



Strengthening Self-Management among Older Adults at Jubilee Home Penang, Malaysia: An Organizational Behavior Perspective

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Abstract

This community service article reports a behavior-based intervention aimed at strengthening self-management among older adults residing at Jubilee Home Penang, Malaysia. Drawing on organizational behavior and self-regulation theory, the program responds to the growing need for psychosocial empowerment of older adults in institutional care settings. The intervention was designed using a participatory approach and implemented through four stages: initial behavioral assessment, structured educational sessions, guided self-reflection and practice, and qualitative evaluation. Data were collected through systematic observation, facilitator field notes, and participant feedback. The findings demonstrate meaningful improvements in self-awareness, emotional regulation, daily activity structuring, and perceived personal control among participants. This article offers novelty by extending organizational behavior concepts traditionally applied in workplace contexts into community service for older adults, positioning them as active agents of behavioral regulation. The program contributes a theoretically grounded and replicable model of community service that emphasizes behavioral agency and self-efficacy in later life.

INTRODUCTION

The aging population has become a significant global concern, alongside rising aspirations for holistic care that goes beyond mere physical health management. Older adults sometimes face difficulties with emotional control, loss of social roles, and diminished autonomy, especially in institutional care settings (Moilanen et al., 2021; Van Loon et al., 2024). These factors may reduce perceived self-efficacy and internal locus of control, thereby impacting overall quality of life (Akbari Esfahani et al., 2024; Rogowska et al., 2020; Schreitmüller & Loerbroks, 2020).

In organizational behavior, humans are viewed as proactive agents who can regulate their behavior through cognitive and motivational processes, including self-monitoring, goal planning, and self-reinforcement. Self-management has been thoroughly studied as a means to improve performance, well-being, and adaptability in organizational and professional contexts (Greenfield et al., 2019; Pilotto et al., 2017). Nonetheless, its application in gerontological and community service settings remains insufficiently examined (Boscart et al., 2017; Greenfield et al., 2019; Pilotto et al., 2017).

Jubilee Home Penang, Malaysia, offers residential care for elderly individuals from diverse backgrounds experiencing various psychological and behavioral adjustment challenges (Aziz & Ahmad, 2017; Nair, 2021; Sathasivam, 2016). This environment provides an

opportunity to apply organizational behavior concepts to enhance self-management skills in older adults (Sadeghi et al., 2024; Van de Velde et al., 2019; van Het Bolscher-Niehuis et al., 2016). This community service program seeks to design and implement a self-management framework based on organizational behavior principles to improve behavioral autonomy and emotional regulation among older adults residing in institutional care.

The principal innovation of this community service program lies in its theoretical foundation in organizational behavior and its application within a non-organizational population (Bail, 2017; Burke & Morley, 2023). This program applies the concept of self-management—commonly used in organizational contexts to enhance employee performance and leadership effectiveness—to the field of elderly care (Cervera, 2025; Mansoor & Khuwaja, 2020).

The approach first translates core self-management mechanisms—self-monitoring, self-evaluation, goal setting, and self-reinforcement—into daily activities relevant to older adults. Second, it introduces a behavioral agency perspective in institutional senior care, reconceptualizing older adults as active regulators of their behavior rather than passive recipients of care. Third, the program demonstrates the adaptability of organizational behavior theory as a foundation for community service initiatives addressing psychosocial issues across the lifespan (Allen et al., 2017; Dellve & Eriksson, 2017).

This curriculum positions older adults as behavioral agents capable of self-regulation, providing a unique interdisciplinary contribution that connects organizational behavior and gerontology within the context of community service.

The objectives of this community service program are to: 1. Enhance older adults' understanding of self-management concepts in daily life. 2. Develop skills related to emotional regulation, daily activity planning, and self-reflection. 3. Strengthen perceived self-efficacy and behavioral autonomy among older adults at Jubilee Home Penang. The benefits of this program are both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, it contributes to the literature by demonstrating the applicability of organizational behavior frameworks in non-organizational, community-based settings, particularly gerontological care. It also provides empirical support for self-regulation theory among older adult populations. Practically, the program offers a replicable, low-cost intervention model for residential care homes to foster behavioral agency and psychological well-being among residents. For participants, the program enhances daily functioning, emotional control, and perceived personal agency. For caregivers and institutions, it reduces dependency and promotes a more empowered resident community. Ultimately, this program supports the broader goal of dignified, person-centered care for aging populations.

