

A Study of Wives' Motivations and Aspirations and Their Relationship to Family Planning Behavior and Fertility

By: Lucy Bolaños Catolico

The purposes of this study were (1) to assess the perception of wives of the importance and fulfillment or hope of fulfillment of needs and aspirations, and their relations to family planning behavior and fertility; (2) to find out if wives from different groups as to socio-economic status, educational background, residence, type of economic community; family planning behavior, and number of pregnancies differ in their perception of the importance and the fulfillment or hope of fulfillment of needs and aspirations; and (3) to assess the gaps between the perceived importance and perceived fulfillment or hope of fulfillment of needs and aspirations and their relations to fertility.

The interview schedule used for this study was based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs and aspirations.

The sample consisted of 460 married women whose ages ranged from fourteen to forty-four, drawn at random from the selected municipalities of the province of Iloilo and from Iloilo City. The gathering of data was done cooperatively by a team, each member of which interviewed respondents from a defined geographical area. Then the data were consolidated and redivided for the particular use of each member. This researcher took the portions that were pertinent to the afore-

mentioned purposes.

The processing of the data was done manually with the use of punched cards. Then for the treatment of data, first, the average perceived importance and the average perceived fulfillment or hope of fulfillment of needs and aspirations were computed. This was done for every grouping of respondents. Next, the gap between the perceived importance and the perceived fulfillment or hope of fulfillment of those needs and aspirations computed. This was done also for every group of respondents. The ways of computing for the gap were used. The average perceived importance, the average perceived fulfillment or hope of fulfillment, and gap between the two were computed for the drawing of the profile of the respondents. Finally, the relationship between non-discrete variables was computed with the use of the Chi-square; the Goodman-Kruskal Gamma Coefficient was used for rankable variables. The 5% level of significance was adopted for the Chi-square values.

Findings-Profile

Motivations/ Aspirations and Residence. Data showed that the town wives gave the highest average perceived importance to basic, safe-

**Abstract of a Master's Thesis done at Central Philippine University.*

ty, esteem, and self-realization needs, but not to the need to own a comfortable house, to which the city wives gave the highest average perceived importance. The barrio wives gave the highest average perceived importance to the social need to be accepted by the neighbors. The differences, however, between the averages of perceived importance of these needs by wives from different residences were little.

When it comes to the fulfillment or hope of fulfillment of these five needs (basic, safety, social, esteem, and self-realization), the data showed that the town wives had the highest average perceived fulfillment of all five except for the social need to be accepted by the neighbors, the esteem need for prestige or social position and the self-realization need to feel happy and contented, of which the city wives had the highest average perceived fulfillment. The barrio wives had the lowest average perceived fulfillment or hope of most needs.

The town wives had the narrowest gap between importance and fulfillment of the basic need to have adequate income or salary, to have a comfortable house, to provide the children with high school and college education, and to provide security for the future. On the other hand, the city wives had the narrowest gap between the importance and fulfillment of the need to own some property, to be accepted by the neighbors, to gain prestige or social position, and to attain self-realization. For the city wives the gap was widest for the need to provide their children with high school and college education, and to provide security for the future. The gap between importance and fulfillment was quite wide for most of the needs.

Motivations/Aspirations and Type of Economic Community. Data

showed great similarity among the aspirations of all the wives from different economic communities. The wives from the semi-industrial community exhibited the narrowest gaps between importance and fulfillment of the five types of needs, fulfillment for them being the highest. On the other hand, the wives from the agricultural community exhibited the widest gap on these needs, except for the need to provide the children with high school and college education. On this need, the wives from the service community showed the widest gap. On the need to feel happy and contented, the wives from the fishing community had the lowest average perceived fulfillment or hope of fulfillment and therefore, the widest gap.

Motivations/Aspirations and Educational Background. Although the average perceived importance of the five needs was highly similar among wives from different educational backgrounds, data seems to show that wives with higher educational background tended to have higher perceived fulfillment or hope of fulfillment of most needs.

On the other hand, the gap between importance and fulfillment tend to widen with the lowering of educational achievement, except for the need to provide the children with high school education and security for the future, on which the gap was narrowest for the college undergraduate wives instead of with the college graduate wives.

Motivations/Aspirations and Socio-Economic Status. Wives from different socio-economic status had similar perception of the importance of the five needs; however, the gap between importance and fulfillment showed an in verse trend with socio-economic status; that is, the higher the socio-econo-

micstatus of wives, the narrower the gap, and vice versa.

Motivations/Aspirations and Family Planning Behavior. Data showed slight differences in the average perceived importance of the five needs for wives with different family planning behaviors, but the acceptors seemed to have the highest average fulfillment or hope of fulfillment of most needs, except for the need to be accepted by the neighbors, which had the lowest average perceived fulfillment among them but the highest among the non-acceptors. On the need to feel happy and contented, both acceptors and dropouts had the same average perceived fulfillment. On the needs to improved the present life financially, socially, or otherwise and to have a comfortable house, the dropouts had the narrowest gap. The acceptors had the narrowest gap for most needs.

