

The psychological and sexual burden of women with pelvic floor complaints

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The psychological and sexual burden of women with pelvic floor complaints; A mixed method study

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Setting the scene

- Literature reports various challenges, restrictions and distress in women with pelvic floor complaints
- A comprehensive overview of women's complaint-related psychological burden is lacking, compromising our ability to inventory and understand the impact to women
- This research was done to confirm the outcomes of a previous mixed method study, and to identify items to assess women's psychological burden with pelvic floor complaints

Research Aims

- To build from the results of previous mixed method analyses
- To utilize a structured conceptualization technique called group concept mapping to develop a model on women's psychological burden from different health care providers' and women's perspectives
- To derive a concise list of statements reflecting the psychological burden of women with pelvic floor complaints
- The conceptual model will be used to provide input for a list of statements to assess women's psychological burden

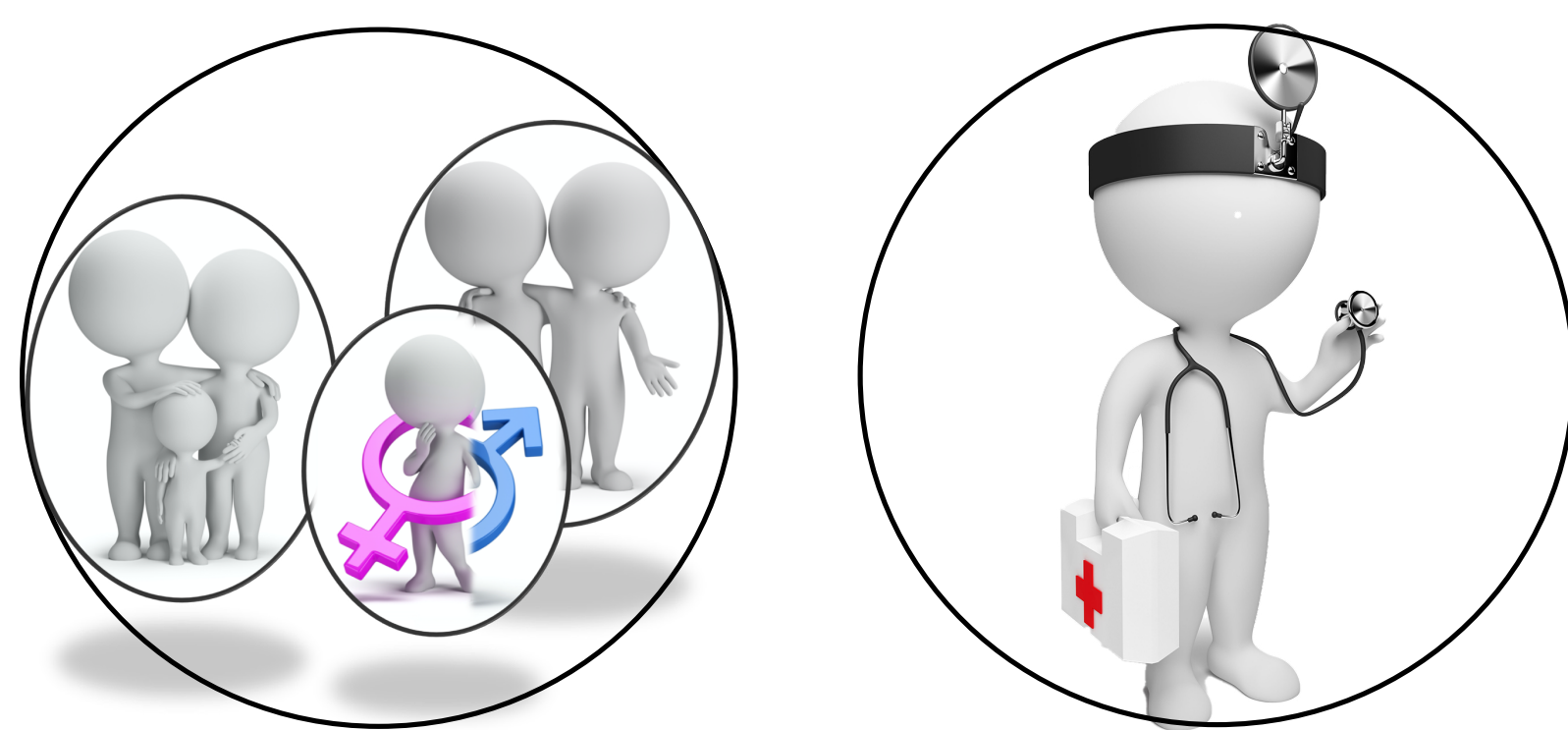
Method

- An expert perspective was sought regarding women's psychological burden to check if their view aligns with the results of the previous mixed method analyses
