



Korean Nurses' Judgments of Child Sexual Abuse Situations: The Use of Vignettes

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= 국문초록 =

아동 성폭력 상황에 대한 한국 간호사의 판단

고 정 미¹⁾

1) 국립의료원 간호대학

본 연구의 목적은 아동 성폭력 상황 자체와 성폭력 가해자에 대한 간호사의 태도가 상황 판단에 미치는 영향을 규명하는데 초점을 둔다. 503명의 병원 간호사와 526명의 보건교사를 대상으로 vignette 디자인 설문조사를 실시하였다. 아동성폭력 상황 vignettes은 7가지의 특성 (성폭력 행위, 성폭력 빈도, 피해자의 연령, 피해자의 저항, 가해자의 연령, 가해자와 피해자의 교차성별, 가해자와 피해자와의 관계)을 조합하여 구성하였다. 1/4 factorial design의 결과로서 64개의 vignettes 이 도출되었으며 이 중 16개 vignettes을 무작위로 추출하여 그 vignettes에 나타난 각 성폭력 상황들의 심각정도를 표시하도록 하였다. 성폭력 가해자에 대한 문항들은 1) 가해자가 아동 성폭력을 하는 이유 2) 전형적인 성폭력 가해자 3) 아동성폭력 가해자의 처벌방법에 관한 간호사의 태도를 묻는 것이었다. 자료분석은 Logistic Regression을 실시하였다. 연구결과에서 간호사들은 아동 성폭력 상황의 심각도를 판단할 때 주로 성폭력 상황에 의해 영향을 받고 아동 성폭력 가해자에 대한 개인적 태도는 거의 영향을 미치지 않는 것으로 나타났으며, 아동 성폭력 상황 특성 중 피해자의 저항, 성폭력 행위, 성폭력 빈도, 가해자의 연령, 가해자와 피해자의 교차성별 순으로 아동 성폭력상황의 심각도에 영향을 미치는 것으로 나타났다. 결론적으로, 간호사들은 아동 성폭력 상황에 직면하여 사례를 판단할 때 아동 성폭력 문제에 대한 개인의 태도에 영향을 받기보다는 사례 그 자체에 근거를 두고 판단하는 경향을 나타낸다. 본 연구 결과는 법적, 전문가적 의미에서 아동성폭력 신고자로서의 의무와 사례증제에 개입된 의료인으로서의 역할 수행에 긍정적인 면을 시사한다.

주요어 : 아동 성폭력, 상황 판단, Vignettes, Fractional factorial design

Key words : Child sexual abuse, Judgment, Vignettes, Fractional factorial design

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PURPOSE

Child sexual abuse has been recognized as a social problem since the beginning of 1990's. According to a 2001 report from Korea Sexual Violence Relief Center, the incidents of child sexual abuse are increasing and its consequences are very traumatic and harmful. As a result of growing awareness of the problem of child sexual abuse developed in Korea, professionals are calling for increased emphasis on its prevention and intervention. Child sexual abuse laws were established in 1994 and eventually, a mandatory reporting law was established in 1999.

As currently Korean nurses are one of the mandated reporters, they have a legal and professional responsibility to report suspected child sexual abuse that they encounter. To fulfill the professional responsibility, they must realize the importance of accurate detection of child sexual abuse in order to protect the victim, handle child sexual abuse cases efficiently and to reduce the possible harmful effects of intervention. Campbell and Humphreys (1984) stressed nurse's strategic position in child abuse cases. They pointed out that nurses have direct contact with abused children and families within a variety of settings (i.e., pediatric nurse, public health nurse, school nurse, emergency room), and must be able to prevent child sexual abuse and interact therapeutically with the child and/or family when abuse has occurred. However, to find true cases is difficult since they must be influenced by many factors when perceiving an event as child sexual abuse.

Studies about child sexual abuse have shown that professionals are influenced by a number of factors in the judgment process of child sexual abuse. In general, factors that influence the judgment process are divided into two groups. One group of factors relates to the characteristics of the child sexual abuse case situation including intrusiveness of the sexual act (Atteberry-Bennett, 1987; Dewitt, 1992; O'Toole, Webster, & Lucal, 1994), frequency of the sexual act (Dewitt, 1992; Hartman, Karlson, & Hibbard, 1994), age of victim (Atteberry-Bennett, 1987; Jackson & Nuttall, 1993), gender of victim (Broussard, Wagner, & Kazelskis, 1991; Lessard, 1996), victim resistance (Broussard & Wagner, 1988; Finkelhor and Redfield, 1984), age of perpetrator (Dewitt, 1992; Finkelhor & Redfield, 1984), gender of perpetrator (Atteberry-Bennett, 1987), and the relationship of the perpetrator to the child (Atteberry-Bennett, 1987; Conte, Forgarty & Collins, 1991;

Dewitt, 1992). The other group of factors relates to professionals'(observers') background characteristics including professional affiliation (Jackson & Nuttall, 1993; O'Toole et al., 1994), their demographics (Jackson & Nuttall, 1993; McKenzie & Calder, 1993; O'Toole et al., 1994) and observer's past history of sexual victimization (Broussard et al., 1991; Jackson & Nuttall, 1993; Lessard, 1996).

