Welfare-based management of nursing homes to improve the quality of life of the elderly in Tanjungpinang City, Indonesia

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Abstract

This study examines the role of welfare-based management approaches in improving the quality of life for the elderly in nursing homes in Tanjungpinang City, Indonesia, by focusing on how institutional care practices are shaped through a combination of policy implementation, administrative strategies, and human resource dynamics within the context of local socio-cultural values. In particular, the research explores how welfare-oriented management prioritizes the development of personalized care plans, fosters social participation, and ensures access to basic health services as part of a holistic approach to elderly well-being. Using a qualitative approach, it investigates how institutional practices, family involvement, and care frameworks intersect to support elderly well-being. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and observations within selected care institutions. The findings highlight that welfare-oriented management emphasizes individualized care plans, regular health monitoring, and social inclusion through community engagement. These elements collectively promote residents' physical health, emotional stability, and sense of belonging. However, the implementation of such approaches is constrained by limited resources, staffing challenges, and cultural norms that often view institutional care as a last resort. These obstacles affect the consistency and quality of eldercare services. The study concludes that effective eldercare requires a shared responsibility among the government, families, and institutional actors. Strengthening cooperation between these parties is essential to build an inclusive, sustainable model that meets the diverse needs of the aging population. Practically, this research offers insight into how developing countries can adapt welfare-based eldercare strategies to local contexts. It underscores the urgency of policy reforms and increased investment in eldercare infrastructure, while also advocating for greater public awareness and family participation.

Keywords: Elderly, Nursing home, Quality life, Welfare-based management.

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1. Introduction

The global population growth has raised concerns regarding the well-being of older adults. In policy studies on elderly welfare, a growing body of research has emphasized digital-based welfare solutions for older adults [1, 2]. According to the Universal Instrument United Nations Principles for Older Persons, older individuals should have access to adequate food, water, housing, clothing, and healthcare to maintain their independence, facilitated through income provisions, family support, and community assistance [3]. Furthermore, older adults should also have opportunities for employment or access to other income-generating activities.

Japan's population growth is significantly driven by its aging population, which currently stands at approximately 36.23 million older adults [4]. This figure accounts for more than one-third of Japan's total population. Meanwhile, China's elderly population has been steadily increasing, reaching 254 million individuals aged 60 and above in 2019 [4]. By 2040, this number is projected to rise by approximately 28%, reaching 402 million. Both Japan and China face similar challenges in ensuring access to healthcare, education, and addressing socioeconomic disparities among older adults [4, 5].

Elderly individuals are generally categorized based on their ability to earn a living. The potentially productive elderly group consists of those capable of working and contributing to the production of goods and services, while the non-productive elderly group comprises those who are unable to support themselves financially and rely on assistance from others [6]. The latter group is often found in nursing homes, as they lack the capacity to engage in income-generating activities.

The social construction of elderly roles should not only emphasize their vulnerability but also recognize their productivity within society. Older adults should not be solely identified by their physical or health limitations but also by the contributions they make to their families, communities, and society at large [7, 8]. Despite physical decline, they often possess valuable memories, knowledge, and wisdom that can be utilized in various contexts. They play essential roles in providing emotional support, offering guidance, and sharing their expertise with younger generations [3]. In this regard, a social construction of aging that transcends the stigma of vulnerability is crucial in fostering social inclusion and recognizing their societal contributions. Such recognition enables older adults to feel valued, remain motivated to stay active and engaged in social life, and sustain their overall well-being [9].

The increasing proportion of older adults, coupled with the challenges they face, has significant implications for development. Therefore, special attention must be given to elderly care, particularly by immediate family members, who serve as their closest support system [7, 10]. Proper family functioning is essential to help older adults cope with age-related decline and ensure a high quality of life in their later years [1]. This includes creating a supportive and caring family environment, considering their needs and preferences, and providing necessary assistance with daily activities and mobility [11].

Welfare-based management in nursing homes refers to an approach that prioritizes the needs of older adults, encompassing physical, psychological, social, and spiritual aspects [12]. This approach goes beyond merely fulfilling basic needs such as housing and nutrition; it also includes healthcare services, social activities, and emotional support. Research indicates that elderly well-being can be enhanced through more personalized, interactive, and community-based care systems [1, 13-16]. Therefore, a management system oriented toward elderly welfare is essential to ensure that older adults experience a more meaningful and fulfilling later life.

