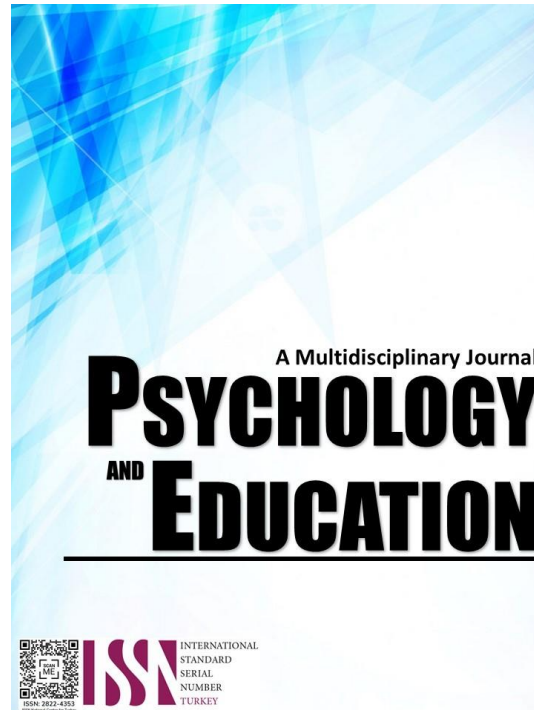


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Family Planning Among Couples in Morong, Rizal

Morielle SA. Gutierrez*, Edwilyn A. Gelotin, Precious Yvonne Kiara C. Magramo,
Hya Ymeth G. Gimenez, Jazayeri B. Aldana, Roger L. Vargas,
Romnick B. Dolores, Vanessa A. Teodoro
For affiliations and correspondence, see the last page.

Abstract

This study aimed to determine the prevalence of family planning in Morong, Rizal, and the most commonly used method as well as determine whether the utilization of family planning has significant differences in terms of the respondents' profile like age, sex, residence, length of relationship, and monthly family income. This study used a quantitative design that utilized a content-validated questionnaire to determine prevalence of the use of family planning, the most commonly used family planning methods, and the significant difference in the use of family planning methods in terms of the respondents' profile. The study was conducted among the eight barangays of Morong, Rizal, with 228 respondents. Random sampling method was utilized to select the respondents from the population size which are couples with families as they are the most suited for the study. The findings from the study indicated that 177 (77.63%) out of 228 respondents, or the majority of the population, use family planning techniques. With 79 (44.63%) out of 177 respondents who utilized family planning methods, pills were the most frequently utilized. It was determined that there are significant differences in the use of family planning in terms of the respondents' monthly family income. There is a high utilization rate of family planning methods among couples in Morong, Rizal, with pills being the most commonly used method. Furthermore, there are no significant differences in the use of family planning in terms of the respondents' age, sex, residence, and length of relationship. However, there is a significant difference in terms of the respondents' monthly family income.

Keywords: *family planning, unintended pregnancies, couples, utilization, prevalence*

Introduction

Family is one of the most important reasons why life continues in the Philippines. It is the fundamental unit of society and is extremely important to everyone. A family consists primarily of parents and children, with the parents being in charge of their children. To have more attention to a child's well-being and to have a healthy relationship with one's body, family planning methods are globally introduced. Nowadays, it is important to be involved in family planning methods so that when the time comes to start a family, people will be able to assess your family's needs. Without having knowledge about this practice, poor family planning has several negative outcomes, including maternal mortality, unwanted pregnancies, and unsafe abortions according to the Department of Health (n.d.).

Family planning is defined as the process of assessing and creating a plan for the number and spacing of children a couple intends to have (Cornell University, n. d.). There are several methods of family planning and using contraceptives is the most known among such according to the World Health Organization (2020). Oral contraceptive pills, injectable implants, patches, vaginal rings, intrauterine devices, condoms, male and female sterilization, lactation amenorrhea techniques, withdrawal, and fertility awareness-based approaches are among the contraceptive methods

available.

In the Philippines, the Republic Act No. 10354, or Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act of 2012, mandates that no individual should be denied access to information and services regarding natural and artificial family planning methods. It is also stipulated that all public health centers with accreditation must offer a full range of family planning methods. Based on the results of the conducted National Demographic Health Survey (2017), there are 2.6 million married women and 5.1 million unmarried women who wanted to use family planning but were not able to do so, heightening the risk of unintended pregnancy. According to the 2022 State of World Population (SWOP), the Philippines ranked 56th out of 150 countries in the number of unintended pregnancies at 71 per 1,000 women annually. This implies that unintended pregnancy has become more frequent in the country compared to other 94 countries in the world.

