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The Relationship Between Spiritual Well-Being And Stress Levels In The Elderly

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ABSTRACT

Elderly is characterized by a variety of changes and issues, such as issues with the biological, psychological, and social facets of life. Elderly may experience stress due to the numerous changes and issues that arise. One way to overcome the stress is by fulfilling the well-being of spirituality. Methods: The research is a quantitative study using a descriptive correlational design and a cross-sectional approach. The research sample consisted of 92 elderly individuals with inclusion criteria of being ≥ 60 years old and Muslim, using purposive sampling technique in Kubang Jaya Village. Data were analyzed using the chi-square statistical test. Result: It was found that the majority of the elderly have high spiritual well-being with a normal stress level of 41 (44.6%) elderly. The results of the chi-square test indicate a significant relationship between spiritual well-being and stress levels in the elderly, with a p-value of 0.004. Conclusion: The higher the spiritual well-being, the lower the stress levels in the elderly.

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1. Introduction

Elderly is the final stage of a person's development in life. According to the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia (2023), a person is considered elderly when a man or woman exceeds the age of 60 years. According to the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia (2019), the elderly population in Southeast Asia reached 142 million people. It is predicted that by 2025, the elderly population will reach 33.69 million, and by 2035, then in 2035 it is expected to increase to 48.19 million, resulting in an estimated 9.03% of the elderly living in Indonesia. (Kemenkes, 2019). Since 2013 (8.9% in Indonesia and 13.4% worldwide), the percentage of elderly population in Indonesia has increased until 2050 (21.4% in Indonesia and 25.3% worldwide) and 2100 (41% in Indonesia and 35.1% worldwide) (Anggrawati & Sari, 2021). This increase in percentage is due to life expectancy increasing every year, which has an impact on the number of older people. Since 2000, Indonesia has been Indonesia has been classified as a country with old structures or aging populations, as it has a percentage of residents exceeding 7% (Noor dkk, 2023).

Indonesia has 34 provinces where based on the Kampar Regency Health Profile in 2014, the number of elderly reached 12. 496, in 2015 in 2015 it increased to 25,367 elderly, in 2016 it reached 28,827 elderly, and in 2017 it reached 35,289 elderly out of a total population of 785,943 (Kementerian Kesehatan RI, 2019). Then based on the Riau Provincial Health Office (2019), in 2015 Riau Province had an elderly population of 47,911 with the highest number of elderly in Kampar Regency, totaling 25,367 individuals. Based on data from the Kampar District Health Office (2023), the total number of elderly people aged 50 and above (early transition elderly) reached 151,630, with a higher number of elderly men at 77,702, while the number of elderly women was 73,928. The increasing number of elderly will cause various complex problems both for the elderly and for families and society.

The elderly phase is the final stage of life that everyone will go through in due time and it is characterized by various declines and problems that will be faced in the form of biological, psychological, and social problems. Biological problems in the elderly include decreased organ function, decreased immune system function and susceptibility to various diseases. (Friska, 2020). The psychosocial problems experienced by the elderly are that the elderly are unable to adjust to changes in their lives, a sense of emptiness due to the loss of a partner, boredom, withdrawal and fear of death (Teting, 2023). With the decline in bodily functions, whether natural or otherwise, the elderly are considered unable to work which makes them feel a loss of role and status leading to economic or financial problems as they enter retirement. (Ramadhan & Subroto, 2023). The numerous changes and problems that occur can cause stress for the elderly (Kaunang, 2019).

Globally, 15% of the elderly suffer from mental illnesses, and stress is one of the primary mental health conditions that affects a sizable part of the elderly (10–55%) (Seangpraw et al., 2020). Stress affects 8.34% of Indonesia's elderly, and WHO reports that stress is the 4th most common disease in the world, affecting over 350 million people (Sari & Amalia, 2019). The elderly are more prone to stress because there are more stressors. Stress is a physiological and psychological response that occurs when a person feels a conflict between the tension they experiencing and their ability to cope with that tension (Munir, 2023). The level of stress in the elderly is the degree of psychological problems faced by the elderly as a cause of stress due to changes and problems occurring in their lives (Putri et al., 2023). When someone faces a situation that causes stress, they will try to find a way out, a solution with the hope of reducing or eliminating that feeling of pressure. The treatment is not only physical, such as medication or lifestyle changes, but also includes spiritual handling (Darvyri et al., 2019).

