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Emerging Social Issues Division

Social Policy and Population Section

### *Asia-Pacific Population Journal*

**Article**    **The Institutionalization and Medicalization of Family Planning in Tonga**

**Author**    *Henry Ivarature*

**Abstract**    This article takes a historical perspective to examine the institutionalization of family planning in Tonga through its adoption by the medical establishment. It argues that family planning "medicalizes" women at both the macro and micro levels, to exercise social control and play a regulatory function. Aside from a demographic rationale and clinical objectives of family planning, population management assumes an economic and development function implemented on behalf of the state by the medical establishment. In terms of options for public policy, this approach is not only narrow and limited, but also underestimates the power of medicine over women's sexuality and their reproductive environments.

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