the child care center assimilates the change in culture. The field is reminded of the purpose for the change and the benefits for the industry. The refreezing occurs as individual professionals understand how the organization delivers better child care as a result of ELCCT. The Licensing Agency, on the other hand, examines “the total organizational system to determine the root cause of a problem and

solutions are presented and applied to bring about long-term systemic change” through policy and standards (Dirkx et al., 2004, p.42).

### *Chaos Theory*

A related but different theory regarding learning is Chaos Theory. This theory, like Change Theory, requires a review of the complexity of the learning system to positively impact quality. The main thrust of this theory is that quality improvements do not necessarily follow a linear pattern (Buell & Cassidy, 2001). For example, in the field of early care and education, Chaos Theory, like Change Theory does not focus solely on the individual learning, but also on the child care organization’s reaction to chaos caused by a change thrust upon it. In this case, the change is the new regulation requiring training for all newly hired staff.

The elements of Chaos Theory involve decomposability, non-linearity, sensitivity to initial conditions, feedback mechanisms, and attractors. The principle of decomposability suggests that child care systems cannot be broken into parts for purposes of gaining education and quality. Non-linearity implies that not all system changes, including additional education, can be weighed equally. This is due to the fact, that in complex systems, cause and effect relationships are not linear systems (Buell & Cassidy, 2001). For example, mandatory entry level training, used as a screening tool, could reduce turnover, which would be a major benefit to the industry. Lower turnover could lead to more experienced professionals in the classroom and fewer licensing violations. In contrast, a linear model would suggest that additional training after ELCCT needs to occur to improve licensing compliance. Sensitivity to initial conditions is a tenet that explains that minor changes at the beginning of a process can lead to exponentially larger



changes at the end of a process (Buell & Cassidy, 2001). Again, in complex systems, change does not occur in a straight-line fashion. This principle may be particularly important with respect to entry level child care training, since it is training that occurs at the beginning of employment for professionals in the child care field. ELCCT's purpose is to influence the initial condition of the child care professional.

The feedback mechanism concept, describes how an organization's structure feeds back knowledge gained through a process. Chaos Theory teaches that constant energy is more important than surge energy. The industry's reaction to ELCCT could be twofold. One child care organization could produce surge energy and simply comply with the regulation. Another child care entity could use ELCCT to provide feedback to managers and child care professionals on developmentally appropriate practices in the classroom. If ELCCT changes behaviors with this type of feedback, it then produces constant energy and organizational change. This part of Chaos Theory is consistent with refreezing in Change Theory. Finally, attractors are points of measurement systems moving to and from during a time of change (Buell & Cassidy, 2001). Licensing requirements are classic attractors. Mandatory entry-level child care training is considered a fixed attractor. A fixed attractor moves child care organizations to a point of measurement. In the case of ELCCT, this point is reached at 20 hours of clock hours of training.

The theoretical frameworks of both the Change and Chaos Theories have important ramifications for the success of Oklahoma's entry-level child care training requirement. According to Change Theory, increased readiness for change and a regulatory execution of the change can create a resultant culture change that has long

lasting effects. According to Chaos Theory, turbulence caused by change is positive but surge energy is negative.

The precepts underpinning Oklahoma's entry-level child care training requirement appear to coincide with these theories. The goals of the entry-level child care training is to ready workers for a change, institute government regulation for the change, and create fixed attractors for measured turbulence, while mitigating surge energy by offering participants the availability of training by more than one delivery method.

### Education

A review of the literature demonstrates that the quality of care and education by parents and others in a child's first five years of life is critical to future success. The single most important factor related to positive learning experiences and outcomes for children is quality adult-child interactions (Bowman et al., 2001; Gable & Halliburton, 2003; Honig & Hirallal, 1998, Snider & Fu, 1990). Although there has been little research on the effectiveness of child care training/pre-service training, research has positively linked professional development preparation of child care professionals with the quality of the early childhood environment and child outcomes. These outcomes for young children, such as better language and thinking skills, increased social skills, and fewer behavior problems, have been linked to the specialized training and education of professionals as well as other structural features of child care classroom environments (Rhodes & Hennessy, 2000). In 1990, a study by Snider and Fu concluded that a higher quality classroom is achieved through child care professional education/training.

On the same note, a comprehensive study on the professional development training system in Pennsylvania showed that child care center quality was related to several factors, including professional growth opportunities. Centers where child care professionals were offered more opportunities for professional growth in their workplace reported exhibiting a higher quality of care. For the most part, child care professionals expressed a desire for training, as training helped them in their work (Iutovich et al., 1997). Having the training available is important, but applying the content of the training back to classroom practices is critical if the training system is to have any type of impact (Zaslow, Tout, Maxwell & Clifford, 2004). The research generally has upheld the conclusion that formal coursework directly associated with early childhood education is linked with the condition of higher quality care (Zaslow et al., 2004). There is little data regarding training outside of the formal educational system; but, what little verification exists, does suggest that having some training is linked to higher quality (Zaslow et al., 2004).

#### Pre-Service/Entry-Level Child Care Training

Another area of minimal investigation involves the effect of pre-service or entry-level child care education for professionals entering the field in regard to turnover reduction and content applicability. Snider and Fu (1990) make a strong case for improved staff qualifications required by minimum licensing requirements. Ackerman (2004) indicates the need for states to increase the minimum ECE pre-service requirements for teachers in center-based settings. Many states that have ongoing training requirements have no minimum ECE pre-service requirements, and the average

number of required training hours is minimal. Gable and Halliburton (2003) suggest that states should require qualifications and parallel training opportunities that articulate realistic job expectations. Requiring both could “weed out individuals unsuited for working with children” (p.188).

Currently, fourteen states have required some type of minimum early childhood education preservice qualifications and ongoing clock hours. The states are as follows: California, Delaware, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Illinois, Kansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Texas, Vermont, and Wisconsin. The following states require a varied numbers of training hours which must be completed within a range of one month to three years upon being hired: Florida, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont and Washington (LeMoine, 2004).

#### Educational Support Initiatives

Ackerman (2004) reported almost half the U.S. states offer some type of financial incentives that reduce the cost of improving educational qualifications. In Oklahoma, The Scholarship for Excellence in Child Care (SECC), sponsored through the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE), offers a scholarship to help cover partial costs of tuition, fees, books and paid release time to attend ECE or child development classes. Recipients make a commitment to remain in their child care setting for a specified period of time. The program also provides for a scholar coordinator located at a two-year college to mentor a child care professional through the application, enrollment, advisement and coursework. In addition, SECC also provides an assessment scholarship upon completion of coursework for the Child Development Associate (CDA) and Child

Care Professional (CCP) national credentials. After receipt of the national credential, child care professionals and directors can apply for a stipend (OSRHE, 2005).

Another initiative to link compensation and qualifications in Oklahoma is Rewarding Education With Wages and Respect for Dedication (R.E.W.A.R.D.) which is an affiliate to the North Carolina child care WAGES® program. CECPD administers the wage supplement, and the program provides increasing supplements as child care professionals and directors increase their education. R.E.W.A.R.D. is designed to reduce staff turnover and encourage continued education, which in turns creates more stable relationships between children and with their teachers.

Training courses through CECPD are offered free or at a minimal cost to the participants. Courses are offered classroom as well as through Web-based technology and can lead to obtaining a CDA credential through the Child Care Careers courses. The entry-level child care training course (ELCCT) is offered through both delivery methods because Oklahoma is a geographically large rural state (CECPD, 2005).

#### Technological Delivery Method

Technology-supported training or coursework is an optional delivery method designed to train large numbers of professionals in the field of early care and education in a rural state. Technology and distance education as a delivery method for training is controversial in the early childhood field (Donohue, 2002). Advances and improvements in technology are making it easier and more cost effective to deliver training at a distance, especially to rural sections of Oklahoma. The improvements, which have been made, involve design, access to information, and the ability to administer, propagate and exchange information (Donohue, 2002). The advances with the use of multimedia

presentation and communication tools have presented a more content-rich experience to learning (Clark, 2004). “The goal is to make the technology as transparent as possible so students can focus on the content, not worry about fighting the technology to access information and communicate with one another” (Donohue, 2002, p.22)

However, a review of the literature reveals that little evidence-based research has been conducted on the effectiveness of educational technology that meets the scientifically based standards as defined by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. The U.S. Department of Education is investing over \$56 million dollars to study the impact on teaching and learning. The majority of the funding is intended for elementary and secondary public school, with over \$26 million being allocated to 20 different universities and independent research organizations to enrich education at any level. Some states are utilizing the funding to develop courses for Pre-K teachers, with the state of Connecticut developing a video/electronic media-training program for at risk-preschoolers, their parents, and caregivers in any child care setting. Results of the studies will conclude in 2006 or 2007.

