



**BIRTH SPACING PRACTICE AMONG MARRIED WOMEN  
AFTER FIRST AND SECOND BIRTH IN CHITTAGONG  
AND KHULNA DIVISION IN BANGLADESH:  
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS**

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The study aimed to examine the factors affecting family planning behavior among the women who practice birth spacing after having their child in two regional divisions in Bangladesh. Chittagong division, which is considered a low CPR (contraceptive Prevalence Rate) area and Khulna division a high CPR area. Special attempt was made to analyze difference between younger and older age groups related to patterns of contraceptive use. Moreover, this study hypothesized that socioeconomic factors were the major cause of birth spacing practice in terms of contraceptive use and non-use.

A sample of 852 married women from Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey (BDHS, 1996-97), were used for analysis. A set of workable socioeconomic variables were identified for analysis in this study. The analysis employed frequency distribution and cross-tabulation, as analytical methods.

The findings showed that a relationship between socio-demographic characteristics of respondents i.e., age, number of children, education, sex of the children, occupation, residence, religion, and knowledge about modern contraceptive methods and contraceptive use. Some of these relationship were not statistically significant.

The birth spacing practice was low among the younger age group (age 25 years or less) after their 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> child in above mentioned two divisions. Respondent's education had a little impact on contraceptive use. However, husband's education and occupation, place of residence, namely in urban areas, and those with male child were using contraceptive more for birth spacing. This supported the prior hypothesis. Women's occupation and religion had no impact on birth spacing. Slight may have been due to some local culture and traditional beliefs, which were not included in this study.

Socio-demographic factors were not responsible alone for birth spacing behavior among the women in the two regional divisions, but change in life style helped explain the contraceptive use.

It was recommended that to accelerate the birth spacing practice in Bangladesh, women's social status be upgraded thereby giving the adequate space and level of socioeconomic development in the country, the family planning program would have synergetic effect on contraceptive practice.