

## ABSTRACT

This study compares the knowledge and attitudes of four groups of women within the menopausal phase, 40 to 60 years of age. Public Health Nurses (PHNs) and women without health training (WWHTs) were studied in both Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica.

The study was done during December 1989 and March 1990 using an original questionnaire to collect the data. The findings, based on the data collected from 88 respondents in Jamaica and 90 in Trinidad, showed that women were well aware of the term "menopause" but were not fully knowledgeable of its cause and effects. It also showed that both groups of women in both countries knew most of the symptoms of menopause and were conscious that certain conditions arising at the onset of menopause presented problems to the well being and health of women.

The study further showed that while PHNs knew more of the technical facts of menopause, their general knowledge and understanding of the condition was not greater than that of WWHTs. In both groups, actual experience of menopause indicated more knowledge and a better understanding of the conditions.

The study suggests the need for:-

- (a) special attention to be given to the menopause as an important aspect of the development of women;

- (b) the training and retraining of medical personnel;
- (c) the organization of clinics and further research in specific areas that have an impact on the lives of those experiencing menopause.

The propagation of counselling programmes, and educational activities aimed to raise consciousness and alleviate problems, have been identified.