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Research

Islamic Values In Elderly Care: The Perspective Of Muslims In Southern Philippines On Nursing Homes

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Abstract

Background: With the increasing elderly population in the Philippines, the lack of nursing homes and long-term care centers remains one of the neglected problems. This study aimed to explore the perceptions of Filipino Muslims regarding sending their elderly parents to nursing homes in Marawi City, Philippines.
Methods: An exploratory-qualitative design was employed, involving eight Muslim Meranao participants selected via purposive sampling. Semi-structured interviews were conducted, and thematic analysis was used to analyze the data.
Results: Three main themes and thirteen subthemes emerged. Firstly, participants were aware of nursing home benefits but hesitated due to stigma and Islamic principles against abandonment. Secondly, culturally compliant nursing homes were suggested, emphasizing adherence to Islamic customs and values. Lastly, factors influencing willingness to use nursing homes included Islamic obligations, availability of family caregivers, and elder loneliness.
Conclusion: While Islamic beliefs prioritize home care for elders, some Filipino Muslims see the need for culturally compliant nursing homes, particularly for elders with special needs. This highlights the ongoing stigma surrounding nursing home placement and the importance of culturally sensitive elder care initiatives in Filipino Muslim communities.

Keywords: Elderly Care, Nursing Homes, Filipino Muslims, Islamic Values

INTRODUCTION

The rapid aging of the population, evidenced by the outnumbering of individuals aged 60 and above by those under 5 years old in 2020, underscores the pressing need for expanded elder care facilities[1]. This demographic shift, particularly pronounced among women and those over 80, necessitates an increase in nursing homes to accommodate the growing elderly population. However, the Philippines faces challenges in adequately

addressing this need, with insufficient geriatric facilities failing to meet the rising demand effectively[2]. Motivated by these deficiencies in nursing home provision within the country, this study seeks to explore the perspectives of Muslims in Marawi City regarding nursing homes.

Elderly individuals grappling with chronic illnesses or an inability to self-care often consider nursing homes for long-term support, while others opt for informal care within their families' homes[3]. Within geriatric facilities, nurses play a pivotal role in providing essential care and support, significantly influencing residents' quality of life[4]. This underscores the importance of high-quality long-term care services in meeting the needs of aging individuals.

Islamic teachings, emphasizing familial care for elders as prescribed in the Holy Qur'an, have led many Muslim families to resist placing their elderly in long-term care centers due to religious and social factors, contributing to the stigmatization of nursing homes within Muslim communities[5]. While debates continue regarding the feasibility and necessity of Muslim-specific nursing homes, there is a growing recognition of the importance of addressing the cultural and religious needs of elders within these facilities.[6]. Marawi City, predominantly inhabited by Muslims known as Meranaos, embodies this tension, with no nursing homes currently established despite the presence of elderly individuals in need of care[7]. In light of these considerations, this qualitative study aims to investigate the perspectives of Muslims in Marawi City, Philippines regarding nursing homes, shedding light on the cultural, religious, and social factors shaping their attitudes and preferences towards long-term care options for the elderly.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study utilized an exploratory-qualitative research design to address the research questions. Qualitative research focuses on understanding the subjective experiences and perceptions of research participants[8]. Moreover, Cuthill (2002)[9] suggests that exploratory research is appropriate when there are few or no previous studies available to inform the investigation. Given the dearth of research on nursing homes for Muslims, particularly among the Meranao community, the study employed an exploratory and descriptive approach to gain insights into this underexplored area. Through this design, the researchers gained valuable insights into the attitudes and perceptions of the Meranao people towards placing older parents in nursing homes.

Research Participants

A total of Eight participants were purposively recruited from Brgy Papandayan, Marawi City, Philippines, chosen for its proximity to a Nursing Home, ensuring a rich array of perspectives until data saturation was achieved. Inclusion criteria encompassed various demographic factors: participants had to identify as Muslim Meranao, belong to different age groups (young adult, middle adult, or older adult), marital statuses (married, unmarried, widowed, or divorced), educational backgrounds (ranging from no formal education to college graduates), income levels (low, middle, high, or none), and employment statuses (employed, self-employed, or unemployed). The authors also considered participants' availability, willingness to engage in the study, and capacity to articulate experiences and opinions effectively.

