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THE IMPORTANCE OF FIT: FOSTERING JOB SATISFACTION AND RETENTION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS

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RETENTION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS

A Thesis
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science
in
Psychology:
Industrial/Organizational

by
Heather Jennifer Carrasco
June 2019

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ABSTRACT

The primary objective of this study is to foster career outcomes such as job satisfaction and turnover intentions in early childhood educators (ECEs). ECEs are defined as individuals teaching children from the age range of birth to 5 years old and work in child care programs. The focus on ECEs population was due to the fact they work in demanding environments with little wage incentives, and as a result they experience high levels of job dissatisfaction, which in turn leads to turnover. Research has demonstrated that most ECEs are intrinsically motivated, but previous research has not quantitatively tested this construct in a model. A third objective is to explore the role of person-organization fit (P-O fit) and person-job fit (P-J fit) as mediators. Prior research has examined fit a mediator for the K-12 teacher population but it has not been explored in ECEs. The last objective of this study is to investigate distributive justice on career outcomes through P-O fit and P-J fit. Data for the study were collected from a community-based sample. The participants were teachers that worked in the field of early childhood education. Our findings show educators' motivation and perceptions of organizational justice have a considerable impact on their career outcomes. Our results provide support for the mediation model that we hypothesized. This study can also assist in the selection of early childhood educators by utilizing the intrinsic motivation to work with children to identify which educators are intrinsically motivated and assess their fit as it relates to a specific organization.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
LIST OF TABLES	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
Challenging Work Environment	2
Intrinsic Motivation	5
Job Satisfaction	8
Turnover Intentions.....	10
Workplace Fit.....	13
Distributive Justice	17
Present Study	18
CHAPTER TWO: METHOD.....	21
Participants	21
Procedure	21
Measures.....	22
Motivation to Work with Children.....	22
Distributive Justice	23
Job Satisfaction.....	23
Turnover Intentions	23
Person Organization Fit	24
Person-Job Fit.....	24

Demographic.....	24
CHAPTER THREE: RESULTS.....	26
Data Screening.....	26
Analysis	27
Model Estimation.....	27
Direct Effects.....	27
Indirect Effects	29
CHAPTER FOUR: DISCUSSION	34
Implications and Directions for Future Research	38
Limitations.....	43
Conclusion	46
APPENDIX A: SCALES	47
APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT	58
APPENDIX C: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL.....	60
REFERENCES.....	62

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Demographic Variables	31
Table 2. Partial Correlation Matrix of Predictors and Criterion	33

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Proposed Model and Illustration of Hypotheses	20
Figure 2. Estimated Model with Standardized Path Coefficients	30

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood educators (ECEs) are professionals who educate children from birth to 5 years in childcare centers (Whitebook, Phillips, & Howes, 1989; Whitebook, Phillips, & Howes, 2014). Before the 1980's, educational research primarily focused on K-12 teachers and failed to explore early childhood educators as a separate profession (Jorde-Bloom, 1988). Distinguishing between the two occupations allowed for researchers to operationalize them as separate entities, which improved the understanding of the unique early childhood educators' work environments. ECEs work in a highly demanding environment with low pay, little respect, limited extrinsic benefits (Ellis, Skidmore, & Combs, 2017), and low retention rates (Totenhagen, Hawkins, Casper, Bosch, Hawkey, & Borden, 2016). Also, there are wage disparities between childcare age groups, where ECEs are paid less wages for working with younger age groups (Whitebook, King, Philipp, & Sakai, 2016). The high levels of turnover reveal that maybe the profession is not for everyone. Part of this may indeed be tied to the nature of the work environment, and one potentially important factor that has been unexplored in the ECEs workforce is employee perceptions of fit. Fit research has played a significant role in explaining the attraction and retention of employees (Edwards, 1991; Ellis et al., 2017; Verquer, Beehr, & Wagner, 2003). Congruence between employees and their workplace has been positively related

to their performance and contributes to satisfaction and retention (Cable & Edwards, 2004; Edwards, 1991; Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987). While previous research has explored the relationship between fit and K-12 teachers, there have been few studies that studied the specific population of ECEs.

Despite having the responsibility of teaching and caring for the youngest and most vulnerable members of our society (i.e., infants, toddlers, and children), early childhood professionals face a challenging and often unsupportive work environment (Whitebook et al., 2014). Early care sites are often understaffed with limited resources (Feeney, Galper, & Seefeldt, 2009), while ECEs receive few work-benefits and are typically paid at near-poverty wages (Whitebook et al., 2014; Whitebook et al., 2016). Working with young children can be demanding emotionally and physically exhausting, yet these educators remain vastly underappreciated.

Some ECEs are driven by their motivation, which is their love for interacting with children and they are less motivated by financial benefits (Hall-Kenyon, Bullough, MacKay, & Marshall, 2014). Understanding the role fit has on career outcomes is vital for organizations to attract and retain talented ECEs.

Challenging Work Environment

Whitebook, Howes, Darrah, and Friedman (1982) were among the first researchers to identify the challenging work conditions in ECEs. They found teachers were underpaid, commonly experienced burnout, and turnover was

20% higher than the national average. Also, organizational structures created immobility for teachers to advance their careers. Recent research mirrors the same challenges as in 1982, which exemplify little has done to improve work conditions for educators.

One of the most significant challenges ECEs experience is the public's perception of the field of early childhood education. ECEs jobs are regarded as short-term than a long-term profession (Cassidy, Lower, Kintner-Duffy, Hegde, & Shim, 2011). Educators are often seen more as "babysitters" than professionals, and this lack of respect leads to challenges in the work environment (Boyd, 2013; Deutsch & Riffin, 2013; Feeney et al., 2009; Gould et al., 2017; Hall-Kenyon et al., 2014). Failing to distinguish "childcare" from "babysitting," perpetuates the undervaluation in ECEs (Gould et al., 2017). As such, the devaluation leads to a decrease in performance, creates conflict between employees, demoralization, and ultimately turnover (Whitebook et al., 2016). Undervaluing ECEs is one of the many factors that contribute to retention issues in early childcare centers (Boyd, 2013).

In addition, ECEs is one of the lowest paying professions. One-third of ECEs in the United States live near or at the poverty line and qualify for public assistance (Austin, Sakai, & Dhamija, 2016; Department of Education, 2016a). From 1997-2013, ECEs wages only increased by 1%. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS: 2016), the median pay for a childcare worker is \$10.18 per hour. Additionally, the average hourly rate for an ECEs is between

\$10.72 - \$13.94 per hour, but the hourly rate for other professions with the same education requirement is approximately \$27.00 (The Department of Education, 2016a). Also, there are wage disparities between childcare age groups. ECEs receives higher wages for older age groups of 3 – 5-year-olds, than younger age groups such as infants and toddlers (McLean, Whitebook, Roh, 2019; Whitebook et al., 2016). Early childhood education is an important industry in that it is necessary to have consistent caregiving, and having high-quality educators that are paid living wages can assist in retention factors.

ECEs experience a variety of financial hardships in the workplace (Boyd, 2013). These difficulties include a scarcity of overtime pay, lack of standardization pay rates, and proper compensation for years of work experience (Boyd, 2013; Feeney et al., 2009). In addition to lack of financial support, ECEs experience employment insecurity. Some teachers have reported that they continuously worry about the stability of their job and fear potential pay reductions (Boyd, 2013; Feeney et al., 2009; Whitebook et al., 2016). These issues affect ECEs economic well-being because many of them worry about earning enough money to pay for bills, retirement, and necessary expenses. To further complicate the issue, economic worry has been associated with psychological symptoms for ECEs, such as stress, anxiety, and depression (Whitebook et al., 2014; Whitebook et al., 2016).

The research on ECEs consistently demonstrates that the work environment is challenging, and not extrinsically rewarding, and turnover rates

remain high. Many others, however, have made long careers in the field, and the industry needs a consistent and talented workforce. Understanding the motives that drive satisfaction and retention of teachers in the ECEs field may help us identify paths to address this need.

Intrinsic Motivation

Workplace motivation provides employees the momentum to perform optimally and is the inspiration to keep moving forward at work. Self-determination theory (SDT) explains how specific behaviors motivate people (Deci, Connell, & Ryan, 1989; Deci & Ryan, 1985, 1991). SDT is the “inherent tendencies and innate psychological needs that are the basis for their self-motivation and personality integration” (Ryan & Deci, p. 68, 1985). Deci and Ryan (1985) identified two facets of motivation, which include intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The innate motivation to seek challenges for material reward is labeled as intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985). The completion of a task for external rewards, such as recognition, and monetary incentives are defined as extrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1991). Whether one is intrinsically or extrinsically motivated, employees will seek work environments that reinforce their motivation preferences (Amabile, Hill, Hennessey, & Tighe, 1994).

