Professional Self-Identity as a core Leadership Skill

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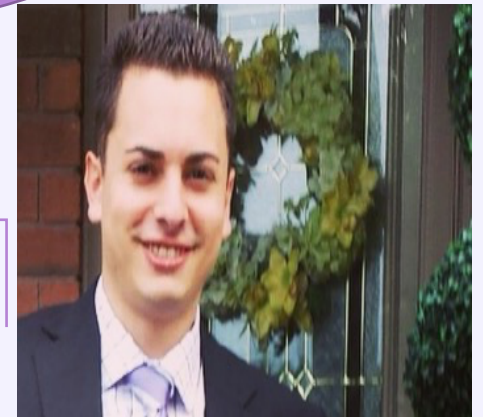
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Our research team

What we care about…

- The early years' sector is in a period of immense and rapid transformational change

- We are a sector that is not used to viewing ourselves as agents of change, as leaders

- By examining and understanding the interpretation by RECEs of their evolving journey of professionalization, the investigators can begin to formulate a hypothesis of how best to support future RECE leaders

Research Question:

Have the last 10 years of transformation had an impact on professional self-identity and the overall understanding that this leadership perspective has on quality education and care?

Our research study details:

- George Brown College Collaborative Applied Research Project ORG#5057
- Ethics #6004224
- research@georgebrown.ca

The literature says...

Globally, there is no consensus or clarity on what is expected of ECE graduates at the time of graduation... (Waniganayake, 2014, p.66).

Developing professional identity requires early childhood professionals to think in alternative ways, to reconstruct or reshape who they are, what they stand for and what they want to achieve (Stamopoulos, 2012, p.4).

While there is consensus among policymakers and practitioners about the importance of strong leadership in early childhood education, there is scant research on effective models of leadership development... (Bloom, et al, 2014, p. 1).
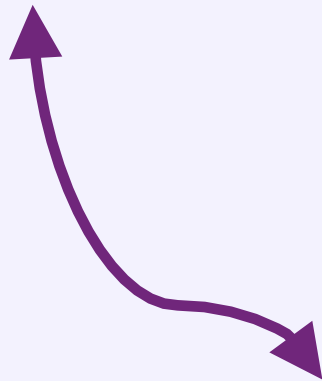
Methodology

- **Focus Groups**
  - **Minimum one each for WoodGreen RECEs, GBC Lab School RECEs, GBC Graduating Semester Students (about to become RECEs)**
  - **Completed to date:**
    - **1 x WoodGreen RECEs (8 participants)**
    - **2 x GBC final semester students (total of 4 final semester students thus far)**

- **Survey**

- **PhD dissertations**

- **Informal data collection (community workshops)**

- **Qualitative and quantitative**

Possible inferences

- How our view of ourselves is not only changing, but the external perspective is also transforming into a more professional lens of the ECEC sector

- As the talk about "who we are and what we do" becomes more entrenched in higher level thinking, so do our self-identity reflections becomes more entrenched in higher level expectations of self

- Self identity is wrapped in our own perception of keeping current and relevant

- Advocacy is a core component of professional self-identity

Next steps

- Complete literature review
- Complete focus groups
- Share survey link
- Analyze survey results
- Analyze focus group themes
- Inferences from data analysis
- Recommendations
- Further presentations with final findings and recommendations
- Final report and journal submission
- Seek further funding to venture out further geographically in Ontario

Have your say…

- https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/JDL2QXP

- Or Contact below for survey link:
  - Elaine Winick: ewinick@georgebrown.ca
  - Elaine Levy: elevy@woodgreen.org

References

- Bloom, P., Kelton, R., & Talan, T. (2014). Building the Leadership Capacity of Early Childhood Directors: An Evaluation of a Leadership Development Model. *Early   Childhood Research & Practice*, *16*(1), 1. Retrieved from http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/v16n1/talan.html

- Stamopoulos, E. (2012). Reframing early childhood leadership. *Australasian Journal Of Early Childhood*, *37*(2), 4. Retrieved from http://eds.b.ebscohost.com.gbcprx01.georgebrown.ca/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=4&sid=9bb282ca-3dba-4712-8874-f1d0996e73c4%40sessionmgr105&hid=108

- Waniganayake, M. (2014). Being and Becoming Early Childhood Leaders: Reflections on Leadership Studies in Early Childhood Education and the Future Leadership Research Agenda. *Journal Of Early Childhood Education Research*, *3*(1), 66. Retrieved from http://jecer.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Waniganayake-   issue3-1.pdf