

Children's rule-breaking behaviors in Taiwan and Finland preschools



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Hui Chun Lee, Tzu-chi University, Taiwan (Oral presenter)



Jyrki Reunamo, University of Helsinki, Finland
Li-Chen Wang, Chang Gung University of Science and Technology, Taiwan
Chao-Jung Lin, Ching Kuo Institute, Taiwan

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Different day care scenario

- Finland

The law on child day care stipulates the entitlement of children to day care and the responsibility of municipalities to arrange day care. The provision of early childhood education and care is based on national curriculum guidelines on early childhood education and care (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, 2003).

Most of Finnish day care is funded by the municipalities.

Day care is provided by trained personnel. The qualification of a kindergarten teacher is a university or university of applied sciences degree. All day-care centre personnel must have at least an upper secondary-level qualification in social welfare and health care. In Finland, an average of 46% of all under school-aged children attended day care organized by their municipality in 2005 (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, 2006).

Different day care scenario

- Taiwan

Day care settings in Taiwan based on official regulation with 2-6 year-old, kindergarten is 5-6 year-old before Edu-care Integrated Act in 2012. After 2012, educare settings in early years are all united called “preschools”. **Less than 40% preschools are public funded or non-profit preschools, it means over 60% of day care in Taiwan are private own.**

Over 90% of 5 years old children attend preschools. ECEC reform with progressive ideas in Taiwan has been introduced over 30 years, and Reggio model has been applied and teacher scaffolding skills has been emphasized for more than 20 years. However, it can be found **variety ECEC teaching models in Taiwan** in terms of 60% preschools are private own and profit orientation.

Taiwan day care scenario



1 Constructing with in 6 Area (one group with 30 children, two educators)

Taiwan day care scenario



Role play Area (opened space shared with three groups)

Research Method

- The observers were all experienced teachers in Finland and Taiwan.
- There were same videos with same observation definitions used in both countries and a discussed Q & A handbook produced during observation training to ensure the same observation categories in comparison.
- An observer did not observe their own group of children. Two randomly chosen observers observed each other's groups.

Research Method-procedure

- The children were observed systemically in the order determined by the list. To prevent systematical bias the observer started each day with a different (random) child in the list.
- Each group of children were observed between 8.00-12.00 am at three minutes intervals.
- Data collected on 7 half days within 6-7 months, spreaded into week days.

