



Connection between the psychological readiness for maternity and the personal sovereignty level in Russian women

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Introduction

The problem of dramatic population decreasing in Russia may be considered as a result of not only economical situation in our country but also as a result of low personal readiness to have a child in Russian women. Despite the progress being made in understanding deviant maternity, virtually nothing is known about a "normal" readiness for maternity. It is very important for Russia where the motherhood has been underestimated as phenomenon for a long time.

In recent years, psychologists have become increasingly aware that to fully understand the psychology of maternity, we must focus on the inner dynamics of the woman personality.

Concepts and Theories

Psychological readiness for maternity (PRM) has been considered not from the point of view of baby's well-being but as a way of woman's self-actualization last time. We use following definition of this concept: it is historically and ontogenetically developing dynamic system with own structure that demonstrates a level of acceptance by a woman of mother's role with all its limitations and responsibilities. PRM realizes evolutionary, social and existential aims through ensuring good conditions for a child in the real situation and for further development of the mother's personality.

The present study is based on the Theory of Psychological Sovereignty (Nartova-Bochaver, 2005).

Psychological (personal) sovereignty (on French souverain - the carrier of the Supreme authority) is a personality's ability of supervising, protecting and developing his or her psychological space. This ability develops by means of generalization of successful independent behavior. Psychological space of the person is defined in our works as a fragment of reality that is significant for a person, determines its actual activity and life strategy and includes a complex of physical, social and psychological phenomena that the person identifies him- or herself with. Sovereignty is shown in the inner experience of personal borders integrity.

All critical events, changes in the family and life influence certainly changes of the personal space and the level of sovereignty: close people develop a common psychological space with common borders. Therefore the level of sovereignty can also show a number of unsatisfied needs.

We proposed that the child with all its habits and needs is included into the personal space of the woman in the case of harmonious maternity. She accepts all limitations connected with a child birth. In the unfavorable case chronic injured mother to come feels degraded with ones.

Interaction between the mother and her child includes borders rebuilding and co-adaptation.

Measures and procedure

Investigated variables were psychological readiness for parenting and personal sovereignty. There were used questionnaires (1) Psychological readiness for maternity (PRM) (Skoronnaya, 2006) (2) Sovereignty of the Psychological Space (SPS) (Nartova-Bochaver, 2002).

The questionnaire "Psychological readiness for maternity" (PRM) is one-scale list having 30 items. Each of them can be assessed by 5 answer variants. This questionnaire hasn't been published until now. Its validation included check-up of discrimination, consistency, construct validity, and representativeness on the sample of 500 women.

The questionnaire "Sovereignty of the Psychological Space" (SPS) has 80 items, each of them describes potentially depriving situation from the childhood. They are joined into 6 scales according to 6 dimensions of the psychological space: Sovereignty of Body, Territory, Personal Things and Belongings, Time and Regime habits, Social connections, Tastes and Values. This questionnaire has been also checked about validity, consistency, representativeness, and standardization for two age groups. It has been published in Russian and translated into German and English.

So we proposed that women who experienced or have been experienced chronic deprivation can be less ready to have a child because it is perceived by them as a threat of limitations and personal destroying mainly.

Hypotheses

1. The higher is the level of the personal sovereignty the higher is the psychological readiness to have a child.
2. The level of the personal sovereignty depends on the real stage of mother's experience.

Results and Discussion

Computation of Pearson-coefficient r confirmed hypothesis 1 for five SPS subscales ($p < 0,05$). Computation of U by Mann-Whitney confirmed hypothesis 2: the highest value of the personal sovereignty was in the group (1), the lowest one – in the group (4) ($p < 0,05$).

So as expected it was found that the psychological readiness to have a child is significantly positively connected to the level of sovereignty in all dimensions with exception of Personal Things-Belongings and Tastes-Values to which it is nevertheless connected with a weak-positive links also. It claims that integrated persons are more much ready to give a life to a new human being then deprived persons who have a lot of own unsatisfied needs.

Women who have been recently married (Group 1) demonstrate the highest level of the sovereignty and full controlling all the dimensions of the space. So they are the full mistresses of the own life. Women who are at the second or third term of pregnancy (Group 2) don't suffer also from limitations connected to the child to be. Women recently confined (Group 3) have also a high level of the sovereignty because this event hasn't changed their real being yet. But the women who have a baby (Group 4) show the level of sovereignty which is under the normal meanings border: it means that they are feeling deprived of own body, territory, belongings, habits, friends and tastes. So young mothers are in estrangement from their being and reality until they rebuild and modify their personal space.

Then we chose in each of 4 participants groups women who were the most ready and the least ready to have a child and compared the level of personal sovereignty. We have found that investigated connection is more important for groups 1 and 4. It is very interesting fact because it describes the contrast groups: having a direct bearing on interaction with a child and having no such experience at all just in mind.

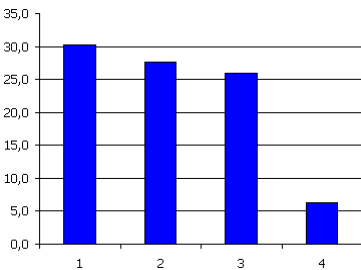


Fig. 2. Level of SPS depending on the stage of real maternity

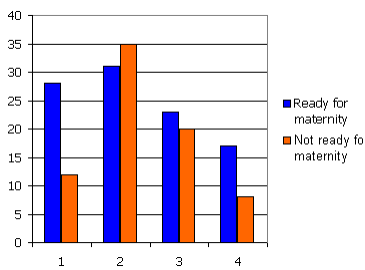


Fig. 3. Level of SPS depending on the stage of real maternity and meaning of the psychological Readiness assessed by PRM

Connection between PRM and SPS

Scale	Sovereignty of Personal Space	Sovereignty of Body	Sovereignty of Territory	Sovereignty of Personal Things and Belongings	Sovereignty of Time and Regime habits	Sovereignty of Social connections	Sovereignty of Tastes and Values
p	0,03	0,04	0,05	< 0,3	0,02	0,04	< 0,3

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