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RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Critical Success Factors of Childcare Safety Practices: An Evidence from Malaysia

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	Purpose – This article aims to investigate the critical success factors of childcare safety practices in Malaysia. Design/methodology/approach
	– A pilot study was carried out on a sample of 45 childcare business institutions in Malaysia. A survey instrument including 35 measurement items was designed to investigate the level of childcare safety practices and their implementation in the Malaysian childcare industry. The SPSS software was used to analyze the descriptive statistics and to check the reliability. Findings – Findings indicate that

| safety training is the first rank of the critical success factors that play the crucial role in ensuring safety performance in childcare institutions, followed by the worker's involvement, rules and procedures, management commitment, communication and feedback, and promotion policies. The childcare organization needs to obtain critical success factors of childcare safety practices implementation to enhance their safety level, particularly for the Malaysian childcare industry. |
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aidanazima@unimap.edu.my | Research limitations/implications – This research study has been difficult of finding the literature on childcare safety practices, particularly in the Malaysian childcare industry. Another limitation is that this research was only conducted on 45 childcare institutions from the Malaysian childcare industry as a pilot study. Practical implications – The instruments developed in this research could be useful tools to investigate childcare safety practices in the Malaysian childcare industry in the future. This study also provides important guidelines for the Malaysian childcare industry to implement childcare safety practices. Thus, this research finding would offer new insights into the critical success factors of childcare safety practices to enhance the safety level in the Malaysian childcare industry. Social implications – The critical success factors of childcare safety practices will be valuable for the childcare itself to be implemented in their operation, which will give direct positive impacts towards the children they served, and indirect implications towards their parents and the social wellbeing. Thus, I will create a harmonized environment for human empowerment. Originality/value – This study contributes to the childcare safety practices in the Malaysian childcare industry. This research also provides essential information for decision-makers involved in childcare safety practices implementation and also provides valuable guidelines for future researchers in this research area. |

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to investigate the important factors that contribute to childcare safety in Malaysia. Hence, the research seeks to identify and analyze the fundamental components of childcare safety practices within the Malaysian context. This objective involves a thorough examination of the regulatory framework, guidelines, and standards that shape and govern the childcare safety industry in Malaysia. By doing so, the study will shed light on the foundational elements that underpin safety practices in childcare facilities. Examining this regulatory environment as it directly relates to childcare facilities' legal compliance is crucial for the study. The safety of children at daycare centers is extremely important, and a strong regulatory structure makes sure that facilities are held responsible for keeping a secure environment for kids. By carefully examining these guidelines and requirements, we can comprehend the legal requirements that daycare providers must fulfil. Finding possible non-compliance areas that could endanger children and provide legal difficulties for daycare centers is crucial.

Without a doubt, childcare services are the global agenda today, where the children's wellbeing is the main priority. Childcare provision is structured differently in various countries, with some nations, such as France, Italy, and Belgium, provided as part of the school system, while others treat it as a component of the social welfare system (Koenig, 2013). However, in Malaysian childcare contexts, the childcare providers are bound under the 308 Act and 611 Act (Akta Taman Asuhan Kanak-Kanak 1984, 2008; Akta Kanak-Kanak 2016, 2016), and enforced by the Department of Social Welfare, under the Ministry of Women, Family, and Community Development.

The recent rise in the number of working moms has been seen as an unavoidable consequence of changing economic conditions, with sending children to day nurseries described as an economic survival strategy (Yamaura, 2020). Thus, towards the national economic development, childcare services are relevant to provide quality services for the children's safety and wellbeing. Besides, nowadays, the customers may now select from a wide range of product kinds, colors, tastes, and sizes, where the quality is part of the management control system in a business (Jos van Iwaarden et al., 2006). However, for childcare services, the parents may select based on the quality of the childcare itself.

