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The Relationship between Child Values and Happiness of Early Childhood Parents: Actor Effect and Partner Effect

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Abstract

Purpose: This study examined the relationship between child value and happiness among parents of infants and toddlers in the 6th and 7th waves of the Korean Child Panel Survey.

Method: We conducted an analysis of self and other interdependence model (APIM) to test the self-effect and partner-effect of parents of infants and toddlers.

Results: The results of the self-effect and partner-effect tests of mothers’ and fathers’ perceived parental child value on happiness showed that mothers’ and fathers’ perceived child value had a significant positive effect on their own happiness. In addition, the interaction effect of mothers’ and fathers’ perceived child value on happiness was significant only for the negative effect of fathers’ perceived child value on mothers’ happiness. We also found significant differences in the self-effect and partner-effect of parental values on happiness, with mothers’ happiness being influenced more by their own parental values than by their fathers’ parental values.

Conclusion: The significance of this study is that it verified the effect of parents’ child value on their own happiness, which has been lacking in the literature. Therefore, this study provides implications for the establishment of government childcare policies to improve the happiness of parents of infants and toddlers and for parent education in early childhood education institutions, and provides a basis for future research and programs to improve the happiness of parents of infants and toddlers.

Keywords: Child Values, Happiness, Actor Effect, Partner Effect, Early Childhood Parents

1. Introduction

Happiness is the ultimate goal of human life. In this regard, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) provides statistics on various areas of well-being, including well-being by country, through the Better Life Initiative [1]. According to the "How's Life? 2020" report released by the OECD in 2022, South Koreans' life satisfaction was 6.1 out of 10, ranking at the bottom of the OECD countries, and the United Nations (UN) World Happiness Report in 2020 ranked South Koreans 61st among OECD countries. This, coupled with the fact that South Korea's GDP is the 10th largest in the world as of 2021, suggests that the country's mental quality of life is lagging behind its material growth, and that material abundance is no longer the best measure of happiness.

Happiness is defined in various ways. Similar concepts to happiness include Quality of life, Subjective Well-being, Well-fare, Satisfaction, Life Satisfaction, and Well-being, which are often used interchangeably [2][3][4][5][6]. There are as many concepts of happiness as there are studies on happiness, and they vary depending on the purpose, topic, and field of study. Seligman proposes that happiness is based on positive psychology and is realized by individuals striving to have positive emotions and by discovering and developing their strengths and virtues and...
utilizing them in their lives, and that happiness can be continuously improved through personal autonomous factors rather than environmental factors[7]. Ryff argued that a happy life does not simply mean feeling satisfied and in a good mood, and that in order to measure an individual's happiness, it is necessary to consider how well the individual is functioning as a member of society[8]. In other words, an individual's happiness can be defined as the subjective quality of life, life satisfaction, and sense of well-being, which are the psychological qualitative aspects of an individual's psychological well-being based on the performance of positive aspects of functioning as a member of society, as well as social relationships and, at home, family relationships[9]. Human happiness is determined by a variety of factors, including genetics, upbringing, living environment, relationships, intentional activities, achievement and self-acceptance, economic status, and family identity, and it continuously affects various areas of life such as marriage, friendship, economic status, work life, and health[8][10].

Happiness, as perceived by parents, is a concept that encompasses the overall sense of well-being in life, including life satisfaction and joy, as well as economic power and fulfillment, social status and recognition, self-improvement and the proper development of children, love of family, interpersonal relationships, a positive outlook on life, and health[11]. When parents feel happy, they are more confident in their ability to resolve any situation that may arise in their relationship with their children in an amicable manner, resulting in positive discipline of their children and consistent warmth and flexibility in their parenting behavior[12][13]. This suggests that positive parental well-being is an essential component of raising children to be psychologically healthy[14][15].