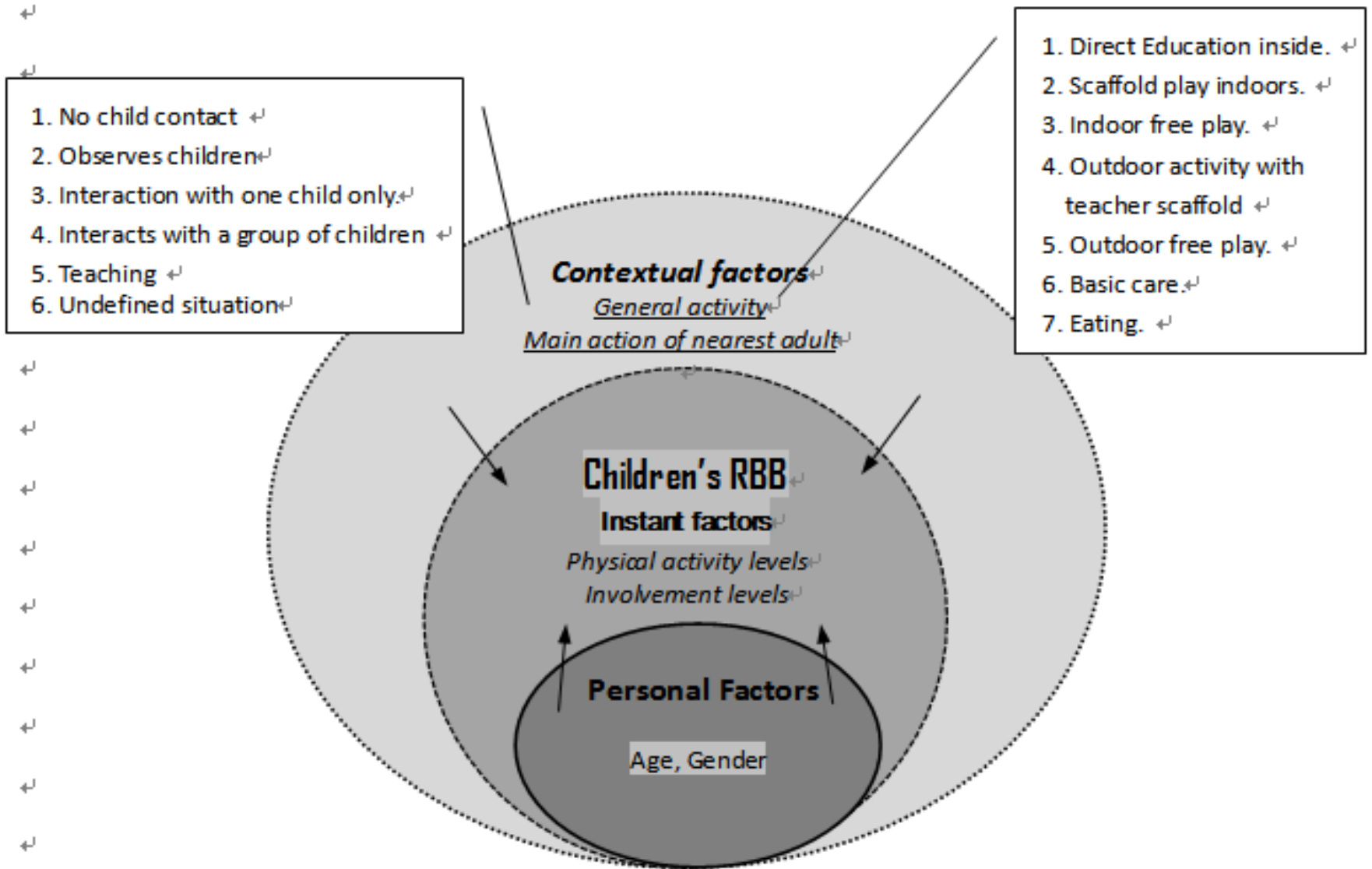
Definition of Rule-breaking Behaviors

- Action not allowed : e.g. teasing, being disruptive to others, attaching others or not following orders.

The target child is supposed going into the toilet to get a wiper for cleaning, however when he get into toilet he rearranges the wipers in a different way. The other child says to him: "you should not arrange in this way". He insists :this is the way it shall be done. How to code? Is it action not allowed?

1. If we did not hear the target child said "this is the way it shall be.", could be B3 -play with material.
2. But it seems the target child has his own idea to rearrange the wipers, it could be B7-practice, work.
3. If observers can recognize clearly that the target child is monkey about or fool around the wipers, then it could be B8 action not allowed.

