

BIOPSYCHOSOCIAL AND PSYCHIATRIC ASPECTS OF INFIDELITY

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SAŽETAK

Uvod/Cilj: Neverstvo predstavlja kompleksan biopsihosocijalni fenomen sa značajnim implikacijama na individualnom, partnerskom i porodičnom nivou. Iako se često posmatra kroz moralnu, kulturološku ili društvenu prizmu, savremena istraživanja ukazuju na međudejstvo bioloških, psiholoških i socijalnih faktora u njegovoj etiologiji. Neverstvo je povezano sa poremećajima privrženosti, impulsivnošću, hormonskim i neurobiološkim uticajima, traumatskim iskustvima, poremećajima ličnosti i različitim oblicima zavisničkog ponašanja. Posledice mogu da se ogledaju u ozbiljnim poremećajima mentalnog zdravlja, kao i u destabilizaciji partnerskog i porodičnog sistema. Cilj rada je da se izvrši analiza biopsihosocijalnih i psihijatrijskih aspekata neverstva u partnerskim i porodičnim odnosima, kao i sagledavanje njegovih etioloških faktora, kliničkih manifestacija i posledica po mentalno zdravlje pojedinca, partnersku dinamiku i porodično funkcionisanje.

Materijal i metode: Rad predstavlja narativni pregled relevantne domaće i međunarodne literature iz oblasti psihijatrije, kliničke psihologije, porodične terapije, evolucione psihologije i neurobiologije. Analizirani su radovi koji se bave genetskim predispozicijama, hormonskim i neurotransmiterskim mehanizmima, obrascima privrženosti, karakteristikama ličnosti, sociokulturnim determinantama i psihijatrijskim posledicama neverstva.

Rezultati: Pokazalo se da je neverstvo multifaktorijski fenomen. Biološki faktori uključuju: genetske varijacije, hormonske i neurotransmiterske uticaje i aktivaciju moždanog nagradnog sistema povezanog sa dopaminergičkim putevima. Psihološki faktori obuhvataju: nesigurne stilove privrženosti, traženje senzacija, narcističke i granične crte ličnosti, traumatska iskustva iz detinjstva i poremećaje kontrole impulsa. Socijalni faktori uključuju: kulturne norme, profesionalno okruženje, te savremene modele partnerskih odnosa. Posledice neverstva mogu da uključuju: depresiju, anksioznost, posttraumatski stresni poremećaj, suicidalne ideje, porodično nasilje, probleme zavisnosti, kao i dugotrajno narušavanje poverenja i intimnosti.

Zaključak: Neverstvo nije isključivo moralno ili socijalno pitanje, već složen klinički i društveni fenomen sa značajnim implikacijama po mentalno zdravlje i stabilnost partnerskih i porodičnih odnosa. Razumevanje biopsihosocijalnih mehanizama omogućava adekvatniji psihijatrijski i psihoterapijski pristup, usmeren ka transformaciji individualnog i partnerskog funkcionisanja kroz razvoj samosvesti, odgovornosti i rezilijentnosti.

Ključne reči: neverstvo, biopsihosocijalni fenomen, mentalno zdravlje, partnerski odnos, porodična dinamika

ABSTRACT

Introduction/Objective: Infidelity is a complex biopsychosocial phenomenon with significant implications at the individual, relational, and family levels. Although traditionally viewed within moral, cultural, or social frameworks, contemporary evidence highlights the interplay of biological, psychological, and social determinants in the etiology of this phenomenon. Infidelity has been associated with attachment disorders, impulsivity, neurobiological and hormonal influences, traumatic experiences, personality pathology, and addictive behaviors. Its consequences may include severe mental health issues and disruption of partner relations and family stability. The present study aims to analyze the biopsychosocial and psychiatric aspects of infidelity in intimate and family relationships, with particular emphasis on etiological factors, clinical manifestations, and consequences for mental health, partner relationships, and family dynamics.

Material and methods: This is a narrative review of relevant national and international literature in psychiatry, clinical psychology, family therapy, evolutionary psychology, and neurobiology. The analysis included studies addressing genetic predispositions, hormonal and neurotransmitter mechanisms, attachment patterns, personality traits, sociocultural determinants, and psychiatric outcomes associated with infidelity.

Results: Infidelity is a multifactorial phenomenon. Biological contributors include genetic variability, hormonal and neurotransmitter influences, and activation of dopaminergic reward pathways. Psychological factors include insecure attachment styles, sensation seeking, narcissistic and borderline personality traits, childhood trauma, and impaired impulse control. Social determinants encompass cultural norms, occupational environments, and contemporary relationship models. Consequences of infidelity may include depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, suicidal ideation, domestic violence, substance abuse issues, as well as long-term impairment of trust and intimacy.

Conclusion: Infidelity should not be regarded solely as a moral or social issue, but as a complex clinical and societal phenomenon with substantial implications for mental health, partnership, and family stability. A comprehensive understanding of its biopsychosocial mechanisms enables more effective psychiatric and psychotherapeutic interventions aimed at improving individual and partnership functioning through the development of self-awareness, responsibility, and resilience.

Keywords: infidelity, biopsychosocial phenomenon, mental health, partner relationship, family dynamics

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UVOD

Neverstvo predstavlja složen i višedimenzionalan fenomen koji zahvata individualni, partnerski i porodični sistem. U najširem smislu, neverstvo se definiše kao emocionalna i/ili seksualna intimnost sa osobom izvan primarne partnerske ili bračne veze, bez znanja i pristanka partnera, čime se narušava implicitni ili eksplicitni dogovor o vernosti [1]. Iako ne postoji univerzalno prihvaćena definicija, većina autora saglasna je da neverstvo podrazumeva povredu poverenja i destabilizaciju emocionalne sigurnosti unutar partnerskog odnosa [2].

Epidemiološki podaci ukazuju na visoku prevalenciju ovog fenomena. Procene variraju u zavisnosti od metodologije i definicije, ali istraživanja pokazuju da značajan procenat osoba u dugotrajnim partnerskim odnosima tokom života doživi ili počinu neverstvo. Smatra se da se 40% do 50% parova koji su doživeli neverstvo razdvajaju ili razvode. Oko 80% tajnih ljubavnih veza i dalje traje nakon otkrivanja neverstva ili razvoda, dok blizu 25% brakova opstaje nakon preljube jednog od partnera [3–7]. U savremenim društvima primećuje se smanjenje rodni razlika u stopama neverstva, uz porast učestalosti kod žena u poslednjim decenijama [4].

Sa stanovišta biopsihosocijalnog modela, neverstvo se ne može objasniti jednim uzrokom. Biološki faktori uključuju: genetske predispozicije, hormonalne uticaje i neurobiološke mehanizme povezane sa sistemom nagrade u mozgu [8,9].

Psihološki faktori obuhvataju: stilove privrženosti, crte ličnosti, nivo samopoštovanja, traume iz detinjstva i sposobnost regulacije emocija kod oba partnera [10,11]. Socijalni i kulturološki faktori dodatno oblikuju percepciju i učestalost neverstva. Društvene norme, religioznost, profesionalno okruženje, i savremeni modeli partnerskih odnosa utiču na način na koji se vernost, odnosno neverstvo, definiše i sankcioniše [12,13]. U pojedinim društvima prisutni su dvostruki standardi u proceni muškog i ženskog neverstva, što dodatno komplikuje razumevanje ovog fenomena [12].

Posledice neverstva mogu biti značajne i višeslojne. Na individualnom nivou, uključuju emocionalnu patnju, depresivne i anksiozne simptome, gubitak poverenja i suicidalne ideacije [11,14]. Na partnerskom nivou, dolazi do narušavanja poverenja, učestalih konflikata, nasilja i prekida partnerskog odnosa [15]. Na porodičnom nivou, mogu se javiti dugotrajne posledice po decu, uključujući emocionalnu nesigurnost i poteškoće u formiranju budućih partnerskih odnosa [9].

U psihijatriji se govori o uzrocima i posledicama neverstva sa biološkog, psihološkog i socijalnog aspekta. Seksualna adicija, kao oblik zavisnosti i poremećaja

INTRODUCTION

Infidelity is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon that affects individual, partner, and family systems. In the broadest sense, infidelity is defined as emotional and/or sexual intimacy with a person outside of a primary partner or marital relationship, without the knowledge and consent of the partner, thereby violating an implicit or explicit agreement of fidelity [1]. Although there is no universally accepted definition, most authors agree that infidelity entails a breach of trust and the destabilization of emotional security within a partner relationship [2].

Epidemiological data indicate a high prevalence of this phenomenon. Estimates vary depending on methodology and definition, but research shows that a significant percentage of people in long-term partnerships experience or commit infidelity during their lifetime. It is estimated that 40% to 50% of couples who experience infidelity separate or divorce. About 80% of clandestine love affairs continue after the discovery of infidelity or divorce, while nearly 25% of marriages survive after an affair by one of the partners [3–7]. In modern societies, a reduction in gender differences in infidelity rates has been observed, alongside an increase in frequency among women in recent decades [4].

From the perspective of the biopsychosocial model, infidelity cannot be explained by a single cause. Biological factors include genetic predispositions, hormonal influences, and neurobiological mechanisms associated with the brain's reward system [8,9].

Psychological factors encompass attachment styles, personality traits, self-esteem level, childhood trauma, and the ability of both partners to regulate emotions [10,11]. Social and cultural factors further shape the perception and frequency of infidelity. Social norms, religiosity, professional environments, and modern partnership models influence the way fidelity – or infidelity – is defined and sanctioned [12,13]. In some societies, double standards exist in the position towards male versus female infidelity, which further complicates the understanding of this phenomenon [12].

The consequences of infidelity can be significant and multifaceted. At the individual level, they include emotional distress, depressive and anxiety symptoms, loss of trust, and suicidal ideation [11,14]. At the partner level, there is a breach of trust, frequent conflict, violence, and the termination of the relationship [15]. At the family level, long-term consequences for children may arise, including emotional insecurity and difficulties in forming future partner relationships [9].

In psychiatry, the causes and consequences of infidelity are discussed from biological, psychological, and social aspects. Sexual addiction, as a form of de-

kontrole impulsa, posttraumatski sindrom, depresija, anksioznost, alkoholizam, samoubistvo i porodično nasilje predstavljaju samo deo uzroka i posledica neverstva.

Obično je tema neverstva više povezana sa trivijalnim pričama o poznatima i javnim ličnostima i njihovim preljubama. U medijima je to često predstavljeno kao zabava za mase po principu „hleba i igara“. U uobičajenim okolnostima, o neverstvu se samo „šapuće“ u porodici, na poslu ili među prijateljima. Neverstvo ponekada ostaje dobro čuvana, odnosno javna i porodična tajna.

Spoznaja sebe samog, sopstvenih sistema vrednosti, kao i razumevanje dinamike partnerskog odnosa i biopsihosocijalnih faktora koji vode ka neverstvu, predstavljaju put prevencije budućih neverstava i pružaju mogućnost da se iscele posledice neverstva. Te posledice često narušavaju integritet ličnosti, doživljaj životnog smisla i suštine partnerskoj odnosa.

Psihoterapijski pristup lečenju uzroka i posledica neverstva je kompleksan i jedan od najizazovnijih u partnerskoj i porodičnoj terapiji. Neverstvo može biti kriza kao šansa za promene u partnerskom odnosu, kao i poziv za rešavanje ličnih problema kroz sagledavanje sebe u okviru bioloških i psihosocijalnih osobnosti, snaga i deficita.

MATERIJAL I METODE

Rad predstavlja narativni pregled literature sa ciljem da se sistematski sagledaju biopsihosocijalni i psihijatrijski aspekti neverstva u partnerskim i porodičnim odnosima. Prema biopsihosocijalnom modelu, u analizu su uključeni radovi iz oblasti psihijatrije, kliničke psihologije, porodične terapije, evolucione psihologije, neurobiologije i sociologije porodice.

Pretraga literature sprovedena je korišćenjem elektronskih baza podataka *PubMed*, *PsycINFO* i *Google Scholar*, kao i pregledom relevantnih monografija i poglavlja iz stručnih knjiga. Ključne reči korišćene u pretrazi bile su: *infidelity*, *extradyadic relationships*, *attachment styles*, *dopamine*, *vasopressin*, *oxytocin*, *testosterone*, *personality disorders*, *compulsive sexual behavior*, *marital instability* i *partner violence*. U pretragu su uključeni radovi objavljeni na engleskom jeziku do 2025. godine, sa posebnim fokusom na sistematske preglede, longitudinalne studije, genetska istraživanja i kliničke radove koji ispituju psihijatrijske posledice neverstva.

U okviru biološkog pristupa, analizirane su studije koje se bave genetskim faktorima i varijacijama receptorskih gena za vazopresin i oksitocin, kao i dopaminskim polimorfizmima povezanim sa traženjem noviteta i rizičnim seksualnim ponašanjem. Razmatrani su i

pendency and impulse control disorder, post-traumatic stress, depression, anxiety, alcoholism, suicide, and domestic violence represent only a portion of the causes and consequences of infidelity.

Typically, the topic of infidelity is more often associated with trivial stories about celebrities and public figures and their love affairs. In the media, it is often presented as mass entertainment following the “bread and circuses” principle. Under normal circumstances, infidelity is only “whispered” about within the family, at work, or among friends. Infidelity sometimes remains a well-kept or an open family secret.

Self-awareness, understanding one’s own value systems, as well as comprehending the dynamics of the partner relationship and the biopsychosocial factors that lead to infidelity, represent the path toward preventing future infidelities and provide the opportunity to heal the consequences of infidelity. These consequences often impair personality integrity, the experience of the meaning of life, and the essence of the partner relationship.

The psychotherapeutic approach to treating the causes and consequences of infidelity is complex and remains one of the most challenging areas in couples and family therapy. Infidelity can be a crisis serving as an opportunity for change within a relationship, as well as a call to resolve personal problems by viewing oneself within the framework of biological and psychosocial characteristics, strengths, and deficits.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study represents a narrative literature review aimed at systematically examining the biopsychosocial and psychiatric aspects of infidelity within partner and family relationships. According to the biopsychosocial model, the analysis includes articles in psychiatry, clinical psychology, family therapy, evolutionary psychology, neurobiology, and the sociology of the family.

The literature search was conducted using the electronic databases *PubMed*, *PsycINFO*, and *Google Scholar*, as well as by reviewing relevant monographs and chapters from specialized books. The keywords used in the search were: *infidelity*, *extradyadic relationships*, *attachment styles*, *dopamine*, *vasopressin*, *oxytocin*, *testosterone*, *personality disorders*, *compulsive sexual behavior*, *marital instability*, and *partner violence*. The search included papers published in English up to 2025, with a particular focus on systematic reviews, longitudinal studies, genetic research, and clinical articles examining the psychiatric consequences of infidelity.

Within the biological approach, studies dealing with genetic factors and variations in vasopressin and oxytocin receptor genes, as well as those analyzing do-

radovi koji ispituju hormonske uticaje testosterona i estradiola na seksualno ponašanje i partnersku dinamiku, kao i neurobiološke mehanizme nagradnog sistema mozga.

U okviru psihološkog pristupa, analizirani su radovi koji ispituju povezanost stilova privrženosti i neverstva sa uticajem crta ličnosti, posebno narcističkih i impulsivnih karakteristika kao i ulogu traume iz detinjstva i poremećaja regulacije emocija u razvoju izvanpartnerskih odnosa. Posebna pažnja posvećena je literaturi koja razmatra psihološki distres kao potencijalni uzrok i posledicu neverstva.