Research Instrument

In this study, individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant to gather comprehensive insights. The researchers developed a questionnaire comprising two sections: the first section captured participants' socio-demographic profiles, including age, marital status, education level, income, occupation, and household composition. The second section comprised four open-ended questions aimed at exploring participants' perspectives on nursing home placement for older family members. To ensure clarity and comprehension, the questionnaire was translated into the Maranao language from English. Interviews were chosen for their flexibility in eliciting in-depth responses beyond what other research methods might yield. Interpersonal skills were employed during interviews to foster rapport, encourage cooperation, and enhance data richness.

Four experts, including a research adviser and three other academicians, analyzed and validated the questionnaire to ensure its validity. The content validity of the instrument was also assessed for faults or weaknesses. It served as a basis for analyzing Filipino Muslims' attitudes toward nursing home institutionalization of aging family members. Pilot testing followed validation to ensure reliability, involving at least one participant. Recommendations were reviewed, errors addressed, and re-piloted until no further changes were needed.

Data Collection

The data collection phase spanned from January to March 2024. To commence, the researchers diligently obtained approval from the Research Ethics Committee of the authors' institution, underscored by Certificate number 2024-30 ensuring the ethical integrity of the study.

Subsequently, participants were given informed consent, outlining the research objectives, fostering an environment where they could offer informed consent to engage voluntarily. Emphasizing confidentiality and anonymity, the study's purpose was communicated clearly to participants.

With due authorization from the local authorities of Brgy Papandayan and the Research Ethics Committee, the researchers proceeded to conduct one-on-one interviews in the participants' homes.

The interview methodology adopted an open-ended question-and-answer format, allowing participants ample time to contemplate and articulate their responses freely. During interviews, field notes were taken to capture participants' nonverbal cues, supplemented by audio recordings to preserve spontaneous comments and verbatim responses. The subsequent encoding of interviews facilitated efficient organization for later analysis and interpretation.

Data Analysis

In this study, a thematic analysis was conducted following Braun and Clarke's method[21], involving systematic exploration of the dataset to identify recurring patterns. A coding tree structured the process, organizing data into overarching themes and sub-themes for consistency. Themes emerged organically from the data, enabling a nuanced exploration.

NVivo software facilitated data management and analysis, allowing efficient navigation, pattern identification, and insight generation. Two data coders ensured reliability and participant checking was conducted by involving two participants in providing feedback on the findings, enhancing the study's validity and aligning findings with participants' perspectives.

Ethical Consideration

In this study, adherence to ethical standards was paramount, with Research Ethics Approval obtained from the Research Ethics Committee of the authors' institution, bearing approval number 2024-30. Participants were assured of voluntary participation, allowing them to engage without coercion and withdraw at any time. Informed consent, obtained through formal letters, outlined the research purpose and guaranteed privacy and confidentiality. Anonymity was maintained through the use of pseudonyms, protecting participants' identities. Researchers also emphasized the confidentiality of data.

RESULT

Part I: Demographic Profile of the Participants

Table 1: Profile of the Participants

Name	Age	Sex	Civil Status	Educational Attainment	Occupation	Conditions of Elderly Parents
Aisha	38	F	Married	Elementary Graduate	Sari-sari Store Owner	Aisha's mother is 63 years old, physically able to perform activities of daily living; has no maintenance medications.
Farah	30	F	Married	High School Graduate	Businesswoman	Farah's father is 66 years old while her mother is deceased; her father has arthritis and has maintenance medication and is being taken care of by her younger brother.
Jamila	56	F	Separated	Master's Degree	Principal	Jamila's father is 73 years old while her mother is deceased; her father has diabetes and arthritis and is hemiplegic; her father has maintenance medications for diabetes.
Latifa	49	F	Married	College	Housewife	Latifa's mother is 80 years old, while her father is deceased; her mother has maintenance medications for her hypertension and diabetes.
Tahani	22	F	Single	Undergraduate	Student	Both parents are living; her mother is 70 years old and has hypertension and diabetes; her

						father is 74 years old, has heart disease, and is currently treated at the hospital.
Aziz	43	M	Married	High School Graduate	Store Assistant	Both parents are living; his mother is diabetic, and his father has arthritis; both parents can perform activities of daily living without assistance.
Zahra	33	F	Married	College Graduate	Teacher	Mother is living and currently 69 years old, while father is deceased; mother has no known illnesses and is physically able to perform daily activities.
Musa	43	M	Married	High School	Office Worker	Mother is currently 80 years old; father is deceased. Mother has arthritis and has maintenance medications.

