

A Study on Social Support and Psychological Well-Being among Post-Menopausal Working and Non-Working Women

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Abstract: Menopause is a sign of a transition into the second half of adult life – a time of role changes, greater independence, and personal growth. How a woman views menopause may depend on the value she places on being young and attractive, her attitudes toward women’s roles, and her own circumstances.

Aim: To compare and determine the relationship between social support and psychological well-being among working and non-working post-menopausal woman.

Methods: The population included in this study was working and non-working Post-Menopausal Women. Purposive Sampling method was used. Tools used in this study was Duke-UNC Functional Social Support Questionnaire (FSSQ) developed by Broadhead et al., (1988) and Psychological General Well-Being Index (PGWBI) was developed by Chassany, O., (2004). The data was subjected to statistical analysis – t-test and correlation.

Results: The findings of this study reveal that there is a statistically significant relationship between social support and psychological well-being among post-menopausal women. But there was no significant difference in the level of working and non-working post-menopausal women’s social support and psychological well-being.

Conclusion: The weaker correlation between social support and psychological well-being shows if social support is increases, we cannot deduce that it will also improves the psychological well-being of post-menopausal women. Hence, the major life style changes of working and non-working women, i.e., post-menopause could not affect the level of social support and psychological well-being of women.

Keywords: Post-Menopause, Social Support, Psychological Well-Being.

I. INTRODUCTION

Menopause is a sign of a transition into the second half of adult life – a time of role changes, greater independence, and personal growth. How a woman views menopause may depend on the value she places on being young and attractive, her attitudes toward women’s roles, and her own circumstances. A childless woman may see menopause as closing off the possibility of motherhood; a woman who has had and raised children may see it as an opportunity for greater sexual freedom and enjoyment (Avis, 1999).

Definition of Post-Menopause:

World Health Organization (WHO) defined natural menopause as the “permanent cessation of menstruation resulting from the loss of ovarian follicular activity”. Post-menopause is the period of time after a woman has experienced 12 consecutive months without menstruation.

Definition of Social Support:

Social support is defined as “verbal and nonverbal communication between recipients and providers that reduces uncertainty about the situation, the self, the other, or the relationship, and functions to enhance a perception of personal control in one’s life experience” (Albrecht & Adelman, 1987).

Definition of Psychological Well-Being:

Well-being is a dynamic concept that includes subjective, social, and psychological dimensions as well as health-related behaviors. Psychological well-being consists of positive relationships with others, personal mastery, autonomy, a feeling of purpose and meaning in life, and personal growth and development (Ryff, C. D. 1989).

Social Support and Psychological Well-Being:

Some researchers indicate that there exists a relationship between social support, psychological well-being and post-menopause. Study conducted on the topic, “The relationship between social support and life satisfaction for people with long-term mental illness” shows that different sources of social support have different effects on individual’s life satisfaction. Perceived support from friends lead to a better overall life satisfaction, but perceived family support was not related to individuals overall life satisfaction (Young, 2006). A study determined that a social support is a good predictor of health-promoting lifestyles of rural women (Adams, M. H., 2000).

Srivastava, S., & Tanwar, D. K. (2011) aimed to explore “The difference between stress and wellbeing of menopausal and post-menopausal working and non-working women”. The results indicate that overall there is no significant difference between menopausal and post-menopausal women on stress and well-being. Similarly, there is no significant difference between post-menopausal working and non-working women on stress and well-being but there is a significant difference between menopausal working and non-working women on stress and well-being.

Need of the study:

Social support and Psychological well being enhances the quality of life and provides a buffer against adverse life events.

- Menopause is a universal biological event during which major physical and psychological changes take place in women, along with changes in their social roles and personal growth.
- There are very few studies concerning these three variables social support, psychological well-being and post-menopause.
- The finding of this study will helps to benefit of society considering that social support plays an important role in maintaining good wellbeing.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Aim of the study:

The aim of the study was to compare and determine the relationship between social support and psychological well-being among working and non-working women who have attained menopause.

Objective of the study:

To compare the level of social support and its dimensions among working and non-working post-menopausal women.

- To compare the level of psychological well-being and its dimensions among working and non-working post-menopausal women.
- To examine whether there is relationship between social support and psychological well-being among working and non-working post-menopausal women.

Hypothesis:

There will be no significant difference in the level of social support and its dimensions among working and non-working post-menopausal women.

- There will be no significant difference in the level of psychological well-being and its dimensions among working and non-working post-menopausal women.
- There will be no significant relationship between social support and psychological well-being among post-menopausal women.

Sample:

The sample consists of 100 women, who attained menopause with the proportion of 50 working women and 50 non-working women. The sampling method chosen for this study is the non-probability sampling method of purposive sampling.

Inclusion Criteria:

- Only women who attained menopause were included in the study.
- Both working and non-working women were included.
- Women of all age group who attained menopause.
- Respondents who are comfortable with the English language.
- Those who have willingness to participate.

Exclusion Criteria:

- Women who haven't attain menopause.
- Individual with any physical deformities or illness.
- Individuals with chronic diseases were eliminated.
- Respondents who are not comfortable with the English language.
- Those who are unwilling to participate.

