

# Successful Ageing and Social Support Among Older People Living in the Community

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Successful ageing of older people is influenced by the received social support. As the proportion of older people in Malaysia grows and the need for promoting successful ageing is apparent, it becomes increasingly important to investigate the relationship between successful ageing and social support among older people in the community.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional survey with convenience sampling was conducted on 200 older people living in the community of Kuantan, Pahang. A structured questionnaire, Successful Ageing Inventory and Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support were used to collect data regarding demographics. Data were analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics (version 25). Descriptive statistics, Pearson's chi-square, and Fisher's exact test were used for analysis. The statistical significance level was set at  $p \leq 0.05$ .

**Results:** The results showed that 98.5% and 75% of older people have highly successful ageing and social support, respectively. A statistically significant relationship was found between successful ageing and social support. However, no significant relationship was observed between successful ageing and demographic characteristics.

**Conclusion:** The level of social support received by older people in the community plays a crucial role in determining successful aging. Therefore, implementing intervention programmes on the significant factors to enhance the successful ageing of older people is recommended.

**Keywords:** Social support; Successful ageing; Older people

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## INTRODUCTION

Most countries worldwide have been experiencing increased life expectancy and low fertility, leading to the prevalence of ageing. According to the United Nations (UN), there were 727 million older people aged 65 or over in 2020, and older people are projected to double by 2050 (1). Likewise, Malaysia is experiencing a rapid increase in this population. The population of 60 and over increased to 3.6 million (11.2%) in 2021 compared to 3.5 million (10.7%) in 2020, and it is projected to rise to around 32% by 2050 (2). The statistics showed that Malaysia's number of older people is growing every year, an indication of an ageing nation; hence, it is important to ensure that they achieve the best quality of life. Therefore, the term "successful ageing" was formed to understand more about ageing and determine the factors of ageing well among these older people.

Positive ageing, ageing well, productive ageing, and healthy ageing are concepts that fall under the umbrella phrase "successful ageing." It is divided into five categories, i.e., social well-being, psychological well-being, physical health, spirituality and transcendence, and environment and economic security (3). According to Rowe and Kahn, three components reflect three criteria for defining successful ageing, i.e., minimal risk of sickness, excellent cognitive and physical functioning, and active participation in life (4). Therefore, attaining these three requirements to the greatest extent feasible allows for the best life possible in the later stages. The study highlighted that successful ageing is very important to older people because it helps them to be the best version of themselves during old age.

Wu et al (5) defined successful ageing as a concept that highlights older people's potential and strengths, rather than their diseases and debilities, to cope with the problem of ageing, influenced by the growth of positive psychology in gerontology. Several studies have been conducted to study successful ageing and its related factors among older people. Studies that determined older people's successful ageing reported high scores based on the Successful Ageing Inventory (SAI) (6-8). However, Kozar-Westman et al (9) revealed a low score on successful ageing among older people, where just under 20% of the

participants described their ageing as successful. The significant result shows that successful ageing among older people is good in many countries. However, based on the multidimensional construct, the successful ageing prevalence among older people in Malaysia is still low, i.e., only 13.8% of Malaysian older adults were classified as successful agers (10).

In addition, an increase in the population of older people can raise the burden of dependence on families, communities, and the government (11). Therefore, to reduce dependence, older people need to be physically, mentally, and socially healthy, for example, undergoing successful ageing. In a recent study, Urtamo (12) mentioned that life satisfaction, meaning in life, and perceptions of the ageing process have all been linked to successful ageing. As a result, perceived social support for later-life adaptability is a crucial component of successful ageing. Perceived social support is one of the important factors of successful ageing for older people to achieve a quality of life. Several studies examined social support and its related factors in older people, and some reported a high level of social support among older people (13-15). The significant result shows that social support is important in older people's life.