Meanwhile, safety plays fundamental responsibility in every company setting (Perera, 2021), where safety performance is the essential critical success factor for any manufacturing and services organization. In the physical manufacturing organization, the staff is dealing with high-risk tools and machines. However, in childcare services, the human life of children's safety is much more critical than others. In Malaysian contexts, childcare providers must attend and pass the PERMATA childcare course (KAP) certificate, which includes theory and practical (Haziq et al., 2020; Kementerian Pembangunan Wanita, 2018). Besides, in response to its unpredictable environment, the organization implemented a set of control mechanisms for its critical business operations, including the formal and informal control (Stephen Eldridge et al., 2014), including their business system and practices, for organizational success and sustainability. Thus, there is a must for childcare providers to make a serious effort on their safety practices in operating this kind of business towards the high quality of services.

By integrating business activities and social issues, the notion of creating shared value (CSV) offers a significant potential to modify the company model for long-term sustainability (Yang & Yan, 2020) by improving its activities and practices. In the services business, the functional and dimensions of technical quality, including the image, are essential in the service quality (Barrie Dale et al., 2005). The quality dimensions of functional are concerned with "how" the service is supplied, whereas the quality dimensions of technical explain "what" service is delivered, such as the end quality of the service's process (Barrie Dale et al., 2005). To achieve business sustainability and social prosperity, firms must combine financial success with corporate social responsibility, which demands accountability to shareholders, workers, consumers, vendors, and the environment and society (Yang & Yan, 2020) to generate shared value by combining their operations with social issues. Hence, to bring the economy and society's growth into harmony.

Furthermore, to the author's knowledge, there is yet an established critical success factor for childcare safety practices, particularly in childcare centers in the Malaysian setting. Therefore, the research objective is to rank the critical success factor of childcare safety practices quantitatively and, thus, provide empirical evidence.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Management commitment

In a business process, managers assess performance, compare it to the desired performance level, intervene as needed to ensure accomplishment, and continually improve process performance (Stephen Eldridge et al., 2014). The business operation is mainly under the management's responsibility and commitment to ensuring its business success direction. The management's commitment to safety is one of the most critical warning signs for companies throughout the world, and it is a key indicator for assessing safety performance. (Mashi et al., 2018) cited management commitment to safety as a measure of how serious management is about communicating and responding. Thus, when management prioritizes safety, workers are exposed to additional chances to gain safety information (Keffane, 2014), supporting substantial compliance (Subramaniam et al., 2016; Kanval et al., 2024) and involvement (Loong, 2018) in an organization's safety elements. Furthermore, management's dedication to safety is essential.

Furthermore, the commitment of management at all levels, including the highest, middle, and first-line management, implied direct participation (Osama Abudayyeh et al., 2006) towards childcare aims to create a safer environment in childcare centers, ensuring their staff to demonstrate excellent practices (Hanafi, 2015). Although having more competent directors or management is connected with less accidents, rules governing the ratios of child and staff, and inspections have no substantial impact since their dedication to serving the childcare institution is unwavering (Currie, J., 2004; Gorry & Thomas, 2017). Thus, managerial assistance will be required to achieve operational and practices excellence (Williams et al., 2004) and the organizational commitment also can be measured by the Employee-organization bonding and minimal staff turnover (Yang & Yan, 2020).

Safety training

The training for the childcare owner, its management, and staff, especially the babysitter, is essential for childcare safety sustainability. Safety training is intended to offer accident prevention and control (Razali et al., 2018), and it is one of the key safety management techniques that can impact high safety performance results (Namian et al., 2016). As a result, a lack of training creates a barrier among an organization's personnel (Unnikrishnan et al., 2015). Furthermore, insufficient training may result in poor performance, and there is a need for hazardous nature safety training as childcare when dealing with the value human life of children (Alamri, 2019).

Haycock-Stuart (1996), Kowtko (2020), Saad (2016), and Salman (2005) research also emphasized the need for first aid training among their employees in order to prevent the effect of injury in the first place. Furthermore, the fire drill training, lack of fire prevention awareness is one factor that contributes to the horrifying fire experience, particularly among youngsters (Ahmad et al., 2019), and is necessary to successfully complete the CPR training (Kowtko, 2020).

The utilisation of safety measures has witnessed a growing trend in its application to support children, hence providing a multitude of advantages including personalised learning experiences and enhanced accessibility (Amka & Dalle, 2021). Gallud et al. (2021) conducted a systematic mapping study that examined the use of technology-enhanced and game-based learning in the context of children's education. The study emphasised the potential of these approaches to effectively address the different learning needs of children. Furthermore, Zavaraki and Schneider (2019) highlighted the efficacy of blended learning strategies in relation to youngsters, underscoring the possibility of amalgamating e-learning with conventional instructional approaches to augment educational achievements (Alanazi ,Almulla & Khasawneh,2023).