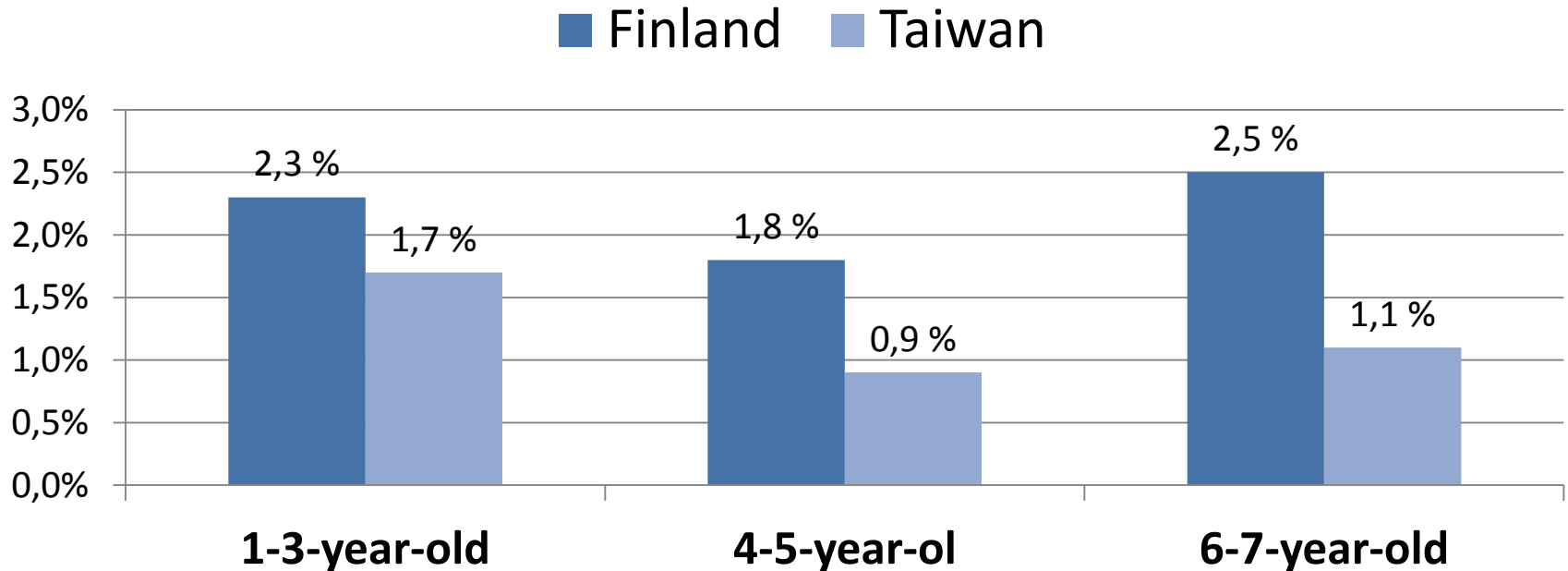
Research Frame



Participants and Data Collected

	Taiwan	Finland
Participated settings	7	48
Observers	34	70
Participated children	460	801
Observation data collected	10247	18808
RBBs observed	116	385
RBBs % within data collected	1.2%	2.1%

Rule Breaking Behaviours(RBBs) in Different Age-groups



The differences between day care centers in Finland and Taiwan are statistically significant, $\chi^2(1, N = 28607) = 36.331, p < .0005$, Cramer's $V = .036$.

It is possible that younger children were not yet developmentally ready to follow rules.