Nota Bene: *The participants' names used in the study are pseudonyms based on the most popular Islamic baby names. The names presented do not reflect the real names of the participants for their privacy.*

Three primary themes emerged from the data analysis, including the benefits of sending the elderly to a nursing home versus social stigma, an ideal nursing home for Muslims, and factors influencing their willingness to send their elderly parent to a nursing home. The themes and categories, along with some of the participants' statements for more elaboration, are presented below.

Table 2: Summary of Generated Themes and Subthemes

THEMES	SUBTHEMES
Benefits of Sending Elderly to a Nursing Home Vs. Social Stigma	Assistance with Activities of Daily Living Registered Nurses and Doctors as Caregivers Abandonment Uncompliant with Islamic Values
An Ideal Nursing Home for Muslims	Existence of Prayer Rooms or Masjid Separate Rooms for Men and Women Same-Sex Caregivers Culturally Compliant Non-Muslim Caregivers More Activities that Strengthen Faith
Factors Affecting Willingness to Send Elderly to a Nursing Home	Islamic Obligation to Care for Elderly Parents at Home Availability of Family Members that Serve as Primary Caregivers Loneliness of Elderly at Home Lack of Primary Caregiver

Theme 1: Benefits of Sending Elderly Vs. Social Stigma

The findings reveal that, it becomes evident that participants acknowledge the advantages of caring for elderly family members at home, often influenced by depictions in media and television. Despite this awareness, the inclination to consider nursing home placement for their elderly parents remains limited. In fact, half of the participants perceive nursing homes as facilities for abandoned elders, indicating a prevalent stigma.

Moreover, for many participants, the decision to place parents in such institutions conflicts with Islamic principles. Within the Islamic tradition, it is commonly interpreted that adult children are duty-bound to care for aging parents within their own homes.

Subtheme 1.1: Assistance in Activities of Daily Living

The participants highlighted that nursing homes provide care and assistance in the activities of daily living. The following excerpt from the participants provides an inference that nursing homes are beneficial to the elderly and to their children, especially to those who are not able to render care to their parents due to the demands of their job.

"Based on what I see on TV, the services that nursing home provides are assistance to elderly…" – ***Aisha***

*"The services in nursing homes are that they maintain the health of their clients. They help the elderly in doing daily activities that they are not physically and mentally capable of such as bathing."– **Farah***
*"The services there are similar to the services in a hospital such are assisting them in performing activities of daily life such as bathing and giving medications for their illness." – **Jamila***

Subtheme 1.2. Nurses and Doctors as Caregivers

On the question of who the carers in a nursing home are, all of the participants claimed that nurses are the primary caregivers of nursing. There are also participants who stated that nursing homes also include doctors who provide specialized care for the elderly with special needs. In this regard, the participants state that:
*"The carers in nursing homes are nurses or caregivers. In some cases, there are also doctors who check up on the elderly" – **Aisha***
*"When I hear about the carers in nursing homes are nurses and doctors who provide checkups for them." **- Farah***
"The carers in nursing homes are those who know nursing such as registered nurses who knows and experienced in caring for elders. There may also be doctors and other healthcare workers present there." – **Jamila**

Analysis shows that the participants are aware that the caregivers in a nursing home are trained nurses whose role is primarily to assist the elderly clients in their activities of daily living. This idea gives an implication that the participants perceive nursing homes as a place that is beneficial to the elderly, as registered nurses are the ones who care for them.

