

**CARING FOR THE ELDERLY: A COMPARATIVE STUDY  
BETWEEN MALAYSIA AND SINGAPORE**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This main purpose of this research is to analyze the inadequacy of the law, specifically related to the maintenance of the elderly in Malaysia. As of today, there is no specific law or provisions in Malaysia that regulates the issue of elderly maintenance. This lacuna of law happens amidst the increasing number of cases of elderly abandonment. Moreover, the plight, cases and sad stories of elderly neglect, abuse, abandonment and maintenance issues will be discussed as well.

Furthermore, this research will delve deep into the current existing law, policies, programmes and services available to the elderly here in Malaysia and Singapore as well. A comparison will then be drawn between both countries in terms of elderly protection.

In addition, the Singapore's Maintenance of Parents Act 1995 (MPA) will be the main highlights in this research. The process, procedures and requirements under MPA will be thoroughly examined. From that, guidelines, suggestion and commentaries will be provided in strengthening the current protection for the elderly in Malaysia together with the prospect of enacting a new maintenance law by having the MPA as a guideline.

It is hope that this research will shed a light on the elderly plight in Malaysia with respect of having a Malaysia's own maintenance law, shaped by religion, culture and unique socio diversity.

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It is our hope that through this research, we had contributed something that can make people realize about their obligations to their parents and why they should care for their parents.

Thank you.

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## CHAPTER I

### RESEARCH PROPOSAL

#### 1.0 BACKGROUND STUDY

Malaysia's population is not currently particularly elderly, although this will change over the next two decades or so. The 2000 Census showed that 6.2 per cent, that is 1.452 million people, were aged 60 or over, but demographic ageing is occurring and by the year 2020, 9.5 per cent of the country's population will be aged 60 years and over. In accordance with the United Nations World Assembly on Ageing held in Vienna in 1982, at which the age of 60 years and over was adopted for deliberating issues on ageing, Malaysia has also adopted this demarcation in formulating and implementing plans for its senior citizens.<sup>1</sup> However, the present retirement age of 60 seems to suggest that the threshold for ageing locally is felt to begin at 60 years of age.

Until 1995, there was no specific policy for older persons in Malaysia. At best, policies or programmes catering to the needs of older persons were largely incorporated into overall social welfare policy development. The National Welfare Policy promulgated in 1990 identifies older persons as one of its many target groups.

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<sup>1</sup> Ong Fong Sim, *'Ageing in Malaysia A Review of National Policies and Programs'* [http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-28476-201-1-DO\\_TOPIC.html](http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-28476-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html) accessed on 18 March 2011.