Based on the factors related to the professional's judgment process of child sexual abuse, the previous study by Lee (1999) was conducted to examine the relationships of child sexual abuse situation characteristics, other respondent demographics and the respondent's past history of sexual victimization on the perceptions of child sexual abuse among Korean nurses. The study demonstrated that characteristics of the abusive situation were the main influence on the perceived seriousness of child sexual abuse, not characteristics of respondents including demographics and the respondent's past history of sexual victimization.

As one of respondents' characteristics, professionals' attitudes are also important to consider in the judgment processes. In other words, when professionals face child abuse cases the judgment can be influenced by their attitudes. Ashton (2001) found that professionals' attitude toward child's discipline affected the judgment about seriousness of the abusive situation. Studies about reporting of child abuse also have shown that reporters'(professionals') attitudes toward reporting child abuse play an important role in this judgment process (Feng & Levin, 2005; Kling, Reece, Bendel & Patel, 1998). Especially, Krowchuk (1989) argued that nurses' attitudes of child abusers may be used to form assessments, can lead to stereotype-based erroneous judgments about clients in the practice setting and it ultimately affects the delivery of care to clients.

Using vignettes, the present study is designed to determine the effects of abusive situation characteristics and respondents' characteristics that influence Korean nurses' judgments about seriousness of child sexual abuse situation. To date, studies that have used vignettes to assess professional judgment (Finkelhor, 1984; Giovannoni & Becerra, 1979; Jackson & Nuttall, 1993) have focused on how professionals judge various types of maltreatment. These studies have sought opinions about the relative seriousness of abusive situations, as illustrated in a number of short vignettes. The benefit of the vignette technique in survey research is that it makes possible

an analysis of the effects on people's judgments by systematically varying the characteristics used in the situation description (Hox, Kreft & Hermkens, 1991).

This study extends earlier work of Lee (1999) by examining how Korean nurses' judgments about seriousness of child sexual abuse situation vary as a function of child sexual abuse situational characteristics as well as nurses' attitudes as a part of respondents' characteristics. The specific objectives of the study are as follows: 1) to examine the effects of abusive situational characteristic variables on the Korean nurses' judgments about seriousness of child sexual abuse situation; 2) to examine the effects of nurses' attitudinal variables toward child sexual abuser on the Korean nurses' judgments about seriousness of child sexual abuse situation; 3) to confirm the results of the earlier work by Lee (1999) that the characteristics of the abusive situation were the main influence on the Korean nurses' judgments about child sexual abuse situations, not characteristics of respondents.

METHOD

Design

A vignette design was used to assess Korean nurses' judgment about seriousness of child sexual abuse situation. Vignettes are short description of a person or a social situation which contain precise references to what are thought to be the most important factors in the judgment making processes of respondents. In this study, respondents were given vignettes describing hypothetical situations of sexual interaction involving children and others, and were asked to rate these examples according to their degree of seriousness. Seven variables were selected for vignette construction: 1) age of victim, 2) age of perpetrator, 3) cross-gender combinations of perpetrator and victim, 4) victim resistance, 5) relatedness between victim and perpetrator, 6) frequency of sexual abuse, and 7) intrusiveness of sexual act. Each level of each variable was combined with each level of every other variable to create a condition of complete orthogonality among all seven variables. Since for some gender combinations sexual intercourse is not possible, this study was limited to cross-gender perpetrator-victim combinations. All variables were dichotomous except intrusiveness of abuse, a four-level variable. The full combination of levels and factors yields 256 vignettes (six

variables with 2 levels and one variable with 4 levels - a 2x2x2x2x2x2x4 design).

<Table 1> Variables and their levels used in vignette construction

Variables	Levels ^a
Victim age	Child (1), Adolescent (2)
Perpetrator age	Adolescent (1), Adult (2)
Cross-gender abuse (victim/perpetrator)	Female, Male (1), Male, Female (2)
Victim resistance	Does not object (1), Objects (2)
Relatedness	Family (1), Neighbor (2)
Frequency	Once (1), Several times (2)
Sexual act	Verbalization (1), Exhibitionism (2), Touch (3), Vaginal intercourse (4)

^a The level is indicated by (1), (2), etc.

