


# Chapter 15

## The Provision of Elderly Care Centre and User Perception Towards Its Built Environment in Kuala Lumpur

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### ABSTRACT

*The population growth in Malaysia since Independence Day is attributed to improved healthcare and longer lifespans. However, as the older generation ages, some are forced to live independently, while others lack suitable institutions for their daily activities. Neglected conditions in elderly care institutions have led to concern about the physical and mental health of these individuals. The research aimed to analyze the existing built environment of elderly care centers and the needs of users for an improved future environment that prioritizes the comfort and safety of the elderly. The objective of this research is to determine the strategies for the future development of elderly care centers. A qualitative method adopted by recruiting five voluntary participants from Pusat Jagaan Rumah Love and Care Kajang Home. Key findings revealed diverse needs and provisions influenced by social factors and living infrastructure.*

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3693-1650-4.ch015

*Ultimately, accommodating the changing behaviors and characteristics of the elderly was crucial for developing infrastructure that promoted positive and healthy aging.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The population in Malaysia has been growing since Independence Day (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2020), leading to the necessity for proper institutional facilities and a comfortable environment. However, developmental progress in Malaysia often prioritizes the younger generation rather than the elderly. Statistics indicate that the elderly constitute 9.6% of the total population, with certain states having a higher concentration of the elderly population (World Health Organization, 2020). The research specifically focused on aging individuals residing in Kuala Lumpur.

The Ministry of Urban Wellbeing, Housing, and Local Government identified five issues related to aging, including medical illness, physical changes, financial constraints, low social interaction, and non-elderly friendly building designs (Mafauzy, 2000). While some of these issues are unavoidable, there is still potential for improvement to enhance the wellbeing of the elderly.

## **PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The aging population in Malaysia raised significant concerns with various predictions, suggesting that Malaysia might become an aging nation by 2035 (Nuradzimmah, 2016). Factors such as improved health and access to subsidized healthcare have contributed to an increased lifespan in the elderly. However, the built environment in Malaysia is suitable to accommodate the growing aging population (Aini, Murni & Abdul Aziz, 2016). Elderly individuals living in rural areas prefer staying in their hometown due to comfort, while those in busy cities often choose between living with their children or residing in a care center (Nurul Aini et al., 2018). Existing care institutions were lacking in focusing on the cognitive and active development of the elderly, as well as a lack of awareness of their specific needs (Elderly in the Rural vs Urban Settings, 2020). Therefore, a comprehensive study of existing care centers was necessary to identify areas for improvement. By understanding the needs of the end-users and addressing the issues in the built environment, this study aimed to provide recommendations and design strategies that could promote active development for elderlies in Malaysia.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Aging Population**

The definition of “Elderly” varies globally, but the World Health Organization (WHO) has classified individuals over 60 as elderly or as senior citizens (World Health Organization, 2020). Further classifications included the oldest old (over 80), centenarians (over 100), and super-centenarians (over 110). The

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