

Reconceptualizing Femininity in Women with Breast Cancer

A Grounded Theory Study by Asie Omidvar Tehrani and Fariba Zarani.



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Meet the Speaker: Dr. Asie Omidvar Tehrani

Clinical Psychologist & Psychotherapist

- PhD in Clinical Psychology, 10+ years experience.
- Focus: Women's mental health, identity, and femininity.
- Research: Illness, body image, cultural factors, and self-understanding.
- Working on: Reconstruction of femininity among women with breast cancer.
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The Profound Impact of Breast Cancer

Global Health Concern

Most common cancer among women worldwide, a major health concern in Iran.

Beyond Physical

Profoundly affects psychological well-being, self-image, and perceptions of femininity.

Challenged Notions

Loss of a breast or visible changes challenge cultural and personal ideas of womanhood.

Study Objective: Reconstructing Femininity

This study explored how Iranian women with breast cancer reconstruct their understanding of femininity in the face of illness and mortality.

How do women redefine their identity after breast cancer?

What role do cultural and personal notions play?

How is femininity perceived in the context of mortality?





Methodology: Grounded Theory

01

Qualitative Design

Grounded theory methodology employed for in-depth understanding.

03

Participant Recruitment

Purposive and snowball sampling used to select participants.

02

Data Collection

Two years of semi-structured, in-depth interviews with women diagnosed with non-metastatic breast cancer.

