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Lived in Experiences of Post Menopausal Women

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ABSTRACT

A focused group discussion with four study groups was conducted a study to explore the lived in experiences of post menopausal women at selected community areas of Puducherry. A total of 32 subjects who fulfilled the inclusion criteria were selected by using purposive sampling technique. Data were collected using demographic variables profile and health profile and analyzed through descriptive and thematic statistics. The results revealed the significant association between the groups and selected demographic variables of age, marital status, age at menarche, obstetrical history, family and diet pattern.

Keywords: *Post menopausal women, lived in experiences, focused group discussion.*

INTRODUCTION

Menopause is a natural biological process of reproduction when a woman's menstrual cycle permanently ceases and estrogen levels decline as result of progressive ovarian failure. Natural menopause occurs at an average age of 51 years. Varying widely from 40-58 years during the transition through menopause and in the year after menopause there is a diverse range of metabolic impairments as well as physical, emotional symptom that can negatively impact the overall quality of life of women.

Common metabolic impairments include weight gain, increased visceral and subcutaneous abdominal adiposity, impaired glucose tolerance, hyperinsulinemia, and hypertension. Additionally physical and emotional symptoms often include vasomotor symptom, sleep disturbances, fatigue and sexual compliance.

The overall health and well- being of middle aged women has become a major public health concern around the world more than 80% of the women experience physical and psychological symptoms in the years when they approach menopause, with varies distress an disturbances in their lives, leading to a decrease in the quality of life. Menopause is associated with constellation of physical changes some of these changes are directly attributed to the loss of estrogen including hot flashes, bone demineralization and vaginal dryness. Through a matter of controversy an increased incidence of cardiovascular disease and dementia also seen to be associated with both menopause and aging.

Menopause symptoms and their severity vary from person to person due to the effects of confounding factors such as lifestyle social status body composition, and psychological status. Menopausal symptoms, especially the vasomotor and sexual symptoms are associated with impaired QOL in women. QOL is an individual 's perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns.

The statement of the problem was to “ **A study to explore the lived in experiences of post menopausal women in the selected community area of Puducherry.** The OBJECTIVES of the study were to explore the lived in experiences of the post menopausal women in the selected community area. And To associate the demographic variables with the lived in experiences of the post menopausal women.

METHODOLOGY:

The qualitative research approach was adopted for the present study. A focused group discussion was conducted in four groups of eight each to explore the lived in experiences of post menopausal women .A total sample of 32, above 45 years with post menopausal women who met the inclusion criteria were selected. Purposive sampling technique was adopted to select the subjects for study. Themes were derived out of the discussion regarding the physical , emotional and social problems or experiences of the post menopausal women and analysed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

1. Distribution of the demographic variables group wise.

It shows that, in group 1, 2 (25%) women belong to 41 to 45 years of age, 1 (21.5%) of the mother was aged between 51 to 55 years and 5 (62.5%) women were aged 56 and above. In group 2, 1 (12.5%) of mother was aged between 46 to 50 years, 3 (37.5%) of women were in the age group of 51 to 55 years and 4 (50%) of women were aged 56 and above. In group 3, 7 (87.5%) of women were from 51 to 55 years and 1 (12.5%) of women were 56 and above. In group 4, 8 (100%) women were 56 and above.

Regarding marital status in Group 1, 2 (25%) women were married and 3 (37.5%) women were unmarried and 3 (37.5%) women were widow. In group 2, 6 (75%) women were married and 2 (25%) women were widow. In group 3, 2 (25%) women were married and 6 (75%) women were widow. In group 4, 2 (25%) women were married and 6 (75%) women were widow.

According to the religion, in group 1, 7 (87.5%) women were hindu and 1 (12.5%) of women were Christian. In groups 2, 3 and 4, all the 8 (100%) women were hindu.

According to the age at menarchy, in group 1, 7 (87.5%) of women had age at menarchy between 12 to 15 years and 1 (12.5%) of woman had age at menarchy between 15 to 20 years. In group 2, 1 (12.5%) women had age at menarchy at above 12 years and 7 (87.5%) of women had age at menarchy between 12 to 15 years. In group 3, 1 (12.5%) women had age at menarchy above 12 years and 7 (87.5%) of women had age at menarchy between 12 to 15 years. In group 4, 5 (62.5%) women had age at menarchy at above 12 years and 3 (37.5%) of women had age at menarchy between 12 to 15 years.

