

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY SUPPORT AND SOCIAL INTERACTION AMONG THE ELDERLY AT PAYUNG SEKAKI PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER, PEKANBARU.

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Abstract

Family support is a real form of interpersonal relationship between families, one of the goals of which is to protect someone from problems such as helping reduce stress or burdens. In its task, the family carries out an adaptation role which helps create and maintain a culture in harmony with physical, emotional, mental and social development, with the increasing number of elderly people also facing problems experienced by the elderly such as physical, psychological, social & economic changes. One of the social problems resulting from the aging process experienced by the elderly is difficulty connecting with people around them or difficulty having social interactions. This research aims to determine the relationship between family support and social interaction among the elderly at the Payung Sekaki Community Health Center, Pekanbaru City. This research is a quantitative research with a correlation design with a cross sectional approach. The sample for this research was 82 elderly people who came to the Payung Sekaki Community Health Center, Pekanbaru City on December 10-20 2024 and the sampling technique used was Accidental Sampling. This research instrument uses a family support questionnaire and a social interaction questionnaire. The analysis used was univariate analysis with respondent characteristics and bivariate analysis using the chi square test. The results of this research showed that more than half of family support was high, namely 55 people (67.1%), and more than half of social interaction was 56 people (68.3%), and the chi square statistical test obtained a p value = 0.001 < 0.05, which means that H₀ was rejected, so it can be concluded that there is a relationship between family support and social interaction in the elderly at the Payung Sekaki Community Health Center, Pekanbaru City with an OR value of 5,000, meaning that elderly people who receive high family support have a high level of social interaction. 5,000 times better than elderly people who have low family support.

Keyword: Social Interaction 1; Family Support 2; Elderly 3;.

INTRODUCTION

Family support is a tangible form of interpersonal relationship among family members, with one of its main goals being to protect individuals from various problems, including reducing stress and burdens. Within its function, the family plays an adaptive role that helps create and maintain balance in physical, emotional, mental, and social development. The increasing number of elderly people in Indonesia is accompanied by various problems they face, such as physical, psychological, social, and economic changes. One of the social problems arising from the aging process is the difficulty of the elderly in establishing interactions with those around them. Low levels of social interaction may lead to loneliness, isolation, and a lack of emotional support. Therefore, this study aims to determine the relationship between family support and social interaction among the elderly at the Payung Sekaki Public Health Center in Pekanbaru City. Elderly individuals represent the final stage of human development, a period often characterized by a decline in physical, cognitive, and psychosocial functions.

The elderly are defined as individuals aged 60 years and above who are no longer capable of independently meeting their daily needs (Ratnawati, 2018). Aging is not a disease

but a natural biological process that reduces the body's physiological resilience. According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2022), the global elderly population aged 60 years and above reached approximately 1.4 billion in 2023 and is projected to rise to 2.1 billion by 2050. In Indonesia, the elderly population represents 10.82% or around 29.3 million people, and this number continues to grow each year (BPS, 2022). Family support plays a crucial role as a form of interpersonal relationship aimed at protecting family members from stress or emotional burden (Saputri et al., 2019).

The family acts as an adaptive system that creates and maintains balance in physical, emotional, and social development (Nurhayati et al., 2021). As the number of elderly people increases, so do the challenges they face — including physical, psychological, social, and economic changes. One major social issue faced by the elderly is difficulty in maintaining social interaction, especially due to reduced mobility and family members' busy schedules (Ezalina, 2024). Social interaction is defined as reciprocal relationships or mutual influences among individuals within a society (Nurliawati et al., 2020). Previous studies have shown that elderly individuals tend to experience poor social interaction (Andesty & Syahrul, 2018; Sari, 2021; Setyowati et al., 2023). Decreased interaction can lead to feelings of loneliness, isolation, and reduced quality of life (Susanto et al., 2021). Family attention and care are vital for helping the elderly maintain optimism and emotional stability (Schulz-Allen, 2014). Family support—including emotional, informational, instrumental, and appraisal support—positively influences the psychological well-being and social functioning of the elderly (Hutagalung, 2019). Families that provide strong support foster a sense of belonging, social connectedness, and improved interaction with others.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a quantitative research method with a correlational design and a cross-sectional approach. The sample consisted of 82 elderly individuals who visited the Payung Sekaki Public Health Center in Pekanbaru City from December 10 to December 20, 2024. The sampling technique used was accidental sampling. The instruments used were a family support questionnaire and a social interaction questionnaire. Data analysis was conducted using univariate analysis to describe respondents' characteristics and bivariate analysis with the Chi-square test to determine the relationship between family support and social interaction.

RESEARCH RESULTS

The results showed that more than half of the respondents had high family support (55 respondents or 67.1%) and more than half had good social interaction (56 respondents or 68.3%). The Chi-square statistical test yielded a p-value of 0.001 (<0.05), indicating that H₀ was rejected. This means there is a significant relationship between family support and social interaction among the elderly. The Odds Ratio (OR) value was 5.000, meaning that elderly individuals who received high family support were five times more likely to have good social interaction compared to those with low family support.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study showed that the majority of elderly respondents had high levels of family support (67.1%) and good social interactions (68.3%). This finding indicates that family still plays a crucial role in the social lives of older adults. Family support serves as a primary support system, helping older adults cope with the physical, psychological, and social

changes associated with aging. According to Friedman (2010), family is a primary source of support that can influence an individual's well-being and social functioning, particularly in the elderly.

Statistical analysis using the Chi-square test showed a p-value of 0.001 (<0.05), indicating a significant relationship between family support and social interactions in older adults. The rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0) confirms that the level of family support significantly influences the elderly's ability to interact socially. This aligns with social support theory, which states that individuals with good social support tend to have more active and meaningful social relationships (House, 1981).

An Odds Ratio (OR) of 5.000 indicates that seniors with high levels of family support are five times more likely to have positive social interactions than those with low levels of family support. This figure underscores the strong role of family in fostering social engagement in seniors. Family support not only provides physical assistance but also increases seniors' motivation and confidence to participate in social activities (Sarafino & Smith, 2014).

Family support, which includes emotional, informational, instrumental, and appraisal support, contributes to a sense of security and appreciation in seniors. This allows seniors to feel accepted and confident in establishing social relationships with those around them. Research by Setiadi (2013) suggests that emotional support from family can reduce feelings of loneliness and social isolation in seniors, thereby improving the quality of their social interactions.

This finding aligns with previous studies showing that seniors living with family have better levels of social interaction and quality of life than those living alone. A study by Litwin and Shiovitz-Ezra (2011) revealed that the presence of family members plays a crucial role in maintaining social engagement and mental health in seniors. Therefore, strengthening the role of the family is very important as a promotive and preventive strategy in improving the social welfare of the elderly.

CONCLUSION

There is a significant relationship between family support and social interaction among the elderly at the Payung Sekaki Public Health Center, Pekanbaru ($p = 0.001$; OR = 5.000). Elderly individuals who receive high family support are five times more likely to have good social interaction compared to those who receive low family support.

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