Parents with higher levels of happiness believe their children will grow up to be healthier[16][17], and have more positive interactions with their children, which reduces their children's problem behaviors[18][19]. Parental happiness is also significantly related to children's happiness, and higher levels of happiness in fathers have been shown to have a positive effect on parenting by improving paternal role intelligence[14]. In addition, research on the effects of parental positivity on children has shown that children of parents with high levels of happiness are more likely to be happy[20], healthier[16], engage in more positive behaviors[12][14], and exhibit fewer aggressive behaviors[18]. This suggests that positive psychological variables such as parental happiness in early childhood can influence children's development. However, most studies have studied mothers and fathers separately, or have simply lumped them together, leaving the interaction between mothers and fathers as the primary caregivers in the home unexplored.

On the other hand, infancy and early childhood is a time of high parental child value, which leads to increased happiness[21]. This means that the younger the child, the more time parents spend talking to them and showing them love, which affects their child value. This child value is defined as the desire for a child that brings satisfaction to the parent[22], and refers to the value to the parent of the joy, emotional security, and social status of the adult child that the parent receives from raising the child. It is a concept that includes attitudes toward the parent-child relationship and expectations and beliefs about parenting, and can be seen as a value system that guides the direction of child education and parenting[23]. Lugo-Gil and Tamis-LeMonda identified child values as an important family resource that mediates various risk factors for parenting, including improving parental psychological strain and mediating negative effects on children’s emotional and cognitive development[24].

Although scholars disagree on the subcomponents of child value, it can be broadly categorized into emotional value and instrumental value. Emotional value refers to the emotional comfort or worthiness gained from children, while instrumental value refers to the social and economic importance gained from children[25]. Lee and his colleagues reported that in modern society, emotional value is being emphasized as opposed to the traditional value of children in terms of economic value[26]. In the process of parenting, parents' child value refers to the
meaning and emotional satisfaction of having children in their lives, which is reflected in the creation of a positive parenting environment and attitudes toward parenting. In other words, it can be inferred that parents are driven by their own values to raise their children, are able to have a sense of happiness through their children, have positive values for their children naturally, and have a sense of happiness through the process of parenting.

To date, there have been few studies on parental perceived child value, and most of the previous studies have focused on sociodemographic variables such as subsequent childbearing intentions and childbearing expectations[27][28], and there are few direct studies on the impact of parental child value on happiness. However, Yeon and Choi found a positive relationship between parental emotional child value and parental marital satisfaction[29], and Kang reported that parents with higher child value tended to show more concern and affection for their children[30]. Yoo has shown that emotional child value reduces women’s postpartum depression[31], and it is generally accepted that higher maternal child value is associated with lower maternal parenting stress[28][32][33]. In addition, infant mothers perceive their child’s value as related to family happiness[34].

In recent years, the family environment has been changing due to the continuous decline in the birthrate and social demands for child rearing and division of labor, and as part of these changes, the influence relationship between fathers and mothers has been increasing. Previous studies on the influence relationship between couples have focused on a variety of topics, but have generally focused on how couples perceive each other[35][36], what factors can increase marital quality or marital stability[37][38], and what characteristics of the relationship can increase happiness. And which characteristics of a couple’s relationship affect their happiness[39][40]. However, several studies have found that differences in couples’ perceptions of each other have a greater impact on their relationship than actual characteristics of the couple[41][42]. Perceptions of spouses have been proven to affect not only the quality of the relationship, but also individual happiness[43][44][45].

It is possible that couples' happiness may be influenced by their relationship, in that they may have a more generous view of their spouse and be more satisfied with their relationship[46], but this has not been well studied. Previous research has shown that couples with young children’s happiness with parenting is influenced by their own and their partner's marital satisfaction and their relationship[47]. Therefore, this study aims to examine the relationship between couples' happiness and parenting variables at home through a dyadic study of self-effect and partner-effect. In particular, a couple’s happiness at home not only affects their own happiness and their spouse’s happiness, but it may also vary depending on the degree of their own or their spouse’s happiness in the process. Social comparison theory[48] and self-sufficiency theory[49], which posits that people form their opinions and abilities based on comparisons with others, emphasize the interactive nature of how one’s spouse’s happiness affects one’s own happiness, and how one’s happiness affects one’s spouse’s happiness, depending on whether one’s own happiness is high or low.