Regarding the obstetrical history, in group 1, 1 (12.5%) woman was gravid and 7 (87.5%) of women were para. 6 (75%) women done family planning. In group 2, all 8 (100%) women were gravid. 6 (75%) of women had still born. In group 4, 5 (62.5%) women were gravid, 1 (12.5%) of women were para and 2 (25%) of women had number of living child.

In group 4, 5 (62.5%) women had permanent sterilization, 2 (25%) of women had copper T and 1 (12.5%) of woman had use of oral contraceptive pills.

According to the income, in group 1, 6 (75%) women had income less than 5000 and 2 (25%) of women had income between 5000 to 10000. In group 2, 6 (75%) women had income less than 5000 and 2 (25%) of women had income between 5000 to 10000. In group 3, 6 (75%) women had income less than 5000 and 2 (25%) of women had income between 5000 to 10000. In group 4, 8 (100%) women had income less than 5000.

According to diet patten, in group 1, 4 (50%) women were vegetarian and 4 (50%) of women were non vegetarian. In group 2 and group 3, 8 (100%) women were non vegetarian.

Distribution of women according to the associate disease showed that in group 1, 3 (37.5%) women had DM and 5 (62.5%) of women had HT. In group 2, 3 (37.5%) women had DM AND 5 (62.5%) of women had HT. In group 3, 3 (37.5%) women had DM AND 5 (62.5%) of women had HT. In group 4, 3 (37.5%) women had HT and 1 (12.5%) of women had arthritis.

2. Finding related to physical problems:

When analyzing the physical problems of the postmenopausal women in group 1, regarding heart related discomfort, 1 (12.5%) woman had tightness of chest, 2 (25%) women had unusual awareness of heart beat, 3 (37.5%) women had palpitation and 2 (25%) women had breathlessness. Regarding sleep related problems, 4 (50%) women had difficulty in falling sleep, 4 (50%) women had waking up early 1 (12.5%) women had watery discharge from breasts.

In group 2, regarding heart related discomfort, 1 (12.5%) woman had chest tightness, 1 (12.5%) mother had Unusual awareness of heart beat, 3 (37.5%) women had Palpitation and 3 (37.5%) women had Breathlessness. Regarding problem during sleeping, 2 (25%) women had Difficulty in falling asleep, 2 (25%) of women had Waking up early and 4 (50%) of women had Insomnia. All the women had joint and muscle discomfort and pain complaints. Regarding breast related changes, 1 (12.5%) women had Tingling sensation, 2 (25%) of women had Watery discharge and 5 (62.5%) of women had Pain in breast.

In group 3, regarding heart related discomfort, 2 (25%) women had chest Tightness, 2 (25%) women had Palpitation and 4 (50%) women had Breathlessness. Regarding problem during sleeping, 2 (25%) women had Difficulty in falling asleep, 2 (25%) of women had Waking up early, 2 (25%) of women had Insomnia and 2 (25%) of women had Disturbed sleep. All the women had joint and muscle discomfort and pain complaints. Regarding breast related changes, 2 (25%) women had Tingling sensation, 2 (25%) of women had Watery discharge and 4 (50%) of women had Pain in breast.

In group 4, regarding heart related discomfort, all 8 (100%) women had tightness. Regarding problem during sleeping, 1 (12.5%) women had insomnia and 7 (87.5%) women had disturbed sleep. Regarding experience, 7 (87.5%) women had hot flushes and 1 (12.5%) woman had increased sweating. All 8 (100%) women had joint and muscle discomfort and pain complaints. Regarding breast related changes, all 8 (100%) women had tingling sensation.

3. Finding related by digestion and elimination related problems:

. In group 1, regarding urinary elimination problems, 2 (25%) women had Difficulty in urinating, 2 (25%) of women had Urge to pass urine, 2 (25%) of women had Dripping of urine during cough and sneezing and 2 (25%) women had Burning sensation. Regarding problem during bowel elimination, 2 (25%) women had Tightness in defecating. Regarding G.I. problem, 2 (25%) of women had Lower abdomen pain, 5 (62.5%) of women had Not able to eat and 1 (12.5%) of women had Indigestion. Regarding sex related problems, 4 (50%) women had Change in sexual desire and 4 (50%) of women had change in Sexual activity. Regarding vaginal changes after menopause, 1 (12.5%) woman had Dryness of vagina, 2 (25%) women had Burning sensation in vagina, 5 (62.5%) of women had any watery or any other and 2 (25%) of women had Blood discharge with any smell.

