

**Assessing Parenting Behaviors: Advantages and Disadvantages
of Using Parent Report, Child Report,
Observational Coding, and Observer Ratings**
양육행동의 측정: 부모 보고, 자녀 보고, 관찰 코딩,
관찰자 평정의 장점과 단점들

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《Abstract》

During the past several decades, the role of the parenting behaviors has been emphasized in child development literature and researchers have witnessed the advancement in the conceptualizations of parenting constructs and methodologies to assess these. Particularly, researchers have incorporated various methodologies to assess parenting behaviors into parenting studies, and tried to compromise psychometric and methodological problems that each method has by relying on multiple sources of data. Given this situation, review on advantages and disadvantages that each method of assessing parenting behaviors has seems important and needed not only for the better understanding of the current methodological trend and issues but also for the better designing of future parenting research. Thus, this paper focused on four methodological approaches to the assessment of parenting behaviors (parent report, child report, direct observational coding of parent-child dyads, and observer ratings) and reviewed their basic features, advantages, and disadvantages. In conclusion, important psychometric and methodological issues surrounding the assessment of parenting behaviors were reiterated and recent efforts to compromise these issues were discussed.

주제어(Keywords) : 부모양육행동(*parenting behaviors*), 부모 보고(*parent report*), 자녀 보고(*child report*), 관찰 코딩(*observational coding*), 관찰자 평정(*observer rating*)

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During the past several decades, research on the role of the family context in children's development has significantly increased. A special attention has been paid to the role of the parenting behaviors and the literature in this field has evidenced the advancement in conceptualizations of parenting constructs and methodologies to assess these constructs (Barber, 2002; Darling & Steinberg, 1993; Dishion, Li, Spracklen, Brown, & Haas, 1998; McMahon & Metzler, 1998).

One of the notable changes in parenting studies is that researchers have increasingly emphasized the importance of collecting data from multiple informants and applying multiple methodologies to fully describe the complexities of the parent-child relationship and parenting processes (McMahon & Metzler, 1998; Sessa, Avenevoli, Steinberg, & Morris, 2001). Researchers have incorporated parent report, child report, direct observational coding of parent-child dyads and observer ratings into parenting studies, and child report has also been used with children in various developmental stages such as preschool-age children, elementary school-age children, adolescents, and young adults. This recent methodological trend in parenting studies reflects researchers' increased recognition of the psychometric and methodological problems that each method for assessing parenting behaviors has and efforts to compromise these problems by relying on multiple sources of data. Also, this changed attitude reflects researchers' increased attention to the shared and non-shared parenting components between multiple informants and attempt to increase their differential validity for predicting child outcomes.

Given this condition, review on advantages and disadvantages that each method for assessing parenting behaviors has seems important and needed not only for the better understanding of the current methodological trend in parenting studies but also for the better designing of future parenting research. Thus, this paper focuses on the four methodological approaches to the assessment of parenting behaviors - parent report, child report, observational coding, and observer ratings.

1. Parent Report of Parenting Behaviors

Most popularly, parenting behaviors have been assessed through parents' self-report of their own parenting behaviors. Parental reports, particularly in research with very young children who are thought to be difficult to report their own perception of their parents' behaviors, are

traditionally the standard method of assessing parenting behaviors. Among parent report, mother report has been more documented in the parenting literature than father report given the traditional role of mother as a main caretaker and relatively high availability of mother sample than father sample for studies. However, recently, as the research findings suggesting the importance of fathers' involvement and their potential differential role in child rearing and socialization processes increase, interests in father report are growing (e.g., Siegal, 1987; Updegraff, McHale, Crouter, & Kupanoff, 2001; Woodworth, Belsky, & Crnic, 1996).

Several advantages of assessing parenting behaviors using a parent report have been discussed. First, parents can yield report of their own parenting behaviors that are relatively enduring or stable across settings and time as a direct observer and innermost informant (Cairns & Green, 1979). Unlike observational coding that is the simple recording of parenting behaviors of interest occurring within a specific dyad in a specific place for a specific time period, parenting behaviors reported by parents are considered to be the abstracted and integrated ones that are filtered from the mass of information gathered by virtue of knowing their own behaviors and family processes as pertinent to the quality of attribute under investigation. Such abstraction and integration permit parents to focus on the enduring properties of parenting behaviors. Ephemeral and uncharacteristic parenting behaviors are eliminated initially by parent reporters themselves and thus are not underwent for later data analysis.