Based on the above, we can assume that there is a reciprocal relationship between parents' value of their children and their happiness. However, despite the fact that the relationship between fathers and mothers in the family is very strong, studies have tended to measure each separately or focus on the unidirectional influence between various variables. Therefore, this study focuses on the influence of parents’ psychological values toward their children on their Happiness.

In recent years, there has been a growing trend in research on these couples to utilize the actor-partner interdependence model to examine both self-effects and partner effects. This is an important approach because it allows for a comparative analysis of actor-effect, which is the effect of one's psychological aspects or behavior on oneself, and partner-effect, which is the
effect of one's behavior on one's partner [50], and allows for a joint examination of one's and one's partner's influence on couple happiness and child value.

Therefore, this study utilizes the APIM method to examine the relationship between self-effect and partner-effect on parents' feelings of child value and happiness in mother-father pairs. The research question selected for this study is as follows.

Research question: What are the self-effects and partner effects of parental values on child well-being in infancy and early childhood?

2. Subjects and Methods

2.1. Subjects

This study was conducted using data on child values from the 6th year of the Panel Study of Korean Children and happiness from the 7th year [51]. Among the 2150 parents who participated in the Panel Study of Korean Children, 886 pairs of parents were selected after removing missing data and outliers.

The general characteristics of the children and the general characteristics of the mothers and fathers in the 7th year of the survey are shown in <Table 1>.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Infants</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72~74</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>20s</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75~77</td>
<td>527</td>
<td>59.5</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>669</td>
<td>75.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78 or more</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>40s</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>49.1</td>
<td>20s</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>486</td>
<td>54.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>40s</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>43.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N=886 pairs.

2.2. Research instruments

2.2.1. Parental child value

In this study, parental child value was measured using the Child Value Scale, which was used in the 2005 National Survey of Marriage and Fertility Trends by the Korea Institute of Health and Social Research [52]. The child value scale has a total of nine questions, four for emotional value and four for instrumental value, but in this study, parents' child value scores were combined and analyzed. Each item is on a 5-point Likert scale, with higher scores indicating that parents value their children more and less. The Cronbach's α of each subfactor of this tool was 0.78 for fathers' child value and 0.77 for mothers' child value.

2.2.2. Parental happiness

Parental happiness was measured using the Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS), which was adapted and validated by the Korean Child Panel researchers, whose reliability and validity were verified through Lyubomirsky and Lepper's study [53]. The SHS is a 4-item Likert 7-point scale, with higher scores indicating higher levels of happiness. Regarding the internal consistency (Cronbach's α) between the items of each subfactor, both fathers' and mothers' happiness were 0.85.
2.3. Data analysis procedures and methods

This study was analyzed using data from the 6th Parental Child Value and 7th Parental Happiness Surveys, which were published by the Korean Child Panel researchers on their website with sensitive data such as personal information removed. The data collected in this study were analyzed using SPSS 21.0 and Amos 21.0 statistical programs for Windows, and the missing values of the main variables were handled by the listwise deletion method before structural equation analysis.

First, frequency analysis was conducted to examine the sociodemographic characteristics of the study subjects, and Cronbach’s α was calculated for the constructed questions. We also conducted descriptive statistics to examine the mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis of the main variables.

Second, we conducted an autoregressive interdependence model (APIM) analysis to examine the self-effect and partner-effect of parental influence on the study variables. APIM analysis is reported to be an appropriate method for analyzing paired data because it utilizes dyadic data to assess within- and between-group variation[54]. In APIM analysis, the actor effect is defined as the effect of a characteristic or behavior on the self, and the partner effect is the effect of a characteristic or behavior on the partner. In particular, APIM analyzes self-effects while controlling for partner effects, and partner effects while controlling for self-effects, in order to produce measure mentally accurate results[55].

The APIM analysis was conducted as follows. First, we set up models for the paths of father-mother child value and father-mother happiness. Second, the model was tested for goodness of fit by specifying the correlations between the independent variables and the residuals. Third, for each pathway, we imposed four equivalence constraints to compare the self-effect of husbands and wives on the dependent variable, the partner-effect of husbands and wives on the dependent variable, and the self-effect and partner-effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable.