In Morong, Rizal, family planning programs are being implemented currently which primarily include various family planning methods. According to the Local Government Unit (2023), the family planning methods that are currently available in barangay health centers are pills, depot-medroxyprogesterone acetate (DMPA) injectable, condoms, progestin sub-dermal implant (PSI), and lactation amenorrhea method

(LAM). This study aimed to determine the prevalence of the utilization of family planning methods in the municipality and the most commonly used technique as well as determine if it has significant differences in terms of their profile like age, residence, and monthly family income. This study is also beneficial as this can be the basis for planning and formulating projects for the proper dissemination of information regarding family planning.

Research Questions

This study aimed to measure the prevalence of family planning methods among couples in Morong, Rizal, and determine the most commonly used method. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:
 - 1.1 age;
 - 1.2 sex;
 - 1.3 residence;
 - 1.4 length of relationship; and
 - 1.5 monthly family income?
2. How many respondents are using family planning methods?
3. Is there a significant difference on the use of family planning methods in terms of their profile?
4. What are the most commonly used family planning methods?
5. What project/s may be recommended regarding family planning?

Literature Review

Numerous local and international researches were conducted to determine the uptake of family planning. This literature review will consider the prevalence of family planning in international and local scenarios since family planning generally helps to prevent unintended pregnancies. Additionally, this literature review aims to bring a better understanding of family planning uptake locally and internationally. Unintended pregnancies happen to a woman who did not intend to have any (more) children or pregnancies that happened at an earlier time (United Nations Population Fund, 2022). According to Dr. Pascale Allotey (2022), family planning promotes self-actualization, empowerment, health, and well-being, while also lowering mother and newborn mortality rates by preventing unintended pregnancy and unsafe abortion. During the earlier times of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, approximately 70% of countries reported disruptions in these critical services, raising the risk of unwanted births.

According to the 2022 State of World Population Report by the United Nations Population Fund, between 2015 and 2019, 71 out of every 1,000 women aged 15 to 49 experienced an unintended pregnancy. Family planning allows couples or individuals to protect themselves and their families in such significant ways since it can reduce unintended pregnancies as well as minimize pregnancy complications. Proper family planning helps prevent unintended pregnancies. According to Kaware et al. (2016), 58.57% of married women of reproductive age used contraception. Contraception use was highest in the 30-34 age group (14.57%), followed by the 25-29 age group (13.71%). The use of contraception was greater (24.85%) among mothers with three or more children. The most prevalent reason for not utilizing contraception was a desire for more children (42.76%).

More so, family planning uptake is low in sub-Saharan Africa, including Nigeria (Akamike et al., 2020). Researchers examined how married women of reproductive age in rural areas in Ebonyi state perceived family planning technologies, their usage patterns, their partners' support, and the factors that contributed to their adoption. The study found out only 26.2% of the respondents used family planning in some way. The study found that natural family planning methods were most frequently used. This study concludes that family planning is not often used in rural areas for numerous reasons, including the desire for more children, concern about side effects, religious convictions, and the perceived negative impact of modest family size on food and economic production.

Furthermore, a study by Mustafa et al. (2015) was conducted in three provinces of Pakistan and aimed to explore knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding family planning and factors that influence the need for and use of modern contraceptives, hence they surveyed married women and men aged between 15 and 40. It is indicated that most people were aware of some contraception options, but overall contraceptive use was quite low. Incomplete family size, bad impressions, in-laws' disapproval, religious objections, side effects, and lack of access to high-quality treatments are some of the reasons given for not utilizing family planning and contemporary contraception.

According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (n. d.), women in low-income families (40.1%) are less likely to use family planning than those in higher-income households (50.2%). This difference is mostly attributable to a higher hesitancy of female

sterilization among non-poor women (13.2% versus 5.1%). It is also mentioned that over half of married women in the Philippines between the ages of 15 and 49 practice family planning. There is very little difference between the level of contraceptive use of women involved in the gainful occupation and that of women not engaged in any gainful occupation (47.3% versus 46.8%).