Sociokulturni aspekti su analizirani kroz studije koje se bave religioznošću, profesionalnim kontekstom, rodnim normama i savremenim modelima konsenzualne nemonogamije, kao i kroz radove koji ispituju povezanost neverstva sa porodičnim nasiljem i homicidnim ponašanjem.

Kriterijumi za uključivanje radova obuhvatali su: (1) empirijska istraživanja ili teorijske radove sa jasnom metodologijom, (2) fokus na etiologiju, kliničke manifestacije ili posledice neverstva, i (3) relevantnost za biopsihosocijalni model. Isključeni su radovi sa isključivo popularnim ili nenaučnim sadržajem, kao i radovi bez jasne metodološke osnove.

Analiza podataka je sprovedena deskriptivno, sa ciljem integracije nalaza različitih disciplina u jedinstveni teorijsko-klinički okvir. Rezultati su sistematizovani prema biopsihosocijalnom modelu, uz razmatranje interakcije bioloških predispozicija, psiholoških karakteristika i socijalnih faktora rizika.

REZULTATI I DISKUSIJA

Terminološke postavke

Definicija neverstva, odnosno preljube, obuhvata različite oblike ponašanja koji narušavaju dogovor o vernosti između partnera. Neverstvo može označavati emocionalnu i/ili seksualnu intimnost sa osobom izvan bračne ili partnerske zajednice, kao i flertovanje, upuštanje u emocionalne i seksualne (tzv. sajberseks) onlajn odnose, gledanje pornografije, emocionalnu bliskost sa drugom osobom na štetu primarnog partnera, kao i svako ponašanje kojim se ne poštuje dogovor o vernosti postignut između dve osobe, pri čemu se prevara odvija bez znanja i odobrenja primarnog partnera.

Ne postoji jednostavna i jednoznačna definicija neverstva. Čak i partneri koji su u istoj vezi mogu imati različita tumačenja o tome šta čini neverstvo i kakve su njegove posledice. Neverstvo vodi ka dubokoj psihološkoj patnji i bolu, kao i doživljaju nesigurnosti i gubitku poverenja kod izneverenog partnera. Istovremeno, preljubnik ili preljubnica često prolaze kroz sopstvenu krizu, koja može uključivati osećanja pokajanja

pamine polymorphisms associated with novelty seeking and risky sexual behavior, were analyzed. Articles examining the hormonal influences of testosterone and estradiol on sexual behavior and partner dynamics, as well as the neurobiological mechanisms of the brain's reward system, were also reviewed.

Within the psychological approach, articles examining the link between attachment styles and infidelity were analyzed, along with the influence of personality traits – particularly narcissistic and impulsive characteristics – as well as the role of childhood trauma and emotion regulation disorders in the development of extradyadic relationships. Special attention was paid to literature discussing psychological distress as both a potential cause and consequence of infidelity.

Sociocultural aspects were analyzed through studies dealing with religiosity, professional context, gender norms, and modern models of consensual non-monogamy, as well as through studies examining the association between infidelity and domestic violence and homicidal behavior.

The inclusion criteria for the articles were: (1) empirical research or theoretical papers with a clear methodology, (2) a focus on the etiology, clinical manifestations, or consequences of infidelity, and (3) relevance to the biopsychosocial model. Articles with exclusively popular or non-scientific content, as well as articles without a clear methodological basis, were excluded.

Data analysis was conducted descriptively, with the goal of integrating findings from different disciplines into a unified theoretical-clinical framework. The results were systematized according to the biopsychosocial model, while considering the interaction of biological predispositions, psychological characteristics, and social risk factors.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Terminology and definitions

The definition of infidelity, or adultery, encompasses various behaviors that violate the agreement of fidelity between partners. Infidelity can signify emotional and/or sexual intimacy with a person outside a marital union or partnership, as well as flirting, engaging in emotional and sexual (so-called cybersex) online relationships, viewing pornography, maintaining emotional closeness with another person to the detriment of the primary partner, and any behavior that disregards the agreement of fidelity reached between two people, with the adultery occurring without the knowledge or approval of the primary partner.

There is no simple or unambiguous definition of infidelity. Even partners within the same relationship may have different interpretations of what constitutes infi-

i krivice, ali i negiranje ili minimiziranje preljube. Često se traže opravdanja za preljubu kroz optuživanje partnera, disfunkcionalnog odnosa ili sopstvenih osobina i vulnerabilnosti.

Neverstvo se može posmatrati kao pogrešan put, pri čemu terapeut ima ulogu da na neosuđujući i nekritički način objasni partnerima da je neverstvo vrsta izdaje i da je neprihvatljivo u partnerskim odnosima u kojima su se ljudi obavezali na vernost [1,2].

Tema neverstva prisutna je oduvek i svuda u svetu – od mitologije, stručne literature i beletristike, do teorijskih psiholoških koncepata i brojnih istraživanja koja nastoje da otkriju uzroke, posledice i puteve isceljenja uzroka i posledica neverstva.

Neverstvo u mitologiji i književnosti

Pozadina priče o trojanskom konju predstavlja dramatičnu priču Homerove *Ilijade* (8. vek pre nove ere). Helena je bila udata za Menelaja, kralja Sparte. Paris iz Troje ju je, prema različitim verzijama mita, ili oteo ili je ona pristala na vezu sa njim. To je razljutilo Menelaja i njegovog brata Agamemnona, te je započeo Trojanski rat. Grčka koalicija krenula je prema Troji sa ciljem da vrati Helenu u Spartu. U međuvremenu, dok je Agamemnon ratovao, njegova žena Klitemnestra našla je ljubavnika, i kada se Agamemnon vratio iz rata, Klitemnestra i njen ljubavnik su ga ubili [16,17].

Priča o Zevsu i neverstvu je jedan od najpoznatijih motiva u grčkoj mitologiji i služi kao klasičan primer kako moć i strast vode do sukoba i posledica. Zevs, vrhovni bog, varao je svoju ženu Heru sa mnogim drugim ženama, dok je ona kažnjavala njegove ljubavnice i njihovu decu, ali nikada samog Zevsu. Njegovo ponašanje pokazuje kako apsolutna moć omogućava prenebregavanje moralnih granica. Hera simbolizuje osvetu i posledice neverstva, i božanske i ljudske [18].

Jupiter je bio vrhovni rimski bog, poznat po svojim aferama sa smrtnicama i boginjama. Njegove ljubavne avanture su često izazivale sukobe sa Junonom, njegovom ženom, koja simbolizuje osvetu i ljubomoru. Venus (Afrodita) je imala brojne ljubavne veze, uključujući i smrtnike, dok je Mars bio poznat po strastvenim aferama sa boginjama i smrtnicama [19,20].

U poznatim književnim delima neverstvo je takođe česta tema. Kod Lava Tolstoja, u romanu *Ana Karenjina*, junakinja zarobljena u braku bez ljubavi upoznaje Vronskog, a njena se preljuba završava tragično [21]. Kejt Šopen u romanu *Buđenje* (19. vek) prikazuje Ednu, koja traži ljubav i nezavisnost izvan braka, čime potresa viktorijanske kodekse ponašanja. Gustav Flober u *Gospođi Bovari* (19. vek) opisuje ženu koja traži afirmaciju života izvan dosadnog braka, što je vodi ka finansijskom slomu i smrti. Ričard Jejt u romanu *Revolucio-*

delity and what its consequences are. Infidelity leads to deep psychological suffering and pain, as well as a feeling of insecurity and a loss of trust experienced by the betrayed partner. At the same time, the adulterer often goes through their own crisis, which may include feelings of remorse and guilt, but also those of denial or minimization of the affair. Justifications for adultery are often sought by blaming the partner, a dysfunctional relationship, or one's own traits and vulnerabilities.

Infidelity can be viewed as the wrong path, wherein the therapist's role is to explain to partners, in a non-judgmental and non-criticizing manner, that infidelity is a form of betrayal and is unacceptable in partner relationships where people have committed themselves to fidelity [1,2].

The topic of infidelity has been ever-present worldwide – from mythology, specialized literature, and fiction to theoretical psychological concepts and numerous studies that strive to uncover the causes, consequences, and paths to healing the causes and effects of infidelity.

Infidelity in mythology and literature

The background behind the story of the Trojan horse represents a dramatization of Homer's *Iliad* (8th century BC). Helen was married to Menelaus, the King of Sparta. Paris of Troy, according to various versions of the myth, either abducted her or she consented to a relationship with him. This enraged Menelaus and his brother Agamemnon, and thus started the Trojan War. The Greek coalition set out toward Troy to return Helen to Sparta. Meanwhile, while Agamemnon was at war, his wife Clytemnestra found a lover, and when Agamemnon returned from the war, Clytemnestra and her lover killed him [16,17].

The story of Zeus and infidelity is one of the most famous motifs in Greek mythology and serves as a classic example of how power and passion lead to conflict and consequences. Zeus, the supreme god, cheated on Hera, his wife, with many other women. She punished his mistresses and their children, but never Zeus himself. His behavior demonstrates how absolute power allows for the disregard of moral boundaries. Hera symbolizes revenge and the consequences of infidelity, both divine and human [18].

Jupiter was the supreme Roman god, known for his affairs with both mortal women and goddesses. His romantic adventures often caused conflicts with Juno, his wife, who symbolizes revenge and jealousy. Venus (Aphrodite) had numerous love affairs, including those with mortals, while Mars was known for his passionate affairs with goddesses and mortal women [19,20].

Infidelity is also a frequent theme in famous literary works. In Leo Tolstoy's novel *Anna Karenina*, the heroine, trapped in a loveless marriage, meets Vronsky, and her

narni put (1961) prikazuje oba partnera koji se upuštaju u preljube boreći se sa konvencionalnošću i dosadom urbanog braka [22–24].

U srpskoj tradiciji i književnosti tema neverstva takođe zauzima značajno mesto. U epskoj pesmi o Banoviću Strahinji, njegova žena Anđelija upustila se u ljubavni odnos sa svojim otmičarem, ali joj je oprošteno jer je Strahinja razumeo da je neverstvo počinjeno iz straha. Spisateljica Milica Janković u knjizi *Plava gospođa* (1922) govori o ženskom neverstvu, dok Dušan Vasiljev, istaknuti srpski ekspresionista dvadesetih godina 20. veka, u svojim spisima pominje izneveravanje bračnih obaveza kroz temu neverstva [25–27].

Psihoanalitički koncept neverstva

Preljuba gotovo uvek prvo asocira na erotiku. Erotika predstavlja momenat strasti povezan sa nagonim nabojem. Sama po sebi, erotika nije nužno povezana sa spiritualnošću niti sa ljubavlju, iako ljubav može podstaći erotičnost.

Žene češće imaju potrebu za emocionalnom intimnošću da bi postale erotične. Potrebno im je da budu željene, da im se muškarac divi zbog njihove zavodljivosti i lepote, što vodi ka seksualnoj strasti i sjedinjavanju. Seksualno zadovoljstvo se umanjuje ukoliko kod žena prevladava samosvest, strah od gubitka slobode ili bojazan da će biti odbačene. Žene često poistovećuju seksualno zadovoljstvo sa emocionalnom bliskošću [28].

Muškarci, sa druge strane, češće imaju potrebu za fizičkom seksualnom bliskošću kako bi postali emocionalno bliski. Oni seksualno zadovoljstvo poistovećuju sa samim seksualnim činom, imaju češće seksualne odnose i veći broj partnera. Kod muškaraca postoji izraženiji seksualni nagon, kao i veće interesovanje za neobavezne i kratkotrajne seksualne odnose. Takođe, muškarci imaju više seksualnih fantazija i češće pokazuju kajanje ukoliko nisu iskoristili mogućnosti za seksualne odnose. To vodi ka tome da su muškarci više skloni neverstvu [2].

Kao jedan od najvažnijih faktora opstanka partnerskih veza i brakova ističe se osećanje ljubavi, koje se smatra ključnim sastojkom kvaliteta, stabilnosti i sveukupnog blagostanja partnera. Jedan od glavnih razloga za razvod braka jeste percepcija jednog od partnera da u odnosu nema dovoljno ljubavi, bliskosti i intimnosti.

Erotika i seksualnost predstavljaju deo primarnog instinkta. Primarni instinkt za produženjem vrste često ima prednost u odnosu na vernost. U evolucionom smislu, muškarci teže da oplode što više partnerki, dok su žene u potrazi za „alfa mužjakom“ koji simbolizuje zaštitu, snagu i materijalnu sigurnost za porodicu.

U tom kontekstu, Frojdova psihoanalitička teorija uvodi pojam Erosa, kao simbola ljubavi, seksualnosti

adultery ends tragically [21]. In the novel *The Awakening* (19th century), Kate Chopin portrays Edna, who seeks love and independence outside of marriage, thereby shaking Victorian codes of conduct. Gustave Flaubert, in *Madame Bovary* (19th century), describes a woman seeking life affirmation outside of a boring marriage, which leads her to financial ruin and death. Richard Yates's novel *Revolutionary Road* (1961) depicts both partners engaging in adulterous affairs while struggling with the conventionality and boredom of urban marriage [22–24].

In Serbian tradition and literature, the theme of infidelity also occupies a significant place. In the epic poem about Banović Strahinja, his wife Anđelija engaged in a romantic liaison with her abductor, but she was forgiven because Strahinja understood that the infidelity was committed out of fear. The writer Milica Janković, in her book *The Blue Lady* (1922), wrote about female infidelity, while Dušan Vasiljev, a prominent Serbian expressionist of the 1920s, mentioned the betrayal of marital obligations through the theme of infidelity in his writings [25–27].

The psychoanalytic concept of infidelity

Adultery is almost always first associated with eroticism. Eroticism represents a moment of passion linked to instinctual drives. In itself, eroticism is not necessarily connected with spirituality or love, although love may foster erotic feelings.

Women are more likely to require emotional intimacy in order to become sexually aroused. They need to feel desired and admired by a man for their attractiveness and beauty, which leads to sexual passion and intercourse. In women, sexual satisfaction is diminished when there is a predominance of self-consciousness, fear of losing their freedom, or concern about being rejected. Women often equate sexual satisfaction with emotional closeness [28].

Men, on the other hand, are more likely to require physical sexual intimacy in order to become emotionally close. They tend to equate sexual satisfaction with the sexual act itself, they engage in sexual intercourse more frequently, and have a greater number of sexual partners. Men generally exhibit a stronger sexual drive, as well as a greater interest in casual and short-term sexual relationships. They also report more sexual fantasies and are more likely to experience regret when they fail to take advantage of opportunities for sexual relations. This contributes to a greater propensity toward infidelity among men [2].

One of the most important factors in the survival of romantic relationships and marriages is love, a feeling considered to be a key component of relationship quality, stability, and the overall well-being of the part-

i afirmacije života, nasuprot Tanatosu, koji predstavlja nagon smrti i destrukcije [29]. Eros i Tanatos su u stalnom međusobnom prožimanju. Eros ponekad može da se transformiše u Tanatosa. Postavlja se pitanje kada neverstvo, vođeno Erosom, aktivira Tanatosa, sa posledicama u vidu agresije, ubistva ili samoubistva.