In group 2, regarding problem during bowel elimination, 2 (25%) women had Tightness in defecating. Regarding G.I. problem, 1 (12.5%) women had Tightness in abdomen, 1 (12.5%) woman had Lower abdomen pain, 5 (62.5%) of women had Not able to eat and 1 (12.5%) woman had Indigestion. Regarding sex related problems, 1 (12.5%) woman had Change in sexual desire and 7 (87.5%) of women had change in Sexual activity. Regarding vaginal changes after menopause, 2 (25%) women had Dryness of vagina, 2 (25%) of women had Burning sensation in vagina, 2 (25%) of women had Any watery or any other and 2 (25%) of women had Discharge in vagina.

In group 3, regarding problem during bowel elimination, 2 (25%) women had Tightness in defecating. Regarding G.I. problem, 5 (62.5%) women had Tightness in abdomen, 1 (12.5%) woman had Lower abdomen pain and 2 (25%) of women had Indigestion. Regarding sex related problems, 7 (87.5%) women had Change in sexual desire and 1 (12.5%) woman had change in Sexual activity. Regarding vaginal changes after menopause, 2 (25%) women had Dryness of vagina, 2 (25%) of women had Burning sensation in vagina, 2 (25%) of women had watery and 2 (25%) of women had Discharge in vagina.

In group 4, regarding problem during bowel elimination, 7 (87.5%) women had difficult in urinating, 7 (87.5%) women had urge to pass urine, 7 (87.5%) women had dripping of urine during cough and sneezing and 7 (87.5%) women had burning sensation. Regarding problem during bowel elimination, 8 (100%) women had frequent motion passing and 8 (100%) women had tightness in defecating. Regarding G.I. problem, 8 (100%) women had tightness in abdomen. Regarding vaginal changes after menopause, 1 (12.5%) women had dryness of vagina, 1 (12.5%) women had burning sensation in vagina, 1 (12.5%) women had difficult in sexual intercourse and 1 (12.5%) women had watery.

4. Finding related by psychological problems:

While analyzing the psychological problems of the postmenopausal women, in group 1, 2 (25%) women had Depressed mood, 1 (12.5%) woman was Feeling sad, 2 (25%) of women had Lack of drive and 3 (37.5%) women had Irritable feeling. Regarding Changes in memory, 3 (37.5%) women had Decreased concentration, 2 (25%) women had Impaired memory, 2 (25%) women had Forgetfulness and 1 (12.5%) woman had Decreased performance.

In group 2, 1 (12.5%) women had Depressed mood, 1 (12.5%) of women were Feeling sad and 6 (75%) of women had Irritable feel. Regarding Changes in memory, 3 (37.5%) women had Decreased concentration, 2 (25%) of women had Impaired memory, 2 (25%) of women had Forgetful and 1 (12.5%) of women had Decreased performance.

In group 3, 1 (12.5%) woman had Depressed mood, 1 (12.5%) woman were Feeling sad and 6 (75%) women had Irritable feel. Regarding Changes in memory, 3 (37.5%) women had Decreased concentration, 2 (25%) women had Impaired memory, 2 (25%) of women had Forgetful and 1 (12.5%) women had Decreased performance.

In group 4, regarding feeling after menopause, all the 8 (100%) women had depressed mood. Regarding change in memory, all the 8 (100%) women had forgetfulness.

