

Psychological Well-being of the Elderly in Yogyakarta City: Descriptive Study

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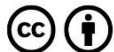
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ABSTRACT: Elderly people are a population that receives attention worldwide because when individuals enter the elderly period, life changes automatically occur, from productive to non-productive, even reduced physical abilities. This condition can undoubtedly affect the psychological well-being of the elderly because it requires them to adapt to new situations that have never been experienced before. This study aimed to determine the psychological well-being of the elderly through descriptive analysis and difference tests to find the results of differences in the psychological well-being of male and female elderly people. Three hundred twenty elderly people, both men and women, were involved in this study. These elderly people were selected using purposive sampling techniques in the Yogyakarta area. Data collection used a psychological well-being scale with six indicators, namely (1) self-acceptance, (2) life goals, (3) environmental mastery, (4) personal growth, (5) autonomy, and (6) positive relationships with others. The data that had been collected were then analyzed using descriptive statistics and the Wilcoxon test. The study results showed that the psychological well-being of male elderly people was 54.45, lower than that of female elderly people, who obtained a score of 54.51. In terms of age, the psychological well-being of elderly people was lower than that of elderly people. However, the overall results showed no difference in the psychological well-being of the male and female elderly with a p-value of $0,076 > 0,05$. The psychological well-being of the elderly is better because it emphasizes the spiritual dimension in building a better meaning of life.

INTRODUCTION

The elderly population needs to be an essential concern for global population trends. This is because the lack of proper care by family members and neglect can interfere with the physical and mental problems of the elderly (Kola et al., 2021; Manchia et al., 2022; Afrashteh et al., 2024). World Health Organization (2021), Blanchard et al. (2021), and Townsend et al. (2022) added that the elderly group is vulnerable to self-harm caused by mental disorders. The research results of Setyarini et al. (2022) show that the elderly in West Bandung are prone to stress, anxiety, and depression. This condition can occur due to chronic conditions or acute emotional stress, so the elderly decide to harm themselves as a result of lack of attention and mental health problems. Pedri et al. (2022), Arslan (2023), and Nogueira & Sequeira (2024) stated that psychological well-being contributes to the development of positive mental health and prevents the emergence of problems related to mental health. This condition can occur because psychological well-being is obtained from social support, a sense of belonging, life satisfaction, and self-efficacy, which are needed by the elderly to

overcome mental health problems, such as loneliness. Therefore, this study aims to determine the psychological well-being of the elderly and the differences in the psychological well-being of male and female elderly.

Psychological well-being is the state of mind of an individual who can work productively, cope with the pressures of life, and develop their potential (Suleman et al., 2021; Kang & Him, 2022; Dhanabhakya & Sarath, 2023). This means that elderly people who are psychologically well-off can work productively and develop well because they can achieve life satisfaction, personal growth, life goals, and autonomy and have low negative emotions. Bhat (2018), Hernandez et al. (2018), and Páez-Gallego et al. (2020) added that psychologically well-off individuals can develop well compared to focusing on their shortcomings, feeling calm or satisfied, happy, and mentally healthy.

Individuals with good psychological well-being will also be able to overcome various challenges in their lives, mainly because of the social support from those around them (Reo et al., 2024; Hermanoes et al., 2024). This condition is different from the elderly, who have low psychological well-being due to a lack of social interaction and social support, so they are low in the sense of togetherness (Asensio-Aguerrí et al., 2019; Su et al., 2022; Menhas et al., 2024). This can cause social isolation and loneliness in the elderly, reducing psychological well-being. Mohd et al. (2019), Mishra et al. (2023), and Xu et al. (2024) stated that elderly women often experience functional disorders, decreased health, lack of social satisfaction, lack of social support, and low participation in social activities compared to elderly men. These results indicate that there is a relationship between gender that can have an impact on the psychological well-being of the elderly.