Several articles recommend benchmarks for best practices in providing successful adult learning experiences through web-based and non-traditional learning environments. The first benchmark is the changing role of the instructor in the classroom. “Technology-mediated learning forces a paradigm shift, by transferring control of the learning experiences away from instructor and toward learners” (Clark, 2004, p.5). Access to information and Internet search tools, and sharing with colleagues, provides students more control over what they learn. It is no longer the instructor with all the information. Another benchmark for best practices is developing a relationship-based

experience as students and the instructor may never meet in the classroom. Research has shown that the best environment for learning is in a social context--learning experiences depend on meaningful exchanges. In the field of early care and education learning experiences have been relational interactions, and critics say this is an area where technology is lacking. Distance education and technology can combine for a delivery system to teach providers about the science of teaching relational care. Emphasizing good teaching with pedagogy-based training, which focuses on good teaching and learning principles, enhances student success (Clark, 2004).

### Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to provide comparative information about the two delivery methods of ELCCT, on-line and classroom, with emphasis on the web-based delivered course. The specific research questions to be addressed were:

1. To what extent are child care professional background characteristics (current education, age, and ethnicity) associated with delivery methods (on-line versus classroom).
2. How does the organization of the ELCCT on-line delivery method compare to recommended standards of practice?
3. Which delivery method, the traditional classroom or the on-line approach, is associated with greater reported application of content in classroom practices?
4. Which delivery method, the traditional classroom or the on-line approach, is associated with increased confidence in their role as a new child care professional?

## Chapter III

### PROCEDURES AND METHODOLOGY

#### ELCCT Historical Background

Entry-level child care training was made a mandatory licensing requirement August 1, 2003 by the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS). This required all newly hired child care professionals to take 20 clock hours of entry-level training within the first three months of employment. The OKDHS had three goals in mind when designing the mandatory requirement. According to Nancy vonBargen, Director of the Division of Child Care (DCC), the first was to “reduce the turnover rate among beginning professionals who work in child care settings”. The second goal was “to provide 20 clock hours of quality child care orientation training,” which would help professionals meet the yearly-required licensing training hour requirement. The third goal was to equip the newly hired professional with information to assist with improving their classroom practices (personal communication, March 8, 2005). Research has shown that 18 hours of training can have some impact on professionals (Iutovich et, al 1997). According to vonBargen, the Division of Child Care requested the Center for Early Childhood Professional Development (CECPD) develop a 20-hour course to assist the child care industry in meeting the mandatory requirement in



order to alleviate the fear and apprehension of becoming non-compliant with licensing regulations (personal communication, March 8, 2005).

Jill Soto, Program Specialist at the (CECPD) and co-author of the entry level child care training (ELCCT), reflected that ELCCT was designed to fit into the Child Care Careers Caregiver Advancement Ladder as the foundation course. It was designed “to raise the professional’s awareness of what is involved when working with children of different ages during the professional’s first three months of employment, to equip them with the basic knowledge needed to provide quality care for children in their work environment and to provide a resource book for them to utilize in the classroom” (personal communication, January 12, 2005). In addition, it was designed as Tier II training to meet licensing requirements and to fit into the state’s professional development system.

The traditional classroom delivery method was launched in the fall of 2000 prior to the enactment of the licensing requirement. Since it was initially not required, only a small segment of the new child care professionals participated in the training opportunities. Several research studies have shown barriers that many professionals encounter which exclude them from accessing and participating in training, such as inconvenient scheduling, location of classes, juggling job and family responsibilities (Gable & Halliburton, 2003; Saluja, et al., 2002). The Oklahoma Department of Human Services Division of Child Care estimates that the mandatory training requirement would affect approximately 5000 professionals annually, due to the turnover rate in the ECE industry.

In order to provide ELCCT to the estimated number of professionals located in a predominately rural state, other delivery methods options were given consideration. One option was to shift from the classroom delivery of educational content to a technology-mediated format. Providing this course through a combination of online and classroom delivery methods would allow a greater number of individuals to take the training in the most economical, efficient, and effective manner.

### Research Design

The research design that was utilized was correlational and non-experimental. The instrument measured the association between child care training and the delivery method. The time dimension in this research design was cross-sectional as the measures were collected from all the subjects at a single point in time. The study included a random sample of child care professionals using the classroom delivery method and the qualifying on-line participants. There was no sampling of the on-line participants due to the challenges of locating demographic information. All data for this study was collected through the administration of self-report instruments mailed to child care professionals and child care directors who had completed the ELCCT course between March 2003 through March 31, 2005.

Two survey instruments were developed. The first instrument was designed for child care professionals enrolled in ELCCT (Appendix A), while the second was for directors enrolled or whose staff had enrolled in the ELCCT course (Appendix B). The validity of the instruments was affirmed by the review of a panel of experts in the field of early childhood education. The reviewers were three Oklahoma State University

professors in the Human Development and Family Science Department; the Director and Senior Program Manager with the University of Oklahoma Outreach, Center for Early Childhood for Professional Development; a senior researcher from the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Office of Planning, Policy and Research and the Director of Child Care Services of the Division of Child Care.

### Sample

The target population for this study was Oklahoma child care center professionals and directors enrolled in CECPD's entry level child care training course—ELCCT from March 2003 through March 2005. In addition, directors of centers with staff that had enrolled in ELCCT were also part of this study. The sampling frame was a list of child care professionals and child care directors who are employees in Oklahoma licensed child care centers. A listing of participants enrolled in the ELCCT course was generated from CECPD's registration information. All participants on the list were screened to ensure they met the study criteria. The criteria required participants to be employed in a licensed child care center, have completed the ELCCT course between March 2003 and March 2005, and hold a position of director or teach children in a classroom within the child care setting. There were a total of 2986 participants who did not meet the study criteria and were removed from the list. Many of those who did not meet the criteria either did not work in a child care setting but were employed in other industries, were not a director or teacher in the child care facility or did not complete the course within the timeframe. The child care industry's typical survey return rate of 50% coupled with an estimated 30% turnover rate were taken into consideration in calculating the number of surveys sent to each group. A computer software package, SPSS, was utilized for the random

selection of 999 out of 2882 child care professionals who had met the criteria and had taken the classroom delivery method. For participants who had taken the course on-line, demographic information could only be secured for 882. After screening of the on-line participants to ensure they met the criteria, 761 surveys were mailed to eligible child care professionals which resulted in a total of 1760 surveys sent to child care professionals in both delivery methods. A total of 104 child care professionals who took the course by the on-line delivery method responded, as did 77 child care professionals who completed ELCCT by the classroom delivery method, for a grand total of 181 child care professional surveys. This resulted in a 10% survey return rate as shown in Table 1. There were 5.7% of the child care professional unopened surveys returned due to child care professionals no longer being employed in the field.

A total of 501 child care directors who enrolled in/or had staff enrolled in the ELCCT course were selected from both of the delivery method categories. All directors who had completed or had staff complete the ELCCT course met the criteria and were sent a survey due to the low number. A total of 94 of directors responded to the survey for an 18% return rate as shown in Table 2.

The gender, age, race and education percentages of the respondents were compared by delivery method for child care professionals and for directors to determine if any significant differences exist.

### *Child Care Professionals*

The majority of survey participants from both delivery methods working with children in child care settings were women (98.9%). The age-range of child care professionals was from 17 to 64 years ( $M= 30.66$ ). The ethnicity of the majority of participants was white

(70.7%) with African-American following (12.2%), and Native American, Latino Hispanic, Asian and other ethnicities making up the remaining 17.1%. Most of the child care professionals did not have a college degree (81.3%) but a majority did have some college experience (64.2%).

Demographics of participants who took ELCCT on-line were 98.1 % female and 1.9% male with the age-range from 17 to 62 years ( $M= 29.35$ ). The ethnicity of the majority of child care professionals was white (72.1%) with African-American following (11.5%), and Native American, Latino Hispanic, Asian and other ethnicities making up 16.4% of the population. The educational levels of the child care professionals ranged from high school graduate (38.2%), some college (42.2%), associate's degree (8.8%), with bachelor and graduate degrees (10.8%).

Child care professionals who took ELCCT classroom (classroom) with ages ranging was from 18 to 64 years ( $M= 32.54$ ). The ethnicity of the majority of participants was white (68.8%) with African-American following (13%), and Native American, Latino Hispanic, Asian and other ethnicities making up 18.2% of the population. The educational levels of the child care professionals ranged from high school graduate (32.4%), some college (50%), associate's degree (10.8%), with bachelor and graduate degrees (6.8%).

