

HOUSING CHOICES FOR THE ELDERLY: PHILIPPINE EXPERIENCE. Maribel C. Dizon, Ed.D. College of Education, Tarlac State University, Tarlac, Philippines, 2300

Generally, this paper – which was inspired by the researcher’s desire to identify the best places and conditions where the old can spend the rest of their lives happily and with dignity – is about the housing choices for the elderly in the Province of Tarlac, Philippines for the period 1996-1997. Specifically, this study sought to correlate with the choices certain factors (the elderly’s sex, age, civil status, number of children, educational attainment, living arrangement and livelihood; and the evaluation of the caregivers as to the elderly’s sensory functioning, motor abilities, physical changes, mental change, interest changes and unique problems).

This research, which utilized the descriptive method and the normative survey technique, studied 360 elderly from the 18 towns of the Province of Tarlac. For purposes of this research, “elderly” is defined “any citizen of the Philippines at least 60 years old.”

The research revealed that more than half of the respondents prefer living in an extended family (one nuclear family plus relatives), which is in keeping with the Filipino’s traditional practice of familial responsibility (where each individual feels responsible for his relatives) and filial piety (which accords honor, respect and reverence to elders). Given this background of strong familial responsibility and of close family ties, it is not surprising that there is low incidence of sub-nuclear arrangement (living alone).

As to housing choices, about ninety per cent of the respondents chose residential homes. This is easily understood in the context of Filipino culture in which the elderly are accorded respect by the members of the household.