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## Korean Mothers' Intuitive Theories Regarding Emotion Socialization of their Children

*This study aims at exploring Korean mothers' beliefs on the development of emotion of their children. In specific, sensitivity and maternal reactions to their children's both negative and positive emotion expressions were explored. Further, associations among maternal sensitivity, maternal reactions and child emotion regulation were examined. A total of 100 Korean mothers whose children were between 6 and 7 years old participated in the study. In order to assess mothers' beliefs about sensitivity, vignettes in a forced-choice format were presented through individual interviews. Mothers' self reported reactions to their children's negative emotions and positive emotions and mothers' perceptions of*

*children's emotion regulation were assessed using questionnaires. Results revealed that Korean mothers endorsed both proactive and reactive sensitivity. However, their sensitivity differed depending on the situation. Mothers tended to endorse either Emotion Focused or Problem Focused reactions to their children's negative emotions. Mothers reported that they were most likely to restrict their child positive emotional expression with explanation in supportive way followed by invalidating through reprimanding it. Mothers' reported Distress Reactions and Punitive Reactions to children's expression of negative emotion were associated with children's liability whereas Emotion-Focused Reaction and Problem-Focused Reaction were associated with children's functional emotion regulation. The results are discussed within a theoretical framework of socialization of emotions.*

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Emotions are often viewed as having an impact on the motivation in human behavior (Eisenberg, 2006) and thus, the study on emotion socialization is a fundamental task for understanding the development of social-emotional competence. Moreover, the socialization of emotions is influenced by cultural meaning systems for the expression and regulation of emotions (Cole & Tan, 2006; Trommsdorff, 2006; Trommsdorff & Rothbaum, 2008; Trommsdorff & Cole, 2011). For instance, caregivers' sensitivity to their children' emotional expression varies depending on their culture. Mothers' implicit socialization beliefs (i.e. intuitive theories) about maternal sensitivity

and mothers' reactions to their children's emotional expression can be assumed to be associated with children's emotion development and socio-emotional adjustment (Leekes, Blankson, & O'Brien, 2009; Trommsdorff & Friedlmeier, 2010). Emotion socialization may occur in daily life through parents' practices which are guided by their culture-informed intuitive theories about child emotional competence. Accordingly, children learn to experience, display, and regulate their emotions in line with socio-cultural expectations regarding situation-specific appropriate emotional functioning. Therefore, the intensity of emotion experience, and the way of emotion expression, and moreover, the meaning of the specific emotions is varying across cultures. While inter-cultural differences in emotion development have been reported in several studies (e.g., Cole, Tamang & Shresta, 2006; Trommsdorff & Cole, 2011), intra-cultural differences have largely been ignored. For example, Asian children as compared to Western children are rather discouraged to show an emotional expression of disappointment or anger (Trommsdorff, 2009). Not only this difference between Asian and Western culture, but cultural differences within Asian cultures have also been implied. According to Park & Cheah (2005), although both Korea and China are Confucian-based culture, Korean mothers were more influenced by Western ideologies regarding child socialization than their Mainland China counterparts due to marked societal changes in contemporary Korea. The aim of this study therefore is to explore aspects of the emotion socialization of young children in South Korea in order to gain insight in the influence of culture on mothers' implicit theories on the development of their children's emotion expression and emotion regulation.

Harkness and Super (2006) have emphasized the importance of parental beliefs as part of the developmental niche. The authors suggest that child everyday experiences are influenced by social cultural customs, physical environment, and parental ethno-theories. In fact, previous research pointed to cultural differences in the meaning of care-givers' sensitivity in the development of child social-emotional behaviors (Rothbaum, Nagaoka, & Ponte,

2006; Trommsdorff & Friedlmeier, 2010). Thus, it is useful to examine the differences and similarities in emotion socialization beliefs across cultures and moreover, in a particular culture. To date, no studies in Korea have directly assessed maternal beliefs about emotion socialization and the relations between maternal sensitivity, maternal reactions to children's emotion expression, and children's emotion regulation. The purpose of this study is to examine Korean mothers' socialization beliefs about sensitivity and maternal reactions to their children's both negative and positive emotion expressions and to explore the associations between maternal beliefs and child emotion regulation.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Mothers' Sensitivity*

According to Trommsdorff and Friedlmeier (2010), maternal sensitivity as indicated by comforting and helping implies responding to child's needs with behaviors appropriate to the situation and the child's signals (p.355). Mothers' sensitivity is assumed to promote culturally valued ways of children's emotion expression. In a specific culture, maternal sensitivity to the child's emotion expression facilitates the child's internalization of cultural values and of mother's expectations about adequate emotional expression. However, recent studies revealed that the kind of maternal sensitivity differs depending on the cultural context. Such differences have been shown in the level or stability or flexibility across situations and also the cultural meaning of sensitivity. For instance, comparing German and Japanese mothers' sensitivity to child's distress, Trommsdorff and Friedlmeier (2010) found significant cultural differences. Japanese mothers were seemingly more sensitive than German mothers. Further, Japanese mothers' sensitivity varied according to the situational context (task related sensitivity vs. distress-related sensitivity) whereas German mothers' sensitivity was not affected by the situation. Based on the results, Trommsdorff and Friedlmeier conclude that Japanese mothers' sensitivity could be viewed as a "state" phenomenon rather than a "trait." Japanese

mothers reacted more flexible by taking into account the situational conditions impacting the child's emotional experience.

Previous studies have also found cultural differences in the meaning of caregivers' sensitivity between Western and East Asian cultures. In Western cultures where independence is emphasized, emotional expressive is highly valued and open expression of emotions is more encouraged. Thus a mother expects her child to express needs and emotions openly, with mothers responding promptly (i.e. *reactive sensitivity*). In contrast, in Asian cultures where interdependence is more highly valued, the open expression of emotions or needs is socially undesirable. Thus, a mother tries to anticipate her child's needs based on subtle or situational factors (i.e. *proactive sensitivity*) and open expression of emotions is likely discouraged. Comparing the teachers' beliefs about rather anticipating and responding to children's need, Rothbaum *et al.* (2006) found that sensitivity in western cultures has more to do with responsiveness to children's explicit expression of needs. In contrast, sensitivity in non-western cultures has more to do with the anticipation of the children's needs and receptivity to subtle and nonverbal cues.