The comparisons revealed no significant demographic differences between the on-line group and the classroom group. Chi-square results for education and racial/ethnic categories were non-significant, as was a difference of means test for the age variable. However, it should be noted that the age difference between the two groups approaches significance [ $t(176) = 1.87, p = .064$ ], with the on-line group younger. The demographic information is shown on Table 3.

### *Child Care Directors*

The gender of directors from both delivery methods and/or who had staff enrolled were all female. The age-range of child care directors was from 18 to 81 years ( $M= 42.84$ ). The ethnicity of the majority of participants was white (78.7%) with African-American following (10.6%), and Native American, Latino Hispanic, Asian and other ethnicities making up 10.7% of the population. Approximately half of the child care directors did not have a college degree (56.55%) but most did have some college similar to the child care professionals (83.7%).

The age-range for child care directors that took ELCCT on-line was from 24 to 65 years ( $M= 42.10$ ). The ethnicity of the majority of participants was white (69.6%) with African-American following (21.7%), and Native American, Latino Hispanic, Asian and other ethnicities making up 8.7% of the population. The educational levels of the child care professionals ranged from high school graduate (13%), some college (30.4%), associate's degree (21.7%), with bachelors degree (26.1%) and graduate degrees (8.7%).

Child care directors were all female that took ELCCT classroom and had ages ranging from 27 to 81 ( $M= 40.94$ ) years. The ethnicity of the majority of participants was white (78.8%) with Native Americans following (12.1%), and African American, Latino Hispanic, Asian and other ethnicities making up 9.1% of the population. The educational levels of the child care professionals ranged from high school graduate (19.4%), some college (58.1%), associate's degree (3.2%), and bachelors degree (3%). The demographic information is shown on Table 4.

The comparisons revealed no significant demographic differences between the on-line group and the classroom group. Chi-square results for education and racial/ethnic categories were non-significant, as was a difference of means test for the age variable.

### Instrument and Measurement

The survey instruments utilized were self-reporting surveys designed to explore an association between the method of delivery and (a) the participant's application of the entry-level training course content, and (b) the participant's level of confidence in their new role in the classroom. Further, the surveys were designed to compare the course on-line delivery design to best practices in the field.

Two surveys were been developed; Director Survey and Child Care Professional Survey. Questions 1-3 on both surveys obtained demographic information such as gender, age, race, months in position, and educational level. Question 4 on each survey collected facility information such as location, type of facility and licensed capacity. Teachers were asked to identify the delivery system they used (on-line or classroom) with question 5 and directors with question 15 on their respective survey.

### *Scales*

*Standards of Technological Best Practices.* A "Technological Support Features Scale" was created as one of the measures used to compare the on-line design with best practices, such as the availability of technical assistance, the option of taking an orientation session on how to navigate the course and access to resources.<sup>2</sup> The full content of the scale is in Table 5, with a possible score ranging from "0" to "6" as each yes response received a score of "1" and the responses were added. A higher score

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<sup>2</sup> Chronbach's Alpha was the statistic for the study that determine the interitem reliability for scales.

indicated more of the features of technology supports that are recommended in standards of best practice. The Chronbach's alpha coefficient results was .545 for this scale.

A 4-point Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, somewhat disagree and strongly disagree) was used for question 14 on the Child Care Professional Survey and question 18 on the Director Survey. These questions asked course participants to rate the presence of five design features recommended by the best standards of technology practice; ease of navigation, organization of content, attractiveness of design, facilitator's responsiveness, and ability to communicate with others taking the course. A mean "Technological Design Features Scale" was created for each course participant by summing responses and dividing by five.

A final measure of best practices for technology-delivered learning is the length of time spent working on the course. This was measured two ways. First the course participants were asked to identify how long they spent on-line completing the course. In addition, a learner tracking report generated by the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology measured the length of time it takes a participant to complete the on-line course. The data were compared to data collected from the self-report instruments to compare on-line delivery design with best practices.

*Perception of Application of Course Content.* Course participants were asked to rate their ability to apply the training content presented in the course. A 4-point Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, somewhat disagree and strongly disagree) was used for question 12 on the Child Care Professionals Survey and question 17 on the Director Survey that lists each of the nine chapters of the course. The titles of the nine chapters have been identified in Table 6. A mean "Perception of Application of Course Content"



score was created for each course participant by summing and dividing by nine. The Chronbach's alpha coefficient results was .960 for this scale.

*Confidence in Classroom Role.* Course participants rated the confidence they gained from the course in their ability to perform in the classroom. Eight specific teacher practices were listed in Question 11 of the survey for teachers: classroom environment, learning activities, health/safety practices, interactions with children and parents, guidance, observation/assessment, and preparation to teach. A 4-point Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, somewhat disagree and strongly disagree) was used for question 11 on the Child Care Professional Survey. A mean "Perceptions of Confidence" score was created for each child care professional by summing responses and dividing by eight. The Chronbach's alpha coefficient results was .938 for this scale.

#### Administration of Instrument

A letter stating the purpose of the study, procedures, and requirements, was sent to the participants who enrolled or had staff enrolled in CECPD's ELCCT training. The survey was printed on colored paper to enhance the probability of completion and return. A postage-paid, return envelope was included with the survey. As an incentive, child care staff and directors who returned a completed survey by the two-week deadline had an opportunity to receive one of six \$25.00 savings bonds. There were three chances for directors and three chances for professionals to be selected for a savings bond.

Participants were given category-specific self-report measures. A number was assigned to each survey, which then linked to a master list, ensuring confidentiality. This

process was implemented for the selection of the incentives. Approval was received from the Institutional Review Board for the distribution of the survey.

The returned surveys were entered into the statistical package SPSS. The ELCCT on-line and the traditional classroom delivery methods were compared to determine if there was a difference in application of the training content in classroom practices and the level of confidence in the role of the professional in the classroom. In addition, the on-line delivery method was assessed for consistency with the recommended standards of best practices. The demographic characteristics of the survey population were also analyzed to determine if these characteristics were associated with differences between the two types of delivery methods. All data were discussed in the aggregate.

## Chapter IV

### RESULTS

Of the four research questions, one has already been addressed in the methods section under “Sample.” No significant differences were found between the delivery methods for demographic characteristics of child care professionals or directors. The remaining results of the project were separated into two sections. The first section of the results highlights information gathered from survey items indicating if the organization and design of the ELCCT on-line course was comparable to recommended standards of best practices for Internet courses. The second section focuses on data comparing the two ELCCT delivery methods, on-line and traditional classroom, for increased confidence and applicability of course content to classroom practices.

To answer the second research question a “Technological Support Features” Scale compared six on-line design items to best practices. The descriptives are shown in Table 7. Child Care Professionals were split in their perceptions of technological support features. Regarding the first two items, technical support and orientation, a majority of the respondents indicated the course did not provide these features. In contrast, the remaining features (video clips, audio streaming, on-screen written text, and accessibility of resources) were provided to a majority of respondents. As shown

in Table 8, the Directors responded similarly, with the exception of item 1, technical support. Nearly 60 percent of the Directors responded that they did receive technical support. According to nearly all of the Child Care Professionals (95%) and all of the Directors (100%) who received technical support, the technical support they received was conveyed in non-technical terms as shown in table 9.

With respect to the design features, the summing of the responses and dividing by five scaled the items on the “Technological Design Features Scale”. This resulted in a mean of 1.47 (sd=.520, with a range of 1 [most favorable] to 3 [least favorable]). Directors were also highly favorable in their responses, with a mean of 1.38 (sd=.482, with a range of 1 [most favorable] to 3 [least favorable]). Child Care Professionals, though also favorable on most items, were a bit less favorable on two items. Regarding the attractiveness of design, 7.9 percent of the Child Care Professionals responded unfavorably (disagree somewhat or strongly disagree) as compared to 4 percent disagreement among the Directors. On the ability to communicate with other providers taking the course, 28 percent of Child Care Professionals disagreed somewhat or strongly as compared to 4.3 percent of the Directors. Overall, the vast majority of respondents perceived that the on-line course was well designed as shown in Table 10.

