

ROLE OF EDUCATION ON AWARENESS ABOUT MENOPAUSE AMONG URBAN WOMEN OF DEHRADUN

Monika Sharma^{1*}, Preeti Kothiyal²

¹Department of Clinical Pharmacy, Division of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Shri Guru Ram Rai Institute of Technology and Science, Patel Nagar, Dehradun- 248001(U.K)

²Department of Pharmacology, Principal and head of the Department, Division of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Shri Guru Ram Rai Institute of Technology and Science, Patel Nagar, Dehradun- 248001(U.K)

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***Correspondence for**

Author:

Monika Sharma

Department of Clinical
Pharmacy, Division of
Pharmaceutical Sciences,
Shri Guru Ram Rai Institute
of Technology and Science,
Patel Nagar, Dehradun-U.K)

monika.sharma07@rediffmail.com

ABSTRACT

Objectives: To determine the role of education on awareness level about menopause, to find out the common myth and false believes in this regards among urban women of Dehradun.

Methodology: A structured questionnaire was prepared which includes the questions related to social demographics, educational status, awareness level and common sources of information for participants. Total 123 menopausal women between age group 45-65 actively participated in this study. All women were categorized as excellent, moderate and poor on the basis of their level of awareness & knowledge towards menopause and correlated with the educational status of the participants.

Result: The study revealed that 94(76.42%) women had some form of formal education. Majority of women 58(47%) were in moderate and minimum 29 (23.6%) women were in the poor category. All 36

(29.3%) of women who had excellent level of awareness were highly educated mostly post graduated level. Majority of urban menopausal women believe that women should stop having sexual activities after menopause 32.4% and 10.3% women thought that menopause was a disease.

Conclusion: The data suggests that there is a direct correlation between educational status and level of awareness about menopause. Uneducated women are highly unaware about menopause and associated problem and risks. There is an immediate need to spread

awareness about menopausal health risk amongst all strata of society with special emphasis on poor literate women.

Keywords: Education, awareness, menopause.

INTRODUCTION

Menopause is the permanent cessation of menstruation resulting from the loss of follicular activity of the ovaries. It is a stage when the menstrual cycle stops for longer than 12 months and there is a drop in the levels of estrogen and progesterone, the two most important hormones in the female body ^[1]. The onset of this physiological development not only marks the end of women's reproductive function but also introduces them to a new phase of life. Menopause is accompanied by biologic and psychological changes that affect a woman's health and sense of well-being. This stage in a woman's life is an important factor that can influence health maintenance and prevent serious illness, chronic conditions and age-related disabilities ^[2]. Menopause as a part of cycle of reproductive aging is universal but how women experience differ by ethnicity, culture and socioeconomic status ^[3]. Numerous factors including menopausal status, social background education and physical and emotional health may influence women's knowledge and beliefs about menopause ^[4]. Health promoting behaviour like avoid smoking, maintaining normal weight, participating in regular physical activity, and having regular medical screening tests have been shown to increase both quality of life and longevity^[5]. Most of the studies done in this area were in North America, Europe and Australia to determine women's knowledge and attitude that totally differ from community to another ^[6]. It appears from the aforementioned studies that women have a complex phase of middle age that varies across ethnic and sociocultural groups. From India, some scattered studies have focused on estimating age at menopause and menopausal symptoms, but there has been no published literature on this topic from eastern India. Few Indian studies have attempted to determine the rural-urban difference in menopausal age and symptoms ^[7]. Thus, the present study sought to determine the role of education on the awareness level and to find out the common myth, doubt and false believes about menopause among urban women of Dehradun.