Indonesia has not ratified the International Convention on Aging, and as a result, there are no specific regulations regarding older adults in national policies. This situation correlates with an increasing life expectancy in Indonesia, which reflects improving health conditions. However, the growing elderly population has become a critical issue in social policy and public welfare. Data from the Central Bureau of Statistics in year of 2023 indicate a continuous rise in the proportion of older adults, highlighting the need for greater attention to the management of nursing homes as a key alternative for social services catering to this demographic.

Nursing homes play a crucial role in providing care, protection, and social support for older adults who are unable to live with their families. However, a key challenge faced by nursing homes in Indonesia, particularly in Tanjungpinang, is the implementation of a welfare-based management system to enhance the quality of life for elderly residents. In regional policies that align with the Social Welfare Law, older adults are classified as a vulnerable group that should be empowered.

According to data from the Riau Islands Central Bureau of Statistics (Badan Pusat Statistik Kepulauan Riau) in September 2020, the province's population was recorded at 2.064 million, with an annual growth rate of 2.02% between 2010 and 2020—a decline from the previous decade's rate of 4.95%. The working-age population (15 to 64 years) constituted 71.00% of the total, while the elderly population accounted for 5.30%, an increase from 3.4% in 2010. As the capital of the Riau Islands, Tanjungpinang had an elderly population of 8.06% in 2020, out of a total of 213,592 residents.

This study aims to analyze and evaluate the welfare-based management system of nursing homes in Tanjungpinang to enhance the quality of life for older adults. The primary focus is to identify the factors influencing elderly well-being in nursing homes, assess the effectiveness of existing policies and programs, and formulate recommendations for a more humane and sustainable management strategy. By doing so, this research seeks to contribute to the improvement of nursing

home management in Tanjungpinang and serve as a model for other cities in Indonesia in addressing increasingly complex demographic challenges.

2. Research Methodology

This study employed a qualitative research design to explore the application of welfare-based management in nursing homes and its impact on improving the quality of life for the elderly in Tanjungpinang City, Indonesia. The research adopted a case study approach, allowing an in-depth examination of institutional practices, resident experiences, and stakeholder perspectives within the specific sociocultural context of the region.

Data collection methods included semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and observation. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, including nursing home administrators, caregivers, elderly residents, and their families, to gather diverse insights into the implementation and outcomes of welfare-based management. FGDs were held with community representatives and policymakers to understand broader systemic challenges and opportunities. Observation was carried out within nursing home facilities to document day-to-day practices, interactions, and care routines.

Data analysis followed a thematic approach, ensuring that recurring patterns and themes were systematically identified and interpreted [17]. Triangulation was employed to enhance the validity and reliability of the findings, combining multiple data sources and perspectives. Ethical considerations were upheld throughout the study, including informed consent from participants, confidentiality, and sensitivity to cultural norms [18]. This methodology provided a comprehensive understanding of how welfare-based management influences the well-being of elderly residents, offering valuable insights for improving eldercare practices in similar contexts.

3. Results and Discussion

Field observations indicate that nursing homes in Tanjungpinang comply with government regulations in providing facilities, care, and psychosocial support for older adults in accordance with established guidelines. However, nursing homes managed by social foundations tend to offer better facilities compared to those operated by the government. Ensuring adequate facilities and comfort for older adults should be a priority. This is evident in foundation-managed nursing homes, where the amenities are more comprehensive and conducive to elderly residents' daily activities.

Figure 1.
Elderly Activity in Nursing Home in Tanjungpinang
Source: Field Observation Data (2024).

The issue of aging populations is also evident in Tanjungpinang, Riau Islands Province. According to data from the Tanjungpinang Social Affairs Office in 2024, the percentage of older adults in the city has been steadily increasing over the years. Preliminary observations identified three nursing homes operating in Tanjungpinang. The following presents the latest data on nursing home residents in the city:

Table 1.
Data on Elderly Residents in Nursing Homes in Tanjungpinang

No.	Nursing Home	2021	2022	2023
1.	Rumah Bahagia Bintan	32 elderly	36 elderly	40 elderly
2.	Rumah Bahagia Embung Fatimah	12 elderly	7 elderly	9 elderly
3.	Panti Jompo Anugrah	28 elderly	29 elderly	35 elderly

Based on the elderly data in Table 1, a small proportion of nursing home residents in Tanjungpinang were placed there by their families. This indicates that the majority of residents are abandoned older adults. Given the high number of elderly individuals who have been neglected and now reside in nursing homes, this study seeks to explore the role of families in ensuring the quality of life for older adults. In this context, family functionality emerges as a crucial factor in determining elderly well-being.

