

Ageing Problems in Klang Valley, Malaysia Associated with Those in Newtowns of Nagasaki

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1. Introduction

In this research the author carried out a survey to detach what are the problems in Dialand and Nagayo Newtowns of Nagasaki. The main problem is about the ageing population that affects in their way of living and also in the Town Planning environment. The research is about the affection of ageing population in their living environment. The living environment for elderly is important whose abodes is the center of virtually all their activities.

2. 21st Century – The Elderly Century

In Year 2050, 1 of 3 person of Japan citizen is the elderly person (65 years old and over) according to the recent estimation of population in Japan 1997. Today the rate of the elderly person (the aged are those 65 years old and above) is 14.5% but it will continue to be 27.4% in year 2025 and 32.3% in year 2050¹⁾. This shows that the population of Japan is ageing very rapidly.

The United Nations had announced the year 1999 as The International Year of Older Persons (IYOP99). The World Population Prospect 1988 (The United Nation) said the less developing countries will have more elderly population than more developing countries by 2020. From the recent data of 26 August 99, the mid-year population in Malaysia is 22.71 million²⁾. By year 2020, the population is expected to 33.4 million. It is projected that in the year 2020, 9.5% of the population is the elderly person (the aged are those 60 years old and above)³⁾. Table 1 shows demographic indicators for Malaysia, Singapore and Japan 1970, 1990 and 2020⁴⁾. It can be seen that the extent of ageing differs with the status of socio-economic development of the country.

Table 1

Country	% aged 60 years and over			Median age			Life expectancy			Old age dependency ratio 65 years & over		
	1970	1990	2020	1970	1990	2020	1970	1990	2020	1970	1990	2020
Malaysia	5.2	5.9	9.5	17.4	21.9	27.1	63.6	71.7	74.7	10.5	10.2	15.7
Singapore	5.7	9.1	24.1	19.7	29.8	41.4	67.9	73.6	79.2	5.8	8.6	23.9
Japan	10.6	17.4	31.0	29.0	37.4	46.3	71.1	78.3	81.3	10.3	17.2	41.5

Source: Monograph series 4, Senior citizens and population ageing in Malaysia, Department of Statistic, Malaysia

3. Design of Welfare and Barrier Free Facilities in Living Environment

1) Home Barrier Free Design Approach⁵⁾

Examples of the facilities: Handrail at the wall, wide spacing for wheel chair person easier to move, emergency phone by the bed, handrail and footlight by the steps, automatic machine to move the disabled or the elderly up and down the stairs, wide switch, low and wide kitchen, easy-to-use tableware, easy-to-use toilet goods, easy-to-use bathroom goods and others.

2) Transportation

Public transportation: non-step bus, low-step bus, community bus, demanded bus, handicapped vehicle, lifted taxi, care-taxi, low-step train, monorail-train and others suitable vehicles.

3) Traffic Facilities

Wide pathway, handrail at the slope pathway, escalator and elevator at the train station, siren sound at the zebra cross, easy-to-see departure sign board, low lamp street, sound map board, parking for handicappers vehicle, Braille-block at the pathway for the disabled and other facilities.

4) Town Barrier Free Design Approach

Barrier free design facilities are needed at the public area such as public service buildings (post office, city hall, banks etc.), medical treatment buildings (hospitals, clinics etc.), shopping complexes, train & bus stations, airports, public phones and others.

5) Care Service at Home⁶⁾

Home care services for the elderly such as living at home services (house keeping service, food deliveries, bathing service etc), welfare homes design service, medical home service (dentist visit service, nursing service etc), volunteer service (short-stay service, day service etc.) and others are needed so that the elderly can live in their own house as long as possible feel with secure

and comfortable.

6) Healthy Sports and Culture Activities

Activities such as sport activity (jogging, play gateball games etc.) for the elderly are alternatives for the elderly to enjoy their life healthier. Sharing stories about their life experiences or teaching cultures to others can be beneficial in other individual life.

7) Worthy long living – Participation to the Society

The elderly must confidently make their life to be brighter by giving their role support to the society. Service after retirement age is what we called 'The 2nd Active Service Generation' for the elderly. In the past, the image of elderly is poor rather in physical or economical factor and it was said that the elderly is the weakness of the society. But as the average of life expectancy is increasing in years this image had been changed. At the first active service are full of responsibility and tense. But in the 2nd active service, more freely at work, entertaining, free to contribute to the society and many other kind of social activities.

4. Survey of the Elderly Problems in Dialand and Nagayo Newtowns, Nagasaki

Table 2

Study Area	Population (1995)				% of Elderly Population (number of person)		
	Age Range	Total	Male	Female	% of Total	% of Male	% of Female
Nagayo Newtown	0-15	586	295	291	16.26% (608)	44.57% (271)	55.43% (337)
	16-59	2,309	1,091	1,218			
	60-64	237	121	116			
	65-74	392	187	205			
	75 & over	216	84	132			
Dialand	Age Range	Total	Male	Female	% of Total	% of Male	% of Female
	0-15	1,624	823	801	8.84% (517)	43.71% (226)	56.29% (291)
	16-59	3,422	1,561	1,861			
	60-64	283	128	155			
	65-74	372	169	203			
	75 & over	145	57	88			

Source: Calculated from 1995 Population Census of Nagasaki City and Nagayo-Cho

Table 2 shows the population of Nagayo Newtown and Dialand in 1995. This shows that at Nagayo Newtown there is more elderly than in Dialand. The survey is mainly to seek what are the problems that the resident faced in their daily life. This will show the differences between Dialand and Nagayo Newtown and the rate of elderly population is half from the number. One of reason of this differ is that Nagayo Newtown was built many years before Dialand and most of the resident in Nagayo Newtown live there continuously while in Dialand some of the residents do not stay there permanently.

From the hearing survey of the leader of inhabitants' council of Nagayo Newtown residential, the relation between family and relation between neighbour nowadays is not good as the past that many elderly like to live alone in their homes. There are activities such as summer camping, visiting elderly homes and giving lectures in schools that giving chances to elderly to participate in the society. Somehow the number of participated elderly still very few. Other problems such as narrow pathway in the housing area that the residents have to walk on the road. This might be risky especially to children and the elderly. From the medical term side, there is some request that wanting the dentist and ophthalmologist visit to the bedridden elderly home for treatment.

5. Conclusion

As the 21st century is 'The Elderly Century', the number of elderly society in the world is gradually moving in the millennium year with much higher number, many implementation plans are needed to improve the elderly society. In the developing countries such as Malaysia that will be aged by the year 2020, look over the countries that are aged to prepare a suitable living environment for the elderly society in the country.

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