Social support and successful ageing are influenced by the caregiver's connection and the severity of the limitations in daily activities. Despite limited mobility, older people maintain their bonds in this era of social networking (16). As a result, having broader social support can lead to greater life satisfaction and assist older people in successful ageing. Studies revealed that higher levels of social support were favourably connected with successful ageing in older people (17). Moreover, interactions with family and friends play an important role in helping older age successfully (18). Likewise, Takács and Nyakas (19) revealed a significant relationship between social support and successful ageing. In contrast, Wu et al (5) stated that social support is not associated with successful ageing.

The study on successful ageing among older people in Malaysia is scarce, with only a study investigating the issue. Thus, this study is expected to meet with the desired result of a positive result of successful ageing and the factors associated with it, i.e., social support,

which was investigated for better understanding and suggest further interventions by the respective authorities.

## METHODS

### Study Design and Setting

This study was conducted using the cross-sectional study design on older people around Kuantan, Pahang. The participants were recruited from neighbourhood areas, religious institutions, and recreational spaces within the study area. Pahang is one of Malaysia's 14 states, and the study was conducted in the territory of Kuantan. Population distribution by district indicated that Kuantan is the most populous district in Pahang, with 443,796 people (20). Thus, it was anticipated as having a high number of older people. Moreover, the older population in Kuantan, Pahang, was chosen because no study has been done on them. Thus, the decision to distribute the questionnaire to participants in Kuantan, Pahang, would likely be more relevant and significant.

### Participants and Sampling

The study sample was selected from older people around Kuantan, Pahang. The convenient sampling method was chosen because the subject was carefully selected to achieve the specific objectives and fixed inclusion criteria. Furthermore, the convenient sampling method is considered the best and most commonly used as it is less expensive, more efficient, and easier to implement (21).

The sample size was calculated to ensure the minimum number of participants needed to represent the population of older people in Kuantan, Pahang. The sample size was estimated using the single proportion formula (22). In this study, the sample size was calculated as 222 using  $Z = 1.96$ ,  $P = 0.176$  (23), and  $d = 0.05$ . Considering the issues of missing data, potential dropout, and unusable questionnaires, a sample size of 10% more than 222 will be the aim (24). Finally, the total sample size was calculated to be 244. The inclusion criteria for this study were older people aged 60 and above, who can read, write, and understand Malay or English. Meanwhile, the exclusion criteria included older people who refused to participate in the study.

### Procedures of Data Collection

The researcher selected the participants based on the sample size recommended and inclusion criteria. The data from the participants were collected face-to-face through a self-administered questionnaire among older people in Kuantan, Pahang. The questionnaire was given to participants, and they needed to answer all sections of the questionnaire. The estimated time to complete the questionnaire is about 30 to 45 minutes. The participants could ask questions related to the questionnaire during the answering session. The questionnaire was collected after completing the survey, and the researcher thanked the participants for their participation. Any incomplete set of the questionnaire was excluded from the data analysis. The answered questionnaire was kept by the researcher's team. Participants who declined to answer the questionnaire were kindly thanked and excluded from the study. Participants who did not meet the inclusion criteria and were not eligible to participate were terminated from the survey. The participants were also provided with information regarding the study.

### Study Instruments

A set of questionnaires was used to gather the data. The first section covered demographic characteristics, including age, gender, ethnicity, marital status, level of education, living arrangement, household income, chronic illness, and the number of chronic illnesses.

The second section examined participants' successful ageing. The Successful Ageing Inventory (SAI) developed by Troutman et al (6) was used. The SAI has 20 items and uses a Likert format from 0 to 4. The SAI has shown a high level of convergent validity and reliability. Internal consistency is indicated by Cronbach's alpha ranging from 0.86 to 0.91 (25). SAI is a reliable and adequate inventory that may be utilised for older people. However, the questionnaire is not available in the Malay language. Therefore, the original versions of SAI were translated into Malay. The forward and backward translation process was used to ensure the content validity of the questionnaires. Two gerontology nursing lecturers and three nursing instructors reviewed the instrument and provided feedback to maximise questionnaire comprehension, completeness, and ease of

completion. Their comments were applied as minor refinements to the questionnaire. Then, the Malay version of SAI was tested in a pilot test for internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha. Reliability was tested on 30 older adults with characteristics similar to the samples, which yielded 0.938 Cronbach's alpha for SAI. The Cronbach alpha value of more than 0.9 indicated that the questionnaire has excellent internal consistency.

