Author’s response to reviews

Title: "I should live and finish it": A qualitative inquiry into Turkish women's menopause experience

Authors:

Serap Y Cifcili (serapcifcili@gmail.com)
Mehmet Akman (makman4@gmail.com)
Abdullah Demirkol (demirkolster@gmail.com)
Pemra C Unalan (pcunalan@gmail.com)
Etienne Vermeire (etienne.vermeire@ua.ac.be)

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Author’s response to reviews: see over
Dr J. A. Le Good  
Senior Assistant Editor  
BMC-series journals

Dear Mam,

We are very honoured that our manuscript is accepted in principle. We would like to thank you and the referees once again for the efforts in the process.

To improve the style of written English, a native speaker and English teacher from United Kingdom copyedited our manuscript. His name is added to the acknowledgments. We also rechecked the manuscript formatting checklist and revised the manuscript accordingly.

A detailed list of the changes we made is given in the following pages.

Yours, sincerely

Corresponding author:

Serap Cifcili, MD  
Marmara Medical School  
Department of Family Medicine

Aydın s. No: 7/8  
Altunizade 34662 Istanbul/TURKEY  
serapcifcili@gmail.com  
Office: +90216 327 56 12  
Fax: +90216 325 03 23

Co-authors: Mehmet Akman MD, MPH; Abdullah Demirkol MD, PhD; Pemra C. Ünalanci MD, Etienne Vermeire.
Reviewer's report:

The authors have taken on board previous comments regarding how the sample was obtained, and the methodological approach and analysis used. The results are likely to be of interest to readers other than just in Turkey. I now recommend publication, although someone does need to review the paper for typographical and grammatical errors.

Descriptions of the changes (for typographical and grammatical errors) made:

The initial sentences are from the previous version; the latter sentences are from the revised version. The location of the sentences is given in the parenthesis. The changes are highlighted.

Abstract:

1- semi-structured, in-depth interviews (Second page, first line)

2- The interview questions focused on two areas; 1) knowledge, experiences, attitudes and beliefs about menopause and; 2) menopause-related experiences and ...........
   (Second page, fifth line)

Main text, Background:

3- process, or even (Fourth page, third line)

4- “medicalized”, and (Fourth page, eighth line)

5- The feminist paradigm .................of this time to be associated with a normal processes, and not indicators of a “disease” [4].

   The feminist paradigm has viewed menopause as a life transition and problems of this time as normal processes, and not indicators of a “disease” [4]. (Fifth page, first line)

6- As Turkey geographically lies between east and west, and the social life-style also shows a broad variability. Some women live more traditionally, some others, relatively small in number live more a “western” style supported by the laws of secular republic.
As Turkey geographically lies between east and west, and the social life-style also shows a broad variety, some women live more traditionally while some others, relatively small in number, live more a “western” style supported by the laws of the secular republic. (Fifth page, sixth line)

**Method:**

7- This study explored the research questions experiences, beliefs and attitudes of Turkish women about menopause and HT.

This study used semi-structured interviews to explore experiences, beliefs and attitudes of Turkish women about menopause and HT. (Sixth page, first line)

8- Since it involved collecting sensitive and personal information regarding the participants’ experiences, knowledge and attitude towards menopause and HT a qualitative approach was used.

As this involved collecting sensitive personal information regarding the participants’ experiences, knowledge and attitude towards menopause and HT a qualitative approach was used. (Sixth page, third line)

9- The inclusion criteria were having experienced

The inclusion criteria were having experienced (Sixth page, fourteenth line)

10- ......about the symptom sought help) as well as those who visited the outpatient department for a problem other than climacteric symptoms but when asked declared that they had been experiencing climacteric symptoms (did not seek help).

......about the symptom had sought help) as well as those who visited the outpatient department for a problem other than climacteric symptoms but when asked declared
that they had been experiencing climacteric symptoms (had not sought help). (Sixth page, eighteenth line)

11- Each category was then fed back to the following interviews as probing questions if they did not arise during the interview spontaneously, to explore the extent to which these experiences were shared among the participants.

All categories were then fed back into the subsequent interviews as probing questions, if they did not arise during the interview spontaneously, to explore the extent to which these experiences were shared among the participants. (Eighth page, fifth line)

**Results:**

12- They also told that before menopause they had vaginal discharge more often.

They also said that before menopause they had vaginal discharge more often. (Ninth page, seventeenth line)

13- One participant was pleased that her menstrual migraine had disappeared along with the menstruation and, according to her, none of the symptoms of menopause were comparable to that of migraine. (Tenth page, first line)

14- One of the participants clearly defined menopause as “beginning of a new life” that she is more conscious and more concerned about her health.

One of the participants clearly defined menopause as “the beginning of a new life” in which she is more conscious and more concerned about her health. (Tenth page, thirteenth line)

15- Some participants mentioned their mothers and how they had diseases which they linked to menopause and that they could not access proper health care because of lack of knowledge.
Some participants mentioned their mothers and how they had had diseases which they linked to menopause and that they had not been able to access proper health care because of lack of knowledge. (Eleventh page, first line)

16- Some participants stated that they were more concerned about menopause and it was not as bad as they thought it would have been.

Some participants stated that they were more concerned about menopause and it was not as bad as they had thought it would be. (Eleventh page, ninth line)

17- For some, hot flushes were a social as well as a physical problem since the people around them could notice

For some, hot flushes were a social as well as a physical problem since the people around them might notice them. (Twelfth page, ninth line)

18- Most of the participants, who sought help,...

Most of the participants who had sought help,... (Thirteenth page, fourth line)

19- The women stated that they were very sensitive and irritable without any apparent reason and this irritability was stressing their relationship with their families.

The women stated that they were very sensitive and irritable without any apparent reason and this irritability was placing their relationship with their families under stress. (Thirteenth page, tenth line)

20- According to one of the participants even if she has lost her interest in sex she tried to continue her sexual practice to maintain her relationship with her husband.

According to one of the participants even though she had lost her interest in sex she tried to continue her sexual practice to maintain her relationship with her husband. (Fourteenth page, fourth line)
21- exercise and an herbal product which helps with hot flushes.....

........exercise and a herbal product ......( Fifteenth page, fifth line)

22- I wished Americans announced the results of the hormone study a bit later,.....

 I wished the Americans had announced the results of the hormone study a bit later,.....(Fifteenth page, thirteenth line)

23- They trigger cancer, that is ........... (Fifteenth page, nineteenth line)

24- The source of the knowledge was mainly the media and friends rather than health professionals.

The source of the knowledge was mainly the media and friends rather than health professionals. (Sixteenth page, first line)

Discussion:

25- The same concept was referred as freedom in the study mentioned above

The same concept was referred to as “freedom” in the study mentioned above

(Eighteenth page, eighteenth line)

26- This association between not having period and cleanliness may be a reflection of Islamic cosmology. According to Islamic traditions, women are not allowed to participate in any religious activity during the menstrual period.

This association between not having periods and cleanliness may be a reflection of Islamic traditions, according to which women are not allowed to participate in any religious activity during the menstrual period. (Eighteenth page, nineteenth line)

27- I’m dirty or I got dirty” to refer menstruation

I’m dirty” or “I got dirty” to refer to menstruation. (Eighteenth page, twenty-second line)
28- Biri et al.’s cross-sectional study reports the frequency of psychosocial symptoms between 41-64% in which, four different categories were defined as psychosocial complaints: anxiety, stress feeling, touchiness and self-depression, and absent-mindedness.

Biri et al.’s cross-sectional study reports the frequency of psychosocial symptoms as between 41 and 64%, in which four different categories were defined as psychosocial complaints: anxiety, feeling of stress, touchiness and depression, and absent-mindedness (Twentieth page, first line)

29- In our study emotional instability and irritability were the most common psychosocial complaints (Twentieth page, third line)

30- Many studies in Turkey explored the relationship between depression and menopause reflecting the common medical paradigm that menopause has severe negative effects on women however more recent studies denied this relationship.

Many studies in Turkey have explored the relationship between depression and menopause, reflecting the common medical paradigm that menopause has severe negative effects on women; however more recent studies have denied this relationship. (Twentieth page, seventh line)

31- It appears that, this is an important issue which needs further exploration as to whether family support will help in reducing women’s stress during this period.

It appears that whether family support will help in reducing women’s stress during this period is an important issue which needs further exploration. (Twentieth page, fourteenth line)

32- Loss of sexual interest or vaginal dryness was other matters that women in this study expressed as one of the problems that affect their relationship with their partners
Loss of sexual interest or vaginal dryness were other matters that women in this study expressed as problems that affect their relationship with their partners (Twentieth page, seventeenth line)

33- Some researchers have often suggested that this has resulted in medicalization of menopause especially by western medicine.

It has often been suggested that this has resulted in medicalization of menopause, especially by western medicine. (Twenty-first page, nineteenth line)

34- It is possible that the findings of this study may be transferable to other settings in which middle class Turkish women from Muslim background reside.

It is possible that the findings of this study may be transferable to other the settings in which middle class Turkish women from Muslim backgrounds reside. (Twenty-second page, thirteenth line)

Acknowledgements:

35- In addition, the authors acknowledge David Hill, Peter Whetton and Husna Razee for editing the English language of the manuscript.

Table 1

1. How do you deal with menopausal symptoms?

If not mentioned before: What does the term “hormone” remind you?

Did your doctor suggest you to use hormones? IF NOT, what would you feel if he did so?

36- How do you deal with menopausal symptoms?
If not mentioned before: Of what does the term “hormone” remind you?

Did your doctor suggest that you use hormones? IF NOT, what would you feel if he / she did so?

37- All the terms estrogen were changed with oestrogen except the in the quotation from a US research.