

Original Research Article

## Pattern of menopausal problems among urban women of Dist. Rohtak, Haryana

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**Abstract:** Menopause is a unique stage of female reproductive cycle and is a transition from reproductive to non-reproductive stage. Menopause, the permanent cessation of menstruation, normally occurs between 45-55 years. It is characterized by major physical, psychological and social changes which may adversely affect the quality of life. The present study was conducted to find out the menopausal problems among women of age group 40-55 years in an urban slum of Rohtak city, Haryana. A descriptive cross sectional study was conducted among 200 women of age group 40-55 years residing in an urban slum of Rohtak city during the period May and June 2012 using an interview schedule. Collected data was analysed using SPSS version 20.0 and described using frequency and percentages. Among the total 200 study participants, 47% were in the age group 40-45 years. 88% were illiterate. 74.5% were housewives. 62.5% were from nuclear families. 98% belonged to Hindu religion. 33% were in the income group 5001-10000. 74.1% were living with husband. 53% were from post-menopausal group. 43.5% were belonging to para 3 group. With regards to menopausal problems, 77% had anxiety followed by 73% having weight gain problem and 70.5% suffering from muscular and joint discomfort. 64.5% had depressive mood and 64.5% were having sexual problems while 62.5% had irritability. 59% had hot flushes. As menopausal health demands priority in Indian scenario due to increase in life expectancy and growing population of menopausal women, huge efforts are required to educate and make these women aware of menopausal symptoms. This will help in early recognition of symptoms, reduction of discomfort and fears and enable them to seek appropriate medical care if necessary.

**Keywords:** Menopause, Urban women

### INTRODUCTION

Menopause is a unique stage of female reproductive cycle, a transition from reproductive to non-reproductive stage. Menopause, the permanent cessation of menstruation, normally occurs between 45-55 years. The mean age at natural menopause is 51 years in industrialized nations, while it is 48 years in poor and non-industrialized nations [1, 2]. With increase in life expectancy, a woman spends more than one-third of her lifespan in menopausal state [3]. The symptoms of menopause as a result of oestrogen deficiency due to primary ovarian failure are reflected not only in the female genital tract but also in the skeletal, cardiovascular and psychological system. Thus, menopause is characterized by major physical, psychological and social changes and may adversely affect quality of life. It is, therefore, considered as an important public health problem.

India has a large population which has already crossed the 1.2 billion mark with 72 million people over 60 years of age and the number of menopausal women being about 43 million. Average age of menopause is 47 years in Indian women with average life expectancy of 71 years. Therefore, Indian women are likely to spend almost 23, 5 years, i.e., one third of their total lives, in menopause [4]. Hence, detection and management of menopause related problems are essential for designing appropriate health care services to ensure a healthy and enjoyable life in women of this age group.

Therefore, the present study was conducted to find out the menopausal problems among women in the age group 40-55 years in an urban slum of Rohtak city, Haryana.

### MATERIAL AND METHODS

The present study was a descriptive cross sectional study conducted among women of 40-55 years of age in urban slum area (Gandhi Camp) of Rohtak city. Prior permission was taken from the ethical committee. The study was carried out during May and June 2012. Non probability purposive sampling technique was used to include 200 women of 40-55 years of age. Face to face interview technique was used for conducting the study. An interview schedule was used for data collection which consisted of questions on socio-demographic data and perimenopausal problems among women. The content validity of the tool was done by the research committee members of Pt B D Sharma PGIMS, Rohtak. Before the conduct of the final study, a pilot study was conducted among 20 women from 24th April to 2nd May 2012 after taking permission from Municipal councillor of the concerned area. The pilot study showed that 40% (8) had mild, 20% (4) had moderate and 5% (1) had severe peri menopausal problems. On the basis of success of pilot study, the final study was conducted in the defined setting. After checking for completeness and consistency, the data was analysed. Frequency and Percentages were used to describe the sample characteristics. Chi square test was used to compare the association between menopausal and selected variables.

## RESULTS

The study population consisted of 200 women. Table 1 shows the distribution of study participants according to various socio-demographic variables.

As seen from Table 1, out of the total study participants around 47% (94) of the women belonged to the age group of 40-45 years, followed by 35% (70) between 46-50 years and 18% (36) between 51-55 years. Majority 88% (176) of the study participants were literate, 9% (18) were illiterate and 3% (6) had professional education. 74.5% (149) of study

participants were housewives, 13% (26) were unskilled workers, 6.5% (13) were engaged in self-employment, 5% (10) and 1% (2) were private and government employees respectively. Regarding type of family, majority 62.5% (125) of the study participants belonged to nuclear family while 37.5% (75) belonged to joint family. Majority 98% (196) of the study participants were Hindu by religion and remaining 2% (4) were from Sikh community. When family income was considered 33% (66) of the study participants had family income between Rs 5001 – 10000 followed by 30% (60) with family income Rs 5000 and below and 19% (38) between Rs 10001 – 15000, 9% (18) between Rs 15001 – 20000 and 9% (18) with income Rs 20000 and above. Majority 74.5% (149) were living with their husband, 23.5% (47) were widow, 1% (2) was separated and 1% (2) was not living with their husband. 53% (106) of the study participants belonged to postmenopausal group and remaining 47% (94) belonged to perimenopausal group. Majority 43.5% (87) of the study participants were para 3, 28% (56) were para 2, 14% (28) were para 4 and 6.5% (13), 4.5% (9) and 3.5% (7) were para 1, nullipara and para 5 respectively.

