

The development process of male childcare workers in terms of post-structuralism

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Abstract: The aim of this study is to demonstrate a development process of male childcare workers in terms of post-structuralism. Against previous study of Aono (2012)'s thesis that "As male childcare workers experience their jobs more, they become to consider their job and sex separately", I conclude that it is impossible to separate sex and job in society which people are asked to be male or female but no other gender, by discerning the context of notable scholars such as Simone-de-Beauvoir and Judith Butler.

As a result of the study, it is found out that male childcare workers read a difference between female childcare workers and them by sex, and they label the difference as what they don't have and absorb it. Starting off with structuring male sex, male childcare workers obtain androgynous through cooperating with females. This mechanism is concluded as the development process of male child care workers. Thus, while Aono (2012)'s study points out "sex does not matter", this study demonstrates new perspective that male childcare workers absorb good point from different sex based on their original sex.

Keywords: Gender / Male childcare worker.

1. INTRODUCTION

When people define sex in Japan, numerous studies define sex as biological sex and gender as sociological sex. John Money, a doctor of medicine degree contributed to spread this notion. There are great number of researches about childcare from gender perspective which based on his theory.

Mimura (2006) and others conducted the paper based interview to reconsider how individual esteem is demonstrated in nursery school from gender perspective. As a result, they found out following points: 1. What child care providers acknowledge and demonstrate of the individual esteem is based on the premise that to respect difference of biological sex. 2. Insufficient recognition towards the fact that male and female characteristic theory is based on asymmetrical notion caused by gender stereotype, and 3. Care providers and parents often reproduce and tell gender to children without acknowledging their own gender bias. They also found out that there is a huge gap between self-recognition of childcare practice based on philosophy of individual esteem and real situation.

Some studies mention not only relationship of gender and childcare, but to describe male childcare workers from gender perspective. Aono (2012) carried out categorical analysis formed on Grounded Theory (Willig 2001, translation by Otuska 2003) and a semi-structured interview which was conducted for 6 male child careworkers, to illustrate how male childcare workers think their job, and how they recognize the difference between female childcare workers and them.

In consequence of the analysis, he states that male childcare workers are possible to imagine that childcare workers transcend biological sex: be free from male or female sex role, by transferring their own image of childcare. Moreover, he also states that more years they experience the job, they become to consider childcare job and sex separately more.

2. THE PREVIOUS STUDY'S ISSUE

Although these papers are based on John Money's theory, the latest gender study conclude that his theory is outdated. According to John Money's theory, distinction of sex and gender is brought up to argue biological fatalism, and his theory foment the idea of that while sex is biological and impossible to be manipulated artificially, gender is formed by cultural construction. Thus, gender is not a consequence of sex nor fixed thing unlike sex. In other words, the distinction of sex

and gender indicates a fundamental breakdown between sexualized body and culturally formed gender. Judith Butler, a post-structuralism philosopher states that have cast doubt on universality of sex, the construction called sex itself might be formed socially as same as gender. Sex always equals to gender in reality (Butler, 2018). She illustrates that there is no distinction between sex and gender.

3. COUNTER-ARGUMENT TO AONO (2012)'S THESIS

Aono (2012)'s theory mentioned in the above stats that when male childcare workers experience their jobs more, their identity becomes to change and gradually obtain confidence for the area which they used to think it is difficult for them. However, he also states that male childcare workers do not think they want to be same as female workers, but they aware there is an area where female childcare workers do not demonstrate and they can use their experience most of it. As a result, male childcare workers are possible to imagine childcare workers transcend biological sex: be free from male or female sex role, by transferring their own image of childcare. From above, Aono (2012) concludes that this phenomenon is similar to what Nakata (2004) points out: mechanism which male child care workers become to consider child care job and sex separately when they experience their job more. Aono (2012) claims that no matter sex, child care job requires high level of expertise and that results in overwhelming sex. In this chapter, I discuss about interaction of the expertise and sex.

People are surrounded by many kinds of stereotype from the time they were born. For example, while products for boy tends to be blue, girl's product is pink in baby product store. In the early childhood, boys become to choose cool color and girls tend to choose warm color. Aono (2012) deems this tendency shows a result of parental imprinting, and propose "gender free program idea", designed to demonstrate child care activity which departs from gender characteristic motif.

