



## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY SUPPORT AND QUALITY OF LIFE AMONG ELDERLY INDIVIDUALS WITH HYPERTENSION IN PEMBUANG HULU

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### Abstract

The elderly are a vulnerable age group prone to various degenerative diseases, one of which is hypertension. Uncontrolled hypertension can lead to a decline in the quality of life of the elderly, both physically, psychologically, socially, and environmentally. Family support plays an important role in maintaining the well-being of the elderly through emotional, instrumental, informational, and evaluative assistance. This study aims to determine the relationship between family support and the quality of life of elderly individuals with hypertension in the working area of Pembuang Hulu Public Health Center, Seruyan Regency, Central Kalimantan. This research employed a quantitative method with a descriptive-analytic approach and a cross-sectional design. A total sample of 30 elderly individuals with hypertension was selected using purposive sampling. The instruments used were a family support questionnaire and the WHOQOL-BREF to assess quality of life. Data analysis was performed using the Spearman correlation test. The results showed that most respondents (60%) received low family support, and the majority had a moderate quality of life (63.3%). The Spearman correlation test indicated a very strong and significant relationship between family support and quality of life ( $r = 0.916$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ). The conclusion of this study is that there is a significant relationship between family support and the quality of life of elderly individuals with hypertension. Therefore, increasing the role of the family in elderly care is highly recommended, especially in providing continuous support to improve the quality of life in rural areas.

**Keywords:** Family Support, Quality of Life, Elderly, Hypertension, Pembuang Hulu Health Center

### Introduction

Hypertension is one of the most significant global health problems, especially among the elderly. According to data from the World Health Organization, hypertension affects more than 1.13 billion people worldwide and is a leading cause of cardiovascular disease and premature death <sup>(1)</sup>. In Indonesia, the prevalence of hypertension in the elderly is relatively high. Based on the 2018 Basic Health Research (Risikesdas), the prevalence of hypertension among the elderly reached 63.2%, with the number of cases continuing to rise with age. Poorly managed hypertension can affect the quality of life of older adults, encompassing physical, mental, social, and emotional aspects <sup>(2)</sup>.

In Pembuang Hulu, Seruyan Regency, the problem of hypertension among the elderly is also a major concern. According to data from the local health center in 2022, approximately 45% of the elderly population suffers from hypertension, and most of them experience a decline in quality of life due to complications arising from the condition. Family support is one of the key factors in helping

the elderly cope with the stress caused by hypertension. Therefore, this study is important to examine the relationship between family support and the quality of life among older individuals <sup>(3)</sup>.

Elderly individuals with hypertension tend to experience a decline in quality of life due to the physical and psychological effects of the disease. Symptoms such as dizziness, shortness of breath, chest pain, and chronic fatigue are commonly experienced by elderly people with uncontrolled hypertension. Additionally, psychological issues such as anxiety, depression, and social isolation can worsen the condition <sup>(4)</sup>. This indicates that the impact of hypertension on the elderly is not limited to physical aspects but also significantly affects their psychosocial well-being.

The role of the family in supporting elderly individuals with hypertension is very important. Families that provide emotional, financial, and physical support can improve the quality of life of the elderly, particularly in dealing with the pressure and stress associated with the disease. Conversely, elderly individuals who do not receive adequate support tend to feel emotionally burdened, which eventually worsens their hypertensive condition <sup>(5)</sup>. Therefore, family support can be a determining factor in maintaining the stability of quality of life among elderly individuals with hypertension.

Theoretically, many studies have highlighted the importance of social support—especially from the family—in improving the quality of life of the elderly with chronic illnesses such as hypertension. According to the social support theory, the family serves as the primary source of emotional, physical, and social support that can improve an individual's physical and psychological health <sup>(6)</sup>. However, in practice, not all families are able to provide sufficient support to the elderly. This is due to various factors, such as financial limitations, low knowledge about elderly care, and the presence of other family responsibilities <sup>(7)</sup>.

In Pembuang Hulu, most families of elderly individuals with hypertension come from low-to-middle-income backgrounds. This lack of resources often becomes an obstacle in providing optimal care. Moreover, family knowledge regarding their role in maintaining the health of the elderly remains limited. Some families are even unaware of how critical their role is in enhancing the quality of life of elderly individuals suffering from hypertension <sup>(8)</sup>. This reflects a gap between the theoretical understanding of the importance of family support and the actual practices in the field that have yet to fully support this role.

