

The Relationship between Peer Social Support and Stress Levels among the Elderly in the Tresna Werdha Social Institution

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Abstract:

The elderly with cognitive decline becomes more anxious, restless, and socially withdrawn, thus requiring special attention. Social and emotional support and moral and material support provided by relatives and friends will strengthen the elderly's daily lives. This study aims to analyze the relationship between peer social support and stress levels in the elderly. The research design in this study was quantitative analytic with a cross-sectional approach. The sample in this study was 59 elderly living in the Tresna Werdha Social Institution. The measuring tool for this study used a Peer Social Support Questionnaire and the Stress Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ). The correlation test in this study used was the Spearman correlation test. The results of this study indicate that most of the elderly are in the moderate category of stress, with as many as 37 respondents (62.7%), and have peer social support in the positive category, namely 53 respondents (89.8%). Based on the Spearman correlation test, it was found that p -value = 0.001, which means that there is a correlation between peer social support and stress. Spearman's correlation value of -0.446 indicates that the direction of the correlation is negative, with the strength of the relationship being. The higher the value of peer social support, the lower the stress on the elderly. Tresna Werdha Social Institution health workers can motivate the elderly so they can increase peer social support and improve programs that benefit the elderly.

Article info:

Submitted:
23-02-2023
Revised:
29-03-2023
Accepted:
03-04-2023

Keywords:

peer; social support; stress; elderly

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.53713/htechj.v1i2.38>

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INTRODUCTION

The elderly is a group that is more susceptible to infection with infectious diseases caused by decreased immunity and comorbidities (Astuti et al., 2022). In the elderly, there is a decrease in the immune system and the body's response to infection (Kurniyawan et al., 2022). Age over 60 years is the final stage of the aging process, which impacts biological, economic, and social aspects (Budiman et al., 2021).

Aging is a total change in living things marked by decreased bodily functions (Savitri & Ratnawati, 2022). The aging process, physiological changes, and decreased immune function in the elderly put them at high risk of exposure to disease (Rojannah et al., 2022; Kurdi et al., 2021). Problems in the elderly due to the aging process are decreased vision function, body flexibility, memory, hearing function, sexual function, and muscle strength (Emmawati et al., 2022). The elderly with cognitive decline becomes more anxious, restless, and socially withdrawn, thus requiring special attention (Adisiwi et al., 2021). Lack of social interaction among the elderly can cause feelings of alienation, causing depression which can affect the quality of life of the elderly (Nuraini et al., 2021).

Stress is a condition that occurs due to changes in the environment which are considered something that threatens or damages a person's mental balance (Pusparini et al., 2021). Exposure to long-term and uncontrollable stress in the elderly can harm their health (Ariviana et al., 2021). An imbalance between pressure on individuals causes stress, and these individuals cannot deal with it, so they need more energy to neutralize it (Patuh et al., 2021). Stress can affect changes in hormonal balance in the body (Afkarina et al., 2022).

Someone experiencing stress due to life pressure problems in the body will show several psychological responses to the stress they face, causing several disturbances such as cognition, emotion, and social behavior (Cahyani et al., 2022). Stress can cause overall physical and psychological symptoms such as anxiety, changes in appetite, increased heart rate, disturbed sleep patterns (Wuryaningsih et al., 2018), feelings of anxiety, tension, and overreaction to something (Septiani et al., 2020), decreased focal points and headaches (Ningrum et al., 2022).

Stress can also increase the risk of various diseases, including cardiovascular and gastrointestinal diseases and diabetes (Kurniyawan et al., 2022). Stress has three levels, namely mild stress (acute stress), moderate stress (episodic acute stress), and severe stress (chronic) (Ratnasari et al., 2021). Mild or low stress is when a person experiences only a few hours of pressure (Dewi et al., 2020).

Social support is a function of the expression of supportive behavior given by people considered meaningful for the individual who receives it. Social support is also a form of providing a feeling of comfort psychologically and physically when a person is under various pressures (Pradini et al., 2020). Social support is a form of relationship that individuals receive from their environment, including family, friends, and society (Kurniyawan et al., 2022). This social support is usually in the form of encouragement, attention, appreciation, and affection so that a positive impact on someone becomes more valuable (Allaili et al., 2021).

Peer social support is the presence of peers who provide moral and spiritual encouragement, attention, and information to increase the intensity of behavior at certain times (Maharani et al., 2022). High peer emotional support means the elderly care about their peers through empathy, caring, concern, positive appreciation, and encouragement (Wuryaningsih et al., 2019). Social support will be felt if obtained from people trusted by the elderly (Suntari et al., 2022).

Social support will provide supportive behavior to the elderly considered essential and meaningful (Kurniyawn et al., 2022). Support in the form of actions, attitudes, and acceptance given to the elderly lasts a lifetime (Pakilaran et al., 2022). The most critical support includes informational, assessment, emotional, and instrumental support so the elderly can feel the benefits (Trisnadewi & Suniyadewi, 2022).

Social support is constructive for dealing with stressors and is expected to lead to validation, normalization of experiences, reduced social and emotional isolation, and a sense of togetherness (Gustyawan et al., 2022). Social and emotional support and moral and material support from relatives and friends will strengthen the elderly's daily lives (Widowati et al., 2022). The support of nurses, family, friends, and the community will make the elderly self-confident and improve their health status so they can return to interact with and benefit the community (Kurniyawan et al., 2023). This study aims to analyze the relationship between peer social support and stress levels in the elderly.

