EMOTIONAL LABOR: TEACHERS' UNDERSTANDINGS OF THEIR EMOTIONAL LIVES IN PRESCHOOL CLASSROOMS

A Thesis Presented for the

Master of Science

Degree

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Kylie B. Larkin

May 2021

Copyright © 2021 by Kylie B. Larkin

All rights reserved.

Abstract

This study examines how early childhood teachers understand their emotional lives and explores the research question: How do early childhood teachers understand emotional labor in the daily life of the preschool classroom? More specifically, an emotional labor theoretical framework was used to analyze how preschool teachers self-regulate and manage their emotions. This framework suggests that we all do some amount of "acting" or "performance" of emotion in the workplace. A qualitative methodology was used to gather data from three semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. Participants were three preschool lead or assistant teachers and one preschool administrator working in a University early care and education center in the Southern Region of the United States. Findings indicated that preschool teachers understood emotional labor to be related to emotional support, emotional regulation, and emotional comfort/discomfort. Implications for practice from this study include the need for leaders to advocate for increased income, benefits, and support for teachers in order to prevent burnout, the need to spread awareness about the difficult emotion work that teachers do, as well as systemic work to normalize emotional expression in the ECE field.

Keywords: early childhood, education, emotional labor, preschool, qualitative research, teacher emotion

Table of Contents

I. INTRODUCTION....1

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE....3

The Professionalization of Early Childhood Education....3

Teacher Emotion and Child Well-Being....4

Teacher Emotion in Early Childhood Education....5

Theoretical Framework....7

Emotional Labor....7

Research Questions....10

III. METHODOLOGY....11

Participants and Context....11

Institutional Review Board Approval....14

Procedures and Data Collection....14

The Role of the Researcher....16

Analysis....16

IV. FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS....19

Emotional Regulation....21

Emotional Support....27

Emotional Comfort/Discomfort....31

V. DISCUSSION....36

Theoretical Implications....37

Implications for Practice....37

Limitations....38

Future Research Directions **38**

VI. REFERENCES **40**

VII. APPENDIX **46**

Appendix A **48**

Appendix B **52**

Appendix C **53**

Appendix D **54**

Appendix E **55**

Appendix F **62**

VITA **67**

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

For the purpose of this paper, the term emotions will be used throughout, rather than the terms feelings or affect due to a lack of agreement and consistency within literature regarding teacher emotion. Emotion is defined as "a strong feeling such as love, fear, or anger; the part of a person's character that consists of feelings" (Oxford English Dictionary, 2019). Emotions communicate information about professional identities in the workplace (Hochschild, 2012). Teachers' emotions are a significant part of their professional trajectories and impact their daily lives as educators of young children. Teachers experience a broad range of emotions while interacting with children, colleagues, families, and staff in the early childhood classroom and are expected to manage these emotions through emotional labor (Burić, Slišković, & Penezić, 2018). Hochschild defines emotional labor as being the requirement to suppress emotion in order to maintain the outward expression that produces the appropriate mental state in others (2012). Emotional labor consists of the effort, control, and planning that teachers must apply to their emotions in order to achieve professionally preferred expressions of emotion during interpersonal contact. Research has shown that teachers intentionally express or suppress certain emotions in order to achieve job-related goals (Hochschild, 2012). Reports have estimated that close to 50% of teachers leave the teaching profession within 5 years of entering the profession. A possible explanation for this could be the emotional labor, and resulting stress and burn-out, required of a teacher (Shutz & Zembylas, 2009).

In addition, research emphasizes that teachers' emotional support is important in contributing to children's positive developmental outcomes (Brown, Vesely, Mahaymya, & Visconti, 2018). Studies have shown that teachers often explicitly hide or mask their emotions in

an effort to display emotions that are considered “appropriate” for teachers of young children. Teachers’ emotional regulation skills are said to be supportive to children and are necessary in order to be considered an effective teacher (Karabay, 2019). Preschool teachers, specifically, need to form attachments with the children in their classroom, similar to the attachments children construct with caregivers/parents, so that children feel comfortable exploring their environment and may manage their behaviors more functionally (Curtis & Carter, 2017). These relationships are built with teacher sensitivity which is positively correlated with suppression of emotions (Karabay, 2019). This means that in order to build positive relationships with children, teachers are often pushing their own emotions aside in order to be sensitive to children’s emotions. While several studies have examined teacher emotion and the concept of emotional labor, there is a need to add to this literature in order to further understand the continual development of early childhood education teachers, how they use emotional labor in the early childhood classroom, and how they can be better supported. As such, this study explicitly asks teachers about emotional labor and their regulation of emotion. This study seeks to explore and understand teachers’ perspectives surrounding their emotional labor in the classroom.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Professionalization of Early Childhood Education

The field of early childhood education is challenged primarily by two issues: improving the quality of early childhood programs for children and increasing income, benefits, and support for early childhood teachers (Boyd, 2013). Historically, early childhood teachers have been documented as being undervalued and underpaid, in turn causing many instances of low-quality care (Osgood, 2006). Despite public figures and organizations advocating for increased wages for teachers, this is still a very problematic issue. Training and professional development has been emphasized by some, stating that the professionalization of the field of early childhood education would result in higher wages (Morgaine, 1999). Yet, the public image of this field has not been transformed and salaries have not become more equitable, despite many committed, phenomenal, strong educators working in the field. Unfortunately, the need for program improvement has kicked the discussion of fair wages to the curb and the voices of early childhood educators themselves have been left out (Boyd, 2013).

Emotion has always been a focus within the field of early education in the context of supporting young children's development. Madrid, Fernie, & Kantor (2015) stated that recent developments in early childhood curricula have transformed the focus of the classroom to include the development of children's emotional regulation and emotional expression skills. As such, Madrid, Fernie, and Kantor (2015) sought to shift the focus of emotion to broadly include how the world of emotion in early childhood impacts both the children and the adults involved because relationships are indeed built on emotional connections. There is a need to illuminate the role emotion plays in the overall well-being of children and teachers (Day & Lee, 2011). An

overwhelming concern about children learning academic skills and disciplinary knowledge threatens to push emotional conversations out of the public discourse and under the radar in educational spheres (Madrid, Fernie, & Kantor, 2015). All individuals, including children, parents, teachers, and administrators, involved are feeling the added pressures of standardization and the consequences (Shutz & Pekrun, 2007). There has been an increase in demand for ECE practitioners to demonstrate competence in their performance due to a general presentation of early childhood educators failing to meet the needs of children (Osgood, 2006). This has led to reform in policy regarding professionalism and disciplinary powers over ECE practitioners. More recently, there has been a shift in the professionalization of the early childhood workforce. One example of this can be seen in teacher preparation programs that now offer bachelor's and master's degrees in the field of education for children from birth through age eight. Previously, only elementary (grades K to 12) teacher licensures were offered (Madrid, Fernie, & Kantor, 2015). Still, there is little support for those who fulfill the emotion work that is required in this field.

Teacher Emotion and Child Well-Being

Being a teacher demands a positive contribution to the academic, social, and emotional needs of children (Schutz & Zembylas, 2009). Teachers are especially important to children's social and emotional needs in early childhood, the time period in which children are rapidly developing social and emotional competence (Shewark, Zinsser, & Denham, 2018). Teaching and learning are collaborative events, and because of this, teacher or child emotions can either facilitate or inhibit children's classroom engagement (Durlak, Weissburg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011). Children develop and learn largely from the interactions they have with others. According to the *Teaching Through Interactions Framework,* teacher-child interactions

are the main driving force for children's learning (Hamre & Pianta, 2007). For example, if a teacher is highly sensitive and responsive to children, children will gain a sense of security in the classroom and be more engaged and motivated during activities (Landry, Anthony, Swank, & Monseque-Bailey, 2009). Children seem to make further gains in language, academic, and cognitive skills when classroom emotional support, instructional support, and organization are higher (Leyva, et al., 2015). Thus, teachers and their emotions are important to children's developmental well-being. Interactions between teacher and child may impact a child's early development. This is why supporting teachers is especially vital in the early childhood environment.

Teacher Emotion in Early Childhood Education

This emotional role between the teacher and child is even more pronounced for teachers who work with young children ages birth to five years (Degotardi, Page, & White, 2017). Early childhood curriculum puts relationships at the center of learning and teaching as early childhood pedagogies position learning as being socially facilitated through interpersonal relations (Curtis & Carter, 2017). Even within infant-toddler research, relationships are said to be significant for effective learning (Dalli et al., 2011). If positive, relationships are the basis for learning and development for very young children. Through various relationship dynamics, teacher-child interactions can foster trust, warmth, reciprocity, group socialization, a sense of belonging, and collaborative participatory learning (Degotardi, Page, & White, 2017). Emotions are essential in early childhood education (ECE) as the work invokes strong feelings in protecting and supporting children as well as engaging with their families and communities and caring for colleagues. This places extra pressure on teachers in the field of ECE where self-interest is not emphasized (Osgood, 2006).

The field of ECE has often been marginalized because of the gendered nature of the profession. There is a dominant discourse that being an educator of young children does not require an advanced or higher-level skillset; however, the expectations of teachers have been increasing, especially for early childhood teachers, who are often females and are positioned as both the caregiver and the teacher (Madrid, Fernie, & Kantor, 2015). Colley (2006) describes the early childhood occupation as "heavily gender-stereotyped" with the majority of teachers being female. This infers that the display of emotion is embedded within gendered norms and values along with the discourse of early childhood teaching as 'women's work.' Given that caring for young children has historically been the job of women, it has also been a profession with low pay (Colley, 2006). ECE teachers continue to be underpaid and ECE continues to be a female-dominated field. The acceptance of low pay by teachers seems to be an indication of genuinely caring about the children and doing the job simply because of a love of education and a love of being able to help children grow (Goldstein, 1997; Colley, 2006).

