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Defey et al.(1996) 78

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-Abstract-

Key concept : Menopausal Experiences

## A Study of Women's Menopausal Experiences

Kim M Young\* Choi, Soo Jeong\*  
Yang, Seung Ae\*

This study was alone to identify the meaning and the essence of the menopause experience by means of the Colaizzi's phenomenological method.

The participants were eight women, 48-60 years old, who were experiencing perimenopause or postmenopause. They were selected using a theoretical sampling technique.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews from April 6 to May 20, 1999. The interviews took from 40 to 90 minutes. Interviews were tape-recorded and analyzed using the constant comparative method.

Significant statements from data were extracted. From these formulated meanings, 18 themes, 8 clusters of themes and 3 categories were constructed. Final descriptions were found to be valid through the interviewee validation process.

Essential themes of the menopausal experience which emerged were "coming of change", "inclined to deny the in mind", and "adapted life". Menopause, as coming of change was the turning point in the women's life cycle accompanying changes, in body and mind and marital life changes. Especially, the unpredictable menopausal changes were an opportunity to hide the fact of menopause and not to talk with anybody. Such a phenomenon reflected on the psychological attributes of menopausal woman such as an inclination to deny in the mind. Their experiences of menopause as adapted life were generally regarded as signalling the end of fertility and were interpreted as a natural developmental process that indicates a life transition.

In conclusion, participants depicted the menopause as a natural stage in the life cycle. In order to help women have a positive life change and self accomplishment, nurses need to understand the essential themes of the menopausal experience. Thus, the importance of an open approach in eliciting the phenomena of menopause cannot be overemphasized.

In conclusion, the results of this study suggest that exercise program is one of the effective interventions to improve the self-efficacy and also to lower the fatigue in the sample of female college students.

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