Mitološki prikaz Erosa dodatno osvetljava ovu dinamiku. Eros je bog stvaranja života i ljubavi, sin Afrodite, boginje seksualne ljubavi, i Aresa, boga rata i destrukcije. Afrodita je bila udata za Hefesta, ali je imala ljubavnu vezu sa Aresom. Kada ih je Hefest uhvatio u preljubi, zarobio ih je u magijskoj mreži i izložio drugim bogovima, koji su se smejali i ismevali prevaru i prevarenog muža. Postavlja se pitanje šta je Afroditu privuklo Aresu – pitanje koje je aktuelno i u savremenim prevarama. Ares je simbolizovao moć i socijalni status, elemente koji podstiču nagonске potrebe i mogu doprineti neverstvu i kod muškaraca i kod žena. Mitologija se, na izvestan način, ponavlja i u savremenom društvu.

Savremene statistike u SAD, Evropi i Srbiji u poslednjih deset godina pokazuju da je oko 80% muškaraca i 50% žena barem jednom prevarilo svog partnera, dok se jedan od pet brakova suoči sa neverstvom u nekom periodu zajedničkog života. Muškarci sa višim prihodima skloniji su prevari, dok su žene sa nižim prihodima takođe sklonije preljubi i češće očekuju finansijsku podršku od strane muškarca. Preljube su češće u urbanim sredinama. Muž ili žena često su među poslednjima koji saznaju za preljubu, dok okolina – radna sredina, komšiluk – često zna više i ranije od samog izneverenog partnera [9,13].

Evolucija i neverstvo: koncept monogamije i poligamije

Evolutivni pristup je zasnovan na neodarvinizmu. Njegova osnovna pretpostavka jeste da je ponašanje savremenog čoveka rezultat evolucijskog razvoja. Smatra se da su u modernog čoveka ugrađeni mehanizmi koji su bili svrsishodni njegovim precima i koji su, prenoseći se s generacije na generaciju, postali deo genetskog sistema savremenog čoveka.

Sa stanovišta evolucije, muškarci su skloniji neverstvu od žena. Njihova uloga u reprodukciji je drugačija i biološki manje zahtevna. Nakon oplodnje, uloga muškarca je minimalna, dok žena, kada zatrudni, počinje da investira u dete i biološki i psihološki. Njena reproduktivna strategija podrazumeva zaštitu i negovanje gena kroz brigu o detetu koje se razvija. Ženi je zato potrebna sigurnost i zaštita partnera i za sebe i dete, zbog čega je snažnije vezana za partnera i manje sklona neverstvu. Evolucijsko stanovište pretpostavlja da će žena biti sklonija neverstvu ukoliko je njen partner

ners in the relationship. One of the principal reasons for divorce is one partner's perception that the relationship lacks sufficient love, closeness, and intimacy.

Eroticism and sexuality are manifestations of the primary instinct. The primary instinct for the continuation of the species often takes precedence over fidelity. From an evolutionary perspective, men strive to impregnate as many partners as possible, whereas women seek an "alpha male" who symbolizes protection, strength, and financial stability for the family.

In this context, Freud's psychoanalytic theory introduces the concept of Eros as a symbol of love, sexuality, and the affirmation of life, in contrast to Thanatos, representing the death drive and destruction [29]. Eros and Thanatos are in a constant state of interaction. At times, Eros may transform into Thanatos. This raises the question of when infidelity, driven by Eros, activates Thanatos, resulting in consequences such as aggression, homicide, or suicide.

The mythological depiction of Eros further illuminates this dynamic. Eros was the god of life creation and love, the son of Aphrodite, the goddess of sexual love, and Ares, the god of war and destruction. Aphrodite was married to Hephaestus, yet she engaged in a love affair with Ares. When Hephaestus caught them committing adultery, he trapped them in a magical net and exposed them to the other gods, who laughed and mocked both the adultery and the deceived husband. This raises the question of what attracted Aphrodite to Ares – a question that remains relevant in contemporary cases of infidelity. Ares symbolized power and social status, elements that stimulate instinctual needs and may contribute to infidelity in both men and women. In a certain sense, mythology continues to repeat itself in modern society.

Contemporary statistics from the United States, Europe, and Serbia in the past ten years indicate that approximately 80% of men and 50% of women have cheated on their partner at least once, while one in five marriages experiences infidelity at some point. Men with higher incomes are more likely to engage in infidelity, whereas women with lower incomes are also more prone to adultery and are more likely to expect financial support from a male partner. Adultery is more common in urban environments. Husbands or wives are often among the last to learn about an affair, while the surrounding community – coworkers, neighbors, and others – frequently know more and learn about it earlier than the betrayed partner [9,13].

Evolution and infidelity: the concept of monogamy and polygamy

The evolutionary approach is based on neo-Darwinism. Its fundamental assumption is that modern hu-

relativno niskog statusa i ne uspeva da pruži adekvatnu sigurnost i zaštitu njoj i detetu [30,31].

Za razliku od žena, muškarci su oslobođeni trudnoće i neposredne biološke investicije, a istovremeno im je, kao i ženama, biološki zadatak reprodukcija gena. U nastojanju da ispune taj biološki zadatak, muškarci češće stupaju u odnose sa više partnerki i skloniji su neverstvu. Ipak, iako su skloniji neverstvu, često se posesivno ponašaju prema partnerki kako bi zaštitili očinstvo. Muškarci provode više vremena sa partnerkom, ispoljavaju ljubomoru i ponekad pretnje kako bi ograničili njen potencijalni kontakt sa drugim muškarcima [32].

Ljudska vrsta je ipak uspela da razvije koncept socijalne monogamije, koji podrazumeva izbor jednog partnera sa kojim se ostvaruje emocionalna povezanost i obaveza, uz kontrolu želje za drugim seksualnim partnerima. Socijalna monogamija bila je prisutna još u antičkoj Grčkoj i Rimu, iako je seksualno neverstvo bilo tolerisano u odnosima sa konkubinama i robovima. Smatra se da je socijalna monogamija važna zbog dece, jer su deci potrebna oba roditelja radi brige i zaštite. Ona takođe omogućava stabilnost među muškarcima, smanjujući međusobno nadmetanje i rizik od nasilja, uključujući i ubijanje dece, jer se umanjuje sumnja u očinstvo. U svom delu *Anatomy of Love: The Natural History of Monogamy, Adultery, and Divorce*, Fišer govori o biološkim i društvenim osnovama monogamije i preljube [33].

Krajem dvadesetog veka, monogamija se definiše kao praksa u kojoj osoba ima samo jednog bračnog partnera u određenom vremenskom periodu. U modernim društvima, monogamija je češća, između ostalog i zato što žene imaju veća prava i viši stepen autonomije, što doprinosi ravnopravnijem i stabilnijem partnerskom odnosu. Ovakav oblik zajednice uglavnom se poštuje u Evropi, Australiji, Americi i delovima Azije. Monogamija je zasnovana na poverenju, pri čemu se partneri obavezuju na ekskluzivnost i međusobnu vernost. Ukoliko u partnerskom odnosu nema poverenja, teško je govoriti o stabilnoj ljubavi. Monogamija omogućava socijalnu harmoniju, smanjuje rivalitet i umanjuje rizik od polno prenosivih bolesti. Ljudi često donose svesnu odluku da budu monogamni kako bi zaštitili svoj partnerski odnos, porodicu i materijalna dobra.

Savremeno društvo donosi i drugačije modele partnerskih odnosa. U pojedinim kulturama i dalje su prisutni ugovoreni brakovi, koji se praktikuju u više od pedeset zemalja sveta, uključujući Indiju, Pakistan, Jemen, Etiopiju, Avganistan i Irak. U Srbiji je primetan napredak u odnosu na tradiciju ugovorenih brakova, koji su danas najzastupljeniji u romskoj kulturi [34].

Postoje društva u kojima žena ima više muževa (poliandrija), kao i ona u kojima muškarac ima više žena (poliginija) [35,36]. Pojedini brakovi organizovani

man behavior is the result of evolutionary development. It is believed that contemporary humans possess mechanisms that were adaptive for their ancestors and which, having been transmitted from generation to generation, have become part of the genetic makeup of modern humans.

From an evolutionary perspective, men are more prone to infidelity than women. Their role in reproduction is different and biologically less demanding. Following fertilization, the man's role is minimal, whereas a woman, once she becomes pregnant, begins to invest in the child both biologically and psychologically. Her reproductive strategy involves protecting and nurturing her genes by caring for the developing child. This is why women require security and protection from their partners, for both themselves and their children, which leads to a stronger attachment to the partner and a lower propensity for infidelity. The evolutionary perspective assumes that a woman is more likely to engage in infidelity if her partner has a relatively low status and fails to provide adequate security and protection for her and her child [30,31].

Unlike women, men are free from pregnancy and the immediate biological investment associated with it, while at the same time sharing with women the biological task of gene reproduction. In their efforts to fulfill this biological imperative, men are more likely to engage in relationships with multiple partners and are therefore more prone to infidelity. Nevertheless, although they are more likely to be unfaithful, they often behave possessively toward their partners to safeguard paternity. Men spend more time with their partners, display jealousy, and sometimes resort to threats in an effort to limit their partner's potential contact with other men [32].

Nevertheless, the human species has succeeded in developing the concept of social monogamy, which involves choosing a single partner with whom one forms an emotional bond and commitment, while controlling the desire for other sexual partners. Social monogamy existed as early as ancient Greece and Rome, although sexual infidelity involving concubines and slaves was tolerated. Social monogamy is considered important because children require the care and protection of both parents. It also promotes stability among men by reducing competition and the risk of violence, including infanticide, as it decreases uncertainty regarding paternity. In her work *Anatomy of Love: The Natural History of Monogamy, Adultery, and Divorce*, Helen Fisher discusses the biological and social foundations of monogamy and adultery [33].

In the late twentieth century, monogamy was defined as the practice of having only one marital partner during a given period of time. In modern societies, mo-

su oko dogovorene nemonogamije, gde partneri vesno pristaju na dodatne odnose. U nekim slucajevima jedan od partnera odlucuje da ostane „slobodan“, ili da zadrzi određeni stepen slobode. Ljubavnik ili ljubavnica ponekad postaju poznati i prihvaceni u porodicnom sistemu. Neki partneri su zainteresovani za multiplicitet intimnih odnosa vec na pocetku bracne veze, dok drugi takav model pocinju da praktikuju nakon duzeg perioda stabilne monogamije [37].

Monogamija nije iskljucivo ljudska karakteristika. Mnoge zivotinje su monogamne, poput ptice kivija na Novom Zelandu, pingvina, morskih konjica, kojota i drugih vrsta.

Poligamija

Poligamija podrazumeva odnos u kome jedan ili oba partnera, bez obzira na pol, imaju vise partnera. Ona je cesce prisutna u tradicionalnim patrijarhalnim drustvima, gde zene imaju manja prava i nizi stepen autonomije. Evolucijsko objašnjenje poligamije polazi od bioloskih razlika: zene imaju ogranicen broj jajnih celija i teze izboru najboljeg moguceg partnera radi opstanka i kvalitetnog potomstva, dok muskarci, teorijski, imaju neogranicen broj spermatozoida, pa je njihova strategija usmerena ka širenju gena na što veci broj potomaka. Ovakvo tumačenje razvijeno je u okviru evolucionih teorija, između ostalog i u delu Ričarda Dokinsa *Sebični gen* [38].

Rizici za nemonogamiju kod žena povećani su ukoliko su žene biseksualne, ukoliko boluju od bipolarnog poremećaja, imaju poremećaj pažnje sa hiperaktivnošću (engl. *attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder – ADHD*) ili su rano ušle u pubertet. Ovi faktori mogu da budu povezani sa pojačanom impulsivnošću, intenzivnijim doživljajem seksualnosti i većom sklonošću ka rizičnim ponašanjima [39].

Motivi i okolnosti koje dovode do neverstva (Slika 1) potvrđeni su u savremenim istraživanjima o motivima za vanpartnerske odnose [3,4,40].

Neverstva se cesce javljaju u određenim vremenskim periodima i razvojnim fazama braka. Na primer, tokom i nakon zimskih praznika – usled pojačanog stresa, nezadovoljstva partnerskim odnosom i prazničnih okupljanja na poslu, kada se mogu uspostaviti tajne veze sa kolegama.

Neverstvo se često događa u specifičnim psihološkim i situacionim trenucima: u momentu požude, u momentu ukazane prilike, pod uticajem intoksikacije, u stanju usamljenosti ili očaja. U takvim trenucima može se javiti unutrašnji dijalog: „Šta ako samo ovaj put postupim kao da pravila ne važe za mene?“ Upravo taj trenutak racionalizacije može da predstavlja prelomnu tačku između vernosti i preljube.

Monogamy is more common, partly because women enjoy greater rights and a higher degree of autonomy, contributing to more egalitarian and stable partnerships. This form of union is generally observed throughout Europe, Australia, the Americas, and parts of Asia. Monogamy is based on trust, with partners committing themselves to exclusivity and mutual fidelity. In the absence of trust within a relationship, it is difficult to speak of stable love. Monogamy promotes social harmony, reduces rivalry, and lowers the risk of sexually transmitted diseases. People often make a conscious decision to remain monogamous to protect their relationship, family, and assets.

Contemporary society has also given rise to alternative models of intimate relationships. In certain cultures, arranged marriages remain common and are practiced in more than fifty countries worldwide, including India, Pakistan, Yemen, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, and Iraq. Serbia has made noticeable progress away from the tradition of arranged marriages, which is today most prevalent within the Romani culture [34].

There are societies wherein a woman has multiple husbands (polyandry), as well as societies wherein a man has multiple wives (polygyny) [35,36]. Some marriages are organized around consensual non-monogamy, whereby partners knowingly agree to additional relationships. In some cases, one partner chooses to remain “single” or to retain a certain degree of personal freedom. A lover or mistress may at times become known to and accepted within the family system. Some individuals are interested in multiple intimate relationships from the very beginning of marriage, whereas others adopt such a model only after a prolonged period of stable monogamy [37].

Monogamy is not exclusively a human characteristic. Many animals are monogamous as well, including the kiwi bird of New Zealand, penguins, seahorses, coyotes, and numerous other species.

Polygamy

Polygamy refers to a relationship wherein one or both partners, regardless of sex, have multiple partners. It is more common in traditional patriarchal societies, where women have fewer rights and a lower degree of autonomy. The evolutionary explanation of polygamy is based on biological differences: women have a limited number of ova and therefore tend to seek the best possible partner to ensure survival and high-quality offspring, whereas men, theoretically, have an unlimited number of sperm cells, and their reproductive strategy is therefore directed toward transferring their genes to as many offspring as possible. This interpretation was developed within the framework of evolutionary theories, including Richard Dawkins' book *The Selfish Gene* [38].



Slika 1. Šta istraživanja govore: Zašto se pojavljuje neverstvo?

Figure 1. What research shows: Why does infidelity occur?

Statistike o neverstvu

Podaci iz istraživanja ukazuju na značajnu zastupljenost neverstva [8,9,33], odnosno 45% pojedinaca u monogamnim vezama navodi da su bili neverni. Procenjuje se da se jedan od pet brakova susreće sa neverstvom u nekom periodu zajedničkog života (Slika 2). Prema nekim podacima, kod žena (55%) ljubav počinje da bleedi nakon najmanje tri godine veze ili braka, u poređenju sa 9% muškaraca [4,8,41]. Prema studiji iz 2024. godine, oko 46% oženjenih muškaraca i 25% udatih žena navodi da je prevarilo svog partnera, pri čemu je stopa neverstva kod žena porasla tokom poslednjih nekoliko decenija. Neverstvo je najčešći razlog za prekid partnerskih veza; oko 40% parova koji su doživeli neverstvo se razdvajaju ili razvode. Ipak, blizu 25% brakova opstaje nakon neverstva jednog partnera.