Equally important, according to Urick (2017), the individuals may have various learning preferences, which can be tested individually or in groups. The research finding discovered that younger employees are more comfortable with technology-enabled training, whereas the older sample prefers on-the-job and mentorship growth over more formal ways (Urick, 2017). Meanwhile, in the context of Jordanian child care centers, the organizational structure has a significant impact on the quality of care provided to children and the training received by a babysitter, which may be a barrier to successful care where childcare workers must have adequate qualifications and experience in handling and raising children (Bani Ismail et al., 2018). Likewise, Gorry & Thomas (2017) discovered that teacher or babysitter training improves childcare results.

Worker's involvement

According to Vinodkumar & Bhasi (2010), participation of employees is a behavior-based strategy that includes people or groups in the organization's upward communication and decision-making procedures. The level of involvement can range without participation (the supervisor makes all choices) to complete participation (everyone engaged in or impacted by the decision). Employees who are close to the job are the best suited to give ideas for changes, and they should be consulted beforehand making final choices (Vinodkumar & Bhasi, 2010). The childcare direction towards the safety agenda cannot be realized without the involvement of everybody in the organization, including the workers. The management can only provide the principles and initiatives; however, the implementation part is another issue that needs the total commitment among the staff.

Besides, in Srinivasan et al. (2016) research, staff engagement through involvement is necessary to identify and minimize safety concerns, and the 5S can result in safety improvement. Similarly, employees' involvement or participation in implementing the organization's rules would bring value to the entire safety management practices and system, which would be supported by management and supervisors and pushed by frontline personnel as collaboration (Newaz et al., 2018).

Similarly Cheng et al. (2018) found the employee engagement is the most effective safety strategy for improving safety performance, with employee involvement acting as a moderator between these associations. Consequently, greater engagement (Alamri, 2019) and employee involvement with the first-hand experience should be reinforced to create a higher safety performance in companies, resulting in fewer workplace accidents and injuries.

Communication and feedback

Good communication and feedback in the form of verbal discussion and written documents are a mirror for a healthy business organization. Cheng et al. (2018) discovered that communication and feedback on accidents commonly occurred at the lowest level, where management teams appear unable to give adequate risk alerts by discussing working practices or techniques. According to Bello (2017), poor communication can lead to project task failure and rework. Thus, contact among all members of an organization is required to minimize workplace accidents and create a safer workplace environment.

Clear safety standards, including written policy and verbal teaching, will assist companies, particularly childcare facilities, in communicating and emphasizing safety aspects as fundamental organizational principles that everyone should take seriously. Furthermore, high-level management's development of written policy as one of the communication mediums indicates the organization's commitment to safety in developing and maintaining a safer environment in childcare facilities. Similarly, Umar (2019) discusses the same concept, indicating that regular communication and interaction among coworkers is a medium for creating and improving an organization's safety performance.

The literature review offers significant insights within the realm of childcare safety. The facilitation of child safety is supported by various components, including the presence and active

participation of parents, vigilant monitoring for both physical and emotional protection, and the establishment of support networks for childcare within the home environment. Furthermore, the research conducted by Mello et al. (2014) highlights the need of offering evidence-based information pertaining to injuries and illnesses among children enrolled in childcare facilities in Malaysia. This is crucial in mitigating risks to child health and safety, as it underscores the necessity of risk analysis and risk perception among Malaysian carers. Moreover, the apprehensions voiced by mothers residing in South Africa regarding the dependability of carers and the safety of the childcare setting underscore the pivotal significance of childcare safety in the decision-making process and overall welfare of mothers (Hayati, S.,2023)

Rules and procedures

The government act and laws underpin each business operation's various rules, regulations, and standard operating procedures (SOP's), internally and externally. According to (Razali et al., 2018), safety rules and procedures are a collection of employee behavior norms that offer a safety system to rectify workers' safety behavior. In contrast, Hale et al. (2012) assert that safety rules and procedures may impact, both directly and indirectly, where Vinodkumar & Bhasi (2010) emphasized adequate written safety rules and processes and would mold their behavior to improve safe-conduct practices among its personnel. Safety regulations and procedures and their implementation by supervisors and managers can enhance workers' safety behavior (Vinodkumar & Bhasi, 2010).