Previous research on intrinsic motivation demonstrates that motivation factors relate to job satisfaction (Wagner & French, 2010) and job performance (Wu, Wei, Zhang, & Han, 2011). Park (2018) also argued intrinsic and extrinsic

motivation share a mutualistic relationship with job satisfaction. Manlove and Guzell (1997) found that childcare center staff are generally intrinsically motivated because of their motivation to work with children and less driven by wages. Past research on early childhood professionals has shown that motivation to work in childcare is associated with retention (Torquati, Raikes, & Huddleston-Casas, 2007) and job satisfaction (Manlove & Guzell, 1997; Wagner & French, 2010).

Wagner and French (2010) examined the impact of motivation on work satisfaction. Through a qualitative data analysis, the authors classified motivation into two categories: active or passive. Active motivation is the determination to take charge on a task. Conversely, passive motivation is the feeling of lack of control to complete a task. Active motivation is illustrated as a passion for teaching, whereas passive motivation is explained as apathy for the teaching field. Educators pursuing teaching for professional development were categorized into “active teaching.” Professionals who described their job as convenient were labeled as “passive teaching.” Active motivation influenced teachers to pursue professional development opportunities for intrinsic motivation, whereas extrinsic opportunities motivated passive motivation. Additionally, Wagner and French (2010) found that co-worker relationships and supervisor support increased intrinsic motivation, which also influenced job satisfaction.

Additionally, Torquati et al. (2007) examined ECEs motivation to teach children. The purpose of the study was to create a model that would test the attraction and retention of educators, and their motivation to work with children. The model also included compensation, quality of interactions with children, teacher education, and workplace support. A total of 964 educators participated in a telephone interview. Additionally, 223 teacher's quality was assessed through the Early Childhood Environment or Infant-Toddler Environment Rating Scale. ECEs were asked to rate their motivation for working with children, and the following options were provided: "my career or profession," "a stepping stone to a related career or profession," and "a personal calling." Workplace support was assessed by asking 12 questions that described what type of support they received from their co-workers and supervisor. Retention was measured by asking how long the educators plan to be a childcare professional and would they choose to work another field. The study's hypothesis was ECEs' motivation would impact their decision to stay in the field. The results revealed that ECEs motivation to work with children was strongly associated with retention.

Based on the literature reviewed above, ECEs' intrinsic motivation to work with children is related to job satisfaction and retention. However, there is little research on what other relationships motivate ECEs to work with children. Particularly, there may be other variables that explain the relationship between their motivation and career outcomes.

Job Satisfaction

Spector (1997) explained job satisfaction as “how people feel about their jobs and different aspects of their jobs. It is the extent to which people like or dislike their jobs” (p. 2). Job satisfaction is recognized as the levels of content a person experiences at work and are based on a person’s own experience (Jorde-Bloom, 1988; Locke, 1976). Spector (1997) described facets under job satisfaction, which are wages, job conditions, personal growth, and the work environment (Spector, 1997). The role of the organization is to provide job satisfaction with the highest consideration because of the outcomes of satisfaction influence many components within an organization (Spector, 1997). The consequences of job dissatisfaction are withdraw behaviors and lack of productivity, which in turn leads to turnover intentions (Saari & Judge 2004; Spector, 1997; Verquer et al., 2003).

Humpert (2016) ran an analysis of 1,084 employees, which was conducted by the U.S. General Social Survey (GSS). The results found that overall, employees are satisfied when they receive open communication from their employer, their work environment is worker-friendly and are free from psychological pressure. Alluding to the fact that employees require more from their employers than extrinsic rewards, such as wages. The misconception is that higher wages lead to higher satisfaction. Instead, intrinsic job characteristics provide the most satisfaction to employees (Saari & Judge, 2004). These factors include autonomy, meaningful work conditions, and absence of stress.

As early as Jorde-Bloom's (1988) study, and subsequent research on educators, the early childhood education field started to witness the unraveling of job dissatisfaction among their teachers, contributed by low wages and unfavorable work environments. Jorde-Bloom (1988) studied the work relationships between ECEs and their co-workers, supervisor, workplace fit, and the role of realistic job preview. Additionally, she divided the facets of job satisfaction into categories of relationships with co-workers and supervisor, wages, job duties, and work conditions. Here, results concluded that there was a bipolar relationship with job satisfaction, in that the job itself created frustration but also satisfaction. The key finding that Jorde-Bloom (1988) found was that although ECEs were dissatisfied with certain aspects of their job, they were overall content with their profession. When ECEs were asked knowing the difficulties of becoming a childcare provider would they still pursue this field, and 83% responded yes. The researchers concluded that perhaps ECEs understand the challenges within the work environment, but their motivation acts as a buffer.

Research has demonstrated that job satisfaction and retention are similar outcomes, and therefore likely to be similarly impacted by environment and fit. In order to retain the highest quality of teachers, childcare centers need to understand what the buffers against workplace dissatisfaction are and also understand teacher's motivations related to retention. Thus, researching the facets of job satisfaction will help to explain what specific challenges ECEs experience in the workplace.

Turnover Intentions

Early childcare centers experience a substantial amount of turnover or turnover intention, which are defined as “an employee’s intention to voluntarily change jobs or companies” (Schyns, Torka, and Gössling, 2007, p. 660). For instance, in Wells’ (2015) study on newly hired Head Start teachers, there was only a 36% retention rate over six months. There are risk factors associated with turnover intentions, such as the increase of factors further intensify the likelihood of resigning (Wells, 2015). Under personal factors, the predictors of turnover intentions are age, experience, tenure (Holochwost, DeMott, Buell, Yannetta, & Amsden, 2009; Porter & Steers, 1973), and education (Wells, 2015; Whitebook & Sakai, 2003). The environmental factors associated with turnover are job characteristics, such as poor relations with their co-workers and supervisors (Whitebook & Sakai, 2003; Wells, 2015; Schyns et al., 2007), job fit (Porter & Steers, 1973), and low wages (Whitebook et al., 2016). The outcomes of turnover intentions are withdrawal behaviors (Porter & Steers, 1973), job dissatisfaction (Siegall & McDonald, 2004), and burnout (Siegall & McDonald, 2004).

Previous research has shown that wages and job satisfaction play a significant role in the retention of ECEs (Jorde-Bloom, 1989; Whitebook et al., 2014, Whitebook et al., 2016). The outcomes of low compensation are lower organization commitment and job dissatisfaction (Whitebook et al., 2014).

Without organizational commitment, an employee is less likely to continue to work for their employer, and low levels of organizational commitment translate to ECEs leaving to another organization or field. Consequently, ECEs relocate to K-12 schooling where the wages are significantly higher, and they essentially hold the same job responsibilities as a childhood educator (Jorde-Bloom, 1989; Whitebook et al., 2014). If employers can help facilitate ways for create stronger ties in organization commitment for ECEs through job satisfaction, then the field may experience fewer turnover rates.

Cassidy et al. (2011) argued that childcare centers have become unconcerned regarding teacher turnover because there is little opportunity to change the work conditions. As a result, childcare centers run the risk of employing inexperienced teachers, which ultimately affect learning outcomes for children. Additionally, the consequences of dissatisfaction among ECEs workers are lower quality relationships between educators and children. Further, the effects of turnover in childcare programs are children's attachments to their teacher (Cassidy et al., 2011; Whitebook et al. 2016). Educators also claimed that it is disruptive to their work environment if they are consistently backfilling positions because there is not enough coverage to support the classrooms (Cassidy et al., 2011; Whitebook et al. 2016). Thus, teacher turnover effects multiple individuals in a childcare setting.

Cassidy et al. (2011) examined the effects of turnover in childcare settings from the perspectives of preschool teachers, directors, and parents. The

researchers examined the centers in real time of turnover transitions through a mixed method analysis. Cassidy and colleagues (2001) discussed the differences between proactive centers, those that are ready for turnover, and reactive programs, those that do not prepare for turnover. The teachers reported that when an ECEs departs from a center, it disrupts the classroom. Specifically, they felt stressed from the increase of workload when backfilling positions. The directors noted an increase in pressure when teachers leave because they themselves may backfill positions as needed, which may lead to them working on days off. The directors also discussed the difficulties of the hiring process because it takes time away from them substituting in a classroom or attending to their regular duties. The directors acknowledged the reasons why teachers would turnover, such as inadequate pay and insufficient work environments, but because funding constraints they are unable to provide additional resources to teachers. Additionally, Educators are retiring, and teachers are departing for higher paying jobs, such as K-12 teaching (Feeney et al., 2009; Jorde-Bloom, 1989; Whitebook et al., 2014). As such, high-quality ECEs remains in demand and turnover causes disruptions in many aspects of childcare centers. The ways to retain ECEs need to be better understood and addressed because these consequences are significant.