Goldstein (1997) suggests that on top of holding an "ethic of care" in that teachers care for and have concern and compassion for the children, teachers of young children also experience a strong commitment and passion for teaching children. She defines the passion teachers have for caring for, having concern for, and building connections with children as love (Goldstein, 1997). This caring profession comes with the experience of a wide variety of emotions as teachers take on the emotions of several different children in one day. ECE teachers aspire to achieve professionalism through emotional labor, believing it's the most appropriate practice in order to do right by the children in their care (Colley, 2006). Teachers make significant investments to create a culture of care that is characterized by positive affect, selflessness, and conscientiousness. Even so, these efforts are often deemed unprofessional and early childhood professionals question

their philosophies and practices. Madrid, Baldwin, and Frye (2013) state that teachers' emotional lives are constantly changing and developing with experience and as educational, social, and political ideals change over time. There are rarely discussions about what emotional displays are considered professional or guidelines about how emotions can be used to advise early childhood curriculum and daily teaching practices. Instead, the principal dialogue surrounding emotion in ECE tends to revolve around gentleness, love, and care- "maternal" emotions (Madrid, Baldwin, & Frye, 2013).

This field necessitates learning to regulate one's emotions in order to induce certain emotions for others, which creates emotional stress. This work is not a source of bonding or satisfaction for many teachers, but often leads to isolation and emotional burnout. Individuals in jobs that require high amounts of emotional labor or emotional suppression experience job dissatisfaction, health issues, and emotional exhaustion- all factors contributing to burnout (Colley, 2006). The emotions that come with being a teacher are linked to teachers' work, development, and identity and deeply impact teachers' lives. Teacher identity includes their goals, beliefs, and standards and is the ways in which teachers view themselves and represent themselves to their students (Schutz & Pekrun, 2010). Teachers' emotional well-being is necessary for their own sense of effectiveness (Shutz & Zembylas, 2009). Emotions and teacher identity are certainly connected as teacher identity is relayed through emotions, whether consciously or unconsciously. Teacher identity influences their actions and emotions as well as their professional identity development. When teachers experience negative emotions in the classroom, their identity may be challenged by those emotions (Schutz & Pekrun, 2010). Some may present that one must simply need to be "the right kind of person" who is doing "the right things" and that you cannot separate the practice of caring from personal characteristics (Colley, 2006). Whether or not this is true, being a teacher

requires an individual to take on several roles and with those roles come the expectations of 'appropriate' early childhood teacher emotions. While emotional regulation from teachers has been shown to be very important for children, teacher perspective and understanding about their own emotional suppression or regulation is not fully understood.

Theoretical Framework

Hochschild's emotional labor framework was used to guide this research. There are several critiques of this emotional labor framework. McClure and Murphy suggest that Hochschild gives only a basic view of emotional labor in the workplace, giving organizations more control over emotions than the individual (2007). Likewise, McClure and Murphy also state that Hochschild overestimates organizational power over workers' emotions. Another critique is one that suggests Hochschild's framework is alienating because of the way she commercializes emotions (Brook, 2009). The argument is that customer service interactions could potentially be both rewarding or troubling to a worker (Korczynski, 2002). Some critics argue for the complete rejection of Hochschild's framework (Bolton & Boyd, 2003), but others suggest this is unwarranted (Brook, 2005). However, Brook (2009) does agree with other critics that Hochschild's framework is overly simplistic and fails to capture the intricacy of emotion work. Overall, Hochschild's framework is still critically important in thinking about emotional labor, especially in emotionally driven professions such as teaching.

The mechanisms of surface acting, deep acting, and genuine expression will help to further examine and understand teachers' emotional labor perspectives. As stated earlier, Hochschild (2012) defines emotional labor as having to suppress emotion in order to uphold the outward expression that yields an acceptable psychological state in others. This framework suggests that we all do some amount of "acting," which can be done in two ways: surface acting and deep acting.

Surface acting is altering how we look on the outside while deep acting involves expressing a self-induced feeling (Hochschild, 2012). Zheng, Yin, & Wang have identified a third strategy termed genuine expression. Genuine expression is defined as the manifestation of naturally experienced emotion and emphasizes automatic emotional regulation as an additional way emotional labor can be executed (2018).

Being a teacher is an emotional rollercoaster (Schutz & Pekrun, 2007). Teaching is generally labeled a caring profession in which teachers must show sympathy, caring compassion, and concern in their interactions with children (Zheng, Yin, & Wang, 2018). Teachers have the job of promoting and preserving positive classroom environments while meeting the physical, academic, and social-emotional needs of their students as well as ensuring their health and safety (Shewark, Zinsser, & Denham, 2018). Preschool teachers play the roles of mentors, caregivers, and are the boundary setters. They must balance the importance of organization, routines and schedules, boundaries, and curriculum with the importance of the teacher-child relationship (Jacobson, 2008). This can be particularly difficult considering the likelihood that at some point teachers will confront situations in the classroom that will trigger negative emotions. In order to create a supportive environment, a teacher must stifle these emotions (Shewark, Zinsser, & Denham, 2018). Though there are not specific rules about what emotions teachers are allowed to display while on the job, teachers consistently discuss appropriate and inappropriate emotions and express the need to display professionalism, which is associated with neutral emotions and restraint. The role of a teacher requires emotional self-regulation in order to promote children's emotional regulation. This puts teachers in charge of all emotional problems in the classroom and positions the teacher as either good or bad regarding his or her ability to control the emotions of everyone in the classroom and regulate emotional rules. Teachers internalize societal expectations

and create images about their own emotional behavior because they seek to make sense of their emotional spheres (Madrid & Dunn-Kenney, 2010). The emotions teachers experience are an expression of their self-identity as a professional (Schutz & Pekrun, 2007). Jacobson states that we cannot help children cope with their feelings if we do not understand our own. The more we understand ourselves, the more likely we are to be able to validate young children's emotions instead of stifling them (Jacobson, 2018). However, in order for teachers to fully understand and cope with their own feelings, administrators and coworkers must create a supportive, healthy environment in order for teachers to feel comfortable doing so.

The preschool teaching profession is highly gender-stereotyped as the majority of preschool teachers are female. It is a low-status job and even highly qualified teachers are extremely underpaid (Colley, 2016; Fenwick, 2004). Teachers' jobs often take a toll on their emotional, physical, and mental well-being, which often leads to teacher burnout (Aboagye et al., 2018). Teacher burnout is the result of long-term occupational stress and tends to be characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010). Emotional labor is largely related to emotional exhaustion. Specifically, deep acting is negatively corelated with job satisfaction and positively corelated to emotional exhaustion and depersonalization (Zheng, Yin, & Wang, 2018). In conclusion, the emotional labor framework will be used to further understand what drives teacher emotion and the impact it has on daily interactions and tasks while also providing a way of thinking about teacher perspectives and a lens through which to view the teaching profession as a whole.

Research Question

It is important to address how teachers understand their emotional lives in the classroom as well as how emotional labor impacts their perspectives about their classrooms because of the

pressure on teachers to support children's well-being and the lack of support for teachers' own well-being. As such, this study addresses the following research question: How do early childhood teachers understand emotional labor in the daily life of the preschool classroom?

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

An interpretative and flexible approach to qualitative research was employed for this study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The fluid and emergent method of observing and questioning is the central tenant of this method. Generally, observations are exploratory, setting the stage for other research activities, such as interviews (Guest, Namey, & Mitchell, 2013). Additionally, interview questions are open-ended so that participants are not led to answer a certain way. The general steps and process of this research method includes conducting interviews and/or observations, transcribing the data, reading through the data, coding the data into themes, and interpreting the meaning of the data within those themes. Specifically, the style of observation chosen allowed for participation in class routines and conversations (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Participatory observation allows for researchers to gain insight that would be difficult to obtain through interviews (Glesne, 2016). In order to answer the research question of "How do early childhood teachers understand emotional labor in the daily life of the preschool classroom?" it was important to seek an emic perspective and live experience of the participants gathered in the following type of data collection procedures: meanings from conversations, personal accounts, and observed behaviors, which was the primary reason for selecting this research method.

Participants and Context

Participants for this study were recruited from a university-based lab school that served approximately 110 children and 95 families in the Southeastern United States. The preschool classrooms at this school follow a mixed-age model, including children aged three to five years old. There are three preschool-age classrooms that each have one demonstration teacher and one assistant teacher. The number of participants in this study was limited to four preschool teachers

who were either demonstration teachers or assistant teachers at either of the two school locations. All six preschool teachers were asked to participate in the study. They received consent forms via email as well as in paper hard copy format. After all six consent forms were signed and returned, four teachers were randomly selected; however, one dropped out of the study and could not be replaced due to COVID-19, limiting the study to three teacher participants. All three teachers participated in three 30-45-minute interviews and one 2-hour classroom observation. Additionally, one administrator participated in a single 1-hour interview that was audio recorded and transcribed by the lead researcher. Pseudonyms were assigned to each participant after receiving their consent forms.

Participants

Jane is a 32-year-old White female and is a demonstration teacher at the lab school. She has 9 years of teaching experience and has both a bachelor's and a master's degree in Early Childhood Education. She worked at another facility for a short period before continuing her teaching career at this school. Lilia is a 25-year-old White female and is an assistant teacher. She has 4 years of teaching experience and a bachelor's degree in Child and Family Studies as well as a master's degree in Educational Psychology. She has worked at this school all 4 years of her teaching career. Tim is a 37-year-old White male and is an assistant teacher. He has 17 years of experience in the field of education and he has a bachelor's degree. He has served as a teacher and childcare center director at another facility in the past before becoming a teacher at this school. Colette is a White female. She is one of the program directors at the lab school as well as a university lecturer. She has 19 years of experience in the field of education and has a bachelor's degree in Child and Family Studies as well as a master's degree in Early Childhood Education.

