



AENSI Journals

Journal of Applied Science and Agriculture

ISSN 1816-9112

Journal home page: www.aensiweb.com/jasa/index.html



## Comparison of Life Quality Identity Crisis Among Usual and Menopause Women

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### ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 20 December 2013

Received in revised form 22

February 2014

Accepted 26 March 2014

Available online 15 April 2014

Keywords:

menopause women, identity crisis

### ABSTRACT

**Background:** One of the most critical periods of women's life is subjected to the process of menopause. **Objective:** The main aim of the study was to compare the identity crisis among the menopause and usual women. A comparative-causative method was used to study the research. 60 women higher than 45 years old with early menopause symptoms due to the disease or surgery and 60 non-menopause women higher than 30 year old dwelling in Tehran cosmopolitan participated in this research. They filled the identity crisis questionnaire. Data were analyzed by the use of means comparison method and SPSS software. **Results:** The results indicated that there is a significant difference between the identity crisis of normal and menopause women. Only menopause and non menopause women had significant difference in terms of tradition subscale. **Conclusion:** Due to the obtained results of the present study, it can be concluded that the menopause has a negative impact on the identity crisis among menopause women.

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**To Cite This Article:** Sharareh Tafazoli Aghvami, Fariborz Bagheri, Comparison of life quality identity crisis among usual and menopause women., *J. Appl. Sci. & Agric.*, 9(3): 1336-1339, 2014

## INTRODUCTION

One of the most critical periods of women's life is subjected to the process of menopause. The menopause process has been considered as the most essential point of women being included in menstruation and pregnancy phases. The menopause is an indicator of passing the ability of reproduction and reaching to the infertility. Indeed, the menopause is a natural event and phenomenon into the life of women. The menopause has a long history in the era of the mankind and its approaching can make different economical, cultural and religious attitudes for the whole women. Although the menopause is a biological process happening for the all women, but it is not defined and experienced equally for the related women. The psychological, mental, spiritual, emotional health, cultural and social attitudes of the women is evolved in this process. It seems that the number of menopause symptoms is high but fortunately no one has experienced these; some women never show any clear signs in this case. However, it is estimated that about 75% of women experience intense and severe signs after the menopause. It is expected that women pass one in third of their ages at the period of menopause. This manner can be come along with destroying women's feeling, and destructing their social activities, leisure times, identity, values activities, connection to others, morality, sexual activities, enjoying life and life quality in general. The process of the menopause is very important personally, socially and culturally; it has been considered as the most vital healthy and hygienic issues in terms of fertility and women health. One of the most crucial targets of the hygiene for everyone in 21th century is to recover and optimize the life quality. At present century, the definition of a one life is not subjected to not having a disease, but being good and having high quality of the life has made great and high potential affairs in this case. According to the definition of the world organization, the life quality is subjected to people's imagination of their status at life due to the cultural contexts and values systems. It also takes the whole targets, expectations, standards and worries in this regard. The life quality is consisted of two main mental and objective indices. The mental index is subjected to the same satisfaction and feeling of satisfaction being made by mental perceptions and the personal testing of his or her life in this pavement. However, the emotional aspect is highly being felt in measuring the life quality. The objective index is also related to the same conditions being influential environmentally on the variables of the life quality including the economical, political, cultural and environmental aspects in this path (Feather, 2002).

