

Provisions And Perceptions Of The Reproductive Health Bill Triangulation Among Dipolognons

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Abstract — The major purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of some selected teenagers, professionals, and non-professionals of Dipolog City towards Reproductive Health Bill. A descriptive research methodology was used to gather information for this study. A survey was administered to selected samples from a specific population within the barangays of Dipolog City. This design was chosen to meet the objectives of the study which were to identify the real stand of the commoners regarding the issue of RH Bill, and to help the commoners to express their ideas, comments and reactions properly. Questionnaires were made up of three parts; the first part was the personal profile, the second were the provisions of the said bill and the third was the perceptions of the respondents.

Results of the study showed that majority of the respondents have a positive response towards RH Bill, and there was a significant difference between the perceptions of the respondents toward RH Bill. It also revealed the conclusions such as; majority of the respondents were females in their late stages, majority of the teenagers and professional respondents lived below poverty line, majority of the respondents were Roman Catholics yet the response of the majority of the respondents towards RH-Bill was quite positive, therefore, many of the Roman Catholics agree on the implementation of the said bill, the provisions of the said bill offer a great progress in which Filipinos will be benefited and many more.

Keywords — *Perception, Population, Reproductive Health Bill, Triangulation, Dipolognons*

I. Introduction

One of the recent problems that the Philippine government should address is the increasing rate of our population. According to survey, Philippine is on the 12th place of the most populous nation in the world today. Due to this reason, RH Bill was proposed.

Reproductive Health Bills are Philippine bills aiming to guarantee universal access to methods and information of birth control and maternal care. With regards to it, there are two bills with the same goal, the “House Bill No. 4244” which was proposed by Albay 1st district representative Edcel Lagman and the second is the “Senate Bill No. 2378” which was introduced by the late senator Miriam Defensor Santiago. The House Bill No. 4244 is mainly concerned with the exercise of universal basic human rights to reproductive health by all persons particularly of parent couples, and women, consistent with their religious convictions, cultural beliefs and the demands of responsible parenthood. It has 34 sections which tackle the procurement and distribution of family planning supplies, such as essential medicines, mandatory age-appropriate

reproductive health and sexuality education, integration of responsible parenthood and family planning component in anti-poverty programs, midwives for skilled attendance and roles of local government in family planning program. On the other hand, the latter bill also states that the state recognizes and guarantees the human rights to equality non-discrimination in these rights, the right to sustainable human development, the rights to health which includes reproductive health, the right to education and information and to choose and make decisions for themselves in accordance with their religious convictions, cultural beliefs and the demands of responsible parenthood.

Among the two bills, the House Bill 4244 was more controversial. While there was a general agreement about its provisions on maternal and child health, there was a great debate on its key proposal that the Philippine government and other private sectors would fund and undertake widespread distribution of family planning devices. In this particular issue, the state and the church have its own opposing ideas. The state strongly believed that through the awareness of people about artificial family planning, the rate of abortion and population will lessen. On the other hand, the church stands on its principle which is based on the bible “go to the world and multiply”. They emphasize the importance of morality and spirituality of a person.

Despite the rallies that happened all over the country, still the common or plain individuals seemed to be left behind. There were lots of forums or panel discussions yet they were not able to express their ideas, reactions and comments properly. Legislators were busy debating on the advantages and disadvantages of the RH Bill yet they neglected the “say” or the stand of those commoners who were the main concern of the bill.

Due to these premises, the researchers would like to study the different perceptions of the individuals towards RH Bill that would help them express their opinions in the form of formal writing.

Literature Review

According to Malthus, “the populations of the world would increase in geometric proportions; the food resources available for them would increase only in arithmetic proportions”. In other words, if human population continues to increase in an uncontrolled way, the number of people would increase at a faster rate than the food supply.

Based on House Bill No. 4244, the government is mandated to “promote, without bias, all effective natural and modern methods of family planning that are medically safe and legal”. The bill calls for a “multi-dimensional approach” that integrates a component of family planning and responsible parenthood into all government anti-poverty programs.

