Understanding Expectations: The Influence of Educator and Child Expectations on Kindergarten Children’s Self-Regulation, Early Reading, and Vocabulary Outcomes

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Graduate Department of Applied Psychology and Human Development
University of Toronto

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Abstract

This dissertation is comprised of two studies. Study 1 is a qualitative study exploring the factors that may contribute to the formation of educator expectations in Kindergarten. This study presents emerging themes from an educator questionnaire that asked Early Childhood Educators and teachers to describe their teaching philosophies, roles, teaching practices, and other interactions that support students. Findings revealed key distinctions in educator responses to the questionnaire. Early Childhood Educators responded with a child-centred focus that was reflected in multiple themes. A teacher-directed, structured lens was evident in the themes that emerged from the teachers. This study presents the necessary background information to understand the differences in the two groups in terms of how their expectations may be formed and in turn may affect processes leading to child outcomes.

Study 2 is an empirical study examining the influence of educator and child expectations on children’s self-regulation, early reading and vocabulary outcomes. Study 2 compared the expectation levels of the Early Childhood Educators and teachers. Results indicate that Early Childhood Educator and teacher expectations were congruent at Time
1 but dissonant at Time 2, with ECEs having significantly higher expectations for children’s self-regulation, early reading and vocabulary outcomes at Time 2.

Furthermore, findings revealed that Early Childhood Educator and child expectations had significant positive direct effects on outcomes. The only significant direct effect from teacher expectations to child outcomes was for vocabulary, and this was a negative effect. Differences in professional knowledge base, educator roles, and the amount of time spent with children are potential explanations for these findings. Overall, the findings provide insight into the factors that may contribute to the formation of educator expectations in Kindergarten and begins to address the gaps in the expectation field by exploring the influence of educator and child expectations on children’s outcomes in the early years.
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CHAPTER 1
Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is threefold: 1) to compare factors that may contribute to the formation of expectations of two educator groups, Early Childhood Educators and Kindergarten teachers, 2) to compare the expectations of both educator groups, and 3) to understand the direct and indirect effects of educator and child expectations on self-regulation, early reading and vocabulary outcomes in Kindergarten. This dissertation presents findings from two studies. Study 1 is a qualitative study exploring differences between Early Childhood Educator (ECE) and teacher factors that may contribute to the formation of educator expectations. In particular, the first study presents an in-depth examination of reports from the ECEs and teachers on their teaching philosophies, roles, teaching practices, and interactions that support students. This study elucidates the differences in the two groups in terms of how their expectations may be formed and in turn how they may affect processes leading to child outcomes. Study 2 is a quantitative study exploring the influence of educator (the same ECEs and teachers from Study 1) and child expectations on children’s self-regulation, early reading, and vocabulary outcomes in Kindergarten over two time points, October 2015 and February 2016. In addition to exploring the influence of educator expectations on students’ learning outcomes, Study 2 investigates congruence and dissonance between educator (ECE and teacher) expectations at the individual student level for self-regulation, early reading, and vocabulary and at the class level. Thirty educators (15 ECEs and 15 teachers) and 149 children participated in the study.
Setting the Context

Educational and psychological researchers have identified factors that influence school achievement, including educator expectations. There is a wealth of literature demonstrating relations between educator expectations and student school achievement (Entwisle, Alexander, & Olson, 2005; Kemp & Carter, 2005; Mistry, White, Benner, & Huynh, 2009). Educator expectations can positively or negatively influence student achievement outcomes (Good & Brophy, 2003; Rubie-Davies, Hattie & Hamilton, 2006; Weinstein, 2002). Empirical studies exploring these relations often rely on the self-fulfilling prophecy theoretically to explain the influence of educator expectations on student achievement (Ferguson, 2003; Good & Brophy, 2003; Rubie-Davies, 2010).

Other scholars have examined the relation between children’s expectations of themselves as students (often in comparison to their peers) and their educational outcomes (Blackwell, Trzesniewski, & Dweck, 2007; Buchmann & Dalton, 2002; Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004; Sanders, Field, & Diego, 2001).

Educator expectations are defined as the expectations teachers have of their students in relation to their academic performance. For example, Rubie-Davies (2015) defines expectations relative to achievement. She suggests that high expectation teachers expect their students to make large learning gains (high relative to achievement); in contrast, low expectation educators have expectations that are low relative to achievement, defining expectations relative to student outcomes. Good (1987) defines teacher expectations as “…inferences that teachers make about the future behavior or academic achievement of their students, based on what they know about these students now” (p. 32). Alderman (2004) describes teacher expectations as student academic
capabilities in relation to curriculum, that is, to what degree teachers believe students will meet curriculum expectations. This dissertation captured educator expectations by asking educators to indicate the percentage of the curriculum they believed/expected each student in the study was mastering (current expectations) and will be mastering (projected expectations) in relation to self-regulation, early reading and vocabulary outcomes. The educators indicated this percentage using the learning expectations from Ontario's full-day kindergarten curriculum document.

Researchers exploring the influence of child expectations on outcomes have defined student expectations in various ways. Rubie-Davies (2006), for example, defines student expectations as the academic self-perceptions that students hold of themselves in curriculum areas such as math and literacy. Sanders, Field and Diego (2001) describe student expectations as the expectations students hold for themselves in relation to future academic attainment and aspirations. Zhang (2014) characterizes child expectations as the current perspectives that students hold of themselves in relation to their educational outcomes. In this dissertation, child expectations are operationalized as the perceptions students hold for themselves in relation to how successful they are in completing self-regulation, early reading and vocabulary tasks. Immediately following the academic outcome measures the students were asked, “how do you think you did?” The question was framed in this way based on Rubie-Davies’ work (2015). It is also important to point out that research on student expectations may employ other terms such as academic self-concept, self-efficacy, student perspectives and student expectations interchangeably.

**Expectations in Kindergarten**

This dissertation adds to the research literature in the educator expectation field
by extending the research to include the early years. Extant research includes educator expectations with older children, typically in the late primary (grades 2-3), junior (grades 4-6) and intermediate grades (Black, 1991; Guay, Marsh, & Boivin, 2003; Hattie & Marsh, 1996; Swann, 1996; Zhang, 2014). Thus, the inclusion of Kindergarten educator expectations, particularly the unique team of ECEs and Kindergarten teachers in Ontario’s full-day Kindergarten (FDK) program, adds an important piece to our current understanding of educator expectations.

The FDK program was phased in over five years, beginning in 2010, with a goal to provide universally accessible Junior (4-year-old) and Senior (5-year-old) FDK across Ontario. The primary purpose of the FDK program was to establish a strong foundation for learning in an environment that is safe, developmentally appropriate and child-centred (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010). In a child-centred program children are viewed as being competent and responsible in directing their learning (Chung & Walsh, 2000). Moyer (2001) defines a child-centred approach as one that supports the individual interest and needs of all students and recognizes the importance of educating the whole child. A child-centred approach is achieved in the FDK program through a play-based environment that promotes the holistic (physical, social, emotional and cognitive) development of all children. Six fundamental principles guide the FDK program and are reflective of the values, beliefs and best practices of current research in early learning and care (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010). Principle 5 specifically acknowledges the link between play and learning for young children, “play is a means to early learning that capitalizes on children’s natural curiosity and exuberance” (p. 2). Both child-initiated and teacher structured play-based learning are integral to successful implementation of the
The FDK program provides a “single program with a single pedagogical and curriculum approach planned and delivered by qualified educators using common space and resources” (Pascal, 2009, p. 18). FDK is not simply a doubling of time; unique foundational elements include the professional knowledge base of both ECEs and teachers and the implementation of a play-based curriculum. At the time of data collection the Kindergarten curriculum used in Kindergarten classrooms in Ontario was the FDK draft program; however, in 2016 an updated Kindergarten curriculum was introduced. The Kindergarten Program (2016) replaces the 2010 FDK curriculum. Therefore, beginning in September 2016 (the year following data collection), all Kindergarten programs began to utilize this updated document (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016a). The updated document incorporates the transformational changes in pedagogical approaches described in the 2010 FDK document, including the movement from a traditional pedagogy to a child-centred play-based program, and adds insights from educators working in the field along with additional research on early learning (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016a). The current research focuses on the 2010 FDK curriculum document that was being used at the time of data collection. The FDK model with the inclusion of the unique team of ECEs and Kindergarten teachers provided an opportunity to compare the factors that may contribute to the formation of educator expectations in Kindergarten.
Study 1 examines and compares the factors that may contribute to the formation of expectations for ECEs and teachers. Educators incorporate information from various sources as they form academic expectations for children. Research on the factors that influence educator expectations is primarily focused on the ways teachers integrate information about students, for example, student characteristics and prior achievement. More recently, there is interest in moving away from a focus on student characteristics toward a focus on the ways teacher factors influence expectations (Bishop & Berryman, 2006; Dweck, 2006, 2009, 2010; Hornby, Witte, & Mitchell, 2011; Weinstein, 2002).

Despite a growing body of literature that addresses teaching factors such as differentiated teacher beliefs, behaviours and interactions (Dweck, 2006, 2009, 2010; Kuklinski & Weinstein, 2001; Rubie-Davies, 2015), more research is needed to understand the factors and processes that may be associated with varying expectations. Given the differences in training and roles of ECEs and teachers within the FDK program the factors that influence their expectations may differ for the two educator groups. Educators who have a better understanding of how their students are performing may have more accurate academic expectations for their students, resulting in appropriate instruction and ultimately in improved outcomes. With this in mind, educators vary in the ways they obtain information about students; therefore, assessment practices may have an effect on educator expectations. Interestingly, a 2017 study exploring teachers’ assessment practices in play-based kindergarten classrooms found a misalignment between teachers’ perspectives of the purpose of play and what teachers assess during play periods in their classrooms (Pyle & DeLuca). Findings demonstrate a need to enhance teacher assessment competencies in relation to play-based learning. Furthermore, educators may have
differential opinions on grouping practices and interactions that are most beneficial for
children’s learning. Therefore, capturing this information is particularly important in
understanding factors that may be associated with educator expectations in Kindergarten.

Building on Study 1, Study 2 explores the influence of educator (ECE and
teacher) and child expectations on children’s outcomes from 15 Kindergarten classrooms.
Despite the growing body of literature on the factors that influence student school
achievement and educational outcomes, there is limited research using a mediation model
to identify potential processes that underline the relations between educator expectations
and child outcomes, such as the use of child expectations as a mediating variable when
both educator and child expectations are taken into consideration. We need to understand
the potential direct and indirect effects of expectations on child outcomes. This study
answers the research question, “What are the direct and indirect effects of educator (ECE
and teacher) and children’s expectations on self-regulation, early reading and vocabulary
outcomes at Time 1 and Time 2?” In addition to exploring the direct and indirect effects
of expectations on students’ learning outcomes, Study 2 investigates congruence and
dissonance between educator (ECE and teacher) expectations, and responds to the
research question, “Is there congruence or dissonance between educator (ECE and
teacher) expectations for self-regulation, early reading, vocabulary, and class level
expectations?”

Expectation researchers have primarily focused on the expectations that teachers
hold at the individual student level, that is, the ways in which teachers use information
related to individual characteristics in forming expectations for students (Bandura, 1997;
de Boer, Bosker, & van der Werf, 2010; Keogh, 2000). Researchers have explored how
individual characteristics such as ethnicity, gender, social class, social skills, prior achievement, and parent background influence teachers’ expectations for individual students (Baron, Tom, & Cooper, 1985; McKown & Weinstein, 2002; Obiakor, 1999; Tenenbaum & Ruck, 2007; Woodcock & Vialle, 2011; Zhang, 2014). There has been a particular focus on the characteristics of ethnicity and social class given the noted gap in academic achievement for minority groups and families in low socio-economic classes (Hattie, 2003; Muller, Katz & Dance, 1999; Pellegrini & Blatchford, 2000; Rubie-Davies et al., 2006; Tenebaum & Ruck, 2007; Weinstein, 2002). Expectation scholars are beginning to explore expectations that teachers hold at the class level, that is, teachers' expectations whether high or low for all their students (Rubie-Davies, 2015; Rubie-Davies, Hattie, Townsend, & Hamilton, 2007). To address changes in the expectation field, individual student level expectations for self-regulation, early reading and vocabulary outcomes and class level expectations were included.

Self-regulation, literacy and language outcomes were selected for this dissertation as these areas are shown to be strong predictors of overall school success (NAEYC, 1998; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2014; Shanker, 2011; Timmons & Pelletier, 2016) and are highlighted as foundational elements of learning in the FDK curriculum document. The FDK curriculum devotes significant attention to the role of self-regulation in children’s capacity to learn and the ways in which a play-based environment can support self-regulation skills. The FDK curriculum, based on Pascal's (2009) commissioned report for the Premier of Ontario, states that self-regulation, is “a cornerstone of development and a central building block of early learning” (p. 4). Self-regulation involves “attention skills, working memory and cognitive flexibility,” providing the foundation for planning and

There is a strong link between play and learning particularly in the area of language and literacy development (Fullan, 2013; NAEYC, 2009; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2014). "Literacies" is defined broadly as a term describing the development of the physical, social, emotional, linguistic and cognitive aspects of communication in the early years (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2009). Research on literacy behaviours has demonstrated that children are becoming literate in a variety of ways (Dickinson & Neuman, 2005; Luke, 2007; Wien, 2005), therefore, it is important to understand literacy in the broadest way to support children in developing skills to understand and communicate (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016a). Thinking about literacy in this broad way ensures that all aspects of literacy and language are developed including early reading and vocabulary behaviours to provide a strong foundation for learning. Early literacy and language behaviours are stressed throughout the FDK and Kindergarten curriculum documents as they are recognized as being “evident in virtually every aspect of human behaviour” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016a, p. 65). In summary, capturing expectations for self-regulation, literacy and language outcomes was of particular interest in this dissertation as these areas are highlighted in the FDK curriculum document, critical for learning in the early years, and are predictive of overall school success.
**Thesis Overview**

The remainder of this thesis includes three chapters. Chapter 2 presents Study 1, a qualitative study that explores the factors that may contribute to the formation of educator expectations in Kindergarten. First, Chapter 2 reviews literature on the formation of expectations including a discussion on teacher beliefs, interactions and differentiation in instruction for high and low expectation educators. Next, Chapter 2 presents the methodology with a specific focus on the analysis procedures relevant to the general inductive approach for analyzing qualitative data (Thomas, 2006). This chapter then presents findings that use the questionnaire topics as headings in the Results section. Chapter 2 ends with a discussion and conclusion that includes limitations, significance of findings and next steps for future research.

Chapter 3 presents Study 2, an empirical study examining the influence of educator and child expectations on children’s self-regulation, early reading and vocabulary outcomes. To begin, Chapter 3 reviews four topics relevant to Study 2: 1) expectations at the individual student level, 2) class level expectations, 3) relations between educator and child expectations, and 4) methods for gathering children’s perspectives in the early years. Chapter 3 continues with a conceptualized model of expectations, research questions, methodology, and results. Finally, a discussion and conclusion section is presented including implications and consideration for future research.

The final chapter, Chapter 4, brings the findings from Study 1 and 2 together and presents overall conclusions. This chapter reflects on the implications of the thesis as a
whole and presents relevant information for continuing research in the area of expectations.
CHAPTER 2
Study 1: A Comparison of the Factors that may Influence ECE and Teacher Expectations

Literature Review

Formation of Expectations

Teachers incorporate information from various sources as they form their academic expectations for students. Teacher expectations have been linked to student prior achievement (Mistry et al., 2009), perceptions of student effort (Muller et al., 1999) and student characteristics such as diagnostic labels (Batzle, Weyandt, Janusis, & CeVietti, 2009; Woodcock & Vialle, 2011), ethnicity (Bishop & Berryman, 2006; Tenenbaum & Ruck, 2007), social class (Sorhagen, 2013), gender (Dusek & Joseph, 1985; Robinson & Lubienski, 2011), and stereotypes (Jussim & Eccles, 1992; McKown & Weinstein, 2008; Slaughter-Defoe, Nakagawa, Takanishi, & Johnson, 1990). The student record of prior achievement is the most salient factor that educators use to form their expectations for children’s achievement (Rubie-Davies, 2015). Research on the factors that influence educator expectations has primarily focused on the ways teachers assimilate various pieces of information about students (Rubie-Davies, 2015). More recently, there is an interest in moving away from this perspective and focusing more on teacher factors that may influence these differing expectations. These teacher factors include teaching beliefs and philosophies (Bishop & Berryman, 2006; Rubie-Davies, 2015; Zohar, Degani, & Vaaknin, 2001), notions of intelligence (Dweck, 2006, 2009, 2010; Wilkinson & Townsend, 2000) and differential learning through planning and instruction (Arabsolghar & Elkins, 2001; Babad, 2009; Brophy, 1995; Hornby et al., 2011; Weinstein, 2002; Woßmann & Hanushek, 2006).
Teacher beliefs, Interactions and Expectations

There is a lack of attention in the expectation literature to the role of teacher beliefs. In understanding the formation of educator expectations it is not sufficient to examine personal characteristics of teachers; teacher beliefs also need to be explored (Rubie-Davies, 2015). Understanding the translation of teacher beliefs to classroom practices is important in gaining a comprehensive understanding of the ways beliefs influence instruction. In a 1996 literature review, Fang documented the many ways in which teacher beliefs influence instruction and thus affect the learning opportunities of students. This review included a focus on the ways implicit beliefs influenced reading and writing teaching approaches. Fang (1996) concluded that teacher beliefs and values ultimately influence teaching pedagogy. Some researchers suggest that the most significant beliefs that teachers hold are those that focus on the causes of student achievement and behaviour (Arabsolghar & Elkins, 2001; Zohar et al., 2001). Zohar et al. (2001) interviewed teachers about the suitability of higher-order thinking approaches for students of differing abilities. Forty-five percent of the teachers believed that higher-order thinking approaches were not appropriate for low ability students. In fact, thirty percent of teachers in this study reported never using higher-order questioning with students whom they characterized as being low ability. Many of the teachers reported that these students would be best taught through a transmission approach. This suggests that teacher beliefs, like expectations, may lead to differing instructional interactions, which ultimately affects what children learn.

Some teachers’ beliefs may lead them to see students as stereotypes (Rubie-Davies, 2015). Stereotypes and negative teacher beliefs are two potential explanations for
the difference in academic outcomes for minority groups and children from lower SES. Based on their beliefs, teachers may indirectly influence student achievement through the opportunities they provide (Rubie-Davies et al., 2006). Minority students are not provided with the same opportunities to enhance their learning (Nicholas & Good, 2004) and are often placed in low academic groupings where they are not only negatively labeled but are also given fewer opportunities to improve academically (Weinstein, Gregory, & Stambler, 2004). Furthermore, teachers provide students for whom they have low expectations with learning opportunities that maintain their lowered achievement, while their peers (for whom the teachers have high expectations) are provided with enriched learning opportunities that improve their achievement (Cooper & Good, 1983).

A related area of research explores the differences between high and low differentiating teachers. High differentiating teachers treat students with varying abilities in distinct ways, in comparison, low differentiating teachers, although also aware of differences in abilities, do not differentiate their treatment in the same way. Several scholars have used the Teacher Treatment Inventory to understand how teachers treat high and low ability students (Kuklinski & Weinstein, 2001; Weinstein, Marshall, Brattesani, & Middlestadt, 1982). Using observations and the results from questionnaires and interviews with students, Weinstein (2002) determined specific practices that were associated with high and low differentiating teachers. High differentiating teachers adopted an entity perspective of intelligence in which they placed students in fixed ability groupings and often emphasized performance goals and extrinsic rewards. Furthermore, high differentiating teachers publicly made direct comparisons between high and low achievers. Alternatively, low differentiating teachers held incremental understandings of
intelligence. These teachers fostered intrinsic motivation, had interest-based groupings in which peer support was encouraged, and developed positive relationships with students. Low differentiating teachers believed that it was the responsibility of the teacher to ensure that all students were learning and viewed student mistakes as an opportunity to reflect upon their own practice. The effects of teacher type were also explored in an experimental study on high and low bias teachers (Babad, Inbar, & Rosenthal, 1982a). High bias teachers were easily swayed by false information about student achievement. As a result of these false perceptions, teachers interacted with students in ways that confirmed their expectations. In comparison, low bias teachers were not as easily swayed and therefore were able to interact with students according to the behaviours students demonstrated.