To reduce the number of possible vignette combinations, a one-fourth fractional factorial design was followed for this study. Fractional factorial design provides a strategy for maximizing the number of vignette characteristics which can be systematically manipulated while minimizing the information loss reduction in design size, thereby enhancing the efficiency of this technique (Alexander & Becker, 1978). This design requires only 64 of the 256 possible vignettes (The complete orthogonal array of factor levels and combinations for the 64 vignettes is shown in Appendix A.). However, 64 vignettes are still too many for a respondent to address in a single administration of a questionnaire. Respondents instead were given random samples of 16 of the 64 vignettes. The construction of the random samples of vignettes was accomplished with a computer program created for this task. This procedure generated a randomly selected and randomly ordered set of 16 vignettes for each respondent. The one-fourth fractional factorial design, coupled with the one-fourth random assignment of the vignettes, allowed statistical independence of the situational characteristic variables to be maintained.

In order to ensure that respondent would start from the same reference point, four additional vignettes that were identical for all respondents were placed at the beginning of the vignette questionnaire section, before the 16 random vignettes. The seriousness of sexual abuse represented by these four vignettes was designed to range from not serious to very serious. Each respondent was asked to indicate for each of the 20 vignettes (4 fixed, 16 random) in the degree of seriousness of the sexual abuse situation portrayed in the vignettes. Seriousness ranged on a continuum from 0="Not sexual abuse"

to 9="Extremely serious sexual abuse."

In addition to the set of vignettes, a number of questions were included in the questionnaire to obtain attitudes about reasons why people sexually abuse children, the identity of those who perpetrate child sexual abuse and treatment vs punishment priority toward offender.

The experts of this area verified the contents of vignettes and other parts of the questionnaire. Then, those were translated into Korean and back translated into English to ensure that the content/meaning of the questionnaire and vignettes were conveyed properly. Several English speaking native Koreans assisted in this process.

Sample and Procedure

Korean registered nurses, consisting of 503 hospital nurses and 526 school nurses, comprise the sample in this study. This represents a 93.4% overall response rate.

For hospital nurses, four large hospitals in one urban area and one large hospital in another were selected. Questionnaires were distributed to the head nurses in each hospital by the respective hospital nursing directors. These nursing directors selected all nursing units in their respective hospitals, excluding units that do not directly interact with patients (intensive care unit, supply unit, operating unit, etc.). Head nurses in each unit distributed questionnaires to the nurses in their units, along with a cover letter explaining the study and an envelope in which participants could return the questionnaire. For school nurses, the respective directors of the continuous education courses distributed questionnaires during continuous education classes held at three urban locations. Continuous education classes are designed for school nurses who want to advance in their employment positions. These classes are held every year for five weeks from July through August. After respondents filled out the questionnaire, they returned it sealed in a provided envelope to their respective nursing or continuous education director. Arrangements were then made for the questionnaire to be returned to the investigator for analysis.

Independent Variables

• Characteristics of Child Sexual Abuse Situation

Seven variables were included as characteristics of child sexual abuse situation in the vignettes: age of victim, age of

perpetrator, cross gender abuse (perpetrator/victim pairing), victim resistance, relatedness of perpetrator to child, frequency of sexual act, and sexual act.

- Victim age : This variable is divided into two categories, a 7-year-old child and an adolescent of unspecified age.
- Perpetrator age : This variable consists of two categories, an adolescent of unspecified age and an adult.
- Cross-gender abuse : This variable is categorized as either female victim with male perpetrator or male victim with female perpetrator.
- Victim resistance : This variable is defined as victim's response to initiation of sexual activity by the perpetrator. It is categorized as victim objects or victim does not object. For example, "the girl did not object," and "the girl objected strenuously."
- Relatedness of perpetrator to victim : This variable is the relationship between victim and perpetrator, categorized as within the family or neighbor (outside the family). If the level of relationship is family and the level of perpetrator age is adolescent, then relationship is represented in the vignettes by sibling relationship. For example, "a female adolescent exposed herself to her 7-year-old brother," or "a male adolescent exposed himself to his 7-year-old sister." If the level of relationship is family and the level of perpetrator age is adult, then relationship is represented by a parent-child relationship in the vignettes. For example, "a mother touched her adolescent son in a sexual way," and "a father touched his adolescent daughter in a sexual way." If the level of relatedness is outside family, it is represented by neighbor. For example, "a male adolescent had intercourse with a 7-year-old girl, who was his neighbor."
- Frequency of sexual act : This variable is defined as the number of occurrences of sexual contact, dichotomized as "once" and "several times."
- Sexual act : This variable is defined as the degree of contact involved in the sexual activity, grouped into four levels of increasing intrusiveness: talking in sexually suggestive ways, exhibitionism, touching, and sexual vaginal intercourse.