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Hall et al (1996) evaluated the impact of the management training plans on the life quality on their subjects; the results showed that the use of psychiatric pressure management can increase the score of subjects in relation to the scale of life quality getting continued to six months after the end of the session (Grotevant, 1989). In relation to menopause women, the life quality points to the related aspects of the healthy issues including a collection of emotional, mental and social signs in this case. Hence, often the term "life quality" is simply called to the definitions of destruction, nightly sweating, dryness of the vaginal; certainly, these signs are effective on women's life quality destructing other factors in this case potentially (Montgomery, 2005). Hall (1996) believes that in communities where the emphasis on the potential ability for expanding the self at life is high, the olds tend to have target-based dreams instead of feeling disability in their life. Grotevant (1985) showed that there is a positive relationship between the religious internal orientation and identity-seeking in one hand, and in the other hand, there is a negative relationship between the religious internal orientation with crisis-damaged and perplexities of the identity. Blumel (2000) showed that the menopause women has a lower life quality score in compare to other women and the problems of household women are more than working ones. In addition to the results of the research, it is shown that the menopause cause to the reduction of life quality and this reduction is independent of the age and other social variables such as marriage, education, occupation and the number of children. Rostami (2001) showed that the feeling of anxiety and being panic, tiredness and the lack of energy, muscular and joint pains and the lack of tendency towards sexual relations are the most common problems of menopause among women. Hvas (2006) found that women stated different and considerable viewpoint about the senility regarding their menopause in relation to their senility process. They all except one stated positive aspects for reaching to senility; they had high experiences and abilities in this case. They had gotten the growth of personal facilitations making them to find their choices and options talking together better. The positive impacts had been the result of a long life period. A woman also described the negative aspects in this case as following:

The negative expectations and experiences in this regard; the positive aspects along with the existence nature or psychological issues seem to be better than negative experiences coming along with or without physical changes. Hence, there have been reports in relation to the positive relationship between the life quality, self-esteem and inverse relation with the anxiety and continuous tiredness (Grotevant, 1985). Other researchers believe that there is no found any relationship between the menopause transformation and other psychiatric health symptoms (Harter, 1999). The Iranian culture takes a great value for olds and they have been highly appreciated traditionally particularly in Islam religion. Among this, women have been considered as important mothers and spouses. The result of this process is subjected to the impact of life quality particularly after having targets and positive expectations of the future. In these periods many behaviors and activities happening for a woman may be forgotten due to the existence of little children and life responsibilities; but, in the other hand, other part of a woman's values in Iran includes the ability of fertility and having relaxation as well as overcoming the whole feelings against the young children; this may be destructed by the fluctuating manner in this regard. The menopause happens for a woman when she stops and review her all surroundings and she may step towards a path where it has not been practical for her yet in this pavement (King et al., 2005). Parker and Zukerman (1996) found that there is a significant relationship between the life quality and menopause steps and the high life quality regarding to women is happening at before their menopause and the lowest life quality is subjected to the near period of the menopause. Also, it is specified that the life quality does not have significant relationship with long life, menopause period, occupation, education, economical status and the number of children of a family. Berzonsky (2008) showed that the mean anxiety of trained group is lower than experimental group; so, it can be concluded that the correct training of menopause people and their mates can reduce the side effects of the disorder in this pavement. Generally, some people state their view towards the process that the main aim of a family life has been ended up when children leave the house; however, others believe that it can be followed the whole valuable targets at life every time. For some people the purpose of the mental growth is subjected to the topic that it belongs to twenty years of their life while others consider it for the fifty year old priority (Schwartz, 2001). As a result, one of the most common changes happen simultaneous to the beginning of the menopause is related to the intrigue and change of identity making these women to think absurdity and vanity in this regard. Probably today the construction of the identity is difficult than the past. Many years ago, the whole girls were expected to be mother of the house but today, these expectations of the girls were exceeded and they had higher choices to select their issues in this regard. Maccoby et al (2008) showed that there was a significant difference between parents and children in terms of personal value and intensity of the orientation of the process in relation to the family, economical, political, artistic and religious issues. Berzonsky (2008) indicated that the whole dimensions of the family biology (FES) have a significant relationship with the accessibility to the identity and distribution status. Also, the results showed that two dimensions of the emotional independence and the parents' perception can make a positive impact on the life quality while it seems that the idealism of the parents can lead to the formation of adolescents' identity as well. Berzonsky (2005) showed that there is no observed significant difference between the adolescents' identity crisis having mothers working and non-working people.

