The Effect of Character Strengths and Anger Control on Teaching Professionalism of Preservice Early Childhood Teacher

Hae-Jung Lee¹, Jeong-Jin Youn²* and Seung-Hwa Jwa³

¹Early Childhood Education, Busan Women College, Korea; lhj111ok@bwc.ac.kr
²Early Childhood Education, Tongmyoung University, Korea; jjy@tu.ac.kr
³Early Childhood Education, Dong-Eui Institute of Technology, Korea; seunghwa@dit.ac.kr

Abstract

Objectives: To investigate the effects of character strengths and anger control on teaching professionalism of pre-service early childhood teachers. Methods/Statistical Analysis: Three hundred and sixty one college students majoring in early childhood education responded to three different questionnaires. Data were statistically analyzed using correlation and regression. Findings: The results of the study were as follows. First, we found correlation between subcategories of each variable of character strengths and teaching professionalism. Especially, the relationship between self-esteem and professional participation in teaching professionalism was statistically significant. Second, in examining interaction effect of anger control on character strengths and teaching professionalism, we found statistically significant interaction effect of anger control. In detail, interaction between two subcategories of humanity and anger control influenced the degree of self-esteem. Improvements/Applications: These findings suggest that the variables of character strengths and anger control were useful predictors of teaching professionalism of preservice early childhood teachers. Thus, it is necessary to develop intervention programs for enhancing character strengths and anger control in the level of teacher training program to improve teaching professionalism of preservice early childhood teachers.

Keywords: Anger Control, Character Strengths, Preservice Early Childhood Teachers, Teaching Professionalism

1. Introduction

Early childhood teachers have influence on children’s learning and development, and are a key factor of the quality of education¹–³. Early childhood teachers play an important role on enhancing children’s development⁴–⁵. When teachers recognize their own character strengths and apply them to teacher’s roles, appropriate teaching behavior becomes demonstrated and has positive influence on teaching performance⁶. In addition, it has been reported that emotional labor of early childhood teachers may cause social problems such as child abuse in child care centers. Early childhood teachers’ child abuse in day care centers was related to anger control and lack of expression ability⁷. It could be possible that anger control and character strengths are key factors of teaching professionalism. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate how early childhood teachers recognize character strengths, anger control, and teaching professionalism, and the relationships among three variables. Moreover, the effects of character strengths and anger control on teaching professionalism were examined. Based on the purpose of this study, three research questions were established.
The Effect of Character Strengths and Anger Control on Teaching Professionalism of Preservice Early Childhood Teacher

2. Method

2.1 Subjects
The subjects of this study were 361 randomly selected college students majoring in early childhood education in the city of Busan, Korea.

2.2 Data Collection
Three questionnaires were utilized to measure the levels of character strengths, anger control, and teaching professionalism.

2.3 Data Analysis
Data were statistically analyzed using SPSS 21.0. To find out the relationship among variables and subcategories, correlation and regression analysis methods were utilized.

3. Results

3.1 Recognition Levels of Character Strengths, Anger Control, and Teaching Professionalism
The Table 1 shows the levels of their recognition of character strengths, anger control, and teaching professionalism in each subcategory. (N = 361)

| Variables                | Subcategories             | M     | SD   |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|-------|------|
| Character Strengths      | Humanity                   | 4.26  | .56  |
|                          | Temperance and Endurance   | 3.60  | .57  |
|                          | Wisdom and Knowledge       | 3.53  | .57  |
| Anger Control            | Anger Control              | 3.63  | .59  |
| Teaching Professionalism | Self-esteem                | 4.64  | .52  |
|                          | Objectivity                | 3.83  | .62  |
|                          | Professional Participation | 4.13  | .62  |

As shown in Table 1, levels of their recognition of humanity, anger control, and self-esteem were relatively high in the following subcategories within each variable: Mean of humanity is 4.26 (SD = .56), mean of anger control is 3.65 (SD = .59), and mean of self-esteem is 4.64 (SD = .52).

3.2 Relationships among Subcategories of Character Strengths, and Teaching Professionalism, and Anger Control
Table 2 shows the relationship between subcategories of character strengths, teaching professionalism, and anger control.

As shown in Table 2, in examining relationships among subcategories in character strengths and teaching professionalism of preservice early childhood teachers, it was found that subcategories within each variable of character strengths and teaching professionalism were correlated. Especially, the relationship between self-esteem and professional participation in teaching professionalism was statistically significant (r = .401)

3.3 Interaction Effect of Anger Control on Character Strengths and Teaching Professionalism
The Table 3 shows the interaction effect of anger control on character strengths and teaching professionalism.

As shown in Figure 1, we found a statistically significant interaction effect after examining the relationship between anger controls, humanity- the most significant subcategory of character strengths- and self-esteem- the most significant subcategory of teaching professionalism- of preservice early childhood teachers. This result indicated that self-esteem was influenced by anger control and humanity. Specifically, preservice early childhood teachers with high humanity showed high self-esteem in
both cases of low anger control and high anger control. However, preservice early childhood teachers with low humanity and high anger control showed low self-esteem.

Figure 1. Interaction effect of anger control on self-esteem and humanity.

4. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships among subcategories in three variables of character strengths, anger control, and teaching professionalism of preservice early childhood teachers. Results of this study were as follows. First, some subcategories within each variable of character strengths, anger control, and teaching professionalism were correlated, and especially, self-esteem and professional participation, both of which fall under the variable of teaching professionalism, were significantly correlated. Second, we found a positive correlation between character strengths, anger control, and teaching professionalism. Third, in examining interaction effect of anger control on character strengths and teaching professionalism, it was found that interaction effect of anger control was statistically significant. In detail, interaction between two subcategories of humanity and anger control influenced one’s degree of self-esteem. Overall, this study points to the importance of incorporating character strengths and anger control in teacher training programs in order to help develop early childhood teachers’ level of teaching professionalism.

5. Acknowledgements

This research was supported by the Tongmyong University of Research Grants 2016.
6. References

1. Ade W. Professionalization and it’s implication for the field of early childhood education. Young Children. 1982; 37(3):25–32.

2. Katz L. Where is early childhood education as a profession? In Spodek B, Saracho ON, Peters DL, editors. Professionalism and the Early Childhood Practitioner. New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University; 1988. p. 75–83.

3. Ryang KM, Won KS. A phenomenological study on play in early childhood in Korean early childhood education institutions. Indian Journal of Science and Technology. 2016 Jul; 9(26):1–7.

4. Early childhood teacher education. Available from: http://www.earlychildhoodteacher.org/

5. Hua LY, Seek LC. Mediating effects of self-esteem and peer support in relationship between racial diversity and social diversity and social distance of elementary school students. Indian Journal of Science and Technology. 2016 Aug; 8(20):1–5.

6. Ah SH, Ok KM. The impact of early childhood teachers’ character strengths to psychological well-being and job satisfaction. The Korean Society for Early Childhood Teacher Education. 2013; 17(1):435–53.

7. HeaIk H, Mi KH, Hwa TJ. The structural relations among pre-service teachers’ happiness, optimism, hope and emotion affectivity. The Korean Society for Early Childhood Education. 2015; 385–402.

8. Peterson C, Seligman MEP. Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification. New York: Oxford; 2004. p. 816.

9. Koo CK, Woong HD, Ho LC. Korean Adaptation of Spielberger's STAI (K-STAI). The Korean Journal of Consumer and Advertising Psychology. 1997. p. 1–14.

10. Sookhee W. Comparing early childhood teacher’s professionalism between daycare and kindergarten teachers. The Graduate School of Education Sookmyung Women's University; 2007.