The third section examined participants' social support. The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) by Zimet (26) was used to assess a person's sense of support. The tool developed by Gregory Zimet in 1988 comprises 12 questions and has been widely used and validated. The set comprises 12 items that need to be assessed using a Likert scale from 1 to 7. The possible score range is 12 to 84, with higher scores indicating greater perceived social support. A Malay version MSPSS validated by Ng et al (27), with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.89, was used. Permission has been granted from the original researcher via email before the study.

### Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to report the characteristics of older people, successful ageing, and perceived social support. Continuous variables were presented as mean and standard deviations, and categorical data were reported using frequencies and percentages. Pearson's chi-square and Fisher's exact test were used to determine the relationship between successful ageing and social support and demographic variables. The statistical significance level was set at  $p < 0.05$ . All data were analysed with IBM SPSS Statistics (version 25).

## RESULTS

### Sociodemographic Characteristics of Older People

Two hundred and forty-four older people were approached. Forty-four older people refused to participate in the study, resulting in a total sample of 200 older people and a response rate

of 82%. **Table 1** presents the sociodemographic characteristics of older people in Kuantan, Pahang. About 70.5% of the participants are aged 60 to 69, 21.0% are aged 70 to 79, and 8.5% are aged 80 and above. Most respondents are females (57.0%) compared to males (43.0%), and a majority of them are married (91.5%). The Malays outnumbered the non-Malays, with 88.0%. More than half of the participants (58.5%) have a secondary/tertiary education level, 25.5% have primary education, and 16.0% have no formal education. Most respondents live with spouses (57.5%) and children (29.5%), while 13.0% lived alone. Most participants have a household income of <RM2500–RM4849 (78.5%), followed by RM4850–RM10959 (20.0%) and RM10960–RM15039 (1.5%). A majority of them also have a chronic illness (79.5%), with at least 1 to 3 chronic illnesses (74.0%)

### Successful Ageing Level Among Older People

The respondents are expected to have a total score from 0 to 80 for SAI, and the researcher has categorised the total score as follows: 0–40 is considered a low level of successful ageing and 41–80 is considered a high level of successful ageing. **Table 2** presents the respondents' total SAI scores ranging from 35 to 80, with 197 respondents (98.5%) having a high total score and 3 (1.5%) having a low total score. The mean score of SAI  $69.87 \pm 9.744$  indicates that the older people in Kuantan, Pahang, have a high level of successful ageing.

### Perceived Social Support Level Among Older People

The range of total score for MSPSS is 12 to 84, and the researcher has categorised the total score of 12–35 as low perceived support, 36–60 is considered medium perceived support, and 61–84 is considered high perceived support. **Table 3** shows the respondents' (N = 200) total scores ranging from 26 to 84, with a mean MSPSS score of  $69.34 \pm 12.125$ . From the result, 2 (1.0%) respondents scored 12 to 35, 48 (24.0%) older people scored 26 to 50, and the rest (150 respondents = 75.0%) scored 61 to 84. Thus, it can be concluded that the older people in Kuantan have a high level of perceived social support, considering the mean score of  $69.34 \pm 12.125$ .