Mukhlis et al. (2024) stated that gender is correlated with psychological well-being. However, the results of other studies, namely Poudel et al. (2020), stated that they did not find differences in psychological well-being based on gender. It is essential to reconfirm these results to determine the differences in psychological well-being between male and female elderly people. Furthermore, Hernandez et al. (2018) and Edwards et al. (2021) stated the need for further research to collect representative data related to psychological well-being to evaluate the psychological condition of the elderly more systematically to improve physiological function and longevity. This study aimed to determine the psychological well-being of the elderly through descriptive analysis and difference tests to find the results of differences in the psychological well-being of male and female elderly.

Literature Review

Psychological Well-being

Psychological Well-being (PWB) in the elderly is a very complex personality phenomenon. It is formed in humans due to activities in a natural relationship system with people around them. Personal, cognitive, emotional, social, communication, psychological and other non-psychological factors determine psychological well-being in the elderly. Elderly people who do not feel lonely, have enough opportunities to communicate with others and are socially active have higher levels of psychological well-being (Kovalenko & Spivak, 2018). Therefore, psychological and social services are needed for the elderly to reduce feelings of sadness, improve well-being opportunities to communicate, and increase the social activities of the elderly. Psychological well-being (PWB) is a multidimensional construct that is a significant protective factor against chronic diseases in the elderly. Many psychological and cognitive factors can affect PWB in the elderly (Steptoe et al., 2015).

The psychological well-being of the elderly can be described as a feeling of life satisfaction, quality of life, personal fulfilment, and the creation of objective and subjective values. There are several aspects of psychological well-being, including evaluative well-being (or life satisfaction), hedonic well-being (feelings of happiness, sadness, etc.), and eudemonic well-being (feelings of purpose and meaning in life). This elderly well-being is associated with self-actualization, growth, and personal fulfilment. It is also related to a person's emotional assessment of themselves (Kovalenko & Spivak, 2018). Fusi et al. (2022) explained that elderly health has historically been defined as complete

well-being in physical, mental, and social conditions or states, not just the absence of discomfort or disease.

Carol Ryff explains the psychological well-being (PWB) model, a multidimensional and dynamic process that includes various psychological aspects. This model contains six positive dimensions that differ in psychological function. The first dimension is described as a positive evaluation of oneself and past life (self-acceptance); the second as a feeling of continuous growth and development as a person (personal growth); the third as the ability to have a purpose and a sense of direction in life and a feeling that life has a purpose and meaning (purpose in life); the fourth as the ability to build relevant relationships with others based on trust and warmth, to experience intense feelings of empathy and affection and create intimate relationships (positive relationships with others); the fifth as the ability to manage life and the environment effectively. The sixth is a tendency to be self-confident and independent and to have self-confidence and self-determination (autonomy).

Characteristics of the Elderly

In Indonesia, as in other countries, the birth rate is decreasing while life expectancy is increasing. The world is currently experiencing this. Rapid demographic change is marked by the fastest-growing segment of the world's population, the group aged 60 years and over. Indonesia is heading towards an aging population. Data shows that in 2010, the population census found that the number of people aged 60 years and over was 18.1 million or 7.6% of the total population. This figure is projected to increase in 2025 to 33.7 million, or 11.8% of the population, and reach 48.2 million, or 15.8%, in 2035 (Adioetomo & Mujahid, 2014). This demographic transition poses a challenge for the Indonesian government as a policymaker regarding how to maintain the quality of life of the elderly.

Morbidity (morbidity rate) increases with age. The most common health complaints reported by the elderly in Indonesia are fever (7-10%), cough (13-23%), colds (10-12%), asthma (1-11%), diarrhea (1-2.4%), and recurrent headaches. (5-11%) and toothache (0.8-1.8%). The most common non-communicable diseases are asthma (5-6%), heart disease (3%), rheumatism (30-35%), hypertension (18-24%) and cataracts (5-6%). (Adioetomo & Mujahid, 2014). The incidence of morbidity among elderly women is always higher than men.