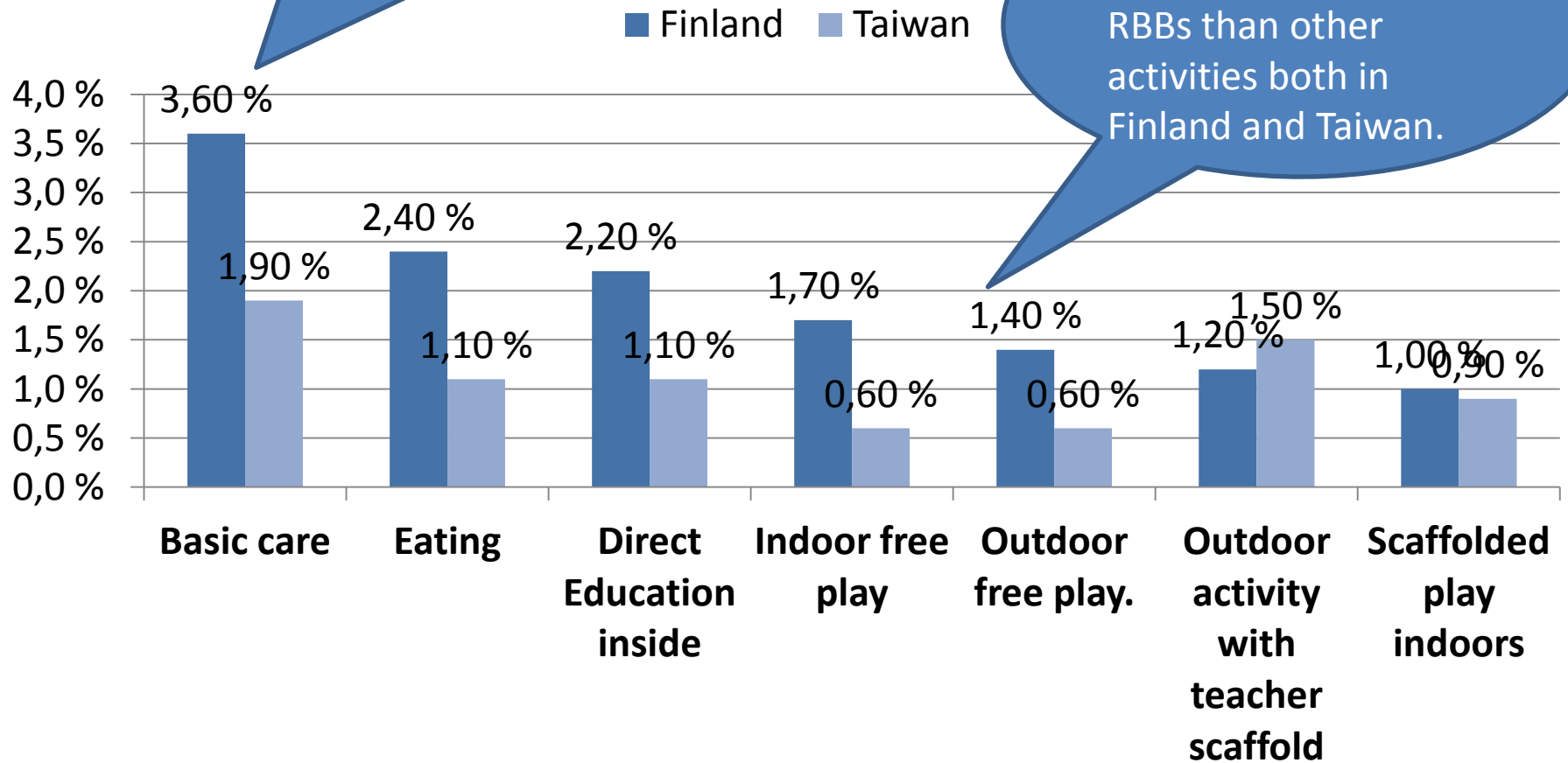
Elder child could have been provided not enough challenge in the classroom.

The Percentages of RBBs

Different Activities

Basic care in Finland is dense with RBBs.