- Data was analyzed using Group Concept Mapping in a mixed-method design
- Multidimensional scaling and Hierarchical cluster analyses
- Sixteen women and health care providers sorted and rated 125 statements
- Computation of Item-total correlations for item-selection for the list of statements to assess women's psychological burden

Participants

- 48 Women with pelvic floor complaints were interviewed
- 20 Participants were invited and 16 included (3 male and 13 female)
- 4 Women with pelvic floor complaints, 5 pelvic physical therapist, and 8 health care providers sorted and rated statements

The health care providers were General practitioner, Gynecologist, Urologist, Sexologist, Psychologist, and Midwife by profession



Alignment of experts' views and women's experiences

- Loss of control prevalent in pregnant women
- Feeling Wronged was prevalent in women receiving PPT
- Feeling Helpless was prevalent in women receiving PPT
- Sexual distress was an important challenged domain the total group of women
- Feeling Angry prevalent in women receiving PPT
- Feeling Disappointed was prevalent in the total group of women
- Feeling Insecure did not come up as important theme, but it certainly was a concept in the previous analyses.

All distress appears to be embedded in Insecurity

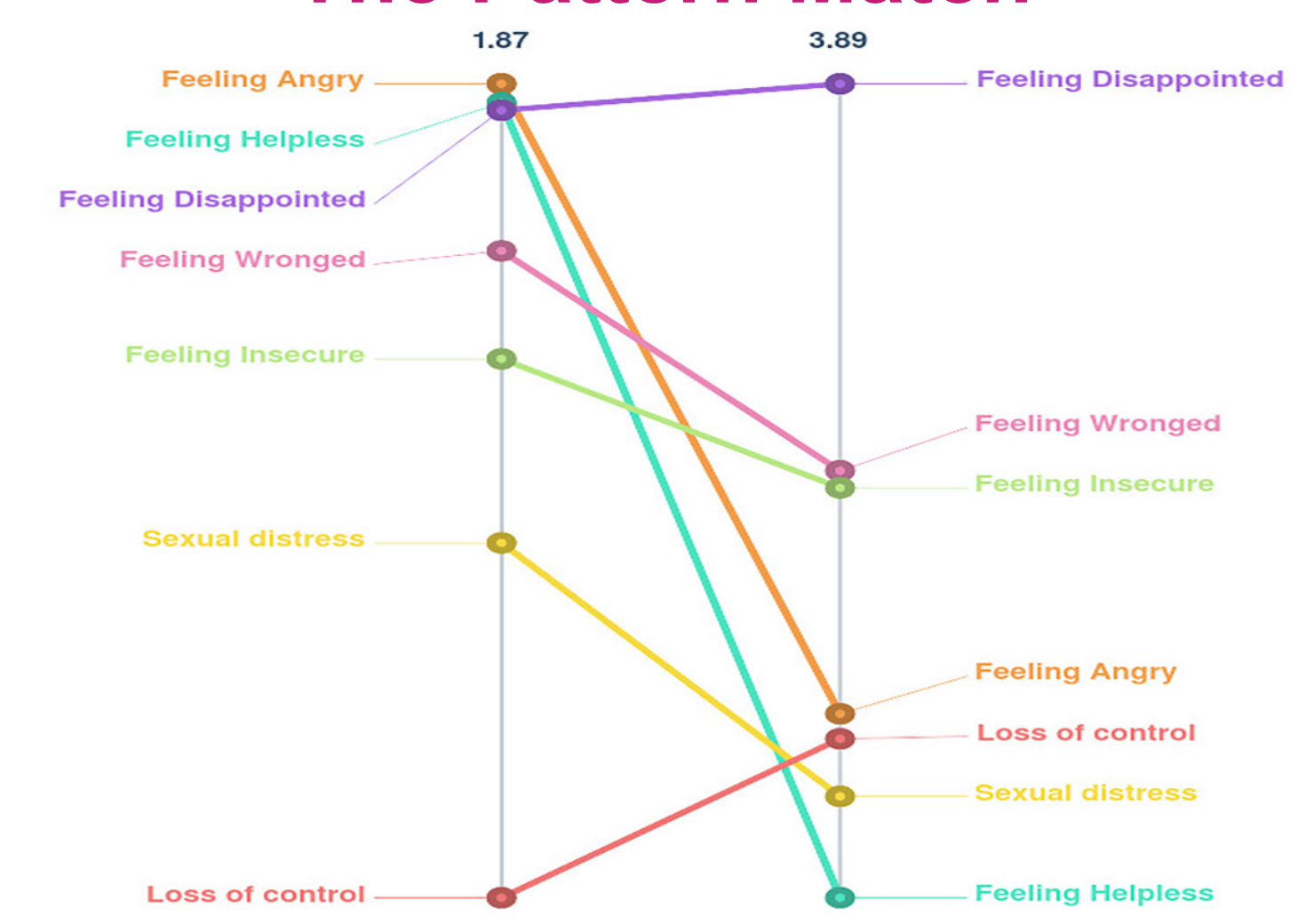
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RESULTS