Association between the Groups and Demographic Variables

| Sl. No | Demographic Variables | Group 1 | | Group 2 | | Group 3 | | Group 4 | | Chi-Square | P Value |
|--------|------------------------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|------------|---------|
| | | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % | | |
| 1 | Age | | | | | | | | | 25.01 | 0.003* |
| | 41 to 45 years | 2 | 25% | - | - | - | - | - | - | | |
| | 46 to 50 years | - | - | 1 | 12.5% | - | - | - | - | | |
| | 51 to 55 years | 1 | 12.5% | 3 | 37.5% | 7 | 87.5% | - | - | | |
| | 56 and above | 5 | 62.5% | 4 | 50% | 1 | 12.5% | 8 | 100% | | |
| 2 | Marital Status | | | | | | | | | 16 | 0.014* |
| | Married | 2 | 25% | 6 | 75% | 2 | 25% | 2 | 25% | | |
| | Unmarried | 3 | 37.5% | - | - | - | - | - | - | | |
| | Widow | 3 | 37.5% | 2 | 25% | 6 | 75% | 6 | 75% | | |
| 3 | Religion | | | | | | | | | 3.097 | 0.377 |
| | Hindu | 7 | 87.5% | 8 | 100% | 8 | 100% | 8 | 100% | | |
| | Christian | 1 | 12.5% | - | - | - | - | - | - | | |
| | Muslim | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | |
| 4 | Age at menarchy | - | - | 1 | 12.5% | 1 | 12.5% | 5 | 62.5% | 13.429 | 0.037* |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|---------------------------------|---|-------|---|-------|---|-------|---|-------|--------|---------|
| | <12 years | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 12 to 15 years | 7 | 87.5% | 7 | 87.5% | 7 | 87.5% | 3 | 37.5% | | |
| | 15 to 20 years | 1 | 12.5% | - | - | - | - | - | - | | |
| 5 | Obstetrical history | | | | | | | | | 44.294 | <0.001* |
| | Gravida | 1 | 12.5% | 8 | 100% | 3 | 37.5% | 5 | 62.5% | | |
| | Para | 7 | 87.5% | - | - | - | - | 1 | 12.5% | | |
| | Number of living child | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 25% | | |
| | Abortion | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | |
| | Still born | - | - | - | - | 5 | 62.5% | - | - | | |
| 6 | Family planning history | | | | | | | | | 5.294 | 0.258 |
| | Permanent sterilization | 6 | 75% | 6 | 75% | - | - | 5 | 62.5% | | |
| | Interval sterilization | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | |
| | MTP | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | |
| | Copper T | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 25% | | |
| | Use of oral contraceptive pills | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 12.5% | | |
| 7 | Education | | | | | | | | | 6.462 | 0.374 |
| | Illiterate | 5 | 62.5% | 7 | 87.5% | 7 | 87.5% | 7 | 87.5% | | |
| | Primary school | 1 | 12.5% | 1 | 12.5% | 1 | 12.5% | 1 | 12.5% | | |
| | Middle school | 2 | 25% | - | - | - | - | - | - | | |
| | High school | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | |
| | Graduate | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | |
| 8 | Occupation | | | | | | | | | 6.2 | 0.401 |
| | Sedentary worker | 5 | 62.5% | 6 | 75% | 6 | 75% | 7 | 87.5% | | |
| | Moderate | 1 | 12.5% | 2 | 25% | 2 | 25% | - | - | | |
| | Heavy worker | 2 | 25% | - | - | - | - | 1 | 12.5% | | |
| 9 | Family | | | | | | | | | 14.823 | 0.002* |
| | Nuclear | 8 | 100% | 6 | 75% | 6 | 75% | 1 | 12.5% | | |
| | Joint | - | - | 2 | 25% | 2 | 25% | 7 | 87.5% | | |
| | Extended family | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | |
| 10 | Income | | | | | | | | | 2.462 | 0.482 |
| | Less than 5000 | 6 | 75% | 6 | 75% | 6 | 75% | 8 | 100% | | |
| | 5000 to 10000 | 2 | 25% | 2 | 25% | 2 | 25% | - | - | | |
| | Above 10000 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | |
| 11 | Diet pattern | | | | | | | | | 13.714 | 0.003* |
| | Vegetarian | 4 | 50% | - | - | - | - | - | - | | |
| | Non vegetarian | 4 | 50% | 8 | 100% | 8 | 100% | 8 | 100% | | |
| 12 | Other associate disease | | | | | | | | | 7.583 | 0.27 |
| | DM | 3 | 37.5% | 3 | 37.5% | 3 | 37.5% | - | - | | |
| | HT | 5 | 62.5% | 5 | 62.5% | 5 | 62.5% | 3 | 37.5% | | |
| | Thyroid | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | |
| | Arthrities | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 12.5% | | |

*-Significant

Regarding the association between the groups and demographic variables, It was shown that age, marital status, age at menarche, obstetrical history, family and diet pattern showed significant association between groups and rest of the variables didn't show significant association between groups since the p value is greater than 0.05.

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