**Table 1:** Sociodemographic characteristics of older people (N = 200)

N = 200	Variables	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age (year)	60-69	141	70.5
	70-79	42	21.0
	80+	17	8.5
Gender	Male	86	43.0
	Female	114	57.0
Ethnicity	Malay	176	88.0
	Chinese	7	3.5
	Indian	9	4.5
	Others	8	4.0
Marital status	Unmarried	17	8.5
	Married	183	91.5
Level of education	No formal education	32	16.0
	Primary	51	25.5
	Secondary/Tertiary	117	58.5
Living arrangement	Living alone	26	13.0
	Living with spouse	115	57.5
	Living with children	59	29.5
Household income	<RM 2500-RM 4849	157	78.5
	RM 4849-RM 10959	40	20.0
	RM 10960-RM 15039	3	1.5
Chronic illness	Yes	159	79.5
	No	41	20.5
Number of chronic illnesses	0	44	22.0
	1-3	148	74.0
	4+	8	4.0

**Table 2:** Successful ageing level among older people (N=200)

Variables		Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)
Successful Ageing	<i>Total score</i>			69.87	9.744
Low level of Successful Ageing	0-40	3	1.5		
High level of Successful Ageing	41-80	197	98.5		

**Table 3:** Perceived social support level among older people (N=200)

Variables		Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)
Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS)	<i>Total score</i>			69.34	12.125
Low Perceived Support	12-35	2	1.0		
Medium Perceived Support	36-60	48	24.0		
High Perceived Support	61-84	150	75.0		

### The Relationship Between Sociodemographic Characteristics and Successful Ageing Level Among Older People

The relationship between sociodemographic characteristics and successful ageing levels among older people was obtained using Pearson's chi-square and Fisher's exact tests. **Table 4** presents the Pearson's chi-square test result between the sociodemographic characteristics and successful ageing levels. The results presented did not meet the assumption of Pearson's chi-square test; thus, Fisher's exact

test was used. It reveals that the sociodemographic data of the respondents, which include age ( $p = 0.116$ ), gender ( $p = 1.000$ ), ethnicity ( $p = 1.000$ ), marital status ( $p = 0.235$ ), level of education ( $p = 0.538$ ), living arrangement ( $p = 0.368$ ), household income ( $p = 0.518$ ), chronic illness ( $p = 0.499$ ), number of chronic illness ( $p = 0.233$ ) have no significant association with the level of successful ageing among older people ( $p > 0.05$ ). Overall, it can be concluded that sociodemographic characteristics do not influence the successful ageing of older people.

**Table 4:** The relationship between sociodemographic characteristics and successful ageing level among older people (N=200)

Variables	Successful Ageing Level		n (%)	$\chi^2$	p
	Low level of Successful Ageing (%)	High level of Successful Ageing (%)			
<b>Age (year)</b>					
60-69	1 (0.5)	140 (70.0)	141 (70.5)	3.027	0.116
70-79	1 (0.5)	41 (20.5)	42 (21.0)		
80+	1 (0.5)	16 (8.0)	17 (8.5)		
<b>Gender</b>					
Male	1 (0.5)	85 (42.5)	86 (43.0)	0.116	1.000
Female	2 (1.0)	112 (56.0)	114 (57.0)		
<b>Ethnicity</b>					
Malay	3 (1.5)	173 (86.5)	176 (88.0)	0.415	1.000
Chinese	0 (0.0)	7 (3.5)	7 (3.5)		
Indian	0 (0.0)	9 (4.5)	9 (4.5)		
Others	0 (0.0)	8 (4.0)	8 (4.0)		
<b>Marital status</b>					
Unmarried	1 (0.5)	16 (8.0)	17 (8.5)	2.415	0.235
Married	2 (1.0)	181 (90.5)	183 (91.5)		
<b>Level of education</b>					
No formal education	1 (0.5)	31 (15.5)	32 (16.0)	1.383	0.538
Primary	0 (0.0)	51 (25.5)	51 (25.5)		
Secondary/Tertiary	2 (1.0)	115 (57.5)	117 (58.5)		
<b>Living arrangement</b>					
Living alone	1 (0.5)	25 (12.5)	26 (13.0)	1.293	0.368
Living with spouse	1 (0.5)	114 (57.0)	115 (57.5)		
Living with children	1 (0.5)	58 (29.0)	59 (29.5)		
<b>Household income</b>					
<RM 2500- RM 4849	2 (1.0)	155 (77.5)	157 (78.5)	0.371	0.518
RM 4850-RM 10959	1 (0.5)	39 (19.5)	40 (20.0)		
RM 10960-RM 15039	0 (0.0)	3 (1.5)	3 (1.5)		
<b>Chronic illness</b>					
Yes	2 (1.0)	157 (78.5)	159 (79.5)	0.308	0.499
No	1 (0.5)	40 (20.0)	41 (20.5)		
<b>Number of chronic illnesses</b>					
0	2 (1.0)	42 (21.0)	44 (22.0)	3.565	0.233
1-3	1 (0.5)	147 (73.5)	148 (74.0)		
4+	0 (0.0)	8 (4.0)	8 (4.0)		

