

LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES AMONG MALAY ELDERLY COMMUNITY IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM

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Received: 20.05.2020

Revised: 17.06.2020

Accepted: 04.07.2020

Abstract

Care of the parents is still a priority for the Malay community. In the modern and changing structure of Malay society where in most cases both husband and wife working, issue of dependency of elderly parents on their children still a priority. The previous global employment pattern has promoted second and third generations of the rural population to migrate to cities and towns for better employments has instigated today's issue of global care-drain for the rural elderly (Simonazzi Villa 2006; Michel 2011). As Wan Ibrahim et al (2015) points out, one aspect that the community needs to address now is the outpouring of the elderly caregivers into cities. The future rural Malay elderly realize that previous tradition, depending on their children to care for their elderly lives is not the main option, that has forced them to plan and prepare their elderly living arrangements. Therefore, this paper will discuss options and strategies adopted by the Malay rural elderly in an effort to sustain the impact of the outflow of their potential elderly caregivers into cities. To identify these strategies, this study used a qualitative approach, specifically Focus Group Discussion (FGD) method. A total of 36 respondents were involved in the FGD, consisting of 26 elderly and 10 future elderly. The main strategy identified by the respondents was self-reliance. This is to face the current changing phenomenon that would disrupt the tradition and culture where care of the parents is a priority for the Malay community.

Keywords-- senior citizens, self-reliant, future planning

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DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.31838/jcr.07.08.317>

INTRODUCTION

Aging is a biological, sociological, economic and chronological phenomenon. Age is an inevitable process of aging. Therefore, everyone should be prepared to grow old. Aging is also associated with decreased biological, physical, and increased dependency on others. Often people in old age will have a lot of problems related to their mobility and daily activities. Therefore, constantly, this requires them to depend on others, specifically their children, to manage their lives. This is also true among the Malaysian society such as the Malays.

The definition of an elderly person varies according to the fields of studies. According to social studies, the perspective of the elderly or old person depends on cultural and generational differences. From the Economics perspective, the elderly refers as individuals who have retired from their occupation (World Health Organization, 2017). Lack of specific definition has led many sociologists, behavioral scientists and other researchers to more likely classify retirement age as dividing lines between adults and old (Roebuck, 1979). In the case of Malaysia, it has categorized persons aged 60 and above as elderly persons, based on the definition made in the "World Assembly on Ageing 1982" (Department of Social Welfare).

As the global phenomenon unfolds as early as 2030, Malaysia must also be ready to become an aging country by then. So, the issue of living arrangement among the elderly in the society in general need to be addressed and designed in line with the current development trend. The recent trend portrays that the ability of children to take care their elderly parents in rural Malay society has drastically reduced compared to the previous situation. This is because many of the younger generations in rural areas have migrated to cities for employment and in many cases, both spouses are working (Simonazzi Villa 2006; Michel 2011).

The present situation becomes more critical when it involves out-migration among the rural young population. Wan Ibrahim et al (2015) highlights that one aspect which the rural community needs to address now is the heavy movement of rural younger generation who would be the elderly caregivers into cities. Realizing that in future the rural Malay elderly need to have alternative plans and strategies to have a sustainable elderly life, the future elderly in rural areas have made some plans and preparations for their elderly living arrangement. In addition, the current rural elderly have also adjusted their livelihood strategies to suit the current living arrangement. Therefore, this paper will discuss plans and strategies adopted by the Malay rural elderly and future elderly in an effort to sustain the impact of the outflow of their potential elderly caregivers into cities.

PROBLEM STATEMENTS

The elderly, especially the sick ones need caregivers to manage their daily needs. According to Kamus Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (2018) care can be defined as acts of guardianship, supervision, preservation, control and so on. The caregivers in this paper refers to the children or immediate family of the elderly. Previous study by Roziah (2000), illustrates most Malay families in Malaysia are still adhering to the values and norms that the children are responsible to take care of their elderly parents. However, further study by Tengku Aizan and Khadijah (2003) proves that these values and norms are eroding due to industrialization process in Malaysia.

In Malaysia, migration to cities has been increasing ever since the New Economic Policy was launched in 1971, contributing to the reform of the elderly care, especially in rural areas. The availability of employment opportunities in cities has encouraged the out-migration of young generation leaving the older generation in rural areas. Even though, it is generally believed that the elderly lives will be cared by their children, especially girls, however, due to modernization process, many women have also been employed by formal sectors (Nur Syakiran Akmal et al.

