

2022 KICCE PROJECT REPORT ABSTRACTS

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ECEC

Policies

- A Study on the Establishment and Linkage of Financial Data for Early Childhood Education and Care
- Improving Administrative Organizations and Functions of Local Offices of Education to Strengthen Early Childhood Education Support System
- A Study on the Establishment of the Integrated Operation Foundation for Child Care
- 2018~2022 Childrearing Policy Analysis and Outcome Evaluation (V): Focusing on 2021~2022 Policies
- Monitoring and Support Planning of 2019 Revised Nuri Curriculum(III)

Major Research Project

A Study on the Establishment and Linkage of Financial Data for Early Childhood Education and Care

Dong Hoon Kim / Wonsoon Park / Taewoo Kim

Backgrounds and Purpose of Study

- **This study was intended to derive the standards and measures of financial data regarding early childhood education and care for an objective and scientific management of financial data.**
 - In addition, we attempted to consider the analysis and classification system of current status data, such as the size of objective financial data scattered throughout the central government, local governments, and education offices.

Research Methods

- **To achieve the purpose of the study, the concept of childcare support policy in the financial support project and related financial data were first reviewed.**
 - Literature on the financial status of childcare support and related laws and systems was analyzed.
- **Second, the current status of the financial data classification system and related finances were analyzed, focusing on local governments.**
 - Various revenue and expenditure data were collected and analyzed to obtain financial data related to childcare support policies.
- **Third, detailed data on childcare support policy projects and finances were analyzed.**
 - Financial and related data disclosed on the websites of Statistics Korea, Korea Education Statistics Service (KESS), the Ministry of Education, and the provincial offices of education were collected and analyzed.
- **Fourth, a proposal to improve the financial data classification standard for the childcare support policy was put forward.**
 - The opinions of experts were collected through meetings.

Results

- **Although the current budget classification system of local governments applies almost the same as the central classification system, the setting level or scope is different in the unit project.**
- **Childcare support policy projects are highly associated with social welfare, education, and health, but in fact, various childcare support policy projects are budgeted in other areas. Therefore, to understand their financial scale, it is necessary to broaden the scope of the projects in analysis.**
- **Even if it is the same project for each local government, it is difficult to grasp and analyze the overall financial scale of the childcare support policies, because in some cases, sectors are different or detailed project names do not match when compiling the budget.**
 - Due to mismatch in classification and name of various childcare support projects, there is also a limit to calculating the detailed financial scale.
- **It is impossible to classify early childhood education finances under an accessible disclosure system related to educational finance. However, the data on the special account settlement for educational expenses by metropolitan and provincial offices of education show that kindergartens can be managed separately in sector-policy project-unit project-detailed project, and cost-based statistics.**

Policy Suggestions and Future Agenda

- **Suggestions for improving the linkage of early childhood education and care financial data are as follows:**
- **First, systematic classification standards must be prepared to understand the financial status of projects related to childcare support policies.**
 - It is necessary to adjust the level of unit projects while matching the budget classification system of local governments as much as possible, starting with policy project units.

- However, it is necessary to grant autonomy to some parts of the policy projects to reflect the regional characteristics of local governments and clearly demonstrate policy goals.
- **Second, it is necessary to apply the current classification system to set the policy project unit according to the policy goal or actual situation of each local government as a program project in the childcare, family, and women sectors, which are highly related to the childcare support policy.**
- **Third, it is necessary to match the unit project names of childcare-related budgets between central and local governments.**
 - The unit project name of the central government budget has the advantage of being able to grasp the general content of the project.
 - The names of local government unit projects also need to be matched with those of the central government.
 - It is difficult to grasp the financial status of childcare support policies, such as comprehensive childcare support projects, because the current unit business names are different and unclear to each local government.
 - Through this, it is possible to know the contents of the existing budget more specifically, which are somewhat
- ambiguous, such as public childcare, free childcare, childcare environment support, etc., and obtain various types of information.
- **Fourth, it is also necessary to adjust the unit project names to reflect the characteristics of some regions, while matching those of the central and local governments.**
 - It should be considered that there may be projects that exist in the central government but not in local governments, or vice versa.

Major Research Project

Improving Administrative Organizations and Functions of Local Offices of Education to Strengthen Early Childhood Education Support System

Mugyeong Moon / Ahreum Kim / Yong Kim / Youngmin Kim

Backgrounds and Purpose of Study

- As the demand for early childhood education administration has recently increased due to efforts to strengthen its public nature, there is an increasing need for more efficient organization and function of the local offices of education.
- Since early childhood education in Korea is not yet part of the public education system, administrative organizations of early childhood education within the Ministry of Education and local offices are relatively small and not functionally separate, unlike those of primary and secondary school education.
- This study aimed to identify the issues and challenges of organizations and functions of early childhood educational administration in local offices of education, providing suggestions for improvement.
- Reflecting on the new governmental agenda of integrating early childhood education and care, cooperation projects between local offices of education and the city and provincial governments were also examined, and their future tasks were discussed.

Research Methods

- A range of research methods was used to examine the current status and related issues of early childhood education administration in local offices of education, including surveys with 178 officials, stakeholder interviews, and seven case studies.

Results

- Most officials in local and district education offices favored an independent division of early childhood education focused on curriculum implementation, which is the expertise of officials specializing in early childhood education. However, they

preferred to transfer safety, health, and meal services to other divisions.

- Although approximately 80% of local officials pointed out a shortage of manpower in the early childhood education divisions, there was little effort by local offices to alleviate such shortages.
- Local offices of education (in charge of early childhood education) responded by cooperating with provincial offices (in charge of childcare) in terms of fee support, joint events, mutual use of facilities, and resource sharing.
- Childcare services (after-school programs), child health and safety, subsidy support, and the transition to primary school were the most important areas of cooperation, as indicated by local education officials.

Policy Suggestions

- Policy implications and measures were suggested not only to improve the efficiency of administration of early childhood education but also to facilitate processes of integrating administrative systems of early childhood education and care.
- Specifically suggested were standards of manpower allocation, quotas for officials specializing in early childhood education, coordinating tasks and organizational types of early childhood education in local offices of education, cooperating in providing childcare services after school, and establishing and operating the Preparatory Committee for the Integration of ECEC under the Superintendent Council.

Major Research Project

A Study on the Establishment of the Integrated Operation Foundation for Child Care

Yoon Kyung Choi / Sook In Cho / Hyemin Lee / Jung-Hyun Kim / Jae-seok Youn

Backgrounds and Purpose of Study

- **The continuity of service use from a child and parents' point of view and the cooperation among diverse education and care service deliveries, are inevitable tasks of current times.**
 - Various educational care services for children before and after school entry have been planned and provided in a segregated manner as multi-ministerial policies.
 - To improve the efficiency of care service delivery, the provision of education and care services needs to be linked in terms of service information, access, and use of these diverse services without discontinuity or loopholes in care.
- **The purpose of this study was to present a plan to establish an integrated operating base that provides systematic and comprehensive services, from the perspective of children and parents.**
 - Based on the child's age and life cycle, this study focused on the availability and continuity of care services as encompassing education and childcare.

Research Methods

- Review of basic plans and laws for major policies and projects covering pre- and post-school care
- Analysis of continuity and equity of accessibility and use of quality care services in 2022: Analyzing the institutional design and operational status of major care policies and projects (10) operated as multi-ministerial projects
- Survey of parents and experts on demand for care by age, service use status, gaps, disconnection, and difficulties in childcare
- Parental focus group interviews and expert advisory meetings

Results

- **The overall policy design of 10 major policies/projects showed that all of them had low levels of connectivity or integration. Most child care services had a relatively short history of system implementation, small business scale, and low accessibility and commerciality.**
 - Children's National Vaccination (NIP) was relatively more accessible, compatible, and satisfactory than other childcare services, and early childhood education was also relatively

high in terms of benefits, accessibility, and connectivity.

- Family childcare support services, such as in-home care, part-time care, group care, and joint childcare by caregivers, were low for most indicators. However, the link with childcare services was relatively strong.
- It was found that childhood care services at schools (elementary afterschool care, community care, and local children's centers) had a high connection with other services.
- Institutional designs and devices must be prepared from the perspective of integrating care and educare policies/businesses and linkage cooperation.

Policy Suggestions and Future Agenda

- **Based on the main research results, this study first proposed preparing a legal basis for the Ministry of Education's care service. In the order of reorganizing the current care laws and enacting the integrated law in the first stage, an integrated approach was suggested to reorganize the business in a way that blind spots are solved.**
 - An integrated regional care committee (tentative name) and a related organizational system could be established to encompass regional education offices, local governments, and public-private cooperation systems.
- **Second, prior to the establishment of an online-offline operation foundation for integrated care, individual consumers searched are necessary to enhance the universal accessibility.**
 - Once an integrated operational foundation is established, an integrated online and offline platform is established to ensure that relevant information is provided and service links are identified through the same channel.
 - The integrated childcare information platform needs to contain the following contents: real-time search, waiting application, and registration of available care services; openness and expansion as an integrated platform for public-private information, and care services; expanded care-welfare links; expanded child safety and healthy growth and development; and open care apps for each local government.

Major Research Project

2018~2022 Childrearing Policy Analysis and Outcome Evaluation (V): Focusing on 2021~2022 Policies

Nayoung Kim / Yoon Kyung Choi / Heesue Kim

Backgrounds and Purpose of Study

- This study comprises the last annual study of Childrearing Policy Analysis and Outcome Evaluation (2018–2022), which was conducted as a five-year study. Its main purpose was to review the achievements of childcare policies that have been promoted so far and to find ways for future improvements.
- The lifestyle of Korea's childrearing households has been rapidly changing, including an increase in females' participation in economic activities and changes in household types; accordingly, the needs of policy consumers have been constantly changing when it comes to raising children.
- It, therefore, is meaningful to evaluate the implementation of policies so that the government's efforts can show positive results, and seek ways to improve them.

Research Methods

- In this study, the categories of childcare policies were comprehensively defined as cash and medical expense support, early childhood education, childcare, primary care, and childcare time support policies.
- In addition to evaluating the performance of the consultation based on the policy plans proposed by each ministry and the degree of achievement against the annual targets, we examined how the goals and policies implemented were perceived from the perspectives of parents, field staff, and experts; and reflected in the childrearing process and environment as a whole.
- To understand the actual results of childcare policies, a survey was conducted among parents, childcare policy experts, and field faculty and staff, and the responses were used to suggest directions for improvement of childcare policies in a larger framework.