3.1. Family Support for the Quality of Life of Older Adults

Family support is a crucial factor influencing the quality of life of older adults. As aging individuals face physical, psychological, and social challenges that can impact their well-being, the role of the family becomes essential as a primary source of support, providing security, affection, and care. Family support can take various forms, including emotional, material, and practical assistance, all of which contribute to enhancing the quality of life of older adults [19-21].

Emotional support from family has a significant impact on the mental health of older adults [22]. Those who feel loved and valued by their families tend to experience higher life satisfaction. The presence of caring and attentive family members helps older adults cope with feelings of loneliness, anxiety, or depression that often emerge in later life. Warm and affectionate interactions between older adults and family members not only boost their self-esteem but also strengthen social connections within the family environment [23, 24]. Thus, emotional support plays a vital role in creating a nurturing environment where older adults feel happy and valued.

In addition to emotional support, this study highlights the importance of material support from family in improving the quality of life of older adults. Many older individuals face financial limitations due to retirement or reduced work capacity. In such cases, financial assistance from family members helps cover basic needs such as food, healthcare, and housing. Beyond ensuring physical comfort, material support also provides a sense of security, reassuring older adults that their needs will continue to be met despite their decreased economic productivity [25, 26]. Moreover, material support can enable older adults to remain socially active, allowing them to participate in community activities or attend family events that may require financial resources.

The findings of this study also reveal that practical support from family members has a significant impact on the well-being of older adults. For those experiencing physical limitations or mobility issues, such assistance is crucial in helping them maintain their independence and ensuring their needs are adequately met [27]. Moreover, the presence of family members who assist with daily activities provides a sense of comfort and alleviates the psychological stress that older adults may experience. Practical support enables them to feel valued and reduces their sense of being a burden on others.

Family support also plays a crucial role in enhancing the physical health of older adults. This study indicates that those who receive strong family support tend to have better overall health compared to those who lack such support. Family members contribute by encouraging older adults to adopt healthy lifestyles, including maintaining a nutritious diet, engaging in regular physical activity, and adhering to medical treatments. Additionally, the presence of caring family members facilitates access to necessary healthcare services, enabling older adults to better prevent or manage chronic illnesses. Thus, family support not only influences psychological well-being but also significantly contributes to the overall physical health of older adults.

"There are indeed certain behaviors that cannot be overlooked, such as elderly individuals who tend to wander aimlessly. This is something we remain vigilant about, especially when they begin to experience dementia, as they might suddenly open the door and leave the house without any clear direction. To address this, we typically provide a secure and supervised environment. However, if their overall condition is still stable, issues may arise due to cognitive decline—for instance, they may unknowingly urinate without realizing it, even though it is something they would normally be aware of." (Interview with NN, Nursing Home Staff).

On the other hand, a lack of family support can have detrimental effects on the quality of life of older adults. Elderly individuals who feel neglected or receive little attention from their families tend to experience a decline in well-being, both physically and mentally. Social isolation and loneliness resulting from limited interactions with family members can significantly increase the risk of depression and other health issues [28]. Additionally, insufficient material and practical support can leave older adults feeling insecure and struggling to meet their basic needs. Therefore, it is crucial for families to recognize their role in supporting elderly members to ensure they lead a more meaningful and fulfilling life.

1. However, providing adequate family support is not always easy, particularly in the context of contemporary social changes. Many families face economic pressures and work-related demands, limiting their time and resources to care for elderly relatives. In such situations, it is essential to find effective solutions, such as sharing caregiving responsibilities among family members or utilizing community support services, including nursing homes.
2. Furthermore, the findings of this study reveal that cultural factors also influence how families provide support for the elderly. In collectivist cultures such as that of Kota Tanjungpinang, older adults are traditionally regarded as respected family members who should be cared for by the younger generation. The strong influence of Malay cultural values in Kota Tanjungpinang encourages families to provide comprehensive support, whether emotional, material, or practical. In contrast, in more individualistic cultures, older adults tend to be more independent and rely

on formal support systems, such as healthcare facilities or social services. Thus, understanding cultural contexts is essential in designing appropriate family support strategies for the elderly.

