



Research on Teacher Degrees in Early Childhood Education and Care

Study	Pro	Con	Undecided
Bermuda College Training Program Study (Arnett, 1989)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The study found that teachers with 4-year degrees in ECE rated higher in positive interactions (as well as were less detached, less authoritarian and less punitive) with children than those without these credentials. Training that focused on child development, communication and curriculum activities appeared to account for the differences in behaviors and attitudes. Those with 2 or 4 years of Bermuda College training rated higher in positive interaction; rated lower on detachment and were significantly less authoritarian in the child rearing attitudes than caregivers with no training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sample size is of 50 teachers in 22 centers in Bermuda. 17 of these teachers had a bachelor's degree. The analysis did not address pre-existing motivational or other differences among the various groups of teachers, making it more difficult to tease apart the particular impact of training. 	
National Child Care Staffing Study (Howes, Phillips and Whitebook, 1992; Whitebook, Howes and Phillips, 1990)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The study sampled 227 randomly selected child care centers in 5 diverse US metropolitan areas (Atlanta, Boston, Detroit, Phoenix and Seattle) and information was collected on 1300 teachers. The study showed that teachers with bachelor's degrees (with or without college-level specialized ECE training) were more sensitive, less harsh and less detached than teachers without bachelor's degrees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sample only studies child care centers in urban areas. When weighed against teachers with some college education, the bachelor's degree made little difference. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In comparing the relationships between formal education and specialized training, formal education was a stronger predictor, but specialized training was also important.
Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes Study (Blau, 2000; Helburn, 1995; Howes, 1995; Howes, 1997; Phillipsen, Burchinal, Howes and Cryer, 1997)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The study drew from a random sample of 400 centers. The study found that higher quality learning environments were associated with the lead teacher having a bachelor's or at the very least some college education. Children in classrooms with teachers who had an associate's or bachelor's in ECE demonstrated stronger receptive vocabularies (could understand more words) than did children with teachers having only high school backgrounds. Teachers with a bachelor's or more advanced degree in ECE were rated as more sensitive than teachers with an associate's, who in turn were rated as more sensitive than teachers with other backgrounds. Greater teacher sensitivity was associated with more education, while lower sensitivity was found among teachers with extensive experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No statistical significance between teachers with and without degrees relative to: harsh treatment of children, detachment from children, responsiveness and child outcomes across developmental domains. 	

<p>Florida Quality Improvement Study (Howes, 1997; Howes, Galinsky, Shinn, Gulcur, Clements, Sibley and Abbott-Shimm, 1998)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The study used a random sample of 150 centers and included centers serving high and low numbers of subsidized children. • Teachers with at least a bachelor's degree in ECE were rated as more sensitive than all other teachers. • Children whose teachers had at least a bachelor's in ECE were observed to have higher involvement with children than all other teachers. • Children whose teachers had at least a bachelor's in ECE engaged in more creative activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers with some child development training did not consistently display differing behaviors than teachers with bachelor's degrees. • No difference was found in harshness or degree of being detached from children for teachers with a bachelor's when compared to teachers with a child development associate (CDA) or high school diploma. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers with a bachelor's or CDA had children who engaged in the most language activity.
<p>Three-State Study (Massachusetts, Georgia and Virginia) (Phillips, Mekos, Scarr, McCartney and Abbott-Shim, 2000; Scarr, Eisenberg and Deater-Deckard, 1994)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infant, toddler and preschool classrooms were observed in each of the 40 centers in the 3 states. • Teacher education and teacher training showed modest significance with relationships quality measures, such as adult-child interactions and developmentally appropriate activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The researchers raised concerns that the wide range of quality among classrooms in the sample may have affected the results. When the data was later re-analyzed in 2001, it was found that only wages and ratios predicted quality in preschool classrooms. 	
<p>Head Start FACES Study (Zill, Resnick, Kim, Hubbell-McKey, Clark, Pai-Samant, Connell, Vaden-Kiernan, O'Brien and D'Elia, 2001)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The study was a national random sample of 180 centers (518 classrooms and 3,200 children). • Bachelor's degrees or higher positively influenced teacher attitudes and knowledge. • Classrooms with higher levels of quality had teachers with higher levels of education, experience, and positive attitudes and knowledge about ECE. • Teachers rated higher in sensitivity had higher education levels as well. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modest relationships were found between teacher education and children's vocabulary knowledge as well as story and print concepts.
<p>New Jersey Studies (Barnett, Tarr, Lamy and Frede, 1999; Barnett, Tarr, Lamy and Frede, 2001)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study assessed only center-based preschool programs in low-income districts. • The highest quality programs were operated by the school districts, which required teachers to have bachelor's degrees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The researchers were unable to analyze differences between those with a specialized bachelor's degree in early childhood education and those who had majored in another field. This was thought to be partly due to the fact that many teachers majored in elementary education with a concentration in ECE. 	
<p>Then and Now: Changes in Child Care Staffing (Whitebook, Sakai, Gerber and Howes, 2001; Whitebook and Sakai, in press)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sample included 92 centers from 3 California communities studied over the course of 6 years. Classrooms were visited three times, in 1994, 1996 and 2000. • Centers had higher quality if teachers held a bachelor's degree and specialized ECE or child development training than if teachers had completed some college and some specialized ECE training at the college level. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to these findings, other variables contributing to center quality included nonprofit status, higher wages paid to teachers and NAEYC accreditation.
<p>Marshall, N.L. et al. (2003). MA Family Child Care Today: A Report of the Findings from the MA Cost and Quality Study. Wellesley Centers for Women.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was no significant impact on quality in family child care settings for providers with an associate's degree or higher in any field when compared to providers with a CDA.