



Economic Resilience and Welfare of Older Adults after the Paitua Assistance Program

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Abstract: Older adults in Southwest Papua are increasingly vulnerable both socially and economically, while the Paitua Program as a social safety net has not been empirically assessed. This study establishes a baseline evaluation using an Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods design, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches. Data were collected from 270 elderly respondents and five informants through questionnaires, interviews, observation, and document review. Quantitative data were analyzed with descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative findings were examined through thematic-phenomenological analysis. Results reveal that the Paitua Program influences elderly well-being across economic, social, and psychological dimensions. The program not only addresses basic needs but also reduces family burdens, enhances security, and improves self-worth. Average scores were 2.88 for satisfaction, 3.09 for economic resilience, and 2.81 for overall well-being. Hypothesis testing confirmed significant positive effects both partially (t -test: well-being = 17.929; economic resilience = 3.970 > t -table 1.650) and simultaneously (f -test = 257.887 > f -table 3.029). The novelty of this study highlights that direct cash transfers strengthen not only economic resilience but also social and psychological well-being, an area rarely emphasized in prior research.

Keywords: Economic Resilience; Welfare; Paitua; Social Safety Net; Older Adults

A. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is undergoing a demographic shift toward an aging society. This ageing phenomenon is characterized by an increase in the proportion of elderly people within the total population, and it affects both developed and developing countries (Mahmood, 2023). Older adults are individuals aged around 60 years and above, characterized by biological, psychological, functional, and social changes due to the ageing process, yet they still possess the capacity to adapt, remain active, and contribute when supported by appropriate environments and policies (Gaviano et al., 2024). This demographic transition underscores the urgency of viewing ageing not merely as a biological and social challenge but also as an opportunity. With the right

policies and social support, the growing elderly population can become a valuable resource that strengthens social capital rather than a vulnerable group, ensuring that the ageing phenomenon contributes positively to sustainable development.

Projections indicate that by 2050, individuals aged 65 years and older will account for 25% of the population. The dependency ratio is also expected to intensify, with three working-age persons supporting one elderly by 2045 (BPS Indonesia, 2025). Across provinces, the proportion of older adults exceeds 7%, with Yogyakarta recording the highest share at 16.69%, followed by East Java, Bali, and Central Java, each at approximately 13% (Sadya, 2022). Meanwhile, the proportion of the elderly in Southwest Papua Province has reached 7% (BPS Indonesia, 2024). These figures clearly illustrate the rapid demographic transformation toward an aging society, highlighting the urgency for comprehensive policies and social protection systems to manage the growing dependency ratio and ensure the well-being of the elderly.

After the formation of Southwest Papua Province on December 8, 2023, the government implemented five flagship initiatives. These include Prodikter, aimed at producing medical specialists; Bis Games, which offers scholarships for indigenous Papuans; Berdaya Ekomas, designed to strengthen economic resilience and alleviate poverty; Jambu Hidup, which improves community nutrition; and the Paitua Program, focused on elderly support (Sutrisno, 2023). This research specifically explores the Paitua Program's role in enhancing social resilience and well-being among older adults. Sorong City records the highest concentration of elderly residents, accounting for 49.2% of the provincial total, while the rest are dispersed across nearby districts (BPS Kota Sorong, 2025). Prioritizing the elderly through targeted programs is crucial to ensuring social protection, dignity, and sustainable welfare in later life.

Social safety nets are defined as policy instruments and programs intended to safeguard communities from poverty and inequality (Widiastuti et al., 2019). Within this framework, the Paitua Program has been developed to strengthen the economic resilience of elderly populations (Kominfo, 2023). The initiative specifically targets senior citizens aged 65 years and older, with eligibility determined through adaptive criteria. By 2025, the program is expected to benefit 24,759 elderly individuals, each receiving monthly assistance of IDR 150,000 from the provincial government and IDR 100,000 from local governments. This financial support is designed to improve their purchasing capacity, thereby ensuring access to basic health services and household necessities (Pemprov Papua Barat, 2025). As such, the Paitua Program functions not only as direct financial aid but also as a strategic policy instrument to reduce vulnerability, promote social equity, and safeguard the welfare of older adults.