School Context

The university lab school is an inclusive early education program for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and their families. The program is designed to promote the physical, emotional, social, creative, and cognitive development of young children. The teachers at this school support children, families, students, and researchers in a multitude of ways. The curriculum at the lab school is guided by a theoretical position that suggests that all children, regardless of their developmental dispositions, are active learners who create increasingly more complex depictions of the world, mainly through the play processes. One of the primary purposes of the lab school is to provide a place where students can build a foundation for their careers by working with young children and their families. Additionally, the program supports graduate research by providing a site for study and observation. The school administration provides a welcoming and supportive environment for children and their families, staff, professors, college students, graduate student assistants, and researchers.

Institutional Review Board Approval

Approval from the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB) was obtained in 2019 to pursue this study. Once the IRB gave approval, all of the participants were provided with hard copies of the informed consent documents in their school mailboxes as well as a digital copy via email. See Appendices D & E for the consent documents and Appendix F for a script of the email that was sent to the participants for recruitment. Participants were asked to submit a signed consent form acknowledging their awareness of the objectives of the study, the voluntary nature of participation in the study, and the confidentiality of their responses to interview questions. They were also informed of the methods I would take to protect their identities as well as how the data would be protected and stored.

Procedures and Data Collection

Data collection included one focal teacher observation per participant in addition to three qualitative interviews per teacher participant. Additionally, an administrator was interviewed about professional development provided for teachers by the school concerning emotions and emotional intelligence. These are data points to offer context to the research project. The central data source for this study was the teacher interviews. There were approximately two weeks between the first interview and the first observation for each participant and approximately two weeks between the second and third interviews for each participant; however, there was a delay between the first observation and the second interview due to COVID-19. Data collection occurred over a three-month period.

Observations were used to inform interview questions and give context to the project and were not used as data since the participants were asked about events that occurred during the observations in their interviews. Individual interviews followed a semi-structured format. The first round of interviews took place in person at a location of the participants' choosing. The second and third rounds of interviews took place via Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The interview questions built on the previous interviews and observations and were partially emergent. Before the first interview, participants were asked to fill out a form including demographic questions, such as "What is your educational background?" and "How long have you been teaching?" The first interview included questions like "What does a typical day look like for you?," and "Describe the various emotions you feel on a regular basis." The second interview included broad questions concerning teachers' emotional lives in the classroom as well as questions about situations observed in the classroom by the researcher, and the third interview was used to expand on thoughts shared in the first and second interviews and focus in on

concepts of emotional labor. See Appendices A, B, and C for demographic and interview questions.

The field observations were two hours long and all took place in the morning in order to capture the same types of routines in each classroom. The researcher was immersed in the classroom activities and routines with the children and teachers and periodically wrote down field notes during the observations as well as after the observations. Only consented teachers were observed, and no child identifiers were written down. The purpose of the teacher observations was to build rapport with the teacher as well as to develop interview questions and/or further understand the context of the study by being in the study setting (Glesne, 2016). The observations were important for the researcher to gain insight and be able to ask the teachers about specific situations and instances of emotion (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Additionally, the observations allowed the researcher to capture moments and experiences that would not have been possible to capture otherwise (Glesne, 2016). It should be noted that two classroom observations per teacher had been scheduled. Due to the COVID-19 school closures, the study had to be modified and the second observation was not conducted. Data analysis of the teacher interviews was an iterative and recursive action and reaction grounded in the data that arises from the participants interviews and observations (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Data collection occurred over a period of three months.

The Role of the Researcher

The nature of qualitative studies requires that the role of the researcher be shared transparently as the researcher is the primary tool for collecting and interpreting data. This section is necessary in order to ensure that the reader can trust the researcher and be aware of any biases the researcher may have (Peshkin, 1988).

As the primary researcher on this study, I identity as a white cis-gender female and have a B.S. degree in Child and Family Studies. I have experience working with children through multiple practicums, internships, and jobs. Currently, I teach two and three-year-olds at a local preschool. I have also worked as a research assistant with the experience of conducting research at the lab school at which this study took place and in other early childhood education programs. Additionally, I am a certified CLASS and CHILD observer, which could potentially influence my understanding of teacher affect.

Analysis

Data was coded into themes manually and analyzed using a qualitative thematic content analysis process (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Following each observation and interview, I met with my thesis advisor to debrief in order to be as objective as possible and reflect on how the project was going, whether adjustments needed to be made, etc. After transcribing was complete, transcriptions were separated by both interview and participant and manually coded into themes. Interview transcriptions were initially coded through an open coding process and then discussed with my advisor (Saldana, 2016). Two more rounds of coding took place in this same manner and were also discussed with my advisor. The quotes and codes were then put into a spreadsheet and condensed into more specific themes (Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen, & Snelgrove, 2016). The themes were then discussed with my advisor and finally, those themes were broken into subthemes on the same spreadsheet. This was a team effort and the weekly discussion between every round of coding helped to ensure reliability and trustworthiness of the themes. According to Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen, & Snelgrove (2016),

> It is suggested that researchers ultimately link their story line to the literature around which the content of themes in the study revolves to show how the study phenomenon

> has been advanced and also facilitate fuller understanding of the phenomenon for readers. Researchers recognize the story line developed based on themes as a strategy of "meaning" making, not "truth" making. If the story line is coherent and logical, readers are able to travel easily through the worlds of themes' developers and decide for themselves whether themes are legitimate research endeavors. (p. 107)

To do this, a member check was conducted. The themes and a brief description of those findings were shared with the teachers to ensure that the themes matched up with the teachers' experiences. Lastly, in the final stage the data were analyzed and interpreted using a thematic analysis to answer the research questions and "to link themes into theoretical models to develop the study's story line." (Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen, & Snelgrove, 2016, p. 110).

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Through the data analysis process, three themes emerged from the interview transcriptions. These themes include: (1) Emotional Regulation, (2) Emotional Support, and (3) Emotional Comfort/Discomfort. Emotional regulation is defined as the process an individual goes through in order to influence one's own emotions, including what emotions they feel, when they occur, and how they experience and show those emotions (Pena-Sarrionandia, Mikolajczak, & Gross, 2015). Emotional support is defined as helping one cope with difficult emotions (Jones, p. 339). Emotional discomfort is defined as being in a state of tension or feeling unpleasant emotions and emotional comfort is the positive dimension of that, feeling positive, pleasant emotions (Williams & Irurita, 2006). Within these three themes, many instances of overlap occurred, which lead to the following subthemes: (1a) providing emotional support (in order to help children regulate their emotions), (1b) seeking emotional support (in order to regulate own emotions), (2a) regulating emotions (in order to provide emotional support for children), (3a) feeling emotional comfort (due to having emotional support), and (3b) feeling emotional discomfort (due to having to provide emotional support). These subthemes illustrate the interconnectedness of emotional interactions and how those interactions influence the emotional lives of individuals, and in this case, preschool teachers. The observations and administrator interview are used as a method to triangulate the data.

Emotional Regulation

The theme of emotional regulation emerged as all three participants discussed their beliefs about the importance of emotional regulation as well as how they choose to show

emotion to children, families, or colleagues. For instance, Jane spoke about how she adapts her emotion around children:

> With children, I tone it down. I try to not be like overwhelming but also still model that like hey everybody feels emotions and you have to find a way to deal with them and so I'll talk through like I'm feeling really frustrated because blah blah blah therefore I'm going to blah blah blah.

Hochschild (2012) calls this a type of "coordination of mind and feeling" within emotional regulation. That is, the coordination of mind and feeling is a practice that often ties to a person's individuality. One may begin feeling distanced from her own sense of self due to habitually regulating emotions and becoming accustomed to feeling one way but acting another way. This same phenomenon was found in an excerpt by Tim who claimed, "teachers tend to be pretty even-keel because that's the name of the game." Here, the teachers reproduce a common early childhood education discourse about teacher emotion being censored or controlled by implicit teaching norms and practices. For example, Jane does not simply manage her emotion in front of children but also uses this time to demonstrate "appropriate" emotional coping skills. She is both regulating her own emotions, while also modeling emotional display rules for children. The notion that self-regulation is based on implicit emotional rules is also stated in Tim's idea that being even keeled is the "name of the game," suggesting that to play the game of teaching, emotional self-control is not just needed, but expected. Hochschild also mentions a type of "game," stating that not only individuals regulate their emotions in order to do their jobs, but also entire organizations "have entered the game" (Hochschild, 2012, p. 185).

Hochschild (2012) also states that emotional regulation used to be a private act but is now portrayed as a type of work in people-oriented jobs. Now companies and organizations promote

standard practices around emotions and emotional displays, instead of individuals deciding for themselves. The practices noted above are called emotion rules. Hochschild defines emotion rules as a cultural way to control actions that may follow emotions. Emotion rules are what influence emotional regulation and emotional responses. Without implicit and explicit emotion rules created within our society, one would not be led to regulate emotions. Emotion rules are made visible by the way we evaluate our emotions and/or the way others may evaluate our display of emotions. Hochschild (2012) also posits that different group settings may have different emotion rules. Both of the teachers (i.e., Tim and Jane) articulated that they were aware of their emotional regulation and acknowledged that it was simply just part of their job. Not only were the teachers aware that emotional regulation and modeling is a central part of "playing the game" of teaching, Lilia suggested that she manages her frustration and not feeling great by stepping away from her teacher role as thinker and observer and plays with the children. Different roles have different rules and ways to interpret what emotions are appropriate (Hochschild, 2012). As another example, Lilia stated,

> …in the classroom when things are happening with kids that I'm like feeling not great about like frustrated with or like thrown off by, um I play with them. I take a minute to stop observing and stop thinking really critically and I enjoy them as people and that like helps so much.