Following is an example of a complete vignette incorporating all seven variables: "A female adult talked in sexually suggestive ways to a male adolescent, who was her neighbor, several times. She did this even though the boy

objected.”

- Respondents' Characteristics: Nurses' Attitudes

Respondent characteristic variables include questions developed by Finkelhor(1984) about reasons why people sexually abuse children, the identity of those who perpetrate child sexual abuse and treatment vs punishment priority. To assess attitudes about reasons why people sexually abuse children, a list of common popular explanations containing ten statements was given to respondents, including “They are mentally ill, They are too highly sexed, They are lonely and isolated” etc. The four response categories of such statements were (1) most cases, (2) some cases, (3) rare cases, (4) almost never. The response categories were reverted for the analysis. To assess attitudes about the identity of those who perpetrate child sexual abuse, six types of abusers were given including “parents, stepparents, brothers and sisters, relatives, acquaintances and strangers”. The four response categories were (1) most cases, (2) some cases, (3) rare cases, (4) almost never. The response categories were reverted. To assess attitudes about treatment vs punishment priority which reflect that the ways to handle the people who have sexually abused a child, respondents were asked to indicate their preference in order including “Brought to punishment”, “Get psychological help”, and “Both.” This variable was created by coding as follows: 1=Psychological help as the first preference, 2=Both as the first preference and Psychological help as the second 3= Both as the first preference and Punishment as the second 4=Punishment as the first preference.

Dependent Variable

- Judgment about seriousness of child sexual abuse situation (Seriousness Rating).

The dependent variable of this study is respondents' seriousness ratings of sexual abuse situations involving children portrayed in the vignettes, and ranges from 0 to 9. A rating of 0 indicates that respondent considered the situation not to be sexual abuse. A rating of 1-3 indicates the situation was perceived to be minorly serious sexual abuse, 4-5 moderately serious, 6-7 quite serious, and 8-9 extremely serious sexual abuse.

Control Variable

- Average rating tendency

The average score of baseline vignettes was derived from an average of the four baseline vignettes rated by all respondents and reflects a measure of respondent's rating tendencies. Respondents with high average scores were considered to have tendencies to rank incidents toward the high seriousness end of scale, whereas those with low averages were seen as having tendencies to rank incidents toward the low seriousness end of scale.

Data Analysis

The distribution of the dependent variable of this study (seriousness ratings of child sexual abuse situations) was highly skewed and non-normally distributed. Logistic regression is particularly robust with respect to violations of multivariate normality (Hosmer & Lemeshow, 1989). Therefore, logistic regression was used for analysis. The median split was used to determine the two categories of the dependent variable (0-7 low to quite serious sexual abuse=1, 8-9 extremely serious sexual abuse=2). An alternate dichotomizing strategy was also considered based on the theoretical midpoint (0-5 for low seriousness, 6-9 for high seriousness). However, this mid-point cutting produced very poor classification tables due to the highly skewed distribution of the dependent variable, whereas results using the median split produced excellent classification tables for the analysis.

RESULTS

A total of 16,464 rated vignettes was obtained from the 1,029 respondents in the sample as the unit of analysis. To examine the extent to which situational abuse incident characteristics and respondents' characteristics influence the judgments of the seriousness of child sexual abuse situations, seriousness ratings were regressed first on the situational characteristic variables (Model 1), next on respondents' attitudinal variables (Model 2), finally, on combined situational characteristics and respondent's attitudinal variables (Model 3). Respondent's attitudinal variables were questions about why people sexually abuse children, the identity of those who perpetrate child sexual abuse, and treatment vs punishment