The third research question was concerned with the application of course content to classroom practices. The nine items comprising the “Perception of Application of Knowledge Scale” reflect the nine chapters of course material. Summing responses and dividing by nine scaled the Likert items. A difference of means test indicated no significant difference [ $t(168) = -.809, p=.420$ ] between the classroom and on-line child care professionals. The mean for the classroom method was 1.52 (sd=.455), as compared

to 1.59 for the on-line method (sd=.667). In an attempt to find significant differences related to delivery method, the on-line group was examined in terms of how many hours the respondents spent completing the course. This variable was dichotomized in relation to the median number of hours. That is, respondents who spent more than the median number of hours (median = 6 hours) were coded “1” (n = 51), while those who spent 6 or less hours were coded “2” (n = 45). The strength of agreement variable was recoded into two possible values—those who strongly agreed (n=91) as compared to those who reported a weaker agreement (79). This allowed the use of Chi-square as a test of association between application of content and a three-category variable representing course delivery (classroom, on-line more hours, and on-line fewer hours). This three by two analysis indicates a statistically significant association ( $\chi^2(2) = 6.34, p = .042$ ). There was a significant association between those child care professionals taking the course on-line for 7 or more hours and applying application of knowledge to classroom practices and two content areas. The first area was Behavior and Guidance  $\chi^2(2)=6.608, p=.04$  and the second area was Communication  $\chi^2(2)=6.305, p=.04$ . In addition, two content areas approached significance, Child Care as a Profession  $\chi^2(2)=4.898, p=.09$  and Observation/Assessment  $\chi^2(2)=5.134, p=.08$ . The results have been shown in Table 11 details for the individual survey items.

A comparison of means for the Directors was non-significant. The mean for the classroom method was 1.58 (sd=.458), as compared to 1.61 for the on-line method (sd=.411). Due to the small number of respondents (n = 50), the three-by-two analysis described above would not be appropriate.

The fourth research question was concerned with increased confidence in their role as a Child Care Professional. The eight Likert items comprising the “Perception\_of Confidence Scale” were scaled by summing responses and dividing by eight. A difference of means test indicated no significant difference [ $t(173)=.436, p=.663$ ] between the classroom and on-line respondents. The mean for the classroom method was 1.622 (sd=.523), as compared to 1.65 (sd=.604) for the on-line method. In an attempt to find significant differences related to delivery method, the on-line group was examined in terms of how many hours the respondents spent completing the course. This variable was dichotomized in relation to the median number of hours. The strength of agreement variable was recoded into two possible values—those who strongly agreed (n=83) as compared to those who reported a weaker agreement (n=92). This allowed the use of Chi-square as a test of association between application of content and a three-category variable representing course delivery (classroom, on-line more hours, and on-line fewer hours). This three by two analysis indicates a statistically significant association ( $\chi^2(2) = 7.22; p = .027$ ). There was a significant association between those child care professionals taking the course on-line for 7 or more hours and the Positive Guidance content and increase confidence in their role ( $\chi^2(2)=7.324, p=.03$ ). Another content area, Room Environment approached significance ( $\chi^2(2)=5.443, p=.07$ ). The results have been shown in Table 12 for the individual survey items.

## Chapter V

### DISCUSSION

In general this study demonstrated that child care professionals and directors reported positive views regarding entry-level child care training offered by both on-line and classroom delivery methods. Because there has been little research comparing on-line courses with their traditional course counterparts, the primary focus of this chapter is a discussion of what the survey responses tell about the merits of the two delivery methods. Additional discussion centers on implications for theory and future research.

#### Demographics

In terms of demographics, only one respondent characteristic was related to delivery method. The delivery method variable showed a “close to significant” association with the age of the learner. The data showed that younger persons tended to be more likely to take the on-line course. In our rapidly changing world of technology it is not surprising that younger persons are more inclined toward an on-line course than the traditional classroom method of learning. Several comments received on the open-ended questions indicated participants would support additional technology-mediated training on other topics in the early care and education field.

## Hours of Training

The ELCCT course is designed as a 20-hour course in order to align with research illustrating that 18 hours of training can have some impact on professionals in the early care and education field (Iutovich et, al 1997). It was surprising that the on-line course median hours for completion was 6 hours. While this validates the honesty of the respondents, as the stated hours were in line with measured seat time, it is the researcher's opinion that it was difficult to complete the course on-line in that amount of hours if the participant read the text book as instructed on the video and watched each of the eleven video-clips provided during the training. One reason for the different completion hours may be due to the current design.

The current design has developed a test after each chapter that the participant is required to take over the material. Some of the test questions pertain to material in the text book. Immediate feedback is given to the participant concerning their performance on the test with an opportunity to correct answers on multiple-choice questions before the participant can advance to the next section. However, an incorrect answer on the test is not connected to a consequence, so a participant can continue to answer until the correct answer appears, moving the training on to the next section. This is a flaw in the design. Only one section with true and false answers allowed the participant to continue with the course only after tabulating the correct responses. It is questionable whether participants can learn the material without being accurately evaluated at the end of the chapter and at the end of the completed training. Administration and analysis of pre-and post- tests would measure the learning that takes place.



## Course Design

In regard to the design of ELCCT on-line, the majority of respondents thought that the course was well designed. Why child care professionals chose to take the on-line course over the traditional classroom delivery method, the highest percentage of responses indicated convenience (35%), the next highest response rate (20.4%) indicated time, followed with 4.9 percent responding they were required by their director, and 3.9 percent responding they preferred individual learning. The remaining 35.8 percent reported a combination of time, convenience and preference for individual learning and/or location.

Respondents generally agreed that best practice standards were met by ELCCT's design and its technical support. The information they received was conveyed in non-technical terms. Another design feature that respondents evaluated positively is that the facilitator responded to content-based questions. However, during the researcher's review of the course, the facilitator was available to answer questions twice a week through electronic mail, but did not initiate any discussion. Adults, similar to children, learn through meaningful interactions. There is less opportunity for personal contact with on-line courses, and successful designed models are relationship-based even though the facilitator and participant may never meet (Clark, 2004). According to Harvey (2004) anecdotal reports point toward a connection between the quality of facilitation and learning outcomes. A facilitator not only provides answers to questions but initially orients the participant to the program, reviews and remarks on responses to program activities and provides additional resources as needed. Preferably, the facilitator becomes the content mentor-coach (Harvey, 2004).

Regarding the technological feature supports, the majority of respondents thought the on-line course curriculum was helpful. Respondents were able to access resources to complete the course. They found the audio streaming, video clips and written on screen text helpful in learning the content. This coincides with best practices. Video is a powerful learning tool and should illustrate what it proposes to teach. The participant should be able to view and hear the interactions with the teacher and children for analysis (Harvey, 2004).

It was projected that many of the child care professionals and directors would take the course at their local Career Technology Center. Best practices state that an orientation is imperative in helping students feel comfortable navigating a computer-based curriculum (Clark, 2004; Donohue, 2002). To align with best practices, an orientation with a facilitator at the Career Techs would provide guidance on how to use the computer and navigate the course. Ideally, facilitators are available to answer questions. Surprisingly, however, less than one percent of the respondents have taken the course at a Career Tech. The majority of participants took the course at their workplace, home, or a friend's home. Moreover, although two-thirds of the child care professionals and directors stated that they received an orientation, there was not an orientation provided in the course. There may have been confusion regarding the meaning of this survey question.

Despite the general agreement, there were some minor problems reported regarding the design of the technology-based course. For example, respondents reported a slight disagreement on the attractiveness of the design. Also, a fourth of the respondents reported a lack of an ability to discuss course materials with other providers. Unlike classroom setting there was not the ability to conduct "blackboard" type of discussions by

all persons taking the course. Best practices suggest that sharing among peers is the “centerpiece of the curricular design” (Clark, 2004).

### Comparing Delivery Methods

The initial results from the data showed no significant variation in the delivery methods between the uses of classroom training versus on-line training. This initial result of non-significance applied to both child care professionals as well as child care directors. Upon further analysis however, according to the hours reportedly spent reviewing the on-line course, there was significance found in applying training content into classroom practices as well as an increase in confidence for those taking the course on-line for seven (7) or more hours.

The results of this study are promising. The use of technology to teach an entry-level training course was well received by the industry. To the extent that this choice lessened the fear of non-compliance with new regulations requiring training assisted agencies in navigating change. Based on both Chaos and Change theories this fact should help agencies minimize surge energy and smoothly transition new training requirements into organizational changes in learning. While this result is important it also appears unclear as to whether the efficiency of this option (technology education) increases learning of the material. When the fixed attractor is achieved (compliance with 20 hours of mandatory training), organizational efficiency could be maximized by increased learning of the student. Increased learning of each child care educator is important to increase the organizational capacity of assimilation of change.