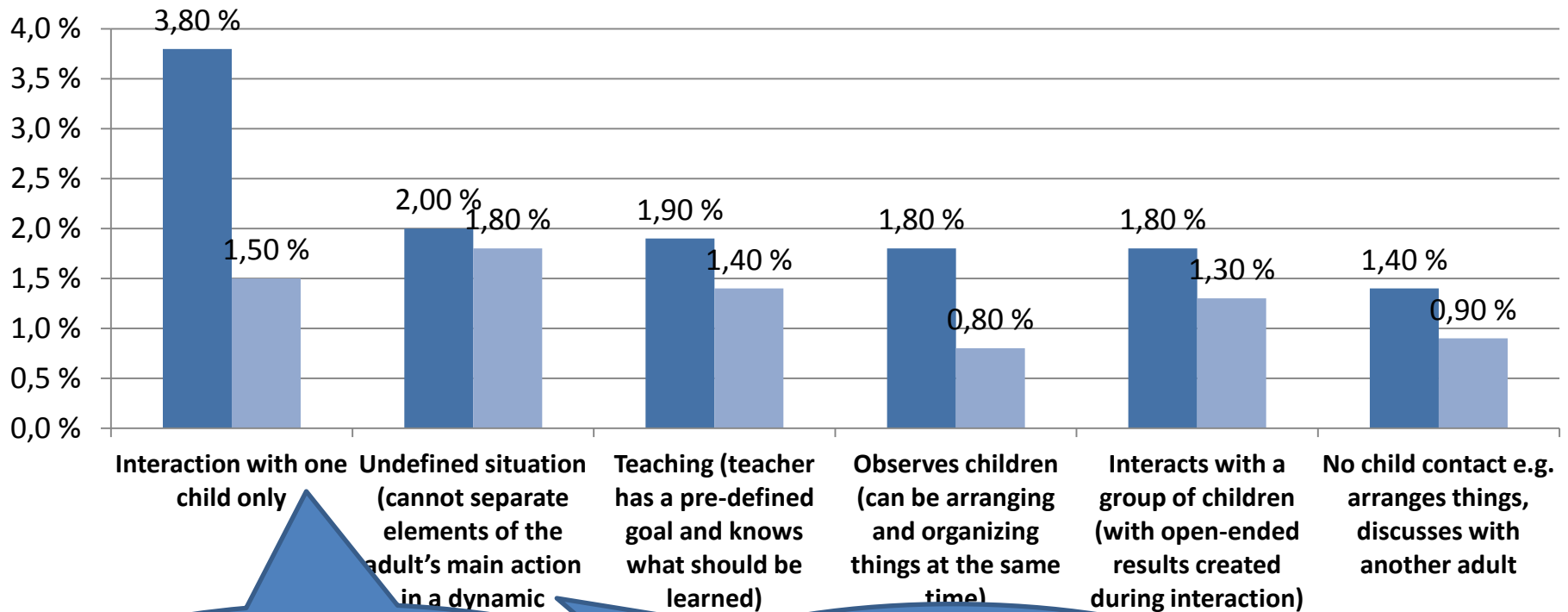
Free play indoors and outdoors had less RBBs than other activities both in Finland and Taiwan.



The differences in the activities are statistically significant in Finland, $\chi^2(6, N = 18358) = 46.239, p < .0005$, Cramer's $V = .050$, the standardised residual of basic care (5.2).