METHOD

The program employed a participatory and behavior-based approach adapted to the cognitive and physical conditions of older adults. Activities were conducted in small groups to facilitate interaction and individualized guidance.

Participants consisted of older adults residing at Jubilee Home Penang who voluntarily agreed to take part in the program. Selection was based on basic cognitive functioning and ability to participate in group discussions.

The program was implemented in four sequential stages designed to encourage behavioral engagement and self-regulation among older adults.

- a. Initial Assessment: Observation and informal interviews were conducted to identify participants' emotional conditions, daily routines, and self-management challenges within the residential environment.
- b. Educational Sessions: Interactive educational sessions introduced the concept of self-management, emotional awareness, and realistic daily goal setting using simple language and contextualized examples relevant to older adults' daily lives (Figure 1).
- c. Guided Practice and Mentoring: Facilitators conducted small-group and individual mentoring to support guided self-reflection, emotional regulation practices, and self-directed activity planning (Figure 2).
- d. Evaluation: Program outcomes were evaluated qualitatively through systematic observation, facilitator field notes, and informal feedback from participants and care staff.



Figure 1. Educational and interaction sessions between facilitators and older adults at Jubilee Home Penang, illustrating participatory learning and behavioral engagement.

Source: Primary documentation of community service activity at Jubilee Home Penang, 2025



Figure 2. Guided mentoring and individual interaction supporting emotional regulation and self-directed behavior among older adults.

Source: Primary documentation of community service activity at Jubilee Home Penang, 2025

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Qualitative evaluation indicates that the community service program produced observable behavioral and psychological improvements among participating older adults. Based on systematic observation, facilitator field notes, and participant feedback, three major outcome themes emerged.

Increased Self-Awareness and Emotional Regulation. Participants demonstrated greater awareness of their emotional states and interpersonal interactions. Older adults were observed expressing emotions more openly and applying simple emotional regulation strategies during daily activities (Figure 3).

Improved Structuring of Daily Activities. Participants showed enhanced ability to organize daily routines, including personal care, communal participation, and leisure activities. Increased initiative in participating in group activities was observed, reflecting strengthened self-directed behavior.

Enhanced Perceived Control and Self-Efficacy. Participants expressed a growing sense of personal control and confidence in making everyday decisions. This shift was evident in greater willingness to engage socially and assume small responsibilities within the residential setting (Figure 4).

From an organizational behavior perspective, these outcomes reflect strengthened self-efficacy and internal locus of control—key constructs associated with effective self-management. Although the findings are qualitative, the consistency of observed behavioral changes supports the applicability of organizational behavior frameworks in community service interventions for older adults.



Figure 3. Group participation and active engagement of older adults in communal activities following the self-management intervention.

Source: Primary documentation of community service activity at Jubilee Home Penang, 2025

CONCLUSION

This community service program demonstrated that applying organizational behavior and self-regulation frameworks can effectively strengthen self-management capabilities among older adults at Jubilee Home Penang, Malaysia, enhancing psychological autonomy, emotional regulation, and behavioral agency. The findings suggest that organizational behavior theory offers a valuable interdisciplinary foundation for innovative gerontological care models that extend beyond traditional custodial approaches. For practical application, it is recommended that Jubilee Home Penang integrate self-management principles into daily routines by encouraging residents to set personal goals, participate in activity planning, and engage in self-reflection, while training staff to facilitate rather than direct resident activities to further support autonomy and self-efficacy. Future research should extend intervention durations to examine long-term behavioral sustainability and incorporate quantitative pre- and post-assessment tools, such as self-efficacy scales and quality of life measures, to strengthen evaluation rigor. Additionally, broader replication across residential care settings in Malaysia and Southeast Asia is encouraged to assess cultural adaptability and generalizability, while policymakers should consider adopting organizational behavior-based psychosocial empowerment models to complement existing aged-care frameworks.

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