

# A Study of the Modernity Attitude of Married Women and Its Relation to Fertility\*

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The study was designed to find out the relationship of the wives' modernity attitude to number of pregnancies, the indicator of fertility. The 460 married women whose ages ranged from fourteen to forty-four randomly selected from Lambunao, Passi, Estancia, and Iloilo City served as the sample. There were 115 respondents randomly selected from each place mentioned above.

The instrument used to gather the data was the "Family Life Interview Schedule" prepared and validated by Central Philippine University Research Center. Only sections three and ten of the interview schedule were used for this particular study. Section three was used to gather the data of the respondents' number of pregnancies and section ten is a scale used to measure the respondents' modernity attitude as determined by the four inventories namely: political, economic, familial, and social factors. The number of pregnancies was considered as the dependent variable and modernity attitude as determined by the political, economic, familial, and social factors as independent variables.

The statistical procedure used in the analysis of data were the following:

1. Computation of the means; medians, standard deviations, standard errors of the means and medians, and the significance of the difference between the medians for the respondents' profile.

2. Computations of the coefficient of correlations, partial correlations, and multiple correlations to determine the relationship between modernity attitude and fertility.

3. Computation of coefficient of determination. The pertinent results of the study are:

- A. Modernity Attitude Profile of Respondents

*By Residence*

1. The medium score of the whole group in matters of politics was  $23.50 \pm 0.34$ . No significant difference was found between the medians of any two groups which indicates that barrio, town, and city respondents are equally modern in their practices and beliefs concerning politics.

2. The median score obtained by the whole group from the economic life inventory was  $22.73 \pm 0.29$ . The city respondents obtained a median of  $23.85 \pm 1.47$  which was significantly higher than the city respondents from the town. This indicates that the city respondents are more modern in matters of economics than those from the towns. No significant difference was found between the medians of the barrio and town as well as the barrio and city respondents.

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3. The median scores obtained by the whole group on family and social relations were respectively  $15.03 \pm 0.26$  and  $13.57 \pm 0.31$ . The city respondents obtained a median score of  $16.56 \pm 0.52$  on family relations and  $20.36 \pm 0.45$  on social relations which were significantly higher than the median obtained by the town and barrio respondents but no significant difference was found between the medians of the town and barrio respondents.

*By Social-Economic Status (SES)*

1. The median score of the whole group concerning political matters was found to be  $23.53 \pm 0.34$ . The median score of  $27.28 \pm 2.00$  obtained by the respondents with high SES was significantly higher than the median of those with low SES. No significant difference was found between the the middle and high SES.
2. In economic matters, no significant difference was found between the medians of any pair of SES groups. The median of the whole group which was found to be  $22.73 \pm 0.29$  could be practically the same for all levels of socio-economic status, which shows that the respondents with high, middle, or low SES are equally modern in the matter of acquiring their means of livelihood.
3. In family life, the median score of the whole group was  $15.02 \pm 0.26$ . Respondents with high SES obtained a median of  $17.90 \pm 1.03$  and was significantly higher than the medians of the respondents with low and middle SES.
4. In social life the median score of the whole group was  $18.54 \pm 0.31$ . The median obtained by the respondents with high SES was

$20.83 \pm 1.22$  which was significantly higher than the median of the respondents with low SES. No significant difference was noted between the medians of the respondents with low and middle SES as well as between the middle and high SES.

*By Educational Attainment*

1. No significant difference was found between any pair of educational levels in matters of political and economic life. The obtained medians of the whole group were  $33.49 \pm 0.34$  and  $23.73 \pm 0.29$ , respectively, and could be practically the same for all levels of educational attainment which signify that elementary, high school and college respondents are equally modern in the political and economic practices and beliefs.
2. The medians of the whole group concerning familial and social relations were  $15.02 \pm 0.26$  and  $18.54 \pm 0.31$ , respectively. The medians of the high school and the college respondents were significantly higher than the medians of the elementary grade respondents on both inventories. No significant difference was found between the medians of the college and the high school respondents.

*By Family Planning Behavior*

1. In political matters, the median of the whole group was  $23.47 \pm 0.34$ . The difference between the medians of the dropouts and the users was found to be significant in favor of the dropouts. No significant difference was found between the medians of the users and the non-acceptors; the users and the unawares; the dropouts and the non-acceptors; as well as the dropouts and the unawares.

2. The median scores of the whole group on economic and family life were  $22.73 \pm 0.29$  and  $15.03 \pm 0.26$ , respectively. No significant difference was found between the medians of any possible pair which shows that the users, the dropouts, the non-acceptors, and the unawares portray almost the same attitude towards economic and familial life.
3. In social relations, the median of the whole group was  $18.57 \pm 0.31$ . The median of the users which was  $20.10 \pm 0.47$  was found to be significantly higher than the medians obtained by the dropouts, the non-acceptors, and the unawares. No significant difference was found between the dropouts and the non-acceptors but they were found to be more modern than the unawares.