These differences in caregivers' preference for the type of sensitivity may also be due to their expectations what their children should learn in the particular society. For instance, exploring the reasons of caregivers' sensitivity, Rothbaum *et al.* (2006) found that U.S. teachers believe that children should learn to be self-reliant and that children are responsible for expressing their own needs. In contrast, Japanese teachers emphasize that children should learn to engage in interdependence with their teachers, and that teachers are responsible for understanding the children's needs. Eventually, the two types of sensitivity may have different consequences in child development. To date, few studies have addressed the issue of these two types of sensitivity and the related goals of caregivers for the emotion socialization of children.

The primary aim of this study is to provide an empirical evidence of Korean mothers' beliefs about proactive (i.e. anticipating) and/or reactive (i.e. responsiveness) sensitivity. Traditionally, Korean

children have learned from their parents in explicit or inexplicit way that they are not allowed to tell their own opinion or needs to their parents or adults. The important features of traditional parenting practices in which parents' sensitivity of anticipation would be valued are parental devotion and indulgence (Kim, Park, Kwon, & Koo, 2005). However, things have been changing. Due to the nature of a more competitive and industrialized society, Korean mothers have begun to socialize to meet the changing demands of society such as children's assertiveness or independence (Kim, Park, & Kwon, 2005). They even want their children from early age on to act independently; their reason is that they do not have extra time to monitor and watch their children all day long. Thus, we assume that Korean mothers would emphasize not only the importance of sensitively anticipating children's needs, but also they would expect their children's explicit expression of their needs. Regarding the reasons for the preference of both types of sensitivity, Korean mothers would emphasize mothers' responsibility for anticipating their child needs and also emphasize mother-child interdependence. However, due to the ongoing socio-economic and value change, we assume that Korean mothers would as well emphasize the child's autonomy, independence, and self-expression.

#### *Emotion Socialization and Maternal Reactions to Children's Emotional Expression*

Emotion socialization is the process of teaching children implicitly and explicitly how to regulate their emotions and how to behave in more appropriate way when emotions are elicited. Due to the aversive nature of negative emotions, parents often to react to those behavior using negative control strategies. Sometimes even the expression of positive emotions is discouraged or even prohibited in certain situations, especially in Korean culture (Lee, Suh, Chu, Kim, & Sherrnan, 2009). The socialization of emotions is influenced by cultural meaning systems for the expression and regulation of emotions (Trommsdorff & Cole, 2011; Trommsdorff & Rothbaum, 2008; Trommsdorff & Friedlmeier, 2010). Therefore, parental reactions to children's expression of either negative or positive

emotions are assumed to be influenced by the maternal beliefs which emotion was appropriate in the specific context. In other words, socio-cultural values influence parental goals and socialization beliefs which in turn affect parenting behavior. Thereby, parents develop culture-specific preferences and socialization goals for emotion socialization of their children. These goals are more or less directly manifest in parenting behavior. Thus, the associations between parenting behavior and child emotion development can be most likely explained by parental socialization beliefs developed in a specific cultural context (Trommsdorff & Rothbaum, 2008).

Researchers who emphasize culture-specific socialization have assumed that parental emotion socialization beliefs and behaviors would differ depending on a rather individualistic or collectivistic cultural context. For instance, in individualistic cultures where assertive behaviors and obvious expression of emotions are more likely valued, parents ask their children to express overtly their emotional needs. In contrast, in collectivistic cultures where interpersonal relationships and harmony are more valued, parents teach their children to inhibit the expression of their negative emotions or their personal emotional needs for the sake of group interests (Cole, Tamang, & Shrestha, 2006; Cole, Martin, & Dennis, 2004; Trommsdorff, 2006; 2009). Based on empirical evidence we assume that mothers in this sample would show both supportive and unsupportive reactions to their children's negative or positive emotional expressions.

*Association between Mothers' Reactions toward Child  
Negative or Positive Emotional Expressions and  
Children's Emotion Regulation*

Evidence suggests that parents who react to children's negative emotions in supportive ways contribute positively to the development of children's social and emotional competence (Eisenberg, Fabes, & Murphy, 1996; Eisenberg, Fabes, Schaller, Carlo, & Miller, 1991; Kim & Kim, 2003; Soe & Lee, 2008). On the other hand, mothers who react to children's negative emotion in unsupportive ways contribute negatively to the development of children's emotion regulation (Denham, Mitchell-Copeland, Strandberg,

Auerbach, & Blair, 1997; Noh & Jeong, 2010). Studies examining the relationships between mothers' reactions to child negative emotion expression and children's emotion regulation strategies, Park, Lee, and Bae (2011) reported that mothers' problem focused and emotion focused reactions have been found to be negatively related to children's aggressive emotion regulation strategy. On the other hand, mothers' minimizing, punishment and distress reactions have been found to be positively related to aggressive strategy whereas negatively related to positive emotion regulation strategy. Other researchers also reported that mothers' problem focused and emotion focused reactions to children's negative emotional expression contribute to children's successful emotion regulation (Kang & Kang, 1999; Eisenberg & Fabes, 1994). Similarly, children whose parents report that they actively encourage the expression of emotion or help them develop strategies to deal with their emotion show better behavior regulation (Davidove & Grusec, 2006; Fabes, Poulin, Eisenberg, & Madden-Derdich, 2002). In line with existing evidence, we assume that mothers' supportive socialization strategy would help children learn how to regulate their negative emotion.

The majority of research on emotion socialization has focused on parents' responses to child negative emotional expression. Only a few studies have attempted to focus on parental socialization of positive affect exploring the association between parents' reactions toward child positive emotion and social emotional functioning of children (Ladouceur, Reid, & Jacques, 2002; Yep, Allen, & Ladouceur, 2008). Considering the important contribution of parental emotion socialization to the child's social-emotional functioning (Fabes *et al.*, 2002; Park *et al.*, 2011) and cultural meaning systems for the expression and regulation of emotions (Trommsdorff & Cole, 2011), the relationship between mothers' reactions to children's positive emotion expression and children's emotion regulation in Korean culture needs to be explored.

*Research Questions*

This study aims at a contribution to a culture-informed theoretical model on socialization antece-

dents of child emotion expression for the regulation of emotions. Specifically, Three research questions are addressed in this study: a) to exploring mothers' beliefs about maternal sensitivity in everyday situation, b) examining mothers' reactions and attitudes toward child expression of negative and of positive emotion, and c) examining the relations between maternal sensitivity and attitudes toward child negative and positive emotional expression and the child's emotion regulation.

