Menopause occurs at the age of 45 to 55 years. Sex at the age of menopause has been a taboo subject. The purpose of the study was to investigate an in depth description of sexual activity experience of menopausal woman during menopausal period at Kragilan village of Godean Sleman, Yogyakarta, in 2012. The research is a qualitative research with a phenomenological study. The method of data collection was in-depth interviews (depth interview). The samples of the data was Snow ball sampling technique sampling. The participants of this study were 5 menopausal mothers. From the research findings, it is found 8 main themes; special preparation for facing menopause is absent, anxiety feelings during menopause is absent, physical complaints become more vulnerable in the menopausal period, menopause does not affect social relationship with children and husband, sexual intercourse is still performed merely to fulfill the obligations as a wife, the closure in terms of sexual satisfaction, the public's view towards sexuality during menopause and the needs of menopause health information.

**Keywords:** Sexual Experience, Menopause

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Menopause is a phenomenon in women's lives characterized by the cessation of the menstrual cycle. Menopause is a natural phase in every woman's life that marks the end of the fertile period. Menarche and menopause as well as pregnancy are considered as superb event to the lives of women (Mackenzie. 2002).

Results of the study showed that 75% of women who experience menopause feel menopause as a problem or disorder in a sexual relationship, while about 25% do not mind it. Some things that affect a woman's perception of the menopause are such as cultural factors, socio-economic, lifestyle, need for sexual life, and so on (Achadiat, 2011).

In the ages of 45 and 50 years old, women have abandoned sex. In addition, sex has been a taboo topic which is felt as inconvenience to be discussed anymore and even is regarded as scary topic. Menopause period can cause anxiety, because they are afraid that they are unable serve their husband well and cause them look for another woman or even divorce them, because some of them feel that they are no longer valuable for their husbands (Kasdu, 2004).

Based on the research results (Rostiana 2010), postmenopausal women feel tired and sore when having sexual intercourse with their husband. In addition, women do not know their husbands’ opinion about it because they were afraid to ask and are also afraid that their husband felt disappointed because they were not like they used to be (Rostiana, 2010).
According to the preliminary study conducted by researchers at the Kragilan Village of Godean Sleman towards 5 interviewed women who had experienced menopause, 3 of them said that after menopause, they had never had sexual intercourse anymore because they feel embarrassed and when they felt pain during the sexual intercourse which causes anxiety although sometimes their husbands asked for sexual intercourse. One menopausal mother said they remained sexually active although only for a couple of times and the other menopausal mother said that she kept doing sexual intercourse like usual before menopause.

The purpose of this study is to investigate an in depth description of sexual activity experience of menopausal woman during menopausal period at Kragilan village of Godean Sleman, Yogyakarta in 2012.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

The design of the study is a qualitative research with phenomenological approach. Participants in this study are the menopausal mothers who live in the Kragilan village of Godean Sleman. Participants in the study were selected through the snow ball which were chosen in sequence in which after collecting data from 1st respondents is finished the researcher requested that the respondent provided recommendations for the 2nd respondent and onward. This process continued until the researcher obtained sufficient data as needed or saturated.

The method of collecting data is through in-depth interviews (depth interview) and thus the data obtained is the primary data. The interview data recording were conducted using a voice recorder after obtaining the consent of the respondent. The validity of the data (validation test) in this study was done by using triangulation. Triangulation is a technique that utilizes other data in comparing the results of interviews of the research object (Moleong, 2004).

Triangulation technique used in the research was triangulation source. The usage of information as a source of triangulation is by comparing and rechecking the data obtained from the participants to the informant. Informant in question is the husband. Consultation is done after data retrieval or interviews with participants.

Qualitative data analysis was done through content analysis (content analysis) hich is based on the data of menopausal mothers’ sexual activity experience through an in-depth interview as the data collection methods. The analysis process on the data in the research used Colizzi in Streubert & Carpenter (1998) as follows:

1. Record the data by changing voice recording into written form without adding or reducing the information given by the participants. The field record on the participants and their living environment was used as the next analysis.
2. Read the transcript repeatedly to gain ideas meant by the participants according to the transcript.
3. Choose the words citation and statements which were related to the studied phenomenon. The researcher chose the words based on the phenomenon meant by the researcher.
4. Formulate the meaning for each significant question and arranging the interview script result.
5. Repeat the transcript process to determine the keywords. After that, the researcher categorized the relevant data and note the sub theme of the category to find theme.
6. The researcher interprets the result as a whole in a descriptive narrative.