Moreover, there are several barriers to increasing the use of effective contraception in the Philippines such as having first sexual intercourse before marriage (Nagai et al., 2019). Only 3% to 6% of women and 2% to 7% of men said that religious objection to contraception was a barrier. With that matter, in 849 women during the enlistment, effective methods were utilized by 51.1% of them currently, 20.6% had formerly used such, and 28.3% had never used any. One in four pregnancies in the Philippines is undesired, and 610,000 unsafe abortions are carried out per year. Through family planning, unintended pregnancies and other complications like unsafe abortions can be prevented.

The above-mentioned reasons are mostly the cause of not utilizing family planning methods, hence, heightening the risk of unintended pregnancies. Although the Philippines started to invest in family planning programs, many opportunities to offer family planning counseling are lost. Wider legal, policy, social, cultural, and structural hurdles must be overcome in order to provide effective contraceptive techniques. Despite family planning programs being available in barangay health centers, little to no studies are being conducted regarding family planning in Morong, Rizal. The results of this study will contribute a new body of information regarding the current state of family planning in Morong, Rizal.

Methodology

Sampling

This is a quantitative study where the prevalence of the use of family planning was determined. The study utilized 228 respondents or 5.24% of the 4,354 estimated number of couples in the Municipality. Random sampling method was utilized to select the respondents from the population size which are couples with families as they are the most suited for the study.

Data Collection

A content-validated questionnaire was utilized as a tool to gather information from the sample population. A couple that has a family already was asked to answer the questionnaire. The data were collected and analyzed in line with the objective of the study and in accordance with protocols during the conduct of a study. The information gathered was assessed in order to determine how prevalent family planning is and the most commonly used family planning methods.

Data Analysis

The information gathered was assessed to determine the profile of the respondents, the number of couples that use family planning method, and the most utilized type of family planning method in Morong through the use of frequency and percentage. The significant difference in family planning uptake with respect to their profiles was also analyzed through Chi-Square Test, and Bonferroni Adjustment to reduce the chances of the data incorrectly appearing to be statistically significant. Additionally, a qualitative discussion was done to suggest plans and projects for the proper dissemination of information regarding family planning and better implementation of family planning programs.

Results and Discussion

Profile of the Respondents

Table 1.1 shows the range of ages of the respondents, wherein people between the ages of 31 and 40 are the most frequent respondents in the study, tallying 92 out of 228 (40.35%). Followed by 18 to 30 years old, constituting 71 (31.14%), and ages older than 41, with 60 (26.32%). Lastly, those below 18 years old appear to be the least number of respondents, with 5 (2.19%). Respondents from the age range of 31 to 40 years old appear to be the most frequent respondents to the survey.

Table 1.1. Age

<i>Age</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Below 18 years old	5	2.19
18 to 30 years old	71	31.14
31 to 40 years old	92	40.35
41 years old and above	60	26.32
Total	228	100

Table 1.2 shows the profile of the respondents in terms of their sex. The table shows that there are more female respondents than male respondents; 203 out of 228 (89.04%) of the respondents are female, and 25 out of 228 (10.96%) of the respondents are male. This shows that the majority of the respondents are female.

Table 1.2. Sex

<i>Age</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Male	25	10.96
Female	203	89.04
Total	228	100

Table 1.3 shows the total number of responses in terms of the respondent's residence. It is shown on the table that six barangays, such as Bombongan, Caniogan-Calero-Lanang, Lagundi, Maybancal, San Guillermo, and San Juan, have 30 (13.16%) respondents each. Followed by San Pedro with 28 (12.28%) respondents and San Jose with 20 (8.77%).

Table 1.3. Residence

<i>Barangay</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Bombongan	30	13.16
Caniogan-Calero-Lanang	30	13.16
Lagundi	30	13.16
Maybancal	30	13.16
San Guillermo	30	13.16
San Jose	20	8.77
San Juan	30	13.16
San Pedro	28	12.28
Total	228	100

Table 1.4 shows how long the respondents have been in a relationship. It appears that couples with more than 15 years of being in a relationship are the most

frequent among the respondents, with 76 (33.33%). Followed by the bracket between five (5) and 10 years, tallying 63 (27.63%), 10 to 15 years, with 47 (20.61%), and less than five (5) years, listing 42 (18.42%). This indicates that most of the respondents to the survey have been with their partner for more than 15 years.

Table 1.4. Length of Relationship

<i>Length of Relationship</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Less than five (5) years	42	18.42
Five (5) to Ten years	63	27.63
10 to 15 years	47	20.61
More than 15 years	76	33.33
Total	228	100

Table 1.5 shows the respondents' monthly family income. It appears that 95 couples out of 228 (41.67%) have a monthly family income between Php 9,520 and Php 19,040. While 69 out of 228 (30.26%) of the respondents make above Php 19,040 every month. Lastly, 64 out of 228 (28.07%) of the respondents earn less than Php 9,520 per month.