The advantage of parental self-report as capturing enduring and integrated characteristics of their own parenting behaviors was advocated by Epstein (1979). Epstein reviewed evidence demonstrating that a high component of measurement error and a narrow range of generality resulting from the use of a single item of behavior are reduced as the behavior under investigation is averaged over a sample of situations. He argued that this is precisely what raters do in judging and further advocated the utility of knowledgeable informants' report as a methodology for assessing parenting behaviors.

Second, parent report has advantages over other methodological approaches in practical aspects. Self-report questionnaires are easy to administer and yield ratings from individuals who possess insiders' knowledge about family behavior as it occurs on an on-going, daily basis. Since a rater is basically assumed to be a competent personality theorist, methodologist, observer, and psychometrician in rating methods (Cairns & Green, 1979), there are no needs for consideration of issues such as categorization of behaviors (how to lump observations together into a category)

or breadth of observation (what to select out of stream of activity for recording) and no needs for additional high-cost, time-consuming procedures for observer training, inter-rater reliability check, and actual observations as in the case of observational methods. The steps of measurement, scaling, and the transformation are taken by a rater privately, prior to recording the judgment, rather than being orchestrated by an investigator and being made through subsequent analyses of data. Parents also seem to be a better rater of parenting behaviors than children who might lack complex information-processing capabilities needed for raters (Shelton, Frick, & Wootton, 1996) or than other observers (e.g., teachers or trained observers) who might lack insiders' knowledge about parent-child interactions or might not be familiar with cultural, interactional, and situational norms and expectations of parenting behaviors and those of appropriate reference groups to which they have to refer when they give their rating. For instance, reports of children between the ages of 6 and 13 were found to be not useful for assessing parenting constructs using either a global report format or multiple telephone interviews (Shelton et al., 1996). This was especially true for younger children below age 9 and for child report on the telephone interviews, whereby children tended to respond using a response set. In contrast, parental report, whether it took a format of global report or telephone interview, was found to be useful for assessing parenting constructs. Parental report showed expected age trends and expected associations with socioeconomic status. More importantly, parental report was useful for differentiating families of children with disruptive behaviors from families of normal children (Shelton et al., 1996).

Despite the advantages aforementioned, several disadvantages have also been recognized with regard to the use of parent report in the parenting assessment. First, doubts about parenting as cross-situationally stable constructs challenge the validity of reporting methods for parenting. Mischel (1968) pointed out that personality measures reported by knowledgeable informants failed to predict behaviors across situations, and further concluded that personality does not exist in the form of cross-situational, trait-like behavioral dispositions. Validity of a certain methodology is critically challenged when a construct to be measured is not trait-like but the methodology for this construct is intended to capture trait-like constructs. Parent report which is assumed to capture trait-like dispositions, therefore, may not be a proper methodology for the assessment of certain parenting constructs that seem to lack cross-situational stabilities. For these constructs, the observation method that enables analyses of interpersonal processes occurring

under specific contexts seems more useful than the reporting method that excludes these situation-specific interpersonal processes from the first stage of data recording.

Holden and Miller (1999) demonstrate that this methodological debate could be relevant to the subject of parenting behaviors. Holden and Miller, in their meta-analysis, found evidence for both stabilities and changes of parenting behaviors across time, children, and situations (relatively low stability of parenting behaviors found in the across-situations domain than in the across-children and across-time domains). The findings suggest that while some parenting behaviors could be captured by rating procedures, some might not.

Second, reporter biases can be problematic in parent report. As discussed earlier, reporting procedures take advantage of the ability of raters to be a competent personal theorist, methodologist, observer, and psychometrician. They share with the investigator the burden for determining how the major concepts are defined, take into account multiple sources of information, abstract and integrate relevant bits, and weigh the significance of an entire series of action patterns by taking into account cultural, interactional, and situational norms and expectations and by referring the subject's behaviors to those of the appropriate reference group of which he or she is a part. However, some internal factors unique to raters could bias their information processing, increasing error variance specific to raters (Cairns & Green, 1979; Paulhus, 1991; Richters, 1992; Wilson & Durbin, 2010). Idiosyncratic interpretations of the construct or dimension, idiosyncratic interpretation of the relevant activities, scaling of individual onto the group distribution, lack of knowledge of subjects under investigation, limitations of perception, personal biases toward subjects, biases toward groups (stereotyping), lack of knowledge of reference population, dispositions of a reporter (e.g., optimistic or pessimistic dispositions), or selective memory are the sources of these reporter biases. Though not all of them, some factors could significantly influence parent report of parenting behaviors, resulting in reliability and validity problems of this methodology.