#### B. Relationship of Modernity Attitude with Number of Pregnancies

1. The coefficient of correlation between political factor and the number of pregnancies was 0.04. The "true" correlation obtained when the possible "effects" of the three other variables were controlled was 0.09, an insignificant and a negligible correlation.
2. The coefficient of correlation between economic factor and number of pregnancies was 0.03. No change occurred when the possible "effects" of the other three variables were controlled. The "true" correlation was 0.03, an insignificant and a very negligible correlation.
3. The highest correlation was found between familial factor and number of pregnancies. It was -0.18 and significant at five per cent level. The "true" correlation when all the possible "effects" of the three other variables were

controlled was -0.14, still significant at five per cent level but a negligible one.

4. A negative correlation was also obtained between social factor and number of pregnancies. It was -0.14. With the possible "effects" of the other variables controlled, the "true" correlation obtained was -0.11, significant at five per cent level but also a negligible correlation.
5. The combined "effect" (R) of political, economic, familial, and social factors to number of pregnancies was 0.23 which indicates a slight relationship of modernity attitudes to fertility. Expressing the relationship as a percentage by the coefficient of determination, it was found out that only 5.29 per cent of the association to fertility is explained by modernity attitude.

### CONCLUSIONS

The foregoing findings have led to the following conclusions:

1. The respondents as a group are modern in matters of politics but the respondents with high socio-economic status are more modern in their practices and beliefs concerning the political life prevailing in the culture than those with low socio-economic status. They tend to give priority to merit rather than patronage in the appointment of persons to public office or in the election of officers; objectivity rather than personalism in government affairs; autonomy in certain community affairs rather than centralization; and group rather than individual oriented decision-making.
2. The respondents as a group also portray a modern outlook in economic life but the city respon-

pondents are more modernistic than those from the town. They tend to show more faith in modern agri-business; make investments to raise their standard of living; and favor more often group-centeredness rather than go-it-along orientation. However, the respondents from the city and barrios as well as those from the barrios and towns have almost the same practices and beliefs concerning economic life prevailing in the culture.

3. The respondents with high socio-economic status, with higher educational attainment, and are living in the city are modern in their practices and beliefs concerning family life prevailing in the culture than those with low socio-economic status, with lower educational attainment, and are living in the town or barrio. They are more likely to favor the family oriented decision-making rather than parent-oriented; teach the children to become more independent rather than dependent on parents; believe that child-rearing is the responsibility of parents; and, believe on nuclear rather than the extended family concept.
4. The respondents with high socio-economic status, with higher educational attainment, who are using any method to prevent pregnancies, and are living in the city are more modern in their practices and beliefs concerning their interpersonal relations in the larger society than those with low socio-economic status, with lower educational attainment, who are either dropouts, non-acceptors, or unawares, and are living in the towns or barrios. They tend to favor more often the merit system rather than patronage in giving favors; dislike more often reciprocity (*utang na loob*) concept when giving and or given favors; and,

allow young girls to go out without chaperons.

5. Political factor and economic factor have practically no relationship to the number of pregnancies.
6. There is a slight tendency for respondents who have modern outlooks in familial and social life to have fewer pregnancies.
7. Modernity attitude as defined in this study cannot be said to have any sizeable relationship with number of pregnancies.
8. Familial factor has the greatest "influence" among the factors in the correlation obtained between modernity attitude and individual fertility.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the findings of this study, the following are recommended:

1. Family planning workers and motivators should intensify the emphasis of population work among the barrio women, the less-educated, and the socio-economically less favored ones. It is revealed in this study that most of the unawares, the less-educated, and the poorer ones came from the barrios who had the most number of pregnancies. This fact stresses the need for a greater thrust of population work in the barrios.
2. Since familial factor was found to have the highest negative correlation and had the greatest "influence" among the four factors to fertility, it is recommended that the school be utilized to the maximum to foster a modern attitude towards family life. Believing that literacy brings about understanding of modern phenomena, the school can conduct massive literacy programs through its population education program.

- 3- It is recommended that a series of intensive programs and/or strategies whose aim is to develop a modern attitude towards family life geared to a wise decision in planning a family among the target groups like mothers: young and old, the school and out of school youths; the husbands; the elders; and the family planning workers; be constructed, experimented with, and then disseminated. The research units of POPCOM, colleges and universities, and school administrators can pool together and plan this out.
4. It is highly recommended that a separate study of the modernity attitude of husbands related to the number of pregnancies of wives be conducted. The present study only made use of the modernity attitudes of the wives and found out a slight correlation. What if the study involved the husband's modernity attitudes? Would the result be the same or be the opposite, since ours is a basically patriarchal society?
5. When the correlations between the independent variables (Table XXI, p. 183) were determined it was found out that the political factor and the economic factor had a high correlation, which fact shows that they have much in common. Therefore, from a study using only one of them the probable role of the other may be surmised. It is therefore recommended that in future studies which involve modernity attitude as determined by the instrument used here, only the economic, the familial, and the social inventories need be used.
6. It is recommended that further study on other aspects of modernism related to fertility should be conducted. The present study is only limited to modernity attitude as measured by the political, economic, familial, and social factors. A study to determine what modern personality traits are highly related to fertility might also be explored. Some of these modern personality traits may be identified to center around the theme of subjective efficacy, orientation toward time, and openness to change. It will also be more helpful to some development project later on if the facilitator of these modern traits be also identified.