Table 1.5. Monthly Family Income

<i>Monthly Family Income</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Less than Php 9,520	64	28.07
Between Php 9,520 and Php 19,040	95	41.67
Above Php 19,040	69	30.26
Total	228	100

Number of Respondents Using Family Planning Methods

Table 2 shows the frequency of respondents who are using family planning methods and those who are not. There are 228 respondents, of whom 177 (77.63%) utilize family planning methods while 51 (22.37%) do not. According to the survey conducted, it has been determined that a majority of the respondents prefer to use family planning methods. In a study conducted by Nagai et al. (2019), it was determined that half of women, specifically 51.1% of women, currently utilize family planning methods. Furthermore, 20.6% had formerly used such, while 28.3% had never used any. This data establishes the fact that the majority of the

population is using family planning methods. Overall, it can be inferred that the use of family planning methods is prevalent among the majority of people. This suggests that a majority of the population utilizes family planning methods.

Table 2. *Number of Respondents Using Family Planning Methods*

<i>Using or Not</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Yes	177	77.63
No	51	22.37
Total	228	100

Significant Difference on the Use of Family Planning Methods in Terms of Profile

Table 3 shows the significant difference in the use of family planning methods in terms of the respondents' profiles. With a P - value of 0.086, there is no significant difference in the use of family planning methods in terms of the respondent's age. Furthermore, there is no significant difference in the use of family planning methods in terms of their sex (P - value = 0.221) and in terms of the respondents' length of relationship (P - value = 0.928). On the other hand, with a P - value of 0.044, it shows that there is a significant difference in the use of family planning methods in terms of the respondents' residence. There is also a significant difference in the use of family planning methods in terms of their monthly family income (P - value = 0.018).

However, after conducting a Bonferroni adjustment on all variables that showed a significant difference, it was determined that there are no more significant differences in terms of the respondents' residence (P - value = 0.044 > Bonferroni corrected alpha level = 0.043). But it is determined that after the Bonferroni adjustment, there is still a significant difference in terms of the respondents' monthly family income (P - value = 0.018 < Bonferroni corrected alpha level = 0.046).

Philippine Statistics Authority (n. d.) supports the result, women from low-income families are less likely to use family planning methods compared to women from high-income families. The use of family planning methods is 40.1% among women in low-income

families, which is much less compared to the utilization rate of women in high-income families of 50.2%. This data establishes a significant difference in the use of family planning methods in terms of people's family income. This implies that the use of family planning methods among the respondents is generally similar, irrespective of their profiles such as age, sex, residence, and length of relationship. However, according to the findings, there are significant differences in the use of family planning methods in terms of the respondents' monthly family income.

Table 3. *Significant Difference on the Use of Family Planning Methods in Terms of Profile*

<i>Variable</i>	<i>P - value</i>	<i>H₀</i>	<i>Verbal Interpretation</i>	<i>Bonferroni corrected Alpha Level</i>	<i>Verbal Interpretation</i>
<i>Age</i>	0.086	Failed to reject the null hypothesis	There is no significant difference	Bonferroni adjustment is not conducted	
<i>Sex</i>	0.221	Failed to reject the null hypothesis	There is no significant difference	Bonferroni adjustment is not conducted	
<i>Residence</i>	0.044	Rejected the null hypothesis	There is a significant difference	0.043	There is no significant difference
<i>Length of Relationship</i>	0.928	Failed to reject the null hypothesis	There is no significant difference	Bonferroni adjustment is not conducted	
<i>Monthly Family Income</i>	0.018	Rejected the null hypothesis	There is a significant difference	0.046	There is a significant difference

Most Commonly Used Family Planning Methods

Table 4 shows the most commonly used family planning methods among couples in Morong, Rizal. Seventy-nine out of 177 (44.63%) of the respondents are using pills, while 46 out of 177 (25.99%) are using other family planning methods such as female sterilization, withdrawal, and an intrauterine device (IUD). Further, 35 out of 177 (19.77%) of the respondents are using depot-medroxyprogesterone acetate (DMPA) injectable, 8 out of 177 (4.52%) of the respondents are using a condom, and 7 out of 177 (3.95%) of the respondents are using progestin subdermal implant (PSI). Lastly, 2 out of 177 (1.13%) of the respondents are using the lactation amenorrhea method.

