A Study on Parenting Parents' Recognitions of Child Abuse: Focused on Q Methodology

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양육중인 부모의 아동학대에 대한 인식: Q 방법으로

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Abstract I think it would be better to rewrite the Korean abstract. To analyze the personal characteristics of the participants and identify their perception of violence using the Q methodology, the scores of 20 parenting parents on 25 Q cards were statistically analyzed using forced normal distribution. There are three factors and from the most agreeable to the most disagreeable statements, they have shown their perception of violence. It was helpful in identifying parents' subjective perceptions and types of child abuse, and it suggested the need to define child abuse so that parents can have a correct perception of child abuse, rather than an abstract perception. In this perspective, the results of this study provide preliminary data for improving the recognition of parenting parents on child abuse.

Key Words : Child, Abuse, Parenting, Parents, Recognition

요 약 본 연구의 목적은 양육 중인 부모의 아동학대에 대한 인식을 조사하기위해 실시하였다. Q 방법론을 통해 참가자의 개인적인 특성을 분석하고 폭력에 대한 인식을 파악하기 위해 25장의 Q 카드에 기재된 양육 중인 부모 20명의 점수를 강제 정규분포를 적용하여 통계적으로 분석했습니다. 이를 통해 세 가지 인자가 도출되었으며, 가장 호의적인 진술부터 가장 부정적인 진술에 이르기까지 양육 중인 부모들의 폭력에 대한 인식이 드러났습니다. 아동학대에 대한 부모의 주관적 인식과 유형을 파악하는 데 도움이 되었으며, 추상적인 인식이 아닌 부모가 올바른 아동학대 인식을 가질 수 있도록 아동학대를 정의할 필요가 있음을 시사했다는 점에서, 아동 폭력에 대한 양육 중인 부모의 인식 개선을 위한 기초 자료를 제공할 수 있습니다.

키워드 : 아동, 학대, 부모, 양육, 인식

1. INTRODUCTION

Child abuse gives physical and mental pains to children and causes learning and developmental disorders, behavior disorder, suicide, eating disorder, drug and alcohol abuses, aggression, violence, and criminal behavior, leading to a negative effect on their psychological and social adaptation [1]. Therefore, prevention is the most important and prompt reporting and appropriate follow-up measures are required.

To prevent and intervene in child abuse, the most important part is the identification and reporting of an abused child [2]. A child abuse reporting system in Korea, as an institutional framework [3], requires people in 12 fields who have personal inter-exchange with children to identify and report child abuse in early stage [4]. They are included in the reporting obligation for 24 occupations specified in the Special Act on the Punishment of Child Abuse Crimes, and if they become aware of or suspect a child abuse crime while performing their duties, they are required to report it to a child protection agency or investigative agency[5]. Mandated reporters for child abuse are specified in the Act because children who are the victims of child abuse cannot inform other people of such fact due to their immaturity. In addition, child abuse offenders never report their wrongdoing by themselves, so child abuse continues or is concealed unless it is identified and reported by a third person [6]. However, regardless of such institutional framework, child abuse has not been reported effectively by the mandated reporters [7].

One of the reasons for such problem is that corporal punishment has been considered a means of discipline traditionally in Korea and many of the parents' abusive behaviors have been justified by considering that the children were wrong [8]. In actual child abuse deaths, biological parents ranked first as perpetrators [9], It also has been recognized until recently that child rearing is a family affair and

it should not be interfered by other people [10]. According to the concept of abuse, negligence by the parents even without the use of violence and psychological abuse by abusive language are also included in the child abuse, in addition to physical abuse [11]. Therefore, a study on the degree of recognition on the concept of child abuse is necessary.

According to the Ministry of Health and Welfare, the abused child detection rate in Korea is one out of 1,000 children in 2014 which is gradually becoming higher compared to the past. However, the Tableure is still very low when comapred with U.S where the abused child detection rate is nine out of 1,000 children [12]. It is important to detect an abused child in order to solve such child abuse issue efficiently. It is important to know the extent of parents' awareness.

