

Fall 12-15-2012

# Teachers' Perceptions of Leadership in Young Children

Deborah Lee Fox

*University of New Orleans*, [deborah\\_fox@msn.com](mailto:deborah_fox@msn.com)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.uno.edu/td>



Part of the [Gifted Education Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Fox, Deborah Lee, "Teachers' Perceptions of Leadership in Young Children" (2012). *University of New Orleans Theses and Dissertations*. 1546.

<https://scholarworks.uno.edu/td/1546>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Dissertations and Theses at ScholarWorks@UNO. It has been accepted for inclusion in University of New Orleans Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@UNO. The author is solely responsible for ensuring compliance with copyright. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@uno.edu](mailto:scholarworks@uno.edu).

Teachers' Perceptions of Leadership in Young Children

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
University of New Orleans  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy  
in  
Special Education

by

Deborah Lee Fox

B.A., University of New Orleans, 1979  
M.Ed., University of New Orleans, 1994

December 2012

## **Dedication**

To my father, Jerry Lee, who first dreamed this dream for me; and

To my father-in-law, Charles Fox, who gently nudged me to achieve this dream.

To the rest of my family,

My mother-in-law, Rose Mary Fox, who always asked about my research;

My mother, Joyce Lee, who always told me I could achieve this goal;

My husband, Patrick Fox, for always being there for me; and

My daughter, Rebecca Fox, for always inspiring me to be a better person.

## Acknowledgements

First, I thank God for carrying me through many serious obstacles to finish this dissertation and for placing the people I needed for this journey in my path at the right times.

I want to acknowledge the members of my doctoral committee: Dr. Linda Flynn-Wilson, Dr. Patricia Austin, Dr. Ann O’Hanlon, Dr. Kate Reynolds, and Dr. Judith Kieff. My co-chairs, Dr. Flynn-Wilson and Dr. Austin both went “above and beyond” to help me finish this dissertation, and for this, I am eternally grateful. They were both generous with their time, and I truly enjoyed the rich and meaningful conversations we had along the way.

Dr. Flynn-Wilson was with me from the very beginning of this journey. I want to thank her for staying with me until the end and for being so supportive. I’ll never forget how she always encouraged me by saying things such as, “Keep going” and “You’re almost there.” She inspired my research and motivated me to continue even when I became discouraged. I also want to thank her for helping me develop the *RLIC Survey*.

Dr. Austin joined my committee at a time when I needed structure and support. She told me she would assist me in completing my dissertation, and I’m thankful we have both come to the end of that journey! I believe there will be more projects ahead for us. I want to express my gratitude for her guidance, encouragement, and advice. Her expert editing and careful attention to details saved me hours of work at the end when time was critical.

I also want to thank Dr. O’Hanlon, my methodologist, who shared her expertise and time with me. Her help in coding and analyzing data was invaluable. I am grateful for her guidance with statistical procedures as well as her unending patience and steady reassurance.

I wish to express my gratitude to Dr. Reynolds for her valuable comments and suggestions. Ever since we met, she has encouraged me to enter the doctoral program. I thank her for believing in me and for always being there to provide encouragement and advice.

I want to acknowledge Dr. Kieff for serving on my committee and for her thoughtful suggestions. Dr. Kieff has been an early childhood education mentor of mine ever since I was a student in her class, more than 10 years ago.

Finally, I want to express my love and gratitude to my wonderful family: Mom, Pat and Rebecca. I thank them for having faith in me and for putting up with me during this long process. Rebecca, I hope this accomplishment will inspire you to follow your dreams without letting anything stand in your way and remind you that perseverance can be rewarding.

Of course, there are many others who have provided support during this process. I want to thank my dear friends: Mary Badeaux, Terie Capella, Connie Brown, Nancy Kleppner, Carolyn O'Hare, Robbie Thibodeaux, Claire Weilbaeher, Lana Nuccio, Dedra Johnson, and Rebecca Fox—for reading, discussing, listening, checking data, offering emotional support, or giving me whatever I needed along the way. I also would like to acknowledge Dr. Bud Wellington and Dr. Mary Banbury who were instrumental in helping me begin this program.

## Table of Contents

List of Tables .....	viii
Abstract .....	ix
Chapter One: Introduction .....	1
Overview .....	1
Statement of the Problem .....	4
Significance of the Study .....	5
Teacher influence .....	6
Teacher interactions .....	7
Conceptual Framework .....	8
Purpose of Study .....	9
Research Questions .....	11
Definition of Terms .....	11
Background of the Study: Personal and Professional Experiences .....	12
My early childhood experiences .....	13
My daughter's early childhood experiences .....	14
My professional experiences .....	15
Conclusion .....	15
Chapter Two: Review of the Literature .....	17
An Overview of Leadership .....	17
Theories of leadership .....	17
Overview of Child Leadership .....	23
Characteristics of Child Leadership .....	26
Instruments Used to Measure Leadership in Children .....	26
Research Studies on Child Leadership .....	34
Type One. Studies in which teachers nominated, classified, or described student leaders .....	36
Type Two. Studies in which researchers nominated the student leaders .....	43
Type Three. Studies in which researchers used test data and observations .....	47
Type Four. Studies in which students evaluated peers using sociograms, peer ratings, or self-reporting .....	48
Type Five. Studies in which parents nominated or described leaders .....	50
Summary of the Studies .....	51
Critique of the studies reviewed .....	51
Teacher Influence .....	53
The classroom as an environment for leadership .....	55
Recognizing Child Leadership .....	56
Conclusion .....	58
Chapter Three: Methodology .....	59
Research Design .....	59
Survey Instrument .....	60
Instrument development .....	64
Reliability .....	67
Content validity .....	67

Variables .....	69
Data Collection Procedures.....	69
Sample.....	70
Early childhood teachers.....	71
Teachers of the gifted.....	72
Characteristics of the Sample.....	72
Certifications.....	73
Grade levels .....	75
Training.....	76
Data Analysis Procedures .....	76
Research question one.....	77
Research question two .....	77
Research question three .....	78
Worldview.....	80
Researcher bias .....	81
Conclusion .....	82
Chapter Four: Results .....	83
Overview.....	83
Purpose of Study.....	83
Research Question One.....	83
Finding one .....	84
Research Question Two .....	92
Summary of scenario response data.....	97
Teacher recognition and expert ratings.....	97
Finding two .....	98
Research Question Three .....	100
Teacher response rate to leadership scenarios .....	102
Finding three .....	103
Finding four .....	103
Coded teacher responses.....	105
Finding five.....	106
Finding six .....	110
Finding seven.....	112
Thematic content analysis of teacher responses .....	117
Finding eight .....	117
Ancillary Findings .....	130
Identification of leadership in less obvious scenarios.....	130
Misidentification of leadership in scenarios .....	132
Failure to identify leadership in scenarios .....	132
Corresponding phrasing in descriptions and responses .....	135
Conclusion .....	138
Chapter Five: Discussion .....	139
Overview of the Study .....	139
Discussion of the Findings.....	139
Finding one .....	139

Finding two .....	146
Finding three .....	151
Finding four .....	153
Finding five.....	154
Finding six .....	155
Finding seven.....	157
Finding eight .....	158
Finding nine .....	161
Emergence of Leadership .....	162
Mismatch Between Theory and Practice .....	165
Limitations .....	166
Delimitations.....	166
The Picture of the Early Childhood Teacher .....	166
Implications.....	167
Recommendations for Future Research .....	168
Conclusion .....	170
References.....	172
Appendices.....	180
Appendix A: <i>Recognizing Leadership in Children (RLIC) Survey</i> for Teachers and Teacher Script .....	181
Appendix B: <i>Recognizing Leadership in Children (RLIC) Survey</i> for the Expert Panelists .....	189
Appendix C: List of Experts .....	197
Appendix D: Correspondence from Experts about <i>RLIC Survey</i> .....	199
Appendix E: Permission from the IRB .....	207
Appendix F: Correspondence with Jefferson Parish Public School System to Conduct Research.....	208
Appendix G: Contact Information for Regional District Administrators from State Coordinator of Gifted Programming.....	216
Appendix H: Correspondence with Administrators in East Baton Rouge, Tangipahoa, and Livingston Parishes .....	217
Appendix I: Correspondence about the Preschool and Kindergarten Conference .....	221
Vita.....	225



## List of Tables

Table 1	Predominant Characteristics of Child Leadership from the Literature.....	25
Table 2	Instruments Designed for Use with Young Children.....	27
Table 3	Studies Concerning Early Childhood Leadership and Nomination Techniques .....	35
Table 4	Correlation of Survey Items to Characteristics Found in the Literature.....	62
Table 5	Question #2.....	66
Table 6	Question #3.....	66
Table 7	Frequencies of Participants' Ages ( $N = 133$ ).....	73
Table 8	Teacher Certifications.....	75
Table 9	Descriptors Most Supplied by Teachers in Written Answers.....	90
Table 10	How Teacher Descriptions Compared with Most Prevalent Characteristics of Child Leadership in the Literature.....	91
Table 11	Total Number of Leadership Scenarios Teachers Identified Correctly .....	93
Table 12	Recognition and Response Rates for Leadership Scenarios.....	94
Table 13	Teacher Recognition Percentages with Expert Ranking of Leadership for Each Scenario.....	99
Table 14	Summary of Teacher Responses Including Coding Categories.....	116
Table 15	Categories from Scenario Responses.....	128

## **Abstract**

The purpose of this research was to explore how teachers described, recognized, and would potentially influence leadership behaviors in children aged 4 to 6 years. One hundred thirty-three early childhood teachers and teachers of the gifted were surveyed using a researcher-designed instrument called the *Recognizing Leadership in Children (RLIC) Survey* to assess if teachers could recognize leadership from classroom scenarios that were based on actual classroom observations. As part of the survey, teachers wrote how they thought they might respond to the leadership scenarios. As there is a scarcity of literature concerning children's leadership, the results from this study contribute information to the field. Data from this study indicate that teachers describe child leaders most often as helpful and self-confident with good communication skills. Teachers generally recognize child leadership but recognize obvious leadership behaviors more often than subtle ones. Teachers are more likely to encourage child leadership when they recognize behaviors as leadership; they are more likely to respond to child leadership in a discouraging manner when they do not recognize the behaviors as leadership. Therefore, if teachers learn to recognize child leadership, they could be more supportive, thus creating more developmentally appropriate early childhood classrooms.

Keywords: child leadership, early childhood education, gifted, leaders, prosocial behaviors, social skills, teacher expectations, young children

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

The concepts of leaders and leadership have been studied for many centuries (Boulais, 2002; Paradise, Ceballos, & Hall, 2010), going back to the times of Plato and Aristotle (Addison & ERIC Clearinghouse, 1985). A noted leadership scholar, Bernard Bass, wrote that leadership is “one of the world’s oldest preoccupations” (Bass, 2007, p. 3). Numerous theories and definitions pertaining to adult leaders can be found in leadership literature. Although it is also documented that leadership emerges in early childhood, child leadership has not been researched extensively (Mawson, 2011). Educators are encouraged to support (Karnes & Bean, 2010; Karnes & Zimmerman, 2001) and develop leadership in children (Bisland, 2004; Bisland, Karnes, & Cobb, 2004; Hensel, 1991; Sisk & Rosselli, 1996). In fact, Karnes and Bean (2010) believe that “[b]ecause of current circumstances facing our nation and world, it is clear that more serious attention should be given to developing young leaders” (p. vii). Early childhood educators may not be able to recognize emerging child leadership or manage it when they do recognize this behavior in early childhood classrooms. Therefore, the purpose of this research was to explore how early childhood classroom teachers recognize leadership and how they projected they might influence leadership behaviors in young children (aged 4 through 6 years).

#### **Overview**

Literature about children’s leadership is lacking (Lee, Recchia, & Shin, 2005; Mullarkey, Recchia, Lee, Shin, & Lee, 2005; Trawick-Smith, 1988), and child leadership has not been clearly defined (Bisland, 2004; Council for Exceptional Children [CEC] & ERIC Clearinghouse, 1990; Karnes & Bean, 1990; Maxcy, 1991). Researchers question the appropriateness of using

adult leadership literature and definitions when looking at leadership in children (Lee et al., 2005; Morda, Waniganayake, & Care, 2005). One researcher pointed out that “conventional definitions of leadership failed to do justice to early childhood leading” (Maxcy, 1991, p. 100). Moreover, some researchers believe that youth leadership and adult leadership may be separate concepts (Roach, Wyman, Brookes, Chavez, Heath, & Valdes, 1999). The following four definitions specifically regarding child leadership are found in the literature:

1. “Leadership Behaviors are those in which a child gives directions, commands, orders, requests, or persuasion, etc., to other children, over whom the child has influence, and from whom cooperation and submission are reciprocated” (Fu, 1979, p. 135).
2. Regarding child leadership, leadership is “the process of planning or showing the way. Leadership may be of self or others” (Roets, 2000, p. 4).
3. “Leadership can be defined as the ability to direct individuals or groups to a common decision or action” (CEC & ERIC Clearinghouse, 1990).
4. “Leadership is a process of mutual stimulation which, by the effective interplay of relevant differences, guides human energy in the pursuit of a common cause” (Pigors, 1933).

Despite these four definitions of child leadership, there is not a general understanding about what constitutes child leadership (Karnes & Bean, 1996; Maxcy, 1991) or how to recognize and support these behaviors in classroom settings (Lee et al., 2005). For the purposes of this study, I adapted the definition of child leadership supplied by the Office of Gifted and Talented that was written to supplement the federal definition of giftedness: Child leadership is the ability to influence individuals or groups to a common decision or action (CEC & ERIC Clearinghouse, 1990). I changed the word “direct” to “influence” because I believe young

children don't always lead by directing; sometimes children can inspire other children or teachers indirectly by their actions. In one of the earliest journal articles published on child leadership, Pigors (1933) explained that a child who has no desire to lead can initiate a spontaneous activity that other children follow. The other children might be influenced by this "contagious behavior" (p. 146) and thus follow the first child's actions. Pigors further explained that when the child realizes that other children are following his or her example, he or she might continue to influence the others. According to Pigors, this may be one way in which the child leader and follower relationship starts. Children who unconsciously influence other children might become leaders and thus, the term "influence" should be considered in the definition of leadership for this study.

In contrast to the small number of child leadership definitions, numerous characteristics of child leadership are given in the literature. Examples of the varied characteristics include flexibility (Karnes & Bean, 1996; Sisk & Rosselli, 1996), verbal skill (Adcock & Segal, 1983; Karnes & Bean, 1996; Perez, Chassin, Ellington, & Smith, 1982), and empathy or sensitivity to the feelings of others (Karnes & Bean, 1996; Manning, 2005; Perez et al., 1982; Sisk & Rosselli, 1996). Other characteristics supplied in the literature include self-confidence (Adcock & Segal, 1983; CEC & ERIC Clearinghouse, 1990; Sisk & Rosselli, 1996), responsibility and reliability in carrying out tasks (CEC & ERIC Clearinghouse, 1990; Karnes & Zimmerman, 2001; Sisk & Rosselli, 1996), and organization of materials and activities (Adcock & Segal, 1983; Mullarkey et al., 2005; Roets, 2000; Shin et al., 2004). Child leadership characteristics can be behavioral or personality traits and include dispositions or attitudes a child might display. Some are observable while others are not easily seen. Most of the characteristics referenced in the literature are cognitive, social, emotional, or physical attributes which are children's

developmental domains (Bredenkamp & Copple, 1997). The characteristics discussed in the literature are numerous and widespread which could explain why leadership behaviors may not be easy for teachers to understand and recognize. A summary of the characteristics most prevalently found in the literature is included in Chapter Two.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The development of leadership is necessary for the advancement of society (Karnes & Bean, 2010; Karnes & Stephens, 1999; Manning, 2005). Leadership has been called an essential component in social interaction (Trawick-Smith, 1988) and is an important social behavior in children (Fu, 1979). Researchers have observed leadership behavior in young children (Fu, 1979; Fu, Canaday, & Fu, 1982; Fukada, Fukada, & Hicks, 1994; Fukada, Fukada, & Hicks, 1997; Lee et.al., 2005; Maxcy, 1991) and suggested that these leadership behaviors be encouraged in early childhood classrooms (Hensel, 1991; Karnes & Bean, 1996). The literature suggests that social behaviors emerge throughout early childhood (Hensel, 1991), and teachers can influence students' leadership development (Maxcy, 1991), so teacher support of leadership behaviors is important for young children. However, evidence that teachers recognize and support leadership behaviors in children is not well-documented. While a few studies report that teachers recognize leadership behaviors by the time children are 3 years old (Shin et al., 2004) or by 5 years old (Fukada et al., 1994), evidence exists that such behavior is not always supported and encouraged (Mullarkey et al., 2005).

Early childhood teachers may not discern emerging leadership qualities easily because some teachers may not have been trained to recognize these behaviors (Karnes & Meriweather, 1989). In addition, the characteristics of leadership listed in the literature are diverse which can add to the confusion of what leadership is and how students demonstrate it in the classroom.

Even if teachers do recognize leadership behavior, they may not know how to support it in the classroom setting. In one research study conducted in 1991, Maxcy observed and described how teachers support, encourage, discourage, or stifle leadership abilities in young children in kindergarten classrooms. Thus, the purpose of this research was to explore how early childhood classroom teachers recognize leadership behaviors in young children (aged 4 through 6 years) and also to examine how teachers believe they might encourage or discourage leadership behaviors based on projected interactions.

### **Significance of the Study**

Leadership in young children is a concept that, while not new, has not been addressed comprehensively because information regarding child leadership is not widespread in the literature (Shin et al., 2004). While several definitions of child leadership exist, the research does not yet provide extensive investigations of child leadership (Edwards, 1994 cited in Yamaguchi, 2003; Karnes & Bean, 1996; Lee et al., 2005; Morda & Waniganayake, 2010; Shin et al., 2004). However, the literature suggests that teachers can facilitate emerging leadership skills in young children (Fu et al., 1982; Trawick-Smith, 1988). Some children may possess the disposition while others may not. It is also documented in the child leadership literature that teachers influence the development of leadership in children by recognizing or ignoring, and encouraging or discouraging child leadership behaviors (Maxcy, 1991; Mullarkey et al., 2005). This study focused on teacher recognition of child leadership behaviors and explored the ways in which teachers believed they might influence child leadership in classroom scenarios.

### **Teacher influence.**

Teachers have a powerful role in influencing leadership development in the early childhood classroom environment (Maxcy, 1991). Maxcy (1991) concluded that while “school culture” (p.108) affects students, teachers also influence student leadership. Teachers can encourage and discourage child leadership or ignore leadership behaviors (Maxcy, 1991; Mullarkey et al., 2005). Therefore, teachers should have an understanding of what leadership might look like in children so they can recognize and support leadership development.

Teachers need to recognize child leadership behaviors in order to support emerging leadership. However, teachers’ reliability in recognizing child leadership is insufficiently documented in the literature and information describing teachers’ abilities to recognize child leadership is limited. More research in this area contributes information about how well teachers of young children recognize child leadership behaviors. Since leadership characteristics are displayed at early ages and researchers suggest that nurturing these abilities also begin early in a child’s life (Hensel, 1991; Karnes & Bean, 1996; Karnes & Stephens, 1999; Maxcy, 1991), teachers are in an ideal position to support these abilities if they recognize them. Thus, it is important to provide more information to teachers about what leadership looks like in young children, so teachers can be more responsive to children’s emerging leadership behaviors.

Because of the lack of understanding about child leadership, teachers might not realize how they affect emerging leadership, and they may find it difficult to create supportive practices for children’s emerging leadership abilities. One critical component of developmentally appropriate practice (see Definition of Terms section) is supportive teacher interactions. Supportive teacher interactions are the responses teachers give to children that



accept, nurture, encourage, or redirect children to enhance their development. Since teachers have influence upon children, teachers need more knowledge about how to recognize and facilitate leadership behaviors in order to provide more support for child leaders.

### **Teacher interactions.**

Teachers' interactions with children can have a significant effect upon children's developing abilities (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) including emerging leadership. The child leadership literature contains a few examples of how teachers' interactions with children encourage leadership (Maxcy, 1991; Mullarkey et al., 2005). Also, the literature provides many recommendations for teachers to develop (Bisland et al., 2004; Hensel, 1991; Karnes & Stephens, 1999), support, and foster child leadership (Lee et al., 2005; Scheer & Safrit, 2001).

Besides encouraging and supporting leadership, teachers can also discourage these behaviors (Maxcy, 1991; Mullarkey et al., 2005). When Maxcy observed two kindergarten lead teachers and their teacher assistants interacting with their students, he witnessed how the teachers tried to control the children's behavior. Sometimes the teachers supported leadership actions in less aggressive children while discouraging leadership in others. Teachers sometimes ignore or do nothing about child leadership (Maxcy, 1991; Mullarkey et al., 2005) because either they don't recognize or they don't want to encourage the behaviors. This lack of support can cause children to become frustrated or display problem behaviors (Maxcy, 1991). Thus, the teachers' role includes an awareness of the way he or she responds to children.

Teachers play a pivotal role in leadership development because of their influence, but they might not recognize emerging leadership behaviors in students. When this happens, leadership may be thwarted. The literature suggests that when teachers recognize, support, and encourage leadership behaviors, the student will benefit. However, if leadership is recognized

yet discouraged by the teacher, the student may hide these behaviors and not develop to his or her full potential. Since teachers wield such influence over children, it is important to explore how well teachers recognize and how they affect early childhood leaders.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The noted theorist Bronfenbrenner (1979) described how teacher interactions and experiences with other people in the environment affect the developing child. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory provides a framework to explore teacher influence on child leadership. In his theory, Bronfenbrenner (1979) wrote about the ecological environment as a system of concentric circles. The innermost system, the microsystem, contains the developing child and the people in the child's immediate surroundings such as the child's family. An example of a setting in the microsystem is the child's home. When the child actively participates with people from at least two settings, it is called the mesosystem. Bronfenbrenner (2005) suggested the interactions between school and the child's home as an example of this level. He described the exosystem as the people in the external environment who influence the child's life even though the child is not actively involved. Bronfenbrenner used "the relation between the home and the parent's workplace" (2005, p. 148) as an example of an exosystem for a child. For example, if a parent loses his or her job, this event could influence the child. Bronfenbrenner described the macrosystem as the overall cultural context which also exerts influence on the child. He believed that development was a result of the interactions between and among the developing child and the people within these particular environments, for example, the child and the teacher within the classroom environment. Furthermore, just as the environment affects the developing child, the child affects his or her environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 21).

The child's environment changes and expands as he or she grows. Usually a child's first environment is the home where leadership qualities can be cultivated, according to researchers Karnes et al. (1990) and Meriweather and Karnes (1989). When children attend school or child care, interactions and experiences with the members of a new environment influence the developing child's actions and abilities. Adcock and Segal (1983) explained when young children begin preschool, they are not aware of social etiquette. Children learn social skills from experience with other people in the environment. Shin et al. (2004) agreed that prosocial behavior develops over time, explaining that children form strong bonds with teachers and peers, and as they grow, children develop social awareness which helps them exhibit prosocial behaviors.

While all members within the child's environment can affect the child in multiple ways, Bronfenbrenner (1979) explained that the teacher specifically plays an important role in the development of children. For example, Bronfenbrenner believed that in a group setting, the teacher can increase children's cognitive development by interactions that "stimulate, sustain, and encourage" the child's task-related activities (p. 202). This study investigated how teachers influence developing leadership skills in young children, and Bronfenbrenner's theory highlights the importance of the interactions between and among the developing child and members of his or her environment, including the teacher. Therefore, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory frames this research study effectively.

### **Purpose of Study**

Although there is a significant amount of literature about adult leadership, a scarcity of studies concerning leadership in young children (ages 4 through 6 years) exists. This study fills a void because of this scarcity in the literature (Mullarkey et al., 2005; Yamaguchi, 2003),

particularly within the early childhood context (Lee et al., 2005; Maxcy, 1991). Studies on child leadership began with Parten's study in 1932. Despite a steady increase in studies since, the number of child leadership studies is limited.

A few limitations exist in leadership studies: (a) teacher reliability, and (b) the selections of populations. In a majority of the studies, researchers assumed teachers recognized their child leaders without verifying the basis of the teacher recognitions. Only four studies reported that teacher nominations matched other collected data about the leaders in the classroom. Thus, teacher reliability in identifying leaders may be questionable. In the body of research, populations of children in four studies (Maxcy, 1991; Nath & Seriven, 1981; Perez et al., 1982; Shin et al., 2004) were from university-affiliated or laboratory schools. Typically, the populations of children in university laboratory schools are children of university professors or students and, thus, may not be representative of the general population.

In this study, a survey was administered to teachers who were asked to recognize child leadership from a pool of scenarios that may or may not depict children assuming leadership roles. Findings provided information regarding the effectiveness of teacher recognition in this area. Teachers were also asked to write if and how they would have intervened in these scenarios. Descriptions of their purported interventions provide information about how teachers might influence leadership. The findings from this research study contribute to policy and practice in the following ways:

- Policy: This study helps early childhood curriculum developers and early childhood program directors recognize the need for more child-directed activities, including play, to allow children to practice leadership behaviors.

- Practice: As a result of this study, early childhood teachers are aware of early childhood leadership behaviors which would help them to identify, support, and encourage these behaviors. Also, this study could inspire teacher training programs to prepare early childhood teachers to recognize and support leadership behaviors.

## **Research Questions**

Based on classroom observations and a review of the literature, the following research questions were the focus for this study:

1. How do teachers describe leadership in young children?
2. Given scenarios, how do teachers recognize leadership behaviors in young children?
3. Given scenarios, how do teachers believe that they might influence (support or discourage) leadership behavior in young children?

## **Definition of Terms**

The following key terms and definitions are used in this study:

Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP): This refers to a perspective within early childhood development where the teacher nurtures a child's social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development by basing practices and decisions on child development theories, a child's identified strengths and weaknesses, a child's age, and the child's social background defined by his family and community (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009).

Developmental domains: These are areas in which children develop abilities and skills, that is, cognitive, social, emotional, and physical. These areas do not all develop simultaneously in a child; however, development in one area can influence development in all areas since they are interrelated (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997).

Dispositions: This term refers to “habits of mind” (Katz & Chard, 2000, p. 35) or personality attributes such as persistence or responsibility.

Gifted: “[W]hen used with respect to students, children, or youth, [gifted] means students, children, or youth who give evidence of high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who need services and activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities” (National Association for Gifted Children, 2008a).

Influence (in teachers): This term refers to the teacher’s power to encourage, discourage, support, or otherwise affect leadership development in children.

Influence (in children): This term means to sway or affect the actions of others.

In-service teachers: This term refers to teachers who are currently teaching early childhood students. This study specifically targeted teachers who teach pre-kindergarten through first grade because these are the grade levels of the children in the *Recognizing Leadership in Children (RLIC) Survey* scenarios.

Leadership: For the purpose of this study, leadership in young children is the ability to influence individuals or groups to a common decision or action.

NAEYC: This is an acronym for the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Young children: In this study, “young children” refers to children 4 to 6 years old as the focus is on early childhood teachers and their students. Children 4 to 6 years of age match the children’s ages in the *Recognizing Leadership in Children (RLIC) Survey* scenarios.

### **Background of the Study: Personal and Professional Experiences**

I became interested in child leadership as a student in a leadership seminar for doctoral candidates in 2002, after reading a journal article by Maxcy. This researcher’s observations

revealed how kindergarten teachers encouraged or discouraged child leadership. The fact that I was not aware of child leadership startled me because I have a Master's degree in gifted education, and leadership is a trait of giftedness recognized by the federal government (CEC & ERIC Clearinghouse, 1990). The findings from Maxcy's article inspired me to reflect about my own experiences and my daughter's as young children in the classroom.

### **My early childhood experiences.**

My experiences as a child have made me an advocate for developmentally appropriate education for all children. I was allowed to skip kindergarten and was admitted directly into the first grade at the age of five because I could read. I easily kept up intellectually, but I felt inferior in some ways because I sensed that I was different than the other students. I realized that everyone else had been to school before. It seemed to me that all the other children already knew each other and knew what to do. They had all somehow been socialized to the classroom routines. I remember my teacher scolding and humiliating me because I did not adhere to rules of the classroom culture. I never wanted to do anything to get scolded again in front of my classmates. I had learned that to challenge the teacher or the norm was not a good idea unless I was ready to deal with shame and humiliation. I became afraid to take risks after the teacher scolded me, and I also tried to keep a very low profile for many, many years. Therefore, I was hardly perceived as a leader at school.

In second grade, I was advanced to a second/third grade combination class with a few other second graders selected for our academic achievements. One day, I was asked to read aloud to a fourth-grade class. Afterward, the teacher humiliated those students by asking why they could not read as well as a second grader. I still remember watching some of the fourth grade students lower their heads while others' faces turned red, and I felt upset that I had played

a part in this scenario. When I was supposed to begin third grade, I moved to a new school and was reinstated in the grade where I belonged socially and emotionally. Feeling different and inferior contributed to my feelings of low self-esteem and probably influenced my interest in the social and emotional needs of children which researchers link to leadership (Goleman & Boyatzis, 2008; Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002).

### **My daughter's early childhood experiences.**

Because of my experiences with my daughter, Rebecca, who is a gifted learner, I am also an advocate for children who are identified as gifted. She taught herself to read, and the principal recommended that she skip grades several times. Of course, I resisted based on my own experiences. Similarly to my elementary school career, my daughter was humiliated and shamed for being the person she was. Any attempts she made at leadership were squashed by her teachers; therefore, like me, she learned to stay under the radar. When Rebecca was a young child, she was very verbal and communicated her ideas to others easily. She was sociable, and she liked to include other children in her games or activities. When she began kindergarten, I noticed a change in her personality. She stopped trying to lead, and the few times that she did, her efforts were thwarted by her teachers or other children. One example of this was when Rebecca began a club for girls out on the playground. She was the president and made membership cards for the members. A few days later, two other children also began clubs. The teachers grew concerned and immediately outlawed all clubs. Anyone caught in a club would be punished. As a result of both my daughter's and my experiences as young children, I am sensitive to teacher responses related to child leadership.



### **My professional experiences.**

Finally, as a teacher of early childhood students and of gifted students for over 20 years, I have encountered child leaders in early childhood classrooms. I have also observed ways in which teachers reacted to child leadership behaviors. For example, during a class observation, I watched a teacher punish a child who, while trying to show another student how to add to a structure, accidentally knocked down the structure. It appeared that the child was punished due to poor motor skills rather than acknowledged for his willingness to contribute a new idea.

My experiences as a student, parent, and teacher have inspired my interest in social and emotional issues. Because of my history, I actively work to encourage the understanding of the social and emotional needs of young learners which might include leadership behaviors.

### **Conclusion**

The educational literature documents that teachers influence children's development (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997; Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and, more specifically, influence leadership development (Adcock & Segal, 1983; Maxcy, 1991; Trawick-Smith, 1988; Yamaguchi, 2003). Evidence exists that leadership develops in young children (Hensel, 1991; Fu, 1979; Fu et al., 1982). However, little is written in the literature about teachers' recognition of leadership behaviors and more information is needed about the ways in which teachers influence child leadership. Furthermore, while teachers (particularly those of gifted children) are encouraged to support leadership abilities, they may not have received training on how to nurture leadership in their classrooms (Karnes & Meriweather, 1989; Karnes & Stephens, 1999). In spite of a lack of knowledge and training about leadership, teachers design learning environments in their classrooms and influence how students view themselves and others. This study was based on what is currently known about child leadership and the findings expand this knowledge base by

contributing information about how teachers describe leadership, how well they recognize child leadership behaviors from scenarios, and how they think they may intervene in scenarios depicting child leadership.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Review of the Literature**

This chapter provides an analysis of four key concepts: (a) an overview of the concept of leadership which includes traditional theories that relate mainly to adults, (b) an overview of child leadership characteristics and instruments to measure child leadership, (c) a review of the relevant research studies in the literature, and (d) an analysis of the ways teachers influence children's social skills, including leadership.

#### **An Overview of Leadership**

Leadership is predominantly described in the literature with adolescents or adults in mind (Karnes & Bean, 1996; Oakland, Falkenberg & Oakland, 1996; Roach et al., 1999). Over the past 200 years, the majority of leadership literature has been about how to inspire workers to be more productive (Maccoby, 2007). Also, leadership may be easier to study in adults because adults can self-assess their skills. For these reasons, some attention should be given to definitions and theories that apply mainly to adults.

Eminent scholars do not agree on a definition of leadership (Burns, 1978; Schulz, 2001) even though there are numerous definitions of leadership in the literature. Stogdill (1974) wrote that "[t]here are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept" (p. 259). Despite the surplus of writings about leadership, a common understanding of leadership does not exist (Paradise et al., 2010).

#### **Theories of leadership.**

In order to understand leadership, one should consider leadership theories (Sisk & Rosselli, 1996), which is not a simple task because the concept of leadership is complicated

(Fiedler, 1967; Northouse, 2001; Stogdill, 1974). Ideas about leadership abound (Northouse, 2001). Of the many theories, this review describes four theories which are most commonly encountered in the literature: (a) Trait, (b) Behavioral or Style, (c) Situational or Contingency, and (d) Transactional and Transformational theories of leadership. Even though other theories of leadership have been introduced, most are based on the basic theoretical approach of these exemplars.

### ***Trait theory.***

Trait leadership theory maintains that individuals are born with certain traits inherently favorable for the development of leadership ability (Cherry, 2012; Shead, n.d.; “Trait theory,” 2004). This approach is one of the oldest leadership theories dating back in time to Aristotle (Sisk, 1985; Sisk & Rosselli, 1996) and has also been referred to as “[t]he great-man” theory (Heifetz, 1994, p.17). In 1869, Sir Francis Galton’s book *Hereditary Genius* suggested that leadership was based on inherited qualities (cited in Hollander, 1978, p. 21). However, there was a lack of consensus among researchers regarding which traits were necessary for an individual to become a leader (Northouse, 2001; Schulz, 2001). Also, this approach did not explain why people with leadership traits would not demonstrate leadership across situations (Knes, 2012; Northouse, 2001; Pavitt, 1998). Despite these criticisms, Trait theory has endured for centuries.

### ***Behavioral styles.***

Behavioral, or style, theory emerged next. In contrast to Trait theory, Behavioral theory posited that one did not have to be born a leader but could learn to become one (Cherry, 2012). In this theory, researchers looked at differences in behaviors in various situations (Hollander, 1978). In the late 1940s (Northouse, 2001), researchers at Ohio State University gave people a questionnaire about their leaders and found that two important behaviors emerged:

“consideration” in which leaders exhibit concern for followers, and “initiation of structure” in which leaders show interest in how the task is organized (Hollander, 1978; Pavitt, 1998; Stogdill, 1974). Other researchers at Michigan State University classified leadership behaviors as “employee orientation and production orientation” (Northouse, 2001, p. 37). Both types of leaders have a goal in mind, but leaders who have an employee orientation are more focused on their employees, taking into consideration their needs and characteristics and how they interact together to accomplish the goal. In contrast, a leader who leans toward a production orientation focuses more on an end product or performance. In the early 1960s (Northouse, 2001), Blake and Mouton designed a managerial grid to illustrate different leadership styles that occur when the two factors, concern for production and concern for people, are combined and ranked on a grid. Sisk (1985) identified Lewin, Lippit, and White’s three styles of leadership as aristocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire. Another author, Fujishin (1997), described three similar leadership styles: autocratic (tight control where leaders make the decisions), democratic (the group shares in making decisions), or laissez-faire (the leaders take little action and let followers make decisions). Behavioral theory has been criticized because specific situations may call for special styles of leader behavior (Northouse, 2001; Pavitt, 1998). However, this theory is still widely used in business management leadership training programs.

### ***Situational theory.***

The Situational theory was developed after Trait and Behavioral/style theories (Hollander, 1978). This theory’s approach considers the demands of the situation or task (Fujishin, 1997). The most notable of the situational theorists, Hersey and Blanchard (1996), stated that leaders should adapt their style to fit their followers’ developmental levels. This was called the “life-cycle theory.” To be most effective, the leader would consider the followers’

maturity levels when deciding how task-oriented or relationship-oriented they needed to be (Vecchio, 2007). As followers became more mature, the leader adjusted his or her style accordingly. Hersey and Blanchard proposed four leadership styles: (a) “directing,” (b) “coaching,” (c) “supporting,” and (d) “delegating” (Northouse, 2001, pp. 57-58). The Situational model has been criticized due to limited research on the approach (Northouse, 2001; Vecchio, 2007). Also, this theory failed to address “leader-follower relations over time” and eventually led into Contingency theory (Hollander, 1978, p. 33).

### ***Contingency theory.***

Contingency theory was developed combining elements from the Trait and Situational theories (Heifetz, 1994). Fred Fiedler developed a prominent Contingency model, the Least Preferred Co-worker Scale (Hollander, 1978). Fiedler explained that with Contingency theory, the group’s effectiveness “depends on two interacting or ‘contingent’ factors” (Fiedler et al., 1976, p. 3). These two interacting factors are:

1. The leader’s personality which shapes his or her style of leadership; and
2. The amount of situational control or favorableness (Fiedler et al., 1976).

Fiedler defined situational control “as the leader’s sense of influence and control afforded by the situation” (Ayman, Chemers, & Fiedler, 2007, p. 344). Fiedler’s model described leaders as being either “task-oriented” or “relationship-oriented” (Hollander, 1978, p. 34). The task-oriented leader is focused on accomplishing tasks while the relationship-oriented leader is concerned with developing relationships with team members (Addison, 1985). The leader who is task-oriented will lead most effectively with followers in high or low control situations while the leader who is relationship-oriented is more effective with followers in a medium control

situation. The level of situational control or favorableness can be assessed by leader and follower reports (Ayman et al., 2007).

Fiedler's Least Preferred Co-Worker (LPC) Scale measured leadership style (Fiedler et al., 1976). Over the years, this instrument has been modified for use with various groups. In 1978, it was modified to be used with children to explore leadership and was called the Least Preferred Playmate Scale (Hardy, Hunt, & Lehr, 1978). This study showed that it is possible to measure leadership using this modified LPC scale in females as young as 4 years of age (Hardy, 1995). However the questioning techniques used with the young children may not have been reliable. The Least Preferred Playmate Scale is described in more detail in the Studies section of this chapter.

Contingency theory has been well grounded in empirical research over many years. However, researchers have not explained why certain styles of leadership are not effective in all situations (Knes, 2012; Northouse, 2001). The Least Preferred Co-worker Scale's construct validity has also been criticized because the LPC lacks "a clear theoretic-deductive explanation" (Ayman et al., 2007, p. 344). Despite these issues, Fiedler's LPC scale has been used widely and modified to study leadership over the years (Hardy, 1995).

### ***Transactional and Transformational leadership theories.***

The Transactional and Transformational theories of leadership have also gained prominence as major leadership theories. James MacGregor Burns (1978) explained that Transactional leadership happens "when one person takes the initiative in making contact with others for the purpose of an exchange of valued things" (p. 19) and Transformational leadership happens "when one or more persons *engage* with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality" (p. 20). Transformational leaders

motivate followers to exceed expectations through encouragement towards common goals (Karnes & Bean, 1996). For example, a Transactional leader would initiate an action with the expectation that the follower would reciprocate. However, a Transformational leader, through a charismatic personality, could inspire followers to perform beyond expectations and become leaders themselves.

