

# Family Support with Quality of Life in the Elderly

Dinda Surya & Laili Alfita\*

Department of Psychology, Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Medan Area, Indonesia

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\*Corresponding Email: [lailialfita@staff.uma.ac.id](mailto:lailialfita@staff.uma.ac.id)

## Abstract

This study aims to identify family support with the quality of life of the elderly. In Indonesia, people generally live at home with their families, so the family as one source of social support gives an important meaning to the lives of the elderly, family support is the most influential factor in the quality of life of the elderly, compared to other factors. This is because family support can increase self-confidence in the elderly and motivate them elderly in live their lives. The elderly are in the last phase of life and will experience decline resulting in muscle weakness, degenerative diseases, anxiety, and depression. The elderly need support from others. Family support is an important element to motivate the elderly, increase self-confidence, and help the elderly in meeting their needs and facing their problems. High family support will improve the quality of life of the elderly. This study uses a quantitative approach. The data collection tool in this study uses a Likert scale model, through a scale of family support and quality of life. Data analysis used Person Product Moment through SPSS Version 23. Based on 11 articles analyzed, it shows that family support affects the quality of life of the elderly because family support has a positive impact on the quality of life.

**Keywords:** Family Support; Quality of Life; Elderly.

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## INTRODUCTION

Humans are unique individual beings, different from one another. Individually, humans also want to fulfill their respective needs, realize themselves or wants, and be able to develop their respective potentials. In human life, they have a goal to achieve a decent and meaningful life. As individual beings, humans are the smallest part and unit of social life. (Dalimunthe et al., 2022; Situngkir & others, 2018). In human life, we go through various phases from infancy to old age. The aging process is a continuous process (continuing) naturally. Aging in humans is an unavoidable phenomenon. The better the health services of a nation, the higher the life expectancy of the community, and in turn the higher the elderly say that the influence of the aging process can cause various problems both physically-biologically, mentally, and socio-economically. (Hutauruk, 2010; Nurrahmadhani & others, 2018; Saragih & others, 2018).

Elderly is the final stage in the human life cycle which is marked by various physical, psychological, and social changes. According to Law No. 13 of 1998, a person is categorized as elderly when they have reached the age of 60 years and above. Meanwhile, WHO divides the elderly into several categories, namely middle age (45-59 years), old age (60-70 years), old age (75-90 years), and very old age (90 years and above) (Heryani & others, 2023; Paramita, 2023).

As they get older, the elderly experience an aging process that includes physical, cognitive, mental, spiritual, and psychosocial changes. (Achmad, 2022; Perangin-Angin & Chandra, 2022). These changes often result in decreased immunity, making the elderly more susceptible to various chronic diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, and heart disease. In addition, cognitive disorders such as decreased memory and thinking function are also common in the elderly, which can affect their independence in carrying out daily activities.

The impact of these changes is not only limited to physical health but also affects the psychosocial aspects of the elderly. When the elderly experience physical limitations and declining health, they tend to feel weak and less able to do activities than before. This can reduce their level of social interaction with family, friends, and the surrounding environment. If this condition persists for a long time, the elderly are at risk of experiencing feelings of loneliness, stress, and depression, which will ultimately reduce their quality of life.

To maintain the quality of life of the elderly, support is needed from various parties, especially the family. Emotional, social, and instrumental support from family and the surrounding environment plays an important role in helping the elderly feel appreciated, active, and have a purpose in their lives.

Family support plays a very important role in the quality of life of the elderly. According to Havighurst, there are several developmental tasks that must be faced by the elderly, including adjusting to decreased physical strength and health, facing retirement and reduced income, and adjusting to the loss of a spouse. These developmental tasks show that old age is a challenging stage of life, which requires social and emotional support from family and the surrounding environment.

One of the main factors that affect the quality of life of the elderly is family support. Family support can be in the form of assistance in the form of goods, services, information, and advice that can make the elderly feel appreciated, loved, and at ease. The attitude of acceptance and care from family members towards the elderly provides a sense of security and improves their well-being. (Malinda et al., 2022; Margaretta et al., 2022). Family support also plays a role in maintaining the mental health of the elderly, so that they do not feel isolated or lonely.

