



EXPLORATION OF NURSE EXPERIENCES IN PROVIDING HEALTH EDUCATION IN AN EFFORT TO IMPROVE ACTIVITY OF DAILY LIVING (ADL) FOR THE ELDERLY

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ABSTRACT

The elderly are a vulnerable age group that experiences a decrease in physical, psychological, and social functions, which has an impact on the ability to carry out daily activities (Activity of Daily Living) so that the elderly need the help of others in fulfilling their daily needs. Nurses have an important role in providing health education to improve the independence of the elderly, especially in primary care areas such as the Oekabiti Health Center. This study aims to explore nurses experiences on improving the Activity Daily Living of elderly. This study used a qualitative approach with a phenomenological method. Participants were collected by purposive sampling. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with 7 nurses who have more than 6 months of experience and are active in providing health education to the elderly. Data analysis was carried out with a thematic approach. This study resulted in five main themes, namely: (1) Nurses have a good understanding of health education; (2) health education is needed to improve the ADL of the elderly, (3) strategies for providing health education for the elderly, (4) challenges in providing health education for the elderly, (5) unavailability of health education media. This study shows that nurses have a good understanding of the importance of health education to improve the ADL skills of the elderly. Educational strategies are carried out personally and contextually, although they still face obstacles such as low health literacy and lack of educational media. Institutional support and media provision are needed to optimize elderly education.

Keywords: ADL; elderly; health education; independence; nurses

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INTRODUCTION

Elderly is an advanced phase of life characterized by a decline in physical condition and a reduced role in social life. These conditions can also interfere with the fulfillment of daily needs, so that the elderly become dependent on the help of others. If this dependence is not addressed immediately, there can be disruptions in body functions, including the emergence of diseases that have an impact on reducing the ability to carry out Activity of Daily Living (ADL) (Purba et al., 2022).

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), by 2030, one in every six individuals worldwide will be 60 years of age or older, with the number of global elderly expected to reach 1.4 billion in 2030 and increase to 2.1 billion in 2050 (WHO, 2024). The proportion of elderly people in Indonesia is also increasing, with around 12% of the population aged 60 years and above in 2023 (Ministry of Health, 2024). The Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) noted that in 2023, the percentage of elderly people in Indonesia reached 11.75%, and 10.06% in East Nusa Tenggara (BPS, 2023). A total of 63 elderly people in the Oekabiti Health Center area were recorded as needing family assistance in carrying out ADLs. The highest number was in Oenoni (17 people) and Oesena (15 people) villages, while other villages such as Ponain, Tesbatan, and Apren had varying numbers between 1 and 12 people..

Research at the Balauring Health Center, Lembata, NTT, shows that the independence of the elderly in carrying out IADLs such as shopping, cooking, and managing health still faces major challenges.. This is due to the decline in body functions with age. Age, health conditions, physical activity, and the role of health workers greatly affect the independence of the elderly (Hurek, 2020). Health education is a key factor in supporting the improvement of elderly ADL skills.

Health education plays an important role in increasing the knowledge and independence of the elderly. Through structured counseling, the elderly can understand how to maintain health, recognize symptoms of disease, and implement a healthy lifestyle. Widiharti et al. in (Prayitno et al., 2023) stated that proper education can increase elderly awareness of the importance of maintaining health and living independently.

Nurses play an important role in providing health education to increase the independence of the elderly in daily activities (ADLs), such as bathing, dressing, and moving. This education needs to be tailored to the different conditions and needs of the elderly. (Kusmiati et al., 2023). Health education provided by nurses not only increases patients' understanding of health management, but also has an impact on improving quality of life. As educators, nurses play an important role in promoting a healthy lifestyle through physical activity and a balanced diet. Effective education has also been shown to improve patient compliance to care. (Haflah & Sari, 2024).