## METHOD

### *Participants and Procedures*

A total of 100 mothers whose children were between 6 and 7 years old children (Mean age=6.7 yrs.  $SD=.31$  boys= 55; girls=45) attending the first grade of elementary school were participating. This age group was selected because first year in school is especially important not only academically but also for socio-emotional competence (Trommsdorff, Cole, & Heikamp, in press). The mean age of mothers were 36.2 years ( $SD=3.25$ ). The majority of the mothers (69%) were college graduates or above (Mean education=15.8yrs). The majority of mothers (78%) estimated their socio-economic status as middle- or upper middle-class.

The mothers were recruited from private and public elementary schools, after having received the permission from the school principals in Seoul and its vicinities in Seoul, Korea. The mothers were informed about the purpose and the method of the study and participated in this study voluntarily. The data were collected through interviewing the mothers from March to July of 2010. Before interviewing mothers for the main study, four graduate students had been trained by the first author. For each interviewer, training trials consisted in five pilot interviews of different mothers, followed by feedback from the first author. The training for interviewers was continued until everyone had clear idea about the interview and no further questions. All interviews were tape-recorded for later transcription. The interviews took place in mothers' homes or in the university lab, depending on

mothers' preference. Each interview lasted about one hour and a half.

### *Measures*

We used both standardized quantitative methods and open-format qualitative methods and thus, nominal and ordinal scales were used for further statistical analyses. All measures were adapted from instruments previously used in cross-cultural studies. This study was conducted as a part of the cross-cultural comparison studies across 5 countries, i.e. Germany, U.S. India, Nepal & Korea, all scales used in this study were originally developed in English. Therefore, they were translated by the first author of this study into Korean. Next, a back translation was done by a graduate student who was fluent with English and Korean. Comparison of the original scale in English to the Korean translations showed strong convergence. During the translation-back translation processes, culture-specific meanings or implicit meanings of some words in Korean were discussed with the second author of this study.

### *Mothers' Sensitivity*

*The Caregiver Sensitivity Interview Questionnaire (CSI; adapted from Rothbaum et al., 2006)* was used to assess mothers' beliefs about how they respond to the child's distress. The questions of Caregiver Sensitivity Interview were based on descriptions of proactive and reactive sensitivity (Trommsdorff & Rothbaum, 2008). For the current study, five of the twelve questions of original instrument were chosen and slightly modified using a combination of forced choice and open-ended questions. Mothers were asked about their subjective theories on parental sensitivity in the situation addressed in these questions. Specifically, mothers made a choice either 'anticipation (i.e. *proactive sensitivity*)' or 'responsiveness (i.e. *reactive sensitivity*)' embedded in the two forced-choice options and were asked to explain the reason for their choice (open-ended questions). The sample question of sensitivity is "if a child does not feel well or happy, and is upset, would you think (a) It is better to go to the child and sit close to him/her and talk to him/her (i.e. *proactive sensitivity*); (b) It is better to let the child know that

he/she can approach you if he/she feels she wants to be with you (i. e., *reactive sensitivity*)” and “Could you tell me why you would think that way? (i.e., reason)”. Five to six categories of reasons for each open-ended question were identified based on frequently occurring answers and finalized through discussions among authors. Inter-rater reliabilities between the rater’s coding and the master rater’s coding on randomly selected 20 samples turned out to be from .90 to .98% across the categories of 5 items with a mean of 94.8%.

#### *Mothers’ Responses to Children’s Negative Emotions*

Mother’s beliefs about how they respond to their own children’s negative emotions were assessed using the *Coping with Children’s Negative Emotion Scales* (CCNES; Fabes, et al., 2002). The CCNES is a self-report instrument consisting of six subscales that is designed to assess how mothers typically respond to their children’s negative emotions (e.g. fear, anger, embarrassment etc.). Original form of this self-report scale presents 12 hypothetical scenarios in which the child is upset or angry. Due to too lengthy interview materials, only five items from the original 12 items of CCNES including three different negative emotions such as anger, sad and fearful were used for the current study. Mothers were asked to rate the likelihood of responding to the scenario in each of six possible ways, i.e. Distress Reaction (DR), Punitive Reaction (PR), Expressive Encouragement (EE), Emotion-Focused Reactions (EFR), Problem-Focused Reactions (PFR), and Minimization Reactions (MR). DR items reflect the degree to which parents experience distress (e. g., mothers get upset) when children express negative affect. PR items reflect the degree to which parents respond with punitive reactions that decrease their exposure or need to deal with the negative emotion of their children. EE items reflect the degree to which parents encourage children to express negative affect or the degree to which they validate child’s negative emotional states (e. g., it’s O.K to cry when you feel unhappy). EFR items reflect the degree to which parents respond with strategies that are designed to help the child feel better. PFR items reflect the degree to which parents help the child to

solve the problem that caused the child’s distress (e.g. help my child think of places he/she hasn’t looked yet). Finally, MR items reflect the degree to which parents minimize the seriousness of the situation (e.g. tell my child that he/she is over-reacting). The rating scale ranged from 1 (very unlikely) to 7 (very likely). Cronbach’s alpha of these six responses on 12 scenarios ranged between .69 and .85 for the mothers of 3-to-6-year-old children (Mean age=56.4 M) in the U.S. (Fabes et. al., 2002). Park et al. (2011) reported quite good reliability estimates ranging .77 and .95 for the mothers of preschoolers (Mean age=48 M). But Cronbach’s alpha reliability estimates for DR, EE, MR, PR, EFR, and PFR in this study were .45, .75, .61, .62, .59, and .63 respectively. Relatively low reliabilities found in this study may be due to the small number of items (i. e., scenarios) in the CCNES. However, it is more probable that mothers actually responded differently depending on the situation in which children experience distress. Therefore, reliability estimates are no adequate method here.