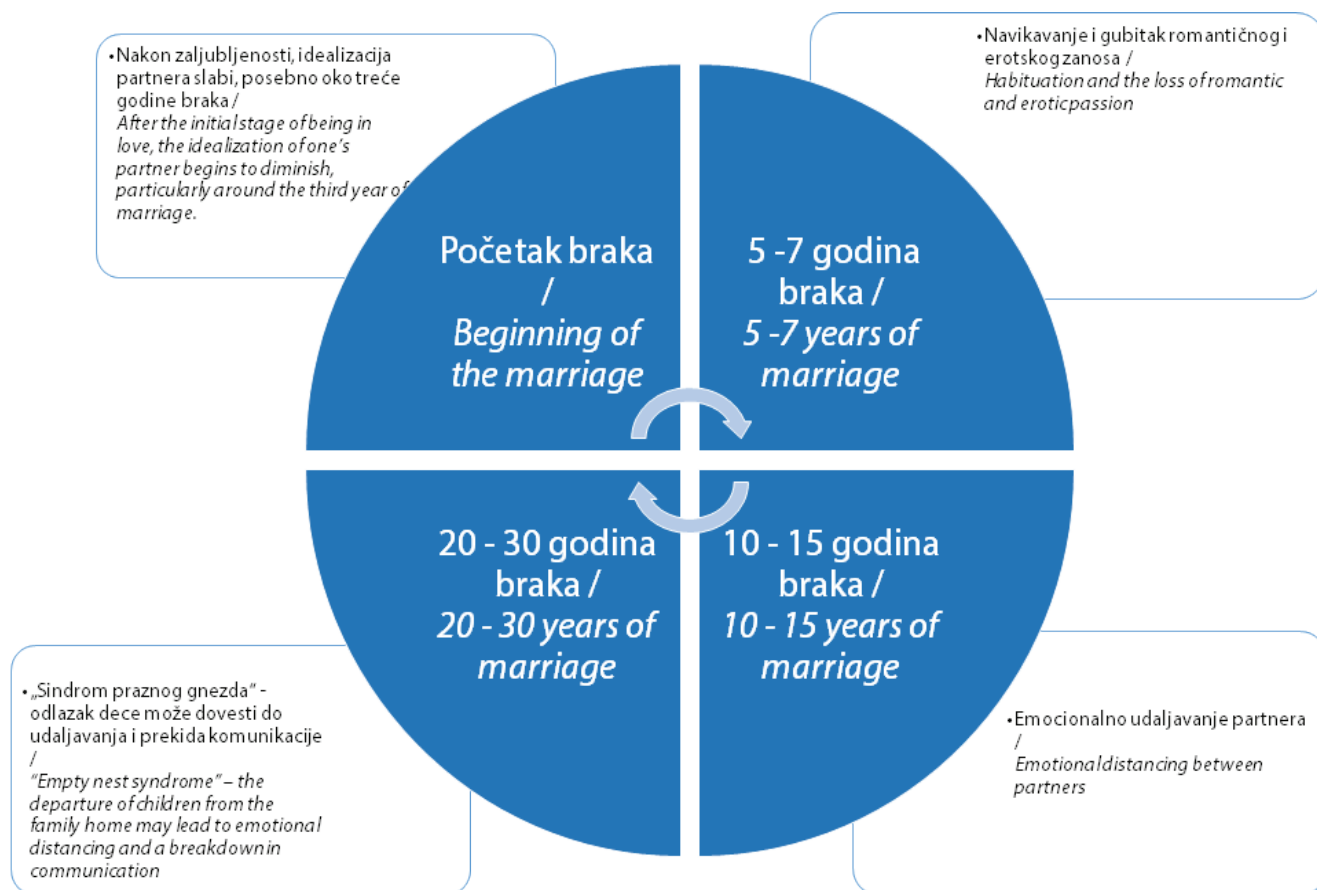
Procenat neverstva varira od 1,2% do 85,5%, u zavisnosti od metodologije i definicije. Postavlja se pitanje da li su fantazije, snovi, razmišljanje o nekoj drugoj osobi, privlačnost, fascinacija ili obožavanje glumca, javne ili nedostupne šarmantne osobe – oblici neverstva. Takođe, dilema se javlja i kada osoba stavlja karijeru, avanturu ili lične ambicije ispred partnerske veze.

The risk of non-monogamy among women is increased if they are bisexual, have bipolar disorder, have attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), or if they entered puberty at an early age. These factors may be associated with increased impulsivity, a more intense experience of sexuality, and a greater propensity for risk-taking behaviors [39].

The motives and circumstances that lead to infidelity (Figure 1) have been confirmed in contemporary studies examining the motivation for extradyadic relationships [3,4,40].

Infidelity tends to occur more frequently during certain periods and developmental stages of marriage. For example, it may arise during and after the winter holiday season due to increased stress, dissatisfaction with the relationship, and holiday gatherings at the workplace, where secret relationships with colleagues may develop.

Infidelity often occurs in specific psychological and situational circumstances: in moments of desire, when an opportunity presents itself, under the influence of intoxication, or during periods of loneliness or despair. In such moments, an internal dialogue may emerge: "What if, just this once, I acted as though the rules did not



Slika 2. Kritične faze u braku

Figure 2. Critical phases in marriage

Sociodemografski i lični faktori koji povećavaju sklonost ka neverstvu

Uviđaju se razlike u neverstvu u odnosu na pol: 61% muškaraca ostaje u braku nakon sopstvene preljube, dok 44% žena koje su bile neverne ostaju u braku. U Tabeli 1 se navodi više razloga zbog kojih žene i muškarci ulaze u vanpartnerske odnose. Ovi razlozi preuzeti su iz različitih istraživanja, odnosno kliničkih opažanja [10,42–46] (Tabela 1).

Prema starosti i polu, među odraslima mlađim od 30 godina koji su u braku, 11% žena i 10% muškaraca navodi da je bilo neverno. Nedavna istraživanja sugerišu da se razlike između polova postepeno smanjuju [5,47,48]. Kod muškaraca, najveći vrhunac neverstva beleži se u starosnom dobu između 30. i 34. godine, a zatim ponovo između 50. i 59. godine života (oko 31%). Prema novijim podacima, najviša stopa neverstva pomerila se i ka starosnom dobu između 60. i 69. godine. Kod žena je najveća stopa neverstva u periodu od 40. do 49. godine života (oko 18%), nakon čega stopa opada kako žene stare.

Nereligiozne osobe sklonije su prevari; osobe sa višim stepenom obrazovanja imaju veću verovatnoću da se upuste u vanpartnerske odnose. Takođe, pojedinci sa višim primanjima i oni na višim profesionalnim i društvenim pozicijama češće dolaze u situacije koje omogućavaju

apply to me?” It is precisely this moment of rationalization that can represent the turning point between fidelity and adultery.

Statistics on Infidelity

Research findings indicate a substantial prevalence of infidelity [8,9,33], with 45% of individuals in monogamous relationships reporting that they have been unfaithful. It is estimated that one in five marriages encounters infidelity at some point during the partners' shared life together (Figure 2). According to some data, among women (55%), love begins to fade after at least three years of a relationship or marriage, compared with 9% of men [4,8,41]. According to a 2024 study, approximately 46% of married men and 25% of married women reported having cheated on their partner, with the rate of infidelity among women having increased over the past several decades. Infidelity is the most common reason for the dissolution of intimate relationships; approximately 40% of couples who experience infidelity separate or divorce. Nevertheless, nearly 25% of marriages survive after one partner has been unfaithful.

The reported prevalence of infidelity ranges from 1.2% to 85.5%, depending on the methodology and definition used. This raises the question of whether fantasies, dreams, thinking about another person, at-

Tabela 1. Razlozi za neverstvo iz empirijskih istraživanja

Zašto muškarci varaju?	Zašto žene varaju?
1. Nezrelost i nedostatak iskustva u odgovornim partnerskim odnosima; ne prepoznaje se u potpunosti da prevara povređuje partnera, a seksualne avanture se doživljavaju kao nešto „normalno“.	1. Savremeni partnerski odnosi često se doživljavaju kao „poslovni“ aranžmani; žene su mentalno i fizički iscrpljene i osećaju se nepoželjno, što stvara negativan odnos prema partneru i smanjuje seksualnu želju kod oba partnera.
2. Povezanost neverstva sa adiktivnim ponašanjima – alkohol, droge, kockanje ili seksualna kompulzija.	2. Nezadovoljstvo partnerskom vezom, uključujući erotsku nekompatibilnost i nedostatak seksualnog zadovoljstva.
3. Nesigurnost u vezi sa sopstvenom vrednošću – osećaj muškarca da je previše mlad ili star, nedovoljno privlačan, bogat ili pametan; kriza srednjih godina može podstaći potrebu za jačanjem ega i potvrdom muževnosti.	3. Nisko samopoštovanje i potraga za validacijom izvan braka.
4. Neverstvo se koristi kao način da se okonča partnerska veza koja duže vreme ne funkcioniše.	4. Nezadovoljene emocionalne potrebe za empatijom, poštovanjem, posvećenošću, podrškom i druženjem; u tim slučajevima prevara se ne doživljava kao afera, već kao ispunjenje emocionalnih potreba.
5. Traženje novog partnera pre definitivnog prekida postojeće veze.	5. Ljutnja i potreba za osvetom zbog partnerovog neispunjavanja očekivanja.
6. Nedostatak muške podrške; emocionalne i socijalne potrebe nisu zadovoljene u vezi, a istovremeno se ne prepoznaje potreba za podrškom kroz muška prijateljstva.	6. Nedostatak uzbuđenja u vezi; novi seksualni odnos može dovesti do porasta endorfina i dopamina.
7. Konfuzija oko značenja obaveze, odgovornosti i romantike u partnerskom odnosu, uz snažnu žudnju ili čak opsesivnu potrebu da se „osvoji“ druga osoba.	7. Ustaljenost, predvidljivost i dosada u dugotrajnoj vezi; intrigantnost nove veze podstiče strast.
8. Zlostavljanje u detinjstvu, posebno seksualno, koje može dovesti do teškoća u intimnosti i privrženosti u odrasлом dobu.	8. Usamljenost i emocionalna distanca od partnera, što podstiče fantazije o novoj romantičnoj i erotskoj vezi.
9. Narcizam i osećaj posebnosti koji opravdava sopstveno ponašanje.	9. Nesigurna privrženost (anksiozna ili izbegavajuća), koja vodi stalnoj potrazi za osobom koja će zadovoljiti primarne emocionalne potrebe.
10. Iznenađna prilika i nekontrolisana impulsivnost.	10. Kriza srednjih godina (35–60 godina), uz sociokulturološka očekivanja od žene; prevara može predstavljati pokušaj realizacije neostvarenih potencijala i emocionalno-seksualnih potreba.
11. Nerealna očekivanja da partner odmah i u potpunosti ispuni sve njegove potrebe, uz nerazumevanje da druga osoba ima sopstveni život i potrebe.	11. Iznenađna prilika – putovanja, druženja ili spontani emocionalni i seksualni spoj sa osobom koju je žena tek upoznala ili već duže poznaje.
12. Ljutnja, osveta i kažnjavanje partnera kroz neverstvo, pri čemu se prevara ponekad i ne skriva i učinjena je sa namerom da izazove patnju kod partnera.	12. Neverstvo, kao mehanizam bekstva od neprijatnih osećanja; adrenalinski skok tokom afere može služiti kao alternativa suočavanju sa gubitkom, anksioznošću ili drugim negativnim iskustvima.

vaju susrete i upuštanje u preljubu. Procene pokazuju da se oko 50% neverstava događa na radnom mestu.

Karakteristike ličnosti koje povećavaju rizik od neverstva uključuju: permisivan stav prema seksu, nesiguran stil privrženosti, manjak empatije, izraženu potrebu za statusom i moći, prethodnu istoriju neverstva, kao i veći broj partnerskih veza pre braka [2,6].

Važno je pomenuti paradoks neverstva – kada su srećni partneri skloni neverstvu. Neverstvo se ne javlja isključivo u onim partnerskim vezama gde postoji nezadovoljstvo ili erotsko i emocionalno udaljavanje. Kod partnera koji žive u stabilnim odnosima, preljuba se može desiti ukoliko jedan od partnera ima nerazrešenu traumu ili posttraumatski poremećaj. Tada se može javiti potreba za dodatnim saosećanjem, razumevanjem i podrškom, koju osoba traži izvan primarne veze [37]. Smrt ili porodične tragedije mogu pokrenuti egzistencijalnu potragu za negiranjem gubitka. Opravdanje za neverstvo tada može da glasi: „Život je kratak, želim da

traction, fascination, or admiration for an actor, a public figure, or an unattainable attractive person constitute forms of infidelity. A similar dilemma arises when an individual puts their career, adventure, or personal ambitions ahead of their romantic relationship.

Sociodemographic and personal factors increasing the propensity for infidelity

There are observable gender differences in infidelity: 61% of men remain in their marriage after their own adultery, while 44% of women who have been unfaithful remain married. Table 1 lists various reasons why women and men enter into extradyadic relationships. These reasons are drawn from various studies and clinical observations [10, 42–46] (Table 1).

Regarding age and gender, among married adults under 30 years of age, 11% of women and 10% of men report having been unfaithful. Recent research suggests that the differences between the sexes are

Table 1. Reasons for infidelity from empirical research

Why men cheat? [10,45,46]	Why women cheat? [10,42–44]
1. Immaturity and a lack of experience in responsible partner relationships; the fact that infidelity hurts one's partner is not fully recognized, and sexual affairs are perceived as something "normal."	1. Contemporary relationships are often experienced as "business" arrangements; women are mentally and physically exhausted and feel undesirable, which creates a negative attitude toward their partner and reduces sexual desire in both partners.
2. The link between infidelity and addictive behaviors – alcohol, drugs, gambling, or sexual compulsion.	2. Dissatisfaction with the relationship, including erotic incompatibility and a lack of sexual fulfillment.
3. Insecurity regarding one's own self-worth – feeling of being too young or too old, not attractive, wealthy, or intelligent enough; midlife crisis can stimulate the need to boost one's ego and validate masculinity.	3. Low self-esteem and seeking validation outside of marriage.
4. Infidelity is used as a means to end a relationship that has not been functioning for a long time.	4. Unmet emotional needs for empathy, respect, commitment, support, and companionship; in these cases, infidelity is not perceived as an affair, but rather as the fulfillment of emotional needs.
5. Seeking out a new partner before the definitive end of an existing relationship.	5. Anger and a need for revenge due to the partner's failure to meet expectations.
6. Lack of male support; emotional and social needs are not met within the relationship, while at the same time, the need for support through male friendships is not recognized.	6. Lack of excitement in a relationship; a new sexual relationship can lead to an increase in endorphins and dopamine.
7. Confusion regarding the meaning of commitment, responsibility, and romance in a relationship, accompanied by a strong craving or even an obsessive need to achieve another "conquest".	7. Routine, predictability, and boredom in a long-term relationship; the intrigue of a new relationship fuels passion.
8. Childhood abuse, especially sexual abuse, which can lead to difficulties with intimacy and attachment in adulthood.	8. Loneliness and emotional distancing from one's partner, which fosters fantasies about a new romantic and erotic relationship.
9. Narcissism and a sense of entitlement that justifies one's own behavior.	9. Insecure attachment (anxious or avoidant), which leads to a constant search for a person who will satisfy primary emotional needs.
10. Sudden opportunity and uncontrolled impulsivity.	10. Midlife crisis (ages 35–60 years), alongside sociocultural expectations of women; infidelity can represent an attempt to realize unfulfilled potential and emotional-sexual needs.
11. Unrealistic expectations that one's partner should immediately and completely fulfill all their needs, coupled with a lack of understanding that the other person has their own life and needs.	11. Sudden opportunity – travels, social gatherings, or a spontaneous emotional and sexual encounter with a person that a woman has just met or has known for a long time.
12. Anger, revenge, and punishing one's partner through infidelity, where attempts to hide the affair are sometimes not even made, as the adultery is committed with the intention of causing the partner pain and suffering.	12. Infidelity as a coping mechanism for escaping unpleasant feelings; the adrenaline rush during an affair can serve as an alternative to facing loss, anxiety, or other negative experiences.

iskusim nešto novo." U slučaju dijagnoze teške bolesti, poput karcinoma, neverstvo može da predstavlja pokušaj bekstva od anksioznosti i suočavanja sa mogućnošću smrti. Nova avantura kao da donosi produžetak života.