Several previous studies have discussed the relationship between family support and the quality of life among the elderly. A study conducted by Zainuddin and Wahyuni showed a significant relationship between family support and the quality of life of elderly individuals with hypertension <sup>(4)</sup>. In that study, elderly participants who received full support from their families reported a higher quality of life than those who did not receive adequate support. Another study by Widodo and Putri also found that emotional support from family members can reduce stress levels in elderly individuals with hypertension, thereby improving their quality of life <sup>(5)</sup>.

However, studies examining the relationship between family support and the quality of life among the elderly in rural areas, such as Pembuang Hulu, are still very limited. Therefore, this study aims to fill that gap by investigating how family support affects the quality of life of elderly individuals with hypertension in this area. This study is expected to make an important contribution to efforts aimed at increasing the family's role in caring for elderly individuals with hypertension in rural areas.

A preliminary study involving 10 elderly respondents in Pembuang Hulu revealed that 7 out of 10 respondents had a low quality of life. Furthermore, based on questionnaire results, it was found that family support was lacking, especially in health-related care, such as reminding medication schedules and accompanying the elderly to the health center. On the other hand, the remaining 3 respondents who received full family support reported a better quality of life, with improved blood pressure management and psychological well-being.

These results indicate that family support plays a vital role in maintaining the quality of life of elderly individuals with hypertension. Families who are actively involved in providing support can help reduce the negative impacts of hypertension, both physically and emotionally. Therefore, further efforts are needed to raise awareness and encourage greater family involvement in the care of elderly individuals with hypertension in the Pembuang Hulu region.

Considering the importance of family involvement in supporting elderly individuals with hypertension, this study aims to further explore the relationship between family support and the quality of life of the elderly in Pembuang Hulu. The results of this study are expected to provide recommendations to local governments and healthcare providers to enhance the family's role in elderly care, especially in rural settings. Additionally, this research will provide a clearer picture of possible interventions to improve the quality of life of elderly individuals with hypertension, either through family education or more targeted health programs in Pembuang Hulu.

## Method

This study was conducted in the working area of the Pembuang Hulu Public Health Center, Seruyan Regency, Central Kalimantan, due to the relatively high number of elderly individuals with hypertension and the community's strong reliance on family support in elderly care. The research employed a quantitative approach with a descriptive-analytic design and a cross-sectional method, which involves collecting data at a single point in time to examine the relationship between family support and the quality of life of elderly individuals.

A total of 30 elderly respondents were selected using purposive sampling, based on specific inclusion criteria such as being aged 60 years or older, diagnosed with hypertension, living with family, and willing to participate in the study. Elderly individuals with severe cognitive impairments, those living alone, or those in an unstable health condition were excluded from the study.

The research instruments consisted of two questionnaires: a family support questionnaire and the WHOQOL-BREF, which was used to measure quality of life. Both instruments had been previously tested for validity and reliability, with Cronbach's alpha values of 0.85 and 0.88 respectively, indicating that they are reliable for use in research.

Data collection began with obtaining ethical clearance and permissions from the research site, followed by providing information to the participants, obtaining informed consent, and administering the questionnaires. Once the data were collected, they were processed and analyzed using the Spearman correlation test.

## Results

**Table 1. The Relationship Between Family Support and Quality of Life**

Quality of Life	Family Support			Total	Correlation Coefficient	p-value
	Low	Moderate	High			
Poor	1	0	0	1		
Moderate	17	2	0	19		
Good	0	0	9	9	0.916	0.000
Very Good	0	0	1	1		
Total	18	2	10	30		

This table shows the relationship between family support and quality of life. Respondents who received low levels of family support mostly had a moderate quality of life (17 individuals), while one individual had a poor quality of life. All respondents who received high levels of family support

reported a good quality of life (9 individuals) and a very good quality of life (1 individual). The Spearman correlation test yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.916 with a p-value of 0.000, indicating a very strong and statistically significant relationship between family support and the quality of life of elderly individuals.

## Discussion

The Spearman correlation test analyzed the relationship between family support and the quality of life of elderly individuals with hypertension. Out of 30 respondents, the majority of elderly individuals who received low family support had a moderate quality of life (17 individuals), and one respondent had a poor quality of life. Meanwhile, two respondents with moderate family support also had a moderate quality of life. Interestingly, all respondents who received high levels of family support showed better quality of life—nine with a good quality of life and one with a very good quality of life.