Teachers’ notions of ability as a stable or unstable trait have important implications for instruction. When an educator believes that all students can learn, the responsibility for student learning is placed on the teacher (Rubie-Davies, 2015). Teachers who take this responsibility are more likely to see greater learning gains for their students. When the lack of student success is thought to be a lack of student ability, teachers are less likely to try a new approach and will more likely stop trying (Wigfield, Galper, Denton, & Seefeldt, 1999). Wilkinson and Townsend (2000) reported that best-practice teachers hold a developmental notion of intelligence and ability. These teachers believe it is their responsibility to provide learning opportunities that support each student’s growth. In contrast, “Teachers who hold the view that intelligence is fixed believe that some children simply lack ability; such teachers tend to have low expectations for their students and are likely to allow their negative beliefs to act as self-
fulfilling prophecies” (Rubie-Davies, 2015, p. 55). Differing beliefs in regard to intelligence and ability can dramatically influence the behaviour and practices of educators. The instructional behaviours of educators have shown to be guided by their beliefs and philosophies particularly in relation to ability. Therefore, there is a need to understand how teaching beliefs and philosophies are translated into teaching behaviours and how these behaviours influence student learning. There are two components of differential teacher behaviours. The first involves differential teacher interactions with students. The second is far less studied and has to do with the differential learning opportunities that teachers plan and then execute in their classrooms. Rubie-Davies (2015) believes the latter to be “…the crux of teacher expectation effects” (p. 34).

Since the seminal work of Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968), there have been hundreds of studies seeking to understand the ways differential teaching interactions can be portrayed to students. In the classic work of Brophy and Good (1970) teacher behaviour was observed in four first grade classrooms to understand differential teacher behaviour with both high and low expectation students. Findings revealed that teachers held high standards for students for whom they had high expectations and often praised this type of behaviour when it occurred. Alternatively, teachers accepted poor standards of work from those students for whom they had lower expectations and were far less likely to praise these students for their good performance. Cooper and Good (1983) added to this work by demonstrating that teachers tend to interact with students in public if they have high expectations of them. In contrast, they interact in private with students for whom they have lower expectations. Exploring the impact of differential behaviour of teachers helps to explain the effect of self-fulfilling prophecies of teachers with their
individual students (Rubie-Davies, 2010). In 1985, Brophy summarized the findings of various studies and identified seventeen differential teaching behaviours directed towards students for whom they held high or low expectations. Brophy concluded that teacher interactions with low expectation students were of lower quality and educators did not seek to extend the thinking of these students. Teachers assumed that these students had difficulty learning so demanded less and provided less feedback. Another distinction was in the wait time provided to students. Teachers provided more wait time to high expectation students; however, the difference was a matter of seconds. Despite subtle differences, Brophy concluded there was a potential for lasting detrimental effects for the low expectation students (1985).

Although there has been a large body of research in the area of differential interactions with students, there is limited research in the expectation field focused on teacher planning. The decisions teachers make for planning regarding the ways that learning opportunities will be provided to children will directly influence the learning experiences to which children are exposed (Rubie-Davies, 2015). When teachers plan for instruction they make decisions that may have far reaching effects. Planning for instruction is where teacher beliefs and expectations are translated into opportunities for learning (Rubie-Davies, 2010, 2015).

Teachers consider several student factors when planning including student ability, achievement, class participation, student demographic characteristics (gender and ethnicity), and work habits (Shavelson & Stern, 1981). The factor that has the most significant effect on planning decisions is prior achievement, and this achievement often aligns with teacher expectations (Rubie-Davies, 2015). Shavelson and Stern (1981)
investigated planning practices associated with differing reading abilities. Teacher plans for children perceived as being low ability focused on procedures, decoding skills and involved structured tasks. There was much more flexibility in the practices planned for the high ability students, these activities focused more on student comprehension. Good and Brophy (2008) similarly noted differential planning for low versus high ability students in reading. Low ability students were more likely to be asked to read outside a meaningful context and were asked simple recall questions. Decoding skills took precedence over meaning and structured organization of tasks was more prominent for children whom teachers perceived as low ability. Although there is limited research in the expectation field on the ways expectations influence planning, it appears that teachers plan different learning opportunities for students for whom they have varying expectations. A potential explanation for why high expectation students learn more is because they are provided with more opportunities to do so in a child-centred environment (Rubie-Davies, 2015). In contrast, low expectation students are learning less because they are provided with restricted opportunities through more structured teacher directed interactions.

**Differentiated Instruction**

Differentiated instruction involves tailoring instruction to meet the individual needs of students within a classroom. The goal of differentiated instruction is to support all students in learning effectively regardless of ability (Tomlinson, 2014). In 2016 the Ontario Ministry of Education released an educator’s guide to differentiated instruction (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016b). Within this guide, differentiated instruction is described as “a cyclical process of finding out about the learner and responding by
differentiating” (p. 1). As teachers learn about their students they should respond by differentiating their instruction with increased precision. Therefore, the underlying principles of differentiated instruction involve 1) knowing the learner, and 2) responding by differentiating. It is important to know that unless a student is on an Individual Education Plan (IEP), differentiated instruction must be based on the same curriculum expectations as all students in that grade. Therefore, all students must have “opportunities to achieve the same high standards of performance” (p. 1). In summary differentiated instruction is a framework for thinking about teaching and learning that involves effective instruction that is responsive to the interests and abilities of individual learners and helps maximize student growth (Tomlinson, 2014). Thus, when instruction is differentiated it is critical that it is based on knowledge of the learner with the goal of maximizing student learning. A potential cause for concern is when instruction is differentiated in a way that reduces opportunities for some students to learn. “Although providing differential learning opportunities may be common practice, this does not necessarily mean it is best practice” (Rubie-Davies, 2015, p. 35). Despite justified pedagogical reasons for differentiation in planning and instruction, the ultimate goal should be to enhance the learning opportunities of all students. Thus, it is essential to understand the implications for differential planning and outcomes particularly in relation to providing quality learning opportunities for all children.

Differential planning results in differential instruction, which ultimately can result in disproportionate opportunities to learn. Once differentiation exists there is potential for sustained expectation effects. Therefore, researchers and teachers alike should consider when differentiation is acceptable. Differentiation is appropriate when learning outcomes
are maximized. Differentiation is of concern when it reduces the opportunities for particular students and increases the gap between high and low ability students (Rubie-Davies, 2015). Of course, it would not be suitable or supportive to demand that a student struggle throughout a lesson that was not developmentally appropriate; however, all students regardless of ability should be challenged in their learning environment.

Unfortunately, the way differential instruction is enacted in many classrooms results in inequitable learning opportunities for low ability children.

One of the ways that educators manage varying abilities of students in their classroom is through placing children in ability groupings (Dweck, 2006; Hattie, 2009; Hornby et al., 2011; Rubie-Davies, 2015; Timperley & Robinson, 2002; Weinstein, 2002). Ability groupings enable educators to manage a range of ability levels in various curriculum areas (Chorzempa & Graham, 2006). Teachers report that ability grouping enables them to manage student diversity while making teaching tasks more manageable (Woßmann & Hanushek, 2006). Some teachers report that ability groups allow children to learn more effectively (Cahan, Lichevski, Ygra, & Danziger, 1996) specifically in curriculum areas that are hierarchical such as math (Chorzempa & Graham, 2006). Advocates of ability groupings believe that student learning is increased because teaching can match the appropriate pace and level of instruction for each group (Hornby et al., 2011). A 2012 study explored the differential effects of homogenous grouping and literacy instruction time in Kindergarten classrooms (Hong, Corter, Hong, & Pelletier, 2012). Findings indicated that there were no overall advantages of homogenous grouping for high-ability students. Homogenous groupings were optimal in regard to literacy growth for medium ability students when educators spent more than 1 hour per day on
literacy instruction. Similarly, homogenous grouping with adequate instruction time improved general learning behaviours of low ability students. However, when provided with insufficient instruction time, low-ability students suffered. Findings from this study suggest that during the Kindergarten year, learning is optimized for medium and low-ability students when provided with adequate time and adaptive literacy instruction through the use of homogenous grouping (Hong et al., 2012).

A further look at the research on the effectiveness of ability grouping on student learning reveals potential negative implications. The early work of Good (1987) revealed the lasting impacts of ability groupings. The streams that students were in, in secondary school, were traced back to the ability groups these children were placed in when they were in primary school. Findings from the work of Good (1987) further demonstrate that once differentiation exists in instruction, there is a potential for sustained academic effects. Teacher expectation effects have been shown to have a stronger influence in classrooms that ability group (Good & Thompson, 1998). Hattie (2009) reports that if there are any benefits to ability grouping at all, they are minimal. Opponents of ability grouping argue that children in the lower groups are provided with lowered quality instruction (Hornby et al., 2011; Weinstein, 2002). Teachers have lowered expectations for the students in the bottom groups which results in slowed instruction that is repetitive (Weinstein, 2002). Scholars add that children are denied high quality peer modeling and interaction if they are in the bottom groups (Fuligni et al., 1995; Hornby et al., 2011). In a study that explored student perspectives of ability grouping, children appeared to not only be aware of the ability group they were in but also the reason why they were placed in
that group by their teacher (Hallam, Ireson & Davies, 2004). The children in this study preferred to be in mixed-ability groupings.

As mentioned earlier, the emerging research on the practices of high and low expectation educators reveals that high expectation teachers rarely group by ability for learning interactions. When they do group by ability it is for instruction only (Rubie-Davies, 2007, 2008). High and low expectation educators group in different ways (Weinstein, 2002). More research is needed to understand these differences while also understanding why educators choose particular grouping strategies in their practice. Research should also seek to include the voices of children on their perspectives of mixed- and ability- groupings.

Despite the growing body of literature on differentiated teacher beliefs, behaviours and interactions, there is a need to further understand the factors that are associated with high and low expectations. Most of the research that exists focuses on differential interactions with high or low ability students. Although there is emerging research on high or low expectation educators, the factors and interactions that may influence expectation levels of educators needs to be explored. The current study begins to address this gap by further exploring the potential factors that may influence expectation levels, including teaching philosophies and descriptions of educator roles and practices such as grouping strategies and interactions that educators believe are most helpful in supporting students. Furthermore, this research responds to existing gaps in the educator expectation field by extending the research to include the early years. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the full-day Kindergarten (FDK) program is taught in
collaboration by two teaching partners: a registered Early Childhood Educator (ECE) and a certified teacher; therefore, the voices of both educators were included in this research.

**Research Question**

What are the factors that may contribute to the formation of ECE and teacher expectations (a comparison)?

**Methodology**

The method section describes the setting and participants, instruments, research design, analysis procedures and techniques used to establish trustworthiness of the findings. This study uses qualitative research methods collected with ECEs and teachers. The educators completed the questionnaire in October 2015 (approximately 35 minutes) while the principal investigator was on site.

**Setting and Participants**

Participants were recruited from two school boards in the greater Toronto Area (one public and one Catholic board). The recruitment process involved e-mail communication with principals from schools in the two school boards to gauge initial interest. After responses from five principals were received, an in-person meeting was scheduled to further discuss the goals of the research study and discuss involvement of the Kindergarten teaching teams. At these meetings the principals asked questions in regard to the involvement of the staff and students at their schools. All five principals expressed an interest in discussing the project with their educators. At this time the principals shared the study overview and consent forms with the educators and were provided with contact information if they had additional questions. A follow up phone
meeting was scheduled with the principals to discuss educator interest. All five schools had teaching teams who were interested in participating and therefore, consent forms were collected from the schools. Thirty educators, (15 ECEs and 15 teachers) participated in the educator questionnaire during the school day. Complete demographic information from the educator demographic survey (Appendix B-1) is presented in Table 2.1. Participants reported their age, total years of teaching experience, total years of teaching experience in Kindergarten, and their highest level of education.
Table 2.1

Educator Demographic Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>ECE (n=15)</th>
<th>Teacher (n=15)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>n (%)</td>
<td>n (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>15 (100)</td>
<td>15 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>20-24 years</td>
<td>1 (6.6)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>25-29 years</td>
<td>5 (33.3)</td>
<td>1 (6.6)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30-34 years</td>
<td>4 (26.6)</td>
<td>2 (13.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35-39 years</td>
<td>2 (13.3)</td>
<td>3 (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40-44 years</td>
<td>1 (6.6)</td>
<td>2 (13.3)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>45-49 years</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>2 (13.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50-54 years</td>
<td>1 (6.6)</td>
<td>1 (6.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>55+</td>
<td>1 (6.6)</td>
<td>4 (26.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years Teaching</td>
<td>1 year or less</td>
<td>1 (6.6)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2-4 years</td>
<td>5 (33.3)</td>
<td>1 (6.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5-9 years</td>
<td>4 (26.6)</td>
<td>2 (13.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10-14 years</td>
<td>4 (26.6)</td>
<td>4 (26.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15-19 years</td>
<td>1 (6.6)</td>
<td>5 (33.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20-24 years</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>2 (13.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25 + years</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>1 (6.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years Teaching Kindergarten</td>
<td>1 year or less</td>
<td>1 (6.6)</td>
<td>3 (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2-4 years</td>
<td>5 (33.3)</td>
<td>4 (26.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5-9 years</td>
<td>4 (26.6)</td>
<td>5 (33.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10-14 years</td>
<td>4 (26.6)</td>
<td>2 (13.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15-19 years</td>
<td>1 (6.6)</td>
<td>1 (6.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest Level of Education</td>
<td>College diploma</td>
<td>8 (53.3)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-diploma certificate</td>
<td>2 (13.3)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>4 (26.6)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-graduate certificate</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>12 (80)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-graduate degree</td>
<td>1 (6.6)</td>
<td>3 (20)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instruments

Educator Questionnaire. The educator questionnaire (See Appendix B-2) provided information in regard to educators’ teaching philosophy and practices. The questionnaire included four open-ended questions/descriptions: 1) Describe your teaching
philosophy, 2) Describe your role as an ECE/Teacher in the FDELK program, 3) What kind of interactions do you think are most helpful in supporting your students in meeting the curriculum expectations? (Describe), and 4) Describe your grouping strategies within your classroom. The educators were also asked to indicate their basis for evaluation, “Please indicate your basis for your evaluation, what reference are you using in estimating your expectation scores?”

Research Design and Analysis Procedures

This study employed a general inductive approach for analysis of qualitative data. Thomas (2006) discusses the purposes of an inductive approach as threefold: 1) to condense raw text data into a summary format, 2) to establish clear links between research objectives and findings derived from the raw data while ensuring transparency, and 3) to develop a framework of the underlying structure as evident in the raw data. This approach provides a systematic procedure for analyzing qualitative data that produces reliable and valid findings (Thomas, 2006). In considering limitations, the general inductive approach is not as strong as other analytic strategies that are used for theory or model development; however, it provides a straightforward approach for deriving themes in the context of focused research and evaluation questions. An inductive approach provides insights into how individuals experience a particular phenomenon or situation (Rowan & Huston, 1997). The purpose of this study was to further understand the factors and practices that may influence ECE and teacher expectations, and therefore, the general inductive approach provided the structure and simplicity required in interpreting educator responses to the questionnaire data.
In describing inductive analyses, Strauss and Corbin (1998) state, “The researcher begins with an area of study and allows the theory to emerge from the data” (p. 12). Similarly, Thomas (2006) describes inductive analyses as approaches that use readings of raw data to develop categories, themes, and/or a model through interpreting the raw data. The primary goal of an inductive approach is to allow findings to emerge from the dominant themes present in the raw data, without constraints imposed by more structured methodologies. In contrast, in deductive analyses key themes can be obscured or left uncovered due to the preconceptions in data collection and analyses that are imposed by the researchers (Thomas, 2006). Thomas (2006) refers to the work of Scriven (1991), who describes goal free evaluation, which is consistent with inductive analyses where researchers aim to describe the actual effects not just the expected effects of the research.

Thomas (2006) clarifies the data reduction process of an inductive approach by describing procedures for creating meaning from complex data through the establishment of summary themes and/or categories. The present study followed the 5 procedures of inductive analyses as outlined by Thomas (2006). These procedures include: preparation of raw files, close reading of text, creation of categories, examination of overlapping coded and uncoded text, and continuing revision and refinement of category system (pp. 241-242). The intended outcome of the procedures is to establish a small number of themes (between 3 and 8) that capture the key aspects of the themes identified in the raw text. This procedure was followed for each educator group and each question in the educator questionnaire.

**Preparation of raw data files (data cleaning).**

The ECEs and teachers completed a paper copy of the educator questionnaire. A
trained research intern was responsible for transferring the hard copy data into electronic
documents. The principal investigator reviewed all files for accuracy of transfer. All
electronic documents were produced in a common format using Word.

**Close reading of text.**

Once the raw data had been prepared and checked for accuracy of transfer, the
principal investigator read through all the raw text data to become familiar with content.
Each questionnaire was read twice to ensure understanding of the overall themes and
descriptions included.

**Creation of categories.**

The questions for the questionnaire were selected to capture the factors that are
associated with educator expectations. Therefore, open coding allowed for identification
of themes from the raw text of each educator. The ECE and teacher responses were
reviewed separately. This decision was made based on emerging research on teacher
factors that has demonstrated how different beliefs, training, practices and interactions
can influence expectations (Babad, 2009; Bishop & Berryman, 2006; Dweck, 2006, 2009,
2010; Hornby et al., 2011; Rubie-Davies, 2015; Weinstein, 2002). This allowed for the
potential for divergent themes to come from the questionnaire data of both educator
groups. In keeping with an inductive approach, the themes were created using the
language of the participants in the study.

In summary, open coding followed three stages for the educator and teacher
questionnaire. First, the raw text was reviewed reflectively to gain a deeper understanding
of participant responses. Next, initial codes were generated based on participant
responses (Charmaz, 2014). The final stage of open coding involved comparisons of
codes for similarities and differences. Similar codes were grouped together, resulting in
the initial list of themes. The initial list of themes was quite extensive and included 12-20
themes for each question of the questionnaire, demonstrating further need to refine the
lists.

Memos were produced during open coding. This provided a record of initial
thoughts and reflections and included ideas related to connections among themes and
potential sub-categories. This stage was particularly useful in reducing overlap in themes
during the next procedure of overlap coding and uncoded text.

**Overlapping coding and uncoded text.**

Once themes were established the raw text and memos were read through to
reduce overlap and redundancy among the themes. At this stage, themes were refined,
interconnected and eliminated (if they were redundant or unrelated to research objectives).
Additional memo writing took place during this procedure and provided support for final
revisions and refinement.

**Continuing revision and refinement of category system.**

Once themes were established the memos were reviewed for evidence of insights
that may have been missed; however, no new insights or contradictory points were found.
Finally, quotations were selected to clearly communicate the essence of the major theme.

**Trustworthiness**

In the text, *Naturalistic Inquiry*, Lincoln and Guba (1985) provide a framework
for establishing trustworthiness in qualitative research. In this framework four types of
trustworthiness are described: credibility, transferability, dependability and
confirmability. Procedures such as consistency checks or checks of inter-rater reliability are encouraged within this framework. Thomas (2006) describes two types of coding consistency checks including independent parallel coding and a check on the clarity of codes. This study achieved trustworthiness through a check on the clarity of codes and transferability through the use of thick descriptions.

Following the procedure for developing themes as described above, an initial coding of the raw data was completed. Next, a trained research intern was provided with the research objectives, the themes developed and a description of each theme without the raw data attached (Thomas, 2006). The research intern was instructed to assign the themes to sections of the raw questionnaire data. The two coders met to check the extent to which the intern allocated the themes to the same sections of the raw text. Reliability was calculated by comparing agreements divided by agreements and disagreements. Inter-rater reliability of over 92% was obtained for each question of the educator questionnaire.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) discuss establishing trustworthiness through transferability, the potential applicability of the findings to other contexts. Therefore, transferability depends on the degree of overlap among the original research and contexts in which the results may be transferable. In discussing the limitations of qualitative design, they state, “the naturalist can only set out working hypotheses together with a description of the time and context in which they were found to hold” (p. 316). In qualitative research, the focus is not about generalizing findings to the population but rather about having a database that makes transferability of judgements possible. One
way of enhancing transferability of qualitative research is through the use of thick
descriptions.

Thick descriptions, in this study, included details of the context of the research
and participants, descriptions of themes, and direct quotations and interpretations. This is
in keeping with the work of Ponterotto (2006), who argues the use of thick descriptions
of the sample, setting, and procedures in providing a context for clear understanding of
the study results. In sum, sample, procedures and quotations are thickly described “…so
that thick interpretations of the actions can be made, presented in written form, and be
made available to a wide audience of readers” (Ponterotto, 2006, p. 542). The use of thick
descriptions in this study allows for potential transferability of the findings in allowing
future researchers to answer similar research questions in regards to the factors and
practices that may influence educator expectations in Kindergarten contexts. Although
strategies for establishing trustworthiness were taken, the ability to generalize qualitative
findings is limited. While generalizing the findings is limited, the small sample size of 30
educators generated in-depth and rich data. Therefore, the findings can be used to guide
future research.

