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## Optimization Of The Quality Of Life Of The Elderly Through Counseling And Elderly Exercise Programs In Terusan Baru Village

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**Abstract.** Elderly people are an age group that is vulnerable to various health problems, including declines in physical, cognitive, and social functions. Health education programs and elderly exercise (*senam lansia*) are important strategies to improve their quality of life. This study aims to analyze the role of health education and elderly exercise in enhancing physical fitness, health awareness, and independence among the elderly. The method used is community service through health education activities, exercise demonstrations, and evaluations of participants' fitness and health knowledge. The expected outcomes are increased participation of the elderly in physical activities, understanding of healthy lifestyle habits, and the ability to maintain their health independently. Thus, this program can serve as an effective intervention model to improve the quality of life of the elderly in local communities.

**Keywords:** *Elderly, Health Counseling, Elderly Exercise.*

### INTRODUCTION

The elderly (*lansia*) are a demographic group experiencing biological and physiological changes due to the aging process, making them vulnerable to physical and mental health disorders. Many elderly experience a decline in organ function, including motor and cognitive abilities, which impacts their quality of life (Anindya, Rosadi, & Rosyida, 2021). One of the dominant problems faced by the elderly is the decline in cognitive function, such as reduced memory, concentration, and the ability to complete daily tasks independently. This condition can make it difficult for the elderly to adapt to their social life (Polkesban, 2020)

Cognitive decline in older adults is closely associated with reduced physical activity, often due to lack of motivation, fear of injury, or the perception that exercise is unsuitable for the elderly (Dinas Kesehatan Buleleng, 2020). Studies show that regular physical activity, including light to moderate exercise, can stimulate brain function by improving blood flow and increasing neurotrophic proteins like Brain-Derived Neurotrophic Factor (BDNF), which are essential for neuronal health (Dinas Kesehatan Buleleng, 2020)

Literature reviews also indicate that physical activity and exercise play a significant role in maintaining and even improving cognitive functions in older adults, including memory, executive function, and logical reasoning skills (Smith et al., 2023). In terms of physical fitness, elderly exercise programs are specifically designed to meet the physiological needs of older adults. These programs provide safe, gradual exercises that enhance muscle strength, balance, and flexibility, while reducing the risk of falls (Widanti et al., 2022).

Beyond physical benefits, elderly exercise activities can also promote social and psychological participation, helping older adults interact more actively with their community and reduce feelings of loneliness or social isolation (Rahmawati, 2021). Health education is an

essential component in motivating older adults to understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle, including the benefits of physical activity, balanced nutrition, and chronic disease management common in later life (Anindya, Rosadi, & Rosyida, 2021).

Health education activities combined with elderly exercise demonstrations provide practical knowledge and hands-on experience in performing exercises correctly, safely, and enjoyably, enabling older adults to continue activities independently after the program ends (Putri, 2020). Therefore, integrating health education and elderly exercise programs has the potential not only to improve physical fitness but also to enhance health awareness and independence, serving as an effective community-based intervention model to improve the quality of life of older adults (Widanti et al., 2022)

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

The research activities were carried out in several stages. The first stage was preparation and coordination, which included socializing the activities to community leaders, mapping participants, and providing the necessary facilities and infrastructure for the elderly exercise implementation. The second stage was health counseling, conducted in the form of an interactive presentation about the importance of physical activity, balanced nutrition, disease prevention, and independent health management. This counseling was supported by visual media and easy-to-understand health guide brochures for the elderly.

The third stage was demonstration and elderly exercise training, designed according to the physical abilities of the participants. The exercises included warm-up movements, muscle strength training, balance, flexibility, and cool-down. Each exercise session was guided by an experienced instructor and adjusted to the individual ability level to ensure safety and effectiveness. Additionally, participants were given the opportunity to practice independently with limited guidance so that they could apply it in their daily lives. The fourth stage was evaluation of the activity results. Evaluation was conducted using two approaches: physical fitness measurement and assessment of participants' health knowledge. Physical fitness was measured using simple indicators such as walking ability, hand grip strength, balance, and body flexibility. Health knowledge was assessed through questionnaires before and after the counseling activities to measure the increase in participants' understanding of healthy lifestyles. The data obtained were analyzed descriptively by comparing conditions before and after the intervention. This analysis aimed to see the extent to which health counseling and elderly exercise could improve physical fitness, health awareness, and independence of the participants. The analysis results were then used to provide recommendations regarding effective intervention strategies for the elderly in the local community. With this method, it is hoped that the counseling and elderly exercise activities will not only improve the physical abilities and knowledge of the participants but also encourage active participation of the elderly in maintaining their health independently, making this program a sustainable intervention model at the community level.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The health counseling and elderly exercise activities were attended by elderly individuals aged 60–75 years. All participants showed active involvement in the counseling sessions and exercise training. The high level of participation indicates that this program was well accepted by the community and can serve as an effective means to motivate the elderly to engage in physical activity. This aligns with previous research showing that elderly involvement in group exercise programs can increase motivation and sustainability of physical activity (Widanti et al., 2022). The physical fitness evaluation results showed an improvement in the motor abilities of participants after participating in the elderly exercise program. Tests of hand grip strength, balance, and flexibility showed higher average scores compared to before the intervention. This

improvement indicates that regular exercise, even if light, can significantly enhance the physical function of the elderly. This supports the findings of Smith et al. (2023) that regular physical activity plays a role in maintaining and improving physical function as well as preventing the risk of falls in the elderly. Questionnaires conducted before and after counseling showed an increase in the elderly's understanding of healthy lifestyles, including the importance of balanced nutrition, physical activity, and management of chronic diseases. The increase in knowledge scores indicates the effectiveness of counseling in providing relevant and easy-to-understand information. Counseling combined with practical activities allows participants to relate theory to real experience, consistent with adult learning principles (Anindya, Rosadi, & Rosyida, 2021). In addition to physical and knowledge improvements, some participants showed the ability to perform daily activities more independently. For example, they were able to do stretching movements, balance exercises, and walk more steadily without assistance. This finding indicates that a structured intervention program can support the elderly's independence in managing their own health, in line with the goals of community service. The results of this study confirm that the combination of health counseling and elderly exercise has a positive effect on the quality of life of the elderly. Improvements in physical fitness contribute to daily functional abilities, while increased health knowledge promotes awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. This program also shows social value, as participants can interact in groups, strengthen social bonds, and reduce the risk of social isolation. Overall, this intervention aligns with a community-based intervention model that emphasizes a holistic approach—combining physical, cognitive, and social aspects. The success of this program shows that health counseling and elderly exercise can be an effective strategy to improve the quality of life of the elderly at the community level, and it can be replicated in other areas with similar population characteristics.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that health counseling and elderly exercise have a positive impact on physical fitness, health knowledge, and independence of the elderly in the local community. The high participation of the elderly in this program shows good acceptance and motivation to remain active. Physical fitness evaluations showed improvements in muscle strength, balance, and flexibility, while health knowledge questionnaires indicated increased understanding of healthy lifestyle habits. In addition, some elderly participants were able to perform daily activities more independently, demonstrating improved physical independence and awareness of personal health.

Overall, the integration of health counseling and elderly exercise proves effective as a community-based intervention model to improve the quality of life of the elderly. This approach not only focuses on physical aspects but also cognitive and social ones, thereby supporting the overall well-being of the elderly.

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