#### *Mothers’ Responses to Children’s Positive Emotions*

The *Parents’ Reaction to Children’s Positive Emotions Scale* (PRCPS; Ladouceur, Reid, & Jacques, 2002) were used to assess mothers’ socialization beliefs about how they respond to their own children’s positive emotions. The original instrument (targeted for 4- to-8-year olds) consists of a series of 12 Vignettes in which children are likely to experience positive emotions such as joy, pride, excitement, and curiosity, but only three vignettes each for joy, pride and curiosity have been adapted for considering the age of children in this study. The PRCPS used for this study includes different contexts (at school and in a restaurant), but the mother is always present. For each situation, parents indicate on a 7-point scale from 1 (very unlikely) to 7 (very likely) how likely they would be react as described in each of the four alternative responses. The PRCPS yields four subscales, Socialization, Encouragement, Reprimand, Discomfort: Socialization reflects the degree to which mothers explain to their child the reasons why their expressive behavior may be inappropriate; Encouragement reflects the degree to which mothers

encourage or validate their child to express positive affect; Reprimand reflects the degree to which mothers react by reprimanding their child for expressing positive affect and Discomfort indicates the degree to which mothers feel discomfort or embarrassed when their child express positive affect. Reliability estimates ranged from .65 to .75 in Yep, Allen & Ladouceur (2008), and varied between .40 and .62 in this study. Again, relatively low reliabilities found in this study may be due to the small number of items (i. e., scenarios) in the *PRCPS*. However, it is more probable that mothers actually responded differently depending on the situation. Therefore, reliability estimates are no adequate method here.

#### *Children's Emotion Regulation*

The *Emotion Regulation Checklist (ERC)* (Shield & Cicchetti, 1997) was used to assess children's emotional expressiveness and emotion regulation including liability, intensity, valence, flexibility and contextual appropriateness of expressiveness. This measure consisted of 24 items which include two subscales; Liability/Negativity subscale reflects dysregulation whereas Emotion Regulation reflects appropriateness of emotional expressiveness. The sample items are "is easily frustrated" for *Liability* and "responds positively to friendly overtures by peer" for *Emotion regulation* subscale. Mothers' responses were scored on 4-point Likert scale from 1 (never) to 4 (almost always). In the study of Shield and Cicchetti (1997), Cronbach's Alphas were .96 for

liability/negativity and .83 for emotion regulation. After deleting 6 items, Cronbach's Alphas revealed .81 for each subscale (8 items for Emotion Regulation; 10 items for Negativity/Liability).

#### *Data Analysis*

To explore mothers' beliefs about maternal sensitivity in everyday situation and to examine mothers' attitudes toward child expression of negative emotions and positive emotions, means, standard deviations and frequencies or percentages were computed. For examining the associations between maternal sensitivity, maternal attitudes toward child negative and positive emotional expression and child emotion regulation, Pearson correlation analysis was carried out. Further,  $\chi^2$  tests, and one-way ANOVA were used to examine the differences in mothers' responses according to demographic variables.

## RESULT

#### *Mothers' Beliefs on Caregiver Sensitivity*

First, as shown in Table 1 mothers' responses to the forced choice format of 5 CSI items revealed that for item 1 regarding mother's role, Korean mothers were more likely to anticipate the children's needs rather than responding to children's explicit expression of needs (56% vs. 44% respectively). Similarly, when children feel unhappy or upset, 60% of mothers

Table 1. *Mothers' Responses (%) to CSI 5 items*

CSI Item	Response	Freq.	%
CSI 1: mothers' role	1) observe the child always carefully	56	56
	2) wait until the child requests it	44	44
CSI 2: play in the outside...	1) come and comfort	34	34
	2) wait and see what happens	66	66
CSI 3: doesn't feel happy..	1) go and sit close to talk	60	60
	2) let the child know that he/she can approach	40	40
CSI 4: children's role	1) should ask for help	95	95
	2) should wait until the mother asks	5	5
CSI 5: mother in everyday life	1) attend to the child's explicit requests.	55	55
	2) anticipate the child's need	45	45

emphasized 'go and sit close to talk' (see CSI item # 3 in Table 1). In contrast, for item 4 regarding the role of the child, majority of mothers (95%) selected that a child should ask for help if he/she may need it. When children did not get hurt seriously, 66% of mothers selected 'wait and see what happens' (see CSI item # 2 in Table 1). For item 5 regarding everyday life, some mothers responded that they tended to attend their child's explicit requests (55%), others responded that they anticipated their child's need (45%). The findings indicate that Korean mothers were likely to display both proactive and reactive sensitivities depending on the situation their child experienced.

To examine the degree to which mothers' sensitivity types varied as a function of the socio-demographic indicators (i.e. child gender, SES, mothers' education and mothers' employment) of our sample, we conducted a series of  $\chi^2$  tests for each CSI item. Results revealed child gender, SES and mothers' employment were not significantly related to the kind of mothers' sensitivity. Only maternal educational level was significantly related to CSI item #2 and 3. In specific, Mothers with under or high-school graduates showed more 'Reactive Sensitivity' in item #2 [ $\chi^2(2), p=.004$ ] (when playing

in the outside, child gets hurt, but not seriously...) whereas they showed more 'Proactive Sensitivity' in item #3 [ $\chi^2(2), p=.019$ ] (when child doesn't feel happy) than mothers with college graduates or above college graduates.

Secondly, mothers' responses to the reasons she reported for her preference the mothers' answers (to the open ended questions) were categorized into 5 or 6 thematic contents of the most frequent reasons for each CSI item (See Table 2~6). As reasons for *Proactive Sensitivity* on CSI item 1, mothers emphasized 'young age' for instance, 'too young to handle the situation' or 'too young to express his/her needs'. Mothers were also likely to mention 'prevention of possible accidents' or 'to understand the situation if the child needs any help'. Reasons regarding *Reactive Sensitivity* on CSI item 1, the majority of mother (65.5%) emphasized 'fostering independence' followed by 'developing the ability to ask help' and 'not being intrusive' (See Table 2).

Reasons for Proactive Sensitivity on CSI item 2 emphasized 'child's needs for comfort' followed by 'mother's concern for child'. On the other hand, for the reasons of Reactive Sensitivity on CSI item 2, mothers emphasized 'seriousness of the situation' followed by 'independence' (See Table 3).