The Percentages of RBBs in Educators' Main Actions

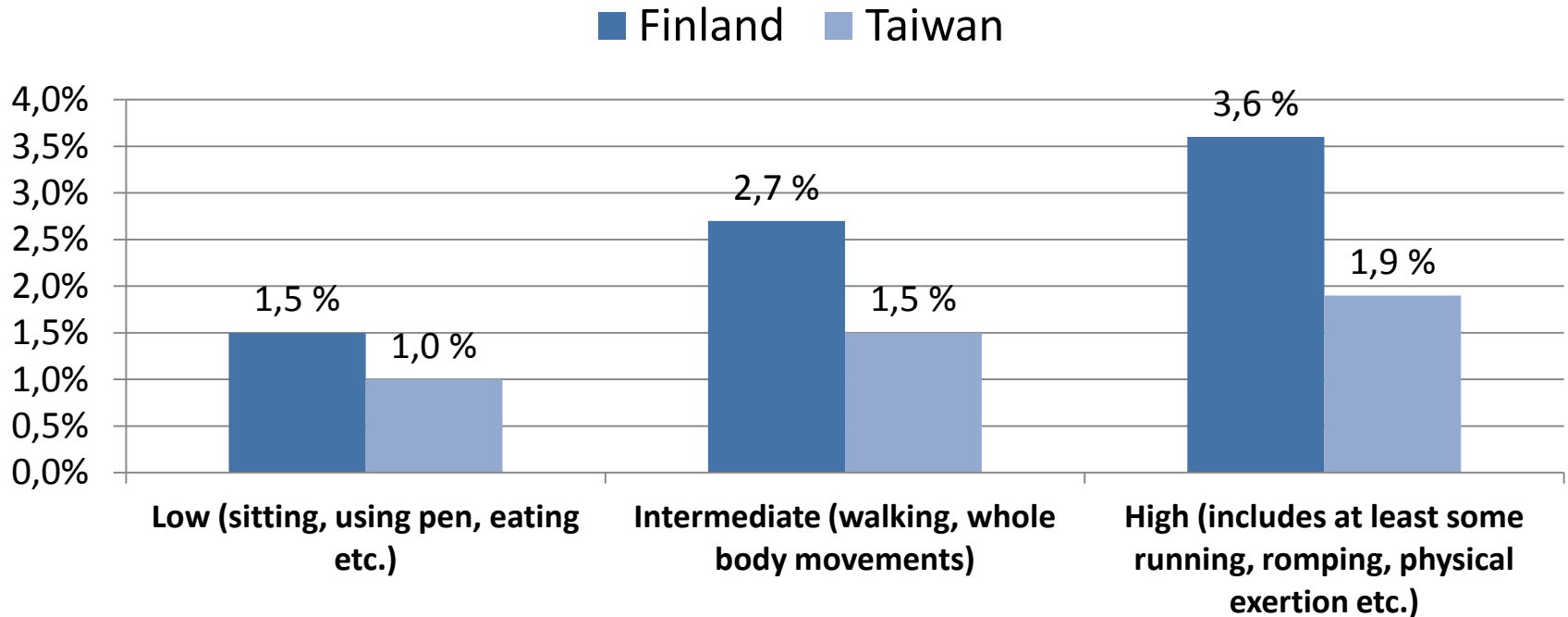
■ Finland ■ Taiwan



In Finland, when teacher is occupied by one child, other children seem more possible to break rules.

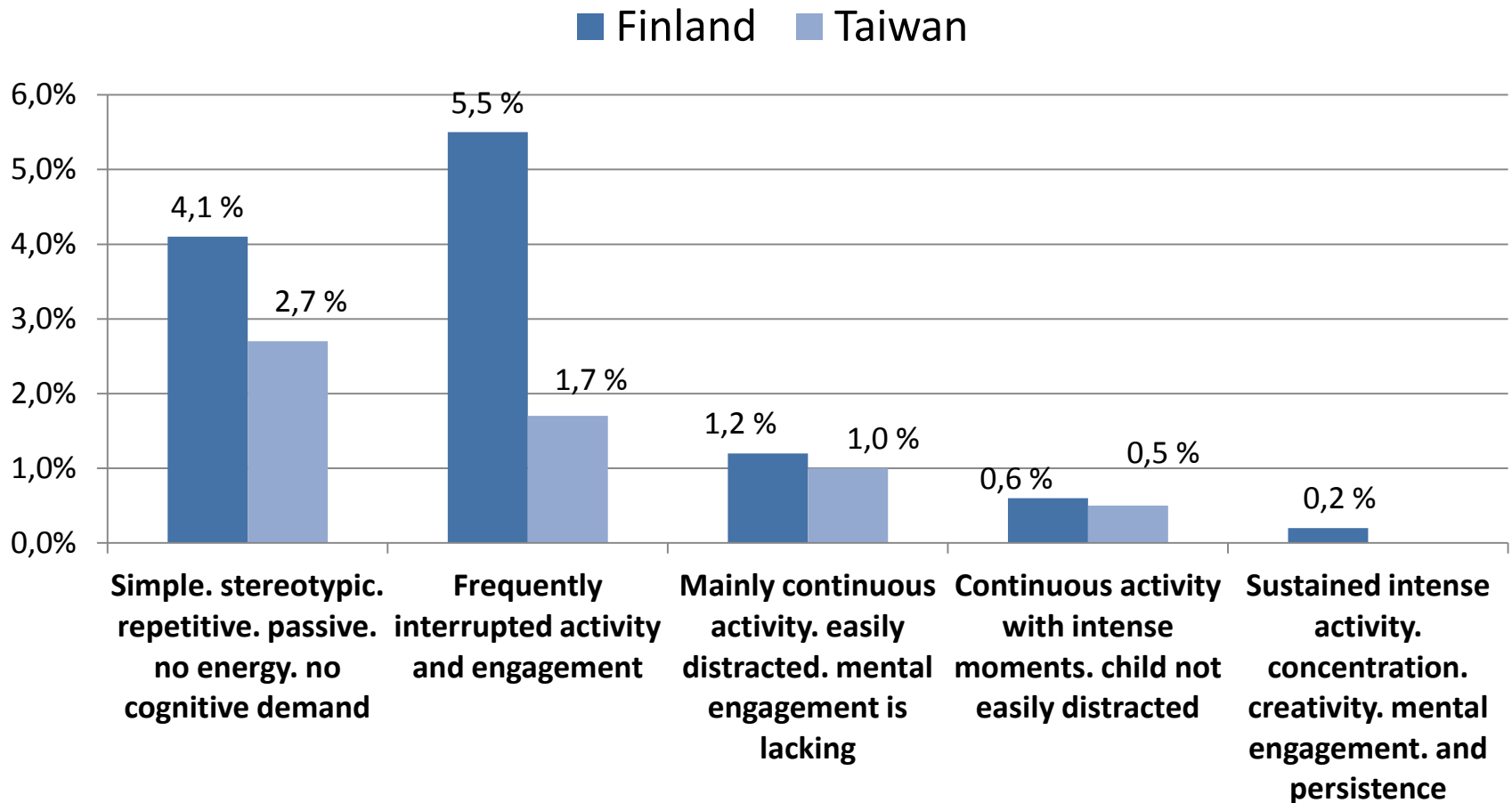
In Taiwan, undefined situation may disturb both teachers and children, which may result in more breaking rules.