Based on House Bill No. 5043 (Sec. 2), the State upholds and promotes responsible parenthood, informed choice, birth spacing and respect for life in conformity with internationally recognized human rights standards. It shall uphold the right of the people, particularly women and their organizations, to effective and reasonable participation in the formulation and

implementation of the declared policy. This policy is anchored on the rationale that sustainable human development is better assured with a manageable population of healthy, educated and productive citizens. The state likewise guarantees universal access to medically-safe, legal, affordable and quality reproductive health care services, methods, devices, supplies and relevant information thereon even as it prioritizes the needs of women and children, among other underprivileged sectors.

II. Methodology

In this research, descriptive method was employed in determining the perceptions of the different individuals in Dipolog City as to the issue of the implementation of RH Bill. It aimed at acquiring information and reaction from the respondents with respect to their stand on the said issue. This was also aided with unstructured interviews to gain more valid information that will further support enhance the result of this study.

The respondents of this study were the selected teenagers, non-professionals and professional residents of Dipolog City. The total number of respondents was 399 which were selected through random sampling.

III. Results and Discussion

Table 1 Respondents' Age

TEENAGERS			NON-PROFESSIONALS			PROFESSIONALS		
Age bracket	Respondents (N)	Percentage (%)	Age bracket	Respondents (N)	Percentage (%)	Age bracket	Respondents (N)	Percentage (%)
13-14 yrs. old	4	3.00%	20-26 yrs. old	29	21.80%	20-26 yrs. Old	18	13.53
15-16 yrs. old	5	3.76%	27-33 yrs.old	21	15.79%	27-33 yrs.old	19	14.29
17-18 yrs. old	115	86.47%	33-40 yrs. old	52	39.10%	33-40 yrs. Old	46	34.59
19-20 yrs. old	9	6.77%	40 yrs. old	31	23.31%	40 yrs. Old	50	37.59
TOTAL	N-133	100%	TOTAL	N-133	100%	TOTAL	N-133	100%

Table 1 presents the respondents' age specifically of the teenagers, non-professionals and professionals. It includes the age bracket, the number of the respondents, the percentage and the corresponding interpretation. The table showed that out of 133 teenager respondents, 115 or 86.47% were 17-18 years old which gained the highest percentage among the teenagers. Out of 133 non-professionals, 52 or 39.10% were 34-44 years old which gained the highest percentage among the non-professionals. From the 133 professionals, 50 or 37.59% of the respondents were 40 years old and above which gained the highest percentage among the professionals. This further implies that the majority of the respondents are on their last stages.

Table 2 Respondents' Gender

TEENAGERS			NON-PROFESSIONALS			PROFESSIONALS		
Gender	Respondents (N)	Percentage (%)	Gender	Respondents (N)	Percentage (%)	Gender	Respondents (N)	Percentage (%)
Male	45	33.83%	Male	34	25.56%	Male	55	41.355%
Female	88	66.17%	Female	99	74.44%	Female	78	58.655%
TOTAL	133	100%	TOTAL	133	100%	TOTAL	133	100%

Table 2 presents the respondents' gender which was categorized into triangulation, namely: the teenagers, non-professionals and professionals together with the corresponding number of respondents and percentage. Table showed that out of 133 teenager respondents, 45 or 33.83% were males and 88 or 66.17% were females. While out of 133 non-professional respondents only 34 or 25.56% were males and 99 or 74.44% were females. From 133 professional respondents, 55 or 41.35% were males and 78 or 58.655% were females. This further implies that the majority of respondents are females.

Table 3 Respondents' Annual Family Income

TEENAGERS			NON-PROFESSIONALS			PROFESSIONALS		
Annual Family Income	Respondents (N)	Percentage (%)	Annual Family Income	Respondents (N)	Percentage (%)	Annual Family Income	Respondents (N)	Percentage (%)
500,000 & above	—	—	500,000 & above	—	—	500,000 & above	1	0.75%
200,000-499,999	—	—	200,000-499,999	—	—	200,000-499,999	28	21.0%
150,000-199,999	—	—	150,000-199,999	—	—	150,000-199,999	52	39.1%
100,000-149,999	7	5.26%	100,000-149,999	17	12.78%	100,000-149,999	35	26.3%
80,000-99,999	49	36.84%	80,000-99,999	35	26.32%	80,000-99,999	8	6.02%
79,999 & below	77	57.90%	79,999 & below	81	60.90%	79,999 & below	9	6.77%
TOTAL	133	100%	TOTAL	133	100%	TOTAL	133	100%

Table 3 presents the annual family income of the three sets of respondents who are the teenagers, non-professionals, and professionals. It also includes the number of respondents as well as the percentage. Majority of the teenage respondents belonged to families who were living below poverty line while majority of the non-professionals belonged to families who were living within poverty line. On the other hand, professionals had higher chances of getting high compensation compared to non-professionals who have fewer chances in applying for greener pastures or high positions in the government or any private companies.