Note: \*Significant at  $p < 0.05$

**The Relationship Between Social Support Level and Successful Ageing Level Among Older People**

Pearson’s chi-square test was used to determine the relationship between the social support level and successful ageing level among older people in Kuantan, Pahang. **Table 5** displays the relationship between social support level and successful ageing level among older people

in Kuantan, Pahang. As the results do not meet the assumptions of Pearson’s chi-square test, Fisher’s exact test result was used. The results reveal a significant relationship between the social support level and successful ageing level among older people in Kuantan, Pahang ( $p = 0.002$ ). Thus, this study found that the level of social support will influence successful ageing among older people.

**Table 5:** The relationship between social support level and successful ageing level among older people (N = 200)

Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) Level	Successful Ageing Level		n (%)	x <sup>2</sup>	p
	Low level of Successful Ageing (%)	High level of Successful Ageing (%)			
Low level of Perceived Social Support	1 (0.5)	1 (0.5)	2 (1.0)	36.435	0.002*
Medium level of Perceived Social Support	2 (1.0)	46 (23.0)	48 (24.0)		
High level of Perceived Social Support	0 (0.0)	150 (75.0)	150 (75.0)		

**Note:** \*Significant at  $p < 0.05$

**DISCUSSION**

The purpose of the study is to investigate the relationship between successful ageing and social support among older people in the community. A statistically significant relationship was found between successful ageing and social support. However, no significant relationship was observed between successful ageing and demographic characteristics.

**Successful Ageing Level Among Older People**

In the current study, older people seem to have a high level of successful ageing. The majority of the participants in this study were between the age range of 60-69 years (young-old age), meaning 70.5% were still in the productive age group. This may be the reason why older people in this study showed a high level of successful aging. The finding is supported by previous studies, where older people tend to have high scores on successful ageing (6-8). Nevertheless, the result contradicts the study by Kozar-Westman et al (9), who showed that

the SAI result presented under 20% of the sample described their ageing as successful.

In addition, only one published study reported successful ageing among older people in Malaysia, and the results showed that only 13.8% of Malaysian older adults were classified as successful agers, which is a low percentage (10). The study was based on a multidimensional model that included avoiding chronic sickness and problems with physical functioning, as well as maintaining high psycho-cognitive functioning ageing studies (10). However, successful ageing in the current study was explored using the Successful Ageing Inventory (SAI) because it is more comprehensive than the multidimensional model. SAI covers five components, i.e., intrapsychic and functional performance, coping strategies, existential being, introspective gerotranscendence, and retrospective gerotranscendence (25).

The participants in this study have a higher score of successful ageing because most are under the young age category, and most

received secondary or tertiary education. Most older people under young age probably have fewer health problems than the older class. They also have a good cognitive reserve due to better education, as it helps their brain better cope with any failures or declines in their future, particularly in their later stages of life. (28). Therefore, this study revealed that older people under young age who received secondary or tertiary education are more prone to experience successful ageing.