The unidimensional father-mother Happiness was analyzed using item parcels[56]. Item parcels are analyzed by creating a measure that combines several items into a single variable, which reduces the problem of non-normality and increases the reliability of individual items. It also reduces the number of parameters that need to be estimated, reducing measurement error and improving model fit[57]. In order to analyze the father-mother happiness(4 items) into item packages according to the method proposed by Little, Cunningham, Shahar and Widaman, each item was factorized by the varimax rotation method after fixing the factor number to 1 in the principle component analysis extraction method[58]. After that, the items sorted by the size of the loadings were assigned to two packages each in a zigzag method from the largest to the smallest.

3. Results

3.1. Results of confirmatory factor analysis of research variables

Before analyzing the structural relationships in this study, the variables were calculated using a measurement tool that secured validity and reliability. In addition, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to evaluate whether the measured variables adequately explain each latent variable.

As a result of the confirmatory factor analysis, parental value was measured with four items of emotional parental value and four items of instrumental parental value, forming a single concept and measured with a total of eight items. In order to improve the model fit, during the
model revision process, items with an absolute value of factor loadings ($\beta$) of 0.5 or less were found to be inadequate to measure the variable[59], so the model was modified by removing the fourth instrumental value item for both fathers and mothers. The modified model is shown in Figure 1.

### Figure 1. Modified confirmatory factor analysis model of child value.

The goodness-of-fit analysis of the revised model showed that mothers' child value $x^2=104.217$ (df=13, $p<0.001$), GFI=0.967, NFI=0.939, TLI=0.912, CFI=0.946, and fathers' child value $x^2=150.512$ (df=13, $p<0.001$), GFI=0.954, NFI=0.922, TLI=0.929, CFI=0.928, and the fit indices met the criteria.

The goodness-of-fit analysis of the revised model showed that mothers' child value $x^2=5.197$ (df=1, $p<0.01$), GFI=0.997, NFI=0.997, TLI=0.986, CFI=0.998, and the father's happiness $x^2=44.605$ (df=1, $p<0.001$), GFI=0.976, NFI=0.977, TLI=0.966, CFI=0.978, and the fit indices met the criteria.

In addition, the C.R.(Critical Ratio) value of the measured variables, which determines whether the regression coefficient is statistically significant, was significant at the $\alpha=0.001$ level, indicating that all measured variables adequately reflect the concept of the latent variable. The factor loadings were all above 0.05, confirming the validity of the variables[59].

### Figure 2. Initial model of confirmatory factor analysis of happiness.

3.2. Results of reliability analysis of research variables

In this study, some inappropriate items were refined through the factor analysis process of the variables, and then the reliability of the multi-item scales of the theoretical variables was analyzed by Cronbach's $\alpha$ coefficient to evaluate the reliability and validity of the measurement
items. The internal consistency analysis method is a method to increase the reliability of a measurement tool by finding items that hinder reliability when multiple items are used to specify the same concept and excluding them from the measurement tool, and it is generally considered to be relatively reliable if the value of Cronbach's $\alpha$ coefficient is 0.6 or higher.

The results of the reliability analysis of the items comprising each factor are shown in the following <Table 2>.

**Table 2.** Reliability analysis results of research variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Number of items</th>
<th>Cronbach's $\alpha$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Initial</td>
<td>Revised</td>
<td>Initial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exogenous variables</td>
<td>Child value</td>
<td>Mothers</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fathers</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endogenous variables</td>
<td>Happiness</td>
<td>Mothers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fathers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Cronbach's $\alpha$ values for the number of items in the original model and the revised model of all factors were at least 0.77, confirming that the reliability was adequate.

**3.3. Self-effect and partner-effect of child value on happiness**

To test the self-effect and partner-effect of parental child value on happiness, we constructed a model as shown in <Figure 3> and checked the fit of the model, and the fit of the self-effect and partner-effect model of parental child value on happiness was $x^2=135.608$ $(df=14, p<0.001)$, GFI=0.963, NFI=0.939, CFI=0.945, and it was confirmed that the model explained the data well.

