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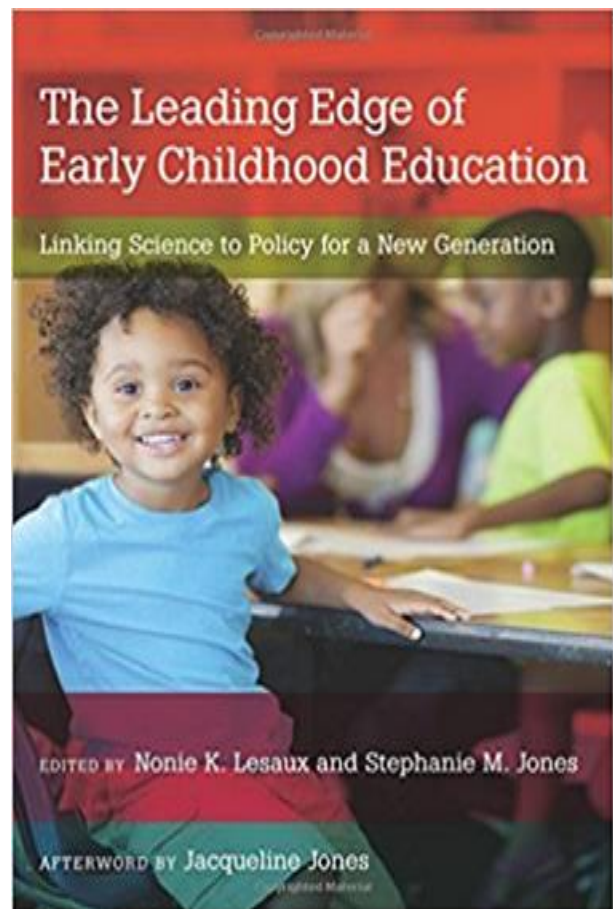
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**Reviewed by Tobi Adegbuyi  
University of Colorado Denver  
United States**

As the title indicates, *The Leading Edge of Early Childhood Education: Linking Science to Policy for a New Generation* is a compendium of detailed information, research, articles, and evaluations of old and new innovations in the early childhood education field, with great emphasis on the science of implementation. In our continuously globalized world, where women's role in the society is extending far beyond domestic responsibilities, there is also an increased call for quality early childhood education experience for young children (Stevens, 2015). As a mother of an infant and a toddler as well as an early childhood educator and researcher, I have hope for the future of our young children after reading this book.

With an introduction and conclusion by editors, Nonie K. Lesaux, Stephanie M. Jones, and Julie Russ Harris, this seven chaptered volume was written by the attendees, contributors, supporters, discussants, and/or plenary speakers at the 2014 Harvard Graduate School of Education one-day conference: The Leading Edge of



Early Childhood Education Initiative. The book addresses themes and subtopics that ranges from the macro level, like technology in all early childhood settings (chapter 5), special education/disability assessment/access (chapter 6), improving early childhood workforce, and various socio-demographics, sociocultural, socioeconomic, and sociopolitical inferences; to the micro level subjects that are more personally and contextually focused.

Acknowledging the influences of the adults involved in the everyday developmental encounters of young children, each theme of this book addresses the failures, successes, takeaways, results, and recommendations from implementations, policies, and initiatives in the early childhood field. To support the need for further establishment of quality early childhood education and care, this book draws from various successful government and independently funded early childhood projects in places like Georgia, Oklahoma, New-Jersey, Boston, San-Antonio, or the Pre-K expansion in New-York City, the Obama Administration's Preschool for All initiative, and so on. To focus on expanding learning opportunities for young children, especially for those that are from economically disadvantaged communities, the authors adopt from these examples of successful pilot early years learning and development programs. Furthermore, each contributor offers realistic and practical recommendations for teachers, parents, or policy makers, that are research based and scientifically evaluated. These innovative testimonials can be used across the various developmental habitat of children. Whether the setting is a classroom, at home, or a child care center, they emphasize the importance of good healthy educational foundation of early years of a child.

A body of neurological and psychological science around child development informs the collection of the research in this book. Each author carefully presents high quality references, examples, and

models that support the call for several rich learning opportunities in the environments that foster the growth of children. Their arguments, meant for educators, researchers, policymakers, and leaders in the various early childhood education organizations, provides hope for young children who will likely not have the opportunity for a rich early childhood experiences like some of their peers.

As a call for advocacy, this book is a great tool for promoting social awareness for the field of early childhood education. To be a voice for young children, their families, and their all-round health and wellbeing, various chapters of this book give interdisciplinary insights on how to use science and research based findings to influence policies and practices that affect children of all developmental abilities and disabilities. Chapters 1, 2, and 6 dig into the psychoanalytical, socioemotional, neurodevelopment, and neurobiological socio-environmental conditions, stressors, and adverse experiences that can predetermine early childhood development.

