

## Spiritual Well Being in The Elderly

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### Abstract

Spiritual well-being is one of the causes of the attitude of the elderly in everyday life. These conditions can experience changes depending on how the environment affects them. This study has the purpose of determining the psychological impact of factors caused can affect the condition of the spiritual well-being of the elderly. This study used a phenomenological research design using the research data sources of 2 elderly and five respondents (4 nurses, and one *ustadzah*) as informants. Data analysis using qualitative data analysis techniques model of Miles, and Huberman. The results of the study showed that spiritual well-being could experience an increase and decrease. This is influenced by several factors such as attention from relatives, full of desires, attention from nurses and elderly colleagues, and the role of religious teachers in assisting the elderly. Increased spiritual well-being is characterized by a cheerful attitude, not easy to complain and more passionate about reciting. Meanwhile, the decline in spiritual well-being often leads to an attitude of despair, anger, and even rebellion.

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## INTRODUCTION

Old age is the final period of life that is synonymous with declining changes and is a critical period to evaluate success and failure (Syarif, 2016). Changes to aging are expected to affect the quality of life of the elderly (Choyal, Dube, and Sharma, 2014). With setbacks experienced by not a few older adults who experience despair in living life in this period.

Spiritual well-being is one of the causes of everyday attitudes of the elderly. Each older adult experiences emotional instability which is influenced by several factors both from inside and outside the elderly. Having a good spiritual well-being can help the elderly to maintain emotional stability in everyday life. Spiritual well-being is the affirmation of life in a relationship with God, self, community, and environment that is maintained and maintained intact (Ellison, 1983).

By having a good spiritual well-being, individuals will be better to understand the direction of their life goals. This can shape individual attitudes towards themselves and their environment. However, having a good spiritual well-being is not formed by itself but requires continuous knowledge and practice. In his findings (Ellison, 1983) stated that childhood experiences with family and friends had an impact on the well-being conditions of individuals in the future.

Spiritual well-being is one of the indicators that can determine the quality of life of the elderly. This is in line with the opinion that quality of life reflects an approach that looks at things according to their spiritual (Kurniawati, 2015). Therefore, the elderly need assistance to achieve spiritual welfare to find a goal at the end of their lives. As in a journal stated that therapy regarding the purpose of life has the potential to be effective in understanding the meaning of life, reducing psycho existence suffering, and improving the quality of life among cancer patients at the end of life (Wang, Chong-wen., Chow, and Chan, 2017)

This study is one of the forms of responsibility for problems in this country. As

stated in Law Number 13 of 1998 states that efforts to improve the social welfare of the elderly are essentially the preservation of religious values and national culture. The elderly population in Indonesia is based on population projection data; it is estimated that in 2017 there will be 23.66 million people (9.03%). Predicted the number of elderly population in 2020 (27.08 million), in 2025 (33.69 million), in 2030 (40.95 million) and 2035 (48.19 million) (Ministry of Health Republic of Indonesia, 2017). According to Soewono in (Ministry of Health Republic of Indonesia, 2017), a country is said to have an old structure if it has an elderly population above 7% (seven percent).

The data shows the percentage of older adults in Indonesia in 2017 has reached 9.03% of the total population. With the data above, the presence of the elderly needs attention, especially from the government because it has been regulated in a Government Regulation that the welfare of the elderly is the responsibility of the State (Republic of Indonesia Regulation No.43 of 2004).

Based on the data above, the handling of the elderly by the government is experiencing limitations so that it is expected that participation from competent parties. As disclosed, efforts to improve the welfare of the elderly have been limited to the efforts of giving as referred to in Law Number 4 of 1965, concerning the Providing of Jompo People's Livelihood Assistance, which at present is inadequate when compared to the development of elderly problems, so those who have experience, expertise and wisdom need to be given the opportunity to play a role in development.

With the help of competent parties, it is expected to help the elderly, especially in achieving spiritual welfare. Therefore, the guest house of the old Husnul Khatimah in the services provided in addition to prioritizing physical aspects also paid attention to the spiritual aspects of his ministry. From this, the researchers were interested in studying more deeply related to religious activities carried out at the Husnul Khatimah old house in Semarang.

This study was intended to determine the implications of the spiritual well-being of the

elderly towards the activities of the elderly in daily life. Also, this study is expected to be able to help practitioners, especially those who are in direct contact with the elderly at Wisma Lansia Husnul Khatimah in Semarang.

## METHODS

The research design used in this study was qualitative research. This study was intended to understand deeply about the spiritual needs of the elderly. The qualitative model in this study was done using a phenomenological approach that aims to describe the implications of the spiritual needs of the elderly in achieving the expected quality of life. In this study, two elderly were selected as the subject in the study and three nurses as well as one religious teacher as the informant of the study.