Results

· Childcare policy performance analysis: policy summary evaluation

- In the case of parents, “parental leave” and “child allowance” were the highest achievements among the last government's cash-service-time support policies, at 28.0% and 22.1%, respectively; however, at the same time, “parental leave,” “maternity leave,” and “child allowance” were the lowest-performing policies, with 18.9%, 10.9%, and 9.4%, respectively.
- In the case of experts, when looking at the results of the survey regarding the policies that showed the most performance in the overall childcare policy, the “parental leave system (realization of parental leave pay, strengthening of incentives for male parental leave, etc.)” was the highest at 26.0%.

Policy Suggestions and Future Agenda

- Reduction of blind spots in childcare time support and continuous improvement of policy utilization: It is necessary to improve the utilization of childcare support policies for small- and medium-sized business workers and self-employed people, and to prevent men's participation in childcare and women's career breaks.
- Strengthening data-based and information collection systems related to childcare support policies: There is a high demand to establish an all-round system for the protection of the socially disadvantaged and prevention of child abuse, and the dimensions of child abuse information collection should be carried out in more detail to prepare a comprehensive system.
- Strengthening customized policies to support parents in various types of work: To strengthen the direct care of parents, it is necessary for them to have absolute time for parenting. To secure such time, more diverse types of work should be considered.

- Promoting central-provincial linkage mid- and long-term childcare plans: It is necessary to establish the concept of comprehensive regional classification from the perspective of childcare service provision and legislate this concept to serve as a basis for the establishment of future childcare policies and projects. Thus, when establishing a mid- to long-term childcare plan between central and local governments, the proportion and organization of the budget are allocated to achieve efficiency in childcare finance.
- Strengthening the quality of childcare through the provision of customized childcare consulting: Consulting programs should be developed and provided at the central government level, considering toddler care education institutions in various special conditions, such as small-scale and rural areas.
- Linkage of population influx policy with childcare policy: Youth influx projects and policies should be established and implemented in rural areas; these projects and policies tend to be limited to simply job projects or settlement fund support. Thus, a plan should be established to create an environment without childbirth/parenting difficulties so that the influx of youth can settle down and lead a fruitful life in the region.

General Research Project

Monitoring and Support Planning of 2019 Revised Nuri Curriculum(III)

Eunyoung Kim / Eun Jin Kang / Hyejin Kim / Hong-Ju Jun / Myunghee Choi

Backgrounds and Purpose of Study

- For the Revised Nuri Curriculum to be properly established, it is necessary to monitor how the curriculum is being implemented in kindergartens and childcare centers.
- In this context, to ensure that the curriculum is being implemented properly, the Korea Institute of Childcare and Education planned the “Monitoring and Support Planning of 2019 Revised Nuri Curriculum Research” as a three-year (2020-2022) project.
- The present report is the result of the third-year study of the “Monitoring and Support Planning of 2019 Revised Nuri Curriculum,” which evaluates the extent to which field changes have been made according to the direction of innovation in early childhood education, analyzes the policy effect, and based on the results, aims to propose a continuous comprehensive policy support plan.

Research Methods

- **For this purpose, literature reviews of Korean and international studies, surveys, and case studies were conducted.**
- **Surveys were conducted with delivery system officers, field faculty, and parents.**
 - The delivery system survey was conducted with 17 supervisors from 17 local departments of education and 18 Nuri Curriculum-related task directors of local support centers for childcare, which provide support to childcare centers regarding childcare curriculum operations.
 - The field faculty survey was conducted with 1,060 directors/vice-directors and 1,068 teachers employed in kindergartens and childcare centers.

The parent survey was conducted with 1,000 parents of elementary first-graders who had experienced the Revised Nuri Curriculum while attending a kindergarten or childcare center.

- **The case study was conducted twice in four kindergartens and four childcare centers (eight directors and 22 teachers).**

Results

- **The following is a summary of the research results obtained through these research methods:**

- The Department of Education conducted a national level project to enhance the educative power of early childhood education through its “Measures for Early Childhood Innovation” from 2018 to 2020, in order to support the implementation of the kindergarten curriculum.
- In 2022, as part of the 「National Special Grant Policy Project」, it was operating the project “Future Kindergarten Curriculum Establishment and Operation Support,” along with a project to support the creation of a safe environment for early childhood education, connective education for bridging education and care, and kindergarten and elementary education.
- In every local department of education nationwide, a wide range of support projects (supervision of teaching, consultations for Nuri Curriculum implementation, operation of professional learning communities, mentoring, teacher training, selection and operation of demonstrative institutions, selection through contests and sharing of exemplaries, development and dissemination of support materials, support for physical environment improvement, provision of play media, and materials) were carried out.
- The central and local support centers for childcare also promoted various support projects. The Central Childcare Support Center focuses on providing consultations for childcare curriculum implementation, teacher training,

development, and the dissemination of support materials to support the operation of the Revised Nuri Curriculum. In local childcare support centers, the most actively promoted projects in 2021 and 2022 were teacher training (education) and consultation for the Nuri Curriculum implementation.

- Comprehensively examining the performance of the projects to support the proper settlement of the Nuri Curriculum that were carried out over the three years from 2019 to 2021, although each local department of education focused on a different project each year, all 10 projects were actively executed by all local departments.

- **Specifically, the project to “support physical environment improvement” showed continuous expansion.**
- **In 2019, “Class Observation and Feedback,” “Nuri Curriculum Operation Consulting,” and “Demonstrative Institution Selection and Operation” projects were intensively carried out in many local childcare support centers; since 2020, “Nuri Curriculum Operation Consulting” and “teacher training (education)” projects are being carried out steadily in most local centers.**
- **The results of the survey were as follows:**
 - Parents’ expectations of their children’s personality and attitude development were the most common, followed by “sociability” and “academic competence.”
 - The directors and teachers reported “reactivity” as the highest among the sub-factors of playfulness and “spontaneity” as the lowest.
 - Teachers’ awareness of the level of expertise in nursing curriculum management was somewhat high, scoring from 3.16 to 3.30 on a four-point scale. Around 71.1% of the directors and 75.7% of teachers had completed the Revised Nuri Curriculum training.
 - In the case of supervision or consultation, 31.2% of the directors and 35.2% of the teachers responded that they had experience, and 65.6% of the directors and 56.1% of the teachers responded that they had experience

in the learning community. Teachers most frequently participated in internal self-supervision to enhance their professionalism, and the most desired professional development activity was observing other institutions.

- Examining the operating conditions of the Revised Nuri Curriculum revealed that childcare centers had a relatively higher rate of indoor play and kindergartens had a relatively higher rate of outdoor play.
- The planning of yearly, weekly, and daily plans related to the Nuri Curriculum was higher in childcare centers, whereas planning of monthly plans was more common in kindergartens.
- Examining the achievement level of the implementation of the Revised Nuri Curriculum, both the directors and teachers reported “flexibility of daily routine” the highest, followed by “communicative organizational culture” by the directors, and “openness of the physical environment” by the teachers.
- The director’s achievement level regarding the implementation of the Revised Nuri Curriculum was the highest in “democratic relationship with young children,” and the teachers scored the highest in “teacher role.”
- As for the director’s awareness of the changes in children after implementing the Revised Nuri Curriculum, “physical and mental health improvement” was rated the highest, and “initiative” was rated the highest for teachers.
- Kindergarten directors and teachers rated the changes in children more positively than did the directors and teachers of childcare centers.
- Regarding government support policies necessary for the operation of a kindergarten or childcare center curriculum, the response rate for “adjustment of the teacher-to-child ratio” was the highest among directors, teachers, and parents, with teachers responding with the highest rate.

· **The results of the case study were as follows:**

- Kindergarten teachers viewed the relationship dynamic between the teacher and child to have changed: while in the previous curriculum, the relationship between the child and teacher were viewed as “teacher-learner,” in the Revised Nuri Curriculum, the teacher and child were “co-creators” of the curriculum.
- Kindergarten teachers reported that the greatest change occurred in the level of trust built with parents, mainly through faithfully recording child observations.
- Kindergarten teachers reported that while the proportion of play in the operation of the curriculum increased, that of activities planned by teachers decreased; they also recognized changes in the provision of unstructured play and evaluation using various media.
- For the Revised Nuri Curriculum to be properly implemented in the field, the directors demanded the deregulation of budget use, administrative support, and government-level parent education, while teachers demanded objective evaluation tools and administrative manpower support.
- Teachers pointed out that the biggest achievements of the Revised Nuri Curriculum were higher awareness of the competence of the children, the operation of a distinctive curriculum in each kindergarten or childcare center, and the strengthening of teacher autonomy and competency.
- The limitations experienced in the implementation of the curriculum included problems of connectivity from early childhood to elementary education and the level of quality in curriculum operations according to the level of teacher competence.
- Childcare center teachers recognized that “communication” and “cooperation” between teachers were enhanced through the operation of the Revised Nuri Curriculum, as well as an increase in the “activeness” of children by playing with them naturally and establishing equal and democratic relationships.
- By implementing the Revised Nuri Curriculum in childcare centers, the proportion of playtime increased, as in kindergartens, and activities were newly recognized as a process of sharing the educational effects of play.
- The teachers reported that the children themselves led the change in the play space; they provided unstructured play and digital materials based on the children’s intentions.
- To properly implement the Revised Nuri Curriculum, directors demanded a decrease in the teacher-child ratio, an increase in the childcare budget, and an expansion of legal space standards.
- Teachers mentioned a decrease in the teacher-child ratio, support for practical teacher training, and parental education to increase their understanding of the value and meaning of play.
- Teachers cited the qualitative growth of the curriculum and higher recognition of children’s competence as results of the Revised Nuri Curriculum.
- Regarding the limitations in implementing the revised curriculum, teachers reported a gap in the level of execution among institutions and difficulty in confidently implementing the curriculum due to ambiguous educational goals and evaluation criteria as well as the lack of detail in the curriculum handbook.
- The tasks of the 2019 Revised Nuri Curriculum were identified as raising parents’ understanding of children and play, strengthening connectivity with the elementary school curriculum, improving the field conditions of kindergartens and childcare centers, and overcoming differences in curriculum operation according to teacher competency.

- The future direction in revising the Nuri Curriculum is to reflect the capabilities required for the future of young children (emphasis on character education and the development of digital competency), reinforce support for children with special needs, strengthen the transition/ connection between early childhood education and elementary education, and consider stating standards to be achieved through early childhood education.

Policy Suggestions and Future Agenda

- **The policy direction set based on these research results and the direction pursued by the Revised Nuri curriculum are equivalent to the direction proposed in 2020.**

- First, to bridge the educational gap, the quality of basic curriculum should be guaranteed, while diversity in the field is pursued.
- Second, teacher autonomy should be guaranteed and their professionalism enhanced.
- Third, expanding children's participation in the curriculum and enhancing their initiative in play are needed.
- Forth, institutions and families need to connect and cooperate by enhancing parents' understanding of play-centered curricula.
- Fifth, support for the operation of the curriculum is in line with the purpose of the Revised Nuri Curriculum, accounting for future social changes such as COVID-19.

