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KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PRACTICE OF ELDERLY INDIVIDUALS TOWARDS SUCCESSFUL AGING AT KLINIK PAKAR PERUBATAN, HOSPITAL UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA, KELANTAN
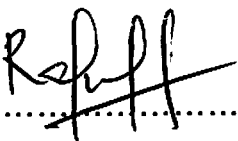
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled "Knowledge, Attitude and Practice of Elderly towards Successful Aging, at the Klinik Pakar Perubatan HUSM, Kelantan is the bonafide record of research work done by Miss Ida Seriwati binti Ismail, 81528 during the period of July 2007 to April 2008 under my supervision. This dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment for the degree of Bachelor of Health Sciences (Nursing). Research work and collection of data belong to Universiti Sains Malaysia.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

ADL	Activities of Daily Living
CBR	Crude Birth Rates
CDR	Crude Death Rates
CI	Confidence interval
HUSM	Hospital Universiti Sains Malaysia
KAP	Knowledge, attitude and practice
KPP	Klinik Pakar Perubatan
RAND	Research And Development
SD	Standard deviation
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
USMKK	Universiti Sains Malaysia Kubang Kerian

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Ida Seriwati Ismail and Rahimah Mohd Anshari

ABSTRACT

This research aims to determine the level of knowledge, attitude and practice of elderly towards successful aging. Samples were recruited by purposive sampling among elderly, aged 60 years and above, at the Klinik Pakar Perubatan Hospital Universiti Sains Malaysia (n=100). A constructed questionnaire was used to collect the data. The mean age of samples was 66 years. The majority of the respondents scored highly in knowledge (68%), had a positive attitude (n=74), and good level of practice (53%) towards successful aging. The status of successful aging was moderate (n=53). Spearman Correlation Coefficient test revealed significant positive correlations between knowledge and attitude (r=0.421, P<0.01), and practice and successful aging (r=0.569, P<0.01). However, no significant correlation was found between attitude and practice. In conclusion, the present findings revealed that practice was significantly related to higher successful aging status. Therefore, healthy lifestyle practices, such as continuous participation in appropriate physical activity and eating healthy nutritionous diet, should be encouraged to optimize successful aging in the late years of life.

Keywords: successful aging, knowledge, attitude, practice.

PENGETAHUAN, SIKAP DAN AMALAN WARGA EMAS TERHADAP PENUAAN YANG BERJAYA DI KLINIK PAKAR PERUBATAN, HOSPITAL UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA, KELANTAN

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ABSTRAK

Penyelidikan ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji tahap pengetahuan, sikap dan amalan warga emas terhadap penuaan yang berjaya. Soal selidik di lakukan dengan pemilihan secara persampelan di kalangan warga emas yang berumur 60 tahun ke atas, di Klinik Pakar Perubatan Hospital Universiti Sains Malaysia (n=100). Soalan soalan soal selidik yang digubah digunakan bagi mengumpul data. Purata umur sampel adalah 66 tahun. Majoriti dari responden mendapat markah yang tinggi dalam pengetahuan (68%), mempunyai sikap yang positif (n=74), dan tahap amalan yang baik (53%) terhadap penuaan yang berjaya. Status penuaan yang berjaya adalah sederhana (n=53). Ujian Spearman Correlation Coefficient menunjukkan bahawa terdapat kaitan yang positif dan signifikan antara pengetahuan dan sikap (r=0.421, P<0.01), dan antara amalan dan penuaan yang berjaya (r=0.569, P<0.01). Walau bagaimanapun, tiada kaitan yang ketara ditemui antara sikap dan amalan. Secara kesimpulannya, hasil penyelidikan mendapati amalan mempunyai kaitan yang jelas terhadap peluang mencapai usia tua yang lebih tinggi. Justeru, amalan gaya hidup yang sihat seperti penglibatan berterusan dalam aktiviti fizikal dan pengambilan diet yang

seimbang, perlu digalakkan bagi mengoptimakan penuaan yang berjaya di hari tua.

