

**FACTORS THAT ENCOURAGE YOUNG FEMALE TO PRACTICE
UNSAFE SEX, BANGLADESH**

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M.A. (HEALTH SOCIAL SCIENCE)

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The purpose of this study was to explore the pattern of unsafe sex, and factors that encourage young girls to practice unsafe sex. Socialist feminist (SF) framework was applied to analyze the data from cases. The study site was located in Bagerhat district town, which is situated in the southwest region of Bangladesh. Being a Muslim dominated country, the conservative Bangladeshi society avoids the responsibility of dealing with premarital unsafe sex in the general population aged, most strongly felt by those aged 14-24 years old.

This study, being qualitative research, used “in-depth interviews” and “non-participant observation” data collection methods. The study population was unmarried young females, aged 14-24. A total of 8 young unmarried females participated in this study.

This study found different patterns of unsafe sex: not using any contraceptive method, using contraceptive methods irregularly, not using condoms with multiple partners, using the safe period method, and using the traditional withdrawal method. The study found that all of the cases are practicing premarital unsafe sex. Premarital unsafe sex happens under the patriarchal system of forced sex including, force by boyfriends, force by parents, force by relatives through false marriage and force by teachers. Unsafe sex and forced sex occur in the context of the patriarchal-capitalist system. The study found that engaging in work, resource independency, resource dependency, affinity to resources, false marriage, taking away family responsibilities, the capitalist system taking away socialization time, demanding patriarchal parents, and giving priority over virginity leads to forced sex under the dual system. On the other hand, denying a girl access to information, denying a girl access to services, dependency upon unreliable men by unmarried girls, men’s refusal to use condoms, parental force to sell sex, no bargaining power with men and devotion to lovers lead to unsafe sex. As a result young girls are powerless to negotiate for sexual behavior.

Unsafe sexual and reproductive health behavior is detrimental to maintaining a quality life. The policy makers should take initiatives to identify the magnitude of this problem among the young population, especially the unmarried one. Thus, in the HIV/AIDS era, more study should be conducted in this area and as appropriate policy and strategy should be formulated for their protection.

KEY WORDS : PREMARITAL UNSAFE SEX/YOUNG FEMALE/FORCE SEX

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