- **According to these policy directions, policy measures and tasks have been divided into short-term measures and mid- to long-term measures.**

- First, short-term measures include the following suggestions:
 - ① continuous efforts to improve teachers' professionalism through support for vitalizing learning communities and linking teachers' autonomous efforts such as establishing a training bank system, etc.;
 - ② development of cooperation among delivery systems through a forming and operating community of experts, etc.;
 - ③ support for enhancing parent competency through training parents as cooperators of

implementing the curriculum, etc.; and ④ reducing the gap among the levels of teachers and institutions through providing differentiated support according to regional and institutional circumstances as well as customized support for children with special needs, etc.

- Mid- to long-term measures include the following:
 - ① preparation of the basis for implementing the Revised Nuri Curriculum, such as preparing an optimized physical environment standard, adjusting the ratio of teachers to children, etc.;
 - ② reorganizing the system to enhance the professionalism of teachers, such as revising the teacher training curriculum etc.;
 - ③ performing detailed tasks to establish the kindergarten and childcare center status as a school and reorganize their system.

Parenting

Friendly Support

- A Study on the Improvement of Time Policy for Equal Childcare Rights (I): On the Perspective of Reducing the Disparity of Parental Childcare by Employment Types
- A Study on the Childcare Communities for Infants and Young Children

Major Research Project

A Study on the Improvement of Time Policy for Equal Childcare Rights (I): On the Perspective of Reducing the Disparity of Parental Childcare by Employment Types

Eun Jung Park / Mira Cho / Ji-yeon Yun / Yun Kyu Ryu / Jayoung Yoon

Backgrounds and Purpose of Study

- This study aimed to identify improvement measures for childcare time policies by examining the current state of childcare, along with the usage and demand for childcare-related regulations according to different types of employment.
- Despite the rapid diversification of both employment types and the labor market, there has been insufficient research on changes in parents' childcare patterns or care support needs according to their employment types.

Research Methods

- **In this study, the Korean childcare time support system was divided into parental leave and a flexible work system, and the main content and usage status of each system were analyzed.**
- **Additionally, the overall childcare time support systems of OECD countries were reviewed, and the cases of Sweden, France, the United Kingdom, and Germany were analyzed in depth.**
- **Furthermore, focus group interviews and questionnaire surveys were conducted to gain an in-depth understanding of the actual conditions related to childcare time by employment types.**
 - Focus group interviews were conducted with six groups of non-regular and non-standard workers with children under the age of eight years.
 - The survey was conducted among 1,637 working parents with children under the age of eight.

Results

- **The results of the focus group interview analysis indicated that most parents with non-standard employment had switched to precarious or non-standard work in order to take care of their children.**

- Moreover, it was found that they changed jobs in pursuit of more flexible working hours to balance work and childcare. However, even within the non-standard employment group, the reality and dynamics of work and childcare varied greatly, depending on the type of occupation or employment.

- **The results of the survey are as follows: An analysis of the characteristics of childcare time by employment types indicated that regular, full-time workers had the shortest actual childcare time on working days, whereas their spouses had the longest childcare time.**

- Furthermore, the gap between their desired and actual childcare hours was larger than that for other forms of employment. Non-regular workers had more childcare time for their own children, and even among non-regular workers, part-time and temporary workers had more childcare time for their own children than did regular workers, whereas their spouses had less childcare time.
- Consequently, part-time and temporary workers had larger disparities in childcare time between themselves and their spouses.
- Regardless of the type of employment (i.e., regular or non-regular), part-time work was a factor for longer childcare time.
- In addition, the actual childcare time for a self-employed individual without employees was longer than their desired childcare time.
- **In terms of employment types, regular workers were well-informed about the childcare time support system and had more experience in using the system.**
 - Among regular workers, part-time workers had less experience using the system than did full-time workers.
- **The usage rate of maternal and paternal leave among non-regular workers was quite low (i.e., less than 30%), and among these workers, the rate of leave usage was lower for part-time and temporary workers than for full-time workers.**

- Self-employed individuals had a lower usage rate of maternal and paternal leave and were the least aware of these leave systems.
- **In general, non-standard workers had lower access to the time support system, and among them, freelancers had the lowest access.**
 - Non-regular and non-wage workers had a low utilization rate of parental leave because many were not eligible. This indicates that a large systematic blind spot exists in the parental leave system.
- **According to an in-depth analysis of employment types, the experience of changing jobs to resolve time conflicts related to children varied significantly among employment types, but there were no significant differences in care deficit or difficulties in work and childcare reconciliation.**
 - However, employment types differed in their levels of specific difficulty, such as commuting time and emergency care demands. Among wage workers, regular and full-time workers showed the lowest rate of job change in relation to childcare; meanwhile, non-regular workers had a high rate of job change (63%), but their spouses ranked lowest in terms of rate of job change.
 - Unpaid family workers and single self-employed individual workers showed a high rate of job change. Among non-standard workers, platform workers had the highest rate of change in work due to pregnancy, childbirth, and child-rearing (71.4%), and this rate was higher in the special type of workers and freelancer groups (60%).
- Ensuring the right to childcare as a fundamental social right for all parents and children
- Enhancing target inclusiveness and system flexibility in childcare time policies
- Reflecting various childcare situations and support needs by employment type
- Guaranteeing parents' time sovereignty with respect to their work and childcare
- **Based on the suggested principle directions of the childcare time policy, detailed policy measures were suggested by dividing them into measures “for all working parents” and “by employment types.”**
 - First, childcare time policy measures for all working parents are as follows: 1) flexible application of employment insurance requirements, 2) raising the level of real income security for parental leave benefits, and 3) reinforcing the duties and roles of companies.
 - Second, the childcare time policy measures by employment type are as follows: 1) expansion of the flexible work policy, 2) reinforcement of unfair treatment prohibition and support for returning to work after reinstatement, 3) active promotion of employment insurance subscription and time support system, 4) simplification of proof procedures and documents, 5) childcare service at various times of the day, 6) strengthening the linkages with dispatch childcare services, 7) utilization of parenting communities, 8) flexible parental leave benefit system, and 9) avoidance of night shift work by parents during the period of raising young children.

Policy Suggestions and Future Agenda

- **By summarizing the research analysis results in this study, the following principle directions regarding the childcare time policy of ensuring equal care rights for all parents and children are suggested:**

Major Research Project

A Study on the Childcare Communities for Infants and Young Children

Mira Cho / Hae-mi Yoo / Moonjeong Kim

Backgrounds and Purpose of Study

- This study aimed to investigate the current situation of communal parenting for infants and young children and to find a policy strategy for activating them.
- Recently, as the social demand for elementary care has grown, research and investigations on elementary care communities have been actively accumulating, but interest in parenting communities for infants and young children has decreased.
- Accordingly, the following study was conducted to examine and support parenting communities for infants and young children.

Research Methods

- First, the current state of support for childcare communities was identified by comprehensively examining the policies of central and local governments related to support for childcare communities.
- Second, a survey was conducted on parents of infants and young children to investigate the difficulties and demands of parents participating in parenting communities, as well as the demands of parents who did not experience childcare communities.
- Third, through an in-depth case study of childcare communities for infants and young children, we analyzed how childcare communities operate.

Results

- A survey on the demand for care activities for those who had no experience in childcare communities showed that about half were willing to participate, indicating that the need for childcare communities for infants and young children is quite high.

- It was found that the parenting community played a significant role for parents with infants. In particular, childcare community support was required for infant households that do not use institutions. This is because, with the introduction of parental benefits paid to children aged 0-1 years from 2023, home care for infants is expected to increase; therefore, community support for this group was emphasized.
- In addition to caring for infants and young children, communities were found to provide emotional support such as transportation and sharing baby food.
- It was found that the community that included elementary school students was more satisfied with parents than was the community with only infants and young children. In addition, as a result of a survey on activities after the community targeting infants and young children, it was found that many cases led to elementary care activities according to the child's growth; therefore, support for expanding and continuing community activities is required.

Policy Suggestions and Future Agenda

- **Based on the results of this analysis, an approach to promote the childcare communities was presented, and policy improvement plans and detailed tasks were proposed to create conditions.**
- **The approach to activate childcare communities is presented as follows:**
 - It is necessary to strengthen community childcare support for infants and young children.
 - As children grow and community members' needs diversify, the government should support childcare communities in actively responding to them.
 - Childcare community support should be designed to emphasize the participation of community members.
- **Policy improvement measures are presented as follows:**
 - Government support for childcare communities should be expanded and systematized.

- Linkages and cooperation between ministries and the central and local governments should be strengthened.
- It is necessary to establish new childcare community support projects for infants and toddlers. In addition, spaces for childcare communities, support for management, and support for member empowerment are suggested.

Pregnancy

and Child Health Support

- Evaluation and Development Plans of Infants, Young Children, and Pregnant Women Health Support Project
- An Analysis of Childcare Infrastructure Trend and the Responsive Policy in the Era of Low Fertility: Focusing on the Pregnancy and Childbirth Infrastructure

Major Research Project

Evaluation and Development Plans of Infants, Young Children, and Pregnant Women Health Support Project

Mekyung Kwon / Jeong Won Lee / Jaehye Lee / Jiwon Eom / Sojeong Yun / Soyoung Lee / Sunyoung Hwang

Backgrounds and Purpose of Study

- This study identified and evaluated the current status of health support programs for infants, young children, and pregnant women, and suggested development plans.

Research Methods

- To this end, previous studies were reviewed, related policies organized, and best domestic and foreign practices collected.
- A survey was conducted with 804 mothers of infants and young children, and 258 public health center officials to evaluate health support programs for infants and pregnant women and collect requests for improvement.
- An expert survey was conducted with 21 experts.

Results

- **According to the standards of the World Health Organization (WHO), the research classifies the target and scope of health support for infants, young children, and pregnant women into universal support, targeted support, and indicated support.**
- **75% of mothers of infants and young children evaluated the health support program for infants and pregnant women positively.**
 - Positive points included “because of financial help with support costs,” “because of appropriate support at the necessary time,” and so on.
 - There was a high demand for “providing an opportunity to diagnose the development of infants and toddlers.” They hoped to expand the targets and costs of health support programs.

