Overall, the Koreans have very limited knowledge about the existing child welfare law regarding physical child abuse, and they had mixed feelings about it. The Koreans' opinions about how the perpetrator should be handled and who should have the primary responsibility, were somewhat unique.

This study found that a majority of the Koreans were aware of the existing child welfare law regarding physical child abuse in the United States. They had heard about the law through media-related sources such as the newspaper and television. Also, about half of the Koreans heard about the general problems of child abuse in the Korean community through newspapers. However, the study found that Koreans merely heard about the child abuse law or problems, but that when it came to specifics, they were not very familiar with issues of child abuse. For example, the Koreans' awareness of child protective services in the community was extremely low. Also, only a small number of the Koreans had knowledge of preventive programs or activities dealing with child abuse. The number of Koreans who had actually participated in those programs was even smaller. Only three percent of the total Koreans sampled had actually participated in those programs or activities.

The study also found that the Koreans had mixed feelings about the existing child welfare law in relation to physical child abuse. Even though a majority of the Koreans reported that child abuse laws are important to protect the child, more than half of the Koreans also felt that child abuse laws conflict with Korean child rearing practices. One-third of the Koreans also expressed that they felt child abuse laws interfere with family matters. A majority of the Koreans thought that the family has the primary responsibility for dealing with the child abuse problems. However, when parents injure a child deliberately or by anger, a majority of the Koreans would intervene by notifying the authorities or talking directly to those parents to encourage self-reflection. About half of the Koreans also thought that a child needs to be removed from the natural parents, when parents injure a child deliberately or by anger, but highly preferred placement in a relative's home. With regard to the question about what should be done to perpetrators, the Koreans' opinion was somewhat divided. About half of the Koreans thought those parents should be supervised or treated by the child welfare agencies, and the other half of the Koreans thought that those parents should have a chance to reflect on the event. This information does indicate that because physical punishment is accepted as a child discipline method in the Korean culture, sometimes child abuse laws specifically related to physical abuse, may create conflicts with Korean child rearing practices; however, the Koreans were willing to intervene when their neighborhood child was physically injured by parents out of anger or with deliberation. This could mean that Koreans do not consider it merely as a family matter when the parents use of physical force on a child goes beyond child discipline.

The study also found differences among the Koreans based on their level of acculturation, social class status, and demographic characteristics. The study indicated that the professional Koreans and the better educated Koreans were somewhat more knowledgeable about preventive programs or activities dealing with child abuse in the
community. With regard to the existing child abuse law, more of the
non-professional Koreans thought that the child abuse law conflicts with
Korean child rearing practices, than did the professional Koreans. More
of the English speaking Koreans reported that the child abuse law does
interfere with family matters, than did the Korean speaking Koreans.
However, more of the Koreans who had received a U.S. formal education
reported that the child abuse law does not interfere with family matters,
than did the Koreans who had not received a U.S. formal education. This
discrepancy resulted because more of the Korean speaking Koreans who had
received a U.S. formal education reported that the child abuse law does
not interfere with family matters. The study indicated that more of the
Korean speaking Koreans thought that the family has the primary
responsibility in dealing with the whole problem of child abuse, than did
the English speaking Koreans. Among the Koreans, the question, ‘whether
a child needs to be taken away from his or her parents when those parents
injure a child not by accident but in anger or deliberately,’ was the
most controversial. Their length of residence in the U.S., formal
educational experience in the U.S., sex, and age, made a difference in
their opinions. The study found that more of the more acculturated
Koreans reported that a child needs to be taken away from his or her
natural parents, than did the less acculturated Koreans. Also, more of
the men and the younger aged Koreans reported that a child needs to be
taken away from his or her natural parents, than did the women and the
older aged Koreans. Based on their age at the time of immigration and
their formal educational experience in the U.S., the Koreans’ opinions
about what should be done to perpetrators was different. More of the
less acculturated Koreans thought that such parents who have injured a
child should have a chance to reflect on themselves, whereas more of the
more acculturated Koreans thought that such parents should be closely
supervised or treated by child welfare agencies. When a neighborhood
Korean child was injured, the Koreans’ reaction to the incident was
somewhat different based on their educational level. The better educated
Koreans would notify the authorities, while the less educated Koreans
would emphasize encouraging self-reflection by the perpetrators.

Compared to the whites, the Koreans’ level of knowledge is somewhat
lower. Considering the fact that Giovannini and Becerra had conducted a
study a decade ago, it indicates total isolation of the Korean community
from mainstream child abuse networks. There were also differences in
opinions about how to handle child abuse incidents between the Koreans
and the whites. More of the whites would notify the authorities when
child abuse occurs in their neighborhood, while a significant number of
the Koreans would talk directly to encourage self-reflection. A majority
of the whites also felt that perpetrators need to be supervised or
treated, while a significant number of the Koreans suggested encouraging
self-help efforts by perpetrators through the self-reflection process.

The Koreans’ emphasis on self-reflection as a way of handling child
abuse problems could stem from different social control methods in the
Korean culture. Instead of law, in the Korean culture, control was
prevented through existing social norms. As a consequence, enforcement
takes different forms, such as group pressure and social
pressure. When the Koreans were not conforming to social norms, shame
was the punishment. To overcome the shameful behavior or conduct,
one needed to examine oneself and rehabilitate oneself with tears and
make the correction voluntarily. The point was that the self-help
process through self-evaluation and self-correction was highly valued in
the Korean culture. This may point to the reason why more of the less
acculturated Koreans preferred the self-reflection method as a way of
handling child abuse problems.

In this study, there were overall similarities and differences among
the Koreans. The Koreans as a group perceived child maltreatment
situations very seriously. The difference among the Koreans is based on
their level of acculturation and demographic characteristics. Overall,
there was a lack of knowledge and information about child abuse issues in
the Korean community, and, obviously, existing child welfare service
networks have not reached out to the Korean community. This may be due
to the overall lack of bilingual, bicultural services which could make
such information and services accessible to the Korean community. This
study also suggests that the Koreans are concerned about keeping the
family together. The study suggested an alternative intervention method,
i.e., a method more in line with the culturally embedded method, instead
of institutional intervention methods. As an exploratory study with a
small sample, findings cannot be generalized for the Korean community in
the Los Angeles area. However, this study has suggested that more
extensive research in the child welfare area is needed not only in the
Korean community, but also in the other ethnic minority communities.
This study also confirms the feasibility of conducting research using an
immigrant native language.

APPENDIX

1. I would like to ask you to rate some short statements about specific
parent-child situations. Please read each statement that comes
closest to describing how you feel about the seriousness of the act,
and rate the incident on a scale of increasing degrees of seriousness
between least and most. Use 9 for most serious acts, 1 for the least
serious of the acts. Remember that this is only your opinion of the
seriousness of the act; there are no right or wrong answers. The
child is seven years old.

1.1 The parent live with their child in a small two-room apartment.
The three of them have lived there for several months.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>not serious</td>
<td>moderate</td>
<td>most serious</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.2 The parent burned the child on the buttocks and the chest with a
cigarette.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>not serious</td>
<td>moderate</td>
<td>most serious</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.3 The parents regularly left their child alone outside the house
during the day until almost dark.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>not serious</td>
<td>moderate</td>
<td>most serious</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.4 The parents dress their daughter in boys clothing and keep her hair
cropped short like a boys.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>not serious</td>
<td>moderate</td>
<td>most serious</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.5 The parents make their child steal small articles out of the
supermarket.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>not serious</td>
<td>moderate</td>
<td>most serious</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.6 On one occasion, the parents left their child alone all night.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>not serious</td>
<td>moderate</td>
<td>most serious</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>