Spirituality is a dimension of well-being for the elderly that can reduce stress, maintain individual existence, and provide a sense of purpose in life (Simbolon et al., 2023). Spirituality is described as a strength and belief that can provide peace and self-acceptance (Faradila et al., 2023). Poor spirituality in the elderly can make them feel worthless, lack self-confidence, feel unloved, fear of death, and lack of life purpose. Conversely, good spirituality in the elderly enables them to accept and be more prepared for death, helps them face reality, and gives meaning to life (Anitasari & Fitriani, 2021). Spirituality is believed to function as a coping mechanism for the elderly in dealing with stress (Elmaghfuroh et al., 2022). Spiritual well-being is something that is related to a condition that reflects the harmony of an individual's relationship with themselves, with others, with the environment, and with their belief in God (transcendental) (Narmiyati & Tohari, 2021). A person can be said to have spiritual well-being or a prosperous spirituality if they possess two aspects in the form of vertical aspects related to beliefs and the supernatural world (Creator of the universe), and as well as horizontal aspects related to the environment and so on (Irawan & Achadi., 2022). Spiritual well-being gives the elderly hope and a stronger mentality, allowing them to accept changes in conditions, whether they occur naturally or due to illness, with sincerity. (Masruroh & Rahma, 2023). Spirituality will encourage individuals to have full hope, be optimistic, and think positively in various conditions. However, there is a study by Ubaidillah (2023) that shows the majority of its respondents have high spirituality but also high levels of stress.

Based on the phenomenon that the researcher found in Kubang Jaya Village among 10 elderly individuals, it was found that 4 elderly individuals have good spirituality (elderly pray five times a day, and when they have free time, they read the Quran) and they feel at peace because they are satisfied

with the life they have lived and feel close to God. Then there are 3 elderly individuals who have good spirituality but they feel stressed due to the illnesses they are experiencing and are not yet ready for death. Meanwhile, the other 3 elderly individuals admit to feeling stressed because their spiritual activities, such as prayer, are still inconsistent due to laziness or falling asleep. Based on the description above, the researcher is interested in conducting a study on the relationship between spiritual well-being and stress levels in the elderly.

2. Method

This research uses a quantitative research method to examine a particular population or sample, gathering data with the use of research tools and statistically analyzing the data to test the hypothesis. (Sugiyono, 2019). This study uses a descriptive correlational design with a cross-sectional approach. The research was conducted in Kubang Jaya Village because based on the data obtained, Kubang Jaya Village has the highest number of elderly compared to other villages, with a population of 1,425 elderly. The sampling was conducted using the Purposive Sampling method, resulting in a total sample of 92 elderly participants using the Slovin's formula estimation. This method is chosen for this research because it allows the researcher to intentionally select participants who meet specific criteria related to the study's objectives, such as age, is muslim, willing to be respondents, not mentally ill and being able to communicate well. This targeted approach enables the collection of rich, relevant data from individuals who can provide meaningful insights into the relationship between spiritual well-being and stress in elderly populations.

The instruments used were a respondent characteristic questionnaire, a spiritual well-being measurement questionnaire in the form of the Spiritual Well Being Scale (SWBS), and a stress level measurement questionnaire in the form of the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale-42 (DASS-42). Data were analyzed univariately and bivariately. The objective of univariate analysis was to characterize the respondents' age, gender, type of illness, last education, occupation and marital status. The Chi-Square statistical test is then used in the bivariate analysis to ascertain the relationship between elderly's spiritual well-being and stress levels.

In this study, the researcher obtained respondents by visiting the elderly's homes, so the data collection was face-to-face. Then, the researcher read the questionnaire to the elderly and filled out the questionnaire based on the elderly's answers. After completing the data collection, the researcher conducted a data check, then the collected data was first input into Microsoft Excel and then processed and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science application (SPSS).

