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Predicting Role Performance Variables for Childcare Teachers

This study determined the factors that contributed to role performance by childcare teachers in Korea. Questionnaire data were gathered from 425 childcare teachers. Statistical analyses consisted of t-test, ANOVA, Scheffé and hierarchical regression analysis. There were no differences in the role performance of childcare teachers by age and experience. Differences were evident by education level and workplace type. Role performance was most affected by the internal-external control followed by emotional intelligence. The findings of this study are pertinent to childcare policy makers.

The changes that have occurred in industrial societies (including Korea) have significantly influenced family structure and increased the need for childcare. This social demand fostered the establishment of many childcare facilities in Korea. Assessing the qualitative level of the facilities capable of providing safe and developmentally appropriate support that foster human resources (such as excellent childcare teachers and high-quality childcare programs) has been problematic. In response, the Korean government implanted a national assessment and certification system for childcare facilities in 2005 and a national curriculum for childcare and

education in 2006.

Childcare teachers are the most important of the qualitative factors. In addition to teaching skill, they must meet the basic needs of young children so that they can grow up holistically, pay attention to their safety, plan and execute a childcare curriculum appropriate for development, build, observe and evaluate desirable environments, contribute to the support of their family, and act as professional decision-makers. These diverse roles have become more important as childcare needs have increased; in addition, they have increased work-related stress for childcare teachers.

It is possible to determine who is a qualified teacher by investigating the roles of teachers for young children (Saracho, 1988). Legal and administrative standards are important for quality childcare programs. However, the quality of childcare teachers who primarily contact and directly influence young children is the paramount factor (McNairy, 1988; Lee *et al.*, 2003).

This study is based on the premise that it is essential to investigate the dynamic influence of multiple and contextual variables on role performance of childcare teachers.

Teachers have different psychological emotions that vary depending on their recognition and response to environmental stimuli. Glasser (1998) proposed internal and external controls according to individual self-control and control of others. Internal control refers to thoughts or behaviors necessary for self-control, while external control refers to thoughts or behaviors necessary to control and influence the

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behavior of others. In the performance of their roles, childcare teachers can exert varying internal and external controls. Simultaneously teaching and caring for young children exposes childcare teachers to various mental and psychological difficulties related to the lives of children under their care and parents that can interfere with the performance of a teacher in their roles and duties.

A possible alternative is a mental health emphasis (Glasser, 2003). Many childcare teachers feel unsatisfied, as they find no solution for different difficulties in similar environments that can be a reflection of diminished mental health. Childcare teachers have a great social influence that protects and educates young children at a crucial period in their development. The unhappiness experienced by teachers can extend to children in their care and subsequently to society. Given such challenging childcare circumstances, it is necessary to establish environments in which childcare teachers can maintain positive human relations, control their surrounding environments appropriately, and perform their roles with satisfaction.

Work environments are also important as an environmental factor. Unlike other education institutions, childcare facilities have simple structures that feature aspects of home and school (Cho, 2005), so a positive human and physical work environment is a prerequisite for the stable satisfaction of teachers in performing their roles. The work environments of childcare teachers should ensure that they maintain friendly relations with their directors and co-workers, receive adequate compensation and professional support, and participate in decision-making. In addition, autonomous work environments based on mutual trust can maximize childcare performance, enhance teacher satisfaction, and motivate the quality of care and education activities. Jorde-Bloom (1989) argued that the work satisfaction of childcare teachers is decided by work itself, degree of salary, frequency of promotion, relations with colleagues and directors, and work environments in general. In childcare facilities, work dissatisfaction by teachers is mainly caused by low salary, poor work environments, and low social status; however, teachers can simultaneously be highly satisfied with

education activities with young children (Stremmel, 1991).