Previous studies indicate that elderly-oriented social protection in Indonesia is still marginal and has yet to become a national priority (Seftiani, 2019). Strengthening resilience through elderly empowerment has been suggested as a strategic approach (Widiyastomo, 2020), alongside innovative mechanisms such as sharia-based insurance schemes that act as complementary social safety nets (Haryadi et al., 2022). Nevertheless, the effectiveness of existing initiatives, including PKH and BPNT, remains limited since many elderly continue to struggle with restricted mobility, limited knowledge of programs, and inadequate institutional support, both financially and structurally (Ardianto et al., 2022). Consequently, elderly welfare is

insufficiently safeguarded, leaving a significant portion excluded from state protection frameworks (El Anshori, 2023).

Although no prior study has directly examined the Paitua Program, existing literature offers important comparative insights. Seftiani et al. (2019) highlighted the importance of both government and family roles in supporting elderly well-being, while Alie and Elanda (2020) demonstrated how women's contributions, bolstered by gender equality, can enhance family economic resilience. Novianto et al. (2022) research shows economic resilience strategies through business diversification and social networks, yet there remains a gap in quantitative studies on the economic resilience of older adults receiving structured social assistance. Rizka et al. (2023) emphasized the urgency of transforming social assistance schemes to effectively alleviate poverty, and Pagalu et al. (2023) confirmed the role of social innovation in strengthening household economic independence. However, a clear research gap remains, as none of these studies have specifically analyzed elderly-focused social protection initiatives that integrate community empowerment and innovative approaches at the local level. This study therefore contributes by providing the first empirical examination of the Paitua Program, assessing its effectiveness, challenges, and potential as a model for elderly-oriented social protection within Indonesia's broader social policy framework.

Elderly populations in Southwest Papua are increasingly exposed to socio-economic vulnerabilities, yet the Paitua Program has not been empirically examined. Therefore, a baseline study is necessary to assess whether the program effectively enhances elderly survival and well-being, or if reliance continues primarily on familial and governmental support. This research addresses four core questions, 1) how elderly beneficiaries experience and utilize assistance from the Paitua Program, 2) the extent of their satisfaction with the program, 3) the influence of economic resilience on their condition after receiving assistance, and 4) the impact of social welfare on their post-assistance condition.

B. METHOD

The research approach used was a combination of quantitative and qualitative. Creswell (Sugiyono, 2022) explains that combination research is a combination of two approaches to collect and analyze data, integrate findings, and draw conclusions in a single study (Creswell, 2019). This study employed an Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods design, conducting quantitative research first, followed by qualitative research for support. An Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods design was applied as quantitative data provided an overall picture of the program's effectiveness, while qualitative data deepened understanding by explaining numerical findings through participants' perspectives and experiences. This approach ensures the research results are more comprehensive, valid, and contextually grounded. The study was carried out in Southwest Papua Province from July to August 2025.

The population refers to the entire research subject (Ghozali, 2019), namely the recipients of the paitua assistance program in West Papua Province, spread across 1 city and 5 regencies. The sampling technique employed was multistage random sampling, where area sampling was first applied to ensure proportional representation of program recipients in each region, followed by purposive sampling

to confirm that respondents met the criteria, namely assistance beneficiaries (Sugiyono, 2018). Using Isaac and Michael's formula with a 10% margin of error, this study determined a sample of 270 respondents. Proportionally, 27 research locations were selected by considering social dynamics and regional complexity, ensuring that each Regency/City as well as District/Village had representation of elderly beneficiaries as shown in the following table:

Table 1. Quantitative research sample

No	City	Sampling village	Σ Responden
1	Sorong City	10	100
2	Sorong	7	70
3	Maybrat	2	20
4	South Sorong	2	20
5	Tambraw	2	20
6	Raja Ampat	4	40
Total		27	270

Source: Processed researcher data, 2025

In qualitative research, purposive sampling is used to select subjects based on specific objectives and criteria to ensure that the data obtained are relevant and in-depth. According to Sugiyono (2018) this technique allows researchers to determine samples through particular considerations, thereby enhancing the validity of the research findings. Because this study is basilene, the subjects focused on the grassroots level of aid recipients, thus ensuring objectivity, resulting in a total of five informants.

Data collection in this study employed observation, in-depth interviews, questionnaires, and documentation (Moleong, 2022). Observation captured actual behaviors, in-depth interviews explored participants' experiences and perceptions, questionnaires provided structured data for analysis, while documentation supplemented with secondary data. The combination of these techniques enabled triangulation, making the research findings more valid, reliable, and comprehensive. In qualitative research, data quality is assessed through validity and reliability tests. Validity ensures that the instrument measures what it is intended to measure (Sugiyono, 2018) with items considered valid if $r \text{ count} < r \text{ table}$ (Ghozali, 2019). Reliability examines the consistency of the instrument, conducted after validity testing, with a standard Cronbach's alpha of 0.600 (Sugiyono, 2018). Qualitative data quality is further evaluated through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability tests (Sugiyono, 2022).

