Blending Family and Professional Roles: Psychosocial Influences Upon the Experiences of Family Child Care Providers

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Family Child Care (FCC): Definition

• Home-based Care
• Licensed home-based care capacity is ≈ 1.2 million children and the number of providers is estimated to be 115K listed and 919K unlisted providers
• Caregivers with diverse educational backgrounds and pathways to this work
• High representation of infants and toddlers

(Morrissey, 2007; National Child Care Information and Technical Assistance Center & National Association for Regulatory Administration, 2013; National Survey of Early Care and Education Project Team, 2013)
Background: Psychosocial Influences upon FCC Quality

• Psychosocial wellness is associated with higher quality of care
• Stressed providers often exit, but using supportive resources is associated with higher commitment and quality
• Social support from peer providers is associated with less consideration of exit
• Professional role identity is associated with more professional development participation
• Lower participation in training and quality improvement efforts than center-based programs; lower quality overall even among those who do participate

Research goal: Increase understanding of the experiences of FCC Providers to support efforts to engage these members of the ECE workforce in quality improvement.

(Baumgartner, Carson, Apavaloaie, & Tsoulapas; 2009; Hamre and Pianta, 2004; Manlove, 1993; Todd & Deery-Schmidt, 1996; Swartz, Wiley, Koziol, & Magerko, Revise and Resumbit; Tout et al., 2010; Tout et al., 2011)
Family Child Care Interview Project (FCCIP): Integrated Theoretical Framework

Work Family Border Theory (Clark, 2000):
- Home-Based Context
- Shared Personal Family and Child Care Routines
- Work-Family Balance

Inform Tailored Support/ and Professional Development for FCCPs

Social Convoy Theory (Kahn and Antonucci, 1980):
- Self Construction of Role
- Dual Role Demands
- Social Support Network
- Attachment Relationships through the Lifespan
FCCIP: Participant Demographics

• N = 24
• Small Urban/Rural
• 75% Caucasian; 25% African American
• 6 Counties in Illinois
• M = 45 years old
• All Women
• Varied Formal Education (ranging from GED - pursuing a masters degree)
FCCIP: Method

In-depth, semi-structured interviews, conducted in participant’s homes (ranging 39-118 min.) (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, Seidman, 1998; Fontana & Frey, 2003)

**Themes**

- Ecocultural Family Routines (Weisner, 2002)
- Stresses and Challenges of family child care (Clark, 2000)
- Support Network/Social Convoy (Kahn & Antonucci, 1985)
- Training and Professional Development Participation

**Narrative analysis**

- Interpretive process (Denzin, 2001)
- Verbatim Transcripts
- 2 Independent coders (Miles & Huberbman, 1984)
- Member checks (Guba & Lincoln, 1985)
- Ethnographic field notes (Lofland & Lofland, 1995; Ely, 1991)
## FCCIP Findings: Role Identities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Roles</th>
<th>ECE Professional Roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Mother</td>
<td>• Day care provider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sister</td>
<td>• Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Grandmother</td>
<td>• Preschool Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Aunt</td>
<td>• Child Care Provider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Close Friend</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Everybody calls me Nana, everybody... my daughter’s friends, my daughter’s boss, everybody calls me Nana.--Barbara
## FCCP Findings: Characteristics Related to Family Role Identities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Routines</th>
<th>Support Network</th>
<th>Professional Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Less structured</td>
<td>• Own family</td>
<td>• Less focused on formal training/education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Comparisons to rearing own children</td>
<td>• Friends</td>
<td>• Less open/more nervous about trainers entering their homes for consulting (though the Child and Adult Care Food Program trainers and Quality Improvement/Toy Library visitors were mentioned positively)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• More intertwining with personal family routines</td>
<td>• Faith community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• “Close” FCC families</td>
<td></td>
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Voices of Participants: ECE Professional Roles

There is a family childcare association, and I’m head of that so, we do trainings once a month, I try to stay involved with our school district...That’s one thing I loved about working at Head Start, because it really taught me the things I needed to know to make sure the children were prepared for school.

-----Mary
### FCCIP Findings: Characteristics Related to ECE Professional Role Identities

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<th>Routines</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• More structured</td>
<td>• Included trainers and PD providers</td>
<td>• Positive about quality improvement program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use of a “curriculum”</td>
<td>• Included professional peers</td>
<td>• More eager to work with consultants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• More separate from personal family routines</td>
<td>• Mention providers associations and networks</td>
<td>• Interest in formal education in ECE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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FCCIP Findings: Intertwining Roles

• Not mutually exclusive roles
• Fluid identities/dynamic over time
• Network and professional development experience reflected each provider’s unique identity balance
• Difficulties one caregiving role could affect the other domain
• Adequate social support and awareness of the need to balance both caregiving roles seemed to help FCCPs persevere in the face of stress.
• Difficulty balancing the demands of child care work and personal family also appeared to cause stress in FCC routines and make professional development participation more challenging
With my 3 year old. .. when I ’m running the daycare we follow the same routine and we do things.. so tryin ’ to find that balance was like, okay, Tina (her daughter) I know you wanna go do this but right now we ’re doing this (daycare)...I found that to be kind of a challenge, being mom and being child care provider. –Keisha
Role Identity Blends

Role Identity Blend

Continuum of role blending

Family Roles

ECE Professional Roles

Diane
Sandra
Cheryl
Barbara

Janet
Patricia
Laurie
Susie
Cindy
Pamela
Joan

Annie
Judy
Helén
Jessica
Margaret

Shirley
Missy
Keishia
Vicki
Tiana
Andrea
Mary
Lucy
Fluidity of Role Identities: Example of Building ECE Professional Identity

I’m, accepted into the training grant program that they have, and help me but learning more about, tryin’ to teach and, you know, help with these kids, cause like they say I’m not a babysitter...but it’s different, it’s totally different. It’s a teaching in there, teaching is not normal as to raising your child, you know what I’m sayin’, it’s different, it’s like actual teacher school, you know and I didn’t know that when I first started.—Pamela
Contextualized “Whole Caregiver” Understanding to Inform Quality Improvement Efforts

- Emotional Resources
- Social Resources
- ECE Knowledge

Contextual Factors

Quality of Practices
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