- **Public health center officials evaluated that infants and pregnant women’s health support projects were necessary, and among them, the children’s national vaccination support project and mother-newborn health management support project received the highest evaluation. In the future, it was hoped that the universal service would be expanded.**
- **Experts emphasized “expanding home visit health support service” for infants, and education and counseling through regular visits had to be provided frequently.**

Policy Suggestions and Future Agenda

- **We suggest six directions for the promotion of health support for infants, young children, and pregnant women in the future:**
 - A comprehensive life-cycle perspective
 - Family-centered support
 - Reinforcement of psychological and emotional support
 - Collaboration among support systems
 - Improving project accessibility
 - Improvement of services for vulnerable classes and areas
- **Methods to actualize these directions were proposed:**
- **A comprehensive life-cycle perspective**
 - Establishment of life cycle integrated with health management system
 - Strengthening of support considering developmental characteristics of all age groups
 - Expansion of opportunities for diagnosing the development of infants and young children
 - Introduction of the primary care physician system
 - Improvement of birth registration system
- **Family-centered support**
 - Parental education opportunities through postpartum care centers
 - Fathe’s capacity building
- **Reinforcement of psychological and emotional support**
 - Psychological examination and diagnostic support for

infants and young children

- Emotional support and counseling opportunities for pregnant women
- Training counselors to strengthen psychoemotional support

• **Collaboration between support systems**

- Establishment of an app for sharing/integrating service information
- Preparing a one-stop service window
- Delivery system revision of laws for linkage and cooperation

• **Improvement of project accessibility**

- Provision of home visit service
- Expansion of medical personnel specialized in the health of infants and pregnant women
- Non-face-to-face online treatment and counseling support
- Promotion of support services and reinforcement of guidance
- Establishment of an emergency transportation system

• **Improvement of services for vulnerable classes and areas**

- Bridging regional gaps and establishment of public infrastructure
- Support for areas vulnerable to childbirth
- Establishment of a health support coordinator system
- Reinforcement of rehabilitation treatment support for disabled infants
- Support for disabled parents
- Expansion of rare disease items for newborn screening
- Improvement of postpartum care center quality
- Preparation of grounds for subsidizing postpartum care center usage costs

General Research Project

An Analysis of Childcare Infrastructure Trend and the Responsive Policy in the Era of Low Fertility: Focusing on the Pregnancy and Childbirth Infrastructure

Jaehye Lee / Dong Hoon Kim / Jong-geun Kim / Jiwon Eom / Sojeong Yun

Backgrounds and Purpose of Study

- This study intended to investigate the state and trend of childcare infrastructure in a country experiencing a rapid decrease in fertility rates, and to suggest responsive measures in both aspects of human and material infrastructure of the future through the diagnosis of regional disparities and demand forecasting of childcare infrastructure.

Research Methods

- Regarding the objectives, this study first examined the current state and trend of pregnancy and childbirth as well as the changes in the population structure in Korea using a longitudinal approach.
- Second, it investigated the state of pregnancy and childbirth infrastructure in Korea, including obstetrics and gynecology (ob / gyn) and pediatric hospitals, and conducted a geographic information system (GIS) analysis. A hot / cold spot analysis was then conducted with 2SFCA access scores for ob / gyn, pediatric, and pediatric emergency care units, and the scores were calculated.
- Third, it reviewed the relevant policies that support regions lacking such infrastructure, both at the central and local government levels, and identified issues and challenges to overcome.
- Fourth, a survey was conducted to determine the demands of pregnancy and childbirth infrastructure by households that have or are expecting a child. Based on the research results of the pregnancy and childbirth infrastructure state, the study conducted a logistic regression analysis to determine the influence of pregnancy and childbirth infrastructure level on people's intentions to have any additional pregnancies and to leave the present residential district in the future.
- Finally, it suggested a policy direction and improvement measures for future pregnancy and childbirth infrastructure to meet the needs of the low birthrate era.

Results

- **The examination of the fertility rate trend from 2012 to 2020 revealed that the rate continuously declined, with the total fertility rate being 0.84 in 2020.**
 - Accordingly, the number of ob/gyn and pediatric departments in hospitals reduced drastically, including the number of obstetricians, gynecologists, and pediatricians.
 - As a result, the lack of pregnancy and childbirth infrastructure has become increasingly serious in smaller cities and towns, such as Eup and Myeon.
- **To resolve the lack of pregnancy and childbirth infrastructure, the central government is carrying out a support project for obstetrically underserved areas.**
 - The support project for obstetrically underserved areas involves the government providing ob / gyn facilities and equipment expenses to those areas that have no such facilities.
 - The project is largely divided into labor ob / gyn support projects (new establishment and support for potentially vulnerable areas), maternity outpatient ob / gyn support projects, and mobile ob / gyn support projects.
 - At the same time, local governments are providing public postpartum care centers, transportation expense support for pregnant women, mobile clinic buses, healthcare support for new mothers and newborn babies, and so on.
- **Also examined in this study was the state of pregnancy and childbirth infrastructure in the areas where women who gave birth within the last two years reside.**
 - Regarding the state of infrastructure, while most of the large cities or mid-or small-sized cities had ob / gyn clinics that assist childbirth, only about 37% of town and rural areas, or "Eup / Myeon," had such facilities therein.
 - Regarding emergency rooms, while about 90% of the large-, mid-, or small-sized city residents responded that they had one in their area, only half of the Eup and Myeon residents said that they had one in their area.

- The study also found that the average travel time to a labor facility was approximately 27 min. More specifically, it took about 24 min in large cities, 29 min in mid-or small-sized cities, and 36 minutes in Eup and Myeon, indicating that it takes relatively longer to get to a labor facility at the Eup and Myeon levels.
- An analysis of accessibility to available medical centers revealed that labor and delivery facility hotspots included Seoul-Incheon, southern Gyeonggi-do, Busan and its vicinity, Daejeon and Sejong and their vicinity, and Gangneung-si and Donghae-si in Gangwon-do.
- Pediatric hotspots included Seoul, Incheon, south Gyeonggi-do, Daegu, western Daejeon, and Sejong. The hotspots of pediatric emergency care included Seoul-Incheon and the nearby Gyeonggi region, Gwangju and its vicinity, Jeonju-si and its vicinity in Jeollabuk-do, Wonju-si and its vicinity, Gangneung-si and Donghae-si in Gangwon-do, Andong-si, and Yongju-si and its vicinity in Gyeongsangbuk-do.
- **In addition, this study assessed the demands of pregnancy and childbirth policies through various methods.**
 - The results showed that the younger the age and higher the income, the stronger one's intention to have an additional pregnancy. Regarding pregnancy and childbirth infrastructure, only the level of pediatrics service affected one's intention to have another pregnancy.
 - Regarding the intention to relocate, the results showed that such intention tended to decline when there was an overall sufficient pregnancy and childbirth infrastructure in place.
- **The results of in-depth interviews with the pregnant women in obstetrically underserved areas revealed that most of these women travelled to an ob / gyn clinic located in a city far away from their own residence. More difficulties were found in the availability of pediatric clinics. Many areas had no pediatric clinics at all, and even if a medical service existed, the residents found the level of service and expertise unsatisfactory and were therefore not willing to use the service.**
- **In addition, this study held a pregnancy and childbirth policy contest, and collected various policy suggestions from both prospective users and professionals in the field. Consequently, it suggested the use of a smartphone application, which will be available in any area of the country.**

Policy Suggestions and Future Agenda

- **Based on the results of the research and analysis, this study suggests the following policy measures:**

- First, the essential public health infrastructure (ob / gyn), pediatric, and pediatric emergency units) must be expanded. Therefore, it is mandatory to establish these emergency units in public healthcare facilities, and medical expenditure support for medically underserved areas and essential healthcare services must be implemented. Moreover, the introduction of a national responsibility system for childbirth-related medical malpractice should be considered.
- Second, accommodation and transportation support for households during pregnancy, as well as the emergency medical services (EMS) transport system for mothers and newborns, should be improved.
- Third, the provision of general postpartum care vouchers and the establishment of public postpartum care centers should be implemented at a reasonable level.
- Finally, an integrated smartphone application for pregnancy and childbirth care should be developed to improve and assist various policy activities conducted by both central and local governments in this regard.

Management and

Staff of ECEC Center

- A Study on Operation and Improvement of Extended Class Teacher, Assistant Teacher, Substitute Teacher in Daycare Center
- A Study on the Construction of Kindergartens and Daycare Centers for the Future Environment (I): Focusing on Space Restructuring

Major Research Project

A Study on Operation and Improvement of Extended Class Teacher, Assistant Teacher, Substitute Teacher in Daycare Center

Hae-mi Yoo / Ja Yeun Koo / Moonjeong Kim

Backgrounds and Purpose of Study

- In order to improve the quality of childcare services for infants and toddlers, it is essential to improve the competency and working conditions of daycare teachers. Considering the long working hours in Korea, the poor treatment of childcare teachers urgently needs to be improved.
- In accordance with these policy demands, the employment status of childcare teachers at daycare centers has diversified to support assistant teachers, substitute teachers, and teachers in charge of extended childcare, which will be in operation from March 2020.
- As a result, the number of teachers with different employment statuses is increasing in daycare centers. Therefore, childcare teachers should be positioned in high-quality jobs and assigned without any gaps, according to the characteristics of the region and daycare centers.

Research Methods

- **In this study, the needs of childcare teachers and directors of daycare centers were comprehensively analyzed.**
 - Specifically, 432 teachers in charge of extended classes at daycare centers, 490 assistant teachers, and 304 substitute teachers were surveyed regarding their working conditions and demands for improvement.
 - In addition, 513 directors of daycare centers across the country were surveyed on difficulties and demands when operating daycare teachers, and the results were compared.
- **Based on the above discussions, the direction and major strategies for operating standards, such as the assignment of assistants and substitute teachers and improvement tasks for each type of childcare teacher, were also suggested.**

Results

- **Extended class teachers in daycare centers and request for improvement**
 - 52.2% of extension class teachers responded that they “usually have time to work alone.”

- The need to improve the quality of extended childcare, namely “improvement of the standards for organizing extended classes,” averaged 3.90 points, “recruitment of extended class teachers that meet the demand for extended daycare” received 3.83 points, “clarification of division of duties between 16 and 17” received 3.75 points, and “basic class children’s compliance with house of representatives” obtained 3.72 points.

• Assistant teachers in daycare centers and request for improvement

- 96.1% of respondents answered that they “voluntarily chose” the position of teaching assistant.
- Regarding the need to improve the working environment of assistant teachers, “various allowances and bonuses” scored an average of 4.20 points, “reinforcing work-life balance support” scored 3.86 points, and “stability of work content” scored 3.76 points.