<Table 2> Descriptive statistics of variables

Variables	Mean	SD	Range
Average rating tendency(Control variable)	5.44	1.12	0-9
Situational characteristics(Independent variables)			
Victim age			
Child(7-year-old)	6.97	2.21	0-9
Adolescent	7.13	2.07	0-9
Perpetrator age			
Adolescent	6.98	2.12	0-9
Adult	7.12	2.16	0-9
Cross-gender abuse			
Female(Victim)/Male(Perpetrator)	7.26	2.03	0-9
Male(Victim)/Female(Perpetrator)	6.84	2.23	0-9
Victim resistance			
Does not object	6.63	2.30	0-9
Objects	7.47	1.98	0-9
Relatedness			
Family	6.94	2.28	0-9
Neighbor	7.16	1.99	0-9
Frequency of act			
Once	6.88	2.22	0-9
Several times	7.21	2.05	0-9
Intrusiveness of sexual act			
Talk in sexually suggestive way	6.30	2.36	0-9
Exhibitionism	6.41	2.53	0-9
Touch	7.07	2.19	0-9
Sexual intercourse	8.44	1.48	0-9
Respondent attitudes(Independent variables)			
Why perpetrator sexually abuse children			
They are mentally ill	3.65	0.71	1-4
High sexed	2.86	0.98	1-4
Lonely and isolated	3.01	1.02	1-4
Not get enough sex from their parents	2.81	1.07	1-4
Read about things like this in sex books	2.68	1.01	1-4
Not believe that it is wrong to do this	2.90	1.13	1-4
They are homosexuals	1.74	0.85	1-4
They are senile	1.94	1.13	1-4
They are alcoholics	1.99	0.95	1-4
Children themselves act in a sexy way	1.25	0.63	1-4
The identity of abuser			
Parents	2.36	1.01	1-4
Stepparents	1.68	0.87	1-4
Brothers and sisters	2.85	0.86	1-4
Relatives	2.35	0.91	1-4
Friends or acquaintances	2.65	0.90	1-4
Stranger	3.16	0.95	1-4
Treatment vs punishment preference	2.7	0.93	1-4
Judgment about seriousness(Dependent variable)	7.05	2.14	0-9

priority toward offender. The respondents' average score on four baseline vignettes was introduced to control respondent's rating tendencies. The mean of respondent's average score on four base vignettes is 5.44 with a standard deviation of 1.12. The overall average rating of dependent variable (judgments about seriousness of child sexual abuse situation-seriousness

<Table 3> Socio-Demographic characteristics of nurses^a

Variable	Frequency (Percent)	M	SD
Age		33.2	6.8
20-29	338 (32.8)		
30-39	380 (36.9)		
40-49	191 (18.6)		
50+	16 (1.6)		
Education			
High school graduates	6 (0.6)		
3yrs nursing college graduates	476 (46.3)		
Bachelor's degree	389 (37.8)		
Master's degree	66 (6.4)		
Number of years of nursing experience		9.4	5.7
0-4	224 (21.8)		
5-9	273 (26.5)		
10-14	241 (23.4)		
15-19	137 (13.3)		
20+	56 (5.5)		
Size of community in which the respondents grew up			
County/Township/Village	219 (21.3)		
Small/Medium city	212 (20.6)		
Large City	512 (49.8)		
Media exposure about child sexual abuse issues		2.9	0.7
Never	15 (1.5)		
Seldom	251 (24.3)		
Sometimes	547 (53.2)		
Often	214 (20.7)		
Marital Status			
Never married	316 (30.7)		
Married	622 (60.4)		
Other ^b	6 (0.6)		
For Married Nurses Only ^c			
Have Children			
Yes	548 (88.1)		
No	73 (11.7)		
Number of Child		1.6	0.8
None	73 (11.7)		
1	163 (26.0)		
2	334 (53.2)		
3+	43 (6.8)		

^an=1,029; variables for which percentages do not total 100% contain missing data.

^bOther includes divorced, separated, and widowed. ^cn=628

ratings) is 7.05 and a standard deviation of 2.14 with a range from 0 to 9. Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics of variables included in the analysis of this study.

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Sample

Average age of respondents was 33.2 years and most of the respondents had graduated from a 3- or 4-year nursing college. Average number of years of nursing experience was 9.4 years.

Two-thirds of the respondents were married, and of these nearly 9 out of 10 reported that they have children with more than half reporting two children. Almost half of the respondents lived in large cities until completing junior high school. About three-fourths of the respondents reported that they were exposed sometimes or often by the media to child sexual abuse issues.

Model 1 : Situational Characteristic Variables on the Judgments of Child Sexual Abuse Situation (Seriousness Ratings)

Model 1 in Table 4 presents findings from the simultaneous logistic regression of the seven situational characteristic variables and respondent's rating tendency on judgments about seriousness of child sexual abuse situation (seriousness ratings). Results indicate that model 1 which includes seven situational characteristic variables and a control variable is highly significant (Model Chi Square=4768.80; $p=.001$), although the large sample size causes even very small differences to reach high levels of statistical significance. An alternative indication of the strength of the model is provided by the Pseudo-R² of 0.205, which indicates that 20.5% of the association between judgments about seriousness of child sexual abuse and the situational characteristic variables is accounted for by the model. Results shown in model 1 of Table 4 indicate that victim resistance (odds ratio=2.36), intrusiveness of sexual act (odds ratio=2.33) and average rating tendency (odds ratio=1.88) have the greatest impact on the judgments about seriousness of child sexual abuse. Respondent rating tendency was the third important predictor of dependent variable, which reflects that respondents with high average scores were considered to have tendencies to rank incidents toward the high seriousness end of scale, whereas those with low averages were seen as having tendencies to rank incidents toward the low seriousness end of scale. Next in relative impacts are frequency of sexual acts (odds ratio=1.44), perpetrator age (odds ratio=1.37) and cross-gender relationship (odds ratio=0.75).

