

The study aims at conducting an analysis of the situation of women with disabilities in aspects of reproductive autonomy, motherhood, and care work. The experience of women with disabilities related to reproductive dilemmas, motherhood, and care work are constructed socially (discrimination on grounds of gender and disability) and historically (e.g. limiting the reproductive rights of people with disabilities through eugenics, sterilization or prohibition of marriage of people with disabilities). The study will focus on the perspective of women with disabilities, as well as broader analysis of the social, cultural, historical and structural that influence their experience of (non)motherhood and care.

The objective of the project is, therefore, an attempt to answer the following questions: How disability informs reproductive autonomy of women with disabilities in Poland? How women with disabilities navigate their reproductive autonomy? How women with disabilities practice their motherhood? What are the challenges? How are they overcome? How structural, economic, social and cultural factors influence care practices and reproductive autonomy of women with disabilities? How norms regarding reproductive autonomy of women with disabilities are constructed? How are they negotiated and subverted? How in the relationship of care women with disabilities build their autonomy and subjectivity? How the category of interdependence is negotiated?

The project will be based on qualitative methods of social research. Three research techniques will be applied in order to provide an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon: desk-research, 30 in-depth interviews, 10 case studies and 3 group interviews that will focus on a participatory analysis of the microaggression that are experienced by women with disabilities in relation to their reproductive practices. The sample will consist of women with disabilities and are in reproductive age. Participants of the study will consist of both women who are mothers and those who do not have children (in order to deepen understanding of issues related to reproductive autonomy). In total 50 women who self-identify as disabled will participate in the study.

The analysis of the relationship between disability and reproduction and care will result in better understanding of the contemporary social practices of support, care and motherhood, especially by contributing to dynamically transforming Family Studies through disability factor analysis. The study aims to analyze the perspective of women with disabilities in order to understand the dilemmas and negotiations related to the construction of autonomy and support. In the context of a strongly exclusive social norm on who and why can become a mother and who makes the decision. These are the basic questions about how societies to reproduce themselves. Including perspectives of mothers with disabilities is especially important because historically often they were deprived of autonomy (due to e.g. eugenics, limiting reproduction and the social construction of disability).

Simultaneously, the study will contribute the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, ratified by Poland in 2012, which emphasizes the obligation of States Parties to collect data and conduct research in the topic of disability.