The implementation of health education for the elderly at Puskesmas still faces obstacles, such as low literacy, limited media, and the lack of family roles. In addition, studies related to nurses' experience in providing education, especially in rural health centers such as Oekabiti, are limited. Therefore, this study aims to explore nurses' experiences, including strategies, challenges, and the impact of health education on improving the Activity Of Daily Living (ADL) of the elderly.

METHOD

This study used a qualitative approach with phenomenological methods to explore nurses' experiences in providing health education to the elderly. Participants were seven nurses selected by purposive sampling, with inclusion criteria: working for at least six months at Oekabiti Health Center and actively providing education to the elderly. Data were collected through in-depth interviews using semi-structured guidelines and a voice recorder. Data were analyzed thematically using Colaizzi's approach, which included identifying important meanings, grouping into themes, and preparing essential descriptions.

RESULT

Based on interviews conducted with 7 participants, this study found five main themes that describe nurses' experiences in providing health education to improve the ability of Activity of Daily Living (ADL) in the elderly at Oekabiti Health Center.

Theme 1: Nurses have a good understanding of health education

The participants realized that health education is very important to help older people understand and be aware of how to take care of their health. This understanding is the basis for them to build ways of educating so that the elderly can lead healthy lives and remain independent. This is in line with the views expressed by Triwibowo and Mitha (2017) in (Harahap, 2023), health education is a planned process to encourage behavior change in order to increase independence in living a healthy life in the surrounding environment..

“Health education is educating the people around us to know the functions and benefits of health for themselves and their families.” (N1)

“Health education is to find out the attitude, behavior, practice where the attitude and behavior of the practice refers to how the daily application of health.” (N4)

“In my opinion, health education is an effort to help or understand and apply health principles in everyday life.” (N7)

Theme 2: Health Education is Needed to Improve ADL in the Elderly

All participants explicitly stated that health education needs to be continuously improved, as it plays a huge role in supporting the independence and quality of life of the elderly. It prevents the decline of physical function and encourages the elderly to remain active in their daily lives.

"I think it needs to be improved... these elderly people if we just talk about it they get sleepy quickly... so we have to use pictures." (N1)

"It is necessary, it is very necessary because most here Hypertension and Diabetes Melitus are the most especially for the elderly so it is indeed very necessary." (N2)

"In my opinion, it is very much improved because even now the age of 60 years and over is the SPM of the Kupang District Health Office.." (N3)

"I think it's mandatory and it is a must... the more we provide health education the more they know." (N5)

Theme 3: Strategies for Providing Health Education for the Elderly

The nurses apply various strategies, such as making direct visits to the elderly's homes, providing counseling at Maternal and Child Health (posyandu) and in the Chronic Disease Management Program (prolanis program), and using simple language or local language so that information is more easily accepted by the elderly.

"We first come to the house and then we bring the blood pressure monitor... they have to pay for the tension 'uh sir, let me check your blood pressure... it's free'." (P1)

"For patients who live in the same village as me, usually when I get home, I go to their house to re-check their blood pressure.." (P2)

"For the elderly, the way we provide health education cannot use standard language ... we provide education using everyday language." (P5)

Theme 4: Challenges in Providing Health Education for the Elderly

Various obstacles are encountered in the implementation of the program, such as the low level of education in the elderly, cultural habits that prefer traditional medicine and language barriers..

"My mom used to eat Japanese gourd or alternative medicine, and my blood pressure wasn't high anymore, so I didn't need to be tested... they always said that, so they believed in alternative medicine more.." (N1)

"Not all elderly people, there are one or two elderly people who cannot use Indonesian, so there must be an interpreter who speaks the local language, and then the language must be simple..." (N4)

"The level of patient knowledge is somewhat lacking, so it must be informed frequently." (N5)

Theme 5: Unavailability of Health Education Media

Some participants said that visual media such as leaflets, banners, or pictures have not been used optimally in health counseling for the elderly. This is due to limited facilities and budget, although visual media is needed to attract attention and facilitate understanding of the elderly..