The Role of Nursing Homes in Enhancing the Quality of Life for the Elderly

Welfare-based management in nursing homes has become an increasingly relevant approach in the modern era, given the growing challenges faced by the aging population. This approach prioritizes enhancing the quality of life for the elderly through management strategies that address their physical, psychological, social, and spiritual needs. Improving the well-being of older adults extends beyond physical health; it also involves ensuring that they continue to feel valued, maintain a sense of independence, and have an active role in their community [13]. Consequently, nursing homes are adopting a holistic management model that integrates various aspects of well-being to effectively address these challenges.

A key component of welfare-based management is the provision of comprehensive and sustainable healthcare services [29]. This includes regular health check-ups, high-quality medical care, and rehabilitation programs for elderly individuals experiencing mobility issues or chronic illnesses. These services must be supported by skilled medical professionals and well-equipped facilities to enable older adults to lead healthier and more fulfilling lives.

Beyond healthcare, welfare-based management also emphasizes the importance of psychosocial support for the elderly [30]. Many older adults in the nursing home Tanjungpinang experiencing loneliness or depression due to physical limitations or reduced social interactions. Therefore, nursing homes must implement programs aimed at enhancing the emotional well-being of residents, such as group therapy, individual counseling, and recreational activities that encourage social engagement. These initiatives help seniors feel more connected to others and boost their self-confidence.

From a social perspective, welfare-based management prioritizes the creation of an inclusive community within nursing homes [31]. An inclusive environment allows older adults to maintain a sense of belonging despite residing in a more confined setting. This approach can be realized through communal activities such as holiday celebrations, skill-building workshops, or discussion groups involving the elderly. A strong community fosters social connections, ensuring that residents feel valued and adequately supported.

The spiritual dimension is equally significant in welfare-based management. Many elderly individuals face difficult life transitions, and spiritual support can provide them with strength and peace of mind. Nursing homes can cater to residents' spiritual needs by offering religious services, meditation sessions, or spiritual counseling. This approach helps seniors find meaning in life and alleviates anxiety about the future.

Welfare-based management also requires active involvement from family members. Families play a crucial role in supporting the emotional and material well-being of elderly individuals. Nursing homes can facilitate strong family connections through regular visitation programs, open communication, and family participation in decision-making regarding care plans. A solid support system from loved ones enhances the elderly's sense of appreciation and motivation to live a fulfilling life [2, 32].

Additionally, the physical environment of a nursing home is a critical factor in welfare-based management. A comfortable, safe, and senior-friendly setting significantly impacts residents' quality of life. This includes designing facilities that promote mobility, ensuring adequate lighting, and creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere. These environmental adjustments not only aid seniors in their daily activities but also contribute to their overall psychological well-being.

The implementation of welfare-based management also requires strong support from the government and various other stakeholders. The government plays a crucial role in establishing supportive policies, providing adequate funding, and ensuring proper training for nursing home staff. Additionally, collaboration with non-governmental organizations and local communities can further strengthen the execution of welfare programs in nursing homes. With a synergistic effort from multiple parties, nursing homes can deliver higher-quality services to the elderly.

Regular evaluation and monitoring are also essential components of welfare-based management. Nursing homes must conduct routine assessments of residents' needs and satisfaction levels to ensure that programs remain aligned with their evolving conditions and expectations. Furthermore, these evaluations help identify challenges and opportunities for improving service quality in the future.

Ensuring the efficient and sustainable use of available resources is another critical aspect of welfare-based management. Nursing homes must implement prudent budget management, encourage community involvement in supporting programs, and explore innovative approaches to resource management. These strategies help maintain service continuity without financial or operational disruptions.

To enhance the effectiveness of welfare-based management, nursing homes should also integrate technology into their services. Technology can be used to monitor residents' health more efficiently, provide access to relevant information, and facilitate better communication between elderly residents, their families, and nursing home staff. By leveraging technology, nursing homes can offer more responsive and high-quality care.

