The Relationships of College Students' Ego Development with their Cognitive Development, Personality, and Life Experiences: The Application of Washington University Sentence Completion

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Jane Loevinger's ego development theory has been recognized as one of the significant theories in development psychology. She described 10 ego stages that individuals develop in sequences throughout life span. These ego stages include presocial and symbiotic, impulsive, self-protective, conformist, self-aware, conscientious, individualistic, autonomous, and integrated. The purposes of this study were to examine ego development of college students in Taiwan by using Loevinger's WUSCT, and to investigate the relationships of ego development with cognitive development characters, personality and the impact of college life experiences. Subjects were 465 college students from 6 universities located in the areas of Taoyuan and Hsinchu. They completed the scales of Washington University Sentence Completion Test, the Scale of Intellectual Development, Neo-Five Factor Inventory, and College Student's Life Events. The results indicated that the average stage of college students in Taiwan is Self-Aware stage. Female students reported a higher level of ego level than male students did; students who major in engineering displayed a lower level of ego stage than the students who major in management, education, and humanities and social science. Moreover, students with higher levels of relativistic thinking, empathy, openness to experiences, and intellectual inspiration from learning showed a higher level of ego stage. In addition, openness to experience fully mediated the relationship between intellectual inspiration and ego development for male, whereas openness to experience and empathy partially mediated the same relationships for female.

Keywords: *cognitive development, life experience, loevinger's ego development theory, personality*