From Philoxenia to Xenophobia? Relations between Xenophobic Tendencies and Parental Acceptance-Rejection Childhood Experiences for Greek Cypriot University Students

By

Loucia Demetriou
Associate Prof. of Psychology
Department of Education, Frederick University, Cyprus
Address: 18 Mariou Agathangelou Street, Ayios Georgios Havouzas,
3080 Limassol, P.O.Box 56368, 3306 Limassol, Cyprus
Email: luciad61@gmail.com

Abstract

Cypriot society has undergone a great number of social changes, especially since 1974. The increased migration to the island has created new realities in the country's social environment. A profound social transformation – the immigration phenomenon – has changed the face of Cyprus and the perceptions and attitudes of its people. Greek Cypriots' perceptions and attitudes pertaining to the concept of philoxenia are undergoing a transformation characterized by increasing xenophobic tendencies. R. Rohner (2005) conducted cross-cultural research and found that in various cultures, rejected children were more aggressive and had a more negative worldview than non-rejected children. Therefore, the question of whether parental rejection in childhood could constitute one of the many underlying causes of the development of xenophobia arises. By drawing from a sample of 215 Cypriot respondents and using two questionnaires (Adult-Gr-PARQ and RACM), we are exploring the extent to which the adverse effects of perceived rejection in childhood could predict and account for the development of xenophobic and exclusionist attitudes toward people from other cultures in adulthood. Although the data analysis of the four scales of the Adult-Gr-PARQ reveals that the majority of our Cypriot respondents fall well within the range of acceptance, the correlation of separate items on the RACM and the Adult-Gr-PARQ scales confirms that those respondents who do exhibit xenophobic tendencies also have scores on the Adult-Gr-PARQ scales that point toward childhood experiences of rejection.

Keywords: *PARTheory of Socialization, parental acceptance-rejection, attitudes, xenophobia*