7. The researcher meets the participants to clarify the interview result data in the form of transcript which has been arranged to confirm whether it corresponds to their statements. In this step, there is no addition or reduction of transcript which has been arranged by the researcher according to the participants’ perception. The clarification of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd participants are performed on Wednesday, August 8th 2012. Meanwhile, the clarification of the 4th and 5th participants are performed on Thursday, August 9th 2012.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Characteristics of participants in this study were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Level of education</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Menopausal Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>52 years old</td>
<td>Senior High School</td>
<td>House wife</td>
<td>8 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Elementary School</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>55 years old</td>
<td>Senior High School</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Elementary School</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>59 years old</td>
<td>Senior High School</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>9 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>51 years old</td>
<td>Senior High School</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>6 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>50 years old</td>
<td>Elementary School</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>5 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. The Characteristics of Participants by Age, Level of Education, Employment, and Menopausal Age.

There are 8 themes in this study:

3.1. No special preparation in facing menopause

Rostiana research results (2010) indicate that lack of women's attention who face menopause towards menopausal preparation will affect anxiety in dealing with menopause. All participants do not provide special preparations to face menopause. As expressed by the participants as follows:

"...I do not care sister... menopause is common and inevitable in every woman so I feel ok without preparation ..." (P3)

3.2. No anxiety during menopause

Menopause is a process that is experienced by each woman's life and occurs at the average age of 51 years old. Many women are overwhelmed by a sense of anxiety before the menopause (Nuhartan, 2011).

Anxiety that appears in menopausal women is often linked to the existence of anxiety in dealing with a situation which had not previously been feared (Rostiana, 2010).

The result showed that all participants did not feel anxious when facing menopause because all participants did not feel drastic body changes during menopause and thus, the fear and anxiety at the time of menopause is not felt by all participants. Following is the expression of the participant:
3.1. Menopause Causes Physical Complaints in which the Participants Feel Easy to get Exhausted

Menopause is a normal physiological process which will be experienced by all living creatures, including humans. During this time there is a change regarding the whole organ. All organ systems gradually declines both structural and functional and finally died. This process of growing old happens continuously and gradually while bringing about anatomical, physiological and biochemical change of the tissue or organ which will affect the function and the ability of the body as a whole, and eventually stop functioning or dead (Kasdu, 2001).

All respondents who were interviewed said that they had experienced physical changes after menopause. The physical changes they felt were easily tired while doing activities and quickly took a break was a choice made by the participant immediately to restore their body to normal condition. Here is an expression of the participant:

"... I think because of the aging it may also be different... i feel easily tired so I need a little bit of a break ... i work as I can ... " (P4)

3.2. Menopause does not affect Social Relationship With Children and Husband

Research conducted by Fingerman (a psychologist) in the Journal of Gerontology: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences (2000) showed that empty-nest syndrome can be in the form of stress and depression because of loneliness and emptiness or loss of life (Jacob, 2004). Besides, the background of each woman's influences the condition of women in experiencing menopause (Kasdu, 2004).

From the interviews, it was found that participants do not feel disturbance in their social relationship with their family and their family do not feel disturbed as well. hey still have a good relationship despite of the menopause because of their good relationship since the participants have not experienced menopause so that when the participants experienced menopause, their relationship remains well. The good relationship in the family of participant and the participant menopausal period gives no problem cause the harmony of the family which also contributes to the participants in dealing with menopause. Here is an expression of the participant:

"Since before menopause until now I feel fine ... menopause does not affect our relationship ... our relationship has no problem, there is nothing wrong....." (P5)

3.3. Sexual Intercourse Is Still Performed Merely to Fulfill the Obligations as a Wife

In our society, sometimes the assumption that the role of a woman or a wife who is only to serve the biological needs of husband and provide ancestry to her husband worsens the condition. Such construction will indirectly influence the women's attitudes in dealing with menopause (Janes, 2005).

The wife who is obliged to serve the husband is the principle of the participants. Although participants are not comfortable in having sexual relations but they still have sex as merely an obligation of a wife, the following are the expressions of the participant:
"... Because I am already old so as a wife it is just an obligation ... so I follow my husband if he wants it then I will do if he does not want then I will not do it. There is no such necessity ... " (P3)

All participants thought that the sexual future of this menopause is simply a form of a wife who is obliged to serve her husband. Although participants are not comfortable in having sexual relations but they still have sex as merely an obligation of a wife.

3.5.1. Menopause Reduces Sexual Arousal

The decrease in sexual drive according to Virginia (2010) is that psychologically there is no reason to say that an elderly person can no longer enjoy sex with their partner, even women experienced renewed interest and pleasure to the sexual intercourse.