Research conducted by Indriyani & Ronoatmodjo revealed that family support is the most influential factor in the quality of life of the elderly compared to other factors. Elderly people who receive emotional and social support from their families tend to have higher self-confidence and are more motivated to live their daily lives. The presence of family members who care and actively interact with the elderly can help them feel appreciated and have a purpose in life.

Previous research conducted by (Husni et al., 2015) regarding the relationship between family support and the quality of life of breast cancer patients in the inpatient installation of Dr. Mohammad Hoesin Palembang Hospital also showed similar results. From the study, it was found



that 75% of respondents had poor family support, and 53.1% of respondents had poor quality of life. The results of the Chi-Square statistical test showed a significant relationship between family support and the quality of life of breast cancer patients. This finding reinforces the fact that social support, especially from family, is very important in determining a person's quality of life, including the elderly.

Family support can take various forms, such as emotional support that includes attention, affection, and empathy for the elderly. In addition, instrumental support in the form of practical assistance, such as providing food, health care, and meeting daily needs, also contributes to the well-being of the elderly. Informational support, such as providing advice and information related to health, helps the elderly make better decisions regarding their well-being.

Thus, it can be concluded that family support is the main factor that influences the quality of life of the elderly. Elderly people who receive full support from their families tend to be happier, healthier physically and mentally, and better able to adapt to changes in their lives. Therefore, families need to continue to provide the attention, affection, and assistance needed so that the elderly can live comfortably and meaningfully.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study does not use research subjects because it uses a data collection method, namely a literature study. The method used for the study is a literature study using secondary data types obtained from 11 references to Psychology journals related to family support, quality of life, and the elderly. The data are compiled, analyzed, and concluded to obtain conclusions regarding the related discussion.

The research tools that will be used in this study are hardware and software. The hardware consists of a laptop with Intel Celeron Inside processor specifications, while the software used is the Microsoft Windows 10 operating system. As for data analysis using SPSS version 23.0 for Windows. Then the score representing the subject's choice on each statement item is moved to the next stage, namely Microsoft Excel 2010.

The data collection tool in this study used a Likert scale model, through a scale of family support and quality of life. Data analysis used Person Product Moment through SPSS Version 23. The researcher explained the instructions for filling out the questionnaire, then the completed questionnaires were collected and then checked for completeness to be processed and analyzed by the researcher.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Repeated studies have shown that individuals who receive high levels of family support tend to experience improvements in overall health and well-being.(Cohen & Wills, 1985; Mulder et al., 2003; Pierce et al., 1996). Family support not only contributes to improving physical health but also has an impact on mental health, such as decreasing levels of depression and loneliness.(Cohen & Wills, 1985; Cutrona & Russell, 1987; Mulder et al., 2003; Pierce et al., 1996; Roberts & Gotlib, 1997). This shows that the family plays an important role in maintaining the psychological well-being of individuals, including the elderly group.

The need for social support for the elderly is a major concern in the field of gerontology because historically, the family has always played a major role in ensuring the welfare and security of the elderly. As they age, the elderly experience changes in physical, psychological, and social aspects that require support from their surroundings, especially the family. Without adequate support, the elderly are more susceptible to stress, depression, and loneliness, which can hurt their health.

As the most natural source of social support, families can provide four forms of support for the elderly. According to(Hermann et al., 2011; and Johnston et al., 2011), these supports include: emotional support, which provides comfort and empathy; instrumental support, in the form of assistance in daily activities; appreciation or assessment support, which increases the elderly's





sense of self-esteem; and informational support, which helps the elderly in making decisions and understanding various information related to their well-being.

With strong family support, seniors can live healthier, happier, and more meaningful lives. Therefore, families need to continue to provide attention and active involvement in the lives of seniors to ensure their well-being is maintained.

This is also in line with research.(Al Khorni et al., 2017)Entitled "The Relationship Between Family Support and Quality of Life of the Elderly in Gonilan Village, Kartasura District, Sukoharjo Regency" shows that most respondents received sufficient support, namely 23 respondents (61.2%) because most respondents live alone and their families do not understand the importance of this support in caring for the elderly.(Al Khorni et al., 2017).