Table 2. Reasons for the Responses on CSI Item 1

(1) observe the child always carefully	Freq.	%
1) too young to know what(how) to do or decide if he/she needs help	20	28.2
2) too young to ask(express) for help even if he/she needs it	13	18.3
3) to prevent accidents, child's emotional discomfort or to avoid mother's concerns	13	18.3
4) to handle the situation immediately, efficiently and properly	7	9.9
5) to understand the situation whether the child needs help or for the mother's decision for helping the child or not	14	19.7
6) other (natural as a mother, because of c's characteristic etc. )	4	5.6
Total	71	100.0
(2) wait until the child requests it	Freq.	%
1) the child needs to learn what to do by himself or deal with problems independently(not to depending on others)	36	65.5
2) the child needs to develop the ability of asking for help when needed	8	14.5
3) to avoid the mother's interference	6	10.9
4) difficult for mothers to keep an eye on the child all the times	2	3.6
5) to avoid the mother's judgment error	1	1.8
6) other (considering the child's age, child's self-esteem, etc.)	2	3.6
Total	55	100.0



Table 3. *Reasons for the Responses on CSI Item 2*

(1) come and comfort	Freq.	%
1) because the child feels anxious or need comforts and feeling to be safe	13	31.0
2) too young to express his/her feelings or ask help; too young to do by him/herself	4	9.5
3) feels sorry or concern for the child as mothers' heart(as a mother)	10	23.8
4) needs to check the child in person if it is serious or what happened	10	23.8
5) in order to help the child immediately and manage the situation	4	9.5
6) other (show love, empathy, etc.)	1	2.4
Total	42	100.0
(2) wait and see what happens	Freq.	%
1) it's better for the child to solve the problem by him/herself; it's better to be independent	18	20.2
2) to raise the child to be strong, or not to depend on others; don't want to be overprotective	12	13.5
3) the situation is not too serious and so the child can handle by him/herself( does not need any help)	36	40.4
4) not to make the child feel overly concerned about the situation	14	15.7
5) don't want interrupt what the child was doing	5	5.6
6) other (child does not want, considering the child age, none of my business etc.)	4	4.5
Total	89	100.0

Table 4. *Reasons for the Responses on CSI Item 3*

(1) go and sit close to talk	Freq.	%
1) the child needs someone who provides comforts or to talk about	11	15.7
2) in order to make the child feel better through communication	23	32.9
3) because it's difficult for the child to ask(or shy to express) for asking help first;	7	10.0
4) the mother as a mother nature feels sorry and concerned	11	15.7
5) the mother wants to know the reasons or/and give a hand	17	24.3
6) other(because of the child's self-esteem)	1	1.4
Total	70	100
(2) let the child know that he/she can approach	Freq.	%
1) the child needs some time to calm down before he/she is ready to ask for help	8	17.4
2) it's better to let the child make a decision or choice by him/herself; in order to respect the child's decision	16	34.8
3) because the child might not want to talk about the problem	13	28.3
4) because the child might want to be alone	4	8.7
5) because the child might feel interfered; the mother doesn't want to be push the child might be irritated by the mother's approach	4	8.7
6) other (none of my business..)	1	2.2

Reasons for Proactive Sensitivity on CSI item 3, included 'making the child feel better' followed by 'wanting to know the reason to help'. As reasons of Reactive Sensitivity on CSI item 3, mothers mentioned 'respecting for the child decision' (See Table 4).

For the reasons of Reactive Sensitivity on CSI item 4, mothers were more likely to emphasize both 'mothers' view (mother doesn't know everything)' and 'child's view (e.g. child can't wait)' (See Table 5).

For the reasons of Reactive Sensitivity on CSI item 5, most of all, mothers thought a child knows

Table 5. *Reasons for the Responses on CSI Item 4*

(1) should ask for help	Freq.	%
1) the mother can't know everything the child needs; It's difficult for the mother making a decision whether or not to help the child	32	29.6
2) the child is too young to do something by him/herself, or don't know what to do, and can't wait for help	27	25.0
3) it's important for the child to do it by him/herself and make his/her own decision: or in order to encourage the child's independence	26	24.1
4) in order to improve the child's communication skills; The mother wants the child to be active instead of passive	19	17.6
5) in order to understand the child or have a good mother-child relationship through communication (i.e. asking the mother for help)	4	3.7
Total	108	100.0
(2) should wait until the mother asks	Freq.	%
1) the child is too young to ask for help or to decide what to do; So that child knows the mother is here for him/her	3	60
2) because it is important for the child to do by him/herself or develop the ability of decision making in the first place	2	40
Total	5	100.0

Table 6. *Reasons for the Responses on CSI Item 5*

(1) attend to the child's explicit requests	Freq.	%
1) to encourage the child's ability to think or make a decision, or solve the problem by him/herself	16	25.4
2) the mother doesn't know everything the child needs; because the mother has to decide if the child really needs help	11	17.5
3) the child knows more accurately what he/she needs and the mother can efficiently help the child	18	28.6
4) not to make the child depend on his/her mother and others	3	4.8
5) to encourage the ability to ask what the child wants	11	17.5
6) other (consider the child's age; to have the child appreciated the mother's help)	4	6.3
Total	63	100
(2) anticipate the child's need	Freq.	%
1) too young to know what he/she wants or to ask	16	29.6
2) in order to understand the child's needs	7	13.0
3) to help immediately and properly; in order to be prepared as a mother for helping child	19	35.2
4) in order to provide empathy and love(let the child know the mother's love)	5	9.3
5) it's the mother's role	7	13.0

his/her needs better than mother. Following that, they emphasized 'child independence'. For the reasons of Proactive Sensitivity on CSI item 5, mothers emphasized 'in order to help child immediately or properly' (See Table 6).

In general, the results indicate mothers who were more likely to endorse proactive sensitivity were more concerned about the age of child or child safety, whereas mothers who were more likely to endorse reactive sensitivity wanted to foster child's independence or communication ability.

#### *Mothers' Reactions to their Children's Expression of Negative Emotion*

Mothers' self-reported reactions to their children's expression of negative emotions were assessed with the subscales, Distress Reaction (DR), Punitive Reaction (PR), Expressive Encouragement (EE), Emotion-Focused Reaction (EFR), Problem-Focused Reaction (PFR), and Minimization Reaction (MR) of the coping with Children's Negative Emotions Scale (Fabes *et al.*, 2002) (scales ranging from 1 very unlikely to 7 very likely). Korean mothers were most

Table 7. Inter-correlations between Mothers' Reactions to their Children's Expression of Negative Emotion

Reaction	DR	PR	MR	EE	EFR	PFR
DR	-					
PR	.204*	-				
MR	.300**	.313**	-			
EE	-.211*	.045	-.250*	-		
EFR	-.007	.176	.302**	.068	-	
PFR	-.117	.018	-.090	.363***	.367***	-
Mean	2.98	4.19	3.27	4.15	5.10	5.44
SD	.82	.98	1.10	1.30	.89	.95

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

DR=Distress Reaction, PR=Punitive Reaction, MR=Minimization Reaction, EE=Expressive Encouragement, EFR=Emotion-Focused Reaction, PFR=Problem-Focused Reaction

Note: Ranging from 1 (very unlikely) to 7 (very likely)

likely to show Problem Focused Reaction (Mean=5.44,  $SD=.95$ ) to child distress followed by Emotion Focused Reaction (Mean=5.10,  $SD=.89$ ). They were least likely to report Distress Reaction (See Table 7).