Leadership theories have changed over time (Knes, 2012; “Trait theory,” 2004) and grown to encompass new perspectives. Originally, theorists only considered the individual since people believed that leadership was inherent (Trait) or learned (Behavioral style). Then theorists realized that the situation was an important factor in leadership (Situational or Contingency). Eventually, the relationship between leaders and followers (Transactional and Transformative) has become emphasized (Wertheim, n.d.). While additional theories such as Path-Goal theory and Leader-Member exchange theory (Northouse, 2001) have added to the idea of leadership, the focus of leadership theory is still on adults.

Although Maxcy (1991) and Roach et al. (1999) have suggested that traditional ways of conceptualizing adult leadership may not be applicable to children, adults still refer to the traditional leadership theories described above to understand child leadership. In the existent literature concerning leadership, established theories described above were used to study or describe child leadership. Several authors supplied lists of traits and behaviors of leadership giftedness in gifted elementary school-aged children and adolescents (Bisland et al., 2004; Karnes & Bean, 1996; Karnes & Zimmerman, 2001; Kitano, 1982), and some research studies described child leadership in situations within the context of the classroom (Adcock & Segal, 1983; Lazarus, 1990; Lee et al., 2005; Shin et al., 2004). In one study, researchers modified the Least Preferred Co-Worker Scale from the Contingency theory to use with children



(Hardy et al., 1978), and in another, researchers used the Transformational model of leadership as a framework to study leadership in gifted students in fourth through sixth grades (Smyth & Ross, 1999). In the examples above, adults relied on traditional theories of leadership to study or understand child leadership. Therefore, it may be necessary to review adult leadership theory to understand how teachers respond to child leadership behaviors.

### **Overview of Child Leadership**

Leadership has been observed in children as young as nursery school age (3 years old) by Parten (1932) and preschool age (3 and 4 years old) by Adcock and Segal (1983), but the research literature about children's leadership is minimal in quantity (Mullarkey et al., 2005; Shin et al., 2004; Trawick-Smith, 1988; Yamaguchi, 2003).

Information about how leadership manifests in the classroom is also limited. Furthermore, teachers may not have had preparation in ways to support emerging leadership (Karnes & Meriweather, 1989; Karnes & Stephens, 1999), yet teachers are the ones who are responsible for managing classroom behavior. This lack of knowledge might make it difficult for teachers to create supportive environments conducive to children's emerging leadership abilities. According to Howard (2005), the classroom environment is very important for children's development. Howard pointed out that a combination of genetics and environment in the early childhood years help leaders build their ways of thinking about the world. Therefore, teachers should become cognizant of the important role they play in the area of social relationships and, specifically, in leadership development. If teachers, who are the role models (Adcock & Segal, 1983; Maxcy, 1991) and the powerful adults in the child's classroom environment, are not aware of leadership behaviors in children, they can suppress or thwart these developing abilities.

In the literature, Bisland (2004), Bisland et al. (2004), Karnes and Bean (1996), and Lee et al. (2005) have given specific suggestions to help educators expand leadership skills in the classroom. For example, Bisland (2004) and Bisland et al. (2004) recommended that teachers provide opportunities for children to develop leadership skills by incorporating leadership activities, such as reading biographies of prominent leaders and collaborating on class projects, into the daily curriculum. Karnes and Bean (1996) urged teachers to “develop self-understanding, social skills, problem-solving skills, and conflict resolution skills” in their preschool and primary grade students by using “modeling, creative drama, group discussions, collaborative work, and group play” (p. 15). Lee et al. (2005) suggested teachers nurture emerging leadership by encouraging children to offer their ideas to others and to seek support from their peers. Suggestions to develop and foster child leadership abilities abound in the literature, but it is uncertain how often teachers recognize these abilities.

Once teachers become aware of a child’s leadership ability, they may use it to their advantage. For example, teachers sometimes depend on young leaders to act as “catalysts” to help motivate the other students in the classroom (Lee et al., 2005, p. 1). Teachers have a key role in fostering the development of leadership in the classroom environment because they are in an authoritative position to design and control the learning experiences that occur in the classroom.

Despite the fact that a relatively small number of studies on child leadership exist, a variety of leadership characteristics describing children are found in the literature. These characteristics are traits and behaviors that can be categorized as cognitive, social, affective, and physical which are domains in which children develop. Other characteristics can be

classified as dispositions a child exhibits. The following table depicts a summary of child leadership characteristics most commonly found in the literature.

Table 1

*Predominant Characteristics of Child Leadership from the Literature*

Developmental Domain/Disposition	Source
<b>Cognitive</b>	
Problem solver/creatively solves problems	Karnes & Bean (1995, 1996); Karnes et al. (1990); Roets (2000); Sisk & Rosselli (1996)
Verbal skill	Adcock & Segal (1983); Karnes & Bean (1996); Perez et al. (1982)
Communicates well verbally with peers	Adcock & Segal (1983); Perez et al. (1982); Sisk & Rosselli (1996)
<b>Social/emotional</b>	
Empathetic/sensitive to feeling of others	Karnes & Bean (1996); Manning (2005); Perez et al. (1982); Sisk & Rosselli (1996)
Sought out by peers	Adcock & Segal (1983); Harrison Observation Student Form (2004); Kitano (1982)
Self-confident	Adcock & Segal (1983); CEC & ERIC Clearinghouse (1990); Sisk & Rosselli (1996)
<b>Physical</b>	
Energetic/high energy level	Manning (2005); Roets (2000); Shin et al. (2004); Sisk & Rosselli (1996)
<b>Dispositions</b>	
Flexible/flexible in thought and action	Harrison Observation Student Form (2004); Karnes & Bean (1995, 1996); Karnes et al. (1990); Manning (2005); Sisk & Rosselli (1996)
Independent	EBY Checklist; Perez et al. (1982); Sisk & Rosselli (1996)
Responsible/accepts & carries out responsibilities	CEC & ERIC Clearinghouse (1990); Harrison Observation Student Form (2004); Karnes & Zimmerman (2001); Sisk & Rosselli (1996)
Organized/organizes materials and activities	Adcock & Segal (1983); CEC & ERIC Clearinghouse (1990); Harrison Observation Student Form (2004); Roets (2000); Shin et al. (2004)

*Note.* The researcher and two early childhood teachers independently reviewed characteristics and categorized each characteristic into the domain in which it best fit.

## **Characteristics of Child Leadership**

The researchers Sisk and Rosselli (1996) and Karnes and Bean (1996) contributed most of the characteristics highlighted in Table 1. Sisk and Rosselli agreed with Karnes and Bean on the following characteristics of a child leader: a flexible problem solver with verbal skill who is empathetic or sensitive to the feeling of others. Sisk and Rosselli (1996) also supplied the following attributes: an independent, responsible, self-confident person who has a lot of energy or who accepts and carries out responsibilities. The list of the traits and styles from these researchers provides information about child leadership. A child leader may possess either a few or several of the characteristics supplied in Table 1.

## **Instruments Used to Measure Leadership in Children**

Several instruments exist to measure leadership in children. However, there are few instruments to assess leadership in young children ages 4 to 6 years. Addison (1985) recognized the need for valid instruments, so she recommended using multiple ways to identify leadership (i.e., teacher, peer, and self-nominations; leadership experience; and information from interviews) in addition to instruments and checklists.

Table 2 provides a summary of the instruments suitable for use with young children. Formal instruments have been appropriately normed and are available commercially. Informal instruments are those which have been developed by researchers specifically to study leadership in children.

Table 2

*Instruments Designed for Use with Young Children*

Category	Instrument	Ages assessed	Assessor
Formal Instrument	The Leadership Observation Inventory (Roets, 2000)	Children ages 4 – 8	Teacher or other adult
Checklists within instruments that assess giftedness	The Eby Gifted Behavior Index (Eby, 1989)	All ages	Teacher
	Gifted and Talented Evaluation Scales (GATES, Gilliam, Carpenter, & Christensen, 1996)	Ages 5 – 18	Teacher, parent, adult
	The Gifted and Talented Screening Form (GTSF, 1980)	Students in kindergarten – grade 9	Teacher and self reporting
	The Harrison Observation Student Form (Harrison, Coleman, & Shah Coltrane, 2004)	Students in kindergarten – grade 12.	Teacher, adult
Rating scales within instruments that assess giftedness	Gifted Rating Scales (Pfeiffer & Jarosewich, 2003)	Students in grades 1 – 8	Teacher, adult
	The Gifted Evaluation Scale-2 (GES-2, Henage, McCarney, & Anderson, 1998)	Ages 5 – 18	Teacher, adult

(table 2 cont.)

Category	Instrument	Ages assessed	Assessor
Rating scales within instruments that assess giftedness (continued)	The Scales for Rating the Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students-Third Edition (SRBCSS) (Renzulli, Smith, White, Callahan, Hartman, Westburg, Gavin, Reis, Seigle, & Sytsma, 2004)	Students in kindergarten – grade 12; Online version of this test allows assessment for ages 3- 19 and pre-kindergarten through grade 12.	Teacher, adult
Informal Instruments	Least Preferred Playmate Scale (Hardy, Hunt, & Lehr, 1978)	Children ages 4 – 5	Teacher, adult administered with child choosing descriptors
	Medieval Kingdom Framework (Adcock & Segal, 1983)	Children ages 4 – 6	Teacher, adult
	Nursery School Leadership Observation Schedule (Fu, 1979)	Kindergarten children, ages 5 – 6	Teacher, adult
	One minute sampling technique (Parten, 1933)	Children ages 2-4	Teacher, adult

As Table 2 illustrates, current methods of existing assessment are formal instruments, scales and checklists found within instruments to assess giftedness, and informal assessments. One formal instrument designed to assess leadership in young children is available: the Leadership Observation Inventory (LOI) for Leadership (Roets, 2000). Roets (1986) designed a leadership instrument for students aged 8 through 18 years, but in 2000, she designed another instrument for young children called the Leadership Observation Inventory (LOI)

which accompanies the manual *Leadership for Ages 4-8: Identification & Talent Development*. This inventory helps teachers identify leadership in children between the ages of 4 and 8 years old. The manual lists characteristics of child leadership and suggests activities to encourage the development of leadership in young children. Teachers are instructed to tally incidences when children exhibit leadership characteristics.

There are a few other formal instruments which measure giftedness in children that contain subscales for leadership. Oakland et al. (1996) reviewed four such tests used to identify giftedness in children and youth which contain leadership subscales: the Eby Gifted Behavior Index (Eby, 1989), the Gifted and Talented Screening Form (GTSF, Johnson, 1980), the Gifted Evaluation Scale (GES-2, Henage, McCarney, & Anderson, 1987), and Scales for Rating the Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students (SRBCSS, Renzulli, Smith, White, Callahan, Hartman, & Westburg, 2002). Each of these measures is described in the following paragraphs.

The Eby Gifted Behavior Index (Eby, 1989) reportedly can be used with all ages to screen students for gifted programs, and it is recommended for elementary, high school, and college-aged students. Teachers use a checklist to measure students on items covered in each of seven categories (one product scale, one general checklist, and six talent checklists).

Leadership is one of the six talent categories.

The Gifted and Talented Screening Form (GTSF, Johnson, 1980) was designed for students in kindergarten through ninth grades. The GTSF is a self-report checklist which assesses 10 different areas including leadership. Parents and teachers can also observe and rate students' leadership characteristics on a scale.

The Scales for Rating the Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students-Revised (SRBCSS-R, Renzulli, Smith, White, Callahan, Hartman, & Westburg, 2002) was designed to be used for children and adolescents in kindergarten through twelfth grades. Teachers or other adults can rate the students on the leadership subscale (Shaunessy & Karnes, 2004). There is a newer, online version of the Scales for Rating the Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students (Third Edition) by Renzulli, Smith, White, Callahan, Hartman, Westburg, Gavin, Reis, Siegle, and Sytsma (2004) that allows teachers to assess the characteristics in fourteen categories obtained from the literature on gifted and talented students. The online version allows assessment of children ages 3 to 19 years in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade and has a separate scale for preschool and primary children.

The Gifted Evaluation Scale, Second Edition (GES-2, Henage, McCarney & Anderson, 1998) is for children ages 5 through 18 and measures giftedness according to the federal and some state definitions of giftedness. Leadership ability is one subscale of this test which is teacher-rated.

After reviewing the four instruments listed above, Oakland et al. (1996) reported that “significant deficiencies exist in the assessment of leadership among children and youth, and few standardized measures of leadership are available” (p. 144). There were psychometric deficiencies (i.e., researchers used inadequate norming measures, small sample sizes, and provided insufficient demographic information) in some of the measures. Therefore, Oakland et al. concluded “the assessment of leadership must go beyond the use of existing scales and surveys” (p. 138). Shaunessy and Karnes (2004) agreed with Oakland et al. that leadership instruments for children need more development and testing, adding that current



measurements focus primarily on leadership traits which children may demonstrate.

Mullarkey et al. (2005) pointed out that child leadership should be viewed as relational rather than as a list of characteristics, so they studied child leadership within the context of social relationships.

Results from the Mental Measurements Yearbook database revealed two more instruments found in assessments for giftedness that include subscales on leadership with young children. One subscale is the Gifted Rating Scales (Pfeiffer & Jarosewich, 2003) and the other is the Gifted and Talented Evaluation Scales (GATES, Gilliam, Carpenter, & Christensen, 1996). A third instrument is titled the Harrison Observation Student Form (Harrison, Coleman, & Shah Coltrane, 2004) which contains the U-STAR-PLUS Checklist.

The Gifted Rating Scales (GRS, Pfeiffer & Jarosewich, 2003), reviewed by Shaunessy and Karnes (2004), assesses six areas of giftedness, including leadership, and has two forms. The Gifted Rating Scales School Form (GRS-S) is used for children in first through eighth grades. There is also a GRS-P used for preschool and kindergarten children, but the leadership subscale is only found on the GRS-S. Both the GRS-S and the GRS-P are teacher-rated with the teacher comparing the student to other students in the general population of the same age and then ranking the student on a 9-point rating scale for each attribute.

The Gifted and Talented Evaluation Scales (GATES, Gilliam et al., 1996) is a checklist used to help identify gifted students. It contains five subscales from the federal definition of giftedness including a 10-item leadership checklist. Teachers or parents can assess students using this instrument. The adult rates the student by comparing him or her to other gifted students of the same age and rating the student as below average, average, or above average for each attribute.

On the Harrison Observation Student Form (Harrison et al., 2004), a teacher is required to observe a child over a period of time and then check characteristics that the child exhibits in seven areas. One area is titled “Displays Leadership” which contains nine attributes such as “organizes materials and activities” and “is seen as manipulative and strong-willed” (p. 11). Attributes need to be observed and then marked by the teacher on the form. Scores are totaled in all seven areas to help determine if the child displays gifted characteristics.

Several researchers created informal checklists or rating scales specifically to help them identify leadership in children. Parten (1933) developed one of the earliest observational scales which included a range of behaviors: “Following,” “Independently pursuing own ends,” “Both directing and following,” “Reciprocally directing,” and “Directing” (p. 433). Also, Fu (1979) created a checklist called the Nursery School Leadership Observation Schedule (NSLOS), which is similar to the subscales on gifted tests listed above.

Another scale that has been used with children is Fiedler’s Least Preferred Co-worker (LPC) Scale. In a study by Hardy et al. (1978), the LPC scale was modified to assess if the leadership style of nursery school children (ages 4.0 years to 4.11 years) is related to birth order. These researchers called the modified version the Least Preferred Playmate Scale. The children were asked, “Please think of a person with whom you have played least well” (p.185). If the child did not appear to understand the question, the examiner explained the question further (Hardy et al., 1978). After the child identified the least preferred playmate, the child chose a word from pairs of adjectives presented (for example, “kind and not kind”) which best described the playmate (p. 185).

The researchers Adcock and Segal (1983) also designed a framework to help them identify child leadership. They designed a medieval kingdom framework describing profiles of child leaders which was used in four subsequent studies. The medieval kingdom metaphor identified preschool children as kings/queens, lords, bishops, vassals, and serfs. Leaders were described as kings/queens, lords, and bishops whereas vassals and serfs were the terms used to describe followers.

Of the four researcher-designed instruments mentioned above, all but one of these scales or checklists requires teachers to rate children based on their knowledge of those children. The Least Preferred Playmate Scale (Hardy et al., 1978) differs from the other three measures because researchers evaluated children's leadership styles rather than characteristics. On the Least Preferred Playmate Scale, the child's answers about his or her least preferred playmate form the basis for determining his or her own leadership style. This instrument is described in more detail in the Studies section of this chapter.

Several measures designed to assess leadership in elementary school-aged children are currently available. Formalized measures, including subscales from gifted tests, and informal checklists or scales are reviewed in the literature. However, instruments to assess leadership in very young children, ages 4 through 6 (the ages addressed by this study), are fewer in number. Of the instruments discussed above, those purported to be suitable for young children include one formal instrument, the Leadership Observation Inventory; seven subscales contained in gifted assessments: the Eby Gifted Behavior Index, the Gifted and Talented Screening Form (GTSF), the Gifted Evaluation Scale-2 (GES-2), the Gifted and Talented Evaluation Scales (GATES), the Scales for Rating the Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students (SRBCSS), the Gifted Rating Scales, and the Harrison Observation Inventory; and four informal assessments

designed by researchers: the modified version of Fiedler's scale called the Least Preferred Playmate Scale (Hardy et al., 1978), Adcock and Segal's (1983) medieval kingdom framework, Fu's (1970) NSLOS checklist, and Parten's (1933) observational checklist. Of these 12 instruments designed to assess leadership in young children, 10 measures depend upon teacher ratings. This fact illustrates the important role that classroom teachers play in the identification of child leaders because if researchers or school district personnel use the 10 teacher-rated measures listed above to identify leadership, there is an assumption that teachers recognize child leadership behaviors. This study investigated how well teachers recognize leadership in children.

### **Research Studies on Child Leadership**

Due to the limited number of child leadership studies concerning children aged 4 through 6 years, I reviewed and analyzed research studies on children's leadership from the earliest, conducted in 1933, until the most recent one conducted in 2011. Table 3 reveals the 26 studies that were conducted and published or presented. I categorized the studies according to the ways in which the child subjects were selected. The logic behind this classification system was that if teachers are nominating classroom leaders to participate in the studies, a teacher's ability to recognize leadership behaviors is integral to the validity of the studies. The research populations in all of the research studies in this section were early childhood students in preschool through third grades. Generally, students were selected to participate in the child leadership research studies in the following ways:

Type One: Teacher nominations, classifications, or descriptions;

Type Two: Researcher nominations;

Type Three: Test data nominations;

Type Four: Self-report or sociograms; and

Type Five: Parent descriptions or feedback.

Table 3 lists each of the leadership studies I identified and reviewed. For each study, an X indicates the type of nomination technique the researchers used to select child leaders. It is possible for a study to be marked in two categories if more than one nomination technique was used. For example, Hensel's (1991) study is marked in two categories, Type Three and Type Four, because she used test data and sociograms to locate child leaders.

Table 3

*Early Childhood Leadership Research Studies and Nomination Techniques*

Researcher(s)	Type of Nomination Techniques				
	Type One: Teacher	Type Two: Research -er	Type Three: Test data	Type Four: Self or Socio- grams	Type Five: Parent
Parten, 1933	X	X			
Harrison, Rawls, & Rawls, 1971	X		X		
Hardy, Hunt, & Lehr, 1978				X	
Fu, 1979		X			
Nath & Seriven, 1981	X			X	
Fu et al., 1982		X	X		
Perez et al., 1982	X		X	X	
Adcock & Segal, 1983		X			
Segal, Peck, Vega-Lahr, & Field, 1987a (study one)		X			
Segal et al., 1987b (study two)	X				
Segal et al., 1987c (study three)	X	X			
Trawick-Smith, 1988		X			
Karnes & Meriweather, 1989	X				

(table 3 cont.)

Researcher(s)	Type One: Teacher	Type Two: Research -er	Type Three: Test data	Type Four: Self or Socio- grams	Type Five: Parent
Meriweather & Karnes, 1989					X
Lazarus, 1990		X			
Hensel, 1991			X	X	
Maxcy, 1991		X			
Fukada et al., 1994	X				
Fukada et al., 1997				X	
Shin, Recchia, Lee, Lee, & Mullarkey, 2004	X				
Lee, Recchia, & Shin, 2005	X				
Mullarkey, Recchia, Lee, Shin, & Lee, 2005	X				
Morda, Waniganayake, & Care, 2005			X	X	
Faurie, Vianey-Liaud, & Raymond, 2006	X			X	
Mawson, 2010		X			
Mawson, 2011		X			
Total: 26	12	11	5	7	1

**Type One: Studies in which teachers nominated, classified, or described student leaders.**

In eight reviewed studies, teachers were asked to nominate or rate student leaders: Parten (1933); Harrison, Rawls, & Rawls (1971); Nath and Seriven (1981); Fukada et al. (1994); Shin et al. (2004); Lee et al. (2005); Mullarkey et al. (2005); and Faurie, Vianey-Liaud, and Raymond (2006). In addition to the eight studies above, four other studies involved teacher input. Karnes and Meriweather (1989) asked teachers to describe their child leaders. In Segal et al.'s (1987b, 1987c) second and third studies, teachers were asked to classify children according to the

medieval kingdom framework proposed by Adcock and Segal (1983). In a study conducted by Perez et al. (1982), teachers nominated, but since sociograms were used, this study is discussed in the Type Four section.

Parten (1933) conducted a study on child leadership in which teachers rated each of 34 children on social participation and on leadership. Researchers also observed the children during free play using a one-minute sampling technique to record child behaviors as: “following,” “independently pursuing own ends,” “both directing and following,” “reciprocally directing,” and “directing” (p. 433). Teachers’ ratings of social participation coincided closely with the researchers’ ratings. However, teachers’ ratings of child leadership did not match the researchers’ observations. Nonetheless, Parten felt that the teachers’ ratings for leadership were high enough to be valid indicators. Parten recognized two types of leadership in the preschool: bullies and diplomats. The “diplomat” was described as one who, “by artful and indirect suggestions, controls a large number of children,” and the bully was described as one who “employs brute force in ‘bossing’ the small group he has chosen for his ‘gang’” (p. 440). Parten’s (1933) study also fits into the Type Two category because, in addition to using teachers’ ratings of students’ leadership abilities, Parten also used researchers’ observations of children. This study is one of four that discussed the validity of teacher ratings in finding that teachers’ ratings of child leaders were accurate.

Harrison et al. (1971) studied the link between intelligence and leadership in children aged 6 through 11. In this study, teachers rated how often children were chosen as leaders by other children: “frequently chosen,” “average incidence,” or “seldom or never chosen” (pp. 269-270). Then the researchers examined further data collected on all the students from the “frequently chosen” or “seldom or never chosen” groups. The researchers collected the

following data: demographic and health information, teachers' and mothers' feedback, and psychological subtest scores including math and reading. The results showed that frequently chosen leaders scored higher overall in intelligence, health, and social skills than the seldom or never chosen leaders. Furthermore, a higher number of gifted students were identified as leaders compared to the non-gifted students in the sample.

Nath and Seriven (1981) explored the connection between leadership and self-esteem at a university preschool program. To measure self-esteem, the researchers first administered the Pictorial Self-concept Scale to 17 children in a preschool class. Then teachers rated the children's leadership according to a modified version of Parten's (1933) observational scale. The authors found a relationship between self-esteem and leadership, but this relationship was non-significant for two reasons: (a) the scale they used to assess leadership (Parten, 1933) did not distinguish among different types of leadership, and (b) seven of the 17 children possibly misunderstood how to answer the scale questions.

In the Fukada et al. (1994) study, 18 Japanese children (aged 5 years old) were scored during free-play on a researcher-created leadership checklist. Three trained researchers observed six children whom three teachers nominated from each of their classrooms. Each teacher was asked to nominate one male and one female in each of three categories: Central, In-Between, and Peripheral. A "Central" child often participated in group activities and frequently assumed an important role within the group play. An "In-Between" child sometimes joined group activities and sometimes took on an important role in the play. A "Peripheral" child infrequently participated in group activities but, after joining, he or she rarely assumed an important role within the group play. The purpose of this study was to determine if Centrals and Peripherals displayed different leadership behaviors for the two



dimensions described by Fukada et al. (1994): (a) “Facilitation of Play” and (b) “Consideration-Evaluation of Playmates” (p. 392). No significant difference existed between the two groups on the facilitation of play dimension. However, Centrals scored higher than Peripherals on the Consideration-evaluation of playmates dimension. The findings from this study suggest that it is necessary to measure children’s leadership on more than one dimension because looking at leadership one-dimensionally could exclude some child leaders. This study was groundbreaking because the researchers used a scale that characterized two dimensions of leadership and most studies up to that point in time had measured child leadership as a whole phenomenon.

Shin et al. (2004) conducted a study using teacher interviews and classroom observations to identify the characteristics of child leadership. In this study, three teachers who taught classes of infants, toddlers, and preschool students (6 weeks through 5 years old) selected six leaders whom the researchers then studied. The students nominated for this study were between the ages of 22 months and 4.6 years old. The researchers wanted to discover the attributes of developing leadership behavior in young children and how these children displayed leadership in their classrooms. Their observations resulted in two categories of developing leadership behavior: “dynamic and powerful” personalities and a “high level of awareness” (p. 306) in the classroom. Children with “dynamic and powerful” personalities were appealing to the other children, enthusiastic, and assertive with strong social, communicative, and physical skills. Children showing a “high level of awareness” knew specific things about everyone in the classroom. These children would not hesitate to communicate what should happen in their classrooms. These same researchers (Shin et al., 2004) found leadership to be a “relational construct” (p. 309) and suggested that leaders used

their social skills to build relationships with their peers and teachers. As these children aged and developed, they also developed more leadership power.

In a related study, three researchers (from the Shin et al., 2004 study), Lee, Recchia, and Shin (2005), analyzed the data about the four oldest children from their first study. The purpose of this research was to answer the following questions: “(1) What are the unique characteristics of each leader that emerge within the social context of the classroom?” and “(2) How do young leaders use their distinct characteristics to accomplish leadership with their peers?” (p. 3). After they interviewed teachers about their classroom leaders, the researchers observed and videotaped the four nominated children. In addition to finding characteristics that are common to child leaders, case studies also revealed the individual characteristics of each of the four child leaders. For example, Child One was named “The Director” (p. 6); Child Two was called “The Free Spirit” (p. 9); Child Three was labeled “The Manager” (p.12); and Child Four was described as “The Power Man” (p. 15). Each child displayed distinct yet powerful characteristics of leadership (Lee et al., 2005).

In a study related to the Shin et al. (2004) and Lee et al. (2005) studies, Mullarkey et al. (2005) interviewed six early childhood teachers to find out what teachers think about child leadership. Two teachers taught infants (children under 1 year of age), two taught toddlers (children ages 1–2 years), and two taught pre-school (children ages 3–4 years). Teachers were interviewed about their perceptions of child leadership. Teachers reported that they had trouble allowing children to exert leadership and still be able to maintain their classroom management, for example, when classroom leaders encouraged other children to challenge classroom rules. The researchers also investigated how teachers consciously or unconsciously encouraged or discouraged leadership in children. Their findings revealed that many teachers

face a “dilemma” (p. 128) as they struggle with their ideals of child leadership while managing their classroom communities. When these teachers were asked how they encouraged and discouraged leadership behaviors, their answers kept referring to how they managed leaders in their classroom environments. One teacher out of the six provided an example of how she encouraged leadership; however, all six teachers admitted to deterring the leadership behaviors of certain children to maintain classroom control. The findings also indicated that teachers had a tendency to support “established leaders” (p. 128) instead of encouraging new student leaders. These authors suggested that this theory and practice “dilemma” (supporting child leaders while managing their classroom communities) should be addressed in teacher training programs. They urged teachers to examine their own leadership beliefs and to think about how they interact with child leaders of different genders, ages, and ethnicities (Mullarkey et al., 2005).

In a study conducted by Faurie et al. (2006), researchers primarily used teacher ratings to discover if there was a correlation between handedness and school performance or leadership skills. The researchers mailed a questionnaire to primary schools asking teachers to rate their first- to fifth-grade students on leadership, school performance, and laterality. Teachers at 81 schools rated leadership and school performance on individual scales and obtained laterality scores from performance tests. Results indicated that more right-handed females showed leadership than left-handed females. There was not a significant difference between right-handed and left-handed male leaders. The researchers also asked students at 12 of the 81 schools to rate their peers as leaders. In this case, teachers’ ratings correlated positively with peer ratings at eight of the 12 schools where students rated their peers. This

study is important because it is one of four studies that discussed teacher reliability in rating child leaders.

Karnes and Meriweather (1989) conducted a series of studies in which they interviewed different groups of participants about leadership. In one study, researchers asked 48 kindergarten-twelfth grade teachers attending the National Association for Gifted Children's (NAGC) annual conference to describe their students' leadership qualities. All 48 of these teachers taught gifted students and their definitions of leadership were consistent with definitions of leadership in the literature. When these teachers defined leadership, they were more likely to describe leading as a process than as a set of skills. This study is significant because it is one of four studies that reported teachers could reliably define and identify leadership characteristics.

Segal et al. (1987b) conducted a series of three studies to explore if Adcock and Segal's (1983) medieval kingdom system of classifying children's social styles was useful in the classroom. Adcock and Segal (1983) used a medieval metaphor to identify preschool leaders as kings/queens, lords, and bishops, while followers were identified as vassals and serfs. Segal et al. (1987b) conducted a second study which fits in this category because teachers classified 20 children into the five social styles described by Adcock and Segal in the medieval kingdom framework. Five observers also watched the same students outside on the playground and coded their behaviors based on Adcock and Segal's descriptions. Teachers assigned a social style to each of their students without using the observers' data. The social styles the teachers and observers assigned to the students (based on the student behaviors) provided more data about children in the various social roles.

In the third study conducted by Segal et al. (1987c), researchers observed three aggressive children in two different classrooms. Afterward, the teachers were asked to classify all the students (including the three aggressive children) according to the medieval kingdom framework. Since the teachers classified all the students as leaders (king/queens, lords, bishops) and followers (vassals and serfs), this study fits in the Type One category. After social style classification, the children were paired with other students according to Adcock and Segal's recommendations for successful play. Pairing the children resulted in a reduction of aggressive acts which means that this social framework is helpful for reducing classroom conflict. Although the first study in this series falls under the Type Two category, the second and third studies (1987b, 1987c) fit into this category (Type One).

In the 12 studies listed above, teachers nominated, rated, described, or classified the students whom the researchers studied. Since data on teacher reliability in the area of nominating child leaders is limited, findings from these studies could be misleading. Teachers selected the leaders, so one must wonder how many child leaders might have been overlooked or disregarded. Results from this study provided information on whether or not teachers recognize leadership in children.

**Type Two: Studies in which researchers nominated the student leaders.**

In eight studies, researchers identified student leaders through their own observations of entire classrooms: Adcock and Segal (1983); Segal, Peck, Vega-Lahr, and Field (1987a); Trawick-Smith (1988); Lazarus (1990); Maxcy (1991); Fu (1979); and two studies by Mawson (2010, 2011). Parten's (1933) study also fits in this category, because her subjects were observed in combination with teachers' ratings; however, since teachers initially nominated the students, this study is grouped with the Type One studies. In another study by

Fu et al. (1982), researchers observed the children but combined their observation data with test data, so this study is described in Type Three. Segal et al. (1987c) observed students to look for children with problem behaviors to pair with child leaders. This study is described in Type One and is the eleventh study in this category.

Segal et al. (1987a) conducted three studies to test the validity of the medieval kingdom metaphor proposed earlier by Adcock and Segal (1983). In the first study, Segal et al. (1987a), two research assistants observed 24 children in a classroom over a four-month period. They coded student behaviors during classroom free play based on Adcock and Segal's medieval kingdom descriptions. Then they assigned each of the children one of the five social styles as described by Adcock and Segal (1983). The children's behaviors confirmed that the social style descriptors were valid.

Trawick-Smith (1988) wanted to find out if there was a connection between leading and following behaviors in preschool children. He observed 32 children playing in their classrooms. He found a relationship between leading and following and described successful leaders as children who: (a) were followers, but were discerning about whom they followed; (b) were willing to consider the suggestions of others in light of their own needs; or (c) used "tactful rejection" (p. 55). Leaders contributed new and fun ideas during play and were willing to compromise to maintain play. Trawick-Smith (1988) believed the teacher played a role in building children's social skills. He advised that encouraging child leadership meant teaching children both to lead and to follow. These two skills may be further developed when children are allowed to play freely with each other.

Lazarus (1990) studied 66 kindergarten children from three classes of one teacher. The teacher placed four or five children in committees over a 10-month period spanning two

school years. The researcher wanted to know what would happen as a result of forming student cooperative learning groups and giving them tasks to complete. She audio-taped their conversations and documented that children engaged in leadership behaviors such as “Decision-making,” “Allocation of work,” and “Supervising work” (p. 7) while they interacted within their groups.

In 1991, Maxcy studied two kindergarten classes “to observe and record student life worlds in the cultural context of the school” to see if he “could redefine childhood leadership” (p. 107) because he found that traditional ideas about leadership did not apply to children in kindergarten. Maxcy also explored how teachers nurtured or discouraged student leadership. He reported that leaders could only continue to be leaders if the teacher permitted them to do so. Maxcy observed that teachers discouraged specific children from acting as leaders in some situations. This caused some researcher-identified class leaders to become frustrated or to require disciplinary actions. Some of the ways teachers discouraged child leaders were by restricting opportunities for student decision-making and limiting playtimes where children could practice leadership roles. Another technique teachers used to discourage child leaders was to reinforce leadership in some children who were not leaders which discouraged others who were exhibiting leadership.

Fu (1979) observed 48 children for four 5-minute periods each day using the scale she developed called the Nursery School Leadership Observation Schedule (NSLOS, Fu, 1970). The observations occurred during free play in four different classrooms. Half the students were from a middle class socioeconomic group and half were from a lower class socioeconomic group. Fu wanted to explore the leading and following behaviors of middle class and lower class children. She found the following differences in leadership styles

between children from the two classes: (a) middle class children were more likely to act as followers than children from the lower class, (b) leaders from the middle class used more verbal skills while leaders from the lower class used more non-verbal communication, and (c) all children valued leadership.

Mawson conducted two studies more recently on child leadership (2010, 2011). In the first study, Mawson studied 3- and 4-year-old children ( $n = 22$ ) at a daycare center and 4-year-old children ( $n = 47$ ) from another early childhood program to explore gender differences in leadership styles during collaborative play. He observed that girls acted more as “directors” and boys acted more as “dictators” in the ways they led other children (p.115). Girls used more negotiation and compromise while boys exhibited leadership that was hierarchical in nature. (The boys usually deferred to one dominant male.) The girls usually grouped together by friendships while boys chose interest groups, but in both genders, the presence of a leader was necessary for collaborative play. The children in the daycare setting engaged in more mixed-gender play than the children in the other early childhood setting, possibly due to environmental reasons.

In Mawson’s (2011) second study, he observed 3- and 4-year-old children at an early childhood daycare center to explore leadership behaviors that occurred during collaborative play. Behaviors were grouped into four categories: “physical aggression,” “physical assertiveness,” “relational aggression,” and “relational assertiveness” (p. 329). The girls used more relational strategies in their play than did the boys. Findings also indicated a relationship between larger-sized play groups and mixed-gender play. Boys led mixed-gender groups a little more often than girls and were again observed to be more hierarchical with leadership. Teachers intervened more in large group play than they did in dyads or triads



because children in large play groups used more aggression which caused conflict. Mawson recommended that teachers delay their interventions so that children learn how to resolve conflicts in large groups.

In the Type Two studies described above, researchers went into classrooms and observed all children to discover child leadership. Researchers chose not to be influenced by teacher nominations. Instead, researchers looked for leadership behaviors that emerged from young children within the context of the classroom or playground.

### **Type Three: Studies in which researchers used test data and observations.**

Researchers used test data singly or in combination with researcher observations to identify student leaders in three studies: Fu et al. (1982); Hensel (1991); and Morda, Waniganayake, and Care (2005). The test data was used to link leadership to intelligence, creativity, or verbal skills. Two other studies belong in this category because the researchers used test data in combination with other forms of ratings. Harrison et al. (1971) used test data on students the teachers nominated, so this study is described in Type One. Perez et al. (1982) used test data with sociograms so this study is described in Type Four.

In Fu et al. (1982), the researchers collected leadership and “followership” (p. 291) scores from 5- and 6-year-old kindergarten children during free play using the Nursery School Leadership Observation Schedule (NSLOS, Fu, 1970). These researchers assessed creativity using the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking. They investigated the relationship between leadership and creativity among children from two different socioeconomic classes. In children from the middle class, the researchers found a relationship between leader-follower behavior and creativity which they thought was due to the children’s language proficiency. Researchers did not find a relationship between leader-follower behavior and creativity in

children from the lower class, which the researchers thought may have been the result of these children's lower language abilities.

In 1991, Hensel conducted a project based on a previous study by Perez et al. from 1982. Like Perez et al. (1982), Hensel administered the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) to find the students who scored highest in verbal skills and then administered the same sociogram that Perez et al. used. Hensel selected the students who scored the highest on both the PPVT and the sociograms and then observed those students in dramatic play to see if they displayed leadership skills. These tests were used to select the students to participate in a training program she developed which would build leadership characteristics such as prosocial and problem-solving skills in children. As a result of this project, she made suggestions for teachers to develop prosocial behaviors in children.

Morda et al. (2005) explored the potential relationship between leadership and intelligence. They used the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Test to assess students' intelligence, and the Preschool Interpersonal Problem Solving Test to measure social intelligence. They also used the Pictorial Scale of Perceived Competence and Social Acceptance for Young Children and the Social Skills Rating System to measure self-evaluation. These researchers found a correlation between giftedness and leadership and, after observing the children, they grouped the child leaders using the medieval kingdom framework created by Adcock and Segal (1983).

**Type Four: Studies in which students evaluated peers using sociograms, peer rating, or self-reporting.**

In three studies, researchers used self-ratings, sociograms, or peer ratings to identify classroom leaders. These studies were conducted by Hardy et al. (1978), Perez et al. (1982), and Fukada et al. (1997). Four other studies can be categorized in this section but were described in

a previous section. Hensel (1991) used sociograms in combination with test data. Morda et al. (2005) asked teachers to administer a self-evaluation to students along with test data, and Nath and Seriven (1981) administered a self-concept scale to children. These studies were previously discussed in the Type Three studies section. In another study conducted by Faurie et al. (2006), peers also rated child leaders, but since teachers rated students, this study is described in Type One.

Hardy et al. (1978) gave 36 children a revised form of Fiedler's (1967) Least Preferred Co-worker (LPC) Scale called the Least Preferred Playmate Scale. In order to determine if there was a relationship between leadership style and birth order, the researchers asked the children to think of a person with whom they had not played well. Then the children were asked to describe that person from a list of adjectives (i.e., "kind and not kind," p. 185). The researchers determined children's leadership styles from this Least Preferred Playmate Scale using the "task-oriented" and "relation-oriented" (p.185) leadership styles that are described above in the Contingency theory section. This study fits Type Four because in rating a playmate, each child revealed his or her own leadership style. Researchers did not find a relationship between leadership style and birth order for boys, but did find one for girls. Of girls who were first-born or only children, 20% were relation-oriented and 80% were task-oriented. The researchers concluded that leadership style had not yet emerged in 4-year-old boys as it had for girls of that age.