Subtheme1.3. Abandonment

According to three of the participants, placing one's elderly parents in a nursing home is a form of abandonment and a lack of empathy towards parents. Despite hailing nursing homes as beneficial to the elderly, it is nonetheless still viewed by participants as a place for those who are neglected or abandoned. Placing one's parents here remains a stigma. Hence, they show disagreement on nursing home placement. This subtheme is supported by:
*"For us Meranaos, we do not send our old parents to nursing homes… For me, it is not good for children to send their elderly parent/s to a nursing home because it shows that they have abandoned their parents." – **Aisha***
*"But for me, as long as possible, they should take care of their parent/s at home because they are more comfortable and at ease at home. It's better for a child to take care of his/her elderly parent rather than someone else." – **Farah***

Subtheme 1.4. Uncompliant with Islamic Values

Another issue emphasized by the participants against nursing homes was that it defies the Islamic value of caring for one's parents at home as taught to them by their religion, Islam. For example, three of the participants mentioned that in Islamic culture and tradition, it is an obligation of an adult child to take care of his/her aging parent at home, just as how they took care of them when they were young. This can be evident from the following statements:
*"However, in our culture and tradition in Islam, it is discouraged to send family members to a nursing home. It is a must to take care of one's parents at home. Mostly for us Meranaos and Muslims, it is better to give service to our elderly parents". – **Jamila***
*"…we are aware that in Islam, it is our responsibility to take care of our own parents. And we should take care of them just like how they took care of us when we were young."– **Latifa***
*"…I see those people as children who do not love and care for their parents. Because they do not allot time to provide care to their parents and then hire someone to take care of their parents. In Islam, we are obliged to care for our parents" – **Zahra***

Theme 2: An Ideal Nursing Home for Muslims

On the question of what they expect to see in a nursing home, the answers include a prayer room, a Masjid, a big living room for Islamic seminars, separate rooms for men and women, same-sex caregivers, and patients, Meranao or Muslim caregivers and serving of Halal foods. On the question of facilities necessary for an ideal nursing home, a prayer room is the majority answer of the participants. This shows that Filipino Muslims describe a culturally compliant Nursing Home as strictly adhering to the Islamic culture and promoting activities that strengthen the faith of the elderly.

Subtheme 2.1 Existence of Prayer Rooms or Masjid

All the participants highlighted the necessity of having a prayer room inside the nursing home. Every Muslim is obliged to perform the five prayers every day during the prescribed times called *Salah* (Qur'an 20:13-14). This explains why all the participants display a strong desire to include prayer rooms in a home for the aged. The subtheme is derived from the following statements:
*"It would be very good if there is a prayer room for elders inside the nursing home or a Masjid."– **Aisha***

*"*It would be nice if the nursing home will have its own small Mosque outside it so the elderly can pray and perform activities of faith together… then there should be a prayer room inside." – **Jamila**
*"…they should allot a spacious room where they can pray."– **Aziz***
From the statements made by the participants, it is evident that they describe a culturally compliant nursing home as a place that provides a room where the elders can pray.

Subtheme2.2. Separate Rooms for Men and Women

Almost all the participants claimed that for a nursing home to be ideal for Muslims, there should be a separation of rooms between men and women clients. This is based on the law of Islam, which prohibits free-mixing between men and women (known as *Ikhtilat*). The goal of the restrictions is to keep such interaction at a modest level. Specifically, the participants mentioned the following:
*"There should be a separate room for elderly men and women. They can make one room for three or four elders with the same sex, so they have some company."– **Aisha***
*" In terms of the rooms, the rooms for women and men should be separate."– **Jamila***

Subtheme2.3. Same-Sex Caregivers

As the participants define their ideal nursing home, it should strictly observe the same sex between caregivers and the clients. A female elderly client should be cared for by a female caregiver. Similarly, a male client should have a male primary caregiver. This theme was derived from the following excerpts:
*"The caregiver should have the same sex with the elderly he/she is taking care of. If there are no available Meranao or Muslim caregivers, then it is permissible for a non-Muslim to be the primary caregiver as long they have the same sex"– **Farah***
*"The caregivers should have the same gender as their primary clients so we will not disobey the religion of Islam."– **Jamila***
*"For the caregivers, it should be women to women. The care provider and the client should be the same sex."– **Latifa***
*"The caretakers should have the same sex with their primary client."– **Tahani***
*"The caregiver and the client should of course be male-to-male or female-to-female."– **Zahra***
*"They should observe the same sex between caregiver and client" – **Musa***