Lilia uses the act of playing with the children to conceal her emotions or possibly even get rid of them all together by focusing on *being with* the children (Hochschild, 2012). This statement reveals the difficult "work" of emotional labor and the exhaustion when performing the emotion of teaching. That is, there are times when teachers need to simply take a break from this performance and let their guard down; emotional regulation takes effort, observation, and critical

thinking. Echoing the teachers' statements about the "work" of emotional regulation and also reinforcing Hochschild's idea of emotion rules, Colette, a program administrator stated, "It's like a general understanding that teachers have that obviously we can't walk into class being like totally dysregulated." She goes on to say, "we all have the power to regulate ourselves and to apply strategies rather than emotions being something that are like out of our control and that, you know, just sort of happened to us." This statement constructs an image and notion that emotions are controlled and should not be something that "just" happen. Teachers are expected to have the skills and knowledge to regulate themselves. Additionally, individuals tend to give emotion reminders, whether to themselves or to others (Hochschild, 2012). For example, others may ask us to explain or justify our emotions. We may be reminded of emotion rules by the way others react to how they think we are feeling and how they think we should be feeling. Emotions, from this standpoint, are something to be monitored and even "strategized" when combined with binary language of control/not controlled.

Regulating Emotions to Support Children

In each of the interviews, there was overlap within the themes. In many instances, the teachers discussed regulating their emotions in order to be able to provide emotional support for children. Lilia stated, "In terms of like inside of the classroom, um, I think that emotional connection is probably one of the biggest things that happens between a teacher and a child. And so how can a child's emotions not impact you?" She goes on to explain:

> But I think that there's a difference between understanding and acknowledging a child's emotions and responding empathetically and having a child's emotions dictate your emotions throughout the day. Like there's gotta be a healthy balance, um because wow.

> With the amount of tantrums that happen in a preschool classroom, you kind of just have to acknowledge that like life is hard for a four year old.

In this excerpt, Lilia illustrated how finding an emotional balance requires emotional labor. It is an explicit and conscious act. Hochschild calls this "deep acting" (Hochschild, p. 35). The belief that teachers should have a healthy balance was also expressed and reinforced by the school administration. For example, in the administrator's interview, Colette noted:

> All emotions are valid, and we all have the right to feel whatever we feel. And at the same time, we all have responsibility, and the ability if we cultivate it, to regulate ourselves and to move ourselves to different places emotionally. And so while I might be feeling a certain way, and that's valid, it won't serve me well in this next meeting, I have, for example, to be feeling that way.

It should be noted that an explicit focus on a "healthy" emotional balance is something unique to this school as a majority of the literature of teacher emotions shows that teachers often feel guilt or surveilled by administration, which can lead to teacher emotional burn-out, stress, and frustration (Colley, 2016; Madrid & Dunn-Kenney, 2010). Recent research on "Love as an act of Resistance" has shown how focusing on children's emotional needs can be an act of resistance (Morris, 2020). Showing care and affection for children is often considered "breaking the rules" and is in tension with the notion of emotional labor and regulating emotions (Morris, 2020). Teachers may feel an internal conflict about whether they should prioritize either school readiness or emotional well-being (Morris, 2020). Similarly, at this school, there seems to be a focus on showing "appropriate" emotions or "appropriate" levels of emotions. For example, Jane stated:

> In terms of regulating emotions I think that it's always necessary in the classroom. Um, big emotions in general can be really overwhelming for children. A couple of weeks ago a parent was dropping off and she was telling me this story and it was hilarious, and I like busted out laughing like super loud and several of the kids turned around and were like that was scary. Um and so like you know it's not just regulating negative emotions it's all of it because we don't want to be like an overwhelming presence in the classroom. Um but negative emotions especially I think are really important to learn how to regulate well in front of children because we want to serve as a model for the fact that everyone has negative emotions and it's okay to have negative emotions but you have to learn how to deal with them in a way that is productive and respectful.

Jane, along with the other teachers, made it clear that regulating her emotions was very important and was for the benefit of the children. In addition, Jane is drawing upon a common discourse of what might be considered "overwhelming" emotional acts, which creates emotional display rules and norms in the ECE classroom (Colley, 2016). Jane' statement builds on the implicit discourse and concept about managing emotions as well as socializing children into learning how to deal with emotions in a "productive" and "respectful" way. Hochschild (2012) recognized this act as surface level acting and suggests that emotional labor "requires one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others" (p. 7). From an administrative perspective, Colette stated:

> I think it's really important for teachers to be full emotional beings that don't subscribe to that antiquated notion of you check your feelings at the door because that's really inauthentic. And I think we can't be fully present with children and in the moment with children and truly accessible to children, if we have put some part of ourselves aside, we

> have to be fully present with them with our whole selves. And therefore, I think what we are thinking carefully about in our program and certainly what I believe is that it is the work of teachers and you know, teacher prep programs, and coaches and leaders of teachers to unpack what that means, what it means to be your authentic self, and to be regulated and accessible because for some people it feels like either/or- either I'm my authentic self or I am who the children need me to be. But I would argue that if you're looking at it from an either/or lens, then the being what the children need you to be is not actually happening because it's a superficial veneer on the outside of your actual self."

In this passage, Colette explained that it's important for teachers to put in the work to be authentic and genuine with children while also being regulated. Zheng, Yin, & Wang (2018) called this "genuine expression," where teachers are simultaneously expressing emotion and regulating that emotion, instead of completely suppressing such emotion (Zheng, Yin, & Wang, 2018). Additionally, Hochschild (2012) suggests that genuineness and sincerity is accomplished through emotion management practices. However, Hochschild also discusses the cost of emotional labor and states that through the act of regulating emotions and consistently doing emotion work, changes occur in how one understands his or her emotions and how he or she understands what emotions say about one's self, making it more difficult to be genuine, especially in unpredictable social situations. Additionally, Hochschild (2012) states that emotional labor can affect the level to which we attend to emotion and even our "capacity to feel" (p. 21). Furthermore, Hochschild states that our culture has started to put more and more value on natural feeling and "the unmanaged heart" and suggests that there is "widespread acceptance of the view that spontaneous feeling is both precious and endangered" (p. 190). This

statement may align with the above words of the administrator, but it does not seem to align with the school culture as a whole or the actions and words of the teachers in this study.

Emotional Support

The theme of emotional support recurred many times throughout all three rounds of interviews. The teachers discussed the ways in which they provided emotional support for children and colleagues as well as the ways in which their colleagues provided emotional support for them. For example, while discussing what they saw as their role as a teacher, Jane stated, “I honestly feel like a counselor for children a lot. Ya know, I mean it's preschool like emotions are just a big part of our day all the time and so I think a big part of my role is being able to help children process emotions and figure out positive ways to deal with them” and Tim stated, “you're just there for the children, the very basic level is just for their safety and creating a loving environment for them.” In regard to having supportive colleagues and working in a supportive environment, Lilia said, “I think it's really interesting to work in a place that has people who are outside of your classroom who are like really tied into what you're doing and know what's happening um because then it's not just the people in your classroom that become your emotional support.” and Jane said, “for me the support is like if I am interested in something then my directors are going to be like yeah great, pursue that, what do you need? If I'm having a bad day there's always someone there to talk to. If I need anything, somebody is always willing to help me out. And I think it makes work an enjoyable place to be.” All three of the teachers expressed feeling very supported in the workplace on multiple occasions. Additionally, all three of the teachers noted that this support made their job much more enjoyable. Colette also shared about this, stating,

> I would say that what I see that teachers need after years of mentoring college students and in practice teachers, is that what they really need is to be fully seen…be fully seen in this very specific context of early childhood education, to be fully seen as whole humans who have emotional lives and personal lives and realities and to be supported in not shelving their emotions, but rather, truly understanding their emotions, being seen for their emotions, and then being supported and taking responsibility for being the emotional beings that serve us best in our roles as teachers and that serve the children best in our classrooms.

Colette echoes the teachers' statements about the school being a supportive environment; however, Colette's statement about teachers taking responsibility and being the "emotional beings" that serve the children best is implying that teachers need to not only regulate their emotions, but also only show their true emotions when it is of benefit to the children. I would argue that this stance does not align with the previous statements about teachers' emotions being valued, nor does it align with Colette's statement about teachers being fully seen and not having to shelve their emotions. As discussed earlier, emotion rules guide the emotional labor that people do and the cost of that emotional labor is a loss of self and genuineness (Hochschild, 2012). Additionally, emotion reminders can appear as encouragement that casually corrects the way one may feel or display emotion (Hochschild, 2012). Often, this could be mistaken for emotional support. Clearly, the teachers in this study felt emotionally supported. The critical analysis of these statements is meant to reconsider how aspects of emotional support are socially constructed in the classroom.

Providing Emotional Support

Throughout the interviews, the teachers discussed providing emotional support to children in order to help children regulate their emotions. Tim stated,

> With the kids, I find it very important to give them the words to talk through it and if they see you talking through it and sort of explaining with your words how you feel that helps them go from maybe just a scream or a growl or straight up tears to being able to say well you know what I'm feeling sad right now because of this or I'm frustrated because I wanted us to do this and I have friends that aren't listening. Or oh I'm really excited because we get to work on this project today and I really enjoy that! So um you talking it out just constantly talking, constantly using your words so then they have that vocabulary so when they're in those situations as a teacher you can understand what they're going through.

It was a common understanding that teachers themselves not only needed to regulate their emotions in order to provide emotional support to children but that it was a process of helping the children to regulate their emotions as well. If the teachers were to not regulate their emotions while trying to provide support to children in a heightened emotional state, the situation would likely escalate the child's emotional state even more.