The Percentages of Physical Activity Level in RBBs



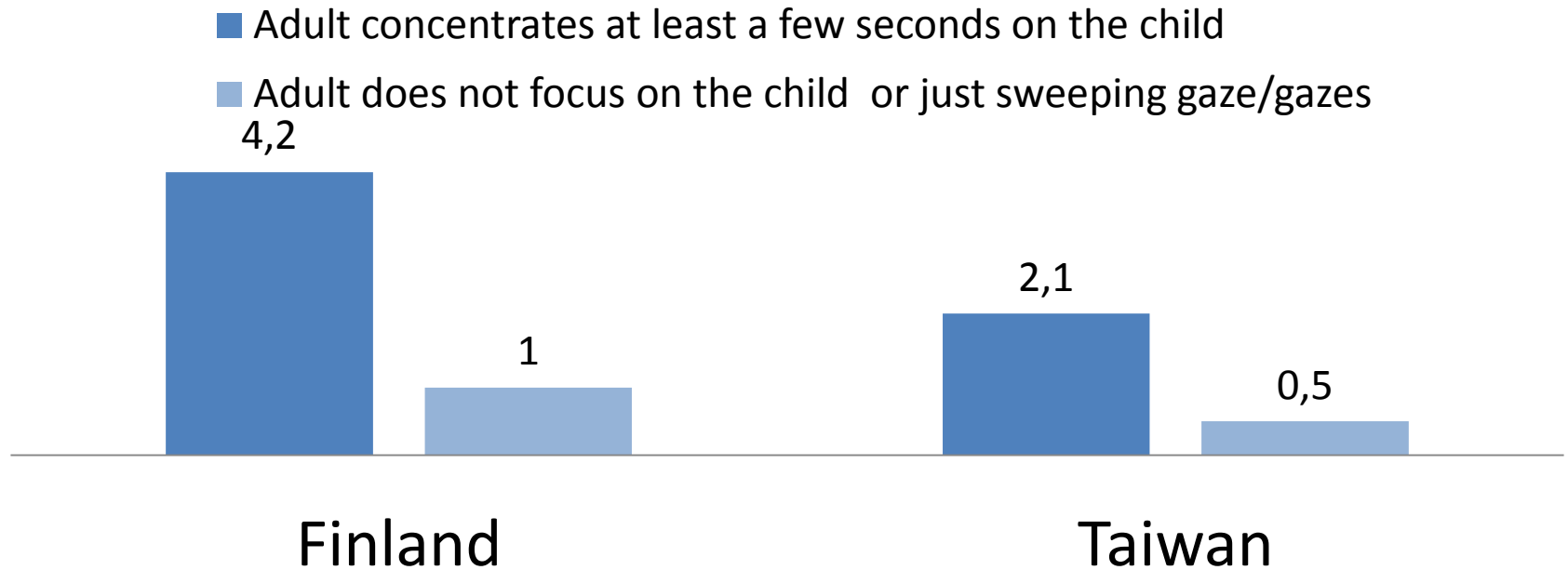
Firstly, it is possible that children lose their control in highly physical activities. Secondly, it may be that the rules are in favour of lower physical activity. Taiwan children are provided less physically active than in Finland. In Taiwan children also break rules less. Result suggests RBB is related to higher physical activity.