Perez et al. (1982) also used sociograms to identify leaders. Researchers conducted the sociogram by asking each child questions such as "Who is your best friend/favorite friend in the classroom?" and "Whom should I (the teacher) choose to help me teach the children?" (p. 26). Then the children's answers were used to create a diagram of the most-chosen peers

or leaders. After the sociogram, researchers administered the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) to all the students. Children who were identified as leaders on the sociograms were among the highest scorers on the PPVT. Teachers reported that these child leaders used sophisticated sentence structure and more descriptive language than the other children. Also, the leaders whom the teachers suggested matched the leaders indicated on the sociograms. This is one of four studies that indicated that teachers' suggestions of child leaders reliably matched leaders selected by other data.

Fukada et al. (1997) used sociometric tests, behavioral observations, and a leadership checklist (Fukada et al., 1994) to study the relationship between leadership and sociometric measures in 24 children aged 6 years old. Fukada et al. (1994) defined leadership as having two "factors," "Facilitation of Play" and "Consideration-Evaluation of Playmates" (p. 393). Results from this study indicated a relationship between leadership and sociometric ratings in both facilitation of play and consideration of playmates.

#### **Type Five: Studies in which parents nominated or described leaders.**

In spite of the fact that Chan (2004), a researcher who studied leadership in older students (aged 8 to 16), believed that parents gave reliable information about their children, few studies exist in which parents nominated their children for leadership studies. Of the 26 studies reviewed, parents were asked to describe leaders in one study (Meriweather & Karnes, 1989). In one other study, Harrison et al. (1971), mothers were asked for feedback on their children, but were not asked to nominate them as leaders.

Meriweather and Karnes (1989) administered a survey to 73 parents of elementary and secondary school children at conferences to explore their attitudes and perceptions about their children's leadership development. Parents described their children's top three leadership

strengths as “interpersonal skills,” “intelligence,” and “ambition” (p. 56). Parents described four areas—self-confidence, delegating authority, patience, and communication skills—in which their children were lacking.

### **Summary of the Studies**

Out of 26 studies conducted with young children, teacher nominations, descriptions, ratings, or classifications, were elicited in 12 studies while 11 studies used researcher nominations or observations to assess leadership. Researchers used testing data in five studies, and sociograms or self-reports in seven of the studies. Parents completed a related survey in one reviewed study (Meriweather & Karnes, 1989). Some studies fit into multiple categories.

#### **Critique of the studies reviewed.**

Of the 26 studies reviewed above, researchers studied children who teachers nominated or described in eight studies (Faurie et al., 2006; Fukada et al., 1994; Karnes & Meriweather, 1989; Lee et al., 2005; Mullarkey et al., 2005; Nath & Seriven, 1981; Segal et al., 1987c; Shin et al., 2004). In four other studies (Harrison, et al., 1971; Parten, 1933; Perez et al., 1982; Segal et al., 1987c), teacher ratings were used in combination with other measures. Thus, a total of 12 studies considered teacher ratings or descriptions of child leadership in the literature. Of these 12 studies, was found to be reliable in four (Faurie et al., 2006; Karnes & Meriweather, 1989; Parten, 1933; Perez et al., 1982). Since four of the 12 studies reported teacher accuracy, results from the other eight studies may be misleading. Roach et al. (1999) suspected that teachers looked more at individual traits than situations when viewing leadership. If teachers in the reviewed studies acted as Roach et al. (1999) suggested, then teachers in the other eight studies may have simply looked for children who

demonstrated leadership traits and might not have looked at leadership emerging from situations. This would be one weakness in the studies reviewed.

Based on this review of the literature, more than half of the research studies did not rely on teachers to identify leaders. Although Chan (2004) studied the multiple intelligences of older gifted children between the ages of 8 and 16, he found that the students' self-ratings were the most accurate predictors of leadership among five nomination sources: teachers, mothers, fathers, peers, and self-nominations. This could indicate that teachers were not as reliable as predictors of leadership as were the students themselves. Yet only two of the studies used self-ratings (Morda et al., 2005; Nath & Seriven, 1981). After reviewing the literature, the idea that teachers may not always recognize leadership in children is clear. As a consequence, teachers may misinterpret leadership actions of children.

Another weakness of the studies was that in four cases, researchers studied children from university-based programs where the subjects may have been related to faculty members or university students. These studies (Hensel, 1991; Nath and Seriven, 1981; Perez et al., 1982; Shin et al., 2004) used populations that might not be representative of the general population of young children. For this reason, the results of the studies may not be generalizable to other populations.

Child leadership has not been studied extensively (Mawson, 2011; Shin et al., 2005). As a result, the number of research studies on this topic is limited and, in the existing body of research on child leadership, weaknesses have been noted. Researchers used limited populations, so the results might not be generalizable. Although teachers' nominations, classifications, or descriptions were used in 12 studies on child leadership, researchers reported that teachers' ratings of child leaders matched the researchers' or peers' ratings of child leaders

in 33% of the studies. Even though researchers have studied child leadership, additional research that addresses the weaknesses noted above is clearly warranted.

### **Teacher Influence**

Teachers influence child development (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997; Bronfenbrenner, 1979) which includes social development. Children's development is enhanced when they form beneficial, stable relationships with adults and other children (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997). To help children build positive relationships, teachers are expected to set up a community of learners where all children are valued and feel psychologically safe (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997).

In addition to affecting child development, teachers influence social relationships (Chang, 2003) and classroom dynamics. Teacher attitudes and actions within the classroom context influence children's social status (Chang, 2003). Moreover, the ways in which teachers interact with students affect the way children view themselves and also how they view other children in the classroom (Chang, Liu, Fung, Wang, Wen, Li et al., 2007; Montague & Rinaldi, 2001). Chang (2003) explained that a teacher's likes or dislikes of a child's behaviors impacted that child's social ranking in the classroom. In a subsequent study, Chang et al. (2007) further investigated the "mediating teacher preference" (p. 625), which occurred when the children whom teachers favor are usually favored by the other children and children whom the teachers dislike may be disliked by other children. In this study, they found that girls were influenced more by their teacher's preferences than boys, and that younger children were more susceptible to teacher influence than older children. This finding is significant because it focuses on how teachers influence behaviors in young children.

The ways in which teachers view and value a child's behaviors have a significant influence on that child's behaviors. Researchers Lane, Wehby, and Cooley (2006) administered a survey to elementary, middle, and high-school teachers to investigate if a difference existed in the way teachers across grade levels perceived the skills of self-control, cooperation, and assertion. Elementary teachers viewed self-control and cooperation as more important than assertion. This finding is important since assertion is a leadership characteristic (Shin et al., 2004). Because young children try to please their teachers, they will try to display the behaviors their teachers value. As a child develops socially, a 5-year-old child seeks "to please significant adults" (Wood, 1997, p. 42). Developmentally, 5-year-olds want to be cooperative, helpful, and thought of as "good" (Wood, 1997, p. 46). Because of the teacher's importance, children between the ages of 5 and 6 who have emerging leadership abilities might abandon those abilities if their teacher disapproves of certain skills (for example, assertiveness) to please teachers. This research study targeted children in the 4- through 6-year-old age range because of the teacher's powerful influence on young children's behaviors.

Teacher expectations are another way of influencing children's social behaviors (Adcock & Segal, 1983; Kitano, 1989). Kitano (1989) warned that some young gifted children who are highly sensitive to teacher expectations may suppress their abilities for teacher approval. Since young children are eager to please their teachers (Brewer, 1995) and may need adult approval (Wood, 1997), some young children may hide abilities if they feel the teacher does not value their talents. For example, children may display leadership behavior if they feel they are expected to; conversely, if they feel the teacher does not expect this behavior from them, children may suppress their leadership behaviors for teacher approval. This makes it important



that teachers become aware of how they can unconsciously affect social development, including leadership, in children.

Teachers also model social behaviors and transmit their values to children. Values about particular social skills are communicated to the students through a teacher's personal style (Adcock & Segal, 1983). For instance, Adcock and Segal (1983) described how children learned about sharing from their teacher's example and Maxcy (1991) also found that teachers model leadership skills.

Since leadership is a social behavior (Fu, 1979; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2008), it is possible for teachers to influence child leadership in the ways described above. However, the child leadership literature provides descriptions of how teachers specifically influence leadership development in children. Maxcy (1991) and Mullarkey et al. (2005) pointed out that teachers both encourage and discourage leadership. Maxcy observed teachers' modeling of leadership skills and discounting leadership behaviors which influenced child behavior. Teachers enhance (Karnes et al., 1990; Yamaguchi, 2003) and influence leadership development (Lee et al., 2005; Maxcy, 1991; Mullarkey et al., 2005; Parten, 1933; Shin et al., 2004) by their interactions and behaviors.

### **The classroom as an environment for leadership.**

Researchers (Hensel, 1991; Maxcy, 1988; Mullarkey et al., 2005; Trawick-Smith, 1988) point out the importance of teachers' awareness of leadership behaviors. Teachers also need to have an awareness of teacher influence on child leadership behaviors and recognize the importance of the environment they create for young learners. The National Association for the Education of Young Children's (NAEYC) position statement recommends that "[t]he learning environment enables children to construct understanding through interactions with adults and

other children” (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997, p. 16). Similarly, researchers have encouraged educators to set up the classroom environment to support the development of various leadership behaviors (Lee et al., 2005) or prosocial development (Doescher & Sugawara, 1989). Because children spend a majority of each day in classrooms, the classroom is a logical place for children to practice leadership behaviors with other children. Teachers are the persons of authority in classrooms (Adcock & Segal, 1983) and, as such, have control over the environment. The classroom environment is very important for children’s development, and a combination of genetics and environment in the early childhood years helps leaders build their ways of thinking about the world (Howard, 2005). Therefore, educators should set up environments which allow and encourage children to practice emerging leadership behaviors both inside and outside of the classroom (i.e., an environment that allows and encourages child-initiated play where children choose the activities in which they engage).

Teachers are not supplied with a lot of information about how leadership manifests in the classroom and may not be trained to support emerging leadership (Karnes & Meriweather, 1989; Karnes & Stephens, 1999). Therefore, it might be difficult for teachers to create supportive environments conducive to children’s emerging leadership abilities. Furthermore, teachers may not be aware of how much social power they wield in the classroom, so it is necessary that they become cognizant of the influential role they play in the area of social relationships, specifically in the area of leadership development.

### **Recognizing Child Leadership**

Teachers striving to meet the needs of all their learners need to be aware of a particular group of students who demonstrate leadership behaviors: children identified as gifted. The concept of leadership is included in the federal definition (CEC & ERIC Clearinghouse, 1990)

for children and adolescents who are gifted. The identification of gifted learners may include the component of leadership (Karnes et al., 1990). Several states base their definitions of gifted learners upon this national definition of giftedness (Karnes & Stephens, 2000). Currently, some states sponsor educational programs that allow students to be identified as gifted learners beginning in kindergarten, including Arizona, California, Connecticut, Georgia, Idaho, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Wisconsin. Teachers in these states are expected to recognize leadership behaviors in young children so that they can make referrals to special education programs. Gifted identification is mandated in 35 out of 52 United States and U. S. territories while 31 out of 52 states and territories mandate gifted programming for students (NAGC, 2008b). Since teachers identify gifted children beginning in kindergarten, children at these ages may be exhibiting leadership behaviors. Once children demonstrate leadership behaviors, they need to be recognized and referred for gifted services. However, teachers may not be aware that these behaviors represent emerging leadership and may ignore leadership behaviors or mistake them for problem behaviors. Teacher identification of giftedness at young ages is another reason to explore how teachers recognize and influence child leadership.

While research studies on child leadership are minimal, literature exists concerning leadership in gifted elementary school-aged children and adolescents. For example, several authors supply lists of traits and abilities of leadership giftedness in children (Bisland et al., 2004; Karnes & Bean, 1996; Karnes & Zimmerman, 2001; Kitano, 1982). Other research studies describe child leadership within the context of the classroom (Adcock & Segal, 1983; Lazarus, 1990; Lee et al., 2005; Shin et al., 2004). Since leadership is recognized as a trait of giftedness, these descriptions of leadership

giftedness and the classroom descriptions of child leaders might assist a teacher in recognizing child leadership.

## **Conclusion**

Additional research is needed in the area of child leadership (Karnes & Bean, 1996; Morda & Waniganayake, 2010; Mullarkey et al., 2005; Roach et al., 1999) to help teachers increase their awareness of child leadership and to help them identify leadership potential in young children. When teachers, who are the role models and the powerful adults in the child's classroom environment, are not aware of leadership behaviors in children, they can suppress or thwart these developing abilities. Conversely, if teachers recognize child leadership, they can support and encourage these behaviors in children.

This literature review draws attention to the fact that teachers may not easily recognize developing leadership in children because there is still not a definitive understanding of what leadership looks like in young children. However, there is also evidence that teachers significantly influence leadership development whether they realize it or not. The findings from this research study provide information on whether or not teachers recognize leadership behaviors in children and how teachers believe they might influence the development of these skills.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Methodology**

In the literature, there is evidence that young children aged 4 years (Adcock & Segal, 1983; Lee et al., 2005), 5 years (Fu et al., 1982; Maxcy, 1991; Perez et al., 1982) and 6 years of age (Fukada et al., 1997; Maxcy, 1991) exhibit leadership behaviors. Some researchers have studied leadership in children using teacher nominations. However, validation of teachers' recognition of child leadership is lacking. Researchers encourage teachers to nurture (Lee et al., 2005; Scheer & Safrit, 2001) or develop leadership behaviors in children (Bisland et al., 2004; Karnes & Zimmerman, 2001; Manning, 2005), yet there is also evidence in the literature that teachers discourage leadership in children (Maxcy, 1991; Mullarkey et al., 2005). The purpose of this research study was to contribute information about how effectively teachers recognize child leadership behaviors and also reveal ways in which teachers might encourage and discourage leadership in young children.

### **Research Design**

The study is a survey design, using both qualitative and quantitative data, which is necessary to answer the following three research questions:

1. How do teachers describe leadership in young children?
2. Given scenarios, do teachers recognize leadership behaviors in young children?
3. Given scenarios, how do teachers believe they might influence (support or discourage) leadership behavior in young children?

The answer to Question One was best addressed by open-ended responses from teachers and qualitative analysis. Question Two was best answered from a quantitative perspective whereas Question Three was best addressed with qualitative data. The quantitative approach

provides data that can be measured on the dimension of how well teachers recognize leadership in young children. The qualitative approach provides in-service teachers of early childhood students an opportunity to describe how they view child leadership and also how they believe they might influence child leadership behaviors.

The type of research design that was used for the study was the Concurrent Triangulation Design. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2007), this type of design involves using a survey instrument designed to collect both quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously and weights both sets of data equally. In this study, a survey instrument was used to collect quantitative data and qualitative data. The collected quantitative and qualitative data from the survey responses were analyzed to shed light on the topic of teacher influence on child leadership. Therefore, the research design for this study met the criteria for the Concurrent Triangulation Design.

Using a survey enables a researcher to make a generalization from a sample to the general population about a behavior (Creswell, 2009). The survey was the best type of data collection for this study because it allowed a large number of subjects to participate from across the state. Teacher participants for this study were from urban and rural areas as well as from private, public, and parochial schools which makes the results representative of the larger population and, therefore, more generalizable.

### **Survey Instrument**

The name of the researcher-designed survey used in this study was the *Recognizing Leadership in Children (RLIC) Survey*. The survey instrument contains 10 scenarios of children in early childhood settings (see Appendix A). To complete the instrument, teachers read the 10 scenarios and respond to the questions following each scenario. The scenarios include eight

examples of child leadership and two examples of non-leadership behaviors. Teachers are asked to indicate whether or not each scenario contains child leadership behaviors. The survey also gives teachers the opportunity to describe child leadership and allows them to write if and how they would intervene with child behaviors in the scenarios.

Collecting data with this survey instrument allowed the researcher to discover how teachers describe child leadership as well as determine how well teachers recognize leadership behaviors in young children. To attain teacher recognition rates of the scenarios, teachers' answers were scored correct or incorrect and a total score was computed by adding up the number of correct responses.

On the survey, teachers had the option of explaining briefly how they might intervene in each of the 10 leadership scenarios. Therefore, I was able to obtain information about how teachers believed they influence child leadership behaviors through the question, "As a teacher, would you respond to the students in this scenario? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No. If yes, please describe how you would respond and why you would respond that way in the following space."

After the teachers answered, I grouped their responses into three predetermined categories: (a) teachers discourage leadership, (b) teachers ignore leadership behaviors, and (c) teachers encourage leadership. These preset themes align with research Question Three which asks how teachers could influence child leadership. The three categories explain how teachers respond to children's leadership behaviors and are based on the literature. Additional categories were added for the responses that emerged from the data but did not fit any of the three predetermined categories.

I saved anecdotal records and observational data from children in early childhood classrooms to create the scenarios on the *RLIC Survey*. Each scenario is representative of the

characteristics from the literature. Table 4 displays how each survey item correlates to the characteristics from the literature summarized in Chapter One (see Table 1).

Table 4

*Correlation of Survey Items to Characteristics Found in the Literature*

Leadership scenarios from <i>RLIC Survey</i>	Correlation to characteristics in the literature
<p>Scenario 1:            While playing with blocks, Frank told Ryan, "Let's build a whole city." Ryan said, "O.K." The two children built gates and buildings out of blocks. Ryan said to Frank, "I have an idea." Ryan showed him his idea.            Frank continued doing his own thing.</p>	<p>Communicates well verbally with peers (Adcock &amp; Segal, 1983; Perez et al., 1982; Sisk &amp; Rosselli, 1996).            Flexible/flexible in thought and action (Karnes &amp; Bean, 1996; Manning, 2005; Sisk &amp; Rosselli, 1996; U-Stars checklist, 1996).</p>
<p>Scenario 2:            The teacher said, "It's time to pick up" and began the "Clean Up" song. Hannah immediately told the kids in the block center as she pointed to individual students: "You pick up the squares, you pick up the round ones, you pick up the rectangles, and Leigh and I will get all the rest. OK?" Then Hannah watched as the other children put the blocks away in the bin.</p>	<p>Organized/organizes materials and activities (Adcock &amp; Segal, 1983; CEC &amp; ERIC Clearinghouse, 1990; Roets, 2000; Shin et al., 2004; U-Stars checklist, 1996).</p>
<p>Scenario 3:            Some of the children were complaining because they couldn't see the storybook the teacher was holding. Jeffrey made the suggestion, "Tall ones sit in the back and short ones sit in the front." Some children began moving around on the rug according to Jeffrey's suggestion.</p>	<p>Verbal skill (Adcock &amp; Segal, 1983; Karnes &amp; Bean, 1996; Perez et al., 1982).            Problem solver/creatively solves problems (Karnes &amp; Bean, 1995, 1996; Karnes et al., 1990; Roets, 2000; Sisk and Rosselli, 1996).</p>



(table 4 cont.)

Leadership scenarios from <i>RLIC Survey</i>	Correlation to characteristics in the literature
<p>Scenario 6: Lisa often helps her classmate complete his work. She tells him, "Here, let me show you." As a result, her teacher often lets her help other students finish their work.</p>	<p>Communicates well verbally with peers (Adcock &amp; Segal, 1983; Perez et al., 1982; Sisk &amp; Rosselli, 1996).</p> <p>Empathetic/sensitive to feelings of others (Karnes &amp; Bean, 1996; Manning, 2005; Perez et al., 1982; Sisk &amp; Rosselli, 1996).</p>
<p>Scenario 7: Erin asked the group at the table, "What are you doing?" Isabella said, "You can help us if you want." Erin sat down at the table with the group and helped.</p>	<p>Empathetic/sensitive to feelings of others (Karnes &amp; Bean, 1996; Manning, 2005; Perez et al., 1982; Sisk &amp; Rosselli, 1996).</p> <p>Sought out by peers (Adcock &amp; Segal, 1983; Kitano, 1982; U-Stars Checklist, 1996).</p>
<p>Scenario 8: Whenever the group needed refocusing, the teacher would clap her hands in a distinctive pattern. One day Patrick used the same clap when the group began to get too noisy. Some of the children stopped what they were doing.</p>	<p>Energetic/high energy level (Manning, 2005; Roets, 2000; Shin et al., 2004; Sisk &amp; Rosselli, 1996).</p> <p>Independent (EBY checklist; Perez et al., 1982; Sisk &amp; Rosselli, 1996).</p> <p>Problem solver/creatively solves problems (Karnes &amp; Bean, 1995, 1996; Karnes et al., 1990; Roets, 2000; Sisk and Rosselli, 1996).</p>
<p>Scenario 9: After a visit from a fireman, Billy told Nicholas, "When we go outside, you be the fire chief and I'll be the fireman." Evan asked Nicholas, "I'm going to be a fireman on your truck, too, OK?" Nicholas said, "OK, but someone has to be home to call 9-1-1." Several other students immediately volunteered.</p>	<p>Communicates well verbally with peers (Adcock &amp; Segal, 1983; Perez et al., 1982).</p> <p>Sought out by peers (Adcock &amp; Segal, 1983; Kitano, 1982; U-Stars Checklist, 1996).</p>

(table 4 cont.)

Leadership scenarios from <i>RLIC Survey</i>	Correlation to characteristics in the literature
<p>Scenario 10: Ramon was appointed the line leader for the day by the teacher. As they walked, some children started to pass in front of Ramon. He stopped, faced the kids, put both his hands up and shouted, "Stop!" Then, Ramon reminded them that he was the line leader for the day. A few of the children stopped and moved behind him while others walked on ahead.</p>	<p>Responsible/accepts and carries out responsibilities (CEC &amp; ERIC Clearinghouse, 1990; Karnes &amp; Zimmerman, 2001; Sisk &amp; Rosselli, 1996; U-Stars checklist, 1996).</p>
<hr/> <p>Non-leadership scenarios from <i>RLIC Survey</i></p> <hr/>	
<p>Scenario 4: Sophie was talking to other children around her during story-time. She told a few of the children that she liked their shoes. The teacher asked Sophie to be quiet while she (teacher) read. Sophie continued to talk to the other children in her area. She said, "Do you like my shoes? I got them at the mall."</p>	
<p>Scenario 5: The office called for the teacher to send a volunteer to the office to collect paperwork. Several hands shot up in the air. Sarah raised her hand and asked, "Ooh, can I go?" The teacher allowed her to go to the office.</p>	

### **Instrument development.**

I developed this survey instrument after conducting several investigative studies beginning in 2002 and through 2009. These studies are described below.

- Investigative study #1: I observed child leadership in my early childhood classroom and made anecdotal records of children in free play situations. Additionally, another doctoral student and I videotaped children playing in my classroom. Then our professor checked

our data and the three of us discussed which scenarios we thought depicted child leadership. The professor taught a doctoral seminar on leadership and was certified in early childhood and early intervention education. The doctoral student was certified in early intervention education and was a research assistant. These scenarios formed the basis for the scenarios in the *RLIC Survey* instrument.

- Investigative study #2: In order to find out how teachers describe and perceive leadership behaviors in children, I interviewed one teacher, observed several kindergarten classes, and conducted a focus group. One of the findings revealed that three out of five teachers described child leaders as children who help the teacher with various classroom management duties. Analysis of the data from this study informed me that teachers do not always recognize leadership behaviors in children.
- Investigative study #3: I administered a draft of the *RLIC Survey* instrument to a group of 10 teachers in a doctoral statistics class. (These 10 teachers were three males and seven females. One taught early childhood classes for two years and one taught second and third grade for 17 years, but no one was certified in early childhood education. Three of the 10 were teaching in a higher education setting when they completed this survey). A revised version of this same survey instrument was used in this research study. The preliminary findings from investigative study #3 (as they relate to two of the research questions) can be seen in Tables 5 and 6.

Table 5

*Question #2: Do teachers recognize leadership in young children as it is characterized in the literature?*

Types of leadership behaviors within developmental domains	What percentage of teachers recognized the behavior
Cognitive	39%
Social	52%
Emotional	28%
Physical	44%
Dispositions (affective)	44%

*Note.* Refer to Table 4 for correlation of each scenario to characteristic. Refer to Table 1 for characteristics listed in developmental domains.

Table 6

*Question #3: How do teachers influence leadership behavior?*

Themes	Percentage of teachers who wrote a comment related to an identified theme
A Discourage leadership behavior when recognizing it	60%
B Do nothing (ignore) as a response to leadership behavior	40%
C Encourage leadership behavior when recognizing it	20%

*Note.* The percentages do not add up to 100% because teachers responded in more than one category for different scenarios.

**Reliability.**

The reliability of the *RLIC Survey* instrument was calculated using Kuder-Richardson procedures to determine the internal consistency of the scale. The formula used was the Kuder-Richardson 21. This formula is used to rate the internal consistency of scales with dichotomous answers (i.e., right/wrong). The reliability of the survey was .79 which is a respectable level.

**Content validity.**

Preceding the administration of the *RLIC Survey* to the in-service teachers, the survey was first reviewed by experts. I e-mailed a five-member expert panel to ask them to evaluate and provide feedback on the survey. This panel provided input as a social validation, content validity procedure. In the e-mail message, I explained the purpose of the survey (see Appendix B) and attached the *RLIC Survey* file. All five expert panelists have researched child leadership and were identified from the literature. A list of the five researchers and their qualifications is provided in Appendix C.

On the survey for the expert panelists (see Appendix B), the content sections were (A) the cover letter, (B) instructions for expert panelists, (C) scenarios depicting leadership behaviors and non-leadership behaviors, and (D) comments. In section C, after each scenario, space was provided for feedback. The experts were asked to rate each scenario on the degree of leadership it contained using a Likert scale (the scale ranged from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*). The experts were also asked to comment on any developmental domains (cognitive, social, emotional, or physical) they found reflected in each scenario. Section D contained questions for additional feedback and other comments. This initial testing of the instrument was important because it provided information about the content validity of this instrument and helped improve the scenarios and formatting of the survey. Upon completion of the expert

review, I considered any comments the expert panelists provided and then modified, added, or deleted items to improve the *RLIC Survey*.

I received four responses, but only one complete evaluation. Expert One personally met with a member of my dissertation committee and me in February 2011, before the survey was e-mailed, for a preliminary evaluation. At this meeting, we discussed whether or not each scenario depicted leadership and the developmental domains that were reflected. Expert One believed the instrument was novel and had merit, but advised that it was too lengthy. After this recommendation, I modified the survey by dropping five scenarios that took place in the block center because Expert One remarked that these five scenarios were “confusing.” Expert Two responded, “It looks fine to me.” This expert did not complete the scale to indicate the degree of leadership for the scenarios or comment on which developmental domains each scenario may have reflected. Expert Three could not comment on the survey because of a difference in viewpoints. This expert viewed leadership as a “relational construct” and did not feel the survey represented that view. Expert Four failed to respond at all. Expert Five contributed extensive comments on the survey, reviewing the scenarios and indicating the degree of leadership for each scenario using the scale provided. Expert Five also suggested the developmental domains each scenario reflected. All experts’ comments are included in Appendix D.

After reviewing the comments from the expert panelists with members of my dissertation committee, one scenario was dropped from the survey and three scenarios were modified. When all the changes were made, the final number of scenarios on the *RLIC Survey* decreased from 11 to 10. After modifying the survey using the panelists’ comments, I administered the adjusted survey in person (whenever possible) to the selected sample population (described below).

## **Variables**

The subjects for the proposed study were teachers who taught early childhood or gifted classes (with students ages 4 through 6 years). The independent variables for this study were teaching experience (years of teaching) and training level of the teachers (degrees and certifications). The dependent variable, child leadership behavior, is multifaceted, has different characteristics, and is defined by more than one item. These multiple characteristics, found in the literature, are reflected in the survey instrument. I wanted to find out if the variables: (a) amount of experience, (b) training, and (c) certifications were correlated with the scenarios the subjects identified correctly. To find the answers to these questions, I used the IBM SPSS Version 19.0 software program to run Pearson Product Correlation tests. The results of these tests are discussed in Chapter Four in the Results section.

## **Data Collection Procedures**

Upon a successful proposal defense, an Institutional Review Board (IRB) application was submitted. I received approval to conduct this study from the University of New Orleans' IRB on December 5, 2011 (Appendix E).

The researcher-designed survey contained scenarios of child leadership and was based on the characteristics found in the current literature (see Table 4). On the *RLIC Survey*, the teachers were asked to read and decide if they found child leadership in each of the scenarios provided. They answered the question "Is leadership exhibited?" by marking an X in blanks next to the words "Yes" or "No." All participants also wrote down a child's name if they thought he or she was a leader. A total of 133 surveys were used for this study. Additional surveys were collected but were eliminated from analysis if they were incomplete (missing two or more scenarios or 20% of the survey responses) or if the subjects were paraprofessionals or administrators since the

intent for the study was to determine how practicing or in-service teachers responded to child leadership behaviors. I collected the quantitative and qualitative data through the survey instrument from each research site over a period of two-and-a-half months. The surveys remained anonymous, but I assigned a different color for each site. I numbered each survey for data retrieval purposes and kept all surveys in a locked file box to which only I have access.

Subjects were asked to complete the surveys while participating in their district in-service meetings or at a state conference for early childhood teachers. When personally administering the survey, I was present to handle any questions or concerns about the survey instrument.

Another benefit from my presence at the survey sites was that I was able to obtain the results in a timely manner instead of waiting for results to trickle in by mail or e-mail. The subjects were provided with as much time as necessary to complete the survey. Teachers in the parish in which I work who were unable to complete the surveys in person returned the surveys (anonymously) to my mailbox through the school system's mail service. I also did not personally administer the surveys at three of the gifted teacher sites because their district administrators wanted to administer it themselves to save time. In those cases, I mailed the surveys to the administrators who then mailed them back to me, or I picked them up when they were completed. Specific procedures for the administration of the survey to the two target groups (early childhood teachers and teachers of the gifted) follow.

### **Sample**

The population for the study was teachers who taught early childhood students (grades pre-kindergarten through first) and included teachers of gifted students (grades pre-kindergarten through first). Teachers of the early childhood grades taught in public, private, and parochial schools all over the state of Louisiana. The teachers of gifted students were certified in gifted



education (two were working toward gifted certification) and were teaching early childhood students in the grade levels targeted in the study. These teachers of the gifted were from public schools in five districts in Louisiana. It is important to note that within the entire sample, twenty-eight teachers were disability specialists with children in the targeted grade levels.

### **Early childhood teachers.**

I was invited to present on child leadership at the 2012 Preschool and Kindergarten Conference in January. On day one of the conference, I set up a booth and asked conference participants to take a survey. On day two, before my presentation on child leadership, I asked my session's participants to take the survey. The presentations were described in a conference program so each teacher who attended the session knew in advance that she or he would be asked to take a survey. Every teacher who completed a survey at the conference had the chance to enter a ticket in a raffle for gift baskets (day one) or gift cards (at the presentation on day two). Consequently, I was able to include 78 surveys from the Preschool and Kindergarten Conference in my data set.

In addition to the conference participants, I obtained surveys from teachers in the parish in which I am employed. After receiving permission to conduct research from my parish school system (Appendix F), I met with each school principal to ask permission to conduct the survey. Therefore, I was also allowed to conduct my research with early childhood teachers at four elementary schools in the parish in which I work.

### **Teachers of the gifted.**

I administered the surveys to teachers of the gifted whom I identified from regional district administrators. This contact information was supplied by the state coordinator of gifted programming (Appendix G).

After contacting the regional administrators to ask if I could administer the survey to their teachers, I scheduled dates to conduct each survey. I contacted administrators in eight parishes. Although initially given approval by seven parishes, I was unable to gain access to teachers of the gifted in two parishes due to factors such as time constraints. Therefore, I received approval from administrators in five parishes (Appendices F, H). On two scheduled dates, I drove to one parish to administer the surveys to teachers at meetings. The administrator in a second parish invited me to her monthly staffing meeting where I administered the survey on the scheduled date. All teachers were told that their participation was voluntary and were assured that all results would be confidential. Administrators of gifted programs from three parishes each requested that I mail them the surveys with the script attached so they could administer the surveys to their teachers. This adjustment was necessary because there were no meetings scheduled during the time frame of the study. All administrators assured me that teacher participation would be voluntary. For thank-you gifts, I raffled gift cards or gave (or mailed) key chains to the teachers at each survey site. I received 28 surveys from five parishes; therefore, a total of 28 teachers who were certified in gifted and currently teaching early childhood gifted students completed the *RLIC Survey*.

### **Characteristics of the Sample**

Of the 133 participants, the majority were female, 98% ( $n = 131$ ), with 1.5% ( $n = 2$ ) male participants. One hundred thirty-two participants indicated their age categories while one

participant chose not to answer this question. The ages of the participants were relatively evenly distributed across the age categories. The data concerning the participants' ages are displayed in Table 7.

Table 7

*Frequencies of Participants' Ages (N = 133)*

Age	Frequency	Percent
Under 25	4	3.0
26-35	33	24.8
36-45	29	21.8
46-55	29	21.8
56-65	31	23.3
66+	6	4.5
Missing	1	.8
Total	133	100.0

*Note.* Missing refers to the respondent who did not answer the question.

### **Certifications.**

Participants indicated the type of certifications they currently held by checking the appropriate boxes included on the survey instrument. The choices included “Early childhood education,” “Early Intervention birth-to-five,” “Gifted certification,” “State certification,” “National Board certification,” or “Other.” The largest number of participants were early childhood certified, 71.4% ( $n = 95$ ); followed by gifted, 21.1% ( $n = 28$ ); and a small number were certified in Early Intervention, 13.5% ( $n = 18$ ). The results are displayed in Table 8.

Ninety-five teachers (71.4%) reported that they were certified in Early Childhood education. All 95 teachers were currently teaching students in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, or first grades. Twenty-six teachers (20%) reported that they were certified in gifted education and two teachers (2%) indicated that they were in the process of obtaining their certification in gifted

education. All 28 of those teachers (22%) were currently teaching gifted students in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, or first grades. Eighteen teachers (14%) reported that they were certified in Early Intervention ages birth through 5 years old. These 18 teachers were teaching students in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, or first grade; however, it is not clear from the data how many of these teachers were currently teaching in an early intervention setting.

The survey data provided results on two other certifications, specifically state certification and National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification. The teachers who reported that they were certified by the state of Louisiana to teach the grade levels they taught comprised 86% ( $n = 114$ ) of the sample. Not all teachers reported that they were state certified. Another certification that teachers can obtain is from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Nineteen teachers (14%) reported that they were National Board Certified teachers (see Table 8). State and national certification may be held along with early childhood, early intervention, and add-on endorsement in gifted education.

Fourteen teachers listed other certifications which included “Montessori,” “Pre-K,” “Special Education,” “Non-categorical preschool, kindergarten, LD (learning disabled), hearing impaired, mental retardation, elementary grades 1-8,” “Administration/Supervision,” “Administration/Supervision of Early Childhood Special Education Programs,” and “Education Leadership Level-1 certification.” More than one teacher listed the following certifications: Elementary Education (K-6,  $n = 2$ ), Reading Specialist ( $n = 2$ ), Mild-moderate Special Education ( $n = 2$ ), English as a Second Language ( $n = 2$ ), and Speech and Language Provider ( $n = 2$ ). Most teachers reported more than one certification.

Table 8

*Teacher Certifications*

Certification	Frequency	%
Early Childhood	95	71%
Gifted	28	22%
Early Intervention	18	14%
State	114	86%
National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)	19	14%

**Grade levels.**

Teachers were asked to select all grade levels that they had experience teaching. This information was needed to explore how teaching experience affected the recognition of leadership scores. Participants did not always indicate their current teaching position; however, they selected all responses that applied to the different grade levels in which they taught. The choices were “Pre-kindergarten,” “Kindergarten,” “First grade,” and “Other.” The greatest number of participants indicated that they had taught first grade, 56.4% ( $n = 75$ ), followed by teachers who taught pre-kindergarten, 48.9% ( $n = 65$ ), and teachers who taught kindergarten, 47.4% ( $n = 63$ ). The total percentage does not add up to 100% because teachers may have taught more than one of the target grades (pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade) during their teaching careers. It is important to note that teachers of the gifted in Louisiana often teach multiple grade levels; however, they may not have indicated the individual grade levels they taught. Most teachers of the gifted indicated a range of grade levels taught in the “Other” category (for example, “gifted K-5”). Nevertheless, all teachers of the gifted were teaching in the targeted grades at the time of the survey. Seventy answers were written in the “Other” grade levels category. Some of the responses given included: PE – (Physical Education) = 4Y (years),

Head Start = 9Y, Special education = 5Y, K-4 Intervention = 2Y, 6 grade = 3Y, (Speech and Language) SLP provider/Early Intervention Provider = 20Y. The data results revealed that at the time the survey was administered, all teachers in the sample were either teaching in the target grades (pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, first) or serving as disability specialists for children in these grade levels (e.g., speech and language provider/SLP.) The number of years of experience in the target grades ranged from half of a school year to 40 years.

### **Training.**

Teachers were asked to reply to the following statement: “I have had training in recognizing and/or supporting leadership in children.” Of a total of 131 responses, 66 teachers (50%) checked “Yes” and 65 teachers (49%) checked “No.” If they answered “Yes,” teachers were asked to indicate the types of training in which they had participated. Teachers were given the following choices: “University class,” “In-service or staff development meeting,” “Workshop at Conference,” or “Other.” They reported: University class—29% ( $n = 39$ ), In-service or staff development meeting—32% ( $n = 43$ ), and Workshop at conference—33% ( $n = 44$ ). Five people indicated other training and the answers included: “Confratute in Conn” (a summer institute in Connecticut for teachers to learn best practices about meeting the needs of gifted and talented students), “experience,” “Louisiana Youth Seminar (High Schoolers),” “Staff Meeting, group lead meeting,” and “Training with the Guggenheim Edith Sackler Education Department, the JFK teaching artist program.”

### **Data Analysis Procedures**

All quantitative data was entered into the IBM SPSS Statistics Version 19.0 software package for analysis. The following data analysis procedures were used: descriptive statistics, Pearson Product Correlation, and independent t-tests. All qualitative data was processed and

analyzed according to the recommendations from the book *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook* by M. Miles and A. Huberman (1994). The specific data collection and analytical techniques are listed under each question they were used to answer.

**Research question one.**

How do teachers describe leadership in young children?

**Data analysis.**

To find out how teachers described leadership in young children, the researcher's dissertation committee added a question to the original *RLIC Survey* instrument: How do you describe leadership in children? Teachers answered this open-ended question on the survey instrument in their own words.

After administering the surveys at each site, I followed Miles and Huberman's (1994) recommendations for analyzing qualitative data. First, I read and reread the data. Next, I recorded all open-ended responses from the surveys into an Excel document and made a table, listing all the descriptions ordered by survey identification numbers. Then I looked for patterns and themes within the responses, highlighted similar themes for each scenario, and made analytical notes (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Finally, I wrote a narrative of the findings from the data. These results are discussed in the Qualitative section of Chapter Four.

**Research question two.**

Given scenarios, do teachers recognize leadership behaviors in young children?

Sub-questions:

A) Does the number of correct responses correlate with years of experience in the target grades?

B) Does reported training in child leadership make a difference in the number of correct responses?