Due to the emphasized needs of social intervention in child abuse [13], We provide mandatory education on parent education and child abuse in public institutions and workplaces. However, we do not know exactly the effectiveness of compulsory education, and I think it is necessary to confirm the subjectivity of parents' perception of child abuse.

Therefore, this study applied correlation analysis and factor analysis to parents' perceptions of child abuse through Q methodology [14], a research method that can reflect an individual's subjective perception, attitude, and behavior in response to objects and characteristics. I believe that human subjectivity can be analyzed quantitatively. Through this, parents' awareness of child abuse was identified and the practical need to improve awareness was confirmed.

You did not suggest preventive measures in your research. Therefore, it seems like it would be a good idea to delete the following sentence.

The purpose of this study is to categorize the subjectivity of parents' perception of child abuse by applying Q-methodology and explore the characteristics of each type. The specific purposes are as follows.

1) To categorize the subjectivity of parents' perception of child abuse
2) To identify and describe the characteristics of each subjectivity type

2. MATERIALS AND METHOD

2.1 Sampling Method

2.1.1 Q population formation

This study conducted a survey of 82 parents raising in the G state, and secured 13 statements based on the survey results. Later in October 2022, the study conducted atypical interviews with five parents in foster care, and received open questions about "child abuse they perceive." The recorded interview was analyzed to secure 15 statements. An additional 22 statements were obtained from previous studies on child abuse, Internet news articles, and books. A total of 50 statements obtained formed a Q group on parenting parents' perceptions of child abuse.

2.1.2 Selection of a Q sample

To select a Q-sample from the Q-population, the researcher read the 50 statements repeatedly to determine if they well reflect parents' perception of child abuse, and finally selected 45 statements after reviewing them with criteria such as duplication of meaning, representativeness, and lower dimension. To check the validity of the subject and content, the researcher consulted two professors in nursing, who had expertise in Q methodology and were able to provide advice about parents' perception of child abuse, and one professional at a child welfare institute. Statements that did not accord with their opinions were adjusted through coordination. After that, the researcher selected 25 statements with the highest discrimination and validity and conducted a preliminary survey on two parents' in November, 2022. After revising words and phrases whose meanings were obscure, a total of 25 statements were selected as Q-sample.

2.1.3 Selection of a P-sample

For select the P sample, the researcher visited the local health and family support center and met the head of the center, helped inform them of the purpose and method of this study, and a total of 20 raising parents who voluntarily decided to participate were selected. Therefore, there is no restriction on the number of research participants. The larger the P-sample, the larger the number of participants concentrated on a criterion[13].

The researcher explained, orally and in writing, the purpose and method of this study and that their anonymity is guaranteed and that there is no penalty for withdrawal, to the nurses who wanted to participate in the study one-on-one, and received their written consent. They were provided with a small reward (two drink coupons).

2.1.4 Q classification process and method

Q classification was conducted by visiting each of the 20 parents in the P sample at wards during the period from December 4 to 17, 2022. They were explained the Q classification first and then asked to read 25 cards with statements on them one by one and categorize them into "agree," "neutral" and "disagree" according to the importance of their subjective opinions. After that, they were asked to arrange the cards by placing "agree" statements from right (+4) to center according to the extent of agreement and "disagree" statements from left (-4) to right according to the extent of disagreement on a nine-point scale, using the forced distribution method. The researcher interviewed them about the statements of highest agreement and disagreement.

Lastly, they were asked to fill out the forms of demographic characteristics. It took about 40 minutes to one hour per person.

2.2 Data analysis method

The statement numbers recorded on the Q sample distribution chart were checked after the Q classification as to parents' perception of child abuse

was finished. Statements the participants "most disagreed" with (-4 statement) were given 1 point; -3 statements 2 points; -2 statements 3 points; -1 statements 4 points; neutral statements 5 points; +1 statements 6 points; +2 statements 7 points; +3 statements 8 points; and statements the participants "most agreed" with (+4 statement) were given 9 points. Then, the data was entered into the computer. PC Quanl Program was used for data analysis, and principalcomponent factor analysis was used for Q factor analysis. The threshold is Eigen value ≥ 1.0, and Z-score was used to select appropriate items.