Findings

Study 1 employed qualitative methods to gain an in-depth understanding of the
factors that may contribute to the formation of ECE and teacher expectations in
Kindergarten. A general inductive approach to analysis revealed similar and divergent
themes for ECEs and teachers. Tables 2.2 - 2.6 provide a list of emerging themes, a
description of each theme, and an example quotation from the ECE and teacher
responses. The descriptions for the themes were developed using the responses of the
ECEs and teachers; therefore, the language of the educators was integrated into the descriptions. In some cases the topics that the ECEs and teachers discussed were similar in theme yet different in their descriptions. Therefore, the descriptions of the themes vary for the ECE and teachers to reflect the variation in their responses. These descriptions provide further clarification in understanding the emerging themes. This section presents and discusses the themes. Results are presented as headings using the questionnaire items with similar and divergent themes presented under each heading.

**Teaching Philosophy**

The ECEs and teachers were asked to describe their teaching philosophies. Table 2.2 provides a description of the emerging themes from the ECE and teacher questionnaire and a sample quotation for each theme. All 30 educators, 15 ECEs and 15 teachers, discussed play- and inquiry-based learning when describing their teaching philosophy. Although these themes emerged from both educator groups, the ways in which they were described in relation to teaching philosophy differed. ECEs described both play- and inquiry-based learning as central to their teaching philosophies and guided their learning and interactions with children. In contrast, the teachers discussed the inclusion of these approaches as part of their teaching philosophy. For example, the teachers would describe play- or inquiry- interactions as a way to extend learning from teacher directed lessons. One teacher discussed play-based learning as a tool for developing social skills,

> My philosophy on teaching employs structure in the classroom, using routines to help students be confident and comfortable in the class. I believe students can learn from each other during playtime or play-based learning but it is mostly a
social piece. Directed instruction is fundamental when a completely new topic is being introduced. I think that playing comes in as a way to inspire them to learn more (T6).

Themes specific to the ECEs included discussion of constructivist pedagogy and developmentally appropriate practices. Responses under the theme of constructivism included theoretical aspects in thinking about socio-cultural learning theories as described by Vygotsky and more practical applications such as educators acting as a scaffold for children’s learning. One participant stated: “Supporting the children where he needs support. For me it is about being that scaffold if needed, giving just a little bit of help so that he can solve the problem” (E10). The themes that emerged from the ECEs’ teaching philosophies focused on child-centred practices and interactions that are in line with the reviewed literature on child-centred approaches (Chung & Walsh, 2000; Moyer, 2001; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010, 2016a).

Themes specific to the teachers focused on structure and teacher-directed practices. Ten of the fifteen teachers discussed some aspect of teacher direction as being part of their teaching philosophy. Responses included direct instruction as part of an introduction to a lesson as well as direct instruction throughout the completion of an activity. One participant compared her own practices to that of her teaching partner,

I will admit that my teaching partner has embraced play-based learning more fully. I believe there is a strong need for structure and teaching of lessons directly with the inclusion of play times or extended inquiry periods. When teaching directly you have the opportunity to see what children don’t understand during the lesson and while children practice (T3).
A final theme that captured the teacher descriptions of their teaching philosophy was the importance of routines in Kindergarten. Seven of the fifteen teachers discussed routines, these responses focused on the important role routines play in children’s learning. For instance, one teacher discussed the idea that children should come to school with an understanding of how the day will progress,

Every single day we start the school day in the same way. The children know to hang up their stuff at their cubbies and then to find their name on their table and sign in. This routine is so important so we have time for all the learning to happen (T9).

Another teacher discussed the tools she uses in her classroom to ensure students are aware of the routines for the day, “I use visual boards so that the children can quickly look up and see what task they should be doing” (T14). The message that routines are fundamental in the early years in providing the necessary environment to allow for learning was evident in the responses of these seven teachers. The themes that emerged from the teachers’ philosophies were focused on teacher-directed interactions and structure with features of play as supportive elements or extensions to learning.
### Table 2.2

**Teaching Philosophy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educator</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example from Questionnaire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECE</td>
<td>Inquiry-based learning</td>
<td>A pedagogy that allows children to take the lead and uses children’s questions to explore topics or problems. A teaching approach that focuses on the process of learning, which is assisted by the facilitator.</td>
<td>“I learned about inquiry-based learning in my ECE training. I really liked the idea that learning is co-constructed and it’s not about the educator having all the answers. I take on an inquiry perspective in tackling children’s misconceptions and questions. It is all about kids.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play-based learning</td>
<td>A context for learning that is child centred. Play provides children the context to develop and learn social, emotional, and cognitive skills.</td>
<td>“Even before completing my ECE diploma I knew that children learned best in an environment that promoted play. My diploma and experiences as an ECE have showed me how effective a play-based approach is. Children develop skills in multiple domains when they are in an environment that supports their need to play and learn from play.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constructivism</td>
<td>A theory of learning that suggests that children learn best when they are actively engaged with their world (people, experiences, materials).</td>
<td>“I am a constructivist. The whole idea of the zone of proximal development and scaffolding, support the child right where they are, it just makes sense!”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmentally appropriate practice (DAP)</td>
<td>A teaching approach that is grounded in research on how children develop in the early years.</td>
<td>“All interactions with children should come from knowledge of child development, quality environments, and the individual child. NAEYC principles include a focus on DAP.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Inquiry-based learning</td>
<td>Play-based learning</td>
<td>Teacher directed</td>
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<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An educational pedagogy that involves activating student curiosity through a series of</td>
<td>A student-centred pedagogy that provides children with opportunities to extend thinking.</td>
<td>Explicit teacher instruction that often takes place during an initial lesson. Direct instruction can also include the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hands on learning activities that follow the children’s interest.</td>
<td></td>
<td>teacher modeling examples and guiding students during execution of the lesson during review and practice.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I generally follow a structured procedure in teaching new concepts. Play-based learning is important to success but concepts need to be explicitly taught, especially letter sounds. I teach the sounds in a direct way during whole group and the children practice together at play time.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Inquiry-based learning is a more effective way of teaching topics over time. Students become more engaged because it is based on their interest. It is more than just a unit plan, it is an effective pedagogy to teach broad topics based on student curiosity.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>“Play-based learning and inquiry-based learning are similar, but I think in Kindergarten play provides students an opportunity to practice their understanding of lessons in a fun and engaging way.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Role in Kindergarten Program**

The educators were asked to describe their role in the FDK program. Table 2.3 provides a description of the emerging themes from the ECE and teacher questionnaire and a sample quotation for each theme. Ten teachers and eight ECEs described their role as program planners within the Kindergarten program. Both educators described their role in planning short- and long term plans, such as individual lesson plans, day plans, unit and inquiry plans or inquiry mapping. A theme that came out of program planning for the ECEs was their role in planning and setting up the classroom environment. This was a role described by eight of the ECEs. One ECE stated that setting up the environment was her “…favourite part of my job” (E3). Although similar responses were found in the types of planning the educators do, with the exception of setting up the classroom environment, there was a difference in the language used by ECEs and teachers. The ECEs used the word “support” to discuss their involvement with planning, whereas a teacher stated that lesson planning was “…a major part of my role” (T6). The idea of being a support for the teacher was prominent in the ECEs responses, therefore, it warranted recognition as its own theme. Ten of the fifteen ECEs specifically stated that part of their role was to “support the teacher” (E12) or “support their teaching partner” (E1). Two additional ECEs suggested a hierarchy in educator roles through discussion of taking on assistant related responsibilities, “I assist with the goals that Mrs. [last name] has for the class. Assisting mostly with transitions” (E15). Another ECE stated, “Assisting with the daily responsibilities that come with teaching in FDELK” (E6).

In thinking about this hierarchy further, nine of the fifteen teachers described themselves as program leads. Responsibilities focused on program planning, assessment
and reporting. One teacher stated, “My ECE is not responsible for report cards, therefore, I take the lead to ensure they are completed using information from the assessments I have done” (T12). Another teacher reported, “I have training in the developmental reading assessments we use in [name of school board] so I generally take on that responsibility myself” (T8). The theme of assessment, evaluation, and reporting came out of these types of responses. The teachers described formal assessments they were using in their classroom. In comparison, the theme of observation came out of the ECE responses. The ECEs and teachers described their use of assessment practices quite differently. The ECEs focus on informal interactions, observations, and documentation, whereas the teachers focus on formal assessments.

A final theme that came out of both educator responses was that of a facilitator. ECEs and teachers described the importance of their role in “facilitating children’s learning” in the Kindergarten classroom. Therefore, despite key differences in the enactment of roles in relation to assessment practices, both educators see themselves as important in supporting children’s learning.
Table 2.3

*Role in Kindergarten Program*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educator</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECE</td>
<td>Program Planning</td>
<td>Program planning includes short- and long-range plans (individual lesson plans, day plans, unit/inquiry plans)</td>
<td>“I support with planning. I write out the day plans, think about materials for learning centres, selecting inquiry topics, supporting with all the plans.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitator</td>
<td></td>
<td>Descriptions include facilitating children’s learning through educator interactions.</td>
<td>“I think that in FDELK it is important that the educators are more facilitators of children’s learning than anything else. We are there to guide them.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td>Descriptions in regards to supporting the classroom teacher.</td>
<td>“Definitely a support for the teacher. She is ultimately the one who makes the final decisions and so for me it’s thinking about how I can best help her in achieving success. Working with a partner isn’t new to me.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observer</td>
<td></td>
<td>Descriptions include completing observations such as running records and anecdotal notes.</td>
<td>“Being an ECE we know the importance of observation, observation, observation. Mostly anecdotal notes for planning and portfolios.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set-up classroom environment</td>
<td></td>
<td>Roles relating to setting up various learning centres in the classroom (block, literacy, inquiry, technology centres).</td>
<td>“My favourite part of my job is that I get to set up the learning centres. Looking at my observations and thinking about children’s interest and then adding materials to learning centres or selecting a focus for dramatic play”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Program Planning</td>
<td>Participants’ Comments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Program planning includes short- and long-range plans (individual lesson plans, day plans, unit/inquiry plans)</td>
<td>“Lesson planning is a major part of my role. Ensuring that curriculum expectations are inherent in the plans that are provided.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitator</td>
<td>Descriptions included facilitating children’s learning through educator interactions.</td>
<td>“A major aspect of our PD is to think about intentional play-based learning and our role within that is to facilitate children’s learning in our classrooms.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program lead</td>
<td>Describe being the lead educator responsible for program planning and assessment.</td>
<td>“We have a lot of responsibilities as the teacher. I have spoken to the other K teachers and they agree we are the program leads and it is up to us to make sure that we are thinking about the curriculum.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment, evaluation &amp; reporting</td>
<td>Formal assessments such as developmental reading and school readiness assessments were described. Discussion of evaluation and reporting focused on report cards.</td>
<td>“I am always assessing and evaluating the students to make sure all students are meeting curriculum expectations for K.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Helpful Interactions

The educators were asked to describe interactions they thought were most helpful in supporting their students in meeting the curriculum expectations. Table 2.4 provides a description of the emerging themes from the ECE and teacher questionnaire and a sample quotation for each theme. All 30 educators, 15 ECEs and 15 teachers, stated that play was one of the interactions that is most helpful. Despite all educators using the word “play” in their responses, there were clear distinctions in the ways in which play interactions were described. All of the ECEs described the notion that play offers multiple opportunities for children to meet the curriculum expectations. Some examples include:

“There is not just one time of the day that the curriculum is taught, it is sort of covered through everything that we do. Even during washroom time the children are learning” (E9)

“That is sort of a hard question to answer, because I just think play is the way you teach curriculum in the early years, it’s not that [it is] just supporting children’s learning, it is learning” (E3)

“…when the play environment is right, there are lots of opportunities to learn” (E13)

Responses from the teachers suggested that play was key in supporting students in meeting curriculum expectations; however, evidence of specific time periods or places for teaching and mastering the expectations was the focus,

I plan the activities for each day using the curriculum. I’ve been teaching for 12 years now, I know the curriculum by heart and I know the type of lessons that play can best support… building blocks activities for problem solving and math expectations… read alouds for comprehension expectations (T1).
Another teacher stated, “During play I see these “AH-HA” moments where children just sort of get the lessons or question they were exploring” (T13). One teacher articulated the idea of a particular lesson being dedicated to a specific expectation, “all the lessons are planned in relation to a curriculum expectation. If we are doing a math lesson it’s because the children are interested and because its focus [is] on a clear expectation for math learning” (T5).

The educators gave specific examples of grouping size as helpful interactions. Twelve ECEs reported small group interactions and ten teachers reported whole group interactions as being most helpful in supporting children in meeting the curriculum expectations. One ECE suggested that small groups were most helpful when an educator could be actively engaged in the small group activity with the children,

It is a luxury and the easiest when myself or Miss [name] can be present while the children are working in small groups. It allows us to see how the children engage with materials but also tells us right away if they [the children] just don't get something (E10).

The teachers' responses in relation to whole group contexts was in keeping with the idea that it is best when an educator is present; however, differed in the context most helpful in providing that additional support. “I think that people don’t realize how wonderful a whole group meeting can be for teaching a lesson. The lesson can be taught using the Smart Board or chart paper and all the students have time to ask questions” (T15).

Another teacher suggested that whole group interactions allow for the teacher to see how children are responding to the lesson: “I do most of the instruction during whole group so that all students can participate and I can see how different children respond” (T13). In
summary, it appears that both ECEs and teachers believe it is important for an educator to be present or involved in instruction and activities to support children in the moment; however, these educators differed in the context in which they describe their presence as being more beneficial.

A final theme that came out of the ECE responses was that of a “motivation for learning.” The idea that children need to be motivated in order to learn was reported by six ECEs. A major focus in these descriptions was providing children with choice so that they were more likely to “buy in” and be motivated to participate. For example, “Ultimately it’s the idea of motivating them to learn. I think the only way you can do that is by including their interests” (E7). Another wrote, “…giving them choice, so if they are choosing the centre they are going to be playing at they will be more motivated I think” (E14). This notion is summarized by one ECE who stated, “At the end of the day it’s about the kids and what they are interested in and want to do. You need them to buy in or else they won’t be motivated at all” (E11).

Two themes that emerged from the teacher questionnaire were “direct instruction” and “family involvement.” The theme of direct instruction was not discussed in isolation but described as a delivery method for meeting curriculum expectations. For example, the teachers often described a three-part-lesson type structure in which they would describe a whole group, teacher led lesson that included a follow up discussion and further consolidation at learning centres. One teacher articulated this by stating;

I believe students need to be taught the basics through a balanced program of teacher directed/generated activities… I think the teacher directed piece comes
first in thinking about expectations to provoke further thinking followed by an opportunity to play and practice (T5).

Another teacher shared an example from her classroom, “When teaching a new concept or lesson I start with teaching the concept more directly as to model behaviours and interactions, usually after a 10-minute whole group meeting the children go to learning centres and participate in extension activities” (T11).

The final theme that came out of the teacher questionnaire was that of “family involvement.” Despite only five teachers describing family involvement in their responses, these five teachers provided several examples of the important roles families, parents in particular, play in Kindergarten, and therefore, it is a theme worth highlighting. All five teachers touched on the idea that it was important for them to keep families up to date on the practices that were going on in the classroom so that they could extend this learning at home. Three of the teachers described ways in which they send activities or projects home:

“I send home monthly flyers to give the parents examples of how to extend the key topics from school” (T2)

“When we do project-based units my ECE and I think about how we can assign some fun home activities for the families such as taking photos of their environment or going for nature walks” (T4)

“Homework in our class is focused on spending time together” (T1)

A fourth teacher extended on this by stating, “Families are one of the greatest helps. I try really hard to think about ways that parents can extend learning that we are doing at school at home with their children” (T15). Finally, the teachers discussed the idea of parent volunteers in Kindergarten as being “…a really great way for the parents to
understand what we are working on in our program” (T7). Although parent involvement was not a theme highlighted by all teachers, the five teachers that did include it focused on the positive role that families play in supporting the learning that happens in Kindergarten. None of the ECEs mentioned families or parents as part of their response to this question. Given the training of ECEs and teachers, it was surprising that the ECEs did not include a discussion on parent or family involvement. Although surprising, an earlier study on pre-service ECE beliefs about working with families found that when asked about why they were attracted to the field of early childhood education, very few pre-service ECEs mentioned parents or families in their responses (Winder, 2013).

In the FDK curriculum document, there is a section on the role of teachers and ECEs (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010). Prior to the roles being described separately, there are two sentences that state,

In their relations with families, members of the Early Learning–Kindergarten team can play an important role in facilitating the significant transition that children face between their home and the school environment. Team members also need to be culturally aware, and should encourage parents to become involved in school life and to take an active part in their child’s education (p. 8).

Following this, the roles are broken down into two paragraphs, one outlining the role of the teacher and the other outlining the role of the ECE. In these separate descriptions, there is no mention of families in the ECE role; however, in describing the role of the teacher it states, “…teachers are responsible for student learning… and formal reporting and communication with families” (p. 8). Therefore, it is possible that an execution of roles is contributing to the distinction in responses.
Table 2.4

*Helpful Interactions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educator</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECE</td>
<td>Play</td>
<td>Responses focus on having large blocks of time dedicated to intentional play throughout the day to support children in discovery of new ideas and consolidation of learning.</td>
<td>“I think there are multiple opportunities throughout each day to meet the curriculum expectations through play-based spaces.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small group</td>
<td></td>
<td>Descriptions include small group interactions where children work together on a variety of activities, sometimes with the educator as well.</td>
<td>“A lot of what we do is at small groups. Centre time is in small groups, play and inquiry in small groups.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation for learning</td>
<td></td>
<td>Responses focus on motivating children by providing them with choice in deciding what activities or interactions they were interested in.</td>
<td>“At the end of the day it’s about the kids and what they are interested in and want to do. You need them to buy in or else they won’t be motivated at all.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Play</td>
<td>Examples include providing children with “play time” as a way to consolidate learning following a lesson.</td>
<td>“During play I see these “AH-HA” moments where children just sort of get the lessons or question they were exploring.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole group</td>
<td></td>
<td>Interactions or instruction during whole group time.</td>
<td>“I do most of the instruction during whole group so that all students can participate and I can see how different children respond.”</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct instruction</td>
<td>Explicit teacher instruction that takes place prior to individual work time.</td>
<td>“I believe students need to be taught the basics through a balanced program of teacher directed/genered activities… I think the teacher directed piece comes first in thinking about expectations to provoke further thinking followed by an opportunity to play and practice.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family involvement</td>
<td>Providing parents/families with examples of activities they could work on with their children at home or involving parents as volunteers in the class.</td>
<td>“Families are one of the greatest helps. I try really hard to think about ways that parents can extend learning that we are doing at school at home with their children.”</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


**Grouping Strategies**

The educators were asked to describe grouping strategies they use within their classroom. Table 2.5 provides a description of the emerging themes from the ECE and teacher questionnaire and a sample quotation for each theme. Seven ECEs and nine teachers discussed cooperative learning groups. Responses from both educator groups were very similar and focused on the social dynamics in Kindergarten classrooms. Two of the ECE responses included making decisions for cooperative learning groups: “If I am going to make a choice for a group of children, I focus that choice on who I know works well together” (E2). Another stated, “social dynamics can be a bit interesting in Kindergarten, we like to mix it up but we do have to think about what an effective environment is” (E8). Two teachers also focused their response on the social dynamics in the classroom, “There are some children who just can’t work together. We have tried and tried and tried!!! Now we help them make a better choice” (T11). The second teacher stated, “There are definitely a few leaders in our class, we utilize some of their team building skills and place them as group leaders in cooperative groups” (T2). Other educators focused their response on the ways in which cooperative grouping has benefits for the overall Kindergarten program. One teacher said,

In one PD workshop I learned about cooperative learning groups it really does have benefits in a larger way not just for the children in the group but I find that when we have them work on cooperative skills in their groups it has an impact on learning outside (T10).

The ECE in this classroom stated, “my teaching partner [name] went to this training and she learn[ed] about giving a common goal to the group and the group sort of works on
achieving that goal together. We have found that it works wonders” (E10).

A theme that emerged from both educator groups was the idea of having “no plan” in regard to grouping. Six ECEs and five teachers described the notion that the focus of play-based FDK is free play where children are making decisions about where they want to play and who they want to play with. Responses of both educators were very similar for example, one ECE stated, “We don't really have a plan for grouping. During centres the students select where they want to go and who they want to play with. No real grouping plan” (E5). A teacher stated, “I don’t think I have a grouping strategy, we let the students pick who they want to work and play with. That’s sort of the goal of FDELK” (T15). Other educators focused on the natural unfolding of groupings, as demonstrated by an ECE:

We don’t have a plan for who works with who as it just happens. Children end up working with other children at different activities. I think it’s the same way that we think about play, we follow their [the children’s] lead (E4).

The main distinction in educator responses in regard to grouping strategies had to do with heterogeneous/flexible grouping and ability grouping. Responses from eight ECEs included heterogeneous/flexible groupings, none of the ECE responses included positive support for ability groupings. In contrast, eight of the teacher responses focused on ability grouping, and none of their responses focused on flexible groupings. The ECEs used the term “flexible grouping” and their descriptions were in keeping with that of descriptions of heterogeneous groupings found in the literature (Dweck, 2006, 2010).