Subtheme2.4. Culturally Compliant Non-Muslim Caregivers

Upon being asked about their expectations of a Muslim-appropriate nursing home, the majority mentioned that they would allow non-Muslim caregivers provided that they must be trained properly in terms of cultural competency. Hence, the subtheme was formed given the following responses:
*"If there are no available Meranao or Muslim caregivers, then it is permissible for a non-Muslim to be the primary caregiver as long they have the same sex. – **Farah***
*"…but it would not be a problem to me if the carers are non-Muslim or non-Meranao as long as they are oriented on the do's and don'ts and should be properly trained on cultural competency". – **Jamila***
*"It is also okay for me if the carer is a non-Muslim as long as they are trained on what is appropriate and inappropriate in Islamic and Meranao culture. – **Latifa***
*"I would also permit if the caregivers were non-Muslims as long as they are trained with cultural sensitivity". – **Tahani***
*"For non-Muslim caregivers, they should be aware and trained on the permissible and non-permissible acts in Islam and in Meranao culture". – **Aziz***
*"It is also okay for me if the caregiver is a non-Muslim as long as they know their limits and are aware of our culture." –**Zahra***

Subtheme 2.5. Activities that Strengthen Faith

When participants were asked about the activities they anticipated in a nursing home environment, a notable consensus emerged regarding the importance of incorporating religious practices, particularly Qur'an reading and Islamic seminars. The sentiments expressed underscored a desire for spaces where residents could engage in spiritual enrichment and communal worship.

Aisha emphasized the significance of Qur'an reading, suggesting that it not only serves as a means of spiritual solace but also fosters a sense of connection to Islamic teachings within the elderly community. Tahani echoed this sentiment, highlighting the preference for activities centered around worshiping Allah, emphasizing the intrinsic value of Islamic seminars and Qur'an reading sessions in nurturing spiritual well-being among elderly residents.

Aziz concurred with the sentiment, reiterating the importance of Islamic seminars and Qur'an reading as essential components of the residents' daily activities. These statements collectively emphasize the participants'

belief in the pivotal role of faith-based practices in promoting the emotional and psychological well-being of elderly individuals residing in nursing homes.

"Qur'an reading and Islamic seminar". – ***Aisha***

"…Islamic seminars, Qur'an reading, and Islamic education because most of the elderly are fond of activities that involves worshipping Allah." – ***Tahani***

"Islamic seminars, Qur'an reading…." – ***Aziz***

The unanimous advocacy for activities that strengthen faith underscores the significance of integrating religious and spiritual elements into the fabric of nursing home environments. Such initiatives not only cater to the religious inclinations of residents but also contribute to fostering a supportive and culturally sensitive atmosphere conducive to their overall well-being.

Theme 3: Factors Affecting Willingness to Send Elderly Parent to a Nursing Home

The excerpts from the participants show two opposing views. Six out of 10 participants stated that even though a culturally compliant nursing home will be built in their community, they still oppose sending their parents there. Devotion towards taking care of their parents despite being busy with work is apparent. From the findings, the researchers identified four factors that influence the participants' willingness to send elderly relatives to nursing. Specifically, this theme is established through the following subthemes:

Subtheme 3.1 Islamic Obligation to Care for Elderly Parents at Home

Even with an existence of a culturally compliant nursing home, they would still choose to care for their elderly at home. The participants believed that from a religion's point of view, they are obliged to take care of their parents just as how their parents took care of them when they were young.

"…Even though I am busy, I would still take care of him at home. Also, in Islam, we are taught to take care of our parents as they become older. Just like when they took care of us when we were young." – ***Jamila***

"I would rather take care of my parents at home than send her in a nursing home. Because in Islam, we are obliged to take care of our parents."– ***Zahra***

"For us Muslims, we are obliged to give service to our parents."– ***Musa***

The findings show that three out of eight participants would rather take care of their parents than send them to a Nursing Home because they believe it is their obligation as children to take care of their parents at home, as taught in Islam.

When the time comes when their elderly parents become weak and shall need special needs, the participants would still choose to take care of their parents at home. Additionally, analysis shows that even if a culturally compliant nursing home is built in their community in the future, they still will not consider it as an option for their elderly. Hence, the findings strongly demonstrate that the participants value the Islamic idea of caring for one's parents in the home.