The work environment is very important, since the human and physical environments of childcare teachers directly influence young children. Teaching and learning necessarily involve emotional aspects (Hargreaves, 2002) and emotion is an indispensable teaching asset. The role of stress in the emotional aspects of work performance has become significantly discussed as part of the emotional intelligence that forms an important personal and psychological factor in the performance of teachers in their various roles (Day, 2007; Lasky, 2000).

Emotional intelligence is an aspect of social intelligence to find as "evaluating, expressing and controlling personal and other emotions and using them adaptively" (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Emotional intelligence plays an important role in reasonable decision-making and teaching life skills in general (Leitch & Day, 2001). Accordingly, the emotional intelligence of a teacher is a very important factor in carrying out educational duties since it is associated with improving teaching activities, understanding the emotional expressions of others (including young children) and establishing positive interpersonal relationships (Choi *et al.*, 2009). This has led to studies of the relationships between emotional intelligence and role performance, teaching practice, work-related attitude, burnout, job engagement and work satisfaction (Day, 2007; Hargreaves, 2002; Zembylas, 2002).

Significant research has focused on role performance of childcare teachers; however, most studies have singularly looked at limited and isolated variables. Therefore, this study contributes to the recognition of multiple contexts in order to advance understanding on role performance by childcare teachers.

Internal-external control, work environments, and emotional intelligence should be collectively taken into consideration as important variables in order to implement childcare into effective practice. The present study sought to address this issue by analyzing variables of role performance of childcare teachers.

The main research questions for this study were

as follows. First, are there any differences in internal-external control, work environments, emotional intelligence, and role performance according to the socio-demographic characteristics of childcare teachers? Second, what are the relations between the internal-external control, work environment, emotional intelligence, and role performance of childcare teachers? Third, what are the predictors of role performance by childcare teachers?

METHODS

Subjects

The present study dealt with 425 childcare teachers in Seoul, Incheon, and Gyeonggi (Province), South Korea. The questionnaires were mailed to the work place of 520 teachers with a letter explaining the goals of the study. Of the 520 teachers, 450 teachers returned the questionnaires with a follow-up after mailing that yielded a response rate of 86.5%.

A total of 196 (46.1%) of the subjects were below 30 years-of-age and 229 (53.9%) were over 31-years-of-age. A total of 232 (54.6%) were graduates of junior colleges or lower schools and 193 (45.4%) were graduates from colleges or higher schools. A total of 111 (26.1%), 155 (36.5%), and 159 (37.4%) of the subjects had less than 3 years, 3 to 6 years, and more than 6 years work experience, respectively. A total of 197 (46.4%), 149 (35%), and 79 (18.6%) of the subjects worked at private, national and public, and workplace childcare centers, respectively.

Measures

Role performance The scale developed by Lee & Kim (2000) was used for the present study. The questionnaire consisted of 60 questions or statements: 12 each for five factors (care and basic guidance, education and teaching activities, counseling and emotional support, research and reflective practice, and relational role). Relational role was comprised of cleaning, hygiene, safety, relations with parents and office performance. All responses were ranked on a Likert 5-point scale, with higher points indicative of higher role performances. Cronbach's values were .97 for the

role performance of childcare teachers.

Internal-external control The internal-external control scale developed by Park & Kim (2004) based on selection theory (Glasser, 1998) was used. This scale was designed to measure how much one controls oneself or others and consisted of two independent sub-scales to measure internal and external control. It is comprised of 35 questions or statements: 12 for measuring internal control and 23 for measuring external control. Questions used a Likert's 4-point scale and higher points indicated higher internal-external control. Cronbach's values were .77 (internal control) and .82 (external control).

Work environment The work environment for childcare teachers was measured using the tool described by Suh (2002). The questionnaire consisted of 27 questions or statements: five concerning relations with organizational directors, five concerning relations with colleagues, five concerning welfare environments, five concerning professional support, and seven concerning operation and decision-making. Responses were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, with higher rankings indicative of a more positive perception of the work environment. Cronbach's values of work environment were .92.