More specifically, respondents are more likely to rate vignettes including statement "victim objects" as extremely serious by 2.36 times than those including "victim does not object". For intrusiveness of sexual act, the odds of vignettes being rated as an extreme serious increases 2.33 times for one unit of increase in the level of intrusiveness of the sexual act.

For base vignettes, the odds of vignettes being rated as an extreme serious increases 1.88 times than being rated as a low/quite serious for one unit of increase in the mean score of four baseline vignettes. With respect to the frequency of sexual act, being rated as extremely serious is 1.44 times more likely for vignettes with multiple sexual interactions compared to those with only a single sexual interaction. With respect to the gender of victim and perpetrator pairing, vignettes with male victims and female perpetrators have 25% decreased likelihood of being rated as extremely serious. The impact of victim age (odds ratio=1.1) and relatedness were negligible and insignificant. For the most part, directions in relationships with this Korean sample of nurses are similar to those found with US samples (e.g., DeWitt, 1992; Finkelhor & Redfield, 1984). Judgments of more serious abuse situation are related to resistance by the victim, more intrusive levels of abuse, higher rating tendency, multiple occurrences of abuse, adult perpetration and male perpetrator-female victim pairing. Relatedness between perpetrator and victim and victim age variables do not have significant effects on the judgments about seriousness of child sexual abuse situation.

Model 2 : Respondent Attitudinal Variables on the Judgments of Child Sexual Abuse Situation (Seriousness Ratings)

Model 2 in Table 4 presents results of the logistic regression for the seventeen respondent attitudinal variables. Although the statistical significance of this model is high, due to the size of the sample (Model Chi-Square=109.209, $p=.01$), the Pseudo-R² is only 0.005. This means that less than 1% of the association between seriousness rating and all seventeen attitudinal variables taken together is accounted for by this model. However, some attitudinal variables are significant. In general, seriousness ratings are related to the respondents who think that the offenders are mentally ill, they don't get enough sex from their partner, they read about things like sexual interaction with children in sex books, they do not believe that sexual interaction with children is wrong, and parent is the typical offender. The effects of those respondent attitudinal variables are quite small compared to situational characteristic variables and their odds ratios are close to 1.

Model 3 : Situational Characteristic and
Respondent Attitudinal Variables on
the Judgments of Child Sexual Abuse
Situation (Seriousness Ratings)

The purpose of the combined analysis was to determine the extent to which the judgment about seriousness of the incidents of child sexual abuse portrayed in the vignettes could be attributed to situational characteristics, after the introduction of respondents' attitudes as a part of respondents' characteristics. If the influence of the situational characteristic variables still remains stable and Pseudo-R² is changed little with the introduction of respondents' attitudinal variables, the conclusion would be that the judgment of seriousness of child

<Table 4> Logistic regression for situational characteristics and respondent attitudes on the judgments about seriousness of child sexual abuse situation(Seriousness Rating)

Variables	Odds Ratios		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Average rating tendency	1.875***		1.873***
Situational characteristics			
Victim age	1.111		1.092
Perpetrator age	1.371***		1.373***
Cross-gender abuse	0.747***		0.751***
Victim resistance	2.362***		2.374***
Relatedness	1.045		1.001
Frequency of act	1.443***		1.512***
Intrusiveness of sexual act	2.331***		2.345***
Respondent attitudes			
Why people sexually abuse children			
They are mentally ill	0.965*		0.944*
High sexed	1.066		1.070
Lonely and isolated	1.007		1.013
Not get enough sex from their partners	0.952**		0.943**
Read about things like this in sex books	1.043*		1.076**
Not believe that it is wrong to do this	0.948*		0.929*
They are homosexuals	0.951		0.998
They are senile	0.984		1.023
They are alcoholics	1.115		1.057
Children themselves act in a sexy way	0.928		0.970
The identity of abuser			
Parents	1.101**		1.117***
Stepparents	0.999		0.995
Brothers and sisters	0.974		0.995
Relatives	1.034		1.005
Friends or acquaintances	1.023		0.986
Stranger	0.996		1.011
Treatment vs punishment preference	1.031		1.036
Model Chi-Square	4768.80***	109.209**	4765.99***
Pseudo-R²	0.205	0.005	0.209

Note: *p≤.05 **p≤.01 ***p≤.001

sexual abuse situation is primarily due to characteristics of the abuse situation, not to characteristics of the observer-respondent.