As seen from table 2, which shows the distribution of study participants according to presence of menopausal problems, 77.5%(155) had anxiety, 73%(146) had weight gain, 70.5%(141) were suffering from joint and muscular discomfort, 64.5%(129) had depressive mood, 64.5%(129) had sexual problems, 62.5%(125) had irritability, 59%(118) were suffering from hot flushes, 55.5%(111) had physical and mental exhaustion, 44%(88) of study participants were suffering from sleep disturbances, 35.5%(71) had bladder problems, 23.5%(47) had inferiority feelings, 22.5%(45) had dryness of vagina, 19.5%(39) were having suspiciousness.

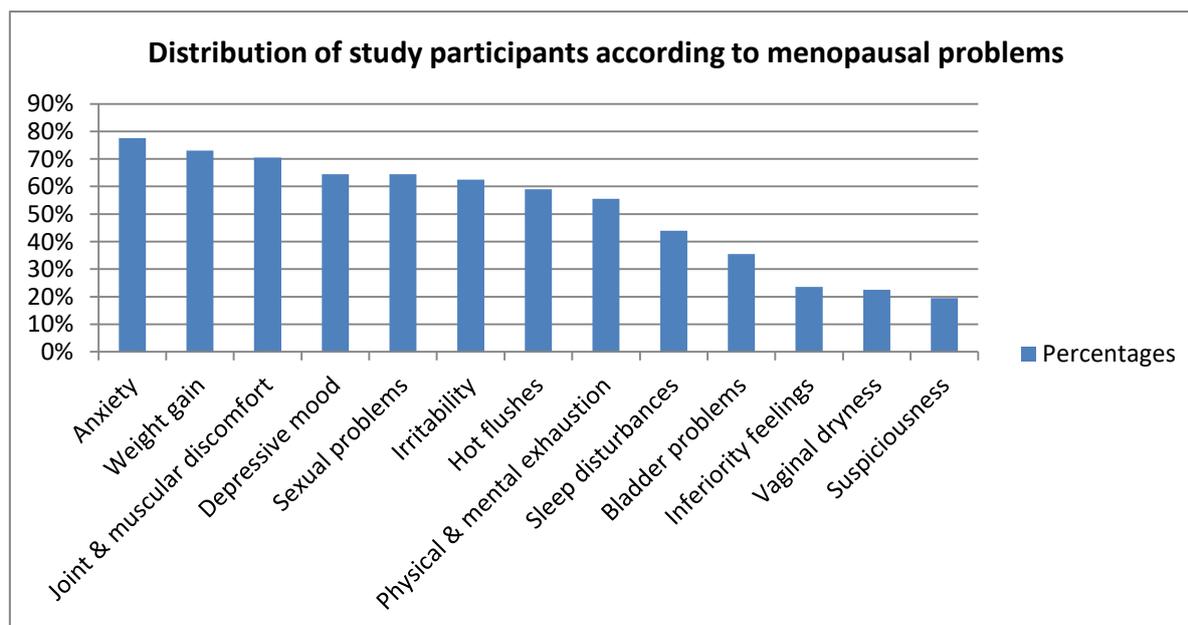
**Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of study participants**

S. No	Socio-demographic variable	Number	Percentage
1	<b>Age (in years)</b>		
	40-45	94	47
	46-50	70	35
	51-55	36	18
2	<b>Education status</b>		
	Illiterate	18	9
	Literate	176	88
	Professional	6	3
3	<b>Occupation</b>		
	Govt Employee	2	1
	Private Employee	10	5
	Self-employed	13	6.5
	Unskilled worker	26	13
	House wife	149	74.5
4	<b>Type of family</b>		
	Nuclear	125	62.5
	Joint	75	37.5
5	<b>Religion</b>		
	Hindu	196	98
	Sikh	4	2
6	<b>Monthly family income (in Rupees)</b>		
	5000 and below	60	30
	5001-10000	66	33
	10001-15000	38	19
	15001-20000	18	9
	20001 and above	18	9
7	<b>Marital status</b>		
	Living with husband	149	74.5
	Not living with husband	2	1
	Separated	2	1
	Widow	47	23.5
8	<b>Menopausal status</b>		
	Perimenopausal	94	47
	Post-menopausal	106	53
9	<b>Parity</b>		
	0	9	4.5
	1	13	6.5
	2	56	28
	3	87	43.5
	4	28	14
	5	7	3.5

**Table 2: Distribution of study participants according to menopausal problems**

S. No	Menopausal problems	Number	Percentage
1	Hot flushes	118	59
2	Sleep problem	88	44
3	Depressive mood	129	64.5
4	Irritability	125	62.5
5	Anxiety	155	77.5
6	Physical and mental exhaustion	111	55.5
7	Sexual problems	129	64.5
8	Bladder problems	71	35.5
9	Dryness of vagina	45	22.5
10	Joint and muscular discomfort	141	70.5
11	Inferiority feelings	47	23.5
12	Suspiciousness	39	19.5
13	Weight gain	146	73

Multiple responses.



