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Features of Researching Women's Preparation for Childbirth

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Introduction.

Currently, the study of the psychological characteristics of childbirth and the postpartum period is directly related to a woman's preparation for pregnancy and childbirth. Modern psychology has seen a number of studies conducted by various foreign scientists in this area. Specifically, I.V. Dobryakov, G.G. Filippova, T.L. Kryukova, M.V. Saporovskaya, E.V. Kufiyak, V.A. Ababkov, M. Perre, and B. Plansherel, based on a biopsychosocial approach in perinatal psychology, have emphasized the need to study the complex effects of physical, psychological, and social factors during pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period. Their research is grounded in the functional-role specifics of the family and the individual personality characteristics of the woman 7, 14, 1. Based on this, it can be said that women's emotional states during pregnancy are unstable, and the course of the pregnancy is directly related to the surrounding environment. As a result of the development of medicine, perinatal psychology, obstetrics, and gynecological practice, and with a greater focus in medicine on women and their entire families, scientific research on pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period as distinct and unique life situations has increased. In particular, E.G. Eydemiller and I.V. Dobryakov propose modern models and methods in family diagnosis and family psychotherapy 17, 18. Therefore, a woman's role in the family and its formation are also significant when selecting psychodiagnostic methods for working with them.

Methodology.

K.D. Khlomov and S.N. Enikolopov have researched the impact of psychoemotional and individual-characterological characteristics on women at risk of pregnancy termination 16. This is because the feeling of loss or fear of it in women can also cause a number of problems in their psychoemotional sphere. However, there has been little research dedicated to the interrelationship of physiological, psychological, and emotional characteristics in the prenatal and postpartum periods. This situation is likely due to the difficulty of conducting research and longitudinal analysis with pregnant women and their families throughout the entire perinatal period. In addition, due to the high relevance of this topic both abroad and in our country, studying it requires an investigation into the dynamics of the main psychophysiological processes in women during childbirth. According to research conducted by foreign scientists E.J. Henshaw and N.K. Cunningham, psychophysiological processes during the third trimester of pregnancy have the greatest impact on labor and the postpartum period. This conclusion shows,

firstly, that a woman's physiological, psychological, and emotional preparation for childbirth leads to a normal birth for both her and her child. In the research of A.V. Levchenko and G.G. Filippova, the issue of pregnancy is considered a critical period, a stage of gender-role identification that leads to qualitative changes in the mother's personality 9. In our opinion, these changes in the mother's psychoemotional state are related to the extent to which her health is formed. In G.G. Filippova's work, the birth of a child is presented as a stage of re-evaluating life prospects during the development of the future mother's personality. Experiencing stress and a number of negative emotional experiences during this period contributes to a rapid and high-quality adaptation process in preparation for childbirth and in the postpartum period 13. This is because the course of pregnancy in women can cause not only psychophysiological changes but also depressive states. In the research of A.I. Golubikh, S.S. Savenisheva, and A.L. Filonenko, it was found that negative emotional states and low quality-of-life indicators in maternal health can lead to inadequate responsiveness in the first year of the child's life 6, 15. Negative psychological situations in the environment have also been observed to cause feelings of rejection or unwillingness towards motherhood in practical settings. In the works of A.S. Batuev, L.V. Sokolova, L.N. Stankevich, and A.A. Ukhtomskiy, it is analyzed that postpartum psychological characteristics are based on the development of the "mother-child" system under the influence of the sequential alternation of gestational, childbirth, and lactation dominance 3, 12. Dobryakov (2010), E.G. Vetchanina, and G.B. Malgina (2001) considered, from a psychophysiological point of view, that the preparation of a pregnant woman for childbirth shapes childbirth as a single functional system, and that stress and negative emotional states experienced during its formation can lead to various disorders in the process 7.

E.G. Vetchanina investigated the characteristics of psychoemotional stress response at different stages of pregnancy 4. It can be said that the course of pregnancy not only constitutes a testing period for a woman, but it also leads to an analysis of the situations in her emotional relationships, and complex situations play a major role in the successful course of this pregnancy.

R. Collings (2018) emphasizes that the dominance of childbirth requires the correct conduct of labor activity as a complex of neurohumoral, endocrine, and nervous changes in the pregnant woman's body. At such a time, it is considered necessary for the woman to receive support and attention from her family.