However, can the imprinting be only factor of causing the color select tendency? As same as chicken or the egg theory, whether which comes first – children's expression of favor or influence of product development based on children's tendency – triggers to causality dilemma, thus, this discussion is subject to metaphysical philosophy. Nonetheless, it is clear that children become to show their favorite color to the surroundings and choose it by themselves with their free will.

Not only children but also people including adults reflect our own preference to every single act, in the situation our free will is respected. The accumulation of this results in creating a unique charm of the people: the development of the identity. The identity reflects in choosing favorite color, singer, and people. If gender is cultural content which sexualized body covers, the identity is not an outcome of single theoretical approach. In other words, Aono (2012)'s claim that male child care workers become to consider child care job and sex separately when they experience their job more, can be interpreted as: they form their professionalism in the area where departs from the identity, as they experience their job more.

On the other hand, Simone-de-Beauvoir's famous saying: "One is not born, but rather, becomes, a woman" in her book: The second sex, is stated in the context of one always become to woman under cultural compulsion. As she claims, if "body is a status of situation", male child care workers are always forces to demonstrate male role by society, culture, or themselves. Male childcare workers are, no matter they wish or not, keep acknowledged as *males'* childcare worker. Hence, it is impossible to separate sex and job in society which people are asked to be male or female but no other gender. Accordingly, this study reexamine and review Aono (2012) theory by carrying out similar research as her.

4. RESEARCH APPROACH

This research aims at clarifying the development of male childcare workers in terms of gender, by reexamining Aono (2012)'s theory. Unfortunately since I live in Tokyo, I could not conduct interview in Hiroshima city like Aono did. However, 6 male childcare workers who work in both public and private nursery cooperated with interview. The interviewee's profile is shown in Table 1. The interview is carried out as follows; an hour for A and B individually while their nursery naptime (13:00~15:00), 45 minutes for C and D after their workhour, and an hour for E and F in restaurant on weekend. The content of the interview is recorded agreed upon by all interviewee's written consent.

After asking about their characteristic, interviewer asked following questions and acquire not only the answer for the questions but also their opinion besides the topic.

- Whether they face any difficulty as male child care worker
- How they think of difference between female and male in role of child care worker
- Whether they feel social pressure for them to carry out their job
- How they think of male doing childcare

Table 1: Interviewee’s profile

Name Code	Age	Occupational History	Qualification	Title	Public/ Private	Marital Status	Whether they have child
A	44	20 years	Nursery Teacher, Kinder Garden Type I	Manager	public	○	○
B	32	14 years	Nursery Teacher, Kinder Garder Type 2	-	private	-	-
C	45	15 years	Nursery Teacher, Kinder Garden Type I	-	private	○	○
D	30	10 years	Nursery Teacher, Kinder Garden Type I	-	private	-	-
E	28	7 years	Nursery Teacher, Kinder Garden Type I	-	public	-	-
F	29	7 years	Nursery Teacher, Kinder Garden Type I	-	public	-	-

To analyze the interview content, categorical analysis which is subject to Grounded Theory (Willig 2001) is applied, same as Aono (2012)’s study.

First step is to transcribe the interview content and part them apart by one sentence to make it unit to analyze. By comparing each unit, the one related to child care is categorized as sub category and count the number of interviewee who mention same topic. Secondly, label main category for the point which seems common in the sub categories. Moreover, create category group by finding out the common point among main categories. Although some contents in the interview is not directly related to childcare topic, as the result of the analysis of the interview, 5 category groups and 11 main categories are created.

5. ANALYTICAL FINDING

From the interview, 5 category groups which is 1. Identity of male childcare worker, 2. The leaning thorough their job, 3. Confusion about trouble caused by being male childcare workers, 4. Male childcare workers and their collegiality, and 5. Society and male childcare workers, are created. The aim of this chapter is to examine how changes among these 5 category groups by taking 6 interviewee’s profile into account.

On the premise of the examination, all interviewee has great satisfaction for their job. Most of them struggle and face identity of male childcare workers after they engage into their job. After went through the struggling process, they found their answer such as being themselves or not to overthink is the best. Some of them demonstrate masculinity in their position at their workplace, for they feel that they are required to play a paternal role or intentionally play that role. From these points, it is clear that male childcare workers intentionally form male sex in their job.