2017). The new cultural values and perceptions focusing on improving social and living standards in a society demands the involvement of women to contribute to the families' economy. As a result, many women have to work outside their homes. Therefore, the current employment pattern among the young generation makes them no longer as the prime caregivers for their elderly parents. This means that the elderly parents and (or) their children need to find alternatives for elderly living arrangements. This situation needs to be taken into consideration as this can be detrimental to the livelihoods of rural elderly, especially to those with health problems (Wan Ibrahim Wan Ahmad, FuziahShaffie, Jamaluddin Mustaffa, Ahmad Syukri Abdul Hamid and RusimahSayuti, 2015). The issue of elderly caregivers is not just a domestic issue but also a global issue as industrialization process has a great impact on the traditional elderly care norm, culture and customs.

In the event of out migration to the city, there is an issue of caregivers for the elderly parents who have to find an alternatives elderly care service and facilities including finding domestic helpers from Indonesia (Zakiyah Jamaluddin, Wan Ibrahim Wan Ahmad, Zarina Mat Saad, FuziahShaffie, 2009). Therefore, before any policy on the care of the elderly can be formulated, the issue of loosing the customary caregivers should be analyzed to identify the real issue or the push factors related to the out migration of the young generations to cities. This phenomenon is crucial and need to be analyzed critically as in future the number of elderly persons will increase as Malaysia is moving towards becoming an aging society. This is to ensure that the country would provide elderly care services and facilities suitable to the needs and life style of the elderly to warrant the wellbeing of the group. Thus, this paper will discuss strategies that have been planned and adopted by the rural elderly and prospective elderly in their effort to have desired living arrangement for their promising elderly livelihoods.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in District Y for a group of elderly named Group A and District C for a group of elderly named Group B, in the state of Kedah. The method used was qualitative through Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and the sampling was design aimed at obtaining the data of this study. For Group A there were 26 respondents divided into two subgroups based on gender and age 60 and above. Group B is a group between 40-59 years old consisting of 10 people. Thematic data analysis was used for the findings of the interviews. The details of the use of both approaches in reference to the research objectives are as shown in the table below. Secondary data consist of government publications, media, journals and past studies were utilized in supporting the findings of this study.

The session lasted for 60 minutes facilitated by the head researcher. The data obtained were recorded and transcribed. Finally, the demographic data were analyzed descriptively and data collected from the FGD were analyzed manually based on the themes set for the FGD discussion.

Table 1. Group A: The Elderly Group

Demography	No.	Percentage
Sex		
Male	10	38.5
Female	16	61.5
Age		
60-64	18	61.5
65-69	8	30.8
70-74	0	0.0
75-79	2	7.7

Employment	No.	Percentage
Private Sector	1	3.8
Retired	1	3.8
Self-employed	10	38.5
House-wife	14	53.8

Table 1 shows the demographic distribution of the respondents, the majority of the respondents of the study were female (61.5%), while the rest were male (38.5%). Respondents were 60 to 64 years old (61.5%), followed by 30.8% of respondents aged 65 to 69 and only 7.1% of respondents were 75 to 79 years old. Most of the survey respondents were housewives (53.8%), 38.5% were self-employed and 3.8% were private and retired workers.

Table 2. Group B

Demography	No.	Percentage
Sex		
Male	5	50
Female	5	50
Age		
40-49	5	50
50-59	5	50
Employment		
Public Sector	3	22.2
Private Sector	2	22.2
Self-employed	3	33.4
House-wife	2	22.2

Table 2 shows the demographic distribution of the respondents, 5 women (50%) and 5 men (50%). Respondents were 40 to 49 years old (44.4%), followed by 55.6% of respondents 50 to 59 years old. Most of the respondents were self-employed (33.4%) and 22.2% working in government, private sectors and housewives.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

The phenomenon of migration has long attracted the attention of demographic researchers (KatimanRustam, 2006; MohdFadzil Abdul Rashid and Isaac Ab Ghani, 2007; Usman HjYaakob and TarmijiMastom, 2010). The effect of migration especially on women is the care of the elderly in rural areas. According to Michael (2010), this issue is generally related to the international migration of women from low-income countries in developing countries to high-income countries in developed countries (Michel, 2010), or to the context of internal migration from rural to urban areas in search for a better life. The issue of outmigration of caregiver from rural areas or care drain, is an issue that is increasingly being discussed globally (Bettio, Simonazzi and Villa, 2006; Michel, 2011), leaving the implications that the elderly are left in rural areas facing to cope with their living arrangement on their own (Wan Ibrahim, et al. 2015).