To obtain an indication of the relative importance of situational characteristics and respondents' attitudes as a part of respondents' characteristics, the addition of attitudinal variables was introduced to the Model 1. This model is significant overall (Model Chi-Square=4765.99, p=.001). The Pseudo-R² value is 0.209, indicating that 20.9% of the association between the judgments about seriousness of child sexual abuse and the combined effects of both situational characteristics and respondents' attitudes is accounted for by the model. Compared to the model containing just the situational characteristic variables, the value of Pseudo-R² for the combined model is increased by only 0.4%..

Overall, these results indicate that the situational characteristic variables continue to have almost same odds ratios and Pseudo-R² is changed little with the introduction of respondents' attitudinal variables as a part of the respondents' characteristics. Conclusively, the judgments about seriousness of child sexual abuse situation is primarily influenced by characteristics of the abuse situation, not by characteristics of the observer-respondent.

CONCLUSIONS

The most important finding of this study is that Korean nurses' judgments about the seriousness of child sexual abuse situation are affected by characteristics of the child sexual abuse case situation rather than by attitudes of observers-respondents. This reflects that when nurses consider the seriousness of child sexual abuse cases, they will make judgments based on the case itself rather than being influenced by their attitudes of child sexual abusers as one of observers' characteristics. These findings confirm those obtained by earlier work of Lee (1999) which concluded that the influence of observer characteristics on the judgments about seriousness of child sexual abuse in general does not appear to play an important role for the nurses.

The major finding mentioned above is noteworthy for nursing practice since it may present that nurses remain unbiased when they face child sexual abuse incidents. If nurses have stereotypes of child abusers, it may affect assessments and judgments about clients in the practice setting (Krowchuk,

1989). For instance, when the nurses deal with child sexual abuse cases, individuals fitting in the identity of child sexual abuser (e.g., parents, stepparents, acquaintances, strangers etc.) or the reasons of child sexual abuse (e.g., They are mentally ill, highly sexed, etc.) may be more likely diagnosed, whereas those who do not fit in the stereotypes will be more likely to be dismissed and forgotten. This can eventually lead to erroneous judgment.

With respect to the findings that the situational characteristic variables on judgments about seriousness of child sexual abuse situation, judgments of more serious abuse situation are related to resistance by the victim, more intrusive levels of abuse, higher rating tendency, multiple occurrences of abuse, adult perpetration and male perpetrator-female victim pairing. The difference between intrafamilial versus extrafamilial abuse and victim age do not influence on the respondents' judgments about child sexual abuse situation. The findings that Korean nurses tend to judge child sexual abuse situations as more serious when the victim objected to the perpetrator's sexual advances, and where the sexual interaction involved a female victim and male perpetrator have important implications. Educational programs may need to provide the dynamics involved in adult-child sexual interactions, particularly focused on victims who do not resist but remain passive and sexual interactions involving an adult female and a male child. A child cannot give informed consent for sexual interaction with an adult and the minority of cases in which the child may initiate as a means of receiving love previously denied her or him. In addition, the sexual abuse incidents involving male victims and female perpetrators are not rare occurrences (Broussard et al., 1991) and male victims appear to suffer the same psychological trauma as females (Rogers & Terry, 1984; Park, 1996).

Korean nurses did not make distinctions between family perpetrators and neighbors when considering the seriousness of child sexual abuse incidents. This finding is consistent with findings of U.S. samples, where a weak distinction between intrafamilial and extrafamilial relationships on the perceived seriousness ratings has typically been obtained (Finkelhor & Redfield, 1984; Kelley, 1990). In addition, Korean nurses tend to judge child sexual abuse incidents involving adolescents as serious as those involving 7-year-old children. Further research may be needed to determine if judgments of seriousness vary according to whether victims are intrafamilial or extrafamilial

or more victim age differential.

In addition, the respondent's average score on four baseline vignettes was the third important predictor of the judgments about seriousness of child sexual abuse situation in this study. This means that respondents with high average scores were considered to have tendencies to rank incidents toward the high seriousness end of scale, whereas those with low averages were seen as having tendencies to rank incidents toward the low seriousness end of scale. The finding suggests the need for researchers' concern about a respondent's overall tendency to rate high or low on a seriousness continuum. Studies should take account of control of individual rating tendency in respondents' seriousness ratings.

The use of vignettes in this survey research is very meaningful. It is frequently argued that major problem in survey research is the ambiguity that often arises when respondents are asked to make judgments from abstract and limited information. However, the vignette method has several advantages. According to Alexander and Becker (1978), the use of vignettes helps to standardize the social stimulus across respondents and at the same time makes the situation more concrete and real. In addition, by employing systematic variation in vignette content, researchers are able to measure the determinants of respondent opinion more accurately than by the use of direct questioning. Due to these benefits, vignettes have been used for the studies to examine respondent's decision making or judgment. Especially, studies that have used vignettes were to assess how professionals judge various types of abuse situation (Finkelhor, 1984; Giovannoni & Becerra, 1979; Jackson & Nuttal, 1993). For further research of concern to all professionals who are confronted with difficult judgments of child abuse cases, the use of vignettes would be effective in this research area.