The data analysis in this study employed an explanatory sequential mixed-methods approach, beginning with quantitative analysis using descriptive and inferential statistics to identify patterns and relationships among variables, and subsequently followed by qualitative analysis to deepen the understanding of numerical findings. This strategy was chosen because it connects quantitative results with broader social contexts, thereby producing a more comprehensive and valid picture. As explained by Creswell (Creswell, 2019), sequential mixed-methods designs offer advantages in integrating numerical data with participants' narratives, while Gogo & Musonda (2022) emphasize that sequential analysis enables researchers

to explain quantitative results with more contextual qualitative findings. Thus, the use of this method not only enhances the validity of the research but also provides richer insights into the phenomena under study.

C. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Economic resilience

Economic resilience can be understood at two main levels: micro and macro. At the micro level, it refers to the ability of households to cope with challenges through sound financial management and stable sources of income, thereby ensuring the fulfillment of basic needs such as food, housing, clothing, and long-term stability (Lestari et al., 2023). At the macro level, economic resilience reflects the capacity of a region or nation to sustain development by ensuring that the basic needs of its population are met while simultaneously improving the quality of human resources. A commonly used indicator is the Human Development Index (HDI), which encompasses health, education, and a decent standard of living (Fahrurrozi et al., 2023). Thus, economic resilience may be viewed as a collective capacity—at both household and regional levels—to withstand, adapt, and continue progressing in the face of internal and external challenges.

Briguglio (Susanti Tasri et al., 2021) economic resilience is the capacity of an economic system to withstand or recover from external shocks. At the household level, it means adapting to risks, minimizing losses, managing change, and sustaining living standards. Family well-being and resilience are interconnected, as happier families tend to be more resilient. According to Valentina et al. (2023), economic resilience refers to the capacity of communities to manage and utilize economic resources, such as income, assets, and local potential, in order to fulfil basic needs, mitigate the risk of poverty, and adapt to social and developmental changes, thereby ensuring the sustainability of their livelihoods.

Economic resilience reflects well-being by fulfilling basic needs such as food, clothing, housing, education, and health. It has four dimensions: (1) home ownership, (2) family income, (3) education financing, and (4) savings or financial reserves (Alie & Elanda, 2019). Economic resilience refers to the ability to withstand both external and internal pressures, serving as a crucial foundation for strengthening national economic stability. It comprises three main dimensions: resistance (the capacity to endure shocks), adaptation (the ability to adjust to changing conditions), and recovery (the capacity to return to normal or achieve improved conditions after a disruption) (Arifin et al., 2025).

Economic resilience is closely linked to three main dimensions. First, resistance, which refers to an economic system's ability to endure and function despite crises or shocks. Second, adaptation, which is the capacity to adjust to changing conditions through innovations such as economic digitalization and the development of technology-based tourism. Third, recovery, which denotes the ability to return to normal conditions or even reach a better state after disruption, for example, through new normal tourism strategies and the strengthening of the creative economy. Therefore, economic resilience is not only about maintaining stability but also about the ability to transform and emerge stronger after a crisis (Maharani & Mahalika, 2022).

2. Social welfare

Social welfare refers to a state of human life when various social problems are well managed, human needs are met, and social opportunities are maximised. Social welfare results from well-managed problems, the fulfillment of human needs, and the utilisation of social opportunities (Andina & Wahyudi, 2024). Welfare is reflected in living conditions that allow individuals and communities to achieve a decent and dignified life, encompassing economic, social, cultural, and political aspects that collectively shape overall well-being and quality of life (Rukmana Patty, 2025). According to Law No. 11 of 2009, social welfare is a state in which citizens' material, spiritual, and social needs are met, enabling them to live decently, develop themselves, and perform their social roles as human beings.

The implementation of social welfare is defined as a systematic, integrated, and sustainable effort by the state to meet these needs while ensuring equal opportunities for all citizens (Fitriana Sari & Rafi, 2023). Midgley (Ritonga et al., 2023) The concept of social development is frequently equated with that of social welfare, as both emphasize broader dimensions of societal well-being. Within the framework of social welfare, well-being is not limited to the fulfillment of basic needs such as income, education, and health, but also encompasses the capacity of society to address social issues – including poverty and crime – while simultaneously expanding opportunities for active community participation.