Secondly, it is found out that each interviewee make effort to learn from colleague and try to make their performance better. For example, some interviewee said that female childcare workers are more conscious to detail episode of children, and the other said that he try to copy the way his male colleague talks to children. No matter colleague is male or female, they are willing to learn from them and also wish to share their learnings to junior and people who work in same field. Moreover, to focus on relationship between male and female child workers, they learn a feminine element from female childcare workers through cooperation with them, and adopt it into their performance.

On the other hand, the interviewee shows confusion about trouble caused by being male childcare workers. They feel challenged to carry out their job when they face social pressure of required to be stereotypical image of male childcare workers, rejection towards them as in attacked by bullying from colleague, or tension between them and children’s parents when they get the opinion from them such as parents do not want them to do toilet support to their girl.

However, male childcare workers develop strategies for the tension. Some interviewee answers that they make effort to have good communication with children’s parents and colleague to obtain trust from them or to be person who inspire others, in order to overcome sexual difference. They try to communicate actively with not only children’s parents but also colleague, which results in making their position better in their workplace. Lastly, the interviewee told the reason of

International Journal of Novel Research in Education and Learning

 Vol. 6, Issue 4, pp: (27-36), Month: July - August 2019, Available at: www.noveltyjournals.com

continuing their job in the category group of Society and male childcare workers. Interest to children such as interesting to find funny episode of children or feeling pleasure for watching them growing up, work positively. Some interviewee also mention that children's parents is one of the reasons which motivates them to continue their job, for some parents encourage their performance or being supportive to them.

Table 2: 1Category created from the interview towards 6 male childcare workers

Group category	Major category	Sub category	number mentioned in the dialogues
Interest for children	Affection towards children	I Like children	1
		Children is a motivation to continue a job	2
		It is fun to play with children	1
		It is pleasure to see children bright and active	1
		Ideal person is someone who like children	1
		Passion to do a job which engaging in children	1
	Empathy for children	It is important to attract children	1
		It is important to have fun more than children	1
		It is hard to give consideration to children's feelings	2
		Ideal child care provider is a person who develop together with children	1
		It is ideal to be a person that children love	1
		Offering childcaring from persprctive of children	1
Demerit for male childcare workers	Need of female child care workers	It is ideal to be a person whose sense of empathy is close to children's one	1
		Infants feel uncomfortable towards men taking care of them	1
		It is necessary to have motherhood towards infants	2
		It is necessary to have women's support to take care of infants	2
		Woman offer toilet support for girls	3
		Some infants are not used to be taking care by men	2
	Sense of difficulty	Play piano	3
		Understand children's conditions	1
		Receive an assesment as rough	1
		Use rough words	2
		Receive an advice to pay attention to children more	1
		Anxiety for teaching female junior	1
Identity of male childcare workers	Role as male	Be looked at with a great deal of curiosity from surroundings	1
		Expectation to do heavy physical work	3
		Will of playing parental role	1
		Expectation to demonstrate actively	1
		Being children's playmate	2
		It is more easy to communicate with boys	1
	Status of male childcare workers	Expectation to play a role in terms of preventing crime	1
		There is a unique way of childcaring by male	1
		Wantto teach active play to girls	1
		Want to contribute to the acknowledgement which childcaring can be continued	1
		There is few male childcare workers whc engaging to the job for many years	1
		Expectation from surroundings to make a change by male childcare workers joining to the workplace	2
Childcaring over sex	Perspective of specialists	It is easy to adapt oneself into environment where other male childcare workers already exist	3
		Want to make an enviroment which let more male childcare workers join to the workplace	1
		Feel anxiety to continue job as male childcare workers	1
		Low salary	4
		More open to accpet advice from men rather than women	1
		Want to take child-rearing leave	3
	Gender Free Child Caring	Feel that childcaring job is suitable for them	1
		There is no difference in childcaring by men or women	3
		There is women who is manly and able to do physical work	2
		Receive good assesment from parents	1
		The way they communicate with their own children and with children in the workplace is not same	1
		Male childcare workers need to pay attention delicately too	1
Gender Free Child Caring	My job is satisfying and meaningful	1	
	Carry out childcaring by taking advantage of one's character	2	
	Do not very feel like they are mwn	1	
	Challenge to do girly playing	1	
	Put more imporatanace on children's personality rather than their sex	3	
	Want children to experience both boys and girls' playing	1	
Gender Free Child Caring	Even men can take care of infants is not difficult	1	
	Want to take care of infants	1	
	Want to do job which engage with infants (although one is men)	1	

