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### Community Stigma and Stress on Caregiver Adaptability in Caring for Clients with Schizophrenia in Aceh, Indonesia: A Cross-Sectional Study in Indonesia

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#### Abstract

**Background:** The adaptability of caregivers is a process of adjusting to environmental conditions. This is influenced by the caregiver's way of dealing with various problems that are felt, and changes in situations can affect the psychological caregiver such as stress and community stigma (Afriansyah, 2019) <sup>[1]</sup>. This study was to determine the effect of stress and social stigma on the adaptability of caregivers in caring for clients with schizophrenia.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional study was conducted on 180 caregivers. Data were collected from 12 August to 08 September 2022 at the Puskesmas, Aceh, Indonesia. The caregiver demographic data includes age, gender, marital status, education, occupation, relationship with clients, and

income.

**Results:** Most caregivers are women (97.8%), aged between 46 to 55 years (71.7%), marital status is widow (66.1%), caregiver relationship with the patient is the mother (69.4%), educated basic income (72.2%) and below the provincial minimum wage (83.3%). The bivariate test showed that there was a relationship between social stigma and the adaptability of caregivers in caring for clients with schizophrenia ( $p = 0.000$ ) and stress ( $p = 0.000$ ).

**Conclusion:** It was concluded that social stigma and stress can affect the adaptability of caregivers in caring for clients with schizophrenia.

**Keywords:** Caregiver, Adaptability, Schizophrenia, Community Stigma, Stress

#### 1. Introduction

Schizophrenia is a serious mental disorder affecting 20 million people worldwide which is characterized by deviations in thinking, perception, emotion, language, self-perception, and behavior such as hallucinations (hearing, seeing, or feeling things that don't exist) and delusions. (false beliefs are even maintained even though they do not match reality) (WHO, 2019) <sup>[2]</sup>. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2022) <sup>[3]</sup>, says that around 24 million people, or 1 in 300 people (0.32%) worldwide suffer from schizophrenia.

Stress is a disturbance to the body and mind caused by the changes and demands of life. Stress is an external need that attacks a person, for example, an object in the environment or a noxious objective stimulus. Stress can also be understood as pressure, tension, and unpleasant disturbances that come from outside a person's self (Donsu, 2017) <sup>[4]</sup>. Stigma is a negative perspective that is attached to a person and is influenced by the environment. Stigma is one of the inhibiting factors for recovery from mental disorders (Hanifah *et al.*, 2021) <sup>[5]</sup>.

A caregiver is someone who lives with a client for 6 months or 1 year and is fully responsible for family members who have mental disorders, starting from preparing food, clothing, and medicine, and accompanying clients during treatment at healthcare facilities (Heru, 2021) <sup>[6]</sup>.

The caregiver is a job that is not easy where individuals are required to be able to adapt to various conditions that they have never felt before such as the high level of stress experienced by the individual himself, the stigma received in the environment where he lives, work that begins to be disrupted and costs that are not the family has to spend a little for the treatment of schizophrenics (Afriyeni, 2020) <sup>[7]</sup>.

Based on the description above, the researcher is interested in seeing the relationship between social stigma and stress on the adaptability of caregivers in caring for schizophrenic clients.

## 2. Materials and methods

caregivers in Aceh. Data collection was carried out from 12 August to 08 September 2022. This study used four instruments, namely demographic data sheets, Community Attitudes toward Mental Illness (CAMI), Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS-21), and Occupational Adaptation Questionnaire of Family Caregiver (QAQC). Demographic data include age, gender, marital status, education, occupation, relationship with clients, and income. Data collection was carried out by distributing questionnaires and guided interviews. The ethics committee approved the local university research, and the caregivers agreed to be involved in the research voluntarily.

