

Stress and Quality of Life Among Postmenopausal Women

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ABSTRACT

Present study was aimed to assess the stress and quality of life among postmenopausal women. The objectives of the study were to determine the relationship between level of stress and General quality of life among postmenopausal women and to determine the relationship between level of stress and menopause specific quality of life among postmenopausal women. The theoretical framework was based on Sr. Callista Roy's adaptation model. A descriptive cross-sectional design was adopted. A total 300 postmenopausal women from Ambalapuzha block panchayat were selected by multistage cluster sampling. The study was conducted among postmenopausal women meeting the inclusion criteria from selected wards of Ambalapuzha block panchayat (Punnapra south and Purakkad panchats were selected randomly). The tools used for data collection were of socio personal data sheet to assess the socio personal variables, The Perceived Stress Scale to assess the level of stress among postmenopausal women, WHO-QOL BREF scale to assess the general quality of life among postmenopausal women, Modified menopause specific quality of life questionnaire (MENQOL) to assess the menopause specific quality of life among postmenopausal women. The collected data were analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings of the study revealed that the mean age of menopause among postmenopausal were 46.89 years and standard deviation was 1.653. It was found that (45.66%) of postmenopausal women had high perceived stress, 13.6% had moderate stress and 40.67% had low stress. The mean score of level of stress among postmenopausal women was 20.98. It was found that, 43.33% postmenopausal women had good quality of life and 28% had average quality of life and 28.67% had poor quality of life. There was significant moderate negative correlation between stress and general quality of life among postmenopausal women. It was also found that there was moderate negative correlation between stress and menopause specific quality of life. Hence the researcher concluded that strategies for managing stress can help women cope not only with menopause, but with life and also aging in general. Exercising proper diet, not smoking, reduction of stress are also effective ways to make menopause more bearable.

Keywords: Post menopause; Stress; Quality of life

INTRODUCTION

Menopause is a stage in life when a woman stops having her monthly period. It is a normal part of ageing and marks the end of

a women's reproductive years. Menopause typically occurs in a woman at late 40's to early 50s. however, women who have their

ovaries surgically removed undergo “sudden menopause”.¹

Quality of life is an important outcome measure of health care, understanding the impact of menopausal stress on quality of life is a critically important part of the care of symptomatic postmenopausal women. There is considerable lack of awareness about the effects of menopausal symptoms in Indian women.²

Purpose of the present study is to identify the relationship between stress and quality of life among postmenopausal women. This will help to plan and initiate stress preventive strategies, as the stress and poor quality of life will affect the healthy family environment too.

A cross sectional study was conducted in 130 postmenopausal women in selected areas of Chennai to evaluate the stress and its influence on quality of life. The findings of the study revealed that majority of postmenopausal women (70.4%) had very high level of stress and 44% of postmenopausal women had very poor quality of life. There was moderate negative correlation found between stress and quality of life among postmenopausal women.³

Many women find the time around menopause stressful. This may be partially due to hormonal changes and resulting bothersome symptoms such as hot flushes and disrupted sleep. Chronic stress is not good for anyone’s health. It may cause increased blood pressure and heart rate, headaches, gastric reflux, depression/anxiety, and over the long term, an increased risk for heart disease. Some believe that chronic stress may affect the immune system, making the people more susceptible to illness, infections and even cancer. Stress affects not only the health but also the relationships, work performance general sense of wellbeing and quality of life (QOL).⁴

MATERIALS & METHODS

The research design selected for the present study was descriptive cross-sectional design. The research was conducted in

selected areas of Ambalapuzha block panchayat. The population for the study is comprised of postmenopausal women. The sampling technique adopted was multi stage cluster sampling. Sampling carried out based on the inclusion criteria of the researcher with a total sample of 300 postmenopausal women residing in Ambalapuzha block panchayat.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26, IBM, Chicago, USA, was used for data analysis. The results were presented as percentages, mean, and standard deviation. Spearman Rank correlation coefficient was used for assessing the relationship between stress and Quality of life. $p < 0.001$ was considered as statistically significant.

RESULT

Table 1 Frequency distribution and percentage of postmenopausal women based on their level of stress. (n=300)

Level of stress	f	%
Low stress (0-13)	122	40.67
Moderate stress (14-26)	41	13.67
High perceived stress (27-40)	137	45.66

Table 1 reveals that 45.66% of postmenopausal women had high perceived stress, 13.6% had moderate stress and 40.67% had low stress.

Table 2 Percentage distribution of postmenopausal women based on their general quality of life (n=300)

General quality of life	F	%
Good QOL (>96.99)	54	18
Average QOL (46.63-96.99)	213	71
Poor QOL (<46.63)	33	11

Table 2 shows that 71% of postmenopausal women had average quality of life, 11% had poor quality of life and 18% of postmenopausal women had good quality of life.

