

KONDISI PEREKONOMIAN DAN PENGETAHUAN KELUARGA YANG RENDAH MEMICU PENGABAIAAN LANSIA PEREMPUAN DI KELUARGA BESAR

(Poverty and Lack of Knowledge Cause Negligence of Female Elders Living in Extended Families)

Setho Hadisuyatmana,* M Ruli Maulana,* Makhfudli Makhfudli*

*Program Studi Pendidikan Ners Fakultas Keperawatan

Email: setho.h@fkip.unair.ac.id

ABSTRAK

Pendahuluan: Pengabaian lansia yang melibatkan perempuan usia lanjut seringkali tidak dilaporkan di Ampenan Nusa Tenggara Barat. Meskipun bukti ilmiah terpublikasi masih sangat kurang untuk mendukung signifikansi fenomena ini, sebuah pilot studi menunjukkan bahwa lansia yang tinggal bersama keluarga di Ampenan hidup dalam keadaan kotor, kulit kering, dan mengalami kurang gizi. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengeksplorasi faktor berhubungan dengan kasus-kasus yang tidak dilaporkan pada kelompok lansia tersebut. **Metode:** Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan *cross sectional* secara deskriptif analitik. Tiga puluh empat keluarga besar yang tinggal dengan dan merawat lansia perempuan di wilayah kerja Puskesmas Ampenan dilibatkan secara purposif sebagai partisipan dalam penelitian ini. Data tentang kesadaran keluarga terhadap penelantaran lansia dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan kuesioner yang dikembangkan berdasarkan *Elder Abuse Instrumen* (EAI) melalui komponen checklist dan kecurigaan terhadap perilaku pengabaian pada lansia perempuan didapatkan menggunakan checklist 13-item dari EAI. Data kemudian dianalisis dengan menggunakan Spearman rho dengan tingkat kealpaan $\alpha \leq 0,05$. **Hasil:** Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kurangnya pengetahuan keluarga memiliki korelasi yang kuat dengan peristiwa pengabaian lansia ($p = 0,000$ dengan $r = 0,643$). **Diskusi:** Analisis temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa tidak hanya kurangnya pengetahuan keluarga, tetapi juga situasi ekonomi yang buruk memicu mereka secara tidak sengaja mengabaikan orang tua perempuan mereka. Hasil ini menutup kesenjangan kurangnya bukti yang dapat menjelaskan faktor-faktor berhubungan dengan kejadian pengabaian lansia di kawasan timur Indonesia. Penelitian lebih lanjut diperlukan untuk menjelaskan signifikansi dan luasan dampak dari pengabaian terhadap lansia. Peneliti menyarankan bahwa Dinas Kesehatan, Puskesmas dan profesional kesehatan memiliki peran penting untuk mendidik masyarakat sebagai langkah pertama untuk meningkatkan kualitas hidup dan menciptakan proses penuaan yang sejahtera bagi lansia.

Kata kunci: pengabaian, lansia, pengetahuan, ekonomi, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Elder neglect remains as unreported problem that involves old women in Ampenan West Nusa Tenggara. Despite the paucity of evidence to report the significance, an earlier pilot study showed that elders who lived with their family in Ampenan were found dirty, with dry skin and malnourished. The purpose of this study was to explore the correlating factors of the unreported cases of neglect among these elders. **Method:** This study was a cross-sectional study conducted using a descriptive analytic approach. Thirty-four extended families lived with female elders in the working area of Puskesmas Ampenan and were purposively involved as participants in this study. Family awareness of abuse was collected using a questionnaire developed based on an Elder Abuse Instrument component checklist and the suspicion of instances of neglect among the elders was collected using the 13-item checklist from the Elder Abuse Instrument. The data were then analysed using Spearman's rho ($\alpha \leq 0,05$). **Result:** The results show that a family's lack of knowledge has a strong correlation with elder neglect ($p = 0,000$ with $r = 0,643$). **Discussion:** The analysis of this finding suggests that not only were the families lacking in knowledge, but they were also being burdened by poor economic situations that triggered the unnecessary neglect of their female elders. These results bridge the paucity of evidence to explain the correlating factors with the incidence of elder abuse in eastern Indonesia. Further research is necessary to explain the size and the impact of neglect towards elders. It is suggested that local departments of health, Puskesmas and health professionals should educate the community as the first step to improving the elders' quality of life and promoting healthy aging.