To examine the degree to which mothers' reactions types varied as a function of the characteristics (i.e. child gender, SES, mothers' education and mothers' employment) of our sample, we conducted a series of one-way ANOVAs. None of the demographic variables was significantly related to mothers' responses on CCNES subscales.

As can be seen in Table 7, correlation analysis revealed that Emotion Focused Reactions (EFR), Problem Focused Reactions (PFR), and Expressive Encouragement (EE) were significantly, positively correlated with one another. Likewise, Minimization Reactions (MR), Punitive Reactions (PR), and Distress Reactions (DR) were significantly, positively related with each other. More specifically, mothers who reported feeling more emotionally distressed were less likely to encourage their children to express negative emotions ( $r = -.211$ ,  $p < .05$ ), but were more likely to punish ( $r = .204$ ,  $p < .05$ ), to downplay or to minimize ( $r = .300$ ,  $p < .01$ ) their children's expression of negative emotions. As anticipated, mothers who were likely to minimize children's negative expression reported punishment reaction ( $r = .313$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and were less likely to encourage children's negative expression ( $r = -.250$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Interestingly, mothers who minimized expression of children's negative emotion were likely to respond with strategies that

help the child feel better ( $r = .302$ ,  $p < .01$ ) whereas mothers who encouraged to express children's negative emotion were likely to help the child to solve the problem that caused the child's distress ( $r = .363$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

#### Mothers' Reactions to their Children's Expression of Positive Emotion

In order to assess mothers' socialization of positive emotions, three vignettes which were adapted from PRCPS developed by Ladouceur *et al.* (2002) were used. The three vignettes were related to joy, pride and curiosity. Regarding to their attitudes toward the children's expression of these positive emotions, mothers were asked to make a choice out of four possible responses, 'Socialization', 'Encouragement/Validating', 'Reprimand', and 'Discomfort'. Table 8 presents the means, standard deviations of each subscale of PRCPS and the interrelations among 4 subscales. As can be seen in Table 8, ranging from 1 (very unlikely) to 7 (very likely), Korean mothers were most likely to show 'Socialization' reactions (Mean=5.91,  $SD=.89$ ) to their child positive affect expression followed by 'Reprimanding' reactions (Mean=4.63,  $SD=1.18$ ) and 'Discomfort' reactions (Mean=3.88,  $SD=1.23$ ). Mothers were least likely to show 'Encouragement or Validating' (Mean=3.54,  $SD=1.23$ ).

Further, we examined the degree to which each of mothers' reaction types varied as a function of the socio-demographic indicators (i. e., child gender,

Table 8. *Inter-correlations between Mothers' Reactions to their Children's Expression of Positive Emotion*

Reactions	Discomfort	Socialization	Encouragement	Reprimand
Discomfort	-			
Socialization	.412***	-		
Encouragement	-.581***	-.461***	-	
Reprimand	.472***	.608***	-.443***	-
Mean	3.88	5.91	3.54	4.63
SD	1.23	.89	1.23	1.18

\* $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

Note. Ranging from 1 (very unlikely) to 7 (very likely)

Table 9. *Inter-correlations between Mothers' Reactions toward Child Negative Emotional Expression and Positive Emotional Expression and Child Emotion Regulation*

Mothers' reaction	Child Emotion Regulation	
	Negativity	Regulation
Distress Reaction (DR)	.251*	-.259**
Punitive Reaction (PR)	.200*	.064
Minimization Reaction (MR)	.159	.040
Expressive Encouragement (EE)	-.080	.044
Emotion-Focused Reaction (EFR)	.105	.265**
Problem-Focused Reaction (PFR)	.033	.241*
Discomfort	-.052	-.022
Socialization	.045	.203*
Encouragement	.014	-.131
Reprimand	.172	.125
Mean	1.86	3.33
SD	.44	.48

\* $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ .

Note. Reactions toward Negative Emotional Expression: DR, PR, MR, EE, EFR, PFR

Reactions toward Positive Emotional Expression: Discomfort, Socialization, Encouragement, Reprimand

SES, mothers' education and mothers' employment). A series of one-way ANOVAs revealed that only mothers' 'Encouragement' of positive emotion was significantly different depending on mothers' education level [ $F(2, 97)=3.29, p < .05$ ]. Specifically, mothers with high school graduates or less (Mean = 4.31) tended to be more 'Encouraging or Validating' of children's expression of positive affect than the mothers with college graduates or higher degree than college graduates (Mean=3.41 & 3.42, respectively).

Interrelations among the four subscales (see Table 8) indicated that mothers who felt 'Discomfort' when their child expresses positive affect displayed

higher 'Socialization' reactions ( $r=.412, p < .001$ ) and 'Reprimanding' reactions ( $r=.472, p < .001$ ). As expected, mothers' 'Discomfort' reactions were significantly negatively related to 'Encouragement' of children's positive emotion ( $r=-.581, p < .001$ ).

*Inter-correlations between Mothers' Sensitivity,  
Reactions toward Child Negative Emotional  
Expression and Positive Emotional Expression and  
Child Emotion Regulation*

None of correlations between mothers' sensitivity and their reactions toward the children's negative emotion was significant. Only mothers' proactive

sensitivity in situation 2 (During playing in the outside, a child hurts him/herself, but not seriously) of CSI, was negatively related to the children's 'Emotion Regulation' ( $r = -.234, p < .05$ ). The result indicates the more mothers reported proactive sensitivity the less children showed better emotion regulation.

As expected, mothers' 'Distress Reaction (DR)' ( $r = .251, p < .05$ ), and 'Punitive Reaction (PR)' ( $r = .200, p < .05$ ) toward the children's negative emotional expression were related to children's Negativity/Liability which reflects maladaptive emotion regulation. In contrast, mothers' 'Emotion Focused Reaction (EFR)' ( $r = .265, p < .01$ ), and 'Problem Focused Reaction (PFR)' ( $r = .241, p < .05$ ) toward children's negative emotional expression have been found to be related to children's 'Emotion Regulation'. In a similar vein, mothers' 'Socialization' strategy was positively related to child adaptive emotion regulation (see Table 9).