The results showed that all participants still have sexual intercourse during menopause although it is rarely done. The body condition become a benchmark for sexual intercourse. As disclosed by the following participant:

"Yes ...... I still do hahahahahaha ...... yooooo .... it is not a must ... hihiihiihihi, sometimes it depends on the interest hahahahahaha ,", yes right? Hahahaha ...... sometimes once a week sometimes fortnightly hahahaha, depending on the state of the body hehehehe ... so it is not a must.....it is not like I used to be when I was young... hahaha, "(P1)

3.5.2. Menopause Causes Pain During Sexual Intercourse

Sexual disorders occur due to a decrease in estrogen levels that causes the vagina to become atrophic, dry and itchy. Heat and pain during sexual activity (disparenia) because after menopausal vaginal secretion is decreasing (Kasdu, 2004).

Sexual disorders is proven to be felt by all participants. Grievances felt by all participants is the dryness of reproductive organs during sexual intercourse. Complaints from participants during sexual intercourse is one of the reason for the rarity of participants’ sexual intercourse. Surrender is the attitude showed by the participants to face such complaints because participants feel embarrassed to ask the grievances they felt to health professionals so that participants prefer to enjoy the pain, as expressed as follows:

"... when we are doing sexual intercourse, I feel a bit sore cock because it is dry maybe ... people said that it is exactly like that if we are old then it is so dry ... Actually it is kind of a pain when having sexual intercourse but what can I do ... it has to be like that ... actually it makes less passionate to me ... because it feels so sick ... so I feel lazy hahaha But yes I remain silent I do not want medical treatment because that's a shame ... .because it is so personal hehehe ...

3.6. The Closure in Terms of Sexual Satisfaction

Winanda (2010) showed that women are too embarrassed to say their sexual satisfaction. Women tend to shut themselves in sexual satisfaction because they feel sexuality is a very personal and sensitive. In addition, women assume that their complaints offended their partner. So that more women choose to remain silent in terms of sexuality.

In the menopause period, the satisfaction of sexuality is rarely felt by the participants, although participants rarely feel the satisfaction, they never demand. Sexuality is not the important thing in married life. Here is an expression of the participant:
"... when I do not have menopause problems, I rarely get the satisfaction... and during menopause it becomes more rarely.....hehehe this is what I feel during menopause is like this... ..."

(P3)

3.7. Participants’ Opinion Regarding Sexuality During Menopause

According to Ahmad (2000), most of the myths or beliefs developed in the community about menopause, is strongly believed by them and leads women to experience negative feelings when experiencing menopause. Negative feelings that often accompany is like feeling not pretty anymore, worthless, unnecessary, and so on.

From the interviews with the head of the Kragilan village, she said that in the Kragilan village there are actually myths about women who experience menopause although many people are forward-thinking, but there are some who believed in the myths that exist. These myths are usually about the complaints that occur during menopause which later is connected to the sexuality in menopause. Here's the interview:

"There are still some people believe it but not many ... ...but yes ... there are also some people who believe that menopausal women should not do sexual intercourse too often because it creates a big belly, scared of being pregnant... because if there is an old women who is pregnant then the society is in crowd ... the old women will feel embarrassed because people will say that an old woman should not have sex like that.... "

3.8. Health Service Necessity Related To Menopause

Health services play an important role in the welfare of society especially information which is necessary for community's health. Health services can be obtained through mass media because human behavior is strongly influenced by what kind of information they obtained such as from television, radio, magazines and other sources of information (Farid, 2010).

Health services in the Kragilan village is already well established but the service for the menopausal mothers’ welfare is still neglected. From the interviews, it is shown that the provision of counseling about menopause or provided information about menopausal mothers’ welfare are both absent. Here are the expectations of the participants towards the health workers:

"... my hope. .... Hopefully health professionals can pay more attention to people, especially to menopausal women because menopausal women have many complaints .....hahahaha and I feel it is necessary that the programs of health centers can be like counseling about menopause so that we can add more information ... ..."(P4)

4. CONCLUSION

To conclude, all participants did not make special preparations to deal with menopause and anxiety is not felt by all participants when facing menopause. The physical changes felt by almost all respondents are vulnerable body. Menopause also does not affect social relationships with family. Sexual intercourse during menopause is still being done although it is rarely and merely as an obligation as a wife. Almost all participants tend to be introvert in terms of sexual satisfaction. Moreover, the myths which is spreading in the community makes it worse. The absence of cooperation of health officers and the role of the midwife in the village Kragilan also worsens the condition.
5. SUGGESTION

It is expected that Kragilan village hold a counselling program especially about sexuality during menopausal period. The participants are also expected to always seek for information and consultation for health problems from health workers. All the health workers, especially midwives are expected to provide knowledge in the form of counseling about menopause health. In addition, midwife can also assist government programs in an effort to prosper menopausal women. It is suggested for further research to determine the samples whether the samples fulfill the criteria so that less time is wasted because they have to repeat the process. Besides, in-depth approach should be performed so that the participants can answer the interview questions honestly and actually.

REFERENCES