Neploidnost često vodi ka niskom samopoštovanju, i preljuba može biti pokušaj potvrde sopstvene vrednosti i poželjnosti. Gubitak posla može da izazove anksioznost i depresiju. Neverstvo postaje pokušaj prevazilaženja osećaja poniženja. U ekstremnim uslovima, poput ratnih zona, neverstvo može da poprimi karakter prkosa i potvrde života pred opasnošću od smrti.

Kriza identiteta kod žena može da nastane usled konflikta između dužnosti i ličnih želja. Neverstvo se manifestuje kao „adolescentna pobuna“ u zreloom dobu. Postoji zavist u odnosu prema mlađoj ćerki koja

gradually decreasing [5,47,48]. Among men, the peak of infidelity is recorded between the ages of 30 and 34, and again between 50 and 59 years of age (about 31%). According to more recent data, the highest rate of infidelity has also shifted toward the 60 to 69 age group. For women, the highest rate of infidelity occurs between the ages of 40 and 49 years (about 18%), after which the rate declines as women age.

Non-religious individuals are more prone to infidelity; those with higher levels of education are more likely to engage in extradyadic relationships. Furthermore, individuals with higher incomes and those in higher professional and social positions encounter situations that facilitate meeting different people and engaging in adultery more frequently. Estimates indicate that about 50% of infidelities occur in the workplace.

uživa u slobodi svoje mladosti. Neverstvo tada može da predstavlja pokušaj ponovnog povezivanja sa zapostavljenim delovima sopstvene ličnosti ili pokušaj integracije izgubljenih aspekata identiteta. Preljuba može biti način ostvarivanja nezavisnosti i podizanja samopoštovanja.

Egzistencijalni konflikti, kao što su strah od smrti i izolacija, takođe povećavaju rizik od neverstva, jer se javlja žudnja za oslobađanjem od sigurnosti i konvencija stabilne primarne veze [37].

Kontekstualna učestalost neverstva

Podaci o učestalosti neverstva po zemljama sveta (Slika 3) variraju u zavisnosti od metodologije i kulturnog konteksta [9,11,49,50]. Ove razlike odražavaju kulturnološke norme, religijske uticaje, društvene vrednosti i način definisanja neverstva u različitim društvima [50,51].

U savremenom društvu preljuba više nije krivično delo, ali i dalje predstavlja jedan od najčešćih razloga za razvod braka i narušavanje porodičnih odnosa. Iako je pravno regulisana kao bračni prestup bez krivičnih sankcija, njene psihološke, porodične i socijalne posledice ostaju duboke i dugotrajne. U istorijskom kontekstu, žena koja je bila nevena suočavala se sa teškim posledicama – od društvene anateme do smrtne kazne, a često se nije vraćala mužu i bila je trajno stigmatizovana. O muškoj neveri govorilo se znatno manje, što odražava patrijarhalnu strukturu društva i dvostruke standarde [52–55].

Statistički podaci iz 2026. godine govore da se u Srbiji svaki treći brak razvodi. Glavni uzroci su neverstvo, emotivno udaljavanje, loša komunikacija, finansijski problemi i zloupotreba alkohola i droga. Prosečno trajanje braka je 14 godina. Starost muškaraca pri razvodu je 45,5 godina a žena 41,9 godina.

Biološki faktori koji utiču na neverstvo

U okviru biološkog pristupa, neverstvo se posmatra sa aspekta genetskih uticaja i neurobioloških mehanizama. Varijacije određenih receptorskih gena mogu da igraju ulogu u formiranju ponašanja povezanih sa traženjem noviteta, impulsivnošću i seksualnim interesovanjem za alternativne partnere. Biološki orijentisana istraživanja sugerišu da hormoni kao što su testosteron, estradiol, vazopresin i oksitocin, kao i neurotransmiteri poput dopamina, imaju prediktivnu vrednost u razumevanju nevernog ponašanja.

Genetika i neverstvo

Neverstvo se delimično objašnjava genetskom osnovom, u kontekstu evolucijske strukture čoveka. Traženje alternativnog partnera može da ima za cilj pove-

Personality characteristics that increase the risk of infidelity include: a permissive attitude toward sex, an insecure attachment style, a lack of empathy, a pronounced need for status and power, a previous history of infidelity, as well as a higher number of relationships before marriage [2,6].

It is important to note a paradox of infidelity – when partners in a happy relationship are prone to infidelity. Infidelity does not occur exclusively in partnerships where there is dissatisfaction or erotic and emotional distancing. In partners living in stable relationships, adultery can occur if one of the partners has an unresolved trauma or post-traumatic stress disorder. In such cases, the need for additional compassion, understanding, and support may arise, which the person seeks outside the primary relationship [37]. Death or family tragedies can trigger an existential urge to deny the loss. The justification for infidelity may then be: “Life is short, I want to experience something new.” In the case of the diagnosis of a severe illness, such as cancer, infidelity can represent an attempt to escape from anxiety and from facing the possibility of death. A new adventure seems to bring a new lease on life.

Infertility often leads to low self-esteem, and adultery can be an attempt to confirm one’s own worth and desirability. Job loss can cause anxiety and depression. Infidelity becomes an attempt to overcome feelings of humiliation. In extreme conditions, such as war zones, infidelity can take on the character of defiance and affirmation of life in the face of the danger of death.

A midlife identity crisis in women can arise from a conflict between duty and personal desires. Infidelity manifests as an “adolescent rebellion” in adulthood. There is envy toward a young daughter who enjoys the freedom of her youth. Infidelity can then represent an attempt to reconnect with neglected parts of “self” or an attempt to integrate lost aspects of identity. Adultery can be a way of achieving independence and raising self-esteem.

Existential conflicts, such as the fear of death and isolation, also increase the risk of infidelity, as there is a craving for liberation from the security and conventions of a stable primary relationship [37].

Contextual Frequency of Infidelity

Data on the frequency of infidelity by country (Figure 3) varies depending on methodology and cultural context [9,11,49,50]. These differences reflect cultural norms, religious influences, societal values, and the way infidelity is defined in different societies [50,51].

In contemporary society, adultery is no longer a criminal offense, but it remains one of the most com-

**Zemlje sa višim stopama neverstva /
Countries with higher rates of infidelity**

- Tajland: 61% / Thailand: 61%
- SAD: 71% / USA: 71%
- Danska: 46% / Denmark: 46%
- Nemačka: 45% / Germany: 45%
- Italija: 45% / Italy: 45%
- Francuska: 43% / France: 43%
- Ujedinjeno Kraljevstvo: 36% / United Kingdom: 36%

**Zemlje sa nižim stopama neverstva /
Countries with lower rates of infidelity**

- Novi Zeland: 19% / New Zealand: 19%
- Slovenija: 11% / Slovenia: 11%
- Urugvaj: 10% / Uruguay: 10%
- Island: 9% / Iceland: 9%

Slika 3. Učestalost neverstva po zemljama sveta

Figure 3. Figure 3. Frequency of infidelity by country

ćanje broja potomaka, obezbeđivanje genetske raznorsnosti ili pristup dodatnim resursima za potomstvo.

Istraživanja ukazuju da genetski faktori mogu da objasne oko 63% varijabilnosti neverstva kod muškaraca i oko 40% kod žena. Geni su povezani sa sklonošću ka rizičnom ponašanju i potrazi za senzacijama. Monozigotni (MZ) blizanci imaju oko 1,5 puta veću verovatnoću da će ispoljiti neverstvo u poređenju sa dizigotnim blizancima. Takođe su identifikovane veze između određenih receptorskih gena za vazopresin i oksitocin i sklonosti ka vanpartnerskim odnosima [14,56].

Hormoni, neurotransmiteri i neverstvo

Vazopresin i neverstvo

Vazopresin, hormon koji se luči iz hipofize, ima značajnu ulogu u socijalnom povezivanju, empatiji i izgradnji poverenja u partnerskim odnosima. Arginin-vazopresin receptor 1A (AVPR1A) jedan je od glavnih receptora za vazopresin i prisutan je u različitim delovima mozga, ali i u perifernim organima [57,58].

Istraživanja pokazuju da određene varijacije na genu AVPR1A koreliraju sa sposobnošću muškarca da se veže za partnerku, razvije poverenje i odanost, što direktno utiče na kvalitet partnerskog odnosa.

Dopamin i neverstvo

Dopamin je neurotransmiter povezan sa osećajem zadovoljstva, nagrade i motivacije. Muškarci koji imaju specifičan polimorfizam na genu dopaminskog receptora D4 češće prijavljuju veći broj vanpartnerskih seksualnih odnosa u poređenju sa muškarcima bez ove genetske varijacije [14]. Ovaj nalaz povezuje sklonost ka novinama, uzbuđenju i traženju senzacija sa neurobiološkim mehanizmima nagrađivanja [59].

mon reasons for divorce and the disruption of family relationships. Although it is legally regulated as a marital offense without criminal sanctions, its psychological, familial, and social consequences remain deep and long-lasting. In a historical context, an unfaithful woman faced severe consequences – from social ostracism to the death penalty, and she often did not return to her husband and was permanently stigmatized. Much less was said about male infidelity, reflecting the patriarchal structure of society and double standards [52–55].

Statistical data from 2026 indicate that every third marriage in Serbia ends in divorce. The main causes are infidelity, emotional distancing, poor communication, financial problems, and alcohol and drug abuse. The average duration of a marriage is 14 years. The age of men at the time of divorce is 45.5 years, and the average age of women is 41.9 years.

Biological factors affecting infidelity

Within the biological approach, infidelity is viewed through the lens of genetic influences and neurobiological mechanisms. Variations in certain receptor genes may play a role in shaping behaviors associated with novelty-seeking, impulsivity, and sexual interest in alternative partners. Biologically oriented research suggests that hormones such as testosterone, estradiol, vasopressin, and oxytocin, as well as neurotransmitters like dopamine, have predictive value in understanding unfaithful behavior.

Genetics and infidelity

Infidelity is partially explained by a genetic foundation in the context of human evolutionary structure. Seeking an alternative partner may aim to increase the

Testosteron i neverstvo

Povišen nivo testosterona može da poveća osetljivost na nagradu i da smanji osetljivost na kaznu, što može da doprinese rizičnom ponašanju, uključujući i neverstvo. Dodatna istraživanja ukazuju na povezanost genetskih varijacija dopaminskog receptora D4 sa neverstvom i promiskuitetnošću kao i na povezanost viših nivoa testosterona sa većom verovatnoćom neverstva kod muškaraca [60–62].

Istraživanja pokazuju da se nivo testosterona smanjuje kada se muškarac obaveže na stabilnu partnersku vezu kao i tokom oćinstva, što se tumači kao biološka priprema za roditeljsku ulogu [63].

Ovulacijski ciklus kod žena takođe ima uticaj na sklonost ka neverstvu. Istraživanja pokazuju da su žene sklonije flertovanju i izvanpartnerskim interesovanjima tokom faze ovulacije, kada su najplodnije i kada je verovatnoća zaćeća najveća. Estradiol je povezan sa fizićkom bliskošću [64].

Oksitocin i neverstvo

Nivoi oksitocina povezani su sa prosocijalnim ponašanjem, zbog ćega se ovaj hormon ćesto naziva „hormonom ljubavi“. Oslobađa se tokom orgazma, dojenja i u ranim fazama zaljubljenosti [65,66]. Kod muškaraca, oksitocin može da poveća interesovanje za kratkoroćne veze sa ženama, dok kod žena podstiće interesovanje za dugoroćne veze sa vernim partnerima. Ova razlika ukazuje na polno specifićne obrasce vezivanja i partnerske orijentacije.

Mozak i neverstvo – „Ne krivite mene, već moj mozak“

Prevara može da bude izuzetno prijatno iskustvo jer uključuje novinu, potragu za senzacijama i element „zabranjenog voća“, što avanturi daje osećaj magićnosti i uzbuđenja. Neurobiološki gledano, neverstvo aktivira nagradni sistem mozga, posebno mezolimbicki dopaminski put, slićno kao i upotreba psihoaktivnih supstanci.

Seksualne aktivnosti dovode do porasta dopamina u nagradnom krugu mozga. Osećaj zadovoljstva koji sledi šalje poruku da je iskustvo vredno ponavljanja i pamćenja. Kada partnerska veza postane predvidljiva i rutinska, pojedinci mogu da teže povećanju dopaminske stimulacije kroz novinu i uzbuđenje, što može da doprinese riziku od neverstva [67].

Psihološki faktori koji utiću na neverstvo

Ester Perel naglašava da „preljuba samo ukazuje na već postojeće stanje – bilo da je u pitanju problematićan odnos ili problematićna osoba“ [37]. Ova perspektiva sugeriše da neverstvo retko nastaje izolovano, već je ćesto simptom dubljih individualnih ili relacijskih teškoća.

number of offspring, ensure genetic diversity, or provide access to additional resources for offspring.

Research indicates that genetic factors may explain about 63% of the variability in infidelity in men and about 40% in women. Genes are linked to a predisposition for risk-taking and sensation-seeking. Monozygotic (MZ) twins are approximately 1.5 times more likely to exhibit infidelity compared to dizygotic twins. Links have also been identified between certain receptor genes for vasopressin and oxytocin and a propensity for extradyadic relationships [14,56].

Hormones, neurotransmitters, and infidelity

Vasopressin and Infidelity

Vasopressin, a hormone secreted by the pituitary gland, plays a significant role in social bonding, empathy, and building trust in relationships. The arginine-vasopressin receptor 1A (AVPR1A) is one of the primary receptors for vasopressin and is present in various parts of the brain as well as peripheral organs [57,58].

Research shows that specific variations in the AVPR1A gene correlate with a man’s ability to bond with a partner, develop trust, and maintain fidelity, which directly affects the quality of the partnership.

Dopamine and infidelity

Dopamine is a neurotransmitter associated with pleasure, reward, and motivation. Men who possess a specific polymorphism in the dopamine receptor D4 gene more frequently report a higher number of extradyadic sexual relationships compared to men without this genetic variation [14]. This finding links the inclination toward novelty, excitement, and sensation-seeking with neurobiological reward mechanisms [59].

Testosterone and infidelity

Elevated testosterone levels can increase sensitivity to reward and decrease sensitivity to punishment, which may contribute to risky behavior, including infidelity. Additional studies point to a correlation between genetic variations in the dopamine receptor D4 and infidelity/promiscuity, as well as a link between higher testosterone levels and an increased likelihood of infidelity in men [60–62].

Research indicates that testosterone levels decrease when a man commits to a stable partnership and during fatherhood, which is interpreted as a biological preparation for the parental role [63].

