

**HIV/AIDS TRANSMISSION RISKY BEHAVIORS OF MIGRANTS IN
DHAKA CITY: ANALYSIS OF SEXUAL BEHAVIORS**



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In the context of the increased mobility of people inside Bangladesh, people's vulnerability to being exposed to HIV infection and the transmission of HIV/AIDS is an important issue. An in-depth exploration of risky sexual behaviors of both female and male migrants in Dhaka City was undertaken.

A qualitative, exploratory research methodology was employed. Data were collected from October 1998 to January 1999. A purposive sample of 15 migrants (6 females and 9 males) was selected from an area to the west of Dhaka City. Line by line content, contextual and thematic data analyses were performed to reveal the risky sexual behaviors of the migrants in the context of HIV transmission.

Results reveal premarital, extramarital and multi partnered sexual relationships among the migrants. Lack of social bindings and economic freedom led the migrants, particularly the females, to have out of wedlock sexual relationships. Viewing pornographic materials led the male migrants to have sexual intercourse with CSWs. The male migrants had sexual partners back home, either wives or long-term girl friends. They also had multiple sexual partners in Dhaka City. Being away from family and boredom led them to have sexual intercourse as a source of relaxation. For the female migrants, lack of social binding seemed to play an important role in establishing sexual relationships. Data show lack of knowledge about HIV/AIDS transmission and prevention. Condoms are not commonly used for disease prevention. Migrants did know, however, about the contraceptive function of condoms.

Designing HIV/AIDS prevention programs targeting the migrant population by introducing effective Information, Education and Counseling (IEC) materials at river-ports, bus and boat launch terminals, railway stations, as well as in public transportation vehicles to inform the migrants about HIV/AIDS and safe sex practices. Work-place intervention is also recommended to provide proper knowledge regarding HIV/AIDS, as the migrants spend most of their time at work. Condoms should be promoted among male and female migrants. Village-based prevention programs should be launched aimed at providing HIV/AIDS related knowledge to villagers among whom are the long-term or permanent sexual partners of the migrants; this should promote awareness of the preventive measures taken against HIV/AIDS. Viewing and showing of X-rated movies publicly should be restricted and laws should be enforced more strictly.