Seeking Emotional Support

Moreover, teachers often discussed seeking out emotional support from their colleagues both inside the classroom and outside the classroom in order to help regulate their own emotions and be reassured about their actions. Jane stated,

> Lilia and I both have an agreement basically like if you need to tap out with a situation you can tap out. If something has just gone on too long, you can't take it it's just really

> getting to you like whatever then you're no longer the best person to support that child and also you need to take care of yourself so we'll be like hey I need to switch.

Similarly, Lilia stated,

> Um, I feel like, my first go to, especially when it's something happening in the moment with a child where I'm like I'm feeling irate that you continue to spit in my face ya know like I've told you 15 times to stop spitting in my face and you're spitting on your friends and they're all feeling angry at you and like I'm feeling angry at you, what I often do is stop what I'm doing and I walk over to [Jane] and I'm like [Jane] check me right now because this is the way that I want to respond to this child but I'm also feeling really irritated and angry and I don't want to make a decision based off of those things. It needs to be a supportive decision for the child and the classroom and cannot be driven by how angry I feel, and she's, I mean often she's like no, that's what needs to happen and sometimes she's like maybe you just need to switch with me and we do that often.

Lilia's statement about asking her co-teacher to "check" her brings us back, once again to the notion of emotion rules and reminders. Lilia is asking Jane to check her emotional display and guide her to an "appropriate" response. The rules of their classroom and school culture are what give Jane the power to govern Lilia's emotions. Hochschild (2012) states, "Authorities on how a situation ought to be viewed are also authorities on how we should feel" (p. 75). In other words, those who remind us of emotion rules have authority over our emotions and how we display them. In this example, Jane is the authority, but in other situations, Colette, another coworker, or even a parent may be the authority.

Colette further discussed the support that is provided for the teachers, stating,

> We have a pedagogical coaching model which involves a ped coaching leadership team. And so we get together once every couple of weeks to do basically curriculum planning like teachers do with children, but we're doing it for teachers. We then do meetings- individual one on one ped coaching meetings. And so that's what those ped coaching relationships look like and the ped coaches are assigned to teachers for a full year. And then sometimes we stick with the same classrooms for a few years. And those meetings offer teachers support, mentoring, listening, coaching, they serve a wide variety of purposes, but it's also a communication to teachers that they're worth our time and that we are here to support them. And so our ped coaching structure does offer a lot of that support to teachers and then we're making individualized support plans based on what we learn from teachers that they need.

Colette reiterates the fact that teachers are valued and supported at this school and she discusses how they accomplish this through a pedagogical coaching method. This again contrasts research that states that teachers generally do not feel supported or valued in their schools. Hochschild (2012) states that individuals rarely experience emotions or emotion management alone as this typically happens during exchanges with other people; however, people often accept uneven exchanges in their work environments. This offers a potential reason why having an emotional support system at work seems to alleviate the stress of emotional labor for the teachers in this study.

Emotional Comfort/Discomfort

The theme of emotional comfort and discomfort developed as the teachers discussed feeling multiple different emotions at work. Positive emotions such as happiness and excitement were initially classified separately from more negative emotions such as frustration, anger, and

sadness; however, we decided to combine the discussion of these emotions into one theme as emotional comfort and discomfort rather than assuming teachers' comfort levels with certain emotions. Jane discussed her and her co-teacher's discomfort in providing specific curriculum for the children,

> I've also um in the last couple of years gotten really uh frustrated, downhearted, um with just our general cultural climate and political climate and um one of the things that I kind of decided was that my classroom with my children and families and students is the place where I can have the most impact so I've tried to bring that to our classroom and my co-teacher and I have spent a lot of time developing curriculum around um ideas of social justice and creating a space in our classroom where children can talk about and are encouraged to talk about things that normally adults tell you not to talk about um or that adults are uncomfortable talking about.

Above, Jane described implementing uncomfortable topics into curriculum for the purpose of bettering the children and the community through addressing biases and societal stereotypes. On the other hand, Tim talked about emotional comfort, saying

> I enjoy this so I'm very content coming to work, you feel happy when the kids have hit these milestones you've all worked for, you're in an activity and it takes the next step or that kid that's been working so hard or maybe say going to the bathroom and they're able to figure that all out on their owns you get excited with them and for them.

Tim expressed positive emotions of happiness and joy from working with children and experiencing their accomplishments and milestones. The teachers discussed feeling emotional comfort often times due to having emotional support from their coworkers. Jane stated,

> It is easier to manage because I work in a really supportive place. So if I'm having a really rough day there are any number of people that I can go to and be like hey I need to vent for a minute and then I need you to help me like figure out what to do to manage this and like they're happy to help. So that is ya know, it makes a world of difference.

Jane describes being able to better manage her emotions because of the support she receives in her work environment. While emotional comfort was related to peer support, the teachers also discussed feeling emotional discomfort in order to do what was believed to be best for the children or to provide emotional support. For example, Lilia talked about emotional discomfort and exhaustion, stating:

> I feel like lately I've been pretty emotionally exhausted but I know that it has everything to do with the curriculum work that I am like working on with the children because when you decide that like it matters that children don't develop unhealthy bias um and treat each other with compassion you're then forced to constantly reevaluate your own bias and um I think it's just been really really difficult for me to acknowledge that a lot of my curriculum or missteps in curriculum this past semester um have been like essentially have all been impacted by my privilege and my whiteness.

In this statement, Lilia discusses feeling uncomfortable with her self-identity and mistakes regarding teaching. In addition, Tim discussed the discomfort of being male and showing emotion but also feeling a need to teach children about showing emotions. He stated,

> Generally, in our society um the sort of stereotype is you know guys don't talk about their emotions or their feelings and you know that whole horrible adage of boys don't cry and that kind of mystique. Um I think it has pushed me to recognize that I need to show the kids in my class especially the boys that it's okay to say oh I'm feeling frustrated or I'm a

> little sad you to know explain those emotions so hopefully when they see it and they grow up its sort of something that's normal to talk about instead of this thing that guys don't talk about that stuff. So yeah I believe being vocal about the way that feels and sort of showing them too that uh a male figure can be a caregiver and sort of those non-stereotypical masculine roles you know it's like 'I'm only going to build something with you' but know if you're hurt and you need a hug or you miss someone I can be there emotionally supportive as well. So I've had to push myself to recognize that I can be seen.

This statement contrasts Hochschild's (2012) framework, which suggests that men do less emotional labor work than women do and that women are more adaptive to the needs of others than men are. However, these teachers were willing to put themselves in emotionally uncomfortable situations in order to provide support for children and take on the responsibility of teaching children important life lessons. In addition, Hochschild states that women "lack a status shield against poor treatment of their feelings" at work because they are of a low status category and a woman's feelings are therefore reduced (p. 174-175). However, I'm not sure this is true in this scenario considering a vast majority of employees at this school and in the field of ECE in general are women. It is possible that men have the disadvantage in this context.

Additionally, we addressed the topic of burnout in our interviews. All three of the teachers stated that they have experienced burnout multiple times before and have to do certain things to prevent or overcome those feelings of burnout. Colette also discussed teacher burnout and the importance of acknowledging teachers' emotions. She said,

> I think it's important to acknowledge the reality of teaching as a profession, we have all this data that tells us that, you know, most teachers lose best practice within three years,

> that the percentage of teachers who stay in the field after the first three years, like drops tremendously.

She goes on to say,

> I think the solution to like oversimplify it, it's not really that simple, but the approach and the key is in acknowledging the emotion. All landscape of teaching as a profession and the reason those things are happening, the reason we have data about burnout and losing best practice…it is so emotionally draining and undervalued in society.

She continues:

> …And what we have to do, I think, is to acknowledge what the reality of teaching is like- that it is emotionally draining, but if you're doing it well, you're giving so much of your emotional self to children and families and whoever else needs you.

Colette explains that teachers are undervalued in our society despite the importance of their careers and impact on children. She also states that the job is emotionally exhausting and draining, but that in order to do the job well you must give a lot to others. The combination of giving a lot and receiving little support or compensation often leads to burnout. This makes sense as Hochschild states that keeping up with separating real emotions and emotional display (emotional labor) leads to strain (Hochschild, 2012). Additionally, emotional labor causes individuals to be estranged from emotional display, from experiencing emotions, and from what emotions tell us. Also, Hochschild suggests that some may use certain techniques to try to prevent burnout, such as separating one's self from one's role and developing a "healthy estrangement" (Hochschild, 2012, p. 188). Individuals who have a healthy estrangement are acutely aware of when they are putting on a show and when they are experiencing genuine emotion. Sometimes individuals may feel as they are being "fake," but by being able to

differentiate from real emotions and fake ones, they are less susceptible to burnout (Hochschild, 2012).

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This study explored preschool teachers' emotional lives and aimed to answer the question: how do early childhood teachers understand emotional labor in the daily life of the preschool classroom? Findings suggest that preschool teachers' emotional lives are influenced by: (1) emotional support, (2) emotional regulation, and (3) emotional comfort/discomfort. Each teacher discussed ways in which they provided emotional support for children as well as received emotional support from colleagues. They expressed various reasons as to why they felt emotional regulation was important in an early childhood classroom setting. Additionally, each teacher gave examples of teaching moments during which they felt emotional comfort or discomfort.

Throughout this study, I explored teachers interviews as well as an administrator interview. It is important to acknowledge that the teachers at this school have attended conferences and other professional development opportunities regarding emotional intelligence and other topics concerning emotions. Additionally, as expressed throughout the interviews with the teachers as well as the administrator, the school culture emphasizes both the importance of emotional regulation and teacher support. This study suggests that preschool teachers take part in constant emotional regulation and difficult emotion work throughout their workdays and even once they are at home. A lot is expected of teachers at this school and even though the need for and implementation of teacher support is emphasized, the school culture does not seem to allow for teachers to express their genuine emotions on a regular basis. This, according to Hochschild's emotional labor framework, is costly to one's sense of self and ability to recognize and express their emotions in other contexts that are outside of the classroom.