### **Perceived Social Support Level Among Older People**

In addition, the level of perceived social support among older people was also examined. The study revealed that most older people have a high level of perceived social support, especially from family, friends, and significant others. This is congruent with previous studies, which reported that older people tend to have positive outcomes and a good level of social support (13–15), (29–31). Moreover, the result revealed that the highest mean belonged to friend support (31). The recent study also stated higher values for support from significant others and family and lower values for support from friends (15).

It is shown that most of the studies used the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) to evaluate social support in older people. However, a study in Malaysia used another type of instrument, i.e., the 11-item Duke Social Support Index, to assess perceived social support among older people (28). The estimated mean Duke Social Support Index score was 27.65, according to the findings (95% CI 27.36–27.95). The results described that social support is influenced by many factors and is one of the crucial aspects to focus on among older people in Malaysia. Another study in Malaysia on social support for older people's mental health used the Medical Outcome Survey Social Support Survey. Social support mediates the link between loneliness and depression, according to the findings. Although the findings demonstrated only a partial mediation impact, the researchers concluded that social support for older people could help mitigate the detrimental effects of loneliness on depression, improving older people's quality of life (30).

### **The Relationship Between Sociodemographic Characteristics and Successful Ageing Level Among Older People**

The high level of successful ageing among older people could be influenced by several factors. Nevertheless, this study showed no significant relationship between sociodemographic characteristics and successful ageing levels among older people in Kuantan, Pahang. It could be due to the imbalanced data of the participants. For example, the distribution of participants in each ethnic group was not balanced, under-representing older people of Chinese, Indians, and other ethnic groups. Thus, the comparisons between groups contributed to the absence of statistical differences. Moreover, the present study has distinguished the prediction as no factors can be associated with successful ageing with older people. This might be due to the small sample size of the present study than other studies. Furthermore, it could also be due to the homogeneity of the study participants, such as age, gender, ethnicity, marital status, level of education, living arrangement, household income, chronic illness, and the number of chronic illnesses, which may contribute to these insignificant results of the study.

This is contradictory to several studies that reported the association between sociodemographic characteristics and successful ageing, such as the link between age and successful ageing (5,10), (32,33). However, Bosnes et al (34) and Gallardo-Peralta et al (8) demonstrated that age was adversely linked with successful ageing. In addition, gender was also linked and positively connected to successful ageing (5,8,35). A study by Aizan Hamid et al (10) in Malaysia revealed that ethnicity was strongly linked to successful ageing. Meanwhile, although marital status and relationship satisfaction are positively connected with successful ageing (5,8,35) highlighted no clear link between marital status and successful ageing. A study by Aizan Hamid et al (10) also reported that married respondents had a substantial difference in successful ageing than unmarried respondents.

Successful ageing was linked to higher levels of education, probably due to cognitive reserve (5,8,10,35). Besides, Jang (33) found that living arrangements were linked to successful ageing, while the economic level was linked to successful ageing (4,10,34). Li et al (32) revealed that the prevalence of successful ageing was lower among older people without adequate or just enough money for personal use. A study by Halaweh et al (35) stated that most patients had one or more chronic conditions. They were

more concerned about their physical health in terms of diseases than being free of incapacitating illnesses that would impede their daily activities. In addition, a study by Badrasawi et al (36) stated that this research shows that a low incidence of successful ageing correlates with a higher prevalence of chronic illnesses.

Most studies showed a significant relationship between sociodemographic characteristics and successful ageing, but the current study showed a non-significant relationship between sociodemographic characteristics and successful ageing ( $p > 0.05$ ). Hence, to overcome the non-significant data, the data collection should be balanced to present a significant relationship between sociodemographic characteristics and successful ageing among older people in Kuantan, Pahang. The researcher has to ensure that the number of participants for each group represented is balanced or equal and no huge gap exists between the participants in one group to overcome this problem in the future.

