

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-COMPASSION, HUMOR AND ALEXITHYMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF PARENTS WITH AUTISTIC CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

Parents' individual characteristics have an important role on children's development and their acquisition of fundamental skills. This study aims to investigate the self-compassion, humor styles and alexithymia levels of parents with autistic children. The sample of the study consists of the parents of children diagnosed with autism who were also attending private special education centers in İstanbul. In the study, the Self-compassion Scale, the Humor Styles Scale and the Toronto Alexithymia Scales were used and hierarchical regression analyses were conducted to evaluate the causal relationship between the scales. The results revealed that over-identification subscale of the Self-compassion Scale and the aggressive humor subscale of the Humor Styles Scale are positive predictors, and the mindfulness subscale of the Self-compassion Scale is a negative predictor of the Toronto Alexithymia Scale total scores, the difficulty identifying feelings subscale and the difficulty describing feelings subscale scores. In addition, it is also revealed that self-enhancing humor variable is a positive predictor of the Toronto Alexithymia Scale total scores and the externally-oriented thinking subscale.

Key Words: Autism, parents, self-compassion, humor, alexithymia.