Children's Involvement in RBBs



The proportion of rule breaking decreased as children's involvement increased. RBBs are related with loose engagement.

Percentage of Adult's Attention on the RBBs



RBBs attracted teacher's attention rather than ignored the target child.

The Finnish educator concentrates on the rule breaking child 71.5% of the time while she concentrates on children with no rule breaking behavior only 37.4% of the time. The Taiwanese educator concentrates on the rule breaking behavior in 76.3% of the time and on other behavior 37.4% of the time.

Conclusion 1

- The results are surprisingly similar in both countries, in fact speak more about similarities in RBB than about differences between two countries.
- The most dubious result between two countries is: the children in Finland acting more RBB than Taiwanese children.
- It could be concerning the sampling reliability or definition between two countries. There was no similar research have done with this issue so it needs to be further explored.

Conclusion 2-1

- The large percentage of rule breaking in basic care situations call for teacher's reflection: either the basic care situations should be organized better or the rules need to be changed.
- From the children's point of view basic care seems to include a lot of activity that either tempts or pushes children over the rule borders.
- From the point of educators, **the basic care situations could have been changed to suit children's interests and activities better or the children need more help to be able work within accepted contexts** (e.g. transition activities).

Conclusion 2-2

- On the other hand, findings suggest that when children are highly involved in their activities, rule breaking is rare. There are two possible explanations.
- Firstly, when children have something meaningful to do, children do not break rules.
- Secondly, educators' positive feedback on children's interests produces a learning environment with less need for RBB.

Conclusion 2-3

- Does it mean the routine basic care is not challenging enough to be involved therefore children are lured to forbidden activities?
- Is it possible teachers can add up playful procedure or some challenge tasks in basic care?
- Finding also suggests **rule breaking is also related to less skilful children.** These children may need more constructive strategies or help to develop their processes.

Conclusion 3

- Result suggests RBB is related to higher physical activity. There are two possible conclusions for educational conduct.
- Firstly, we could diminish children's physical activity in early years. This is not a good option. For children, physical and mental wellbeing depend on physical activity. Children are already now too passive physically (cf. Reunamo, Hakala, Saros, Kyhälä, Lehto & Valtonen, 2014).
- The other, more positive option would be to make the day care rules more tolerant for higher physical activity level. Or **the early childhood educators could have made the rules more supportive for physical activity.**

Conclusion 4

- RBB seems to call for adult's attention or interaction. The findings suggest adult takes attention to RBB highly more than ordinary behaviors in both countries.
- When there is no rule breaking the educators interfered less. Rule breaking calls for interaction and it confuses the educators' activities.
- It is important that the children, who tend to break rules more, could have got more attention when they do something positive.

Conclusion 5

- Both in Finland and Taiwan boys are observed to break rules significantly twice as much as girls.
- However, it should be kept in mind that 67 % of the Finnish boys and 75 % of Taiwanese boys were not observed to break rules even once during observation.
- The results may not indicate that boys break rules more. They only indicate that some of the boys were observed to break rules more than other children.
- There may be a need to consider that in a long tradition of female educators in ECEC have produced a learning environment where is more suitable for girls than for boys.

Conclusion 6

- RBBs of **Finnish** children were more frequent, especially with **boys who had trouble getting hold of themselves**.
- **In Taiwan, RB boys tended to be related with participation and creativity.** The RBB was often related with low involvement and high physical activity. It usually only occurred with participating and confident boys in rather unfocused situations.

Thanks for your attention

Hui Chun Lee

Department of Child Development and Family Studies,



Tzu Chi University, Taiwan , R.O.C.

Contact: leetwuk@gmail.com