Kata kunci: penuaan yang berjaya, pengetahuan, sikap, amalan.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The demographic trend in Malaysia requires immediate public attention. By the end of 2007, it is estimated that the population of 60 years and older will be 1.93 million people out of 26.58 million people. However, it is projected to increase up to 2.24 million in 2010 (World Health Organization, 2005). This high-speed trend towards an aging population is facilitated by the dramatic decline in fertility rate and increase in life expectancy at birth.

The aging population gives a significant impact towards the whole population of the nation. Challenges that rises through the aging process includes increase risks of chronic debilitating diseases, increase dependency of older people towards the labour population, and decrease participation of elderly in social roles and activities.

In meeting the challenges of an aging population, successful aging is the key concept to be implemented. Many researchers have made attempts to define successful aging based on the perspective of both researchers' and the elderly. However, the basic concept of successful aging emerged from the Rowe and Kahn's Model of Successful Aging developed in 1998 (Chan, 2006). Three elements involved are avoiding diseases and disability, maintaining physical and cognitive functions, and also active engagement in life.

The importance of achieving successful aging is undeniable. Both younger and older population must not only strive to add years to life expectancy but also to ensure that those added years are ones of well-being, active engagement, and independence (Collins, 2007). However, most concepts have been discussed in the western point of view. The knowledge, attitude and practice (KAP) of elderly in eastern countries towards successful aging have been neglected, especially Malaysia. This study will overcome this deficiency and provide the latest information regarding this matter.

1.2 Problem Statement

The elderly is inevitably affected by the physical and social changes related to the aging process. Thus, the old age population is synonymous to multiple, acute and chronic diseases such as incontinence, Alzheimer and dementia (Mafauzy, 2000). Although the life expectancy improved over the decades, the main survivor of the population is the female counterpart (Rabieyah & Roszaini, 2002). Taking care of multiple roles as expected by social norms, such as being the family's main caregiver while taking care oneself, produces a heavy burden to, especially, the female elderly. Furthermore, the health care system in this country focuses on short term care and hospitalization whereas the geriatrics need long term care for their chronic diseases (Mafauzy, 2000). Despite the fact that institutionalization is against the social customs in Malaysia compared to the western countries, the probability of Malaysians following that trend in the future, is not unimaginable.

Thus, successful aging is the target to be achieved by the elderly population in order to decrease morbidity, increase health and lifespan, avoid or minimize effects of the aging process, and to continue functioning at the optimum level throughout life. According to Rowe and Kahn (1998), successful aging evolves in three dimensions, which are avoid disease and disability, maintain high cognitive and physical function, and stay involved with life and living. However, previous research findings reveal that the elderly have their own perception of the concept (Roos and Havens, 1991, Phelan, Anderson, Lacroix and Larson, 2004, Bowling and Dieppe, 2005, Bowling, 2006, Hsu, 2007). Despite experiencing disability and suffering from chronic diseases, they still rate themselves as aging successfully, based on other criterion. But, in this research, successful aging will be derived from Rowe and Kahn's Model of Successful Aging (1998) as it provides us the basic principals of successful aging.

Nevertheless, the information regarding knowledge, attitude, and practice of elderly population towards successful aging are still scarce. In the case of Malaysia, there is no similar study at all regarding successful aging and therefore these matter remains unknown. Their knowledge, attitude, and practice are important in order to determine how far this concept of successful aging is acknowledged in the Malaysian elderly population. This study will provide the current data on these three aspects that leads to successful aging focusing on the elderly population in HUSM Kelantan. This information can be appreciated by numerous sectors, especially policy makers and developers of health care programs so that interventions made are suitable with the present situation and facilitate the goal of successful aging of Malaysian as a whole.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study is to determine the level of knowledge, attitude and practice of elderly in KPP HUSM, towards successful aging.

1.3.1 Specific objectives

1. To determine the level of knowledge of elderly in KPP towards successful aging and its association with successful aging.