METHODOLOGY

The survey carried out prospectively over a period of two months in the department of clinical pharmacy after the approval of institutional ethic committee. The data was collected from different urban areas of Dehradun city. A structured questionnaire was prepared by the

researcher to collect data on Sociodemographic variables (age, educational status, economic status and employment status) and awareness about the menopausal symptoms, health risk, positive and negative concerns, myth and false believe about menopause, hormone replacement therapy and common sources of information. All natural menopausal women between age group 45-65 were included in the study which was further subdivided into the age groups of 45-50, 51-55, 56-60, and 61-65. Those women having history of drug induce menopause, early menopause, artificial menopause and those who are mentally incapable to express their views was not included in the study. The level of awareness & knowledge among women was graded as excellent, moderate and poor based on the interview conducted. Relevant data about their Level of awareness, social demographics, educational status and source of information were further evaluated and correlated.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Total of 123 menopausal women actively participated in this study. Table.1 describe their Sociodemographic characteristics maximum 44(35.8%) of women belong to 45-50 year of age group and minimum 24(19.5%) belongs to 61-65 years of age group. The study revealed that 94(76.42%) of women had some form of formal education among which 20(16.26%) were primary educated, 21(17.07%) high school, 12(9.75%) intermediate, 21(17.07%) graduate, 20(16.26%) post-graduate (Fig1). The level of awareness & knowledge among women was graded as excellent, moderate and poor based on the interview conducted. Majority of women 58(47%) were in moderate and minimum 29 (23.6%) women were in the poor category. All 36 (29.3%) of women who had excellent level of awareness about menopause by definition, proper sign and symptoms, physical and psychological changes and all aspect of hormone replacement therapy were highly educated mostly post graduated level (Table 3). While as much as 16(55.2%) women were uneducated out of 29(23.57%) who had very little knowledge and awareness. Table 2; indicate that health care providers were primary source of information 67(54.5%). Other common source of information among women were family and friends 15(12%), magazine (2.4%), television 7(5.7%), internet 10(8.1%).

A part from the level of awareness further the study was also attempt to find out the myth, doubts and false believes which usually change the state of mind during the menopausal transition and the data suggests that 68(55.3%) having some myth, doubt and false believe among which 27(39.7%) were uneducated, 16(23.5%) were high school, 9(13.8%) primary

educated and 8(11.7%) were graduate (Table 4). Majority of urban menopausal women believe that women should stop having sexual activities after menopause 22(32.4%), 14(20.6%) women believe that hormone replacement therapy may cause more side-effects and minimum 7(10.3%) women thought that menopause was a disease not a natural part of aging among which all are uneducated (Table 5).

Table 1: Sociodemographic characteristics of participants

Variables	Number (N)= 123	Percentage (%)
Age		
45-50	44	35.8
51-55	28	22.7
56-60	27	22
61-65	24	19.5
Culture background		
Garhwali	39	31.7
Kumauni	20	16.2
Jaunsari	02	1.62
Bhotia	00	00
Plains	62	50.4
Economic Status		
High	36	29
Moderate	70	57
Low	17	14
Employment status		
Employed	09	7.3
housewife	114	92.7
Diet		
Vegetarian	42	34.15
Non- Vegetarian	81	65.85

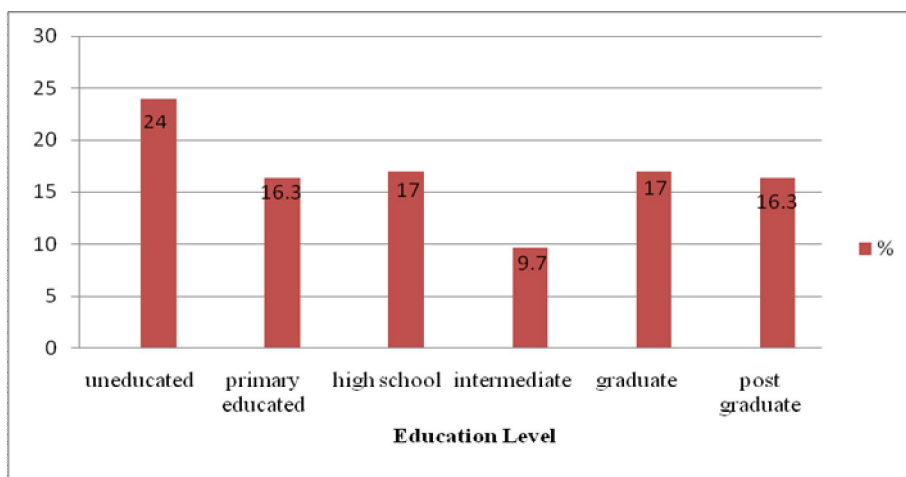


Fig.1: Distribution of women according to their educational status.