Keyword: neglect, elder, knowledge, economic, Indonesia

INTRODUCTION

Neglect is one of the most common family mistreatments towards elder (Alizadeh-Khoei et al. 2014; Kaur et al. 2015). Neglect can be defined as intentional or unintentional failure in providing basic care for the elder (Maurier & Smith 2005). This definition also refers to self and carer's failures in providing proper food, physical and psychological

isolation, leaving the elder to stay in damp clothing, or other harmful situations. Poor hygiene, having skin problems, being malnourished and living in a filthy space are the major indicators of neglect (Elder Abuse Prevention Unit 2014).

The World Health Organization (2015) confirms that most of the cases occurred in extended families and were misdiagnosed. The

Bureau of Justice Statistics (2012) reported that in the United States about 2.2 million cases of mistreatment are reported annually. About 67.3% of the victims were female (National Center on Elder Abuse 2015). Similarly, cases also occurred in Spain. Marmolejo (2008) reported that the victims were mostly female elders. The fact that they could live longer, be more financially dependent, and more prone to chronic diseases (when compared with the opposite gender) have made them vulnerable as victims of abuse (Anetzberger 2012).

Earlier studies added advanced age, dependency, interfamilial conflict, depression, isolation, and poor health as main factors that contribute to neglect (Alizadeh-Khoei et al. 2014; Begley & Matthews 2010; Maryam et al. 2012). Furthermore, burdened stress in providing care for all the members, and the economic situation of the family also triggers the mistreatment of elders (Maurier & Smith 2005). In addition, neglect could be a result of caregivers' lack of awareness (Bureau of Justice Statistics 2012).

A pilot to this study showed that elders who lived with their families in the sub-district of Ampenan Tengah of West Nusa Tenggara were found dirty, with dry skin, and malnourished. They were left alone in their family-houses while the younger adults were working outside. Thus, this study was designed to explain further the contributors to elder neglect in the working area of Puskesmas Ampenan in West Nusa Tenggara.

METHOD

This study explored the correlations between the second generation's knowledge of how to care for their female elder and the possibility of elder neglect in families. The working area of one public health centre (Puskesmas) in Mataram, the capital region of a province on the Island of Nusa Tenggara Puskesmas Ampenan was selected prior to the earlier pilot observation which showed that more than thirteen female elders living in that area were in poor condition and left alone without support for most of the day. According to the definition proposed by the Elder Abuse Prevention Unit (2014), their conditions could be considered to be neglect.

The ethical clearance of this study has been approved by the Faculty of Medicine Universitas Airlangga Ethical Committee on

Health Research under the article number 442/EC/KEPK/FKUA/2016. This study used a descriptive analytical approach, a cross-sectional method. Thirty-four extended families that were taking care of grandmothers and/or their female parents-in-law and had more than one child in a house were involved as the unit of analysis. Both male and female (husbands and wives) adults' knowledge of how to care for elders was analysed as an independent variable, while the possibility of neglect experienced by female-older members (grandmothers) of the family was the dependent variable.

The data for both variables were collected through questionnaires and a checklist adapted from the Fulmer's (2003) Elder Abuse Index (EAI). The collected data were then analysed carefully using Spearman's Rho test with a significant level of 95%.