Table 4 Respondents' Church Affiliation

TEENAGERS			NON-PROFESSIONALS			PROFESSIONALS		
Church Affiliation	Respondents (N)	Percentage (%)	Church Affiliation	Respondents (N)	Percentage (%)	Church Affiliation	Respondents (N)	Percentage (%)
1. Roman Catholic	81	60.90%	1. Roman Catholic	102	76.69%	Roman Catholic	81	60.90%
2. Seventh-day Adventist	23	17.29%	2. Seventh-day Adventist	11	8.27%	2. Seventh-day Adventist	31	23.31%
3. Iglesia ni Cristo	15	11.28%	3. Iglesia ni Cristo	7	5.265%	3. Iglesia ni Cristo	3	2.26%
4. Jehova's Witness	2	1.51%	4. Jehova's Witness	—	—	4. Jehova's Witness	4	3.00%
5. Baptist	7	5.26%	5. Baptist	8	6.02%	5. Baptist	11	8.28
6. Others	5	3.76%	6. Others	5	3.76%	6. Others	3	2.26%
TOTAL	133	100%	TOTAL	133	100%	TOTAL	133	100%

Table 4 presents the church affiliation of the three sets of respondents which are the teenagers, non-professionals and professionals. Table showed that 81 or 60.90% were Roman Catholic from teenagers and professional respondents while from the non-professional respondents, out of 133, 102 or 76.69% were Roman Catholic. This implies that majority of the respondents are Roman Catholic.

Table 5 Respondents' Educational Attainment

TEENAGERS			NON-PROFESSIONALS			PROFESSIONALS		
Educational Attainment	Respondents (N)	Percentage (%)	Educational Attainment	Respondents (N)	Percentage (%)	Educational Attainment	Respondents (N)	Percentage (%)
Elementary Level	—	—	Elementary Level	1	0.75%	Elementary Level	—	—
Elementary Graduate	3	2.26%	Elementary Graduate	1	0.75%	Elementary Graduate	—	—
High School Level	57	42.865%	High School Level	15	11.28%	High School Level	—	—
High School Graduate	38	28.57%	High School Graduate	53	39.85%	High School Graduate	—	—
College Level	35	26.32%	College Level	63	47.37%	College Level	—	—
College Graduate	—	—	College Graduate	—	—	College Graduate	133	100%
TOTAL	133	100%	TOTAL	133	100%	TOTAL	133	100%

Table 5 showed that out of 133 teenager respondents, 3 or 2.26% of them were elementary graduates, 57 or 42.86% were in high school level, 38 or 28.57% were high school graduates, 35 or 26.32% were in college level. Out of 133 non-professional respondents, 1 or 0.75% was in elementary level, 1 or 0.75% was an elementary graduate, 15 or 11.28% were in high school level,

53 or 39.85% were high school graduate, 63 or 47.37% were in college level. From 133 professional respondents, all were college graduates.

This further implied that there were many teenagers who were not able to go to college and only few got the privilege to finish college due to lack of financial support and other circumstances. Those who were not given the privilege add to the growing population of unfinished or non-degree holder adults.

Table 6 Mean Distribution of the Provisions of RH-Bill Rated by the Teenagers, Non-professionals and Professionals

RESPONDENTS	AWM	INTERPRETATION	RANK
Teenagers	4.028	Strongly Agree	1 st
Non-professionals	3.404	Strongly Agree	2 nd
Professionals	2.9773	Agree	3 rd
GRAND MEAN	3.4697	Strongly Agree	---

LEGEND:

SCALE	CONTINUUM	DESCRIPTIVE EQUIVALENT
5	4.21-5.00	Very Strongly Agree (VSA)
4	3.41-4.20	Strongly Agree (SA)
3	2.61-3.40	Agree (A)
2	1.81-2.60	Disagree (D)
1	1.00-1.81	Strongly Disagree (SD)

Table 6 presents the mean distribution of the provisions of RH-Bill rated by the respondents. The table revealed the responses of the three sets of respondents; for teenager respondents, they strongly agree on the provisions of RH-Bill with an average weighted mean of 4.028, ranked as first among the three respondents. Next is the non-professional respondents who also strongly agree on the provisions with an average weighted mean of 3.404. The least in the rank is the professional respondents which only agree on the provisions for they only have an average weighted mean of 2.9773. In totality, the table showed that majority of the respondents strongly agrees on the provisions of RH-Bill for they had a grand mean of 3.4697 which was respectively described as strongly agree.

