

A Study to Assess the Psychological Problems of Postmenopausal Women in Selected Rural Areas, Mysore

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Abstract

Menopause is a natural phenomenon which/ that occurs in every woman's life. It occurs between the ages of 45-55 years. During this period many women have certain psychological problems. Some of the psychological problems experienced by women undergoing menopause can include irritability, feelings of sadness, lack of motivation, anxiety, aggressiveness, difficulty in concentrating, mood changes and depression. The objectives of the present study included assessment of the psychological problems of post-menopausal women and finding the association between these psychological problems with their selected demographic variables. A non-experimental descriptive survey design was adopted to accomplish the objectives of the study. A sample of 100 post-menopausal women was selected by using convenient sampling technique. The psychological problems of the post-menopausal women were determined by administering structured rating scale. Findings of the study revealed that the majority of post-menopausal women 78 (78%) were having moderate psychological problems and remaining 22 (22%) had mild psychological problems. The mean score of the psychological problems was found to be 16.96 (65.23%) with a standard deviation of 2.96. This study concludes that the post-menopausal women have moderate psychological problems and there is a necessity to improve the awareness to prevent these psychological problems. With this aim, the researcher has provided the pamphlet regarding the measures to reduce the post-menopausal psychological problems.

Keywords: pamphlet, post-menopausal women, psychological problems

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INTRODUCTION

Menopause is a natural phenomenon which/ that occurs in every woman's life. But still many people have myths/misconceptions about the menopause. These myths or misconceptions make women feel vulnerable with respect to physical and psychological stress. Various factors, such as the individual's age, physical as well as her emotional status and environmental elements influence the regularity of her periods. Hence women should be educated about the physiological changes that occur

as the age progresses.^[1,2] Each woman has a different experience during her menopause. Some might undergo a smooth and even a liberating changeover from her reproductive to her non-reproductive stage, while some might experience fluctuations in her chemical and emotional states. However the transition and state of menopause raises important health care concerns and physical challenges for all women experiencing it. The menopausal changes in women can lead to long term risks that might have a major effect on her overall health and quality of life. Hence it

is high-time to alert each women about her body process which can be energizing and empowering for her.^[3,4]

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Along with the physical problems, menopausal women also experience psychological problems like anxiety, depression, anger, fear, loss of memory and lack of concentration. As per the studies almost 55% of the women suffer from depression, 36% suffer from insomnia and 30% of the menopausal women experience forgetfulness. Still some women experience smooth transition during menopause.

The various psychological factors are related to the physical changes during menopause. Women may have the feeling of losing their appearance, sadness at passing of reproductive age, losing hopes about the purpose of life, etc.

These psychological variations may lead to exaggeration of physical discomfort by complex hormonal changes. But if women are made aware of the natural changes occurring during menopause, she might experience a smooth transition during this phase.

The awareness about the natural process of menopause will help her in adopting self-help behavior and in improving her coping abilities.^[5]

A prospective cross-sectional study of 200 post-menopausal women attending Gynecology OPD and Menopausal Clinic at the Obstetrics and Gynecology Department of a North Indian tertiary care hospital revealed that 32% of the post-menopausal women experienced psychological symptoms, 34% of them had the same problems with less intensity. 31.5% of the menopausal women were irritable, 28.5% were nervous and 23.5% had depression. It also revealed that 41.5%

of them had mild depression, whereas 3% suffered from clinical depression.

This study concluded that women during menopausal period are at an increased risk of developing psychological disorders. As prevention is better than cure, therefore, women should be educated about the natural process of menopause, which would alleviate her fear in order to prevent her from experiencing psychological problems.^[6]

OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the psychological problems of post-menopausal women.
2. To find the association of psychological problems of post-menopausal women with their selected demographic variables

METHODOLOGY

Research Design: The research design selected for study was non experimental descriptive survey design. Study was conducted in Tandavapura village, district Mysuru.

Sampling Technique: Convenience sampling technique was employed.

Sample: Sample size consisted of 100 post-menopausal women in selected rural areas of Mysuru.