Emotional intelligence The emotional intelligence of childcare teachers were measured using the *Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale* (WLEIS) developed by Wong & Law (2002) and adapted by Han & Yoo (2005). The questionnaire consisted of 16 questions or statements: four concerning self-emotion cognition, four concerning other emotion cognition, four concerning emotion use, and four concerning emotion control. Each response was ranked by a 5-point Likert scale, with higher points corresponding to higher emotional intelligence. Cronbach's values of emotional intelligence were .92.

Procedures and Analysis

A preliminary survey was conducted for 30 childcare teachers to examine whether they had difficulties in understanding and answering questions, and the effort involved to complete the survey. In the actual

Table 1. Average and Standard Deviation of Variables (N=425)

Variables	Range	Min/Max	M(SD)
Role Performance	1-5	2.98/5.00	3.94 (.39)
Internal-External Control	Internal Control	1-4	1.67/4.00
	External Control	1-4	1.09/3.00
Work Environment	1-5	1.44/5.00	3.54 (.50)
Emotional Intelligence	1-5	2.19/5.00	3.83 (.46)

Table 2. Differences in Variables by Childcare Teachers' Ages (N=425)

Variables	Group	≤ 30-Years-of-Age (N=196)	≥ 31-Years-of-Age (N=229)	T
		M(SD)	M(SD)	
Internal-External Control	Internal Control	3.05(.27)	2.97(.29)	2.76**
	External Control	2.17(.27)	2.21(.28)	-1.41
Work Environment		3.70(.43)	3.40(.52)	6.41***
Emotional Intelligence		3.79(.45)	3.86(.47)	-1.58
Role Performance		3.97(.38)	3.93(.39)	.92

** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

survey, 450 completed questionnaires were collected and 425 were finally analyzed. Frequency, percentage, average, and standard deviation were calculated from the collected data using the SPSS WIN 17.0 program. Statistical analyses included t-test, ANOVA, Scheffé and hierarchical regression.

RESULTS

A calculation was made of the average and standard deviation of the variables. The results are summarized in Table 1.

Differences between Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Childcare Teachers and Variables

Differences in Variables by Teachers' Age Table 2 summarizes the differences in internal-external control, work environment, emotional intelligence, and role performance values by teacher age. There was no statistically significant difference in external control, emotional intelligence, and role performance. However, there were significant differences in internal control ($p < .01$) and work environment ($p < .001$). In terms of internal control, subjects under

30 years of age showed higher scores than those over 31 years of age. In terms of work environment, subjects under 30 years of age also showed higher scores than those over 31 years of age.

Differences in Variables by Childcare Teachers' Academic Backgrounds Table 3 illustrates the differences in internal-external control, work environment, emotional intelligence, and role performance by childcare teachers' academic backgrounds. There were significant differences in internal control ($p < .001$), external control ($p < .01$), work environment ($p < .001$), emotional intelligence ($p < .01$), and role performance ($p < .05$). In terms of internal control, those with college or higher graduation levels showed higher perceptions than those with junior college or lower graduation levels. In terms of external control, junior college or lower graduates showed a higher perception than college or higher graduates. In terms of work environment, graduation from college or higher showed more positive perceptions than graduation from junior colleges or lower. In terms of emotional intelligence, those with college or higher graduation showed higher perceptions than those with junior college or

Table 3. Differences in Variables by Childcare Teachers' Academic Backgrounds (N=425)

Variables	Group	Junior College or Lower (N=232)	Four Year University or Higher (N=193)	T
		M(SD)	M(SD)	
Internal-External Control	Internal Control	2.96(.28)	3.06(.28)	-3.66***
	External Control	2.23(.27)	2.14(.29)	3.24**
Work Environment		3.46(.48)	3.63(.51)	-3.56***
Emotional Intelligence		3.78(.45)	3.89(.47)	-2.61**
Role Performance		3.91(.36)	4.00(.41)	-2.35*