According to the data provided by the Philippine Statistics Authority (n. d.), pills are found to be the most commonly used family planning method among Filipinos, with 15%. The second most commonly used

family planning method is female sterilization, with 11%. This data establishes the fact that the use of pills is prevalent in the country, and it is the method individuals and couples opt to plan their reproductive lives. This implies that, in general, a majority of people are using pills as their primary family planning method. While other methods such as female sterilization, are the second most utilized form of family planning.

Table 4. *Most Commonly Used Family Planning Methods*

<i>Family Planning Methods</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Pills	79	44.63
Depot-medroxyprogesterone acetate (DMPA) injectable	35	19.77
Condom	8	4.52
Progestin subdermal implant (PSI)	7	3.95
Lactation amenorrhea method	2	1.13
Others	46	25.99
Total	177	100

Recommended Projects

The researchers recommend that the local government thoroughly implement programs like disseminating flyers, posting on social media platforms, and rolling out a campaign and symposium that advocate for couples in the municipality to use family planning. By disseminating flyers and posting them through social media platforms, the couples from Morong may access information regarding family planning, such as the various methods of family planning. More so, rolling out a campaign and symposium may provide the deeper information needed, like how to properly use those methods and discuss the importance of family planning. Through the implementation of these projects, more couples in Morong, Rizal, will be informed regarding family planning. Hence, encouraging more couples to utilize it further lessens the risk of unintended pregnancies.

Conclusion

According to the study, researchers found that 177, or

77.63%, of the respondents utilize family planning, while 51, or 22.37%, do not, and that in general, there is a high utilization rate of family planning methods. Further, when researchers conducted the Chi-Square Test, it was found that there is no significant difference between the use of family planning methods in terms of the respondents' profiles, specifically their age, sex, and length of relationship. While the use of family planning in terms of residence and monthly family income has significant differences. However, after Bonferroni adjustment was conducted on the variables that have significant differences, it was determined that there are no more significant differences in terms of the respondents' residence. But it was determined that there is still a significant difference in the use of family planning methods in terms of the respondents' monthly family income. More so, pills appear to be the most commonly used family planning method among couples in Morong, Rizal, with utilization rate of 44.63%.

Based on the results of the study, the researchers recommend that a wider and follow-up study be conducted to further analyze the specific variables where significant differences in the use of family planning methods lie in terms of the respondents' monthly family income. It is also recommended that for future research regarding this matter, the educational attainment, number of children, and occupation of the respondents shall be included in the profile to determine whether it might be a factor of utilizing family planning method. In addition, the researchers recommend the local government implement programs that encourage couples in Morong, Rizal, to use family planning, such as disseminating flyers, posting on social media platforms, and rolling out a campaign and symposium. Through these programs, information necessary for using family planning will be provided, which may encourage couples to adapt it.

The researchers intend to disseminate the research findings by sharing them through the use of Morong National High Schools' student publications, as well as present them to the Local Government Unit of Morong in the presence of the Municipal Health Officers and the Chief Executives of Barangay Bombongan, Caniogan-Calero-Lanang, Lagundi, Maybancal, San Guillermo, San Jose, San Juan, and San Pedro, or their respective representatives. The use of social media applications such as Facebook, TikTok, and Youtube can also be used to disseminate the research findings since many people make use of them as a medium for communication. Moreover, the research findings may be used as a basis for the Local Government Unit to

revisit existing programs and review relevant ordinances on the matter of family planning in the Municipality of Morong for better implementation of family planning programs. Furthermore, the researchers intend to use the research findings as their advocacy tool by spearheading a symposium regarding family planning for junior high school students. The researchers also encourage the municipal health officers and barangay health workers to also conduct symposiums to inform the residents of various barangays regarding family planning.

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Affiliations and Corresponding Information

Morielle SA. Gutierrez

Morong National High School
Department of Education - Philippines

Edwilyn A. Gelotin

Morong National High School
Department of Education - Philippines

Precious Yvonne Kiara C. Magramo

Morong National High School
Department of Education - Philippines

Hya Ymeth G. Gimenez

Morong National High School
Department of Education - Philippines

Jazayeri B. Aldana

Morong National High School
Department of Education - Philippines

Roger L Vargas

Morong National High School
Department of Education - Philippines

Romnick B. Dolores

Morong National High School
Department of Education - Philippines

Vanessa A. Teodoro

Morong National High School
Department of Education - Philippines