In an effort to bridge and close the economic, opportunity, and achievement gaps early, Chapter 7 intensively provides an example of government assisted initiatives through career advancement programs for adults in early childhood. This chapter reflects the core focus of the book, which is on increasing universal awareness of high-quality education for early years of children in all settings of their developmental encounters. The authors used this publication to advocate for a responsible use of funds on innovations that are considered in its complexity, with gradual and well-intended change, like the Two-Generation program called the Community Action Project of Tulsa County (CAP Tulsa) in Oklahoma. Initiatives and practices that will have stronghold in its local context, that will have lifelong benefits for both children and their families, and that are universally adaptable, sustainable, effective, and applicable in other contexts.

A unifying theme in this book is the recognition of the teacher's (adult) role in all aspects of a child's development. After presenting their data, information, or arguments, almost every author emphasizes the developmental effects of any stressor experienced by the adults involved in a child's life. For example, in chapter 2, the author suggests that through effective teachers' in-service or pre-service professional development, career advancement trainings, or an assurance of economic stability (increase in wages/salary of early childhood educators), there could be a decrease in early adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) through the adult(s) children interact with. This chapter highlights how these early adverse experiences in a child's life are key determinants of developmental elements like executive functions, self-regulation skills, and/or language skills, that are needed to function in every early childhood institutional settings.

However, although the contributors of this book promote and support inclusiveness and its economic, developmental (abilities/disabilities), and linguistic ramifications, they failed to analyze these issues critically. Borrowing from lead researcher Walter Gilliam and his team study of 132 early childhood educators, implicit bias regarding sex and race is directly affecting classroom discriminatory discipline practices in the preschool and early education system (Gilliam, Maupin, Reyes, Accavitti, & Shic, 2016). Despite references to inequitable practices, such as cases of underlooked or ignored screening and diagnosis of developmentally delayed children from culturally and linguistically minority backgrounds (Chapters 4 and 6), and a discussion of poverty and the digital divide affecting access to educational technologies in

some homes or early childhood settings (Chapter 5), these chapters did not delve deeply into the systemic and sociopolitical issues or ways to navigate such issues. In all the recommendations directed towards early teachers and educators in the field, there was little or no mention of improving on culturally inclusive or sensitive pedagogies in the classroom, or the need to recruit, improve, or increase cultural representations of teachers in the field, so as meet the need of the growing population of racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity of students in our education system.

In general, this book is filled with optimistic articles, research, studies, initiatives, recommendations, and projects that are potentially adaptable in all spheres of early childhood education. The volume reinforces and echoes our need for an effective cross-sectional early childhood development system that works toward a common goal of creating better life for families, children, and the early educators. This collection is a must read for all early educators in practice, educators of early educators (higher education), policy makers, and leaders and stakeholders in the early childhood education system. Also, mothers of young children who are invested in making effective decisions on their children's early education can find this book very helpful. Filled with informative recommendations that recognizes our changing world and 21<sup>st</sup> century needs, this text offers accounts of current efforts that link science and empirical evidence with early childhood education practices and piloting accomplishments that recognize the uncontrollable circumstances of young children that puts them in learning and growth disadvantages compared to their peers. Finally, the book closes with the challenge that "knowing is not enough, but a cause for next-step-of-action is the best practice."

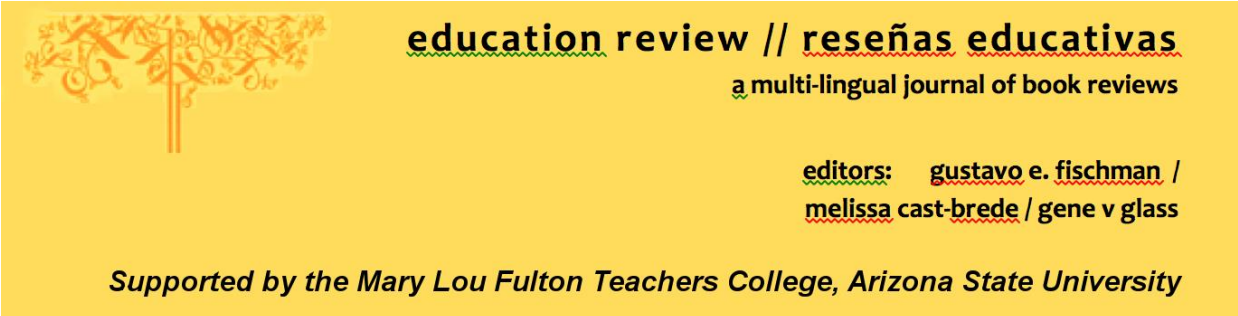
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## About the Reviewer


**Tobi Adegbuyi** is an Early Childhood PhD student at the University of Colorado Denver, and a Research Assistant in a Pilot study on Quality Rating and assessment of preschool programs in Arkansas, funded by the Walton Family Foundation. Her research and teaching focus on how preparing early educators can improve quality early childhood education and experience that will help to ensure children's success in kindergarten and beyond.



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