*Method:*

The present study is of a comparative-causative type of research.

*Research statistical community:*

The statistical community of the research has been included in two groups of women as following:

- 1- 60 women experienced their menopause period at the beginning; that is, the complete stop of the monthly period ranging higher than 45 year old dwelling in Tehran cosmopolitan. In addition, women having illness and surgery experience to the early menopause.
- 2- 60 non-menopause women higher than 30 year old dwelling in Tehran cosmopolitan.

In addition it should be mentioned that both groups were different classes socially and economically. They had not also any psychiatric or a severe illness in this case.

*Research sample and sampling method:*

In this research to determine the sample, the cluster-based sampling method has been applied. In the definition of the sampling, it is necessary to point to the following notes as well:

At first, according to the clustering sampling method, three districts were selected from the 22 districts of Tehran cosmopolitan and from every district some cultural houses were taken up accidentally; among these cultural houses 120 people of menopause and non-menopause women were accidentally taken up and then they were asked to participate in the study by their own allowance.

*Research tool:*

Ahmadi identity crisis questionnaire (1999) has been used to evaluate the level and intensity of personal identity crisis. The questionnaire evaluates problems at the long-term targets, hesitation at occupational selection, the lack of having suitable pattern for friendship, disorder at sexual relation, problem in the recognition of religious issues, the lack of attention to morality values, the lack of considering group commitment, time dysfunction, the lack of suitable pattern for making family, having negative attitude towards the self.

*Research statistical analysis method:*

T test was applied in this research.

*Results:*

**Table 1:** Comparison of identity crisis in both groups.

Group	Mean	Std dev	Df	Df	Sig
Normal	207	2099	-2.966	58	0.004
Menopause	5.6	4.43			

It is observed that the mean identity crisis degree in menopause women group is higher than normal ones. The results of t-test about both groups difference in  $p < 0.004$  showed that there is a significant difference between the identity crisis of normal women and menopause ones. So, it can be stated that along with 99% confidence, menopause women experience higher crisis in compare to normal women. In order to evaluate the hypothesis, the difference between the life qualities of both groups was evaluated and then the subscales were applied to evaluate the dimensions of the life quality through t-test as following:

*Discussion and conclusion:*

After the statistical analysis, it is observed that the mean identity crisis degree is higher in menopause women in compare to normal ones. In  $p < 0.004$  significant level, it is shown that there is a significant difference between the identity crisis of menopause and normal women; thus, it can be stated that the menopause women have higher identity crisis in compare to normal ones. The physiological conditions of women make her to be exposed to risky problems; these conditions including the maturity, pregnancy, delivery and postpartum, lactation and finally the menopause are the most common risky issues for women. So, it is implied that the women should be put into a high safety and privacy affairs. The process of menopause comes along with physiological changes and hormone and psychiatric conditions. Usually, everyone defines the process of the menopause by her own comment. Some women think that the beginning of the menopause is related to the senility and the reduction of the abilities. The most common problems of this period are as following:

Infertility, losing springtime, skinny changes, motor-psycho changes (such as destruction, insomnia, migraine headache pains and emotional problems), moral and behavioral changes (Adams 1998). Since the menopause has been specified as the end of menstruation and pregnancy phase, this will have many various problems that it may destruct good feeling of women in this case. They may also lose their social connections,

identity, leisure times, values and sexual relations as well. It seems that it is natural for a woman to feel destructive issues when she reaches to the menopause period making her to feel useless in this regard. The results of the significance confirmed the difference between normal and menopause women in the subscale of tradition so that it is confirmed that the mean score of the tradition subscale is higher in menopause group in compare to normal ones. In relation to the lack of confirmation of this hypothesis, it can be stated that the background of this research has not been carried out on the menopause women value system; since the process of the value is considered as a cultural issue, the questionnaire of Schwartz values has been applied in this regard that it may not be coincident with Iranian culture. It is better to use a questionnaire where it can be coincident with Iranian value system.

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