Direct examples from ECEs include:

“I use flexible grouping. I don't think it’s right to put children in ability groups in Kindergarten, there is a huge range in all areas so mostly groups are made based on topics
of interest” (E3)

“I’m pretty flexible in terms of who I place with who. Sometimes I think one child should try working with another and so I will switch it up” (E6)

“In our class we use a range of grouping strategies for learning… small group, partner, independent work” (E7)

“I have a practice of putting children in groups of various abilities, I think that makes for the biggest learning potential” (E9)

Eight of the fifteen teachers describe using ability groupings in their practice. Six of the eight examples focused solely on literacy groups, and two of the teachers discussed literacy and math ability groupings in their classroom. “I have reading groups, math groups, and topic interest groups. I am doing DRA [developmental reading assessments] with the students right now so I may make some changes to the leveled groups for reading soon” (T11). Two teachers focused heavily on the different reading levels of students in Kindergarten:

I taught grade two for three years before coming to Kindergarten. Kindergarten is so different because there is such a difference in abilities for reading, some children don’t know their alphabet and others are reading four word sentences. So ability groups (T4).

Another teacher stated, “The range in our class is wide, more than I have ever seen. We use leveled readers and guides in different reading groups” (T1).
### Table 2.5

**Grouping Strategies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educator</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECE</td>
<td>Cooperative learning</td>
<td>Placing children in groups with children they work well with (careful consideration for social dynamics in the classroom).</td>
<td>“In our class we think a lot about social dynamics, who works well with who.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No plan</td>
<td>The idea that FDK should consist mostly of free play where children are making decisions about where they want to play and who they want to play with.</td>
<td>“We don't really have a plan for grouping. During centres the students select where they want to go and who they want to play with, no real grouping plan.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Heterogeneous/Flexible grouping</td>
<td>Using a variety of organizational strategies for instruction that is flexible, children can be grouped based on interest, choice, topic, etc. Labeling of groups is minimized in flexible grouping.</td>
<td>“I use flexible grouping. I don't think it’s right to put children in ability groups in Kindergarten, there is a huge range in all areas so mostly groups are made based on topics of interest.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Cooperative learning</td>
<td>Placing children in groups with children they work well with (careful consideration for social dynamics in the classroom).</td>
<td>“Cooperative learning groups are the only groups we actually plan out in advance.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No plan</td>
<td>The idea that FDK should consist mostly of free play where children are making decisions about where they want to play and who they want to play with.</td>
<td>“I don’t think I have a real grouping strategy, we let the students pick who they want to work and play with. That’s sort of the goal of FDELK”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ability Grouping</td>
<td>Practice of grouping children together based on their abilities in the classroom (examples focused on literacy and math groups).</td>
<td>“I have reading groups, math groups, and topic interest groups. I am doing DRA with the students right now so I may make some...”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
changes to the leveled groups for reading soon.”
Basis for Evaluation

The educators were asked to report their basis for evaluation, in other words, what reference were they using in providing their expectation scores (in Study 2). Table 2.6 provides a description of the emerging themes from the ECE and teacher questionnaire and a sample quotation for each theme. Six ECEs and four teachers reported that they were using notes that they had written during conferences, one-on-one meetings with the students, to provide their expectation score. Both educators described these conferences in similar ways, for example, one ECE stated, “We have one-on-one meetings with the kindies. I used the information from these notes to respond” (E3). One teacher stated, “Information from our conference meetings” (T1).

Both ECEs and teachers described using information from their assessment practice; however, ECEs never used the word “assessment,” instead the theme that emerged from their responses was “observations.” When discussing their use of observations they talked most often about running records and anecdotal notes, much like they did in response to the question, “describe your role in the Kindergarten program.” One participant stated, “I take anecdotal notes most often. I feel most comfortable with this type of observation and it provides me enough info” (E10). Another stated, “I am using mostly documentation information that I collected recently. Lots of notes and some running records and checklists” (E3). In comparison, the teachers did use the term “assessment” and this was the most common response provided by the teachers. Twelve of the teachers reported using information from assessments to provide an expectation score for Study 2. What was most interesting about these responses was that all twelve teachers discussed using formal or direct assessments. The most commonly reported assessment was the DRA, followed by the Kindergarten
readiness assessment, and the Early Development Instrument (EDI). Two teachers discussed math assessments but they did not state the name of the assessment they were using, “…also math assessments and counting” (T1) and, “I used the scores for the math assessment” (T11). It was interesting that these two teachers reported using math assessments as a basis for evaluation, specifically because this study did not ask about math expectations only their expectations for children’s self-regulation, early reading and vocabulary outcomes. Although only two teachers reported the use of math assessments as a basis for evaluation, it is possible that the educators are using global evaluations of students based on a variety of assessments completed in the class to provide the expectations for self-regulation, early reading, and vocabulary.

A final theme that came out of the responses from six ECEs was that of “interactions with children.” Responses focused on the many ways that they interact with children throughout the day and the idea that they are able to utilize these informal interactions with children to provide their expectation score. One participant stated, “I am with the children all day, I know how they are doing” (E6). Similarly, another shared, “I see the children for 6.5 hours a day. I play and learn with them. I just know” (E9). Other ECEs further capitalized on this idea that they spend a lot of time with the children but spoke about being with the children during speciality groups. For example: “I am with them always, at gym, at music, at recess, at play” (E13). Another ECE stated, “Especially their self-regulation we can see that during transition time when we go to music and drama” (E7). These quotations capture the idea that the ECEs use information from informal interactions with children to report their expectations.
Table 2.6

*Basis for Evaluation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educator</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECE</td>
<td>Conferencing</td>
<td>One-on-one conferences/meeting with children.</td>
<td>“I meet individually with children and record using our class Ipad. Thinking back on the conferences that I just had last week was helpful in providing the ranking.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>Observations such as running records and anecdotal notes.</td>
<td>“I looked at the records I have from my daily observation book.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interactions with children</td>
<td>Informal interactions with child throughout the school day (learning centres, play, gym, music, small group, recess, conversations, etc.)</td>
<td>“I’m with them [the students] all day, so it is pretty easy for me to know how they are doing.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Conferencing</td>
<td>One-on-one conferences/meeting with children.</td>
<td>“My ECE and I have conferences with the students to understand their level for math and reading.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Formal/direct assessments</td>
<td>Formal assessments completed by teacher during a one-on-one interaction (developmental reading and math assessments, readiness assessments).</td>
<td>“I am always assessing their [the students] learning. In our Board we use formal assessments mostly at the beginning of the school year and after each reporting period to rethink planning.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion and Conclusion

A wealth of literature has demonstrated the ways in which teaching beliefs and philosophies influence planning decisions, interactions, and instruction (Bishop & Berryman, 2006; Fang, 1996; Hattie, 2011; Randall, Pelletier, Volpe, & Thiessen, 1993; Rubie-Davies, 2015; Shavelson & Stern, 1981; Zohar et al., 2001). This study included the voices of both ECEs and teachers in Kindergarten. Results revealed key distinctions in teaching philosophies of the ECEs and teachers. The ECE responses to the teaching philosophy question were child-centred (inquiry-based learning, play-based learning, constructivism and developmentally appropriate practices). The teacher themes were mixed in that they included teacher-directed interactions and a focus on classroom structure (routine), with the addition of child-centred elements such as play- and inquiry-based learning. The distinctions found in educator philosophies in this study are further reflected in the educator responses about their basis for evaluation (reference for expectation ranking) and two items related to classroom practices and interactions: 1) what kind of interactions do you think are most helpful in supporting your students in meeting the curriculum expectations?, and 2) describe your grouping strategies within your classroom. Building on the work of previous scholars, this research demonstrates the ways in which teaching philosophies can influence teaching practices and expectations in Kindergarten.

When ECEs described interactions they believed were most helpful in supporting students in meeting the curriculum expectations, they were child-centred, similar to their responses in regard to teaching philosophy. The themes that emerged from the ECE responses included play, small group interactions, and a motivation for learning. In
providing these examples the ECEs discussed the multiple opportunities to teach the curriculum in the FDK program. Recent research has shown that Kindergarten children respond to opportunities for self-regulation significantly more often in small group and play contexts (Timmons, Pelletier, & Corter, 2016). Similarly, children demonstrate the highest engagement during play and small group contexts. Therefore, not only are play and small group interactions child-centred, children demonstrate significantly greater engagement and self-regulation in these interactions compared to whole group contexts (Timmons et al., 2016). Although teachers in this study described play as an interaction that is most helpful in supporting children in meeting curriculum expectations, their responses were mixed in that play was only part of the interaction. Play was often described as a follow-up component of a lesson. Teachers described whole group contexts and direct instruction as being key for the delivery of new material in a lesson. Therefore, like the responses of ECEs, we see a mapping of teaching philosophies to teachers’ responses to the questions about interactions they think are most helpful in meeting curriculum expectations.

A further application of teaching philosophies was present in educator descriptions of grouping strategies. The main distinction in educator responses was in the themes of heterogeneous/flexible grouping reported by ECEs and homogenous/ability grouping reported by teachers. A review of the work of past scholars reveals some of the practices that are associated with high and low differentiating teachers. For example, Weinstein (2002) revealed that high differentiating teachers adopt an entity perspective of intelligence in which they placed students in fixed ability groupings and often emphasized performance goals and extrinsic rewards. Low differentiating teachers hold
incremental understandings of intelligence and have interest-based groupings in which peer support was encouraged. Although the present study did not probe educators in regard to their beliefs about intelligence (entity versus incremental perspectives), the ECEs’ responses in relation to flexible groupings map onto the findings about incremental perspectives whereas the responses of teachers map onto an entity perspective. Despite not capturing intelligence perspectives, the present study did capture educator philosophies that are in keeping with the findings about grouping approaches seen in previous work. This work, and the work of others have highlighted the ways beliefs and philosophies influence instructional behaviours. The existing research on the practices of high and low expectation educators reveals distinctions in educator groupings (Weinstein, 2002). High expectation educators are less likely to ability group and more likely to place children in flexible groupings (Rubie-Davies, 2007, 2008). Advocates of ability grouping believe that student learning can be increased due to teaching styles that match the appropriate level of instruction for each group (Hornby et al., 2011). Opponents argue that children in the lower groups are provided with lower quality instruction (Hong et al., 2012; Hornby et al., 2011; Weinstein, 2002). A look at the research on the effectiveness of ability grouping on student learning reveals few positive benefits. Hattie (2009), for example, believes that if there are any benefits to ability grouping at all, they are minimal. More work is needed to understand how teaching beliefs and philosophies are translated into teaching behaviours and how these behaviours influence student learning, specifically in relation to grouping approaches. Future research should seek to understand why educators choose particular grouping strategies.
over others in their practice while seeking to understand the ways in which educators can work with more flexible grouping arrangements (Rubie-Davies, 2015).

A continued divergence of themes was seen in educator responses to questions about their basis for evaluation. The ECEs described using observations whereas the teachers described using formal/direct assessments as their basis for evaluation. The *Growing Success- The Kindergarten Addendum* document describes the policy for assessment, evaluation and reporting for Kindergarten in Ontario (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016c). This document aligns with the content in the Kindergarten curriculum. This document states,

> Assessment is conducted concurrently with instruction and is an integral part of learning in Kindergarten. Assessment, evaluation, and reporting policy is based on a view of the young child as "competent, capable of complex thinking, curious, and rich in potential" and actively engaged in the assessment process (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 7; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016c, p. 3).

Three aspects of assessment are discussed: assessment for learning, assessment as learning, and assessment of learning. Assessment for learning helps educators adapt instruction to the individual needs of children; assessment as learning refers to providing feedback and applying strategies to support students in self-assessment while including children in the learning process; and assessment of learning evaluates children’s growth in learning for reporting purposes (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016c). Educators are called to include all aspects of assessment into their practice, while understanding that the primary purpose of assessment is to improve student learning while supporting children in becoming self-regulating, independent learners. Interestingly, it is the teachers, not the
ECEs who are provided with training and workshops in applying these assessment practices in their classrooms.

The educators in this study were not probed directly about their assessment practices in their classrooms; however, they were asked to share the basis (reference) for evaluation that they used to provide their expectation scores. In other words, what information were the educators using to articulate the percentage of the curriculum students were meeting? ECEs described their observation practices through completing running records and anecdotal notes. This is in keeping with assessment for learning in that the ECEs are using observations and evidence of children’s learning to report their expectations. The Growing Success-Kindergarten Addendum describes this process as “pedagogical documentation” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016c). The teachers reported using direct and formal assessments of children’s learning, this is reflective of assessment of learning which is more summative and used for reporting purposes (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010, 2016c). In this study, it appears as if ECEs and teachers are using different methods of gathering evidence for students learning, at least in the case of reporting their expectations for children’s learning. This finding is noteworthy in that a wide variety of assessment practices should be utilized to improve student learning. The practices associated with assessment for learning and assessment as learning are given particular focus in the Growing Success-Kindergarten Addendum (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016c). Going forward, research should seek to unpack the key distinctions in assessment practices, more specifically, additional research is needed to understand the ways in which various assessment methodologies influence educator expectations in the early years.
Distinctions in assessment practices were further revealed in educators’ descriptions of their role in the Kindergarten program. Similar to responses to their basis for evaluation, ECEs described their role as observers, and teachers revealed their role in assessment, evaluation, and reporting. A look inside the curriculum document and the description of their roles helps to understand the educator responses. The language used to describe the roles of the educators varies. When describing the teacher’s role the word, “responsible” is used, when describing the ECE’s role the terms “bring” and “contribute” are used. In describing the role of teachers the document states: “…teachers are responsible for…formative assessment (assessment for learning) and evaluation, based on the team’s assessments of children’s progress; and formal reporting and communication with families.” In describing the role of ECEs the document states, “Early childhood educators bring a focus on age-appropriate program planning… contribute to formative assessment (assessment for learning) and evaluation of the children’s learning” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010, p. 8). Although the assessment practices of ECEs are more closely tied to the description in regard to assessment for learning, it is possible that teachers are feeling pressured by their responsibility for assessment and formal reporting to families so that they are more inclined to use formal assessment techniques.

Educator responses suggest a hierarchy of roles, with ECEs stating that they see themselves in a supportive role to the teacher and teachers describing themselves as program leads. A 2011 study, exploring the teaching structure of ECEs and teachers in the FDK program also found a hierarchical structure in the relationship of ECEs and teachers (Gibson & Pelletier, 2012). In this study, half of the ECEs stated they had less of an influence on the program decisions relative to that of the teacher. Furthermore, more
than half of the teachers stated that they had more authority than the ECEs and one quarter reported delegating tasks to the ECE. Approximately 35% of the ECEs reported acting as an assistant to the teacher (Gibson & Pelletier, 2012). The work of Gibson and Pelletier (2012) specifically probed for a hierarchy in the relationship and structure. Despite not specifically asking about a hierarchical relationship in the present study, the themes that emerged from the ECE and teacher responses demonstrate a hierarchy in regard to the ways in which the educators execute their responsibilities in the classroom. These teaching teams are mandated to work as partners together; the findings from this study suggest that more work is needed to truly optimize the teaching partnerships within Kindergarten classrooms in Ontario.

In conclusion, there were key distinctions in the educator responses to the questionnaire. Overall, ECEs responded with a child-centred focus that was reflected in multiple themes including: inquiry- and play- based learning, small group interactions, developmentally appropriate practices, motivation for learning, and constructivist pedagogies. The themes that emerged from the teacher responses were mixed. Although teachers included aspects of child-centred elements in their responses such as inquiry-based and play-based philosophies, they often described these interactions as happening subsequent to directly teaching a lesson. A more teacher-directed, structured lens was evident in the themes that emerged from the Kindergarten teachers. The child-centred elements that the ECEs describe are in line with previous literature on the beliefs and practices of high expectation, low differentiating educators. The more structured teacher-directed themes that emerged from the teacher responses are more consistent with that of low expectation, high differentiating educators. For example, a theme that emerged from
the ECE responses was that of heterogeneous/flexible grouping. Prior research has indicated that high expectation educators are less likely to ability group and more likely to place children in flexible groupings (Rubie-Davies, 2007, 2008).

Despite limited research in the expectation field on teacher planning, the decisions educators make in regards to the types of learning opportunities students are provided with directly influences their outcomes (Rubie-Davies, 2015). There is evidence that educators provide varying activities for students based on their expectations. A study exploring the planning practices associated with reading abilities revealed that educators plan more structured decoding activities for students who they describe as being low-ability (Shavelson & Stern, 1981). In contrast, educators provide high-ability students with more flexible activities that focus on comprehension skills (Shavelson & Stern, 1981). Similar distinctions are noted in a 2008 study by Good and Brophy who revealed differential planning for low versus high ability students in reading activities. Rubie-Davies (2015) suggests that high expectation students learn more because they are provided with child-centred interactions and activities that support their learning, whereas low expectation students are provided with more structured procedural teacher-directed activities that are not consistent with their needs. Although this dissertation did not specifically question educators about variations in planning approaches for students of various abilities, it did ask educators to reflect on practices they believed were most helpful in supporting students in meeting curriculum expectations. The ECE responses to this question were consistent with the planning practices of high expectation teachers in previous research.
The significance of this study is threefold: (1) this study begins to unpack the factors and practices that may influence educator expectations in Kindergarten; 2) this study includes the voices of ECEs and teachers and provides a comparison of themes that emerge when educators are given an opportunity to reflect on their practices; and, 3) previous research on educator expectations focuses on the perspective that there is something about students that leads teachers to form differing expectations for them. This research moves away from a focus on child characteristics, and focuses on educator factors that influence educator expectations. Although there were some commonalities in themes that emerged from the educator responses, this research highlights important distinctions in teaching philosophies, educator roles, teaching interactions (grouping approaches), and the basis for student evaluation by the educators that may be useful in understanding educator expectation levels. Future research should seek to explore within-group differences to further understand educator practices and interactions that may influence expectations within each group. However, with next steps in mind there is a potential limitation to studying educator expectations in groups, in that studying all educators as a group means that the individuality of educators can be lost. This study sought to address this potential limitation through the use of thick descriptions from both sets of educators, which documents the variability of differences among educators within a group. Thick descriptions included details of the context, participants, descriptions of themes, and direct quotations provided by participants. In addition to thick descriptions, the number of participants whose responses fit under each theme was presented. To further address this potential limitation future research should go beyond capturing information from educator questionnaires and interviews, and begin to understand
classroom interactions through observational data. This would provide the opportunity for researchers to work with teaching teams to better understand the decisions they make in their classrooms while further understanding the practices and interactions that may be associated with varying expectation levels of educators in Kindergarten.
CHAPTER THREE
Study 2: The Influence of Educator and Child Expectations on Children’s Self-Regulation, Early Reading and Vocabulary Outcomes in Kindergarten

Literature Review

Several decades of research in the area of teacher expectations have provided convincing evidence that educator expectations influence student performance and achievement (Babad, 1993; Brophy, 1983; Weinstein, 2002; Zhang, 2014). This line of research began with the seminal work of Robert Rosenthal (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968) whose Pygmalion experiment revealed that teacher expectations produce changes in student outcomes. This finding between educator expectations and student academic outcomes became known as the self-fulfilling prophecy (Good & Brophy, 2008; Merton, 1948; Rubie-Davies, 2010; Stanovich, 2013). Weinstein (2002) suggests that self-fulfilling prophecy effects occur when a teacher’s beliefs or expectations result in the fulfillment of these beliefs. Thus, these expectations result in altered student achievement (Good; 1987; Jussim, 1989).

Expectations at the Individual Student Level

Teachers use information related to a variety of individual characteristics in forming perspectives and expectations of their students (Bandura, 1997; de Boer et al., 2010; Keogh, 2000). Many researchers over the past three decades have explored how individual characteristics such as ethnicity, gender, social class, social skills, stereotypes, exceptionalities, prior achievement, parent background, and teacher student relationships influence teacher expectations (Baron, Tom, & Cooper, 1985; McKown & Weinstein, 2002; Obiakor, 1999; Tenenbaum & Ruck, 2007; Woodcock & Vialle, 2011; Zhang, 2014). There has been a particular focus on the characteristics of ethnicity and social
class given the noted gap in academic achievement for minority groups and families in low socio-economic classes (Hattie, 2003; Muller, Katz, & Dance, 1999; Pellegrini & Blatchford, 2000; Rubie-Davies et al., 2006; Tenebaum & Ruck, 2007; Weinstein, 2002).

