

Effects of After-school Childcare Services on the Academic and Adjustment of Children from Multicultural Families in Korea

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Abstract. This study aims to examine the adjustment level of children from multicultural families through a comparison with children from non-multicultural families and examine the impact of the factors of satisfaction with after-school childcare services on the adjustment including school and daily life of children from multicultural families and non-multicultural families. For this purpose, a survey was conducted with children in elementary school in Jangsu-gun, Jeollabuk-do, and of them, 827 children's questionnaires were analyzed. For a data analysis, using SPSS 21.0, an independent sample t-test and multiple regression analysis were conducted. As a result of the study, first, it turned out that the mean of the adjustment of the children from non-multicultural families was slightly higher than that of those from multicultural families, but it was not statistically significant. Second, it was found that the factor that had a significant impact on the adjustment of the children from multicultural families was the variable of peer relationship in living domain, while the factors that had significant impacts on the adjustment of the children from non-multicultural families were facility environment in facility and teacher relationship domain and peer relationship in the living territory. Lastly, it was suggested that it would be necessary to emphasize the appropriate improvement of the environment in after-school childcare facilities and the program for the enhancement of peer relationship in after-school childcare services in order to increase the adjustment of the children from multicultural families and those from non-multicultural families.

Introduction

Recently, in Korean society, the number of children from multicultural families has steadily been increasing, and accordingly, the preceding studies noted that they have difficulties in daily life and school life adjustment because of their poor environmental condition. Specifically, it turned out that children from multicultural families had slower language development, lower academic achievement and higher drop-out rate as compared to those from non-multicultural families [6] and experienced discrimination due to their appearance and difficulties in interpersonal relationships like bullying [5]. The problem is most children from multicultural families experience these problems from their early school age and later, it has negative impacts on the formation of relationships during their adulthood, as well [7]. Therefore, it is necessary to be interested in the adjustment of children from multicultural families, who come under the early school age.

Meanwhile, as a solution to the maladjustment of children from multicultural families, the importance of after-school childcare services is pointed out [1]. In particular, since after-school childcare services are provided regardless of the differentiation of children from multicultural families, they can be free from a branding problem, so they are appropriate as a measure for supporting their adjustment. It is reported that these after-school childcare services have positive impacts on various dimensions like the academic adjustment of children from multicultural families [3].

Thus, this study would comprehensively consider the daily life adjustment, including bi-cultural and psycho-social adjustment as well as an academic adjustment of children from multicultural families and examine whether there is any difference between the children from multicultural families and those from non-multicultural families. In addition, by considering the factors of satisfaction with after-school childcare services that affect the adjustment of children from non-multicultural

families as well as those from multicultural families as prediction variables, this study would discuss a direction of the development of after-school childcare services to help their adjustment.

Specifically, the research questions presented in this study are as follows: First, is there any difference in the adjustment between children from multicultural families and those from non-multicultural families? Second, what are the factors of satisfaction with after-school childcare services that affect the adjustment of children from multicultural families? In addition, what are the factors of satisfaction with after-school childcare services that affect the adjustment of all children from both multicultural families and non-multicultural families?

Methods

Research Model

This study presented a research model like Figure 1 in order to examine the impact of satisfaction with after-school childcare services on the adjustment of children from multicultural families. Their satisfaction with after-school childcare services was an independent variable, which was divided into the facility and teacher domain and living domain. Their adjustment was a dependent variable, which included school life adjustment and daily life adjustment, and as control variables, variables of sex and economic condition were put in.

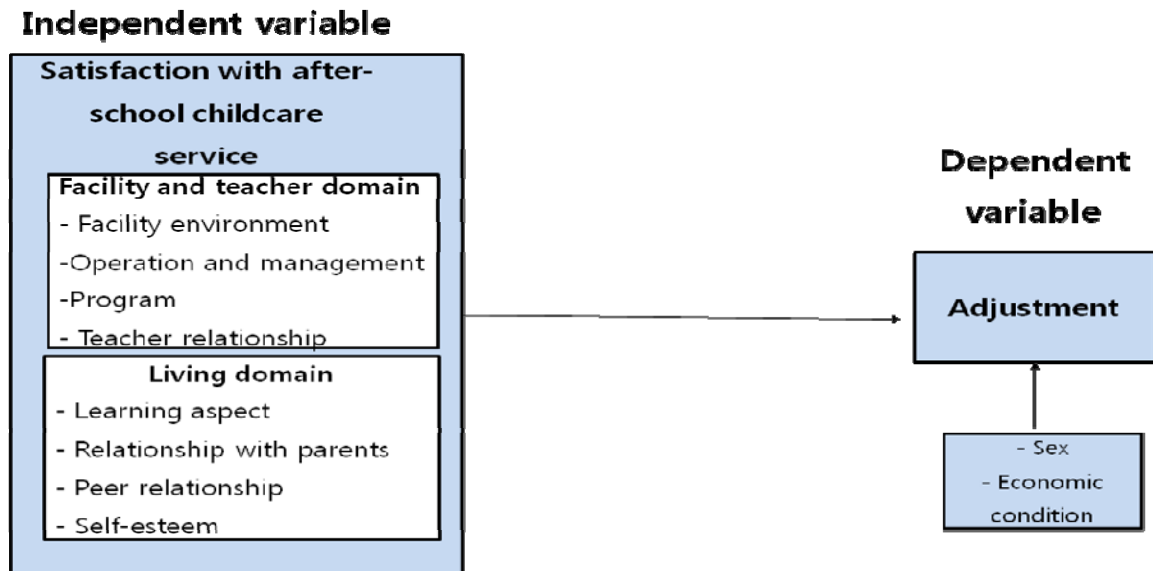


Figure 1. Research model.