• Substitute teachers in daycare centers and request for improvement

- Teachers’ satisfaction with working hours and work was high, but their satisfaction with wage levels was the lowest.
- The need to improve the working environment for substitute teachers was high in terms of “additional support for transportation expenses” and the “payment of various allowances and bonuses.”

Policy Suggestions and Future Agenda

- First, as a key strategy for improving the operation of daycare centers, assistants, and substitute teachers, diversification of support methods, such as expansion of support hours and creation of work manuals to clarify the division of duties with homeroom teachers, was suggested.
- Regarding the detailed plan tasks, it was proposed to improve the salary system for extended class teachers and substitute teachers, clarify the duties of assistant teachers, strengthen collaboration with homeroom teachers, and establish new standards for supporting non-homeroom teachers.
- It is thus necessary to improve re-education according to the purpose of support.

General Research Project

A Study on the Construction of Kindergartens and Daycare Centers for the Future Environment (I): Focusing on Space Restructuring

Changhyun Park / Mugyeong Moon / Nam Hee Do / Jinil Cho / Bokyoung Kye / Ji-yeon Yun
/ Heejeon Suh / Dongsim Kim / Juyeon Park / Namsu Park

Backgrounds and Purpose of Study

- This study examines the future education discourse, considers better reforms of the early childhood education and care system, and draws a future-oriented model of early childhood education schools. It aims to examine the application points of various elements included in future schools for early childhood education and care and to develop a spatial restructuring plan that considers the integration of education and care.
- This is the first-year research of a three-year study proposing a kindergarten and childcare model that responds to future environments by focusing on restructuring the spaces of kindergartens and childcare centers. This study includes research that sets the scope and direction of three-year research themes: space-restructuring, digital, and climate-related research.

Research Methods

- This study conducted policy, institutional, and spatial innovation; restructuring improvement projects; digital and remote learning; and climate and environmental response through a literature search.
- A survey of 1,240 kindergarten and childcare center teachers was conducted to identify policy demands for restructuring the space, digital environment, and climate change response of future infant schools.
- A Delphi survey was conducted with 35 experts to develop a kindergarten and childcare center (early childhood education) model that responds to future environments.
- Domestic and foreign cases of spatial innovation and restructuring were used to examine the systems and gain insights by analyzing them with a focus on the future. Data were gathered through field visits and interviews.

Results

- **Status of domestic and international early childhood education facilities**
 - There are many public kindergartens with aged facilities, with 2,426 facilities for children over 3 years old and 1,351 for children over 4 years old. Compared with kindergartens, there have been fewer aged childcare centers because they were established later. There are specific guidelines for designing spaces overseas; detailed guidelines for each space are provided on-site.
 - Analysis of domestic and international innovative spatial cases
 - Focusing on domestic and international innovative spatial cases, we found cases of utilizing green spaces, installing cafes for parents and children, strengthening connectivity and development, securing central gardens, transforming corridor spaces into learning spaces, reinforcing universal design, carbon-neutral environments, rooftop playgrounds, and Koran “Green-Smart models” where all members participate in the design process.
- **Analysis of future digital playspaces**
 - Our analysis revealed the importance of innovating early childhood education spaces by integrating EduTech, creating learning spaces where children could exercise autonomy and initiative, and effectively integrating learning spaces and technology. The cases of one national kindergarten, three private kindergartens, and one childcare center were analyzed and categorized into digital and early childhood, spatial configuration, space development, and space utilization.
- **Expert opinion survey**
 - The factors that would most significantly impact future early childhood education were, in order, low birth rates, decreasing school-age population, changes in the early

childhood digital environment, and climate change.

- The most important task is developing and implementing educational curricula that increase future social capabilities. The future school was seen as an educational welfare-based and reserve-integrated future early childhood education center. For this reason, it was considered important for the government and education authorities to provide institutional and financial support. The policy priorities for educational goals are to pursue capability access and innovative teaching methods.
- **Survey of 1,240 kindergarten and childcare center teachers**
 - There are high demands for improving current educational and childcare spaces, future education, and spaces related to carbon neutrality and the climate crisis, including the building layout, size, and number of floors.

Policy Suggestions and Future Agenda

- **Future models for early childhood education and care**
 - Proposal for a future model of early childhood education and care institutions that integrate education and care as part of a public education and care system for cultivating talent in future citizens.
- **Space restructuring**
 - Development and dissemination of customized user participation design manuals and processes for restructuring kindergartens and childcare centers that adapt to future

environments; development and dissemination of excellent cases of national and regional space restructuring; establishment of a specialized department for space innovation in professional organizations; training for educators; and proposing realistic plans for developing various facility models and facility standards.

- **Digital and smart-related**

- Expansion of wireless networks to establish digital environments, develop excellent devices and content, enhance digital competencies for early childhood educators, and strengthen home education.

- **Climate, green, and ecology**

- Making all early childhood education and care institutions carbon neutral and green by establishing environmentally friendly educational programs and hardware.

Development of

Children

- Comprehensive Analysis of the Panel Study on Korean Children (2008~2020)
- 2022 Longitudinal Study of Growth and Development of Korean Children: Panel Study on Korean Children (PSKC)
- Korean ECEC (Early Childhood Education and Care) Panel Study
- A Study on How to Resolve the Gap in Development and Learning of Young Children After COVID-19(I)

Major Research Project

Comprehensive Analysis of the Panel Study on Korean Children (2008~2020)

Sook In Cho / Jihyun Kim / Sangin Lee / Keng-Hie Song / Hyosik Choi / Ju-Hyun Song / Jae-chul Kim / Heesue Kim

Backgrounds and Purpose of Study

- The purpose of this report was to examine the growth and development of panel participants' children for 13 years and to provide policy implications for future generations based on multiple analyses of The Panel Study on Korean Children (PSKC) data.
- The present study focused on five different areas: (1) sample attrition in the panel data; (2) child: children's media use and socio-emotional development; (3) parent: parenting and child development; (4) family: family risk factors and children's physical/mental health; and (5) policy: the effect of policies regarding early childhood education and care. Overall, PSKC data (Waves 1 through 13) were analyzed using the Growth Mixture Model to apply a person-centered approach (Chapters 3-6).

Research Methods

- The first analysis (Chapter 2) examined sample attrition in the PSKC data.
- The second part of the study (Chapter 3) investigated the longitudinal trajectories of children's media use and the differences in socioemotional development between latent groups.
- The third part of the study (Chapter 4) explored the longitudinal trajectories of marital conflict of both mothers and fathers and the differences in various aspects of child development among the latent groups.
- The fourth analysis (Chapter 5) was conducted to explain the longitudinal trajectories of maternal depression during infancy

and preschool age and differences in children's physical and mental health among latent groups.

- The fifth part of the study (Chapter 6) explored the effectiveness of four different early childhood education and care policies.

Results

- **By analyzing the sample attrition in the PSKC data, we found that mothers had a greater influence on the sample attrition than did fathers.**
 - The group that left the panel during infancy tended to have a lower income and education level and a higher level of maternal depression.
 - The group that left the panel during early childhood tended to report a relatively higher level of marital conflict and had more relocation experiences.
 - The group that left the panel at school age was likely to report a higher level of parenting stress, daily stress, and child problem behaviors.
- **Next, we investigated the longitudinal trajectories of children's media use and differences in socio-emotional development between latent groups. Growth Mixture Modeling analyses revealed two distinctive trajectories of children's media use: (1) high-stable, and (2) middle-increasing groups.**
 - The "high-stable" group was more likely to be isolated from peers, exposed to cyber bullying, use slang, and have parents who are addicted to media.
 - The "middle-increasing" group reported higher levels of peer relationship quality, teacher-child relationship quality, and sense of community.
- **In the third part of the study, we explored the longitudinal trajectories of marital conflict of both mothers and fathers,**

and differences in various aspects of child development among latent groups.

- Growth Mixture Modeling analyses revealed five distinctive trajectories of mothers' marital conflict: (1) low-stability, (2) lowest-stable, (3) highly stable, (4) middle-increasing, and (5) middle-decreasing.
- Latent groups of fathers' marital conflict were divided into (1) middle, (2) lowest, and (3) low groups.
- In general, the "lowest-stable" group demonstrated higher levels of academic performance, self-esteem, life satisfaction, and school adjustment.

• In the fourth analysis, we assessed the longitudinal trajectories of maternal depression in infancy and preschool age and differences in children's physical and mental health among latent groups.

- Growth Mixture Modeling analyses revealed four distinctive trajectories of mothers' depression during both infancy and preschool age: (1) low-stable, (2) high-decreasing, (3) high-stable, and (4) low-increasing groups.
- Children of the "high-stable" group during infancy reported the highest levels of allergic symptoms in middle childhood. In terms of mental health, the "high-stable" group during preschool age demonstrated the lowest level of happiness in middle childhood.

• The results of exploring the effectiveness of four different early childhood education and care policies were as follows:

- Through the free child care policy, the maternal employment rate increased and household child care expenses decreased.

- Children in dual-income families were more likely to use after-school care services in elementary schools, and those who used these services were more likely to spend less time and money on private education.
- Children who participated in the family experiential learning program showed higher levels of overall happiness and satisfaction with school/time use in the 5th grade.
- Children who completed school violence prevention programs reported lower levels of strict rules and a more supportive atmosphere in the 4th grade, higher levels of friend support, fun class atmosphere, teacher support, and free communication; and lower levels of cyber bullying in the 5th grade.

Policy Suggestions and Future Agenda

- The results of this study emphasized the need for mental health support services for mothers of infants, support for improving the quality of marital relationships in panel families, and media addiction prevention programs for both children and parents. Finally, several suggestions were made for the maintenance and management of the Panel Study on Korean Children (PSKC) and the Korean Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Panel Study.

General Research Project

2022 Longitudinal Study of Growth and Development of Korean Children: Panel Study on Korean Children (PSKC)

Jihyun Kim / Nam Hee Do / Yun-Jin Bae / Hyejin Kim / Kyudon Kang / Hyunjin Jang

Backgrounds and Purpose of Study

- **The Panel Study on Korean Children (PSKC) was the first longitudinal study for newborns organized by the Korean Institute of Child Care and Education, and has been conducted for 15 years since 2008, for those born in 2008.**
 - The PSKC has been providing researchers with meaningful data accumulated every year, contributing to the academic field and policy by providing meaningful data to analyze the environments' influence on children's development.
 - Based on Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological perspectives, the PSKC was designed to understand the various environments surrounding children, including parents, schools, peers, communities, and policies.
 - Most of the panel participants included second-grade junior high school students, and the study is planned to continue until 2027.
- **The contents of the 2022 annual report were largely divided into three categories:**
 - First, the 15th wave PSKC was conducted.
 - Second, a basic analysis of the survey data collected in the 14th year (first year of middle school) was conducted.
 - Third, the 13th academic conference was held to share the results of meaningful academic research.