Likewise, elderly disability data increases significantly with age, with 26% of the elderly population affected. Seeing, hearing and climbing stairs are common problems experienced by elderly people in Indonesia. Cataracts cause loss of vision, thus preventing the elderly from carrying out daily activities and not working, resulting in loss of income. Hearing loss prevents the elderly from engaging in social activities because they have difficulty communicating with others, which leads to increased loneliness and social exclusion. Difficulty in climbing stairs has the following impacts, among others, arthritis. This type of disease is a degenerative disease that accompanies the aging process. Another challenge in maintaining the quality of life of the elderly is the decline in labour force participation. Labour force participation indicates declining economic independence, which has consequences on how to support financial security for the elderly.

These problems require steps to ensure that the quality of life of the elderly is maintained, such as the need for adequate income, optimal health services, and getting appropriate accommodation and facilitation to live an active life as long as the elderly are able and want it (Adioetomo & Mujahid, 2014). This leads to the ultimate goal of achieving psychological well-being and mental health for the elderly.

Study Aim and Hypothesis

This study aimed to determine the psychological well-being of the elderly through descriptive analysis and difference tests to find the results of differences in the psychological well-being of male

and female elderly. The hypothesis is that there are differences in psychological well-being between male and female elderly.

METHODS

Design

The research method used is comparative quantitative to determine the psychological well-being of the elderly and the differences in psychological well-being between male and female elderly.

Participants

The research sample was obtained from 320 elderly people in the Yogyakarta City area. The sampling technique used purposive sampling, ensuring the sample followed the study's objectives and targets (Campbell et al., 2020; Hast et al., 2022; López, 2023). Thus, the sample criteria for this study were elderly people who were in and attended elderly schools in the Kota Gede area of Yogyakarta.

Instruments

The data collection technique was the psychological well-being scale developed based on Carol D. Ryff's theory (2007). There were six indicators, namely (1) self-acceptance, (2) life goals, (3) environmental mastery, (4) personal growth, (5) autonomy, and (6) positive relationships with others. The instrument validity test used expert tests and statistical tests. Expert tests were given to lecturers with doctoral education qualifications and expertise in the personal social field. Meanwhile, the statistical instrument validity test used factor analysis and obtained a KMO and Bartlett's Test value of 0.728 and 15 valid items. Furthermore, the reliability test using Alpha Cronbach showed a reliability score of 0.545, meaning that the scale was in a good category for revealing the psychological well-being of the elderly.

Data Analysis and Research Procedure

The data analysis technique uses non-parametric statistics, namely the Wilcoxon signed rank test, to determine the differences in psychological well-being of male and female elderly. The research procedure for the psychological well-being of the elderly in the city of Yogyakarta can be explained as follows: (1) analyzing problems in the field, (2) compiling a research instrument, namely a psychological well-being scale for the elderly, (3) conducting expert tests on the psychological well-being scale, (4) revising the results of the expert test, (5) conducting validity and reliability tests on the instrument, (6) revising the instrument for collecting data in the field based on the results of validity and reliability tests, (7) collecting research data, (8) analyzing research data, (9) compiling an interpretation of the research results, and (10) reporting the research results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This study examines the psychological well-being of the elderly in the Kota Gede area, Yogyakarta, and the differences between the psychological well-being of male and female elderly people, see table 1. Table 1 shows the descriptive results of the mean value of psychological well-being differentiated by gender and age. The results of the mean value of psychological well-being in the gender category show that the psychological well-being of the female elderly (54.51) is higher than that of the male elderly (54.45). In terms of the indicators of psychological well-being, both male and female elderly people have low means values shown in the purpose indicator and high means values in the self-acceptance indicator. The same results were found in the means value of psychological well-being in the age category; both elderly and old have low means values in the purpose in life indicator and high means values in self-acceptance. Meanwhile, in terms of their

