

# The Role and Strategy of Community Development for Elderly Families in Encouraging the Independence of Older People in Cianjur

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## ABSTRACT

*This research aims to explore and understand the role and strategies of the Elderly Family Development community in encouraging the independence of older people in Cianjur City. The Cianjur City Elderly Family Development Community has a vital role in encouraging the independence of older people. BKL not only acts as a place of socialization for older people but also as a place where they can get support, gain knowledge, and be involved in various activities that increase their independence. Data collection techniques using interviews and documentation. The Elderly Family Development Community has eight strategies: Providing Education and Information, Skills Development, Building Social Support, Holistic Approach, Organizing Recreational and Cultural Activities, Empowerment through Active Participation, collaboration and advocacy. Through these programs and activities, we can encourage older people to develop themselves, especially their independence. Therefore, the importance of collaboration with health services and local government emphasizes that the Elderly Family Development community does not stand alone*

**Keywords:** *Elderly Independence, Elderly Family Development Community*

## INTRODUCTION

Badan Pusat (2018) shows that the percentage of people aged over 65 years will increase by 25 percent in 2050; from 25 million in 2019, it will increase to 80 million people in 2050. In connection with this phenomenon, there is a need for social welfare. Elderly economy and the socio-economic role of older people in national development. As a community development strategy, empowerment creates opportunities for individuals to take an active role in decision-making that affects their lives (Susiana, 2023; Syafmaini, 2019). Community empowerment aims to empower communities through skills, knowledge, and collective analysis to engage in actions that bring change (Dira & Syuraini, 2023; Harahap & Setiawati, 2023; Sudiapermana & Nurwahidayah, 2021). Apart from that, community empowerment activities involve communities planning, managing, and controlling their resources. Community empowerment provides physical or economic strength and empowers individuals to form and direct shared goals (Esilvita & Setiawati, 2023; Nurhabibah & Syuraini, 2023; Putridiani & Suryono, 2019). In the context of community empowerment, one group that requires special attention is the elderly. According to the elderly, they are individuals experiencing the aging process; with increasing age, a person will experience a natural decline in physical and non-physical conditions (Alpin, 2016; Manafe & Berhimpon, 2022; Suryani, 2016). According to the World Health Organization (WHO), an elderly person is one who has reached the age of 60 years and over. The elderly are an age group of humans who have entered the final stages of their life.

This group, categorized as elderly, will experience the Aging Process. Global society is currently facing significant demographic changes, with the number of elderly people continuing to increase. Population aging is no longer an isolated phenomenon in developed countries but has become a global problem that requires innovative and integrated solutions. Seniors, generally identified as individuals aged 60 years and older, face several unique challenges, including physical, social, and mental decline. Community empowerment is becoming increasingly important as an

approach that can help elderly people remain independent, involved in social life, and contribute to society (Dimala, 2023; Indrayogi et al., 2022). One of the things carried out by the elderly family development community is various education and training programs carried out to encourage the independence of the elderly. Independence includes the ability to carry out daily activities without dependence on others, including physical, mental, and social aspects. Community empowerment has emerged as a promising strategy to achieve and maintain the independence of the elderly (Noor, 2011). Involving the community, family, and related parties in supporting the independence of the elderly can create an environment conducive to their growth, participation, and well-being. In elder empowerment, it is essential to understand that each individual has a unique aging experience. Health conditions, social circumstances, and cultural background can influence how a person responds to aging. Therefore, community empowerment approaches must be inclusive and adaptable to individual needs and contexts; along with the urgent need to explore the role of community empowerment in increasing the independence of the elderly, studies that focus on collaborative strategies and support become relevant (Fathy, 2019).

Empowerment strategies that involve the active participation of older adults, families, and communities can significantly transform how we view and respond to aging. Therefore, this article aims to explore, analyze, and present in-depth insights into how community empowerment and collaborative support can be the key to increasing the independence of elderly people in the Happy Elderly community. Based on this, a holistic and sustainable approach is needed to understand and overcome these obstacles. In particular, the focus on collaborative strategies and support offers a comprehensive and integrated view for understanding how community empowerment can be applied effectively in increasing the independence of older people. The importance of understanding the dynamics of interaction between individuals and society in the context of empowering the elderly is theoretical and practical. Hopefully, this research can provide a more concrete and focused framework for practitioners, policymakers, and related parties to design and implement more effective and relevant community empowerment programs. In doing so, this article will fill existing knowledge gaps, help shape new understanding, and provide practical guidance for supporting the independence of older adults through a community empowerment approach that focuses on collaborative strategies and support.