RESULTS

The demographical data in Table 1 shows that most of the adults in the families were of a productive age of 25 to 45 years old. About 79% of the adult females in the families were full-time mothers who were not only taking care of their female-elder family members, but also their children. It can be assumed that the

Table 1. Demographical distribution of the families involved as participants in the study.

| No | Characteristics | total | % |
|------------------|-------------------------|-------|------|
| Age of the adult | | | |
| 1 | respondents | | |
| | a. 26-35 y.o. | 22 | 64.7 |
| | b. 36-45 y.o. | 12 | 35.2 |
| | Total | 34 | 100 |
| Level of highest | | | |
| 2 | education | | |
| | a. Primary | 25 | 74 |
| | b. High school | 8 | 24 |
| | c. Tertiary | 1 | 2.9 |
| | Total | 34 | 100 |
| 3 | Occupation | | |
| | a. Housewife | 27 | 79 |
| | b. Seller | 3 | 8.8 |
| | c. Employee | 1 | 2.9 |
| | e. Others (uncertainty) | 3 | 8.8 |
| | Total | 34 | 100 |
| 4 | Elders' age | | |
| | a. 66-70 y.o. | 18 | 53 |
| | b. 71-75 y.o. | 12 | 35 |
| | c. >75 y.o. | 4 | 12 |
| | Total | 34 | 100 |

income of these families came from the husbands only.

Almost all of the adult respondents have limited knowledge, reflected in their highest degree of education. The data gathered from the questionnaire-guided interviews showed that the adults' understandings of elder abuse were poor. Table 2 shows that only three families had enough awareness of abuse, while about 47.1% others did not know anything about abuse.

The test using EAI showed that 41.2% of the female elders who were members of the families as responders were suspected of being unintentionally neglected. However, the test also revealed that the other 58.8% elders were not neglected (See Table 3).

The statistical test (Spearman's Rho) revealed that adults' (referring to husband and wife) knowledge about abuse correlates with the prevalence of elder neglect ($p=0.001$). It also indicated that knowledge has a strong correlation with neglect ($r=0.643$) (See Table

Table 2. Family awareness of elder abuse in the working area of Puskesmas Ampenan, year 2016

| No | Knowledge and awareness | Total | % |
|----|-------------------------|-------|------|
| 1 | Sufficient | 3 | 8,8 |
| 3 | Fair | 15 | 44,1 |
| 4 | Insufficient | 16 | 47,1 |
| | Total | 34 | 100 |

Table 3. The result of EAI test for the elders observed in the study

| No | Elder Assessment Instrument | Total | % |
|----|-----------------------------|-------|------|
| 1 | Not neglected | 20 | 58.8 |
| 2 | History of being neglected | 14 | 41.2 |
| | Total | 34 | 100 |

Table 4. Strong correlation between knowledge and elder neglect

| EA Awareness | Elder Abuse Assessment | | | | Total | % |
|--------------|------------------------|------|---------|------|-------|------|
| | Non-neglect | % | Neglect | % | | |
| Sufficient | 3 | 8.8 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 8.8 |
| Fair | 13 | 38.2 | 2 | 5.9 | 15 | 44.4 |
| Insufficient | 4 | 11.8 | 12 | 35.3 | 16 | 47.1 |
| Total | 20 | 58.8 | 14 | 41.2 | 34 | 100 |

$p = 0,000$

$r = 0,643$

4).

DISCUSSION

Education is one of the supporting factors for individuals in gaining and synthesising information. (Notoatmodjo (2007) asserts that the higher the education the more knowledge an individual can get. This means that the higher the level of education the more information individuals would gain, as well as improving their broad knowledge.

The results of this study imply that almost half of the involved respondents neglected their female elders. They were mostly malnourished and poor. Among the suspected contributors, families' lack of awareness about elder neglect was identified to correlate significantly with the unreported cases. IN the authors' opinion, participants' lack of knowledge has made them unable to identify whether they have treated their elders correctly. The respondents' lack of knowledge was suspected because of the small flow of information in Ampenan, the small village in West Nusa Tenggara, the place they lived. The Puskesmas (local public health service) in Ampenan had never been involved with families nor provided information about elders' health. On the other hand, there is no evidence to support that elder abuse is either an important or familiar topic. Therefore, unfamiliarity of elder abuse became one major contributor to the high prevalence of unreported neglect.

This study also suggests that poor financial support is another factor in neglect. This finding showed that most of the neglected elders lived in families with low economic status, where daily needs are often short. According to the American Psychological Association (2012) this situation could lead to family stress and triggers neglect of elders. The situation was worse for elders who lived with families where the householders do not have permanent work. The householders would have been burdened with their responsibility in providing proper living conditions for their families with children and also for their elders. Given that the majority of householders in Ampenan were unemployed and did not have permanent work, it is reasonable to conclude that elders were unnecessarily neglected.