The methods of data collection applied in this study were observation, interviews, and FGD (Focus Group Discussion). Of the seven elderly, there were only two elderly who can be interviewed. Whereas, three nurses and one religious teacher became the informants who provided information related to the daily lives of the elderly. From the results of the interviews, it was known that the emotions of the elderly were often unstable, angry, hopeless, talking dirty, crying, rebelling, and unable to sleep. However, when the mood was good, the elderly usually seem cheerful, passionate about reciting and not easy to complain. This was also influenced by the role of nurses who pay enough attention and clerics who typically become the stories of the elderly.

The observation was carried out by observing the activities of the elderly since waking up until before going to bed. It was found that the elderly were quite disciplined in daily activities such as prayer, bathing, eating, and resting. Also, it also observes the service activities of nurses and religious teachers given to the elderly.

Based on the results of the documentation obtained from data related to the health history of the elderly, the journal activities of the elderly and the personal data of the elderly. The FGD (Focus

Group Discussion). Was attended by two nurses, one person from the household section, and one cleric. The researcher was a moderator and was assisted by a research assistant. The FGD (Focus Group Discussion) was conducted to clarify the problems of the elderly due to the condition of the elderly who tended to be unstable.

To test the validity of the data, the researcher used triangulation data of sources and methods. In this study, source triangulation was done by comparing the results of interviews obtained from the elderly, nurses, and clerics as a comparison to examine the information obtained. Of the 20 total questions asked, only six questions were taken regarding the spiritual condition of the elderly. The six questions submitted to the elderly have a match with the statement given by the cleric and nurse. So that the degree of validity of the data was 24% of the total items submitted, this indicated that the study related to the spiritual condition of the elderly was valid and can proceed to the next stage.

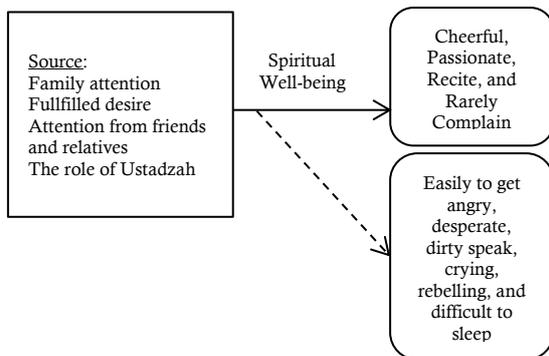
The data analysis technique used in this study was the data analysis techniques model proposed by Miles, and Huberman. In this model, the initial stage in collecting data using observation, interview, documentation, and FGD (Focus Group Discussion) techniques. Data reduction by selecting and simplifying data and summarized to get the main things and the results obtained that the elderly spiritual well-being can experience changes due to several factors originating from the environment around the elderly.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Wisma Lansia Husnul Khatimah Semarang has about 8 to 10 elderly members. This number can change since they passed away or move to another place. Health facilities and worship facilities are also available to support the activities of the elderly. Nurses, religious teachers, and other staff also co-assist activities and meet the needs of the elderly. Based on the observations conducted by the researcher, with the help of elderly nurses can be organized and disciplined in daily activities.

Mentoring provided to the elderly was not only physical needs but also physical and spiritual needs. The nurses usually accompany the elderly for 24 hours either directly or supervise from CCTV. In serving the needs of the elderly, nurses were assisted by the cleaning and household department.

On the other hand, the spiritual well-being of the elderly tends to change. This condition can change if there is a discrepancy in the expectations of the elderly with the reality received. In general, the condition of the spiritual well-being of the elderly can experience a decline and can increase. Furthermore, the condition of spiritual well-being in the elderly at Husnul Khatimah Semarang old house will be illustrated in the following Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** An Overview of the Elderly Spiritual Well-Being

The findings indicated that the condition of spiritual well-being in the elderly affects the behavior shown by the elderly in daily activities. Basically the condition of the elderly tends to experience instability, but due to support from the environment the spiritual condition of the elderly tend to experience a noticeable increase in the behavior of the elderly. The condition of spiritual well-being in the elderly can experience an increase or decrease caused by various factors, especially those from the environment around the elderly.

Figure 1 shows the researchers' initial findings regarding the condition of the spiritual well-being of the elderly, especially in the elderly who are still living in the guesthouse. The increase and decrease in the condition of the

spiritual well-being of the elderly are influenced by several factors, including attention from the family, being fulfilled by the wishes, the attention of friends and colleagues, and the role of the *ustadzah*. Elderly who just stayed at the guesthouse for the first time looked very depressed and felt hopeless. From the results of interviews, the researcher told nurses that the condition of the elderly was caused because the elderly were disappointed with relatives who left him at the homestead of the elderly. They felt free. Therefore, it is not uncommon for those who always say "just want to die" and those who speak disrespectfully to nurses. Another attitude that was also shown was a hunger strike and threatened only to eat if he met his family. There are even older adults who are rebelling and screaming so that they disturb other older adults.