6. RESULT AND CONSIDERATION

In this study, I reexamine and review Aono (2012)'s claim; As male childcare workers experience their jobs more, they become to consider their job and sex separately more, and formulate a hypothesis based on the latest gender research that it is impossible to separate sex and job in society which people are asked to be male or female but no other gender, by carrying out same way of research which Aono (2012) conducted. The result is as follows;

1) Mechanism of constructing male sex of male childcare workers

Take a look at Table 2 Identity of male childcare workers category group

Mr. F

Q. What do you think of strong point that female childcare workers have?

A. I think there is nothing that only woman can do. [...]

For example, when I communicate with children, I try to be dynamic or - not sure this word is right to put it but - rough. I kind of like to hear children saying "Because Mr. F said it's ok to do so". There is the things that other colleague will say "Hey what are you doing!" to children, but I tell them "Sorry, I am the one who said ok". I feel like I want to break the rule or detail guideline for them. When children are playing or doing other things, my female colleague follows nursery rule in a careful manner. That point, I want to twist or break it a bit.

When interviewer asked about strong point female childcare workers have, Mr. F answered there is nothing that only woman are good about it, and told me his work motto. He is engaged to be free and easy person who do not stick to rule or detail guideline in his work place, and behave that in front of children.

Mr. F

Q. Do you think it is good to have male childcare workers in nursery?

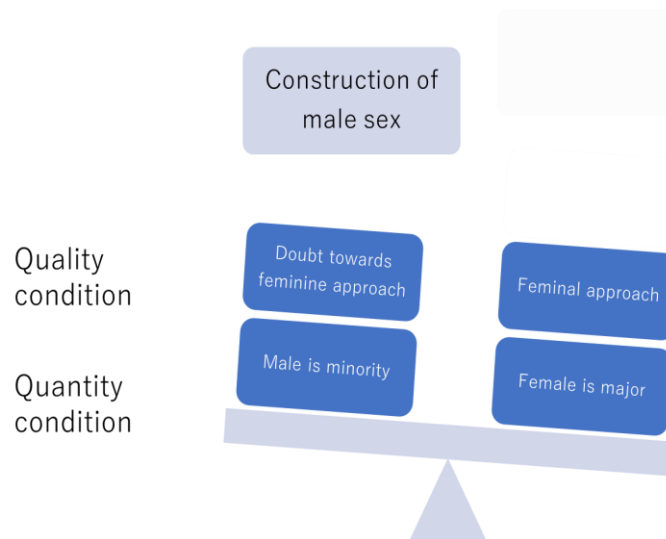
A. People say it is important to accept difference or respect each other's individuality, so I think adults need to show that behavior to children first. I don't give in to the pressure when people said "Hey F, what are you doing?". The foundation which adults have mutual respects to each other and acknowledge their difference is necessary to tell children to accept various values. He also states the detail episode in the nursery as follows;

Mr. F

Q. Do you think it is good to have male childcare workers in nursery?

A. One day, hot morning, some children talks to me they are thirsty. Things only served from canteen is allowed to give to them, by nursery rule from a hygiene perspective. But usually tea for them can be ready around 9:30. So I let them to drink tap water, saying like "Yup, you go there and drink tap water ok? Make sure to turn the tap upwards, don't kiss it!" Because I heard from principal that those tap water is safe and clean for it comes from waterworks department, so I do not think it will be a problem. But other colleagues will not allow it and I can easily imagine they will say "What are you doing, stop!", and children reply; "But Mr. F said ok". Women colleagues stick to the rule, and I know their way of thinking is right and it is important to follow the rule. And nursery rule is quite reasonable. But you know, when they go to elementally school they drink water from tap by themselves right? I want them to act on their judgement. So if they are thirsty they go drink water from the tap, if they want to go to bathroom they go by themselves... I let them do so. Both in positive and negative ways, I value my way of child caring.