Research Methods

- In the 14th wave of PSKC, as the panel children entered junior high school, the scales were extensively modified with variables that were appropriate for adolescence, and most of them were maintained this year.
- In the annual report for 2022, we analyzed the data collected in 2021 (14th wave) and provided the characteristics of the children, parents, households, and community.
- A total of 1,304 panel households (1,293 children) participated in the 14th year of the survey in 2021.

Results

- **The following are some representative points from the research results of the 14th wave:**
 - First, the 7th grade panel children's mean height for boys was 164.15cm, and that for girls was 158.9 cm. The mean weight for boys was 58.99 kg, and that for girls is 51.13 kg. The average time spent using media was 6.56 hours per day during the 14th wave, and it was 2.80 hours per day during the 13th wave.
 - Second, the mean score of academic stress in the 14th wave was 2.42 on a five-point-scale. The average score of girls was higher than that of boys, and the children of unemployed mothers showed higher academic stress than those of employed mothers.
 - Third, 96.31% of fathers and 63.3% of mothers were employed. Among employed mothers, the proportion of regular workers was 68.98% in the 14th wave, which was 7.3% higher than in the 13th wave.
 - Lastly, the proportion of students using private education was 88.28% for the 7th grade, excluding after-school classes. Children with higher household incomes tended to use private education more than those with lower household incomes.

Policy Suggestions and Future Agenda

- Understanding and supporting gender differences in children, gender differences appear in health habits. While male students' intake of instant food and caffeine drinks is more than female students, and female students' sleeping time is longer than male students.
- In terms of media usage, male students are spending more time on playing games, while female students are spending more time on SNS and entertainment. In addition, male students appreciate their understanding in science and female students appreciate their understanding in Korean and English.

General Research Project

Korean ECEC (Early Childhood Education and Care) Panel Study

Jeong Rim Lee / Yun-Jin Bae / Jayeun Kim / Shinyeong Song / Kyungjin Cho / Hyunjin Jang / Kee Jae Lee

Backgrounds and Purpose of Study

- Multifaceted and complex developmental trajectories affect healthy growth and development in children.
- Therefore, a longitudinal approach to childhood growth is required, with a time dimension from the beginning of life to adulthood, including multiple environments from the uterine environment to community levels.
- The Korean Early Childhood Education and Care Panel Study (K-ECEC study) was designed to collect information on educational and childcare-related factors for a decade from children's early stages of life.
- Particularly, the K-ECEC study aimed to assess child-rearing policies and maximize their utilization and value by including children from subpopulations such as low-income families, multicultural families, and twin children.

Research Methods

- According to the sample design and sampling strategy, the K-ECEC panels were collected by April 2022, and Basic Surveys I and II were completed and descriptively analyzed. In addition, a survey of mothers of newborns at one month old was conducted using the Korean Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale.
- The scope and variables of the 1st year survey targeting four-month-olds were confirmed, and three sets of questionnaires were finalized for the child's main caretaker, mother, and father. Furthermore, a feasibility test was conducted using the Korean Infant / Toddler version of the Home Observation for Measurement of the Environment (K-IT-HOME).
- The first-year survey was conducted by trained interviewers and was expected to be completed by the end of this year. After finalizing the 1st year survey, data cleaning, missing data adjustment, and sampling weight generation were performed, and the database was ready to be released to the public later.

Results

- The final number of households with recruited pregnant women was 3,380, and pregnant women from multi-cultural families and low-income households represented 95 (2.8%)

and 72 (2.1%) households, respectively. Among 3,380 households, there were 40 cases of twin births, and the number of twin births was expected to increase by the end of the 1st year survey.

- The regional distributions of the 3,380 pregnant women were as follows: Seoul (521, 15.4%), Kyonggi / Incheon (1,037, 30.7%), Daejeon / Sejong / Chungcheong / Gangwon (365, 10.8%), Daegu / Gyeongbuk (409, 12.1%), Busan / Ulsan / Gyeongnam (572, 16.9%), and Gwangju / Jeolla / Jeju (476, 14.1%).
- According to Basic Surveys I and II, the following descriptive information was obtained: mean age of recruited women (32.4 years old), household income of 300-500 million won (47.9%), the first birth order (62.1%), employed mother (56.4%), college graduates (53.6%), and planned pregnancy (77.6%).

Policy Suggestions and future agenda

- **Based on the analytic results using Basic Surveys I and II, the following issues should be considered:**
 - According to the current status and characteristics of the recruited pregnant women and households, a specified approach should be delivered according to the age of the pregnant mother, household income (especially low-income households), employment status, and so on.
 - Furthermore, differentiated approaches for multicultural families, low-income households, and twin panels should be developed.
- **The K-ECEC study was launched in 2021, and the birth of infant panels occurred in 2022. The second-year survey will be conducted in 2023.**
 - After the completion of the 1st year survey, the strategies for maintaining and managing the panels should be prepared, as well as the disclosure of Basic Surveys I and II, for the 1st academic conference in 2023.
 - Meanwhile, the variables and survey tools should be developed and confirmed for the 2nd year survey scheduled for 2023.
 - Therefore, promoting activities to maintain survey participants should be prepared, along with the achievement of academic knowledge and evidence for developing adequate policies.

General Research Project

A Study on How to Resolve the Gap in Development and Learning of Young Children After COVID-19(I)

Eun-Young Choi / Eunyoung Kim / Ja Yeun Koo / Hyejoo Cho / Yoon kyung Jeong / Young kyu Shim

Backgrounds and Purpose of Study

- This study collected and analyzed empirical data on the developmental gap of young children based on domestic and foreign studies conducted in this regard, driven by social concerns about the developmental gap of young children amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- This study will be conducted for two years, from 2022 to 2023, planning for 2021, when the COVID-19 pandemic was serious.
- The purpose of this study was to determine if there is a gap in early childhood development and learning, and if so, what the cause is, while suggesting ways to mitigate the factors that cause the gap.

Research Methods

- According to the purpose of the study, domestic and foreign preceding studies related to young children's development and learning after the COVID-19 pandemic were analyzed.
- In addition, to reflect the voices of field experts who experienced the COVID-19 pandemic, we visited kindergartens and daycare centers to collect opinions from directors, teachers, and parents. Based on this, background variables that may have affected development due to the COVID-19 pandemic were investigated.
- Developmental tests (K-WPPSI-IV, K-Vineland-2) were conducted for two-year-old and five-year-old children (100 in each age group, 200 in total) in kindergartens and daycare centers.
- In addition, the overall developmental status of young children was analyzed based on the survey results of parents (100 each, total 200) and teachers (40 total) in charge of young children who performed developmental testing.

Results

- **Based on the results, the discussion is as follows:**
- **First, as a result of analyzing the cognitive abilities (K-WPPSI-IV) of young children, both two-year-old and five-year-old children showed an average level.**
 - This was because the proportion of households with a college degree or higher and that of dual-income households were high because of the characteristics of the households participating in this study.
 - In other words, considering the high socioeconomic status of households participating in this study, the results of this study can be said to be similar to those of standardization studies.
- **Second, the combined score of adaptive behavior (K-Vineland-2) of children in the two-year-old class and five-year-old class also showed an average level.**
 - Specifically, children in the five-year-old class received high scores in the subdomains of sociality and interpersonal relations.
 - However, children in the two-year-old class scored higher on the motor domain. Further studies are required to elucidate these differences.
- **Third, the difference in cognitive development according to sex, which is an individual variable in young children, did not show any difference between two and five years of age.**
 - On the other hand, in the two-year-old class, children from dual-income families showed higher scores on the vocabulary acquisition index than did children from single-income families, and the adaptive behavior of children from dual-income families was higher than that of single-income families.
- **Fourth, there was no difference in cognitive ability according to the income level of the two-year-old class children. However, in the five-year-old class, children from high-income families showed high performance in terms of language comprehension and flow reasoning indices.**

- In addition, there was no overall difference in adaptive behavior according to household income, but children from families with low household income showed higher levels of adaptive behavior in the fine motor category for two-year-old class children.

Policy Suggestions and Future Agenda

- This study began with the assumption that the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic may have impacted childhood. Since this study was conducted over a short period of time, the results elicit cautious interpretation; however, the development of children in the two-year-old and five-year-old class was found to be at a similar level to the standardized test results before the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct an in-depth analysis of the specific reasons why

young children from dual-income families show higher levels of development.

- In addition, there was no difference in the development of children from upper-middle and lower-middle families. Therefore, the results of this study suggest that customized support is needed for those who are likely to experience the educational gap discussed in the polarization study conducted before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Inclusive

Childrearing Support

- A Study on the Ways to Support Vulnerable Family's Parenting Capabilities (I): Supporting Plans for Foster Families
- Comprehensive Measure for Early Screening and Support for Children at Risk for Developmental Disabilities in Early Childhood Education and Care (I): A Survey and Development of Early Screening Tool

General Research Project

A Study on the Ways to Support Vulnerable Family's Parenting Capabilities (I): Supporting Plans for Foster Families

Yun-Jin Bae / Jeong Rim Lee / Ahreum Kim / Hyemin Lee / Sungeun Yang / Hae-lim Chang / Yurim Cha

Backgrounds and Purpose of Study

- The “Study on the Ways to Support Vulnerable Family’s Parenting Capabilities” was a five-year project to seek ways to improve the support system and develop parenting guide books, focusing on strengthening parenting capabilities. In 2022, the study targeted foster families raising children in need.
 - Foster children need a deeper understanding, more attention, and affection from caregivers because they have experienced separation from their biological parents (original families) and have had a lot of changes in their home environment, including social and physical contexts.
 - It is necessary to consistently support the parenting capabilities of foster families so that foster children can be protected safely and raised physically and psychologically in foster homes.
- The purpose of this study was as follows:
 - First, it sought ways to improve foster family support systems that can reduce the parenting burden of foster parents and solve parenting difficulties.
 - Second, it aimed to develop parenting guidebooks that are helpful in building parenting capabilities and caring for children with special needs.

Research Methods

- For this study, various research methods were used, including literature review, survey, discussion meetings, expert advisory meetings, and policy forum.
 - A total of 283 foster parents were surveyed regarding their demographic characteristics and those of their children, household characteristics, parenting styles and psychological

- characteristics, foster children’s characteristics, family relations, and experiences and needs for support programs.
- Interviews were conducted with 33 unrelated foster parents.