Theoretical Implications

The theoretical implications of this study made apparent that the cost of emotional labor is inherent and personal. While the school administrator expressed the importance of teachers being their genuine selves, Hochschild made it clear that regulating emotions on a regular basis at work makes it incredibly difficult for one to be genuine not only at work but also in other settings. Additionally, from a theoretical perspective, it is evident that one does not come to the conclusion that they cannot "appropriately" express their genuine emotions all on their own. Emotion rules and reminders come from others in more intimate settings as well as from societal expectations as a whole. Thus, it could be argued that emotional regulation only seems necessary because of systemic biases and discomforts revolving around emotional expression. In that regard, it could also be argued that emotional regulation does more harm than good considering the perceived cost of continual emotional regulation.

Implications for Practice

This study indicates several implications for practicing teachers, school administrators, and teacher educators. The population in this study was unique in that administrators provided intentional support for teachers as well as training surrounding emotions; however, this is not the case at every school and unfortunately, even in what was deemed a supportive workplace by the teachers in this study, every teacher still expressed that they experienced burnout. The number of years the teachers in this study have worked in this field ranged from 4 years to 17 years and all of them expressed that they had faced burnout on more than one occasion. The school administrator indicated that the majority of teachers lose best practice within three years and the number of teachers who continue in the field after those first three years has dramatically plummeted. Unfortunately, I don't think there is a simple solution to this problem; however, I

think the first steps to helping teachers avoid burnout or overcome burnout is acknowledging the fact that teaching is emotionally draining and letting teachers know that their emotions are valid and also valued. Teachers give a lot emotionally to children and their families.

Additionally, teachers in this study expressed that they engage in a lot of reflection and vulnerability practices in order to be their best selves for the children in their classroom and improve pedagogical methods. While this seems to be a great practice to prioritize the children, I think it is important that we, as a society, normalize the prioritization of teacher well-being as well. Children may benefit from learning from and building relationships with genuine people that show genuine emotions. Research makes it clear that some amount of emotional regulation around children is important, but I think this study also emphasizes how important it is for teachers to be able to express their true emotions. Teachers have an incredibly large impact on children and professionals in the field of ECE could learn and teach from the perspective that both teachers and children are equally important.

Limitations

This study was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and limited to mostly self-report from teachers as the second round of observations was unable to be completed. Future studies could benefit from more frequent observation of teachers in their work environments. As with many qualitative studies, this study is not generalizable due to a small sample size. However, despite the small number of participants, this study achieved the goal of exploring teachers' experiences of emotional labor in the preschool classroom and answering the research question of "how do preschool teachers view their emotional lives?" An additional limitation of this study includes the homogenous sample. The demographics of this study population being all white, middle class, educated professionals who work at a University lab school leave a need for future

studies to address more diverse populations and experiences. Additionally, Hochschild's emotional labor framework was the only framework used for this study and was the primary lens for analysis. There are other frameworks and ways to interpret emotional labor; therefore, the analysis could look very different through another theoretical lens.

Future Research Directions

As noted above, this study had various limitations that could be addressed in future research. Though this study explored preschool teachers' understandings of emotional labor, it is still unknown how preschool teachers' understandings of emotional labor may be different in different educational settings. Additionally, teachers' experiences with emotional labor may differ depending on their race, social class, or education level. Future research should address these gaps to ensure minoritized populations are not only represented, but also understood in comparison to differing populations and settings. The school in this study represents children of various races, but the teacher population is not racially diverse, nor is the school population as a whole diverse in other areas.

It would be important to interview children about their perspective surrounding teachers' emotions and how they are expressed in order to collect multiple perspectives from various informants on this subject and further examine the impacts of emotional labor. In addition, future studies could more thoroughly address school administrators' knowledge and views regarding teachers' emotional labor and seek to understand the relationship between school leaders' philosophy of emotion, the school culture, and the professional development that is provided.

REFERENCES

Aboagyea, M. O., Qina, J., Qayyuma, A, Antwib, C. O., Jababuc, Y., & Affum-Oseid, E. (2018). Teacher burnout in pre-schools: A cross-cultural factorial validity, T measurement invariance and latent mean comparison of the Maslach Burnout Inventory. *Children and Youth Services Review, 94,* 186-197. doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2018.09.041

Bolton, S.C. and Boyd, C. (2003). Trolley dolly or skilled emotion manager? Moving on from Hochschild's Managed Heart. *Work, Employment and Society 17*(2), 289–308.

Boyd, M. (2013). "I love my work but ..." the professionalization of early childhood education. *The Qualitative Report*, 1-20. Retrieved from https://go-gale-com.proxy.lib.utk.edu/ps/retrieve.do?tabID=T002&resultListType=RESULT_LIST&searchResultsType=SingleTab&searchType=AdvancedSearchForm&currentPosition=1&docId=GALE%7CA347404092&docType=Article&sort=RELEVANCE&contentSegment=ZONEMOD1&prodId=AONE&contentSet=GALE%7CA347404092&searchId=R1&userGroupName=tel_a_utl&inPS=true

Brook, P. (2009). In critical defence of "emotional labour": Refuting Bolton's critique of Hochschild's concept. *Work, Employment and Society*, *23*(3), 531–548. doi: 10.1177/0950017009337071

Brown, E. L., Vesely, C. K., Mahatmya, D., & Visconti, K. J. (2018) Emotions matter: The moderating role of emotional labour on preschool teacher and children interactions. *Early Child Development and Care, 188*(12), 1773-1787. doi:10.1080/03004430.2017.1286336

Burić, I., Slišković, A., & Penezić, Z. (2018). A two-wave panel study on teachers' emotions and emotional-labour strategies. *Stress and Health.* doi:10.1002/smi.2836

Colley, H. (2016). Learning to labour with feeling: Class, gender and emotion in childcare education and training. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood, 7*(1), 15-29. doi:10.2304/ciec.2006.7.1.15

Curtis, D., & Carter, M. (2017). *Learning together with young children: A curriculum framework for reflective teachers* (2nd ed.). Redleaf Press.

Dalli C., White E. J., Rockel, J., et al. (2011). *Quality early childhood education for under-two-year-olds: What should it look like? A literature review.* Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Education.

Day, C., & Lee, J. C. (2011). *New understandings of teachers' work: Emotions and educational change.* Dordrecht: Springer.

Degotardi, S., Page, J., & White, E. J. (2017). (Re)conceptualising relationships in infant-toddler pedagogy. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood, 18*(4), 355-361. doi:10.1177/1463949117742760

Durlak, J. A., Weissburg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development, 82*(1), 405–432. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01564.x

Emotion. (2019). In OxfordDictionaries.com. Retrieved from http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/emotion

Fenwick, T. (2004) What happens to the girls? Gender, work and learning in Canada's new economy. *Gender and Education, 2,* 169-186. doi:10.1080/09540250310001690564

Glesne, C. (2016). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction*. Pearson.

Goldstein, L. S. (1997). *Teaching with love: A feminist approach to early childhood education.* Rethinking Childhood, *1*. New York, NY: Lang.

Guest, G., Namey, E. & Mitchell, M. (2013). *Collecting qualitative data*. 55 City Road, London: SAGE Publications, Ltd. doi: 10.4135/9781506374680

Hamre, B. K., & Pianta, R. C. (2007). Learning opportunities in preschool and early elementary classrooms. In R. Pianta, M. Cox, & K. Snow (Eds.), *School readiness & the transition to kindergarten in the era of accountability*, 49–84. Baltimore, MD: Brookes.

Hochschild, A.R. (2012). *The managed heart: Commercialization of human feeling.* Los Angelos, CA: University of California Press.

Jacobson, T. (2008). *Don't get so upset! Help young children manage their feelings by understanding your own. A guide for caregivers.* St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press.

Jacobson, T. (2018). When teachers face themselves: Managing our emotions when children seek attention. *Exchange* (19460406), (243), 35–37. Retrieved from http://proxy.lib.utk.edu:90/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eue&AN=131552417&scope=site

Jones, S. (2004). Putting the person into person-centered and immediate emotional support: Emotional change and perceived helper competence as outcomes of comforting in helping situations. *Communication Research*, *31*(3), 338–360. Doi: 10.1177/0093650204263436

Karabay, S. O. (2019) Emotion regulation, teaching beliefs and child–teacher relationships from the perspectives of pre-school teachers. *Education*, *47*(1), 101-115. doi: 10.1080/03004279.2017.1405057

King, E. K., & La Paro, K. M. (2018). Teachers' emotion minimizing language and toddlers' social emotional competence. *Early Education and Development, 29*(8), 989-1003. doi:10.1080/10409289.2018.1510214

Korczynski, M. (2002). *Human resource management in service work.* Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Landry, S. H., Anthony, J. L., Swank, P. R., & Monseque-Bailey, P. (2009). Effectiveness of comprehensive professional development for teachers of at-risk preschoolers. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 101, 448–465. doi: 10.1037/a0013842

Lee, M., & van Vlack, S. (2018). Teachers' emotional labour, discrete emotions, and classroom management self-efficacy. *Educational Psychology, 38*(5), 669–686. doi:10.1080/01443410.2017.1399199

Leyva, D., et al. (2015). Teacher–child interactions in Chile and their associations with prekindergarten outcomes. *Child Development, 86*(3), 781–799. doi: 10.1111/cdev.12342

Madrid, S., Baldwin, N., & Frye, E. (2013). "Professional feeling": One early childhood educator's emotional discomfort as a teacher and learner. *Journal of Early Childhood Research, 11*(3), 274-291. doi:10.1177/1476718X13484240

Madrid, S. & Dunn-Kenney, M. (2010). Persecutory guilt, surveillance and resistance: The emotional themes of early childhood educators. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood, 11*(4), 388-341. doi:10.2304/ciec.2010.11.4.388

Madrid, S., Farnie, D., & Kantor, R. (2015). *Reframing the emotional worlds of the early childhood classroom.* Boca Raton, FL: Routledge.