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 4. Differences in Variables by Childcare Teachers' Experiences (N=425)

Variables	Group	<3 Years (N=111)	3 to <6 Years (N=155)	≥ 6 Years (N=159)	F
		M(SD)	M(SD)	M(SD)	
Internal-External Control	Internal Control	3.07(.29) ^b	2.98(.27) ^a	2.98(.30) ^a	3.80*
	External Control	2.15(.31)	2.19(.26)	2.21(.27)	1.79
Work Environment		3.71(.49) ^b	3.51(.49) ^a	3.45(.50) ^a	9.35***
Emotional Intelligence		3.79(.48)	3.81(.44)	3.87(.47)	1.04
Role Performance		3.96(.43)	3.93(.38)	3.97(.39)	.49

^{a, b} Scheffé result (a<b)

* $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$

lower graduation. In terms of role performance, those with college or higher graduation also showed higher perceptions than those with junior college or lower.

Differences in Variables by Childcare Teachers' Experiences Table 4 illustrates the differences in internal-external control, work environment, emotional intelligence, and role performance by childcare teachers' experiences. There were no statistically significant differences in external control, emotional intelligence, and role performance. However, there were significant differences in internal control ($p < .05$) and work environment ($p < .001$). To determine the differences between sub-groups, a post-analysis was made: in terms of internal control, less than 3 years of experience produced higher values than 3 to 6 years and more than 6 years experience. In terms of work environment, experiences of less than 3 years also showed more positive perceptions than those of 3 to

6 years and more than 6 years. The data indicated that teachers with less than 3 years of experience perceived internal control more highly and the work environment more positively.

Differences in Variables by Childcare Teachers' Workplace Types Table 5 illustrates the differences in internal-external control, work environment, emotional intelligence, and role performance by childcare teachers' workplace types. There were no statistically significant differences in external control and emotional intelligence. There were significant differences in internal control ($p < .01$), work environment ($p < .001$), and role performance ($p < .001$). To determine the differences between sub-groups, a Scheffé post analysis was made: in terms of internal control, the teachers at national and public childcare centers and workplace childcare centers showed higher values than those at private ones. In terms of work environment, workplace childcare centers showed higher perceptions than national

Table 5. Differences in Variables by Childcare Teachers' Workplace Types (N=425)

Variables	Group	National and Public (N=149)	Private (N=197)	Workplace (N=79)	F
		M(SD)	M(SD)	M(SD)	
Internal-External Control	Internal Control	3.05(.27) ^b	2.95(.29) ^a	3.06(.28) ^b	7.68**
	External Control	2.16(.29)	2.22(.27)	2.16(.27)	2.78
Work Environment		3.67(.47) ^b	3.32(.47) ^a	3.83(.40) ^c	43.96***
Emotional Intelligence		3.87(.45)	3.81(.46)	3.80(.51)	1.06
Role Performance		4.05(.38) ^b	3.86(.37) ^a	3.99(.39) ^b	10.84***

^{a, b} Scheff result (a<b<c)

p<.01, *p<.001

Table 6. Relations between Internal-External Control, Work Environment, Emotional Intelligence and Role Performance (N=425)

Internal-External Control	1	2	3	4	5
1	1				
2	-.29***	1			
3	.43***	-.27***	1		
4	.52***	-.29***	.34***	1	
5	.51***	-.23***	.51***	.71***	1

***p<.001

1. Internal Control, 2. External Control, 3. Work Environment, 4. Emotional Intelligence, 5. Role Performance

public ones and private ones. In terms of role performance, national and public childcare centers and workplace ones showed higher perceptions than private ones.

Relations between Internal-External Control, Work Environment, Emotional Intelligence, and Role Performance

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were calculated to determine the relations between role performance and internal-external control, work environment and emotional intelligence. Table 6 summarizes the results. Role performance showed significant correlations with internal control (p<.001), external control (p<.001), work environment (p<.001), and emotional intelligence (p<.001). The higher and lower internal control and external controls were then the more positive perception of work environment and emotional intelligence; in addition, there was a higher ability in role performance.