***Data analysis.***

After administering the surveys at each site, I explored the data by compiling teachers' demographic information and responses for each scenario into the IBM SPSS Statistics Version 19.0 software package to analyze. I then ran descriptive statistics to discover how many teachers checked the right answers for each scenario. Using scenarios numbered one through 10 from Section B of the *RLIC* instrument, I looked at what percentage of teachers correctly identified each scenario as leadership to determine how well teacher participants recognized leadership in young children. Since the subjects were asked to write down the leaders' names in each scenario, I coded the correct and the incorrect names. Then I used descriptive statistics to analyze this data and, as a result, obtained percentages of the number of scenarios where the teachers recognized the leadership behaviors. I ran a Pearson Product Correlation test to determine if there was an association between the variable "experience" and teachers' recognition of leadership. Then I ran a t-test to find out if there was a relationship between the variable "teacher training" and teachers' recognition of child leadership. Subsequently, I entered the quantitative data in tables to represent how the collected data was used to answer the research questions. The tables can be found in Chapter Four. Finally, I wrote a summary of the quantitative findings.

**Research question three.**

Given scenarios, how do teachers believe that they might influence (support or discourage) leadership behavior in young children?



### *Data analysis.*

Qualitative analysis was used to determine how the teacher participants projected they might intervene in the leadership scenario. Open-ended questions were also included in the survey. On the teachers' survey, a question and a request followed each scenario: "As a teacher, would you respond to the students in this scenario? If yes, please describe how you would respond and why you would respond that way." All written responses to these open-ended questions were documented and entered into an Excel spreadsheet to make a data summary table. Next, I summarized and synthesized the themes. I made a conceptual matrix display (Miles & Huberman, 1994) to allow an analysis of all comments from each scenario and also aid in the analysis of subjects' comments across scenarios. After noting patterns and themes, I categorized the responses to the open-ended questions into the three predetermined categories (i.e., teachers support or encourage leadership, teachers do nothing about leadership behaviors, or teachers discourage leadership behaviors). I developed new categories when necessary. I placed colored dots on the matrix display to distinguish the categories: green for encourage, red for discourage, and purple for ignore. I used additional colors, yellow and gray, for two categories that emerged from the data. I conducted intercoder reliability for the classification system with the help of two colleagues who both have over thirty years of early childhood teaching experience. One teacher has a Master's degree in Early Childhood Education with Montessori training and the other teacher has a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education. They reviewed all the responses to the open-ended questions together and categorized them into the predetermined categories, disagreeing on four items. They used the same colored dot scheme to indicate their answers on the matrix display. We then met and compared answers. At first, the teacher team and I disagreed on 40 items, but after analysis, we realized we disagreed on messages that I had coded

“mixed or confusing” and they had coded “discouraging.” There was also disagreement in responses that were comments. After discussion, we concluded that the initial coding scheme did not allow for comments or confusing responses so we made adjustments. After the adjustments to the coding system were made, our agreement rose from 92% to 97%. For deeper analysis, I used a “conceptually clustered matrix” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.129) to examine the within-case relationships between the teacher’s descriptions of child leadership and their scenario responses.

### **Worldview**

The personal and professional experiences described in Chapter One have shaped my worldview about my research interests. Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) explained worldviews in the following way: “We all bring to our research worldviews or paradigms that influence how we design and conduct our projects” (p. 21). These authors further explained that worldviews “are a philosophy deeply rooted in our personal experiences...and our history” (p. 21). After contemplating the researcher worldviews Creswell and Plano Clark described, I chose the advocacy/participatory worldview to collect and interpret data for this study. Through the advocacy/participatory worldview, a researcher advocates for change for marginalized populations. This paradigm can also be politically motivated, “collaborative,” and “empowerment and issue oriented” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 22). In this study, the following two components match the advocacy/participatory worldview attributes listed above:

1. The results of this study may inspire change for a marginalized population. A change in practice may occur for young children if teachers become more aware of what young children’s leadership looks like in the classroom. This new awareness would

enable teachers to nurture or redirect child leaders without stifling or discouraging their students' emerging abilities.

Young children in early childhood classrooms could be marginalized because they are not always able to speak for themselves against the dominant culture of the school. For example, when my daughter started a club and the teacher shut it down, my child was powerless to do anything about it. Also, when a child in a classroom was punished for accidentally knocking down the block structure, he did not have the skills or the opportunity to explain his actions to his teacher.

2. This study is issue-oriented because it focuses on the issue of how teachers influence child leadership. Implicit in this advocacy/participatory framework for me is that first, teachers become more aware of how their power affects children in their care, and that secondly, teachers recognize how leadership behavior manifests in children so that as a result, teachers can be more supportive. I believe that early childhood teachers inherently want to do what is best for their young students; however, they may not have had proper preparation on how to handle child leadership (Bisland, 2004; Karnes & Meriweather, 1989). Results from this study provide information for increasing teacher preparation regarding the issue of child leadership.

### **Researcher bias.**

I strongly advocate for early childhood teachers to support and encourage emergent (not very obvious) or full-blown (more blatant) leadership behaviors in young children. I have experienced, both as a child and again as a parent, having my or my daughter's leadership behaviors squashed by teachers. I have also observed teachers who may have disapproved of children for displaying leadership or initiative. Because of the personal experiences I have

described above, I need to be careful about any biases I may bring to my research. For example, I have been uncomfortable when seeing a teacher reinforce leadership behaviors in some children but discourage the same kinds of behaviors in other children. I have also remained sensitive to witnessing a teacher shame or humiliate a child in front of his or her peers. However, as a teacher, I remember how I felt whenever I was challenged by a student; I am certain that on occasion, my own responses inadvertently shamed students. Viewing my research through the lens of participatory/advocacy gives me a safeguard for my bias by providing a direction for my research.

### **Conclusion**

Teachers influence leadership abilities in children (Maxcy, 1991; Yamaguchi, 2003); however, it is unclear how well teachers recognize leadership behaviors. More problematic is that even when teachers recognize child leadership, evidence exists in the literature that these behaviors are not always supported. Researchers have observed how teachers discourage classroom leadership (Maxcy, 1991) and teachers have admitted to discouraging leadership behaviors to maintain classroom control (Mullarkey et al., 2005). When teachers are asked what leadership looks like in their students, the answers range from classroom helpers to bossy troublemakers. This research study contributes data about teacher recognition of and potential influence upon child leadership.

## Chapter Four

### Results

#### Overview

This chapter is divided into the following four sections: (a) results of qualitative findings used to answer research question one, (b) quantitative reports and qualitative findings used to answer research question number two, (c) results of qualitative findings used to answer research question number three, and (d) a conclusion of all quantitative and qualitative results.

#### Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to explore how teachers described child leadership, how well teachers recognized child leadership, and how they believed they might influence leadership behaviors identified from scenarios involving children aged 4 to 6 years. One hundred thirty-three teachers who were teaching in early childhood classrooms, including 28 teachers possessing gifted certification completed the *Recognizing Leadership in Children (RLIC) Survey*, a researcher-designed instrument. This survey was designed to assess if teachers could recognize leadership in classroom scenarios created from classroom observations. Additionally, teachers wrote how they thought they might respond to the leadership scenarios. A scarcity of literature exists concerning children's leadership, and results from this study contribute information about how teachers recognize and influence leadership behaviors in young children.

#### Research Question One

How do teachers describe leadership in young children?

On the *RLIC Survey*, teachers were asked the question "How do you describe leadership

in children? Please write your answer here.” From a total of 133 people, 90% ( $n = 120$ ) of the sample responded to this question. After I entered all descriptions into a matrix chart with subject numbers down the left side, I reread all descriptions and coded attributes. Teachers’ answers ranged from one word (teacher # 40 [T40] wrote, “Natural”) to a paragraph about leadership containing multiple descriptors. I listed all descriptors separately because I did not know how the teachers weighted the descriptors when they gave more than one. I conducted an emergent analysis to let descriptors arise from the data. Then I looked for patterns and themes and classified them.

### **Finding one.**

Teachers provided descriptors of child leadership.

The top answer the teachers gave was “helpful” followed by “verbal skill and communicates verbally with peers.” “Self-confident” was the third most-used descriptor ( $n = 16$ ). There was a tie for the fourth-ranked response with 13 responses each for descriptors “shows initiative,” “acts as an example or role model,” and “takes charge.” The next highest response was “others want to follow them” ( $n = 12$ ), followed by “responsible” with 10 responses and “makes good choices/good judgment” ( $n = 9$ ). The eighth most-contributed answer was a tie between “natural ability” and “social skills” ( $n = 8$ ). The following five descriptors had seven responses each: “decision-making,” “influences others,” and “organized.” Examples of these responses follow.

The response teachers used most often when describing child leaders was “helpful.” Teachers were referring to the child leader who helped other children in the classroom. The following quotes featured the descriptor “helpful” (quotes from teachers’ responses are presented exactly as written by the teachers, including their punctuation and spelling):

T24: When one child can help another child

T127: These children are helpful & know how to organize others

T18: Helping others without reward

The second-highest theme used by teachers to answer the question “How do you describe leadership in children?” fit under the predominant themes in the literature (see Table 10): verbal skill and communicates well with peers. I combined these two descriptors because it was not clear whether the teachers meant verbally skilled when talking to adults or peers:

T50: Mostly those that are verbally inclined

T70: Leadership is the ability to have others follow your directions

T71: A child who may be a good listener to carry out a task completely, explicit directions given to others, oral language skills, ...express ideas

The theme “self-confident” was the third most-used descriptor:

T30: Child leaders display confidence and good social skills.

T103: Children who have the self confidence and self esteem to take control and make good decisions for their peers.

The descriptors “shows initiative,” “acts as an example or role model,” and “takes charge” tied for the fourth most-used descriptors teachers used to describe child leadership. The descriptor “shows initiative” is significant since the children in the targeted grades may be in the developmental stage known as “Initiative vs. guilt” (Erikson, 1963). This descriptor will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Five.

“Shows initiative”:

T14: A person who takes the initiative to start an activity with friends or solve a problem.

T76: Leadership in children to me is when a child takes initiative in situations.

T89: [A] child who will “assume initiative” whenever the opportunity arises (centers, workstations, playtime, etc).

“Acts as an example or role model”:

T27: Demonstration of being a role-model, watching over & helping others

T49: A child who can model appropriate behavior or skills for other children.

T101: Leadership is when a student is a guiding example for others. A leader is someone you follow because you believe they will follow the rules and be a good example for everyone.

“Takes charge”:

T61: [T]aking the role as a “man-in-charge,” being active, acting as role model to his/her peers

T83: A student who takes charge of a situation and others follow.

T89: A child who can take charge in a group without being bossy.

The theme “Others want to follow them” also emerged in their descriptions of child leadership:

T57: They choose which way they want to behave and have the kind of outgoing personality to have others want to follow that behavior. Sometimes the behavior might not be positive but others still follow.

T69: A child others look up to, respect, and/or follow

T100: The natural ability in a child to get others to follow.... They are usually well liked by others & others want to emulate them.

Another theme that teachers used to answer the question, “How do you describe leadership in children?” was “responsible”:



T42: Child leadership is a child's' *[sic]* ability to grasp concepts and make responsible choices.

T86: The ability of children to make choices, become more independent and responsible.

T95: The ability to instinctively know the "pulse" of the group, intuitively *[sic]* their needs, have their trust by showing your *[sic]* responsible enough to do more than you ask of them, and take responsibility for group.

One teacher mentioned four of the most described characteristics in her description:

T102: I would describe characteristics of leadership in children as students who exhibit positive classroom community. These are students who exhibit the following: 1. Are collaborative and cooperative and encourage that in others in a verbally fluent manner. 2. Responsible and reliable. 3. Like to bring structure to situations and gets *[sic]* involved and take charge. 4. They also are self confident, well accepted by peers, foresees consequences,...uses good judgement *[sic]* & common sense.

"Makes good choices/good judgment" was another theme in teachers' descriptions:

T18: Making wise choices

T78: Someone who is able to make good choices and have others follow them by the example they set.

Natural born ability and social skills were also mentioned frequently in the teachers' descriptors:

"Natural born ability":

T13: Many children are natural born leaders, while others are "followers."

T55: Children who natural *[sic]* possess leadership abilities to lead (influence) children (peers) positively or negatively.

T58: Children who show a natural ability to gain and hold onto other children's or adults [*sic*] attention for their own purposes, or guided by a topic.

This descriptor was of particular interest to the researcher because there are numerous theories of leadership, and eight teachers believed it was natural which can be traced to the oldest theory of leadership development, Trait theory. The idea of the teacher participants referring to theories of leadership will be discussed further in Chapter Five.

“Social skills”:

T11: The child is mature and gets along well with children and adults.

T30: Child leaders display confidence and good social skills.

T122: They offer suggestions without being bossy and work well with others.

“Decision making,” “influences others,” and “organized” were three more descriptors that surfaced in the teachers' descriptions.

“Decision making”:

T81: The child leader will make a decision on his/her own without the influence of others.

T113: Leadership involves being a decision maker.

T131: Willingness to take charge, make decisions, and move forward

“Influences others”:

T1: The ability to work with others and influence others to complete a task or agree with an idea or solve a problem.

T53: Children who influence other children to do what they want to do.

T92: Mostly, I would describe leadership as being influential on others and their actions.

“Organized”:

T127: These children are helpful & know how to organize others.

T71: ...Can organize....

T22: Organizational Skills

The next three descriptors were tied for the tenth place in the top 10 descriptors:

“not bossy,” “follows rules,” and “sought out by peers.”

“Not bossy”:

T90: A leader can coordinate activities without being "bossy."

T87: A child who organizes others into playing a certain game/activity, but without being bossy.

“Follows rules”:

T101: A leader is someone you follow because you believe they will follow the rules and be a good example for everyone

T30: One who volunteers to help and knows and follows rules and procedures

“Sought out by peers”:

T69: A child others look up to, respect, and/or follow.

T74: Children who are involved in activities outside of school and other children gravitate towards them.

The top 10 descriptors the teachers provided in their written answers to describe child leaders are displayed in Table 9.

Table 9

*Descriptors Most Supplied by Teachers in Written Answers*

Descriptor	Frequency
Helpful	24
Verbal skill/communicates well verbally with peers	18
Self-confident	16
Shows initiative Acts as an example or role model Takes charge	13
Others want to follow them	12
Responsible	10
Makes good choices/good judgment	9
[Leadership is] Natural born ability Social skills	8
Decision making Influences others Organized	7
Not bossy Follows rules Sought out by peers	6

The most-used descriptor, “helpful,” is mentioned in the literature but is not one of the most prevalent descriptors of child leadership (Table 1). Although 120 teachers supplied over a hundred characteristics of child leadership, six of the 17 top 10 descriptors (35%) they provided are included in the most predominant characteristics of child leadership provided in the literature

(Table 10). These descriptors are: verbal skill/communicates well verbally with peers, self-confident, responsible, organized, and sought out by peers.

Table 10

*How Teacher Descriptors Compared with Most Predominant Characteristics of Child Leadership from the Literature*

Predominant characteristics from the literature (see Table 1)	Teacher descriptors from the <i>RLIC Survey</i>
Problem solver/Creatively solves problems	Problem solver – 5
Verbal skill	Verbal skill – 10
Communicates well verbally with peers	Communicates well verbally with peers – 8
Empathetic/sensitive to feeling of others	Empathetic/sensitive to feeling of others – 4
Sought out by peers	Sought out by peers – 6
Self-confident	Self-confident – 16
Energetic/high energy level	Active – 4
Flexible/flexible in thought and action	Flexible – 1
Independent	Independent – 5
Responsible/accepts & carries out responsibilities	Responsible/accepts & carries out responsibilities – 10
Organized/organizes materials and activities	Organized/organizes materials & activities – 7

## Research Question Two

Given scenarios, how do teachers recognize leadership behaviors in young children?

Sub-questions:

- A. Does the number of correct responses correlate with years of experience in the target grades?
- B. Does teacher-reported training in child leadership make a difference in the number of correct responses?

To find out how well teachers recognized leadership behaviors in young children, I coded the yes and no answers provided by the respondents. Next, I entered all the coded answers into the IBM SPSS Version 19.0 statistics program to produce frequency tables listing percentages of scenarios teachers answered correctly. Then I looked at the percentage of teachers who recognized leadership across all the scenarios and in individual scenarios.

Results of the quantitative analysis indicated that across the eight leadership scenarios (scenarios one, two, three, six, seven, eight, nine, and ten), the range of correct answers across the eight leadership scenarios (for the 133 participants) was between one and eight (see Table 11). A total of 29 (22%) identified all eight scenarios correctly. Scenarios four and five did not demonstrate leadership behaviors. However, 11% of the teachers identified leadership in scenario four and 42% of the teachers identified leadership in scenario five.

Of the 29 teachers who correctly identified all eight leadership scenarios, 23 of these 29 misidentified one of the non-leadership scenarios as leadership and six teachers of the 29 correctly identified the two non-leadership scenarios as non-leadership scenarios. This means that six (4.5%) of the 133 teachers identified all 10 scenarios correctly. The range of correct

responses across all 10 scenarios was between three and 10 so there was variation in the teachers' recognition rates across all the scenarios (including the non-leadership scenarios).

In Table 11, the total number of teachers who identified leadership in scenarios is shown (including the two non-leadership scenarios that were analyzed by using reverse coding). Of note is the fact that 72 teachers appropriately identified the presence of leadership in at least 80% of the scenarios (eight out of the 10 scenarios).

Table 11

*Total Number of Leadership Scenarios Teachers Identified Correctly*

Total leadership scenarios identified correctly ( <i>n</i> = eight)	Number of teachers who identified	% of teachers who identified
1 scenario	1	.8
3 scenarios	6	4.5
4 scenarios	15	11.3
5 scenarios	23	17.3
6 scenarios	23	17.3
7 scenarios	36	27.1
8 scenarios	29	21.8
Total number of scenarios (including non-leadership) identified correctly ( <i>n</i> = 10)	Number of teachers who identified	% of teachers who identified
3 scenarios	1	.8
4 scenarios	2	1.5
5 scenarios	6	4.5
6 scenarios	19	14.0
7 scenarios	33	25.0
8 scenarios	32	24.0
9 scenarios	34	26.0
10 scenarios	6	4.5

In most cases, teachers recognized the child leader; however, if there was more than one child listed in the scenario, teachers were not always able to recognize the leader. They also responded to certain scenarios more than others. The teacher recognition and response rates for each scenario are in Table 12.

Table 12

*Recognition and Response Rates for Leadership Scenarios*

Leadership scenarios from <i>RLIC Survey</i>	Recognition and response rates
<p>Scenario 1: While playing with blocks, Frank told Ryan, “Let’s build a whole city.” Ryan said, “O.K.” The two children built gates and buildings out of blocks. Ryan said to Frank, “I have an idea.” Ryan showed him his idea. Frank continued doing his own thing.</p>	<p>Scenario 1: Leader – Frank</p> <p>68% (<math>n = 90</math>) recognized leadership. 43% (<math>n = 39</math>) of that 68% correctly identified the leader. 30% (<math>n = 40</math>) indicated that they would respond.</p>
<p>Scenario 2: The teacher said, “It’s time to pick up” and began the “Clean Up” song. Hannah immediately told the kids in the block center as she pointed to individual students: “You pick up the squares, you pick up the round ones, you pick up the rectangles, and Leigh and I will get all the rest. OK?” Then Hannah watched as the other children put the blocks away in the bin.</p>	<p>Scenario 2: Leader – Hannah</p> <p>81% (<math>n = 107</math>) recognized leadership. 95% (<math>n = 104</math>) of that 81% correctly identified the leader. Two respondents wrote that Hannah and the teacher were the leaders and three wrote that the teacher was the leader. 68.4% (<math>n = 91</math>) indicated that they would respond.</p>
<p>Scenario 3: Some of the children were complaining because they couldn’t see the storybook the teacher was holding. Jeffrey made the suggestion, “Tall ones sit in the back and short ones sit in the front.” Some children began moving around on the rug according to Jeffrey’s suggestion.</p>	<p>Scenario 3: Leader – Jeffrey</p> <p>90% (<math>n = 120</math>) recognized leadership. 100% (<math>n = 116</math>; some were missing answers) of that 90% correctly identified the leader. 54% (<math>n = 72</math>) would definitely respond while two teachers indicated that they might respond.</p>



(table 12 cont.)

Leadership scenarios from <i>RLIC Survey</i>	Recognition and response rates
<p>Scenario 6: Lisa often helps her classmate complete his work. She tells him, “Here, let me show you.” As a result, her teacher often lets her help other students finish their work.</p>	<p>Scenario 6: Leader – Lisa</p> <p>91% (<math>n = 121</math>) recognized leadership. 94% (<math>n = 113</math>) of that 91% correctly identified the leader. Six other teachers responded that the leaders were Lisa and the teacher. 46% (<math>n = 61</math>) indicated that they would respond.</p>
<p>Scenario 7: Erin asked the group at the table, “What are you doing?” Isabella said, “You can help us if you want.” Erin sat down at the table with the group and helped.</p>	<p>Scenario 7: Leader – Isabella</p> <p>57% (<math>n = 76</math>) recognized leadership. 76% (<math>n = 58</math>) of that 57% correctly identified the leader. Eight teachers reported that Erin was the leader and 10 teachers reported that Isabella and Erin were leaders. 15.8% (<math>n = 21</math>) indicated that they would respond.</p>
<p>Scenario 8: Whenever the group needed refocusing, the teacher would clap her hands in a distinctive pattern. One day Patrick used the same clap when the group began to get too noisy. Some of the children stopped what they were doing.</p>	<p>Scenario 8: Leader – Patrick</p> <p>87% (<math>n = 116</math>) recognized leadership. 98% (<math>n = 112</math>) of that 87% identified the leader. 50% (<math>n = 66</math>) indicated that they would respond.</p>
<p>Scenario 9: After a visit from a fireman, Billy told Nicholas, “When we go outside, you be the fire chief and I’ll be the fireman.” Evan asked Nicholas, “I’m going to be a fireman on your truck, too, OK?” Nicholas said, “OK, but someone has to be home to call 9-1-1.” Several other students immediately volunteered.</p>	<p>Scenario 9: Leaders – Billy and Nicholas</p> <p>83.5% (<math>n = 111</math>) recognized leadership. 30% (<math>n = 32</math>) correctly identified the leaders. 9% (<math>n = 12</math>) indicated that they would respond.</p>

(table 12 cont.)

Leadership scenarios from <i>RLIC Survey</i>	Recognition and response rates
<p>Scenario 10:            Ramon was appointed the line leader for the day by the teacher. As they walked, some children started to pass in front of Ramon. He stopped, faced the kids, put both his hands up and shouted, “Stop!”            Then, Ramon reminded them that he was the line leader for the day. A few of the children stopped and moved behind him while others walked on ahead.</p>	<p>Scenario 10: Leader – Ramon             55% (<math>n = 73</math>) correctly recognized leadership.            96% (<math>n = 68</math>) of the 55% identified the leader.            One person identified Ramon and the teacher as the leaders and two identified Ramon and the kids who walked ahead as the leaders.            67% (<math>n = 89</math>) indicated that they would respond while one person wrote that she might respond.</p>
<hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">Non-leadership scenarios from <i>RLIC Survey</i></p> <hr/>	
<p>Scenario 4:            Sophie was talking to other children around her during story-time. She told a few of the children that she liked their shoes. The teacher asked Sophie to be quiet while she (teacher) read. Sophie continued to talk to the other children in her area. She said, “Do you like my shoes? I got them at the mall.”</p>	<p>Scenario 4: No identified leader             11.3% (<math>n = 15</math>) incorrectly recognized leadership.            83% (<math>n = 110</math>) respondents indicated that they would respond.</p>
<p>Scenario 5:            The office called for the teacher to send a volunteer to the office to pick up papers for the students in the class to bring home. Sarah’s hand shot up in the air. She asked, “Ooh, can I go?” The teacher allowed her to go to the office.</p>	<p>Scenario 5: No identified leader             42.2% (<math>n = 56</math>) incorrectly recognized leadership.            29% (<math>n = 39</math>) indicated that they would respond and one person wrote a response depended on the situation.</p>

The most-recognized scenario was scenario six which depicted Lisa helping a classmate to complete his work. This scenario was recognized as portraying leadership by 91% of the teachers. The least-recognized scenario was number 10 in which Ramon put his hands up and

shouted that he was the line leader. Fifty-five percent of the teachers recognized leadership in Scenario 10. The second least-recognized scenario was scenario seven in which Isabella invited Erin to join the group. A total of 57% of the teachers recognized leadership in this scenario.

#### **Summary of scenario response data.**

The data indicated that more than 50% of the teachers identified leadership in every scenario in the eight scenarios where leadership was present. Data also revealed that more than 75% of the teachers recognized leadership in five out of the eight scenarios depicting leadership. Scenarios four and five were not leadership scenarios and 53% of the teachers incorrectly reported leadership (Table 11). The least-recognized child leaders were in scenarios 10 (Ramon) and seven (Isabella). The most recognized child leader was Lisa in scenario six.

#### **Teacher recognition and expert ratings.**

Expert Five provided the most feedback about the content validity of the survey. This expert described seven of the scenarios as fitting the cognitive and social domains (scenarios one, two, three, six, seven, eight, and nine) and commented that scenario 10 fit under the social domain. Expert Five also ranked the degree of leadership for each scenario using a Likert scale format. The five scale items included (*SD*) *strongly disagree*, (*D*) *disagree*, (*U*) *undecided*, (*A*) *agree*, and (*SA*) *strongly agree* and described the statement, “This scenario reflects leadership characteristics.” Expert Five ranked each scenario as follows:

Scenario one: Cognitive, social; ranked as (A) Agree

Scenario two: Cognitive, social; ranked as (SA) Strongly agree

Scenario three: Cognitive, social; ranked as (SA) Strongly agree

Scenario six: Cognitive, social; ranked as (SA) Strongly agree

Scenario seven: Cognitive, social; ranked as (A) Agree

Scenario eight: Cognitive, social; no expert ranking so it was modified by the dissertation committee.

Scenario nine: Cognitive, social; ranked as (SA) Strongly agree

Scenario 10: Social; ranked as (A) Agree

Scenarios four and five were not rated because the expert agreed that they did not contain examples of leadership. Members of the dissertation committee decided to combine the social and emotional domains for scenarios six and seven due to an overlap of characteristics. However, since the scenarios did not fit under each domain exclusively, and no scenario fit under the physical domain, this concept was not explored further. Instead of grouping the scenario by domains, each scenario was explored separately to see what kinds of data emerged.

### **Finding two.**

Teachers recognized child leadership more often when it was obvious than they did in less obvious examples.

The scenarios teachers identified correctly take on additional meaning when juxtaposed next to the expert's ratings (Table 13). Teachers were most able to recognize the leadership in the scenarios the expert rated "Strongly Agree" (SA); however, teachers were also able to recognize the scenarios the expert rated as "Agree" (A), but at a lower rate. The recognition rates for the scenarios rated "Strongly Agree" (SA) were: scenario two—80.5%, scenario three—90%, scenario six—91% and scenario nine—83.5%. The range of recognition rates for the obvious scenarios (SA) was 80.5% to 91%. The recognition rates for the scenarios rated as "Agree" (A) were: scenario one—68%, scenario seven—57% and scenario 10—55%. The range of recognition rates for the less obvious scenarios (A) was 55% to 68%. The average score for teachers' recognition of scenarios rated as "Strongly Agree" (SA) was 86% while the average

score for teachers' recognition of scenarios rated "Agree" (A) was 60% (see Table 13).

Scenarios four and five were non-leadership scenarios and scenario eight was modified after the expert's comments. Thus, scenarios that were the most obvious (SA) were the easiest for the teachers to recognize.

Table 13

*Teacher Recognition Percentages with Expert Ranking of Leadership for Each Scenario*

#1	#2	#3	#4 non-leadership	#5 non-leadership	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10
68%	80.5%	90%	11%	42%	91%	57%	87%	83.5%	55%
A	SA	SA	SD <sup>a</sup>	Modified	SA	A	Modified	SA	A

*Note:* Two items were modified due to Expert Five's recommendations.

<sup>a</sup>SD = Strongly Disagree.

***Sub-question 2A.***

Does the number of correct responses correlate with years of experience in the target grades?

To answer this question, I coded the years of experience for each teacher and entered the data into the IBM SPSS Version 19.0 software program. I ran descriptive statistics and frequency tables for total years of experience. The range of experience was between one-half of a year to 40 years in the target grades (pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and first). A Pearson Product Correlation test was calculated between the total number of years of experience and the number of scenarios correctly identified. The results indicated that there was no relationship between the number of years of experience and the number of scenarios correctly identified.

I also wondered if teachers who had gifted certification would recognize leadership at a greater percentage rate than teachers who had only Early Childhood certification because

leadership is included in the definition of giftedness (CEC & ERIC Clearinghouse, 1990). To answer this question, I ran a Pearson Product Correlation test; however, results indicated that there was no association between having gifted certification and early childhood certification when it came to recognizing child leadership from the scenarios.

***Sub-question 2B.***

Does reported training in child leadership make a difference in the number of correct responses?

On the *RLIC Survey*, a question in Section A asked whether or not teachers had any leadership training. Sixty-six teachers commented that they had training on child leadership and 65 teachers reported that they did not have training. Two teachers did not answer. I coded the answers to this question and then ran a Pearson Product Correlation test to find out whether teachers with training had better recognition of leadership behaviors than teachers who had no training. These results indicated that the training component made no difference in the teachers' recognition of child leadership in the scenarios.

**Research Question Three**

Given scenarios, how do teachers believe that they might influence (support or discourage) leadership behavior in young children?

The data used to answer this question was taken from the responses to the questions on the *RLIC Survey* for each scenario: "As a teacher, would you respond to the students in this scenario? If yes, please describe how you would respond and why you would respond that way?" All answers and responses were first entered into an Excel spreadsheet and then coded and entered into the IBM SPSS Version 19.0 software program for analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to run frequencies and the results were analyzed. It is important to note that

in many cases, teachers wrote responses about how they would intervene whether they indicated they would respond or not. A teacher may have indicated that she would respond but did not write a response, and conversely, a teacher may have indicated she would not respond and then wrote a response.

In scenario one, where Frank and Ryan were building a city with blocks, 68% ( $n = 90$ ) recognized leadership, but 30% ( $n = 41$ ) indicated that they would respond and there were 41 actual responses.

Scenario two was the scenario in which Hannah directed the other children on how to pick up the blocks. In scenario two, 81% ( $n = 107$ ) recognized leadership, and 68%, ( $n = 91$ ) indicated that they would respond. However, 97 teachers wrote responses.

In scenario three, 90% ( $n = 120$ ) recognized leadership and, although 54% ( $n = 72$ ) indicated that they would definitely respond and two other teachers said they might respond, there were actually 80 written responses. In this scenario, Jeffrey had the idea that tall students should sit in the back and short students in the front so all could see the storybook.

In scenario four, the scenario in which Sophie continued to talk about her shoes during story time, 11.3% ( $n = 15$ ) incorrectly recognized leadership, but the vast majority ( $n = 115$ , 87%) recognized that that this scenario did not contain leadership. However, 83% ( $n = 110$ ) of all respondents would intervene. In scenario five, in which Sarah volunteered to go to the office to collect paperwork, 42.2% ( $n = 56$ ) incorrectly recognized leadership, but 74 teachers (56%) recognized that it was not leadership and 29% ( $n = 39$ ) indicated they would respond. One teacher said her response depended on the situation. Since these were not leadership scenarios, the teacher responses were not coded.

In scenario six, 91% ( $n = 121$ ) recognized leadership, but almost half, 46% ( $n = 61$ ), indicated they would respond. In fact, there were 66 responses. In this scenario, Lisa helped another classmate complete his work.

In scenario seven, 57% ( $n = 76$ ) correctly recognized leadership, but 15.8% ( $n = 21$ ) indicated that they would respond. There were 24 actual responses. This was the scenario in which Isabella invited Erin to join in the group activity.

In scenario eight, 87% ( $n = 116$ ) recognized leadership and although 50% ( $n = 66$ ) of the number who answered this question (total  $n = 132$ ) indicated that they would respond, there were 71 responses. This is the scenario in which Jeffrey used the teacher's clap to quiet down the room.

In scenario nine, 83.5% ( $n = 111$ ) correctly recognized leadership and 9% ( $n = 12$ ) wrote that they would respond. However, there were 21 responses to this scenario. This was the scenario in which Billy asked the other children to play firemen with him when they went outside.

In scenario 10, 55% ( $n = 73$ ) correctly recognized leadership. One person wrote that she might respond and 67% ( $n = 89$ ) wrote that they would respond to Ramon. However, teachers wrote 93 responses to this scenario.

### **Teacher response rate to leadership scenarios.**

The response rate refers to the number of actual responses teachers wrote indicating how they would intervene or react to a scenario. Teachers responded the most to scenario four (Sophie, 110 responses) which was not a leadership scenario. The next highest response rate was in scenario two (Hannah, 97 responses), followed by scenario 10 (Ramon, 93 responses).



Scenario three (Jeffrey, 80 responses) came next in the ranking followed by scenario eight (Patrick, 71 responses).

The scenarios with the lowest rate of responses were (in order of the responses from highest to lowest) scenario one (30%, 41 responses) in which Frank and Ryan were playing with blocks; scenario five (a non-leadership scenario, 40 responses) in which Sarah volunteered to go to the office; followed by scenario seven (16%, 24 responses) in which Isabella told Erin she could join the group. The scenario with the lowest response rate was scenario nine (9%, 21 responses) in which the children wanted to play firemen when they went outside.

### **Finding three.**

An analysis of the data from the scenario response rates revealed that teachers responded to the child leader most often in two cases: when classroom rules were broken (scenario four, a non-leadership scenario, and scenarios two and 10), and whenever a student took on a teacher's role (scenarios three and eight). The cases of teacher responses were categorized into four groups: Group A, Group B, Group C, and Group D. Group A contains the scenarios that involved children who possibly broke classroom rules and Group B contains the scenarios that described when a student took on a teacher's role. Group C contains the scenarios in which teachers perceived that the children were helping or volunteering and Group D contains the scenarios that depicted children who were playing in centers or outside. Group C and Group D will be discussed in Finding four.

### **Finding four.**

The teachers responded the least in two other categories: when children were helping or volunteering (scenario five, a non-leadership scenario, and scenario six, which became Group C),

and when children were playing in centers or at recess outside (scenarios one, seven, and nine, which became Group D). These scenario groups are discussed more fully below.

Group A: When classroom rules were broken (scenarios two and 10).

Scenario two depicts Hannah in a leadership role, but many teachers thought that she did not help pick up materials, so teachers responded to her at the highest rate of all the scenarios (97 responses). Scenario 10 showed a leader (Ramon) who shouted at the students because they were not following the rules about walking in line and following the “line leader.” Teachers responded to Ramon for shouting and to the other students for not following the “line leader” at a high rate (93 responses).

Group B: When a student took a teacher’s role (scenarios three and eight).

In scenario three, Jeffrey took the teacher’s role when he advised the children how to sit so they could see the storybook; consequently, teachers wrote that they would intervene in the situation at a high response rate (80 responses). In scenario eight, Patrick used the teacher clap, a teacher signal for order. This scenario inspired many teachers to write that they would respond or intervene (71 responses).

Group C: When children were helping (scenario six).

In scenario six, Lisa helped a student complete his seatwork (66 responses).

Group D: When children were playing at center time or recess time (scenarios one, seven, and nine).

In scenario one, Frank and Ryan were building in the block center. Teachers wrote 41 responses. In scenario seven, Isabella invited Erin to join a center activity. Teachers wrote 24 responses. In scenario nine, students were planning to play firemen when they went outside for recess. Teachers wrote 21 responses.

A finding (Finding three) from the analysis of response rates was that teachers may be more likely to intervene on behaviors that would infringe upon a class rule or a teacher's role. Breaking class rules occurred in scenarios two (Hannah) and 10 (Ramon). Students took on teacher's roles in scenarios three (Jeffrey) and eight (Patrick).

Another finding (Finding four) was that teachers may be less likely to intervene on behaviors where children were helping others such as in scenario six (Lisa) or where children were playing in centers or outside as in scenarios one (Frank), seven (Isabella), and nine (Billy and Nicholas).

After looking at the teacher response rates in the four scenario groupings described above, I explored the responses more deeply by examining the encouraging, discouraging, and mixed or confusing messages given in those four groups to reveal more information about research question three: Given scenarios, how do teachers believe that they might influence (support or discourage) leadership behavior in young children?

#### **Coded teacher responses.**

After the number of responses was calculated and the responses were reviewed, all responses were entered into a data matrix and then categorized into the three categories suggested by the literature: encouraging, discouraging and ignoring (Maxcy, 1991; Mullarkey et al., 2005). A fourth category emerged from the data – mixed or confusing messages. The responses were reviewed together by two early childhood teachers who each had over thirty years of experience as teachers of preschool, kindergarten, and first grades (the target grades addressed in the study). Then the responses were calculated for agreement. I calculated the reliability percentage by using the formula suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994). Originally, the early childhood teachers' categories matched the researcher's categories with an

intercoder reliability of 92%. After discussion among the two early childhood teachers and this researcher, additional agreements were made (e.g., a category was created for teacher comments), and the intercoder reliability rose to 97%.

**Finding five.**

Early childhood teachers reported they would respond to child leadership (depicted in scenarios) in the following ways:

Theme A: Discourage leadership

Theme B: Respond, but ignore the child leader(s)

Theme C: Encourage leadership behavior

Theme D: Give a mixed or confusing message to the child leader(s)

Theme E: Would not respond, but comment upon the situation depicted in scenarios.

Of the total responses the teachers wrote, the answers were coded and categorized into the following categories: encouraging, discouraging, mixed, ignoring, comments and disagreements. Ignore meant when the teachers would respond, but ignore the child leader. The results were as follows:

In scenario one in which Frank and Ryan were building a city with blocks, of the 41 responses, teachers gave responses that were encouraging five times and discouraging 25 times. Teachers responded that they would ignore the leader six times and made five comments about the scenario.

Scenario two was the scenario where Hannah directed other children on how to pick up the blocks. The 97 responses were encouraging seven times, discouraging 64 times, and mixed or confusing 14 times. A teacher ignored the leader in one instance and eight teachers made comments about the scenario.

In scenario three, there were 80 responses. In this scenario, Jeffrey had the idea that tall students should sit in the back and short students should sit in the front so all could see the storybook. Teachers gave responses that were encouraging 43 times. They wrote messages that were discouraging 19 and mixed 11 times. One teacher responded that she would ignore the leader and two teachers commented about the scenario.

In scenario six, there were 66 responses. In this scenario, Lisa was often found helping another student complete his work. Teachers gave responses that were encouraging 26 times. They wrote discouraging messages 10 times and mixed messages 21 times. One teacher responded that she would ignore the leader and five teachers made comments about the scenario.

In scenario seven, there were 24 responses. This was the scenario in which Isabella invited Erin to join in a group activity. Teachers gave responses that were encouraging nine times and discouraging one time. Teachers responded that they would ignore the leader eight times and made four comments about the scenario.

In scenario eight, there were 71 responses. This is the scenario where Jeffrey used the teacher's clap to quiet down the room. Teachers gave responses that were encouraging 24 times. They wrote discouraging responses 28 times and mixed messages 10 times. Nine teachers made comments.