The ovulation cycle in women also influences the propensity for infidelity. Studies show that women are more prone to flirting and extradyadic interests during the ovulation phase, when they are most fertile, and

Stilovi vezanosti, odnosno tipovi privrženosti važnim objektima iz detinjstva utiču na profil ličnosti. Anksiozni, izbegavajući i dezorganizovani tipovi privrženosti mogu doprineti razvoju niskog samopoštovanja, problema sa poverenjem, pojačane osetljivosti na odbacivanje i straha od dugoročnih, stabilnih veza. Osobe sa nesigurnim stilom vezanosti češće imaju poteškoće u održavanju intimnosti i stabilnosti u partnerskim odnosima [68,69].

Problemi mentalnog zdravlja dodatno povećavaju rizik od neverstva. Bipolarni poremećaj (posebno u maničnim epizodama), granični, histrionični i antisocijalni poremećaji ličnosti, posttraumatski stresni poremećaj, depresija, anksioznost, zloupotreba alkohola i droga, kockanje, kao i seksualna adicija, mogu biti povezani sa impulsivnošću, nestabilnošću u odnosima i rizičnim seksualnim ponašanjem [10,70,71].

Visoki skorovi na skali traženja senzacija takođe su povezani sa nevernim ponašanjem. Jedna studija je pokazala i povezanost između osećaja moći na radnom mestu i sklonosti ka neverstvu, pri čemu veći doživljaj moći povećava verovatnoću izvanpartnerskih odnosa [45].

Dinamika porodice porekla takođe značajno utiče na nastanak rizika od neverstva. Odrastanje u porodici u kojoj su jedan ili oba roditelja bili neverni može uticati na formiranje stavova o vernosti, poverenju i posvećenosti partnerskom odnosu. Istorija traume, uključujući seksualno zlostavljanje i zanemarivanje u detinjstvu, povezana je sa povećanim rizikom od kasnijih problema u intimnim odnosima i veće sklonosti ka neverstvu.

Kompulzivno seksualno ponašanje, poznato i kao hiperseksualnost ili seksualna zavisnost, spada u psihijatrijske poremećaje kontrole impulsa. Posledice uključuju ozbiljne probleme u partnerskim odnosima, pri čemu je neverstvo prisutno u oko 70% slučajeva. Karakterišu ga nekontrolisana seksualna želja, opsesivne seksualne misli, kompulzivna seksualna ponašanja i nemogućnost kontrole seksualnog nagona. Seksualna zavisnost je češća kod muškaraca. Takođe se javljaju poteškoće na poslu, pravni i finansijski problemi i zdravstveni rizici, uključujući HIV i hepatitis C.

Psihološki profili ličnosti i neverstvo

U **Tabeli 2** su prikazane karakteristike osoba koje češće ulaze u neverstvo na osnovu nalaza iz istraživanja [72]. Neuroticizam, narcizam i pojava treće osobe (ljubavnice ili ljubavnika) se najčešće povezuju sa neverstvom.

Neuroticizam se odnosi na emocionalnu nestabilnost i pojačanu osetljivost na stres. Manifestuje se kroz anksioznost, nesigurnost, napade besa, neprijateljstvo i poteškoće u regulaciji emocija. U kombinaciji sa niskom savesnošću i visokom ekstroverzijom ili otvorennošću ka novim iskustvima, može da poveća rizik od impulsivnog i rizičnog ponašanja, uključujući neverstvo.

the likelihood of conception is highest. Estradiol is associated with physical intimacy [64].

Oxytocin and infidelity

Oxytocin levels are linked to prosocial behavior, which is why this hormone is often called the "love hormone." It is released during orgasm, breastfeeding, and in the early stages of falling in love [65,66]. In men, oxytocin can increase interest in short-term relationships with women, while in women, it encourages interest in long-term relationships with faithful partners. This difference indicates sex-specific patterns of bonding and partner orientation.

The brain and infidelity – "Don't blame me, blame my brain"

An affair can be an extremely pleasurable experience because it involves novelty, sensation-seeking, and the element of "forbidden fruit," which gives the adventure a sense of magic and excitement. Neurobiologically, infidelity activates the brain's reward system, particularly the mesolimbic dopamine pathway, similarly to the use of psychoactive substances.

Sexual activities lead to an increase in dopamine in the brain's reward circuit. The sense of pleasure that follows sends a message that the experience is worth repeating and remembering. When a relationship becomes predictable and routine, individuals may strive to increase dopamine stimulation through novelty and excitement, which can contribute to the risk of infidelity [67].

Psychological factors affecting infidelity

Esther Perel emphasizes that "infidelity only indicates a pre-existing state – whether it is a problematic relationship or a problematic individual" [37]. This perspective suggests that infidelity rarely arises in isolation, but is often a symptom of deeper individual or relational difficulties.

Attachment styles, or the types of attachment to important figures from childhood, influence one's personality profile. Anxious, avoidant, and disorganized attachment types can contribute to the development of low self-esteem, trust issues, heightened sensitivity to rejection, and a fear of long-term, stable relationships. Individuals with an insecure attachment style more frequently experience difficulties in maintaining intimacy and stability in their partnerships [68,69].

Mental health issues further increase the risk of infidelity. Bipolar disorder (especially in manic episodes), borderline, histrionic, and antisocial personality disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, alcohol and drug abuse, gambling, as well as sex addiction, can be associated with impulsivity, instabili-

Narcistički poremećaj ličnosti karakteriše grandioznost, osećaj posebnosti i sklonost ka narušavanju pravila i društvenih konvencija. Neverstvo se u ovom kontekstu može posmatrati kao oblik oportunitizma – „Drugi varaju bez stida, pa mogu i ja“. Narcistične osobe često ne osećaju krivicu zbog povređivanja partnera i ne preuzimanja odgovornosti. Prevara se racionalizuje kao opravdan odgovor na „nesrećan život“, pri čemu se krivica prebacuje na partnera [73,74].

Postoje osobe koje uživaju u ulozu ljubavnika ili ljubavnice, jer ne žele bračne ili dugoročne odgovornosti. Neki ulaze u takve veze jer se osećaju ne vrednovano ili odbačeno u sopstvenom braku. Osoba koja prihvata ulogu „treće osobe“ ponekad živi u uverenju da je upravo ona prva i najvažnija u toj relaciji. Nekada i ne zna da je partner u braku ili u drugim paralelnim vezama. U tim odnosima, ljubav i erotski užitak mogu biti važniji od formalne pozicije u trijadi. Motiv može biti i ostvarivanje finansijske ili društvene koristi, poput boljeg posla ili većih prihoda. U pojedinim slučajevima, potraga za vanpartnerskom vezom može da predstavlja pokušaj zadovoljenja emocionalnih potreba koje nisu bile ispunjene u odnosu sa roditeljima. Iako je društveno često devalvirana i nevidljiva, „treća osoba“ takođe doživljava emocionalnu patnju koja zaslužuje razumevanje i prepoznavanje [37].

ty in relationships, and risky sexual behavior [10,70,71].

High scores on the sensation-seeking scale are also associated with unfaithful behavior. One study also demonstrated a correlation between a sense of power in the workplace and a propensity for infidelity, whereby a greater sense of power increases the likelihood of extradyadic relationships [45].

The dynamics of one's family of origin also significantly influences the risk of infidelity. Growing up in a family where one or both parents were unfaithful can influence the formation of attitudes regarding loyalty, trust, and commitment in a relationship. A history of trauma, including sexual abuse and neglect in childhood, is associated with an increased risk of later problems in intimate relationships and a greater tendency toward infidelity.

Compulsive sexual behavior, also known as hypersexuality or sex addiction, falls under psychiatric impulse control disorders. The consequences include serious problems in relationships, with infidelity being present in about 70% of cases. It is characterized by uncontrollable sexual desire, obsessive sexual thoughts, compulsive sexual behaviors, and the inability to control the sexual drive. Sex addiction is more common in men. It also leads to difficulties at work, legal and financial problems, and health risks, including HIV and hepatitis C.

Tabela 2. Najčešće psihološke karakteristike nevernih osoba

Osobine ličnosti	Psihološki faktori	Razlozi za neverstvo	Posledice preljube po mentalno zdravlje
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visoki narcizam • Psihopatija i manipulativnost (engl. <i>dark triad</i>) • Visoka impulsivnost • Niska savestnost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nisko zadovoljstvo u vezi • Potreba za novinom i uzbuđenjem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muškarci češće navode seksualnu motivaciju i traženje nečeg novog. • Žene češće navode emocionalno nezadovoljstvo i potrebu za intimnošću kao razloge za neverstvo. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kod žena koje su počinile preljubu često se javljaju: izražen osećaj krivice, kajanje, osramoćenost, zloupotreba alkohola i suicidalne ideje. • Kod muškaraca preljubnika prisutni su: krivica, kajanje, sram, depresivnost i suicidalne misli, ali i poricanje neverstva, laganje i traženje opravdanja kroz optuživanje partnera, kao i sklonost ka alkoholizmu.

Table 2. Most common psychological characteristics of unfaithful individuals

Personality traits	Psychological factors	Reasons for infidelity	Consequences of infidelity on mental health
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level of narcissism • Psychopathy and manipulativeness (the "dark triad") • High level of impulsivity • Low level of conscientiousness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low level of relationship satisfaction • Need for novelty and excitement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men more frequently cite sexual motivation and the search for something new as reasons for infidelity. • Women more frequently cite emotional dissatisfaction and the need for intimacy as reasons for infidelity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In women who have committed adultery, a pronounced sense of guilt, remorse, shame, alcohol abuse, and suicidal ideation often occur. • In male adulterers, guilt, remorse, shame, depression, and suicidal thoughts are present, as well as denial of the infidelity, lying, and seeking justification by blaming their partner, along with a tendency toward alcoholism.

Emocionalne reakcije kod muškaraca i žena uključeni u neverstvo, bilo da je u pitanju prevareni partner ili partner koji je počinio prevaru, najčešće uključuju [75,76]:

- Zbunjenost
- Anksioznost
- Ljutnju
- Tugu
- Sram
- Osećaj krivice
- Doživljaj gubitka
- Ljubomoru
- Suicidalne ideje
- Alkoholizam
- Gubitak poverenja prema drugima
- Osećaj nesigurnosti
- Nisko samopoštovanje
- Sumnju u sopstveni izgled i ličnost
- Sumnjičavost prema porodici ili prema novom partneru
- Osećaj bespomoćnosti i ranjivosti

Partnerski odnosi i rizici od neverstva

Dugotrajno nezadovoljstvo u partnerskom odnosu, uz nedostatak romantike i seksualne povezanosti, povećava rizik od neverstva. Gubitak naklonosti, ljubavi i međusobne brige stvaraju emocionalnu prazninu. Nerazrešeni konflikti, strah od intimnosti ili izbegavanje sukoba dodatno produbljuju udaljenost među partnerima. Nedostatak komunikacije o emocionalnim i seksualnim potrebama može da dovede do osećaja napuštenosti, nevrednovanja i nedostatka poštovanja i priznanja. Razlika u godinama među partnerima, koja postaje izraženija sa starenjem, takođe može da doprinese udaljavanju i nezadovoljstvu.

Stilovi privrženosti u partnerskim odnosima povezuju se sa neverstvom. Privrženost se definiše kao specifičan, nesimetričan odnos koji se formira između deteta i majke u prvoj godini života, ali i sa drugim značajnim osobama u detinjstvu, te traje tokom čitavog života. Tipovi privrženosti utiču na kasnije odnose sa drugima, uključujući partnere i sopstvenu decu. Razlikuju se četiri glavna stila privrženosti: jedan sigurni i tri nesigurna – izbegavajući, preokupirani (anksiozni) i dezorganizovani stil.

Smatra se da osobe sa sigurnim obrascem privrženosti grade partnerske odnose na temelju poverenja, razumevanja i emocionalne stabilnosti. One imaju pozitivan doživljaj sebe i drugih, spremne su na bliskost i sposobne da uspostave ravnotežu između autonomije i povezanosti.

Nesigurni stilovi privrženosti povezani su sa većim rizikom od problema u intimnim odnosima, uključuju-

Psychological personality profiles and infidelity

Table 2 shows the characteristics of individuals who, based on research findings, more frequently engage in infidelity [72]. Neuroticism, narcissism, and the involvement of a third party (a lover) are most often associated with infidelity.

Neuroticism refers to emotional instability and heightened sensitivity to stress. It manifests through anxiety, insecurity, fits of anger, hostility, and difficulty in regulating emotions. In combination with low conscientiousness and high extraversion or openness to new experiences, it can increase the risk of impulsive and risky behavior, including infidelity.

Narcissistic personality disorder is characterized by grandiosity, a sense of being special, and a tendency to violate rules and social conventions. Infidelity, in this context, can be viewed as a form of opportunism – “Others cheat without shame, why shouldn’t I?” Narcissistic individuals often feel no guilt for hurting their partner and do not take responsibility. The affair is rationalized as a justified response to an “unhappy life,” with the blame shifted onto the partner [73,74].

Some individuals enjoy the role of the lover because they do not want the responsibilities of marriage or long-term relationships. Some enter such relationships because they feel undervalued or rejected in their own marriage. A person who accepts the role of the “third party” sometimes lives under the belief that they are the first and most important person in that relationship. Sometimes they do not even know that the partner is married or in other parallel relationships. In these connections, love and erotic pleasure can be more important than a formal position in the triad. The motive can also be financial or social gain, such as a better job or higher income. In certain cases, the search for an extradyadic relationship can represent an attempt to satisfy emotional needs that were not met in the relationship with their parents. Although socially often devalued and invisible, the “third party” also experiences emotional suffering that deserves understanding and recognition [37].

Emotional reactions in men and women involved in infidelity, whether it be the betrayed partner or the partner who committed the infidelity, most often include [75,76]:

- Confusion
- Anxiety
- Anger
- Sadness
- Shame
- Feelings of guilt
- A sense of loss
- Jealousy

ći i sklonost ka neverstvu. Na primer, izbegavajući stil privrženosti u partnerskim odnosima često vodi ka dominaciji jednog partnera, visokoj ambicioznosti i snažnom investiranju u sopstvene ciljeve. Dominiraju egoizam, teškoće u prepoznavanju sopstvenih i tuđih emocija i manjak empatije prema partneru. Prisutan je nizak nivo poverenja, naglašena samostalnost i usmenost ka materijalnim vrednostima. Osobe sa ovim stilom privrženosti često biraju sebi slične partnere – ambiciozne, karijeriste i emocionalno distancirane.

Preokupirani (anksiozni) stil privrženosti karakterišu simbiotske veze u kojima je ljubav sinonim za stalnu brigu i emocionalnu uključenost. Partneri su skloni kontroli i izraženoj ljubomori. Sebe doživljavaju kao manje vredne, dok o drugima imaju pozitivniju sliku. Ulažu mnogo energije u odnos i traže stalnu potvrdu ljubavi kroz pažnju i prisutnost partnera. Ukoliko partner svakodnevno pruža potvrdu, njihova slika o sebi se privremeno poboljšava.

Dezorganizovani stil privrženosti podrazumeva negativnu sliku o sebi i ambivalentan odnos prema bliskosti. Osobe imaju snažnu potrebu da budu voljene, ali istovremeno ne veruju partneru i očekuju izdaju ili poniženje. Izbegavaju rizik istinske intimnosti i ne pokazuju svoja autentična osećanja. Kao strategiju koriste emocionalno distanciranje, izbegavanje odnosa ili manipulativne obrasce ponašanja, uključujući zavodnje i napuštanje partnera kroz neverstvo [77].