Data Collection Technique

Section A- It deals with socio-demographic characteristics, that include age, educational status, occupation, income of the family, religion, type of family, marital status, medical problems, and number of children.

Section B- Structured rating scale was prepared to assess the psychological problems among post-menopausal women.

RESULTS

- I) Socio-demographic Characteristics of Study Subjects

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Post- Menopausal Women in Selected Demographic Characteristics

N = 100

Demographic Characteristics of samples		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	45-49 Yrs	41	41
	50-54 Yrs	38	38
	55-59 Yrs	21	21
Educational status	Illiterate	93	93
	Primary level	7	7
Occupation	House wife	99	99
	Private employee	1	1
Income of the family	Less than Rs. 2000/m	9	9
	Rs. 2001-4000/m	32	32
	Rs. 4001-5000/m	42	42
	Rs. 5001 and above	17	17
Religion	Hindu	99	99
	Muslim	1	1
Type of family	Nuclear	73	73
	Joint	27	27
Marital status	Married	90	90
	Widowed	10	10
Medical problems	Diabetes mellitus	37	37
	Hypertension	37	37
	Others	26	26
Source of information	Family and relatives	7	7
	Health professionals	59	59
	Mass media	32	32
	Other sources	2	2

Table 1 depicts that the majority of the subjects, i.e., 41% were in the age group of 45-49 years and that the majority (93%) were illiterates. Almost (99%) of the subjects were housewives and 42% of them had their income between Rs. 4001-5000. Majority of the subjects, i.e., 99% belonged to Hindu religion and 73% of them lived in a nuclear family. Maximum (90%) of the subjects were married and 10% of them were widow. Among the subjects, 37% had diabetes mellitus, 37% had hypertension. 59% of subjects had received information from health professionals

Table 2 depicts that majority of the subjects, i.e., 78% had moderate psychological problems and the remaining 22% had mild psychological problems during the postmenopausal period.

Table 2. Psychological problems level of post- menopausal women

N = 100

Psychological Problems	Frequency	%
Mild	22	22.0
Moderate	78	78.0
Severe	0	0.0
Total	100	100

Table 3. Mean, Mean% and Standard Deviation of Psychological Problems of Postmenopausal Women
N = 100

Psychological Problems	Number of Items	Maximum Score Obtained	Mean	Mean%	SD
Depression	8	8	5.96	74.5	1.38
Anxiety and fear	7	7	4.48	64	1.19
Anger	4	4	2.54	63.5	0.35
Suspiciousness	3	3	1.72	57.33	0.96
Self concept	2	2	1.22	61	0.67
Sexual life	2	2	1.04	52	0.84
Overall	26	26	16.96	65.23	2.96

Table 3 depicts the overall mean score of psychological problems, which was found to be 16.96 (65.23%) with a standard deviation of 2.96.

This indicates that post-menopausal women have moderate psychological problems.

II) Association between Psychological Problems of Post-Menopausal Women with their Selected Personal Variables. The selected personal variables, such as monthly income of the family and family type, had significant association with the psychological problems of postmenopausal women at 0.05 levels.

CONCLUSION

- The findings of the present study revealed that majority (78%) of postmenopausal women had moderate psychological problems. Data shows that mean score of the psychological problems was found to be 16.96 (65.23%) with a standard deviation of 2.96, which indicates that postmenopausal women have moderate psychological problems.
- The findings of the study also revealed that the psychological problems of postmenopausal women had significant association with their selected personal variables, viz. monthly income of the family and family type at 0.05 level of significance.

- There is a necessity to improve the awareness to prevent psychological problems and with this aim the researcher has provided the pamphlet regarding the measures to reduce the postmenopausal psychological problems.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made based on the results of the study.

1. A similar study can be replicated on a larger sample with similar demographical characters.
2. A similar study can be replicated with a control group using a larger population of the community.
3. A comparative study can be conducted on urban and rural postmenopausal women.
4. A follow-up study can be conducted to determine the effectiveness of teaching programme.

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