Workplace Fit

One of the important factors that attracts a person to an organization but also to remain at their workplace is fit. The fit a person demonstrates enhances the quality of relationships between co-workers as well as the production of high-quality work. Additionally, a person's intrinsic motivation plays a critical role in contributing to a more harmonious work environment. Fit is critical to understanding employees' job satisfaction and retention. Research on the relationship between intrinsic motivation and fit among ECEs has been unexplored.

Muchinsky and Monahan (1987) defined person-environment (P-E) fit as the congruence between a person and their environment, and has been empirically studied for almost a century (Lewin, 1935). The concept is grounded in Lewin's (1951) field theory, which states a person's environment affects their behavior (Edwards, 1991; Verquer et al., 2003). The reciprocal relationship between a person and their environment is characterized by *personal* and *environmental characteristics* (Cable & Edwards, 2004; Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987). Personal characteristics reflect an individual's beliefs, needs, disposition, or preference. An example of personal characteristics would be a person's knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) according to their work environment. Whereas environmental characteristics refer to an organization's structure, rewards, climate and culture, and job demands. An example of environmental characteristics would be a teacher's desire to work for a facility that has low

teacher-child ratios. The compatibility between either personal or environmental characteristics fosters a sense of belonging, influences an employees' performance and productivity, and contributes to satisfaction and retention (Cable & Edwards, 2004; Edwards, 1991; Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987). Incongruence between employees and their employer can result in a decrease in morale and an increase in turnover intentions (Cable & Edwards, 2004; Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987).

Under the domain of P-E fit is person-organization (P-O) fit. Kristof (1996) explained P-O fit as the level of compatibility between employees and their employer, which leads to positive outcomes (Vogel & Feldman, 2009). Common associations in the P-O fit literature include work job satisfaction and retention (Arthur, Bell, Villado, & Doverspike 2006; Kristof, 1996; Verquer et al., 2003; Vogel & Feldman, 2009). The negative outcomes for incongruence are turnover, and unfavorable work environments for other ECEs as teachers and directors are backfilling positions (Ellis et al., 2017)

Muchinsky and Monahan (1987) argued that employees who fit well within an organization are more likely satisfied in their work environment, which establishes higher retention rates. Another predictor of fit and retention is when employees share similarities between their co-workers. Additionally, Vogel and Feldman (2009) noted that employees seek to strengthen their self-concept by finding employment in which they share values within their workplace. Although there are associations between job performance and P-O fit, attitudinal variables

show a stronger relationship with P-O fit (Verquer et al., 2003). Perry (1996) has also demonstrated a link between P-O fit and motivational factors, such as working in an organization with low paying wages.

Another categorization under the domain of P-E fit is person-job (P-J) fit. Ellis et al. (2017) described P-J fit as “an employee’s fit with the task performed” (p. 458). P-J fit is also explained as the match between a person’s KSA and the demands of their job, or when an employee meets the requirements of their work environment (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Caplan, 1987; Edward, 1991). Much like P-O fit, the outcomes associated with P-J fit are job satisfaction, turnover intentions, motivation, subjective career success, and in-role performance (Arthur et al., 2006; Edward, 1991; Vogel & Feldman, 2009). The consequences of incongruence fit are job dissatisfaction and psychological stress (Edwards, Caplan, & Harrison, 1998). In sum, the match between a person’s KSA and their job leads to higher overall satisfaction.

All aspects of fit fall under Schneider’s (1987) attraction-selection-attrition (A-S-A) model, which states people are attracted to and remain in organizations where their values, interest, and goals align with one another (fit). Under the A-S-A model, companies attract and hire candidates similar to the organization (Arthur et al., 2006). Additionally, employees will remain at their workplace if it will help them reach their own goals (Youngs, 2015), which can translate as intrinsic or extrinsic motivation. Schneider (1987) demonstrated that the A-S-A

model aligns with the concept of fit; employees that fit within an organization are less likely to engage in turnover intentions.

Research has explored the critical relationship of P-J and P-O as moderators and mediators to explain career outcomes above and beyond an observed relationship. Vogel and Feldman (2009) demonstrated the relationship between P-J and P-O fit as moderators between person-vocational fit and other attitudinal outcomes. In their research, their results showed that P-J is more critical than P-O. Additionally, Ellis et al. (2017) researched realistic job preview on K-12 teacher's satisfaction with their job duties and organization, and the mediated relationship between P-J fit and P-O fit. Results showed that P-O and P-J mediated the relationship between realistic job preview and job satisfaction. Thus, workplace fit is crucial in explaining employee outcomes.

There is little research conducted on fit and ECEs (Youngs, 2015). Previous research has shown that ECEs demonstrate high levels of congruency towards their employers when they are provided support from their co-workers and supervisor (Deutsch, & Riffin, 2013; Hur, Jeon, & Buettner, 2016; King, Johnson, Cassidy, Wang, Lower, & Kintner-Duffy, 2016; Wagner & French, 2010). Understanding the relationship between fit and career outcomes can provide valuable information to organizations.

Distributive Justice

While the primary focus of this study is the importance of fit and intrinsic motivation on career related outcomes, we recognize that this can send an incorrect message that intrinsic motivation is just enough to supply a teacher with satisfaction. Relying on intrinsic motivation and fit as a predictor of job satisfaction and retention can create unintended consequences, such as inequity in terms of wages. As such, we will explore distributive justice as it relates to our study.

Distributive justice, under the domain of organizational justice, is the assessed fairness in an outcome or what is deemed as fair to an individual (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001). The degree to which the assessment is weighed against fairness depends on the context of the situation or organizational goals. Additionally, how one perceives justice is contingent on the role of the individual, and one's motivation (Colquitt et al., 2001). Colquitt, Long, Rodell, and Halvorsen-Ganepola (2015) noted that we are unaware of justice until injustice is provoked. Also, "injustice" does not outweigh "justice." The negative consequences of violation of fairness are a potential loss in the workforce by employee turnover (Skarlicki, Ellard, & Kelln, 1998). Moreover, Ambrose, Taylor, and Hess (2015) identified that injustice can have a psychological and physical effects such as lower levels of job satisfaction and commitment, and difficulties with work-life spill over. Distributive justice also has been found to be robust when evaluating P-O fit and has been found to be a

better predictor of tenure (Park, 2018). As such, justice perceptions are imperative for an organization to understand to negative workplace outcomes.

Present Study

Given the obstacles early childhood educators face, job satisfaction can be challenging. As such, early childcare centers experience a substantial amount of turnover. Consequently, in the context of such a demanding work environment, understanding ECEs perceptions related to fit and intrinsic motivation may be particularly important. Therefore, the present study considers the impact of intrinsic motivation on career outcomes of early childhood educators. Specifically, we examine the relationship of intrinsic motivation to work with children on job satisfaction and teacher retention for early childhood educators, as well as the indirect effects of P-O fit and P-J fit. The proposed model is depicted in Figure 1.

Intrinsic motivation leads to more positive feelings, such as higher levels of happiness, in addition to teachers wanting to keep their job despite the obstacles they face as ECEs. Accordingly, for individuals who are more intrinsically motivated, we expect higher levels of reported job satisfaction and lower levels of turnover intentions.

H1: Intrinsic motivation to work with children will positively relate to job satisfaction.

H2: Intrinsic motivation to work with children will negatively relate to lower levels of turnover intentions.

When employees are intrinsically motivated and have higher perceived fit with their workplace, their performance increases. Likewise, when employees are intrinsically motivated and have higher perceived fit with their job duties, their performance increases.

H5: Intrinsic motivation to work with children will relate positively to P-O fit.

H6: Intrinsic motivation to work with children will relate positively to P-J fit.

H9: P-O fit will positively relate to job satisfaction.

H10: P-O fit will negatively relate to turnover intentions.

H11: P-J fit will positively relate to job satisfaction.

H12: P-J fit will negatively relate to turnover intentions

ECEs studies have primarily focused on job satisfaction, but none to this date have integrated fit into their research design (Boyd, 2013; Deutsch & Riffin, 2013; Gould et al. 2017; Hall-Kenyon et al., 2014). Drawing on Schneider's (1987) A-S-A model, employees will select into and remain in environments where they perceive higher fit.