Mawhinney, L., & Rinke, C. R. (2018). I just feel so guilty: The role of emotions in former urban teachers' career paths. *Urban Education, 53*(9), 1079–1101. doi:10.1177/0042085917741726

McClure, R. & Murphy, C. (2007). Contesting the dominance of emotional labour in professional nursing. *Journal of Health Organization and Management 21*(2), 101–20.

Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation.* (4th ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Morgaine, C. (1999). Alternative paradigm and professionalizing childhood care and education: The Oregon example. Child & Youth Care Forum, 35(1), 5-19.

Osgood, J. (2006). Deconstructing professionalism in early childhood education: Resisting the regulatory gaze. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood, 7*(1), 5-14. doi:10.2304/ciec.2006.7.1.5

Peña-Sarrionandia, A., Mikolajczak, M., & Gross, J. (2015). Integrating emotion regulation and emotional intelligence traditions: A meta-analysis. *Frontiers in Psychology, 6,* 1-160.

Saldana, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.

Schutz, P. A., & Pekrun, R. (eds.). (2007). *Emotion in education.* Burlington, MA: Academic Press.

Schutz, P. A., & Zembylas, M. (eds.). (2009). *Advances in teacher emotion research: The impact on teachers' lives.* New York, NY: Springer.

Shewark, E. A., Zinsser, K. M., & Denham, S. A. (2018). Teachers' perspectives on the consequences of managing a classroom climate. *Child & Youth Care Forum, 47*(6), 787-802. doi: 10.1007/s10566-018-9461-2

Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2010). Teacher self-efficacy and teacher burnout: A study of relations. *Teaching and Teacher Education: An International Journal of Research and Studies, 26*(4), 1059-1069. doi:10.1016/j.tate.2009.11.001

Williams, A., & Irurita, V. (2006). Emotional comfort: The patient's perspective of a therapeutic context. *International Journal of Nursing Studies, 43*(4), 405–415. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2005.06.004

Vaismoradi, M., Jones, J., Turunen, H., & Snelgrove, S. (2016). Theme development in qualitative content and thematic analysis. *Journal of Nursing Education and Practice, 6*(5), 100-110. Doi:10.5430/jnep.v6n5p100

Zheng, X., Yin, H., & Wang, M. (2018) Leading with teachers' emotional labour: Relationships between leadership practices, emotional labour strategies and efficacy in China. *Teachers and Teaching, 24(8)*, 965-979. doi:10.1080/13540602.2018.1508432

APPENDIX

Appendix A
Tables and Figures

Table 1: *Demographics and Participant Information.*

Pseudonym	Age	Gender Affiliation	Years of Experience	Educational Background	Current Position
Jane	32	Female	9 years	Bachelor's degree in ECE Master's degree in ECE	Demonstration Teacher
Lilia	25	Female	4 years	Bachelor's degree in CFS Master's degree in Ed Psych	Assistant Teacher
Tim	37	Male	17 years	Bachelor's degree	Assistant Teacher
Colette	42	Female	19 years	Bachelor's degree in CFS Master's degree in ECE	Program Director & Lecturer

Coding Process
Round 1: Open Coding
Discussion of Codes
Round 2: Focused Coding
Discussion of Codes
Round 3: Focused Coding
Discussion of Codes
Round 4: Thematic Coding and Analysis
Round 5: Analysis and Interpretation of Themes (i.e., Finalization)

Figure 1: ***Coding and Themes***

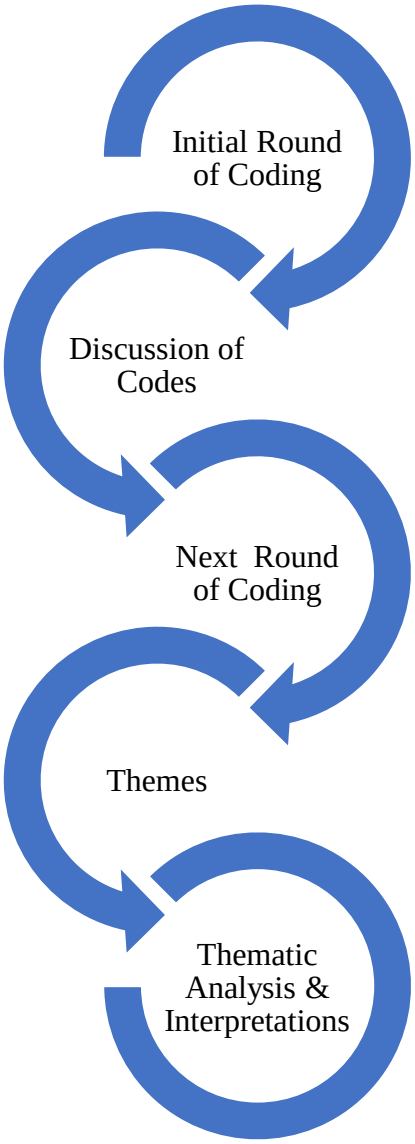


Figure 2: ***Cycles of Coding***

Table 2: *Themes and Example Statements*

Themes & Subthemes	Example Statements
1. Emotional Support	it's not just the people in your classroom that become your emotional support
1a. providing emotional support	I think a big part of my role is being able to help children process emotions
1b. seeking emotional support	Lilia and I both have an agreement basically like if you need to tap out with a situation you can tap out
2. Emotional Regulation	I try to not be like overwhelming but also still model that like hey everybody feels emotions and you have to find a way to deal with them
2a. regulating emotions for children	In terms of regulating emotions I think that it's always necessary in the classroom. Um, big emotions in general can be really overwhelming for children.
3. Emotional Comfort/Discomfort	I enjoy this so I'm very content coming to work
3a. Feeling emotional comfort	It is easier to manage because I work in a really supportive place
3b. Feeling emotional discomfort	I think it's just been really really difficult for me to acknowledge that a lot of my curriculum or missteps in curriculum this past semester um have been like essentially have all been impacted by my privilege

Appendix B
Demographic Form

1. What is your gender affiliation?

2. Age: ____

3. How would you describe your ethnicity?

4. How would you describe your socioeconomic status?

5. What is your educational background?

6. How long have you been a teacher?

7. What ages have you taught?

8. Do you have a teacher certification/license?

9. Do you have any additional certifications or special training?

Appendix C

Teacher Interview Questions

Interview 1:

- What does a typical day look like for you?
- What do you view is your role as a teacher?
- How do you view your emotional life as a teacher?
- Describe the various emotions you feel on a regular basis.
- Describe how you express emotions during your typical work day.

Interview 2:

- In our last interview, I asked you about your emotional life in the classroom. Can you tell me more about that?
- In the last interview, you said these are the emotions you experience on a regular basis; can you explain each emotion in more depth?
- I observed [situation] in your classroom. Describe your emotions associated with this situation.

Interview 3:

- I observed [situation] in your classroom. Describe your emotions associated with this situation.
- As you mentioned in our last interview, you tend to experience emotions such as [fill in the blank]. I analyzed or interpreted this to mean ____.

Appendix D
Administrator Interview Questions

1. What types of teacher trainings have you attended concerning emotions?
2. What types of teacher trainings have you provided concerning emotions?
3. Have all of the preschool teachers attended professional development sessions about emotions and/or emotional intelligence? Can you tell me more about that?
4. Describe how you think the preschool teachers at the ELC have benefited or not benefitted from these professional development opportunities?
5. Please tell me more about your philosophy of teachers' emotions in early childhood education.
6. Is there anything else you'd like to share about the emotional life of educators in preschool classrooms?

Appendix E
Teacher Consent Form

Consent for Research Participation

Research Study Title: Emotional Labor: A Qualitative Study of Teachers' Understanding of Their Emotional Life in the Preschool Classroom

Researcher(s): Kylie Larkin, University of Tennessee, Knoxville;

Dr. Samara Akpovo, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Why am I being asked to be in this research study?

I am asking you participate in this research study because you are either a demonstration teacher or an assistant teacher in a preschool classroom at the Early Learning Center for Research and Practice at the University of Tennessee - Knoxville.

What is this research study about?

The purpose of the research study is to understand teachers' emotional life in the preschool classroom.

I, Kylie Larkin, am the primary researcher on this study. I am a graduate student in the Department of Child and Family Studies at The University of Tennessee in Knoxville. I have experience working with children through multiple practicums, internships, and jobs. In addition, I am a research assistant who has experience conducting research at the ELC and other early childhood education programs. My advisor, Dr. Samara Akpovo, will be assisting with procedures such as data analysis.

How long will I be in the research study?

If you agree to be in the study, your participation will last for 8 weeks and will involve 5 study visits. All research activities will take place at the UTK-ELC or another location of your choosing.

What will happen if I say "Yes, I want to be in this research study"?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to participate in 3 one-hour interviews focused on your emotional life in the preschool classroom. I will also conduct classroom observations 2 times for 2 hours. I will take field notes during the observations about the teacher and situations that may occur. No child identifiers will be written down. There will be around 2 weeks between each interview and around 2 weeks between each observation. These procedures will occur in the following order:

Interview 1 → observation 1 → interview 2 → observation 2 → interview 3

The observations will not disrupt any classroom activities. This research does not include any classroom interventions or experimental design. I will simply be observing the routine and normal practices of classroom life. Children will not be part of this research. I will only observe you, the teacher.

What happens if I say "No, I do not want to be in this research study"?

Being in this study is completely up to you. You can withdraw from the study at any time without negative consequences. Your decision won't affect your employment at *the UTK Early Learning Center for Research and Practice.*

What happens if I say "Yes" but change my mind later?