Relative Influences on the Role Performance of Childcare Teachers

Table 7 illustrates the results of the regression analysis to determine the relative influences on role performance. Prior to regression analysis, it was examined whether or not there was a problem of multicollinearity. The VIF values (1.095-3.313) were less than 10 and the TOL values (.354-.942) were more than 0.1, which indicated that there was no multicollinearity. An analysis was made of the influences of socio-demographic characters, internal-external control, work environment, and emotional intelligence, which were hierarchically inputted as independent variables.

Model I (a regression model by which the socio-demographic characters first inputted explain role performance) showed that workplace type #1 was significant (p<.001). Model II (obtained by adding internal-external control to Model I) showed that internal control (p<.001), external control (p<.05),

Table 7. Relative Influences on the Role Performance of Childcare Teachers (N=425)

		Role Performance							
		Model I		Model II		Model III		Model IV	
		B	β	B	β	B	β	B	β
Socio-Demographic Variables	Age	.03	.04	.04	.06	.07	.09*	.01	.01
	Education	.04	.05	-.01	-.02	.00	.00	-.03	-.04
	Experience	.03	.05	.04	.08	.05	.10*	.02	.04
	Workplace Type #1	-.19	-.25***	-.14	-.18***	-.07	-.09	-.09	-.12**
	Workplace Type #2	-.05	-.05	-.05	-.05	-.09	-.09*	-.05	-.05
Internal-External Control	Internal Control			.65	.48***	.48	.35***	.13	.09*
	External Control			-.12	-.09*	-.05	-.03	.06	.04
Work Environment						.30	.39***	.20	.26***
Emotional Intelligence								.50	.60***
<i>F</i>		4.86***		25.31***		34.24***		76.95***	
<i>R</i> ²		.06		.30		.40		.63	
<i>adj-R</i> ²		.04		.29		.39		.62	
<i>R</i> ^{2 change}		-		.24		.10		.23	
DW				1.97					

p*<.05. *p*<.01. ****p*<.001.

#1private=1, national & public=0, #2 workplace=1, public=0

and workplace type #1 (*p*<.001) were significant variables. Model III (obtained by adding work environment to Model II) showed that work environment (*p*<.001), workplace type #2 (*p*<.05), experiences (*p*<.05), age (*p*<.05), and internal control (*p*<.001) were significant. Model IV (obtained by adding emotional intelligence to Model III) showed that emotional intelligence (*p*<.001), workplace type #1 (*p*<.01), internal control (*p*<.05), and work environment (*p*<.001) were significant. This means that childcare teachers at national and public childcare centers had a higher emotional intelligence and internal control than private childcare centers; in addition, the more positive perception of work environment led to higher role performance.

The socio-demographic variable was first inputted to determine the explanatory power of each variable on the role performance of each childcare teacher and showed the explanatory power of 6%. Second, the internal-external control was added and showed the explanatory power of 30%. Third, work environment was added and showed the explanatory power of 40%. Fourth, IMO emotional intelligence was

added and showed the explanatory power of 63%. This indicated that the role performance of a childcare teacher was most affected by internal-external control (*R*²=.24) and followed by emotional intelligence (*R*²=.23). Model IV showed that the role performance of a childcare teacher was affected by emotional intelligence (*p*<.001), work environment (*p*<.001), workplace type #1 (*p*<.01) and internal control (*p*<.05).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This study investigated socio-demographic characteristics, internal-external control, work environments, and emotional intelligence to explain the role performance of a childcare teacher. The results are discussed according to study questions.