Results

- Survey study
 - The parenting capabilities of foster parents of school-aged children were slightly lower than those of foster parents of younger children. Foster parents said that caring for infants is physically demanding, and caring for older children is financially demanding. They experienced greater economic burdens as their children aged. There were a lot of factors that affected children’s adjustment to foster care, of which the first and most important was the children’s age at the time of entering foster care.
 - Second, foster parents answered “characteristics of foster children and foster families” as the most necessary content for preliminary education, and “how to raise children” as the most necessary content for supplementary education. The adaptation of foster children and preparations of foster families differed depending on the children’s age at the time of entering foster care; therefore, this should be reflected in the educational content.
 - Third, most foster parents said that they needed the authority of their children’s legal representatives.
- Developing parenting guide books
 - Parenting guides were theoretically based on “positive discipline” and the “strength perspective.” Under the title of “Parenting Guide Empowering Foster Parents,” the parenting guide books contained the initial period (spring), adaptation period (summer and fall), and final period (winter) by comparing the process of foster care to four seasons.

Policy Suggestions and Future Agenda

- Based on the study results, plans to strengthen the parenting capabilities of foster families, ways to improve

the supporting systems for foster care, and legislative improvements in the foster care system were proposed.

- First, as a way to strengthen a family's parenting capabilities, it was suggested to enhance foster parents' psychological health, provide customized support considering their situation, develop the content system of parent education, activate information exchange through self-help groups, support physical environment improvement, and use parenting guide books.
- Second, as a way to improve the foster family support system, it was proposed to strengthen social responsibility for foster children through childcare support, expand psychotherapy for foster children, prepare various support programs to meet handicapped children's needs, cooperate between organizations for foster children to return to their original families, keep long-term / short-term foster care formalities

separate and dualize policies, change the termination process of foster care placement, improve the management system considering the characteristics of foster families, provide coherent administrative support, secure a stable budget, improve public awareness of foster care, and promote foster care systems.

- Third, as a legislative improvement plan, establishing a legal framework for the definition and qualifications of foster parents, legislative programs for training foster parents, improving systems for caring for long-term foster children, working out the details for visitation rights, and strengthening the guardianship of foster parents were suggested.

General Research Project

Comprehensive Measure for Early Screening and Support for Children at Risk for Developmental Disabilities in Early Childhood Education and Care (I): A Survey and Development of Early Screening Tool

Eun Jin Kang / MeKyung Kwon / Changhyun Park / Yoonkyung Choi / Hyewon Park / Ilsun Choi
/ KyungOk Lee / Hyung Mee Kim / Sungeun Yang / Young Ah Kim

Backgrounds and Purpose of Study

- This research was a first-year study for a four-year cooperative project of the Korean government's "Master Plan for Children with Developmental Disabilities" (Related Ministries, 2021. 05.) and President Yoon Suk-yeol's key policy tasks (47, 67, 84).
- The purpose of this study was to develop and distribute early screening tools and easy-to-understand support guides for ECEC teachers to use in the classroom.

Research Methods

- In the current study, a literature review, conference of experts, survey of status and demands, and case studies were conducted to develop an index for early screening in terms of a toll and support guide for ECEC teachers.

Results

- First, as a result of analyzing legal regulation systems related to at-risk children, difficulties were identified in the lack of connection between the demands of service consumers from disability diagnosis and early screening, identification of children who qualify for special education, related institutions, and regulations of welfare support providers.
- Second, the results of the analysis of the current systems and services for supporting children with disabilities or those at risk suggested that the system for early screening included the National Health Screening Program for Infants and Children. However, children who were recommended for in-depth

evaluation had difficulties proceeding to the next step because of parental rejection, restrictions on cost support, and a lack of publicity.

- Third, according to the survey results of 1,214 ECEC teachers, 40.4% of the teachers responded that they had experienced caring for children at risk. They responded that observing and comparing their children with their peers was the top priority in their decisions. Among 40.4% of teachers with experience in caring for at-risk children, 38.1% used screening tools such as the K-CDI, K-DST, and CBCL 1.5-5. However, 20.9% of those who underwent screening answered that they did not know the name of the tool. Approximately 48.1% of the teachers who had experience with at-risk children discussed problems with parents and provided activities to use at home. Of the 1,214 teachers, 95.5% (53.5% + 42%) responded that an early screening tool for at-risk children was needed.
- Based on these results, the Korean Screening Index of Early Development (K-SIED) was developed for teachers. The K-SIED was developed to prevent and minimize developmental problems through early screening and intervention. It was developed to support teachers in screening at-risk children in ECEC classrooms. The index included connection with the ECEC curriculum and daily routines, focus on developmental areas, enhancing the possibility of early screening (12 months to five years), securing suitability as a teacher evaluation tool, and the effectiveness of screening results. Based on the preliminary study, 376 items were developed.
- Finally, the contents of the teacher support guide were organized. The guide was not intended for teachers to distinguish children into a specific group called "children at risk," but to provide appropriate support to promote development by identifying children with developmental difficulties in a timely manner. For teachers to provide effective support to at-risk children, this guide was organized as follows: understanding, teaching, and providing behavioral support for at-risk children.

Policy Suggestions and Future Agenda

- The implications of the current study include "a connected system of supporting healthy development from the beginning of life" by complementing the current system.
- First, the monitoring and follow-up system of the National Health Screening Program for Infants and Children should be complemented.
- Second, in order to enhance the monitoring capacities for children at risk in ECECs, the Korean Screening Index for Early Development (K-SIED) and teacher support guide should be distributed. Furthermore, it is necessary to strengthen public awareness of children at risk to improve parental awareness. One-on-one coaching support from experts by visiting ECECs is suggested.
- Third, as a plan to support the capacity of teachers caring for children at risk, the following ways are suggested:
 - A curriculum related to children with disabilities should be included in pre-service teacher training programs.
 - For teachers in service, courses for teaching and learning and play support for at-risk children should be included in the in-service training.
 - To establish an integrated support system through coordination from the developmental learning team and center, the law for founding centers and defining their types, the role of the center, and an integrated support network for children at risk should be divided into 1-2-3 levels.
- Finally, in order to establish a healthy and safe environment for children, integration of ECECs should be advanced to reinforce a special education system for children with disabilities. Moreover, an assistive teacher should be available when children with disabilities are placed in general education classrooms. Infrastructure regarding the placement and support for children with disabilities in integrated classrooms should be expanded. Lastly, it is necessary to systemize an early screening of at-risk children and deliver services through big data.

Childrearing

Cost

- Home Care Allowance Support Status and System Improvement Plan
- KICCE Spending Survey: A Study of Childrearing Costs and Demand for Childcare Services (V)

Major Research Project

Home Care Allowance Support Status and System Improvement Plan

Misun Yang / Nayoung Kim / Eun Jung Park / Miae Oh / Shinyeong Song

Backgrounds and Purpose of Study

- The purpose of this study was to examine the characteristics of households receiving support for home care allowance and the current status of use of childcare programs and education services other than daycare centers and kindergartens, and to evaluate the appropriateness of the home care allowance support policy to suggest measures for improving the system.
- Furthermore, the study aimed to review the current childcare support system and establish an appropriate support system for each growth stage of children.

Research Methods

- To achieve this purpose, a literature review was conducted on laws, systems, and previous overseas studies related to home care allowance. Statistical data on children receiving home care allowance were analyzed; surveys on households receiving home care allowance were conducted; and big data analysis, in-depth analysis of focus group interviews, meetings, and advisory meetings were conducted.

Results

- A survey of households receiving home care allowance for 24 months or more showed that the use of home care allowance support mostly began at birth, but stopped at around age 3 or older due to the use of daycare centers and kindergartens, and then for the purpose of private education, such as English

academies. There was persistent dissatisfaction with the home care allowance.

- On the other hand, although home care allowance was provided to guarantee parents' right to choose, it was used for the living expenses of the entire family rather than for the cost of raising the recipient's child, and expenditures were in the order of food, essential living expenses, medical expenses, children's insurance, children's savings, and apartment applications.
- In addition, among children aged 24 months or older who received home care allowance, more than half planned to use daycare centers or kindergartens and 23.9% did not, with 31.4% going to kindergarten, 31.3% going to daycare centers, and 13.3% to both facilities. More than 30% of children under 24 months used private academies, tutors, and study materials, and 23.6% of parents who participated in the survey answered that the childcare support infrastructure was sufficient.
- Most parents chose 3-4 years of age as the appropriate starting time for daycare centers and kindergartens, with an average age of 2.9 years. Of the households receiving the 24-month care allowance, 51.6% were in favor of the plan not supporting the home care allowance for children aged three or older, and the rest were against it. Around 56.7% of parents of those aged three years or older were willing to send their child to a daycare center or kindergarten even if the support for home care allowance stopped. Those who were not willing to do so had the following reasons: 39.9% were dissatisfied with the daycare center or kindergarten service, 18.2% were burdened as they had to pay additional monthly fees for the daycare center or kindergarten, 10.3% preferred English education, and 8.3% selected private academies as they were suitable for prior learning in elementary school.

Policy Suggestions and Future Agenda

- As a policy measure, recipients of the parental benefit support, which is being implemented from 2023, should be expanded from children aged 0 and 1 years to 2 years, and the removal

- of the home allowance support policy should be reviewed.
- However, additional support policies for children who have difficulty using daycare centers or kindergartens due to the characteristics of children, parents, and households should be prepared. It is necessary to enable the use of daycare centers and kindergartens for children of vulnerable groups such as low-income families, and to solve blind spots in infrastructure in areas where the population is disappearing, such as rural and vulnerable areas.
 - In recent years, cash subsidy policies that have similar and overlapping support purposes and recipients, including child and infant allowances, have been introduced in addition to home care allowances. However, since beneficiaries of these policies cannot properly distinguish between them or know the exact contents of support, it is necessary to simplify the policies and increase publicity to raise awareness.
 - Cash subsidies such as infant and parent allowances can be used to expand childcare support services that can alleviate parents' childcare burden, such as childcare support programs (full day), part-time childcare, and rental services including toys, books, and childcare items.
 - The Support Center for Childcare is already providing services centered on infants, such as the rental of toys and books, and parent-child experience centers; therefore, services for toddlers should be expanded. Furthermore, measures to operate childcare support centers in the form of base centers, such as branch offices in areas with difficult access like rural areas, should be reviewed.

