

***PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMEN WITH
REPRODUCTIVE DISORDERS***

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SUMMARY

The present dissertation is the first scientific recorder work in the field of the reproductive psychology in Bulgaria. It is an attempt to establish some basic personality characteristics of the women with reproductive disorders such as personal and situational anxiety, sexually role-identification, real and ideal image "I" and real and ideal image of a partner. We have used women- biological mothers with naturally born children as a control group. Alongside with the study of women with reproductive disorders we have investigated the influence of some more nonspecific factors as duration of the reproductive disturbances, number of IVF attempts, existence or absence of pregnancy and factors for reproductive disorders - male, female or ambiguous.

We have found that both groups in our comparative analyse of a personal and situational anxiety have statistically significant differences. The women with infertility show higher values in the both personal and situational anxiety. The study examinants that the age, the existence or absence of pregnancy, the duration and the factors of infertility do not impact on situational and personal anxiety of the women with reproductive disorders. That leads us to the assumption that the diagnosis "infertility" is extremely strong traumatic factor against which the other factors are of little importance.

Our hypothesis is confirmed by the comparative analyse of sex-role schemes in both groups that identifies certain differences. The androgynous type occurs twice as often in the biological mothers than in the women with reproductive disorders where the male sexual role-identification is common factor. The study shows that the female and ambiguous sexual role-identification is equally represented in both samples.

We have established some differences in the real and the ideal image of both I groups of women. Women with impaired reproduction expressed desire to be a conformist, to show signs of warmth and friendliness, concern, sympathy, to help and to be involved, thereby they are attracting attention to himself and feel that they are the center of attention, deserve recognition and love compared with women mothers. This is expression of compensatory trend in women with reproduction disorders determinate by their "narcissistic wound" which is connected with the diagnosis "infertility"

A presence of neurotic conflicts is indicated by the comparative analyse for divergences of real and ideal image "I" of women with infertility. One of the basic neurotic conflicts within the women with reproductive disorders could be definite as a conflict between their quest for independence and their experience of dependence. The statement above is a consequence of subordinate position of these women to medical procedures, and that they are forced to live with the procedures and desire to be more confident and independent in their being.

Our study reveal interesting features in the evaluation of a partner`s real and ideal image "I" given by those women with infertility. The certain differences in the image of the ideal and actual partner, which identify areas of mental stress in the lives of the couple is also established. Based on these differences, the women consciously or unconsciously, would reject their partners which would result in a continuous cycle of the reproduction disorders. As a consequence, the thesis that the reproduction disorders are often caused by the gap between real and expected image of a partner is supported by many researchers.

The results of this dissertation illuminate some gaps in the psychosomatic approach to reproductive disorders. It might be useful to psychologists working in the field, to medical teams struggling with reproductive disorders and of course to the couples who have this problem. We are sure that the results obtained in our study would be helpful to develop a more comprehensive approach for a complex treatment of women and couples with reproductive disorders in Bulgaria. We think that the identified by us neurotic conflicts could be the focus of future psychotherapeutic programs, which should be aimed at the reducing of the situational anxiety. The reproduction disorders can become a reversible and temporary stage on the way to implement the dream of many couples to have a child with the help of those programs.