2.3 Ethical Considerations

For the protection of study participants, this study was deliberated and approved by the Y University Bioethics Committee before it was conducted(No.YSUIRB-201910-HR-060-01). In compliance with the approved content, the purpose and process of this study, confidentiality and anonymity were fully explained to the participants who voluntarily agreed to participate in the study. They were also informed that they could stop participating during the study if they wanted to and that all data collected for the study would be discarded after the study ended.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 General characteristics

In the area of general characteristics of participants, Among the participants, those in their 30s were the highest, and 18 out of 20 had more than five years and less than 10 years of parenting experience in Table 1.

3.2 Forming Q Factors

Of the 20 participants in the P sample, factor 1 was classified into 8 people, factor 2 into 7 people, and factor 3 into 6 people. A participant with a high weighting on Q factors has characteristics typical and representative of the Q factors. Such a participant contributed to classifying Q factors in Table 2.

Table 1. General characteristics (n=20)

Items		numbers	%
Gender	Female	19	95.0%
	Male	1	5.0%
Age	The twenties	2	10.0%
	The thirties	16	80.0%
	The forties	2	10.0%
	The fifties	0	0.0%
	The sixties	0	0.0%
Parenting experience	Less than a year	0	0.0%
	More than a year and less than five years	2	10.0%
	More than five years and less than 10 years	18	90.0%
	More than 10 years	0	0.0%
Leisure time	Exercise	6	30.0%
	Taking a nap	1	5.0%
	Chattering with friends	12	60.0%
	Reading books	1	5.0%
	Listening to music	0	0.0%
	Travelling	0	0.0%
	Others	0	0.0%

Table 2. Forming Q Factors I, II, III

Items	P-sample	Wight	Age	Sex	Experience of violence
Factor I (n=8)	19	.997	39	Female	Yes
	17	.921	32	Female	Yes
	2	.902	35	Female	Yes
	4	.882	38	Female	Yes
	14	.818	27	Female	Yes
	5	.797	42	Female	Yes
	9	.599	37	Female	Yes
	3	.527	36	Female	Yes
Factor I (n=7)	10	.941	38	Male	Yes
	20	.914	36	Female	Yes
	7	.818	32	Female	Yes
	12	.751	35	Female	Yes
	11	.677	38	Female	Yes
	13	.611	32	Female	Yes
	1	.563	34	Female	Yes
Factor I (n=5)	8	.984	37	Female	Yes
	6	.981	45	Female	Yes
	16	.925	31	Female	Yes
	15	.778	29	Female	Yes
	18	.428	38	Female	Yes

3.3 Eigenvalues and Variance percentage, Correlation

Factor 1, Factor 2 and Factor 3 had explanatory powers of 15%, 11%, and 10%, respectively. The fac-

tors combined explained 53% of the total variables in Table 3, 2.9116 for Factor I, 2.2420 for Factor II and 2.0129 for Factor III. There were five types with 3 factors in Table 4.

Table 3. Eigenvalues and variance percentage

	Factor I	Factor II	Factor III
Eigenvalues	2.9116	2.2420	2.0129
Variance percentage	0.1456	0.1121	0.1006
Cumulative frequency	0.1456	0.2577	0.3583

Table 4. Correlation

	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4	Type 5
Type 1	1.000				
Type 2	0.121	1.000			
Type 3	−0.020	0.037	1.000		
Type 4	−0.302	0.104	−0.022	1.000	
Type 5	−0.192	−0.046	−0.404	0.074	1.000

3.4 Analysis of Type Q

3.4.1 Type 1: Those who recognize the boundary

Six parents were categorized as Type 1. The statements they most agreed with include "When a child does something wrong, it is desirable to admonish the child rather than hit the child with a rod (Z=1.90)," "Using violence makes things more complicated (Z=1.80)," and "At a nursery, children should not be forced to eat when they do not want to (Z=1.66)." Conversely, the statements they most disagreed with include "You should not spare a rod to raise your child to be a good person (Z=-1.94)," "You may scold children to teach them (Z=-1.61)," and "When a child does something seriously wrong, the child needs to be punished in a way that seems almost like violence (Z=-1.30)."(Table. 5).