The Spearman test results showed a correlation coefficient of 0.916 with a significance value of  $p = 0.000$ , indicating a very strong and statistically significant relationship between family support and the quality of life of elderly individuals. This means that the greater the family support received by the elderly, the better their perceived quality of life.

These findings reinforce the concept that family support is a key determinant in maintaining and improving the quality of life for elderly individuals, particularly those with chronic health conditions such as hypertension. Family support includes emotional aspects, such as love and attention; instrumental aspects, such as physical and financial assistance; and social aspects, such as the presence of family members in daily life. Research by Prasetyo et al. indicated that elderly individuals with chronic illnesses who receive emotional and physical support from their families have significantly higher quality of life compared to those who live alone or lack adequate support <sup>(9)</sup>.

Elderly individuals with low family support—as demonstrated by 60% of respondents in this study—are at risk of experiencing a decline in their quality of life across physical, psychological, and social dimensions. They may feel lonely, burdened by their health conditions, and lack motivation to undergo treatment or engage in daily activities. This aligns with findings by Yuliana and Fitriani, who noted that a lack of family support contributes to lower life satisfaction and increases the risk of depression and psychological stress among the elderly <sup>(10)</sup>.

On the other hand, respondents who received high family support demonstrated a much better quality of life. Consistent family support fosters a sense of security, increases adherence to therapy, and encourages elderly individuals to remain active in social and religious activities. According to research by Sari and Nugraheni, family involvement in managing elderly health—such as accompanying them to healthcare facilities, assisting with medications, and offering motivation—is one of the most influential factors in achieving optimal quality of life in elderly individuals with hypertension <sup>(11)</sup>.

Moreover, the relationship between family support and quality of life can also be understood through Maslow's hierarchy of needs, where affection, a sense of belonging, and esteem are recognized as essential psychological needs in old age. When these needs are unmet, elderly individuals are more likely to suffer from emotional disturbances, which in turn impact their physical and mental health. Hence, family support serves as a critical pillar in fulfilling these needs <sup>(6)</sup>.

This study has practical implications, emphasizing that interventions to improve elderly quality of life must adopt a family-centered approach. Families need to be actively engaged in the care and support processes. This is particularly important in the context of the Pembuang Hulu Public Health Center, where rural social dynamics and strong family ties can be leveraged as assets in community-based health services.

Health centers, through programs like *posyandu lansia* (elderly health posts) and home visits, can integrate educational efforts for family members to strengthen their role in supporting elderly health. Educational content may include information on blood pressure monitoring, medication adherence, provision of nutritious meals, and emotional support through effective communication. This approach is supported by Utami et al., who emphasized the need for family empowerment programs to optimize their role in ensuring the overall well-being of elderly individuals<sup>(12)</sup>.

In conclusion, the findings presented in Table 7 indicate that the quality of life of elderly individuals with hypertension is strongly influenced by the level of family support they receive. Elderly individuals with high family support are more likely to achieve good or very good quality of life compared to those with low support. Therefore, in formulating elderly care policies and designing intervention programs, family involvement must be treated as an essential and inseparable component.

## Conclusion

This study aimed to examine the relationship between family support and the quality of life of elderly individuals with hypertension in the working area of Pembuang Hulu Public Health Center, Seruyan Regency, Central Kalimantan. The results showed a very strong and statistically significant relationship between the level of family support and the quality of life of the elderly. Elderly individuals who received high family support tended to have better quality of life across physical, psychological, social, and environmental domains. In contrast, those with low levels of support experienced a decline in both physical and emotional well-being.

Family support—including emotional, instrumental, and informational support—proved to be a crucial factor in helping elderly individuals manage their hypertension and maintain psychological stability. The presence of family members who provide attention and tangible assistance contributes to medication adherence, a sense of motivation, and emotional security among the elderly. Conversely, the absence of support or weak family relationships increases the risk of stress, social isolation, and deterioration in health conditions.

These findings highlight the importance of family involvement in elderly care, particularly in rural areas where access to healthcare services is limited. Strengthening the role of families through education, community empowerment programs, and support from healthcare professionals can significantly enhance the overall quality of life of elderly individuals.

In conclusion, family support plays a vital role in improving the quality of life of elderly individuals with hypertension. Therefore, healthcare providers—especially nurses and community health workers—are encouraged to actively engage families in the ongoing and holistic care of elderly patients.

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