

## Executive Summary of UGC Minor Research Project

### **Premenstrual syndrome – An Exploratory study among young adults**

Premenstrual syndrome (PMS) is the name given to a collection of physical and psychological symptoms that some women experience during the late luteal phase of each menstrual cycle (7 to 14 days prior to menstruation). Symptoms seem to worsen as menstruation approaches and subside at the onset or after several days of menstruation. PMS is prevalent in women of all ages causing substantial morbidity with obvious detriment to interpersonal relationships, social interactions, lifestyle, work performance, emotional well-being and overall health-related quality of life.

The study was basically done in order to identify the psychological and behavioural symptoms associated with premenstrual syndrome (PMS). For this purpose the women with premenstrual syndrome were initially compared with women without these syndrome. Comparison was done on psychological, social and demographic aspects. Women with premenstrual syndrome were identified based on the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) criteria for premenstrual syndrome. Those who meet the symptoms of these criteria were considered as having PMS.

In the initial stage, comparison was done between personality and social support of women with and without Premenstrual syndrome. 50 women from each group were taken for the study and the major findings of this stage of study are given below:

- Among women with PMS, 42% had depression; 34% had angry outburst; 24% had irritability; 2% had anxiety and 2% had social withdrawal, 34% had breast tenderness; 56% had abdominal bloating and 10% had headache, based on ACOG criteria.
- Extroversion, neuroticism and openness is found to be more in women with premenstrual syndrome compared to women without premenstrual syndrome

- There was no significant difference between women with and without PMS in the social support given by family, friends and significant others
- There was significant positive correlation between extroversion and social support among women

In the second stage women with and without PMS were compared on certain psychological factors such as perceived stress, anxiety, depression and psychological general well-being. 50 women from each group were selected. The remarkable findings of the study are:

- Perceived stress was found to be more in women with PMS compared to women without PMS during their luteal phase of menstruation.
- Comparing women with and without PMS, anxiety and depression were seen more in women with PMS
- Self-control, Positive well-being, Vitality, General health and Overall wellbeing was seen to be more in women without PMS compared to women with PMS.

In the next stage the major aim of the study was to develop a rating scale for women with premenstrual syndrome indicating the severity of their psychological and behavioural symptoms. In this stage variables were selected and items were formed based on interviews with women with PMS and by collecting information from the experts of this topic. Fifty five questions were made. Women who were meeting ACOG criteria for PMS were selected for the study. 400 samples were given questionnaire and 318 returned the questionnaires.

- A psychological and behavioural rating scale for premenstrual syndrome was developed discarding two items from the fifty five item questionnaire after item analysis
- Reliability of Psychological and behavioural rating scale for premenstrual syndrome among 160 representational samples indicated by Cronbach's alpha was found to be 0.954 (internal

consistency of the scale). Guttman split half coefficient was also found to be 0.916. Face validity was ensured and the concurrent validity was also established.

The last stage was to understand the psychological and demographic aspects of women with PMS.

- There was more severity of PMS symptoms in married women compared to unmarried women.
- There were no significant difference in PMS among women who were grouped on the basis of parenthood, area of residence
- More symptoms were seen in women in Hindu religion compared to other religions.
- There found a positive correlation of premenstrual symptoms with depression, anxiety, age and negative correlation with self-control, general health, and overall psychological wellbeing

Women diagnosed with PMS were identified to be at high-risk when compared to those women without PMS. Findings prove that the Premenstrual syndrome had a debilitating effect on the psychological health and well-being of women and it also has an adverse effect on the social life of a woman. The inferences that can be drawn from the study are abundant. This study imparts new awareness to the society about the difficulties faced by women with PMS. Estimation of psychological distress among women diagnosed with PMS aim at the need for efficient risk assessment and the necessity of psychological interventions. The psychological and behavioural symptom rating scale will also be beneficial for the assessment of PMS symptoms and will aid in the intervention strategies.

