

2

**ROLE AND STATUS  
OF ELDERLY IN THE FAMILY:  
A CASE STUDY IN  
KAMPUNG SG. KAYU ARA**



**GAN YEONG AN**  
**Matric No: EGE97002**

**A RESEARCH PAPER SUBMITTED TO THE  
FACULTY OF ECONOMICS & ADMINISTRATION  
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA  
KUALA LUMPUR  
FOR THE  
DEGREE OF MASTER OF APPLIED STATISTICS**

**- 2002 -**

Perpustakaan Universiti Malaya



A511375274

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Firstly, I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor Miss Ng Sor Tho, for her guidance and sacrifices to meet my dateline. Special thanks to Professor Dr. Tan Poo Chang and Mr. Tey Nai Peng, who untiring encouragement and support have help me to finish this course. My appreciation also goes to undergraduates of University Malaya, Kuala Lumpur for year 1998 for conducting the survey and providing me with the data.

I am also grateful to my friends for their encouragement given to me particularly Peck Leong, Chee Kin and Bik Kai. Last but not least, I would like to express my love and gratitude to my wife, Tsuey Tsuey for all her loving support.

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to understand the role and status of the respondents in the family as well as in the society and community. The study looks at among others, their health status; economic participation and contribution; and participation in social and other community activities.

The result of this study shows that many older persons remain able and capable. Due to lack of activities at the local level, many older persons are compelled to retire to their own home. They are also ignorant about their own sickness especially when they have limited financial resources. Simple health checks and health awareness forums should be conducted at community centres to ensure health care services remain accessible and affordable for older persons.

The study shows that about 40 percent of the respondents are still working. Most of them have no choice but to work in order to sustain their own livelihood as well as their family. They contribute about 30 percent of household maintenance expenses. However, they seem to have more say in the household decision making indicating their better status in the family. In contrast, those who are not working and contributing to the household maintenance, tend to have less status in the family. They are mostly dependent on their children for financial support especially the older women. Even if the older persons have saving and social security, it may not be sufficient with rising cost particularly in health care. Support and better work

opportunities including raising the age of retirement, would enhance the quality of life of older persons, and also to contribute to the wellbeing of younger persons.

At older ages, older persons should be encouraged to involve themselves in various activities and continue to integrate fully in society. They would need to continue to have their self-worth and their independence. Initiatives by the community itself to establish an avenue for participation is pertinent as official interventions may take some times. A good example would be the Petaling Jaya Community Centre established in 1996. By being involved in community activities, older persons not only able to contribute productively but maintain their dignity in the family as well as the society.

# CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Acknowledgement</b>	i
<b>Abstract</b>	ii
<b>Contents</b>	iv
<b>List of Tables</b>	vi
<b>List of Figures</b>	x
<b>List of Appendices</b>	xi
<b>Chapter One</b>	<b>General Background</b>
1.1	Introduction
1.2	Justification of Study and Research Objectives
1.3	Literature Review
1.4	Data and Methodology
1.4.1	Sources of Data
1.4.2	Framework of Analysis
1.4.3	Methodology
1.5	Framework of the Research Paper
1.6	Profile of Respondent
	1 3 5 7 7 8 9 11 11
<b>Chapter Two</b>	<b>Health Status and Physical Ability</b>
2.1	Introduction
2.2	Health Status
Support from Family	
2.3	Physical Ability
2.4	Conclusion
	15 15 25 26 29
<b>Chapter Three</b>	<b>Economic Participation and Sources of Income</b>
3.1	Introduction
3.2	Economic Participation
Working Last Week	
3.3	Sources of Income and Social Security
3.4	Social Security Assistance
Support System	
3.5	Conclusion
	31 31 32 37 41 43 47
<b>Chapter Four</b>	<b>Role and Contribution in Family and Community</b>
4.1	Introduction
4.2	Living Arrangement
4.3	Family and Leisure Activities
4.4	Social and Community Activities
Participation in Community Activities	
Coordinating of Community Activities	
4.5	Household Decision Making
4.6	Multivariate Analysis
4.7	Conclusion
	49 49 51 53 53 56 59 62 70

<b>Chapter Five</b>	<b>Conclusion and Recommendations</b>	
5.1	Introduction	72
5.2	Summary and Discussion	72
5.3	Policy & Programme Implications	75
<b>References</b>		78
<b>Appendices</b>		80

## LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1.1	Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Sex and Selected Characteristics	13
2.1	Percentage Distribution of Health Status by Selected Variables	16
2.2	Percentage Distribution by Whether Respondents Had Any Specific Health Problem and Type of Illness by Age Group and Sex	18
2.3	Percentage Distribution by Whether Respondents Had Any Specific Health Problem and Type of Illness by Marital Status and Education Level	20
2.4	Percentage Distribution by Whether Respondents Had Any Specific Health Problem and Type of Illness by Work Status	20
2.5	Percentage Distribution by Whether Respondents and have been Ill during the Last Six Months, Whether Seek Treatment and Place of Treatment by Age Group and Sex	22
2.6	Percentage Distribution by Whether Respondents and have been Ill during the Last Six Months, Whether Seek Treatment and Place of Treatment by Marital Status and Education Level	22
2.7	Percentage Distribution by Whether Respondents have been Ill during the Last Six Months, Whether Seek Treatment and Place of Treatment by Work Status	23
2.8	Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Condition of Eyesight and Hearing and Percentage Having Difficulty in Obtaining Basic Aid by Age Group and Sex	24
2.9	Percentage of Respondents Receiving Support/Care from Others when Ill by Sex and Age Group	25
2.10	Percentage of Respondents Receiving Support/Care from Others when Ill by Marital Status and Education Level	26
2.11	Percent of Respondents Who are Able to Carry Out the Listed Activities Easily by Age Group and Sex.	26
2.12	Percent of Respondents Who are Able to Carry Out the Listed Activities Easily by Work Status	28

2.13	Percent of Respondents Who are Able to Carry Out the Listed Activities Easily by Ethnic Group	28
3.1	Percent of Female Respondents Who Have Ever Worked by Selected Variables	32
3.2	Percent of Respondents Who Has Worked Any Time during the Last Week by Selected Variables	33
3.3	Percent Distribution of Respondents By Type of Work Performed During Last One Week Preceding the Survey by Age Group and Sex	35
3.4	Percent Distribution of Respondents By Type of Work Performed During Last One Week Preceding the Survey by Ethnic Group	35
3.5	Employment Status of Respondents During the Last One Week Preceding the Survey by Age Group and Sex	36
3.6	Employment Status of Respondents During the Last One Week Preceding the Survey by Ethnic Group	37
3.7	Mean Weekly Income from Respondent's Main Job by Selected Variables	38
3.8	Percentage of Respondents Contribute to Household Maintenance by Selected Variables	39
3.9	Mean Monthly Contribution to Household Maintenance by Selected Variables (in RM)	40
3.10	Percent of Respondents Who Have Contributed To or Received Any Social Security Assistance by Selected Variables	42
3.11	Percent of Respondents who Have Contributed to or Received specific Social Security Assistance by Sex and Age Group	43
3.12	Respondents Regular Sources of Financial Support by Sex and Age Group	44
3.13	Respondents Regular Sources of Financial Support by Sex and Age Group	45
3.14	Percentage of Respondents Provide Financial Support for Someone Else In the Last One Year	47



4.1	Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Family Type by Selected Valuables	50
4.2	Mean Number of Household Members by Selected Variables	50
4.3	Percentage of Respondents Participated in the following Leisure Activities by Age Group and Sex	52
4.4	Percentage of Respondents by Ethnic Group Participated in the Following Leisure Activities	53
4.5	Percentage of Respondents Interested in Participating in Any of the Listed Activities by Selected Characteristics	54
4.6	Percentage of Respondents' Who Would Like to Participate in the Following Community Activities by Age Group and Sex	55
4.7	Percentage of Respondents' Who Would Like to Participate in the Following Community Activities by Ethnic Group	56
4.8	Percentage of Respondents Interested in Coordinating or Leading the Following Activities by Age Group and Sex	57
4.9	Percentage of Respondents Interested in Coordinating or Leading the Following Activities by Ethnic Group	58
4.10	Percentage Respondents Interested in Coordinating or Leading Any Activities by Selected Variables	59
4.11	Percentage of Respondents Who Influence the Following Decisions by Sex and by Age Group	60
4.12	Percentage of Respondents Who Influence the Following Decisions by Ethnic Group	60
4.13	Percentage of Respondents Who Influence the Following Decisions by Marital Status and Educational Level	61
4.14	Percentage of Respondents Who Influence the Following Decisions by Work and Health Status	61
4.15	Estimated Probability of Respondents' Influence on Household Spending Decision	69
4.16	Estimated Probability of Respondents' Influence on Purchase of Property	70

4.17	Estimated Probability of Respondents' Influence on Purchase of Durable Goods	72
4.18	Estimated Probability of Contribution by Respondents	74

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
3.1	Percentage of Respondents Have Ever Worked by Sex	31
3.2	Sources of Loan of Respondents	46

## LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix		Page
I	Location Map of Sample Area	80
II	Screening Questionnaire	81
III	Questionnaire	82
IV	Photographs of Sample Area	93
V	Petaling Jaya Community Centre	95