Several studies shown that rural elderly are left to deal with poverty and economic hardship as their children migrated to cities (TengkuAizan&Jariah, 2010; Economic Planning Unit, 2001; HusnaSulaiman&JariahMasud, 2012). In addition to poverty and economic issues, the key issues behind this aging population are the issues of elderly care (Wan Ibrahim Wan Ahmad, et al., 2015), the issue of neglect of the elderly (SitiZailaHusin& Khadijah Alavi, 2016) and issues of abuse among the elderly (Jal Zadi, 2009).

Therefore, the above issues would need to be attended seriously by related agencies to ensure the sustainability of the elderly welfare. This is based on the following reasons. First, public observation found that many rural elderly persons in Kedah, Kelantan and Terengganu are living alone. A study by Masithah and Nazileh (1988) in Selangor, Negeri Sembilan and Malacca shows that the same phenomena is taking place in their study area. Therefore, to determine the extent to which the above issue has the implications of future caregiving patterns for the elderly, an in-depth study to a small group of elderly in rural area is vital.

Secondly, Malaysia is now facing a rapid growth in the number of elderly age-group. The increasing number of the elderly means that Malaysia is moving towards an aging society (Phillips, 1992). In 1970, the population of 65 and over in Malaysia was 282,367, and it increased to 919 000 in 2000. In 2005 the number increased to 1 1133 000. It is estimated that the total population in Malaysia by 2020 will be about 2,079,000. In terms of percentage, it increased from 3.1% (1970), to 3.9% (1995) and 4.2% (2000) and is expected to be 7.3% by 2020 (United Nations, 1991). In 2010 there were approximately 2.3 million (8.2%) elderly aged 60 and over in Malaysia and the number is expected to increase to 5.5 million (14.4%) by 2030 (Faculty of Economics and Administration, University of Malaya, 2012). This means that in every 16 Malaysians today, there is an elderly person aged 60 years and over (Tengku Aizan, Jariah and Chai, 2004). With the increasing number of the elderly, family members are faced with the issue of caring for the elderly. Older people are also faced with alternative living arrangement issues as a result of decreasing primary caregivers (Wan Ibrahim Wan Ahmad, et al., 2015).

Thirdly, to fulfill the requirements by World Assembly on Aging in Vienna (United Nations, 1982) which calls on all countries to raise awareness of the consequences that would arise due to the aging population. The United Nations also previously declared 1999 as Senior Citizens' Year (Kinsella and Velkoff, 2001) to raise attention related to aging population issues, including intensive studies on all aspects of the elderly need and requirements. Therefore, this research is a small effort towards responding to that urge.

In addition to looking at the livelihood strategies of the elderly, future studies on selection or preferences on elderly living arrangement is equally important too. Velkoff (2001) found that factors that influence planning for the future are marital status, finances, health, size and family structure, services and facilities by the government and local culture. Cultural factors were found to be significant as the main contributor in determining elderly livelihood planning. In Malaysia, most families still stick to the values and norms that the children are responsible for the care of their parents (Khadijah & Rahim, 2010). In particular, in the Indian community, parents have to live with their children. However, changes in the traditional family structure to the nuclear family have also changed the type of living arrangement for the elderly. Nevertheless, the study Aishah@Eshah&Katiman (2012) on the elderly in Selangor proving that the economic change would cause many parents unable to be completely dependent on their children.

Financial factors are also essential as the preparation of elderly day. The elderly have to have good lives with sufficient financial standing (Personal Finance Research Centre, 2014). Yen-Jong and Ching-Yi (2012) proved that the elderly in Taiwan who had high socio-economic status or gained financial resources from children prefer to live alone. Besides that, in most developing countries the economic wellbeing of the elderly also varies by gender in terms of income. The economic status of the elderly man is better because they have a higher education level than the elderly women who are also more vulnerable to the employment sector than the elderly men. (Chan, Jariah, Tengku, & Laily, 2010).