To compare the relative influence of self-effect and partner-effect of father's and mother's child value on happiness, a total of four equivalence constraint models were set up as shown in <Table 3>. The equivalence constraint models are (1) a comparison of father's and mother's self-effect on child value on happiness $(A=B)$, (2) a comparison of father's child value on mother's happiness with the partner effect $(A'=B)$, (3) a comparison of mother's child value on father's happiness with the partner effect $(A=B')$, and (4) a comparison of father's and mother's partner effect on child value on happiness $(A'=B')$.

**Figure 3.** Self-effect and partner-effect of child value on happiness.
Both mothers (p<0.001) and fathers (p<0.01) showed a significant positive effect of self-effect of child value on happiness. In other words, both mothers and fathers believe that the higher the child value, the higher their own happiness. There was no partner effect of mothers’ child value on fathers’ happiness. On the other hand, there was a significant negative interaction effect of fathers’ child values on mothers’ happiness (p<0.001). This suggests that both fathers and mothers are influenced by their own perceived child value.

In other words, the higher the mother’s own child value, the higher the mother’s own happiness, but the higher the father’s child value, the lower the mother’s happiness. The effect of the father’s child value on the mother’s happiness suggests that the mother’s happiness is influenced by a number of factors, including the father’s, while the father’s happiness is not influenced by his spouse’s factors.

Table 3. Self-other effects of parental child values on happiness (equivalence constrained model).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>GFI</th>
<th>NFI</th>
<th>CFI</th>
<th>$\Delta \chi^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic model</td>
<td>135.608***</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.963</td>
<td>0.939</td>
<td>0.945</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constraint model 1 (A=B)</td>
<td>136.690***</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.963</td>
<td>0.939</td>
<td>0.945</td>
<td>$\chi^2 (1)=1.081$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constraint model 2 (A’=B)</td>
<td>138.802***</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.962</td>
<td>0.938</td>
<td>0.944</td>
<td>$\chi^2 (1)=3.193$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constraint model 3 (A=B’)</td>
<td>149.183***</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.959</td>
<td>0.933</td>
<td>0.939</td>
<td>$\chi^2 (1)=13.574***$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constraint model 4 (A’=B’)</td>
<td>136.551***</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.963</td>
<td>0.939</td>
<td>0.945</td>
<td>$\chi^2 (1)=0.943$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: ***p<0.001.

The analysis results of the equivalent constraint model are presented in Table 3, and the difference test is used to analyze whether there is a statistically significant difference between each equivalent constraint model and the basic model. First, the self-effect of fathers ($\beta=0.27$) and mothers ($\beta=0.42$) on the effect of child value on happiness is not statistically significant. In other words, there is no difference in the tendency of fathers and mothers to affect happiness the higher the value of their children. Second, there is no statistically significant difference between fathers’ self-effect ($\beta=0.27$) and mothers’ partner-effect ($\beta=0.01$) of child value on happiness. Third, there is a statistically significant difference between mothers’ self-effect ($\beta=0.42$) and fathers’ partner-effect ($\beta=-0.11$) of child value on happiness. This means that the effect of mothers’ own child value on their happiness is greater than the effect of fathers’ child value. Fourth, there is no statistically significant difference in the interaction term between fathers’ ($\beta=-0.11$) and mothers’ ($\beta=0.01$) effects on happiness. To summarize the above results, the effects of fathers’ and mothers’ child values on happiness in early childhood do not differ between couples in terms of the effects of their own child values on their own happiness. In addition, there is a significant difference between mothers’ self-effect and fathers’ partner-effect of child values on happiness, suggesting that mothers’ happiness is more affected by their own child values than fathers’ child values.

4. Discussion

Based on Minuchin’s Family Systems Theory[49] and Cook and Kenny’s Self-Partner Interdependence Model[50], this study examined the self-effect and partner-effect in the relationship between mothers’ and fathers’ perceived child value and happiness in the family, using respondents from the 6th and 7th waves of the Korean Child Panel. Through this study, we aimed to
find ways to improve the happiness of parents with infant and toddler children, to provide implications for the government's childcare policy for parent education in early childhood education institutions, and to provide a basis for future related research and programs to improve the happiness of parents with infant and toddler children.