## DISCUSSION

The current study revealed several important findings. Korean mothers were more likely to endorse proactive sensitivity in general while also showing reactive sensitivity depending on the situation. Mothers also emphasized their child's explicit expression of their needs. Mothers' reasons for proactive sensitivity were concerning the age of child and possible accidents. Reasons of reactive sensitivity focused on values of autonomy, e. g., respecting the child's decision and encouraging the child's independence. In addition, mothers endorsed problem-focused reaction to their child negative emotion expression, but mothers likely showed socialization reactions to their child positive emotion expression. As anticipated, mothers' supportive reactions to their child emotion expressions were positively related to their child adaptive emotion regulations.

Parents normatively teach children how to express their emotions in an appropriate way through culture-informed emotion socialization. Moreover, culture plays an important role in

specifying the emotional meaning of events and socially prescribed ways to communicate. Although emotions are a most important aspect of human behavior, and emotional development is the significant aspect of child development, parenting beliefs regarding emotion socialization have rarely been the focus of research in the field of child development. Therefore, the main purpose of the current study was to explore Korean mothers' beliefs about preferable maternal reactions, more specifically, caregiver sensitivity and emotion socialization, regarding maternal reactions both to their children's emotional distress and positive emotional expression. Further, the associations between maternal beliefs regarding sensitivity, and reactions to children's negative and positive emotional expressions and children's emotion regulations were examined.

### *Mothers' Beliefs on Caregiver Sensitivity*

Considering the socio-cultural changes and the general cultural background, we anticipated that Korean mothers would emphasize the importance of sensitively anticipating children's needs (i. e., *proactive sensitivity*) and also expect their children's explicit expression of their needs (i. e., *reactive sensitivity*). As expected, the results revealed that Korean mothers in general were more likely to show proactive sensitivity than reactive sensitivity, but the kind of mothers' sensitivity (i. e., *proactive sensitivity* and *reactive sensitivity*) differed depending on the situations. Specifically, regarding the mothers' role in everyday life, about half of the mothers expected that they would anticipate their children's needs, and about half of the mothers thought that they rather respond to their child explicit expression. However, a closer examination of the situations revealed that mothers tried to anticipate their children's needs when their child felt unhappy, whereas they responded to their child's explicit expression only when their children were not seriously hurt during playing. Furthermore, mothers thought that children in general should ask for help when they needed support in everyday situation.

The results clearly showed that Korean mothers not only emphasize both proactive and reactive sensitivity in general, but also these types of

sensitivity varied depending on the situation. To date, no studies have attempted to assess mothers' beliefs about sensitivity in Korea. Based on previous research in Western cultures, we have assumed that the characteristics of Korean mothers' sensitivity found in this study are mostly associated with the cultural norm and their socialization goals. Traditionally, Korean mothers have been raised to become take full responsibility of their child's everyday life whereas children have been raised to be dependent on their parents. Even in the contemporary society, Korean mothers devote to taking care of their child's everyday life and their child to be dependent on them (Han, 1999). On the other hand, quite a few mothers have begun to work outside having less time to spend with their child and have realized the importance of child's independence or self-assertiveness. Thus, Korean mothers are tending to also want their children to learn expressing their needs explicitly and to be assertive at any social situation. Reflecting this trend, an ongoing study exploring the cultural differences in maternal sensitivity, Korean mothers' level of proactive sensitivity and reactive sensitivity ranged between India and Nepal on the one hand and U.S. and Germany on the other hand (Fäsche, Trommsdorff, Heikamp, Cole, Mishra, Niraula, & Park, 2011). It has been well recognized that in the U.S. where self-confidence and self assertiveness are emphasized, caregivers' sensitivity usually is indicated by prompt response to children's explicit requests when they need help. On the other hand, in Japan where interdependence rather than assertiveness of children is more emphasized, caregiver's sensitivity implies the anticipation of children's needs (e.g. Rothbaum *et al.*, 2006). Trommsdorff and Friedlmeier (2010) have observed cultural differences in maternal sensitivity; Japanese mothers displayed higher levels of sensitivity than German mothers. It was also found that Japanese mothers' sensitivity in particular, varied according to the situational context (task related sensitivity vs. distress-related sensitivity) whereas German mothers' sensitivity was not affected by the situation. These researchers concluded that Japanese mothers' sensitivity can be viewed as a 'state' phenomenon and as a 'trait' for German

mothers. Borrowing from this notion, Korean mothers' sensitivity which varied between proactive and reactive sensitivity depending on the situation also can be seen as a 'state' phenomenon, reflecting flexibility in Korean mothers' socialization.

Korean mothers' emphasis on both proactive and reactive sensitivity in care-giving situation was also reflected in their reasons given for proactive and reactive sensitivity. Mothers emphasized the importance of independent behavior. However at the same time, they emphasized the importance of observing their children all the time and of helping their children immediately because they were still young and likely to be hurt emotionally. With regard to relations of CSI items to demographic variables, only maternal education was significantly associated with some of CSI items. Specifically, mothers who were more educated displayed more frequently reactive sensitivity when their child was hurt, and they reported more frequently proactive sensitivity when their child felt unhappy than mothers who were more educated. Given this result for only two (of the five) CSI items, these differences may be due to chance. Maternal employment or gender of the child was not significantly associated with any CSI item responses.

#### *Mothers' Reactions to their Children's Expression of Negative Emotion and Positive Emotion*

Among six subscales of mothers' reactions to their children's expression of negative emotions, Korean mothers were more likely to display Problem Focused Reactions (PFR) and Emotion Focused Reactions (EFR) while they were least likely to display Distress Reactions (DR) and Minimization Reactions (MR). Mothers' Punitive Reactions (PR) and Encouragement of Expression (EE) were in between. Confirming the results from previous studies (Fabes *et al.*, 2002), supportive reactions such as PFR, EFR and EE were positively related with each other, while unsupportive reactions such as MR, PR, and DR were positively related with each other. In other words, mothers who reported encouragement of their children's negative emotions tried to be supportive to their child's expression of negative emotion displaying problem-focused or

emotion-focused reactions. In the contrary, mothers who reported distress feeling were not supportive displaying punitive or minimizing reactions when their children expressed negative emotions. Interestingly, Korean mothers who reported to minimize the expression of children's negative emotion were likely to respond with strategies that should help their children feel better by using emotion focused reactions. Unlike Fabes *et al* (2002) who has found that maternal education in the American sample was positively related to Distress Reactions, in our study on Korean mothers, maternal education was not associated with any CCNES subscales. Consistent with previous evidence (Fabes *et al*, 2002; Park *et al*, 2011), no gender difference was found in most of mothers' reactions when they were exposed to their children's negative emotions. Given the fact that there have been gender differences in socialization beliefs regarding social competence for boys and girls (Park & Cheah, 2005), and gender differences in the socialization of emotion in Korea in the past (Han, 1999), this result can be interpreted in two alternative ways. First, Korean mothers in general hold strong egalitarian attitudes in the socialization of children's emotion. Secondly, this result may be a function of the aggregated way of analysis of mothers' responses across the different negative emotions of CCNES. Therefore, gender differences may have appeared if gender differences were analyzed for each type of negative emotion.

