

Relationships among Parentification, Self-Differentiation, and Ambivalence over Emotional Expression for Children of Migratory Families

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Abstract : Due to cultural factors, expressing emotions may not be encouraged in collectivist cultures, which emphasize the needs of the group over the needs of the individual. This phenomenon is more prominent for children of migratory families. Due to the absence of one parent, children were often parentified by adults, which then impacted on their self-differentiation process. It made them more difficult to express their needs and emotions freely and openly. This study aimed to investigate the mediation effect of self-differentiation between parentification, and ambivalence over emotional expression for children of migratory families in Taiwan. Participants included 460 (326 females, 134 males) Taiwanese adults (age 18-25 years). The data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis. The questionnaire included informed consent form, 'Filial Responsibility Scale-Adult', 'Chinese version of the Differentiation of Self Inventory', 'Ambivalence over Emotion Expressiveness Questionnaire', and the demographic sheet. Results indicated that self-differentiation mediated the relationship between parentified experience and ambivalence over emotional expression. In other words, parentified experience itself does not have the power to affect ambivalence over emotional expression. Only by affecting self-differentiation can it make an actual difference. The results were as expected and confirmed the hypothesis. Implications for clinical practice, research, and training were discussed.

Keywords : ambivalence over emotional expression, children of migratory families, parentification, self-differentiation

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