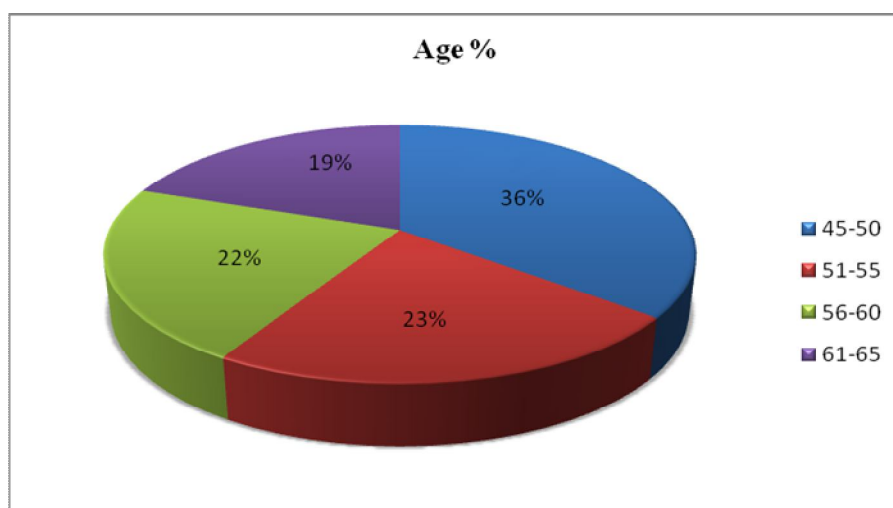


Fig.2: Distribution of women according to their age group

Table 2: Sources of information and awareness about menopause

S. No	Sources of Information	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
1.	Health care provider	67	54.5
2.	Family & friends	15	12
3.	Television	07	5.7
4.	Internet	10	8.1
5.	Magazine	03	2.4
6.	HCP/ family & friends	12	9.7
7.	Internet/magazine	02	1.6
8.	HCP/ internet/magazine	07	5.7

Table 3: Comparison of Education with the level of Awareness and knowledge

S. No	Educational Status	Level of Awareness		
		Excellent (%)	Moderate (%)	Poor (%)
1.	Uneducated	8.3	17.24	55.2
2.	Primary	00	31	6.9
3.	High-school	5.5	32.8	00
4.	Intermediate	11.11	3.45	20.7
5.	Graduate	27.8	12.1	13.8
6.	Post-graduate	47.2	3.45	3.4

Table 4: Correlation between educational status, knowledge and myth associated with menopause

S. No	Educational status	Knowledge (%)	Myth & False believe (%)
1.	Uneducated	3.6	39.7
2.	Primary	20	13.8
3.	High-school	9	23.5
4.	Intermediate	12.7	7.3
5.	Graduate	23.6	11.7
6.	Post-graduate	30.9	4

Table 5: Comparison of common myths and false believes with the educational status of the participants

S. No	Myth & false believe	Educational status (N)					
		UN	Primary	10 th	12 th	Graduate	Post - graduate
1.	Menopause is a disease	7	----	----	----	----	----
2.	Menopause does not required medical attention	5	4	4	----	1	----
3.	Home remedy is best for menopausal symptom	2	3	5	1	----	----
4.	You can still get pregnant after menopause	----	----	----	----	----	----
5.	Women should stop having sex after menopause	9	1	3	2	6	1
6.	HRT cause more side-effects	4	1	4	2	1	2

CONCLUSION

Awareness tends to be high in educated women. Highly educated women of urban area were living active lifestyle and were more health conscious as compared to intermediate and primary educated women. Uneducated women were highly unaware about menopause and associated problem and risks. Further, the study attempted to bust the myths and doubts associated with female reproductive cycle amongst the women of urban areas. Women irrespective of their education status were largely complacent about the problem or symptoms associated with menopause and did not tend it necessary to get medical assistance for the same. There is an immediate need to spread awareness about menopausal health risk amongst all strata of society with special emphasis on poor literate women. The above mention data suggest that health care professionals were the most common source of information which may facilitate to gather the accurate information about menopause and associated health risk as well as all possible treatment approach regarding menopause.

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