Mr. F told the children to drink tap water saying as above when children talks to him they are thirsty. His purpose is to tell the children to think and act by themselves, such as go drink tap water or go bathroom by themselves, which he wish it results in developing their growth and be person who can judge and act on their own. Hence, having the purpose he intentionally constructs male sex which other people tend to describe as dynamic or rough. Also, it is noteworthy that he demonstrates the diversity of adults in form of hidden curriculum to the children.



The mechanism of male childcare workers to construct male sex

Chart 1: Mechanism of constructing male sex of male childcare workers

In this section I want to examine how Mr. F achieves to the above work motto. It is found out in the above that He is an embodiment of variety and intentionally play a role of male to tell children the importance of thinking and acting by their own judgement. The process to achieve this can be explained by Hagel’s dialectic philosophy.

Right : More female workers than male in childcare work place

Wrong : Almost no difference in the number of girl and boy in nursery

Right : The gap in the number of female and male workers amplifies one’s presence and fill in the gap

The logical process in the above works so that he intentionally plays a role of make in front of children. This process is defined as mechanism of constructing male sex herein, and the construction of male sex occurs when both quantity and quality conditions are filled. This is the mechanism of constructing male sex.

Take a nursery’s environment for example, I would like to examine what happen if the numbers of female and male workers are same. Under that situation, there is no need for male workers to engage into constructing male sex. In the case which adults which is role model for children, are same number between male and female, they are in the environment where makes children to imitate adults’ behavior , in the light of adult’s sex who communicate with children and children’s own gender.

Secondly, traditional idea of maternal care in field of child caring makes the history which does not acknowledge expertise of child caring. What if male childcare workers are forced to put themselves into the frame? As category group of identity of male child care workers shows, they will counter argue that it is natural to have a second father in the nursery, for family has both father and mother, when they get pressure of: No matter the sex, child care provider needs to form feminal communication with children, for they should be a second mother, from society or surrounding. It is natural to play paternal role in nursery.

Thus, male childcare workers construct male sex when both quantity and quality conditions are fullfilled. In the existing study, construction of male sex is considered negatively for it can be described as reproduction of gender stereotype. Moreover, Nakata (2004) states that is positioned as an earlier stage out of 3 sequence stages and used to be considered as process which male childcare workers go through in the beginning after they start their job. However, it is clear that construction of male sex contributes to expertise of child caring in aspects of role mode to children and wish for development of children.

2) Spiral model of male childcare workers

This chapter focuses on Table 2 category group: The leaning thorough male childcare workers' job. As stated in the category group of the leaning thorough male childcare workers' job, male childcare workers are willing to learn good point from female childcare workers.

Mr. A

Q. Have you ever thought of difference in child caring by men or women?

A. My female colleague often talks to children like "Things are not in right position" or "You supposed to do it like this", and especially they care about hygiene. When they children these kind of things, I feel "Wow they really watch children carefully", for they pay attention to children's each single behavior. Watching them doing so, I become like them too and sometimes people tell me I'm detail oriented. But still, I think women are excellent at paying attention to watch each single act of children.

Mr. B

Q. Have you ever thought of difference in child caring by men or women?

A. It is important to grasp and understand children's emotion to communicate with them. Women are good at it and I think it's amazing. Still now, I often wish that I've could be like them still now. I have been watching my female colleague takes care of children and understand them very delicately over 10 years, which I really respect them and again, simply amazing.

Mr. B

Q. What do you learn from female colleague?

A. How to take care of children delicately, pay attention to detail things, and the way to talk to children... these things I learn from them. They are very good at having a proper sense of distance towards children and choosing right words when they talk to children, so that they voluntary do things by themselves. By watching how they make the atmosphere which children feels kindness, I feel this is from womanly motherhood.