In the Islamic perspective, social welfare denotes the comprehensive fulfillment of human needs—material, spiritual, social, and cultural—based on principles of justice and balance. It reflects a condition in which individuals and society attain a dignified standard of living, social cohesion, and equilibrium between personal and communal interests, while fostering brotherhood and solidarity as integral values of human relations (Dayusman et al., 2023). Social welfare can be understood from several perspectives: first, as an organized system of activities; second, as a condition of well-being; and third, as a field of scientific study. In essence, social welfare refers to a societal condition in which both material and spiritual needs are adequately fulfilled, thereby ensuring overall well-being (Hardiyati et al., 2023).

D. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Result

a. The Descriptive Statistical Analysis

a) Satisfaction with Paitua Program

The following table displays the results of the descriptive statistical analysis of each question measuring the level of satisfaction with satisfaction with Paitua Program below:

Table 2. The Paitua Program

Item s	Questions	Mean	Median	Mode	Std, Deviation
Y1.1	The Paitua Program is provided to seniors who truly need it	3,42	4,00	4,00	1,201

Y1.2	Assistance from the program is always distributed on time.	2,93	3,00	3,00	1,082
Y1.3	I easily obtain information regarding the Paitua Program	2,94	3,00	3,00	1,089
Y1.4	Assistance from this program is accessible to seniors in remote areas.	2,97	3,00	3,00	1,155
Y1.5	This program truly helps my daily life.	2,67	3,00	3,00	1,084
Y1.6	The Paitua Program is sustainable, not just a temporary measure	3,01	3,00	3,00	1,063
Y1.7	Aid distribution is transparent and fair.	2,86	3,00	3,00	1,124
Y1.8	I receive an explanation or outreach before receiving assistance	2,73	3,00	3,00	1,068
Y1.9	I am satisfied with the implementation of the Paitua Program	2,62	3,00	3,00	1,063
Y1.10	The government is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this program	2,69	3,00	3,00	1,053
Mean variabel		2,88	3,10	3,10	1,098

Source: Processed by SPSS 30, 2025

Descriptive analysis indicates moderate satisfaction with the Paitua Program (mean 2.88, median and mode 3.10, SD 1.098). While targeting is effective (mean 3.42), implementation is lower (2.62), and other indicators are neutral, highlighting the need to strengthen benefits, accountability, communication, and supervision to improve elderly welfare.

b) Economic Resilience

The table below presents the results of descriptive statistical analysis for each item measuring elderly economic resilience following participation in the Paitua Program:

Table 3. Economic resilience

Item	Questions	Mean	Median	Mode	Std, Deviation
X1.1	I can meet basic needs such as food, medicine, and clothing every day	3,44	4,00	4,00	0,738
X1.2	I can manage the assistance I receive for short- and medium-term needs	3,04	3,00	3,00	0,852
X1.3	I am not completely dependent on assistance from my children or family	3,20	3,00	3,00	0,873
X1.4	The assistance I receive is enough to survive each month	2,87	3,00	3,00	0,857

X1.5	I still have savings or a small reserve for emergencies.	3,06	3,00	3,00	0,832
X1.6	I rarely experience serious financial hardship after receiving assistance.	2,89	3,00	3,00	0,803
X1.7	I feel my financial life is more stable than before.	2,98	3,00	3,00	0,716
X1.8	I sometimes earn additional income from small businesses or other assistance.	3,23	3,00	3,00	0,948
X1.9	I am able to adjust my expenses if there is an increase in the price of basic necessities.	3,13	3,00	3,00	0,812
X1.10	I feel more prepared to face economic emergencies than before.	3,09	3,00	3,00	0,829
Mean variabel		3,09	3,10	3,10	0,826

Source: Processed by SPSS 30, 2025

Descriptive analysis shows elderly economic resilience with a mean of 3.09, highest for daily needs (3.44) and lowest for monthly assistance adequacy (2.87). Other aspects are moderate, indicating the Paitua Program improves economic stability but requires further strengthening.

c) Social Welfare

The table below presents the results of descriptive statistical analysis for each item measuring elderly well-being satisfaction following the Paitua Program:

Tabel 4. Social welfare

Item	Questions	Mean	Median	Mode	Std, Deviation
X2.1	I feel more appreciated by the community after receiving assistance.	2,52	2,00	2,00	0,955
X2.2	I participate in social activities in my neighborhood more often.	2,99	3,00	4,00	1,15
X2.3	I feel happier with my life now.	3,24	3,00	3,00	1,149
X2.4	My family shows more attention to me after receiving assistance.	2,56	2,00	2,00	0,954
X2.5	I don't feel socially isolated.	2,92	3,00	3,00	1,046
X2.6	This assistance gives me more enthusiasm for each day.	2,64	3,00	3,00	1,006
X2.7	I have friends or neighbors with whom I interact frequently.	2,96	3,00	3,00	0,979
X2.8	I feel I have a role in my community even though I am elderly.	2,82	3,00	3,00	1,012
X2.9	I can access health services or social assistance more easily.	2,76	3,00	3,00	1,001

X2.1 0	I feel more emotionally and socially well-off.	2,69	3,00	3,00	0,932
Mean variabel		2,81	2,80	2,90	1,018

Source: Processed by SPSS 30, 2025

Descriptive analysis shows elderly well-being with a mean of 2.81, indicating moderate assessments. The highest was happiness with life (3.24), and the lowest was feeling appreciated by the community (2.52). Other aspects were near neutral, suggesting the Paitua Program improves well-being but needs stronger support in social recognition and emotional welfare.

b. The Inferential Statistical Analysis

a) Correlation Coefficient Test

This section presents a correlation table showing the direction and strength of relationships between variables. The results illustrate how economic resilience (X1) and social welfare (X2) affect the condition of the elderly after receiving the Paitua Program (Y), as detailed in the following table:

Table 5. Correlation Calculation Results

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.812 ^a	.659	.656	5.959

a. Predictors: (Constant)

Economic resilience (X1), Social Welfare (X2)

Source: Processed by SPSS 30, 2025

The Model Summary in Table 8 shows a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.812, indicating a very strong simultaneous relationship between elderly Economic Resilience (X1) and Social Welfare (X2) with their condition after receiving the Paitua Program (Y). This demonstrates that both variables together significantly affect recipients' outcomes, confirming that the program enhances elderly quality of life through basic needs fulfillment and overall well-being.

b) Analysis of the Coefficient of Determination

The coefficient of determination shows how much the independent variables contribute to the dependent variable. In this study, economic resilience and social welfare explain 65.9% of the variation in the conditions of elderly after receiving the Paitua Program ($R^2 = 0.659$). This indicates the program's effectiveness, as these variables have a dominant influence, while the remaining 34.1% is affected by other factors outside the study's model.

c) Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Multiple linear regression analyzed the relationship between Economic Resilience (X1), Social Welfare (X2), and elderly conditions after receiving the Paitua Program (Y). Results, shown in the table, illustrate the strength and direction of these relationships.

Table 6. Multiple Linear Regression Test Results

		Coefficients^a			t	Sig.
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-1.328	2.012		-.660	.510
	Economic Resilience	.283	.071	.160	3.970	.000
	Social welfare	.869	.048	.724	17.929	.000

a. Dependent Variable: The Paitua Program

Source: Processed by SPSS 30, 2025

The table shows the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable, presenting regression coefficients, t-values, and significance levels, leading to the following regression equation.

$$Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + e$$

$$Y = -1,328 + 0,869X_1 + 283X_2 + e$$

- The regression analysis shows a constant of -1.328, representing the estimated Paitua Program value when Economic Resilience (X1) and Social Welfare (X2) are zero. This baseline allows assessment of each independent variable's contribution to the program.
- The Economic Resilience (X1) variable has a positive coefficient of 0.283, indicating that each one-unit increase in economic resilience corresponds to a 0.283-unit increase in the Paitua Program effect, assuming elderly welfare remains constant, demonstrating a positive impact.
- The Social Welfare (X2) variable has a positive coefficient of 0.869, meaning that a one-unit increase in social welfare corresponds to a 0.869-unit increase in the Paitua Program effect, assuming economic resilience remains constant, confirming its positive influence.

d) Partial Test (t-Test)

The effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable was tested using a t-test. In this study, the significance level used was 0.1, with degrees of freedom $df = 270 - 2$ (268). Based on the t-distribution table, the t-table value for $df = 268$ at a significance level of 0.1 is 1.650. This value is used as a reference limit to determine whether the independent variable has a positive and significant effect on the dependent variable. The results are as follows:

Economic Resilience of the Elderly After Receiving the Paitua Assistance Program

Based on the t-test results presented in Table 9, the calculated t-value (3.970) is greater than the t-table (1.650), and the significance value (0.00) is less than (0.01), indicating that the economic resilience variable (X1) has a positive and significant relationship after the Paitua program (Y). Therefore, the alternative hypothesis (H1) is rejected, and H2 is accepted because the analysis results indicate that economic resilience of the elderly has a positive and significant effect on the condition of the elderly after receiving the Paitua Assistance Program.

