

Psychological Reasons of Minangkabau Elderly to Stay in Nursing Home (Case Study at Sabai Nan Aluih Nursing Home)

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ABSTRACT

The presence of nursing homes in the Minangkabau community affects the psychological reasons for elderly living in nursing homes. This qualitative research is to uncover the reasons of the elderly to decide for living in a nursing home. From the results of the study it was found that elderly women settled in nursing homes on the grounds of not having a family, not having daughter, not respectful sons-in-law, afraid of offending children and son-in-laws as well as being a burden to them. Meanwhile, elderly men choose to stay in nursing homes because their wives had been died as they feel uncomfortable anymore living in the wife's family environment, do not have sibling daughter as feel they have no right to live in the Rumah Gadang and the position as Ninik Mamak did not exist anymore. It can be concluded that elderly Minangkabau who decide to live in a nursing home have negative psychological reasons for living in their family environment.

Keywords: *psychological reason, elderly, Minangkabau, nursing home*

1. INTRODUCTION

The increase in the life expectancy of the elderly is an indicator of the improvement in the quality of health of the elderly [1]. This increase also affects the number of elderly people living in a certain area. But on the other hand, the high number of elderly people certainly affects their well-being in the neighborhood. The government is trying to deal with the problem by providing nursing homes as a suitable place for the elderly who are economically weak. Along with the development of the need for a better life, the existence of nursing homes is considered as an alternative for the elderly for life at the end of their age.

The nursing home is in principle a total institution that provides assistance to the physically challenged elderly [2]. The Indonesian Ministry of Social Affairs [4] declared the nursing home as social rehabilitation for the elderly in the form of curative, preventive and promotive services to create independent elderly people in social life (UU No 109 / HUK / 2009). West Sumatra as one of the provinces in Indonesia is also included in the provisions of this Act, helping to build a nursing home to provide guidance and services for the elderly in the West Sumatera region. The existence of a nursing home in this area also helps to improve the quality of their welfare.

Basically, Minangkabau men and women who enter old age will be the main responsibility of their extended family in lineage. Minangkabau community basically has a set of responsibilities that have been passed down for generations. The main responsibility in caring for elderly

parents is in the hands of their own biological children, especially daughters. If they have not daughters, then the responsibility falls to the siblings, or commonly known as *sapasusunan*. When there is no sibling, the cousins are also responsible (*saparuik*). If all of the above siblings are absent, then there will be a number of (communal) siblings who are responsible for caring for the elderly and ultimately the responsibility also rests with the local community (*sanagari*) [5]. This unique way of nursing responsibility demonstrates the specific system of Minangkabau culture in solving elderly's problems.

2. METHOD

This research is a descriptive qualitative research in the form of this case study conducted to reveal the reasons for the elderly to decide to live in a nursing home. The study was carried out at Thresna Werda Sabai Nan Aluih Sicincin Nursing Home in Padang Pariaman Regency. The subjects of this study were five elderly people, two elderly women and two elderly men with an age range of 60 years and over. The selection of research subjects was based on discussions with nursing home officials related to the criteria of good and non senile communication skills. Data collection was done by interview and observation with the record and note techniques. This was chosen in consideration that all information both verbal and non verbal data could be recorded properly. Both forms of data were needed to find out the reasons for the elderly and their emotional expression in deciding to stay in a nursing home. Data analysis was performed by personal document analysis with verbal data transcription procedures for research subjects, selection

of verbal data containing reasons for elderly living in nursing homes, paying attention to the subject's nonverbal data when expressing reasons, synchronizing with the notes, analyzing the reasons by understanding the condition of the elderly culture.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the results of the study, it is known that elderly women live in nursing homes on the grounds that they are not married, do not have children, especially women, son-in-law who do not respect their position as mother in-laws so that they appear afraid of offending daughter

and son in-laws and become a burden to them. Meanwhile, elderly men choose to stay in nursing homes because their wives have been died, so they feel uncomfortable anymore living in the wife's family environment, do not have sibling daughter, and feel they have no right to live in the Rumah Gadang and the position as Ninik Mamak is not apply anymore, does want to burden the family of his cousin, and the last is not to have a daughter, so he has no place to live. Living with son and daughters-in-law can be felt as a burden. In general, decisions taken by the elderly based on their own decisions.

Table 1. Reasons of Minangkabau Elderly for Living in Nursing Home

| Elderly | Reasons | Personal Decision | | Family Decision | |
|---------|----------------------------------|--|--|---|-----------------|
| | | Pyschological aspect | Cultural aspect | Reason | Cultural aspect |
| Y M | Unmarried and having no children | Being afraid to be intimidated by the sister and brother in-law | Divison of inheritance and living right in Rumah Gadang | | |
| Z | Unrepected son in-laws | Fear of offending and being burden for daughter and son in-law | Unrespected tobe mother in-law and <i>Bundo kanduang</i> in Rumah Gadang | | |
| R | Died wife and no sibling sister | Do not want to burden the family of a cousin and feel they do not have the right to live in the Rumah Gadang | Right for living in Rumah gadang and status as Mamak | | |
| Y | No daughter | | | Assumed to burden his son and daughter in-law | |
| R | Left by his wife due to srtoke | Does not want to burden his children | Fell useless for being Ninik mamak | | |

From the table, it is illustrated that the elderly Minangkabau decided to live in a nursing home for negative psychological reasons in the family environment. In addition, the elderly have experienced a decline in physical health function that also supports the elderly's decision to live in a nursing home. Especially for elderly Minangkabau, their decisions are also influenced by cultural reasons which also have an impact on psychological reasons.