In scenario nine, the scenario in which Billy asked the other children to play firemen with him when they went outside, there were 21 responses. Of the 21 responses, eight were encouraging, two were discouraging, and three teachers indicated they would ignore the leadership behavior. Eight teachers commented on the scenario (with a majority commenting about how well the children were playing together).

In scenario 10, the scenario in which Ramon put his hands up and shouted that he was the leader to the children who were passing him up, 93 teachers wrote responses. Teachers gave responses that were encouraging 42 times. They wrote 26 discouraging responses and five mixed messages. Teachers responded that they would ignore the leader 11 times and teachers made comments about the scenario five times.

Data analysis indicated that there were 164 responses (34%) coded as encouraging. The child leader who would reportedly be encouraged the most was Jeffrey (in scenario three) when he suggested where the children should sit to see the storybook. In this scenario, Jeffrey's behavior would have been encouraged in 57% of the coded responses. The next most-encouraged child leader would have been Ramon from scenario 10 (47%), followed by Lisa (scenario six) and Isabella (scenario seven). Scenarios six and seven both had 41% encouraging responses. Next was scenario nine (Billy and Nicholas, 38%), followed by scenario eight (Patrick, 34%). The least number of encouraging responses occurred in scenarios one, when Frank did not listen to Ryan's idea (12% encouraging responses) and two, when Hannah did not help pick up the blocks (7%).

The number of responses that were coded discouraging was 175 (37%). The child leader that reportedly would be discouraged the most was Hannah in scenario two (68%). Other scenarios and their rates of discouraging responses were scenario one (Frank, 61%); scenario eight (Patrick, 39%); scenario 10 (Ramon, 29%); scenario three (Jeffrey, 25%); scenario six (Lisa, 16%); followed by scenario nine (Billy and Nicholas, 10%). The least discouraging responses were recorded in scenario seven (Isabella, 5%). These numbers can be misleading, however, unless the number of mixed messages is added to the total.

The number of mixed messages coded was 61 (12%). Mixed messages consisted of two conflicting opinions being presented together. An example of a mixed message is from scenario eight: (T56): “Thank you Patrick for getting everyone quiet but if I have a problem w/ [with] the noise, I will correct the students.” Since children in these early grades (pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and first) want teacher approval (Wood, 1997), children might consider mixed or confusing messages as discouraging. They would hear both the positive and the negative part of the message, but become confused which probably would keep them from repeating the leadership behavior. Therefore, when the discouraging responses are added with the mixed messages, a clearer picture of how teachers may influence children in a discouraging way is presented.

An examination of the scenarios in which the discouraging messages were combined with the mixed messages yielded the following results: in scenario one (Frank and Ryan built a city with blocks), there were 61% discouraging and no mixed messages; in scenario two (Hannah directed the block clean up), there were 68% discouraging and 15% mixed (making a total of 83% potentially discouraging messages); scenario three (Jeffrey gave suggestion for seating) had 25% discouraging and 14% mixed (which equals 39% potentially discouraging messages); scenario six (Lisa helped a classmate with classwork) had 16% discouraging and 33% mixed (49%); in scenario seven (Isabella invited Erin to play), there were 5% discouraging and no mixed messages; scenario eight (Patrick clapped to reduce the noise level) had 39% discouraging and 14% mixed (53%); scenario nine (Billy and Nicholas played firemen) had 10% discouraging and no mixed messages; and scenario 10 (Ramon was line leader) had 29% discouraging and 6% mixed (35%). Thus, the ranking for the most discouraged scenarios were: scenario two (Hannah, 83%), followed by scenario one (Frank, 61%), scenario eight (Patrick, 53%), scenario six (Lisa,

49%), scenario three (Jeffrey, 39%), scenario 10 (Ramon, 35%); and the scenarios with the least amount of discouraging messages were scenarios nine (Billy and Nicholas, 10%) and seven (Isabella, 5%).

### ***Summary of responses.***

The literature on child leadership suggested that teachers encourage, discourage, or ignore child leaders (Maxcy, 1991; Mullarkey et al., 2005). Data from this study indicate that this is true. However, an additional category emerged from the data: when the teacher responded to the child leader with a mixed or confusing message. During analysis, it became necessary to include a category for teacher comments. Percentages were calculated for each of the responses to determine how teachers influence child leadership:

Theme A: Discourage leadership—37%

Theme B: Respond, but ignore child leader(s)—6%

Theme C: Encourage leadership behavior—34%

Theme D: Give a mixed or confusing message to the child leader(s)—12%

Theme E: Would not respond, but comment upon the situation depicted in scenario—  
9%.

### **Finding six.**

Teachers encouraged leadership in 34% of their responses, discouraged or sent mixed messages in 49% of their responses, and ignored leadership in 6% of their responses. Based on these responses, results indicated that teachers would not encourage child leadership in 55% of their responses.

Following every scenario, teachers were asked, “Would you respond to the children in this scenario? If so, please describe how you would respond and why you would respond that



way.” An analysis of the data revealed that teachers left this space blank a total of 569 times (with 1059 possible responses, 54%). Leaving the space blank when asked if they would respond indicated that they would do nothing to intervene.

After categorizing all the responses and analyzing in which scenarios the responses were most likely to occur, I wanted to explore the themes that these responses shared. I wondered if a difference existed between the responses of the teachers who recognized, and the teachers who did not recognize, the leadership depicted in the scenarios. Consequently, two additional questions arose from the analysis:

1. Did teachers who recognized leadership encourage it more often?
2. Did teachers who did not recognize leadership discourage it more often?

To discover these answers, I separated the responses from all the leadership scenarios into two groups: Teachers who recognized leadership (RL) and teachers who did not recognize leadership (DNRL). All responses were separated into the previously-coded categories of encouraging, discouraging, and mixed or confusing. The coded categories “ignore,” “disagreements,” and “comments” did not apply for this analysis. Encouraging responses would reinforce the leadership behavior while discouraging responses would not. Also of note is the category “mixed or confusing messages.” These messages were coded this way since the teacher gave two conflicting opinions (a negative and a positive) in one message. An example of a mixed message provided in this study was given by T57: “I would thank Hannah for helping to organize the clean up but I would remind her that everyone played so everyone is responsible to help clean up.” Therefore, to answer the two new questions above, I combined the responses that discouraged behavior with the responses that were coded as mixed or confusing. Also, since the mixed messages gave two opinions, I coded both opinions, because that is the very nature of

mixed messages; however, when discouraging messages contained two opinions, I coded the main idea of the quote for this analysis.

**Finding seven.**

Teachers who recognized child leadership (RL) encouraged it more than they discouraged it in four of eight scenarios displaying leadership. In answer to the second question, “Did teachers who did not recognize leadership discourage it more often?” teachers who did not recognize leadership (DNRL) would discourage it more often than they would encourage it in six of the eight scenarios displaying leadership.

In scenario one (Frank), teachers who recognized child leadership discouraged (18 responses) more than they encouraged (three responses). Teachers who did not recognize child leadership discouraged (seven responses) more than they encouraged (two responses) child leadership.

In scenario two (Hannah), teachers who recognized leadership wrote encouraging responses ( $n = 7$ ). They wrote discouraging comments ( $n = 43$ ) more often than encouraging ones and they gave 14 mixed or confusing messages to the child leader which means they discouraged ( $43 + 14 = 57$  responses) more than they encouraged. Teachers who did not recognize leadership in the scenario would discourage the leader (21 responses) more than encourage as no encouraging responses were found from the teachers who did not recognize leadership in this scenario.

In scenario three (Jeffrey), teachers who recognized leadership would encourage more often (40 responses) than discourage (17 responses) the child leader with their responses. Yet, teachers who recognized child leadership would also give 10 mixed or confusing messages to the

child leader. Teachers who did not recognize child leadership encouraged (three responses) about as much as they discouraged (two responses) the leader.

In scenario six (Lisa), teachers who recognized leadership would encourage (26 responses) the behavior just as much as they would discourage it (seven discouraging responses and 19 mixed messages = 26 responses). Teachers who did not recognize leadership would discourage the leadership behavior (three discouraging + two mixed messages = five responses) more than they would encourage it because no teacher from this group encouraged leadership.

In scenario seven (Isabella), teachers who recognized leadership would encourage (eight responses) the behavior more than discourage it (zero responses). Teachers who did not recognize leadership would encourage the behavior (one response) the same number of times as they would discourage it (one response).

In scenario eight (Patrick), teachers who recognized child leadership would discourage the behavior more than encourage it, even though they recognized leadership. There were 22 encouraging messages while there were 20 discouraging and 10 mixed or confusing messages (30 total) written in response to this scenario. Teachers who did not recognize leadership would discourage Patrick's behavior (eight responses) more often than encourage it (two responses).

In scenario nine (Billy and Nicholas), teachers who recognized leadership would encourage the leadership behavior (eight responses) more often than they would discourage it because one teacher who did recognize leadership indicated she would discourage it. One teacher who did not recognize leadership gave a discouraging response and there were no encouraging responses in this category.

In scenario 10 (Ramon), teachers who recognized leadership would encourage the leadership behavior (35 responses) more than discourage it (nine responses + three mixed

messages = 12 responses). Teachers who did not recognize leadership would discourage Ramon's behavior more often (17 responses + two mixed messages = 19 responses) than encourage it (seven responses).

To sum up, teachers who recognized child leadership behaviors encouraged the behavior more than they discouraged it in four scenarios displaying leadership. This was evident in scenarios three (Jeffrey suggesting children move to see), seven (Isabella's inviting Erin to join the group), nine (children playing firemen), and 10 (Ramon's shouting that he was the line leader). While this was true in four cases, it was also not true in the other four cases. In scenario one, even though the teachers recognized Frank's leadership, they still discouraged it in favor of encouraging his listening skills or encouraging Ryan's self-esteem. In scenario two, despite the fact that teachers recognized Hannah's leadership, they still reported that they would respond in discouraging ways to her behavior because she did not help clean up. In scenario eight, even though they recognized Patrick's leadership behavior, they would discourage the behavior more often than encourage it because Patrick assumed a "teacher role" by clapping to reduce the noise level. In scenario six (when Lisa helped a classmate), teachers who recognized leadership gave an equal number of encouraging and discouraging responses.

Teachers who did not recognize child leadership behaviors discouraged more than they encouraged the behaviors in six of the eight scenarios reflecting leadership. This was evident in scenarios one (when Frank did not listen to Ryan's idea), two (when Hannah did not pick up), six (when Lisa helped her classmate complete his work), eight (when Patrick clapped to control the noise level), nine (when the children were playing firemen), and 10 (when Ramon shouted that he was the line leader). In scenario three (Jeffrey), the encouraging responses outnumbered the

discouraging responses by one (three encouraged and two discouraged), and in scenario seven (Isabella), the encouraging and discouraging responses were the same number (one).

Another way of examining the differences between teachers who recognized leadership and teachers who did not recognize leadership was to compare the responses from the two groups within scenarios. In scenario eight, in which Patrick claps to reduce the noise level, teachers who recognized leadership encouraged (22 responses) more than discouraged (20 responses). Teachers who did not recognize Patrick's leadership discouraged (eight responses) more than encouraged (two responses). Another example is scenario six, in which Lisa helped her classmate do his work. Teachers who recognized Lisa's leadership encouraged (26 responses) more than discouraged (seven responses). Teachers who did not recognize Lisa's leadership discouraged (three responses) more than encouraged (zero responses). One more example of finding seven is evident in scenario 10, in which Ramon tells the other children that he is the line leader. Teachers who recognized Ramon's leadership encouraged (35 responses) more than discouraged (nine responses) his leadership. Teachers who did not recognize Ramon's leadership discouraged (17 responses) more often than encouraged (seven responses).

Table 14 provides a summary of the total number of responses for each scenario and includes responses for teachers who recognized leadership (RL) and teachers who did not recognize leadership (DNRL) in the scenario. The table also categorizes the responses within the coding categories.

Table 14

*Summary of Teacher Responses Including Coding Categories*

Scenario #	Total Responses	Encourage	Discourage	Mixed	Ignore	Comments	Disagreements
1 (Frank)	41	5 = 12%	25 = 61%	0	6 = 15%	5 = 12%	0
	RL = 30 DNRL = 11	RL = 3 (10%) DNRL = 2 (18%)	RL = 18 (60%) DNRL = 7 (64%)	0	RL = 6 (20%) DNRL = 0	RL = 3 (10%) DNRL = 2 18%	0
2 (Hannah)	97	7 = 7%	64 = 68%	14 = 15%	1 = 1%	8 = 9%	3
	RL = 74 DNRL = 23	RL = 7 (9%) DNRL = 0	RL = 43 (58%) DNRL = 21 (91%)	RL = 14 (19%) DNRL = 0	RL = 1 (1%) DNRL = 0	RL = 7 (9%) DNRL = 1 (14%)	RL = 2 (3%) DNRL = 1 (14%)
3 (Jeffrey)	80	43 = 57%	19 = 25%	11 = 14%	1 = 1%	2 = 3%	4
	RL = 73 DNRL = 7	RL = 40 (55%) DNRL = 3 (43%)	RL = 17 (23%) DNRL = 2 (28%)	RL = 10 (14%) <sup>a</sup> DNRL = 0	RL = 0 DNRL = 0	RL = 1 (1%) DNRL = 1 (14%)	RL = 3 (4%) DNRL = 1 (14%)
6 (Lisa)	66	26 = 41%	10 = 16%	21 = 33%	1 = 2%	5 = 8%	3
	RL = 60 DNRL = 6	RL = 26 (43%) DNRL = 0	RL = 7 (12%) DNRL = 3 (50%)	RL = 19 (32%) DNRL = 2 (33%)	RL = 1 (2%) DNRL = 0	RL = 4 (7%) DNRL = 1 (17%)	RL = 3 (5%) DNRL = 0
7 (Isabella)	24	9 = 41%	1 = 5%	0	8 = 36%	4 = 18%	2
	RL = 17 DNRL = 7	RL = 8 (47%) DNRL = 1 (14%)	RL = 0 DNRL = 1 (14%)	0	RL = 6 (35%) DNRL = 2 (29%)	RL = 1 (6%) DNRL = 3 (42%)	RL = 2 (12%) DNRL = 0
8 (Patrick)	71	24 = 34%	28 = 39%	10 = 14%	0	9 = 13%	0
	RL = 60 DNRL = 11	RL = 22 (37%) DNRL = 2 (18%)	RL = 20 (33%) DNRL = 8 (73%)	RL = 10 (17%) DNRL = 0	0	RL = 8 (13%) DNRL = 1 (9%)	0

(table 14 cont.)

Scenario #	Total Responses	Encourage	Discourage	Mixed	Ignore	Comments	Disagreements
9 (Billy, Nicholas)	21	8 = 38%	2 = 10%	0	3 = 14%	8 = 38%	0
	RL = 18 DNRL = 3	RL = 8 (44%) DNRL = 0	RL = 1 (6%) DNRL = 1 (33%)	0	RL = 3 (17%) DNRL = 0	RL = 6 (33%) DNRL = 2 (67%)	0
10 (Ramon)	93	42 = 47%	26 = 29%	5 = 6%	11 = 12%	5 = 6%	4
	RL= 56 (%) DNRL= 37 (%)	RL= 35 (63%) DNRL= 7 (19%)	RL= 9 (16%) DNRL= 17 (46%)	RL= 3 (5%) DNRL= 2 (5%)	RL= 3 (5%) DNRL= 8 (22%)	RL= 4 (7%) DNRL= 1 (3%)	RL= 2 (4%) DNRL= 2 (5%)
Total	493	164 = 34%	175= 37%	61= 12%	31= 6%	46= 9%	16= 3%

*Note.* “Disagreements” indicated the number of responses in which the two early childhood teachers and the researcher disagreed about the coding.

<sup>a</sup>In scenario three, the responses in the mixed category do not add up to 11 because one respondent did not answer the question, “Is leadership exhibited? Yes \_\_\_ No\_\_\_.”

### **Thematic content analysis of teacher responses.**

After I looked at the numbers of encouraging versus discouraging responses between the teachers who recognized and did not recognize leadership behaviors, I reread, coded, and categorized the responses into themes to determine if there was a difference in the way that the teachers who recognized and the teachers who did not recognize leadership responded. Although there were a few differences between the two groups, the themes between the two groups were generally similar.

### **Finding eight.**

The results from the scenario thematic content analysis revealed that there was not a significant difference in the responses between the teachers who recognized leadership and the teachers who did not recognize leadership. Both groups shared the same five themes in their

responses. The only difference noted was that the teachers who recognized leadership were more likely to praise or thank the child leaders (96%) than the teachers who did not recognize leadership (4%).

The five common themes that emerged from both groups (teachers who recognized child leadership [RL] and teachers who did not recognize child leadership [DNRL]) were: A) (Teachers) Praised or thanked for behavior, B) (Teachers) Insisted that students follow class expectations or rules, C) (Child) Usurped teacher's role, D) (Teacher) Encouraged teamwork or collaboration, and E) (Teacher) Reminded students of student roles.

- Theme A: Praised or thanked for behavior: 135 responses in scenarios two, three, six, seven, eight, nine, and ten fit in this theme. In scenario two, teachers who recognized leadership (RL) wrote 17 responses; in scenario three, teachers who recognized leadership (RL) wrote 51 responses, while those who did not recognize child leadership (DNRL) wrote four responses; the teachers who recognized leadership in scenario six (RL) wrote 24 responses; in scenario seven, teachers who recognized leadership (RL) wrote seven responses but those who did not recognize leadership (DNRL) provided one response; in scenario eight, there were 17 responses from teachers who recognized leadership (RL) and one response from teachers who did not recognize leadership (DNRL); in scenario nine, the teachers who recognized leadership (RL) wrote six responses but those who did not recognize leadership (DNRL) gave no responses; and in scenario 10, the teachers who recognized leadership (RL) wrote seven responses and those who did not recognize leadership (DNRL) wrote zero responses, for a total of 135 responses.



- Theme B: Insisted that students follow class expectations or rules: 86 responses fit this theme in scenarios two: all must help clean up (RL = eight responses, DNRL = four responses); and Hannah must pick up (RL = 32 responses, DNRL = 10 responses). In scenario 10, teachers wrote they would reprimand children for not following line rules (RL = seven responses, DNRL = five) and practice/re-teach line rules (RL = 10, DNRL = 10 responses).
- Theme C: Usurped teachers' roles: This was reportedly not to be tolerated in scenarios three, six, eight, and ten (49 responses). Responses stating that the behavior was the teacher's role or job were seen in the following scenarios: three (RL = 10, DNRL = one); six (RL = two, DNRL = one); eight (RL = 23, DNRL = seven); and 10 (RL = one, DNRL = four). The teachers who recognized leadership made 49 responses concerning the child usurping teachers' roles.
- Theme D: Encouraged teamwork or collaboration: Overall, this was also an important theme to the teachers with 24 responses made in scenarios one, seven, and nine. In scenario one, there were 11 responses (RL = five responses, DNRL = six responses); in scenario seven, seven responses (RL = four, DNRL = three responses); and in scenario nine, six responses (RL = five, DNRL = one response).
- Theme E: Reminded students of student roles: Teachers who did not recognize leadership in scenarios eight and 10 pointed out they would respond that the student was not doing what she or he was supposed to be doing. This was seen in scenarios eight (RL = two; DNRL = one) and 10 (RL = two; DNRL = seven) which totals 12 responses.

In order to determine if teachers who recognized leadership wrote different types of responses than teachers who did not recognize leadership, I analyzed both sets of responses.

***Teachers who recognized child leadership (RL).***

Teachers who recognized child leadership used the following themes in their responses:

Theme A: Praised or thanked for behavior: Teachers who recognized child leadership thanked or praised the child leaders for their behaviors (or for helping) a total of 129 times (96%). This occurred in scenarios two (17 responses), three (51 responses), six (24 responses), seven (seven responses), eight (17 responses), nine (six responses), and 10 (seven responses).

Here are some examples of the responses:

Scenario two (Hannah): T19: Hannah [*sic*] wonderful job assisting and getting blocks cleaned up.

Scenario three (Jeffrey): T60: I would tell him thank you for the suggestion b/c it was to benefit the entire class.

Scenario six (Lisa): T89: I would praise the helpful child for helping.

Scenario seven (Isabella): T53: Good job Isabella! I like the way you invited Erin into the group.

Scenario eight (Patrick): T85: Thank you Jeffrey for helping our class stay on task.

Scenario nine (Billy, Nicholas): T101: You are working together very well. I like the way Billy set up the game, and how Nicholas took the responsibility and improved the plan.

Theme B: Teachers insisted that students follow classroom expectations or rules: Even though they recognized the leadership, teachers still wanted the child leader to follow class expectations or rules as evidenced by the 57 responses (67%) they wrote in the following

scenarios: scenario two (all must help clean up—eight responses; Hannah must pick up—32 responses) and scenario 10 (children were reprimanded for not following line rules—seven responses; teachers wanted to reteach and practice line rules—10 responses). Examples of the responses included:

Scenario two (Hannah): T126: I'd redirect her to help clean too since she played there.

Scenario 10 (Ramon): T20: Remind the students that Ramon is the leader and the proper way to walk in line.

Theme C: Usurped teacher's role: Teachers who recognized leadership still found it necessary to correct child leaders when the students took on a role that they felt was the teacher's role. Thirty-three responses (72%) reflected this fact. Teachers wrote these remarks in scenario three, when Jeffrey had the seating idea (nine responses), scenario eight, when Patrick clapped to lower the noise level (23 responses), and scenario 10 where one teacher told Ramon that it was her job to tell the kids what to do. Examples of the responses in this category included:

Scenario three (Jeffrey): T126: OK—Who's the teacher here. *[sic]* That's a good idea Jeffrey. But let me handle the problem.

Scenario six (Lisa): T3: I would not allow her to do others *[sic]* work for them. I need to see what each child knows *[sic]* if you do the work for them I do not know if they know the information.

Scenario eight (Patrick): T93: I would remind Patrick that this signal was reserved for the teacher.

Theme D: Encouraged teamwork or collaboration: Teachers who recognized leadership still encouraged (or praised) teamwork, cooperation, or collaboration in 14 responses (58%): in scenarios one, when Frank did not consider Ryan's idea (five responses), seven, when Isabella

invited Erin to join a group (four responses), and nine, when the children decided to play firemen (five responses). Examples of the responses include the following:

Scenario one (Frank): I would direct Frank to consider doing Ryan's idea. That they should work together.

Scenario seven (Isabella): I like to see you work together as a team. Teamwork gets things done better.

Scenario nine (Billy, Nicholas): T52: Compliment students on their collaboration skills [*sic*] working together.

Theme E: Reminded students of student roles: Despite the fact that teachers recognized the leadership behavior, they still found it important to remind the child leaders what their student roles were in four responses (33%). This is evident in scenarios eight (two responses), and in scenario 10 (two responses). Examples of the responses that fit this theme:

Scenario eight (Patrick): T15: I would pull Patrick aside and tell him that the teacher uses the special clap, but that students do not need to get children quiet for her.

Scenario 10 (Ramon): T29: Restate Ramon's role as leader and have students recall line rules.

***Teachers who did not recognize child leadership (DNRL).***

Teachers who did not recognize child leadership responded using the same five themes:

Theme A: Praised or thanked for behavior: Teachers who did not recognize leadership would generally not praise child leaders, but they did so minimally in scenarios three (four responses), seven (one response), and eight (one response) for a total of six responses (4%).

Some examples of the responses:

Scenario three (Jeffrey): T66: I would say that Jeffrey made a good suggestion. Let's continue to follow his suggestion.

Scenario seven (Isabella): T14: Explain how I love how they are including Erin.

Scenario eight (Jeffrey): T88: Patrick, I appreciate how you trying *[sic]* to help me.

Theme B: Teachers insisted that students should follow classroom expectations or rules: Teachers who did not recognize child leadership insisted that the children still follow the classroom expectations or rules in their 29 responses (33%). This can be seen in scenario two in the themes "all must help clean up" (four responses) and "Hannah must pick up" (10 responses). In scenario 10, teachers reprimanded children for not following line rules (five responses) and teachers wrote that they would reteach or practice the line rules (10 responses). Examples of the responses:

Scenario two (Hannah): All must help clean up: T24: All students pick up, including Hannah.

Hannah must pick up: T60: I would tell Hannah that she needed to clean up also.

Scenario 10 (Ramon): T69: Reinforce hallway procedures and role of line leader.

Theme C: Usurped teacher's role: Teachers who did not recognize leadership in scenarios three, six, eight, and ten wrote they would point out that the behavior was the teacher's job. Responses fitting this theme were found in scenarios three (one response), six (one response), eight (seven responses), and ten (four responses), which equals thirteen responses (28%).

Examples of the responses:

Scenario six (Lisa): T47: Lisa needs to stop playing a teacher role. I would counsel her privately and tell her she was no longer going to help other students. I would explain that every student needs to learn on their own.

Scenario eight (Patrick): T60: I would remind him that I am the teacher and capable of controlling the situation.

Scenario 10 (Ramon): T27: It is the teacher's responsibility to remind the students of jobs and responsibility. He was negative in his actions.

Theme D: Encouraged teamwork or collaboration: Teachers who did not recognize the leadership behavior in scenarios one, seven, and nine focused on encouraging team work, collaboration, or cooperating to accomplish a task in 10 responses (42%). These responses were seen in scenario one (six responses), scenario seven (three responses), and in scenario nine (one response). Examples of these responses include:

Scenario one (Frank): T130: I would compliment the two boys on working together and collaborating.

Scenario seven (Isabella): T100: I would thank the students for working together & welcoming Erin. I would tell them I like the way they are cooperating.

Scenario nine (Billy, Nicholas): T108: all cooperating.

Theme E: Teachers reminded students of student roles: Teachers who did not recognize leadership in scenarios eight and ten still wanted to remind the children of the students' roles a total of eight times. This occurred once in scenario eight and seven times in scenario ten (67%).

Here are some examples of the responses:

Scenario eight (Patrick): T106: I would tell Patrick that his job is to listen and the teacher's job is to clap.

Scenario ten (Ramon): T41: Ramon [,] if you're the line leader that means everyone is expected to follow you. If you're not the line leader, fall in line.

***Additional categories that emerged.***

During the coding, additional categories of responses (that were not among the five common themes) emerged from scenarios one, two, three, six, eight, and ten. One notable category that emerged was from scenario one: “interrupted Frank to listen to Ryan.” Teachers who recognized leadership encouraged listening, considering, and acknowledging Frank in nine responses. An example follows:

T28: Encourage Frank to listen to Ryans [*sic*] new idea and try it because new things can be fun. It will help Ryan to speak up and share more ideas and Frank to try new things.

Teachers who did not recognize leadership in scenario one asked Frank to listen to, acknowledge, or consider Ryan’s idea in three responses. For example:

T11: Try to have the children listen to each others [*sic*] ideas. Try to get Frank to listen and Ryan to speak up.

The category “Being part of a team/do your share” was reflected in scenario two in 11 responses from teachers who recognized and three responses from teachers who did not recognize Hannah’s leadership behavior. An example from a teacher who recognized Hannah’s leadership behavior:

T56: Hannah [*sic*] could you please help pick up—It is important that everyone helps out b/c we work as a team.

An example from a teacher who did not recognize Hannah’s leadership:

T96: I would tell Hannah to help pick up the blocks in the center so that she would understand that she is part of the group.

In scenario three, two other themes that were exclusive to that scenario were “Teacher allows Jeffrey’s idea, but directs movement” (16 responses from teachers who recognized

leadership), and “Teacher does not allow Jeffrey’s idea and takes over” (seven responses from teachers who recognized leadership and three responses from the teachers who did not recognize leadership.) An example of “Teacher allows Jeffrey’s idea but directs the movement”:

T85: Excellent suggestion [,] Jeffrey. I would like you to have the tall students stand up and the short students stay where they are.

Examples of responses that fit the theme “Teacher does not allow and takes over” from a teacher who recognized leadership and a teacher who did not recognize leadership:

(RL) T84: I would let the children know that the teacher will give instructions as to how she would have the children to sit.

(DNRL) T25: I would ask kids to move closer.

In scenario six, other notable categories that emerged during the coding process were:

- “Monitor if Lisa is helping instead of doing work for them”—teachers who recognized wrote 15 responses; teachers who did not recognize wrote three responses.
- “Don’t allow her to help”—teachers who recognized wrote five responses and teachers who did not wrote three responses.
- “Allow her to help”—teachers who recognized leadership wrote four responses
- “Teach/train to help more effectively”—teachers who recognized leadership wrote seven responses that fit in this category.

Examples of responses for theme “Monitor if Lisa is helping instead of doing work for them”:

(RL) T37: As a teacher, I would want to monitor the tutoring to ensure the help is wanted & the child is actually helping & allowing the other children a chance to do their own work.



(DNRL) T128: Teacher should monitor to ensure students are learning & Lisa is not doing their work for them.

Examples of responses for theme “Don’t allow her to help”:

(RL) T2: Lisa, we need to let your classmate complete his work. I don’t know what his brain really knows if you do it for him.

(DNRL) T108: Lisa, are you helping your friends learn? I want to see how smart they are, not how smart you are.

Example of “Allow her to help”:

(RL) T41: I like the way you’re being a good citizen by helping your classmates.

“Teach/train to help more effectively” example:

(RL) T79: I would remind Lisa not to tell the answers [*sic*] only to see if they are correct and to redirect the questions.

In scenario eight, two other categories were noted: “Teacher talks to Patrick privately” (RL = three responses) and “Teacher does not allow/takes over” (RL = three responses; DNRL one response). Examples of responses for the theme “Teacher talks to Patrick privately”:

T133: Have a private conversation with Patrick making sure he knows when it is appropriate & when not.

Examples of responses for theme “Teacher does not allow or takes over”:

(RL) T63: Not allow Patrick to quiet class as he did.

(DNRL) T12: Depends on whether it was disruptive behavior or not. In general, I would NOT want my students to think it was OK to do that.

In scenario 10, two other themes emerged: “Teacher discussed Ramon’s behavior,” (RL = 10 responses; DNRL = 15 responses), and “Teacher reprimanded other students for not following

line expectations” (RL = seven; DNRL = five responses). Examples of responses for theme “Teacher would discuss Ramon’s behavior”:

(RL) T76: I would remind Ramon that he is the line leader, but not the “boss.”

(DNRL) T88: Ramon, you don’t need to shout.

Examples of responses for the theme “Teacher would reprimand other students for not following line expectations”:

(RL) T92: I would discipline the children who didn’t obey the rules about respecting the line procedures.

(DNRL) T40: I would correct the students that got in front of Ramon.

Table 15 displays the five major themes for each scenario along with the other less frequent response categories (separated into two groups: teachers who recognized leadership [RL] and teachers who did not recognize leadership [DNRL]).

Table 15

*Categories from Scenario Responses*

Scenario	Theme	RL	DNRL
1 (Frank)	Frank should listen to Ryan’s idea	9	3
	Encourage collaboration, teamwork	5	6
	Frank should try Ryan’s idea	11	0
	Encourage Ryan	4	1
2 (Hannah)	Praise and thanks for Hannah	17	0
	Rule is that everyone picks up.	8	4
	Hannah should help pick-up.	32	10
	Part of a team/do your share	11	3

(table 15 cont.)

Scenario	Theme	RL	DNRL
3 (Jeffrey)	Praise or thanks for Jeffrey	51	4
	Teacher allows but directs movement	16	0
	Teacher does not allow/takes over	7	3
	Usurping teacher role	10	1
6 (Lisa)	Praise/thanks for Lisa	24	0
	Monitor if she is helping or doing work for them	15	3
	Don't allow her to help!	5	3
	Allow her to help	4	0
	Teach or train to help more effectively	7	0
	Usurping teacher role	2	1
7 (Isabella)	Thanks Isabella (for including Erin)	7	1
	Cooperation, teamwork	4	3
8 (Patrick)	Thanks/praise for Patrick	17	1
	Teacher's job	23	7
	Teacher talks to him privately	3	0
	Teacher does not allow/takes over	3	1
	Not students job/role	2	1
9 (Billy, Nicholas)	Thanks/praise for leaders	6	0
	Good teamwork, cooperation, collaboration	5	1
10 (Ramon)	Praise for Ramon	7	0
	Encouraged kids to follow Ramon/leader	27	7
	Teacher re-taught line expectations	10	10
	Teacher discussed Ramon's behavior	10	15
	Reprimanded other students	7	5
	Usurping teacher's job	1	4
	Students' role (Ramon's role or job and students' role)	2	7

## **Ancillary Findings**

In order to explore if teachers' descriptions explained how they would recognize leadership or respond in a scenario, I conducted a within-case analysis. I made an "explanatory effects matrix" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.148) to explore the relationships among the teacher's descriptions of child leadership and their scenario responses. I listed the teachers' responses to the scenarios across the top with their description codes along the left side. This matrix allowed me to determine whether or not teachers' descriptions of leadership explained why they identified, misidentified, or failed to identify leadership in the individual scenarios. It also shed light on why a teacher may have written an encouraging or discouraging response to the scenario.

Results of this analysis indicated that participants' descriptions of child leaders provided possible insight into reasons why teacher participants identified, misidentified, or failed to identify a scenario as depicting leadership. Additionally, phrasing contained in the participant descriptions corresponded to phrasing in responses the participants wrote indicating how they would respond to child leaders portrayed in the scenarios.

### **Identification of leadership in less obvious scenarios.**

Leadership behaviors in scenarios seven and 10 were not recognized as much as in the other scenarios. The recognition rate for scenario seven was 57% and for scenario 10 was 55%. The leadership expert rated these two scenarios as "Agree" which indicated that these were not obvious examples of child leadership. However, phrases and words in their written descriptions may explain how some teachers were able to identify leadership in these two scenarios. Scenario seven was the second-lowest recognized scenario yet teachers who included the words or phrases "compassionate," or "worked well with others" in their descriptions were able to identify

Isabella's leadership. Isabella was compassionate to Erin who wanted to join the group.

Examples of these phrases in descriptions:

“Works well with others”:

T98: These children are able to work well with others and they show respect for their peers as well as themselves.

“Compassionate”:

T15: Taking initiative, being compassionate following expectations, encouraging others to do their best.

Teacher T15 also identified Ramon's leadership in scenario 10. This scenario was the least recognized scenario. Four teachers who included the phrases “following rules” and one who included “asserting needs” in their descriptions were able to recognize Ramon's leadership in scenario 10. Examples of these phrases included:

“Following rules”:

T57: Leadership is a child [*sic*] that can understand the difference between right and wrong. They choose which way they want to behave and have the kind of outgoing personality to have others want to follow that behavior.

T101: A leader is someone you follow because you believe they will follow the rules and be a good example for everyone.

“Assert needs”:

T52: I call children leaders when they are able to:... assert their desires, needs...

Scenarios 10 and seven had the lowest rates of recognition because they were more subtle forms of leadership. Words or phrases in seven teachers' descriptions provided clues as to why they were able to recognize two scenarios with subtle leadership.

### **Misidentification of leadership in scenarios.**

Five participants described child leaders as “volunteers.” Three of these five participants misidentified scenario five (where Sarah volunteers to go to the office to collect paperwork) as showing leadership. Also, 24 teachers described child leaders as “helpful”; however, 11 participants misidentified scenario five (Sarah) as showing leadership. Though teachers used the terms “volunteer” and “helpful,” they did not define or provide specific meanings for either.

One teacher (T132) misidentified Ryan as the leader in scenario one. She described child leadership as, “All have leadership ability, but leadership must be developed in an environment that provides opportunities.” She misidentified the leader in scenario one because she may have been trying to provide an environment for Ryan to develop his leadership. She responded to scenario one, “I would tell the boys, Frank lets [*sic*] listen to Ryans idea [*sic*] it may make the city better.”

### **Failure to identify leadership in scenarios.**

Ten teachers failed to identify leadership in scenarios possibly because of what they believed child leadership to be. One teacher described child leaders as children who have good social skills and follow classroom expectations. A female kindergarten teacher with 16 years of experience (T30) described child leadership as, “Leadership in children is the child who take [*sic*] charge in a positive way. One who volunteers to help and knows and follows rules & procedures. Child leaders display confidence and good social skills.” T30 failed to recognize Frank’s leadership in scenario one. The two boys were building with blocks, and Frank did not show social skills when he ignored Ryan’s idea. She also failed to recognize Ramon’s leadership in scenario 10, but encouraged the children to follow the rules responding, “Class, Ramon is correct, [*sic*] he is the line leader and let’s try it again. Everyone in the line behind Ramon.”

In addition to commenting on class expectations, one teacher also considered the emotional side of leadership because she included “being compassionate” in her description. T15 is a female with fifteen years of experience in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten who described child leadership as “[t]aking initiative, being compassionate, following expectations, encouraging others to do their best.” In scenario two, she did not identify Hannah as a leader. Hannah did not follow the class expectation of picking up materials. T15 responded, “I would remind Hannah that everyone is responsible to pick up and not just watch.” T15 identified Ramon as a leader in scenario 10, but she reminded the class to follow the rules and encouraged compassion for Ramon when she responded, “I would remind those walking past Ramon that he is correct, he is line leader, and everyone will have their turn. No one wants to be passed when it is their turn.”

Another teacher considered the emotional aspect of child leadership. A female (T33) who has taught prekindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade for 21 years described child leadership in this way: “Children have an inherent feeling of respect, empathy, and compassion [*sic*] for themselves and their classmates.” T33 failed to identify Ramon as a leader in scenario 10 and responded, “Remind Ramon to use kind words.” It is possible that she did not think that Ramon was a leader because he did not act respectfully to his classmates.

Taking a different direction, another teacher believed that a child leader helped other children. A female teacher (T24) who has taught prekindergarten for nineteen years described child leadership as “[w]hen one child can help another child.” She did not identify Hannah as a leader in scenario two. In that scenario, Hannah did not help pick up and T24 responded, “All students pick up, including Hannah.” It is possible that T24 did not think Hannah was a leader because Hannah did not help pick up.

One teacher described child leadership in regard to the leader's classroom behavior. T49, a female teacher who has six years experience in the target grades, considered child leaders to be students who exhibited good behavior and set good examples for others. She described child leadership as "[a] child who can model appropriate behavior or skills for other children." She failed to recognize Hannah as a leader in scenario two and also failed to recognize Ramon in scenario 10. Hannah and Ramon may not have exhibited appropriate behavior and this may have been why T49 did not recognize them as leaders.

The following three teachers also mentioned behavior, but they mentioned a specific type of behavior leaders should not demonstrate—bossiness: T87, a female teacher with 19 years of experience who teaches gifted students, described a child leader as "[a] child who organizes others into playing a certain game/activity, but without being bossy." She failed to identify Ramon in scenario 10 commenting, "If he was being rude or bossy—I would model a nice or polite way to do it." Similarly, T88, a female kindergarten teacher with five years of experience in the target grades, described a child leader as "[a] child who can follow orders and direct others to do so without being bossy." She failed to identify Ramon in scenario 10 as a leader and may have done so because she did not approve of his behavior, responding, "Ramon, you don't need to shout." A third teacher, T89, a kindergarten teacher with 20 years of experience in the target grades, described a child leader as "a child who can take charge in a group without being bossy." She, too, failed to identify Ramon in scenario 10 as being a leader and responded, "My line leaders have to set a good example! He was not setting a good ex [example]—he was being bossy!"