Promotion policies

The promotion policies are relates to counting safe behavior as a positive element for promotion, rewards, and incentives for reporting risks, as well as raising worker awareness (Vinodkumar & Bhasi, 2010). Thus, for a positive environment in the childcare institutions, the rewards can be monetary or non-monetary rewards that can improve the safety performance in the childcare business environment among its staff. As a result, adopting safety regulations and procedures in childcare facilities must successfully avoid accidents and injuries by combining safety knowledge and motivation among their staff.

Even though regulations and rules are required to establish minimum safety and security requirements, it is impossible to ensure high quality due to rising input regulations by investigating the influence of various obligatory rules, primarily related to the physical area of the care facility's indoor and outdoor space needs (Aran et al., 2016). Childcare providers must be registered, inspected, and adhere to all health and safety laws and regulations (Ball & Vincent, 2005).

METHODOLOGY

This research study applies a quantitative approach to investigate the childcare safety practices of critical success factors, mainly in the Malaysian childcare industry. The questionnaire consists of two sections: the respondent's information (types of childcare centers, experience in the childcare industry, childcare operation period, number of staff, and number of children) and childcare safety practices (management commitment, safety training, workers involvement, communication and feedback, rules and procedures, and promotion policies), respectively, in Sections A and B. This research study applied the nominal scale in Section A and the seven interval scale from 1=strongly disagree to 7=strongly agree in section B. Thus, this research study applies the descriptive analysis to perform the critical success factors of childcare safety practices in the Malaysian childcare industry.

The validation from an experts was performed to check the content's validity by seeking input on each item's remarks, clarity, and quality. The final version of the questionnaire would be distributed to specialists, two are the academic experts from two different Malaysian local university academics, and two are from the childcare business practitioners, as in Table I.

Table 1: Panel of experts

Panel of experts	Experience	Background
Academician 1	Up to ten years experience in an academic field	Senior academician in Malaysian public university, in management, quantitative, and qualitative research field
Academician 2	Eight years of experience in an academic field	Senior academician in Malaysian public university, in management, quantitative, and qualitative research field
Childcare Practitioner 1	More than ten years experience in the childcare business	Childcare business owner with two small and medium childcare branches and KAP ("Kursus Asuhan Permata") training certified
Childcare Practitioner 2	Five years of experience in the childcare business	Childcare business owner and KAP ("Kursus Asuhan Permata") training certified

Furthermore, the questionnaire has proceeded to a pilot study. A pilot study is the first phase in any research project, as the initial stage, and utilized in every research project. The pilot study is essential because it improves the quality and efficiency of the primary investigation. However, the sample size is critical for carrying out the pilot research and validating the instrument utilized.

This research study applies 45 questionnaires gathered from Malaysian childcare practitioners that were coded and analyzed in SPSS software, based on a total of 80 questionnaires survey distributed. The childcare practitioners are consist of various types of registered childcare centers, including institution-based, community-based, home-based, and work-based childcare centers. Besides, the respondents randomly chose respondents whom at least five years of experience in the childcare industry as a business owners, managers, or supervisors to represent their childcare organizations.

Cronbach's alpha measures the internal consistency, or how closely a group of things is linked to each other. It is viewed as to reliability of the scale or consistency measurement. According to Hair, Jr (2015), the Cronbach's alpha ≥ .95 is too high, which means the items are redundant, 0.8 to 0.9 is very good, and 0.9 to 0.95 is excellent.

Table 2: Reliability analysis

Dimension	Items number	Cronbach Alpha value
Management commitment	9	0.900
Safety training	6	0.924
Worker's involvement	5	0.895
Communication and feedback	5	0.899
Rules and procedures	6	0.900
Promotion policies	4	0.915

The overall results, as shown in Table II, the reliability analysis for all six dimensions of the management commitment, safety training, worker's involvement, communication and feedback, rules and procedures, and promotion policies are in a range of 0.895 to 0.95. Thus, this is a very good and excellent reliability remark of the six dimensions in the critical success factors of childcare safety practices.

