



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

***MEANING AND VALUE OF HUMOR IN THE LIVES OF  
ELDERLY MALAYS IN PUTRAJAYA, MALAYSIA***

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**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
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**2013**



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**By**

**RAJA KAMARIAH RAJA MOHD KHALID**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**July 2013**

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of the Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Humor is universal in nature but does vary across culture. Even though there is growing interest in the study of humor across culture, humor use among elderly Malays in Malaysia is not well understood. The study was to explore the use of humor among elderly Malays living with children in Putrajaya. The purpose of this study was to explore in depth on the meaning and lived experience of humor for elderly Malays, living with their children in Putrajaya. This qualitative research, underpinned by interpretive phenomenological approach, used in-depth semi structured interviews with ten elderly Malays in Putrajaya. Each interview lasted approximately two hours for the first session, followed that, another session was carried out for about one hour to ensure the accuracy of the findings. Each session was transcribed verbatim and analyzed manually. Tesch's method was used in data analysis in order to obtain common themes for categorization, re-categorization and context processes. Three themes emerged pertinent to the research questions; experience of humor, reasons for using

humor and meaning of humor. Humor experience created positive relationship and connection in inter-generational gap between grandparents and grandchildren. In addition to that, the respondents benefited humor for general health improvement, physically, psychosocially and spiritually. The study also found that the meanings given to humor are as verbal outcome of laughter, production humorous anecdotes (jokes) and happiness. The analysis revealed that humor increases self-worth which leads to positive well-being for the elderly even though there are limitations in the use of humor. The results can be regarded as groundwork in understanding the use of humor among elderly Malays. The findings discover few models to improve the well-being of the elderly by using humor as a strategy. Specific plans and programs related to the use of humor are developed to help the elderly to experience positive outcomes of aging.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**MAKNA DAN NILAI HUMOR DALAM KEHIDUPAN WARGA TUA  
BERBANGSA MELAYU DI PUTRAJAYA, MALAYSIA**

Oleh

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Humor bersifat universal walaupun terdapat budaya. Walaupun minat terhadap perbezaan humor merentasi pelbagai budaya semakin berkembang, namun, penggunaan humor di kalangan warga tua di Malaysia masih lagi baru dan kurang difahami. Kajian ini meneroka secara mendalam mengenai penggunaan humor di kalangan warga tua berbangsa Melayu yang tinggal bersama anak di Putrajaya. Kajian kualitatif ini berteraskan pendekatan fenomenologi intepretif, menggunakan temubual separa berstruktur secara mendalam dengan sepuluh warga tua berbangsa Melayu. Setiap temubual berlangsung lebih kurang selama dua jam untuk sesi pertama dan satu jam untuk sesi kedua. Setiap temubual telah direkodkan, ditranskrip dan dianalisis secara manual. Kaedah Tesch telah digunakan dalam menganalisis data untuk mendapatkan tema kajian bagi proses pengkategorian, pengkategorian semula serta analisis mengikut konteks. Tiga tema utama berkait dengan permasalahan kajian telah ditemi iaitu pengalaman menggunakan humor, sebab menggunakan humor dan maksud humor. Humor

didapati dapat mengurangkan jurang generasi antara datuk/nenek dengan cucu. Di samping itu, responden mendapat manfaat daripada menggunakan humor untuk peningkatan kesihatan umum, dari segi fizikal, psikososial dan rohani. Kajian ini juga menunjukkan bahawa humor difahami sebagai penzahiran ketawa, anekdot atau jenaka dan kebahagiaan. Analisis juga mendapati humor dapat meningkatkan nilai-kendiri ke arah kesejahteraan positif terhadap warga tua walaupun terdapatnya batasan dalam penggunaan humor. Kajian ini boleh dianggap sebagai asas dalam memahami penggunaan humor di kalangan warga tua Melayu. Beberapa model dibentuk untuk meningkatkan kesejahteraan warga tua dengan menggunakan humor. Perancangan yang khusus dan program-program yang berkaitan dengan penggunaan humor boleh dibangunkan untuk membantu warga tua mencapai penuaan yang positif.



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This thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfillment of requirement for the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy**. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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## DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously, and is not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or at any other institution.

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**RAJA KAMARIAH RAJA MOHD KHALID**

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