A Comparative Study on Couple Role Performance, Depression and Family Strength of Multi-cultural Couples.

Yeun-mi Kim¹, Hye-jin Kim², Eun-kwang Yoo³

¹Dept. of Nursing, Suwon Women’s University
72-Onjeong-ro, Gwonseon-gu, Suwon-si, Gyeonggi-do 16632, Korea
kym12132000@swc.ac.kr

²Dept. of Nursing, Kyungbok University
154 Sinbuk-myeon, Pocheon-si, Gyeonggi-do 11138, Korea
Corresponding Author: kimhj@kbu.ac.kr

³School of nursing, Hanyang University, 222 Wangsimni-ro, Seongdong-gu, Seoul, 04763, KOREA, glory@hanyang.ac.kr

Abstract. This study is a descriptive comparative investigation study to compare the level of couple role performance, depression and family strength of multi-cultural couples, and to identify the correlation between these. The research subjects were 354 people of multi-cultural couples in Korea. The data was collected from May 13, 2013 to August 30, 2013, and analyzed through SPSS WIN 21.0 program. The result of this study, all multi-cultural couples appeared a positive correlation for couple role performance and family strength (wife r=.54, p<.01, husband r=.71, p<.01), and a negative correlation for depression and family strength (wife r= -.27, p<.01, husband r= -.16, p<.05). Therefore, it is necessary to improve the performance of couple roles and family strength for multi-cultural couples, and to provide professional management in order to identify the incidence of depression at an earlier time.

Keywords: Couple Role Performance, Depression, Family Strength, Multi-Cultural Couples

1 Introduction

Recently, Korean society has shown a high increase in Korean men marrying foreign women, which was only 0.2% of the total population in 1990, but is now over 10%, and thus Korean men marrying foreign women has risen by 70.5% [1]. The lifestyle, which is based on the traditional patriarchal mindsets and conflicts over cultural beliefs in the rural society of Korea, is the biggest obstacle for the strength of multi-

This research was supported by Basic Science Research Program through the National Research Foundation of Korea (NRF) for providing the grant of this project (No. 2012R1A1A3015474).
cultural couples. Family dissolution of multi-cultural families has a negative impact on correlations with their children, and it leads to a conflicting correlation between the couple [2], and it also increases the rate of mental diseases such as depression [3]. In particular, foreign women who marry Korean men experience physiological changes related to pregnancy, delivery and postpartum upon marrying their Korean husband without having enough time to learn about each other [4]. The lack of understanding of their spouse's cultural customs, values, language, and family lifestyle, as well as the big age difference, serve as the factors that reduce family strength [5].

Therefore, comparative studies on the correlation of couple roles, depression and family strength for multi-cultural couples, are necessary.

2 Research Method

2.1 Research Design

This study is a descriptive comparative investigation study to examine the performance of couple roles, depression and family strength of multi-cultural couples.

2.2 Research Subject

The subjects were 178 multi-cultural wives in five provinces of Korea, comprised of foreign women married to Korean men. In addition, 176 people are the husbands of these wives, thus making up a convenience sampling of 354 people.

2.3 Research Tools

Couple role performance was measured using a revised and supplemented scale made by Jang (1997). Depression was measured using a short form CES-D that was revised to 10 CES-D questions by the Korea Labor Institute (2006). Family strength used 15 questions on family strength that was revised and supplemented by Kim (2011).

2.4 Data Collection and Analysis Method

The data was collected from May 13, 2013 to August 30, 2013, after being reviewed by the Institutional Review Board (HYI-12-031). Questionnaires were given to 180 people in each group; missing answers were excluded, 98.4% of the data was analyzed through SPSS WIN 21.0 program.
3 Research Results

3.1 Demographic characteristics of Multi-cultural Couples

The age of multi-cultural couples at the time of arrival in Korea, was primarily concentrated in the age group that fell between 20 and 29, in 106 people (59.6%). The main country of origin for migrants to Korea was led by Vietnam with 67 people (37.6%). The period or duration of marriage amongst the couples ranged from one to five years, and was indicative of 96 people (53.9%); 117 people (65.7%) of the subjects were full-time housewives; 89 people (50.6%) of the multi-cultural husbands provided financial support to the in-laws, and 49 people (22.1%) had disputes over this.

3.2 Comparison of Couple Roles, Depression and Family strength of Multi-cultural Couple

On a five-score scale, the mean score of couple role performance was 2.99 score, and multi-cultural husbands 3.09 score. On a three-score scale for depression, multi-cultural wives appeared 0.82 score and multi-cultural husbands 0.72 score. The family strength was on a five-score scale, multi-cultural wives 3.44 score and multi-cultural husbands 3.49 score.

3.3 Correlation of Couple Role performance, Depression and Family strength of Multi-cultural Couples

There were statistically significant positive correlations between couple role performance and family strength, negative correlations between depression and family strength for multi-cultural couple (Table 1).

Table 1. Correlation of Couple Role Performance, Depression, and Family strength of Multi-cultural Couple

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Couple role performance</th>
<th>Depression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>Husband</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couple role performance</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family strength</td>
<td>0.54**</td>
<td>0.71**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** p<.01, * p<.05
4 Discussions

Regarding the correlation of couple role performance, depression and family strength for multi-cultural couples, couple role performance and family strength, a significant positive correlation was demonstrated. Meanwhile, the higher the incidence of depression, the more significant was the negative correlation with family strength. When there was a higher performance of couple role together, as a unit, there resulted higher/positive family strength. In the couple role performance field of multi-cultural wives, the child-raising field was higher than multi-cultural husbands, while the economic activity field was lower, thus showing that in the performance of couple roles for Korean multi-cultural couples, multi-cultural husbands were still slightly higher than multi-cultural women. Therefore, it is necessary to develop various and efficient programs to improve couple role performance and family strength.

References