

## Literature Study of Spirituality in Frail Elderly

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### ABSTRACT

**Background.** *Frailty* adalah terjadinya gangguan fungsi adaptasi dan berkurangnya kemampuan fungsional. Kebutuhan spiritual merupakan aspek penting untuk menghadapi permasalahan agar dapat beradaptasi dengan perubahan-perubahan yang terjadi pada dirinya akibat proses penuaan. Tujuan tinjauan ini adalah mengidentifikasi konsep spiritualitas pada *frail elderly*.

**Methods.** *Literature review* dilakukan menggunakan database Pubmed dan Science Direct dilengkapi dengan pencarian gratis menggunakan Google Scholar dari berbagai jurnal internasional dan nasional dari tahun 2019 sampai 2024. Permintaan pencarian data base terdiri dari dua konsep pencarian konsep *frail elderly* dan konsep spiritualitas.

**Results.** Hasil karya tulis ilmiah ini terdapat beberapa literatur yang membahas pentingnya penguatan aspek spiritualitas pada lansia yang lemah secara fisik.

**Conclusion.** Seiring bertambahnya usia, aspek spiritual menjadi penting untuk meningkatkan kualitas hidup lansia. Pemenuhan spiritualitas pada lansia yang lemah secara fisik membantu mereka menghadapi peristiwa dalam hidup mereka dan merasa lebih positif. Diharapkan tenaga kesehatan harus memperhatikan kebutuhan spiritual agar dapat memberikan pelayanan yang lebih integratif.

### KEYWORDS

*Spirituality; frail; elderly*

## INTRODUCTION

According to the World Health Organization(WHO), in the 21st century the elderly population in the Pacific region will continue to increase. The number of elderly is expected to jump from 410 million to 733 million in 2025, and is predicted to reach 1.4 billion in 2050. Increasing age brings a decline in physical abilities and health that affects their ability to do activities. The elderly are more susceptible to various diseases and syndromes because they do not have the regenerative ability called aging.

The decline in organ function due to aging is known as frailty syndrome, which is also called geriatric syndrome, which is a disorder of adaptation function and reduced functional ability accompanied by signs of weakness, decreased walking speed, rapid fatigue, decreased physical activity, and weight loss (Wowor & Wantania, 2020).

Data from Indonesia showed the prevalence of frailty in 270 elderly patients, the results showed that pre-frailty conditions were found in 71.1% of patients, while frailty was found in 27.4%.(Setiati et al., 2019). Meanwhile, in 2023 in Indonesia the prevalence is 26.8% pre-frailty and 55.5% frailty (Pradana et al., 2023).

*Frailty syndrome* in the elderly it causes disturbances in one or more aspects of health, whether physical, psychological, social, and increases the risk of experiencing negative health impacts such as disability, decreased quality of life, and death (Riani Pradara Jati et al., 2023). The aging process experienced by the elderly, whether physically, biologically, psychologically and socially. The aging process is something that cannot be avoided by every individual. As we age, the spiritual aspect can be a

source of strength and hope in facing the challenges that the elderly face.

When the elderly develop the spiritual dimension, they tend to feel calmer. Spirituality is considered a source of internal strength in giving meaning to life. By deepening and experiencing high spiritual values. Spiritual needs are an important aspect to balance the needs of the elderly in facing or solving problems so that they can adapt to the changes that occur in them due to the aging process.

Elderly people in their daily activities often experience limitations due to physical and psychological changes. This makes it difficult for them to carry out spiritual activities (Fajar et al., 2022). The elderly overcome their problems by increasing their spirituality towards the creator which has a positive impact on themselves and improves relationships with others. This literature review aims to determine the concept of spirituality in frail elderly.

## METHOD

This scientific paper uses a systematic approach to review the literature review. Literature review is a research method with data collection originating from accredited journal articles. The recommendations are outlined to identify relevant literature studies that contain information on spirituality in Frail elderly. Identification of relevant studies, the main literature search was conducted from June-September 2024. The databases used are Pubmed and Science Direct, complemented by a free search using Google Scholar. The database search query consists of two concepts, the concept of Frail elderly and the concept of spirituality. frail elderly identified are

common conditions that occur in old age are usually described as conditions of physiological decline associated with aging, characterized by a clear vulnerability to health. Spirituality is the need to find meaning and purpose in life. Search and filtering of references were carried out after full-text entry.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Literature studies from several literatures show that frail elderly who are physically weak due to changes that occur in themselves need strengthening from the spiritual aspect. Spiritual needs are an important aspect to balance the needs of the elderly in facing or solving problems in order to adapt to the changes that occur in themselves due to the aging process. Spiritual needs refer to needs related to attitudes, values, and expectations that connect individuals to a higher being and lead to health benefits, well-being, and life enhancement. Research Lutpatul & Anung, (2022) mentions that spirituality is considered as a source of internal strength in giving meaning to life. Research Rudiyanto et al., (2022). Said that by deepening and internalizing high spiritual values, the elderly can change negative perceptions into more positive perceptions, and feel a deeper closeness to their creator.