The parents who had the highest weighting among those in Type 1 said, "You should never hit or scold a child who did something wrong. Corporal punishment is definitely an act of violence, and I think scolding a child is an act of violence, too. I gave the highest points to Item 16 because I think you must not use violence under any circumstances."

Abused children tend to be disciplined using cor-

poral punishment [14]. Corporal punishment is likely to become severe. The parents in Type 1 were aware that corporal punishment should not be allowed under any circumstances and that it is a kind of abuse. Such awareness is essential; they were named "those who recognize the boundary between violence and discipline."

Table 5. Descending array of Z-scores of type I (greater than ±1) (n=6)

	Statement	Z-score
Positive	Q16. A child who made a mistake is better to tell by word than to ferule.	1.91
	Q25. It is not violence to force feed children who do not eat at nursery institution.	1.80
	Q10. Violence complicates problem solving.	1.66
Negative	Q9. Parents should not spare hawks in order to raise their children rightly.	−1.94
	Q22. Screaming to teach children is not violence.	−1.61
	Q5. It may be okay that a child who makes a serious mistake needs a punishment considered violence.	−1.30
	Q1. Violence may be used to keep public order.	−1.14
	Q21. It is no violence to beat somebody who has beaten someone closed to me.	−1.04

3.4.2 Type 2: Those who avoid intervening in domestic violence

Seven parents were categorized as Type 2. The statements they most agreed with include "There is no need to intervene in domestic violence between family members to resolve it (Z=1.59)," and "Hitting a family member or a friend cannot be considered an act of violence (Z=1.49)." Conversely, the statements they most disagreed with include "When a child does something wrong, it is desirable to admonish the child rather than hit the child with a rod (Z= -1.84)" and "You may scold children to teach them (Z=-1.65)."(Table. 6).

The parents who had the highest weighting among those in Type 2 said of the reason she arranged the statements on the scale that way, "I know domestic violence is a kind of custom in Korea. When I see child abuse, I know it is practically difficult to intervene in domestic violence and there is no possibility to improve the situation. So I think

you don't need to intervene in domestic violence."

Their perception of violence implies that child abuse by a parent or in a family needs to be approached from a preventive perspective. In this sense, parents in Type 2 were named "those who avoid domestic violence intervention."

Table 6. Descending array of Z-scores of Type 2 (greater than ±1) (n=7)

	Statement	Z-score
Positive	Q11. There is no need for the third party's involvement in order to solve some conflicts between family members.	1.59
	Q19. Beating your family or close friends is not violence.	1.49
	Q20. Verbal abuse such as swearing bad words or cursing is also violence.	1.42
	Q15. Public orders should be maintained by the law, not by violence.	1.39
Negative	Q16. A child who made a mistake is better to tell by word than to ferule.	−1.84
	Q22. Parents or teachers can shout to discipline children.	−1.65
	Q17. Violence between a wife and a husband is an expression of their love so it does not have to end.	−1.61
	Q4. In no case should violence be used.	−1.29

3.4.3 Type 3: Those who allow violence depending on the result

Three parents were categorized as Type 3. The statements they most agreed with include "You may scold children to teach them (Z=2.51)," and "Violence is not bad if the result is good (Z=1.31)." Conversely, the statements they most disagreed with include "When a child does something seriously wrong, the child needs to be punished in a way that seems almost like violence (Z= -1.89)" and "Things that cannot be solved by law should be solved by violence (Z=-1.79)."(Table. 7).

The parents who had the highest weighting among those in Type 3 said of the reason she arranged the statements on the scale that way, "I arranged the cards like this because I think it is okay to scold a child or use a little corporal punishment if the child's behavior can be corrected.