The Point-Cluster map / The Conceptual Model



The Pattern Match



Selected statements to assess Psychological Burden

Nr.	Cluster Definition	Selected statements per cluster	Selected Statements to assess Psychological Burden
1	Loss of control Being unable to control one's feelings or actions	8 out of 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am constantly aware of my physical limitations I am fearful to increase my activity level and consequently having to pay for this I lack control over my body It is hard to constantly balance my activities I feel hesitant when I cannot do what I want because of physical reasons I have to think ahead to plan my activities well I feel tired because of pain I struggle with whether I should take the risk of provoking my physical complaints or not
2	Feeling Insecure Feeling uncertain or anxious	4 out of 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I feel it is a sign of weakness to show that I am not well I lack trust in my body I feel stressed about the future I doubt if what I do is right
3	Feeling Wronged being treated unfairly, or unjustly	4 out of 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I crawl into my shell when I talk about my physical complaints I feel lonely, home alone in my own small world I feel insecure when women in a similar situation can do things that I cannot do I feel sad to have to say I am not well
4	Feeling Helpless The inability to defend oneself or act without help	7 out of 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I find it difficult that people underestimate my physical complaints It is challenging to talk about restrictions that I experience I feel irritation over other people's remarks regarding my physical complaints I have to defend myself when I have to explain how I suffer I feel sad that others do not understand I feel sad about other people's judgements I refuse to participate in social activities with friends due to physical complaints
5	Sexual distress A problem occurring during sexual intercourse that results in unsatisfactory sex	3 out of 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I feel helpless about the influence of my physical complaints on my sex life I feel disappointed about the restrictions in my sex life due to physical complaints I feel sad about the things that I am incapable of doing during sex due to physical complaints
6	Feeling Angry Feeling or showing strong annoyance, displeasure, or hostility	5 out of 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I feel angry when I lack control over my body I feel angry about the severity of my physical restrictions I feel helpless because I cannot do what I want I feel shocked when my physical complaints suddenly occur I am furious about the relapses of my physical complaints, when I work so hard to recover
7	Feeling Disappointed Feeling sad or displeased because something falls short of someone's expectations	2 out of 32	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am going in circles of fear and pain I feel uneasy when my mobility is limited

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