

The Duel of Women on Menopausal Dilemmas

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Abstract: *This study was focused on studying the impacts of menopausal dilemmas among women. It investigated areas (psychological, social, and emotional) in which changes occur affecting them in so many ways. Moreover, coping mechanisms are included in the study. Of the 50 respondents, in which majority of them were from 51 years old and above, results showed that the impacts were: Psychologically, they easily get tired with their works and daily responsibilities; quick to quit; fast to feel annoyed and irritated; always feel so warm; easily get depressed; and often experience sleeping disorder. Emotionally, respondents easily feel sad. They feel so burdened with so many things even they do not have any problem. Socially, respondents lack the initiative and enthusiasm in attending social gatherings such as birthdays, weddings, among others. Respondents' coping mechanisms include participating in activities that may make them feel better such as exercising, watching movies and sports games, praying and attending church services, and other enjoyable social activities.*

Keywords: menopause, menopausal dilemmas, psychological impacts, emotional impacts, social impacts, syndrome, hot flashes, mood swing, coping mechanisms, depression

1. Introduction

Menopause is the period in life when menstruation stops naturally. Women in their menopausal age have problems they encounter. It affects them psychologically. Mood swings affect about 70% of women, who are approaching menopause. Mood swings usually last for the whole menopause transition (until the mid 50's), but some women may experience them for the rest of their life. Menopause is not an illness, but a natural process in a woman's body. The symptoms of menopause are just indicators of changes between the hormones estrogen, testosterone and progesterone. These changes result in a hormonal imbalance in a woman's body and causes mood swings (Charlstone, 2002).

Mood swings (Gan, 2001) can also severely affect a woman's life: snapping at the spouse or feeling just too blue to make supper can be enough to create problems in any relationship. Add to that the anxiety of whether the boss liked their project results, and they can quickly become tired enough to just want to give up and sleep through the rest of their life.

Even while a woman is in her per menopause years, her hormones may fluctuate drastically. Therefore, the body does not have enough support to maintain its natural balance during that time. A woman's mood swings may seem more up and down during menopause than she has ever experienced before in her life. It is important to understand that as a woman's body changes, symptoms of menopause and mood swings go hand-in-hand (Evangelista, 2003).

These struggles of women must be studied systematically, for women to be assisted with all they are going through. Women are left alone and desolate in fighting and coping with such inevitable situation. Whole members of the family, husband and children, must be educated on this matter so

that they can provide support and assistance to his wife or to their mother. Thus, this study is being proposed.

2. Methodology

Research Model

The study used descriptive type of research. This covered women in their menopausal stage from Cabanatuan City as respondents. Data were collected, categorized and analyzed in accordance with the objectives of the study.

A total Of 50 menopausal women served as respondents in the study.

Data Collection Tools

A survey questionnaire was devised covering the *psychological, emotional, and social dilemmas* of the respondents they go through. Each item has 3 – 6 items to elucidate them and deepen our understanding about these dilemmas. A Likert Scale of 1 – 4 was used with the following equivalent verbal descriptors:

Verbal Description

Value	Class Intervals	Verbal Description
4	4.50 – 3.50	Strongly Agree
3	3.49 – 2.50	Agree
2	2.49 – 1.50	Moderately Agree
1	1.49 – below	Disagree

In addition, the study also covered the coping strategies that the respondents had developed and adapted in combating the menopausal dilemma.

Data Analysis

In treating the data on profile variables, frequency, and percentage were used. The weighted mean and average weighted were used in finding out the effects of menopause to women as well as their coping mechanisms.

3. Results and Discussion

Table 1 presents the age of the respondents.

Table 1: Respondents' age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
40 and below	3	6
41-45	5	10
46-50	10	20
51 and above	32	64

Results show that majority of the respondents are from 51 and above years old with a frequency of 32 or equivalent to 64%. The second-high age group of respondents is from 45 – 50 years old with frequency of 10 or percentage equivalent of 20%. The third and fourth groups with ages 41 – 45 and 40 and below have registered frequencies of 5 (10%) and 3 (6%) respectively.

This figure shows that ages 51 and above are the ages that most women are facing or experiencing menopausal period.

Table 2 exhibits the different occupations of the respondents in the study.

Table 2: Respondents' occupation

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Plain house wife	35	70
Employee	10	20
Self Employed	5	10

The figure above shows that most of the respondents are plain house wife with a frequency of 35 (70%). This is followed by the group of employees with a frequency of 10 (20%) and self – employed with a frequency of 5 (10%).

Table 3 displays the age of the respondents when they started to have menopausal experience.

Table 3: Respondents' age when had menopausal experience

Age when they had menopause experience	Frequency	Percentage
40-45 years old	5	10
46-50 years old	20	40
51 and above years old	25	50

The table above exhibits that most respondents experienced menopause when they are 51 and above years with a frequency of 25 (50%), followed by 46 – 50 years old with frequency of 20 (40%), and lastly 40 – 45 years old with frequency of 5 (10%).