The study of Suridah Ali (2016), found that the sources of retirement incomes for the elderly men and women in Besut Terengganu can be divided into four, namely pensions, financial assistance from children, income for working after retirement and revenue from owned properties. The pensions are the main income of all the retired elderly men and women. Nevertheless, most of the female elderly received financial assistance from their children even though they have their own pensions. Financial wellbeing based on gender is also depending on their savings before reaching the age of 60 years (Norlaila, Nor Aini, & Doris, 2009).

While the study by Nor Raudah (2015) shows the elderly are prepared to live in the care centre if the facilities are complete and comfortable to them. This situation is reflected at the al-Jenderami complex (YAJ), an elderly care centre in the state of Selangor.

The fact that the elderly do not make a choice of their preferred living arrangements based on themselves only but also based on the overall household structure which has a significant relationship towards their elderly life. Children living with parents can provide assistance in terms of financial and daily activities compared to the children living apart (Glaser, 1997). The selection of elderly living arrangement also depends on their physical ability (Aishah@Eshah & Katiman 2012). In India, a total of 96 per cent of the elderly who were over 80 years old lived with a large family due to their dependency on economic and physical aspects (Javeed, Srivinas, & Kailash, 2013).

To date, the implications of the outflow of the young generations from rural areas to cities which would have great impacts on the customary elderly care practices still yet to be fully described. There are no official data showing how many elderly people in the rural areas are left unattended or faced with care problems. We also do not have a clear knowledge on the adaptation strategies taken by the elderly or their family members to deal with the above situation. These questions should be addressed so that related agencies can have good knowledge and information on how the elderly adapt their livelihood strategies to suit the current and future lifestyle. These knowledge and information can be the basic framework for the related agencies to plan and provide infrastructure, facilities and services suitable to the needs of the elderly for their sustainable economic and social wellbeing.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, even though most of the respondents have their children migrated to cities, only seven of them live on their own without their other children. This means they live independently managing their lives on their own.

The other respondents have several children so some are still living in their villages. A study by Aishah@Eshah&Katiman (2012) on the elderly in Selangor proves that the economic change caused many parents to live independently on their own.

In order to live the life without depending on children the elderly have to come up with their own strategy for survival. The interviews discovered eight strategies adopted by the elderly to live independently on their own in rural areas. The strategies adopted by the elderly are then compared with the living arrangement plans of the future elderly. This is to assess and evaluate the viability of the plans and strategies of the future elderly and to help them to forecast the possible problem and issues to be encountered so that they can make adjustment and have other alternatives in future.

The followings are the living arrangements of the rural elderly and future rural elderly (the respondents).

Living with spouse

Some of the respondents are still living with their spouses. Therefore, the choice of living with a spouse is a priority and considered as the most preferred living arrangement of the elderly. This is a common phenomenon in the culture of the Malay community which prefer to spend the rest of their lives with their spouses. The study of Velkoff (2001) shows that factor of marital status has also influenced living arrangement for the elderly. Such as the statements below;

I will take care of my spouse while he is alive (Respondent 1A)
Now I am living with my husband. (Respondent 3A)
I will stay with my spouse while he is still alive (Respondent 4A)
We would like to live with our spouses (Respondent 5A)

For study on future elderly, they also chose to live with spouses in future.

I will live with my husband because I do not have my own income (Respondent 2B)
If my wife is still alive, I will stay with her (Respondent 9B)

However, some respondents stated that they would also need to return to the children if their spouses were gone. The fact is that the elderly do not only make choices about their own lives, but their household structure also has a significant impact on their elderly livelihood strategies. Children living with parents are more likely to provide assistance in terms of daily and financial activities than children who live far away (Glaser, 1997). The choice of lifestyle is also dependent on the elderly physical capabilities. The study by Aishah @ Eshah Haji Mohamed & Katiman Rostam (2012) finds that the quality of life of the older people in the study area in Selangor decreased due to the aging process they experienced. The vast majority of respondents have hearing, vision, movement, memory and thinking problems, but at different levels. In addition to the aging process itself, the elderly are also prone to illnesses (such as high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, stroke, gout).

The illnesses experienced by the majority of these respondents can be classified as serious illnesses related to their lifestyle, namely nutrition, physical activity / exercise and stress. The process of aging and illnesses has affected their ability to take care of themselves. This requires them to depend on their children, relatives and so on. The statement below shows the choice of the elderly is to live with their children

If my spouse is still alive I will live with him. If not, I will live with my children. (Respondent 4A)

This situation reflects the existing strong Malay culture that living with children is the next choice of the elderly living arrangement after their spouses passed away is still prevalent in rural local community.