Table 7. Descending array of Z-scores of type 3 (greater than ±1) (n=3)

	Statement	Z-score
Positive	Q22. Parents or teachers can shout to discipline children.	2.51
	Q3. If the result is good, then violence is not bad either.	1.31
Negative	Q5. It may be okay that a child who makes a serious mistake needs a punishment considered violence.	−1.89
	Q2. Somebody or something that cannot be solved by the regulations must be solved by violence.	−1.79
	Q9. Parents should not spare hawks in order to raise their children rightly.	−1.50
	Q7. Violence is better than communication in order to solve the problems simply.	−1.42
	Q16. A child who made a mistake is better to tell by word than to ferule.	−1.09

3.4.4 Type 4: Those who subjectively allow violence

Two parents were categorized as Type 4. The statements they most agreed with include "When a child does something seriously wrong, the child needs to be punished in a way that seems almost like violence (Z=2.46)" and "Violence must not be used under any circumstances (Z=1.62)." Conversely, the statements they most disagreed with include "Verbal abuse such as speaking severe swear words or curses is violence (Z= -1.68)" and "A parent should not child his or her child in any circumstance (Z=-1.62)."(Table. 8).

Table 8. Descending array of Z-scores of type 4 (greater than ±1) (n=2)

	Statement	Z-score
Positive	Q5. It may be okay that a child who makes a serious mistake needs a punishment considered violence.	2.46
	Q4. In no case should violence be used.	1.62
	Q18. The order maintained by violence is not a true system.	1.52
	Q25. It is not violence to force feed children who do not eat at nursery institution.	1.04
Negative	Q20. Verbal abuse such as swearing bad words or cursing is also violence.	−1.68
	Q12. In no case should a parent hit a child.	−1.62
	Q16. A child who made a mistake is better to tell by word than to ferule.	−1.52

The parents who had the highest weighting among those in Type 4 said of the reason she arranged the statements on the scale that way, "I gave that score because I think corporal punishment is necessary when admonishment does not work as discipline depending on what the child does wrong."

3.4.5 Type 5: Those who value social order

Two parents were categorized as Type 5. The statements they most agreed with include "When a child does something seriously wrong, the child needs to be punished in a way that seems almost like violence (Z=2.26)" and "Violating public order and thus making others feel unpleasant is a kind of violence (Z=1.69)." Conversely, the statements they most disagreed with include "At a nursery, it is okay to force children to eat when they do not want to (Z= -1.83)," and "It is not violence to track down and beat a person who hit someone close to you (Z=-1.69)."(Table. 9).

Table 9. Descending array of Z-scores of type 5 (greater than ±1)   (n=2)

	Statement	Z-score
Positive	Q5. It may be okay that a child who makes a serious mistake needs a punishment considered violence.	2.26
	Q23. It is a different form of violence to violate public order that makes the public unpleasant and discomfort.	1.69
	Q4. In no case should violence be used.	1.13
	Q16. A child who made a mistake is better to tell by word than to ferule.	1.06
Negative	Q25. It is not violence to force feed children who do not eat at nursery institution.	-1.83
	Q21. It is no violence to beat somebody who has beaten someone closed to me.	-1.69
	Q13. Every violence is a social problem so violence between family members should not be neglected.	-1.20
	Q14. The teacher can life hawk in order to discipline a student who made something wrong.	-1.06

The parents who had the highest weighting among those in Type 5 said of the reason she arranged the statements on the scale that way, "Corporal punishment is necessary when a child breaches etiquette or does not observe rules and regulations. That's because later the child can be a perpetrator of violence." So nurses in Type 5 were named "those who allow violence according to social perceptions."

3.4.6 Common opinions between different types

No corresponding items were found in this study. This means that each of the five types has unique aspects.

4. Discussion

It has not been long since Koreans began to pay attention to child abuse. Moreover, Korean parents accept and perceive child discipline as a natural process and are not aware of the concept of child abuse. It was found that Korean mothers are very permissive of corporal punishment compared to mothers in other countries [15].

It is noted that even those obliged to report child abuse often fail to report it. Of the calls made to "Urgency Call 1391" at 17 child protection service agencies across Korea during the period from October to December 2022, only 9% were made by people obliged to report child abuse and 0.29% (5 calls) by medical personnel. This data indicates that medical personnel are passive in reporting and handling child abuse and thus, need to have improved awareness of child abuse.