Research Subjects and Measured Variables

The subjects of the study are elementary school students in Jangsu-gun, Jeollabuk-do, and the questionnaires collected from 827 students were used in an analysis. Of them, 119 children were from multicultural families while 700, from non-multicultural families [4]. An adjustment was the dependent variable, and a satisfaction with after-school childcare services was the independent variable, which is divided into the facility and teacher domain and living domain. The facility and teacher domain is subdivided into facility environment, operation and management, program and teacher relationship while the living domain consists of learning aspect, relationship with parents, peer relationship, and self-esteem. Sex and economic condition were used as control variables.

Analytical Methods and Examination of Materials

In order to review the research questions, an independent sample t-test and hierarchical multiple regression analysis were conducted, using SPSS 21.0. Through the independent sample t-test, this study examined whether there was any difference in adjustment between children from multicultural families and children from non-multicultural families, and through the hierarchical multiple re-

gression analysis, this study examined the factors of satisfaction with after-school childcare services affecting the adjustment of children from multicultural families and children from non-multicultural families.

In addition, as a result of an analysis of the skewness and kurtosis of the variables used in this study, the absolute value of the skewness was between .043 and .873, and that of kurtosis was between .087 and 1.130. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) was between 1.582 and 2.082, and it is noted that there are no problems of normality and multicollinearity.

Results

First, as a result of an analysis of the difference between children from multicultural families and children from non-multicultural families, the mean of the adjustment of those from multicultural families was 8.01 (SD=1.97) while that of those from non-multicultural families was 8.13 (SD=1.80), so the adjustment of those from non-multicultural families appeared slightly higher. However, the difference in the mean between the groups was not statistically significant. Thus, this study would emphasize that it is necessary to consider the developmental stage of the whole children rather than 'whether they are from multicultural families' in order to support the children.

Second, it turned out that the result of an inquiry into the factors affecting the children from multicultural families explains 16.8% of the adjustment variate of children from multicultural families, and it was found that peer relationship of satisfaction with after-school childcare services was a factor that has a positive impact on the adjustment of children from multicultural families ($\beta=.319$, $p<.05$). In other words, it is noted that the more positive the peer relationship in after-school childcare facilities, the more positive the children's school life and daily life adjustment becomes.

Finally, it turned out that the result of an inquiry into impacts on the adjustment of children from multicultural families and children from non-multicultural families explains 16.1% of the adjustment variate of children from multicultural families and children from non-multicultural families, and as independent variables, facility and facility environment in the teacher domain ($\beta=.139$, $p<.05$) and peer relationship in the living domain ($\beta=.202$, $p<.01$) had positive impacts on the dependent variable. In other words, in the adjustment of children from multicultural families and children from non-multicultural families, it is noted that facility environment and peer relationship in after-school childcare facilities are important factors.

Conclusions and Suggestions

This study examined the level of the adjustment of children from multicultural families through a comparison with the children from non-multicultural families and examined the impact of the factor of satisfaction with after-school childcare services on the adjustment including the school life and daily life of children from multicultural families and non-multicultural families.

The results of the study are summarized as follows: First, concerning the research question, there is no significant difference in the adjustment of children from multicultural families from that of children from non-multicultural families. Second, peer relationship turned out to be the factor of satisfaction with after-school childcare services that has a significant impact on the adjustment of children from multicultural families, and facility environment and peer relationship were found to be the factors of after-school childcare services affecting the adjustment of both children from multicultural families and children from non-multicultural families.

Through the above result, it is noted that letting children from multicultural families and children from non-multicultural families form positive peer relationships through free play in an appropriate environment would increase the children's satisfaction with after-school childcare services and help them improve their adjustment ability as well. Like this, it is important to let the children play with their peers in a wide space, but since facilities other than middle schools that are after-school childcare facilities hardly have a schoolyard or playground [2], connection with regional community resources such as a childcare facility, regional community library, and playground are more important.

This study has significance in that it examined the concept of adjustment, more widely than the preceding studies did, examining the impact of satisfaction with after-school childcare services on adjustment and examined the adjustment of children from non-multicultural families as well as that of children from multicultural families. However, since the subject of the survey is limited to Jangsu-gun, it is difficult to generalize the research result. Lastly, the result of this study can help children from multicultural families as well as children from non-multicultural families as it is utilized as basic data in the operations of after-school childcare services for the school life and daily life adjustment of children from non-multicultural families as well as children from multicultural families.

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