2. To determine the attitude of elderly in KPP towards successful aging and its association with successful aging.

3. To determine the current practice of elderly in KPP towards successful aging and its association with successful aging.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What is the level of knowledge, attitude and practice of elderly in KPP towards successful aging among?

2. Is there an association between KAP and successful aging of elderly in KPP?

1.5 Hypothesis

Ho : There is no association between KAP and successful aging of elderly in KPP.

H_A : There is an association between KAP and successful aging of elderly in KPP.

The hypothesis is rejected at level of confidence 95% and significance level (α) 0.025.

1.6 Definition of Terms

1.6.1 Knowledge

Knowledge is the state of knowing about a particular fact or situation (Hornby, 2005). It also defined as familiarity, awareness, or understanding gained through experience or study. Similarly, it is the sum or range of what has been perceived, discovered, or learned (Farlex, 2007)

1.6.2 Attitude

Attitude is a complex mental state involving beliefs and feelings and values and dispositions to act in certain ways (Farlex, 2007). It is the way that you behave towards something that shows how you think and feel about it (Hornby, 2005).

1.6.3 Practice

Practice is the act or process of doing something; performance or action. It is a customary way of operation or behaviour. It can also be defined as to do or perform (something) repeatedly in order to acquire or polish a skill (Farlex, 2007). Practice is the actual application of a plan or method, as opposed to the theories relating to it (Oxford University Press, 2007).

1.6.4 Elderly

Elderly can be defined as people who are old collectively, having lived for a relatively long time or attained a specific age (Farlex, 2007). Some considers an individual as an elderly as 65 years and above, as defined by Eliopoulos (2005) and Meiner and Luecknotte (2006). However, the United Nations has agreed that the age of 60 years and above refers to the older population or elderly (World Health Organization, 2007), although the cut-off point for elderly in Malaysia is 55 years and above as it is used as the

retirement age (Abdullah, 2007). Thus, in this study age of the elderly will be taken at 60 years and above.

1.6.5 Successful

Successful is having a favourable outcome and having obtained something desired or intended (Farlex, 2007). It is the state of achieving your aims or what was intended (Hornby, 2005).

1.6.6 Aging

Aging is the organic process of growing older and showing the effects of increasing age (Farlex, 2007). It can also be defined as an artificial process for imparting the characteristics and properties of age (Oxford University Press, 2007). Vaillant and Mukamal (2001) viewed aging in three dimensions, namely decline functions, changing physically, and development and maturation.

1.6.7 Successful Aging

With reference to the Rowe and Kahn's (1998), successful aging can be defined as minimal or absence of diseases and disability, high cognitive and physical functions, and active engagement in life. Bowling and Dieppe (2005) explained that successful aging is the optimisation of life expectancy while minimising physical and mental deterioration and disability, with emphasise on life satisfaction, social participation and functioning, psychological resources and personal growth. Successful aging differed from the 'usual aging' whereby the former have little or no age related decrement in physiological and cognitive functioning, with extrinsic factors playing a neutral or positive role in the process (Bowling and Dieppe, 2005).

1.7 Significance of the Study

If this study is not conducted, we will not know how far the concept of successful aging has grabbed the attention of elderly in Malaysia, and how they act towards this matter. Therefore, this study is important as it provides information on the current status of Malaysian elderly knowledge, attitude and practice towards successful aging. With this data, this study will tighten up the gap in research concerning successful aging in the older population in Malaysia. Furthermore, without this research, fundamental information regarding the elderly in Malaysia will remain unknown, despite the fact that this information is essential, especially for the policy makers, to develop further interventions to this specific group of age. Similarly in the nursing perspective, the data that was collected in this study will be another major step towards a better understanding of the elderly population thus brings us to a higher level of quality of nursing care towards the elderly.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 Malaysia towards aging population

The population of Malaysia is rapidly increasing from 25.5 million people in 2005, projecting into 28.1 million people in the year 2010 (World Health Organization, 2005). Out of this population, 7.9% will be aged 60 years and above in the year 2010 equivalent to 1.4 million people (ibid). Thus, Malaysia is seen to be heading towards the trend of aging population consistent with the worldwide phenomenon.