Social Welfare After Receiving the Paitua Assistance Program

Based on the t-test results presented in Table 9, the calculated t-value (17.929) is greater than the t-table (1.650), and the significance value (0.00) is less than (0.01),

indicating that the social welfare variable (X1) has a positive and significant relationship after the Paitua program (Y). So the alternative hypothesis (H3) is rejected and H4 is accepted because the results of the analysis show that the welfare of the elderly has a positive and significant effect on the condition of the elderly after receiving the Paitua Assistance Program.

e) Simultaneous Test (f Test)

The F-test is used to evaluate whether the independent variables simultaneously have a significant relationship with the dependent variable. In this study, the significance level used was 0.1, with degrees of freedom $df_1 = 2$ and $df_2 = 270-2-1$ (267). Based on the f-distribution table, the f-table value at the 0.1 significance level is 3.029. This value is used as a reference limit to determine whether the independent variables simultaneously have a positive and significant effect on the dependent variable. The results are shown in the following table:

Table 7. Results of Simultaneous Test Calculations (F-Test)

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	18317.618	2	9158.809	257.887	.000 ^b
	Residual	9482.456	267	35.515		
	Total	27800.074	269			

a. Dependent Variable: The Paitua Program

b. Predictors: (Constant): Economic Resilience, Social Welfare

Source: Processed by SPSS 30, 2025

The results of the f test show that the calculated f value (257.887) > f table (3.029), and the significance value (0.000) < (0.01) which indicates that simultaneously the economic resilience of the elderly (X1) and the welfare of the elderly (X2) have a positive and significant relationship with the Paitua Program (Y). Based on these results, the hypothesis H5 is rejected and H6 is accepted, because the results of the analysis show that economic resilience and welfare have a positive and significant effect on the condition of the elderly after receiving the Paitua Assistance Program.

2. Discussion

a. Experience of the elderly in receiving and utilizing assistance from the Paitua Program

The experience of the elderly in receiving assistance from the Paitua Program is important, especially in ensuring the fulfillment of basic needs that are the foundation of daily life. Maslow (Yurdakul & Arar, 2023) emphasizes that physiological and safety needs are the primary layers in the hierarchy of human needs, which must be met before a person can reach a higher level of well-being. This is in line with the experience expressed by informant LM (72 years old) in an interview on July 28, 2025, who stated that:

Since I could no longer work and started getting sick, I worried about how to meet my daily needs, especially since my children now had their own families, so I was embarrassed to always ask for them. When I received Paitua's assistance, I felt relieved

because I could buy rice and medicine. It felt like a little security for my life. I was no longer so dependent on my children, and most importantly, I felt the government still cared for parents like me. I am very grateful to the government for providing this assistance.

In this context, the Paitua Program can be seen as a social instrument that not only provides economic assistance but also protects vulnerable groups from life's uncertainties, especially in old age when economic productivity declines. Based on the interviews, the program is perceived by the elderly as highly meaningful. From the recipients' perspective, Paitua not only reduces financial burdens but also provides a sense of security, peace of mind, and self-worth. Elderly individuals feel less dependent on their families while experiencing tangible attention from the government in their later years.

From a structural functionalist perspective, Talcott Parsons (Ritzer, 2019) emphasizes that social institutions play a crucial role in maintaining social order. Society is viewed as a system composed of interdependent parts, each performing a specific function to maintain social balance. If one institution fails to function optimally, adjustments will occur from other institutions to maintain harmony. Therefore, social institutions, including assistance programs such as Paitua, can be understood as mechanisms that support social stability and the well-being of vulnerable groups. In this regard, the Paitua Program not only provides economic support but also reduces the burden on families. As informant MB (68 years old) stated:

"Since receiving the Paitua assistance from the Sorong provincial and district governments, which is worth 600,000 Rupiah for two months, I feel more at ease because I don't always have to rely on my children. At least there's money coming in, so I just have to wait to pick it up at the village office. If I can't get there, it's delivered to my house. My children also have their own responsibilities, so with this assistance, I can meet my needs. At least I'm not too much of a burden on my family. Although it's not much, it's enough to lighten my burden in my old age" (In-depth interview, July 26, 2025).

Therefore, seniors experience significant benefits from the Paitua Program, which provides bimonthly assistance, as it eliminates their complete dependence on their dependent children. This assistance provides a sense of security and helps meet daily needs. Such programs serve as social institutions that maintain social balance by easing the burden on families and supporting the well-being of vulnerable groups.