H13: P-O fit and P-J fit will mediate the relationship between intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction.

H14: P-O fit and P-J fit will mediate the relationship between intrinsic motivation and turnover intentions.

While job satisfaction and turnover intentions may be related to intrinsic motivation, there is a cost associated with inequity. Individuals care about being

treated equally and integrating distributive justice counterbalances the intrinsic motivation that may impose on an individual. As such, we expect people to

H3: Distributive justice will positively relate to job satisfaction.

H4: Distributive justice will negatively relate to turnover intentions.

H7: Distributive justice will positively relate to P-O fit.

H8: Distributive justice will positively relate to P-J fit.

H15: P-O fit and P-J fit will mediate the relationship between distributive justice and job satisfaction.

H16: P-O fit and P-J fit will mediate the relationship between distributive justice and turnover intentions.

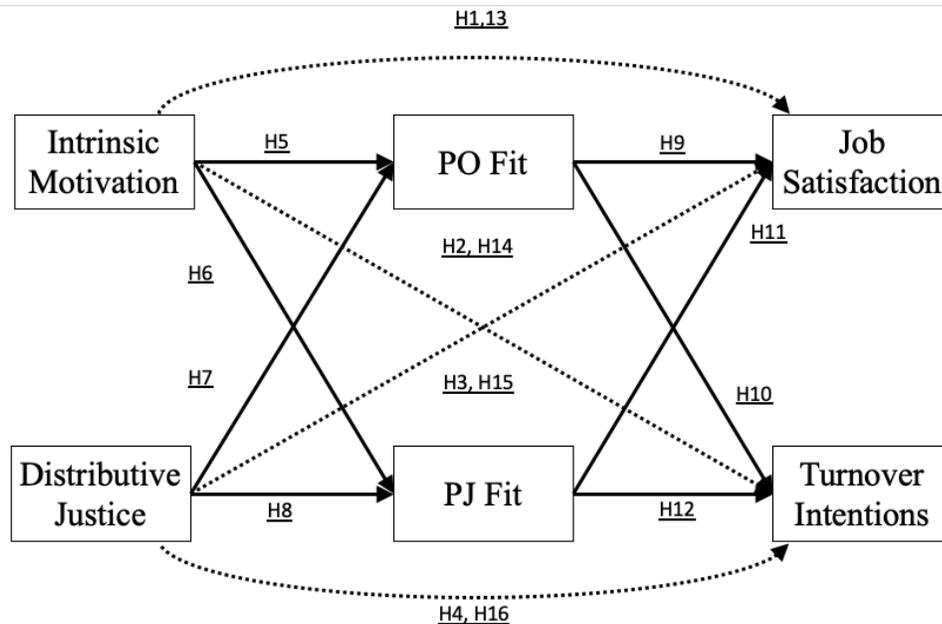


Figure 1. Proposed Model and Illustration of Hypotheses.

CHAPTER TWO

METHOD

Participants

Participants were over the age of 18, worked at least 20 hours per week at licensed childcare centers, and worked with children from the ages of birth to 5 years. A Gpower analysis showed that approximately 150 participants were needed (Faul & Erfelder, 1992). A total of 211 surveys were collected, 21 were missing more than 50% of completion, and 22 did not meet the above-mentioned criteria, thus the final sample was 168 (Females = 159; Males = 3; Missing = 6).

The participants' age range was 18 to 75 years old, with the average age of 39. The participants' tenure ranged from 1 month to 31 years. The responses were 49.7% Hispanic/Latino and 21.7% identified as White/Caucasian. Of the participants, 34.5% had some college, 28.5% had an associates or vocational degree, and 28.5% had a bachelors. Tables 2 provide complete study demographics.

Procedure

Data for the study were collected from a community-based sample. The participants were teachers that worked in the field of early childhood education. Many of the participants were recruited from childcare centers and from local community colleges. Research assistants provided tablets onsite to licensed childcare facilities that contained an external web-link to access a survey through

an online testing database (Qualtrics). Once directed to Qualtrics, participants completed an informed consent form, a demographics questionnaire, and the measures mentioned above. Participants responses remained anonymous, and any information linked to generate an extra credit remained in separate files. The average time participants completed the survey was approximately 15 minutes. Working professionals received a \$10 Lakeshore Learning gift card, which is a retailer that sells education material for teachers, whereas students received extra credit for participation.

Measures

The variables included in the survey were motivation to work with children, distributive justice, job satisfaction, turnover intentions, P-O fit, and P-J fit. Additionally, demographic questions were included in the survey. See Appendix A for full survey items.

Motivation to Work with Children

Motivation for working with children was assessed by using the Factors Influencing Teaching Choice (FIT-Choice: Watt & Richardson, 2007) questionnaire. The FIT questionnaire was designed to assess teachers influence for pursuing a teaching career and one dimension assess motivation to work with children. Thus, the subscale “work with children/adolescents” was used from the FIT questionnaire. The scale included four items, which were assessed on a seven-point Likert-type scale, with 1 = “not at all important” and 7 = “extremely

important". A sample item is "I like working with children." The alpha reliability for this study was .84.

Distributive Justice

Distributive justice was assessed using Colquitt's (2001) organizational justice subscale "distributive justice." The scale included four questions that were assessed on a five-point Likert-type scale, with 1 = "very small extent" and 5 = "very small extent." A sample of the question is "Are your wages justified, given your performance?" The alpha reliability for this study was .95.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction was assessed by the Early Childhood Job Satisfaction Survey (ECJSS) and on a five-point Likert scale with 1 = "strongly disagree" and 5 = "strongly agree" (Bloom, 2010). The ECJSS contains fifty items and includes five facets: co-worker relations, supervisor relations, the job itself, working conditions, and pay and promotion opportunities. An example of a question is "My work is stimulating and challenging." The alpha reliability for the current study was .92.

Turnover Intentions

Turnover intentions is operationalized as the likelihood that a teacher will remain in their profession. Turnover intentions was assessed by Johnsrud and Rosser (1999) single-item instrument, which asked, "I plan to remain in this school." The item was rated on a seven-point Likert scale with 1 = "strongly disagree" and 7 = "strongly agree."

Person Organization Fit

Person-Organization (P-O) Fit is theorized as the level of compatibility between employees and their employer (Kristof, 1996). P-O Fit was assessed through Ellis et al. (2017) four item measure, a modified version of Kristof (1996) scale. The modification measures educators' work environment. P-O Fit was assessed on a five-point Likert scale, with 1 = "very poor match" to 5 = "very good match." An example of a question that measures P-O Fit is, "To what extent is your school's educational philosophy a match?" The alpha reliability for the present study was .87.

Person-Job Fit

Person-Job (P-J) Fit is operationalized as "employee's fit with the tasks performed" (Ellis et al., 2017, p. 458). P-J Fit was assessed through Ellis et al. (2017) four item measure, a modified version of Kristof (1996) scale. The modification measures educators' jobs. P-J Fit was assessed on a five-point Likert scale, with 1 = "very poor match" and 5 = "very good match." An example of a question asked, "to what extent does your job align with the grade levels you teach?" The alpha reliability for the current study was .87.

Demographic

Demographic questions included age, sex, ethnicity, and marital status. Data on education levels, income, and combined income were also collected. Questions regarding occupation included position title, tenure at this organization, hours worked per week, and years working with children.

Additionally, workplace context questions were asked, such as teacher-child ratio, and type of auspice (private vs. public). An example of a workplace question includes: "What is your position in this program?" The response options for that question are "Lead Teacher, Teacher, Teacher Assistant, and Group Teacher."

CHAPTER THREE

RESULTS

Data Screening

Data were downloaded from Qualtrics and were screened using IBM SPSS 24 ($N = 211$). Data screening included removing participants as they did not complete over 50% of the survey ($N = 21$). Additionally, we removed data that did not meet the criteria of an early childhood educator ($N = 15$) and had less than one year of experience as an early childhood educator ($N = 7$). The total sample size after data cleaning was $N = 168$.