Past studies suggest a potential involvement of reporter bias in parental self-report of their parenting behaviors. Parents, more than adolescent children, seem to overestimate socially desirable characteristics of themselves and their families, possibly because of their greater personal investment in the quality of the lives of their families (Bengtson & Kuypers, 1971; Callan & Noller, 1986; Jessop, 1981; Noller & Callan, 1988; Schwarz, Barton-Henry, & Pruzinsky, 1985). Parents tend to perceive families as more loving, closer, more understanding, and more adaptive

to stress, and rate family interactions as more open and less problematic than do their adolescent children. Adolescents, on the other hand, seem to overestimate negative characteristics of their families, distance themselves from their families, and take a more objective outsiders' perspective than do their parents, possibly because of their developmental needs for greater autonomy and independence. Correspondence between family members' descriptions of parenting behaviors was lowest when one member of the family dyad included a parent reporting on his or her own behavior than when parental self-ratings were not included in the correlation, implying that perspective bias (i.e., being the subject of observation vs. being an observer) could significantly influence parents' descriptions of their own parenting (Schwarz et al., 1985). However, some findings suggest that this type of parental report bias might be limited to parenting behaviors in the relationship with adolescent or young adult children, not parenting behaviors in the relationship with young children. For example, Sheton et al. (1996) found that reports from parents tend not to be strongly associated with measures of socially desirable responding.

A recent meta-analytic study by Wilson and Durbin (2010) also suggests a potential involvement of reporter bias by parents when reporting their own parenting practices and behaviors, mainly affected by their emotional states. Wilson and Durbin (2010) calculated effect sizes for the relationship between paternal depression and fathers' positive and negative parenting behaviors and examined whether type of assessment could moderate the effects of paternal depression on fathers' parenting behaviors. The review found that effect sizes derived from studies using father self-report of their parenting are bigger than effect sizes derived from studies using observational coding of parenting behaviors, insinuating depressive fathers' tendencies to downplay or underreport positive aspects of their parenting than actual behaviors observed and to exaggerate or overreport negative aspects of their parenting than actual behaviors observed (Wilson & Durbin, 2010). The results suggest that parents' internal emotional states could cause biased reports of their own parenting practices or behaviors. Past studies further suggest that some contextual factors such as the amount of family stress (Noller, Seth-Smith, Bouma, & Schweitzer, 1992), and socioeconomic status or ethnicity of a family (Sessa et al., 2001) could moderate reporter bias on the part of parents.

2. Child Report of Parenting Behaviors

Some researchers have placed more weight on the child's subjective interpretation of the family context, emphasizing that child's subjective interpretation of his/her family context is most influential in shaping the child's social emotional development, even more than actual childrearing (e.g., Morris, Steinberg, Sessa, Avenevoli, Silk, & Essex, 2002; Parker, 1983). It seems theoretically convincing that parenting behaviors should be measured in part by the recipients of them.

Despite Goldin's (1969) conclusion that parenting data obtained from younger children's report are as valid as data obtained from direct observations, the use of child report in parenting studies started to fall off in the beginning of 1970's. Much of the research conducted in the 1970's and 1980's concluded that young children before age 8 are unable to conceptualize persons or relationships as having stable dispositions or traits (e.g., Barenboim, 1981; Peevers & Secord, 1973). As a result, research attempting to link family processes and psychopathology in young children has ignored the child's perception of the parent-child relationship, and has instead relied more on parent report and observations by trained observers (Sessa et al., 2001). Doubt about younger children's cognitive abilities as a reliable and valid reporter has also resulted in researchers' preference of adolescents over younger children (Barber & Harmon, 2002).