George Homans (Ritzer, 2015) social exchange theory emphasizes that social interactions always contain an element of reciprocity, where individuals strive to balance the effort expended with the benefits gained. Social relations are viewed as transactions that will continue if both parties perceive benefits. In the context of Paitua assistance, economic support from the government can be understood as a "reward", while gratitude, obedience, and social support from the elderly serve as a form of "reciprocity" that maintains social harmony.

In the context of social assistance, the elderly not only receive funds but also feel appreciated by the state. Informant YB (75 years old) in an interview on August 6, 2025, said, *"For me, assistance from the government through the Paitua program makes me feel more relieved. With this kind of attention, I don't feel neglected. Instead, I feel respected*

and valued even though I'm old and no longer have an income. This shows that we elderly are still seen as important in society." Thus, it is clear that the Paitua Program does not only provide material support but also has symbolic value. The elderly feel appreciated and cared for, while the government gains recognition and legitimacy from the community. In this way, this program plays a dual role: meeting the basic needs of the elderly while strengthening social ties between the state and vulnerable groups.

The use of assistance by the elderly can be seen as a form of survival strategy. Some informants use it to meet basic needs, such as food, medicine, and transportation costs. However, others set aside some for social needs. As stated by informant RM (R, 70 years old) in an interview on August 12, 2025, who said, *"For me, this assistance money is mostly used to buy rice and medicine. But sometimes I put aside a little for my grandchildren so they can be happy too."* Even informant EY (67 years old) in an interview on August 13, 2025, said, *"Well, this assistance is very helpful for me. Sometimes I give a little to my grandchildren to buy snacks. My heart is happy to see them happy, even if it's just a little"*.

Research findings show that aid is not only for personal gain but also used to strengthen social ties within families. This aligns with Scott (Dayanti & Harianto, 2022) view, which emphasizes that survival strategies often involve social solidarity. In other words, individual or group actions in the face of economic constraints or social pressures are not solely for self-interest, but also to strengthen reciprocal relationships and support among community members, thereby maintaining social cohesion.

b. Satisfaction with the Paitua Program

In Southwest Papua, the Paitua Program, which has been running since 2023, has received a positive response from some seniors. Around 60.8% of recipients felt it helped them meet their basic needs and maintain their daily well-being. However, 39.2% of seniors expressed dissatisfaction, highlighting the limited amount of assistance, accuracy of distribution, and its relevance to actual needs. This highlights the need for program evaluation to improve its effectiveness. With policy improvements, the Paitua Program is expected to be more inclusive and positively impact the well-being of seniors in Southwest Papua.

Descriptive analysis shows that the level of satisfaction with the Paitua Program is considered adequate, with a mean of 2.88, a median and mode of 3.10, and a standard deviation of 1.098. This indicates that the program is well-targeted, but its implementation is not yet optimal. The aspect of accuracy of targeting received the highest score (mean 3.42), while satisfaction with implementation received the lowest (mean 2.62). Other indicators—such as timeliness of distribution, information accessibility, regional coverage, transparency, socialization, and supervision—remain in the neutral category, indicating respondents' doubts about the quality of implementation. Therefore, the Paitua Program needs to be strengthened in the aspects of satisfaction, tangible benefits, accountability, communication, and supervision to more effectively improve the welfare of the elderly.

c. Economic Resilience of the Elderly After Receiving the Paitua Assistance Program

Economic resilience is closely related to the ability of a family or individual to meet basic needs such as food, shelter, and clothing, even minimally, which requires a source of income (Lestari et al., 2023). For the elderly, this is a challenge because their productivity declines with age. The study results show that the Paitua Program helps the elderly maintain economic resilience, with a mean of 3.09, a median and mode of 3.10, and a standard deviation of 0.826, indicating a fairly good and relatively stable condition. The highest indicator was the ability to meet basic daily needs (mean 3.44), indicating a positive contribution of assistance to meeting basic needs such as food and medicine.

Briguglio (Tasri et al., 2021) emphasizes that the ability of households, particularly the elderly, to adapt to risks is vital for avoiding losses, managing change, and maintaining living standards. Descriptive results reveal the lowest score for assistance adequacy (mean = 2.87), showing that Paitua's monthly aid of IDR 300,000 – distributed bi-monthly and totaling IDR 600,000 – is insufficient amid the high cost of living in Southwest Papua. Other aspects, such as savings, expense management, additional income, and emergency preparedness, reached a moderate level (mean = 3.00). While the program supports elderly economic stability, adjustments in amount and distribution are necessary. Hypothesis testing confirms a significant positive effect of Paitua on economic resilience ($t = 3.970 > 1.650$; $p < 0.01$), aligning with Bleskadite et al. (2024) which states that financial assistance can increase the resilience of the elderly in facing the challenges of life in old age.