The data were then analyzed for violations of normality, univariate outliers, and multivariate outliers. Several cases of outliers were found on different variables and a cut off score of $z = \pm 3.3$, $p = .001$ was used to identify univariate outliers: Intrinsic motivation to work with children ($z = -9.47$), turnover intentions ($z = 3.31$), and PJ Fit ($z = -3.78$). Since these scores exceeded the criteria of $z = \pm 3.3$, they were removed from the analysis ($N = 165$). Multivariate outliers were assessed through Mahalanobis Distance ($df = 6$, $\chi^2 = 22.46$, $p < .001$), and none were discovered. All variables were negatively skewed, intrinsic motivation to work with children, turnover intentions, and PJ fit were platykurtic. Several variables had missing data but a limited amount. A separate variance T-Test was performed, and the data showed no significant patterns. Nine cases were

removed from the dataset as there was missing data on at least one of the variables in the model ($N = 156$).

Analysis

To test the study hypotheses, a path analysis was performed. First, a correlations matrix was performed on SPSS for the following variables: intrinsic motivation to work with children, distributive justice, PO fit, PJ fit, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions (see table 2). The correlation table was then entered into LISREL, which is a software to perform structural equal models.

Model Estimation

The model estimation demonstrated a good fit, chi square, $\chi^2 (2, N = 156) = 12.66, p = 0.002$, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .19, goodness of fit index (GFI) = 0.98, and adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) = .73. Additionally, the model estimation demonstrated good fit, non-normed fit index (NNFI) = .63, comparative fit index (CFI) = .95.

Direct Effects

Figure 2 displays model estimates parameters for direct and indirect effects. In Hypothesis 1, it was predicted that intrinsic motivation to work with children will positively relate to job satisfaction. In Hypothesis 1, it was predicted that intrinsic motivation to work with children will positively relate to job satisfaction. Hypothesis 1 was not supported ($\beta = .22, p > .05$). For hypothesis 2,

it was hypothesized that intrinsic motivation to work with children will negatively relate to turnover intentions. Hypothesis 2 was not supported ($\beta = .08, p > .05$).

For hypothesis 3, it was predicted that distributive justice will positively relate to job satisfaction. Hypothesis 3 was supported as distributive justice increased with job satisfaction ($\beta = .37, p < .05$), and accounted for 14% of the variance. In terms of hypothesis 4, it was predicted that distributive justice will negatively relate to turnover intentions. In terms of hypothesis 4, it was predicted that distributive justice will negatively relate to turnover intentions. Hypothesis 4 was not supported ($\beta = .37, p > .05$).

In hypothesis 5, it was hypothesized that intrinsic motivation will relate positively to P-O fit. Hypothesis 5 was supported as intrinsic motivation increase with P-O fit ($\beta = .21, p < .05$), and accounted for 4% of the variance. For hypothesis 6, it was hypothesized that intrinsic motivation will relate positively to P-J fit. Hypothesis 6 was supported as intrinsic motivation increase with P-J fit ($\beta = .38, p < .05$), and accounted for 14% of the variance. In hypothesis 7, it was predicted that distributive justice will relate positively to P-O fit. Hypothesis 7 was supported as distributive justice increased with P-O fit. ($\beta = .33, p < .05$), and accounted for 11% of the variance. For Hypothesis 8, it was predicted that distributive justice will relate positively to P-J fit. Hypothesis 8 was supported as distributive justice increased with P-J fit ($\beta = .15, p < .05$), and accounted for 2% of the variance.

In hypothesis 9, it was hypothesized that P-O fit will positively relate to job satisfaction. Hypothesis 9 was supported as job satisfaction increase with P-O fit ($\beta = .37, p < .05$), and accounted for 14% of the variance. In hypothesis 10, it was hypothesized that P-O fit will relate negatively to turnover intentions. Hypothesis 10 was supported as turnover intentions decrease with P-O fit ($\beta = .24, p < .05$), and accounted for 6% of the variance. In hypothesis 11, it was hypothesized that P-J fit will positively relate to job satisfaction. Hypothesis 11 was supported as job satisfaction increase with P-J fit ($\beta = .20, p < .05$), and accounted for 4% of the variance. In hypothesis 12, it was hypothesized that P-J fit will negatively relate to turnover intentions. Hypothesis 12 was not supported ($\beta = .08, p > .05$).

Indirect Effects

In hypothesis 13, it was hypothesized that P-O fit and P-J fit will mediate the relationship between intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction. Hypothesis 13 was partially supported as P-O fit and P-J fit partially mediated the relationship between intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction ($\beta = .15, p < .05$), and accounted for 2% of the variance. For hypothesis 14, it was predicted that P-O fit and P-J fit will mediate the relationship between intrinsic motivation and turnover intentions. Hypothesis 10 was partially supported as P-O fit and P-J fit partially mediated the relationship between intrinsic motivation and turnover intentions ($\beta = .09, p < .05$), and accounted for .8% of the variance.

In Hypothesis 15 it was hypothesized that P-O fit and P-J fit will mediate the relationship between distributive justice and job satisfaction. Hypothesis 11 was supported as P-O fit and P-J fit mediated the relationship between distributive justice and job satisfaction ($\beta = .16, p < .05$), and accounted for 3% of the variance.

Lastly, in Hypothesis 16, it was predicted that P-O fit and P-J fit will mediate the relationship between distributive justice and turnover intentions. Hypothesis 16 was partially supported ($\beta = .09, p > .05$) as P-O fit and P-J fit partially mediated the relationship between distributive justice and turnover intentions and accounted for .8% of the variance.

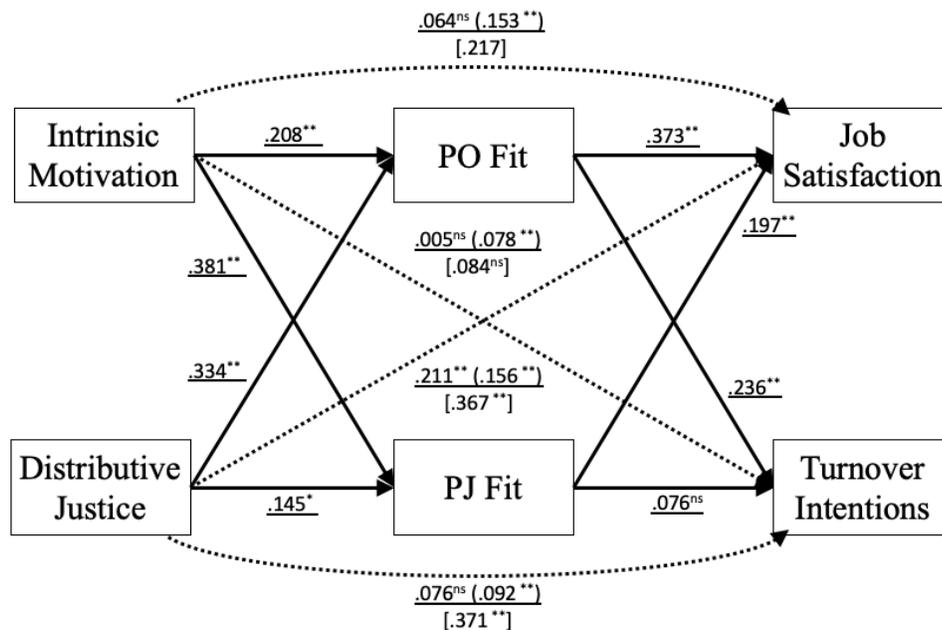


Figure 2. Estimated Model with Standardized Path Coefficients.

Table 1. Demographic Variables

Gender	N (%)
Female	159 (98.1)
Male	3 (1.9)
Tenure (years)	
Tenure	N (%)
0 to 5	86 (51.2)
6 to 10	26 (15.6)
11 to 15	16 (9.6)
16 to 20	4 (4.2)
21 to 25	5 (3)
25 to 28	1 (.6)
30 to 35	1 (.6)
Race/Ethnicity	
	N (%)
Asian American	11 (6.8)
African American	21 (13)
American Indian	2 (1.2)
Middle Eastern	1 (.6)
Hispanic / Latino	80 (49.7)
White / Caucasian	35 (21.7)
Other	11 (6.8)
Education Level	
Level of education	N (%)
High School Diploma/GED	8 (4.8)
Some College	57 (34.5)
Associates or Vocational Degree	47 (28.5)
Bachelor's Degree	47 (28.5)
Master's Degree (MA / MS)	5 (3)
Doctoral Level (Ph.D., Ed.D., MD, JD)	1 (.6)
Marital Status	

Marital Status	N (%)
Single	62 (37.8)
Committed relationship	11 (6.7)
Live with partner	6 (3.7)
Separated	2 (1.2)
Married	74 (45.1)
Divorced	3 (1.8)
Widower	6 (3.7)

Position Type	
Position	
Type	N (%)
Teacher	74 (44.8)
Assistant teacher	37 (22.4)
Lead Teacher	34 (20.6)
Group Teacher	3 (1.8)
Other	17 (10.3)

