

**MARRIED FEMALE ADOLESCENTS' REPRODUCTIVE
HEALTH BEHAVIOR IN BANGLADESH: EVIDENCE FROM
DEMOGRAPHIC AND HEALTH SURVEY**

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to describe the reproductive health situations of married female adolescents in Bangladesh. The main focus of this study is on the contraceptive use and maternal health care use and it identifies socio-economic, demographic and health and family planning service factors associated with these behaviors.

The data used for this cross-sectional study is taken from the 2004 Bangladesh Health and Demographic Survey (BDHS). There were 1563 married female adolescents aged 15-19 included in this study. The current and ever use rate of contraceptives among married female adolescents is 40.8 and 66.7 percent and rate of maternal health care utilizations e.g. ANC, Institutional delivery and assisted delivery by trained health professional of these adolescents is 60.3, 12.9 and 16.0 percent respectively.

Multivariate analysis using logistic regression indicates that economic status, education level of respondents and their husbands, place of residence, current age, number of living children, desire for more children, field worker visitations and exposure to electronic media are found to be significant for contraceptive behavior. Moreover, maternal health care behaviors are influenced by only socio-economic factors. Educated adolescents are more likely to use contraceptives and maternal health care services. Poor adolescents as well as adolescents with lower parity are less likely to use contraceptive and maternal health care services. Poor and illiterate adolescents are also less likely to consult a qualified health professional for delivery care. Those married female adolescents who have been visited by field workers or exposed to media are more likely to use contraception than their counterparts.

It is likely that education and the economic status of married adolescents are the best predictors of reproductive health behaviors in Bangladesh. Study results suggest that emphasis should be given to increase educational opportunities and to create widespread sustainable income generating activities to improve the economic status of married female adolescents.

KEY WORDS: FEMALE ADOLESCENTS / CONTRACEPTIVE USE /
MATERNAL HEALTH CARE USE / BANGLADESH

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