

Affective Ambivalence in Informal Caregivers of Older Adults in the Face of Loss and Grief Processes

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Abstract : Worldwide the population of older adults is increasing. The World Health Organization (2022) estimates that it will double by 2050. Informal caregivers of older adults may experience contradictory impulses, overload, and multiple losses before the death of the older adult in their care. The general purpose of research was to identify and describe the affective ambivalence in informal caregivers of older adults in the face of loss and grief processes. The dimensions under study were affective ambivalence, informal caregivers of older adults, loss processes and the grieving process. A qualitative approach methodology and an empirical phenomenological design were used through Clark Moustakas' Multiangulation Model to describe, categorize and interpret, intentionality, temporality and intersubjectivity a problem never studied. Among the findings was the feminization of the role. Affective ambivalence is manifested through emotions, feelings, thoughts and behavior, including non-verbal language. The assumption of the role is highly influenced by an affective and moral factor, where a minimum of 35 hours per week are invested in without family and financial support. It was found that the participants experience objective and subjective overload. Furthermore, because of the role, they experienced loss of life, loss of aspects of themselves, loss of objects, emotional losses, and losses linked to development. On the other hand, up to two types of grief were found simultaneously. Finally, the presence of affective ambivalence was found with the same intensity 13 years after the loss of the older adult under care.

Keywords : affective ambivalence, informal caregivers of older adults, loss processes, grief processes

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