Based on the results of this study, the following discussion and conclusions are provided. The direct effects of self-effect and partner-effect between mothers' and fathers' perceived child value and happiness in this study were as follows.

In the self- and partner-effect tests of mothers' and fathers' perceived child value on their happiness, self-effect showed a significant positive effect of perceived child value on happiness for both mothers and fathers. This means that both mothers and fathers perceived that the higher their child's value, the happier they were. These findings are similar to those of Choi and Jung[60], who found that mothers of infant children's higher values and perceptions of their children led to higher levels of happiness through an internal maturation process, and are partially consistent with the findings of Seo[61], who found a positive relationship between fathers' child values and fathers' happiness. However, there is a lack of direct research confirming the effect of child value on happiness. However, Yeon and Choi reported that higher parental child value was associated with higher marital satisfaction[62], and Yoo, reported that maternal emotional child value was associated with lower postpartum depression in women[31]. In addition, Kim and colleagues reported that fathers' growth and involvement in their children and deepening relationships with their children positively influenced fathers' happiness[63], which is similar to the results of this study.

In particular, the direction and content of the correlations between the child value and happiness sub-variables showed that all the relationships between the variables were statistically significant, all the paths in the estimated research model were also significant, and the model fit was excellent, confirming that the research model was well constructed theoretically and practically.

On the other hand, the interaction effect of mothers' and fathers' perceived child value on happiness was significant only for the negative effect of fathers' perceived child value on mothers' happiness. In addition, there was a significant difference in the self-effect and interaction effect of child value on happiness, indicating that mothers' happiness was affected more by the effect of their own child value than by the effect of their fathers' child value. These results confirm that, for fathers and mothers of young children, mothers' happiness has both a self-effect and a partner effect, with a significant effect of both their spouse's child value and their own child value, while fathers' happiness has a self-effect but no partner effect. This means that fathers' happiness may be more dependent on their own child value than on their spouse's, but mothers' happiness may be more dependent on their spouse's child value as well as their own. This means that higher mothers' child value is associated with higher mothers' happiness, but higher fathers' child value is not associated with higher mothers' happiness. This suggests that the effect of fathers' self-worth on mothers' happiness is a function of a number of factors, including mothers' self-worth, but especially fathers' self-worth, whereas fathers' happiness is not moderated by their spouses' self-worth.

Of particular note in this study is the finding that fathers' well-being is influenced by their own child values, while mothers' well-being is positively influenced by their own child values and their spouse's child values, with a significant partner effect. This suggests that mothers, who are the primary caregivers in families with infants and toddlers, may experience parenting stress as a result of excessively high fathers' attention and child values. It is also meaningful to find a difference in this phenomenon in the study that women tend to be more depressed than men in the process of parenting[64]. In addition, the results of this study suggest that mothers and fathers raising infant children have different interaction effects on their happiness, which
requires in-depth analysis through various variables. The results of this study are expected to provide more specific and practical useful information to enhance the happiness of mothers and fathers. In addition, the results of this study suggest that mothers of young children should focus on their own issues as well as the influence of fathers and others in determining their happiness, and that fathers' child value and happiness should be analyzed in more depth. In addition, it is interesting to note that the effect of child value on parental happiness of parents with infants and toddlers is significantly influenced by the self-effect, which is influenced by their own child value, while the mother's happiness is significantly influenced by the self-effect and the partner-effect, which is influenced by their own child value as well as their father's child value. These findings provide an important basis for future cross-sectional and longitudinal studies to analyze the influence of self and spouse on the effect of parental child value on happiness.

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that the effect of parental child value on parental well-being among parents of infants and toddlers is significantly influenced by the self-effect, which is influenced by their own child value, while mothers' well-being is significantly influenced by the partner-effect, which is influenced by their own child value as well as their father's child value. These findings provide an important basis for future cross-sectional and longitudinal studies to analyze the influence of self and spouse on the effect of parental child value on happiness.