Income Level	
Individual Income	N (%)
Less than \$10,000	34 (21.5)
\$10,000 to \$14,999	20 (12.7)
\$15,000 to \$19,999	26 (16.5)
\$20,000 to \$24,999	26 (16.5)
\$25,000 to \$29,999	17 (10.8)
\$30,000 to \$34,999	9 (5.7)
\$35,000 to \$39,999	8 (5.1)
\$40,000 to \$44,999	5 (3.2)
\$50,000 to \$54,999	3 (1.9)
\$55,000 to \$59,999	1 (.6)
\$60,000 to \$64,999	2 (1.3)
\$65,000 to \$69,999	1 (.6)
\$70,000 to \$74,999	1 (.6)
\$75,000 +	5 (3.2)

Table 2. Partial Correlation Matrix of Predictors and Criterion

<i>Variable</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Intrinsic Motivation to Work with Children	6.74	0.37						
2. PO FIT	3.83	0.97	.23**					
3. PJ FIT	4.20	0.81	.39**	.55**				
4. Distributive Justice	2.22	1.15	0.06	.36**	.17*			
5. Job Satisfaction	3.70	0.53	.24**	.57**	.46**	.38**		
6. Turnover Intentions	5.28	1.82	0.11	.38**	.25**	.38**	.47**	

Note: * $p < 0.01$ ** $p < .001$. $N = 156$.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION

Early childhood educators experience structural barriers in the workplace, such as demanding work environments with little pay incentive. These challenges are associated with job dissatisfaction and turnover (Ellis et al., 2017). Because educators experience unfavorable work conditions at childcare centers, variables such as intrinsic motivation, distributive justice, and workplace fit help explain the retention of early childhood teachers (Colquitt et al., 2001; Ellis et al., 2017; Park, 2018). The purpose of this study was to examine the role of person-organization (P-O) fit and person-job (P-J) fit in explaining the relationship between intrinsic motivation to work with children on job satisfaction and turnover intentions within the population of early childhood educators. The present study also examined the role of P-O fit and P-J fit to help explain the relationship between perceptions of distributive justice on job satisfaction and turnover intentions. We sought to examine distributive justice within the context of low wages, as early childhood educators is deemed one of the lowest paying professions (Austin et al., 2016). It is noteworthy, few studies explored workplace fit in early childhood educators, further justifying the need to research this group of employees.

Overall, P-O fit and P-J fit were robust as mediators in our model. P-O fit and P-J fit partially mediated the relationship of intrinsic motivation to work with children and the career outcomes of job satisfaction and turnover intentions. P-O

fit and P-J fit were statistically significant mediator between distributive justice and job satisfaction. P-O fit and P-J fit partially mediated the relationship of distributive justice and turnover intentions. With the exception of the relationship between distributive justice and job satisfaction, none of the predictors had a significant relationship with our outcomes. This illustrates that the primary reason the predictors relate to our outcomes is because of the mediators. By integrating workplace fit in our model, we demonstrate that, for ECE, the relationship between intrinsic motivation and increased job satisfaction exists only through the experience of fit.

Our results show intrinsic motivation to work with children increased higher levels of workplace fit (P-O fit and P-J fit), which increased job satisfaction and decreased turnover intentions. Research has consistently found intrinsic motivation to be related to job satisfaction and turnover intentions (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Wagner & French, 2010). We expected that levels of workplace fit would explain this relationship and help explain factors associated with retention. Our results are consistent with previous research in that early childhood educators are more passionate about their career, and when employees are intrinsically motivated, they are more likely to experience higher levels of compatibility towards their job, which increases positive career outcomes (Manlove & Guzell, 1997; Torquati et al., 2007; Wagner & French, 2010). Also, we found a stronger relationship between intrinsic motivation and P-J fit compared to distributive justice and P-O fit. Our results suggest that even though perceptions of justice

are important, intrinsic motivation is critical due to the perception of fit between early childhood educators and their job. Our results show that when an employee demonstrates higher levels of P-J fit, then they are more likely to experience higher levels of intrinsic motivation.

The early childhood education field is challenging as educators are underpaid and undervalued (Whitebook et al., 1989, 2016). What we found in examining distributive justice is that early childhood educators perceive inequality regarding their wages, and these perceptions are related to increased levels of turnover intentions and job satisfaction. However, how these educators fit within their organization, such as P-O fit and P-J fit, increases their job satisfaction and decreases turnover intentions. Our results are consistent with previous findings in that employees have stronger intentions to stay at their workplace when they share the same values and philosophy with their employer, even though they may experience inequity.

Our results indicate lower levels of distributive justice were related to increased levels of job satisfaction and lower levels of turnover intentions when mediated by workplace fit. Previous research has examined parts of this relationship but not collectively. For instance, Park (2018) examined the antecedents of P-O fit, which included job satisfaction and distributive justice. However, in our study we expanded Park's (2018) model by examining both the antecedents and outcomes of P-O fit, which included turnover intentions. By including the outcomes of P-O fit in our model, we were able to show workplace

fit mediates the effect of distributive justice on turnover intentions. Without the mediating effect of P-O fit, employees are more likely to leave an organization when injustice occurs. By exploring this relationship organizations can better understand ways to avoid inequity in the workplace to deter turnover intentions. Our results indicate that workplace fit was a critical factor in partially mediating the relationship between distributive justice and job satisfaction. While we did not find a direct relationship, our study explains that workplace fit is the reason distributive justice relates to increased levels of job satisfaction. We would expect how an employee perceives fit within their job and perceive how they are compensated for their efforts would affect their job satisfaction. Moreover, our results also found a stronger relationship between distributive justice and P-O fit, when compared to intrinsic motivation and P-J fit. P-O fit is more robust when predicting job attitudes (Verquer et al., 2003) and explains the congruence in values between an employee and an employer (Cable & Edwards, 2004). Moreover, our results also found a stronger relationship between distributive justice and P-O fit, when compared to intrinsic motivation and P-J fit. Previous research has found P-O fit is more robust when predicting job attitudes (Verquer et al., 2003) and finding P-O fit strongly related to distributive justice is consistent with previous research. Our findings suggest that even though intrinsic motivation is important and positive aspect of early childhood educators in predicting job attitudes, it does not mean being treating fairly is unimportant, and our results demonstrate that being paid fairly is more important.

In sum, we found the variables of intrinsic motivation to work with children and distributive justice each have a unique role in explaining workplace attitudes and behaviors. Educators are driven to work with young children and this motivation pushes them to persevere while working in challenging environments. Their motivation allows for higher levels of workplace fit, which in turn mediates the relationship between motivation and career outcomes. Their perceptions of pay inequity, however, is related to decreased workplace satisfaction and increased turnover intentions. However, workplace fit mediates these perceptions of justice and increases job satisfaction and decreases turnover intentions. Our study's purpose was to find a deeper understanding of workplace fit and what we found is P-O fit and P-J fit can create a considerable difference for an employee's job satisfaction and intention to stay.

Implications and Directions for Future Research

The results of this study extend the limited research on early childhood educators' behaviors and attitudes in the workplace. In terms of research on workplace outcomes, there is an abundant of research on K-12 teachers but there is limited literature on early childhood educators. To our knowledge, this is the first study to examine P-O fit and P-J fit within the early childhood education field. Our results show that workplace fit plays a critical part in increasing levels of job satisfaction and decreasing turnover intentions. In the child care field,

centers encounter high levels of turnover and thus investigating factors to increase job satisfaction and workplace fit can help program directors increase levels of retention. Our study provides a better understanding of how workplace fit can increase an employee's attitude and behavior.

Also, this study is consistent with past research supporting Schneider's (1987) attraction-selection-attrition (A-S-A) model, which explains the relationship between employee's perceptions of fit and turnover (Kristof, 1996). In our study, we found workplace fit explained the relationship between intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction. Our results are also consistent with the A-S-A framework in that educators who are intrinsically motivated are attracted to work with children. Then childcare centers select these motivated individuals to work in their organization, and these educators who experienced workplace fit are more likely to stay at the center. A critical component within our results is that early childhood educators plan to stay at their job due to workplace fit even though the childcare field is demanding with little pay incentive. Future research should examine our existing model to further identify how workplace fit may differ in other helping fields, such as social work.