One of the key aspects of elderly life in nursing homes is the social relationships formed among residents in Nursing Home Tanjungpinang City. Interviews reveal that social dynamics within nursing homes vary significantly, depending on factors such as social background, health conditions, and individual personalities. Some residents are able to establish close bonds with their peers, forming small groups that frequently gather to chat or engage in activities such as playing cards or participating in events organized by the facility. These close relationships serve as an essential source of social support, helping elderly residents cope with feelings of loneliness and loss that often arise after leaving their homes and families.

However, not all elderly individuals adapt well to the social environment of a nursing home. Some residents, particularly those with mental health issues such as dementia or depression, tend to withdraw from social interactions. Seniors with severe cognitive or physical impairments often struggle to form meaningful connections, which can further deteriorate their psychological well-being. Additionally, cultural and linguistic differences may pose challenges to harmonious social

interactions. For example, elderly residents from different regions, such as those in nursing homes in Tanjungpinang, who come from various districts, may face communication barriers or have differing expectations regarding social norms, potentially leading to minor conflicts or feelings of isolation.

The relationship between elderly residents and caregiving staff plays a crucial role in determining their overall well-being in nursing homes. Interviews with both residents and staff indicate that most elderly individuals rely on caregivers for daily needs such as meals, bathing, and medication management. A positive relationship with caregivers fosters a sense of security and comfort, while a strained relationship can exacerbate feelings of helplessness and alienation.

Staff members with strong interpersonal skills and the ability to demonstrate empathy tend to be more effective in fostering a warm and supportive environment. However, some elderly residents have expressed dissatisfaction with the level of care provided, particularly regarding the limited time staff can dedicate to each individual. Staffing shortages often leave residents feeling neglected or treated with a lack of respect. In some cases, elderly individuals perceive caregivers as being too busy or rushed, which prevents them from receiving the attention and care they truly need.

"…In the past, there were various programs, but now, with the restructuring of the management, things are still being organized. We used to have elderly associations and neighborhood-based programs, including *Posyandu Lansia* (elderly health services) in Tanjungpinang. These elderly associations were quite beneficial. If we look at it, the government has shown significant attention to the elderly. Additionally, we have periodic activities for the elderly, such as group exercise sessions and *Posyandu Lansia*. On Elderly Day, for instance, there are usually activities held at both the district and city levels in Tanjungpinang. From what I observe, the government has been very attentive to elderly welfare. Up to now, there has been strong collaboration between *Anugrah Mitra* and the Social Affairs Department, which has been quite positive in terms of partnership efforts."

The relationship between elderly residents and their families is a crucial aspect of social well-being in nursing homes. Many elderly individuals experience a sense of disconnection from their families after moving into a nursing home, which significantly impacts their emotional state. While some families continue to visit regularly, many residents receive infrequent visits due to geographical distance or family members' busy schedules. Those who rarely receive visits often feel isolated and unappreciated, increasing their risk of depression.

However, for some residents, living in a nursing home provides a greater sense of security and stability compared to residing with their families. Some elderly individuals perceive nursing homes as offering relief from potential family conflicts, allowing them to receive care without feeling like a burden.

From the perspective of social support theory, social support refers to the emotional, informational, or material assistance an individual receives from others [31, 33]. In the context of nursing homes, social support plays a vital role in shaping residents' well-being. This theory identifies several key forms of support, including emotional support, instrumental support, informational support, and esteem-based social support, all of which contribute to enhancing the quality of life for elderly residents.

4. Conclusion

This study underscores the critical role of welfare-based management in enhancing the quality of life for elderly residents in nursing homes in Tanjungpinang City, Indonesia. By prioritizing personalized care, community involvement, and access to comprehensive health services, such management systems address both the physical and emotional needs of the elderly. The findings highlight that adopting a welfare-centric approach fosters a sense of belonging, dignity, and well-being among residents, creating a more supportive and nurturing environment. However, the study also identifies significant challenges, including limited resources, insufficient training for caregivers, and deeply rooted cultural stigmas surrounding institutional eldercare, which hinder the full realization of welfare-based management principles.

To achieve sustainable improvements in the quality of life for the elderly, collaborative efforts are essential. Policymakers must strengthen regulatory frameworks and allocate adequate resources to support nursing homes in implementing welfare-based practices. Simultaneously, fostering community awareness and engaging families in the caregiving process are crucial to overcoming cultural barriers. This research contributes to the broader discourse on eldercare in developing contexts, offering actionable insights for building more inclusive and effective models of institutional care that prioritize the well-being of older adults.

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