Result shows that older women specifically starting from 51 – and above years old are the ages when menopause strikes most women. However, result shows that menopausal period may begin to be experienced by women at age 40 years old.

Table 4 presents the results on the psychological impact of menopausal dilemmas among the respondents.

Table 4: Psychological impact of menopausal syndrome among respondents

Psychological Impact	Mean
1. I easily feel irritated especially with noisy children	2.5
2. My patience is so short. I cannot accept little mistakes	2.46
3. I always feel that the world is against me. I feel nobody needs me or miss me...	2.14
4. I am easily get tired with my work, with my responsibility that I like to quit	3.6
5. I always feel hot that makes me irritable	3.5
6. I always feel depressed and cannot sleep even I know I have no problem.	3.5
Total Weighted Mean	2.95

Result shows the degree of psychological impact of menopausal syndrome among the respondents. The total weighted mean of 2.95 shows that respondents agree of the psychological impact of menopausal symptoms that they are struggling about whenever these are attacking them. Physical tiredness, hot flashes, and depression were the most common experiences of the respondents.

Table 5 portrays the degree of emotional turmoil that respondents experienced in relation to their menopausal symptoms.

Table 5: Emotional impact of menopausal syndrome among respondents

Emotional Impact	Mean
1. I easily feel sad. I am happy but after a while I feel heavy.	4
2. I easily get angry. I am affected with little mistakes.	3.16
3. I feel like I miss everybody even I see them always.	3.28
Total Weighted Mean	3.48

Result displays the erratic emotional state of the respondents experiencing these menopausal symptoms. The total mean of 3.48 proves that respondents agree that these emotional states typify the emotional turbulence that they are going through of which are beyond their control for these are naturally manifesting in their system. Item number one (1) strongly proves that mood swing is a common experience that occurs among menopausal women.

Table 6 exhibits the degree of social dilemma that respondents experienced during their menopausal stage.

Table 6: Social impact of menopausal syndrome among the respondents

Social Impact	Mean
1. I easily get bored being with people.	3
2. I lack enthusiasm attending social gatherings	3.7
3. I always feel that people are talking about me; thus, I avoid being with others.	3.1
Total Weighted Mean	3.26

The total weighted mean of 3.26 tells that respondents agree that social withdrawal is occurring among menopausal women. Self – isolation is a common form of social withdrawal due to lack of enthusiasm being with others during social gatherings as the prime reason.

Table 7 shows the coping system that the respondents adopt during their menopausal stage.

Table 7: Coping mechanisms of against menopausal syndrome of the respondents

Emotional Impact	Mean
1. I break large tasks into small ones then set priorities...	2.72
2. I participate in social activities that make me feel better...	3.56
3. I focus my energy and set aside my emotions...	2.7
4. I eat right and healthy foods...	3.16
5. I adopt natural remedies to combat menopausal symptoms such exercise, yoga....	2.68
6. I always pray for strength and enlightenment...	3.8
Total Weighted Mean	3.10

The weighted mean of **3.10** shows that respondents clearly **agree** that they need to combat and face squarely the different symptoms of being menopause. This admission helps them to handle well their prevailing situation.

Respondents strongly agree that being with God in prayer and being with others through social activities help them extra – ordinarily in combating the syndrome and followed by guarding their health and diet through eating healthy foods.

4. Conclusion and Recommendation

Based on the results of the study, ages 40 and above years old constitute the ages of the respondents. But majority of the respondents came from ages 46 and above years old.

Respondents in the study are mostly plain house wife. Their whole time and energy are focused on the family followed by several numbers of employees working in public and private institutions.

The most vulnerable ages of menopausal syndrome start from 46 and above years old constituting the 90% of the population sample.

The respondents agree that they are psychologically, emotionally, and socially experiencing menopausal dilemmas contributing to imbalance on their way of living at the sunset of their lives.

Thus, the following points are recommended:

- 1) More respondents should be involved in study. Separate study should be done among employee (still working at the moment), among retirees, and also among purely housewife menopausal women for greater understanding about this stage of life among women.
- 2) Further study should be conducted by incorporating other variables that may influence the coping strategies of the respondents such as economic status, marital status, among others. Include also in the study awareness of family members about the struggles of women on menopausal dilemmas.
- 3) Support system that the family members, community, and the institution they belong can offer should be available

to alleviate the undeniable impact of menopausal dilemmas.

- 4) Self – help programs be made readily available to menopausal women in accordance with their capability, interests, and resources.
- 5) Educating women as well as the community about these struggles of women helps women understand themselves as well as everybody to be more sensitive about their needs as they face the battle of menopausal dilemmas.

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