

SURVIVAL STRATEGIES AND POLICY IMPLICATION FOR THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF SINGLE-PARENT FAMILY: A COMPARATIVE APPROACH,

Park C.S., Chung Y.S. Department of Consumer and Family Science,
Taegu University, Taegu, Korea 713-714.

The purpose of this study is to find out various survival strategies for the single-parent family. The survival strategies were analyzed in three dimensions; economic, emotional and social network. The data were collected from the metropolitan areas in Taegu. Based on the results of the pretest, the questionnaire was constructed and distributed to 400 households. Among 400 households, 397 households were analyzed for the study: 32 male-headed, 123 female-headed single-parent families and 241 two-parent families. From each family, only one respondent having at least one child aged under 18 years was qualified for the survey. The household formation process showed that a spouse's death due to illness or an accident was the main reason to be become a single-parent family. Regarding the family cohesion and adaptation, the male-headed family was shown to be the weakest group, and the female-headed family was shown to be very similar to the two-parent family. In the emotional domains, solidarity with children, the amount of sharing time, and conflicts with children were examined, indicating that the patterns of the strategies people used were statistically significant for the different family types. In the economic domains, the level of consumption, resource adequacy, and the experience level of economic difficulties were strongly related to the family type, and those economic domains were important variables related to quality of life. The female-headed family showed the lowest economic satisfaction, indicating that most of the female-headed families were experiencing serious economic hardships with their children. In the social network domains, the female-headed family had some difficulties in having an formal social network due to the loss of spouse. The kinds and the levels of the welfare needs were also strongly related to the family type, showing that the welfare needs of the female-headed family were quite different from those of the male-headed family as well as two-parent family. Finally, comprehensive welfare policies were suggested for the single-parent family in order to improve its quality of life.