The results of this study suggest that there are five types of subjectivity as to parents' perception of child abuse.

Type 1 parents are "those who recognize the boundary between violence and discipline." They think corporal punishment must not be allowed under any circumstances and had the awareness that it is a kind of child abuse. This awareness is essential. It was reported that corporal punishment as discipline has more negative effects than positive ones, leaving physical and emotional scars in children [16].

Type 2 parents are "those who avoid intervening

in domestic violence." They agreed with statements that there is no need to intervene in domestic violence between family members to resolve it and that hitting a family member or a friend cannot be considered an act of violence.

Their perception of child abuse can be related to the society's perception from the past that domestic violence is a problem of a family. In Korea, 83.2% of child abuse perpetrators are parents in families [17]. This shows how urgently necessary it is to change people's perception of domestic violence.

Type 3 parents are "those who allow violence depending on the result." They think that you can scold children to teach them and violence is not bad if the result is good. They need to be aware that frequent use of corporal punishment occurs because corporal punishment can suppress children's behavior temporarily and over time, increasingly severe corporal punishment is required to maintain the same extent of conformity in children[18].

Type 4 parents are "those who subjectively allow violence." They agreed with the statement that a child who does something seriously wrong needs to be punished in a way that seems almost like violence, although they thought violence should not be used under any circumstances.

Type 5 parents are "those who value social value." They said that children should be punished for violating rules and regulations and doing damage to people and that violence to children needs to be allowed to maintain social order. Based on the awareness of the society's sensitivity to acts of abuse, abuse needs to be clearly defined in a way that anyone can agree with the definition [16].

The results of this study helped identify parents' subjective perceptions and types of child abuse, and suggest that there is a need to define child abuse so that parents can have a correct perception of child abuse, rather than an abstract perception. I believe that parent education is necessary to properly recognize such parental child abuse. In addition, the demand for parent education can be confirmed in

previous research [19]. Although the recognition of the importance of parent education can be viewed positively, the government has already implemented a plan to revitalize parent education jointly with related ministries since 2016 to promote parent education. is being implemented as a policy. If you check the parental role support in the policy information on the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family website, you can see that policies such as life cycle-specific parent education and on-site parent education are being implemented. You can take this parent education by applying at the Healthy Family Support Center, and on the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family website, an online parent education classroom called Good Parents and Happy Children also provides parent education lectures and age-specific child care information. In the case of policies being implemented like this, it is difficult to expect that parents will directly search the website of the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family to find these policies, even if they express a demand for parental education. Therefore, I think it is necessary to make efforts to promote parent education and make it easier to find materials when applying for child allowance, and to establish an institutional mechanism that can be essential for parent education.

5. Conclusion and suggestion

This study was conducted to examine the subjectivity in parents perception of child abuse.

A total of 20 parents were asked to categorize Q cards into 1-9 levels. The results showed the variety in their perception of child abuse, suggesting the need to clearly define child abuse for them.

Type 1 parents are "those who recognize the boundary between violence and discipline." They think corporal punishment must not be allowed under any circumstances.

Type 2 parents are "those who avoid intervening in domestic violence." They said there is no need to intervene in domestic violence between family

members to resolve it.

Type 3 parents are "those who allow violence depending on the result." They think that you can scold children to teach them and violence is not bad if the result is good.

Type 4 parents are "those who subjectively allow violence." They agreed with the idea that a child who does something seriously wrong needs to be punished in a way that seems almost like violence, although they thought violence must not be used under any circumstances.

Type 5 parents are "those who value social value." They said that children should be punished for violating rules and regulations and doing damage to people and that violence to children needs to be allowed to maintain social order.

As can be seen from Types 1 to 5, parents have various perceptions of child abuse in terms of social education and such perceptions suggest the need for multilateral education programs.

It is necessary to develop educational materials on child abuse and use them for parent education so that parental education services can be carried out, and to prepare a process on how to respond to child abuse when it is found.

Hopefully, the results of this study will be used as basic data to supplement a system tackling child abuse.

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