Table 1. Descriptive Results of Psychological Well-being of the Elderly in Kota Gede

Number	Description	Total score	Analysis Indicator					
			1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Gender							
	Male	54.45	10.04	8.13	9.71	8.77	8.74	9.07
	Female	54.51	10.05	7.94	9.51	8.96	8.82	9.23
2	Age*							
	60-74 years (elderly)	54.48	10.04	7.97	9.56	8.97	8.75	9.19
	75-90 years (old)	54.54	10.08	8.11	9.56	8.67	8.97	9.16

Description:

The indicator column consists of the following:

Indicator 1: self-acceptance

Indicator 2: Life purpose

Indicator 3: environmental mastery

Indicator 4: Personal growth

Indicator 5: Autonomy

Indicator 6: Positive relationships with others

*Age category using World Health Organization standards.

psychological well-being conditions, elderly people in the elderly age category have lower psychological well-being than elderly people in the old category. This can be seen in the elderly's mean value of 54.48, which is lower than the old's mean value of 54.54, see table 2.

The results of the normality test of psychological well-being data between male and female elderly using Kolmogorov Smirnov showed abnormal results, the significance value, both male (0.000) and female (0.048) < 0.05 . This means that the difference in psychological well-being between male and female elderly cannot be measured using parametric tests because the data is not normal, so the following analysis uses a non-parametric test, namely Wilcoxon. Table 3 is the result of the Wilcoxon test to compare the psychological well-being conditions between male and female elderly. The results showed no difference in psychological well-being between male and female elderly because the Asymp sig value obtained was $0.076 > 0.05$. This means that male and female elderly can work productively and develop well to achieve life satisfaction, personal growth, life goals, autonomy, and low negative emotions.

Table 2. Results of the Kolmogorov Smirnov Assumption Test of Psychological Well-being between Male and Female Elderly

	Tests of Normality					
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	F.	Statistic	df	F.
Male	.132	98	.000	.944	98	.000
Female	.090	98	.048	.982	98	.216

Table 3. Results of Hypothesis Testing of Differences in Psychological Well-being of Men and Women

	Test Statistics
	Female - male
Z	-1.775b
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.076
a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test	
b. Based on positive ranks.	

Discussion

The discussion of the results of this study is divided into three sub-sections, namely (1) psychological well-being of the elderly in terms of gender, (2) psychological well-being of the elderly in terms of age, and (3) differences in psychological well-being between male and female elderly. The first and second discussions answer the research objectives on the psychological well-being of the elderly through descriptive analysis. The third discussion answers the test results of differences in the psychological well-being of male and female elderly people.

Psychological Well-being of the Elderly Reviewed from Gender

The results of the descriptive study showed that the average psychological well-being of elderly women was higher than that of elderly men, as indicated by a mean value of $54.51 > 54.45$. These results indicate that the psychological well-being of elderly women to remain productive and achieve life satisfaction, personal growth, autonomy, and negative emotions is lower than that of men. Interviews conducted with elderly men to confirm these results stated that elderly men prefer to surrender to the life they live. Beach & Bamford (2014), Cené et al. (2022), and Lammer (2023) stated that the growth of elderly men is faster than women, and elderly men are easily socially isolated because they depend on their partners. This means that the attitude of resignation chosen by elderly men is because they still have a life partner to rely on. However, the conditions will be different when the life partner has died due to health problems.

Hernandez et al. (2018), Read et al. (2020), and Mishra et al. (2023) stated that elderly women often experience declining health and functional disorders compared to elderly men, and psychological well-being is related to better health and longevity. This will, of course, have an impact on the lives of elderly men when they lose their partners because it causes loneliness in elderly men so psychological well-being becomes low. These results differ from research conducted by Sharifi (2022), Song et al. (2022), and Bridson et al. (2024), that the psychological well-being of women is higher than that of men, so men are prone to loneliness. However, the results of this study show that the average psychological well-being of elderly women is considered better than the psychological well-being of elderly men. Although elderly women are also prone to loneliness, difficulties in social relationships, and social acceptance, they still have better psychological well-being than elderly men.