### **Corresponding phrasing in descriptions and responses.**

At least seven teacher participants used phrases in their descriptions of child leadership that reappeared in their responses to the behavior in the scenarios. One teacher, T47, was role-conscious in her responses and wanted students to participate equally and behave appropriately in the classroom. She is a female kindergarten teacher who has taught for thirteen years in kindergarten and first grade and she described child leadership as “[a] child who exhibits exemplary behavior even when other students do not; a child who draws upon his/her own sense of right and wrong and does not rely upon others to remind him frequently.” She applied her understanding of child leadership in the following responses:

Scenario 2 (S2): Hannah needs to participate and be an equal in the work, not a supervisor.

S7: Compliment Isabella on including another student and exhibiting exemplary social skills.

S8: Counsel Patrick to not take a teacher role but to participate the same as other students.

On a different note, T58, a female teacher with 17 years of experience in grades prekindergarten and kindergarten, described child leadership as “[c]hildren who show a natural ability to gain and hold onto other children’s or adults’ attention for their own purposes.” She responded to scenario eight, “later I would let [Patrick] know that he found a very clever way of getting his friends *[sic]* attention.”

A female who taught in the target grades for six years, T86, described child leadership as “[t]he ability of children to make choices, become more independent and responsible.” She applied this understanding of leadership when she responded as follows to the scenarios:

S1: Frank made a choice and was creative and independent.

S8: If the environment is one with movement & an easy atmosphere [*sic*] I would commend Patrick for making a “good” and responsible choice.

S10: Ramon responded to a problem by trying to resolve it with a mature decision/choice. It did not work because he is not an adult.

A female gifted teacher, T102, with 25 years teaching experience teaching in the target grades, wrote one of the longest descriptions of child leadership and used phrases from her description in her responses to the scenarios. She wrote, “I would describe characteristics of leadership in children as students who exhibit positive classroom community. These are students who exhibit the following: 1. are collaborative and cooperative and encourage that in others in a verbally fluent manner. 2. responsible and reliable. 3. Like to bring structure to situations and gets [*sic*] involved and take charge. 4. They also are self-confident, well accepted by peers, foresees [*sic*] consequences, uses good judgement [*sic*] & common sense.” She repeated some of these phrases in her responses to seven of the scenarios. For example:

S2: I would facilitate Hannah’s leadership abilities by helping her to carry out her ideas through responsible behavior and cooperation. She needs to foresee the consequences of not doing her part.

S7: I would thank Isabella for encouraging cooperative and collaborative involvement of other students to the group.

S9: I would note in my journal that Nicholas is able to foresee consequences and well accepted by peers. Also that Billy likes to take charge and delegate structure to the situation.

A female kindergarten teacher for four years, T105, answered the question about child leadership by explaining the teacher's role: "Teachers have opportunities to encourage leadership and model what good leaders look like to others." She then responded in scenario 10, "I would model for Ramon the appropriate way to handle the situation and also remind the other students how they want others to act when they are line leader. I would do this to model positive/appropriate behavior."

A teacher of gifted, who also taught kindergarten for three years, T121, described child leaders as those who "help others" and "explain situations." She identified Lisa in scenario six as a leader and responded: "Praise her for her help."

Another female teacher of gifted students, T129, with two years teaching experience in the target grades, described the importance of following: "I always explain to my children that being a leader is knowing how to step up to lead and also knowing how to follow—all the while contributing in a meaningful way to the group." In her response to Scenario 10, she wrote, "Explain to all how to be a follower."

Data indicated that some teachers misidentified and failed to identify child leaders. At times, teachers' written descriptions of child leadership offered glimpses into what they believed about child leadership and provided possible explanations about why they misidentified the child leaders. Teacher beliefs were also echoed in many of their scenario responses. These findings are significant because they point out that teacher beliefs about child leadership may not only influence recognition of child leadership, but may also have some bearing on the responses teachers make to child leaders.

## Conclusion

One hundred and thirty-three early childhood teachers completed a survey on child leadership, contributing information about how they would describe and recognize child leadership, and how they believed they might intervene in scenarios depicting child leadership and non-leadership behaviors. The results of this study revealed that teachers described child leaders as being helpful, verbally fluent, and self-confident. Teachers effectively recognized obvious leadership in scenarios two, three, six, and nine. They had a little more difficulty recognizing subtle forms of leadership in scenarios one, seven, and ten. Teachers recognized child leadership behavior most of the time, but they did not always recognize child leaders. For example, in scenario one, the number of teachers who recognized that Frank was the leader was 39 (43%). In scenario nine, the number of teachers who recognized Billy and Nicholas as the leaders was 32 (30%).

Data from this study confirm the findings in the literature that suggest teachers encourage, discourage, and ignore child leadership (Maxcy, 1991; Mullarkey et al., 2005). A fourth category of teacher response was discovered— teachers sent mixed or confusing messages to child leaders. According to the results of this study, teachers reported that they would encourage child leaders 34%, discourage 37%, send mixed or confusing messages 12%, ignore 6%, and make comments in 9% of the responses. Finally, data indicated that teachers who did not recognize child leadership discouraged it more often than teachers who recognized it. Also, teachers who recognized child leadership praised the behaviors more often than teachers who did not recognize it. Ancillary findings suggest that the ways in which teachers recognized or responded to child leadership may correlate with their conceptions of child leadership. These results will be discussed further in the following chapter.

## Chapter Five

### Overview of the Study

The purpose of this study was to discover how teachers recognize and might influence leadership behaviors in children aged 4 to 6 years as depicted in scenarios. One hundred thirty-three early childhood teachers and teachers of gifted were surveyed using a researcher-designed instrument called the *Recognizing Leadership in Children (RLIC) Survey* to assess if teachers recognized leadership in typical classroom scenarios. Additionally, teachers were asked how they thought they might respond to the leadership scenarios and to write on the survey how they would describe child leadership. There is a scarcity of literature concerning children's leadership, and results from this study contribute information about how teachers recognize and influence leadership behaviors in young children.

### Discussion of the Findings

#### **Finding one.**

Teachers provided descriptors of child leadership.

This study found that teachers conceptualize child leaders as helpful, verbally fluent, and self-confident. Five out of the 15 most-used teacher descriptors (33%) matched the most predominant characteristics in the literature (Table 1). Of the 120 teacher descriptions, 103 teachers used at least one descriptor from the literature on child leadership. Thus, as far as ability to describe leadership, teachers' views matched those of the literature, but not in a robust way. Answers ranged from "not a clue what it is!" (T73) to whole paragraphs about leadership listing multiple descriptors. One teacher gave an example of the latter type of response:

“Leadership in children usually to me is demonstrated by things like good sportsmanship and a positive attitude despite negative interactions with others. They encourage their peers and are forward thinking. They are conscious of others [*sic*] opinions more than most people. Also a good sense of humor is another leadership quality” (T116).

Some teachers ( $n = 13$ ) skipped this question altogether, which could signify that they were unsure how to answer the question. Eight of the 13 teachers who did not answer this question indicated they had not had child leadership training, and this may be a reason why they were uncertain how to answer. Other teachers may not have had a solid understanding of what child leadership is. For example, four teachers wrote that child leaders showed “good behavior.” In addition, several teachers ( $n = 8$ ) used descriptions that fit traditional theories of leadership that may pertain to adult leaders (see Correlation to adult theories of leadership section below).

Teachers provided a variety of descriptors to describe child leaders. Leadership is a multitude of qualities and characteristics and this was reflected in the participants’ responses.

***Teachers’ descriptors that are found in the literature.***

The highest number of teachers described child leaders as “helpful.” While this descriptor is included (Perez et al., 1982; Shin et al, 2004), “helpful” is not predominantly discussed in the literature and is not in the most prevalent characteristics (Table 1). Thus, a mismatch exists between the teachers’ most-used descriptor and the most predominant descriptors from the literature. Perhaps teachers used the descriptor “helpful” most often because early childhood teachers have tremendous responsibilities so they may appreciate when a child helps things flow smoothly in the classroom. Another possible explanation for this descriptor is that a child who is helping contributes to the sense of a community which teachers strive to create in classrooms. Another reason teachers appreciate helpful children is that when

teachers perceive that children are helping, they know that these children are not getting into trouble elsewhere. A teacher used the following words to describe a child leader: “peer mentoring, group leaders, classroom helper, new-comer helper (T115).”

The next highest number of teachers described child leaders as having verbal skill or “communicates well verbally with peers” which is described prevalently in the literature (Adcock & Segal, 1983; Karnes & Bean, 1996; Manning, 2005; Perez et al., 1982; Roets, 2000; Shin et al., 2004; Sisk & Rosselli, 1996). The ability to communicate is considered paramount in leadership. Leaders need to convey their ideas to others and share their vision of what is possible. They also communicate to redirect, renegotiate, or encourage their followers. The third most-used descriptor was “self-confident” (Adcock & Segal, 1983; CEC & ERIC Clearinghouse, 1990; Sisk & Rosselli, 1996), followed by “takes initiative” (Shin et al., 2004), “acts as an example or role model,” and “takes charge” (Manning, 2005). Although the descriptor “acts as an example or role model” is one of the most-used descriptors by teachers, it is not one of the most prevalent characteristics mentioned in the literature. This may reflect a teacher’s desire for child leaders to exhibit exemplary behavior as evidenced by T52’s description: “I call children leaders when they are able to: initiate play with friends, attract friends, make pro-social behavior choices.”

### ***Teacher’s role in developing child leadership.***

In the child leadership literature, it is recommended that teachers support (Lee et al., 2005; Scheer & Safrit, 2001) and help develop (Boulais, 2002; Karnes & Stephens, 1999; Trawick-Smith, 1988) child leadership. One of the patterns that surfaced during the data analysis was that in addition to, or instead of, describing child leadership, seven teachers described the teacher’s role in helping to develop it. Here is an example from a teacher: “It is extremely

important to develop leadership in children, in order for them to become independent and self-sufficient in making decisions and in being able to function well in everyday life” (T85).

Similarly, teachers model appropriate social behaviors (Adcock & Segal, 198/3; Chang, 2003) and leadership behaviors (Maxcy, 1991) for children. In this study, four teachers wrote how they would model leadership behavior to children in their responses, and two teachers suggested that teachers should model leadership in their descriptions. T105 described child leadership and also how teachers can foster it when she wrote, “Leadership in children can have many aspects. Children can take the lead in several ways. Children can take it upon themselves to lead in appropriate or inappropriate behavior in others. Teacher's [*sic*] have an opportunity to encourage leadership and model what good leadership looks like to others.”

This same teacher (T105) also used her idea in response to Ramon in scenario 10: “I would model for Ramon the appropriate way to handle the situation and also remind the other students how they want others to act when they are line leader. I would do this to model positive/appropriate behavior.”

Other teachers wrote in their responses how they would model behavior to child leaders in the scenarios. For example, T87 responded to scenario 10 in the following way: “[D]epending on how he [Ramon] responded to the others—if nicely, I'd let it go. If he was being rude or bossy—I would model a nice or polite way to do it. He was being upset that his role was being usurped.”

Obviously, the early childhood classroom is a recommended and safe place for teachers to support and facilitate leadership behaviors in young children. If more teachers viewed this as their role, additional leadership opportunities would be provided.



### ***Initiative vs. guilt.***

One of the most frequently used teacher descriptors of child leadership was “initiative” ( $n = 13$ ). The fact that early childhood teachers believe child leaders show initiative is significant since children at this age (ages 4 through 6) are in the “initiative vs. guilt” developmental stage; therefore, it is appropriate for young children to demonstrate initiative. Children in this stage enjoy using their new mental and physical abilities by taking initiative. When an authority figure disapproves of these behaviors, the child might internalize guilt feelings (Erikson, 1963). Therefore, teachers need to support appropriate initiative or redirect inappropriate initiative in ways that the child can move successfully through this stage.

### ***Correlation to adult theories of leadership.***

Another pattern that arose in the data analysis was that teachers referred to adult theories of leadership when they described child leaders. There are numerous theories of leadership in the literature that pertain to adults. In Chapter Two, several theories are reviewed: Trait, Behavioral or Style, Situational, Contingency, Transactional, and Transformational theory. Eleven teachers described child leaders as having qualities found in these theories and one teacher compared child leadership with adult leadership when she described child leadership.

One of the 15 descriptors most used by teachers was “natural.” Six teachers out of the 120 who responded (5%) described leadership as a natural ability. This is found in the literature under Trait theory. These teachers may believe that leaders are born and not made.

The following teacher combined two leadership theories. Although T132 believes leadership is related to personality (Trait theory), she also believes child leadership can be developed, which best fits into the Style or Behavioral theory of leadership that maintains that leaders were not born, but could be trained. This teacher seems to believe that more people

could become leaders if given the opportunity to develop leadership skills because she wrote, “Leadership in children is linked to personality. I believe all children have leadership ability, however if those qualities are not develop [*sic*] they do not emerge. Children who have true qualities will emerge in environments that provide them opportunities” (T132).

Two teachers described how they believe the classroom is a place where leadership can emerge or be displayed naturally. One teacher wrote, “I see it emerging naturally in classroom scenarios. There will usually be 1 or 2 students who will stand out & the other children will follow. These children are helpful & know how to organize others” (T127).

A second teacher suggested, “Leadership in children naturally comes out when working in the classroom regardless of whether working in groups or not. They want to lead discussions, groups, or help peers and teachers. They volunteer and want to take charge” (T133). These two teachers may be relating child leadership to the Situational theory of leadership which posits that leaders emerge from the situation. Roach et al. (1999) wrote that the adolescents and young adults they observed did not look for Traits or Behavioral styles in their peer leaders, but instead looked for the peers who stepped up in a situation and knew how to get the task done. Those are the people whom the subjects in the study described as their leaders.

Task-oriented and relationship-oriented leadership, mentioned in the adult theories, (Fukada et al., 1994; Hardy et al., 1978; Lee et al., 2005), fits both adults and children. The leader described in the following quote might be considered as a task-oriented leader, which would fit under the Behavioral/Style, Situational, or Contingency theories of leadership: “The ability to work with others and influence others to complete a task or agree with an idea or solve a problem” (T1). The following quote demonstrates more of a relationship-orientation which also fits under the Behavioral/Style, Situational, or Contingency theories of leadership: “The

ability to instinctively know the ‘pulse’ of the group, intuitively [sic] their needs, have their trust by showing your [sic] responsible enough to do more than you ask of them, and take responsibility for [sic] group” (T95).

It is unknown just how close child leadership is to adult leadership described in traditional theories. There are a limited number of studies about child leadership, and a few authors (Maxcy, 1991; Oakland et al., 1996; Roach et al., 1999) have declared that adult and child leadership are different paradigms. However, child leadership is not totally different from adult leadership. In comparing adult and child leaders, both similarities and differences can be found. Child and adult leaders share some of the same tendencies; for example, people want to follow them and they know how to direct others to get tasks completed. Many of the descriptors the teachers listed in this study about child leaders could also fit adults, such as self-confidence, advanced verbal skills, and problem solving abilities. Conversely, children may demonstrate behaviors or styles listed in traditional leadership theories such as relation-oriented behavior, taking charge, and being responsible.

It is important to understand how teachers conceptualize leadership because, in almost half of the research studies on child leadership, researchers relied upon teacher nominations, descriptions, or classifications of child leaders. When teachers think that child leaders are similar to adult leaders, they may miss child leaders who do not demonstrate adult leadership behaviors. The results of this study confirmed that teachers’ ideas about leadership can influence their recognition of and responses to child leadership. For example, teachers who perceive that leaders follow the rules may miss the child leaders who are not focused on the rules. Also, teachers who view child leaders as being helpful might accidentally omit child leaders who do not appear to be helpful in class. Similarly, teachers may misidentify children as leaders for

exhibiting a behavior that they believe a leader might display. This was evident when 24 teachers described child leaders as being helpful. Almost half ( $n = 11$ ) of the 24 teachers misidentified Sarah's volunteering to go to the office in scenario five as leadership because she was being helpful.

The fact that the most frequently used teacher descriptor of leadership was "helpful" was not surprising because this descriptor also showed up in the findings of the pilot investigations the researcher conducted. During the focus group in Investigation Two, three out of five teachers used the word "helpful" to describe their child leaders and it was one of the top answers that the teachers in Investigation Three wrote as a descriptor of leadership (see Chapter Three, Instrument Development).

In this study, teachers used descriptors from the literature on child leadership, but also integrated adult theories of leadership into their descriptions. There is not a common definition of child leadership in the existing child leadership literature and this was reflected in the descriptions teachers provided for this study. However, most teachers did use at least one descriptor from the child leadership literature in their descriptions.

### **Finding two.**

Teachers recognize child leadership more often when it is obvious than they do in more subtle examples.

Given the recognition rate for each scenario (Table 12), it is apparent that teachers do recognize obvious examples of leadership. They have a little more difficulty recognizing scenarios containing subtle forms of leadership. However, the results of this study indicated that at least 50% of the teachers recognized leadership depicted in all eight leadership scenarios, and at least 75% of the teachers recognized child leadership in more than half of the scenarios (five

out of eight). Scenarios that contained obvious examples of leadership, rated as “Strongly Agree” (SA) by the child leadership expert (scenarios two [Hannah], three [Jeffrey], six [Lisa], and nine [Billy and Nicholas]) had higher recognition rates than did the other scenarios. Scenarios containing less obvious examples of leadership, rated as “Agree” (A) by the child leadership expert (scenarios one [Frank], seven [Isabella], and 10 [Ramon]) had lower recognition rates. The average score for scenarios rated SA was 86% and the average score for scenarios rated as A was 60%.

Teachers may not recognize subtle forms of leadership as often as obvious examples because early childhood teachers are busy scanning all activities in the classroom. In monitoring all the students, they may notice when multiple children are involved in a leadership activity rather than a few children. Also, some child leaders’ actions may be more subdued. Perhaps it is easier for teachers to pay attention to children who are noisy and active than to the children who are quieter and not always demanding the teacher’s attention. Not all leadership is loud and boisterous; there can be quiet leadership. The quiet, more passive leaders might not demand the teacher’s attention so it might be easier to overlook them.

Additionally, the results of this study indicated that teachers have skills identifying leadership within larger groups of children, but may have trouble noticing emerging behaviors with smaller numbers of children. Also, data results indicated that the more names given in a scenario, the less likely teachers were able to recognize the leader(s). This is evident in scenario nine where 83.5% ( $n = 111$ ) recognized leadership, but only 30% ( $n = 32$ ) identified the leaders. This scenario had several choices of names which seemed to confuse the teachers when they identified leaders. A high percentage correctly identified that they were reading about leadership, but, in contrast, a low number of teachers recognized the actual leaders. This might

have happened because teachers are conditioned to value the contributions of all children. In listing many names as the leaders in scenario nine, teachers may have been trying to give all kids credit for contributing to the play scenario.

Teachers recognize obvious leadership in which several children are involved. In three of the four obvious leadership scenarios rated as “Strongly Agree” (two, three, and nine), a child leader directed a group of children and these scenarios were all highly recognized. Teachers have more difficulty with subtle leadership behaviors containing two to three children. In two of three scenarios rated as “Agree” (scenarios one and seven), a student leader directed one or two students and these two scenarios had low percentages for recognition.

Scenario 10, which showed one child leader (Ramon) trying to direct a large number of children and rated “Agree,” was the least recognized leadership scenario. One possible reason why the teachers did not recognize Ramon’s leadership might be that the students were breaking the line rules, which could eventually lead to safety issues, and this may have distracted the teachers from recognizing Ramon’s leadership. Another possible reason why teachers missed Ramon’s leadership may be that many teachers felt Ramon was not behaving appropriately, which may have clouded the fact that he was trying to lead. The following quotes demonstrate the two possible reasons given above:

1. Teachers were concerned about the other students’ behaviors (those who were walking ahead of the line leader, Ramon); T9 wrote, “I would have to take charge and be sure that the children are correctly in line.”
2. Teachers were distracted by Ramon’s behavior as reflected by T76 when she wrote, “I would remind Ramon that he is the line leader, but not the "boss.”

Another less-recognized child leader was Isabella in scenario seven. Teachers may not have recognized Isabella's leadership because it was directed at only one child, and in this study, teachers tended to recognize leadership more often when it was directed at a group of children. Another possible explanation why Isabella's leadership was largely unrecognized may be that she was exhibiting a relational type of leadership showing empathy for the other child, Erin, who wanted to join in the play. Relational leadership fits under the Style and Situational/Contingency leadership theories, but it can also be found in the literature on child leadership (Shin et al., 2004). One of the expert panelists could not review the *RLIC Survey* because the expert viewed child leadership as a relational concept and did not feel the survey matched this view. After reviewing the survey, another expert panelist commented that in scenario seven "Isabella was exhibiting a relationship oriented type of leadership." Teachers in this study did not always recognize the emotional side of leadership. Besides the descriptor "helpful," only a few teachers used "empathetic" or emotional descriptions of child leadership ( $n = 8$ ). This is unfortunate because, according to leadership experts Goleman et al. (2002), emotion is an essential part of leadership since followers look to leaders as emotional guides.

The most recognized scenario was scenario six. This scenario involved Lisa helping her neighbor complete his work. Of the 121 teachers who recognized leadership, 113 correctly recognized Lisa as the leader. It is not surprising that this leader was the most easily recognized since the number one descriptor teachers used to describe child leaders was "helpful," which may be why the teachers correctly identified Lisa's leadership behavior.

Teachers' recognition of leadership has not been fully explored in the literature. Faurie et al. (2006), Karnes and Meriweather (1989), Parten (1933), and Perez et al. (1982) discussed teacher reliability in nominating child leaders. The results of this study indicated that a

substantial number of teachers can recognize child leadership when it is obvious. Occasionally, they omit or misidentify child leaders who do not match their ideas about what child leadership is. Also, teachers can more easily identify that leadership is happening when many children are involved; however, when this is the case, teachers may become confused about who the actual leader(s) is (are).

***Sub-question 2A.***

Does the number of correct responses correlate with years of experience in the target grades?

A Pearson Product Correlation test indicated that there was no association between the number of years of experience and the number of leadership scenarios correctly identified. Even though the teachers' years of experience teaching in the target grades ranged from half a year to 40 years, the years of experience did not seem to affect recognition rates. This was surprising because one would think that teachers who had taught for many years could potentially recognize child leadership more often because they have had more experience. Because an operational definition of child leadership was not articulated in the survey directions, teachers were operating on their own definitions. Thus, years of experience did not aid in recognition rates.

***Sub-question 2B.***

Does teacher-reported training in child leadership make a difference in the number of correct responses?

A t-test indicated that there was no statistically significant difference between teacher training and the number of leadership scenarios correctly identified. One-half of the teachers who participated in this study reported that they had been trained in child leadership. The most prevalent type of training reported was from university programs. It is suggested in the literature



(Karnes & Meriweather, 1989; Bisland, 2004) that teachers may not have adequate training to recognize and support child leadership. This study supports that fact because even though half of the teachers reported they had training in child leadership, the training did not make a difference in correct recognition of leadership behaviors or child leaders. One would believe that teachers who had training about child leadership would recognize it at a significantly higher rate. Perhaps the type, quality, or quantity of training impacted these results.

**Finding three.**

Teachers responded to the child leader most often in two cases: when classroom rules were broken and whenever a student took on a teacher's role.

Teachers responded to the child leader most often in the scenarios when classroom rules were broken (scenarios two and 10). (Teachers were asked to respond if they thought each scenario depicted leadership, but in all 10 scenarios, teachers responded whether they believed there was leadership reflected or not.) Teachers who did not think these scenarios reflected leadership still wanted to respond to the situations. In scenario two, of 97 responses, 23 teachers who did not recognize leadership responded and in scenario 10, of 93 responses, 37 teachers who did not recognize leadership responded.

Examples of teachers intervening when a rule was broken can be seen in scenario two (when Hannah did not pick up, teachers reported that they would intervene in 20% of their answers), and in scenario 10 (when some children were passing the leader while walking in line, teachers reported they would intervene in 19% of their answers). Ramon's leadership may have been obfuscated by the fact that children were not following the classroom rules of walking in line behind the leader. The recognition rate for scenario 10 was the lowest of all the scenarios.

Mullarkey et al. (2005) described a “dilemma” that exists when teachers want to support child leadership but do not because the need to provide support for their classroom community is more pressing. For example, teachers support the rule about walking in line (scenario 10) because failure for the children to walk in an orderly manner could cause chaos, and the teacher might lose control of the group. Also, walking in line is less noisy than walking in a group, and not walking in line could result in safety issues. Mullarkey et al. (2005) noted that teachers felt that discouraging leadership in safety issues was warranted. Thus, scenario 10 was the lowest recognized for leadership. The priority of enforcing classroom rules was also demonstrated in scenario two when teachers wrote that they would tell Hannah to help clean up. Picking up materials is consistent with early childhood rules and expectations (Coppie & Bredekamp, 2009; National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2012). For most teachers, following classroom rules is a priority.

Teachers responded to or intervened on behaviors that would infringe upon a teacher’s role in scenarios three (Jeffrey told the children where to sit) and eight (Patrick performed the teacher clap to quiet the class). In the scenario with Jeffrey, two teachers worried about the chaos that might ensue if children moved around at a child’s direction. Early childhood teachers want to enforce classroom rules and take their responsibility seriously as the person in charge. The teacher is the eminent authority in the classroom (Adcock & Segal, 1983) so teachers may feel less conscientious or responsible as authorities when students take on roles as rule enforcers or traffic officers. Teachers may have overreacted to these scenarios because they did not want the children to feel that they were responsible for enforcing classroom rules. There are at least two possible reasons why teachers may not want the children to enforce classroom rules: (a) the role of the classroom authority figure belongs to one person, the teacher (when authority is

shared, the teacher is not in control of her class and may not be performing her duties); and (b) if all the children tried to enforce class rules themselves, chaos might ensue and the teacher may lose control. Adcock and Segal (1983) explained that a common fear for preschool teachers is losing control of their classrooms. Early childhood teachers are responsible for maintaining order and safety in their classrooms, so when chaos erupts, the teacher has lost control, and the safe classroom is temporarily lost.

**Finding four.**

The teachers responded the least when children were helping or volunteering (scenario five, a non-leadership scenario, and scenario six), and when children were playing in centers or at recess outside (scenarios one, seven, and nine).

Teachers responded less when children were helping (scenario six). Because teachers consider child leaders to be helpful, they may not have responded as much as they did in the other scenarios. Teachers described child leaders most often as being helpful. This is consistent with the findings of Perez et al. (1982) and Shin et al. (2004) who also described child leaders as helpers. Teachers were also less likely to intervene when children were playing at center time or recess time (scenarios one, seven, and nine). In the child leadership literature, Trawick-Smith (1988) recommended that children practice leadership in free-play settings. This might be the ideal situation for children to practice leadership because teachers are less likely to intervene in these situations, as evidenced in this study. Perhaps the reason teachers don't intervene as much in play is because no one is in danger of being hurt, and no class rules are being broken. For example, T47 commented that she would not intervene in scenario nine because she only saw children at play, and no one was overstepping boundaries.

When the teachers don't intervene as much, child leaders are not interrupted or discouraged from acting as leaders. Early childhood teachers should be encouraged to let children have ample opportunities to play so that children can develop and practice leadership skills.

**Finding five.**

Coded responses from early childhood teachers indicate that they would respond to child leadership depicted in scenarios in the following ways: discourage leadership; respond, but ignore the child leader(s); encourage leadership behavior; give a mixed or confusing message to the child leader(s); and comment upon the situation depicted in scenarios.

Teachers encouraged child leadership in every scenario. The most-encouraged scenario was scenario three in which Jeffrey had an idea for seating. A possible explanation is that this scenario was one of the most recognized scenarios so more teachers recognized Jeffrey's leadership; data results indicate (see finding seven) that when teachers recognized leadership, they were more inclined to encourage the behavior.

It is important to consider why teachers may respond to children in these ways. Teachers encourage leadership to develop the child's social skills and to validate the child's efforts. Encouragement does not have to be verbal, but can be transmitted through non-verbal language. In the survey, two teachers indicated that they would use non-verbal communication with their students: In scenario eight, T104 indicated "No" she would not respond, but commented, "I would smile" in response to Patrick. Similarly, in scenario six, T58 answered "Yes," she would respond, and she wrote, "non-verbally: wink at Lisa."

Another category of response, discouraging, can also be expressed verbally or non-verbally. Teachers may discourage child leadership behaviors (consciously or unconsciously) to

encourage other behaviors such as working together as a team or following class rules and expectations. Teachers may also discourage child leadership behaviors in order to maintain control of the classroom environment (Mullarkey et al., 2005). Similarly, teachers may ignore (or do nothing to encourage) leadership behaviors because they are busy trying to support other behaviors or manage their classrooms.

An additional category emerged from the results of this study: mixed messages. Teachers may send mixed messages to children because they are torn between trying to value the contributions of students while ensuring that the behavior does not diminish the teacher's classroom control or interfere with the teacher's role or responsibilities. When children are given a mixed message, they may feel confused and stop the behavior or seek additional input from the teacher.

The literature reflects that teachers encourage, discourage, or ignore child leaders (Maxcy, 1991; Mullarkey et al., 2005). Maxcy (1991) observed teachers encouraging and discouraging child leadership and, in a more recent study (Mullarkey et al., 2005), teachers admitted to discouraging child leaders. This study confirms these findings and adds another category to the ongoing conversation in the literature—the mixed and confusing messages teachers give to child leaders.

**Finding six.**

In their responses, teachers discouraged slightly more (37%) than encouraged (34%) but also actively responded while ignoring leadership behavior (6%). When mixed or confusing messages (12%) are included, the total of non-encouraging messages rises to 55%. Whether they recognized leadership or not, teachers would encourage the behaviors one-third of the time; they

would discourage, send a mixed or confusing message, ignore, or comment upon the behaviors depicted in the scenarios almost two-thirds of the time (63%, not including disagreements).

It is surprising that the teachers responded to child leaders in discouraging ways more often than encouraging ones because early childhood teachers are trained to nurture their young students. One possible interpretation for these results could be that teachers may not have realized they sent negative messages to children. Another reason that teachers gave discouraging messages more often than encouraging ones is that they may have been trying to encourage another behavior, such as teamwork or following classroom rules. Teachers also gave discouraging messages when they perceived that children were usurping teacher authority. This can be explained in two ways. Either the conscientious teacher wanted to be the one in charge, or the teacher feared that allowing the child leader to direct the students might inspire more children to give directions, resulting in a chaotic environment. As discussed previously, teacher control is a critical feature in an early childhood classroom.

When teachers discourage child leadership behaviors, it is not developmentally appropriate because teachers should be supporting children's developing abilities. Bronfenbrenner (1979) described how the child is influenced by the people in his or her environment. In the classroom, the teacher is one of the biggest influences upon the developing child. Added to this knowledge is the fact that young children want to please their teachers (Wood, 1997), so when a child is discouraged from practicing leadership by the teacher, the child will most likely refrain from performing that behavior again. This could lead to a child who hides his/her leadership abilities. Furthermore, Maxcy (1991) found that when teachers discouraged leadership, some children began demonstrating problematic behaviors or became frustrated.

### **Finding seven.**

Teachers who recognized child leadership (RL) wrote encouraging responses more than discouraging ones in four of eight scenarios displaying leadership. Teachers who did not recognize leadership (DNRL) wrote responses that would discourage leadership behavior more often than encourage in six of the eight scenarios displaying leadership.

It is logical that someone who recognizes a behavior and wants to support it will encourage that behavior. However, it is important to note that teachers who recognized leadership behavior still wrote discouraging responses. This may be because teachers had a higher priority to encourage a different behavior.

Teachers who did not recognize leadership discouraged it more. This is understandable because teachers cannot consciously encourage that which they do not recognize. Of course, one may unconsciously encourage a behavior if that behavior is misinterpreted for another behavior the teacher supports.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) described the influence the teacher has on the development of the child, and both Maxcy (1991) and Trawick-Smith (1988) wrote that the teacher has an influence on child leaders. Because of their strong influence upon the development of children, teachers must become aware of how their responses (verbal and non-verbal) can influence children's developing leadership. As a result of this influence, teachers who give discouraging messages to child leaders can cause the children to suppress leadership behaviors. If teachers learn to recognize child leadership behaviors (obvious and subtle), they will be more likely to support and encourage these behaviors. Early childhood teachers are expected to support and encourage children's developing abilities; thus, supporting leadership behaviors would facilitate more developmentally appropriate environments for young children.

### **Finding eight.**

There was not a significant difference in the responses between teachers who recognized leadership and teachers who did not. The only difference noted was that teachers who recognized leadership were more likely to praise or thank child leaders than teachers who did not recognize leadership. There were five themes of teacher responses common to both the teachers who recognized leadership and the teachers who did not recognize leadership. Teacher responses praising or thanking child leaders, (theme one) were found in every scenario. They were most evident in the messages coded as encouraging, yet teachers also thanked the child leaders in mixed and discouraging messages. Teacher responses also encouraged children who followed classroom expectations and rules (a second theme); yet, teachers discouraged children who did not follow the rules and expectations. In two other themes of teacher responses, teachers discouraged child leaders when they believed the child was infringing upon the teacher's authority (teacher's role) or when they believed the child was not doing what a child is supposed to be doing (student's role). Teachers wrote encouraging responses when children used teamwork and cooperation (a fifth teacher response theme) and discouraging responses when children did not.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) provides best practice guidelines for early childhood teachers. As the ultimate authority for early childhood education, policy-makers, administrators, and teachers defer to the organization's recommendations when making decisions about developmentally appropriate practice. The NAEYC (2009) position statement recommends that teachers create a "caring community of learners" in which all students feel valued and safe (p. 35). Teachers are advised to allow children opportunities to collaborate and work on projects together. Classroom expectations and



rules are set and enforced to help children learn about responsibilities, and children are taught to respect and value all members of the learning community (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009). Also, undoubtedly, all of the early childhood certified teachers who participated in this study were exposed to NAEYC standards as this is common information taught across several university courses.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) is a voluntary teacher certification program for practicing teachers that evaluates teacher performance against rigorous standards. The Early Childhood Generalist certification is for teachers who teach children ages 3 to 8 years old. Similarly to NAEYC's guidelines, the standards for the NBPTS Early Childhood Generalist suggest that early childhood teachers create learning communities where all children feel valued and safe; foster dispositions such as fairness, respect, and compassion for other children; and help develop children's knowledge of social skills, expectations for behavior, and rules and routines (NBPTS, 2012). The standards for the NBPTS are of note because 19 teachers (14%) who completed the survey for this study reported that they were National Board Certified teachers.

Therefore, the themes teachers used in their responses to the scenarios are advocated for early childhood teachers by the highly respected NAEYC and also by the NBPTS certification board. For example, both the NAEYC and the NBPTS suggest that each child should feel valued by the teacher. When the teachers wrote that they would thank or praise the child leader for his or her idea, they may have been trying to show that they valued the student's contribution. Also, the NAEYC and the NBPTS both recommend that teachers set simple, clear, and consistent behavioral rules and make sure the children understand the rationales behind the rules (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009; NBPTS, 2012). In scenario two, teachers responded that everyone must pick

up, including Hannah. These teachers were reminding Hannah of classroom rules and also of adult and peer expectations. In scenario 10, teachers also responded that they would remind students of the classroom rules for walking in line.

Additionally, both the NAEYC and the NBPTS recommend that teachers create a caring community within a safe environment and assume responsibility for all children in the classroom community (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009; NBPTS, 2012). Teachers wrote discouraging responses whenever they believed the child leader was trying to take over their role or responsibility in scenarios three (Jeffrey), six (Lisa), eight (Patrick), and 10 (Ramon). NAEYC (2009) encourages teachers to teach children to “consider and contribute to one another’s well-being and learning” (p. 35) while NBPTS (2012) urges teachers to “encourage children to show concern and respect for their peers and adults” (p. 79). The NBPTS maintains that teachers should help children learn to “take responsibility for their learning” (p. 78) and develop an understanding for “the rationale for routines and rules” (p. 78). In scenario eight, the teachers wrote that they would remind Patrick that it was not his job to clap. In scenario 10, teachers wrote that they would remind students of the rules for walking in line.

Likewise, the NAEYC and the NBPTS standards recommend that early childhood teachers allow students to work together cooperatively. In scenario six, many teachers responded that they would let Lisa help another student, and, in scenario nine, teachers responded that they liked the way the children were working together. NAEYC and NBPTS also recommend that teachers promote respect for other children. In scenario six, when teachers allowed Lisa to help another student, they may have been trying to encourage or develop compassion. Similarly, when teachers’ responses encouraged Isabella for inviting Erin to join in the group activity in scenario seven, teachers may have been promoting Isabella’s compassion

and empathy for a child (Erin) who wanted to join in the group activity, but did not know quite how to do so. Also, in scenario one, teachers responded that they would interrupt Frank to listen to Ryan's idea for reciprocity, fairness, and respect. These teachers may have been trying to help Frank (scenario one) learn social skills by respecting Ryan's idea and showing him how to treat Ryan fairly by taking turns. When teachers wrote that they would ask Frank to acknowledge and try Ryan's idea, they may have been trying to empower Ryan. The only problem is that when teachers try to "empower all children" in the classroom community, they may accidentally "disempower some children" (Lee & Recchia, 2008, p.8). This seemed to be the case in scenario one when teachers interrupted Frank to listen to, acknowledge, or try Ryan's idea. However, encouraging compassion, fairness (NBPTS, 2012), and empathy (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009) is recommended to facilitate children's feelings of care, support, and social-emotional development.

**Finding nine.**

Teachers may have used their child leadership descriptions to recognize child leaders in scenarios and sometimes wrote phrases from these descriptions to respond to the scenarios.

Many teachers carried their ideas about child leadership into their recognition of and responses to child leadership. While certainly not true for every teacher who participated in this study, for some teachers, certain words and phrases from their descriptions of child leadership showed up in their responses to child leaders. The words they used in their descriptions may also have influenced their recognition of child leadership in scenarios because data showed that teachers who identified a trait (such as bossiness or helpfulness) recognized a child leader who may have also exhibited the trait. Teachers may not have recognized a child leader who did not

show a trait used in teachers' descriptions. Also, sometimes words in the teacher's response reflected what she or he wrote in the description.

The ways in which teachers respond to children are important because responses convey expectations. Leadership experts Kouzes and Posner (2004) cited research conducted on "self-fulfilling prophecies" (p. 283). These authors stated that research shows the expectations of leaders are an important part of any follower's success or failure; "self-fulfilling prophecies" cause people to act as they believe they are expected to by their leaders. Therefore, when the teacher, who is the leader and authority of the classroom, has negative expectations of students or negative images of child leadership, these students, who as young children typically want to "obey and please" their early childhood teachers, may be discouraged from practicing or testing out their leadership behaviors.

The NAEYC (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009) suggests that kindergarten children realize who the teacher likes and dislikes. Chang (2003) also wrote about how the teacher's opinions about children's social status are conveyed to the other children. When children intuit how teachers feel about children's social status in the classroom, children whom teachers view negatively can be adversely affected. This means that if a teacher believes a child is a leader, the other children will follow that child. Conversely, if a teacher does not believe a child is a leader, the children will not either.