Table 3 Frequency distribution and percentage of postmenopausal women based on their level of menopause specific quality of life. (n=300)

Quality of life	f	%
Good (up to 73.26)	130	43.33
Average (73.27-146)	84	28
Poor (>146)	86	28.67

Table 3 depicts that 43.33% of postmenopausal women had good quality of life and 28% had average quality of life and 28.67% of postmenopausal women had poor quality of life.

Table 4 Frequency distribution and percentage of menopause specific quality of life of postmenopausal women in each domain. (n=300)

Domain.	f	%
Vasomotor domain		
Good (up to 7.92)	82	27.33
Average (7.93- 15.84)	114	38
Poor (>15.84)	104	34.67
Psychosocial domain		
Good (up to 21.78)	69	23
Average (21.79- 43.56)	106	35.33
Poor (>43.56)	125	41.67
Sexual domain		
Good (up to 7.92)	56	18.67
Average (7.93- 15.84)	93	31
Poor (>15.84)	151	50.33
Physical domain		
Good (up to 33.66)	101	33.67
Average (33.67-67.32)	54	18
Poor (>67.32)	145	48.33

Table 4 illustrates that,34.67% of postmenopausal women had poor quality of life in vasomotor domain and 41.67% in psychosocial domains. It was clear from the table that,50.33% of postmenopausal women had poor quality of life in sexual domain and 48.33% of postmenopausal women had poor quality of life in physical domain.

Relationship between stress and general quality of life among postmenopausal women

Spearman rank correlation coefficient was used to find out the relationship between stress and general quality of life among postmenopausal women. The following null hypothesis was formulated to test at 0.001 level of significance.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between level of stress and general quality of life among postmenopausal women.

Table 5 Table showing ρ value, p value of relationship between stress and general quality of life among postmenopausal women. (n=300)

Variables	ρ	P
Stress level of postmenopausal women	-.614***	0.0001
General quality of life among postmenopausal women		

***significant at 0.001 level

From the table 5, it is clear that, there is moderate negative correlation ($\rho = - .614$) between level of stress and general quality of life among postmenopausal women, which is statistically significant at 0.001 level. Hence the null hypothesis H₀₁ was not accepted and it can be interpreted that there

is significant relationship between stress and general quality of life among postmenopausal women.so as the perceived stress of postmenopausal women increases, the general quality of life becomes poor.

Relationship between stress and menopause specific quality of life among postmenopausal women

This section deals with the relationship between stress and menopause specific quality of life among postmenopausal women. Spearman rank correlation coefficient was used to find out the

relationship between stress and menopause specific quality of life. Null hypothesis was formulated to test at 0.001 level of significance.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between level of stress and menopause specific quality of life among postmenopausal women.

Table 6 Relationship between stress and menopause specific quality of life among postmenopausal women. (n=300)

Variable	ρ	P
Stress level of postmenopausal women	+.611***	0.0001
Quality of life among postmenopausal women		

***significant at 0.001 level

From the table 6, it is clear that, there is moderate positive correlation ($\rho = +.611$) between level of stress and menopause specific quality of life among postmenopausal women, which is statistically significant at 0.001 level. Hence the null hypothesis H₀₁ was not accepted and it can be interpreted that there is significant relationship between stress and menopause specific quality of life. As the perceived stress of postmenopausal women increases, the scores of menopause specific quality of life also increases and the quality of life among postmenopausal women becomes poor

between stress and menopause specific quality of life. The findings were consistent with the cross sectional study conducted at Chennai to evaluate stress and its effect on quality of life among postmenopausal women.¹ The study results showed moderate negative correlation between stress and quality of life among postmenopausal women. The current study findings also supported by another study to assess the impact of menopausal stress, age and other factors on QOL in China. The study results showed gradual decline of quality of life among post-menopausal women with high perceived stress.⁶

DISCUSSION

It was found from the present study that, (45.66%) of postmenopausal women had high perceived stress, 13.6% had moderate stress and 40.67% had low stress. It was revealed from the study that, the mean score of level of stress among postmenopausal women was 20.98. The study result was supported by a cross-sectional study conducted within the premises of an urban health center (UHC) attached to tertiary care center Jawaharlal Institute of Postgraduate Medical Education and Research, Puducherry, during May 2017–June 2017, which revealed 26.0% of Prevalence of high to very high stress among the postmenopausal women.⁵ The findings of the present study showed that, there was significant relationship

CONCLUSION

In the present study, it was found relationship between level of stress and quality of life among postmenopausal women. Menopause is a stressful stage in some women. Strategies for managing stress can help women cope not only with menopause, but with life and also aging in general. Stress in the postmenopausal period has a negative impact on the quality of life among postmenopausal women. Menopause does not require medical treatment since it is a natural biological process. Exercising proper diet, not smoking, reduction of stress are also effective ways to make menopause more bearable and also facilitate in preventing any chronic ailments during postmenopausal period.

Declaration by Authors

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