A more contemporary perspective, however, has suggested that developmental researchers have historically underestimated younger children's social cognitive competencies and their ability to report on their own experiences, mainly because of lack of developmentally sensitive methods to assess children's perceptions of their environment (Hart & Damon, 1986; Miller & Aloise, 1989; Sessa et al., 2001). For example, most early research on young children's perceptions of people used open-ended interview techniques, which require extensive verbal productions and expressive skills. Morris et al. (2002) argued that observed age-related differences in children's use of dispositional terms while describing others are likely to reflect linguistic immaturity rather than the absence of psychological constructions of others because young children's verbal comprehension skills are better developed than their verbal expressive skills. Demand characteristics of the standard interview situation (i.e., being questioned by an unfamiliar adult) also seem to inhibit young children's ability to provide psychologically meaningful information.

Recent research has demonstrated that, when being interviewed with developmentally sensitive instruments which included less verbal expressive skill components (e.g., using picture scales or asking children to choose between two statements stated by two puppets) and used more benign interviewers (e.g., puppets), young children were able to reliably differentiate several parenting dimensions and maintain their perceptions of parenting behaviors over time (e.g., Sessa et al., 2001). Additionally, some parenting dimensions reported by younger children were found to be correlated with teacher reports of emotional and behavioral problems, demonstrating criterion validity of parenting behaviors reported by children (e.g., Morris, 1999).

In contrast to young children, more attention has been paid to adolescents' perception of parenting behaviors. Attention to adolescents' perception of parenting behaviors can be explained in several reasons. One reason is that adolescents' advanced cognitive and linguistic abilities increase the qualification of adolescents as a reliable and valid reporter, which enables researchers to take advantage of several methodological advantages inherent in reporting method. The theoretical relevance of some parenting dimensions (e.g., psychological control) to adolescents' developmental tasks (e.g., autonomy, independence, identity formation, or realignment of emotional relationships with parents) also forms another big reason.

Validation of child self-reported findings through alternative methodologies certainly enhances the validity of the child report as a methodology for parenting behaviors. Low to modest correlations between parents' and children's reports of parenting behaviors have been reported (Callen & Noller, 1986; Feldman, Wentzel, & Gehring, 1989; Gonzales, Cauce, & Mason, 1996; Jessop, 1981; Lanz, Scabini, Vermulst, & Gerris, 2001; Noller & Callan, 1988; Schwarz et al., 1985; Sessa et al., 2001; Tein, Roosa, & Michaels, 1994). Despite the poor cross-generational convergence reported, there exists some indirect evidence that adolescents may provide ratings that were more valid than those of their parents when evaluated against observational coders with both similar ethnic background and non-similar ethnic background (Noller & Callan, 1988), against ratings by adolescents and parents of outsider family and by trained observers (Gonzales et al., 1996), and against teachers' observational ratings (Cox, 1970).

Despite potential utilities of child report discussed above, several features of child report pose methodological limitations. First, as in the case of parent report, child report do not allow for analyses of the extent to which parental behaviors are triggered by aspects of the immediate interaction (e.g., things that children may do or say), which can be measured by observations.

Intensive interviews would provide very useful data that could increase knowledge of why and how some forms of parenting behaviors does and does not affect individual children, but so far little studies have been done using these intensive interview methodologies.

Second, as discussed earlier, infants or young children may not be appropriate as a rater given their linguistic and cognitive limitations.

Third, reporter biases could limit the validity of child report of parenting behaviors. Potential reporter biases affected by children's developmental and motivational states have already been introduced in Parent Report section. Past studies found that congruence between children and parents in their perception of parenting behaviors is not static and is constructed over time (e.g., Alessandri & Wozniack, 1987; Collins & Luebker, 1994; Lanz et al., 2001; Tein et al., 1994). These studies suggest that, with increasing age, adolescents appear to be more able to interpret parental behavior and to share with them the idea of childrearing.

Last, limitations can also be found when children's perceptions of parenting behaviors are assessed in a retrospective fashion. Most adult children would no longer be under strong parental influence and many (especially the clinical populations) would have been free from their parents' influence for many years. Constructive and retrospective bias by adult children may play a large role in recollections of childrearing. On a similar note, retrospective parenting studies using adult children generally collapse across a large temporal range (e.g., childhood up to age of 16 or age range not specified). If parenting factors are involved in the development of anxiety and depression, it is possible that there is a crucial developmental period at which such an influence will be optimal (Kagan & Moss, 1962). Child's retrospective perceptions of childrearing that do not properly address this crucial development stage may have limited utilities.