G.G. Filippova (2018) and N.P. Kovalenko (2002) found that the functional adaptation of the future mother's body is influenced by the unresolved psychological problems of her childhood, difficulties in her relationship with her own mother, the actualization of highly valued life prospects, and the psychoemotional states conditioned by personality conflicts during pregnancy 14, 8. It can be said that dissatisfaction, anxiety, or internal tension in a woman can create traumatic situations not only for the mother but also in the psyche of the unborn child.

S.I. Galyautdinova, R.R. Katusheva, and R.B. Gumerova (2016) studied that in the third trimester of pregnancy, fears of childbirth can be observed against a background of emotions ranging from positive prenatal experiences and joy to anxious-depressive states regarding successful childbirth 5. The experience of loss or thoughts about these situations during this period can also negatively affect a woman's psyche.

P.P. Balashov, A.M. Kolesnikova, and N.L. Mamisheva investigated the clinical features of anxiety disorders in pregnant women. According to research, in more than 40% of women with normal pregnancies, states of psychoemotional stress are observed in the form of various degrees of anxiety. In recent years, in particular, there has been an increase in the frequency of development of pronounced depressive symptoms and psychopathological disorders in 40-60% of pregnant women 2, 10. This may also be related to the process of perception associated with their vision, hearing, and senses.

Emotional states experienced by a woman during pregnancy are of great importance.

Specifically, V.L. Tyutyunnik, O.I. Mikhailova, and N.A. Chukhareva found in their work that stressful situations experienced by a woman during pregnancy activate the release of catecholamine produced by the adrenal gland into the blood. At the same time, endorphins, which directly affect the fetus through the placental barrier as positive emotions, are produced with the help of the hypothalamic system. The positive emotional experiences of the mother accelerate fetal growth and enhance the level of sensory perception. The objective difficulty in a mother's self-perception associated with fetal activity and significant weight gain a few weeks before childbirth, as well as the renewal of amniotic fluid and uterine contractions, significantly influences the development of various emotional states in the prepartum woman.

N.P. Kovalenko and O.S. Shkurotenko associate the significant development of alexithymia in women during childbirth and the postpartum period with the manifestation of conscious depressive negative emotions during pregnancy as a psychological mechanism. Emotional states manifesting from the working of the denial mechanism underlying alexithymia during pregnancy can lead to the formation of an ambivalent attitude toward the child, the development of various strategies for eliminating psychoemotional stress, and the mother's unpreparedness for self-regulation. Another psychological state that allows us to know the world through the mother is emotional attachment. The theory of emotional attachment, developed by English psychiatrist John Bowlby and tested by scientist M. Ainsworth in mother-child relationships in various life situations, proved that after about seven months, a child becomes very attached to the mother, and this leads to important psychological developments for the child. For example, based on the behavior recorded when a child aged 12 to 18 months is separated from their mother for 3 minutes, scientists have identified four different types of emotional attachment:

- **Secure attachment:** In such circumstances, the child confidently searches for the mother and explores the surroundings. They become depressed and upset when they start to notice her absence. When the mother returns, they greet her with great joy, smiling and reaching out to her.
- **Avoidant attachment:** After realizing that the mother has left, the child looks around and searches, but when the mother returns, their reaching out to her is minimal. They may even look away and continue playing with their toys.
- **Ambivalent attachment:** After the mother leaves, the child becomes seemingly paralyzed and depressed, neither playing nor looking around. When the mother returns, they neither reach out to her nor run away from her. It is difficult to understand whether they are sad or happy.
- **Disorganized attachment:** In the child, attachment to the mother is difficult to understand, and it seems as if everything is indifferent to the child. It is difficult to see any logic in their behavior.

R.J. Mukhamedrakhimov uses the term "secure attachment" in his research. In this case, mother-child relationships are very smooth, harmonious, and sincere. When studying the attachment that occurred in a family environment, within a framework of good positive relationships, and the attachment in children raised without parents, a large difference was proven to exist between them in terms of this secure attachment.

Conclusion.

Thus, the role of the mother in the normal mental development of the child is immense. This influence remains strong even in the child's later periods, beyond infancy.

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