An early meta-analysis completed by Baron and colleagues (1985) suggested that teacher expectations were particularly influenced by ethnicity. Pellegrini and Blatchford (2000) reported that low teacher expectations for minority students were a contributing factor in their lower academic abilities. A 2007 meta-analysis found that white students were more likely to be referred to gifted programs than students from ethnic minority groups whereas students from ethnic minority groups were more likely to be referred to special education programs (Tenenbaum & Ruck, 2007). It is important to note that the evidence about whether student ethnicity is a factor in educator expectations is mixed (Ennis, 1998; Jussim, Cain, Crawford, & Cohen, 1998). For example, a Dutch study that looked at educator expectation bias found that expectation bias was not related to ethnicity (de Boer et al., 2010). A possible explanation for the biasing of teacher expectations, when they do exist, was provided in a study from the Netherlands that looked into teachers’ implicit prejudiced attitudes (Van den Bergh, Denessen, Hornstra, Voeten, & Holland, 2010). Teachers who have negative implicit prejudiced attitudes (assessed through an Implicit Association Test) were more likely to rate ethnic minority students as being less intelligent when compared with teachers who were not prejudiced. This suggests that there are differing expectations for ethnic minority groups for educators who hold negative implicit prejudiced attitudes.
**Intelligence Beliefs and Mindsets**

Carol Dweck has led research in the field of intelligence beliefs and mindsets (2006, 2009, 2010). Her research stresses how powerful intelligence beliefs and mindsets are in shaping current and future actions. Dweck proposes that implicit theories of intelligence, more specifically, beliefs about whether intelligence is fixed or malleable greatly influences teacher practices (Dweck, 1999; Dweck, Rattan, & Good, 2012). Teachers who hold an entity/fixed theory of ability are more likely to diagnose student’s traits as stable, compared with educators who hold an incremental view who tend to see the opportunity for change (Heslin, Latham, & VandeWalle, 2005; Plaks, Stroessner, Dweck, & Sherman, 2001). Her work over the past decade has focused on growth- and fixed- mindsets. A growth mindset refers to the belief that intelligence can be developed over time. Growth mindsets and incremental views of intelligence improve students’ motivation and grades and reduce racial, gender and social class gaps (Dweck, 2006; Rattan, Savani, Chugh & Dweck, 2015).

Teachers’ mindsets are revealed in the practices of their classrooms. In one study, teachers with fixed mindsets had ability groups that remained constant throughout the year; children who entered in the highest ability group in these classrooms stayed there throughout the year and students who started in the bottom group remained at that level (Dweck, 2006). Ultimately, the teachers’ fixed mindsets limited student achievement through inferior teaching and learning strategies that served to keep students where they were. In contrast, group differences almost disappeared in classrooms where teachers held growth mindsets as these teachers developed lessons that were challenging for all students (Dweck, 2006). Dweck (2006) discusses the early work of the German
researcher Falko Rheinberg who evaluated the mindsets of teachers at the beginning of the school year. Some of the teachers believed that student intelligence was fixed and that as a teacher they had little or no influence on improving student cognitive abilities. Other teachers believed they could enhance children’s abilities through their instructional practices. Findings from his work revealed that teachers with growth mindsets were committed to finding ways to support all students through implementation of a range of teaching approaches, student encouragement and fostering positive work habits. A growth mindset fosters a motivation for learning and resilience that is necessary for continued accomplishment (Rattan et al., 2015).

Dweck has also explored student mindsets. In one study Dweck offered four year olds a choice, they could redo a puzzle they had already mastered or they could try a more difficult puzzle (Dweck, 2006). Some of the children, those whom Dweck considered to have a fixed mindset, chose to redo the puzzle they had already mastered. In comparison, the four year olds with a growth mindset thought it was a strange question to want to redo a puzzle a second time, these children chose to complete the more difficult puzzle. Dweck summarized these findings by stating that children with fixed mindsets believe that smart people should always be successful, therefore, the children with fixed mindsets in this study made the choice to redo the puzzle they had already mastered knowing they would feel continued success. Children with a growth mindset see success differently; they believe that success is about extending their learning. Students and adults with fixed mindsets often reject an opportunity to learn if there is a chance of failure. Although Dweck did not specifically focus on student and teacher expectations,
the findings from her work align with research on educator and student expectations in thinking about the potential self-fulfilling prophecy effects of mindsets on outcomes.

**Expectations and Teacher Characteristics**

Rubie-Davies, Flint and McDonald (2012) investigated the relation between teacher characteristics (gender and previous teaching experience), school contextual variables (such as grade level), and teacher social psychological variables (teacher expectations and teacher efficacy). Findings indicated that being female predicted teacher efficacy in all three areas assessed: student engagement, classroom management, and instructional strategies. Teachers with more teaching experience had higher teacher efficacy for classroom management. No relation was found between teacher expectations and teacher efficacy factors. This was a surprising finding given Rubie-Davies’ previous work highlighting the beliefs and practices of high expectation teachers (2007). These practices include flexible grouping, student choice, and effective teaching approaches, which seem to align with the teacher efficacy factors evaluated in the 2012 study (confidence in engaging students, managing behaviour and using a variety of instructional strategies). This was the first study to explore the relation between teacher expectations and teacher efficacy factors in later primary and intermediate grades, therefore, more research is needed to explore potential relations in the early primary grades. Although there is research that uses demographic characteristics of teachers as control variables in the expectation field (Agirdag, Van Houtte, & Van Avermaet, 2013; Brault, Janosz, & Archambault, 2014), future research should evaluate qualitative characteristics of teachers such as teaching and assessment practices and teaching beliefs and philosophies.
Class Level Expectations

Despite the existence of research exploring teacher expectation effects at the student level during the 1970s and 1980s, research in this area declined during the 1990s (Rubie-Davies, 2010). In the late 1990s there were very few scholars investigating this topic, the work of Weinstein, Babad, and Jussim dominated at this time (Brophy, 1998). In reviewing the work of these scholars, it is important to note that they have started to explore the effects of educator expectations at both the individual student and class level (Babad, 1998; Weinstein, 2002; Weinstein & McKown, 1998).

Some teachers hold expectations at the class level, that is, their expectations whether high or low are for all students (Rubie-Davies et al., 2007). This was the first time that this conception of expectations had been explored. Although it has been three decades since Brophy (1985) argued that class level teacher expectations were likely to have a greater effect than expectation effects for individual students, research on class level expectations is sparse. To further investigate teachers’ class level expectations, Rubie-Davies (2010) asked educators to rate their students on characteristics related to achievement, attitudes, and relationships with peers. Results indicated contrasting patterns for teachers who held high expectations at the class level (high expectation teachers) compared with teachers who held low expectations at the class level (low expectation teachers). Significant positive correlations between expectations and student factors were found for high expectations teachers, whereas significant negative correlations were found for the low expectation teachers. This study is important in advancing understanding of high and low expectation teachers. Specifically, it appears that expectations at the class-level may contribute more to self-fulfilling prophecy effects
than expectations at the individual level. Furthermore, Brophy (1985) suggested that teacher expectations at the class level might actually have more of an effect on student outcomes than the expectations of teachers at the individual student level. A possible explanation for this is that teachers’ class level expectations can be seen as a benchmark for teachers’ individual student expectations. Class-level expectations determine the norm for expectation levels; therefore, expectations at the individual student level can be seen as a deviation from this norm (Brault et al., 2014). Expectations at the class level may be communicated through the implementation of activities and interactions with students. “Such differential group treatment rooted in teacher expectations affects the climate and processes in the classroom which, in turn, not only impacts a few students but also impacts the entire group” (Brault et al., 2014, p. 149). In discussing research that explores teacher expectations at the individual student level, Rubie-Davies (2010) poses the question, “What is it about students that mean their teacher may have high or low expectations for them?” In contrast, research that investigates expectations at a class level poses the question, “What is it about teachers that mean they may have high or low expectations of their students?” (p. 123). With this in mind, it is important to consider that both student and teacher factors can influence child outcomes; therefore, both individual student and class level expectations were captured in this dissertation.

**Educator and Child Expectations**

Teacher expectations may influence child outcomes through the activities that teachers implement as well as through children’s awareness of their teacher’s expectations. Although there is growing evidence that students are able to perceive their teachers’ expectations for their performance and this in turn affects children’s
performance and outcomes (Babad, 1998; Weinstein 2002), there is debate regarding the
direction of this expectation effect (teacher expectations being transferred to students
versus students’ behaviours/academics influencing teachers’ expectations). To further
explore this debate Rubies-Davies (2006) posed the question, “do teacher behaviours
shape students (re)actions in line with teachers’ expectations, or do student behaviours
influence the expectancies of teachers?” (p. 539). In thinking about this question, Rubie-
Davies (2006) suggested that the relation is more likely dynamic than dichotomous.
However, she points to the research of Gill and Reynolds (1999), which suggests a
stronger relation from teacher to student. In this study, fourth grade student perceptions
only indirectly mediated teachers’ expectations to a limited degree, while the expectations
of teachers had a larger direct effect on students’ reading and mathematics achievement.
Similarly, Kuklinski and Weinstein (2001) reported that teacher expectations had
significant effects on fifth grade students’ self-expectations. This finding did not hold for
grade one and grade three students; however, teacher expectations had a significant
impact on student achievement outcomes at all grade levels. Therefore, the authors
concluded that in the primary grades, teacher expectations have more direct effects on
students’ achievement outcomes and are not mediated in the same way as for junior
students via student self-expectations.

Student expectations are associated with behaviour choices that influence
academic outcomes (Wilson & Wilson, 1992). In exploring this relation further, Trusty,
Plata, and Salazar (2003) noted that the impact of positive student expectations on
attainment holds even after controlling for previous achievements. Eccles and Wigfield
(2002) argue that expectations are closely related to children’s achievement performance,
specifically, their individual interpretations of previous achievements, pointing to a possible cyclical influence between expectations and achievements. Other scholars have speculated about this cyclical relation in which academic achievement influences academic expectations, which has an impact on student level of effort in school and ultimately affects achievement (Borkowski, 1996; Chapman, Lambourne, & Silva, 1990; Hay, 1995). Although the cyclical relation of expectations and outcomes has been explored, there is limited and inconclusive research on the effects of such a relation over time (Zhang, 2014).

To explore the relation between teacher and child expectations, Rubie-Davies (2006) measured the self-perceptions of students placed in the classrooms of high and low expectation teachers. She hypothesized that over the course of one year that students’ self-perceptions would alter in line with teachers’ expectations at the class level. Participants included 256 students from 12 classrooms in New Zealand. Teachers were characterized as having expectations for their students that were either significantly above or below their students’ actual level of achievement. Based on this information teachers were placed in one of three groups: high, average, or low expectation teachers. Findings from the study add value to the argument that teacher expectations influence student self-perceptions in that student self-perception of ability appeared to change over the year of the research in relation to the teachers’ expectations. At the end of the school year students with high expectation teachers increased in their academic self-perceptions, whereas the academic self-perceptions of the students with low expectation teachers decreased significantly. The change in student perceptions matched the teachers’ expectations over the year. Interestingly, the students appeared to be aware of their
teachers’ expectations at the class level, as demonstrated through the shift in student perceptions in line with teachers’ expectations.

More research is needed to further explain the impact of student self-perception in classrooms where teachers hold varying expectations for their students (Rubie-Davies, 2006). Curriculum areas were not taken into account in this study; therefore, future research should seek to explain the relations of teachers’ expectations for their classes across various curriculum areas and student self-perceptions in a variety of school-related criteria, while examining these relations in younger children.

Building on existing expectation research, Zhang (2014) investigated the relations among educator expectations, child expectations and child outcomes. Findings demonstrated changes in child expectations and achievements over a four-year period in participants from 9- to 12- years old. Results suggested a strong lagged influence of children’s feelings of disengagement on later expectations and achievements, as well as an association between early teacher expectation and later child achievement. Interestingly, measures of family socioeconomic status (SES) had no direct influence on teacher or child expectations or on child academic achievements. Zhang (2014) noted that what matters most for both children’s expectations and achievement outcomes is their interpretations and perspectives of their early school experiences. This study highlights that upon entering school, children’s experience is a particularly important factor influencing later educational outcomes demonstrating a need to further explore and understand student expectations at the Kindergarten level.
Gathering Children’s Perspectives in the Early Years

Although scholars have studied the influence of student expectations on academic outcomes, most of this research explores children’s expectations in late primary (grades 2-3), junior (grades 4-6), and intermediate grades (Black, 1991; Guay, Marsh, & Boivin, 2003; Hattie & Marsh, 1996; Swann, 1996; Zhang, 2014). There is a lack of research exploring the influence of child expectations on outcomes in the early years. Prior research that includes children’s experiences entering school focuses on issues related to school readiness and transitions to school (Di Santo & Berman, 2012; Dockett & Perry, 2001, 2005, 2007; Duncan et al., 2007; Isaacs & Magnuson, 2011). Within this area of research scholars such as Dockett and Perry (2001, 2005, 2007) have stressed the importance of Kindergarten as a context in which children begin to draw conclusions about school, specifically, whether school is a place they want to be and how they see themselves as learners (Dockett & Perry, 2001). Docket and Perry (2001) believe that it is most important that children “…have a positive view of the school and that children have a feeling of perceived competence as learners” (p. 2). Although they did not specifically investigate child expectations, Docket and Perry highlight the importance of children’s perceptions of competence towards their own learning. Despite a lack of expectation work in the early years, this dissertation draws on the existing literature in the early years by utilizing the strategies of researchers who have worked to capture young children’s experiences in the research process.

Several scholars, including Docket and Perry, have emphasized the perspective that children are capable in communicating their perspectives when the research context is appropriate to their developmental needs (Christensen & Prout, 2005; Clark, 2005; Di
Santo & Berman, 2012; Dockett & Perry, 2007; Einarsdóttir, Dockett, & Perry, 2009; Epstein, Stevens, McKeever, Baruchel, & Jones, 2008; Merewether & Fleet, 2014; Pyle & Alaca, 2016; Smith, Duncan, & Marshall, 2005). When implemented appropriately, interviews have been found to be a developmentally appropriate and effective way to elicit children’s voices (Clark, 2005). Puppet interviews are an effective way to reduce the power of authority between researcher and child (Di Santo & Berman, 2012; Epstein et al., 2008; Pelletier, 1998, 1999, 2014a, 2016).

Clark and Moss (2011) stress the importance of well-trained researchers in designing and carrying out measures that are aligned with how young children communicate. Similarly, Smith and colleagues (2005) maintain that adults need to create contexts where children can communicate with adults who are capable of interpreting and understanding the voices of children, further highlighting the importance of well-trained early childhood researchers. Although there are challenges associated with capturing children’s voices, such as the time required to establish a rapport with children, it is important that children are viewed as important and accurate resources, particularly on matters that influence them (Christensen & Prout, 2005; Clark, 2005; Dockett & Perry, 2007; Einarsdóttir et al., 2009; Epstein et al., 2008; Merewether & Fleet, 2014; Smith et al., 2005). Researchers should continue to seek ways in which they can involve children in research on matters that affect them in developmentally appropriate ways. Researchers have an important role when working with young children to ensure that decisions are made that are appropriate and allow children’s perspectives to be best captured.

Despite the growing body of literature on the factors that influence student school achievement and educational outcomes, there is limited research exploring how these
factors may influence each other when both educator and child expectations are taken into consideration. Furthermore, most of the literature exploring these relations is carried out with older students and youth. There is a need to understand the relation among these factors with children in the early years. This study begins to address this gap by further exploring the influence of educator and child expectations on children’s self-regulation, early reading and vocabulary outcomes in Kindergarten. In Ontario, the full-day Kindergarten (FDK) program is taught in collaboration by two teaching partners: a registered Early Childhood Educator (ECE) and a certified teacher; therefore, the expectations of both educators were captured in this research. Based on the review of the literature and the context of Kindergarten in Ontario, I have conceptualized a model of expectations with both educators included (Figure 3.1). I believe that educator expectations (both ECE and teacher) will have direct effects on child outcomes and mediated effects on these outcomes through children’s expectations of themselves.

![Diagram of conceptualized model of expectations]

Figure 3.1. Conceptualized model of expectations.
Research Questions

Research Question 1: Is there congruence or dissonance between educator (ECE and teacher) expectations for self-regulation, early reading, vocabulary, and class level expectations?

Research Questions 2: What are the direct and indirect effects of educator (ECE and teacher) and children’s expectations on self-regulation, early reading and vocabulary outcomes at Time 1 and Time 2?

Methodology

This study used quantitative research methods collected over two time periods in one school year. Educator and child measures were completed in October 2015 and February 2016. All research tasks were completed during the school day while the principal investigator was on site. The University of Toronto and two school boards granted research ethics approval for this study.

Setting and Participants

As stated in Study 1, participants were recruited from two school boards in the greater Toronto Area (one public and one Catholic board). The same 15 Kindergarten teaching teams from Study 1 participated in the methods for Study 2 (15 ECEs and 15 teachers). Table 3.1 provides complete demographic information for the educators. The 15 classrooms included children from both Junior Kindergarten (JK) and Senior Kindergarten (SK). All of the educators in the study were female. While having all female participants is a limitation of this dissertation, the participants are representative of Early Childhood Educators (98% female) and primary/junior (K-6) elementary teachers (84% female) in Ontario.
The Kindergarten children were withdrawn from their classrooms for approximately 35 minutes in October 2015 (Time 1) and February 2016 (Time 2). The principal investigator collected data along with three trained research assistants (two of whom were early childhood studies candidates, and one who was completing graduate teaching training). All of the research assistants received a minimum of four hours of training prior to being involved in data collection activities. Ethical approval was granted from the University of Toronto and two school boards. Information and consent forms were appended with a slip of paper with a message in multiple languages. The message stated that parents should have the information form translated before they sign it. In addition to consent procedures, child assent procedures were taken. Prior to leaving the Kindergarten classroom the children were asked if they would like to take part in activities with the researcher (assent procedure, Appendix C-1).

Upon receiving consent from the 15 Kindergarten teaching teams (15 ECEs and 15 teachers) information about the study was sent to parents of all JK and SK children in the 15 classrooms. Parents of 149 children agreed that their children could participate in the study. Thus, the sample consisted of 149 children attending Kindergarten at two school boards (one public and one catholic) from five schools in the greater Toronto area. Of these children, 42.3% were girls and 57.7% were boys, 51.7% were in JK and 48.3% in SK. At Time 1 the mean age was 58 months and at Time 2 the mean was 63 months. Table 3.2 provides additional child and family demographic information.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>ECE (n=15)</th>
<th>Teacher (n=15)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>15 (100)</td>
<td>15 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
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<td>25-29 years</td>
<td>5 (33.3)</td>
<td>1 (6.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30-34 years</td>
<td>4 (26.6)</td>
<td>2 (13.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35-39 years</td>
<td>2 (13.3)</td>
<td>3 (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40-44 years</td>
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<td>45-49 years</td>
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<td>1 (6.6)</td>
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<td>55+</td>
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<td>4 (26.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years Teaching</td>
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<td>1 (6.6)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2-4 years</td>
<td>5 (33.3)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5-9 years</td>
<td>4 (26.6)</td>
<td>2 (13.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>10-14 years</td>
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<td>4 (26.6)</td>
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<td>15-19 years</td>
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<td>5 (33.3)</td>
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<td>20-24 years</td>
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<td>2 (13.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25+ years</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years Teaching</td>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1 year or less</td>
<td>1 (6.6)</td>
<td>3 (20)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2-4 years</td>
<td>5 (33.3)</td>
<td>4 (26.6)</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>5-9 years</td>
<td>4 (26.6)</td>
<td>5 (33.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10-14 years</td>
<td>4 (26.6)</td>
<td>2 (13.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15-19 years</td>
<td>1 (6.6)</td>
<td>1 (6.6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Highest Level of Education</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Post-diploma certificate</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-graduate certificate</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-graduate degree</td>
<td>1 (6.6)</td>
<td>3 (20)</td>
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</table>
Table 3.2

*Child and Family Demographic Characteristics*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>(n=149)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>n (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JK</td>
<td>77 (51.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SK</td>
<td>72 (48.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>63 (42.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>86 (57.7)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>Asian</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>29 (19.5)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Latino or Hispanic</td>
<td>10 (6.7)</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Black or African American</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mixed/ Multiple Ethnic Groups</td>
<td>21 (14.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>20 (13.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>43 (28.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother’s Highest Level of Education</td>
<td>Junior high school</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary/high school</td>
<td>23 (15.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community college or technical college</td>
<td>43 (28.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Undergraduate university degree</td>
<td>29 (19.5)</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Graduate/advanced university degree</td>
<td>39 (26.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>11 (7.4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Instruments**

**Educator measures.**

Data collection included educator rankings completed at both time points, October 2015 and February 2016. The educators completed the educator expectation ranking while the principal investigator was on site at their school.