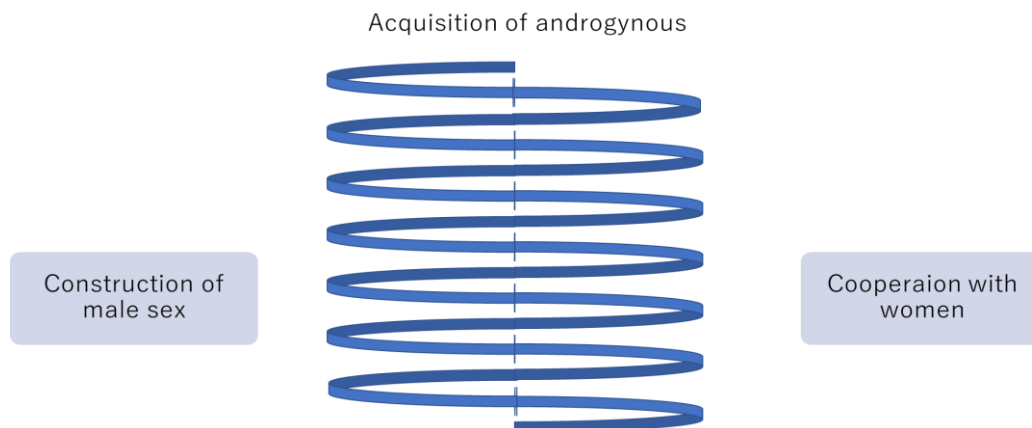
Both Mr. A and Mr. B describe the learning from their female colleague which is understanding children's emotion and behavior, paying attention delicately, and talking to them with proper sense of distance. Mr. B name these points as womanly motherhood. Moreover, Mr. A points out his learning from female colleague through correspondence notebook.

Mr. A

Q. Have you ever thought of difference in child caring by men or women?

A. Same as environmental setting, there is some difference between what I write and what my female colleague write. They capture detail behavior and act of children and write the episodes of them, while I look at children more broadly. This makes me feel that I might not be able to watch them carefully as they do, for I could not describe their expression and nuance. It is difficult for me to choose the exact words to describe children as they do. Also, they are really good at looking children comprehensively but at the same time in detail. I watch them comprehensively but could not focus to take care with them point by point. For example, my female colleague can watch children not to get hurt, to let them have fun, and to let them play in the group at the same time. They describe these both generally and specifically into correspondence notes, which I found out myself that I did not watch them as carefully they do.

From above statement, he told that he was surprised at his female colleague describe children's behavior both generally and specifically by looking the correspondence notes. He learnt from them and eventually become like them, as they told him that he is detail oriented person.



A spinal model of male childcare workers' development

Chart 2: Spiral model of male childcare workers

Male childcare workers who went through the process of construction of male sex become to acquire new learning through cooperation with female colleagues. The keywords such as understanding children’s expression and behavior, paying attention to them delicately, and the way they talk is common to both Mr. A and Mr. B’s dialects, and each of them associate these keywords with femininity female childcare workers have.

Considering the correlation between keywords of delicateness in paying attention and having right sense to choose words, and female childcare workers, it is found out that these points are built in a multi-layered way by encouragement from surroundings to let woman be womanly. Beauvoir’s saying; “One is not born, but rather, becomes, a woman” is precisely explained this phenomenon. Male childcare workers learn from female childcare workers and try to adapt their good points into their performance with their professionalism. Through the cooperation with female childcare workers, they develop their expertise. In the end, male childcare workers who acquired feminine element went through an inner conflict about retrieving their male sex and become the one acquired androgynous, which obtains both good point of male and female child caring. This mechanism is a spiral model of male childcare workers.

The ideal male child care workers’ model of spiral model of male childcare workers hold is person who maintain male sex cultivated over years and also be able to perform well in the field where women are good at it generally, through learning from female colleagues. Even if the cooperation with women might make them struggle to retrieve their male sex, they will develop themselves to next phase with learning from them. Step by step, they will become the one with androgynous, which means epiceinism in Greek.

7. CONCLUSION

This study counter-argues Aono (2012)’s theory: “it is impossible to separate sex and job in society which people are asked to be male or female but no other gender”, by reexamining it. In conclusion, the mechanism of acquiring androgynous from cooperation with female childcare workers triggering by constructing male sex is the development process of male childcare workers. This study illustrates new approach which absorb good point from different sex based on their original sex, while Aono (2012) states “sex does not matter”.

There is thesis in Butler’s gender theory which is similar to this point: “Gender is something always in process, not something be interpreted as start or end” “Gender is to formalize body continuously, a set of practice that is carried out under strict regulatory frame”.

Although this paper uses the term of male sex, this term hold risk of misunderstanding. Firstly, regarding simple notion of *men* as holistic one, and to stick to its consistency and coherency will lead to an outcome which ignore variety of cultural and social interaction that occurs when many kinds of male sex is constructed. Therefore, male sex in this paper mean be used in narrow sense only to support the thesis. More years later, there will be more suitable term to describe this notion thus this usage is temporally.

