

# Penelitian 27

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## THE EFFECT OF SPIRITUAL COUNSELING ON INCREASED ELDERLY SPIRITUALITY

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### Abstract

**Objective:** Spiritual aspects are important parts of the life of the elderly. The current research aimed to assess the effectiveness of spiritual counseling for elders spirituality. Method: The research design used was a quasi-experiment on 34 elderly divided into two groups at a nursing home in Pekanbaru. Questionnaires were asked before and after the spiritual counseling intervention. The data analysis used was the Wilcoxon analysis and the Mann Whitney U-Test. **Result:** The median of elderly spirituality after being given spirituality counseling in the experiment group was 10.00 with a standard deviation of 1.074. The median after without being given spirituality counseling in the control group was 8.00, with a standart deviation of 1.364. The current study result shows an increase in spirituality in the experimental group and that spiritual counseling is an effective method in increasing the elderly spirituality with a p-value of 0.04. **Conclusion:** Spiritual counseling adoption for the elderly is important to increase their spirituality.

**Keywords:** Spirituality, Spiritual Counseling, Elderly At A Nursing Home

### Introduction

The Elderly people over 60 years old, which is the final process of one's life span stages before death<sup>1</sup>. Physical changed will lead to a decreased physical condition, such as health problems and the inability to perform a spiritual activity especially praying. These health problems usually disturb elderly praying behaviors. According to a study conducted by<sup>2</sup>

The elderly with low spirituality and has a low health condition. Another study also found that spirituality and religion affect the elderly's well-being or physical health<sup>3</sup>.

The spiritual dimension, fact, can teach humans to know the relation between humans and their creator (Allah SWT) (vertical dimension), with others, and human with the environment (horizontal dimension)<sup>4</sup>. Spiritual is everything that regarding one's relationship with a non-mate<sup>6</sup> life or a higher power (God) and is also an essential part of one's overall health and well-being<sup>5,6</sup>. The spiritual aspect can affect the health of the elderly

holistically (thoroughly) and be a bridge in getting closer to God. Mature spirituality will help the elderly face reality, play an active role in life, and formulate the meaning and purpose of life circumstances<sup>7</sup>. According a reserach<sup>4</sup>, with a strong spiritual life can naturalize and eliminate diseases. Thus, Spiritual life can be provided by providing counseling services to the elderly.

Spiritual conseling is a form of assistance to individuals so that they will have the ability to develop their *fitrah* as a spiritual being (homo religious), behave following religious values (noble sincere), as well as overcome the problems of life through knowledge, beliefs, and practices of religious rituals<sup>8</sup>. According to Yusuf (2007)<sup>9</sup>, suggesting spiritual counseling can be done by giving prayer techniques, scripture references, spiritual experiences, spiritual confrontations, having prayer together between clients and counselors, practicing forgiving impulses, teaching about the use of community or religious groups,

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having client prayers, and teaching religious radiotherapy as well as spiritual concepts.

Preliminary study on the ten elderly in a nursing home in Pekanbaru (PSTW Khusnul Khotimah), most of the elderly did not attend religious activity for some reasons such as physical problems and limited prayer equipment. Spiritual counseling has never been the nursing home. Thus, it can be concluded that it is important to analyze the effectiveness of spiritual counseling for elderly spirituality in PSTW Khusnul Khotimah, Pekanbaru.

**Method**

The current study used a quasi-experimental design with a non-equivalent control group consisting of 34 elderly as the experimental and control group. The sample was determined non-randomly with the incidental sampling technique. This research was conducted at a nursing home, PSTW Khusnul Khotimah that is a government nursing home in Riau. In this study, the inclusion criteria were elderly who did not have mental disorders, could perform the prayer, did not experience hearing loss, more than 60 years old, and did not need special care. The questionnaire asked was regarding the spiritual aspects, including the dimensions of trust, responsibility in life, and self-actualization. The questionnaire has been tested for validity and reliability. The spiritual counseling was carried out for 10-15 minutes every day for one week by the nurses. Both sample groups were subjected to a pretest and post-test to assess the elderly's spirituality level before and after the counseling. The Wilcoxon test and Maan-Whitney U-Test were used to analyze the data to determine the spiritual counseling effectiveness.