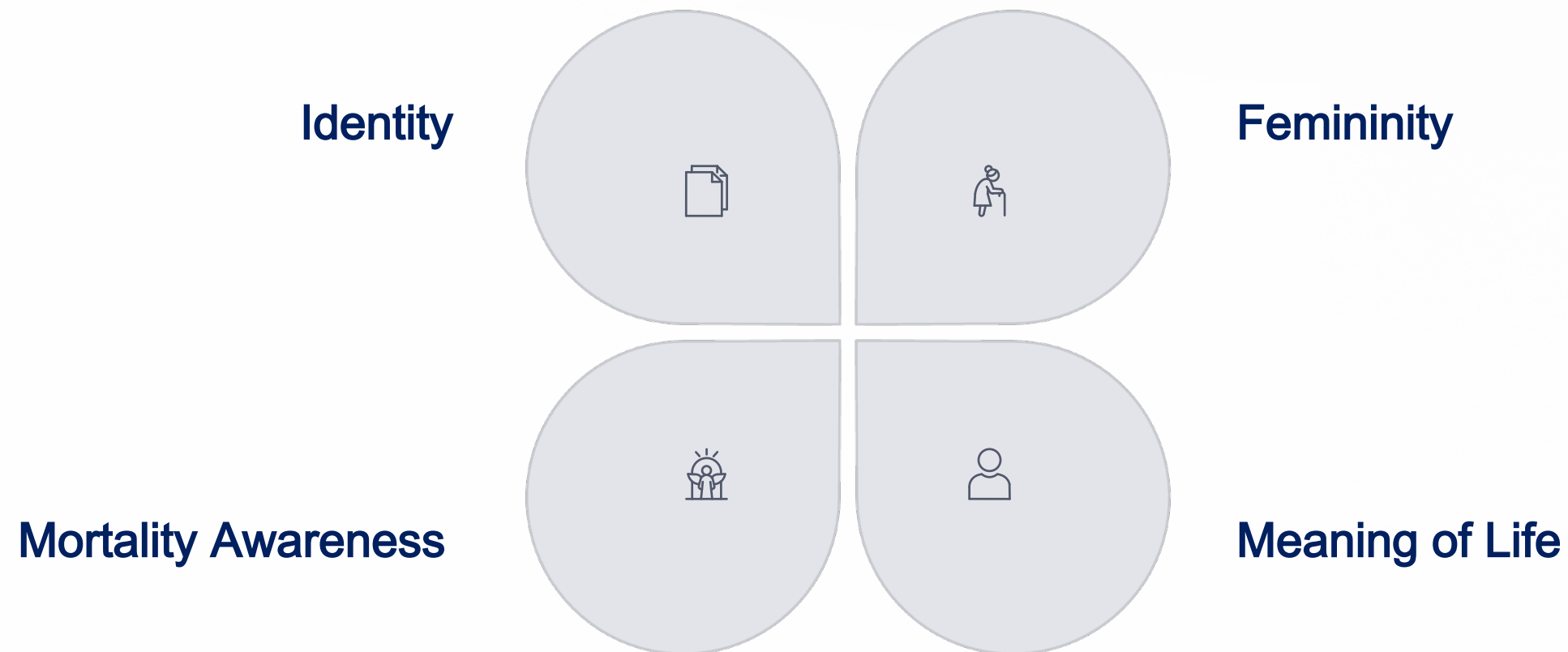
04

Analysis

Interviews transcribed verbatim and analyzed using Strauss and Corbin's constant comparative method.

Core Finding: Reconsidering Identity

The core category that emerged was "Reconsidering identity, femininity, and the meaning of life in the context of mortality awareness."



Five Major Themes Identified

1

Shifts in Self-Perception

Changes in femininity and personal identity.

2

Re-evaluation of Relationships

Impact on family and social connections.

3

Coping with Challenges

Psychological and emotional adjustments.

4

Searching for Meaning

Finding purpose in life.

5

Accepting Mortality

Reconstructing hope despite mortality awareness.

Redefining Femininity: Resilience and Hope

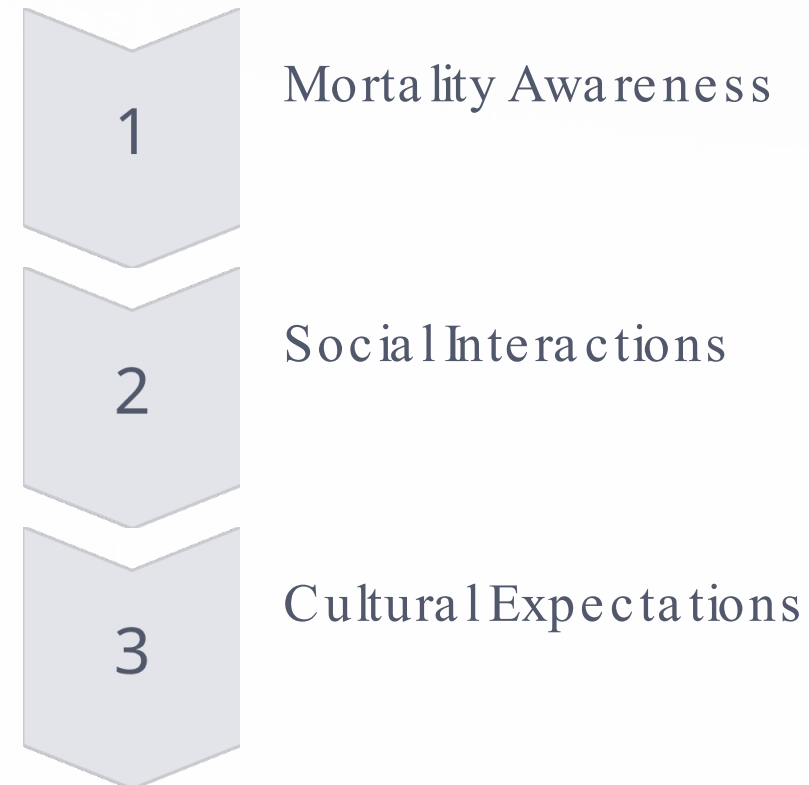
While many participants initially experienced shock, loss, and diminished self-worth, others ultimately redefined femininity by emphasizing resilience, inner strength, and relational values.





Conclusions: Beyond a Medical Condition

Breast cancer is an existential and cultural experience, compelling women to reconstruct identity and femininity.



This underscores the importance of psychosocial interventions, family support, and culturally sensitive care in oncology nursing and healthcare.