Secondly, the discussion of definition of male sex and femininity tends to lead to biological fatalism. There is a discussion to counter-argue this theory by separating sex from gender, so that there is potential risk which easily be treated black or white.

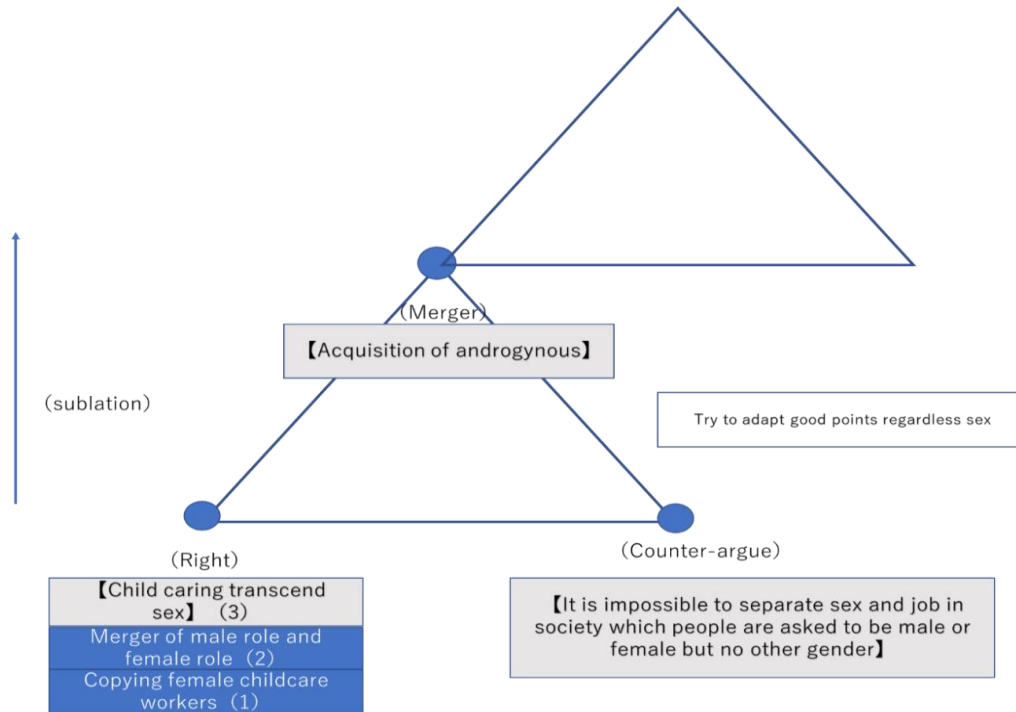


Chart 3 Position of Aono (2012) and this study

Chart 3 illustrates the position of this research by applying Hegel’s dialectic philosophy that is mentioned in 6. Result and Consideration chapter.

Right : Male childcare workers are able to demonstrate child caring transcended sex by merging male and female role

Wrong : It is impossible to separate sex and job in society which people are asked to be male or female but no other gender.

Right : Male childcare workers acquire androgynous that based on their own sex but to absorb good points of women

People including male childcare workers are belong to the society that people are asked to be male or female. Aono (2012)’s thesis: “As male childcare workers experience their jobs more, they become to consider their job and sex separately more” invokes simple question that whether male childcare workers who are not be able to transcended sex over years of experience is low level or not. As mentioned in Research Approach chapter, Mr. F offers hidden curriculum to children by demonstrating male sex in front of them intentionally. Mr. A and Mr. B learn from their female colleague and adapt it to their way of child caring. Hence, it is found out that they read the difference of female child care workers by sex and absorb it into their performance after labeling it as what they do not have. They will become the one with androgynous by going through spiral model of development. With this logic, it is clear that Aono (2012)’s frame are advanced. As conclusion, I would like to quote Mr. B’s dialogue that represents the thesis of this paper;

Mr. B

Q. Do you think male childcare workers is necessary?

A. I think men and women are perfect when they are together. Men and women are two for one, and finally reach to completion. For example women are more emotional in good and bad way, so that they capture many things but it is difficult for them to summarize logically and get to an answer. Men can help for that point, so they fill in gaps each other. If we can make us better together, we can be perfective one.

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