To Work or Not to Work? Mothers of Children With ADHD

Karen M. O’Brien; Elizabeth Sauber; Erica S. Merson; Andrea Chronis-Tuscano

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Abstract

Mothers of children with attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder were studied with regard to employment status, workplace characteristics, and depressive symptoms. Self-complexity theory proposes that complex self-representations buffer against depression; however, maternal employment may challenge mothers’ ability to attend to the many needs of their children. Findings from our cross-sectional study of 176 mothers revealed that employed mothers reported fewer depressive symptoms than unemployed mothers and those employed part time, providing support for the self-complexity buffering hypothesis. Furthermore, low levels of parenting stress were associated with fewer depressive symptoms. Implications are provided for career counseling and future research.