Subtheme 3.2. Availability of Family Members that Serve as Primary Caregivers

A prevalent sentiment among participants who opposed nursing home placement for their elderly parents centered on the presence of family members within the household who could assume caregiving responsibilities. This subtheme sheds light on the pivotal role of familial support networks in influencing decisions regarding eldercare arrangements.

Aisha articulated her preference for keeping her elderly parent at home, citing the abundance of family members capable of providing care and companionship. Similarly, Farah expressed a resolute commitment to personally caring for her father, emphasizing the familial bonds that motivate her decision. Jamila echoed this sentiment, highlighting the presence of both children and trusted helpers as resources for caregiving support.

Musa's perspective underscored a broader cultural and religious imperative, emphasizing the Islamic obligation to serve and care for aging parents within the familial home. For Musa and others, the notion of nursing home placement is incongruent with deeply ingrained cultural values that prioritize familial duty and intergenerational support.

"Even if there is a nursing home that is ideal for Muslims, I would prefer to see my elderly parent/s at home. We have many members in our family who can take care of our elderly mother."– ***Aisha***

" For me, I cannot dare to send my elderly father there. If there is no one to take care of him, then I will take care of him myself. Another reason is that I have many siblings who can alternately take care of our old father."– ***Farah***

These narratives reflect a profound sense of familial responsibility and solidarity, wherein the availability of family members as caregivers serves as a decisive factor in resisting nursing home placement. This underscores the significance of culturally grounded caregiving practices and familial support structures in shaping eldercare preferences within the community. It also highlights the need for healthcare policies and services that recognize and accommodate diverse cultural norms and values surrounding aging and caregiving.

Subtheme 3.3. Loneliness of the Elderly During the Day

Two participants (Participant Latifa and Participant Tahani) favor nursing home placement as an option for their elderly parents. Most specifically that both of the participants' parents have declined cognitively and physically and are left alone at home during the day; with no one to look for their parents at home during the day, they would consider sending their parents to a culturally compliant nursing home. In nursing homes, they have individuals who can accompany them 24 hours, such as the nurses and other clients.

*"*Yes. It is much better if my mother is in a nursing home unlike here at her house where she is alone most of the time. There, she can have someone to talk to all the time, she is given her maintenance medications on time."– **Latifa**

*"I would consider sending both of my parents to a nursing home because now that they are aging and have developed illnesses, I will not be able to take care of them because I am still in school while my siblings are also working during the day.'– **Tahani***

Given these findings above, it is possible that these indicate, to some degree, that the devotion participants towards their parents are limited, in the sense that they comprehend that should the intensive long-term treatment become necessary, relying on the available formal resources for assistance would not necessarily be regarded as a betrayal of their filial devotion. In fact, they perceive nursing homes as a place where their elderly parent care properly and where their health issues are addressed.

Subtheme 3.4. Lack of Primary Caregiver

Another factor identified based on the participants' responses is the lack of caregivers at home. Same with the previous category, the two participants who are in favor of nursing home placement (Participant Delta and Participant Epsilon) would rather send their parents to a nursing home than be left alone without a formal family member who can serve as the primary caregiver. In a nursing home, they are certain that nurses are present which make sure that medications are given on time and the physiological needs of the elderly are met.

*"There, she can have someone to talk to all the time, she is given her maintenance medications on time. Unlike here in this house where you still have to explain her medications or she may even take her medications altogether at the same time because as you get older, you tend to forget things easily". – **Latifa***

*"While we are not yet home, we will not know if they have taken their maintenance meds. I would prefer for them to be in a nursing home so they will be monitored and so they can take medications on time unlike at home where they do not have someone to help them during the day." – **Tahani***

Both participants have parents who have medical conditions that require daily maintenance medications. They consider nursing home placement as beneficial to their own parents, knowing that nursing homes aid in activities of daily including taking medication on time.

DISCUSSION

The study explores the perspectives of Filipino Muslims on culturally compliant nursing homes and highlights key criteria for an ideal facility. Participants emphasized various crucial aspects, such as prayer rooms, separate accommodations for male and female clients, gender-concordant care, culturally competent staff, and activities catering to spiritual needs like Qur'an reading and Islamic seminars. This comprehensive perspective reflects the participants' desire for environments that respect their religious and cultural identities, providing comfort and alignment with their values

In a study by Thaib (2021)[5], she states that should there be a need for Muslim nursing homes, they should provide a place for worship where patients can pray five times a day. Prayers may help to reorient a cognitively impaired elderly Muslim[5].

