

Abstract

Husband-wife communication about Family Planning in Bangladesh: Evidence from the 1996-97 Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey

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The role of husband-wife communication, though an important dimension of family planning behaviour, has remained much less explored in the field of family planning in Bangladesh than any other correlate of contraceptive use.

Using national level data on 7,588 currently married non-sterilized women in Bangladesh from the 1996-97 Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey (BDHS), this paper examines the factors that influence husband-wife communication with regard to the use of family planning methods in Bangladesh. Both bivariate and logistic regressions have been carried out. The dependent variable refers to whether any communication about family planning methods occurred between husband and wife during three months preceding the survey.

More than 50 percent of the women reported that they had discussed family planning with their husbands during the three months preceding the 1996-97 BDHS. Husband-wife communication about family planning was significantly lower among older women, illiterate women, those having no access to mass media, never users of any family planning method, women with fewer children, and women who do not intend to use family planning method within one year.

The results indicate the need for better husband-wife communication for improved contraceptive practice, both in limiting and spacing of births. More efforts should be made to make couples understand the importance of making decisions about family planning jointly and by planning their family through effective verbal communication between them.