This study also extends the research on workplace fit, specifically on P-O fit and P-J fit as mediators in a larger model. Our results suggest that both P-O fit and P-J fit played a critical role in mediating the relationship between intrinsic motivation and distributive justice on career outcomes. While P-O fit and P-J fit

were robust in our results, exploring other potential forms of workplace fit, such as person-vocation (P-V), may also explain the variance unaccounted for in our model. P-V fit is the fit between an employee's skills, the need to fulfill those skills, and the opportunity to have those skills fulfilled by an employer (Kristof, 1996; Vogel & Feldman, 2009). Working with children would fulfill an early childhood educator's skill and working at a childcare center would afford an educator an opportunity to fulfill that particular skill. Thus, P-V fit would be suitable to examine in the population of early childhood educators. Vogel and Feldman (2009) found P-V fit was the antecedent to the mediating effect of P-O fit and P-J fit between job satisfaction and turnover intentions. As such, adding P-V fit to our existing model is worth exploring to explain positive workplace attitudes and behaviors further.

As demonstrated in previous literature (Colquitt, 2001; Park, 2018), distributive justice has been associated with critical employee outcomes, specifically turnover intentions. While we found distributive justice as a robust predictor between our career outcomes, perhaps there is another variable that might explain this relationship further. Not examined in our study, but worth adding to our model, is procedural justice. Procedural justice is the perceived fairness of the processes of an outcome, like the procedures that determine a pay schedule (Leventhal, 1980). Procedural justice has been linked to workplace fit, job satisfaction, and retention (Park, 2018). Lind and Tyler (1988) argue that people are more concerned with the process involved in an outcome rather than

the actual result itself. Poon (2012) found procedural justice strengthens the moderation between distributive justice and turnover intentions. It can be assumed that early childhood educators are more concerned with the procedures involved in injustice rather than the outcomes. Thus, exploring procedural justice in our model can potentially explain retention factors for employees.

Our results show that if employees are intrinsically motivated then they will continue to persevere in challenging work environments under terms of workplace fit. However, such conditions leave employees susceptible to burnout. Burnout is a prevalent phenomenon in the early childhood education population (Cumming, 2016; Whitebook et al., 1982) and has been associated with turnover intentions (Kim, 2015; Siegall & McDonald, 2004). Previous research has found burnout mediates the relation between intrinsic motivation and turnover intentions, where burnout increases turnover intentions albeit an employee is intrinsically motivated (Kim, 2015). In sum, intrinsic motivation can only motivate an employee for an extended amount of time. In circumstances where environments are unfavorable and employees are motivated by intrinsic rewards, the possibility of employees experiencing burnout is highly likely and management must be cognizant of their employees' psychological wellbeing. As such, it would be meaningful for future studies to explore burnout as a variable within our model.

In terms of practical implications, our results illustrate that organizations would benefit from examining their culture to ensure they are allowing for their

employees to experience high levels of congruence between the organization and their employees. Such workplace's values would include; the amount of autonomy staff is allotted, providing work assignments employees prefer and are given tasks that exhibit their knowledge. In terms of early childhood educators, one favorable task assignment may be to allow educators to work with the age group they prefer (infants vs. toddlers). Our results demonstrate that workplace fit is related to increased job satisfaction and decreased turnover intentions, in the context of a challenging work environment. Given that external factors in the workplace cannot be controlled, organizations do have control of internal factors, such as workplace culture and values. An example of a way an organization can enhance its workplace culture is to provide a supportive work environment among staff. Thus, reevaluating a workplace's culture can help mitigate turnover intentions when environments are unfavorable.

Moreover, we would like to highlight that a vast majority of our study's population was female, women of color, and earning near poverty wages, which are consistent with other studies of early childhood educators (Whitebook et al., 2016; Whitebook, McLean, Austin, & Edwards, 2018). In Whitebook et al. (2018) study, women of color experienced higher rates of disadvantage in the workplace with economic insecurity. Nonetheless, policy makers should pay close attention to this social justice issue and look into compensation reform for early childhood educators.

Limitations

We experienced several limitations related to the method used in this study. First, our results were measured quantitatively, and this form of data collection prescribes participants to select predetermined answers, whereas open-ended questions allow for participants to express their responses freely (Perrachione, Rosser, & Petersen 2008). By adopting a mix-method approach, it would have allowed for educators to discuss their career outcomes openly, and thus uncovering other variables not examined in our model. Given that we found 14% of the variance, it appears that there are other factors that could explain job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Furthermore, Manlove and Guzell (1997) noted that because they adopted a mixed-method approach they were able to examine the complex reasons of turnover intentions that would not have been found if just measured quantitatively. Future studies should consider adopting such methods when replicating our study.

Another limitation of our study is that we used a cross-sectional design, which measures one point in time. By implementing a longitudinal study, we could explain our results in a deeper context. For instance, we were only able to assess turnover intentions, but in a longitudinal study we could examine actual turnover rates. While a predictor of voluntary turnover is turnover intentions, there is also literature to support that rates of actual turnover are lower than what turnover intentions predicted (Breuklen, Vlist, & Steensma, 2004; Manlove &

Guzell, 1997; Mobley, 1977, 1982). By comparing turnover intentions with actual rates of turnover, researchers could examine other variables that would account for turnover intentions and job satisfaction outcomes. For instance, Manlove and Guzell (1997) were able to discover predictors of voluntary turnover by comparing turnover intentions to actual turnover rates. One unexpected predictor was perceptions of job opportunity and the researchers were able to examine such through a longitudinal study. Further, it can be assumed that those not surveyed in our studied already left the childcare centers due to incongruence within their job task and work environment. However, by examining our study longitudinally, we can identify if educators voluntarily left due to misfit.

As noted earlier, there is variance unaccounted for within our model, and examining variables in a longitudinal study would help researchers discover other predictors such as Manlove and Guzell (1997) found. Additionally, a longitudinal study may provide further context between the relationship of distributive justice and turnover intentions. Alexander and Ruderman (1987) assert the formation, maintenance, and levels of justice change over time. Organizational justice is a dynamic process and for us to better understand it would require a longitudinal study. Therefore, it would be important to see how the levels of distributive justice change over time and what predictors change such levels. Also, we found evidence that common method variance was not an issue among our findings as our predictors of intrinsic motivation and distributive justice were not correlated. However, by adopting a cross-sectional design would strengthen our findings

(Ghosh et al, 2017). Lastly, while conducting a longitudinal study, it would be meaningful to study educators who recently quit their job. Wells (2013) found in six-month follow up study that early childhood educators who voluntarily left did as a result of lower levels of job satisfaction and experienced incompatibility towards their supervisor and work environment. Wells' (2013) found similar results to the A-S-A model but was also able to explore other predictor variables of turnover, such as obtaining higher education and being married. By examining employees who left childcare centers allow researchers to investigate attrition in the A-S-A model and explore other meaningful variables that would explain factors of turnover.

Lastly, due to the restrictions of our sample size, we were unable to test if there was a difference between a teacher's tenure and the outcomes we found. Research on child care workers supports that teachers with longer tenure may encounter different career outcomes or experience different levels of workplace fit (Ellis et al., 2017). Examining tenure-based differences may have explained the nonsignificant statistical relationship between distributive justice and turnover intentions. For example, if our sample included teachers with longer tenure, who have developed a better understanding of the pay structures at child care centers, then their perceived fairness in wages would not influence their turnover intentions. Future studies would benefit from collecting a larger sample, which would provide the opportunity to examine tenure comparatively. However, given our sample size was limited, it is noteworthy that our fit indices were robust.

Conclusion

The present study provides evidence that workplace fit plays a critical role in mediating the relationships between intrinsic motivation and distributive justice on career outcomes within a sample of early childhood educators. This study provides insight on how P-O fit and P-J fit mediates job attitudes and behaviors when environments are challenging, such as low wages. This study can also assist in the selection of early childhood educators by utilizing intrinsic motivation to work with children to identify which educators are intrinsically motivated and assess their fit as it relates to a specific organization. Further, this study also showed that although intrinsic motivation is an important predictor of job attitudes and behaviors, it is due to the perception of fit between ECEs and the job. It does not predict beyond that. Further, despite being a profession in which workers are highly intrinsically motivated, perceptions of distributive justice were a more critical predictor of job attitudes and behaviors.

APPENDIX A
SCALES

Factors Influencing Teaching Choice

(FIT-Choice: Watt & Richardson, 2007)

Items on the FIT-choice scale will be based on the following 7-point Likert scale.

Not at all Important							Extremely Important
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

Please indicate why you chose to become a teacher in the categories below:

Work with children/adolescents

1. I want a job that involves working with children.
2. I want to work in a child-centered environment.
3. I like working with children.
4. I want to help children learn.