Tools used:**i) Duke-UNC Functional Social Support Questionnaire (FSSQ)**

The scale was developed by Broadhead et al., (1988). The social support is measured as 2 dimensions - confidant support and affective support. Initially 14 questions were proposed, with 8 retained in the final form. The reliability was found to be 0.66.

ii) Psychological General Well-Being Index (PGWBI)

The scale was developed by Chassany, O., (2004), for the evaluation of perceived well-being and distress. The 22 item instrument includes six dimensions: Anxiety, Depressed Mood, Positive Well-being, Self-Control, General Health and Vitality. The internal consistency of American PGWBI was high, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging between 0.90 and 0.94.

Procedure for data collection:

The questionnaire method of data collection was employed to complete the survey. At first, the samples were asked to fill the personal and socio-demographic information. Then, the questionnaire was handed over to the individual and the instructions were given. And then, the test was conducted. The collected responses were scored based on the scoring key.

Statistical Analysis:

The data was subjected to statistical analysis – t-test and correlation. Analysis of data was done using Microsoft Office Excel 2007 and SPSS.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This presents the statistical analysis of the data obtained for this investigation and interpretation thereof. The results of this analysis are shown in different tables which are as follows.

TABLE I: SHOWING THE FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE FOR SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Socio-demographic variables	Categories	Frequency	%
Geographical area	Rural	69	69%
	Urban	31	31%
Marital status	Married	85	85%
	Unmarried	4	4%
	Divorced	3	3%
	Widow	8	8%
Working status	Working	50	50%
	Non-working	50	50%

Table I shows the frequency and percentage of socio-demographic variables. Of the group, only women who attained menopause are taken for the study.

TABLE II: SHOWING THE MEAN, SD AND t-SCORE FOR SOCIAL SUPPORT QUESTIONNAIRE

Variables	N		Mean		SD		t-Value
	W	NW	W	NW	W	NW	
Social support	50	50	32.14	31.92	5.17	5.34	.21 ^{NS}
Dimensions of Social Support							
Confidant Support	50	50	19.8	19.44	3.97	4.03	.45 ^{NS}
Affective Support	50	50	12.34	12.28	2.15	2.1	.14 ^{NS}

W – Working; NW – Non-Working; ^{NS} – Not Significant at .05 level;

Table II shows that, there is no significant difference in the levels of social support between working and non-working post-menopausal women. Also, there is no significant difference in the levels of confidant support and affective support (dimension of social support) between working and non-working post-menopausal women. This may be because the present study has been limited only to post-menopausal women of a particular city.

TABLE III: SHOWING THE MEAN, SD AND t-SCORE FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING INDEX

Variables	N		Mean		SD		t-Value
	W	NW	W	NW	W	NW	
Psychological Well-Being	50	50	63.36	59.7	10.83	11.64	1.63 ^{NS}
Dimensions of Psychological Well-Being Index							
Anxiety	50	50	13.22	12.76	3.06	3.45	.704 ^{NS}
Depressed Mood	50	50	9.5	7.58	2.76	3.5	3.04 ^{NS}
Positive Well-Being	50	50	10.9	10.1	3.45	3.25	1.19 ^{NS}
Self-Control	50	50	9.14	9.6	2.47	2.56	.91 ^{NS}
General Health	50	50	8.94	8.4	2.59	2.45	1.06 ^{NS}
Vitality	50	50	11.66	11.26	3.2	2.56	.68 ^{NS}

W – Working; NW – Non-Working; ^{NS} – Not Significant at .05 level;

Table III shows that Hence, there is no significant difference in the levels of psychological well-being between working and non-working post-menopausal women. Also, there is no significant difference in the levels of anxiety, depressed mood, positive well-being, self-control, general health and vitality (dimension of psychological well-being) between working and non-working post-menopausal women. This may be because working women plays the dual role of family responsibility and workplace responsibility; also she could contribute to the family economically as well. And non-working women is better as she could spend more time in nurturing. Both working and non-working women are faced with different challenges in life as well.

TABLE IV: SHOWING THE CORRELATION BETWEEN SOCIAL SUPPORT AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

Variables	N	r-Value
Social support	100	.221*
Psychological well-being		

* - Correlation is significant at the .05 level

Table IV shows the correlation between social support and psychological well-being in post-menopausal women. Pearson correlation coefficient was performed to describe the relationship between the two variables. The level of statistical significance (p-value) of the correlation coefficient is .221, which means that there is a statistically significant relationship between social support and psychological well-being. Although, the relationship is statistically significant, the r-value indicated a weak correlation between these two variables.

Findings of the study:

- The finding of this study reveals that there was no significant difference in the levels of social support and psychological well-being among post-menopausal women.
- There is a statistically significant relationship between social support and psychological well-being in post-menopausal women. But, the r-value indicated a weak correlation between these two variables. Thus, it is indicating that if a social support of post-menopausal women is increases, we cannot deduce with much certainty that it will also improves the psychological well-being of a post-menopausal women.

IV. CONCLUSION

The study implies that may it be working or non-working women, they do not differ much. Women are naturally subjected to adjustment during life style changes. By increasing the social support, it reduced the immune suppression and thus promoting health and well-being (Arnetz et al., 1987)

The study concluded that, both working and non-working women are faced with different challenges in life as well. Working women can struggle finding time to care for children, husband, career, and home while non-working women may find it hard to find time for them. So, here, the major life style changes of women, i.e., post-menopause could not affect the psychological well-being of women.

Suggestions for further studies:

The further findings can also be done based on considering the other factors that could affect the post-menopause women in terms of health issues, size of family, geographical area, age of attaining menopause, marital status, etc.

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