### Concept of Frail Elderly

*Frailty* is a geriatric syndrome that is a serious problem in global public health, usually characterized by decreased physical ability and loss of ability to respond to stress due to physiological imbalances in various body systems (Yamada et al., 2022). *Frailty* is a common condition that occurs in old age, usually

described as a state of physiological decline associated with aging, characterized by a marked vulnerability to health. The clinical picture of frailty syndrome according to Fried is based on five criteria including weakness, decreased walking speed, fatigue, low physical activity levels, and weight loss. Frailty syndrome has two stages, the early stage and the late stage. The early stage, also called prefrailty, occurs when one or two criteria are present. The late stage of frailty syndrome is called failure to thrive. At this stage, there is weight loss, wasting, dependence, and unexplained cognitive impairment (Wowor & Wantania, 2020). The factors causing frailty syndrome are age, functional status, nutritional status, comorbidities such as specific diseases, cognitive factors and depression, and family factors. Decreased muscle strength, reduced bone mass, and glucose intolerance can weaken a person's physical activity. Decreased physical activity can also be caused by the number or severity of comorbidities experienced by a person.

### **Concept of Spiritualitas**

Spirituality is the need to find meaning and purpose in life. Spiritual belief is a person's action in strengthening relationships with their environment. Spiritual well-being helps to cope with events in one's life. Spiritual needs in the elderly include understanding the meaning of life. According to Florence Nightingale, spirituality is defined as a conscious and natural process in cultivating goodness to achieve the best conditions in life. Spiritual needs in the elderly are used as a way to face challenges, life changes, and events that can have psychological

impacts (Elmaghfuroh et al., 2022).

According to Underwood (2006), Spiritual aspects include two dimensions, namely the relationship between individuals and God and the relationship between individuals and their environment. Several studies show the impact of spirituality related to health, well-being and quality of life, especially in facing bad challenges in life. Spiritual support can make the elderly have positive emotions and help overcome physical and mental health (Can Oz et al., 2022). When the elderly develop a spiritual dimension, they tend to feel calmer. Spirituality is considered a source of internal strength in giving meaning to life. By deepening and experiencing high spiritual values, the elderly can change negative perceptions into more positive perceptions, and feel a deeper closeness to their creator (Rudiyanto et al., 2022). The elderly in their daily activities often experience limitations due to physical and psychological changes. This makes it difficult for them to carry out spiritual activities (Fajar et al., 2022).

Spiritual needs are an important aspect to balance the needs of the elderly in facing or solving problems so that they can adapt to the changes that occur in them due to the aging process. Spiritual needs refer to needs related to attitudes, values, and expectations that connect individuals to a higher being and lead to health benefits, well-being, and life enhancement. Understanding and meeting the spiritual needs of older adults can serve as a coping mechanism for caregivers and help them provide more effective care. Older adults need to see and understand the meaning and purpose of life and seek to enhance spiritual development. Healthcare

providers are responsible for creating an appropriate situation for spiritual development. Health care providers should be aware of the spiritual needs of older adults and take action to meet these needs to the extent possible in order to enhance their spiritual health (Jadidi et al., 2022).

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As age increases, the aspect of spirituality is important to improve the quality of life of the elderly, the fulfillment of spirituality in the elderly who are physically weak helps them cope with events in their lives and feel more positive. Frail Elderly refer to older individuals who experience declining physical, mental, or social health, making them more susceptible to illness and health problems. It is important to highlight the important role of spirituality in improving the quality of life of frail elderly. Spiritual needs can lead to improved mental health, better coping mechanisms, and overall resilience in facing the challenges of aging. Spirituality can provide meaning and purpose, which are essential for emotional well-being. It is hoped that Health workers must pay attention to spiritual needs in order to provide more integrative care (Lucchetti et al., 2018).

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