Regarding mothers' reactions to their child's expression of positive emotion, mothers more often display 'Socialization' followed by 'Reprimanding'. Also, mothers were less likely to display 'Encouraging Expression' or 'Discomfort' reactions. Correlation analysis showed that mothers who felt more 'Discomfort' when their child expressed their positive affects displayed more 'Socialization' or 'Reprimanding'. Consistent with the findings by Yap *et al.*(2008), mothers who displayed 'Socialization' showed more 'Reprimanding' whereas mothers who displayed more nonrestrictive reactions, i.e. 'Encouragement' showed less 'Socialization', 'Reprimanding' or feelings of 'Discomfort'. In Confucian cultures, people tend to inhibit their own feelings for

the interests of others because controlling one's emotions has been considered as an important virtue. Therefore, in the Korean culture which has often been characterized as a collectivistic and Confucian culture, even the expression of positive emotion was less valued (Han, 1991; Lee, *et al.*, 2009). The results of this study imply that traditional beliefs still exert some influence on contemporary Korean mothers' emotion socialization. It was also found that mothers who were less educated tended to display more 'Encouragement of Expression' regarding their child's expression of positive emotions than mothers who were more educated. The results imply that, more educated Korean mothers were most likely to explain to their child the reasons why their child's expressive behavior may be inappropriate; they also were more likely to use reprimanding behavior in order to restrict their child's expression of positive emotion in social situations.

*Associations between Mothers' Sensitivity, Reactions toward Child Negative Emotional Expression and Positive Emotional Expression and Child Emotion Regulation*

Correlation analysis revealed that only for one situation CSI (item #2, child experiences distress from getting hurt during play situation), mothers' sensitivity was negatively related to the children's emotion regulation. Specifically, mothers' proactive sensitivity was related to the children's ability to regulate their emotions. However, this relation may be due to chance since it only occurred in one of the five situations.

As expected, unsupportive reactions such as mothers' Distress and Punitive Reactions to children's expression of negative emotion contributed to their children's dysfunctional emotion regulation. In contrast, maternal supportive reactions such as Problem-Focused and Emotion-Focused Reactions promoted their children's functional emotion regulation. In line with previous research (Fabes *et al*, 2002; Lim & Park, 2002; Noh & Jeong, 2010; Park, 2009; Park *et al.*, 2011), these findings suggest that parental responses to children's negative emotions may have importance consequences for children's

emotion regulation. However, the relationship may be bidirectional and causal relations cannot be interpreted on the basis of correlation results.

Among four types of mothers' reactions to their children's positive emotion, it was found that only mothers' 'Socialization' reaction contributed to functional emotion regulation. In line with Yap *et al.* (2008), this finding suggests the importance of maternal reactions to their child positive emotion in the child's functional emotion regulation as well. Although positive emotion which is defined as pleasant and desirable is in general encouraged, it can be considered to be inappropriate in certain contexts (i.e. when not in line with social norms). Therefore, socialization reactions which refer to mothers' explanation to their children's reasons why their expressive behavior may be inappropriate would contribute to their child emotion regulation.

In sum, regarding to a mother's role in everyday life, Korean mothers' beliefs about sensitivity can clearly be distinguished into two types. Some mothers believe in the importance of proactive sensitivity while others rather endorse reactive sensitivity. However, mothers' beliefs in sensitivity such as proactive or reactive beliefs vary depending on the situation. Mothers show proactive sensitivity when their child feels unhappy, but they rather show reactive sensitivity when their child has only minor difficulties in dealing with the problem. Nevertheless, mothers definitely want their children to ask their mother if they need help. In addition, mothers explain their choice of proactive sensitivity and reactive sensitivity in terms of their socialization goals for children and for themselves. The common reasons given for proactive sensitivity are to foster a mother-child interdependent relationship in which both children and mothers gain a sense of security. Most common reasons for reactive sensitivity are fostering independence and cultivating the child skills of self-expression and the child's emotion competence.

The results of mothers' reactions to their child negative emotional expression indicate that Korean mothers are more likely to use problem-focused or emotion-focused reactions which both are supportive strategies. However, Korean mothers are more likely

to socialize their children's positive emotional expressions by using supportive explanations or by invalidating the expression of positive emotion by reprimanding. Finally, mothers' supportive reactions to their children's negative and positive emotions are associated with their child emotional competence.

To conclude, the findings of the current study imply that Korean mothers endorse both proactive and reactive sensitivity unlike mothers from other Asian countries (e. g., India, Japan) where caregivers predominantly endorse proactive sensitivity (Trommsdorff, *et al.*, in press). Regarding their reactions to children's emotional expression, Korean mothers likely display supportive reactions to negative emotion, whereas they prefer restrictive reactions to positive emotional expressions.

#### *Limitations of This Study*

The present study represented a preliminary step in the investigation of Korean mothers' beliefs on emotion socialization. In our study, combined use of questionnaires scenarios and open-ended questions to assess mothers' intuitive theories has important advantages. However there are several limitations which should be noted. First, this study is limited by the use of self-report data gathered from mothers. Future research could benefit by using multi-method assessments including observations. Another limitation is the low reliabilities of CCNES and PRCPS where few items were chosen from the original scales for the purpose of the present study. Although parents likely respond differently to differential emotional states and use different strategies depending on whether the child is expressing one emotion or another (Fabes *et al.*, 2002), parents' responses reported in the current study reflect generalized responses to the aggregate of children's various emotions( i.e. angry, sad, fearful). Thus, as Fabes *et al.* (2002) suggested, an analysis of mothers' reactions for each emotion may give other insights.

Despite of these limitations, our findings provide valuable insights with respect to Korean mothers' beliefs regarding maternal sensitivity and emotion socialization as a means of understanding the cultural meaning of children's emotional development. The various intra-cultural differences in Korean



mothers' intuitive theories found in the present study are a valuable contribution to the research on cross-cultural patterns of parental beliefs in emotion socialization.

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