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United Arab Emirates University

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Master Thesis Defense

Entitled

Identity Orientation and Depressive Symptoms amongst Adult Third Culture Kids at UAEU: An Exploratory Study

by

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Abstract

Adult Third Culture Kids (ATCKs) make up a large number of the population of U.A.E but very few studies explore the possible psychological distresses faced by this population within the country. Some of the extensively studied difficulties faced by ATCKs include high mobility, unresolved grief, relationship struggles and identity development. The present study aimed to explore the prevalent identity orientation and depressive symptoms, as well as to identify whether identity orientations predicted depression amongst Adult Third Culture Kids at United Arab Emirates University. A sample of about 250 Immigrant Undergraduate males and females, who have spent a major period of their developmental years outside their country of origin, were selected. Analysis of data was obtained through descriptive and inferential statistical procedures. Results indicated that 64% of the sample reported mild mood disturbance to extreme depression. Findings revealed that the depressive symptoms, above normal levels were: Guilty Feelings (48.8%), Changes in Sleeping Pattern (42.4%) and Tiredness or Fatigue (40%). Amongst the different Identity Orientations PI ($n = 149$) and RI ($n = 112$) were most extremely important whereas SI ($n = 67$) and CI ($n = 58$) were least extremely important to the respondents. Stepwise multiple regression had also been used and the findings suggest that SI ($p = 0.152$) has a positive correlational effect on depression. The findings of this study lay the groundwork for future studies to come while also urging the need for appropriate treatment options.

Keywords: ATCK, Identity Orientation, Depressive Symptoms, PI, RI, SI, CI.