

CENTRAL PHILIPPINE UNIVERSITY, ILOILO CITY

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A STUDY OF WIVES' MOTIVATIONS AND ASPIRATIONS AND THEIR  
RELATIONSHIP TO FAMILY PLANNING BEHAVIOR  
AND FERTILITY

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Overpopulation is one of the most serious problems besetting us today. It is a problem believed to be the root cause of most economic and social problems. Robert Malthus did not make a mistake in his prediction that population would outstrip food supply, thus leading to poverty, starvation, and famine because this state of affairs is actually happening in many countries of the world today. Overpopulation is a problem that calls for enlightenment, understanding, compassion, and responsibility in everyone.<sup>1</sup>

The world's population at its present growth rate was projected to produce one person for every square foot of land surface on the globe within 800 years.<sup>2</sup> The Philippine population also grows so rapidly that if it continues to grow at its present rate, by the year 2,000 there will be over 111,000,000 Filipinos.<sup>3</sup>

It is not enough just to be informed about this problem, but every individual must feel the responsibility to do something about it.

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<sup>1</sup>Samuel S. Brodbelt, "Population Crises: Education and Moral Commitment," The Social Studies, 58:72, February, 1977.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 73.

<sup>3</sup>Margarito P. Poral, "Over Population," PPSTA Herald, September, 1974.

Family planning has been introduced to solve the population problem in many overpopulated countries. Countries like Taiwan, Korea, Japan, and several others adopted some program of family planning in order to check population growth, and they found their respective programs to be effective means to reduce birth rate. Many developing countries also adopted family planning programs in order to shorten the period of demographic transition, from high mortality and fertility to low mortality and fertility.

In the Philippines, family planning is not really a new thing. Our ancestors practiced family planning. The Code of Sumakwel written in 1250, the earliest known code of laws in the Philippines, contained provisions both for increasing and for limiting the population.<sup>4</sup> In the early days women in many regions of the country used herbs and medicinal concoctions to prevent pregnancy. The taking of concoctions of roots fermented in alcohol was done on a time schedule that resembles that of the oral-pill method of contraception. Infanticide was even practiced in some parts of our country.

However, organized movement in family planning began in the sixties with the organization of various agencies and

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<sup>4</sup>Philippine (Republic) Department of Education and Culture Population and Educational Program, Teachers' Guide in Population Education (Manila: Department of Education and Culture, 1973), p. 90.

offices to undertake education, service, and research related to family planning.<sup>5</sup>

Acutely aware that Philippine population is exploding, President Ferdinand E. Marcos regarded population control such "an urgent task" that in February, 1969 he created the Commission on Population to study population and to formulate policies and recommendations for the government.<sup>6</sup> On May 15, 1970, the President, through Executive Order No. 233, directed the Commission on Population to implement its policies and recommendations.<sup>7</sup>

In his Presidential Decree No. 79,<sup>8</sup> revising the Population Act of 1971, he ordered that family planning be made a part of a broad education program. In the following year in his General Order No. 18, dated December 8, 1972,<sup>9</sup> he enjoined all citizens of the Philippines, all universities, colleges, and schools, government offices, mass media, civic

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<sup>5</sup>Family Planning Organization of the Philippines, Why the Philippines Needs Family Planning, Training Series Handbook No. 1 (Manila: Ford Foundation, 1970), p. 54.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 57.

<sup>7</sup>"Resource Material for Family Planning," Philippine (Republic) Department of Education and Culture Population and Educational Program, op. cit., p. 93.

<sup>8</sup>F. D. Pinpin (ed.), The First 107 Presidential Decrees, Series No. 7, (Mandaluyong, Rizal, Philippines: Cacho Hermanos, Inc., February, 1973), pp. 242-247.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 366.

and voluntary organizations, religious organizations of all creeds, and business and industrial enterprises to promote the concept of family planning.

The First Lady, Mrs. Imelda R. Marcos, also concerned about the welfare of the people, particularly the children, endorsed family planning. In her speech delivered before the Medical Women's International Association, she said:<sup>10</sup>

We want children because we love them; and because we love them, we want as far as possible the best for them, spiritually and materially. But too many of them will surely diminish our love and strain moral capacities. We do not want to condemn unborn generations to misery and servitude.

With the adoption of a family planning program to control the accelerated population growth, research studies were made (a) to diagnose and measure the state of population and the trends in fertility behavior under changing economic and social pressures, and (b) to assess knowledge, attitudes and practices of fertility control.

Up to the present, studies along these lines have been hardly sufficient, particularly studies on psychological aspects related to family planning. It is this need for more studies on family planning and the felt responsibility to do something about the country's population problem that motivated the investigator to conduct this research study.

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<sup>10</sup>Joe Villarba, "First Lady Pushes F P," The Examiner, 12:9, January 24, 1974.

## THE PROBLEM

### Statement of the problem

This study attempted to assess the perceptions of wives on two dimensions: first, on the importance and the fulfillment, or the hope of fulfillment, of their needs and aspirations: and second, on the relations of these to family planning behavior and fertility.

This study sought to answer the following specific questions:

1. Are there differences in the wives' perceptions of the importance and the fulfillment, or the hope of fulfillment, of needs and aspirations if they come from different types of communities, such as the barrio, the town, and the city?

2. Do wives from different communities categorized as to main industry or main source of livelihood differ in their perceptions of the importance and the fulfillment, or the hope of fulfillment, of needs and aspirations?

3. Do wives with different educational attainments differ in their perceptions of the importance and the fulfillment, or the hope of fulfillment, of their needs and aspirations?

4. Are there differences in the perceptions of the importance and the fulfillment, or the hope of fulfillment, of needs and aspirations of wives from different socio-economic strata?

5. Are there differences in gaps between perceived importance and perceived fulfillment of needs and aspirations of wives categorized according to socio-economic status, educational background, type of community, family planning behavior, and number of pregnancies?

6. Are the said gaps related to fertility?

7. Are motivations and aspirations of wives related to their family planning behavior?

8. Are motivations and aspirations related to fertility?