

P02-293

PSYCHOLOGICAL MEANINGS OF SILENCE FOR BRAZILIAN WORKING WOMEN WITH URINARY INCONTINENCE ABOUT THEIR HEALTH PROBLEM: A CLINICAL QUALITATIVE STUDY

R. Higa¹, V.L.S. Chvatal², M.H.B.D.M. Lopes³, E.R. Turato²

¹Laboratory of Clinical-Qualitative Research, ²Medical Psychology and Psychiatry - Laboratory of Clinical-Qualitative Research, ³Department of Nursing, University of Campinas - Faculty of Medical Sciences, Campinas, Brazil

Objective: To interpret the meanings of the silence from Brazilian working women about their urinary incontinence (UI).

Method: A clinical-qualitative method was used with semi-directed interviews with open-ended questions. The sample consisted of eight women aged 30 to 45 from low-income brackets of the population with complaints of UI and who had never sought treatment. The resulting data was analyzed according to the thematic content analysis technique, based on psychosocial and psychodynamic approaches. The authors were aware of the polysemic character from the speeches in Human Science research.

Results: The difficulty that women with urinary incontinence face in talking about the problem is an indication of the anxiety involved. They generally avoid discussing it due to embarrassment and from fear of being judged and misunderstood. In addition, their underprivileged social, economic and cultural situation may have aggravated their limitations in expressing their feelings. In terms of psychic processes, these women's silence can be seen as a way for them to contain the physical symptom that their UI has brought on. Since it is so hard to express themselves in words, everything remains "unsaid," but this silence can be interpreted as a way of expressing painful and unnameable feelings.

Conclusion: The silence of Brazilian women with urinary incontinence proved to be an essential element of communication about this disorder and was as important as the words they uttered. Their silence evidenced the pain and anxiety they experienced, and it emerged as an adaptive psychosocial mechanism.