

Age at Menopause among Nepalese Women

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The main objectives of this paper are (i) to find out the average age at menopause and to identify the factors affecting the timing of menopause, and (ii) to study the distribution of age at menopause through a probability model. Life table technique has been employed for computation of median age at menopause. A multivariate analysis technique has been utilized to study the effect of various socio-economic variables on the timing of menopause. Type I extreme value distribution has been proposed to describe the distribution of females according to age at menopause and the suitability of the proposed model has been tested with the real data set. Menopausal life table has been constructed with the help of the model. The data are taken from a sample survey of Palpa and Rupandehi districts of rural Nepal.

Median age at menopause, estimated by life table technique, was found 47 years for the data consisting both completed as well as censored cases whereas it was 46 years for the data consisting only completed cases. An increased age at menopause was found among females with increased level of socio-economic status. Age at menopause was found similar for females belonging to Brahmin (46.4 years) and Chhetri (46.5 years) caste category whereas it was lower for females belonging to Dalits/ethnic category (43.4 years). Age at menopause was found slightly higher for working status females (45.9 years) than that of non-working category females (44.9 years).

The variables, like landholdings, caste/ethnicity and menarche, were found to be the significant determinants on the timing of menopause. Females belonging to big and small landholdings have had respectively 68 and 49 per cent less risk of attaining menopause early than that of the landless category. It was found that females belonging in Dalits/ethnic category have had 1.9 times higher risk of attaining menopause early than that of the Brahmin caste category. Age at menarche also influences the timing of age at menopause.

Type I extreme value distribution was found to be an appropriate distribution for describing the distribution of females according to age at menopause. The estimated mean age at menopause through model was 47 years. It was found that the average expected number of years to attain menopause among females aged 30 years was 17 years.

Authors believe that the finding of this paper provides some interesting and valuable results, which may inspire future research in the field of demography especially, age at menopause.