Furthermore, when viewed from the indicators of psychological well-being, the second indicator, namely purpose in life, both elderly men and women have low average values compared to other indicators of psychological well-being. Purpose in life is related to the purpose and meaning in life, and this is related to worse experiences and meanings of life (Frieze & Latimer (2019); García-Mas et al., 2022; Hood et al., 2024), such as frustration due to facing old age with physical abilities and declining health. As stated in the previous paragraph, the elderly choose to surrender to their lives even though, on the one hand, they are frustrated due to the decline in the body's ability to function in carrying out daily activities. Therefore, resignation becomes the goal of life chosen as a consequence of the helplessness they have.

Psychological Well-being of the Elderly Reviewed from Age

In terms of the age of the elderly, namely 60-74 years (elderly) and 75-90 years (old), the psychological well-being of the elderly has a lower average value compared to those categorized as old. Curran et al. (2022), Maddox et al. (2022), and Singh & Suvidha (2024) stated that the elderly category is susceptible to mental and neurological health disorders because they cannot regenerate and have entered retirement. This condition occurs as an impact of social and economic changes, resulting in weak independence, disease, and loneliness, thus reducing psychological well-being. Pourebharim & Rasouli (2019) and Dadfar et al. (2021) stated that individual psychological well-being can differ based on age, and with increasing age or aging, individual psychological well-being can

decrease. However, this seems to be different from the condition of the elderly in Yogyakarta; when entering the elderly age group, they have lower well-being than when entering the old age group.

The causes that occur include the ability to adapt to new situations, environmental support, and anxiety, thus reducing the ability to interpret the meaning of life (Pourebharim & Rasouli, 2019; Páez-Gallego et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2022). However, looking at the research results in Table 1, this negative situation can change when the elderly have entered the old period, as indicated by their psychological well-being getting better. It seems to be influenced by Eastern culture, which emphasizes the search for meaning and purpose in life through spirituality.

Duron-Reyes et al. (2019). McClintock et al. (2019) and Hajinejad et al. (2019) stated that spiritual practices can help the elderly in the old category to overcome illness and feelings of loss, build resources needed for resilience, and increase social support. Spirituality can be a buffer against life stressors, fight feelings of helplessness, and help individuals better interpret life experiences, goals, and meanings.

Saleem & Khan (2015) and Ahmed et al. (2022) added that the spirituality of the elderly is related to the relationship with the environment, relationships with others, and relationships with oneself. Elderly people with good spirituality can engage positively with others, themselves, and the environment to achieve life satisfaction and well-being. Prosperous individuals, especially psychologically, can find happiness emotionally, which is the root of spirituality (Singh et al., 2023; Carey et al., 2023; Ellor, 2024). Therefore, elderly people have better psychological well-being than elderly people because of emotional happiness, which is a manifestation of their high dimension of spirituality.

Although the descriptive results show low mean values in the elderly category, when viewed from the indicators, both elderly and old people have low mean values in life goals. The low life goals of the elderly can be caused by the lack of development of the psychological strengths of the elderly to achieve the expected psychological well-being (Morales-Rodríguez et al., 2020; Andreasen et al., 2024). Program therapies or counselling are needed by the elderly to help them return to their daily activities and psychological well-being. Physical activities, such as training, can also be given to the elderly to face old age to improve their mental health in a better direction (Pinheiro et al., 2022; Guo & Jiang, 2023; Zhang & Jiang, 2023). Thus, the low purpose of life in the elderly needs to be accompanied by physical exercises or activities, therapy, counselling, or programs needed to revive their purpose in life.