## **METHOD**

This research was conducted online and face-to-face at the Cianjur City Elderly Family Development Community. Detailed and illustrative explanations in specific natural contexts are carried out using various natural methods. Qualitative research aims to observe the quality of a relationship, activity, condition, or material, as Fraenkel & Wallen (2008) explains. Furthermore, Sugiyono (2017) stated that qualitative research is very suitable when studying natural objects because the researcher acts as the primary and critical instrument. The method applied in this research is a descriptive method, which is used to provide an overview of, explain, and detail events in the research object, as explained by (Arikunto, 2010). Therefore, a descriptive approach was adopted in carrying out this research. In terms of data collection, two main sources are used, namely primary sources and secondary sources. Primary sources provide information directly to data collectors, while secondary sources are data obtained indirectly (Sugiyono, 2016). The data collection strategy consists of observation, interviews, and documentation studies. The selection of research subjects was carried out to obtain diverse information from various sources to verify the data obtained. The data analysis techniques include descriptive data analysis, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion

## DISCUSSIONS

The Elderly Family Development Community has various activities that can encourage the independence of the elderly. This community has 56 members. The Cianjur City Elderly Family Development Community has a vital role in encouraging the independence of the elderly. BKL not only acts as a place of socialization for the elderly but also as a forum where they can get support, gain knowledge, and engage in various activities that increase their independence..

**Gambar 1**  
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Several factors, including public awareness, government support, community involvement, social media, and sustainability also influence the effectiveness of the role taken by the Elderly Family Development Community. The following are some of the leading roles and strategies carried out by the Cianjur City Elderly Family Development community in encouraging independence: (1) Providing Education and Information: The Elderly Family Development Community can educate the elderly about health, safety, and self-management aspects that are important for maintaining independence. This educational program can include health education, skills training, and information about healthy lifestyles; (2) Skills Development: Through various activities and training, the Elderly Family Development community can help elderly people develop new skills or update their existing skills. This could include training in technology, household skills, or even social skills that can increase their day-to-day independence; (3) **Building Social Support:** The Elderly Family Development Community creates an environment where seniors can build a solid social network. Support from fellow seniors and community volunteers can provide a sense of security and comfort, reduce the risk of social isolation, and improve psychological well-being; (4) Holistic Approach to Health: Elderly Family Development can organize a holistic health program that includes physical, mental, and social aspects. This could involve physical fitness activities, art therapy, or counseling sessions to help seniors manage stress and maintain their mental health; (5) Organizing Recreational and Cultural Activities: Encouraging participation in recreational and cultural activities helps maintain the spirit and energy of seniors. Through art performances, visits to cultural places, or other social activities, the BKL community provides a platform to increase the independence and quality of life of the elderly; (6) Empowerment through Active Participation: The Elderly Family Development Community can empower the elderly through active decision-making. Seniors can be involved in planning and implementing community activities, giving them a sense of ownership and increasing

their self-worth; (7) Collaboration with Health Services and Local Government: Elderly Family Development can collaborate with health services and local government to obtain additional support and resources. This collaboration can ensure that elderly people receive integrated health services and support their independence; (8) Advocacy for Pro-Elderly Policies: Elderly Family Development Communities can act as advocates for policies that support the welfare of the elderly. This includes advocacy for senior-friendly environments, seniors' rights, and social policies that support their independence.

Through these roles, the Elderly Family Development community contributes significantly to building an environment that supports the independence of the elderly, improves their quality of life, and ensures that the elderly can live a dignified life in their community.

## CONCLUSSION

The Cianjur City Elderly Family Development Community plays a vital role in encouraging the independence of the elderly through eight methods, namely Providing Education and Information, Skills Development, Building Social Support, Holistic Approach, Organizing Recreational and Cultural Activities, Empowerment through Active Participation, collaboration and advocacy. Through these programs and activities, we can encourage the elderly to participate in developing themselves, especially their independence. Thus, the importance of collaboration with health services and local government emphasizes that the BKL community needs help to stand alone. Through this collaboration, communities can ensure that seniors receive integrated health services and that local policies support their independence. In this case, the BKL community functions as an advocacy voice that fights for the rights and interests of the elderly at a higher level. Overall, the Elderly Family Development community is not just a forum for socialization but also a motor for positive change for its members. By taking a holistic approach, involving the elderly in community decisions and programs, and building solid collaboration with various parties, the BKL community has become a model that shows how the community can play an active role in increasing the independence of the elderly. This is not only an achievement for the BKL community itself but also an inspiration for similar efforts in various communities committed to ensuring a dignified and independent old age for all members of society.

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