Differences between Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Childcare Teachers and Variables

There were significant differences in internal control according to age. This is consistent with the finding

that younger teachers show higher general and personal teaching efficacy than older teachers. Specifically, teachers with sense of high efficacy shows professional love and communicates more openly than teachers with a sense of low efficacy (Kim, 2000), so it is impossible for the former to do so without high internal control. There were significant age-specific differences in the perception of the work environment. This supports previous findings that younger teachers display a greater sense of teaching efficacy (Im, 2005). A teacher with positive perception of their work environment will tend to have a sense of high efficacy and will not think of a job change. There was no significant age-specific difference in emotional intelligence and did not support the finding of Song *et al.* (2009) that emotional intelligence is age-dependent. Subjects engage children by perceiving, using, and controlling personal and young children's emotions, regardless of age. There was no significant difference in role performance. This supports the absence of age-specific differences reported by Kim *et al.* (2007).

Presently, there were significant differences by education level in internal-external control. Internal control is better perceived by college graduates (or higher) than by junior college graduates (or lower), while external control is perceived more by junior college graduates (or lower) than by college graduates (or higher). This is consistent with the thinking that a higher academic background enables a better understanding of the development of young children based on expertise, the teachers' performance of their roles, self-control, and respect for the individuality and autonomy of young children, rather than external control characteristic of changing young children's as they please. This result shows that academic background is an important factor of to control the psychological aspect of teachers. There were significant differences by education level in the perception of work environments. College graduates (or higher) perceived work environment more important than did junior college graduates (or lower). This supported the findings of Lee (2000) that linked higher academic background to greater work satisfaction. Even when receiving insufficient compensation related to academic

background (due to poor work environments), subjects can still report average or higher satisfaction with their duties at childcare centers (Kim, 1996). This suggests that teachers are satisfied with their duties rather than with their work environment. The finding that college graduates or higher perceived emotional intelligence more than junior college graduates differed from the findings of Song *et al.* (2009). Subjects with higher academic levels had more specialized expertise and understood the development of young children in higher levels. Academic background influenced the emotional intelligence of a teacher, as higher education levels led to the better understanding and control of the emotions of young children. This indicates that academic background is important to enhance the professional role performance of childcare teachers.

Presently, there were significant experience-specific differences in internal-external control. Subjects with less than 3 years of experience displayed higher internal control. An increase in experience leads to job stability that subsequently improves psychological emotions; however, this study shows that less experience is linked to higher internal control and that further studies are needed to resolve this dichotomy. There were significant experience-specific differences in the perception of the work environment. Subjects with less than 3 years experience tended to perceive the work environment positively. The relations between work environment and satisfaction were supported by the findings of Lee (2002) where less experience was linked to higher work satisfaction. A teacher satisfied with work perceives the work environment positively. There was no experience-specific difference in emotional intelligence. This supported the findings of Song *et al.* (2009) in that there is no significant difference between experiences and emotional intelligence. Childcare teachers perceive and control the emotional intelligence of young children to fulfill their educational role regardless of experience. There was no experience-specific difference in role performance and this finding is different from Kim *et al.* (2007), who reported significant experience-specific differences in role performance. When having 5-years or more of teaching experience, a teacher

usually reaches a higher level of self-confidence and expertise that is manifest as high role performance. Yet, the result differs from previous reports that even experienced teachers can experience periods of frustration and performance deterioration. According to You, & Lee (2004), teachers can display average or higher job change intentions and higher age is linked to higher job change intentions. Subsequently, it is predictable that even a teacher with high experience may have difficulties in role performance due to job change and adaptation to new workplace.