Specifically, the reliability analysis for the management commitment is 0.900, safety training at 0.924, worker's involvement at 0.895, communication and feedback at 0.899, rules and procedures at 0.900, and promotion policies at 0.915, respectively. The reliability analysis based on the Cronbach alpha value indicates that all the dimensions have an alpha value of more than 0.700. Thus, it would be reliable to be used for actual data collection in the Malaysian childcare industry.

Respondent's information

Table III represent the respondent's information, including the experience in the childcare industry, childcare operation period, number of staff, and number of children in their childcare organizations.

Table 3: Respondent information

Respondent	*Measurement*	*Frequency*	*Percentage (%)*
Types of childcare centers	Institution-based	22	48.9
	Community-based	2	4.4
	Home-based	13	28.9
	Work-based	8	17.8
Experience in the childcare industry (years)	Up to 5	14	31.1
	6 to 9	5	11.1
	10 and more	26	57.8
Childcare operation period (years)	Up to 5	7	15.6
	6 to 9	14	31.1
	10 and more	24	53.3
Number of staff	Up to 3	25	55.6
	4 to 6	13	28.9
	7 to 9	2	4.4
	10 to 12	2	4.4
	13 and more	3	6.7
Number of children	Up to 5	6	13.3
	6 to 8	4	8.9
	9 to 11	6	13.3
	12 to 14	8	17.8
	15 and more	21	46.7

Regarding childcare centers category of types registered with the Malaysian Department of Social Welfare, the respondents come from different categories or types of childcare centers. Most of the respondents involved were institution-based childcare category (48.9 percent), followed by 28.9 percent in the home-based childcare category, 17.8 percent in work-based childcare, and 4.4 percent in community-based, respectively.

Meanwhile, most of the respondents are very experienced in the childcare industry, where 57.8 percent are with ten years and more of experience in the industry. Besides, 31.1 percent of them are up to five years of experience, and 11.1 percent are with six to nine years of experience in the childcare industry. Similar to the childcare operation period in years, the majority of 53.3 percent of the childcare involved have operated up to ten years and more. 31.1 percent of the childcare with six to nine years of operation, and only 15.6 percent of the childcare operated for five years or less.

In terms of the number of staff who have been recruited, the majority of the childcare with 55.6 percent are only hired within a range of one to three staff, followed by 28.9 percent employed a range of four to six staff, 4.4 percent hired within a range of seven to nine, and ten to twelve respectively, and only 6.7 percent of the childcare organizations hired within a range of thirteen and more of staff. The ratio between the number of babysitters is based on the children at the childcare organization. However, the number of staff employed are various positions, including management, supervision, babysitter, and cooker. Thus, based on the number of children in the childcare organization, 46.7 percent served a number of fifteen and more children, 17.8 percent served twelve to fourteen children, 13.3 percent served nine to eleven children, 8.9 percent served six to eight children, and 13.3 percent served up to five children.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Critical success factors are one method for assisting companies in gaining the knowledge needed to manage their organizations (Mohd Fuzi et al., 2019). One of the important success elements is to enhance the company's objectives, decision-making, and performance measurement to accomplish the company's goals. In the same way, the critical success factors can be measured by analysing the mean value as performed by several past research (Habidin et al., 2018; Mohd Fuzi et al., 2019; Ong et al., 2021). As a result, essential success variables are critical to the fulfillment of each organizational goals to sustain their performance, and as one of their competitive advantage.

