

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF SINGLE PARENT MOTHER EXPERIENCES IN MIDDLE ADULTHOOD

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Abstract

The death of a spouse leaves psychological sadness for the person left behind. Single parent mothers have to carry out dual roles such as raising their children and being the backbone of the family. This research aims to understand the experiences of single parent mothers in middle adulthood which are related to the participants' process of going through the emotional shock of their husband's death, the impact of their husband's death, the demands of carrying out their role as a single parent mother and discovering the meaning of life through these events. The selection of participants in this study used a purposive sampling technique with the following criteria: (1) Widows aged 40-60 years; (2) Divorce due to husband's death; (3) Minimum D3 education; (4) Having children from a previous marriage. Data mining was carried out by conducting semi-structured interviews. Then the interview results were analyzed using the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) technique. This research produced three main themes, including the impact of a husband's death, the dynamics of being a single parent mother and the process of finding the meaning of life as a single parent mother. Decision making in remaining a single parent is greatly influenced by support from family and the environment. The efforts to educate children by the participants in this research are to provide full attention to their children so that they do not feel discouraged because they do not have a father figure. The meaning that participants found in carrying out the role of single parent mother was that their patience and sincerity were reciprocated with kindness.

Keywords: Single Parent Mother, Death of Spouse, Middle Adulthood, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis