



## Perception of Women over the Age of 40 about Menopause and Success

PhD Ivett Reyes-Guillén\*, Socorro Fonseca Córdoba, María del Rosario Flores Morgan

*Autonomous University of Chiapas, Mexico*

**\*Corresponding Author:** *Flor Ivett Reyes Guillén. PhD in Sciences, Natural Resources and Sustainable Development from. Faculty of Social Sciences of the Autonomous University of Chiapas, Mexico.*

**Abstract:** *This article presents the results of research conducted in Chiapas, Mexico, with the aim of analyzing women's perceptions of menopause and their relationship to the self-perception of success. The study involved 50 women aged 40 years and over, in Chiapas Mexico, during the period October 2019 to March 2020. 76% of you like your age as you consider that you have accomplished many good things in your life; but 44% are not considered successful, and it relates to the workplace and family. This valorization and vision of women as the axis of the familiar and with a difficult presence at work, directly affects the self-perception of women in the face of success. This reality becomes more complex due to the vulnerability of women in menopausal stage by the social construction around it.*

**Key words:** *Perceptions, menopause, success, Chiapas Mexico*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The definition of menopause expresses the disappearance of ovulation, and therefore menstruation and reproductive capacity in women. It usually occurs between the ages of 40 and 50. But what about feelings, form of interpretation and relationship with variables like the sense of success in a woman's life.

Today, the bodies are identified, symbolized, classified according to age, gender, race, ethnicity. The human body, socialized, is no longer built not within the private sphere, but from the conception of being a central element in social construction, where there will be more than one main actor; but that privately stops being built, fears, does not find its own goals, does not recognize success, is questioned. The answers are unclear; in the face of this diverse and globalized world, the answers we seek may be in a state of high interference. That is, the excess information or the absence of it, generate the unrest answer and the lack of understanding.

From a holistic and interdisciplinary approach, we focus on the individual and his ability to cognitively process what comes to penetrate his being as part of the perceptual process, including biological factors (for the case of medical process case), social factors, cultural factors and psycho-behavioral elements.

When talking about a process such as menopause, which is the case exposed, as well as how women perceive the property in relation to success, it is necessary to take into account that, in addition to being symbolic constructions that explain it, educational deficiencies are important elements. This is because cognitive processes are impacted by these deficiencies. Education, thought, language and symbolism are articulating elements that guarantee the understanding of perceptual and cognitive processes; so, self-perception analysis takes on relevance. We can say the above, since we analyze the contributions of Blumer (1982), Piaget (1983) and Vygotsky (1934) for the understanding of cognitive processes that detonate, in humans, their development, growth, development and self-perception.

This study was conducted with a group of 50 women aged 40 years or older, in Chiapas Mexico, during the period October 2019 to March 2020, and aimed to identify women's perception of menopause and its relationship to the self-perception of success.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study is of phenomenological cut, based on the interview as a means of meeting with informants. A total of 50 women were interviewed, open population, during the period October 2019 to March 2020. The interviews were semi-structured, based on a holistic and interdisciplinary research model, qualitative with a phenomenological approach and addressed a group of women aged 40 and over. The questions included variables that helped us to perform an analysis of self-perception regarding success, as well as on menopause, its signs, and symptoms.

## 3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS OF INVESTIGATIONS

General data of the women interviewed: 100% of Spanish mother tongue. Its religious affiliation is Catholicism by 92%; 8% are Christian. In terms of the level of education, 4% has postgraduate; 8% primary education; 10% secondary education; 1% out of school and 77% with university level. Regarding occupancy, 32% are housewives, 32% merchants, 16% teachers, 6% retirees, 8% administrative staff; 6% employed in established shops.

Taste for the age they are: 76% if you like your age as you consider that you have achieved many good things in your life; remaining percentage (24%) they don't like the age they are because they mean wanting to be younger and because they suffer illnesses because of their age.

Regarding the stage of life, they liked the most, in general 42% mention that youth, adolescence mainly; followed by 24% who mention childhood. The remaining percentage relates it to the stage of having been mothers (17%), or, with having integrated into a new religion (4%), or to having obtained a job (4%). Only 9% say they liked all the stages of their lives.

Menopause knowledge: 100% if they know what it is and define it as the time of life when they stop menstruating. About the identification of symptoms, they commonly indicate the lack of menstruation, hot flashes, hormonal changes, and these generate changing moods (100%). The results show us that the study population has knowledge about the most common signs and symptoms of menopause, but not with a concept obtained from valid sources.

Self-perception of success: All women interviewed associate success with job achievements and motherhood. Women interviewed are not considered 44% successful. They consider this because they have failed to achieve their work objectives or their goals as mothers and their family attachment.

Today, society conceptualizes success by linking it to economic growth, leaving aside the holistic expression of the nature of the human being and does not take advantage of every element that forms it for development, growth, human empowerment. The only empowerment to which the social environment refers is that of material wealth being the mystification of success. From its origin, the word success comes from the Latin *exitus*, which means the expiration of an adversity and therefore a culmination, an achievement, never suggests that it be strictly material.

On the other hand, and complementing this idea, we have emotional intelligence, which can recognize and regulate our emotions, that is, humans can have self-control, empathy, and good social relations. Faced with this, Goleman (1998), states that this type of intelligence becomes more important than academic intelligence, since it allows us to participate within the social fabric in which we are embedded and it depends on the achievement of our actions, the growth and the development of a harmonious and peaceful environment.

Within the results of the study, women relate to success with two elements, the achievement of their work goals and the achievement of their role as mother and family. Talking about success and job satisfaction in women is very recent in human history, as the presence of women in the paid labor field occurred in the mid-20th century. Women's activities have historically been underestimated, either privately or now in the public sphere (Arango, 1997; Simonton, 2003). Women's economic income is beginning to be reflected socially and not in its exact dimension and in the 21st century, women begin to know each other within these two roles as potential.

In the study, the women interviewed are 40 or older, which places them within a traditional education and the beginning of the change process of the last century (twentieth century). Therefore, they can be understood to focus on how they measure success with the work and family at the same time. Although women began to have a presence in factories, for example, it is only after the world wars that women begin to have a workforce (Chinchilla and León, 2005). By the 21st century, women are already seen so much in the public sphere; but carries two roles, as the scope of the private continues

to be of weight to her with domestic work, childcare, adults and people who require special attention (Idrovo and Leyva, 2014).

Heilman and collaborators (2001 and 2005) explain this reality as a conflict that arises in women and calls it a lack of adjustment, that is, it creates a gap between what women perceive what is expected of them and what they want to achieve in the workplace. All this without leaving the tasks and the image within the personal and family sphere.

Now, on the basis of this global reality, women should not only consider their self-perception in both roles, work and family, but also face their fears and physical-emotional considerations in stages of life as delicate as menopause, stereotypical and self-stigmatized as the stage at which women begin to belong to old age. The fact that 44% of women interviewed are not considered successful, reflects a vulnerability condition that needs to be addressed and that is necessarily a public health contribution to be considered within women's care programs.

Regarding attitudes and beliefs related to menopause, they have changed a lot over time. It has gone from considering itself a disease [because of the sensed signs and symptoms]; it has been considered a decline [19th century]; a release stage in which a woman's childbearing age ends; and currently menopause is regarded as a sense of relief and neutral feelings of positive change (COMEGO, 2008). The latter contrary to what we have found in this study; where menopause is being associated with old age and women interviewed are not perceived to be successful at a high percentage (44%).

It is then that, the menopause has not changed in the way it is perceived, all these perceptions still exist, since, today, 21st century, we are interacting with generations that carry with them beliefs and attitudes from centuries to date. In addition to considering the role-playing that women over the age of 40 are doing in a society that is still in transit regarding the assessment of the economic strength represented by women; even more so in Latin countries like ours.

Finally, another relevant finding is that of the stage of life that the women interviewed have mostly liked. They like the current age, in high percentage; but 24% would like to be younger because they are now suffering from disease. Youth is a stage that has been enjoyed and enjoyed by most of them, free of diseases and with opportunities to meet their goals.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Sociocultural construction, both work and family, generates a devaluation of women's roles and unfortunately today's generations, who lived and formed in both centuries (late 20th and early XXI), are showing themselves as vulnerable groups. This reality becomes more complex in ages where menopause becomes present, socially preconceived as the stage at which women age and cease to be biologically productive.

This valorization and vision of women as the axis of the familiar and with a difficult presence at work, directly affects of women impacting on the self-perception of success.

Among the main contributions of this study is the consideration that it is time to rethink, reconceptualize success and reorder our actions for its achievement. Taking Goleman (1998) into account, emotional intelligence is demonstrated not only by those who are outstanding leaders, but also by those who perform day-to-day in an outstanding way.

Therefore, in the 21st century, it is necessary to consider success as the series of actions that an individual performs to feed his emotional intelligence, generate harmonious and peaceful spaces, as well as self-evaluate and congratulate himself on each of his daily achievements. In the face of this, having children or working at work will be goals and not ends within happiness, harmony and success expected by ourselves, as individuals and as societies.

Estudios como este, son necesarios para generar aportes a la salud pública, y abordar el tratamiento de la menopausia de manera holista, que se explore no solamente la condición fisiológica de las mujeres, sino también, los aspectos de orden social y psicológico que pueden estar afectando la calidad de vida de ellas en esta etapa de vida.

#### REFERENCES

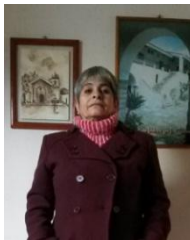
- [1] Blumer, H (1982). *El interaccionismo simbólico, la perspectiva y método*. Barcelona, España.
- [2] Piaget, J. (1983). Esquemas de acción y aprendizaje del lenguaje. En *Centre Royamount Pour une Science de l'homme. Teorías del lenguaje, teorías del aprendizaje: el debate entre Jean Piaget y Noam Chomsky*. Barcelona: Editorial Crítica.

- [3] Vigotsky, L. (1934). *Pensamiento y lenguaje*. Buenos Aires, Fausto.
- [4] Goleman, D (1998). *La práctica de la inteligencia emocional*. Barcelona, España.
- [5] Arango, L. (1997). "La clase obrera tiene dos sexos". *Avances de los estudios latinoamericanos sobre género y trabajo*. Nómadas, 6, 82 - 93.
- [6] Simonton, D. (2003). *A history of European women's work. 1700 to the present*. London: Taylor y Francis.
- [7] Chinchilla, N. & León, C. (2005). *Female Ambition: How to reconcile work and family*. Great Britain: Palgrave Macmillan.
- [8] Idrovo y Leyva (2014). Éxito y satisfacción laboral y personal: cómo lo perciben mujeres que trabajan en Bogotá. *Pensamiento y gestión*. Núm. 36. Universidad del Norte, 155-183.
- [9] Heilman, M. (2001). Description and prescription: How gender stereotypes prevent women's ascent up the organizational ladder. *Journal of Social Issues*, 57, (4), 657-674.
- [10] Heilman, M. & Haynes, M. (2005). No credit where credit is due: Attributional rationalization of women's success in male-female teams. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 90 (5), 905-916.
- [11] COMEGO (2018). *Estudio del Climaterio y la Menopausia*. Colegio Mexicano de especialistas en ginecología y obstetricia. México.

#### AUTHORS' BIOGRAPHY



**Flor Ivett Reyes Guillén.** PhD and master's in Science from the ECOSUR. Member of the academic corp "Society, culture and education", UNACH. Desirable profile PRODEP. President of the Research Network on public Health and Developmental Problems, REINVESAD. LGAC Society, sustainability, and health. Political culture and education. Last three publications: **Article:** Knowledge and Practices Related to the Quality of Life of Patients with Chronic-Degenerative Conditions. Published: 01/04/2020 Vol. V; No. 4; 411-414. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology* **Book:** Reyes-Guillén I y Fonseca-Córdoba S (2019). *Economía, turismo y sustentabilidad. Elementos teóricos y discusión de potencialidades para San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas*. ISBN. 978-607-8675-01-2.



**Socorro Fonseca Córdoba.** PhD in Education from the Institute of University Studies, Master's in economics from the National Autonomous University of Mexico. Leader of the academic corp "Society, culture and education". LGAC Society, sustainability, and health. Political culture and education. Member of the Research Network on Public Health and Developmental Problems, Reinvesad. Publications: **Article:** Tamayo AV, Reyes-Guillén I y CS Fonseca (2020). *Educación Media Superior: una vía de empoderamiento para la mujer indígena*. *Revista Boletín REDIFE*. Núm. 9-2 febrero 2020. 10 indexaciones internacional. ISSN: 2256-1536. **Book** Reyes-Guillén I y Fonseca-Córdoba S (2019). *Economía, turismo y sustentabilidad. Elementos teóricos y discusión de potencialidades para San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas*. ISBN. 978-607-8675-01-2.



**María del Rosario Flores Morgan.** PhD in Higher Education from the Autonomous University of Chiapas LGAC Society, sustainability, and economy. Political culture and education. Member of the Research Network on Public Health and Developmental Problems, Reinvesad. **Article:** (2020) Psychoemotional aspects in the cognition of the school concept in children. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*. **Cap. Book.** Cap. II. *Mercado de trabajo en México, la reforma de la ley laboral 2013. Ocupación por sectores datos de la ENOE, política y fomento del empleo federal, estatal, y local* in -Reyes et al Coords. (2019). *Economía, educación y Salud*. UNACH. ISBN: 978-607-561-019-1

**Citation:** *PhD Ivett Reyes-Guillén, et.al. "Perception of Women over the Age of 40 about Menopause and Success " International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education (IJHSSE), vol 7, no. 5, 2020, pp. 41-44. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.20431/2349-0381.0705005>.*

**Copyright:** © 2020 Authors. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.