In conclusion, this study identified the influence of situational characteristics and respondent attitudes on Korean nurses' judgments of the seriousness of child sexual abuse. Fortunately, the result of this study suggests that nurses may not be biased with their personal attitudes when they formulate decisions about the child sexual abuse cases. It also provides a foundation for Korean nurses to act as gatekeepers to be able to take action from a base of accurate information.

To identify accurately true cases of child sexual abuse and to reduce the possible harmful effects of intervention, the professionals who are confronted with sexual abuse cases must

be clear on how individuals judge child sexual abuse situation. This study should be extended to include populations such as doctors, teachers, judges, lawyers, and police investigators who also have a role in identifying, preventing and intervening in child sexual abuse. In addition, this study does not address a variety of questions about attitudes toward child sexual abuse. More attitudinal questions about child sexual abuse should be addressed in further research.

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<APPENDIX A> Orthogonal array of factor levels by situational characteristic variables

($\frac{1}{4}$ of $2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 4$ Fractional Factorial Design)

Vignette	Factor Levels						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	1	1	1	1	2	2	1
3	1	1	2	2	1	1	1
4	1	1	2	2	2	2	1
5	2	2	1	1	1	1	1
6	2	2	1	1	2	2	1
7	2	2	2	2	1	1	1
8	2	2	2	2	2	2	1
9	2	1	2	1	2	1	1
10	2	1	2	1	1	2	1
11	2	1	1	2	2	1	1
12	2	1	1	2	1	2	1
13	1	2	2	1	2	1	1
14	1	2	2	1	1	2	1
15	1	2	1	2	2	1	1
16	1	2	1	2	1	2	1
17	2	1	1	1	1	1	2
18	2	1	1	1	2	2	2
19	2	1	2	2	1	1	2
20	2	1	2	2	2	2	2
21	1	2	1	1	1	1	2
22	1	2	1	1	2	2	2
23	1	2	2	2	1	1	2
24	1	2	2	2	2	2	2
25	1	1	2	1	2	1	2
26	1	1	2	1	1	2	2
27	1	1	1	2	2	1	2
28	1	1	1	2	1	2	2
29	2	2	2	1	2	1	2
30	2	2	2	1	1	2	2
31	2	2	1	2	2	1	2
32	2	2	1	2	1	2	2
33	1	1	2	1	1	1	3
34	1	1	2	1	2	2	3
35	1	1	1	2	1	1	3
36	1	1	1	2	2	2	3
37	2	2	2	1	1	1	3
38	2	2	2	1	2	2	3
39	2	2	1	2	1	1	3
40	2	2	1	2	2	2	3

<APPENDIX A> Orthogonal array of factor levels by situational characteristic variables(continued)
 (¼ of 2×2×2×2×2×2×4 Fractional Factorial Design)

Vignette	Factor Levels						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
41	2	1	1	1	2	1	3
42	2	1	1	1	1	2	3
43	2	1	2	2	2	1	3
44	2	1	2	2	1	2	3
45	1	2	1	1	2	1	3
46	1	2	1	1	1	2	3
47	1	2	2	2	2	1	3
48	1	2	2	2	1	2	3
49	1	1	1	1	2	1	4
50	1	1	1	1	1	2	4
51	1	1	2	2	2	1	4
52	1	1	2	2	1	2	4
53	2	2	1	1	2	1	4
54	2	2	1	1	1	2	4
55	2	2	2	2	2	1	4
56	2	2	2	2	1	2	4
57	2	1	2	1	1	1	4
58	2	1	2	1	2	2	4
59	2	1	1	2	1	1	4
60	2	1	1	2	2	2	4
61	1	2	2	1	1	1	4
62	1	2	2	1	2	2	4
63	1	2	1	2	1	1	4
64	1	2	1	2	2	2	4

Note: A = Victim age (1=7-year-old child, 2=adolescent)

B = Perpetrator age (1=adolescent, 2=adult)

C = Cross-gender relationship of victim and perpetrator (1=female victim with male perpetrator, 2=male victim with female perpetrator)

D = Victim resistance (1=does not object, 2=objects)

E = Relatedness of relationship between victim and perpetrator (1=family, 2=neighbor).

F = Frequency of sexual acts (1=once, 2=several times)

G = Intrusiveness of sexual act (1=verbalization, 2=exhibitionism, 3=non-penetration contact, 4=penetration)