## 3. Result and discussion

Most of the caregivers were women (97.8%), aged between 46 to 55 years (71.7%), marital status was a widow (66.1%), caregiver relationship with patients was the mother (69.4%), had basic education (72.2%) and earn below the provincial minimum wage (83.3%). Details of demographic data characteristics can be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Socio-demographic characteristics of study respondents

Demographic Data	n	%
Age (year)		
Late teens (17-25)	1	0.6
Early adulthood (26-35)	14	7.8
Late adulthood (36-45)	36	20
Early elderly (46-55)	129	71.7
Caregiver relationship with the client		
Father	4	2.2
Mother	125	69.4
Wife	26	14.4
Older brother	24	13.3
Husband	1	0.6
seks		
male	4	2.2
Female	176	97.8
Marriage		
Not married yet	6	3.3
Marry	55	30.6
Widow	119	66.1
Level of education		
Base	130	72.2
Intermediate	41	22.8
High	9	5.0
Minimum Wage Income		
under wage income	150	83.3
uper wage income	30	16.7

This study found that 46-55 is the dominant age for caregivers caring for clients with schizophrenia. This is in line with previous research which showed that the age of caregivers was mostly the early elderly between 46-55 years (Singkali *et al.*, 2019) <sup>[8]</sup>. This is also in line with the explanation that almost 57.14% of caregivers who care for clients with schizophrenia are over 55 years old (Dewi, 2018) <sup>[9]</sup>.

The age between 46 to 55 years is the early age for the elderly, at this age, the caregiver has a stable emotional state so it is easier to adapt to the environment and manage stress. This has an impact on the caregiver's ability to care for clients with schizophrenia.

The fact that most of the caregivers in this study were women. This is also in line with previous research where the

dominant caregiver is a woman (Nafiah, 2019) <sup>[10]</sup>.

Women tend to have a high sense of caring so they have a great sense of empathy for their family members who have schizophrenia. This sense of empathy is the reason women are willing to care for schizophrenic clients.

Aceh provincial minimum wage (Rp. 3,165,000). The caregiver's average monthly income is below the provincial minimum wage. in line with previous studies, most of the caregiver's income is below the provincial minimum wage (Nafiah, 2019) <sup>[10]</sup>.

The average cost of daily life needs of caregivers is different from that of society in general. Financial problems are not the reason caregivers are willing to care for their family members who have schizophrenia.

The average caregiver's education level is Basic education. In line with previous research, most of them have elementary education (Nafiah, 2019) <sup>[10]</sup>.

Most caregivers are mothers of clients with a percentage of 69.4% of 180 respondents. The relationship between mother and child is the reason a mother is willing to care for her child under any circumstances, including schizophrenia. In line with previous research, most caregiver relationships with clients are with mothers (Dewi, 2018) <sup>[9]</sup>.

In addition to demographic data, this study aims to measure the relationship between social stigma and stress on the adaptability of caregivers in caring for clients with schizophrenia with the Pearson product-moment test. The test results can be seen in table 2.

**Table 2**

Independent Variable	r	P
Stress	0.851	0.000
Community stigma	0.598	0.000
Total respondents 180		

Pearson product-moment test results show that stress with a value ( $p = 0.000$ ;  $r = 0.851$ ). which means that stress affects the adaptability of caregivers in caring for clients with schizophrenia. This is to research conducted by Rochmawati, (2022) <sup>[11]</sup>. which said that stress is a psychological problem experienced by caregivers due to pressure both from within and from outside such as the inability to care for clients with schizophrenia. If viewed from the results in the field, the stress felt by caregivers who care for clients is caused by the burden felt by caregivers such as physical and mental burdens, causing stress on caregivers in caring for clients.

The results of the Pearson product-moment test show that community stigma has a value ( $p = 0.000$ ;  $r = 0.598$ ) which means that community stigma affects the adaptability of caregivers in caring for clients with schizophrenia. Research conducted by Agustang *et al.*, (2021) <sup>[12]</sup>. Community stigma is negative behavior shown by society and attitudes that demean people with mental disorders, limiting their social interactions.

## 4. Conclusion

Several factors related to the adaptability of caregivers in caring for clients with schizophrenia are stress factors and social stigma. However, adaptability can also be influenced by other factors that can be taken into consideration for further research.

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