Table 4: Critical success factor based on average mean ranking

Dimension	Mean	Average Mean	Rank
Management commitment		6.37	4
MC1	6.49		
MC2	6.44		
MC3	6.64		
MC4	6.60		
MC5	6.18		
MC6	6.24		
MC7	5.31		
MC8	6.69		

MC9	6.71		
Safety training		6.48	1
ST1	6.58		
ST2	6.53		
ST3	6.42		
ST4	6.27		
ST5	6.53		
ST6	6.53		
Worker's involvement		6.44	2
WI1	6.40		
WI2	6.07		
WI3	6.60		
WI4	6.60		
WI5	6.53		
Communication and feedback		6.25	5
CF1	6.20		
CF2	5.87		
CF3	6.40		
CF4	6.40		
CF5	6.40		
Rules and procedures		6.43	3
RP1	6.49		
RP2	6.29		
RP3	6.44		
RP4	6.53		
RP5	6.44		
RP6	6.38		
Promotion policies		6.22	6

PP1	6.00		
PP2	6.00		
PP3	6.40		
PP4	6.47		

The results have shown means for all dimensions in the critical success factors of childcare safety practices in Table IV. The overall mean for each element was obtained to investigate childcare safety practices implementation in the Malaysian childcare industry and illustrated in the chart in Figure I.
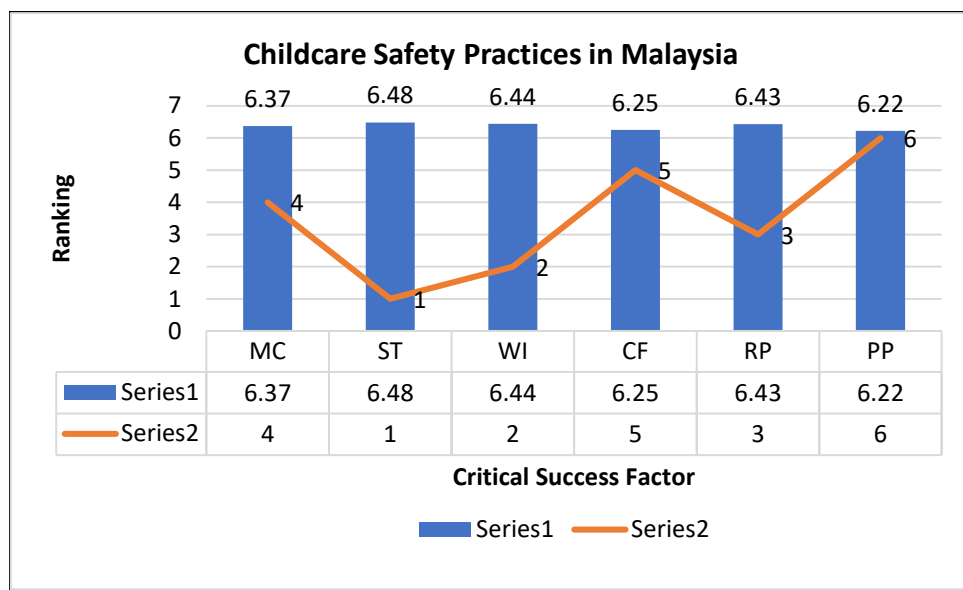

Figure 1: Critical success factors of childcare safety practices in Malaysia

Table IV and Figure I, illustrated the mean value is in the range of 6.22 to 6.48, which is suitable for the implementation of childcare safety practices in the Malaysian context. The highest critical success factor of childcare safety practices is the safety training (mean=6.48), followed by the second highest dimension is worker's involvement (mean=6.44). Next is the safety rules and procedures (mean=6.43) at the third rank of the mean score, followed by the management commitment (mean=6.37), communication and feedback (mean=6.25), and promotion policies (mean=6.22), respectively.

The critical success factors of safety practices are essential in an organization and cannot be realized without the elements of management commitment, safety training, worker's involvement, communication and feedback, rules and procedures, and promotion policies to achieving the safety priority (Abashah & Taib, 2021; Jaafar et al., 2017; Keffane, 2014; Vinodkumar & Bhasi, 2010). Based on the findings, safety training is the most crucial of the critical success factors of childcare safety practices in the Malaysian childcare context. Besides, the knowledge derived from the education and training may include basic technical principles that will impact safety performance (Khawam & Bostain, 2019).

The worker's involvement and their participation are significant for any implementation enforced by the organization. Without their total commitment, the implementation cannot be realized. Based on the analysis, the worker's involvement at the second rank after the safety training, shown as the priority of the practice to be implemented in the childcare institutions. However, in developing the training module, the training should be more innovative so that

prospective trainees have a degree of choice in learning methods for every given training intervention, in ensuring the effectiveness of each training programme (Urick, 2017) to increased learning through a variety of methods, together with informal/individual initiatives (such as on-the-job training and mentorship programmes) and participation in a variety of voluntary activities (Therese A. Sprinkle, 2018).