### **Emergence of Leadership**

Child leadership has been documented (Hensel, 1991; Maxcy, 1991; Parten, 1933; Shin et al., 2004; Trawick-Smith, 1988), but the emergence of leadership in young children has not been as well documented. Based on a review of the literature and the results from this study, child leaders may begin leading one or two children (consciously or unconsciously). As they

grow and develop across domains and continue to practice social skills, their leadership may evolve beyond the dyad into larger groups of children. This idea matches Parten's (1932) categories of play theory which posits that as children grow and learn to communicate better, they move through the six stages of play: "Unoccupied" (the child watches others and whatever else captures his or her interests); "Solitary" (the child plays by him- or herself); "Onlooker" (the uninvolved child watches other children play); "Parallel" (two children play side by side, but each is involved in his or her own activity); "Associative" (the child plays with others but in an unorganized activity); and "Cooperative" (the child plays with other children in an organized activity) (pp. 249-251). Thus, as children move through the categories of play, their ability and opportunity to express leadership behaviors increases. To be a child leader, one must have other children to lead. (It is important to note that Parten (1933) also described stages of leaders and followers [listed in Chapter Two].)

In one of the earliest articles on child leadership, Pigors (1933) wrote how child leadership may begin. He suggested that a child may unconsciously do something which may inspire another child to do the same thing. The first child may like how it feels to have another child follow his initiative and continue to try to inspire children. Pigors called this "contagious behavior" (see Chapter One) and said it could be conscious or unconscious. More recently, Shin et al. (2004) wrote that as young leaders developed verbally and cognitively, their leadership power also grew. These authors also commented that the leaders they observed were chronologically older overall.

Adcock and Segal (1983) also noted that young children enter school unaware of classroom social rules and, as they grow, they learn classroom protocol. This may be why leaders such as Ramon (in scenario ten) "shouted" that he was the line leader and why Frank (in

scenario one) did not exhibit good social manners to Ryan. The leadership skills of these child leaders may have been at emergent stages rather than at the sophisticated levels of child leaders such as Jeffrey (in scenario three) who gave the students suggestions where to sit or Isabella (in scenario seven) who felt confident enough to invite Erin to join the group. Social skills (including leadership) develop as children grow (Shin et al., 2004), so teachers need to realize that child leadership does not always manifest in mature ways.

Results from this study indicated that in most cases, teachers recognized scenarios more easily when the child leaders were leading more than one child. The leadership expert rated these scenarios as “Strongly Agree” when rating the degree of leadership exhibited. On the other hand, teachers recognized scenarios least when the child leader was leading only one or two children, and it should not be surprising that these were the scenarios the leadership expert rated as “Agree” when rating the degree of leadership exhibited.

The above mentioned articles coupled with the results from this study can lead one to a novel view of child leadership development. A child may exhibit emergent leadership when he or she successfully influences (purposefully or accidentally) one or two children to a common action. If the child is allowed to practice his or her initiatives with other children (i.e., given opportunities to play and not given a discouraging or mixed message from the teacher), he or she might continue to attempt to influence or direct other children. As the child leader grows, gaining more confidence and developing more skill with each successful initiative, he or she will try to direct more children. This analysis confirms the view from Shin et al. (2004) that child leadership may be a developmental process yet contributes the new information that child leadership may begin when the emergent leader influences one or a few children and progresses to the proficient leader who directs larger groups of children.

## **Mismatch between Theory and Practice**

In this study, teachers' descriptions reflected that they think leadership is important in theory, yet analysis of the data suggests that all teachers' actions don't always match this ideal. One first grade teacher expressed this ideal of leadership when she described child leadership: "It is extremely important to develop leadership in children, in order for them to become independent and self-sufficient in making decisions and in being able to function well in everyday life. ...Our world is changing so rapidly that the children of today will be left behind if they are not leaders and critical thinkers" (T85). Although this teacher advocated for the development of leadership in theory and acknowledged training in child leadership from an in-service and a workshop, she wrote discouraging comments in scenarios one (Frank) and two (Hannah). She wrote encouraging comments for scenarios three (Jeffrey) and eight (Patrick) and reportedly would not intervene at all in scenarios six (Lisa), seven (Isabella), and 10 (Ramon). This is just one example of how a teacher can promote the ideal of leadership but not always support it in practice.

There is a mismatch between theory and practice when it comes to supporting the individual concept of leadership and simultaneously facilitating the classroom environment (Mullarkey et al., 2005). Responses from this study indicate that early childhood teachers strive to follow expert recommendations for best practice in early childhood education. However, data from this study show that teachers may miss opportunities to encourage child leadership because of the demanding responsibilities necessary for the well-being of their classroom communities. Clearly, teachers struggle between fostering their ideals of leadership and classroom practice. The results of this study confirm the findings from the Mullarkey et al. (2005) study, but also contributed new information about why teachers might have this struggle.

## **Limitations**

The study contains the following limitations:

1. Teachers might have responded to the scenarios in ways they would not actually respond in real life. More authentic results would be obtained if the researcher directly observed teachers in their classrooms over a period of time to see how the teachers responded directly to child leadership behaviors.

2. The *RLIC Survey* instrument is newly developed and information on reliability and validity is limited to this study.

3. Since an operational definition of child leadership was not supplied on the survey, participants may not have used the same definition to recognize child leadership as the one used for this study.

4. Three out of five district administrators would not allow the researcher to administer the survey to large groups of teachers. Thus, more than one person administered the survey. Even though a script was provided, there was no guarantee that the directions were followed by the administrators.

## **Delimitations**

The study contains the following delimitations:

1. This research study was limited to teachers who were teaching in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, or first grade at the time the survey was administered.

2. This research study was limited to teachers who taught in the state of Louisiana.

## **The Picture of the Early Childhood Teacher**

The picture of the early childhood teacher that emerged from this study is: She is the only adult in charge and, as such, is responsible to safeguard all her children. She is the authority and



the enforcer of classroom rules (Adcock & Segal, 1983). She also feels responsible for developing a classroom community where all children feel accepted, respected, and valued (Coppie & Bredekamp, 2009; NBPTS, 2012). If she does her job effectively, she will maintain control of her classroom so that all children feel safe and, consequently, develop across all domains. The early childhood teacher is dedicated and therefore considers her role(s) to be of utmost importance. When the early childhood teacher is focused on being the classroom authority, rule enforcer, and nurturer while simultaneously trying to foster classroom community, it might be difficult for her to remember to encourage child leadership. Adding to the difficulty, child leadership may not be obvious enough for the teacher to recognize because, as the results from this study indicated, teachers don't always recognize leadership in its subtle forms.

### **Implications**

The findings from this study have implications for the early childhood classroom teacher. Teachers should be aware that children aged 4 through 6 years are in the "initiative versus guilt" developmental stage (Erikson, 1963). Therefore, teachers should realize that children will demonstrate leadership behaviors that involve initiative. Teachers should also learn how leadership behaviors present in young children so they can recognize these behaviors and support them.

Teachers must become aware that they exert influence over children (Adcock & Segal, 1983; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Maxcy, 1991), thus they also need to be cognizant of how they respond to children's leadership behaviors. Although teachers gave responses that would encourage child leaders in every scenario, only 34% of the responses in this study were encouraging. This is significant because these types of responses may be occurring in pre-

kindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade where the environment needs to be psychologically safe and accepting.

Furthermore, teachers need to realize how important it is to encourage young children's emerging leadership skills so that the children will continue practicing them and not hide them. Sending discouraging or mixed messages to children can cause children to suppress these behaviors because they want to please their teachers. To provide children opportunities to practice leadership behaviors, teachers need to allow children time to play. In addition, teachers who use a project approach are more likely to facilitate the use of leadership skills.

Professional development about child leadership is also important. Although no difference was reported in recognition between those teachers who had reported training and those who had not, this study did not examine the quality or the quantity of leadership training. Effective training would help increase teacher recognition of child leadership (obvious and subtle forms), which could lead to an increase in encouragement and support of leadership behaviors.

The picture of the early childhood teacher above makes it easy to understand why she or he does not always encourage the child leader. With this understanding in mind, there is certainly room for teacher education programs to discuss child leadership including characteristics that are present in the literature. Teachers could also discuss strategies to redirect or handle emerging leadership (Mullarkey et al., 2005). Information about child leadership is emerging but is very limited, so teachers will need to draw upon their own classroom experiences when trying to understand the child leader.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

This study was an exploratory one, based on the existing studies in the literature. Future studies that would extend and enhance the findings of this study could consider teacher

recognition and responses related to the gender of the child. Another way to extend the findings of this study would be to use child names that are more culturally sensitive to see if there is any bias among various cultures or ethnicities.

Future studies might also focus on the impact of teachers' certification on their ability to identify child leadership. For example, comparing teachers certified in gifted to teachers who are not would add to the body of literature on child leadership. In this study, there was not a significant difference between the recognition rates of teachers of the gifted and early childhood teachers. However, this should be explored further because leadership is included in the federal definition of giftedness. Additional studies could be conducted via observation of teachers in the classroom rather than their reports of what they thought they would do. Other methods such as teacher interviews or focus groups might also yield more information about child leadership.

Although training did not make a difference in this study, it must be noted that training variables such as the quality, quantity, or type of training in which the teachers had participated were not explored. Therefore, more studies examining teacher training and the effects it has on recognition and support of child leadership would be appropriate.

Likewise, it would be valuable to conduct future studies to discover if experience really does impact teacher recognition rates. There is nothing in the existing leadership literature about years of experience impacting leadership recognition rates so this would be an ideal area for future study. While this study found that years of experience did not make a difference in teacher recognition of child leadership, additional studies to explore if experience does make a difference are warranted.

## **Conclusion**

The results from this study revealed how teachers describe, recognize, and might respond to child leaders. In this study, for the most part, teachers accurately described child leadership. While teachers recognized obvious examples of leadership, they had difficulty recognizing subtle examples. They identified child leaders in most scenarios, but had difficulty identifying the leader when multiple children were involved. Coded teacher responses revealed that teachers would have responded to child leaders in multiple ways: encouraging, discouraging, ignoring, and giving mixed messages. Overall, teachers gave discouraging responses more often than encouraging ones. Data indicated that when teachers recognized child leaders, they were encouraging and supportive; however, when teachers did not recognize child leaders, they were more discouraging. Teachers should become aware that the ways in which they respond to child leaders can support or discourage developing leadership behaviors.

Responses from this study also indicated that early childhood teachers strive to follow expert recommendations for best practice in early childhood education. They work to build communities where children feel safe, valued, and respected. Early childhood teachers promote prosocial skills and set clear rules and expectations. They are responsible for the learning communities they create. Nevertheless, data from this study show that teachers may miss opportunities to encourage child leadership perhaps because their responsibilities demand that they foster, model, and regulate processes necessary for the well-being of all students in their classroom communities. Early childhood teachers are expected to create communities where everyone is equal and everyone is respected and valued, but these requirements can be problematic for teachers who try to encourage child leadership. Yet, these notions of equality and leadership do not have to be mutually exclusive. In fact, data from this study demonstrate

that teachers wrote encouraging comments in 34% of the teacher responses and these responses could be communicated to child leaders without minimizing the other children in the classroom. The encouraging responses from the teachers in this study prove that it is possible for teachers to create communities in which all children feel valued and still respond to child leaders in encouraging ways. It is essential that early childhood teachers support children's development in all areas; therefore, it is important that teachers recognize and respond appropriately to child leadership behaviors in the classroom.

## References

- Adcock, D., & Segal, M. (1983). *Making Friends: Ways of encouraging social development in young children*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Addison, L., & ERIC Clearinghouse on Handicapped and Gifted Children, R. A. (1985). *Leadership skills among the gifted and talented. 1985 Digest*.
- Ayman, R., Chemers, M., & Fiedler, F. (2007). The contingency model of leadership effectiveness: Its levels of analysis. In R. Vecchio (Ed.), *Leadership: Understanding the dynamics of power and influence in organizations* (2nd ed.) (pp. 335-360). Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Bass, B. M. (2007). Concepts of leadership. In R. Vecchio (Ed.), *Leadership: Understanding the dynamics of power and influence in organizations* (2nd ed.) (pp. 335-360). Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Bisland, A. (2004). Developing leadership skills in young gifted students. *Gifted Child Today*, 27(1), 24-27.
- Bisland, A., Karnes, F., & Cobb, Y. (2004). Leadership education: Resources and websites for teachers of gifted students. *Gifted Child Today*, 27(1), 50-56.
- Boulais, N. A. (2002). Leadership in children's literature: Qualitative analysis from a study based on the Kouzes and Posner leadership framework. *The Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 8(4), 54-63.
- Bredenkamp, S., & Copple, C. (Eds.). (1997). *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children from birth through age 8* (3rd ed.). Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.
- Brewer, J. (1995). *Introduction to early childhood education: Preschool through primary grades* (2nd ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bronfenbrenner, U (Ed.). (2005). *Making human beings human: Bioecological perspectives on human development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.
- Chan, D. (2004). Multiple intelligences of Chinese gifted students in Hong Kong: Perspectives from students, parents, teachers, and peers. *Roeper Review*, 27(1), 18-24.

- Chang, L. (2003). Variable effects of children's aggression, social withdrawal, and prosocial leadership as functions of teacher beliefs and behaviors. *Child Development, 74*(2), 535-548.
- Chang, L., Liu, H., Fung, K., Wang, Y., Wen, Z., Li, H., et al. (2007). The mediating and moderating effects of teacher preference on the relations between students' social behaviors and peer acceptance. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 53* (4), 603-630.
- Cherry, K. (2012). Leadership theories: 8 major leadership theories. About.com Psychology. Retrieved from <http://psychology.about.com/od/leadership/p/leadtheories.htm>
- Copple, C., and Bredekamp, S. (Eds.). (2009). *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children from birth through age 8* (3rd ed.). Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.
- Council for Exceptional Children, & ERIC Clearinghouse on Handicapped and Gifted Children. (1990). *Giftedness and the gifted: What's it all about?* (ERIC EC Digest E476). Retrieved from National Association of Gifted Children website: <http://www.nagc.org/index.aspx?id=121>.
- Cresswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V.L. (2007). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Doescher, S., & Sugawara, A. I. (1989). Encouraging prosocial behavior in young children. *Childhood Education, 65*(4), 213-216.
- Dunn, M., & Dunn, L. M. (1981). Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised [Measurement]. Circle Pines, MN: American Guidance Service.
- Eby, J. W. (1989). Eby Gifted Behavior Index: Administration manual. East Aurora, New York, NY: D. O. K. Retrieved from Mental Measurements Yearbook <http://www.ebscohost.com/>
- Erikson, E. (1963). *Childhood and society*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton.
- Faurie, C., Vianey-Liaud, N., & Raymond, M. (2006). Do left-handed children have advantages regarding school performance and leadership skills? *Laterality, 11*(1), 57-70. doi:10.1080/13576500500294620
- Fiedler, F. (1967). *A theory of leadership effectiveness*. USA: McGraw-Hill, Inc.

- Fiedler, F., Chemers, M., & Maher, L. (1976). *Improving leadership effectiveness: The leader match concept*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.
- Fu, V. R. (1970). A Nursery School Leadership Observation schedule and a Nursery School Leadership Rating scale. Greensboro, NC: University of North Carolina.
- Fu, V. R. (1979). Preschool leadership-followership behaviors. *Child Study Journal*, 9(2), 133-140.
- Fu, V. R., Canaday, H., & Fu, D. (1982). Creativity and leadership in preschoolers. *The Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 141(2), 291-292. doi: 0.1080/00221325.1982.10533486
- Fukada, S., Fukada, H., & Hicks, J. (1994). Structure of leadership among preschool children. *Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 155(4), 389-395.
- Fukada, H., Fukada, S., & Hicks, J. (1997). The relationship between leadership and sociometric status. *Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 158(4), 481-486.
- Fujishin, R. (1997). *Discovering the leader within: Running small groups successfully*. San Francisco, CA: Acada Books.
- Gilliam, J., Carpenter, B., & Christensen, J. (1996). GATES: Gifted and Talented Evaluation Scales [Measurement]. Austin, TX: Pro-ed. Retrieved from Mental Measurements Yearbook <http://www.ebsco.com/>
- Goleman, D., & Boyatzis, R. (2008). Social intelligence and the biology of leadership. *Harvard Business Review*, 2-7.
- Goleman, D., Boyatzis, R., & McKee, A. (2002). *Primal leadership: Learning to lead with emotional intelligence*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.
- Hardy, R. C. (1995, April). *Development and socialization of leadership style in children and adolescents*. Paper presented at the Society for Research in Child Development Conference, Indianapolis, IN.
- Hardy, R. C., Hunt, J., & Lehr, E. (1978). Relationship between birth order and leadership style for nursery school children. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, 46(1), 184-186.
- Harrison, A., Harrison, C., & Shah Coltrane, S. (2004). U-STARS PLUS. Harrison Observation Student Form [Measurement]. Retrieved from Mental Measurements Yearbook <http://www.ebscohost.com/>
- Harrison, C. W., Rawls, J., & Rawls, D. (1971). Differences between leaders and non-leaders in six-to-eleven-year-old children. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 84, 269-272.



- Heifetz, R. A. (1994). *Leadership without easy answers*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Henage, D., McCarney, S., & Anderson, P. (1997-1998). Gifted Evaluation Scale, 2nd edition [Measurement]. Columbia, OH: Hawthorne Educational Services. Retrieved from Mental Measurements Yearbook <http://www.ebscohost.com/>
- Hensel, N. H. (1991). Social leadership skills in young children. *Roeper Review*, 14(1), 4-6.
- Hersey, P., & Blanchard, K. (1996). Great ideas revisited. *Training & Development*, 50(1), 42-47.
- Hollander, E. P. (1978). *Leadership dynamics: A practical guide to effective relationships*. New York, NY: The Free Press.
- Howard, W. C. (2005). Leadership: Four styles. *Education*, 126(2), 384-391.
- Johnson, D. (1979-1980). Gifted and Talented Screening Form [Measurement]. Wood Dale, IL: Stoelting. Retrieved from Mental Measurements Yearbook <http://www.ebscohost.com/>
- Karnes, F., Bean, S., Council for Exceptional Children & ERIC Clearinghouse on Handicapped and Gifted Children. (1990). *Developing leadership in gifted youth*. ERIC Digest #E485.
- Karnes, F. A., & Bean, S. M. (1995). *Leadership for students: A practical guide for ages 8 - 18*. Waco, TX: Prufrock Press.
- Karnes, F., & Bean, S. (1996). Leadership and the gifted. *Focus on Exceptional Children*, 29(1), 1-12.
- Karnes, F., & Bean, S. (2010). *Leadership for students: A guide for young leaders* (2nd ed.). Waco, TX: Prufrock Press.
- Karnes, F., & Meriweather, S. (1989). Leadership development: Teachers' perceptions and practices. *Gifted Child Today*, 12(3), 50-53.
- Karnes, F., & Stephens, K. (1999). Lead the way to leadership education. *Education Digest*, 64(8), 62-66.
- Karnes, F. A., & Stephens, F. (2000). State definitions for the gifted and talented revisited. *Exceptional Children*, 66(2), 219-238.
- Karnes, F., & Zimmerman, M. (2001). Employing visual learning to enhance the leadership of the gifted. *Gifted Child Today*, 24(1), 56-59.

- Katz, L.G., & Chard, S.C., (2000). *Engaging Children's Minds: The Project Approach* (2nd ed.). Stamford, CT: Ablex.
- Kitano, M. (1982). Young gifted children: Strategies for preschool teachers. *Young Children*, 37(4), 14-24.
- Kitano, M. (1989). The K-3 teacher's role in recognizing and supporting young gifted children. *Young Children*, 44(3), 57-63.
- Knes, M. (2012). Leadership. In *Encyclopedia of Business*. (2nd ed.). Retrieved from <http://www.referenceforbusiness.com/encyclopedia/Kor-Man/Leadership.html>
- Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (2007). *The leadership challenge* (4th ed.). San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons.
- Lane, K., Wehby, J., & Cooley, C. (2006). Teacher expectations of students' classroom behavior across the grade span: Which social skills are necessary for success? *Exceptional Children*, 72(2), 153-167.
- Lazarus, P. (1990, April). Taking charge: kindergartners' planning and leadership talk during committee work. Paper presented at annual meeting of the American Education Research Association. Boston, MA.
- Lee, S. Y., Recchia, S., & Shin, M. S. (2005). "Not the same kind of leaders": Four young children's unique ways of influencing others. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, 20(2), 132-148.
- Lee, Y., & Recchia, S. (2008). "Who's the boss?" Young children's power and influence in an early childhood classroom. *Early Childhood Research & Practice*, 10(1), 1-15.
- Maccoby, M. (2007). *The leaders we need and what makes us follow*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.
- Manning, S. (2005). Young leaders: Growing through mentoring. *Gifted Child Today*, 28(1), 14-20.
- Maxcy, S. J. (1991). Leadership and the education of young children. In S. J. Maxcy, *Educational Leadership: A critical pragmatic perspective*. (pp. 95-109). Toronto, Ontario: OISE.
- Mawson, B. (2010). Gender and leadership styles in children's play. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, 35(2), 115-124.
- Mawson, B. (2011). Children's leadership strategies in early childhood. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, 25(4), 327-338. doi: 10.1080/02568543.2011.605207

- Meriweather, S., & Karnes, F. (1989). Parents' views on leadership. *Gifted Child Today*, 12(1), 55-59.
- Miles, M., & Huberman, A. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Montague, M., & Rinaldi, C. (2001). Classroom dynamics and children at risk: A followup. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, 24(2), 75-83.
- Morda, R., Waniganayake, M., & Care, E. (2005, August). *Profiles of young leaders: What role does intelligence play in leader emergence?* Paper presented at the International Gifted Conference, New Orleans, Louisiana.
- Morda, R., & Waniganayake, M. (2010). Emergence of child leadership through play in early childhood. In M. A. Ebbeck & M. Waniganayake (Eds.), *Play in early childhood education: Learning in diverse contexts* (pp. 103-118). South Melbourne, Australia: Oxford University Press.
- Mullarkey, L. S., Recchia, S. L., Lee, S. Y., Shin, M. S., & Lee, Y. J. (2005). Manipulative managers and devilish dictators: Teachers' perspectives on the dilemmas and challenges of classroom leadership. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 25, 123-129.
- Nath, M., & Seriven, G. (1981). Leadership and self-esteem in preschool children. *Child Psychiatry Quarterly*, 14(4), 138-141.
- National Association for Gifted Children. (2008a). Frequently used terms in gifted education. Retrieved from <http://www.nagc.org/GlossaryofTerms.aspx>
- National Association for Gifted Children. (2008b). *Gifted by state report*. Retrieved from <http://www.nagc.org/index.aspx?id=37>
- National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. (2012). *Generalist/Early Childhood Standards* (3rd ed.). Arlington, VA: National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.
- Northouse, P. G. (2001). *Leadership: Theory and practice*. (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Oakland, T., Falkenberg, B., & Oakland, C. (1996). Assessment of leadership in children, youth and adults. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 40(3), 138-146.
- Paradise, L., Ceballos, P., & Hall, S. (2010). Leadership and leader behavior in counseling: Neglected skills. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counseling*, 32(1), 46-55.
- Parten, M. (1932). Social participation among pre-school children. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 27(3), 243-269. doi: 10.1037/h0074524

- Parten, M. (1933). Leadership among preschool children. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 27(4), 430-440.
- Pavitt, C. (1998). Chapter 10: Leadership: Non-Communication Approaches. In C. Pavitt, *Small group communication: A theoretical approach*. (3rd ed.). Retrieved from [www.uky.edu/~drlane/teams/pavitt/ch10.htm](http://www.uky.edu/~drlane/teams/pavitt/ch10.htm).
- Perez, G., & Chassin, D., Ellington, C., & Smith, J. (1982). Leadership giftedness in preschool children. *Roeper Review*, 4(3), 26-28.
- Pfeiffer, S., & Jarosewich, T. (2003). Gifted Rating Scales [Measurement]. San Antonio, TX: Psychcorp. Retrieved from Mental Measurements Yearbook database <http://www.ebscohost.com/>
- Pigors, P. (1933). Leadership and domination among children. *Sociologus*, 9, 140-157.
- Renzulli, J. S., Smith, L. H., White, A. J., Callahan, C. M., & Hartman, R., & Westburg, K. L. (2002). Scales for Rating the Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students-Revised (SRBCSS-R) [Measurement]. Wethersfield, CT: Creative Learning Press.
- Renzulli, J., Smith, L. H., White, A. J., Callahan, C. M., Hartman, R. K., Westburg, K. L., Gavin, M. K., Reis, S. M., Siegle, D., & Sytsma, R. E. (2004). Scales for Rating the Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students [Measurement]. (3rd ed.). Wethersfield, CT: Creative Learning Press. Retrieved from [http://216.15.64.140/cgi-bin/clp/web\\_scales/login.cgi?](http://216.15.64.140/cgi-bin/clp/web_scales/login.cgi?)
- Roach, A. A., & Wyman, L. T., Brookes, Chavez, Heath, & Valdes (1999). Leadership giftedness: Models revisited. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 43(13), 13-24. doi: 10.1177/001698629904300103
- Roets, L. (1986) Roets Rating Scale for Leadership [Measurement]. Des Moines, IA: Leadership Publishers.
- Roets, L. F., Ed. (2000). *Leadership for ages 4-8: Identification and talent development*. Des Moines, IA: Leadership Publishers.
- Scheer, S. D., & Safrit, R. D. (2001). Nurturing future leadership skills in five to eight year-old children through self-awareness activities. *The Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies*, 8(2), 105-111.
- Schulz, W. (2001). Changing definitions of leadership. In W. Schulz, *Leadership: An overview*. Retrieved from <http://www.infinitefutures.com/essays/publichealth/leadershiphtml/>
- Segal, M., Peck, J., Vega-Lahr, N., & Field, T. (1987). A medieval kingdom: Leader-follower styles of preschool play. *Journal of applied developmental psychology*, 8(1), 79-95.

- Shaunessy, E., & Karnes, F. A. (2004). Instruments for measuring leadership in children and youth. *Gifted Child Today*, 27(1), 42-47.
- Shed, M. (n.d.) Leadership trait theory. Retrieved from <http://www.leadership501.com/leadership-trait-theory/22/>
- Shin, M. S., Recchia, S. L., Lee, S. Y., Lee, Y. J., & Mullarkey, L. S. (2004). Understanding early childhood leadership: Emerging competencies in the context of relationships. *Journal of Early Childhood Research*, 2(3), 301-316.
- Sisk, D. A. (1985). Leadership development: Its importance in programs for gifted youth. *NASSP Bulletin*, 69(482), 48-54. doi:10.1177/019263658506948207
- Sisk, D. A., & Rosselli, H. C. (1996). *Leadership: A special kind of giftedness*. Unionville, NY: Trillium Press.
- Smyth, E. & Ross, J. (1999). Developing leadership skills of pre-adolescent gifted learners in small group settings. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 43(3), 204-211.
- Stogdill, R. M. (1974). *Handbook of leadership: A survey of theory and research*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Trait theory. (2004). Retrieved from [http://changingminds.org/disciplines/leadership/theories/trait\\_theory.htm](http://changingminds.org/disciplines/leadership/theories/trait_theory.htm)
- Trawick-Smith, J. (1988). Let's say you're the baby, OK?: Play leadership and following behavior of young children. *Young Children*, 43(5), 51-59.
- Torrance, E. P. (1968). Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking [Measurement]. Scholastic Testing Service.
- Vecchio, R. (2007). Situational leadership theory: An examination of a prescriptive theory. In R. Vecchio (Ed.), *Leadership: Understanding the dynamics of power and influence in organizations* (2nd ed.). (pp. 318-334). Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Wertheim, E. (n.d.). *Leadership: An overview*. Boston, MA: Northeastern University College of Business. Retrieved from <http://web.cba.new.edu/~ewertheim/leader/leader.htm>
- Wood, C. (1997). *Yardsticks: Children in the classroom ages 4 - 14: A resource for parents and teachers*. (2nd ed.). Greenfield, MA: Northeast Foundation for Children.
- Yamaguchi, R. (2003). Children's learning groups: A study of emergent leadership, dominance, and group effectiveness. *Small Group Research*, 32(6), 671-697.

## Appendices

Appendix A  
*Recognizing Leadership in Children (RLIC) Survey* for teachers and teacher script

***Recognizing Leadership in Children (RLIC) Survey***

<b>A. Demographics: Please check the boxes to indicate your answer(s).</b>
--

1. Gender:     Male             Female

2. Age:  Under 25

26-35

36-45

46-55

56-65

66 +

3. Are you certified in Early Childhood Education             Yes     No  
and/or in Early Intervention Birth-to-five?                     Yes     No

Check all that apply:

- State Certification
- National Board Certification
- Gifted Certification
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Indicate the number of years you have taught in each of the grades:

- pre-kindergarten    # of years \_\_\_\_\_
- kindergarten            # of years \_\_\_\_\_
- first grade                # of years \_\_\_\_\_
- other: \_\_\_\_\_        # of years \_\_\_\_\_

5. I have had training in recognizing and/or supporting leadership in children.     Yes         No

If yes, please indicate kind of training:

- University class
- In-service or staff development meeting
- Workshop at conference
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

(RLIC Survey cont.)

6. How do you describe leadership in children? *Please write your answer here.*

**B. Instructions:**

Decide if each scenario contains leadership behavior by marking an **X** in the space next to the **Yes** or **No** for each scenario. NOTE: Please write who the leader(s) is (are) in the space provided.

**Example:**

Haley was playing in the dress up center with two other girls. She said, "Sisters, we're going to a ball. Sisters, I'm waiting for you." The other two girls followed her to the corner and began looking for clothes to wear to the make-believe ball.

Is leadership exhibited?  Yes  No

If yes, the leader(s) is (are): *Haley*

As a teacher, would you respond to the students in this scenario?  
 Yes  No (Please mark your answer with an X or a check mark).

If yes, please describe how you would respond and why you would respond that way in the following space:



**C: Scenarios:**

**Block Center scenarios**

**Scenario #1:**

While playing with blocks, Frank told Ryan, "Let's build a whole city."  
Ryan said, "O.K." The two children built gates and buildings out of blocks.  
Ryan said to Frank, "I have an idea." Ryan showed him his idea.  
Frank continued doing his own thing.

Is leadership exhibited?  Yes  No

If yes, the leader(s) is (are): \_\_\_\_\_

As a teacher, would you respond to the students in this scenario?

Yes  No

If yes, please describe how you would respond and why you would respond that way in the following space:

**Scenario #2:**

The teacher said, "It's time to pick up" and began the "Clean Up" song.  
Hannah immediately told the kids in her block center as she pointed to individual students:  
"You pick up the squares, you pick up the round ones, you pick up the rectangles, and Leigh and I will get all the rest. OK?"  
Then Hannah watched as the other children put the blocks away in the bin.

Is leadership exhibited?  Yes  No

If yes, the leader(s) is (are): \_\_\_\_\_

As a teacher, would you respond to the students in this scenario?

Yes  No

If yes, please describe how you would respond and why you would respond that way in the following space:

## Story-time scenarios

### Scenario #3:

Some of the children were complaining because they couldn't see the storybook the teacher was holding. Jeffrey made the suggestion, "Tall ones sit in the back and short ones sit in the front." Some children began moving around on the rug according to Jeffrey's suggestion.

Is leadership exhibited?  Yes  No

If yes, the leader(s) is (are): \_\_\_\_\_

As a teacher, would you respond to the students in this scenario?

Yes  No

If yes, please describe how you would respond and why you would respond that way in the following space:

### Scenario #4:

Sophie was talking to other children sitting near her during story-time. She told a few of the children that she liked their shoes. The teacher asked Sophie to be quiet while she (teacher) read. Sophie continued to talk to the other children in her area. She said, "Do you like my shoes? I got them at the mall."

Is leadership exhibited?  Yes  No

If yes, the leader(s) is (are): \_\_\_\_\_

As a teacher, would you respond to the students in this scenario?

Yes  No

If yes, please describe how you would respond and why you would respond that way in the following space:

## Group instructional scenarios

### Scenario #5:

The office called for the teacher to send a volunteer to the office to pick up paperwork for the students in the class to bring home. Sarah's hand shot up in the air. She asked, "Ooh, can I go?" The teacher allowed her to go to the office.

Is leadership exhibited?  Yes  No

If yes, the leader(s) is (are): \_\_\_\_\_

As a teacher, would you respond to the students in this scenario?

Yes  No

If yes, please describe how you would respond and why you would respond that way in the following space:

### Scenario #6:

Lisa often helps her classmate complete his work.

She tells him, "Here, let me show you."

As a result, her teacher often lets her help other students finish their work.

Is leadership exhibited?  Yes  No

If yes, the leader(s) is (are): \_\_\_\_\_

As a teacher, would you respond to the students in this scenario?

Yes  No

If yes, please describe how you would respond and why you would respond that way in the following space:

**Scenario #7:**

Erin asked the group at the table, “What are you doing?”

Isabella said, “You can help us if you want.”

Erin sat down at the table with the group and helped.

Is leadership exhibited?  Yes  No

If yes, the leader(s) is (are): \_\_\_\_\_

As a teacher, would you respond to the students in this scenario?

Yes  No

If yes, please describe how you would respond and why you would respond that way in the following space:

**Transition scenarios**

**Scenario #8:**

Whenever the group needed refocusing, the teacher would clap her hands in a distinctive pattern.

One day Patrick used the same clap when the group began to get too noisy.

Some of the children stopped what they were doing.

Is leadership exhibited?  Yes  No

If yes, the leader(s) is (are): \_\_\_\_\_

As a teacher, would you respond to the students in this scenario?

Yes  No

If yes, please describe how you would respond and why you would respond that way in the following space:

**Scenario #9:**

After a visit from a fireman, Billy told Nicholas, “When we go outside, you be the fire chief and I’ll be the fireman.”

Evan asked Nicholas, “I’m going to be a fireman on your truck, too, OK?”

Nicholas said, “Ok, but someone has to be home to call 9-1-1.”

Several other students immediately volunteered.

Is leadership exhibited?  Yes  No

If yes, the leader(s) is (are): \_\_\_\_\_

As a teacher, would you respond to the students in this scenario?

Yes  No

If yes, please describe how you would respond and why you would respond that way in the following space:

**Scenario #10:**

Ramon was appointed the line leader for the day by the teacher.

As they walked, some children started to pass in front of Ramon.

He stopped, faced the kids, put both his hands up and shouted, “Stop!”

Then, Ramon reminded them that he was the line leader for the day.

A few of the children stopped and moved behind him while others walked on ahead.

Is leadership exhibited?  Yes  No

If yes, the leader(s) is (are): \_\_\_\_\_

As a teacher, would you respond to the students in this scenario?

Yes  No

If yes, please describe how you would respond and why you would respond that way in the following space:

**YOU ARE FINISHED! THANK YOU VERY MUCH.**

Teacher Script:

**Script to participants:**

I am a doctoral candidate under the direction of Dr. Linda Flynn-Wilson and Dr. Pat Austin in the College of Education at the University of New Orleans.

I am conducting a research study to explore teacher perceptions about child leadership. The results of this study will enhance understanding of social and emotional needs of children in the classroom. I am requesting that you participate in this research study which involves completing this survey. By completing this survey, you give your implied consent to participate in this study. The survey should take about 20 minutes to complete and contains ten brief scenarios for you to read. Your participation is voluntary and you may choose to leave this survey at any time. Your survey is completely anonymous; it will be numbered and these numbers are the only way I will be able to identify the data.

When you hand this survey in to your director, she will give you a numbered ticket that you can enter in a drawing to win a prize. When all the surveys are completed, she will draw a winning ticket. If your ticket is pulled, you may claim your prize by handing in your ticket with the matching number to your director or other designated person.

Thank you very much for your participation.

Sincerely,

Deborah L. Fox, M.Ed.

dlfox@uno.edu

Appendix B  
*Recognizing Leadership in Children (RLIC) Survey* for the Expert Panelists

Experts' Cover Letter via E-mail Revised 9.20.11

Dear (Expert):

I am a doctoral candidate at the University of New Orleans who is studying leadership behaviors in young children and I would like your opinion on the survey I am developing. I am contacting you because you are a noted expert in this field and I have read your article(s) on leadership in young children. I am developing a survey of classroom scenarios to determine how well early childhood teachers are able to recognize emerging leadership behaviors in young students from four to six years old.

In order to finalize this survey, I am gathering feedback from a select group of only five identified experts in the field. I have attached a draft of the survey that I created. Could you please take 20-30 minutes of your busy schedule to review the attached survey of classroom scenarios and provide input?

Directions are included, but please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or comments. My email address is [dlfox@uno.edu](mailto:dlfox@uno.edu) and my phone number is \_\_\_\_\_. I will email you a summary of the experts' comments once they are analyzed. Please return this survey to me via email by (two weeks from date of mailing). Thank you for your time and assistance in commenting on the survey.

Respectfully,

Deborah Lee Fox, M.Ed.

[dlfox@uno.edu](mailto:dlfox@uno.edu)

**Recognizing Leadership in Children (RLIC) Survey for the Expert Panelists**

**Instructions for Expert Panelists:**

Read and decide if each scenario contains leadership behavior, then:

- A. On the scale provided, please circle the number that best describes your answer to the statement: This scenario reflects leadership characteristics.
- B. Using the chart provided, (Table 1), circle the developmental domain(s) that is (are) reflected by the behavior in the scenario.
- C. Please write who the leader(s) is (are) in the space provided.
- D. Then write any comments you may have.

**Scenarios:**

**Block Center scenarios**

**Scenario #1:**

While playing with blocks, Frank told Ryan, "Let's build a whole city."  
Ryan said, "O.K." The two children built gates and buildings out of blocks.  
Ryan said to Frank, "I have an idea." Ryan showed him his idea.  
Frank continued doing his own thing.

A. This scenario reflects leadership characteristics

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

B. What domain(s) does this scenario reflect? Choose from Table 1.  
Circle all that apply: Cognitive—Social—Physical—Emotional— or Disposition.

C. The leader(s) is (are):

D. Comments:



**Scenario #2:**

The teacher said, “It’s time to pick up” and began the “Clean Up” song. Hannah immediately told the kids in her block center as she pointed to individual students: “You pick up the squares, you pick up the round ones, you pick up the rectangles, and Leigh and I will get all the rest. OK?” Then Hannah watched as the other children put the blocks away in the bin.

A. This scenario reflects leadership characteristics.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

B. What domain(s) does this scenario reflect? Choose from Table 1. Circle all that apply: Cognitive—Social—Physical—Emotional— or Disposition.

C. The leader(s) is (are):

D. Comments:

**Story-time scenarios**

**Scenario #3:**

When the teacher announced that it was Story Time, Lily reminded the teacher to finish reading the book she (the teacher) started on the previous day.

A. This scenario reflects leadership characteristics.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

B. What developmental domain(s) does this scenario reflect? Choose from Table 1. Circle all that apply: Cognitive—Social—Physical—Emotional— or Disposition.

C. The leader(s) is (are):

D. Comments:

**Scenario #4:**

Some of the children were complaining because they couldn't see the storybook the teacher was holding. Jeffrey made the suggestion, "Tall ones sit in the back and short ones sit in the front." Some children began moving around on the rug according to Jeffrey's suggestion.

A. This scenario reflects leadership characteristics.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

B. What developmental domain(s) does this scenario reflect? Choose from Table 1. Circle all that apply: Cognitive—Social—Physical—Emotional— or Disposition.

C. The leader(s) is (are):

D. Comments:

**Scenario #5:**

Sophie was talking to other children sitting near her during story time. She told a few of the children that she liked their shoes. The teacher asked Sophie to be quiet while she (teacher) read.

Sophie continued to talk to the other children in her area. She said, "Do you like my shoes? I got them at the mall."

