

ABSTRACT

A Study
of the Coping Strategies and the Dependency Levels
of the Elderly
in Mona Heights, St. Andrew, Jamaica.

PEARLIE ESTEEN

"Old age is a privilege denied many". It is not so much the quantity of life that emphasis should be placed on, but rather most definitely the quality. Numerous publications have been written about elderly persons or the rapidly growing numbers of "retired persons" as the persons in the over sixty age group prefer to be called. For most of these persons, retirement does not actually mean going into oblivion, but sometimes this is a mere change or shift in one's routine. This research document is adding a new dimension to the various studies and this is by way of looking at the elderly in a particularly middle class community.

The increasing number of elderly persons in the world at large dictates that adequate provisions should

be made to take care of these persons whether it is going to be in the privacy of their own homes or in public institutions for those who require such facilities.

The challenges of the provision of adequate health care in its broadest sense are very real especially in Third World Countries and Jamaica too has its share.

This preliminary study was undertaken to identify the coping strategies of the elderly in Mona Heights, a middle class community in Eastern St. Andrew, to describe their levels of dependency, the demographic characteristics and health status, the support systems utilized and their attitude towards their present status. Findings indicated that the coping strategies of the elderly in Mona Heights have worked, are working and need to be strengthened.