Differences in Psychological Well-being of Male and Female Elderly

The difference in psychological well-being between male and female elderly groups was analyzed using Wilcoxon, which showed no significant difference in psychological well-being between men and women. However, the descriptive analysis of this study showed a difference in the mean value. This study's results align with those of Poudel et al. (2020) and Habe et al. (2023), who state that there is no difference in psychological well-being based on gender. This condition can occur because most elderly people still have the social support needed to spend their old age. In addition, the loss of the role of masculinity and femininity is caused by the lack of productive ability in work (Matud et al., 2019). This causes reduced personal growth and relationships with others because a change in the social situation is experienced after entering old age. As stated by Asensio-Aguerrí et al. (2019), Su et al. (2022), and Menhas et al. (2024), after entering old age, individuals begin to decrease their sense of togetherness and social interaction.

This condition seems to occur in the elderly in Yogyakarta, so no difference in the psychological well-being of the male and female elderly was found. Tran et al. (2022) and Scandurra et al. (2023) stated that the absence of gender influence on psychological well-being can be caused by perceived social support. The presence of social support can build a positive identity for the elderly, so it can help improve psychological well-being. Mishra et al. (2023) stated that gender does not affect social

isolation and loneliness on the psychological well-being of the elderly. This shows that gender does not function sufficiently as a protective agent for the psychological well-being of the elderly because social support has a significant impact on the psychological well-being of the elderly.

The forms of social support that can be provided by the elderly vary, including (1) self-management and monitoring of diseases suffered by the elderly (Qi, et al., 2021), informal support in the form of relationships with partners, relationships with children, and financial support (Wang, et al., 2022; Yang et al., 2023), (3) building communication and caring for the elderly (Bai et al., 2020), and (4) emotional support (Mogic et al., 2023). It is hoped that this support will improve the psychological well-being of the elderly in carrying out daily activities.

Implications

This study revealed that the psychological well-being of male and female elderly people did not differ because they had social support from the family environment, such as care for the elderly. However, if we look at the means value in the descriptive analysis, it shows that male elderly people have lower psychological well-being on average than female elderly people. It seems that the change in the lives of the elderly from being productive or working to being non-productive or not working requires adaptation to new situations.

Moreover, male elderly people who sometimes experience a phase of being abandoned by their partners certainly have a significant psychological impact because it causes mental health problems, such as loneliness. Furthermore, in terms of age, elderly people at the elderly age have lower psychological well-being than old elderly people. This condition can occur because, during the elderly period, they experience a transition phase from being productive or working to being non-productive or not working. Hence, the adjustment of this condition encourages low psychological well-being. However, when entering old age, the psychological well-being of the elderly becomes better because it emphasizes the spiritual dimension to build a better meaning of life.

Piko (2023) and Merino et al. (2024) stated that counsellors, psychologists, or psychiatrists could provide counselling, support groups, or meaningful guidance for the elderly to build better mental health in facing old age. Motamed-Jahroni & Kaveh (2021); Choi & Jang (2022) added cognitive training, physical exercise, or interventions such as creating an elderly-friendly environment, psychological and social support, and health centers. These trainings are expected to help the elderly in carrying out daily activities. Training can be provided through collaboration between counsellors, psychologists, or psychiatrists at elderly schools in the Yogyakarta area to help improve the psychological well-being of the elderly.

Limitations and Further Research

The limitations of this study are that it did not provide the training needed to build the psychological well-being of the elderly and analyze other variables suspected of influencing the psychological well-being of the elderly. Therefore, further research can be conducted on other variables found in the study, namely spirituality, social support, adaptability, and the attitude of resignation of the elderly, which can impact psychological well-being. In addition, the selection of research samples can be expanded again, not only in the Yogyakarta area, to help improve psychological well-being.

CONCLUSION

The study's results showed that the psychological well-being of male elderly people was lower than that of female elderly people. In terms of age, the psychological well-being of elderly people was lower than that of old people. However, in terms of overall results, there was no difference in the psychological well-being of male and female elderly people.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

BA, IR, MK, WJS, and RL agree to the final version of this article.

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