

**MARRIED ROMAN CATHOLIC WOMEN'S ATTITUDE
TOWARDS ARTIFICIAL BIRTH CONTROL**

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ABSTRACT

The issue of population control, specifically, the use of artificial birth control methods, has triggered a lot of debate, particularly between the Filipino government and the Roman Catholic Church. It has also inspired studies on Filipinos' attitude towards birth control in general and artificial birth control methods in particular. Such studies have touched on the influence of religion, as well as other socio-economic factors, on respondents' attitude towards artificial birth control. However, such studies have failed to look deeper into the actual predominance of the Roman Catholic doctrine on its faithful, which can be gleaned through the latter's piety or adherence to their church's teachings and practices. Furthermore, past studies on artificial birth control have not focused on women who are truly the ones concerned since population control is tantamount to curbing women's fertility without regard to their right to make choices.

With the aforementioned in mind, this study aimed to (1) find out the relationship between age and married Roman Catholic women's attitude towards artificial birth control, (2) find out the relationship between level of education and married Roman Catholic women's attitude towards artificial birth control, (3) find out the relationship between monthly family income and married Roman Catholic women's attitude towards artificial birth control, (4) find out the relationship between level of piety and married Roman Catholic women's attitude towards artificial birth control, (5) find out the relationship between level of acceptance of the notion of reproductive rights and married Roman Catholic women's attitude towards artificial birth control and (6) find out if married Roman Catholic women who actually practice artificial birth control experienced a dilemma over the Roman Catholic Church's stand on the issue and how they dealt with such dilemma.

A survey questionnaire which includes the piety scale, the attitude scale, questions on the acceptability of the notion of reproductive rights and questions on the dilemma they may have experienced on the use of artificial birth control, was administered to ninety-eight (98) married Roman Catholic women from Barangays Arguelles in Jaro, Divinagracia in La Paz and Infante in Molo, all in Iloilo City. This survey questionnaire was designed to elicit the respondents' attitude towards artificial birth control vis-a-vis their age, level of education, monthly family income, level of piety and level of acceptance of the notion of reproductive rights. The said questionnaire also obtained how the respondents who actually use artificial birth control were able to overcome dilemma over their usage of such and their religion's teaching on the issue.

The results of the study show that using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient, there is a relationship between level of piety and married Roman Catholic women's attitude towards artificial birth control. There is also a relationship between level of acceptance of the notion of reproductive rights and the respondents' attitude towards artificial birth control. However, there is no relationship between age, level of education, monthly family income and married Roman Catholic women's attitude towards artificial birth control. The study further found out that majority (79) of the respondents actually use artificial birth control and that twenty-nine percent of them admitted to having experienced dilemma. These respondents indicated that praying for guidance and asking the opinion of other people like their doctor, relatives and close friends were instrumental to the overcoming of their dilemma.