Određene životne situacije povećavaju vulnerabilnost partnerskog odnosa i rizik od neverstva. Najčešće se pominju perinatalni period, hronične bolesti, fizički bol i invaliditet, sterilitet, nerazrešeno žalovanje zbog gubitka deteta, sindrom „praznog gnezda“, partnerska veza na daljinu, dugotrajna razdvojenost usled bolničkog lečenja, zatvora ili poslovnih obaveza, nezaposlenost, i emigracija. Ove okolnosti mogu izazvati emocionalnu distancu, stres i osećaj usamljenosti, što povećava rizik od traženja podrške ili bliskosti izvan primarne veze [77,78].

Socijalni faktori, društvene norme i neverstvo

Istorijski gledano, fenomen neverstva prisutan je u gotovo svim društvima, a dominantna društvena reakcija najčešće je osuda i moralna stigmatizacija. Sa kulturološkog stanovišta, smatra se da u kolektivističkim kulturama (npr. neke azijske i afričke zemlje), socijalne norme često snažno obeshrabruju neverstvo, a posledice za otkrivenu vanpartnersku vezu su strože. U individualističkim kulturama (npr. SAD, Zapadna Evropa), iako neverstvo uglavnom nailazi na društvenu osudu, ono je učestalije, a tolerancija i opravdanja se razlikuju među polovima. Rodne razlike i kulturne norme utiču na motivaciju za neverstvo: muškarci češće izveštavaju seksualnu moti-

- Suicidal ideation
- Alcoholism
- Loss of trust in others
- Feelings of insecurity
- Low self-esteem
- Doubt regarding one's own appearance and personality
- Suspicion toward the family or a new partner
- Feelings of helplessness and vulnerability

Partner relations and risks of infidelity

Long-term dissatisfaction in a relationship, combined with a lack of romance and sexual connection, increases the risk of infidelity. The loss of affection, love, and mutual caring creates an emotional void. Unresolved conflicts, fear of intimacy, or avoidance of confrontation further deepen the distance between partners. A lack of communication regarding emotional and sexual needs can lead to feelings of abandonment, undervaluation, and a lack of respect and recognition. Age differences between partners, which become more pronounced with aging, can also contribute to distancing and dissatisfaction.

Attachment styles in relationships are linked to infidelity. Attachment is defined as a specific, asymmetrical relationship formed between a child and their mother in the first year of life, as well as with other significant figures in childhood, which persists throughout life. Attachment types influence later relationships with others, including partners and one's own children. There are four main attachment styles: one secure and three insecure – avoidant, preoccupied (anxious), and disorganized.

It is believed that individuals with a secure attachment pattern build partnerships based on trust, understanding, and emotional stability. They have a positive perception of themselves and others, are ready for intimacy, and are capable of establishing a balance between autonomy and connection.

Insecure attachment styles are associated with a higher risk of problems in intimate relationships, including a propensity for infidelity. For example, the avoidant attachment style in partnerships often leads to the dominance of one partner, high ambition, and a strong investment in personal goals. Egoism, difficulties in recognizing one's own and others' emotions, and a lack of empathy toward the partner prevail. There is a low level of trust, an emphasis on independence, and a focus on material values. Individuals with this attachment style often choose partners similar to themselves – ambitious, career-oriented, and emotionally distant.

The preoccupied (anxious) attachment style is characterized by symbiotic relationships in which love is synonymous with constant care and emotional involvement. Partners are prone to control and pronounced

vaciju, dok žene češće izveštavaju emocionalno nezadovoljstvo. Ove tendencije variraju među kulturama.

Prema pravilima pojedinih afričkih plemena, neverstvo se kažnjava veoma strogo. Muž ima pravo da probode kopljem suparnika ukoliko ga uhvati u partnerskom odnosu sa svojom ženom. U beduinskoj tradiciji, neverstvo predstavlja sramotu za prevarenog muža, a njegov ugled se ne može povratiti dok preljubnica ne bude pogubljena. U društvima koja su visoko vrednovala materijalna dobra, neverstvo se kažnjavalo novčanim globom [79].

S druge strane, postoje kulture sa drugačijim pristupom. U plemenu Bembe, postoji implicitni oprostaj neverstva kroz ritual pročišćenja gde preljubnik simbolično traži oprostaj od supruge. Kapelanus navodi da se u aristokratskim društvima dvanaestog veka smatralo da je neverstvo viši oblik ljubavi, i da se prava, strastvena ljubav ne može ostvariti unutar braka [80].

U savremenom društvu primećuje se razvoj konsenzualne nemonogamije koja podrazumeva partnerski odnos u kojem su partneri postigli sporazum o dozvoljenim seksualnim ili romantičnim odnosima sa osobama koje nisu primarni partneri [81]. Razlikuju se tri osnovna oblika konsenzualne nemonogamije: svingerstvo (parovi stupaju u seksualne odnose sa drugim parovima), poliamorija (partneri mogu biti u romantičnim vezama sa više osoba istovremeno), otvorene veze (partneri imaju seksualne odnose sa drugim osobama, ali nezavisno jedan od drugog).

U poređenju sa američkim i nekim evropskim društvima, Republika Srbija se svrstava u društva sa nepotpunom modernizacijom. I pored toga, neverstvo je visoko prisutno, a stopa razvoda brakova – često povezana sa neverstvom – porasla je i do 25%.

Profesije koje nose rizik od neverstva

Radno mesto predstavlja jedan od najčešćih konteksta u kojem se razvijaju vanpartnerske veze. Kolege provode mnogo vremena zajedno, dele profesionalne izazove, ali često i lične brige, što može dovesti do emocionalne bliskosti. Posebno je rizično kada se na radnom mestu sa kolegama prepoznaju sličnosti u ličnosti, interesovanjima, vrednostima i životnim potrebama. Trenutak požude može predstavljati prelomnu tačku u kojoj se prijateljski i kolegijalni odnos transformiše u seksualni. Takva dinamika nosi rizik ne samo za partnerski odnos, već i za profesionalne i prijateljske odnose. Istraživanja pokazuju da se prilike za neverstvo često pronalaze u radnom kontekstu – kroz produženo radno vreme, poslovne sastanke i službena putovanja.

Određene profesije (bankari i brokeri, piloti i stjuardese, zdravstveni radnici – lekari i medicinske sestre, poslovni sektor – izvršni direktori i menadžeri, sportski

jealousy. They perceive themselves as less valuable, while they have a more positive image of others. They invest a lot of energy into the relationship and seek constant confirmation of love through the attention and presence of the partner. If the partner provides confirmation daily, their self-image temporarily improves.

The disorganized attachment style involves a negative self-image and an ambivalent attitude toward intimacy. Individuals have a strong need to be loved, but at the same time, they do not trust their partner and expect betrayal or humiliation. They avoid the risk of true intimacy and do not show their authentic feelings. As a strategy, they use emotional distancing, avoidance of relationships, or manipulative behavioral patterns, including seducing and abandoning the partner through infidelity [77].

Certain life situations increase the vulnerability of a relationship and the risk of infidelity. The ones most frequently mentioned are the perinatal period, chronic illnesses, physical pain and disability, infertility, unresolved grief over the loss of a child, "empty nest" syndrome, long-distance relationships, prolonged separation due to hospitalization, imprisonment, or work obligations, unemployment, and emigration. These circumstances can cause emotional distancing, stress, and feelings of loneliness, which increase the risk of seeking support or intimacy outside the primary relationship [77,78].

Social factors, social norms, and infidelity

Historically, the phenomenon of infidelity has been present in nearly all societies, and the predominant social response has most often been condemnation and moral stigmatization. From a cultural perspective, it is generally believed that in collectivist cultures (e.g., certain Asian and African countries), social norms often strongly discourage infidelity, and the consequences of a discovered extradyadic relationship are more severe. In individualistic cultures (e.g., the United States and Western Europe), although infidelity is generally met with social disapproval, it is more prevalent, and levels of tolerance and justification differ between men and women. Gender differences and cultural norms influence the motivation for infidelity: men more frequently report sexual motivation, whereas women more frequently report emotional dissatisfaction. These tendencies vary across cultures.

According to the customs of certain African tribes, infidelity is punished very severely. A husband has the right to run his rival through with a spear if he catches him with his wife. In the Bedouin tradition, infidelity is regarded as a disgrace for the betrayed husband, and his honor cannot be restored until the adulterous wife has been executed. In societies that placed a high value on material possessions, infidelity was punished by monetary fines [79].

radnici – sportisti i instruktori, umetnici, muzičari, manekeni, glumci, di-džejevi, novinari i izdavači, pravnici – advokati i sekretarice, političari) nose povećani rizik od neverstva, zbog čestih putovanja, visokog stresa, društvene moći ili intenzivnih međuljudskih kontakata. Ove profesije često uključuju visok društveni status, prilike za nova poznanstva, rad u stresnim uslovima i udaljenost od porodice. To sve može povećati vulnerabilnost za vanpartnerske odnose [82].

Istraživanje sprovedeno na parovima, pokazalo je da je 62% muškaraca koji su bili neverni ljubavnu aferu započelo na poslu, dok je procenat žena koje su alternativnog partnera pronašle na radnom mestu iznosio 38%. Sociodemografski faktori, poput višeg materijalnog i socijalnog statusa, kao i život u urbanim sredinama, mogu povećati nivo neverstva među zaposlenima [48,82,83].

Posledice neverstva

Neverstvo često izaziva „oluju“ u porodici, koja se opisuje kao napetost i gubitak zajedništva, tuga, poremećena komunikacija, „lažna normalnost“ – privid stabilnosti uz potisnute konflikte, kao i finansijski problemi i konflikti sa širom porodicom. Posledice neverstva u partnerskom odnosu mogu da eskaliraju u rastavu ili razvod, pojačane konflikte i porodično nasilje. Iako partneri mogu da osećaju bes, ljutnju i pasivnu agresiju, emocionalno udaljavanje od partnera ili želju za osvetom, i pored duboke krize, ipak postoji mogućnost da neverstvo postane prelomna tačka koja vodi ka izgradnji nove veze, sa dubljim nivoima emocionalnosti, iskrenosti i intimnosti [75,76]. Deca koja su izložena neverstvu jednog ili oba roditelja često žive u emocionalno nestabilnom porodičnom okruženju (Tabela 3).

Mentalne bolesti, somatske, neurobiološke i bihevioralne manifestacije uticaja neverstva

Nakon saznanja o neverstvu ili učestvovanja u njemu, mogu da se razviju različiti mentalni poremećaji. Najčešće se uočavaju [75,76]:

- Depresija – izražena tuga, poremećaj sna, gubitak telesne težine, pad motivacije i energije.
- Proces žalovanja – koji prolazi kroz faze poricanja, ljutnje, pregovaranja, depresije i prihvatanja.
- Postinfidelitetni traumatski poremećaj (PITP)/ posttraumatski stresni poremećaj (PTSP) – doživljaj mentalnog šoka, intruzivne misli o preljubi, noćne more, „flešbek“ epizode, izbegavanje podsećanja na događaj i pojačana emocionalna reaktivnost.
- Teškoće u formiranju novih emocionalnih veza – problemi u otvorenom izražavanju potreba, izbegavanje razgovora o osećanjima i budućim planovima sa novim partnerom.

On the other hand, some cultures adopt a different approach. Among the Bembe people, there is an implicit forgiveness of infidelity through a purification ritual wherein the adulterous husband symbolically seeks forgiveness from his wife. Capellanus states that in the aristocratic societies of the twelfth century, infidelity was regarded as a higher form of love, and they believed that true, passionate love could not be achieved within marriage [80].

Contemporary society has witnessed the development of consensual non-monogamy, defined as a relationship wherein partners have reached an agreement permitting sexual or romantic relationships with individuals other than their primary partner [81]. There are three principal forms of consensual non-monogamy: swinging (couples engage in sexual relationships with other couples), polyamory (partners may maintain romantic relationships with multiple individuals simultaneously), and open relationships (partners engage in sexual relationships with other individuals independently of one another).

Compared with American and some European societies, the Republic of Serbia is classified as a society characterized by incomplete modernization. Nevertheless, infidelity remains highly prevalent, and the divorce rate – often associated with infidelity – has increased to as much as 25%.

Professions associated with an increased risk of infidelity

The workplace is one of the most common settings wherein extradyadic relationships develop. Coworkers spend a great deal of time together, share professional challenges, and often disclose personal concerns, which can lead to emotional closeness. The risk is particularly high when coworkers recognize similarities in personality, interests, values, and life needs. A moment of desire may represent a turning point when a friendly and collegial relationship is transformed into a sexual one. Such a dynamic carries risks not only for the primary relationship but also for professional and interpersonal relationships. Research indicates that opportunities for infidelity are often found in the workplace through extended working hours, business meetings, and work-related travel.

Certain professions (bankers and brokers; pilots and flight attendants; healthcare professionals, including physicians and nurses; business professionals, including chief executive officers and managers; sports professionals, including athletes and instructors; artists, musicians, models, actors, disc jockeys, journalists and publishers; legal professionals, including attorneys and secretaries; and politicians) are associated with an increased risk of infidelity due to frequent travel, high levels of stress, social power, or intensive interpersonal contact. These professions

Tabela 3. Posledice neverstva na decu, odnose sa prijateljima, i na radnom mestu

Deca osećaju/doživljavaju:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tugu • Ljutnju i zburjenost • Anksioznost i osećaj napuštenosti • Izolaciju i gubitak poverenja prema roditeljima i drugim ljudima • Probleme u školi • Povlačenje od vršnjaka • Strah od budućnosti • Postiđenost • Distanciranje od roditelja koji je bio neveran
U odnosima sa prijateljima dolazi do:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Osuđivanja i kritike od strane prijatelja • Stajanja na stranu prevarenog partnera • Distanciranja od cele porodice ili od osobe koja je počinila preljubu • Izbegavanja zajedničkih okupljanja
Na radnom mestu nastaju:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problemi sa poverenjem prema kolegama • Ljutnja i sram • Povlačenje i izbegavanje kolektivnih aktivnosti • Smanjen radni učinak

- Disocijacija – osećaj otupljenosti, doživljaj izvan-telesnog iskustva ili preterana budnost.
- Problemi sa pamćenjem i kognicijom.
- Bolesti zavisnosti – alkoholizam, zloupotreba psihoaktivnih supstanci i kockanje.

Nakon saznanja o neverstvu, mogu da se jave i fizički simptomi kod osobe koja je prevarena: gubitak telesne težine, smanjen apetit i libido, nesanica, problemi sa koncentracijom i memorijom, kao i somatske smetnje poput otežanog disanja, hronični umor, poremećaj spavanja, bolovi u telu, kardiovaskularne i gastrointestinalne smetnje. Fizički bol se javlja kao posledica aktiviranja puteva za bol kada se prolazi kroz proces saznanja o neverstvu. Hronični stres povezan sa emocionalnom traumom neverstva, može da utiče na imunološki sistem i da dovede do pad otpornosti na virusne i bakterijske infekcije [84,85].

Neverstvo ne pogađa samo emocionalni već i neurobiološki i telesni nivo funkcionisanja osobe. Doživljaj odbačenosti izazvan neverstvom može da dovede do promena u moždanim putevima, do snižavanja nivoa dopamina i oksitocina usled gubitka poverenja i povezanosti sa partnerom. To dovodi do simptoma sličnih apstinencijalnoj krizi kod zavisnosti od alkohola ili droga. Supresija prefrontalnog režnja dovodi do problema sa donošenjem odluka, povećava se nivo impulsivnosti. Promene na nivou hipokampusu dovode do problema sa pamćenjem uz intenzivno doživljavanje saznanja o prevari.