This is also supported by research.(Pradina et al., 2022)Entitled "The Relationship Between Family Support and Quality of Life of the Elderly in Pranam Hamlet, Sendangsari, Sleman" which shows that family support has a great influence on the quality of life of the elderly. Based on the table below, all respondents (100%) received good support from their families, and almost all respondents (94.3%) also had a good quality of life.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage	Median
Family support	350	100	60 (53-60)
Good (48-60)	0	0.0	
Enough (34-47)	0	0.0	
Less (20-33)			
Quality of life			86 (69-100)
Good (68-100)	33	94.3	
Enough (34-67)	2	5.7	
Less (0-33)	0	0.0	

This study shows that most elderly people have a good quality of life, with a percentage reaching 94.3%. This result is higher than the research of Indrayani & Ronoatmodjo, which found that only 53.7% of elderly people have a good quality of life, while 46.3% have a poor quality of life. Elderly people with a good quality of life tend to feel comfortable with themselves, can solve problems well, are independent in carrying out daily activities, can interact socially, and have their needs met.

Observations made by researchers show that elderly people who have a good quality of life remain active in their daily lives, such as hoeing, planting rice, shopping at the market, and taking care of grandchildren. Elderly people who take care of grandchildren even feel happier and more entertained because they have fun activities, so they don't feel lonely. On the other hand, elderly people with a good quality of life often experience physical limitations and need help from their families to do various activities.

Family support plays an important role in improving the quality of life of the elderly. The type of support provided by the family depends on the condition of the elderly and the level of stress they experience. For example, emotional and informational support is needed more by the elderly who have serious or chronic illnesses. However, in this study, almost all respondents were in good health without chronic or terminal illnesses, which contributed to their high level of quality of life.

The family as the closest party to the elderly also functions as a source of practical and concrete help. One form of support that can be given is instrumental support, namely providing real assistance to meet the needs of the elderly, such as health care, protection from danger, and fulfillment of financial needs. As they get older, the elderly's need for care and protection increases, so the existence of the family becomes very important in ensuring that they continue to get the support they need.

The results of the study showed a significant relationship between instrumental family support and the quality of life of the elderly. The elderly who receive instrumental support from their families have a better quality of life compared to the elderly who receive less support. This



instrumental support is not only in the form of fulfilling financial needs but also in the physical presence of family members who care for the elderly. The presence of supportive and caring family members can provide a sense of security and comfort for the elderly, which ultimately contributes to improving their quality of life.

Physiological changes that occur in the elderly cause a decrease in their ability to live their daily lives independently. Therefore, the role of the family in providing support is very important. The family not only plays a role in financial and health aspects but also in providing attention and togetherness that can improve the emotional well-being of the elderly. With strong support from the family, the elderly can live their old age more meaningfully, happily, and healthily.

## CONCLUSION

Family support is an important aspect that contributes to the quality of life of the elderly. This support includes various forms of assistance provided by family members, both nuclear family, extended family, and relatives and friends. Elderly people who receive good family support tend to have a higher quality of life because they feel cared for, and appreciated, and do not experience loneliness which can have a negative impact on their well-being.

In addition to family support, environmental factors also play a role in determining the quality of life of the elderly. A supportive environment, such as a comfortable, safe place to live and having adequate facilities, can improve the physical and mental health of the elderly. A friendly environment allows the elderly to remain actively interacting with others so that they can more easily adapt to the various changes that occur as they age. Positive social interactions also help the elderly feel more accepted and appreciated in their community.

Psychological factors also have a significant influence on the quality of life of the elderly. Good mental health will improve overall well-being, allowing the elderly to carry out daily activities better. Conversely, poor psychological conditions, such as stress, depression, or anxiety, can hinder the elderly's ability to enjoy life. Psychological conditions are greatly influenced by the elderly's perception of themselves and their environment. If the elderly have a positive perception of life, they tend to have a better quality of life.

Based on this study, it can be concluded that there is a real relationship between family support and the quality of life of the elderly. Elderly who receive support from family and the environment will experience a better life, especially when they remain active, participate in various activities, and maintain close relationships with others.

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