

Publication

Relationship between gender role, anger expression, thermal discomfort and sleep onset latency in women

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BACKGROUND: Women with thermal discomfort from cold extremities (hands and feet; TDCE) often suffer from prolonged sleep onset latency (SOL). Suppressed anger could contribute to the genesis of both TDCE and prolonged SOL. The aim of the study was to test the hypothesis whether stereotypic feminine gender socialization (SFGS) is related to anger suppression (experienced anger inwards, Anger-In), which in turn could affect TDCE and SOL. **METHODS:** 148 women, a sub-sample of a larger survey carried out in the Canton Basel-Stadt (Switzerland), sent back detailed postal questionnaires about SOL, TDCE, anger expression (STAXI, state -trait -anger -expression -inventory) and SFGS using a gender power inventory, estimating the degree of gender specific power expression explicitly within women by stereotypic feminine or male attribution. Statistics was performed by path analysis. **RESULTS:** A significant direct path was found from stereotypic feminine attribution to Anger-In and prolonged SOL. Additionally, a further indirect path from Anger-In via TDCE to SOL was found. In contrast, stereotypic male attribution was not related to Anger-In but was significantly associated with outwardly expressed anger. **LIMITATIONS:** Self-reported data, retrospective cross-sectional survey, prospective studies are required including physiological measurements. **CONCLUSION:** Stereotypic feminine gender socialization may play an important determinant for anger suppression, which subsequently can lead to thermal discomfort from cold extremities and prolonged sleep onset latency.

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