*The Educator Expectation Ranking* (EER) captured ECE and teacher expectations (Appendix C-2). At Time 1 the educators indicated the percentage of the Kindergarten
The educators provided class-level expectations at both time points. At Time 1, educators were asked three questions: 1) What percentage of students do you believe are currently meeting the curriculum expectations?, 2) What percentage of students do you believe will be meeting the curriculum expectations by February?, and 3) What percentage of students do you believe will be meeting the curriculum expectations by the end of the school year (June)? At Time 2, educators were asked two questions in relation to class-level expectations: 1) What percentage of students do you believe are currently meeting the curriculum expectations?, and 2) What percentage of students do you believe will be meeting the curriculum expectations by the end of the school year (June)? The decision to include class-level expectations in the study was based on the work of Brophy (1985) who suggested that teacher expectations at the class level might actually have more of an effect on students than the expectations of teachers toward individual students. Therefore, collecting information on individual student and class-level expectations was of importance in this study.
Child measures.

Data collection with the Kindergarten children included a finger puppet interview expectation task as well as standardized and non-standardized assessments to measure children’s self-regulation, early reading and vocabulary skills. The children were withdrawn individually from their Kindergarten classrooms for approximately 35 minutes in October 2015 and February 2016.

The Head, Toes, Knees, Shoulders Task (HTKS) (McClelland & Cameron, 2012) measures behavioural aspects of self-regulation including controlling and directing actions, inhibitory control, paying attention, and remembering instructions. The procedure for this task is similar to the game “Simon says.” The HTKS task is introduced as a game and has two parts with the same instructions and scoring. The first part begins with two paired rules: “touch your head” and “touch your toes”. The child is instructed to switch the rules by responding the opposite way. Two points are scored for following the instructions correctly (i.e., child touches their head when told to touch their toes); 1 point is scored for “self-correcting” (i.e., child makes any motion toward the incorrect response but then makes the correct response instead) and 0 points are scored if the child touches the incorrect body part. The child needs to score at least 4 points to move on to the second part. The second part has the same instructions but with different paired rules: “touch your knees” and “touch your shoulders”. Each of the parts has 10 commands (with a range of 0-20 points per part), therefore the HTKS task’s scores range from 0 to 40.

The HTKS task is a measure of inhibitory control (a child must inhibit the dominant response of imitating the examiner), working memory (a child must remember the rules of the task) and attention focusing (must focus attention to the directions being
presented by the examiner) (Ponitz, McClelland, Mathews, & Morrison, 2009). The HTKS task was chosen for this study as previous research indicates that the HTKS task is valid, shows high inter-rater reliability ($\kappa = .90$), and demonstrates variability in children's scores (McClelland & Cameron, 2012; Schmitt, Pratt, & McClelland, 2014; von Suchodoletz et al., 2013). In addition, the task generally requires no more than 10 minutes to administer.

The Test of Early Reading Ability 3rd Edition (TERA-3) (Reid, Hresko, & Hammill, 2001) was used to assess three components of early English reading: alphabet knowledge, conventions of print, and meaning. The alphabet subtest measures children’s knowledge of the alphabet, including letter recognition, names, and sounds, as well as syllables. The conventions of print subtest measures children’s understanding of conventions including spelling, punctuation, and capitalization, as well as children’s book handling and familiarity with books. The meaning subtest evaluates children’s ability to infer meaning from printed letters, words, sentences, and paragraphs. Subtests are individually administered. For each subtest, children start with the appropriate test item according to their age and continue through each subtest until they either complete all items in the subtest or until three consecutive items (within a subtest) are answered incorrectly.

The TERA-3 provides individual raw and standardized scores of children’s early reading ability in each of the three areas, in addition to a total raw and standardized score of early reading. Raw scores are converted into standard scores. Once standard scores are determined, there are formulas applied that calculate the $z$-scores and percentiles. The test developers assessed content reliability through the use of Cronbach’s alpha across age
intervals for each subtest and for the Reading Quotient (Reid et al., 2001). Findings
demonstrated acceptable levels of alpha for all subtests with all values exceeding .80.
The Reading Quotient had alphas of .91 or higher across all ages. Content reliability was
assessed for the sample in the present study through the use of Cronbach’s alpha.
Findings demonstrated accepted levels of alpha with all values exceeding .88. Reid and
colleagues (2001) also assessed internal constancy for subgroups including gender,
etnicity, and clinical groups (including children with special needs). Coefficients ranged
from .91 to .99 for all subgroups for the Reading Quotient.

The developers describe a systematic process used to determine content validity.
The process included a review of the literature, comparing list of emerging reading
behaviours, item examination by reading experts, item analysis, and a differential item
functioning analysis (Reid et al., 2001). Findings supported the claims that the items on
the TERA-3 represented behaviours that were consistent with what would be expected for
emerging readers. The developers assessed the concurrent validity of the TERA scores by
comparing them to other norm-referenced measures, including the Stanford Achievement
Test-9 and the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test-Revised (NV). Findings revealed that
the TERA-3 compared well with both the SAT-9 reading comprehension and the
Woodcock Reading Mastery Test. In summary, the developers provided evidence that
TERA-3 is a psychometrically sound measure of early reading ability.

The *Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test 3rd Edition* (PPVT-3) (Dunn & Dunn,
1997) is a standardized measure of children’s English receptive vocabulary. For each test
item, children are shown four pictures and asked to point to the picture that corresponds
with the word spoken by the experimenter. A basal level of performance is determined
and testing continues in sets of 12 increasingly difficult words until the child makes 8 or more errors in a single set. Standardized tables are used to convert raw scores to standard scores. The authors have reported sufficient content and construct validity and have also indicated strong reliability scores of .95 and .92 for internal consistency and test-retest reliability, respectively (Dunn & Dunn, 1997). Content reliability was assessed for the sample in the present study through the use of Cronbach’s alpha. Findings demonstrated accepted levels of alpha with all values exceeding .90.

*Finger Puppet Expectation Questions.* Prior to starting any of the questions the children were asked to select a puppet for themselves, and a puppet for the researcher. After completing the outcome measures (HTKS (SR), TERA (ER), PPVT (VOC) the children were asked, “How do you think you did?” Their response to this question was used as the expectation score for each task, that is, how the children expected to do based on having completed the task. This method of capturing child expectations is consistent with the research methods of expectation scholars (Rubie-Davies, 2006, 2015; Zhang, 2014).

*Family Demographic Survey.* Demographic information was provided by parents/guardians. This questionnaire consisted of questions including date of birth, gender, year of Kindergarten (JK/SK) and ethnicity of children. Family background information included highest level of education of mother and father, first language and other languages spoken at home (Appendix C-3).

**Analysis procedures**

The data were first entered into excel and then imported into SPSS. The entries for all variables were checked to ensure accuracy of data entry (SPSS file matched excel
document). A trained Master’s student rechecked the entries to confirm that there were no errors. Next, the validation process in SPSS 21 was used to make sure that the data were ready for analyses. The logic behind the validation process is to apply a set of rules to the data set and if those rules are violated, SPSS indicates such and decisions can be made to address any data entry issues. SPSS has a predetermined set of validation rules; however, it is also possible to define rules for specific variables. I loaded the predefined rules, defined a set of rules for the data set (for specific variables), and initiated the validation process (results in a SPSS output window). Since almost all of the predefined and defined rules were not violated, SPSS produced the message, “Some or all requested output is not displayed…” this indicates that many of the checks were passed. The identifier checks predefined rules did however, have some violations. For example, there was a duplicate identifier (these cases were entered twice). Therefore, I removed the duplicate for this participant. There was also one variable in which the defined rules were violated. A code of 11 was entered instead of a code of 1, therefore, I went back to the raw data, noted the error and corrected this in both the excel document and the SPSS file. Complete data were available for both educators at Time 1 and Time 2; therefore, no imputation or deletion procedures were necessary for the educator data. The data from the educator rankings were normally distributed. There was less than 5% missing data for all child variables. Missing data procedures were employed for the child outcome data.

There is no simple rule for deciding whether to leave data as they are, to drop cases that include missing values, or to impute values to replace these missing values. In the past, some suggested that researchers drop cases over imputing values due to the possibility of distorting significance and effect size (Kalton & Kasprzyk, 1982).
However, deletion techniques result in smaller sample sizes, which may actually decrease power and increase chances of false negatives (Type II error) due to larger standard errors (Kalton & Kasprzyk, 1982). More recently, imputation is almost universally recommended over deletion techniques (Garson, 2015). Using as much information as available through imputation can result in “best-guest estimates of significance and effect size coefficients and is today the preferred approach” (Garson, 2015, p. 11).

Little's chi-square statistic for testing whether values are missing completely at random (MCAR) was conducted in SPSS. If the $p$-value of the Little’s MCAR test is not significant, then the data may be assumed to be MCAR. The MCAR test was not significant, $\chi^2 = 416.734$, $df = 376$, $p = .072$, demonstrating that the data are missing completely at random. Next, the missing value analysis was performed. This procedure has three functions: 1) describes the pattern of missing data, 2) estimates means, standard deviations, covariances and correlations for different missing value methods, and 3) imputes missing values with estimated values using regression or expectation-maximization methods (IBM SPSS Manual 22, n.d.). Descriptive statistics of missing data were reviewed. For each variable the number of non-missing values and the number and percentage of missing values is reported. There was less than 5% missing data for all child variables, therefore single imputation was selected. Single imputation refers to a family of techniques that fill each missing value with a single value in one complete dataset (Rudra, 2014; Waal, Pannekoek, & Scholtus, 2011). The automatic imputation model was selected for imputation; this model chooses the most suitable method based on characteristics of the data. The automatic imputation selected the regression method of imputations for all variables, this method estimates missing values using multiple linear
regression. A new database was created that included the imputed variables, and all analyses were run using the complete imputed dataset.

Research question two is answered using path analysis (PA). PA is a type of structural equation modeling (SEM) that involves only observed variables and is more efficient than conducting a series of separate regression analyses while allowing for a comprehensive assessment of overall model fit (Kline, 2005). PA allows an assessment of the magnitude (size of the effects, regression coefficients) and significance of the relations among the exogenous and endogenous variables. PA is a straightforward extension of multiple regression and was selected for this study due to its ability to simultaneously test for direct and indirect (mediating) effects which is not possible with an ordinary least squares regression approach (Stage, Carter, & Nora, 2004). PA involves model-testing not model-developing procedures (Norman & Streiner, 2003); therefore, in this study I tested my conceptualized model of expectations (Figure 3.1), which is based on theory and knowledge of expectations and the Kindergarten context in Ontario. The straight arrows in the model are the paths, and the curved arrows represent the correlations among the variables. The circle with an arrow pointing to the endogenous variable is the error term, often called the disturbance term in PA, which is part of all regression equations (Norman & Streiner, 2003).

Descriptive statistics and measures of association were conducted for all variables; data were checked for outliers and for normality. In PA, linear relations between variables are assumed. Scatterplots between each predictor and criterion were reviewed. Each variable was normally distributed ignoring the other variables and each variable was normally distributed at every combination of the values. The multivariate
normality assumptions were met, suggesting that the only relation that can exist between the variables is a linear one (Green & Salkind, 2013). In order to reduce violations in the data, it is assumed that error terms are not correlated; this assumption was met for all models as evident through appropriate model fit. Several fit statistics were reviewed to evaluate the fit for each path model and are presented below.

PA involves 5 steps: model specification, model identification, estimation, test of fit, and respecification. Model specification involves specifying the relation among the variable. In this study, my conceptualized model of expectations in Kindergarten was used to evaluate the direct and indirect relations of educator expectations, child expectations, and child outcomes for all three constructs of interest in the study (self-regulation, early reading, and vocabulary) at both time points. When identifying the model, the number of parameters cannot exceed the number of observations. The most effective way of limiting the number of parameters is to leave out paths that are not part of the theorized model (Norman & Streiner, 2003). Maximum likelihood estimation was used, as it is not dependent on the scale of measurement and the assumption of multivariate normality was met. Several fit statistics were reviewed to evaluate the fit for each path model. The $\chi^2$ goodness-of-fit, Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), are reported for all models. The GFI and CFI are all scaled to be between 0 and 1, with larger numbers indicating a better fit with a minimum criterion of .90 (Norman & Streiner, 2003), although Hu and Bentler (1999) advises a minimum cut-off of .95. The RMSEA index is used to examine the model fit against an external benchmark, models with an RMSEA of .05 or less are considered to have a good fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999), but values as high as
.08 are regarded as acceptable (Browne & Cudeck, 1993). For each of the path analyses the fit index indicated acceptable fit to the data and therefore respecification was not necessary. The six path analyses were conducted using AMOS version 22.

A series of path analyses was conducted to test my conceptualized model of expectations for each construct. Six path analyses were run to understand the direct and indirect effects of educator (ECE and teacher) and children’s expectations on the three constructs (SR, ER, VOC), at both time points (See Figures 3.2-3.7). I hypothesized that educator expectations (both ECE and teacher) would have direct effects on child outcomes and mediated effects on these outcomes through children’s expectations of themselves. I believed that ECEs and teachers would have dissonant expectations at Time 1, but that their expectations would be congruent at Time 2.

The path analyses were first run with several student demographic (gender, ethnicity, mother’s education, child age) and teacher controls (years teaching and years teaching in Kindergarten) to examine potentially confounding variables. The only significant control in the path analyses was child age; therefore, child age is the only control variable included in the final path models. This procedure of removing none significant control variables can improve parsimony and is consistent with the work of Browne and Cudeck (1989, 1993), Byrne (2016), and Olobatuyi (2006). “The principle of parsimony states that the best statistical model among all satisfactory models is that with the fewest parameters. That is, if the simplest model in terms of the number of variables or propositions can explain a phenomenon adequately then the simplest model should be selected” (Olobatuyi, 2006, p. 117). Furthermore, simple models are more replicable (Browne & Cudeck, 1989, 1993).
Results

For clarity purposes the results of each research question are presented separately.

Table 3.3 provides a summary of research questions, measures and analysis procedures for Study 2. Findings from both research questions are brought together in the discussion section.

Table 3.3

Summary of Research Questions, Measures, and Analyses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Analyses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is there congruence or dissonance between educator (ECE and teacher) expectations for self-regulation, early reading, vocabulary, and class level expectations?</td>
<td>The Educator Expectation Ranking (EER)</td>
<td>Series of two-way repeated-measures ANOVAs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Follow-up pair-wise comparison</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| What are the direct and indirect effects of educator (ECE and teacher) and children’s expectations on self-regulation, early reading and vocabulary outcomes at Time 1 and Time 2? | **Educator Measure:**
  The Educator Expectation Ranking (EER)                                           | Series of path analyses |
|                                                                                  | **Child Outcome Measures:**
  Head, Toes, Knees, Shoulders Task (HTKS), Test of Early Reading Ability 3rd Edition (TERA-3), Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test 3rd Edition (PPVT-3) |                                              |
|                                                                                  | **Child Expectation Measure:**
  Finger Puppet Expectation Questions                                              |                                              |
|                                                                                  | **Demographic Measure:**
  Family Demographic Survey                                                        |                                              |
RQ1: Is there congruence or dissonance between educator (ECE and teacher) expectations for self-regulation, early reading, vocabulary, and class level expectations?

Self-Regulation (SR)

A two-way repeated-measures analysis of variance was conducted to compare ECE and teacher expectations of children’s self-regulation at Time 1 (current rating October, projected February and projected June) and Time 2 (current rating February, and projected June). Each student was exposed to all combinations of levels of the two qualitative variables and measured on a quantitative variable for each combination. The repeated-measures factors were educator expectations with two levels (ECE and teacher) and time with five levels (Time 1 current October, Time 1 projected February, Time 1 projected June, Time 2 current February, Time 2 projected June). The expectation X time interaction effect and time main effect were tested using the multivariate criterion of Wilks’s lambda ($\Lambda$). The expectation X time interaction effect was significant $\Lambda = .46$, $F(4, 145) = 43.48$, $p < .001$, as well as the time main effect, $\Lambda = .10$, $F(4, 145) = 402.04$, $p < .001$. The univariate test associated with the expectation main effect was also significant, $\Lambda = .84$, $F(1, 148) = 29.23$, $p < .001$.

Five paired-samples $t$ tests were conducted to evaluate the differences between the two educators for each time period (See Table 3.4). The Bonferroni correction was used to reduce the chances of type 1 errors. There were no significant differences at Time 1 (current, projected February, and projected June). The teacher SR expectation score yielded a significantly lower mean rating at Time 2 current (February), $t(148) = 11.9$, $p < .001$, with a large effect size ($d = 1.01$), and Time 2 projected June $t(148) = 8.71$, $p < .001$, with a large effect size ($d = .82$).
Table 3.4

Results of t-tests Comparing ECE and teacher Self-Regulation Expectations

<table>
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<th>Variable</th>
<th>ECE</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
<th>Cohen’s d</th>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>-.122</td>
<td>.903</td>
<td>-3.3, 2.9</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>T1 Projected February</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>62.8</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>-.472</td>
<td>.637</td>
<td>-3.3, 2.1</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>T1 Projected June</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>75.6</td>
<td>75.5</td>
<td>.035</td>
<td>.972</td>
<td>-2.4, 2.5</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>T2 Current</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>75.5</td>
<td>58.5</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>14.2, 19.9</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>T2 Projected June</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>81.5</td>
<td>69.7</td>
<td>8.71</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>9.1, 14.5</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Using the Bonferroni correction for the comparisons, the p-value has to be < .05/5= <.01 for an effect to be significant.

**Early Reading**

A two-way repeated-measures analysis of variance was conducted to compare ECE and teacher expectations of children’s early reading at Time 1 (current rating October, projected February and projected June) and Time 2 (current rating February, and projected June). The repeated-measures factors were educator expectations with two levels (ECE and teacher) and time with five levels (Time 1 current October, Time 1 projected February, Time 1 projected June, Time 2 current February, Time 2 projected June). The expectation X time interaction effect and time main effect were tested using the multivariate criterion of Wilks’s lambda (Λ). The expectation X time interaction...
effect was significant $A = .65, F(4, 145) = 19.70, p < .001$, as well as the time main
effect, $A = .065, F(4, 145) = 523.30, p < .001$. The univariate test associated with the
expectation main effect was also significant, $A = .84, F(1, 148) = 28.36, p < .001$.

Five paired-samples $t$ tests were conducted to evaluate the differences between the
two educators for each time period (See Table 3.5). The Bonferroni correction was used
to reduce the chances of type 1 errors. There were no significant differences at Time 1
(current, projected February, and projected June). The teacher ER expectation score
yielded a significantly lower mean rating at Time 2 current (February), $t(148) = 21.8, p <
.001$, with a large effect size ($d = 1.03$) and Time 2 projected June $t(148) = 18.4, p < .001$,
also with a large effect size ($d = 1.01$).

Table 3.5

Results of $t$-tests Comparing ECE and Teacher Early Reading Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>ECE</th>
<th></th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>95% CI</th>
<th>Cohen’s $d$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$M$</td>
<td>$SD$</td>
<td>$M$</td>
<td>$SD$</td>
<td>$t$</td>
<td>$p$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T1 Current</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>-.843</td>
<td>.400</td>
<td>-5.5, 2.2</td>
<td>-0.083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T1 Projected</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>.404</td>
<td>.687</td>
<td>-2.6, 3.9</td>
<td>0.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T1 projected</td>
<td>72.6</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>71.2</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>.948</td>
<td>.345</td>
<td>-1.6, 4.6</td>
<td>0.074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2 Current</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>12.9, 15.5</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2 Projected</td>
<td>82.3</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>69.9</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>11.1, 13.8</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Using the Bonferroni correction for the comparisons, the $p$-value has to be $< .05/5=$
<.01 for an effect to be significant.

**Vocabulary**

A two-way repeated-measures analysis of variance was conducted to compare ECE and teacher expectations of children’s vocabulary at Time 1 (current rating October, projected February and projected June) and Time 2 (current February, and projected June). The repeated-measures factors were educator expectations with two levels (ECE and teacher) and time with five levels (Time 1 current October, Time 1 projected February, Time 1 projected June, Time 2 current February, Time 2 projected June). The expectation X time interaction effect and time main effect were tested using the multivariate criterion of Wilks’s lambda ($\Lambda$). The expectation X time interaction effect was significant $\Lambda = .93$, $F(4, 145) = 2.67$, $p = .034$, as well as the time main effect, $\Lambda = .083$, $F(4, 145) = 398.90$, $p < .001$.

Five paired-samples $t$ tests were conducted to evaluate the differences between the two educators for each time period (See Table 3.6). The Bonferroni correction was used to reduce the chances of type 1 errors. There were no significant differences at Time 1 (current, projected February, and projected June). The teacher VOC expectation score yielded a significantly lower mean rating at Time 2 current (February), $t(148) = 6.84$, $p < .001$, with a small effect size ($d = .109$) and Time 2 projected June $t(148) = 3.01$, $p = .003$ with a small effect size ($d = .056$).
Table 3.6

Results of t-tests Comparing ECE and Teacher Vocabulary Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>ECE M</th>
<th>ECE SD</th>
<th>Teacher M</th>
<th>Teacher SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
<th>Cohen’s d</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T1 Current</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>53.2</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>-.427</td>
<td>.670</td>
<td>-3.7, 2.4</td>
<td>-0.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T1 Projected</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>.956</td>
<td>-2.7, 2.8</td>
<td>0.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T1 Projected</td>
<td>75.4</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>74.3</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>.717</td>
<td>.475</td>
<td>-1.8, 3.8</td>
<td>0.058</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2 Current</td>
<td>62.6</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>6.84</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>1.1, 1.9</td>
<td>0.109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2 Projected</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>71.8</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.24, 1.2</td>
<td>0.056</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Using the Bonferroni correction for the comparisons, the p-value has to be < .05/5 = < .01 for an effect to be significant.