## Implications of the Research

Three major implications are suggested by the results of this study. First, it is clear that the use of technology in the training of child care professionals can be used successfully to expand other training opportunities in order to further their education or meet licensing requirements. Most child care professionals must attend classroom trainings after they have worked a full day or on weekends due their schedules. A chief complaint of rural child care professionals and directors is the lack of available training. Technology-mediated training could address the issue of limited training statewide and the issue of professionals having to sacrifice their weekends.

Second, many of the participants' comments indicate that the use of technology-based systems do reduce the stress caused by the regulation associated with mandatory training regiments. The reduction of stress to both the employer and employee appears to assist the child care industry in assimilating change as suggested by Change Theory.

Third, the findings suggest that some changes need to be made to the on-line curriculum-based design, such as readjusting the format to ensure 20 hours of training, an accountability that the content was understood (e.g., test score), and creating a mechanism to allow participants to talk to one another and more participation of the facilitator. These changes would provide for more content-rich on-line courses and enhance learning (Donohue, 2002).

## Limitations of Study

The major limitation of this study was the low number of responses from both child care professionals and child care directors. While this is not an uncommon dilemma in survey

research, in this case it caused difficulties in terms of finding statistically significant differences among respondent groups. Unfortunately, increasing the response rate significantly was problematic due to resource and time limitations. In addition, based on actual experience of taking the course by this researcher, it is clear that some of the responses were implausible given the design of the course. For example, many on-line respondents answered yes to questions about an orientation when there was no on-line orientation. One way to investigate this situation would be to conduct focus group studies to illuminate this issue, and to gather more in-depth information on transfer of training content into practices.

#### Suggestions for Future Research

The results of this research raise two important issues for further research. The most important question to consider is why the classroom group did not agree as strongly as the Internet group with more hours on applying training content into classroom practices. Is it the case that on-line instruction is superior to classroom training? If so, which factors account for this difference? While it is beyond the scope of this project to find conclusive answers to these questions, it would be worthwhile to pursue these issues. The second avenue for future research involves the unexpected diversity of occupations among course participants. As stated earlier, a large number of course participants who completed the course did not meet the study criteria of working in a child care setting. The course participants included assembly-line workers, auto mechanics, interior decorators and other occupations. It would be helpful to have a better understanding of this surprising fact. Perhaps, people considering a career change into the field of early

childhood education utilized ELCCT as a screening mechanism to assist with their decision-making.

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APPENDIX A



**OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

Sequoyah Memorial Office Building  
2400 N. Lincoln Blvd.  
P.O. Box 25352  
Oklahoma City, OK 73125-0352  
(405) 521-3646 • www.okdhs.org



July 1, 2005

Dear Child Care Staff:

This letter is to ask your participation in a research project for the Division of Child Care. The project is looking at the entry-level child care training program (ELCCT) offered through the Center for Early Childhood Professional Development.

Selection for participation in this survey is based upon enrollment in ELCCT. Participation in the project is **voluntary**. Participants completing the survey will be eligible for a drawing for one of three **\$25.00 US Savings Bond**. In order to be eligible for the drawing, surveys must be postmarked by **July 22, 2005**.

Please answer all questions honestly and to the best of your ability. The information from the surveys will be used as a group and the identities of the respondents will not be revealed. The results of this study will provide insight into the entry-level training program and used to make recommendations for revisions to the course.

Thank you in advance for your participation in this valuable study. If you have any questions you may contact Sherrill Pallotta or Mitzi Lee at 405-521-3561 or 1-800-347-2276.

Sincerely,

Nancy vonBargen  
Director of Child Care Services

Sherrill Pallotta  
Program Administrator

Mitzi Lee  
Program Manager

For information on subjects' rights, contact Dr. Sue Jacobs, IRB Chair, 415 Whitehurst Hall, 405-744-1676.

### Information to Participants



Project Title: Evaluation of the entry-level child care training program (ELCCT).

Investigators: Sherrill Pallotta, Mitzi Lee.

**Purpose:** The project involves surveying child care staff and directors who have enrolled in ELCCT. It will survey directors who have had staff enrolled in ELCCT. This research involves participant's perception of the relevance and applicability of the training content; child care staff's confidence level and an overall impression of the ELCCT training. Director and child care staff's perception of the level of director's involvement in professional development will be gathered. In addition, a comparison of the delivery methods of course content's applicability to classroom practices will be researched. A comparison of the on-line delivery method will be examined according to best practices in the field.

**Procedures:** The project will involve the completion of the survey. The first part of the survey will ask for demographic information such as your age, gender, race or ethnicity, your education, the age level you work with, and your program's licensing capacity. The next section of the survey asks you to respond to statements about the ELCCT training. It will take no longer than 30 minutes to complete the survey. You will then put the completed survey in the addressed and stamped envelope that accompanied the survey and mail it back to the Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care.

**Risks of Participation:** There are no known risks associated with this project greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life.

**Benefits:** The benefits are that you will be providing information for valuable research into entry-level training.

**Confidentiality:** All information about you will be kept confidential and will not be released. Each survey will be numbered in order to identify winning individuals in drawing. After drawing is completed, all forms with numbers will be destroyed. The principal investigators and the faculty advisor are the only people who will have access to the data. The data will be reported in the aggregate.

**Compensation:** The child care staff and directors who return the surveys by the requested date will be included in a drawing for a total of six ( three for directors and three for child care staff) \$25 U.S. Savings Bonds.

**Contacts:** If you have questions regarding the research, please contact Sherrill Pallotta or Mitzi Lee at 405-521-3561 or 1-800-347-2276 or Dr. Deborah Norris at 405-744-7084. For information on subjects' rights, contact Dr. Sue Jacobs, IRB Chair, 415 Whitehurst Hall, 405-744-1676.

**Participant Rights:** I understand that my participation is voluntary, that there is no penalty for refusal to participate, and that I am free to withdraw my consent and participation in this project at any time, without penalty.

CECPD

Entry Level Child Care Training (ELCCT) Child Care Professional Survey

1. Please mark the boxes that best describe you. If under age 18 do not complete this survey.

1a.  Male  Female

1b. Age at last birthday \_\_\_\_\_

1c.  White  African-American  Native American  Latino/Hispanic  Asian

Bi-racial/Multi-racial  other \_\_\_\_\_

1d.  Single/never married  divorced/widowed  married/living with partner

1e. Months in position as child care professional \_\_\_\_\_

2. Please mark your highest educational level.

**COMPLETED**

- High school or GED
- Some College
- Associates Degree; Major \_\_\_\_\_
- Bachelors Degree; Major \_\_\_\_\_
- Graduate level

Indicate if you have completed the following credential/certificates

- CDA (Child Development Associate)
- CCP (Child Care Professional)
- Certificate of Mastery

3. Please mark all categories that apply:

**CURRENTLY WORKING ON**

- High school or GED
- Some College
- Associates Degree; Major \_\_\_\_\_
- Bachelors Degree; Major \_\_\_\_\_
- Graduate level

Indicate if you are working on the following credentials/certificates

- CDA (Child Development Associate)
- CCP (Child Care Professional)
- Certificate of Mastery

4. Please mark the boxes that best describe the facility you work in.

4a.  Profit  Non-profit      4b.  Rural  Metro

4c.  Child Care Center       Head Start  Public School  Part-Day  School-Age

4d.  One Star       One Star +       Two Star       Three Star

4e. Please mark the licensed capacity of the program where you work.

0-25 children       26-50 children       51-75 children       over 76 children

4f. Please mark the age group(s) in your classroom.

0-11months       12-23 months       2-year olds       3-year olds       4-5year olds

6 years and older

5. What delivery method did you utilize when enrolling in the ELCCT course?

- On-line       Classroom (taught by a trainer)

6. What is your enrollment status

- currently enrolled       completed ELCCT       dropped

The following questions focus on the Entry-Level Child Care Training (ELCCT) program offered through the Center for Early Childhood Professional Development. Place an "X" in the columns that best describe your opinion.

7. The content in the chapters listed below were relevant for me in my new role:

Chapter Content	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree Somewhat	Strongly Disagree (State reasons in comments)	Comments
1. Definition of program and professional terms and organizations					
2. Child Care As a Profession					
3. Child Development Observation/Assessment					
4. Behavior and Guidance					
5. Developmentally Appropriate Practice					
6. Child Care Health Practices					
7. Handling Emergencies					
8. Indoor/Outdoor Safety Practices					
9. Communication Parents/Children/ Colleagues					

8. Rank the top three topics from the above table (1-9) that you consider the most important for you to know as a new staff:

1<sup>st</sup> # \_\_\_\_\_  
 2<sup>nd</sup> # \_\_\_\_\_  
 3<sup>rd</sup> # \_\_\_\_\_

9. Based on your experiences in ELCCT what other information needs to be added to the entry-level training?

10. What is your overall impression of the ELCCT training course?

For questions 11-12, please place an "X" in the columns that best describe your opinion.