The desire to meet family but the family did not attend, causing even psychosomatic anxiety in the elderly. Psychosomatic symptoms in the elderly are usually indicated by headaches and feeling uncomfortable and also having difficulty sleeping. Especially if friends and nurses pay less attention to their will and lack of spiritual guidance obtained often leads to rebellious attitudes towards the elderly.

Nurses will usually accompany the elderly and talk to the elderly to the elderly unconsciously starting to be distracted and not sulking to meet with the family. This is also common to persuade the elderly to want to eat and is willing to learn the Koran with *ustadzah*. So that at that time the elderly can return to undergoing daily activities as they should.

Over time, with the guidance of nurses and religious teachers, the elderly can accept and be able to adapt to their environment. This is inseparable from the role of assistants who always reinforce the elderly to adapt to the climate of the guesthouse. In addition to assistance from nurses, *Ustadzah* also provides spiritual guidance such as reading the *Qur'an*, and *tausiah* guidance. However, it is not uncommon for *Ustadzah* to become a place of complaint about the elderly. The *ustadzah* attitude that accepts and takes good care of the stories of the elderly gets a good response from the elderly.

The above condition shows that providing intensive spiritual guidance to the elderly can reduce anxiety and despair in the elderly. So that it can motivate the elderly to continue to improve their worship activities, if this happens, usually the elderly will experience changes in attitude such as being more cheerful, not easy to complain and more enthusiastic about reciting.

Instead of the role of the *ustadzah* and also nurses, the family also greatly influences the spiritual condition of the elderly. Usually when the clan comes to visit the elderly will provide energy that makes the elderly excited. With the arrival of the family, the elderly can usually tell many things related to their condition; this can unconsciously reduce the burden of anxiety that exists in the elderly. With the motivation generated, it can affect the spirit of learning to recite the elderly.

Based on the findings above, the implications of increasing the spiritual well-being of the elderly are in the form of enthusiasm in worship and always grateful. The spirit of prayer appears in the attitude of the elderly who were quite enthusiastic in participating in the Koran recitation activities by *ustadzah*. Always grateful is reflected in the attitude of the elderly when feelings of disappointment arise and soon realize that what is being experienced now is better than other people out there. Increasing gratitude significantly reduces materialism among adolescents and also weakens materialism negatively influences generosity (Chaplin, John, Rindfleisch, and Froh, 2018) as one study shows new evidence that positive emotions - especially gratitude - can also play a role in motivating individuals to engage in positive behaviors towards self-improvement (Armenta, Fritz, and Lyubomirsky, 2017).

Also, the elderly also better understand current conditions and do not easily complain. With positive thinking, the elderly feel the benefits of overcoming various life problems (Kholidah, and Alsa 2012; Ho, Cheung, and Cheung, 2010). In this case, the elderly usually try to be able to benefit others or the environment. They realize that there are physical defects that make it not like before, so they need help from

others in their activities. This is as discussed that unconditional self-acceptance that is detrimental to well-being and in some cases can cause mental health problems and mental disorders (Vasile, 2016). So that some older adults usually help work for homemakers and there are also older adults who like to care for plants in the yard of their room.

Besides, the elderly who experience an increase in their spiritual well-being will look more cheerful than before. Usually, they are easier to accept the existence of others and open themselves to others. Older adults who live in the guesthouse initially feel uncomfortable because they have to share a room with other older adults, but over time, the elderly can accept the existence of other people as their roommates. In interacting not infrequently the elderly experience misunderstandings, but differences of opinion do not make the elderly lose their attitude to respect other people such as roommates, nurses, religious teachers, and administrators. In a study, it was explained that opening up plays an important role in the development and maintenance of social relations and can also serve a variety of other related objectives such as getting help and support or achieving social control (Rimé, 2016)

During the process, the research subjects seemed to be quite receptive to the presence of the researcher and were quite open to telling the researcher. Nurses and religious teachers also provide good information according to research needs. They hope that there would be standard guidance in understanding the elderly. Since all this time, they only treated the elderly as patients in general. Especially, in the matters of worship, Ustadzah was in desperate need of references that can help in conveying the obedience given to the elderly. The elderly also hope to continue to be accompanied, and there were always people who can listen to their complaints so that they will not feel lonely.

## CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicated that the condition of spiritual well-being could experience increase and decrease. This is influenced by

several factors such as Attention from relatives, full of desires, attention from nurses and elderly colleagues, and the role of religious teachers in assisting the elderly. The increased spiritual well-being is characterized by a cheerful attitude, not easy to complain and more passionate about reciting. Meanwhile, the decline in spiritual well-being often leads to an attitude of despair, anger, and even rebellion.

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