Class Level Expectations

A two-way repeated-measures analysis of variance was conducted to compare ECE and teacher class level expectations at Time 1 (current October, projected February, and projected June) and Time 2 (current February, and projected June). The repeated-measures factors were educator expectations with two levels (ECE and teacher) and time with five levels (Time 1 current October, Time 1 projected February, Time 1 projected June, Time 2 current February, Time 2 projected June). The expectation X time interaction effect and the time main effect were tested using the multivariate criterion of Wilks’s lambda (Λ). The expectation X time interaction effect was significant, Λ = .63,
\(F(4, 145) = 21.73, p < .001\), as well as the time main effect, \(A = .02, F(4, 145) = 1769, p < .001\). The univariate test associated with the expectation main effect was also significant, \(A = .85, F(1, 148) = 26.49, p < .001\).

Five paired-samples \(t\) tests were conducted to evaluate the differences between the two educators for each time period controlling for type 1 errors using Bonferroni correction (See Table 3.7). There were no significant differences for the pair-wise comparisons from current October and projected February expectations from Time 1. Significant pair-wise comparisons were found at Time 1 projected June, \(t(148) = 4.43, p < .001\), with a small effect size \((d = .261)\), Time 2 Current February \(t(148) = 10.05, p < .001\), with a large effect size \((d = .752)\), and Time 2 Projected June \(t(148) = 12.11, p < .001\) with a medium effect size \((d = .682)\), with the teacher class level expectation scores yielding a significantly lower mean rating when compared with the ECE class level expectation scores.
Table 3.7

Results of t-tests Comparing ECE and Teacher Class Level Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>ECE M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Teacher M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
<th>Cohen’s d</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T1 Current</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>.853</td>
<td>.395</td>
<td>-1.4, 3.6</td>
<td>0.063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T1 Projected</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>62.7</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>.536</td>
<td>.592</td>
<td>-1.4, 2.4</td>
<td>0.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February Projected</td>
<td>80.3</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>77.5</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>1.5, 4.0</td>
<td>0.261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2 Current</td>
<td>67.4</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>60.2</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>10.05</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>5.7, 8.6</td>
<td>0.752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2 Projected</td>
<td>77.9</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>71.1</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>5.7, 7.9</td>
<td>0.682</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Using the Bonferroni correction for the comparisons, the p-value has to be < .05/5 = <.01 for an effect to be significant.*

**RQ2:** What are the direct and indirect effects of educator (ECE and teacher) and children’s expectations on self-regulation, early reading and vocabulary outcomes at Time 1 and Time 2?

The results of the six path analyses conducted using AMOS version 22 are presented below. For each of the path analyses the fit index indicated acceptable fit to the data.

**Self-regulation Time 1**

Fit statistics from the resulting model suggested a good model fit, $\chi^2 (1) = 0.585$, $p = 0.444$, GFI = 0.99, CFI = 0.98, RMSEA = 0.001. Findings demonstrated a significant direct effect of ECE SR expectations on child SR outcomes, $\beta = 0.17$, $SE = 0.06$, $p =$
0.02, as well as a significant direct effect from child SR expectations to child SR outcomes, $\beta = 0.50$, $SE = 1.04$, $p < 0.001$. There were no significant teacher expectation effects. Student age in months was a significant covariate of SR outcomes meaning that children who are older have higher self-regulation scores at T1. The standardized direct effects of self-regulation at Time 1 are presented in Table 3.8. The path model marked with standardized coefficients and $R$-square is displayed in Figure 3.2.

Table 3.8

*Standardized direct and indirect effects for self-regulation Time 1*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Path relations</th>
<th>Direct effects</th>
<th>Indirect effects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cex &lt;-- ECEex</td>
<td>.054</td>
<td>.027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cex &lt;-- Tex</td>
<td>.084</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO &lt;-- ECEex</td>
<td>.17**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO &lt;-- Tex</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>.042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO &lt;-- Age</td>
<td>.32***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO &lt;-- Cex</td>
<td>.50***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* ***$p < .001$; **$p < .01$; *$p < .05$.
Figure 3.2. Path model examining the direct effect of educator and child SR expectations on SR outcomes at T1. Paths are marked with standardized coefficients.

**Early Reading Time 1**

Fit statistics from the resulting model suggested a good model fit, $\chi^2 (1) = 0.116$, $p = 0.733$, GFI = 0.99, CFI = 0.99, RMSEA = 0.001. There were no significant direct or indirect effects of early reading expectations on outcomes at Time 1. The standardized direct and indirect effects of early reading at Time 1 are presented in Table 3.9. The path model marked with standardized coefficients and $R$-square is displayed in Figure 3.3.
Table 3.9

*Standardized direct and indirect effects for early-reading Time 1*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Path relations</th>
<th>Direct effects</th>
<th>Indirect effects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cex &lt;-- ECEex</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cex &lt;-- Tex</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO &lt;-- ECEex</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO &lt;-- Tex</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>-.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO &lt;-- Age</td>
<td>.106</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO &lt;-- Cex</td>
<td>.127</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* No sig findings.

Figure 3.3. Path model examining the direct effect of educator and child ER expectations on ER outcomes at T1. Paths are marked with standardized coefficients.
Vocabulary Time 1

Fit statistics from the resulting model suggested a good model fit, $\chi^2 (1) = 1.110$, $p = 0.292$, GFI = 0.99, CFI = 0.99, RMSEA = 0.027. Findings demonstrated a significant direct effect of ECE VOC expectations on child VOC expectations, $\beta = 0.21$, $SE = 0.004$, $p = 0.048$, and a significant direct effect of child VOC expectations on child VOC outcomes, $\beta = 0.54$, $SE = 1.34$, $p < 0.001$. There were no significant teacher expectation effects. The standardized direct and indirect effects of vocabulary at Time 1 are presented in Table 3.10. The path model marked with standardized coefficients and $R$-square is displayed in Figure 3.4.

Table 3.10

*Standardized direct and indirect effects for vocabulary Time 1*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Path relations</th>
<th>Direct effects</th>
<th>Indirect effects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cex &lt;-- ECEex</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cex &lt;-- Tex</td>
<td>-.024</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO &lt;-- ECEex</td>
<td>.106</td>
<td>.111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO &lt;-- Tex</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>-.013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO &lt;-- Age</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO &lt;-- Cex</td>
<td>.54***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$. 
Figure 3.4. Path model examining the direct effect of educator and child VOC expectations on VOC outcomes at T1. Paths are marked with standardized coefficients.

Self-regulation Time 2

Fit statistics from the resulting model suggested a good model fit, $\chi^2 (1) = 0.047, p = 0.828$, GFI = 0.99, CFI = 0.99, RMSEA = 0.001. Findings demonstrated a significant direct effect of ECE SR expectations on child SR outcomes, $\beta = 0.94, SE = 0.013, p < 0.001$, a significant direct effect of ECE SR expectations on child SR expectations, $\beta = 0.89, SE = 0.002, p < 0.001$, and a significant direct effect of child SR expectations on child SR outcomes, $\beta = 0.06, SE = 0.281, p < 0.001$. A significant indirect (partial mediation) was also found from ECE SR expectations to child SR outcomes through child SR expectations, $\beta = 0.056, SE = 0.015, p = 0.01$. There were no significant teacher expectation effects. The standardized direct and indirect effects of self-regulation at Time 2 are presented in Table 3.11. The path model marked with standardized coefficients (the
significant indirect effect presented in red) and $R$-square is displayed in Figure 3.5.

Table 3.11

*Standardized direct and indirect effects for self-regulation Time 2*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Path relations</th>
<th>Direct effects</th>
<th>Indirect effects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cex &lt;-- ECEex</td>
<td>.90***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cex &lt;-- Tex</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co &lt;-- ECEex</td>
<td>.94***</td>
<td>.056***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO &lt;-- Tex</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>-.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO &lt;-- Age</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO &lt;-- Cex</td>
<td>.06***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* ***$p < .001$; **$p < .01$; *$p < .05$.*

Figure 3.5. Path model examining the direct and indirect effect of educator and child SR expectations on SR outcomes at T2. Paths are marked with standardized coefficients.
Early Reading Time 2

Fit statistics from the resulting model suggested a good model fit, $\chi^2 (1) = 0.469$, $p = 0.494$, GFI = 0.99, CFI = 0.99, RMSEA = 0.001. Findings demonstrated a significant direct effect of ECE ER expectations on child ER outcomes, $\beta = .83$, $SE = 0.049$, $p < 0.001$, a significant direct effect of ECE ER expectations on child ER expectations, $\beta = .80$, $SE = 0.006$, $p < 0.001$, and a significant direct effect of child ER expectations on child ER outcomes, $\beta = 0.12$, $SE = .54$, $p < 0.001$. A significant indirect (partial mediation) was also found from ECE ER expectations to child ER outcomes through child ER expectations, $\beta = 0.096$, $SE = 0.029$, $p = 0.006$. There were no significant teacher expectation effects. The standardized direct and indirect effects of early reading at Time 2 are presented in Table 3.12. The path model marked with standardized coefficients (the significant indirect effect presented in red) and R-square is displayed in Figure 3.6.

Table 3.12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Path relations</th>
<th>Direct effects</th>
<th>Indirect effects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cex &lt;--ECEex</td>
<td>.80***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cex &lt;--Tex</td>
<td>-.055</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO &lt;-- ECEex</td>
<td>.83***</td>
<td>.096**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO &lt;-- Tex</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO &lt;-- Age</td>
<td>-.015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO &lt;-- Cex</td>
<td>.121***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$. 
Figure 3.6. Path model examining the direct and indirect effect of educator and child ER expectations on ER outcomes at T2. Paths are marked with standardized coefficients.

**Vocabulary Time 2**

Fit statistics from the resulting model suggested a good model fit, $\chi^2 (1) = 2.683$, $p = 0.101$, GFI = 0.99, CFI = 0.99, RMSEA = 0.05. Findings demonstrated a significant direct effect of ECE VOC expectations on child VOC outcomes, $\beta = 0.91$, $SE = 0.15$, $p < 0.001$, a significant direct effect of ECE VOC expectations on child VOC expectations, $\beta = 1.7$, $SE = 0.019$, $p < 0.001$, and a significant direct effect of child VOC expectations on child VOC outcomes, $\beta = 0.57$, $SE = 0.58$, $p < 0.001$. A significant indirect (partial mediation) was also found from ECE VOC expectations to child VOC outcomes through child VOC expectations, $\beta = 0.97$, $SE = 0.17$, $p = .002$. Findings demonstrated a significant negative direct effect of Teacher VOC expectations on child VOC outcomes, $\beta = -0.47$, $SE = 0.16$, $p = 0.005$, a significant negative direct effect of Teacher VOC expectations on child VOC expectations, $\beta = -1.03$, $SE = 0.021$, $p = 0.003$, and negative
significant indirect (partial mediation was found from teacher VOC expectations to child VOC outcomes through child VOC expectations, $\beta = -0.59$, $SE = 0.17$, $p = 0.002$. The standardized direct and indirect effects of vocabulary at Time 2 are presented in Table 3.13. The path model marked with standardized coefficients (the significant indirect effect presented in red) and $R$-square is displayed in Figure 3.7.

Table 3.13

*Standardized direct and indirect effects for vocabulary Time 2*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Path relations</th>
<th>Direct effects</th>
<th>Indirect effects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cex &lt;-- ECEex</td>
<td>1.71***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cex &lt;-- Tex</td>
<td>-1.03**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>CO  &lt;-- Cex</td>
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*Note.* ***$p < .001$; **$p < .01$; $p < .05$.  

Discussion and Conclusion

A series of two-way repeated measures ANOVAs was conducted to compare ECE and teacher expectations of children’s SR, ER, VOC, as well as class level expectations at Time 1 (current October, projected February, and projected June), and Time 2 (current February, and projected June). All four ANOVAs were significant; therefore, a series of paired-samples t tests was conducted to assess differences between educator expectations at each time period for SR, ER, VOC, and class level expectations. Results for SR, ER, and VOC indicate that ECE and teacher expectations were congruent at Time 1 but dissonant at Time 2, with ECEs having significantly higher expectations on all three constructs at Time 2. Cohen’s $d$ indicated a large effect size for SR and ER expectations; however, a small effect size was present for vocabulary expectations, and therefore we
must consider this trivial effect size in interpreting the findings for vocabulary. Nonetheless, ECEs had significantly higher expectations at Time 2 for all constructs. Post hoc analysis for the educators’ class level expectations indicated a significant difference at Time 1 projected June, Time 2 current February, and Time 2 projected June with ECEs having significantly higher expectations. This was the only time where differences in educator expectations were found at Time 1, demonstrating dissonant expectations in end of year projected growth at the class level. In interpreting this finding, one must question what it is about ECEs that mean they have higher projected expectations for end of year growth right from the beginning of the school year (October).

In understanding the findings of research question one it is important to look back at the decades of research in the area of teacher expectations that have provided sufficient evidence that educator expectations influence student performance and achievement (Babad, 1993; Brophy, 1983; Weinstein, 2002; Zhang, 2014). Researchers have used the self-fulfilling prophecy as a theory to explain the influence of expectations on outcomes. Both positive and negative self-fulfilling prophecy effects are described in the work of Babad, Inbar and Rosenthal (1982b). The dissonant findings of educator expectations suggest the possibility of positive effects from ECE to child, and negative effects from the teacher to the student.

The potential for negative effects is one of the reasons why educators are called to have high expectations; however, simply having an educator decide to have high expectations for their students is not enough to translate high expectations into high student achievement. Thus, there is a need to understand more about the direct and indirect effects of expectations on outcomes. Research question two reveals the direct and
indirect effects of these differential expectations on outcomes using a series of 6 path analyses.

Results from the PA indicated a significant direct effect from ECE SR expectations to child SR outcomes and a significant direct effect from child SR expectations to child SR outcomes. There were no significant indirect or direct effects of early reading at Time 1. There was a significant direct effect from ECE VOC expectations to child expectations and a significant direct effect from child expectations to child outcomes. There were no significant indirect effects. At Time 2 the trend from ECE expectations to child outcomes and child expectations remained consistent for all three constructs. There was a significant direct effect of ECE expectations on child outcomes and child expectations for SR, ER and VOC. Similarly, significant direct effects from child expectations to child outcomes were found for all constructs. A partial mediation was also found, demonstrating that child expectations mediated the relations between ECE expectations and child outcomes. With regard to the teacher expectations, there was a significant negative direct effect of teacher expectations on child outcomes and child expectations for vocabulary. There was also a significant negative partial mediation from teacher expectations to child outcomes. These mediated findings are in contrast to the work of Kuklinski and Weinstein (2001) who concluded that in the primary grades, teacher expectations have more direct effects on students’ achievement outcomes and are not mediated in the same way as for junior students via student self-expectations.

In summary, all significant positive direct effects of expectations on outcomes came from ECE and child expectations. The only significant direct effect from teacher
expectations to child outcomes and expectations was for vocabulary, and this was negative, indicating that when teacher expectations for vocabulary went up, child vocabulary outcomes and expectations went down. There were no direct or indirect effects of educator or child expectations on outcomes for early reading Time 1.

The differences between the findings for ECEs and teachers from RQ1 and RQ2 are noteworthy. The results from RQ1 revealed that ECEs had significantly higher expectations at Time 2 for all constructs. Results from RQ2 demonstrated that all significant positive direct effects of expectations on outcomes came from ECE and child expectations. Therefore, ECEs had higher expectations and these expectations were more predictive of student outcomes when compared with teacher expectations.

In interpreting the results of Study 2 it is important to consider the: 1) dissonant findings for ECEs and teachers for both RQ1 and RQ2, 2) lack of direct or indirect effects for early reading at Time 1, and 3) direct effect of child expectations on child outcomes. I believe there are two possible explanations for the dissonant findings for the ECEs and teachers in this study (for RQ1 & RQ2). The first potential explanation lies in the differences in regard to the educators' professional knowledge base; the second explanation is a possible execution of educator roles as described in the FDK curriculum document. In thinking through the first possibility further, ECEs and teachers bring commonalities and differences in regard to their professional knowledge base. Ontario’s Education Act was amended in 2010 to include changes related to the implementation of FDK (Legislative Assembly of Ontario, 2010). One of the amendments to the Education Act was to spell out the shared responsibilities of the ECE and teacher with a duty to
cooperate and coordinate in the planning and delivery of the program. This model of pairing ECEs and teachers was the first of its kind in Canadian jurisdictions.

In regard to educator training, ECEs must have completed at least a 2-year college diploma in Early Childhood Education that includes training in emergent and child-focused programming, observation methods and principles of child development. All teachers must have a minimum of a 3-year post-secondary degree, and have completed a Bachelor of Education program with a focus on curriculum and assessment (Gananathan, 2015). ECEs and teachers are expected to bring their unique skills and training in a collaborative and complementary way as partners. It is important to acknowledge the difference in training and potential pedagogical differences of the educators working within the Kindergarten program. In interpreting the findings from this study, ECEs may be utilizing their developmental training in understanding the multiple opportunities within a program to deliver the curriculum and with multiple opportunities to teach the curriculum expectations there are multiple opportunities for children to learn and meet the expectations. It is possible that teachers are viewing curriculum delivery as a more specific interaction that needs to occur, possibly resulting in lowered expectations of the teacher.

A related explanation for the dissonant findings is the potential execution of educator roles as outlined in the FDK curriculum document. There are specific roles outlined for each educator. In describing the teachers' role the curriculum document states,

Teachers are responsible for the long-term planning and organization of the program and the management of the Early Learning–Kindergarten classes. In addition, teachers are responsible for student learning; effective instruction; formative assessment (assessment for learning) and evaluation, based on the
team’s assessments of children’s progress; and formal reporting and communication with families (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010, p. 8).

In describing the role of the ECEs the curriculum document states,

Early childhood educators bring a focus on age-appropriate program planning to facilitate experiences that promote each child’s physical, cognitive, language, emotional, social, and creative development and well-being, providing opportunities for them to contribute to formative assessment (assessment for learning) and evaluation of the children’s learning (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010, p. 8).

The words responsible, bring, and contribute have been highlighted to demonstrate the clear distinction in the language being used in describing the roles of these educators. The teacher’s role is described in relation to responsibility for long-term planning, management of the program, student learning and assessment and evaluation, and responsibility for reporting and communicating to families. In comparison, the ECEs bring a focus on age-appropriate program planning and contribute to assessment. The roles as outlined in the curriculum document may be contributing to the differences in educator expectations and the direct and indirect effects of these expectations on children’s outcomes. The teacher’s responsibilities as outlined in the curriculum document may limit their informal interactions with children. The pressure that comes with their responsibilities may cause teachers to be pulled away from being directly involved in the learning interactions with children, an opportunity that the ECEs may be more afforded based on the description of their role and the time they spend with children each day. Future research should seek to further investigate how these roles are actually being played out in FDK classrooms.

The second finding worth further interpretation is the lack of significance in regard to direct and indirect effects of educator and child expectations on early reading at
Time 1. There were no significant differences between ECE and teacher expectations for ER at Time 1, nor were there any significant direct or indirect effects. These findings are a bit concerning considering the importance of Kindergarten as a context for fostering children’s early reading skills. In thinking about the relations between early reading and vocabulary skills, it is helpful to consider the small effect size that was found for the difference in educator expectations for vocabulary. Therefore, a possible explanation is that ECEs and teachers need more time with children to fully understand the complexities of early reading and vocabulary skills in Kindergarten. October may have been too early in the Kindergarten year to assess children’s emerging literacy and language skills. Despite this possibility, it is important to consider a practical implication of this finding. Educator teams should consider the inclusion of more informal assessments and interactions with Kindergarten children even in the beginning months of school, so that they can truly understand the needs and abilities of the children in the classroom. Additional research is needed to understand what these interactions and assessments should look like in Kindergarten.

A final yet critical finding to further understand is the significant direct effect of child expectations on child outcomes for SR and VOC at both time points, and ER at Time 2. Rubie-Davies and colleagues (2006) suggest that educator expectations may be evident to students in learning opportunities provided, classroom climate, and interactions in the context of the classroom (Rubie-Davies et al., 2006). In the present study, child expectations were more consistent with the ECEs' expectations. A possible explanation for this finding is in the context of the FDK program. ECEs attend specialty classes (gym, drama, music) with the children while the teachers have allocated prep time. The
extended time that ECEs spend with children in informal interactions may be contributing to these findings.