Motivations/Aspirations and Fertility. Although all the wives gave high importance to the five needs, data showed that the more pregnancies the wives had, the wider the gap between importance and fulfillment.

Findings-Correlations

Motivations/Aspirations and Residence. The obtained χ^2 values revealed associations between residence and perceived importance of the basic, security or safety, social, esteem, and self-realization needs, except one basic need, the need to own some property, which was shown to be independent of residence. The extent of association between the perceived importance of most needs and residence was very low or almost negligible, however, for the need to have adequate income or salary, need to be accepted by the neighbors, and the need for prestige or social position.

the association with which being slight but present. Substantial or marked association was found between perceived importance of the need to have a comfortable house and residence.

With regards to the fulfillment of the five needs, association or relatedness with residence was found for the need to provide the children with high school and college education, and security, and the need for self-realization. The association on the first mentioned need was marked, on the second need, the association was slight but present; but on the third need, the association was negligible. On the rest of needs, fulfillment or hope of fulfillment was independent of residence.

Motivations/Aspirations and Economic Community. The association between the perceived importance of the esteem need for prestige and types of economic community was slight but present, but the rest of the associations were very low and even nil on the need to provide the children with high school education.

The associations between the perceived fulfillment or hope of fulfillment of the five needs and types of economic community were slight, and even negligible on the need to have a comfortable house.

Motivations/Aspirations and Educational Background. The associations between educational background and perceived importance of the basic need to have a comfortable house and the esteem need to provide the children college education were very low, almost negligible, for the rest of the needs, perceived importance was independent of educational background.

On the perceived fulfillment or hope of fulfillment of these needs,

the associations were slight for most of the needs but very low or negligible for the need to own some property and the social need to be accepted by the neighbors.

Motivations/ Aspirations and Socio-Economic Status. A substantial correlation was obtained between the perceived importance of the esteem need to provide the children with high school education and socio-economic status in that there was a marked tendency for wives from higher socio-economic status to give higher importance to the need. Low and negative correlations were found for the perceived importance of the need to have adequate income or salary and self-realization and socio-economic status. There was a low tendency for wives from higher socio-economic status to give lesser importance to these needs. On the other hand, the correlations were negligible. The Gamma or χ Coefficient showed that wives from higher socio-economic status greatly tended to have higher perceived fulfillment or hope of fulfillment of the five needs.

Gap and Fertility. Low but positive correlations were found between gap and fertility on the needs to have adequate income or salary, to have security in the future, to provide the children with college education, and to improve the present life, financially, socially, or otherwise. There existed wider gaps between perceived importance of these needs and their fulfillment, for wives with more number of pregnancies. However, for the rest of the needs included in this study, the correlation between gaps and number of pregnancies was negligible.

Motivations/ Aspirations and Family Planning Behavior. Negligible associations were found between

the perceived importance of the need for adequate income or salary and the need to provide the children with high school and college education, and family planning behavior. But no associations were found between the perceived importance of other needs and family planning behavior.

The perceived fulfillment or hope of fulfillment of the esteem, social, and self-realization needs were related or associated with family planning behavior. Even so, the associations were very low or almost negligible, except for the esteem need to provide the children with college education and self-realization need to feel happy and contented where the associations were slight but present.

Motivations/ Aspirations and Fertility. The perceived importance of the needs to have adequate income or salary, to provide the children with college education, and to be accepted by the neighbors were positively correlated with the number of pregnancies. The correlations however, were low. The perceived importance of the rest of the needs had negligible correlations with the number of pregnancies.

Low and negative correlation was found between fertility and the perceived fulfillment or hope of fulfillment of the needs to have adequate income or salary, to provide the children with college education, to provide security for the future, to gain prestige or social position, to improve the present life, and to feel happy and contented. To a limited extent, the higher the number of pregnancies, the lower the perceived fulfillment or hope of fulfillment of these needs. The correlations on the other needs were negligible.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, the investigator made the following conclusions:

(1) All the respondent wives, however they are categorized, have highly similar perceptions as to the importance of the five identified needs.

(2) Fulfillment was always of a lesser degree than perceived importance, and tended to be more successfully experienced by town wives, or wives from semi-industrial communities, or wives with high educational background, or wives with high socio-economic status, or acceptors of family planning, or wives with fewer pregnancies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The investigator has the following recommendations:

(1) The findings of this study should be given due consideration in making decisions, plans, and programs, or any course of action in relation to family planning program, and fertility control.

(a) Family planning efforts should give more emphasis with barrio folks, especially those with low socio-economic status and low educational background.

(b) The development programs of the government should be directed towards the barrio, where majority of residents have more or less low fulfillment of needs.

(2) Since this is the first study on motivations and aspirations in relation to family planning and fertility conducted in this province, another study of this kind should be conducted, taking this time a much bigger sample and covering a much wider area, to check the findings of this study.

(3) The same study should be conducted, taking the husbands as the sample.

(4) Finally, since this study tried only to find out the relationship of motivations and aspirations to fertility, it is recommended that a follow up study should be conducted to find out how much of the variations in fertility are attributed to motivations and aspirations.