This result substantiates with Leepson (2008) who stressed that the majority of people favor some sort of sex instruction in public schools, and this has become an intensely controversial issue because unlike most subjects, sex education is concerned with an especially sensitive and highly personal part of human life. He suggested that sex education should be taught in the classroom.

Table 7 Mean Distribution of the Perceptions of the Teenagers, Non-professionals and Professionals toward RH-Bill

RESPONDENTS	AWM	INTERPRETATION	RANK
Teenagers	3.411	Strongly Agree	1 st
Non-professionals	3.147	Agree	2 nd
Professionals	2.843	Agree	3 rd
GRAND MEAN	3.1336	Agree	---

LEGEND:

SCALE	CONTINUUM	DESCRIPTIVE EQUIVALENT
5	4.21-5.00	Very Strongly Agree (VSA)
4	3.41-4.20	Strongly Agree (SA)
3	2.61-3.40	Agree (A)
2	1.81-2.60	Disagree (D)
1	1.00-1.81	Strongly Disagree (SD)

Table 7 presents the mean distribution of the perception of the teenagers, non-professionals and professionals toward RH Bill. The first on the rank were teenager respondents who deliberately showed very positive response toward RH Bill with an average weighted mean of 3.411 described as strongly agree. The second on the rank were the non-professional respondents who also showed a positive response towards RH Bill with an average weighted mean of 3.147 described as agree. The third on the rank were professional respondents who also showed a positive response towards RH Bill with an average weighted mean of 2.843 described as agree. In short, majority of the three respondents have a positive response on RH Bill for they had a grand mean of 3.1336 described as agree.

This corroborates that reproductive health promotes information on and access to both natural and modern family planning methods, which are medically safe and legally permissible. It assures an enabling environment where women and couples have the freedom of informed choice on the mode of family planning they want to adopt based on their needs, personal convictions and religious beliefs (Philippine Daily Inquirer)

Table 8 Significant Difference between the Perceptions of the Respondents toward RH-Bill

Variables	Mean	SD	X	df	TV	Computed f-test	Interpretation	Action
Teenagers	3.400	0.7053	0.05	$\frac{2}{87}$	2.72	8.68	Significant difference	Ho was rejected
Non-professionals	3.114	0.4312						
Professionals	2.843	0.3461						

Table 8 shows the significant difference between the perceptions of the respondents toward RH-Bill. With a mean of 3.400 and 0.7053 standard deviation for the teenagers, a mean of 3.114 and 0.4312 standard deviation for non-professionals and a mean of 2.843 and 0.3461 standard deviation. Using a 5% significant level or 95% confidence level, the computed analysis of variance resulted to 8.68 that were greater than the critical-value 2.72 which implied the rejection of the null hypothesis. This further means that the perception of the teenagers regarding RH-Bill differs from the professionals and non-professionals and vice-versa. In short, there was a significant difference between the perceptions of the respondents toward RH-Bill.

This concurs with Lagman (2008) that when it comes to sex education, age-appropriate RH education promotes correct sexual values. It will only instill consciousness of freedom of choice but also responsible exercise of one's rights. The UN and countries which have youth sexuality education document its beneficial results: understanding of proper sexual values is promoted; early initiation into sexual relations is delayed; abstinence before marriage is encouraged; multiple-sex partners is avoided; and spread of sexual transmitted diseases is prevented.

IV. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers conclude:

The three set of respondents varies on age, gender, church affiliation and educational attainment and it showed that somehow these factors influence their perceptions regarding RH-Bill as to its implementation. Moreover, the respondents have a positive response towards the provisions of RH-Bill. This shows that people are gradually accepting the concept of RH-Bill for they see the benefits it may bring to their lives. Though they still have apprehension on the effects it may bring to the morality of the people especially to the teenagers.

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