### **The Relationship Between Social Support Level and Successful Ageing Level Among Older People**

This study demonstrates the association between social support and successful ageing among older people. Participants in this study have higher social support levels and successful ageing. It could be due to many participants having good social support, especially from their family, friends, and significant others. Social support is one of the important factors in focusing on older people because it will influence them in their later stages of life. Therefore, having a good level of social support will ensure they experience successful ageing, as social support is significantly related to successful ageing among older people.

The relationship is supported by a study in 2013, which reported that improving social support among older people may help them age more successfully (17). Moreover, Nguyen et al (18) also stated that family and friend interactions play an important role in helping older African Americans to age successfully. Similarly, Takács and Nyakas (19) revealed a significant relationship between social support and successful ageing. However, Wu et al (4) reported no relationship between social support and successful ageing level among

older people, where social support was not associated with successful ageing on its own.

### **Implication for Nursing Practice**

With the development of the economy and population ageing, this study provided insight for promoting successful ageing by better understanding the perspectives of older people on successful ageing. These projections substantiate the importance of educating future generations of nurses in caring for older people to support them in the process of successful ageing.

This study also found that older people's perceived social support level affected successful ageing. The researcher found a statistically significant relationship between total MSPSS scores and the total mean scores of SAI; hence, it is imperative that the social support of older people is considered in macro-country planning and that nurses are educated to enhance successful ageing in older people.

Adapting to the changes in old age is important for successful ageing. Therefore, nurses must regularly assess older people's social support systems to improve successful ageing. Determining and improving the family social support of older people should be an essential part of nursing practice. Nurses should encourage older people and relatives to widen their social support networks. The researcher recommended activating older people's social support sources to increase successful ageing and including the topics of successful and social support in health education programmes for older people to increase successful ageing.

### **CONCLUSION**

The result of this study showed that a high level of social support among older people led to a high level of successful ageing. These results offer valuable insights for healthcare professionals, especially nurses, emphasizing the significance of fostering social support from family, friends, and significant others for older people. It highlights the potential benefits of disseminating knowledge, promoting awareness through advertising, and conducting health education initiatives targeted at caregivers and the public, emphasizing the importance of social support in the aging process.

## LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Some limitations were encountered during the study. First, the findings of this study cannot be generalised to other settings as it only reaches older people in Kuantan, Pahang, with limited participants, i.e., not all older people in Kuantan participated in the research. It is recommended for future research to increase the sample size and use a larger population that involves many areas to reduce bias. It is recommended to study factors related to successful ageing among older people on older people in other states in Malaysia to obtain a generalised result. Future research should also include a qualitative study to investigate older people's perceptions of successful ageing in Malaysia. Future studies could also provide some token of appreciation to the participants, as some participants were unwilling to participate in this study, and some chose not to answer the questions. The gift could entice people to answer the questionnaire.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors have no conflict of interest to declare with regard to this work.

## ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Approval of this study was obtained from the Kulliyyah of Nursing Post-Graduate and Research Committee (KNPGRC), with the reference number IIUM/313/G/14/3/1 on March 2, 2022, and the International Islamic University Malaysia Research Ethics Committee (IREC), with the reference number IIUM/504/14/11/2/IREC2022-KON on March 16, 2022. The participants were informed that their participation should be voluntary and informed consent should be signed before answering the questionnaire. They were briefed about the objectives and nature of the study. The participants can ask questions about the questionnaire. Their involvement in the study was voluntary, and their confidentiality was maintained. The data were kept confidential by the researcher, and identifiers such as names or identity card numbers were not used in the questionnaire to protect the privacy and anonymity of the participants.

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## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

**AM:** involved in drafting the manuscript, data collection, analysed the data, support with literature content and finalizing and editing the manuscript.

**NAM:** involved in drafting the manuscript, data collection, analysed the data.

**HT:** involved in support with literature content and editing the manuscript.

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