From the research results it is known that elderly women live in nursing homes for several reasons related to Minangkabau culture. The first reason is not having a family or not having children, especially daughters. In the Minangkabau culture, inheritance applies to daughters. If there are 2 daughters and 1 son in the family, the inheritance will be divided equally for girls only. A son is as Ninik Mamak who will protect the inheritance, not to own it. When one of the daughters of the family does not have a family or do not have a daughter, the inheritance of property stops. In this condition, there is a tendency to control the assets of other siblings.

The above happened to the subject YM, commonly called Mak Ayu, an elderly woman from Padang Panjang. She was a former Head of Kindergarten. Mak Ayu had lived in the Nan Aluih Nursing Home for less than 11 years. The long stay shown that Mak Ayu was very happy living in the Nursing Home. Besides that, Mak Ayu entered the Nursing Home with personal initiative and wishes. This was motivated by her psychological problems in the family home, namely the helplessness of Mak Ayu to face her biological sister and brother-in-law who always intimidate her, especially the problem of inheritance. Physical disability due to minor strokes suffered and not yet married make his helplessness higher. When asked to tell her family, an expression of deep sadness and anger held from her face was seen. At the end of the interview she revealed that she did not want to go back to his family and wanted to spend her old age at the nursing home.

The next reason is the son-in-law who disrespects his position as a mother-in-law so that a feeling of fear offends the daughter and the son-in-law as well as becomes a burden to them. Minangkabau's son-in-law lives in the Gadang House together with his mother-in-laws. Traditionally, son-in-law (*Urang Sumando*) is respected in the family at *Rumah Gadang*. This happened to the next subject, Mrs. Z, who had been living in a nursing home for eight years. She also suffered a stroke, but was unable to walk anymore and use a wheelchair. For her daily activities, Ms. Z was always assisted by nurses who were always available to help and care for her. Similar to Mak Ayu, Mrs. Z also stated that she was very happy and satisfied living in a nursing home. All questions related to her activities at the Nursing Home were answered with cheerful expressions and laughter. Conversely, when the question was directed to the time he lived with her children, his psychological expression immediately turns into disappointment. Statements of fear of offending a son-in-law's feelings are often

expressed. The condition of her daughter who worked and left her with two young grandchildren was impressed, making her afraid of making mistakes because she had suffered a mild stroke at that time. It is this psychological problem that underlies Ms. Z's decision to stay at the Nursing Home without the permission of her children. Although initially not approved by the children who mostly wander, in the end they tried to understand with the wishes of Mrs. Z. Slightly different from Mak Ayu, Mrs. Z still kept in communication with her children and was given an allowance every month.

Meanwhile, elderly men choose to settle in a nursing home because the wife died so they feel uncomfortable anymore living in the wife's family environment and do not have sibling sisters. This condition occurs to 88-year-old Mr. R that claimed he was not comfortable living in his extended family. Mr. R only had one brother. In the Minangkabau culture, Mr. R does not have ownership rights to the *Rumah Gadang*. He ashamed to live in the house. The main thing delivered by Mr. R was not having a sibling sister. From his mother's siblings, he has many sisters, but Mr. R's parents, since he was 12 years old, reminded him to understand that siblings are different from sisters from mothers. This difference was instilled in Mr. R, so psychologically he felt that his cousin would not be willing to care for him in his old age. When his wife died, he decided to live in a nursing home because it was uncomfortable to live in his wife's family environment and the desire not to bother his children. It is also not possible to return to the *Rumah Gadang* because he felt that does not have the right to live there.

Besides that, culturally, Mr. R felt he had no role as Ninik Mamak, even though he actually had a cousin from his cousin. The biological kinship of matrilineal is a significant consideration for these elderly in their care in old age. It is important to have a female sibling in the Minangkabau community, especially for Minangkabau men. These interests can be related to clothing, food and shelter needs. In other words, a sibling can be boarded for the life of an elderly man when his wife is gone and the child can no longer care for him. The absence of siblings means that there is also no niece, so that its function as Ninik mamak does not work as it should in the life of the Minangkabau people. In this case, although in reality there is still a niece of a female cousin, its function as Ninik Mamak is not the main or in other terms not the biological Ninik Mamak.

The next reason is that living with son and daughters-in-law can be felt as burdens. Next up is Mr. Y, who had lived at the nursing home for six years. Physically, he had no shortcomings, had good communication and seemed humorous, broad-minded and tended to obey the rules. From an interview with Mr. Y, it was found that he enjoyed living in a nursing home. The various activities of the nursing home in question were answered with poetry and laughter. The story of his experience of *merantau* was also flowed smoothly. When asked about his family, Mr. Y claimed only have one son who was married and lived in Batam. During his stay with his

son's family, he felt he did not have psychological problems. His expression began to look sad and had tears in his eyes when he said that he did not know the reason for his son to take admission him to the Nursing Home. Even so, he still tried to convince himself that everything was God's destiny and claimed not to keep angry at his son. He was like trying to be sincere with his son's decision. Mr. Y still kept communication with his son, but does not want to ask why he was admitted to the Nursing Home. Mr. Y's condition requires significant adjustments to live in a nursing home [6] because it is not his own decision.

The last reason is feeling to burden the children and their families. This happened to Mr. Rj, who was around 65 years old. The condition of his left leg which was weak due to a stroke made Mr. Rj did not want to bother his children and extended family. He decided to enter the Nursing Home of his own volition. Often expressions of statements about these things appear in the story. An expression of disappointment was drawn from Mr Rj's face when he told of his condition of a stroke left by his wife, who was 35 years younger than him. However, Mr. Rj was impressed to compensate for his disappointment with the religious activities and routine of the Nursing Home.

4. CONCLUSION

Elderly Minangkabau decided to live in a nursing home have negative psychological reasons for their experiences living in family environment. The elderly who in general have experienced a decline in physical health function take decisions also based on conditions from cultural aspects.

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