According to the Rabieyah & Roszaini (2002), the age structure of the population mainly depended on the changing trends in fertility and mortality. The changing trend of fertility from high birth and mortality rates to rapidly declining rates generated a reduction of the young population while increasing the older age group. These changes can be seen in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Crude Birth Rates (CBR) and Crude Death Rates (CDR)

	Crude Birth Rates			Crude Death Rates		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
1980	30.6	31.4	29.9	5.3	6.0	4.5
1990	27.9	28.4	27.4	4.6	5.2	4.1
2000	24.5	25.0	24.0	4.4	5.0	3.8

Source : Rabieyah & Roszaini (2002)

In addition to the low fertility rate, the life expectancy of the elderly has been statistically increased over the years. This event also contributed to the aging population trend in Malaysia. Referring to Table 2.2, the longevity of the elderly have significantly increased, especially on the female counterpart overriding the life expectancy at birth of males by five years. Although higher birth rates were seen on males rather than females, eventually, the female elderly dominated the composition of the aging population (Rabieyah & Roszaini, 2002).

Table 2.2: Life Expectancy at Birth by Sex and Years

Sex	1970	1980	1991	2000
Male	61.6	66.5	69.2	70.2
Female	65.6	71.0	73.4	75.0

Source : Rabieyah & Roszaini (2002)

According to Chan (2006), in order to estimate the challenges that will emerge from the trend of an ageing population, social policy makers tend to consider the elderly dependency ratio, which is the dependency ratio of people aged 65 and above. Although not every elderly is "dependant", this ratio provided a baseline on the degree of which these people are counting on the other age group. Considering the elderly dependency ratio in Malaysia have somewhat stabilized as seen in Table 2.3, it is still insufficient, taking into account that the population of the elderly are rapidly growing. Hence this situation might project the increasing "burden" of an ageing population in the years to come.

Table 2.3: Age Dependency Ratio (%) Between 1970 till 2000

Dependency Ratio	1970	1980	1991	2000
Under aged 15	86.5	69.6	61.9	53.5
Aged 65 and above	5.9	6.4	6.3	6.2
Total	92.4	76.0	68.2	59.7

Source: Rabieyah & Roszaini (2002)

In accordance to the aging population, many problems and challenges had emerged. Elderly are frequently associated with diseases, disability, dependency and depression. Hence, the concept of successful aging has been highly given the attention recently to prevent all of these negative aspects.

2.2 Successful aging

"Successful aging" has become a major focus in contemporary gerontology. The concept of successful aging originally developed from the gerontologists and researchers' various objective views and opinions. Thus, a lot of research has been conducted in order to define successful aging and identify its indicator and predictors that leads towards that concept (Bowling and Dieppe, 2005, Phelan et al, 2004, Depp and Jeste, 2006, Hsu, 2007, Bowling, 2006, Vaillant and Mukamal, 2001).

However, there were few studies that took account the older people's view of successful aging. Bowling and Dieppe (2005), for example, found that apart from the researcher's opinion, the elderly considers stable finances,

retiring in a safe neighbourhood with good community facilities forms successful aging.

Consideration for its awareness and applicability in the Eastern countries are still insufficient (Hsu, 2007), including Malaysia. The term 'successful aging' is not well recognized by the Asian elderly. A research on successful aging in Taiwan reported that the expression 'successful aging' do not exist in Taiwanese culture or discourse, but were better expressed as an 'ideal' or 'satisfactory' life in an old age (Hsu, 2007).

2.3 Rowe and Kahn's Model of Successful Aging

In an attempt to define successful aging the renowned MacArthur studies concentrated on the absence of chronic disease and high level of functioning and independency (Bowling & Dieppe, 2005). Subsequently, a model of successful aging emerged in 1998, developed by Rowe and Kahn (1998). According to these researchers, similarly to the previous concept, successful aging is seen as fulfilling three components of the model, with great emphasis on social engagement in life (Stern & O'Boyle, 2002).