Justice Scale
(Colquitt, 2001)

Items on the Justice Scale will be based on the following 5-point Likert scale.

Very Small Extent					Very Large Extent
1	2	3	4	5	

The following items refer to your wages or other financial incentive. To what extent:

1. Do your wages reflect the effort you have put into your work?
2. Are your wages appropriate for the work you have completed?
3. Do your wages reflect what you have contributed to the organization?
4. Are your wages justified, given your performance?

Early Childhood Job Satisfaction Survey (ECJSS)

(Bloom, 2010)

Items on the ECJSS will be based on the following 5-point Likert scale.

Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

Indicate how you feel about each of the statements in the categories below:

Co-Worker Relations

1. My co-workers care about me.
2. I feel encouraged and supported by my colleagues.
3. My co-workers share their personal concerns with me.
4. My colleagues are hard to get to know.
5. My co-workers are critical of my performance.
6. I feel my colleagues are competitive.
7. My co-workers are not very helpful.
8. My co-workers share ideas and resources with me.
9. I feel I can't trust my co-workers.
10. My colleagues are enjoyable to work with.

Supervisor Relations

11. My supervisor respects my work.
12. My supervisor is too busy to know how I'm doing.
13. I feel I am supervised too closely.
14. I am given helpful feedback about my performance.
15. My supervisor asks for my opinion.
16. My supervisor is tactful.
17. My supervisor is not very dependable.
18. I feel I am encouraged to try new ideas.
19. My supervisor makes me feel inadequate.
20. My supervisor is unpredictable.

The Work Itself

21. My work is stimulating and challenging.
22. I feel I am respected by the parents of my students.
23. My job involves too much paperwork and recordkeeping.
24. My job doesn't offer enough variety.
25. My job is not very creative.
26. I make an important difference in the lives of my students.
27. My job doesn't match my training and skills.

28. My work gives me a sense of accomplishment.
29. There is too little time to do all there is to do.
30. I have control over most things that affect my satisfaction.

Working Conditions

31. My work schedule is flexible.
32. The teacher-child ratio is adequate.
33. I always know where to find the things I need.
34. I feel too cramped.
35. I need some new equipment/materials to do my job well.
36. The decor of my center is drab.
37. This center meets my standards of cleanliness.
38. I can't find a place to carry on a private conversation.
39. This place is too noisy.
40. The center's policies and procedures are clear.

Pay and Promotion Opportunities

41. My pay is adequate.
42. My pay is fair considering my background and skills.
43. My pay is fair considering what my co-workers make.
44. I'm in a dead-end job.
45. My fringe benefits are inadequate.
46. I feel I could be replaced tomorrow.
47. I have enough time off for holidays and vacations.
48. I'm being paid less than I deserve.
49. Opportunities for me to advance are limited.
50. I expect to receive a raise during the next year.

Turnover Intentions
Johnsrud and Rosser (1999)

The turnover intentions scale will be based on the following 7-point Likert scale.

Strongly Disagree							Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

Please select which item represents your disagreement or agreement.

1. I plan to remain in this school.

Teacher P-O fit

Ellis et al. (2017)

Items on Teacher P-O fit scale will be based on the following 5-point Likert scale.

Very Poor Match

Very Good Match

1

2

3

4

5

To what extent is the following a match?

1. School's educational philosophy.
2. School's student discipline procedures.
3. School's teachers' level of autonomy.
4. School's input on departmental decisions.

Teacher P-J fit

Ellis et al. (2017)

Items on Teacher P-J fit scale will be based on the following 5-point Likert scale.

Very Poor Match

Very Good Match

1

2

3

4

5

To what extent does your job match with the following?

1. The subject you teach.
2. The grade level you teach.
3. The students you teach.
4. The extra duties you perform.

Demographics

Gender:

- Female
- Male

Age: _____ years

Ethnicity:

- Asian
- African American
- American Indian
- Middle Eastern
- Hispanic / Latino
- White / Caucasian
- Other

What best describes you?

- Single
- Live with partner
- Separated
- Married
- Divorced
- Widower

Education Level:

- Less than High School
- High School Diploma
- Some College
- Associates or Vocational Degree
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree (MA / MS)
- Professional Degree (MD, JD)
- Doctorate Degree (Ph.D., Ed.D.)

Please indicate the answer that includes your **total family household income** in (previous year) before taxes.

- Less than \$10,000
- \$10,000 to \$14,999
- \$15,000 to \$19,999
- \$20,000 to \$24,999
- \$25,000 to \$29,999
- \$30,000 to \$34,999
- \$35,000 to \$39,999
- \$40,000 to \$44,999
- \$45,000 to \$49,999

- \$50,000 to \$54,999
- \$55,000 to \$59,999
- \$60,000 to \$64,999
- \$65,000 to \$69,999
- \$70,000 to \$74,999
- \$75,000 +

Please indicate the answer that includes your individual income in (previous year) before taxes.

- Less than \$10,000
- \$10,000 to \$14,999
- \$15,000 to \$19,999
- \$20,000 to \$24,999
- \$25,000 to \$29,999
- \$30,000 to \$34,999
- \$35,000 to \$39,999
- \$40,000 to \$44,999
- \$45,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$54,999
- \$55,000 to \$59,999
- \$60,000 to \$64,999
- \$65,000 to \$69,999
- \$70,000 to \$74,999
- \$75,000 +

Number of Hours worked weekly: _____

Employment position

- Teacher
- Assistant teacher
- Lead Teacher
- Group Teacher
- Other: _____

Total teaching experience

- Under 1 year
- 1-2 years
- 2-3 years
- 3-4 years
- 4-5 years
- More than 5 years

How long have you been a teacher in this program? _____ years _____ months

Where you work at now as a teacher, typically in your classroom:

of Children: _____

of Teachers: _____

Where you work at now as a teacher, describe the type of organization.

- Private for-profit (single center)
- Private for-profit (multi-center)
- Private nonprofit (community/board sponsored)
- Private nonprofit (sponsored by faith communities)
- Head Start ONLY
- Public school program
- Other public program (Mental Health, Community College)

APPENDIX B
INFORMED CONSENT



College of Social and Behavioral Sciences
Department of Psychology

You are invited to participate in a study designed to examine career outcomes in early childhood educators. The study is conducted by Heather Carrasco, under the supervision of Dr. Mark Agars, Professor of Psychology, at California State University, San Bernardino. This study has been approved by the Department of Psychology Institutional Review Board Sub-Committee of the California State University, San Bernardino. A copy of the official Psychology IRB stamp of approval should appear on this electronic consent form. The University requires that you give your consent BEFORE participating in the study.

Participation in this study contains no more than minimal risk to the participants. The survey ask about your teaching experience. If for some reason this information was made public, someone could possibly try to link that information to you individually. However, your identity and place of employment will be made anonymous throughout the research process. Thus, even if the unlikely chance of information from this survey or focus group/interview is made public, it should be of little consequence.

Benefits: The potential benefits include learning about ways to support early childhood teachers career outcomes (job satisfaction, retention). Participation in this research is optional and will not impact your employment in any way. The potential benefits include participants receiving \$10 Lakeshore Learning gift cards in exchange for completing the study.

Results: The results from this study may be used in research briefs, academic journal articles, to apply for additional funding to continue this line of research, and to present at local and international conferences.

Contact: If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Dr. Mark Agars (magars@csusb.edu).

Voluntary Consent by Participant: By clicking "next" you are agreeing that you read and you fully understand the contents of this document and you are openly willing to consent to take part in this study. All of your questions concerning this study have been answered. By clicking next, you are agreeing that you are 18 years of age or older and are agreeing to participate.

California State University Psychology Institutional Review Board Sub-Committee			
Approved:	8/14/18	Void After:	8/14/19
IBB #	H-18SU-04	Committee Chair	

APPENDIX C
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

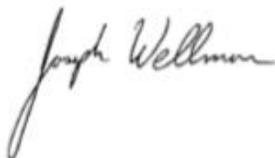
**Human Subjects Review Board
Department of Psychology
California State University,
San Bernardino**

PI: Mark Agars
From: Joseph Wellman
Project Title: The role of fit: Fostering job satisfaction and retention in early childhood educators
Project ID: H-18SU-04
Date: 8/14/18

Disposition: Administrative

Your IRB proposal (**The role of fit: Fostering job satisfaction and retention in early childhood educators, H-18SU-04**) is approved. You are permitted to collect information from **200** participants from **the community for \$10 each**. This approval is valid from **8/14/18** to **8/14/19**.

Good luck with your research!



Joseph Wellman, Committee Member
Psychology IRB Sub-Committee

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