Presently, there were significant differences by workplace type in internal control. Higher internal control was shown more by the teachers at national, public and workplace childcare centers than those at private home childcare centers. This suggests that internal control is related to work environments. The work environment affects work satisfaction and stress (as two factors), therefore teachers at national, public and workplace childcare centers are exposed to fewer stress factors and have a higher internal control than those at private childcare centers. There were significant differences by workplace type in the perception of work environments. The work environment was perceived most positively by the teachers at workplace childcare centers, followed by national and public childcare centers and private childcare centers. This trend was also evident in compensation levels because many workplace childcare centers have higher pay or allowance standards; however, national and public childcare centers follow the pay standards pursuant to childcare instructions. The teachers at private childcare centers tended to perceive the work environment lowest, since such centers follow low pay standards due to profit constraints and there is a relatively high rate of teacher turn-over that affect the stability of operation (Yoo & Lee, 2004). There was no difference by workplace type in emotional intelligence. This supports the findings of Song *et al.* (2009). Caring for young children mentally and physically for a long time exposes childcare teachers to personal and organizational stress (Lee, 2002). A poor work environment causes organizational stress. Therefore, appropriate emotional support is needed to prevent and remove such stress; in addition, work

environment improvement is a prerequisite for emotional support. Higher role performance was shown by teachers at national, public and workplace childcare centers than those at private childcare centers. This is likely because national and public childcare centers have more teachers who have completed regular courses and are more satisfied with expertise and work satisfaction (Cho, 2002).

2. Relations between Internal-External Control, Work Environments, Emotional Intelligence and Role Performance

First, if internal-external control is an important variable in the role performance of teachers, then if internal control (rather than external control) should be paramount in teaching young children. However, because a childcare center is (almost) always staffed by women only, it will be necessary lower the difficulty in controlling external circumstances in consideration of their socio-cultural conditions, since they are lower than men in internal control (Ha, 2006). In this study, relationships were evident between role performance and internal-external control. The findings support previous studies (Lee, 2010) where higher internal control matches more positive role behaviors but higher external control matches less positive role behaviors in the mothers of handicapped and non-handicapped children at combined childcare centers.

Second, a work environment that includes a welfare environment is indispensable to the relationship with the organizational director and colleagues. Positive work environments can support the professionalism of teachers and environments that foster teacher participation in the operation of childcare centers. The friendly leadership of an organization director influence the role performance of childcare teachers in the work environment. In practice, teachers were highly satisfied when the leadership of an organization director was oriented to friendly relations (Go, 2005; Girad, 2000; Herbert, 2003). In addition, the relation with the organizational director enhances the work satisfaction and work efficiency of teachers and influences their role performance (Bennis & Nannus, 1985; Tichy & Devanna, 1986). The efficiency of work performance

can be enhanced by the devotion of an organizational leader to trust in and support of subordinates. The findings of Lee (2005) showed that a higher trust in teachers by organizational directors could create higher role performance. The data of Hur & Joung (2009) showed that an organization in which the director shows a high servant leadership can significantly influence the work satisfaction of teachers, compared to an organization with a director who shows low servant leadership. The relationships with colleagues are also very important in the on-site work environment. When a teacher is tired with a poor environment and various duties, the psychological and emotional support of the organizational director is important; in addition, cooperation or consideration among colleagues is also very helpful and friendship among colleagues influences work satisfaction that can lead to a long-term work commitment at the same organization. However, a teacher more distressed by the conflicts among factions and exclusion by the majority of teachers will consequently leave the workplace. To improve such an atmosphere, an organizational director should play a very important role to improve the organization contributions to the prevention of teachers changing jobs and enabling teachers to perform their roles stably.

Improved welfare environment should be a top work environment priority, since economic conditions are a prerequisite for a stable background. To facilitate the role of a teacher as an expert, an organization should highly encourage the improvement of individual professionalism. The work environment is highly influenced by professional capabilities as well as the desirable attitudes and behavior of the organizational director. This is supported by the findings of Hoy & Miskel (2005), in which the work environments were shown to be a factor affecting role cognition, and the report Lee & Lee (2005), in which environment (like autonomous encouragement) influenced the development and role performance of teachers.