Table 3. Consequences of infidelity on children, friendships, and the workplace

Children experience:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sadness • Anger and confusion • Anxiety and a feeling of abandonment • Isolation and a loss of trust in parents and other people • Problems at school • Withdrawal from peers • Fear of the future • Embarrassment • Distancing from the unfaithful parent
In relations with friends, the following may occur:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judgment and criticism from friends • Siding with the betrayed partner • Distancing from the entire family or from the person who committed the adultery • Avoiding joint gatherings
The following may happen in the workplace:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust issues toward colleagues • Anger and shame • Withdrawal from and avoidance of group activities • Reduced work performance

often involve high social status, opportunities to meet new people, work under stressful conditions, and prolonged periods away from family. All of these factors may increase vulnerability to extradyadic relationships [82].

A study conducted among couples found that 62% of men who had been unfaithful began their affair in the workplace, whereas the percentage of women who found an alternative partner at work was 38%. Sociodemographic factors, such as higher socioeconomic status and residence in urban environments, may increase the prevalence of infidelity among employed individuals [48,82,83].

The consequences of infidelity

Infidelity often triggers a “storm” within the family, characterized by tension and a loss of togetherness, sadness, impaired communication, “false normality” – the appearance of stability accompanied by suppressed conflicts – as well as financial difficulties and conflicts with the extended family. The consequences of infidelity within a romantic relationship may escalate into separation or divorce, intensified conflict, and domestic violence. Although partners may experience anger, resentment, and passive aggression, emotional distancing from one another, or a desire for revenge, there remains the possibility that, despite the profound crisis, infidelity may become a turning point leading to the development of a new relationship characterized by deeper levels of emotional connection, honesty, and intimacy [75,76]. Children exposed to the infidelity

Neurobiološki faktori takođe igraju značajnu ulogu u etiologiji seksualne zavisnosti. *ADHD* i disbalans serotoninina, dopamina i norepinefrina mogu da dovedu do povećane seksualne želje i impulsivnog ponašanja. Demencija, posebno kada su zahvaćeni delovi mozga odgovorni za kontrolu impulsa i prosuđivanje, može da izazove promene u seksualnom ponašanju. Takođe, određeni lekovi koji se koriste u terapiji Parkinsonove bolesti mogu da dovedu do razvoja kompulzivnog seksualnog ponašanja [86–88].

Neverstvo može da bude snažan okidač za različite oblike nasilja i autodestruktivnog ponašanja:

- Porodično nasilje može da se manifestuje kroz emocionalno, psihološko i fizičko zlostavljanje nakon otkrivanja neverstva.
- Samoubistvo se obično javlja kod preveranog partnera. Procenjuje se da oko 33% prevarenih partnera ima suicidalne misli, usled osećaja srama, poniženja, krivice, gubitka partnerskog odnosa i doživljaja napuštenosti.
- Razvedeni muškarci imaju tri puta veći rizik od samoubistva u poređenju sa oženjenim muškarcima.
- Žene češće pokušavaju samoubistvo i sklonije su samopovređivanju.
- Ubistvo se u pojedinim slučajevima povezuje sa „zločinom iz strasti“, kada osoba ubija partnera koji je neveran, partnerovog ljubavnika ili, u ekstremnim slučajevima, čak i svoju decu.

Glavni okidači za nasilno, ubilačko ponašanje uključuje intenzivnu ljutnju, anksioznost, patološku ljubomoru, rivalstvo i osvetu (Tabela 4). Stopa ubistava intimnih partnera tokom 2020–2021. godine iznosila je 0,93 na 100.000 stanovnika [89].

Psihoterapijski pristup kod neverstva

Neverstvo je jedan od najčešćih razloga dolaska na partnersku terapiju i ujedno jedan od najvećih izazova za terapeuta. Ulazak u partnersku terapiju nakon otkrivene prevare često je poput otvaranja Pandorine kutije – metafore koja označava suočavanje sa duboko potisnutim problemima i brojnim emocionalnim komplikacijama. Emocionalni naboj partnera koji dolaze na terapiji je izuzetno visok i izražava se kroz tugu, bes, osećanje krivice, i stid. Narušeno poverenje dominira u terapijskom procesu posebno na početku bilo individualne ili partnerske terapije.

Terapijski proces zahteva od terapeuta stručno znanje, iskustvo i sposobnost da se nosi sa sopstvenim emocionalnim reakcijama, uključujući analizu transfera i kontratransfera. Potrebna je senzitivnost i fleksibilnost terapeuta kao i sposobnost i veštine da se integrišu različiti terapijski modaliteti u okviru intersistemskog pri-

of one or both parents often live in an emotionally unstable family environment (Table 3).

Mental illnesses, somatic, neurobiological, and behavioral manifestations of the impact of infidelity

After learning about infidelity or participating in it, various mental disorders may develop. The most frequently observed mental disorders are the following [75,76]:

- Depression – pronounced sadness, sleep disturbance, weight loss, loss of motivation, and loss of energy.
- The grieving process – which passes through stages of denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance.
- Post-infidelity stress disorder (PISD)/post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) – experiencing mental shock, intrusive thoughts about the adultery, nightmares, “flashback” episodes, avoidance of reminders of the event, and heightened emotional reactivity.
- Difficulties in forming new emotional bonds – problems in openly expressing needs, avoiding conversations about feelings, or conversations about plans with a new partner for the future.
- Dissociation – a feeling of numbness, experiencing out-of-body sensations, or hypervigilance.
- Problems with memory and cognition.
- Addictive disorders – alcoholism, substance abuse, and gambling.

After learning about infidelity, physical symptoms may also occur in the betrayed person: weight loss, decreased appetite and libido, insomnia, problems with concentration and memory, as well as somatic ailments such as shortness of breath, chronic fatigue, sleep disorders, body aches, and cardiovascular and gastrointestinal disturbances. Physical pain occurs as a result of the activation of pain pathways when going through the process of discovering infidelity. Chronic stress associated with the emotional trauma of infidelity can affect the immune system and lead to a decrease in resistance to viral and bacterial infections [84,85].

Infidelity affects not only the emotional level but also the neurobiological and physical levels of a person's functioning. The experience of rejection caused by infidelity can lead to changes in brain pathways and to a decrease in levels of dopamine and oxytocin, due to the loss of trust and connection with the partner. This leads to symptoms similar to withdrawal crises in alcohol or drug addiction. Suppression of the prefrontal cortex leads to problems with decision-making and increased impulsivity. Changes in the hippocampus contribute to memory impairment, compounded by the intense emotional trauma of discovering infidelity.

Tabela 4. Sindromi koji opisuju nasilje kao posledicu neverstva

<p>Medejin sindrom</p> <p>U grčkoj mitologiji, Medeja je ubila svoju decu iz osvete prema mužu Jasonu, koji je napustio Medeju i oženio drugu ženu (Euripidus, 5. vek p.n.e.). Ovaj sindrom simbolički predstavlja ekstremni doživljaj izdaje, napuštenosti, mržnje i osvete. U kliničkom kontekstu, mogu se razmatrati dijagnostičke mogućnosti poput postpartalne psihoze ili paranoidne šizofrenije, u zavisnosti od psihopatološke slike [90,91].</p>
<p>Otelov sindrom</p> <p>Otelov sindrom se karakteriše kao patološka, deluziona ljubomora – čvrsto uverenje da je partner neveran, i to bez realnih dokaza. Dijagnostički se najčešće povezuje sa deluzionim poremećajem – patološkom ljubomorom [92], i obuhvata:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opsesivne optužbe za neverstvo • Kontrolu i nadzor nad partnerom • Mogućnost samoubistva i/ili ubistva partnera • Porodično nasilje – fizičko i emocionalno zlostavljanje partnera i dece.

Table 4. Syndromes describing violence as a consequence of infidelity

<p>Medea syndrome</p> <p>In Greek mythology, Medea killed her children in revenge against her husband, Jason, who had abandoned her and married another woman (Euripides, 5th century BC). This syndrome symbolically represents an extreme experience of betrayal, abandonment, hatred, and revenge. In the clinical context, diagnostic possibilities such as postpartum psychosis or paranoid schizophrenia may be considered, depending on the psychopathological profile [90,91].</p>
<p>Othello syndrome</p> <p>Othello syndrome is characterized as pathological, delusional jealousy – a firm belief that a partner is unfaithful, despite the absence of real evidence. Diagnostically, it is most frequently associated with delusional disorder – pathological jealousy [92], and it encompasses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obsessive accusations of infidelity • Monitoring and surveillance of the partner • The possibility of suicide and/or the murder of the partner • Family violence – physical and emotional abuse of the partner and children.

stupa partnerskoj i porodičnoj terapiji. Cilj terapije nije vraćanje partnerskog odnosa na stanje pre neverstva. Umesto toga, terapija je pokušaj transformacije i podsticanje rasta i razvoja, kako na individualnom tako i na partnerskom nivou.

Na individualnom planu, partneri razvijaju svest o sopstvenim vulnerabilnostima koje su doprinele neverstvu ili iskustvu izdaje. Istovremeno, partneri uče kako da osnaže sopstvene kapacitete i rezilijentnost, kako bi se konstruktivno suočavali sa budućim izazovima i smanjili rizik od ponavljanja sličnih obrazaca neverstva. Na nivou partnerske terapije, primenjuje se koncept emocionalnog usmerenja (engl. *emotionally focused therapy* – EFT), Gotmanov metod, kognitivno bihevioralna terapija, te sistemska partnerska i porodična terapija [93,94].

Neurobiological factors also play a significant role in the etiology of sexual addiction. ADHD and imbalances in serotonin, dopamine, and norepinephrine can lead to increased sexual desire and impulsive behavior. Dementia, especially when parts of the brain responsible for impulse control and judgment are affected, can cause changes in sexual behavior. Also, certain medications used in the treatment of Parkinson’s disease can lead to the development of compulsive sexual behavior [86–88].

Infidelity can be a powerful trigger for various forms of violence and self-destructive behavior:

- Family violence can manifest through emotional, psychological, and physical abuse after the discovery of infidelity.
- Suicide usually occurs in the betrayed partner. It is estimated that about 33% of betrayed partners have suicidal thoughts due to feelings of shame, humiliation, guilt, loss of the relationship with the partner, and the experience of abandonment.
- Divorced men have three times the risk of suicide compared to married men.
- Women attempt suicide more often and are more prone to self-harm.
- Homicide is in some cases associated with “crimes of passion,” when a person kills an unfaithful partner, the partner’s lover, or, in extreme cases, even their own children.

The main triggers for violent, homicidal behavior include intense anger, anxiety, pathological jealousy, rivalry, and revenge (Table 4). The rate of intimate partner homicide during 2020–2021 was 0.93 per 100,000 inhabitants [89].

Psychotherapeutic approach to infidelity

Infidelity is one of the most common reasons for seeking couples therapy and, at the same time, one of the greatest challenges for a therapist. Entering couples therapy after an affair has been discovered is often like opening Pandora’s box – a metaphor that signifies facing deeply suppressed problems and numerous emotional complications. The emotional charge of the partners coming to therapy is extremely high and is expressed through sadness, anger, feelings of guilt, and shame. Shattered trust dominates the therapeutic process, especially at the beginning of either individual or couples therapy.

The therapeutic process requires professional skill, experience, and the therapist’s ability to cope with their own emotional reactions, including the analysis of transference and countertransference. The therapist must be sensitive and flexible, possessing the ability and skill to integrate different therapeutic modalities within the framework of an intersystemic approach to couples and family therapy. The goal of therapy is not to

ZAKLJUČAK

Neverstvo je složeno životno pitanje koje ima višestruko značenje i nosi sa sobom brojne poruke na individualnom, partnerskom, porodičnom i društvenom nivou. Neverstvo podseća na značaj mudrosti i vrednovanja moralnih principa u međuljudskim odnosima. Mudrost podrazumeva razumevanje, znanje i sposobnost da ne osuđujemo, već da osnažimo preuzimanje odgovornosti za sopstvene želje, izbore i postupke.

Moralnost, kao i poštovanje ljubavi i života, zahtevaju razvijanje samosvesti i sposobnosti kontrole sopstvenih nagona – Erosa i Tanatosa, posebno u trenucima iskušenja kada porivi mogu nadjačati racionalno promišljanje. Ponašanje pod nekontrolisanim uticajem nagona može ozbiljno da povredi druge ljude.

Filozofi, umetnici, psihijatri i psiholozi mogu da ponude smernice i razumevanje problema sa neverstvom, ali konačne odluke o sopstvenom ponašanju i izborima u životu donosi svaki pojedinac.

Na svakome pojedinca je da, u skladu sa sopstvenim moralnim načelima, donosi odluke kojima pokazuje da poštuje data obećanja i zavete, i da sopstvene dileme rešava uz uvažavanje ličnosti, dostojanstva i vrednosti drugih ljudi.

U realnosti depopulacionih trendova, kada se donosi odluka bave podizanjem svesti o značaju podrške natalitetu, fertilitetu i dostizanju demografskih milenijumskih vizija, neverstvo koje narušava ili fatalno razara partnerske, radne i porodične odnose jeste individualni duboko kulturološko-fenomenološki utemeljen problem koji zahteva gradnju biopsihosocijalnih kapaciteta i psihijatrijske podrške u cilju razvoja zdravog i produktivnog ljudskog bića i održive zajednice.

Sukob interesa: Nije prijavljen.

return the relationship to the state it was in before the infidelity. Instead, therapy is an attempt at achieving a transformation and at fostering growth and development, both at the individual and the relationship level.

At the individual level, partners develop an awareness of their own vulnerabilities that contributed to the infidelity or the experience of betrayal. At the same time, partners learn how to strengthen their own capacities and resilience in order to constructively face future challenges and reduce the risk of repeating similar patterns of infidelity. At the level of couples therapy, the concept of emotionally focused therapy (EFT), the Gottman method, cognitive behavioral therapy, and systemic couples and family therapy are applied [93,94].

CONCLUSION

Infidelity is a complex life issue that holds multiple meanings and carries numerous messages on an individual, partner, family, and societal level. Infidelity serves as a reminder of the importance of wisdom and of valuing moral principles in interpersonal relationships. Wisdom implies understanding, knowledge, and the ability not to judge, but rather to strengthen responsibility for one's own desires, choices, and actions.

Morality, as well as the respect for love and life, requires the development of self-awareness and the ability to control one's own drives – Eros and Thanatos, especially in moments of temptation when urges may overpower rational reflection. Behavior under the uncontrolled influence of instincts can seriously harm other people.

Philosophers, artists, psychiatrists, and psychologists can offer guidance and understanding of the problem of infidelity, but the final decisions regarding one's own behavior and life choices are made by each individual.

It is up to every individual, in accordance with their own moral principles, to make decisions that demonstrate respect for the promises and vows made and to resolve their own dilemmas while honoring the personality, dignity, and value of others.

In the reality of depopulation trends, when decision-makers are engaged in raising awareness about the importance of supporting birth rates, fertility, and achieving demographic millennium visions, infidelity – which disrupts or fatally destroys partner, professional, and family relationships – is an individual, deeply culturally and phenomenologically grounded problem that requires the strengthening of biopsychosocial capacities and psychiatric support aimed at developing healthy and productive human beings and a sustainable community.

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