Taken together, the findings of this study are significant in that they confirm the effect of parents' child values on their own and their spouse's happiness, which has been lacking in the literature. There have been various studies on parent-related variables related to the family environment. For example, husbands' social support and parenting involvement[65], parents' self-esteem[66], parenting efficacy and marital relationship quality[67], social support and spousal involvement in family interactions[68], parenting attitudes and sensitivity[69], and parenting behaviors[70]. However, most research on parenting has focused on these parental psychological characteristics and the environment. However, it is necessary to consider and reflect on these variables, as well as the influence of parents on each other and their perceptions of their children's values, in order to create a holistic growth and healthy parenting environment.

In addition, as the value of children affects each parent's individual happiness and the child's happiness, which is related to a healthy family environment, the strength of this study is that this study linked child value to life happiness and analyzed positive parenting factors in the family, focusing on self-effect and partner-effect. In particular, in the current era where individualism is prevalent in families, this study contributed to the development of children's values and nurturing environment to improve individual happiness by analyzing the influence factors on the happiness of each parent to create a healthy nurturing environment in the home. The significance of this study is that it structured the influence of parents' children's values on their happiness, which has been lacking in research. Therefore, it is hoped that this study will provide basic data for developing national policies and educational counseling contents for parents living in the era of low birthrate and creating a healthy nurturing environment at home.

This study has the following research significance.

First, this study extends the existing studies that examined the individual influence of each parent by analyzing the complementary relationship between mothers' and fathers' child value and happiness at the intra- and inter-individual levels, and identifying specific mediators of the effect of parents' child value on their own happiness under the influence of their own and others' interactions. In addition, this study confirms the importance of parental child value and parental positive psychology for children's development.
Second, this study is significant in that it simultaneously analyzed both self-effect and partner-effect to more specifically analyze the influence of self and spouse on the relationship between mothers’ and fathers’ child value and happiness. In other words, this study is different from previous studies that only identified individualized influence relationships by applying the self-reliance model to measure the intra- and inter-couple effects of couples on the relationship between child value and happiness of parents with early childhood children.

Fourth, this study empirically verified the importance of parental values in promoting children’s happiness and creating a healthy nurturing environment in early childhood through the results of this study and previous studies[61][71] that showed that fathers’ and mothers’ parental values can affect their own happiness as well as their children’s happiness. The significance of this study is that it suggests the effectiveness of interventions for parents to promote their children’s happiness and create a healthy childrearing environment in the reality of the Korean childrearing environment, where it has been reported that infants’ happiness is low.

The limitations of this study and suggestions for further research are as follows.

First, this study did not examine home environmental stimuli such as parents' socioeconomic background in detail, which is an important variable for investigating the effects of parents' child value and happiness. If future studies examine the effects of parental socioeconomic background on child value and happiness, it will be possible to establish an important basis for creating a healthy nurturing environment at home, along with parental happiness, which has been neglected due to parental economic status and employment.

Second, the results of this study are limited in that it utilizes questionnaires from the Korean Child Panel Survey, which does not allow for a more in-depth understanding of the mutual causal relationships between variables and the characteristics perceived by spouses and children themselves. Therefore, in terms of research methodology, a follow-up study should be conducted to complement this by using qualitative research methods such as in-depth interviews.

Third, parents' perceived child values can be diverse, including emotional, instrumental, economic, and social values, but this study analyzed emotional and instrumental values together, so it was not possible to analyze other types of child values in detail, such as emotional values, which are growing in importance in modern society. In the future, research should be conducted to compare and analyze more types and methods of child value.

5. References

5.1. Journal articles


### 5.2. Thesis degree


### 5.3. Books


5.4. Additional references


6. Appendix

6.1. Authors contribution

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<tr>
<th>Initial name</th>
<th>Contribution</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lead Author</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Design ✔</td>
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<td>- Getting results ✔</td>
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<td>- Analysis ✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corresponding Author*</td>
<td>- Make a significant contribution to collection ✔</td>
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<td>- Final approval of the paper ✔</td>
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<td>Co-Author</td>
<td>- Play a decisive role in modification ✔</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Significant contributions to concepts, designs, practices, analysis and interpretation of data ✔</td>
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<td>- Participants in Drafting and Revising Papers ✔</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Someone who can explain all aspects of the paper ✔</td>
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