Whether for-profit or not, the organization structure must be grounded based on its rules and procedures throughout its operation for its aims. Specifically, in the childcare context, the profit is not the priority, but the children. The following important critical success factor of childcare safety practices is management commitment. A Management commitment entails direct engagement by management in all particular and vital elements of an organization, such as safety, quality, environment, security, or programs. It is critical that the duty for leadership and building an organizational culture of continual improvement falls on all levels of management and members, but especially on the top. It has been demonstrated in the past that achieving a high degree of excellence in operational procedures requires the support of higher management (Williams et al., 2004). Hence, by having the total childcare management commitment, the childcare safety level can be improved in many aspects.

Communication and feedback in the workplace are critical, where the organizations require good communication to prosper and grow. Thus, the communication and feedback should be clear, concise, and purposeful to be helpful. In contrast, the feedback boosts employee morale and enables us to gain a better understanding of ourselves, our strengths and weaknesses, our habits, and how our actions affect others. It also increases our self-awareness and encourages personal development. It is not always important to receive positive feedback. Negative feedback indicates areas for improvement and assists us in doing a better job over time. However, you must deliver feedback in a professional and productive manner; otherwise, there will be no basis for improvement.

Along with all the safety practices, promotion policies are also a must in the childcare institution, at least to motivate and give some awareness towards the childcare staff, especially the management, supervisors, and babysitters, to play their roles and responsibility in the childcare setting. Based on the analysis, the promotion policies are at the last rank of number six. However, it is still significant with the safety practices in the childcare setting with the high value of mean above 6.00. Hence, by applying those safety practices, organizations may learn quality management concepts such as continuous improvement, process management, and customer focus (Mcadam et al., 2006) for better results towards childcare business sustainability.

CONCLUSION

Based on the empirical data survey, childcare safety practices' top three critical success factors are safety training, worker involvement, and rules and procedures. The top three highest mean values show that these three factors are the most significant factors to be implemented in childcare organizations. However, the other three factors of management commitment, communication and feedback, and promotion policies are still essential factors to be implemented in childcare organizations with the highest mean value of 6.37, 6.25, and 6.22, respectively.

In terms of reliability analysis, all critical success factors of childcare safety practices were accepted for this study. Hence, the Cronbach alpha value indicates that all six critical success factors of childcare safety practices (management commitment, safety training, worker's involvement, communication and feedback, rules and procedures, and promotion policies) were valid and reliable to be implemented in measuring the Malaysian childcare safety.

This study contributes to the literature on the critical success factors of safety practices and the childcare ecosystem. The instruments developed in this research study might be valuable tools for evaluating childcare safety practices in the Malaysian childcare industry in practical applications. In addition to theoretic implications, this study offers managerial implications. Many studies agree on the significance of safety in childcare, but they cannot define how to execute its safety measures systematically. Thus, this research also gives critical suggestions for the

Malaysian childcare industry in implementing childcare safety practices. This study's findings will provide fresh insights into the critical success factors of childcare safety practices to enhance safety performance in the Malaysian childcare industry.

DIRECTION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study centered on the childcare ecosystem and included critical success criteria to explain childcare safety practices. The study's findings shed light on the research streams addressing the essential success elements of childcare safety practices and point the way forward for further research. This study's critical success criteria for childcare safety practices might serve as a blueprint for establishing safety practices measurements in childcare environments. There is currently a dearth of empirical research on childcare safety practices and childcare performance based on the conceptualization of safety components; hence, the research findings of this study might serve as the foundation for future empirical studies.

As far as research on childcare safety is concerned, this study observed the ecosystem built by the case company from a macro perspective. One of the research study's limitations has been the difficulty in locating literature on childcare safety practices, quantitatively in childcare safety practices in the Malaysian childcare organizations. Another drawback is that this study was only done on 45 Malaysian childcare institutions. Thus, Future studies may examine childcare safety practices and safety performance by looking at their impact and ecosystems.

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