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The Elderly's Anxiety Levels during the Pandemic

Supardi[1], Fitri Suciana[1], Nur Choiriyah[1]

[1]*Departement of Nursing, Universitas Muhammadiyah Klaten, Central Java, Indonesia*

A B S T R A C T

The covid-19 pandemic occurred in early 2020 in Indonesia. In 2021, the number of confirmed covid-19 patients has increased. The pandemic had an impact on various sectors, such as the economy, education, society and psychology. The impact of covid-19 has caused social and psychological problems for everyone, including the elderly. One of the impacts on the elderly is anxiety that affect the body's immunity and becomes comorbid. This study used a descriptive quantitative research design. Total sampling was 46 respondents with criteria aged over 60 years. The instrument used the HRSA instruments to measure anxiety. The results showed that the average age of the respondents was 70 years, with the most gender being female (56.3%), the last education was elementary school (73.9%), most of the respondents were not working (54.3%) and anxiety levels was low anxiety (34.9%). Anxiety in the elderly was caused by excessive worrying because of a situation, and this excessive worry can decrease the body's immunity resulting in the body being susceptible to infection with viruses or bacteria. It can cause the elderly to become comorbid infected with covid-19 viruses.

INTRODUCTION

World Health Organization (WHO) began to declare covid-19 to be a pandemic in early 2020. In Indonesia, the covid-19 pandemic began to be determined since October 2020 as many as 392,934 people were confirmed, 61.851 cases were declared active, 317.672 were declared cured and 13.411 people were declared dead (Setiawan et al., 2020).

The pandemic in Indonesia has had both material and spiritual impacts. The economic impact is reflected in the decline in services and products sold in the community (Thaha, 2020), and the impact on education can change learning activities from face-to-face to online systems (Mansyur, 2020).

The increasing information about covid-19 pandemic causes excessive anxiety at various ages including the elderly (Rayani & Purqoti, 2020). The elderly experiencing anxiety for a long time can affect a decrease body immunity (Khasanah, U., 2016). The government is trying to overcome the covid-19 pandemic by regulations regarding the implementation of the health protocols which have succeeded in reducing anxiety and creating more peace for the community. The implementation of health protocols can increase confidence to be able to stay healthy during the covid-19 pandemic (Gumantan *et all*., 2020). Developing positive thinking such as self-talk is also believed to reduce anxiety in the elderly (Manna, 2019). The elderly is a group at risk of contracting COVID-19, so it is necessary to prevent transmission of COVID-19 by complying with the protocol health start from the individual level of the elderly, families

and the surroundings. Prevention of the spread of COVID-19 to the elderly requires anticipation impact of social restriction policy. The implementation of the health protocol is expected to reduce the impact on the elderly infected with the COVID-19 virus and reduce the anxiety that can rise due to the high category of COVID-19 cases in the elderly (Keputusan Menteri Kesehatan Republik Indonesia, 2020).

METHOD

This study used a quantitative descriptive method, to determine the level of anxiety in the elderly during a pandemic. The population was the elderly aged 60 years; the sample used a total sampling technique. Data collection was carried out offline from house to house by using implementing health protocols. The instrument used was HRSA with a total of 14 statements. Respondents after data collection received education about knowledge of implementing health protocols by washing hands, using a mask, avoiding crowds, keeping distance and reducing mobilization.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Univariate analysis of characteristics of elderly respondents in Dukuh Kuncen (N=46) in 2021

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	SD
Age (Mean)	70		9, 36653
Gender			
Man	20	43,5	
Women	26	56,3	
Education			
Uneducated	6	13,0	
Primary School	34	73,9	
Junior High School	1	2,2	
Senior High School	3	6,5	
Diploma	1	2,2	
Bachelor	1	2,2	
Occupation			
Work	21	45,7	
No work	25	54,3	
Anxiety level			
No Anxiety	15	32,6	
Mild anxiety	16	34,8	
Moderate anxiety	9	19,6	
Severe anxiety	6	13,0	

Table 2 shows that of 46 respondents, female respondents were 26 (56.3%), the level of education was elementary school education of 34 (73.9%), some of the respondents who did not work were 25 (54.3%), and the level of anxiety is the level of mild anxiety 16 (34.8%) respondents.

The study results in Dukuh Kuncen showed that the age range of the elderly was at least 60 years and a maximum of 98 years, the average age being 70.1 year. Previous research conducted by Wiyono showed that anxiety appeared for the first time at the 60 years, and was higher at the age of 60 years and over (Guslinda et al., 2020).

Based on gender, the number of male respondents was 20 respondents (43.5%), and the number of female respondents was 26 respondents (56.5%). Anxiety can occur in women because women are more sensitive to emotions that can affect their mental condition (Pramana et al., 2016).

Based on the study results, it shows that the most education among respondents is an elementary school with 34 respondents (73.9%). Education affects a person's level of anxiety because education can affect a person's mindset and a person's ability to find solutions in solving problems (Pramana et al., 2016).

The respondent's results who do not work were 25 respondents (54.3%). Respondents who work were 21 respondents (45.7%). Most of the respondents are still farmers.

Based on the study results showed that the elderly who were not anxious were 15 respondents (32.6%), the elderly with mild anxiety were 16 respondents (34.8%), the elderly with moderate anxiety were 9 respondents (19.6%),and the elderly with severe anxiety by 6 respondents (13.0%). The data collected showed that the anxiety of the elderly during the covid-19 pandemic includes mild, moderate and severe anxiety.

Anxiety is a person's emotional condition with a feeling of discomfort in himself and is an unpleasant experience accompanied by feelings of helplessness and uncertainty and the cause is not known (Annisa & Ifdil, 2016).

Anxiety is the fear of something happening due to the anticipation of danger which is a signal for individuals to take action to deal with a threat (Sutejo, 2018).

According to (Rosyanti & Hadi, 2020) sadness and anxiety are normal reactions in threatening and unexpected situations. Reactions that can be caused due to a pandemic, especially a coronavirus pandemic, can be in the form of changes in irritability, anxiety, insomnia, concentrations, reduced productivity and interpersonal conflict.

The elderly experience vulnerability due to a degenerative process that causes a decrease in the body's immunity. The decrease in body immunity causes the elderly to be at risk of being infected with disease, including the coronavirus. It is easy for the elderly to feel excessive anxiety during the Covid-19 pandemic, which ultimately affects their physical health. This situation causes complex and psychologically stressful problems for everyone who needs immediate attention and treatment so that it does not become a more serious mental disorder. The community at risk is the current state of society (in Zahluku & Rantung, 2019).

Anxiety in the elderly occurs from an unclear and diffused sense of worry related to feelings of uncertainty, helplessness and unspecified objects. This anxiety occurs directly through physiological changes such as shaking, sweating, increased heart rate, abdominal pain, and shortness of breath as well as behavioral changes such as restlessness, unstable voice, and irritability. Indirectly symptoms arise in an effort to fight anxiety Febrina & Lesmana (in Guslinda et al., 2020).

CONCLUSION

The study results showed that the average age of the elderly in Dukuh Kuncen is 70 years, with gender dominated by women (56.5%), the most education is an elementary school (73.9%), and many are not working (54.3%). Most of the elderly experience anxiety in a range of mild to severe (76.4%).

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