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Results

a. Univariate Analysis

Table 1
Respondent Characteristics

Respondent Characteristics	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Age		
a. Elderly (60-74 years old)	87	94,6
b. Old (75-90 years old)	5	5,4
Total	92	100
Gender		
a. Male	33	35,9
b. Female	59	64,1
Total	92	100
Type of Ilness		
a. Hypertension	44	47,8
b. None	31	33,7
c. Gout	7	7,6
d. Diabetes mellitus	3	3,3
e. Asthma	2	2,2

f. Stomach ulcer	5	5,4
Total	92	100
Last Education		
a. No school	9	9,8
b. Elementary school	57	62,0
c. Junior high school	19	20,7
d. Senior high school	7	7,6
Total	92	100
Occupation		
a. Farmer	18	19,6
b. Entrepreneurship	17	18,5
c. Not working	8	8,7
d. Housewife	49	53,3
Total	92	100
Marital status		
a. Married	74	80,4
b. Widow/widower	18	19,6
Total	92	100

Based on table 1, it shows that the most common age characteristics are elderly (elderly) 60-74 years, totaling 87 respondents (94.6%), gender characteristics are dominated by elderly women with 59 respondents (64.1%), the characteristics of the type of disease are hypertension with 44 respondents (47.8%), characteristics based on the latest education are mostly elementary school with 57 respondents (62.0%), the characteristics of the most occupations are irt with 49 respondents (53.3%) and the characteristics of the most marital status are married with 74 respondents (80.4%).

Table 2
Frequency of respondents' spiritual well-being level

Spiritual Well-Being	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High	63	68,5
Moderate	29	31,5
Total	92	100

Based on Table 2, it shows the characteristics based on the spirituality well-being variable from 92 respondents, the majority of whom have a high level of spirituality well-being, with 63 respondents (68.5%).

Table 3
Frequency of respondents stress levels

Stress Levels	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Normal	48	52,2
Mild	17	18,5
Moderate	16	17,4
Severe	11	12,0
Total	92	100

Based on table 3, shows the characteristics based on the stress level variable of 92 respondents, the majority of which are normal stress levels as many as 48 respondents (52.2%).

b. Bivariate Analysis

Table 4
The relationship between spiritual well-being and stress levels

Spiritual Well-Being	Stress Levels										ρ *Value*
	Normal		Mild		Moderate		Severe		Total		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	

High	41	44,6	9	9,8	8	5,4	5	5,4	63	68,5	0,004
Moderate	7	7,6	8	8,7	8	8,7	6	6,5	29	31,5	
Total	48	52,2	17	18,5	16	17,4	11	12,0	92	100	

Based on table 4, the number of respondents with high spirituality well-being is 63 (68.5%) respondents. Among these 63 respondents, 41 (44.6%) are in the normal stress level category, 9 (9.8%) are in the mild stress category, 8 (5.4%) are in the moderate stress category, and 5 (5.4%) are in the severe stress category. The number of respondents with moderate spirituality well-being is 29 (31.5%). Among these 29 respondents, 7 (7.6%) are in the normal stress level category, 8 (8.7%) are in the mild stress category, 8 (8.7%) are in the moderate stress category, and 6 (6.5%) are in the severe stress category. The significant value (ρ Value) is 0.004 < α (0.05), so it can be concluded that Ho is rejected and Ha is accepted, indicating a relationship between spiritual well-being and stress levels in the elderly.

3.2. Discussion

The research results showed that respondents with high spiritual well-being who had normal stress levels amounted to 41 elderly individuals (44.6%). The Chi-Square test yielded a ρ-value of 0.004, which is less than the significance level of α = 0.05. This indicates that there is a statistically significant relationship between spiritual well-being and stress levels in the elderly. The findings of this research conclude that spiritual well-being is meaningfully associated with stress levels in the elderly.