The ability to meet basic needs is a crucial aspect of the economic resilience of older adults, even though their productivity declines with age. The Paitua program helps maintain livelihoods, particularly in meeting food and medical needs. However, baseline studies indicate that the amount of assistance remains small and inadequate for the high cost of living in Southwest Papua. Therefore, an evaluation of the amount and distribution mechanism is needed to ensure more targeted support. Overall, despite the elderly's resilience, program evaluation remains crucial to support their economic stability.

d. The Social Welfare of the Elderly after Receiving the Paitua Assistance Program

Prosperity will be achieved when social issues are well-managed, human needs are met, and social opportunities are optimally utilized (Tamba et al., 2024). In Southwest Papua, the Paitua Program, which focuses on the welfare of the elderly, is crucial for vulnerable groups. Provincial government data as of July 2025 shows that 24,759 elderly people received direct assistance of IDR 150,000 per person per month from the province and IDR 100,000 per person per month from districts/cities to strengthen purchasing power and meet basic health and household economic needs (West Papua Provincial Government, 2025). This figure reflects the number of vulnerable elderly people and demonstrates the government's challenge in maintaining the welfare of the elderly and protecting them from the risk of poverty in old age.

The results of the descriptive analysis show that the elderly's satisfaction with their well-being after receiving Paitua assistance had an average of 2.81, a median of 2.80, a mode of 2.90, and a standard deviation of 1.018, indicating a sufficient but not yet optimal category. The highest indicator was a feeling of happiness with their current life (mean 3.24), while the lowest was related to feelings of appreciation by the community (mean 2.52). Thus, the Paitua Program helps increase the happiness and life satisfaction of the elderly, but does not fully meet their social needs, especially regarding appreciation and social recognition. Therefore, improvements in implementation are needed so that the program's benefits are more comprehensive, encompassing economic, social, and appreciation aspects for the elderly.

Welfare reflects the living conditions that enable individuals and groups to achieve a decent and dignified standard of living, encompassing economic, social, cultural, and political aspects (Rukmana Patty, 2025:2). Partial analysis shows that elderly welfare has a positive and significant effect on the condition of the elderly after receiving the Paitua Assistance Program, with a t-count of 17.929 > t-table of 1.650 and a significance of 0.00 < 0.01, so that the alternative hypothesis H4 is accepted. Simultaneously, economic resilience and welfare together have a significant effect on the condition of the elderly, indicated by the F test with an F-count of 257.887 > F-table of 3.029 and a significance of 0.000 < 0.01, so that H6 is accepted.

This research is certainly very different from the research of Kuntarto dan Hanri (2023) which found that the Family Hope Program (PKH) and the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program (BPNT) had not yet impacted the welfare of the elderly. It is even very different from the findings of Afifarachma (2023) research, which emphasized the importance of adequate human resources, funding, and infrastructure. In Southwest Papua, the government demonstrated that funding provided through the Paitua Program was sufficient to produce real change. Thus, the Paitua Program plays a crucial role in improving the economic resilience and welfare of the elderly, and strengthening and sustaining the program are key to ensuring that its benefits are not temporary but rather promote the achievement of long-term goals, including meeting basic needs and stabilizing the lives of the elderly.

E. CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes that the Paitua Program in Southwest Papua has had a positive impact on the condition of the elderly in terms of experience, satisfaction, economic resilience, and social welfare. The assistance was perceived as beneficial because it reduced dependence on family members, helped meet basic needs, and provided a sense of security and government care. The findings indicate that satisfaction with the program was at a moderate level (mean = 2.88), economic resilience was relatively stable (mean = 3.09), and social welfare was also moderate (mean = 2.81), with the highest aspects being the fulfillment of basic needs and happiness, while the lowest were program implementation and social recognition. Inferential analysis confirmed that economic resilience ($\beta = 0.283$) and social welfare ($\beta = 0.869$) had a positive and significant effect on the condition of the elderly after receiving assistance, with a combined contribution of 65.9%. Thus, the Paitua Program has been shown to improve the quality of life of the elderly, although it still requires strengthening through increased assistance amounts, improved distribution

mechanisms, transparency, and enhanced social support to ensure more optimal and sustainable benefits.

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