Third, emotional intelligence works as an important variable, since emotion enables the promotion of a comprehension of the teacher environment (Fisher, 1990) and offers information

in regards to how to make children and teachers learn and teach, respectively as well as how to connect teaching with learning (Lee *et al.*, 2009). According to Lee (2007), the higher a teacher's emotional intelligence then the higher the work satisfaction that results in lower impersonalization, an improved sense of personal achievement, and less emotional burnout. These findings are linked to the data of Leitch & Day (2001), in which emotional intelligence was shown to influence role performance. The higher a teacher's emotional intelligence then the better the role is performed; in addition, the higher the work satisfaction then the lower the burnout that results in improved student satisfaction.

Influences of Childcare Teachers on Role Performance

Role performance was most influenced by internal-external control and then followed by emotional intelligence. Attention is required to the internal-external control. As reported by Lee (2009), lower internal control led to higher childcare stress and higher external control led to higher childcare stress; in addition, Glasser (2003) reported that higher internal control led to higher happiness. For role performance, a childcare teacher should have low stress and can attain desirable role performance when feeling comfortable or happy. The findings of this study support the findings of Choi (2009) that emotional intelligence and role performance correlate strongly and are in agreement with the report of Kahlich & Dorminey (1993) that showed that childcare teachers regard the emotional role as the most important. In conclusion, role performance of childcare teachers must be reviewed within multiple contexts. It is important to recognize the value of examining multiple variables within one study.

The following are the limitations of this study and the suggestions for follow-up studies. First, the present study was conducted on 425 childcare teachers at childcare centers located in Gyeonggi-do and it is unreasonable to generalize the findings to all childcare teachers in South Korea. Follow-up studies are needed to cover small and medium-sized cities as well as big ones. Second, this study is limited to childcare teachers; therefore, it will be salient to determine the differences in role performance

between childcare and kindergarten teachers. Third, this study is limited to the selected variables among those that influence role performance and follow-up studies should be made to determine the relations with other variables that affect role performance. Forth, this study used a structured self-report questionnaire and in the future, it will be necessary to make an in-depth, specific, and comprehensive study that uses other-report questionnaires and on-site observations.

This study remains significant and meaningful in offering basic data on concrete methods that will help childcare teachers perform individual roles in poor environments by looking into the variables for the whole role performance and sub-factors. This study is notable in the establishment of the recognition of the importance of psychological characteristics, emotional support, and workplace considerations for childcare teachers.

Policy suggestions are as follow. First, it will be necessary to develop programs to help childcare teachers foster desirable characteristics in psychological stability and to offer improved education that changes organizational directors perceptions that are deeply related to the emotional support of teachers. Second, policy alternatives should be presented to improve the environment of childcare teachers. It will be necessary to improve the pay system to match educational levels and reward work performance as well as guarantees the time for personal childcare, research, and miscellaneous affairs through the implementation of a two-shift morning and afternoon system for appropriate childcare time pursuant to the *Labor Standards Act*. There is no difference in the qualification system or rank between childcare teachers who completed regular academic courses and those who obtained childcare qualifications after a one-year course. Teachers who complete regular academic courses are not fairly recognized and treated as professionals; subsequently, this causes teachers to increasingly select turnover and makes it difficult to secure high-quality teachers. Therefore, it is necessary to establish requirements for high-quality education and to establish strengthened qualification standards based on a rank system. In addition, it is desirable to empower childcare

teachers who have completed regular academic courses to perform their roles with pride and use teachers with irregular education backgrounds as auxiliary teachers or teacher assistants that applies a different rank and pay system. Third, the national "Evaluation Certification System" is effective to guarantee qualitative education and improve childcare quality; however, there is still requirement to allow teachers to excel in childcare through improved treatment, they fixed ratio of children per teacher, and the introduction of a system of auxiliary teachers and teacher assistants. Fourth, teachers show a high turnover because the pay is higher at national, public, and workplace childcare centers than at private childcare centers and causes difficulties in securing high-quality education at childcare centers. Therefore, there exists a need to strengthen the support and control of private childcare facilities.

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