ABSTRACT

This study delved on the initial and current perceptions of the elderly residents of selected home cares in Cavite - Tahanan ni Maria, Ma-Ma’s Hope Haven of Norway and Bahay Pag-Ibig at Pag-Asa on institutionalization, their present life concerns and their respective coping strategies. It sought to determine whether their lived experience in the home care has differed their present outlook on how they view institutionalization. Further, the results gathered could serve to become a basis for a counseling program for elderly residents of homes for the aged.

The study employed a descriptive survey research design, using a self made checklist to extract the perceptions on institutionalization, life concerns and coping strategies of the chosen elderly residents who are still physically,
cognitively and emotionally capable to respond to questions and have resided at least one year at the home they belong to.

The statistical tools served to measure the data and derive the results needed were frequencies and percentages.

From the findings, this study concluded that the initial perception of the elderly residents on institutionalization is mostly on the negative but a considerable number of the respondents do not have initial idea about home cares. Social, home life, recreational, dental, medical and health services, and moral and spiritual development are the core services the participating home cares commonly provide their elderly. Among these support programs, physical and medical services, as well as emotional care and recreational activities, are what the elderly regards most. The study further revealed that most elderly residents do not give attention to worries and problems anymore in their present lives. However, due to the inevitable physical decline, it was found out that health and medical issues are the elderly respondents' main concern. Loss of family, lack of social contact outside the home and lack of responsibilities where they can use their time and energy are few of the other concerns the elderly residents have.

In coping with their present problems, it follows that most of the respondents put their faith and trust to the medical authority caring for their health. Their coping strength also lies in the respondents' personal faith in God and in silence and solitude.
In the light of their experience in the home care, the elderly respondents currently perceive institutionalization as having provided them with enough care and attention. They also perceive happiness in their present lives. Most respondents have had a positive turn of perception regarding institutionalization.

In view of the concerns revealed by the study, the proposed counseling plans and programs should be tailored to address the elderly concerns as coping with health issues, reconciling loss of family and of their inability to visit, and strengthening their spiritual growth.