The awareness of a family plays a major role as a predisposing factor to an act of abuse (Notoatmodjo 2007). Neglected elders as a subject of this study lived with families who

were not aware of elder abuse. This implies a strong correlation between the unfamiliarity of abuse as a health issue and the incidence of neglect. This study concludes that the lack of information resources, the insufficient effort by Puskesmas to involve families, and unemployment promotes the unreported cases of neglect in Ampenan. Furthermore, the number of neglect could continue to rise as unimportant message in eastern Indonesia. Therefore, it is suggested that the local department of health, Puskesmas and health professionals educate the community as the first step to improving the elders' quality of life and promoting healthy aging.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion

The unfamiliarity of elder abuse was highlighted as factors that correlates with neglect experienced by elders who lived in extended families. The insufficient knowledge among the adults of extended families with whom the elders lived was strongly correlated with unreported cases of neglect. The poor and burden of economic welfare in Ampenan are also correlated with the unnecessary acts of abuse by families. These results add to the available evidence found in earlier studies and theories. However, this study did not explain the extent of the abuse and how big the impact of neglect toward the elders was. These results bridge the paucity of evidence to explain the correlating factors for the incidence of elder abuse in eastern Indonesia.

Recommendation

It is suggested that the local department of health, Puskesmas and health professionals educate the community as the first step to improving elders' quality of life and promoting healthy aging.

REFERENCE

- Alizadeh-Khoei, M, Sharifi, F, Hossain, SZ, Fakhrzadeh, H & Salimi, Z, 2014, 'Elder Abuse: Risk Factors of Abuse in Elderly Community-Dwelling Iranians', *Educational Gerontology*, vol. 40, no. 7, pp. 543–554.
- American Psychological Association 2012, *Elder Abuse & Neglect In Search of Solutions*, The American Psychological Association, Washington.
- Anetzberger, G, 2012, 'An update on the nature and scope of elder abuse', *Generations*, vol. 36, no. 3, pp. 12–20.
- Begley, E & Matthews, F, 2010, 'Protecting older adults: A policy and legal review of "Elder Abuse in Ireland"', *Journal of Studies*, vol. 99, no. 393.
- Bureau of Justice Statistics 2012, *Half of Violent Victimization of the Elderly in Michigan from 2005–2009 Involved Serious Acts of Violence*, The United States Department of justice, Michigan, viewed 28 October 2016, <<http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/press/vcerlem0509pr.cfm%3E>.
- Elder Abuse Prevention Unit 2014, *Elder Abuse: Neglect*, Queensland, viewed 28 October 2016, <<http://www.eapu.com.au/elder-abuse/neglect%3E>.
- Kaur, J, Kaur, J & Sujata, N, 2015, Comparative study on perceived abuse and social neglect among rural and urban geriatric population. *Indian journal of psychiatry*, 57(4), p.375.
- Marmolejo, II 2008, *Maltrato de personas mayores en la familia en España*, Fundación De La Comunitat Valenciana Para El Estudio De La Violencia (Centro Reina Sofía), Valencia.
- Maryam, RS, Rosidawati, Riasmini, N & Siti, SE 2012, 'Beban keluarga merawat lansia dapat memicu tindakan kekerasan dan penelantaran terhadap lansia', *Jurnal Keperawatan Indonesia*, vol. 15, no. 3, pp. 143–150.
- Maurier, FA & Smith, CM, 2005, *Community/Public Health Nursing Practice: Health for Families and Populations*, Elsevier Saunders.
- National Center on Elder Abuse 2015, *Research Statistics/Data: What We Do*, National Center on Elder Abuse, California, viewed 28 October 2016, <<https://ncea.acl.gov/whatwedo/research/statistics.html>>.
- Notoatmodjo, S, 2007, *Promosi Kesehatan dan Perilaku*, Rineka Cipta, Jakarta.
- World Health Organization, 2015, *World Report on Ageing and Health*, WH Organization, Luxembourg.