General Research Project

KICCE Spending Survey: A Study of Childrearing Costs and Demand for Childcare Services (V)

Jeong Won Lee / Jahee Lee / Jayeun Kim / Seokjin Woo / Taewoo Kim

Backgrounds and Purpose of Study

- This study comprised the 5th wave of the five-year (2018~2022) study, the KICCE Spending Survey, which collects information on the childrearing costs and usage of childcare services among childrearing households, for the purpose of informing policies that can help alleviate the cost burden associated with such spending.
- In addition to collecting the 5th wave data of the KICCE Spending Survey, in this year's "KICCE Spending Survey: A Study of Childrearing Costs and Demand for Childcare Services (V)," we also utilized the time series data compiled over the 1st~4th waves to conduct two in-depth analyses.

Research Methods

- **The two main avenues of research methodology employed here were the empirical survey and focus group interviews of childrearing parents.**
 - In the 5th wave of the KICCE Spending Survey, households in which the youngest child had enrolled in elementary school or higher were excluded.
- **In the questionnaire for the 5th wave study, in view of the spread of COVID-19 and the dampened impact of the pandemic on childcare practices, new questions were included regarding households' economic burden, changes in consumption expenditure, and changes in the usage of childcare services in relation to the pandemic.**
- **Additionally, with regard to new childcare support measures being introduced in 2022, questions were included to gauge the awareness and actual usage of households with young children, as well as their expectations regarding the potential alleviation of childcare costs.**

Results

1. Overview of the 5th Wave of the KICCE Spending Survey
 - **The total sample for the 5th wave included 1,730 households, equivalent to a retention rate of 89.8%.**
 - Of the 1,476 sampled households, 1,325 were contacted successfully. A total of 151 households were replaced with new households.
 - As in the previous wave, 254 households were included in the newborn sample.
 - A total of 2,395 children (infants) responded to the survey.
2. Income Situation of Households with Young Children
 - **Among households with young children in the 5th wave (2022), the average monthly income was 5,005,000 KRW (net), down from 5,112,000 KRW (net) in the 4th wave (2021). The continued rise in household income that was observed until the 3rd wave (2020) was found to have reversed since the 4th wave (2021).**
 - Income-wise, households with young children in the 5th wave (2022) were most reliant on "labor and business income" (87.3%) and "public transfer income" (5.8%).
 - In the 5th wave, the average monthly income of dual-earner households was 5,855,000 KRW, approximately 35% higher than that of single-income households (4,328,000 KRW). This difference appears to be attributable to differences in "labor and business income."
3. Expenditure on Living Expenses and Childcare among Households with Young Children
 - **In the 5th wave, the average monthly expenditure among households with young children was 3,032,000 KRW, down slightly from 3,040,000 KRW in the 4th wave (2021) but still higher than the figures from the 1st~3rd waves (2018~2020).**
 - Among households with young children, "food" (31.2%) accounted for the largest share of living expenses. Food expenditure has increased significantly since the 3rd

wave (2020), which coincides with the early stages of the pandemic.

- The Engel coefficient was 28.0 as of the 5th wave (2022), which was lower than in the 4th wave (28.4), but still higher than in the 1st and 2nd waves.
- The Schwabe index was 8.3 as of the 5th wave, up again following a decrease to 8.1 in the 4th wave.
- The Engel coefficient was 26.9 as of the 5th wave (2022), which decreased slightly from 27.2 in the 4th wave, reaching a similar level to that in the 3rd wave.

- **The total average monthly childcare cost for the 5th wave stood at 1,273,000 KRW, which was higher than that observed in the 1st~3rd waves, albeit lower than that in the 4th wave (1,276,000 KRW).**

- Among households with young children, the share of “education / childcare costs” was 334,000 KRW, which was the second-lowest level (after the 3rd wave) observed throughout the five-year study.

- **Average monthly childcare costs for young children in the 5th wave stood at 902,000 KRW, down slightly from 922,000 KRW in the 4th wave.**

- Compared to the 4th wave, “education / childcare costs” expenditure dropped noticeably in the 5th wave, while the share of “family trips” and “experiential learning” under “leisure / cultural activities” grew. In contrast, expenditure fell for items associated with indoor activities such as “toys” or “book purchases.”

- **In the 5th wave (2022), the monthly average childcare cost per young child stood at 652,000 KRW, similar to 655,000 KRW in the 4th wave.**

- In the case of children between the ages of 1 and 5, the burden of child support generally increased as the child’s age increased. However, among infants aged 0-2 years old, newborns (0-year-olds) spent more time in childrearing than those aged 1-2 years old.

4. Use of Childcare Services by Childrearing Households & Policy Demands

• Use of childcare facilities offering half-day or longer programs:

- Types of facilities used: Of the 2,393 young children observed, 77.4% used facilities offering half-day or longer programs. By type, childcare centers accounted for 49.2%, followed by kindergartens (27.1%) and study centers (1.1%) offering half-day or longer programs. A total of 22.6% of young children were found not to use half-day or longer facilities.

- Time spent: Among young children in half-day or longer facilities, the weekly average use hours were 34.9 hours for childcare centers, 34.8 hours for kindergartens, and 35.1 hours for half-day or longer study centers.

- Cost of use: The average monthly fees paid to each type of facility were 71,000 KRW for childcare centers, 120,000 KRW for kindergartens, and 984,000 KRW for half-day or longer study centers.

• Experience of not using the institution for more than half a day due to COVID-19:

- Over the past year, the average number of days of absenteeism among young children enrolled in half-day or longer facilities due to COVID-19 was 21.2. In descending order, the most frequent reasons for absenteeism (multiple choice) included “closing of facility” (42.3%), “COVID-19 positive case among cohabiting family” (41.5%), and “COVID-19 positive case of child” (40.2%).

• Use of part-time private education:

- Types of facilities used: The most frequently reported type was short-term study centers (21.9%), followed by in-person workbooks (12.0%), culture centers (7.67%), non-visit-type workbooks and activities (3.3%), visit-type workbooks and activities (2.2%), and individual / group tutoring (1.9%).

- Time spent and usage cost: The form of part-time private education associated with the longest use hours was “short-term study centers” (3.9 hours per week), while that

associated with the highest cost was “individual / group tutoring” (215,000 KRW per month).

- Satisfaction: Services that were associated with the highest satisfaction levels were “individual / group tutoring” (4.0 out of a possible 5.0).

• **Use of in-home childcare and parental support services**

- Use of individual care services: While grandparents represented the predominant provider of individual care services, the 5th wave saw a rise in the share of childcare helpers in the private sector compared to the first four waves.

- Time spent and usage cost: Households using private childcare helpers paid 685,000 KRW for an average of 21.5 hours per week, which was the highest per hour.

- In-home care by parents: Parents spent an average of 8 h 22 min per day on childcare during weekdays and 13 h 3 min on weekends. The average hours of “in-person parental care,” where at least one parent was present, stood at 8 h 16 min on weekdays and 13 h 2 min on weekends.

- Electronic devices (TV, PC, etc.) were used during in-home childcare for an average of 1 h 20min on weekdays and 2 h 6 min on weekends. Approximately 76.0% of the respondents reported allowing their children to use digital devices to ease the burden of home care.

- 6.8% of respondent households with young children reported having used toy rental services, 16.5% reported having used book rental services, and 8.7% reported having received assistance from childcare supplies.

- Regarding parental support services, the take-up rates by type were as follows: parental training (10.2%), parental counseling (15.0%), and childrearing mentorship (1.0%).

• **Demands regarding childcare support services**

- In the 5th wave, the aspect of government support that parents felt was the most lacking was “cash support” (42.4%). On the other hand, when respondents answered that the aspect of “parental support for parenting time” was insufficient, the demand for “automatic / mandatory access to the program” among the necessary improvements increased significantly.

• **Parents found government support to be the most lacking during “early childhood” (24 months–entry to elementary school, 61.0%), “infancy” (26.2%), and “before and after childbirth” (12.8%), with “cost support” being the most-demanded type of support across all periods.**

• **Addressing the need for emergency childcare**

- In the event of an unforeseen need for emergency care, the most opted-for means of care was “direct care by a parent” (86.5%). The most-demanded form of direct care among dual earner households was “use of paid days off” (34.6%), followed by “use of family care leave / days off” (34.5%) and “working from home” (14.2%).

- Regarding the childcare support policy that needed improvement in the face of societal crisis situations, the most frequently requested item was “better support for family care leave” (39.9%).

5. In-Depth Analysis Findings

• **Time series analysis of income and expenditure, by characteristics of childrearing households**

- Merging the KICCE Spending Survey data from the first four waves (2018–2021) into panel data, we found an upward trend in household income. Expenditure levels for living expenses rose sharply in the 3rd wave, while expenditures for education/childcare grew alongside household income growth. Healthcare / medical care increased over time.

- Composition of living expenses: Food expenditure

accounted for a growing share of living expenses throughout the first four waves, which was particularly apparent in low-income households.

- Trends in living expenses according to the number of children: In terms of both share and level of spending, the purchase of items such as food, housing, education / childcare service, healthcare / medical, and toys / books tended to be greater among households with more children.

• **Impact of COVID-19 on childcare cost**

- Considering the extent of COVID-19 infection by region, we looked at changes in household childcare costs prior to (2018–2019) and following (2020–2021) the pandemic. At the micro level, our estimates indicated that the pandemic had a statistically significant negative effect on childcare costs, with a 10% increase in COVID-19 prevalence associated with a 0.4% decrease in childcare costs.

Policy Suggestions and Future Agenda

- **In view of this finding, we considered several policy directions for alleviating the childcare cost burden for households with young children as follows: 1) strengthening a lifecycle-based approach to childcare support, 2) pursuing balanced development of childcare support across various types of childrearing situations, and 3) designing childcare support measures tailored to the characteristics of each household type. Specifically, these entail the following:**

- First, strengthening the lifecycle-based approach to childcare support would include further financial support for out-of-pocket expenses (transport fees, meals and snacks at facilities, school entrance costs, etc.) associated with the use of childcare and educational services. Further measures include expanding the eligibility for Culture Nuri Cards to three years of age, providing income support for parents during pregnancy and childbirth, and improving support for

parental allowance.

- Second, for the balanced development of childcare support across various types of child-rearing situations, there is a need to continue expanding public infrastructure and closing interregional gaps in facility accessibility to further support surrogate care. We also propose expanding the cost support for in-home childcare services to include all income levels. In addition, to provide direct in-person support by parents, we propose improving the efficacy of time support schemes and expanding accessibility to the local childcare support infrastructure.
- Third, regarding childcare support plans suitable for each household type, a plan was proposed to support childcare for households with many children and low-income households. First, it was proposed to adjust the child allowance and the Munhwa Nuri Card in favor of households with many children, and to raise the age limit for the child allowance. In addition, it was suggested that purposeful support should be provided to alleviate the burden of food expenses for the low-income class.

2022 KICCE PROJECT REPORT ABSTRACTS

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