3. Observational Coding of Parenting Behaviors

The distinguishing property of observational coding is that they involve an attempt to record the actual activities as opposed to offering a judgment about individuals' dispositions or the quality of their relationships. Interpretations about the nature of an individual or of social interactions are not made at the first level of data recording; these are to be made in subsequent analyses of the data (Cairns & Green, 1979). Because of the focus of observations on behavioral events as opposed to qualities and enduring dispositions of individuals or relationships,

a less emphasis is placed on the observer as a theorist and psychometrician. What is presumed to be necessary, however, is that whether observer has the ability to recognize and record accurately the relevant actions in a stream of behaviors as they occur. Since theoretical and statistical preconceptions, which are needed in rating methods, could interfere with precise observations, most investigators attempt to blind their observers to the theoretical and analytic aspects of the investigation during the course of data collection. Despite such attempts, observer biases persist, which influence both what is seen and what is recorded.

Like informants' ratings, observational codings also impose a filter on the information that is attended to and recorded (Cairns & Green, 1979). This filter, however, is not as heavily influenced by the internal weighing systems, implicit personality constructs, and memory of the observer. Rather, the filter concerns what the observer must attend to as determined by the nature of the categories employed and what action patterns are actually perceived by the observer. Hence, selective attention and limitations of perception are key elements in observational methods.

The hallmark features of observational method imply several advantages that this method has. Direct observation has an advantage to preserve the precise actions of individuals and those with whom they interact. Direct observations of behavior make researchers be able to identify how actual behaviors are elicited, maintained, and organized. As Cairns and Green (1979) held, the analysis of such contingencies will be critical for understanding the processes of interactional regulation and development. Videotaping of actual interactional sequences in which some parenting dimensions are observed would allow for the detection of these important interactional dynamics.

Observational coding also compromises some of the disadvantages that informants' reporting method has. Observational coding could be a good alternative method to assess parent-child relationships for the populations with limited cognitive and linguistic capabilities (e.g., infants or younger children). Also, observation method could be especially advantageous when studying parenting dimensions that lack in cross-situational stability. Holden and Miller (1999) contended that childrearing is an interpersonal activity that reflects the constant interplay and coordination of goals between at least two individuals. Behavioral observations seem to be helpful in addressing this context-dependent, interactional nature of parenting behaviors. Observee reactivity or demand characteristics induced by observational settings, however, can present a threat to the

reliability and validity of observational data. Artificial situations induced by certain interactive tasks could raise or reduce the base rate of a parenting behavior under investigation, threatening the representativeness of observed parenting behaviors. Maccoby and Martin (1983) found that children tended to talk more in a three-person group than in either two-person group, whereas parents tended to talk less to a child in a three-person group than in two-person group. Belsky (1980) found that the general level of maternal functioning, but not of infant functioning, was greatly affected by context. Mothers attended to, talked to, responded to, and stimulated their children more frequently in the lab than at home and these individual differences in maternal behavior were found to be more stable when mothers were seen twice in the same context than when seen once in each location (Belsky, 1980). Although it is not clear whether Belsky's (1980) finding suggests the reactivity induced by different observation settings or the situation-specific aspects of parenting, the finding challenges the generalizability of the results obtained by an observational approach. Wilson and Durbin (2010), in their meta-analytic study, found variabilities across studies in the association between paternal depression and fathers' positive and negative parenting behaviors (transformed into effect sizes) depending on observation location (laboratory vs. home) and type of observation task (structured vs. unstructured). Examination of the within-group heterogeneity statistics for studies that assessed positive parenting behaviors observationally indicated that a significant amount of variability among effect sizes remained in observational assessments conducted in participants' home and using structured tasks. On the other hand, for the negative parenting behaviors, a significant amount of variability among effect sizes remained in observational assessments conducted in the laboratory and using structured tasks (Wilson & Durbin, 2010). Although the review focused only on depressive fathers, the review suggests that parents with depressive moods will show inconsistent and volatile parenting across observations when they are given a structured task than when being given an unstructured task. Also, the review suggests that depressive fathers will show inconsistent and volatile pictures in their positive parenting across home observations while depressive fathers will show inconsistent and volatile pictures in their negative parenting across laboratory observations.

Moskowitz and Schwarz (1982) suggests that very large samples of behavior counts are required to capture the stable and valid behavior counts. Although there seems to be variations depending on which personality dimension was investigated, their results imply that, as more

weeks of observational coding data are sampled, generalizability coefficients increase, which leads to additional efforts and expenses.