METHOD

The research design in this study was quantitative analytic with a cross-sectional approach. Aim to analyze the relationship between peer social support and stress levels in the elderly. The sample was 59 elderlies in the Tresna Werdha Social Institution, Jember Regency.

The sampling technique in this study used simple random sampling. The inclusion criteria in this study were the elderly willing to be respondents. Exclusion criteria in this study were: Elderly who are in total care, have impaired oral communication, and have dementia which is known through the MMSE score.

Peer social support was measured using the Peer Social Support questionnaire. Stress in the elderly was measured using a stress level questionnaire, namely the Stress Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ). The correlation test in this study used was the Spearman correlation test.

RESULT

Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents based on Age, Gender, Marital Status, and Education Level (n=59)

Variable	Median	Min-Max
Age (years)	68	63-81
Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Man	26	44.1
Woman	33	55.9
Formal Education		
No	29	49.2
Elementary	24	40.7
Junior high school	6	10.2
Marital Status		
Married	45	78.0
Divorced	14	22.0

Peer Social Support and Stress Level among Elderly

Table 2. Frequency of Peer Social Support and Stress Level among Elderly (n=59)

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Peer Social Support		
Positive	53	89.8
Negative	6	10.2
Stress Level		
Mild	16	27.1
Moderate	37	62.7
Severe	6	10.2

Relationship between Peer Social Support and Stress

Table 3. Result of Relationship Analysis Between Peer Social Support and Stress Level among Elderly in the Tresna Werdha Social Institution (n=59)

Variable	p-value	Correlation value (r)
Peer Social Support Stress Level	0.001	-0.446

DISCUSSION

Peer Social Support in the Elderly

Most of the elderly in the Tresna Werdha Social Institution, Jember Regency, peer social support in the positive category, namely 53 respondents (89.8%). Research on 60 elderly who live in social care homes for the elderly shows that almost half (45.0%) of as many as 27 people receive social support in the moderate category (Soewignjo et al., 2020).

Peer social support is the presence of peers who provide moral and spiritual encouragement, attention, and information to increase the intensity of behavior at certain times (Maharani et al., 2022). Social support will provide supportive behavior to the elderly considered essential and meaningful (Kurniyawan et al., 2022). Support in the form of actions, attitudes, and acceptance given to the elderly lasts a lifetime (Pakilaran et al., 2022). The most crucial support includes informational, assessment, emotional, and instrumental support so the elderly can feel the benefits (Trisnadewi & Suniyadewi, 2022).

Researchers assume that the high social support of peers is because the elderly are aware of the importance of guidance and support from their peers so that the elderly avoid feeling lonely. Guidance obtained by the elderly can be in the form of advice and suggestions on how the elderly deal with problems that occur in the elderly such as decreased physical condition, decreased sexual function, and potential changes in social roles. Positive social support from peers can make problems that exist in other elderly overcome because by providing support, the elderly will feel cared for and loved.

Stress Levels in the Elderly

Table 4 shows that most of the elderly in the Tresna Werdha Nursing Home, Jember Regency, have stress values in moderate stress, with as many as 37 respondents (62.7%) and severe as many as six respondents (10.2%). This research is in line with the results of Hilmi's research (2014) which states that moderate stress in the elderly is more than severe stress.

Exposure to long-term and uncontrollable stress in the elderly can hurt their health (Ariviana et al., 2021). An imbalance between pressure on individuals causes stress, and these individuals cannot deal with it, so they need more energy to neutralize it (Patuh et al., 2021). Stress can affect changes in hormonal balance in the body (Afkarina et al., 2022). Researchers assume that this happens because they do not live with their families, so they feel alone and lack support is given. With the current conditions experienced by the elderly in the Tresna Werdha Social Institution, sometimes the elderly feel that they have been unable to adapt to the new environment, causing stress.

The Relationship between Peer Social Support and Stress Levels in the Elderly

The result of statistical tests using the Spearman correlation test obtained p-value=0.001, meaning there is a correlation between peer social support and stress. Spearman's correlation

value of -0446 indicates that the direction of the correlation is negative, with the strength of the relationship being. The higher the value of peer social support, the lower the stress on the elderly. Other research that supports this research is conducted by Nurdianti (2017), which states that a significant relationship exists between peer social support and the stress level of students preparing their thesis.

Social support is beneficial for dealing with stressors and is expected to lead to validation, normalization of experiences, reduced social and emotional isolation, and a sense of togetherness (Gustyawan et al., 2022). Social and emotional support and moral and material support from relatives and friends will strengthen the elderly's daily lives (Widowati et al., 2022). The support of nurses, family, friends, and the community will make the elderly self-confident and improve their health status so they can return to interacting with and benefiting the community (Kurniyawan et al., 2023).

The elderly who lives in Tresna Werdha Social Institution have more time with their peers than their families. Social support from peers is exceptionally vital, which can affect stress levels in the elderly. Social support from peers can be a concern for Tresna Werdha Social Institution health workers to build intimacy and improve the ability of the elderly to socialize. Tresna Werdha Social Institution health workers can increase support between friends for the elderly, who can be a strength for the elderly to deal with stress.

CONCLUSION

There is a relationship between peer social support and stress in the elderly at the Tresna Werdha Social Institution, Jember Regency. Health workers can motivate the elderly to increase peer social support and improve programs that benefit the elderly. Gathering with peers can increase intimacy between the elderly in Tresna Werdha Social Institutions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We thank the Faculty of Nursing, Universitas Jember, Indonesia, for their support.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest in this article.

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