A. This scenario reflects leadership characteristics.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

B. What developmental domain(s) does this scenario reflect? Choose from Table 1. Circle all that apply: Cognitive—Social—Physical—Emotional— or Disposition.

C. The leader(s) is (are):

D. Comments:

## Group instructional scenarios

### Scenario #6:

The office called for the teacher to send a volunteer to pick up paperwork for students in her classroom. Sarah's hand shot up in the air. She asked, "Ooh, can I go?" The teacher allowed her to go to the office. When Sarah returned she asked the teacher, "You want me to give them out?" The teacher allowed her to do so.

A. This scenario reflects leadership characteristics.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

B. What developmental domain(s) does this scenario reflect? Choose from Table 1. Circle all that apply: Cognitive—Social—Physical—Emotional— or Disposition.

C. The leader(s) is (are):

D. Comments:

### Scenario #7:

Lisa is often seen helping her classmate complete his work. She tells him, "Here, let me show you." As a result, her teacher often asks her to help other students finish their work.

A. This scenario reflects leadership characteristics.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

B. What developmental domain(s) does this scenario reflect? Choose from Table 1. Circle all that apply: Cognitive—Social—Physical—Emotional— or Disposition.

C. The leader(s) is (are):

D. Comments:

**Scenario #8:**

Erin asked the group at the table, “What are you doing?”

Isabella said, “You can help us if you want.”

Erin sat down at the table with the group and watched.

A. This scenario reflects leadership characteristics.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

B. What developmental domain(s) does this scenario reflect? Choose from Table 1.

Circle all that apply: Cognitive—Social—Physical—Emotional— or Disposition.

C. The leader(s) is (are):

D. Comments:

**Transition scenarios**

**Scenario #9:**

Whenever the group needed refocusing, the teacher would clap her hands in a distinctive

pattern. One day Patrick used the same clap when the group began to get unfocused.

Some of the children stopped what they were doing and looked at the teacher.

A. This scenario reflects leadership characteristics.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

B. What developmental domain(s) does this scenario reflect? Choose from Table 1.

Circle all that apply: Cognitive—Social—Physical—Emotional— or Disposition.

C. The leader(s) is (are):

D. Comments:

**Scenario #10:**

After a visit from a fireman, Billy told Nicholas, “When we go outside, you be the fire chief and I’ll be the fireman.”

Evan asked Nicholas, “I’m going to be a fireman on your truck, too, OK?”

Nicholas said, “OK, but someone has to be home to call 9-1-1.”

Several other students immediately volunteered.

A. This scenario reflects leadership characteristics.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

B. What developmental domain(s) does this scenario reflect? Choose from Table 1. Circle all that apply: Cognitive—Social—Physical—Emotional— or Disposition.

C. The leader(s) is (are):

D. Comments:

**Scenario #11:**

Ramon was appointed the line leader for the day by the teacher.

As they walked, some children started to pass in front of Ramon.

He stopped, faced the kids, put both his hands up and shouted, “Stop!”

Then, Ramon reminded them that he was the line leader for the day.

A few of the children stopped and moved behind him while others walked on ahead.

A. This scenario reflects leadership characteristics.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

B. What developmental domain(s) does this scenario reflect? Choose from Table 1. Circle all that apply: Cognitive—Social—Physical—Emotional— or Disposition.

C. The leader(s) is (are):

D. Comments:

**Closing for Expert Survey:** Please answer the following questions by marking the answer.

1. Is the number of scenarios sufficient to determine a teacher's ability to recognize leadership behavior in young children?      Yes     No

2. What are your recommendations about the number of scenarios?

3. Should any of the scenarios be reworded?      Yes     No

If so, please edit directly on the scenario.

I will modify this instrument according to your comments. Please return this instrument to me by first saving it as a document and then e-mailing it back to me as an attachment or returning via fax machine.

If you are interested in receiving either a summary of the experts' comments or the results of the study, please indicate by checking    Yes     No  .

Thank you again for your participation in this project.

Respectfully,

Deborah L. Fox [dlfox@uno.edu](mailto:dlfox@uno.edu)

Fax number (504)-280-5588

Appendix C  
List of Experts

**Jane Chauvin, Ph.D**

Professor  
College of Education  
University of New Orleans

Dr. Chauvin authored:

- Karnes, F. and Chauvin, J. (1986). The Leadership skills. Fostering the forgotten dimension of giftedness. *Gifted Child Today*, 9(3) p. 22-23.

**Frances Karnes, Ph.D**

Professor/Director Gifted Students  
University Distinguished Professor,  
Curriculum, Instruction, and Special Education,  
And Director, the Frances A. Karnes Center for Gifted Studies  
The University of Southern Mississippi

Dr. Karnes authored numerous articles and books about leadership and gifted children.

- Karnes, F., and Chauvin, J. (1986). The Leadership skills. Fostering the forgotten dimension of giftedness. *Gifted Child Today*, 9(3) p. 22-23.
- Karnes, F., & Meriweather, S. (1989). Leadership Development: Teacher's perceptions and practices. *Gifted Child Today*, May/June.
- Karnes, F., & Stephens, K. (1999). Lead the way to leadership education. *Education Digest*. 64(8).

**Romana Morda, Ph.D**

Psychologist, University Lecturer  
Victoria University  
Melbourne, Australia

Dr. Morda authored:

- Morda, R., & Waniganayake, M. (2010). Emergence of child leadership through play in early childhood. In M.A. Ebbeck & M. Waniganayake (Eds.), *Play in early childhood education: Learning in diverse contexts* (pp. 103-118). South Melbourne, Australia: Oxford University Press.

List of experts (continued)

- Morda, R., Waniganayake, M., & Care, E. (2005, August). *Profiles of young leaders: What role does intelligence play in leader emergence?* Paper presented at the International Gifted Conference, New Orleans, Louisiana.

**Susan L. Recchia, Ph.D**

Associate Professor of Education Coordinator  
Program in Early Childhood Special Education Faculty Director,  
Teachers College, New York

Dr. Recchia authored:

- Lee, Y., & Recchia, S. (2008). "Who's the boss?" Young children's power and influence in an early childhood classroom. *Early Childhood Research & Practice, 10*(1), 1-15.
- Lee, S.Y., Recchia, S., & Shin, M. S. (2005). "Not the same kind of leaders": Four young children's unique ways of influencing each other. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education, 20*(2), 132-148.
- Mullarkey, L. S., Recchia, S. L., Lee, S. Y., Shin, M. S., & Lee, Y. J. (2005). Manipulative managers and devilish dictators: Teachers' perspectives on the dilemmas and challenges of classroom leadership. *Journal of Early Childhood Education, 25*(2), 123-129.
- Shin, M. S., Recchia, S. L., Lee, S. Y., Lee, Y. J., & Mullarkey, L. S. (2004). Understanding early childhood leadership: Emerging competencies in the context of relationships. *Journal of Early Childhood Research, 2*(3) 301-310.

**Jeffrey Trawick-Smith, Ph.D**

Education Department  
Eastern Connecticut University

Dr. Trawick-Smith authored:

- Trawick-Smith, J. (1988). "Let's say you're the baby, OK?" Play leadership and following behavior of young children. *Young Children, 43*(5), 51-59.



Appendix D  
Correspondence from Experts about *RLIC Survey*

Correspondence #1 from an expert:

Date: Fri, 11 Nov 2011 18:01:28 -0500  
Subject: Re: child leadership survey  
To: deborah\_fox@msn.com

Dear Ms. Fox,

I did look over your survey but found it difficult to respond to the questions. As you know from reviewing my work on EC leadership, I really see this as a relational construct and did not feel that your survey reflected this perspective at all. Sorry I could not be of help.

Correspondence #2 from an expert:

RE: child leadership survey

Sent: Monday, November 14, 2011 8:20 AM

To: Deborah Lee Fox

It looks fine to me.

Correspondence #3 from an expert:

Hi Debbie,

Please find attached your leadership survey with comments. I thought the scenarios read well. I don't think I can officially call myself a doctor until I submit my PhD revisions which is in early December. We certainly have to look at some collaborative work in the future!

Best of luck with your studies and let me know if there is anything I can do to help.

Kind regards,

Attached document:

*Recognizing Leadership in Children (RLIC) Survey*

**Instructions for Expert Panelists:**

Read and decide if each scenario contains leadership behavior, then:

- A. On the scale provided, please circle the number that best describes your answer to the statement: This scenario reflects leadership characteristics.
- B. Using the chart provided, (Table 1), circle the developmental domain(s) that is (are) reflected by the behavior in the scenario.
- C. Please write who the leader(s) is (are) in the space provided.
- D. Then write any comments you may have.

**Scenarios:**

**Block Center scenarios**

**Scenario #1:**

While playing with blocks, Frank told Ryan, “Let’s build a whole city.” Ryan said, “O.K.” The two children built gates and buildings out of blocks. Ryan said to Frank, “I have an idea.” Ryan showed him his idea. Frank continued doing his own thing.

A. This scenario reflects leadership characteristics

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4✓	5

B. What domain(s) does this scenario reflect? Choose from Table 1.  
Circle all that apply: Cognitive—Social—Physical—Emotional— or Disposition.

C. The leader(s) is (are): *Both children are displaying leadership in terms of initiating ideas. However, as Frank did not follow Ryan’s idea it could be argued that Ryan’s attempt at leadership was not successful.*

D. Comments:  
*I think a definition of what you mean by disposition would be good.*

**Scenario #2:**

The teacher said, “It’s time to pick up” and began the “Clean Up” song. Hannah immediately told the kids in her block center as she pointed to individual students: “You pick up the squares, you pick up the round ones, you pick up the rectangles, and Leigh and I will get all the rest. OK?” Then Hannah watched as the other children put the blocks away in the bin.

A. This scenario reflects leadership characteristics.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5√

B. What domain(s) does this scenario reflect? Choose from Table 1. Circle all that apply: Cognitive—Social—Physical—Emotional— or Disposition.

C. The leader(s) is(are): *Hannah*

D. Comments:  
*Hannah has the makings of a good CEO with her delegation abilities.*

**Story-time scenarios**

**Scenario #3:**

When the teacher announced that it was Story Time, Lily reminded the teacher to finish reading the book she (the teacher) started on the previous day.

A. This scenario reflects leadership characteristics.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3 √	4	5

B. What developmental domain(s) does this scenario reflect? Choose from Table 1. Circle all that apply: Cognitive—Social—Physical—Emotional— or Disposition.

C. The leader(s) is(are):

D. Comments:  
I don’t think that Lily reminding the teacher to finish the story is necessarily leadership.

**Scenario #4:**

Some of the children were complaining because they couldn't see the storybook the teacher was holding. Jeffrey made the suggestion, "Tall ones sit in the back and short ones sit in the front." Some children began moving around on the rug according to Jeffrey's suggestion.

A. This scenario reflects leadership characteristics.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5√

B. What developmental domain(s) does this scenario reflect? Choose from Table 1. Circle all that apply: Cognitive—Social—Physical—Emotional— or Disposition.

C. The leader(s) is(are): *Jeffrey*

D. Comments: *As the children followed Jeffrey's problem solving suggestion then Jeffrey displayed leadership.*

**Scenario #5:**

Sophie was talking to other children sitting near her during story time. She told a few of the children that she liked their shoes. The teacher asked Sophie to be quiet while she (teacher) read.

Sophie continued to talk to the other children in her area. She said, "Do you like my shoes? I got them at the mall."

A. This scenario reflects leadership characteristics.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1 √	2	3	4	5

B. What developmental domain(s) does this scenario reflect? Choose from Table 1. Circle all that apply: Cognitive—Social—Physical—Emotional— or Disposition.

C. The leader(s) is(are):

D. Comments:

## Group instructional scenarios

### Scenario #6:

The office called for the teacher to send a volunteer to pick up paperwork for students in her classroom. Sarah's hand shot up in the air. She asked, "Ooh, can I go?" The teacher allowed her to go to the office. When Sarah returned she asked the teacher, "You want me to give them out?" The teacher allowed her to do so.

A. This scenario reflects leadership characteristics.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4 ✓	5

B. What developmental domain(s) does this scenario reflect? Choose from Table 1. Circle all that apply: Cognitive—Social—Physical—Emotional— or Disposition.

C. The leader(s) is(are): *Sarah*

D. Comments:

*Sarah proposed an idea and the teacher followed the idea therefore Sarah showed initiative and leadership in this scenario.*

### Scenario #7:

Lisa is often seen helping her classmate complete his work.

She tells him, "Here, let me show you."

As a result, her teacher often asks her to help other students finish their work.

A. This scenario reflects leadership characteristics.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5 ✓

B. What developmental domain(s) does this scenario reflect? Choose from Table 1. Circle all that apply: Cognitive—Social—Physical—Emotional— or Disposition.

C. The leader(s) is(are): *Lisa*

D. Comments:

**Scenario #8:**

Erin asked the group at the table, “What are you doing?”

Isabella said, “You can help us if you want.”

Erin sat down at the table with the group and watched.

A. This scenario reflects leadership characteristics.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4 ✓	5

B. What developmental domain(s) does this scenario reflect? Choose from Table 1.

Circle all that apply: Cognitive—Social—Physical—Emotional— or Disposition.

C. The leader(s) is(are): *Isabella*

D. Comments:

*Isabella is showing consideration for Erin’s needs and encouraging her to join their activity. It is not a task oriented type of leadership- it is a relationship oriented type of leadership.*

**Transition scenarios**

**Scenario #9:**

Whenever the group needed refocusing, the teacher would clap her hands in a distinctive pattern. One day Patrick used the same clap when the group began to get unfocused.

Some of the children stopped what they were doing and looked at the teacher.

A. This scenario reflects leadership characteristics.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3 ✓	4	5

B. What developmental domain(s) does this scenario reflect? Choose from Table 1.

Circle all that apply: Cognitive—Social—Physical—Emotional— or Disposition.

C. The leader(s) is(are):

D. Comments:

*I am undecided with regard to this scenario. Patrick is role modeling the teacher’s behavior rather than showing leadership. The children did not follow his direction rather they looked to the teacher.*

**Scenario #10:**

After a visit from a fireman, Billy told Nicholas, “When we go outside, you be the fire chief and I’ll be the fireman.”

Evan asked Nicholas, “I’m going to be a fireman on your truck, too, OK?”

Nicholas said, “Ok, but someone has to be home to call 9-1-1.”

Several other students immediately volunteered.

A. This scenario reflects leadership characteristics.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5√

B. What developmental domain(s) does this scenario reflect? Choose from Table 1. Circle all that apply: Cognitive—Social—Physical—Emotional— or Disposition.

C. The leader(s) is(are): *Billy, Nicholas*

D. Comments:

*Billy initiated the play idea and other boys followed his idea. Nicholas is a leader because he elaborated on Billy’s play idea and other boys accepted this idea. His leadership role was also acknowledged by Evan because Evan asked Nicholas if he can join in the play.*

**Scenario #11:**

Ramon was appointed the line leader for the day by the teacher.

As they walked, some children started to pass in front of Ramon.

He stopped, faced the kids, put both his hands up and shouted, “Stop!”

Then, Ramon reminded them that he was the line leader for the day.

A few of the children stopped and moved behind him while others walked on ahead.

A. This scenario reflects leadership characteristics.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4 √	5

B. What developmental domain(s) does this scenario reflect? Choose from Table 1. Circle all that apply: Cognitive—Social—Physical—Emotional— or Disposition.

C. The leader(s) is(are): *Ramon*

D. Comments:

**Closing for Expert Survey:** Please answer the following questions by marking the answer.

1. Is the number of scenarios sufficient to determine a teacher's ability to recognize leadership behavior in young children?      Yes       No

2. What are your recommendations about the number of scenarios?

3. Should any of the scenarios be reworded?      Yes       No

If so, please edit directly on the scenario.

I will modify this instrument according to your comments. Please return this instrument to me by first saving it as a document and then e-mailing it back to me as an attachment or returning via fax machine.

If you are interested in receiving either a summary of the experts' comments or the results of the study, please indicate by checking Yes  or No .

Thank you again for your participation in this project.

Respectfully,

Deborah L. Fox [dlfox@uno.edu](mailto:dlfox@uno.edu)

Fax number (504)-280-5588



Appendix E  
Permission from the IRB

***University Committee for the Protection  
of Human Subjects in Research***

University of New Orleans

---

*Campus Correspondence*

Principal Investigator: Linda Flynn-Wilson  
Co-Investigator: Deborah Lee Fox  
Date: December 5, 2011  
Protocol Title: Teacher perceptions about child leadership”  
IRB#: 02Dec11

The IRB has deemed that the research and procedures described in this protocol application are exempt from federal regulations under 45 CFR 46.101 category 2, due to the fact that the information obtained is not recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

Exempt protocols do not have an expiration date; however, if there are any changes made to this protocol that may cause it to be no longer exempt from CFR 46, the IRB requires another standard application from the investigator(s) which should provide the same information that is in this application with changes that may have changed the exempt status.

If an adverse, unforeseen event occurs (e.g., physical, social, or emotional harm), you are required to inform the IRB as soon as possible after the event.

Best wishes on your project.

Sincerely,

Robert D. Laird, Ph.D., Chair

UNO Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research

Appendix F  
Correspondence with Jefferson Parish Public School System to Conduct Research  
Permission Letter from Jefferson Parish Public School System to Conduct Research



Department of Instruction  
**JEFFERSON PARISH PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM**  
501 Manhattan Boulevard  
Harvey, LA 70058-4495  
(504) 349-7964  
Fax: (504) 349-7797

James Meza, Jr. Ed.D.  
ACTING SUPERINTENDENT

[www.jpss.k12.la.us](http://www.jpss.k12.la.us)

Marian Bernard  
DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM AND  
INSTRUCTION AND PROFESSIONAL  
LEARNING

January 9, 2012

Deborah L. Fox

Metairie, LA 70003

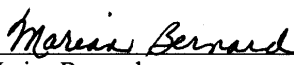
Dear Ms. Fox,

This is to notify you that your request to conduct research in Jefferson Parish Public Schools has been approved with the following qualifications:

1. You must obtain permission to conduct the study from the principal of the school(s) involved. You should present this letter as your official district approval. The principal may request the research packet. You must notify this office of the school(s) selected for participation prior to the study, 504 349-7964; fax 504 349-7797; or e-mail [marian.bernard@jpss.k12.la.us](mailto:marian.bernard@jpss.k12.la.us).
2. You need to be certain all participants understand their involvement is voluntary and that the confidentiality of reported data will be maintained.
3. Send a copy of the completed report or paper with the findings of your research project. Your findings will add to our body of knowledge.

If you have any questions about your application, or if I can be of assistance, please contact me at 504 349-7964.

Approved:

  
Marian Bernard  
Director of Curriculum and Instruction and  
Professional Learning

Application Packet submitted to Jefferson Parish Public School System to conduct research

**JEFFERSON PARISH PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM**



501 MANHATTAN BOULEVARD  
HARVEY, LOUISIANA 70058-4495  
(504) 349-7965  
FAX (504) 349-7797

TITLE II

[www.jpss.k12.la.us](http://www.jpss.k12.la.us)

**JAMES MEZA, Ph.D.**  
SUPERINTENDENT

**MARIAN BERNARD, M. Ed.**  
DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION &  
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Approval of university/college supervisor or agency sponsor. This form must be signed, dated, and returned with the application.**

**POLICY STATEMENT OF THE JEFFERSON SCHOOL BOARD**

Relations with Education Research and Service Centers

It is the practice of the Jefferson Parish Public Schools to cooperate with the colleges, universities, and other agencies in promoting research.

Decisions by the board in conjunction with research involving students, teachers, or other employees are based on the following criteria:

1. The project should be so designed that it can be expected to produce valid and reliable results.
2. It should be expected to contribute something useful and of value for the improvement of education.
3. Outlines must be submitted and should be of sufficient scope and depth to justify the time and effort to be consumed.
4. In general, it is the policy of this system not to interrupt the work of pupils or teachers unless there seems to be real potential in the study.
5. In the case of student projects, prior written approval by a faculty member of the institution attended will be required. This faculty member shall have some responsibility related to the students' project.

\*\*\*\*\*

I have reviewed the policy of the Jefferson Parish Public School System regarding the implementation of a research project within the school system. I am providing assurance that the research project request being conducted by:

Deborah Lee Fox

is consistent with the specified criteria.

JPPSS Application Packet (cont.)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Authorized person from university, college, or  
sponsoring agency)  
University of New Orleans

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of college, university, or sponsoring agency)  
December 19, 2011

Policy No. 6162.5  
Rules Approved: July 13, 1983

**PART ONE**

Date of Application: \_\_\_\_\_ December 19, 2011

**I. APPLICANT**

Applicant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Deborah L. Fox  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ [deleted]  
City/State: \_\_\_\_\_  
Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ [deleted]  
(Work) \_\_\_\_\_ (504) 733-9461

Applicant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Note: A copy of this applicant's vita must be attached to the application.**

**II. EMPLOYMENT STATUS**

Employment Status:  currently employed in JPPSS\*  
(Check One)  currently employed outside JPPSS  
 currently on leave from JPPSS

\*JPPSS work site: Jefferson Elementary, Dolhonde Elementary, and Green Park Elementary School

**III. APPLICANT'S SPONSOR OR SUPERVISOR**

Sponsor's Name\*: \_\_\_\_\_ Dr. Patricia Austin and Dr. Linda Flynn-Wilson  
Sponsor's Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Associate Professors  
Sponsoring University  
or Agency: \_\_\_\_\_ The University of New Orleans  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ (504)280-6609

**\*If none, complete Form A, Request to Conduct Independent Research. (Form A is included in this packet.)**



- 
5. Describe any special populations/exceptionalities to be included in this study. Teachers of early childhood students aged 4 through 6 years (grades pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and first), and teachers of gifted students aged 4 through 6 years (grades pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and first).
  6. List any other school(s) and/or districts outside of JPPSS that may participate in this study. Orleans Recovery School District, Lafayette, East Baton Rouge, Tangipahoa.

**B. Purpose of the Study**

1. Project Goal/Research Question\*: The research questions for this study are: To what degree do teachers recognize leadership behavior in young children? Given scenarios, how do teachers believe they might influence leadership behavior in young children?
2. Project Objectives: Teachers will complete a survey (*Recognizing Leadership in Children*). The teachers will read ten brief scenarios which may or may not describe leadership and check yes or no to answer if they think each scenario demonstrates leadership. They will also be allowed to comment why they think the behaviors they choose are leadership behaviors and if they would interact in any way with the children in the scenarios. Results from this study will contribute information about how teachers recognize and believe they potentially influence leadership behaviors in young children.
3. Expected Outcomes: Findings will provide information regarding the effectiveness of teacher recognition in this area. Additionally, descriptions of teachers' purported interventions should provide information about how teachers might influence leadership. The findings from this research study will contribute to practice in the following way: As a result of this study, early childhood teachers will become more aware of early childhood leadership behaviors which will help them to identify, support, and encourage these behaviors. Also, this study will inspire teacher training programs to prepare early childhood teachers to recognize and support leadership behaviors.
4. Time Frame  
Starting Date: January 2012 Ending Date: May 2012
5. Describe the procedures to be used in order to protect the confidentiality of the participants. (Attach a copy of any letters/correspondence that may be sent to the participants informing them of their role in the study.)

JPPSS Application Packet (cont.)

All teacher participants will be informed that their participation is voluntary and that they may discontinue participation at any time. I will inform the teachers that by completing the survey, they will indicate their consent to participate. The surveys will remain anonymous. I also plan to offer an incentive. Anyone who chooses to complete the survey will have a chance to win a prize in a raffle (if allowed by the district). The raffle ticket will only have a number and will be separated from the survey so that there will be no way to connect a survey to an individual.

\* A list of references (bibliography) supporting this type of study must be attached to the application.

**C. Methodology**

1. Describe the research activities to be conducted with the population identified in section A. (Attach a copy of any observation forms, research instruments, rating scales, etc. to be used in these activities.)

In my proposed study, I will email regional directors or principals in four parishes to ask if I can administer a survey to their early childhood and teachers of the gifted. I will ask to attend a staff or in-service meeting and after the meeting is over, I will administer the surveys to the teachers. The survey is attached.

2. Describe the data to be collected during the study.  
A survey will be administered in this study to early childhood teachers and teachers of the gifted. These teachers will be asked to recognize child leadership from a pool of scenarios that may or may not depict children assuming leadership roles. Teachers will also be asked to write if and how they believe they would intervene in these scenarios.

3. List any JPPSS data needed for this study.  
No JPPSS data is necessary to conduct this study.

**D. Assessment/Evaluation**

1. List the assessment instrument(s) to be used.  
Recognizing Leadership in Children (RLIC) Survey
2. Describe the method to be used for the analysis of data.  
This survey design will use qualitative data analysis and quantitative data analysis. Specific procedures follow.

## JPPSS Application Packet (cont.)

Qualitative Data: After teachers complete the surveys, I will record all open-ended responses from the surveys given for each scenario into an Excel document. Then, I will look for patterns and themes within the responses, highlight similar themes for each scenario, and make analytical notes. Then I will categorize the responses to the open-ended questions into the three predetermined categories supplied by the literature. If necessary, I will develop new coding categories. Next, I will summarize and synthesize the themes by using a content summary table (Miles & Huberman, 1994), a matrix display that I will create listing all the comments ordered by scenario numbers and survey identification numbers (anonymous numbers added only to analyze the data). This matrix will allow an analysis of all comments from each scenario. This display may also aid in the analysis of comments between scenarios. After entering all the data, I will conduct inter-rater reliability for the three categories with the help of a colleague who has over twenty years of early childhood teaching experience. She will independently review all the responses to the open-ended questions and categorize them into the predetermined categories. We will then compare answers and calculate a percentage for agreement. Finally, I will write a narrative of the qualitative findings from the data.

Quantitative data: After administering the surveys at each site, I will explore the data by compiling the teachers' responses for each scenario into the *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS) program to analyze. Since the subjects will be asked to write down the leaders' names in each scenario, the correct and the incorrect names will be tallied. I will tabulate the data of the teachers' recognition and non-recognition of child leadership behaviors for each scenario via their listing of the leaders' names. Then, I will calculate percentages for the number of scenarios where the teachers recognized the leadership behaviors. Chi-squares will be completed to analyze and report the data. Subsequently, I will enter the quantitative data in tables to represent how the collected data was used to answer the research questions. After entering the data, I will hire a colleague as an external auditor to ensure that the data responses are recorded and documented properly. Finally, I will write a summary of the quantitative findings.

3. Describe the way in which these data will be reported.  
Data will be entered into the SPSS program or tables and analyzed. Then all results will be included in the results section (Chapter 4) of a doctoral dissertation.

4. Explain the significance of this study as the results may relate to the objectives of the school system.

The development of leadership is necessary for the advancement of our society (Manning, 2005). Leadership, an important social behavior in children (Fu, 1979) is an essential component in social interaction (Trawick-Smith, 1988). Researchers have observed leadership behavior in young children (Lee, Recchia, & Shin, 2005); therefore, teacher support of leadership behaviors is important because children display social behaviors at young ages (Hensel, 1991) and teachers can influence students' emerging leadership (Maxcy, 1991).

The JPPSS website states: "Mission Possible: Addressing Survival Skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> century." Leadership is a survival skill needed since the beginning of time. The 21<sup>st</sup> century demands strong leadership which begins to develop in young children. However, research shows that teachers influence and may discourage leadership in young children. Helping teachers become aware of leadership in young children – what it looks like and



JPPSS Application Packet (cont.)

how to nurture it – ensures that JPPSS teachers will help to develop strong leadership skills in their students at an early age.

Return to: Marian Bernard  
Director of Curriculum and Instruction  
501 Manhattan Blvd.  
Harvey, LA 70058-7797

Appendix G  
Contact information for regional district administrators from state Coordinator of Gifted  
Programming

Thursday - January 12, 2012 3:27 PM

**From:** Marian Johnson <Marian.Johnson@LA.GOV>  
**To:** 'Debbie Fox' <Debbie.Fox@jppss.k12.la.us>  
**Subject:** RE: I am a teacher of gifted in Jefferson Parish...

Good afternoon, Ms. Fox,

These are the coordinators and their e-mail addresses that you are requesting:

St. Charles parish - Lisa DeJean [lidejean@stcharles.k12.la.us](mailto:lidejean@stcharles.k12.la.us)

St. Tammany- Mary Anne Smith [Maryanne.smith@stpsb.org](mailto:Maryanne.smith@stpsb.org)

East Baton Rouge- Sherry Scardina [sscardina@ebrpss.k12.la.us](mailto:sscardina@ebrpss.k12.la.us)

I know Livingston parish does one in-service every grading period for both their gifted and talented teachers. Darlene Davis is the coordinator; her e-mail address is [Darlene.Davis@lpsb.org](mailto:Darlene.Davis@lpsb.org)

Let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Marian "Suzy" Johnson  
Education Program Consultant, 2--Gifted / Talented Programming  
P.O. Box 94064--Room4-172  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-09064  
Phone: (225) 342-0576  
Fax: (225) 342-4180  
e-mail: [marian.johnson@la.gov](mailto:marian.johnson@la.gov)

Appendix H  
Correspondence with Administrators in East Baton Rouge, Tangipahoa, Livingston, and  
Plaquemines Parishes

Official letter to district administrators:

*The University of New Orleans  
College of Education  
2000 Lakefront Drive  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70148*

Date: January 17, 2012

Dear (Name of District Coordinator or Administrator):

I am a doctoral candidate at the University of New Orleans who is studying leadership behaviors in young children. I am contacting you to ask your permission to conduct my doctoral research in your district. I am conducting a research study to explore teacher perceptions about child leadership. The purpose of this study is to identify the extent to which teachers recognize child leadership and also to describe how teachers react to scenarios about child leadership. The results of this study will enhance understanding of social needs of children in the classroom.

For this research, I will administer a researcher-designed survey to teachers. The survey contains classroom scenarios that may or may not display leadership behaviors. I am requesting permission to administer this survey to your teachers of the gifted (who teach or have taught grades Pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade) in your district. All teacher participants will be informed that participation is voluntary and that all surveys will remain anonymous (no identifying information will be on the survey). Teachers will indicate their implied consent by completing the survey. Anyone who chooses to complete the survey will have a chance to win a

(Official letter to district administrators continued)

prize from a drawing of participants' raffle tickets. These tickets will be handed out upon completion of the survey.

If permitted, I will attend a staff or in-service meeting in your district and after the meeting is over, I will administer the surveys to the teachers. I have attached the survey and a script to be read to the teachers. Directions are included, but please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or comments. My email address is [dlfox@uno.edu](mailto:dlfox@uno.edu) and my phone number is (504)\_\_\_\_\_. As a follow-up to this request, I will contact you regarding approval and obtain the in-service or meeting dates when I could administer the survey. Thank you for your time and assistance in this project.

Respectfully,

Deborah Lee Fox, M.Ed.

[dlfox@uno.edu](mailto:dlfox@uno.edu)

Correspondence from East Baton Rouge Parish, District Administrator for Gifted,  
Sherry Scardina:

**From:** "Sherry Scardina" Tuesday - January 17, 2012 8:58 AM  
<SScardina@ebrpss.k12.la.us>  
**To:** "Debbie Fox" <Debbie.Fox@jppss.k12.la.us>  
**Subject:** Re: Thank you for your phone call

It would be Gifted Site Coordinators that I'll be meeting with on Thursday morning. I'll let them determine the gifted cards as you noted in your email. January 31st is a good date. I'll have them send it to my office by that date. I'll collect them, and you can pick them up here. The address is correct.

Sherry H. Scardina  
Supervisor of Gifted and Talented Programs  
East Baton Rouge Parish School System  
225.929.8646 - Office

Correspondence from Tangipahoa Parish, District Administrator for Gifted, Mary Muscarello

<MARY.MUSCARELLO@tangischools.org> 01/31/12 4:28 PM >>>

Yes, you may administer the survey to the gifted teachers. Please send me information verifying your research. Send to the address below or email.

Good luck with your doctoral research and future studies. I'm glad we are able to assist you with your study. I'm sure you will gather some interesting data.

Thanks

Mary Jo Muscarello  
\*\*\*\*\*  
Mary Jo Muscarello, M.Ed., NCED  
Special Education Coordinator  
Tangipahoa Parish School System  
Special Services Center  
1745 SW Railroad Avenue  
Hammond, LA. 70401

Correspondence from Livingston Parish, District Administrator for Gifted, Darlene Davis:

**From:** "Darlene Davis" Friday - January 13, 2012 11:40 AM  
<Darlene.Davis@lpsb.org>  
**To:** "Debbie Fox" <Debbie.Fox@jppss.k12.la.us>  
**Subject:** Re: Suzy Johnson gave me your name  
I haven't scheduled the next meeting yet. I'll let you know as soon as it decided.

Darlene Davis

Second e-mail to Darlene Davis:

**From:** Debbie Fox Wednesday - February 15, 2012 8:51 AM  
**To:** [Darlene.Davis@lpsb.org](mailto:Darlene.Davis@lpsb.org)  
**Subject:** Re: Suzy Johnson gave me your name  
Dear Ms. Davis,

I am the lady who wrote you about my doctoral research. Please let me know when your next meeting is scheduled and if I can come and administer my short survey to your teachers of the gifted who teach Pre-K, Kindergarten, or first grade students.

Thank you very much,

Debbie Fox  
Teacher of Gifted (Itinerant)  
Jefferson Elementary School (home base)  
[dlfox@uno.edu](mailto:dlfox@uno.edu)

**From:** "Darlene Davis" Tuesday - March 20, 2012 1:50 PM  
<Darlene.Davis@lpsb.org>  
**To:** "Debbie Fox" <Debbie.Fox@jppss.k12.la.us>  
**Subject:** Re: Suzy Johnson gave me your name

We will be meeting Wednesday, March 28 from 8:30 - 3:00. Teachers from grades 1- 12 will attend. We currently do not have any pre-k or k gifted students. What time would you like to administer your survey?

Darlene Davis

Appendix I  
Correspondence about the Preschool and Kindergarten Conference:

Correspondence with representatives from the Louisiana Department of Education:

From: Ivy Starns (DOE) (Ivy.Starns@LA.GOV)  
Sent: Wed 8/17/11 1:06 PM  
To: deborah\_fox@msn.com (deborah\_fox@msn.com)

Deborah,

I am e-mailing you at the request of my supervisor, Dr. Mary Louise Jones. She indicated that you had expressed an interest in having some of our early childhood professionals complete a survey for your studies. She asked me to send you a “Call for Proposal” form for our conference which is to be held in January in Baton Rouge. We would love to have you do a presentation at the conference on a topic related to the theme “Growing Ready Children and Families”. If you wanted to do a session, then perhaps you could ask the participants to complete your survey at the end of your session. Thank you.

Ivy B. Starns, Program Consultant  
1201 North Third Street, Office #4-167  
Baton Rouge, LA 70802  
(225) 342-0576  
Ivy.starns@la.gov

From: **Nicholy Johnson (DOE)** (Nicholy.Johnson@LA.GOV)  
Sent: Fri 10/28/11 3:49 PM  
To: 'Debbie Fox' (deborah\_fox@msn.com)  
Cc: Anita Ashford (Anita.Ashford@LA.GOV)

Good Afternoon Ms. Fox,

Thank you for submitting your conference proposal for our 2012 Preschool and Kindergarten Conference. We are in the process of reviewing and approving proposals and will be in touch with you soon regarding proposal acceptance.

Proposal to present at the Preschool and Kindergarten 2012 conference

- **[Please provide] A detailed description of your presentation, which includes goals and objectives and how these address the prekindergarten/kindergarten standards and/or Grade-level Expectations.**

Goal: To increase session participants' awareness about child leadership.

Objectives: The teachers who attend this session will:

- Complete a survey showing them how well they recognize child leadership and how they may influence it.
- Learn how teachers can influence child leadership
- Learn characteristics about child leadership
- Learn about current research on child leadership
- Discover ways to recognize and develop child leadership in children aged 4 through 6.

Pre-kindergarten standards:

PK-LL-L1 Listen with understanding to directions and conversations

PK-LL-L2 Follow directions that involve two- or three-step sequence of actions

Language Arts

Speaking and Listening

Standard 4:

21. Use words, phrases, and/or sentences to express feelings, ideas, needs, and wants (PK-LL-S1) (PK-LL-S2) (ELA-4-E1)
22. Carry on a conversation about a topic, thought, or idea from the classroom, home, or community (PK-LL-S1) (PK-LL-S3) (ELA-4-E1)

GLEs for kindergarten

Social Studies: Roles of the Citizen

13. Describe the student's role as a member of the family, class, and school (C-1D-E4)

English Language Arts

34. Express feelings, needs, and ideas in complete sentences. (ELA-4-E1)
35. Give and follow one- and two-step verbal and nonverbal directions without interrupting (ELA-4-E2)

- **A brief description (25-50 words) of your presentation, which will be included in the program:**

### **Follow the Leader**

An early childhood teacher (and doctoral candidate) will discuss leadership in children (aged four - six). She will administer a survey to session participants and raffle a prize (all who complete the survey are eligible). She will then discuss child leadership characteristics, teacher influence, and recognizing and developing leadership in children.



**Script to attendees at conference:**

I am a doctoral candidate under the direction of Dr. Linda Flynn-Wilson and Dr. Pat Austin in the College of Education at the University of New Orleans.

I am conducting a research study to explore teacher perceptions about child leadership. The results of this study will enhance understanding of social and emotional needs of children in the classroom. I am requesting that you participate in this research study which involves completing this survey. By completing this survey, you give your implied consent to participate in the study. The survey should take about 15 - 20 minutes to complete and contains ten brief scenarios for you to read. Your participation is voluntary and you may choose to leave this survey at any time. Your survey is completely anonymous; it will be numbered and these numbers are the only way I will be able to identify the data.

When you hand this survey in, I will give you a numbered raffle ticket that you can enter into a drawing to win a prize. When all the surveys are completed, I will draw a winning ticket. If your ticket is pulled, you may claim your prize by handing in your matching ticket stub.

Thank you very much for your participation.

Sincerely,

Deborah L. Fox, M.Ed.

dlfox@uno.edu

**Script for session participants at conference:**

I am a doctoral candidate under the direction of Dr. Linda Flynn-Wilson and Dr. Pat Austin in the College of Education at the University of New Orleans.

I am conducting a research study to explore teacher perceptions about child leadership. The results of this study will enhance understanding of social and emotional needs of children in the classroom. I am requesting that you participate in this research study which involves completing this survey. By completing this survey, you give your implied consent to participate in this study. The survey should take about 20 minutes to complete and contains ten brief scenarios for you to read. Your participation is voluntary and you may choose to leave this survey at any time. Your survey is completely anonymous; it will be numbered and these numbers are the only way I will be able to identify the data.

When you return this survey, you will receive a key chain.

Thank you very much for your participation.

Sincerely,

Deborah L. Fox, M.Ed.

dlfox@uno.edu

## **Vita**

Deborah Lee Fox was born in New Orleans, Louisiana and raised in Metairie, Louisiana, a suburb of New Orleans. Deborah attended the University of New Orleans and graduated in May 1979 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Elementary Education. She earned her Master's degree in Special Education with a concentration in Gifted Education in May 1994. Deborah is a National Board Certified Teacher and is also certified in Early Childhood Education. She has been teaching for 28 years. Deborah is currently teaching gifted education in the Jefferson Parish Public School System.