11. As a result of the ELCCT training, I have gained confidence in my understanding in the following areas:

Teacher Practices	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree Somewhat	Strongly Disagree (state reason in comments)	Comments
Setting up the Classroom Environment					
Developing Learning Activities					
Exhibiting Health/Safety Practices					
Interacting With Children					
Interacting With Parents					
Using Positive Guidance Practices					
Conducting Observation/ Assessment					
Preparation to teach					

IF YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE ELCCT COURSE, INDICATE THE DEGREE TO WHICH YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS.

12. I was able to apply the following training content to my classroom practices

Chapters	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree Somewhat	Strongly Disagree (State reasons in comments)	Comments
1. Definition of program and professional terms and organizations					
2. Child Care As a Profession					
3. Child Development Observation/Assessment					
4. Behavior and Guidance					
5. Developmentally Appropriate Practice					
6. Child Care Health Practices					
7. Handling Emergencies					
8. Indoor/Outdoor Safety Practices					
9. Communication Parents/Children/ Colleagues					

For questions 13-14, please place an "X" in the columns that best describe your opinion.  
**13. How would you describe your director's involvement with you in the following areas of staff development?**

	Very Involved	Somewhat Involved	Little involvement	No involvement
Encouraging you to attend ELCCT training				
Encouraging you to try new ideas learned from ELCCT training				
Follow-up discussion with you regarding ELCCT training content				
Assisting you to develop a career plan				
Providing administrative support to you				
Helping you to select appropriate training				

**ONLY COMPLETE THE REMAINING QUESTIONS IF YOU TOOK THE ELCCT COURSE ON-LINE.**

**14. If you took the ELCCT course on-line, please respond to the following statements:**

ELCCT course	Strongly Agree	Agree Somewhat	Disagree Somewhat	Strongly Disagree	Comments
Easy to navigate					
Content was organized					
Attractive design					
Comfortable with using the computer					
Comfortable in using the internet					
Facilitator responded to content questions					
Able to could communicate with other providers taking the course					
This was a positive learning experience					

15. Did you receive technical support?  Yes  No

16. If you received technical support, did the person convey information in non-technical terms?  
 Yes  No  N/A



17. Why did you choose to take the course on line?  
 Time  Prefer individual learning  Convenience  Location  Other (Please explain) \_\_\_\_\_
18. Where was the course taken?  
 Library  Workplace  Home  Career Technology Center  
 Other (Please explain) \_\_\_\_\_
19. Is this your first time to take any on-line?  Yes  No
20. Were you given an orientation on how to use the computer to navigate the course beyond down-loading media?  Yes  No
21. Were you able to access resources to help you complete the course?  Yes  No
22. When receiving feedback on incorrect responses, do you prefer:  
 automatic response of correct answer  
or  
 additional opportunities to select the correct answer
23. Did you find the following features helpful in learning the content?  
Video clips  Yes  No  
Audio-streaming  Yes  No  
On-screen written text  Yes  No
24. Do you feel that high quality learning can take place without having face to face interaction?  
 Yes  No
25. How many hours did it take you to complete the on-line ELCCT course? \_\_\_\_\_
25. Would you take another course on-line?  Yes  No

Return: Sherrill Pallotta  
OKDHS Division of Child Care  
P.O. Box 25352  
Oklahoma City, OK 73125

APPENDIX B



**OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

Sequoyah Memorial Office Building  
2400 N. Lincoln Blvd.  
P.O. Box 25352  
Oklahoma City, OK 73125-0352  
(405) 521-3646 • www.okdhs.org



July 1, 2005

Dear Child Care Director:

This letter is to ask your participation in a research project for the Division of Child Care. The project is looking at the entry-level child care training program (ELCCT) offered through the Center for Early Childhood Professional Development.

Selection for participation in this survey is based upon enrollment of your staff and/or yourself in ELCCT. Participation in the project is **voluntary**. Participants completing the survey will be eligible for a drawing for one of three **\$25.00** US Savings Bonds. In order to be eligible for the drawing, surveys must be postmarked by **July 22, 2005**.

Please answer all questions honestly and to the best of your ability. The information from the surveys will be used as a group and the identities of the respondents will not be revealed. The results of this study will provide insight into the entry-level training program and used to make recommendations for revisions to the course.

Thank you in advance for your participation in this valuable study. If you have any questions you may contact Sherrill Pallotta or Mitzi Lee at 405-521-3561 or 1-800-347-2276.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Nancy vonBargen in cursive.

Nancy vonBargen  
Director of Child Care Services

Handwritten signature of Sherrill Pallotta in cursive.

Sherrill Pallotta  
Program Administrator

Handwritten signature of Mitzi Lee in cursive.

Mitzi Lee  
Program Manager

For information on subjects' rights, contact Dr. Sue Jacobs, IRB Chair, 415 Whitehurst Hall, 405-744-1676.

### Information to Participants

Project Title: Evaluation of the entry-level child care training program (ELCCT).

Investigators: Sherrill Pallotta, Mitzi Lee.

OSU
Institutional Review Board
Approved <u>6/1/05</u>
Expires <u>5/31/06</u>
Initials <u>cy</u>
<u>HEOST/6</u>

**Purpose:** The project involves surveying child care staff and directors who have enrolled in ELCCT. It will survey directors who have had staff enrolled in ELCCT. This research involves participant's perception of the relevance and applicability of the training content; child care staff's confidence level and an overall impression of the ELCCT training. Director and child care staff's perception of the level of director's involvement in professional development will be gathered. In addition, a comparison of the delivery methods of course content's applicability to classroom practices will be researched. A comparison of the on-line delivery method will be examined according to best practices in the field.

**Procedures:** The project will involve the completion of the survey. The first part of the survey will ask for demographic information such as your age, gender, race or ethnicity, your education, the age level you work with, and your program's licensing capacity. The next section of the survey asks you to respond to statements about the ELCCT training. It will take no longer than 30 minutes to complete the survey. You will then put the completed survey in the addressed and stamped envelope that accompanied the survey and mail it back to the Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care.

**Risks of Participation:** There are no known risks associated with this project greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life.

**Benefits:** The benefits are that you will be providing information for valuable research into entry-level training.

**Confidentiality:** All information about you will be kept confidential and will not be released. Each survey will be numbered in order to identify winning individuals in drawing. After drawing is completed, all forms with numbers will be destroyed. The principal investigators and the faculty advisor are the only people who will have access to the data. The data will be reported in the aggregate.

**Compensation:** The child care staff and directors who return the surveys by the requested date will be included in a drawing for a total of six ( three for directors and three for child care staff) \$25 U.S. Savings Bonds.

**Contacts:** If you have questions regarding the research, please contact Sherrill Pallotta or Mitzi Lee at 405-521-3561 or 1-800-347-2276 or Dr. Deborah Norris at 405-744-7084. For information on subjects' rights, contact Dr. Sue Jacobs, IRB Chair, 415 Whitehurst Hall, 405-744-1676.

**Participant Rights:** I understand that my participation is voluntary, that there is no penalty for refusal to participate, and that I am free to withdraw my consent and participation in this project at any time, without penalty.

CECPD

Entry Level Child Care Training (ELCCT) Director Survey

1. Please mark the boxes that best describe you.

1a.  Male  Female

1b. Age at last birthday \_\_\_\_\_

1c.  White  African-American  Native American  Latino/Hispanic  Asian  
 Bi-racial/Multi-racial  other \_\_\_\_\_

1d.  Single/never married  divorced/widowed  married/living with partner

1e. Months in position as Director? \_\_\_\_\_

1f. Total number of years you have worked as an early childhood professional: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Please mark your highest educational level.

**COMPLETED**

- High school or GED
- Some College
- Associates Degree; Major \_\_\_\_\_
- Bachelors Degree; Major \_\_\_\_\_
- Graduate Degree; Major \_\_\_\_\_

3. Please mark all categories that apply:

**CURRENTLY WORKING ON**

- High school or GED
- Some College
- Associates Degree; Major \_\_\_\_\_
- Bachelors Degree; Major \_\_\_\_\_
- Graduate degree; Major \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate if you have completed the following credentials/certificates

- CDA (Child Development Associate)
- CCP (Child Care Professional)
- Certificate of Mastery (2 yr college)
- Director Certificate of Mastery
- Bronze level or higher

Indicate if you are working on the following credentials/certificates

- CDA (Child Development Associate)
- CCP (Child Care Professional)
- Certificate of Mastery (2 yr college)
- Director Certificate of Mastery
- Bronze level or higher

4. Please mark the boxes that best describe the facility you work in.

4a.  Profit  Non-profit    4b.  Rural  Metro

4c.  Child Care Center     Head Start  Public School  Part-Day  School-Age

4d.  One Star     One Star +     Two Star     Three Star

4e. Please mark the licensed capacity of the program where you work.