"When explaining things to older people, if we talk, they'll get sleepy... So we have to use pictures." (N1)

"Lack of leaflet... we never use it, we only inform through oral communication.." (N2)

"Multiply information media, that's important. Then information media should also use more pictures and fewer words." (P5)

DISCUSSION

This study explores the experience of nurses providing health education in an effort to improve Activity Of Daily Living (ADL) for the elderly at Oekabiti Health Center. The main focus was on identifying the challenges and strategies used in improving the ability of Activity of Daily Living (ADL). Based on interviews with seven participants, the discussion is divided into five main themes: Nurses have a good understanding of health education, Health education is needed to improve the ADL of the elderly, Strategies for providing health education for the elderly, Challenges in providing health education for the elderly, and Nurses do not use media when providing health

education. Each theme has been discussed with reference to the latest findings and literature for 2019-2024.

Nurses Have a Good Understanding of Health Education

The nurses demonstrated a good understanding of the concept of health education. They see it as a means to increase older people's awareness and knowledge about the importance of maintaining good health. This understanding reflects a strong conceptual foundation for nurses in carrying out an educative role. Research by (Setiawan & Dewi, 2022) shows that nurses as educators have an important role in improving patient understanding of basic health measures. This research is also reinforced by the findings of (Alzyood et al., 2020), which highlight the importance of the role of health workers in strengthening basic health practices through consistent education.

Health Education is Needed to Increase ADL of the Elderly

Participants perceived that health education has a significant impact on improving the ability of older adults to carry out daily activities independently. Adequate knowledge can help older adults understand their health condition, follow their medication regularly and participate in light physical activities. Research by (Linawati Togatorop et al., 2024) also indicated that health education has an effect on increasing physical activity of the elderly in daily life. A previous research (Irwadi et al., 2022) also showed that health knowledge can influence healthy behaviors. Thus, health education is the foundation of efforts to prevent and restore ADL function. Participants assessed that health education had a significant impact on improving the ability of older adults to carry out daily activities independently.

Strategies in Disseminating Health Education to the Elderly

Nurses employ a variety of strategies, such as home visits, counseling at health centers and Chronic Disease Management Program, and interpersonal approaches using local or everyday language. This approach shows that contextual and communicative information delivery is an important factor in ensuring that older adults receive information well. Effective communication strategies are reflected in the research (Haris et al., 2019), which shows that the use of simple language and a local approach can improve understanding among the elderly. Meanwhile, a study by Mitike et al., (2023) supporting a household-based approach to health education as an effective strategy for vulnerable age groups such as the elderly.

Challenges in Disseminating Health Education for the Elderly

Nurses often face obstacles when providing health education to the elderly. Low levels of education, language barriers, and strong beliefs in traditional medicine are the main obstacles to communicating medical information. (Haris et al., 2019) emphasizing that low health literacy is a major challenge in providing education to the elderly. A research by (Situmorang & Pasaribu, 2023) also shows that even though they have sufficient knowledge, many elderly people do not apply it due to cultural and environmental influences.

Lack of Health Education Media

Some nurses have not optimally utilized educational media such as leaflets and posters due to limited funds and training. However, visual media greatly helps the elderly understand the material, especially those experiencing cognitive decline.. (Irwadi et al., 2022) states that educational media such as leaflets and audiovisuals are effective in improving the understanding of older adults. Similar findings by (Syam et al., 2021) show that engaging and interactive media make it easier for older adults to absorb information.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that nurses at the Oekabiti Community Health Center have a good understanding of the importance of health education in improving the Activities of Daily Living (ADL) of older adults. The strategies employed include personalized approaches such as home visits and the use of local languages; however, they face challenges such as low health literacy, language barriers, and

traditional healing practices. Additionally, the use of educational media remains limited due to resource constraints, despite its potential to enhance the effectiveness of health education. Institutional support and the provision of educational media are essential to optimize health education for the elderly.

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