Reactivity can modify not only the behavior of the subjects under observation but also the behavior of the observers. Observers tended to be more accurate when they were aware that the reliability of their observations was being checked than not (Reid, 1970; Romanczyk, Kent, Diament, & O'Leary, 1973). Reliability of observers with identified assessor was found to be consistently higher than reliability with unidentified assessor, indicating that observers modified their observational criteria to approximate those of the identified assessor (Romanczyk et al., 1973). Observer accuracy tended to decrease between the end of a training period and the beginning of data collection and increase when spot checks are expected (Taplin & Reid, 1973).

A rather straightforward threat to reliability of observational data comes from the limitations of the observers themselves. Observer characteristics such as tiredness, boredom, physical conditions, or attention span can fall into this category. Several studies also imply that differences in past experience, mental set, and observer training can influence the accuracy with which behavioral records are made and scored. For example, observers who had been trained to code "predictable" behavior (i.e., conversations with redundant information) showed a decline in accuracy when they later coded "unpredictable" behavior, whereas observers trained with unpredictable sequences showed no such decline in accuracy (Mash & McElwee, 1974).

Advantages and disadvantages of observational method can also be discussed in relation to the breadth of behavioral data being sought -- molecular vs. molar behaviors. The molecular approach takes small segments of behaviors as units of behavior. Molecular units are relatively easy to define and are measured reliably. However, molecular units of behavior taken out of context may have little meaning in the real world and thus validity is reduced. On the other hand, the molar approach takes large behavioral wholes as units of behavior. The size of molar units can vary considerably depending on the subject of the research and the theoretical orientation of the researcher. Molar units can also be qualitative and might include categories of behavior such as 'friendliness,' 'responsiveness,' or 'warmth.' Molar categories of this type tend to be more psychologically meaningful and therefore more valid than discrete molecular units of behavior. They are, however, likely to require a fair degree of inference on the part of the observer and data are often in the form of ratings (observer rating), which are, of course, subjective. This may reduce the reliability and validity of this sort of data. Attempts have been

made to define molar constructs operationally such as identifying and listing the behavioral components for molar units. This can achieve a high degree of precision and reliability. However, by doing this, the whole flavor of what is being observed could be reduced as in molecular units of behavior.

4. Observer Ratings

Observer rating, as implied in the label itself, includes both features of rating and observational methods. Whereas behavioral coding requires an observer to make only judgment whether or not a particular behavior belongs in a predetermined category, observer rating requires an observer to make subjective and qualitative evaluation about the behavior under observation.

Characteristically, observer rating shares many advantages that each of rating and observational coding method has. Though not as much as in the case of parent and child reports which use direct parties of childrearing, observer rating allows observers to focus on enduring properties of the person being observed and to yield their internally weighted judgment on a ratee (Cairns & Green, 1979). At the same time, observer rating often enables researchers to analyze contextual, interactional properties of behaviors being observed, although not thoroughly as in the case of observational coding. Observer rating mostly focuses on molar units of behavior such as 'warmth,' and thus the information provided by observer rating tends to be more psychologically meaningful and more valid than the information provided by coding of simple molecular-level behaviors.

However, observer rating also has several disadvantages that are found in both rating and observational methods. Examples include rater/observer biases resulting from characteristics unique to the rater/observer, observer reactivity and demand characteristics, observee reactivity and demand characteristics, and time-consuming, high-cost procedures.

Several ways have been recommended to reduce the subjectivity of qualitative ratings that could potentially be problematic in observer rating. As an example, points along an evaluation continuum can be explicitly defined to provide evaluation guideline or ratings can be made by blind observers who know neither the observee nor preferably the aims of the research (e.g., members of another family). Despite these attempts, the problems described above still seem to

pose some threats to this methodological approach.

Discussion

As Holden and Miller's (1999) review suggests, both stability and changes seem to feature parenting behaviors. It means both rating and observation methodology could be useful for tapping into some important aspects of parenting. Immature discard of informants' ratings based on the belief that parenting is context-specific might limit our understanding of the stable nature of parenting. Simultaneously, washing out adaptive capabilities of people to changing contextual demands and mainly relying on reporter's censored information preclude our understanding of how accommodations are made and how behaviors change over time and space.

