

## Body Image and Self Image Assessed by Drawings and Questionnaires in Women diagnosed with breast cancer

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Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women in the Western world. Mortality rates have declined significantly due to the effectiveness of technology in early diagnosis and treatments. This medical progress calls for an examination of the psychological effects of breast cancer among survivors.

The goals of this study include:

1. To examine psychological effects of breast cancer expression in self-drawings of survivors.
2. To check the validation of a simple diagnostic tool – self-drawing.

The method included a sample of 72 female breast cancer survivors who were asked to draw themselves in the present, and in the past, prior the disease. In addition, the Comfortable Interpersonal Distance Test, and Body Satisfaction Questionnaire were used.

Results of this study showed:

1. Indicators in the drawings distinguished between changes in self-perception (hair, body contour, eyes); and between subjects who had undergone different medical treatments (hair, mouth, breast, head line contour).
2. Significant correlations between DAP indicators and :
  - a. C.I.D Test indicators, with: breast; differences in the 2 administered DAP: 1.Lower Body; 2.Mouth.
  - b. Body satisfaction questionnaire factors, with: eyes, head line contour, lower body, mouth.
  - c. Background variables: Radiation treatment with breasts; Age of subject with hair; Emotional support with: breasts, eyes, and differences in the 2 administered DAP indicator- hair .

The current study may help by extending the concept of the projective diagnostic tool - DAP, given to subjective interpretation, to a tool that can be measured objectively by measurement scales, reflecting compatible results with validated tools.

It can also help as a diagnosis tool of mental distress, methods of coping, and adaptation level after the disease and its treatment in breast cancer survivors, as basis for emotional and rehabilitation therapy programs.

**Keywords:** Breast cancer, Machover Draw-A-Person test (DAP), Self Perception, Body Satisfaction, Comfortable Interpersonal Distance.

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