For the future elderly group, they do not plan on living with children because they choose to live alone if the spouse passed away. They also choose their own home as the prime site to live for their elderly life.

Living in own home

Another strategy is that when their caregivers moved to cities, the respondents prefer to stay at home on their own instead of living with other children. And if the caregiver wants to stay and take care of the respondent, the respondents prefer to stay in their own home than the children's or the caregiver's home. In other words, children need to stay with their parents at their parents' houses if they want to take care of their parents. This means, the elderly are still expecting to maintain the traditional Malay cultural of elderly living arrangement where the children should still be the caregivers for their elderly parents. This hope

persists even when they know that their children have moved to the city for economic reasons

For me, if possible I would like to stay at my own home. The children should stay with me (Respondent 3A)
Stay at my own home (Respondent 2A)
I feel more comfortable to stay at my own home even though after my spouse has passed away (Respondent 1A)
But it is better to stay with my children at my own home, my children should feel comfortable too (Respondent 4A)
When I am sick, its up to my children whether to bring me to their homes (Respondent 6A)

Choosing to stay at home is also an option for the future elderly respondents. It is clear that individuals still expect comfort and prefer to age at own home (aging in place).

Visiting children's houses

Most of respondents are still in good health. Therefore, the majority of them agree that visiting children's homes is one of the preferred living arrangement strategies for the elderly. Some respondents are willing to go to their children's homes if they are not feeling well. Statements supporting such matters are as follows;

If I miss them and they cannot come home, I will visit them. I can still go to Seremban alone. I miss my grandchildren (Respondent 3)
If I am not well, I need my children. I stay with them (Respondent 5)
I would like my children to take care of me and I want to stay with them. I don't want to be taken care by Indonesian maid. (Respondent 4)
I am thinking that when I am old I would like to stay with my children (Respondent 7)

The elderly need to remain active and healthy to promote their independence in managing their lives and to enable them to socialize with the community (Personal Finance Research Center, 2014). Therefore, their preferred living arrangements depend on their health condition. They should be able to live at their own homes if they are healthy but have to live with their children when they are not well. The choices of living arrangement are still depending on the traditional Malay values, services and facilities that are available for the elderly in rural Malaysia.

Pondokas preferred living arrangement

Some respondents chose to stay in an Islamic religious institution known as *pondok*. *Pondok* offers religious classes and Quran reading and interpretation lessons. Most *pondok* provides accommodations that can be purchased or rented by those studying at the particular *pondok*. Therefore, some elderly prefer to stay in *pondok* so that they can spend most of their time for learning and worshiping and also be with friends of their age. These are the statements of the respondents;

If I have to stay alone, I will stay in pondok. If I stay with my children it can cause headache. (Respondent 3A)
I can learn, pray and read Quran if I stay in pondok. (Respondent 2A)

If I have to stay far away from my children, I prefer to stay in pondok. (Respondent 6A)

For the future elderly group, living in *pondok* is the least preferred living arrangement. This is because most of them prefer to stay at their own homes when they become elderly.

Neighbourhood support

Neighbourhood living is also a part of the strategy used by the elderly in the absence of their children. The elderly living in the same neighbourhood tend to help each other in managing their everyday activities. This strategy used by the elderly is one of their livelihood strategies for their elderly lives. This means, in the Malay community, most of the future elderly prefer to live in

their current neighbourhood with the hope that the neighbourhood will provide social support during their elderly lives.

- My neighbours are just like my siblings.* (Respondent 3A)
Just depend on my neighbours. (Respondent 4A)
It depends on us. If we are nice and helpful to people, they will also be nice and helpful to us. (Respondent 2A)
Help others. Just like others....they will pay a visit when we are sick and so on.. that is neighbourhood support. (Respondent 4A)

The Elderly Institution (Old folk house)

Respondents chose the old folk home as their last resort if there is no caregiver available. In addition, if the elderly are unable to take care of themselves, they would resort to the institution even though that was their last choice because in their opinion, their children should be the care givers at this prime age. Likewise for the future elderly, the old folk homes are their last resort. Respondents interviewed stated the following:

- If I were sent to the old folk home, I can stay there, what else can I do...I can't stay at my home alone. In old folk home there would be somebody to take care of me.* (Respondent 4A)
I have to go to old folk home because there is nobody to take care of me. If I can't take care of me, its better to be in the old folk home. (Respondent 4A)
Its better to stay there (old folk home) for good. It is troublesome for them (the children) to send and pick me up from the home everyday. (Respondent 1A)

Financial resources and expenses

Although most of the caregivers (children) live far away from their elderly parents, they still provide financial support to the respondent for their daily expenditures. However, the amounts are not huge because their incomes are not high. Following are statements by the respondents:

- For now my children send remittances to me...I do not force them to do so.* (Respondent 1A)
Every month they send food to me. (Respondent 6A)

For the future elderly, the majority have made the financial planning for the elderly lives and their children. This awareness arises through the exposure to current medium of information media such as television and attending specific talks on financial management. This shows that society is now beginning to realize the importance of saving for the future living arrangement. In addition, some have contributed for their future needs through insurance.

Fulfilling leisure activities

To fulfill their free times the respondents have their own leisure activities such as chatting, watching television, involve with religious activities and cutting grass. Among the respondents' statements are:

- We spend our free time with chatting, watch tv, take a nap and so on.* (Respondent 3A)
We observe that some of our friends who lost her/his spouses, we take it as a lesson....so we don't stay at home. We go to pondok because there we have friends of the about the same age. (Respondent 2A)
Just to fulfill our elderly time because when we grow old, we want to have a peaceful life. A lot of problems can be avoided if we can live in peace.....most of activities are done together. (Respondent 1A)
We do what ever that can be done such as cutting grass.....to the extend of what we can manage to do. (Respondent 5A)
No, just read Yaasin. (Respondent 6A)

The findings show that, in fulfilling daily life, there are side activities performed by the elderly in the area. These activities are their daily routines to fill their free time.

In fact, Malaysia is also providing activities for the elderly such as the Center for the Elderly Activities (PAWE). The government has already planned various programmes and formulated policies to support the preferred living arrangement that is to age at own home (aging in place). For example, PAWE program, which is a service of social outreach and development, involving strategic cooperation between the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development and other government agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), in support of the well-being of the elderly. A total of 22 PAWEs were built under the 8th and the 9th Plan at a cost of RM9 million. In conjunction with the National Senior Citizens' Day Celebration in 2012, the Prime Minister approved applications for the establishment of 23 new PAWE centers nationwide and the allocation for establishing the new PAWE was announced through the 2013 Budget Speech (Public Welfare Department Website, 2016).

However, not all areas have PAWE. According to the research of NurSyakiranAkmal etc. (2017), although there are quite a number of programmes and services available for the elderly, there are still many people who are unaware of these programmes and services. The study discovered that 87 percent of respondents are not aware of the availability of the programmes and services. Therefore, information disclosure needs to be improved to ensure that the programme is responsive and continues to be successful. The Public Welfare Department (JKM) must work with other government agencies such as local authorities or non-governmental organizations to ensure the effectiveness of the programmes and services and the effectiveness in delivering the information.

On the whole, the current practice is where the elderly have to live independently because their children have moved out from the rural areas or their home towns. However, they are hoping that their children will take care of them in future when they are ill and unable to manage themselves. This shows that they still believe in the existing culture in which children should be responsible to take care of their elderly parents. On the contrary, the future elderly are more prepared to face the current culture where they need to plan to manage their elderly life without children. This is because, many young people are migrating to fulfill their economic needs. Therefore, the current rural community members who will soon become the elderly have begun to plan their elderly livelihood strategies so that they can age in place well till the end of their lives.

SUGGESTION AND CONCLUSION

This paper concludes that the elderly living away from their children have a strategy for addressing the issue. This is because the recent pattern is that many of the younger generations from rural areas have moved to the cities and towns for economic development. However, the children who are supposed to be their parents' caregivers need to take some necessary actions to protect their parents' well-being in their absence. This is because in their parents' elderly years, they are depending on many aspects of services and facilities such as health services, local recreation centers, activities and programmes. These services and facilities should be provided by the government for the elderly, especially in rural areas. This is because many studies show that in rural areas there are many elderly who have been left out to stay away from their children (caregivers) who require care and attention. Therefore, the PAWE programmes need to be further developed, especially in rural areas so that the elderly can benefit fully from the programmes.

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Note: This paper is part of the findings Research Grant funded by Universiti Utara Malaysia SO 13453

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