0-25 children     26-50 children     51-75 children     over 76 children

The following questions focus on the Entry-Level Child Care Training (ELCCT) program offered through the Center for Early Childhood Professional Development.

5. Evaluate the **RELEVANCE** of **EACH** of the topics in the Chapters in regard to training of newly hired staff by placing an "X" in the columns that best describe your opinion.

Chapter Content	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree Somewhat	Strongly Disagree (State reasons in comments)	Comments
1. Definition of program and professional terms and organizations					
2. Child Care As a Profession					
3. Child Development Observation/Assessment					
4. Behavior and Guidance					
5. Developmentally Appropriate Practice					
6. Child Care Health Practices					
7. Handling Emergencies					
8. Indoor/Outdoor Safety Practices					
9. Communication Parents/Children/Colleagues					

6. Rank the top three topics from the above table (1-9) that you consider the most important for your new staff to know

1<sup>st</sup> # \_\_\_\_\_  
 2<sup>nd</sup> # \_\_\_\_\_  
 3<sup>rd</sup> # \_\_\_\_\_

7. What other information needs to be added to the entry-level training?

8. What is your overall impression of the ELCCT training course?

9. Indicate the **NUMBER** of staff by **DELIVERY METHOD** used in taking ELCCT

On-line \_\_\_\_\_  
 Classroom (taught by a trainer) \_\_\_\_\_

Question #10 applies to your staff if they have taken the ELCCT course **ON-LINE**

10. As a result of the ELCCT training have you observed positive changes with your staff in any of the following areas. Place an "X" in each of the columns that best describe your opinion.

Teacher Practices	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree Somewhat	Strongly Disagree (state reason in comments)	Comments
Setting up the Classroom Environment					
Developing Learning Activities					
Exhibiting Health/Safety Practices					
Conducting Observation/ Assessment					
Interacting With Children					
Interacting With Parents					
Using Positive Guidance Practices					
Preparation to teach					

Question #11 applies to your staff if they have taken the ELCCT course in a **CLASSROOM SETTING**

11. As a result of the ELCCT training have you observed positive changes with your staff in any of the following areas. Place an "X" in each of the columns that best describe your opinion.

Teacher Practices	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree Somewhat	Strongly Disagree (state reason in comments)	Comments
Setting up the Classroom Environment					
Developing Learning Activities					
Exhibiting Health/Safety Practices					
Conducting Observation/ Assessment					
Interacting With Children					
Interacting With Parents					
Using Positive Guidance Practices					
Preparation to teach					

12. How would you describe your involvement in the following categories of professional development of your new staff? Place an "X" in each of the columns that best describe your opinion.

	Very Involved	Somewhat Involved	Little involvement	No involvement	Don't see this as my responsibility
Encouraging staff to attend ELCCT training					
Encouraging staff to try new ideas learned from ELCCT training					
Follow-up discussion with staff regarding ELCCT training content					
Assisting staff to develop a career plan					
Providing administrative support to staff					
Helping staff to select appropriate training					

13. If you answered "little or no involvement" or "don't see as my responsibility" to any category listed above, please indicate your reason.

14. Do you think your staff have a better understanding of the licensing requirements as a result of the ELCCT course?

- Yes  No

The remaining questions only need to be completed by **Directors** that have **enrolled in ELCCT**

15. What delivery method did you utilize when enrolling in the ELCCT course?

- On-line  
 Classroom (taught by a trainer)

16. Why did you take the ELCCT course?

- to meet annual training hours  
 to qualify for the Director registry  
 to understand what staff are learning

If you have **completed** the ELCCT course, indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statement. Place an "X" in each of the columns for questions 17-18 that best describe your opinion.

17. I was able to apply the following training content to my program.

Chapters	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree Somewhat	Strongly Disagree (State reasons in comments)	Comments
1. Definition of program and professional terms and organizations					
2. Child Care As a Profession					
3. Child Development Observation/Assessment					
4. Behavior and Guidance					
5. Developmentally Appropriate Practice					
6. Child Care Health Practices					
7. Handling Emergencies					
8. Indoor/Outdoor Safety Practices					
9. Communication Parents/Children/Colleagues					

18. If you took the ELCCT course on-line answer the following questions:

ELCCT course	Strongly Agree	Agree Somewhat	Disagree Somewhat	Strongly Disagree	Comments
Easy to navigate					
Content was well-organized					
Attractive design					
Comfortable with using the computer					
Comfortable in using the internet					
Facilitator responded to content questions					
I could communicate with other providers taking the course					
This was a positive learning experience					



19. Did you receive technical support?  Yes  No
20. If you received technical support, did the person convey information in non-technical terms?  
 Yes  No  N/A
21. Where was the course taken?  
 Library  Workplace  Home  Career Technology Center  
 Other (Please explain) \_\_\_\_\_
22. Is this your first time to take a course on-line?  Yes  No
23. Were you given an orientation on how to use the computer to navigate the course beyond down-loading media?  Yes  No
24. Were you able to access resources to help you complete the course?  Yes  No
25. When receiving feedback on incorrect responses, do you prefer:  
 automatic response of correct answer  
or  
 additional opportunities to select the correct answer
26. Did you find the following features helpful in learning the content?  
Video clips  Yes  No  
Audio-streaming  Yes  No  
On-screen written text  Yes  No
27. Do you feel that high quality learning can take place without having face to face interaction?  
 Yes  No
28. How many hours did it take you to complete the on-line ELCCT course? \_\_\_\_\_
29. Would you take another course on-line?  Yes  No

Return: Sherrill Pallotta  
OKDHS Division of Child Care  
P.O. Box 25352  
Oklahoma City, OK 73125

**Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board**

Date: Wednesday, June 01, 2005  
IRB Application No HE0566  
Proposal Title: Evaluation of the Entry-Level child Care Training Program-ELCCT

Reviewed and Exempt  
Processed as:

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved Protocol Expires: 5/31/2006

Principal

Investigator(s)

Sherrill Pallotta  
P.O. Box 25352  
Oklahoma City, OK 7312

Mitzi Lee  
P.O. Box 23532  
Oklahoma City, OK 7312

Deborah J. Norris  
226C HES  
Stillwater, OK 74078

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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.

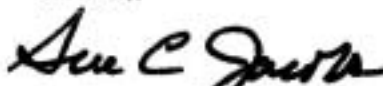
The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

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.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. 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 this 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 Beth McTernan in 415 Whitehurst (phone: 405-744-5700, emct@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,



Sue C. Jacobs, Chair  
Institutional Review Board

Table 1

*Child Care Professional Mailed Surveys*

---

Sample	Classroom	On-line
Mailed surveys n=1760	n=999	n=761
Received surveys n=181	n=104	n=77

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Table 2

*Child Care Directors Mailed Surveys*

Sample	Classroom	On-line	Staff taken course
Mailed surveys n=501	n=142	n=86	n=273
Received surveys n=94	n=29	n=27	n=38

Table 3

*Child Care Professionals Demographic Information Within the Delivery methods*

Characteristic	On-Line n	%	Classroom n	%
Level of Education for Child Care Professionals				
High School/GED	39	38.2	24	32.4
Some College	43	42.2	37	50.0
Associate Degree	9	8.8	8	10.8
Bachelors Degree	10	9.8	5	6.8
Graduate Degree	1	1.0	0	0
No answer	<u>2</u>		<u>3</u>	
	104		77	
Ethnicity				
White	75	72.1	53	68.8
African-American	12	11.5	10	13.0
Native American	7	6.7	7	7.7
Latino/Hispanic	4	3.8	2	2.6
Asian	2	1.9	0	0
Bi-racial/Multi-Racial	3	2.9	5	6.5
Hawaiian	<u>1</u>	1.0	<u>0</u>	0
	104		77	

Table 4

*Child Care Directors Demographic Information*

Characteristic	On-Line n	%	Classroom n	%
Level of Education for Child Care Professionals				
High School/GED	3	13.3	6	19.4
Some College	7	30.4	18	58.1
Associate Degree	5	21.7	1	3.2
Bachelors Degree	6	26.1	5	16.1
Graduate Degree	<u>2</u>	8.7	<u>1</u>	3.2
	23		31	
Ethnicity				
White	16	69.6	26	78.8
African-American	5	21.7	2	6.1
Native American	1	4.3	4	12.1
Latino/Hispanic	1	4.3	1	3.0
Asian	0	0	0	0
Bi-racial/Multi-Racial	<u>0</u>	0	<u>0</u>	0
	23		33	

Table 5

*Perception of Technological Support Features Scale*

Question	Child Care Professional Survey	Director survey
Did you receive technical support?	15.	19.
Were you given an orientation on how to use the computer to navigate the course beyond down-loading media?	20.	23.
Were you able to access resources to help you complete the course?	21.	24.
Did you find the following features helpful in learning the content? Video clips Audio-streaming On-screen written text	23.	26.

