

Poster presentation

Psychological impact of perinatal bereavement in different cultures

Ioanna Ierodiakonou – Benou*, Stergios Kaprinis, Stavroula Sokolaki, Apostolos Iakovidis and Georgios Kaprinis

Address: 3rd Department of Psychiatry, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Thessaloniki, Greece

* Corresponding author

from International Society on Brain and Behaviour: 3rd International Congress on Brain and Behaviour Thessaloniki, Greece. 28 November – 2 December 2007

Published: 17 April 2008

Annals of General Psychiatry 2008, **7**(Suppl 1):S189 doi:10.1186/1744-859X-7-S1-S189

This abstract is available from: <http://www.annals-general-psychiatry.com/content/7/S1/S189>

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Background

Perinatal death includes stillbirth and neonatal death and comes as a shock for the parents, family and medical staff since it is always an unexpected death.

The aim of this study was to explore the feelings this event creates, the social implications which might arise and the role of the cultural parameters which influence the procedure of mourning.

Materials and methods

Our data comes from the Psychotherapy Unit of the Psychiatric department in the AHEPA University General Hospital (Thessaloniki, Greece) where 28 cases have been seen during 2003 -2006, and after an assessment they have been offered psychodynamic psychotherapy (individual, couple or family).

Results

All women presented depression and anxiety disorders. Fathers presented great distress (67%) and sexual dysfunction (58%). Children showed regressive phenomena.

Conclusions

Social factors and cultural parameters involving with the tragic event play a major role in the mourning processes. Religion and personal beliefs influence the bereavement period and have a catalytic impact on the psychological situation of the couple, relatives and the medical environment.

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