**Results**

Comparison between the elderly spirituality score before and after counseling in experiment and control groups

**Table 1**  
**Comparison between the elderly spirituality score before and after counseling in experiment and control groups**

Variable	N	Median	SD	P-value
After experiment	17	14.00	4.566	
After control	17	11.00	4.358	0.04

Based on the table 1, The median of elderly spirituality after being given spirituality counseling in the experiment group was 10.00 with a standard deviation of 1.074. The median after without being given spirituality counseling in the control group was 8.00, with a standart deviation of 1.364. Thus statistical test results show that spiritual counseling is effective to improve elderly spirituality

**Discussion**

Spiritual well-being has several dimensions; cognitive dimension and affection dimension. The cognitive dimension is related to personal satisfaction, while the affection dimension is a person's life experience. Thus, cognitively, when the elderly have received spiritual counseling, they are expected to be able to recall a series of praying activities such as, remembering God, praying five times a day, and reading the Qur'an to remind oneself again of the oneness of Allah SWT. Spiritual well-being refers to positive circumstances and feelings, behaviors, and cognition, to interact with others. Moreover, the transcendent dimension means, giving individuals a sense of identity, integrity, satisfaction, beauty, respect, positive attitude, peace and inner harmony, purpose, and life direction<sup>10</sup>.

The study results obtained was the elderly spiritual score before spiritual counseling was 10.00 for the experiment group and 11.00 for the control group. The result of the spiritual score after the counseling was 14.00 for the experiment group and 11.00 for the control group. It can be concluded that there is a significant increase in spiritual scores after the respondent got the post-test interventions.



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While in the control group that did not get spiritual counseling, there was no increase from 11.00 to 11.00 with a difference of 0.00. Then, in the experimental group that got the intervention, there was a change in spiritual awareness with a difference of 4.00. Thus, there is a meaningful spiritual change in elderly spirituality after the intervention.

Measurement results in the experimental group increased because they had gotten spiritual counseling for three days. This is supported by the characteristics of respondents who are elderly. Counselor carried out spirituality counseling assisting the elderly to increase their spiritual awareness and overcome the problems they face based on the Qur'an and *tauhid*, so that they can have a positive and functional effect on other aspects of their personal life.<sup>11</sup> Before that, the counselor convinced himself that there was a connection between spirituality and counseling, by attending recitation and knowing Islamic science better (following liqo').

Spirituality has an important role, but many problems lead to human misinterpretation of spiritual elements, which bring a person stress and a sense of hopelessness. It can be seen from the elderly's level of depression at a nursing home from the results of<sup>4</sup> Based on their research, from 50 elderly, 38% of them suffer severe depression. In addition, according to<sup>12</sup> at Husnul Khotimah Nursinghome, Pekanbaru, as many as 41% out of 39 elderly have low spirituality. Other studies also explain a significant relationship between spiritual needs and the quality of the elderly' life in the nursing home in Semarang City since if the elderly' spiritual need are properly fulfilled, they can directly overcome the problems they face and make their quality of life better<sup>13</sup>

Spiritual counseling was carried out by referring to counseling standards. Various stages are carried out, including praying, reading the Qur'an, and fasting<sup>14</sup> explains that one's knowledge will increase when he/she gets clear, directed, and reliable information.

Change and increase in knowledge will lead to awareness, understanding, and, finally, behavior in accordance with the knowledge they have achieved.

### Conclusion

Spiritual counseling provision of the elderly is effective in helping them to improve their spirituality. Also, nursing homes should give more attention to this activity to improve elderly spirituality.

### Acknowledgement

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