There is a lack of previous research exploring the relations between children’s expectations and outcomes in the early years, specifically children’s experiences entering school. The research that does exist often focuses on children’s perspectives of school readiness and transitions to school (Di Santo & Berman, 2012; Dockett & Perry, 2001, 2005, 2007; Duncan et al., 2007; Isaacs & Magnuson, 2011). These researchers have stressed the importance of Kindergarten as a context in which children begin to draw conclusions about school (Dockett & Perry, 2001). Zhang (2014) noted the importance of children’s earliest school experiences in contributing to the influence of child expectations on achievement. Upon entering school, children’s experience is a particularly important factor influencing later educational outcomes demonstrating a need to further explore and understand expectations at the Kindergarten level (Zhang, 2014). This research demonstrates the importance of Kindergarten as a context in which children begin to form expectations, which may have lasting impacts.

Despite Kindergarten being an important context in which children form expectations and perspectives on their school experience, research is needed to demonstrate the effect of child expectations on outcomes in the early years. This study addresses this gap and demonstrates direct effects of child expectations on outcomes in Kindergarten for SR, ER, and VOC. This finding is particularly meaningful in highlighting children’s awareness of how they are doing on outcome tasks in Kindergarten. This work confirms the findings of scholars who have stressed the importance and ability of young children to participate in research on matters that affect
them (Di Santo & Berman, 2012; Dockett & Perry, 2001, 2005, 2007; Duncan et al., 2007; Heagle, Timmons, & Pelletier, 2016; Isaacs & Magnuson, 2011; Timmons & Pelletier, 2016) and adds to the literature by further demonstrating that Kindergarten children are aware of how they are doing on self-regulation, early reading and vocabulary tasks. Moving forward, future work should strive to include Kindergarten children in research to construct a greater understanding of the influence of child expectations on outcomes in other curriculum areas.

In conclusion, in comparing ECE and teacher expectations, congruent and dissonant expectations were found. When dissonant expectations occurred, ECEs had significantly higher expectations. Results from the PA indicate direct and indirect effects of educator and child expectations on SR, ER, and VOC outcomes. There was a significant direct effect of ECE expectations on child outcomes and child expectations for all three constructs at Time 2. There was also a significant direct effect from child expectations to child outcomes. There was a significant negative direct effect of teacher expectations on child outcomes and child expectations for vocabulary at Time 2. These results demonstrate consistency in ECE and child expectations and inaccurate expectations of teachers in this study. Possible explanations for these findings include differences in professional knowledge base (educator training), potential execution of educator roles as described in the curriculum document, and a difference in the amount of time spent with children as a result of their roles in the program.
CHAPTER 4
General Conclusions

The aim of this dissertation was threefold: 1) to explore educator factors that may contribute to the formation of educator expectations in Kindergarten, 2) to compare the expectations of ECEs and teachers working in FDK classrooms in Ontario, and 3) to understand the direct and indirect effects of expectations on self-regulation, early reading, and vocabulary outcomes. Study 1 sought to understand the factors that may contribute to the formation of educator expectations in Kindergarten. ECEs responded with a child-centred focus that was reflected in emerging themes such as inquiry- and play-based learning, developmentally appropriate practices, small group interactions and constructivist pedagogies. The themes that emerged from the teacher responses were mixed and included aspects of child-centred pedagogy; however, these child-centred practices were described as secondary to teacher-directed practices.

Distinctions in themes were also prominent in the educator responses to their basis for evaluation. The educators were asked to report their expectations (percentage of the Kindergarten curriculum they believed/expected each student was/would be meeting for self-regulation, early reading and vocabulary). Following the reporting of expectations the educators were asked to report their basis for evaluation, in other words what reference were they using in providing these expectation scores. Findings suggest that ECEs and teachers use varying methods of gathering evidence for the purpose of reporting, at least in the case of reporting their expectations in this research. It is possible that these distinctions are reflective of larger differences in assessment practices of ECEs and teachers. The ECEs described using observations whereas the teachers revealed using formal/direct assessments as their basis for evaluation.
Variations in educator responses were further reflected in the informal versus formal practices and interactions described by the educators. ECEs described informal interactions with children including opportunities to engage with students throughout the day during play, in small groups, and spending time in specialty classes such as drama, music and gym. Teachers described more formal interactions with children such as interactions during instruction of a literacy lesson, such as teaching letter sounds, whole group instructional practices, and implementing routines. The informal practices and interactions described by the ECEs are more in keeping with that of high expectation educators as described in previous literature (Rubie-Davies, 2015; Weinstein, 2002), whereas the practices reported by teachers are more in line with that of low expectation educators, specifically in relation to their reported practice of ability grouping (Dweck, 2006; Good & Brophy, 2008; Hattie, 2009; Hornby et al., 2011; Rubie-Davies, 2015; Timperley & Robinson, 2002). These distinctions are particularly noteworthy for understanding educator expectations in Kindergarten given the differences in expectation levels revealed in Study 2.

The findings of Study 2 revealed congruent expectations for ECEs and teachers at Time 1 on all three constructs, and dissonant expectations at Time 2 with ECEs having significantly higher expectations. Comparison of class level expectations indicated a significant difference at Time 1 projected June, Time 2 current February, and Time 2 projected June with ECEs having significantly higher expectations. This was the only instance where dissonant expectations were found at Time 1, suggesting that ECEs have significantly higher projected expectations for end of year growth at the class level compared with teachers. The series of path analyses demonstrated that when significant
positive direct effects of expectations on outcomes were present, they were from ECE and child expectations. There was a significant negative direct effect of teacher expectations on outcomes for vocabulary at Time 2.

The results from Study 2 indicate key differences between the findings for ECEs and teachers. In summary, the ECEs had higher expectations and these expectations were more predictive of student outcomes when compared with teacher expectations. By itself the latter finding is not necessarily all good news if the goal is higher expectations for all, as expectation literature suggests (Good & Brophy, 2003; Rubie-Davies et al., 2006; Weinstein, 2002). Although the ECEs had higher expectations than the teachers, the ECEs could be working against the interest of the students with the lowest abilities as they have lower expectations for them and higher expectations for the high ability students (positive prediction). Therefore, optimal expectations would be those that are high for all students yet are realistic. Results from Study 1 suggest that ECEs have both elements. For example in Study 1, the ECEs responded to the questionnaire with a more child-centred focus that was reflected in themes such as inquiry- and play- based learning, small group interactions, developmentally appropriate practices, motivation for learning, and constructivist pedagogies. More specifically, when the ECEs described their teaching philosophies their responses fell under the theme of constructivism and included both theoretical aspects in thinking about socio-cultural learning theories and practical applications such as educators acting as a scaffold for children’s learning. These practices are in line with previous literature on the beliefs and practices of high expectation educators (Rubie-Davies, 2007, 2008; Weinstein, 2002). In thinking further about optimal expectations being not only high but also accurate, the ECEs described the importance of
developmentally appropriate practices. In these responses the ECEs discussed the importance of interactions being grounded in knowledge of child development as well as knowledge of individual children. These responses suggest that ECEs not only have high expectations but also report practices of gathering accurate understanding of student ability.

The discussion section of Study 2 provided potential explanations for the dissonant findings for the ECEs and teachers and included differences in professional knowledge base, training, and execution of roles within the FDK program. The discussion of the latter focused on the description of the roles as outlined in the FDK curriculum document. However, the findings from Study 1 further support this explanation. In Study 1 the educators were asked to describe their role in the Kindergarten program. Findings revealed a hierarchy in the description of roles. ECEs described themselves as a support for the classroom teacher and the teachers described themselves as program leaders. Although the goal of FDK is to offer a program that is taught in collaboration by two teaching partners, the language used to describe educator roles in the 2010 FDK document varies. The teachers' role is described in relation to their responsibilities for long-term planning, management of program, student learning, assessment and evaluation and reporting, whereas, the ECEs bring a focus on developmentally program planning and contribute to assessment. Therefore, Study 1 provided converging evidence about this hierarchical relationship and the ways that ECEs and teachers are executing these roles in their classrooms. Taken as a whole these findings highlight the importance of not only capturing educator expectation levels, but going deeper in understanding the practices and interactions that may contribute to the formation of expectations in Kindergarten.
Limitations and Future Research

It is important to consider the limitations of this dissertation and directions for future research. The first limitation is the small sample of educators \((n=30, 15\text{ ECEs and } 15\text{ teachers})\). Future research should seek to increase the sample size of educators specifically in testing the conceptualized model of expectations. However, with future research in mind, there is a limitation to studying all educators through group comparisons rather than considering individual variations. Therefore, going forward there are three important directions for continued research. The first, mentioned previously involves increasing the sample size of educators in testing the conceptualized model of expectations discussed in Study 2. The second involves continued investigation in exploring the individual practices and interactions of ECE and teacher teams. This would mean going beyond capturing data from questionnaire and interview methods to capturing more detailed information through observational data. This would provide the opportunity for researchers to work with educators to better understand the decisions they make in their classrooms for their students, while providing more detailed information about the practices and interactions that are associated with varying expectation levels. Researchers should consider why educators are choosing particular grouping strategies in their practice while seeking to understand the ways in which educators can work with more flexible groupings. The third direction for future research involves further examination into the complexities of the direction of expectation effects. Although expectation scholars accept that teacher expectations influence student outcomes, there is a need to understand the complexities of this relation. In a 1992 study, Goldenberg suggested that teachers and students influence one another in complicated ways that are
often difficult to predict. It is possible that teacher expectation levels result from student
effects. For example, student behaviour and motivation towards learning could shape
teacher expectation levels (Goldenberg, 1992). Teacher expectations may predict student
outcomes because their expectations are accurate interpretations of student achievement.
Rubie-Davies (2006) suggested that the relation is more likely dynamic than
dichotomous; however, the research of Gill and Reynolds (1999) was highlighted to
suggest that the relation is more likely from teacher to student. Future research should
consider further investigating the complex relation of expectations and outcomes.

In addition to exploring educator expectations, Study 2 revealed the direct effect
of child expectations on outcomes for self-regulation, early reading, and vocabulary.
These findings are particularly meaningful in highlighting children’s awareness of how
they are doing in Kindergarten. Future research should strive to include the voices of
Kindergarten children in further understanding the influence of their expectations on
outcomes in other curriculum areas such as math. Research should also seek to include
children’s perspectives of grouping approaches. The long-term goal is to paint the picture
of what high expectations mean in the daily life of the Kindergarten classroom. In order
to accomplish this the voices of all key stakeholders should be included; this includes the
Kindergarten children, both members of the teaching team and parents.

In conclusion, the findings of this dissertation will be far reaching if educators of
young children consider and attend to the importance of their own expectations on
children’s learning and children’s expectations of themselves. This research has
important and direct application to practice in early learning through professional
development and teacher education with pre- and in-service educators, specifically in
considering the practices, interactions, and behaviours of high expectation educators.

Thus, the next step is to better understand how to translate information about the practices of high expectation educators in professional development and teacher training.
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Appendices

Appendix A-1

Information Letter and Consent Form (Educator Participants)

September 2015

Dear Educators,

I am writing to ask for your participation in a research project on educator expectations and child expectations and outcomes in full-day Kindergarten. If you agree to participate, you will take part in a survey and questionnaire about your expectations and perspectives about children’s learning. This will happen once in October 2015 and again in February of 2016. This will take approximately 20-25 minutes of your time. I value your time and commitment to this research project; therefore, I will donate bookstore certifications to your class when your survey is returned.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary, you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. Likewise if you wish to withdraw from the study, all information will be destroyed by shredding.

Information from the research will be presented at scholarly research conferences and in publications. You may receive a summary copy of the study findings.

Please read and sign the attached consent form.

Do not hesitate to contact me at kristy.timmons@mail.utoronto.ca, for further information.

Sincerely,

Kristy Timmons, Ph.D. Candidate

Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study, OISE/UT

416-934-4506

kristy.timmons@mail.utoronto.ca
Consent Form for Educator/Children’s Perspectives Study

I __________________________________________________ [name] understand that I have been invited to participate in a research study conducted by Kristy Timmons on educator and children’s expectations Kindergarten. I understand that I will participate in a survey and questionnaire as part of the research in October and February. I understand that I will not be made to participate, I may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. This study has been approved by the (will include school board ethics information).

• I agree to participate in the study. Please check: YES ☐ or NO ☐

Educator name (Please print) __________________________________________________

Position: Please circle- Early Childhood Educator/Teacher

Educator signature (Please sign) ________________________________________________

Date ________________________________________________________________________

Please check here if you would like to receive a copy of the study. ☐

Please read and sign the attached consent form by Wednesday September 30th.
Appendix A-2

Information Letter and Consent Form (Child Participants)

September 2015

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I am writing to ask for your participation in a research project on educator expectations and child expectations and outcomes in full-day Kindergarten. If you agree for your child to participate, your child will take part in enjoyable learning activities with myself or trained teacher researchers. Children will be asked to point to pictures of words, will be asked to write a simple sentence, participate in a Simon-Says like activity, and share their self-perspectives of themselves as learners. This will happen once in October 2015 and again in February of 2016. Your child will be withdrawn from his or her classroom for approximately 30-45 minutes to engage in these learning activities. I also ask you to complete the attached survey to provide some additional information about your child and family. I value your time and commitment to children’s learning; therefore, I will donate bookstore certifications to your child’s class when your survey is returned to the classroom educator. Children will not be made to participate if they are shy or unwilling and may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. Likewise if you wish to have your child withdraw from the study, all information will be destroyed by shredding.

Information from the research will be presented at community and scholarly research conferences and in publications. You may receive a summary copy of the study findings.

Please read and sign the attached consent form and return it to your child’s teacher by Wednesday **September 30, 2015.**

Do not hesitate to contact me at kristy.timmons@mail.utoronto.ca, for further information.

Sincerely,

Kristy Timmons, Ph.D. Candidate
Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study, OISE/UT
416-934-4506
kristy.timmons@mail.utoronto.ca
Consent Form for Educator/Children’s Perspectives Study

I understand that my child _____________________________ [name] has been invited to participate in a research study conducted by Kristy Timmons on children’s expectations and outcomes in Kindergarten. I understand that my child will participate in learning activities as part of the research and that I (as parent/guardian) will participate in the research by completing the attached survey. I understand that my child will not be made to participate if she/he is shy or unwilling and that our family may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. This study has been approved by the (will include school board ethics information).

I agree for my child and family to participate in the study.

Please check:   YES ☐  or  NO ☐

Parent/Guardian name (Please print) __________________________________________________

Parent/Guardian signature (Please sign) ______________________________________________

Date _____________________________________________________________________________

Child’s Date of Birth _____________________________

Child’s Teacher ________________________________

Child’s Grade Level- Please circle: JK/SK

Is there any information you would like us to have about your child that may be relevant to this study? If yes, include here.

Please check here if you would like to receive a copy of the study. ☐
Appendix B-1

Educator Demographic Survey

**Educator Demographic Survey.**
This survey includes questions about your teaching background. Any information you provide will be treated confidentially. Please return the survey with the consent from to your child’s teacher. 

**Thank you for participating.**

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>E-mail address</th>
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**Gender:** ________

**Age:**
- 20-24 years
- 25-29 years
- 30-34 years
- 35-39 years
- 40-44 years
- 45-49 years
- 50-54 years
- 55+

**Total Years of Teaching:** ________

**Total Years Teaching in Kindergarten:** ________

**Highest Level of Education**
- College diploma
- Post-diploma certificate
- Bachelor’s degree
- Post-graduate certificate
- Post-graduate degree
Appendix B-2
Educator Questionnaire

Name _________________________________________ Position: _________________________________________
Site: _________________________________________ Date _________________________________________

1. Describe your teaching philosophy.
________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________

2. Describe your role as an ECE/Teacher in the FDELK program.
________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________

3. What percentage of students do you believe are currently meeting the curriculum expectations: _____%

4. What percentage of students do you believe will be meeting the curriculum expectations by February: _____%

5. What percentage of students do you believe will be meeting the curriculum expectations by the end of the school year: _____%

6. What kind of interactions do you think are most helpful in supporting your students in meeting the curriculum expectations (describe)?
________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________
7. Describe your grouping strategies within your classroom.

Basis for Evaluation

Please indicate your basis for your evaluation, what reference are you using in estimating your expectation scores?

Any additional comments:
Appendix C-1

Child Assent Procedure

Prior to completing data collection with any of the children, the researchers stated/asked: “I am interested in what children know about Kindergarten. I would like to ask you some questions and complete some activities with you. Is that OK with you?”
Appendix C-2

The Educator Expectation Ranking (EER)

TIME 1

The Educator Expectation Ranking Self-regulation T1

Name: ______________________   School: __________________________
Position: ______________________

Instructions:
Based on your knowledge and interactions with your students, I would like you to indicate the percentage of the Kindergarten curriculum you believe/expect each student in the study: 1) is currently mastering, 2) will be mastering in February, and 3) will be mastering by the end of the school year, in self-regulation, vocabulary development and early reading based on the following expectations:

Self-regulation: Demonstrates independence, self-regulation, and a willingness to take responsibility in learning and other activities.
The Educator Expectation Ranking Early Reading T1

Instructions:
Based on your knowledge and interactions with your students, I would like you to indicate the percentage of the Kindergarten curriculum you believe/expect each student in the study: 1) is currently mastering, 2) will be mastering in February, and 3) will be mastering by the end of the school year, in self-regulation, vocabulary development and early reading based on the following expectations:

Early Reading: Uses reading strategies that are appropriate for beginning readers in order to make sense of a variety of written materials.
The Educator Expectation Ranking Vocabulary T1

Instructions:
Based on your knowledge and interactions with your students, I would like you to indicate the percentage of the Kindergarten curriculum you believe/expect each student in the study: 1) is currently mastering, 2) will be mastering in February, and 3) will be mastering by the end of the school year, in self-regulation, vocabulary development and early reading based on the following expectations:

Vocabulary: Communicates by talking and by listening and speaking to others for a variety of purposes and in a variety of contexts, more specifically, uses specialized vocabulary for a variety of purposes.
The Educator Expectation Ranking (EER)

TIME 2

The Educator Expectation Ranking Self-regulation T2

<table>
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Instructions:
Based on your knowledge and interactions with your students, I would like you to indicate the **percentage** of the Kindergarten curriculum you believe/expect each student in the study: 1) is currently mastering, 2) will be mastering by the end of the school year, in self-regulation, vocabulary development and early reading based on the following expectations:

**Self-regulation:** Demonstrates independence, self-regulation, and a willingness to take responsibility in learning and other activities.

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</table>
The Educator Expectation Ranking Early Reading T2

Instructions:
Based on your knowledge and interactions with your students, I would like you to indicate the percentage of the Kindergarten curriculum you believe/expect each student in the study: 1) is currently mastering, 2) will be mastering by the end of the school year, in self-regulation, vocabulary development and early reading based on the following expectations:

Early Reading: Uses reading strategies that are appropriate for beginning readers in order to make sense of a variety of written materials.
The Educator Expectation Ranking Vocabulary T2

Instructions:
Based on your knowledge and interactions with your students, I would like you to indicate the percentage of the Kindergarten curriculum you believe/expect each student in the study: 1) is currently mastering, 2) will be mastering by the end of the school year, in self-regulation, vocabulary development and early reading based on the following expectations:

**Vocabulary:** Communicates by talking and by listening and speaking to others for a variety of purposes and in a variety of contexts, more specifically, uses specialized vocabulary for a variety of purposes.

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# Family Demographic Survey

This survey includes questions about your family’s background. Any information you provide will be treated confidentially. Please return the survey with the consent form to your child’s teacher.

**Thank you for participating.**

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<tr>
<th>Parents name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Home phone number</td>
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<td>Mailing address</td>
<td>________________________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Postal code</td>
<td>________________________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>E-mail address</td>
<td>________________________________</td>
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</tbody>
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**Name and birth date of your child(ren), please check boy or girl**

Name: ________________________________________
Birth date: ________________________ boy       girl
          (date/month/year)

**Grade:** Please circle: JK/SK

If child is in SK, name of school in JK: ________________________
Name of teacher in JK: ________________________

**Ethnicity:** ________________________________

**Mother’s highest level of education. Please check one of the following:**
- Completed junior high school
- Completed secondary/high school
- Completed community college or technical college
- Completed undergraduate university degree
- Completed graduate/advanced university degree

Mother’s First Language: ________________

**A4. Father’s highest level of education. Please check one of the following:**
- Completed junior high school
- Completed secondary/high school
- Completed community college or technical college
- Completed undergraduate university degree
- Completed graduate/advanced university degree

Father’s First Language: ________________

**Child’s First Language** ________________________
**Other languages spoken at home:** ________________________

**If your child has attended or currently attends childcare, please complete the following information:**
- How long has s/he attend daycare ___________
- How many hours/week ___________

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