The low level of congruence between methodologies presents several challenges in the search for more accurate measurement in family research. Although low convergence between methods might reflect serious methodological issues, including the questionable validity of the assessment measures used or measurement errors, it is equally likely that these discrepancies reflect real differences in the perspectives from which family members and observers are viewing family processes and parental behaviors. Indeed, as Sessa et al. (2001) noted, it might be inherently paradoxical to expect similarities across methodologies given their basic differences in assumptions and measurement goals. As many researchers recommended (Achenbach, McConaughy, & Howell, 1987; Dishion et al., 1998; Gonzales et al., 1996; Schwarz et al., 1985; Sessa et al., 2001; Shelton et al., 1996), information from multiple sources and methodologies seems to be a good compromise for obtaining a more representative view of family life. Fortunately, recent advancement in data analytic strategies and statistics helps address psychometric and methodological problems inherent in the measurement of parenting practices and behaviors. Representatively, a multitrait-multimethod (MTMM) measurement strategy (Campbell & Fiske, 1959; Dishion et al., 1998) is introduced in the field of parenting studies to diagnose method problems and construct validity problems. For example, in a MTMM analysis where method constructs are operationalized and studied along with parenting trait constructs, a method problem is indicated when the most highly correlated indicators in a MTMM matrix are those derived from the same measurement method. Besides helping to address methodological questions

like “To what extent does the measurement method account for covariation among the parenting data?,” a MTMM analysis could address validity-related questions such as “To what extent are various parenting constructs intercorrelated and at what level?” The level of correlation among the parenting trait constructs speaks to the issue of whether these practices are part of a general parenting style or reflect distinct dimensions. Furthermore, researchers (e.g., Bank, Dishion, Skinner, & Patterson, 1990; Dishion et al., 1998) start to utilize structural equation modeling analytic strategies to address methodological problem inherent in the measurement of parenting behaviors. In the context of structural equation modeling, competing models (e.g., trait versus method) can be compared using indices of model fit as well as differences in the chi-square goodness-of-fit test (Bentler, 1990; Bentler & Bonett, 1980).

To the question, “What is the relative value of child versus parent reports in predicting child outcomes,” more and more researchers (e.g., Gaylord, Kitzmann, & Coleman, 2003; Mounts, 2007) emphasize that research should address what different sources of information reveal about the child’s functioning in particular areas or contexts, rather than determine which source of information is more “accurate.” These researchers note that direction of discrepancy between child and parent reports and the level of the discrepancy are both important in predicting different outcome variables. This approach seems to be a good compromise for a long-lasting debate in the field of parenting studies, “Which source of information most accurately reflects the true nature of parenting processes and parent-child relationships?” This approach could also address a question of “Which source of information is more “useful” in predicting child outcomes?” by providing information most closely related to child functioning outcomes.

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〈요 약〉

가족 맥락이 아동 발달에 미치는 영향은 지난 수십 년 동안 연구자들의 관심이 되어왔다. 특히 부모 양육행동의 아동 발달에의 역할은 많은 연구자들의 관심이 되고 있으며, 이 분야 문헌은 그간 부모양육 구인의 개념화와 양육행동 측정 방법에 있어 상당한 진보가 있었음을 보여주고 있다. 연구자들은 부모 보고, 자녀 보고, 부모-자녀 쌍에 대한 직접 관찰 코딩, 관찰자 평정 같은 다양한 방법들을 양육행동 연구에 포함시키고 있으며, 복수의 원천들로부터 자료를 수집함으로써 이들 방법 개개가 가진 심리측정적 혹은 방법론적 문제를 극복하려 하였다. 이러한 상황에서 각 측정 방법이 가진 장점과 단점을 고찰해 보는 것은 양육행동 측정 방법과 관련한 쟁점의 이해 및 추세 파악, 그리고 보다 나은 연구 설계를 위해 필요한 작업이라 생각된다. 이에 본 논문은 부모 보고, 자녀 보고, 직접 관찰 코딩, 관찰자 평정이라는 네 가지 방법론적 접근들을 선정, 이들 방법론적 접근들의 기본 특징, 장점 및 단점들을 고찰하였다. 결론에서 양육행동 측정과 관련한 방법론적 쟁점들이 요약, 강조되었고 이러한 쟁점들을 절충하거나 극복하려는 노력들이 논의되었다.

주요어 : 부모양육행동, 부모 보고, 자녀 보고, 관찰 코딩, 관찰자 평정