Even if you decide to be in the study, you can stop at any time. If you decide to stop before the study is completed, contact me, Kylie Larkin, as soon as possible. There will be no negative consequences. Data already collected for this research will not be used. You can withdraw from the study at any time, even after all the data have been collected.

Are there any possible risks to me?

It is possible that someone could find out you were in this study because I will do classroom observations. I believe this risk is small because of the procedures put in place to protect your information. These procedures are described later in this form.

A possible risk of this study may be the discomfort related to discussing your emotions. This risk is minimal because I will ask general questions about emotion. You will determine what emotional issues you'd like to discuss in the interview. If you, as an interviewee, seem distressed at any point, I will give the you the opportunity to stop the interview and I will direct the you to services if necessary. Additionally, there may be confidentiality risks because of the small number of participants in this study. It is possible that someone could identify you based on the information I collect. All measures will be taken to prevent this from happening. Pseudonyms will be used to protect your identity as well as the school you work at. Participants will be described as educators who work in the Southern United States.

Are there any benefits to being in this research study?

There are no direct benefits to participating in the study. Even if you don't benefit from being in the study, your participation may help me as a researcher to learn more about teachers' emotional lives. I hope the knowledge gained from this study will benefit other researchers, teachers, and educational administrators in the future.

Who can see or use the information collected for this research study?

I will protect the confidentiality of your information by storing consent forms in a locked box inside a locked office on campus. Only myself and my university advisor will have a key. All interview and observation files will be deidentified and stored electronically on a University sponsored, password protected OneDrive account. Only myself and my university advisor will have the password. In addition, only myself and my university advisor will have access to a code key that will link your pseudonym with your name. This will be kept in a different location from the data and consent forms.

If information from this study is published or presented at scientific meetings, your name and other personal information will not be used.

I will make every effort to prevent anyone who is not on the research team from knowing that you gave me information. Although it is unlikely, there are times when others may need to see the information that I collect about you. These include:

- People at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville who oversee research to make sure it is conducted properly.
- Government agencies (such as the Office for Human Research Protections in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services), and others responsible for watching over the safety, effectiveness, and conduct of the research.
- If a law or court requires us to share the information, I would have to follow that law or final court ruling.

What will happen to my information after this study is over?

I will not keep your information to use for other research purposes. Your name and other information that can directly identify you will be deleted from your research data collected as part of the study.

I will not share your research data with other researchers.

Will it cost me anything to be in this research study?

It will not cost you anything to be in this study.

What else do I need to know?

About 4-6 people will take part in this study. Because of the small number of participants in this study, it is possible that someone could identify you based on the information I collected for the study. All measures will be taken to prevent this from happening. Pseudonyms will be used to protect your identity and school. Participants will be described as teachers who work in the Southern Region of the United States.

Who can answer my questions about this research study?

If you have questions or concerns about this study, or have experienced a research related problem or injury, contact the researchers, *Kylie Larkin, qyl575@vols.utk.edu, (423)-276-9655 or Samara Akpovo, smadrid1@utk.edu, (307)-343-3884.*

For questions or concerns about your rights or to speak with someone other than the research team about the study, please contact:

Institutional Review Board

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

1534 White Avenue

Blount Hall, Room 408

Knoxville, TN 37996-1529

Phone: 865-974-7697

Email: utkirb@utk.edu

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

I have read this form and the research study has been explained to me. I have been given the chance to ask questions and my questions have been answered. If I have more questions, I have been told who to contact. By signing this document, I am agreeing to be in this study. I will receive a copy of this document after I sign it.

Name of Adult Participant	Signature of Adult Participant	Date

I agree to be audio-recorded during interviews. By signing, I am agreeing to be in this study and be audio-recorded. I will receive a copy of this document after I sign it.

Name of Adult Participant	Signature of Adult Participant	Date

Name of Principal Investigator	Signature of Principal Investigator	Date

Appendix F
Administrator Consent Form

Consent for Research Participation

Research Study Title: Emotional Labor: A Qualitative Study of Teachers' Understanding of Their Emotional Life in the Preschool Classroom

Researcher(s): Kylie Larkin, University of Tennessee, Knoxville;

Dr. Samara Akpovo, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Why am I being asked to be in this research study?

I am asking you participate in this research study because you are an administrator at the Early Learning Center for Research and Practice at the University of Tennessee - Knoxville.

What is this research study about?

The purpose of the research study is to understand teachers' emotional life in the preschool classroom.

I, Kylie Larkin, am the primary researcher on this study. I am a graduate student in the Department of Child and Family Studies at The University of Tennessee in Knoxville. I have experience working with children through multiple practicums, internships, and jobs. In addition, I am a research assistant who has experience conducting research at the ELC and other early childhood education programs. My advisor, Dr. Samara Akpovo, will be assisting with procedures such as data analysis.

How long will I be in the research study?

If you agree to be in the study, your participation will last for 2 weeks and will involve 2 study visits which will include an interview during the first study visit and a member check during the

second study visit. All research activities will take place at a location of the participants' choosing.

What will happen if I say "Yes, I want to be in this research study"?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to participate in 1 one-hour interview focused on ELC teachers' professional development in relation to emotions. I will also conduct a member-check with you during a second study visit. This research does not include any classroom interventions or experimental design. Children will not be part of this research. I will only interview you, the administrator.

What happens if I say "No, I do not want to be in this research study"?

Being in this study is completely up to you. You can withdraw from the study at any time without negative consequences. Your decision won't affect your employment at *the UTK Early Learning Center for Research and Practice.*

What happens if I say "Yes" but change my mind later?

Even if you decide to be in the study, you can stop at any time. If you decide to stop before the study is completed, contact me, Kylie Larkin, as soon as possible. There will be no negative consequences. Data already collected for this research will not be used. You can withdraw from the study at any time, even after all the data have been collected.

Are there any possible risks to me?

There is a possibility that confidentiality may be lost because of the small number of participants in this study. It is possible that someone could identify you based on the information I collect. All measures will be taken to prevent this from happening. Pseudonyms will be used to protect your identity as well as the school you work at. Participants will be described as educators who work in the Southern United States. I believe this risk is small because of the procedures put in

place to protect your information. These procedures are described later in this form. Another possible risk of this study may be the discomfort related to discussing emotions. This risk is minimal because I will ask general questions about professional development and emotion. You will determine what emotional issues you'd like to discuss in the interview. If you, as an interviewee, seem distressed at any point, I will give the you the opportunity to stop the interview and I will direct you to services if necessary.

Are there any benefits to being in this research study?

There are no direct benefits to participating in the study. Even if you don't benefit from being in the study, your participation may help me as a researcher to learn more about teachers' emotional lives. I hope the knowledge gained from this study will benefit other researchers, teachers, and educational administrators in the future.

Who can see or use the information collected for this research study?

I will protect the confidentiality of your information by storing consent forms in a locked box inside a locked office on campus. Only myself and my university advisor will have a key. All interview and observation files will be deidentified and stored electronically on a password protected OneDrive. Only myself and my university advisor will have the password. In addition, only myself and my university advisor will have access to a code key that will link your pseudonym with your name. This will be kept in a different location from the data and consent forms.

If information from this study is published or presented at scientific meetings, your name and other personal information will not be used.

I will make every effort to prevent anyone who is not on the research team from knowing that you gave me information. Although it is unlikely, there are times when others may need to see the information that I collect about you. These include:

- People at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville who oversee research to make sure it is conducted properly.
- Government agencies (such as the Office for Human Research Protections in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services), and others responsible for watching over the safety, effectiveness, and conduct of the research.
- If a law or court requires us to share the information, I would have to follow that law or final court ruling.

What will happen to my information after this study is over?

I will not keep your information to use for other research purposes. Your name and other information that can directly identify you will be deleted from your research data collected as part of the study.

I will not share your research data with other researchers.

Will it cost me anything to be in this research study?

It will not cost you anything to be in this study.

What else do I need to know?

About 4-6 people will take part in this study. If you agree to participate, you will be the only administrator as the other participants will be teachers. Because of the small number of participants in this study, it is possible that someone could identify you based on the information I collected for the study. All measures will be taken to prevent this from happening. Pseudonyms

will be used to protect your personal identity and school identity. Participants will be described as teachers or administrators who work in the Southern Region of the United States.

Who can answer my questions about this research study?

If you have questions or concerns about this study, or have experienced a research related problem or injury, contact the researchers, *Kylie Larkin, qyl575@vols.utk.edu, (423)-276-9655 or Samara Akpovo, smadrid1@utk.edu, (307)-343-3884.*

For questions or concerns about your rights or to speak with someone other than the research team about the study, please contact:

Institutional Review Board

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

1534 White Avenue

Blount Hall, Room 408

Knoxville, TN 37996-1529

Phone: 865-974-7697

Email: utkirb@utk.edu

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

I have read this form and the research study has been explained to me. I have been given the chance to ask questions and my questions have been answered. If I have more questions, I have been told who to contact. By signing this document, I am agreeing to be in this study. I will receive a copy of this document after I sign it.

Name of Adult Participant	Signature of Adult Participant	Date

I agree to be audio-recorded during interviews. By signing, I am agreeing to be in this study and be audio-recorded. I will receive a copy of this document after I sign it.

Name of Adult Participant	Signature of Adult Participant	Date

Name of Principal Investigator	Signature of Principal Investigator	Date

VITA

Kylie Larkin was born in Kingsport, Tennessee. She is a graduate student at The University of Tennessee in Knoxville where she serves as a research assistant. She is currently working toward her Master of Science degree in Child and Family Studies and a certificate in International Children, Youth, and Families. She has obtained a B.S. degree in Child and Family Studies from Carson-Newman University and is certified in Family and Consumer Sciences (CFCS) from the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS). Additionally, Kylie works as a teacher at a local preschool.