**Fig-1: Distribution of study participants according to menopausal problems**

There was no significant relationship between prevalence of menopausal problems and the selected variables ( $p < 0.05$ ).

### DISCUSSION

In the present study, 47% of the study participants were in the age group 40-45 years followed by 35% between 46-50 years and 18% between 51-55 years. This was similar to the study conducted by Satpathy M [5], where majority (39%) were in the age group 40-45 years, whereas, in the study conducted by

Alakananda *et al.*; [6] majority of the study participants were in the age group 45-50 years.

In present study, majority (88%) of the study participants were literate. This was similar to the study conducted by Satpathy M [5], where 92% were literate and Alakananda *et al.*; [6], where 74% were literate. Similar results were seen in the study conducted by Mahajan N *et al.*; [7] where 68% were literate and Aarti K [8] study, where 67% were educated up to under graduation. It was also seen in present study that 74.5%

were housewives which is similar to the Satpathy M [5] study, where housewives comprised of 83% and Aarti K [8] study, where housewives were 67%. In present study, 62.5% of the study participants belonged to nuclear families and the rest belonging to joint families. This was again comparable with the Aarti K [8] study, where 75% of the study participants belonged to nuclear families. With regard to religion, 98% of study participants in present study belonged to Hindu religion which is similar to the

Alakananda *et al.*; [6] study, where 82.5% were Hindus. Regarding monthly family income of the study participants, 33% were in the income group Rs. 5001-10000 followed by 30% with income below Rs. 5000 i.e., total 63% had income less than Rs. 10000 in present study. This was comparable to the study by Alakananda *et al.*; [6] where 76% had income less than Rs. 10000. In the present study, 74.1% of the study participants were married and living with husband followed by 23.5% being widows. Studies conducted by other researchers showed similar results. Mahajan *et al.*; [7] showed that majority (84%) of study subjects were married while Aarti K [8] showed that 89.8% were married. The studies conducted by Satpathy M [5] and Alakananda *et al.*; [6] also showed that 97% and 80.5% study subjects were married respectively. Coming to the menopausal status, in the present study, 53% of the study participants were from post-menopausal group. This was comparable to the study conducted by Aarti K [8], where 59.6% belonged to post-menopausal group. In the present study, regarding parity, 43.5% of the study participants belonged to para 3 while 28% were para 2. 14%, 6.5%, 4.5% and 3.5% belonged to para 4, 1, nullipara and para 5 respectively.

The present study also revealed the menopausal problems among the study participants, where 77% had anxiety followed by 73% having weight gain problem and 70.5% suffering from muscular and joint discomfort. Equal proportion (64.5%) of females had depressive mood and sexual problems. The other problems included irritability (62.5%) and hot flushes (59%). This was contradictory in comparison to the study conducted by Satpathy M [5], where hot flushes was experienced by majority (77%) of the study participants followed by weight gain(69%), joint pain (60%), forgetfulness (59%), headache(43%), anxiety, irritability and sleep problem in equal proportion (42%), vaginal dryness(34%) and cold hand/feet (27%), In a similar study conducted by Aarti K [8], the most frequently reported symptoms were irritability (48%), nervousness (43.08%), hot flushes (38.2%), and aching joint and muscle discomfort (35.8%). Also in the study

conducted by Alakananda *et al.*; [6] the common symptoms of menopause were muscle and joint pain (63%), fatigue (55.5%), hot flush (52.5%), insomnia (52%) and night sweat (48.5%). The variations in the menopausal problems among the study participants and in the above mentioned studies may be due to the fact that present study included the females in relatively younger age group compared to other studies by Aarti & Satpathy as with more years passed after menopause, women become adapted to the symptoms.

## CONCLUSION

This study revealed the various menopausal problems experienced by perimenopausal women. As menopausal health demands priority in Indian scenario due to increase in life expectancy and growing population of menopausal women, huge efforts are required to educate and make these women aware of menopausal symptoms. This will help in early recognition of symptoms, reduction of discomfort and fears. It will also enable them to seek appropriate medical care if necessary. The doctors & paramedical staff working in health centres need to be sensitised about perimenopausal problems and their management so that the services are available to the females in their localities.

## LIMITATIONS

This study was restricted to only females of Gandhi camp area of Rohtak, Haryana. The data was collected through purposive sampling.

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