A notable finding was the widespread opposition to nursing home placement among participants, rooted in familial and religious obligations. This interpretation is echoed by Muslim scholars and authors, reinforcing the notion that nursing home placement may be perceived as a departure from this normative practice[7,10]. Thus, the choice to relocate a parent to a nursing home is viewed by participants as potentially contradictory to their adherence to Islamic teachings regarding familial care.

Extensive family networks, with multiple generations living close by, were seen as a strong support system for caring for aging relatives. Some also recognized the benefits of nursing home placement in addressing loneliness and lack of primary caregivers.

These perspectives are deeply intertwined with religious beliefs and cultural norms, as underscored by references to Islamic scriptures and teachings emphasizing respect and care for elders[11]. The obligation to honor and support aging parents within the familial home is a cornerstone of Islamic ethics, influencing the participants' attitudes and behaviors towards eldercare decisions. This alignment with religious principles underscores the significance of religious identity in shaping caregiving practices within the Muslim community. [12.]

In the study conducted by Klitzman et al.[13], the factors limiting Islamic nursing homes in the United States include issues regarding modesty and separation of the sexes in nursing care. For example, the same-gender

nursing staff is preferred because it can be uncomfortable to touch a patient of the opposite sex[5, 14]. This study complements how Muslims describe an ideal nursing home as a place where there should be an observance of same-sex caregivers.

Despite recognizing the potential benefits of nursing homes, participants expressed concerns about preserving familial dignity and fulfilling religious obligations, highlighting the complex interplay between cultural norms, religious values, and healthcare decisions.

The familial and cultural Muslim norms of Filipino Muslims regarding this particular behavior inevitably influence the individual's perception of the issue[15]. This implication is based on the theory of reasoned action[16]. The theory states that cultural norms have a significant impact on a person's knowledge, behavior, and intention. In addition, the more religiously conservative the family is, the more the family interprets the command to honor one's parents as an implication that they shall provide unmediated care to their elderly parents or relatives at home[17].

A study on Arab families shows that their attitude towards nursing homes tends to change once they become familiar with the system, leading them to consider letting elderly relatives live in a nursing home while maintaining an active role in their lives. The absence of nursing homes in their community contributes to this negative perception[18].

Healthcare providers need to prioritize cultural competence and sensitivity when delivering care to Muslim patients. Understanding the nuances of Islamic beliefs and practices is essential for providing respectful and effective care[19]. Creating environments that accommodate diverse cultural and religious backgrounds is important for fostering inclusivity and dignity for all residents[20].

The study highlights the multifaceted nature of eldercare decision-making among Filipino Muslims, shaped by religious, cultural, and familial factors. By recognizing these complexities, healthcare providers can better support families in navigating eldercare choices while upholding their values.

CONCLUSION

In summary, Filipino Muslims exhibit a nuanced perspective on nursing home placement for the elderly, balancing an acknowledgment of its potential benefits with a strong preference for familial care rooted in Islamic values. While recognizing the potential advantages of nursing homes, such as addressing loneliness and providing professional care, participants voiced apprehensions about perceived abandonment and cultural insensitivity within institutional settings. Their idealized vision of culturally compliant nursing homes reflects a desire for environments that honor Islamic principles and accommodate religious and cultural practices. Key features include prayer rooms, gender-segregated care, and culturally competent staff. However, the majority uphold the Islamic duty of caring for aging parents at home, citing familial bonds and religious obligations as primary motivators. The availability of family caregivers and concerns about maintaining familial dignity further contribute to opposition to nursing home placement. Nonetheless, some participants acknowledge the practical challenges of caregiving and express openness to nursing home placement under certain circumstances.

This complex interplay of religious, cultural, and familial factors underscores the importance of culturally sensitive eldercare practices in supporting Filipino Muslim families. As such, healthcare providers and policymakers must recognize and respect these values, ensuring the provision of inclusive and dignified care that aligns with Islamic principles while meeting the diverse needs of elderly individuals and their families.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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