Table 6

*Perception of Application of Knowledge Scale*

---

I was able to apply the following training content to my classroom (or program) practices:

---

1. Definition of program and professional terms and organizations
  2. Child Care As a Profession
  3. Child Development Observation/Assessment
  4. Behavior and Guidance
  5. Developmentally Appropriate Practice
  6. Child Care Health Practices
  7. Handling Emergencies
  8. Indoor/Outdoor Safety Practices
  9. Communication Parents/Children/ Colleagues
-



Table 7

*Perception of Technological Support Features: Child Care Professionals*

Survey Item	N	% of yes=		
Did you receive technical support?	n=38	37.3		
Were you given an orientation on how to use the computer to navigate the course beyond downloading media?	n=44	44.4		
Were you able to access resources to help you complete the course?	n=88	88.0		
Did you find the following features helpful in learning the content?				
----Video clips	n=81	80.2		
----Audio-streaming	n=81	81.0		
----On-screen written text	n=98	96.1		
<b>6-item scale</b>	<b>n=96</b>	<b>M=4.25</b>	<b>sd=1.32</b>	<b>R=0 - 6</b>

Table 8

*Perception of Technological Support Features: Directors*

Survey Item	N	% of yes=		
Did you receive technical support?	n=16	59.3		
Were you given an orientation on how to use the computer to navigate the course beyond down-loading media?	n=10	38.5		
Were you able to access resources to help you complete the course?	n=24	92.3		
Did you find the following features helpful in learning the content?				
----Video clips	n=19	79.2		
----Audio-streaming	n=22	81.8		
----On-screen written text	n=23	95.8		
<b>6-item scale</b>	<b>n=22</b>	<b>M=4.59</b>	<b>sd=1.10</b>	<b>R=3 - 6</b>

Table 9

## Means and Standard Deviations Given for Technical Support

If you received technical support, did the person convey information in non-technical terms?	N	Mean	SD	Range
Child Care Professionals	n=37	.946	.229	0 – 1
Directors	n=15	1.000	.000	1 – 1

Table 10

## ELCCT On-Line Technological Design Features

Questions	<u>Child Care Professionals</u>		<u>Directors</u>	
	N	%	N	%
<b>Easy to navigate</b>				
Strongly Agree	80	79.2	20	76.9
Agree	17	16.8	5	19.2
Disagree Somewhat	4	4	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0	1	3.8
<b>Content was organized</b>				
Strongly Agree	82	81.2	20	80.0
Agree	16	15.8	5	20.0
Disagree Somewhat	3	3	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0	0	0
<b>Attractive Design</b>				
Strongly Agree	60	59.4	17	68.0
Agree	33	32.7	7	28.0
Disagree Somewhat	7	6.9	1	4
Strongly Disagree	1	1	0	0
<b>Facilitator responded to content questions</b>				
Strongly Agree	68	67.3	20	83.3
Agree	21	20.8	4	16.7
Disagree Somewhat	6	5.9	0	0
Strongly Disagree	6	5.9	0	0
<b>Able to communicate with other providers</b>				
Strongly Agree	50	49.5	12	52.2
Agree	23	22.8	9	39.1
Disagree Somewhat	17	16.8	4.3	4.3
Strongly Disagree	11	10.9	4.3	0

Table 11

*Perception of Application of Knowledge to Classroom Practices*

Survey Item	Percent Agreeing Strongly			$\chi^2$
	On-Line Hours		Classroom	
	7 or More	6 or Less		
Professional Terms	46.7	31.4	31.6	$\chi^2(2)=3.342, p=.19$
Child Care Profession	57.8	35.3	47.4	$\chi^2(2)= 4.898, p=.09$
Observe - Assess	62.2	42.3	42.9	$\chi^2(2)= 5.134, p=.08$
Behavior - Guidance	71.1	45.1	56.6	$\chi^2(2)=6.608, p=.04$
Dev. App. Practices	64.4	47.1	59.7	$\chi^2(2)=3.311, p=.19$
Health Practices	71.1	54.9	56.6	$\chi^2(2)=3.234, p=.20$
Handling Emergencies	71.1	51.0	58.7	$\chi^2(2)=4.079, p=.13$
Safety Practices	66.7	48.0	53.9	$\chi^2(2)=3.486, p=.18$
Communication	71.1	47.1	51.9	$\chi^2(2)=6.305, p=.04$

Table 12

*Perception of Confidence in Role in the Classroom*

Survey Item	Percent Agreeing Strongly			$\chi^2$
	On-Line Hours		Classroom	
	7 or More	6 or Less		
Room Environment	52.2	29.4	44.3	$\chi^2(2)=5.443, p=.07$
Learning Activities	42.2	33.3	38.0	$\chi^2(2)=0.808, p=.67$
Health/Safety Practices	60.9	45.1	56.3	$\chi^2(2)=2.662, p=.26$
Interacting w/Children	56.5	49.0	49.4	$\chi^2(2)=0.724, p=.70$
Interacting w/Parents	39.1	45.1	40.5	$\chi^2(2)=0.411, p=.81$
Positive Guidance	71.7	45.1	53.2	$\chi^2(2)=7.324, p=.03$
Observe - Assess	50.0	32.7	42.5	$\chi^2(2)=3.062, p=.22$
Preparation to Teach	53.3	34.6	40.5	$\chi^2(2)=3.608, p=.17$

VITA

Sherrill Dee Pallotta

Candidate for Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: COMPARING ENTRY LEVEL CHILD CARE TRAINING DELIVERY METHODS

Major Field: Human Development and Family Science

Biographical:

Education: Bachelor of Arts in Journalism/Public Relations from Central State University, Edmond, Oklahoma in May 1976. Completed coursework in Secondary Education and Communication Arts at Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, Oklahoma from September 1980-June 1984. Completed the requirements for the Master of Science degree with a major in Early Childhood Education at Oklahoma State University, December, 2005.

Work Experience: Oklahoma Department of Human Services 1980 to present employed as a Program Administrator, Division of Child Care from August 2000 to present; as a Program Manger, Division of Child Care from 1992 to 2000; as a Budget Manager III, Division of Children & Youth Services from 1989 to 1992; as an Administrative Hearing Office II, Review and Hearing Board from February 1989-November 1989; as an Administrative Officer II, Division of Children & Youth Services from 1984 to 1989; as a Child Welfare Social Worker II in McIntosh County from 1983 to 1984; as a Social Worker I in McIntosh County from 1980 to 1983

Professional Memberships: National Association for the Education of Young Children, Early Childhood Association of Oklahoma, Southern Early Childhood Association, Oklahoma Certified Public Manager Association

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Date of Degree: December, 2005

Institution: Oklahoma State University

Location: Stillwater, Oklahoma

Title of Study: COMPARING ENTRY LEVEL CHILD CARE TRAINING  
DELIVERY METHODS

Pages in Study: 72

Candidate for the Degree of Master of Science

Major Field: Early Childhood Education

Scope and Method of Study: The purpose of this study was to compare perceptions about applicability and confidence regarding the content of the entry-level child care (ELCCT) training course. Of particular interest are comparisons between on-line and classroom delivery methods. In addition, a comparison of the on-line delivery method was examined in the context of best practices. Participants' demographic characteristics were checked for differences by delivery methods.

Findings and conclusions: A categorical analysis indicated a significant association between child care professionals taking the course on-line for 7 or more hours and the Positive Guidance and Room Environment content and increased confidence in their role in the classroom. In addition, significance was found for child care professionals taking ELCCT on-line 7 or more hours and applying knowledge to classroom practices in two content areas: Behavior and Guidance and Communication. A comparison of demographics revealed a marginal age difference, with those taking the course on-line as younger.

ADVISOR'S APPROVAL Dr. Deborah Norris