In living out the remaining years in old age, having peace and comfort is the highest hope for the elderly. The presence of various declines or changes impacts the increase in stress among the elderly. One of the strategies for reducing stress levels is through a spiritual approach. Spirituality is related to life satisfaction, so the higher the level of spiritual well-being among the elderly, the greater the sense of calm and peace. A deep spiritual understanding makes individuals more capable of adapting to stressors and having better coping mechanisms. Elderly individuals with a high level of spirituality are better able to accept and face the realities of life and they are also more prepared or unafraid of death. The elderly understand that death is something that will inevitably happen to every individual. (Besty, 2021).

The dimension of spiritual well-being in the elderly can reduce various problems such as stress and can maintain one's existence and purpose in life (Lubis & Simanjuntak, 2020). Achieving spiritual well-being in the elderly can also trigger a stimulus that generate feelings of optimism, confidence and positive hope in difficult and challenging situations experienced by the elderly, making the elderly have high self-esteem and helping the elderly neutralize negative thoughts. In addition, spirituality also helps the elderly to have good self-control, so with the establishment of spiritual well-being, it becomes a support system that supports the elderly when they are stressed. In achieving good spiritual well-being, this can be realized by habituating religious activities or worship as an expression or proof of one's gratitude to the Creator and drawing closer to God so that they can better accept every change and event they experience (Fitria & Mulyana, 2021). By having good spiritual well-being, the elderly can calm themselves in facing reality and changes, which are unavoidable, and this keeps them away from feelings of stress. (Irawan & Achadi, 2022).

Barata (2021), sought to examine the relationship between spirituality and stress levels, finding a ρ-value of 0.001, which concludes a significant correlation between the two variables A similar study by Cahyani (2019) explored the connection between spirituality and stress in the elderly, finding a ρ-value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. As a result, the alternative hypothesis (Ha) was accepted and the null hypothesis (H0) was rejected, suggesting a significant relationship between spirituality and stress levels. It is clear from the above findings, that elderly's spiritual well-being has an impact on the stress levels.

4. Conclusion

The results of research on the relationship between spiritual well-being and stress levels in the elderly in Kubang Jaya Village show that the majority of elderly spiritual well-being is high with normal stress levels. Based on the results of the Chi-Square test statistical test, there is a significant relationship between spiritual well-being and stress levels. The higher the spiritual well-being, the elderly tend not to experience stress (normal). In this research, there are several limitations, namely this research uses Error Tolerance of e = 0.1 for sample calculation, resulting the respondents for this study were only 92 elderly. Then, for the data category of the type of disease experienced by the elderly, it is unreliable because the primary and secondary sources are the elderly and their families, not data from the community health center. The results of this study can be used as information and knowledge for community health centers in motivating the elderly in spirituality activities to enhance their spirituality in avoiding stress and it is expected to increase information and knowledge for both the elderly themselves and their families regarding stress levels in the elderly. The findings from this research have significant practical implications for elderly health programs, particularly in community health center, such as incorporating spiritual well-being into holistic care models where health care providers provide spiritual counseling or partnering with local religious leaders to offer spiritual guidance, encourage elderly individuals to engage more in spiritual practices that may reduce stress and improve well-being and implement targeted programs to help elderly individuals manage stress through spiritual practices, which could involve organizing group activities like prayer groups, or mindfulness workshops designed to promote mental peace and reduce stress. By integrating spiritual care into holistic health services, health care center can create more comprehensive and effective programs that enhance the physical and mental well-being of elderly individuals. This approach not only addresses their medical needs but also helps improve their overall quality of life, ensuring that the elderly are supported in both body and spirit. To further develop this research, several directions can be pursued, such as expanding the concept of Quality of Life (QoL) where this study could assess how spiritual well-being influences the broader concept of quality of life in elderly individuals. Researchers could incorporate standardized QoL scales, such as the WHOQOL-OLD (World Health Organization Quality of Life for Older Adults), to evaluate dimensions like physical health, psychological well-being, independence, social relationships and environment. Social Support where this study could explore how spiritual well-being influences social support networks, which are crucial for elderly individuals and this research could be expanded by designing intervention studies to test how improving spiritual well-being through structured programs impacts other areas of well-being. For further researchers, it is recommended to conduct more in-depth studies on the spiritual well-being of the elderly and research on the impact of spiritual interventions on elderly stress.

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