

# INTER-SPOUSAL COMMUNICATION ON FAMILY PLANNING AND ITS EFFECT ON CONTRACEPTIVE ADOPTION IN BANGLADESH

**S. M. Mostafa Kamal, MSc, PhD**

Associate Professor

Department of Mathematics

Islamic University

Kushtia-7003

Bangladesh

Email: [kamaliubd@yahoo.com](mailto:kamaliubd@yahoo.com)



## Introduction:

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The recognition that communication between husband and wife plays an important role in determining reproductive preference dates back to at least the 1950s.

The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Cairo in 1994, the donors and policy makers emphasized to involve men in decision making on women's reproductive health, rights and preferences.

It is assumed that in the patriarchal settings women do not have control over their own reproductive behavior, as because men are dominant decision makers within the family.

In patriarchal society, the role of husband-wife communication in fertility preference and in fertility regulation is critical.

## **Rationale of the study:**

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From a family perspective, the first step in a rational process of fertility regulation decision-making involves communication between spouses, suggests the needs to examine inter-spousal communication on family planning and its effect on contraceptive adoption among women.

## **Objectives of the study:**

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The objectives of the study are as follows:

- (i) To examine the prevalence of inter-spousal communication on FP among women of Bangladesh by their background characteristics;
- (ii) To examine the association between socioeconomic characteristics and contraceptive use including inter-spousal communication; and
- (iii) To investigate the effect of inter-spousal communication on contraceptive adoption among couples net of other socioeconomic factors among women in Bangladesh.

## Data and methods:

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### Data source:

Nationally representative 2007 Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey.

**Sample size:** 10,192 currently married women.

### Statistical techniques:

**Bivariate analysis:**

Chi-square tests.

**Multivariate analysis:**

Binary logistic regression.

### Software:

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) v17.

## Results:

**Table 1:** Association between inter-spousal communication and background characteristics

Characteristics	Urban	Rural	National
Current age of women	(-) ***	(-) ***	(-) ***
Husband-wife age difference	(-) ***	(~) ***	(-) ***
Duration of marriage	(~) ***	(~) ***	(~) ***
Number of living children	(∩) ***	(∩) ***	(∩) ***
Have son	ns	ns	ns
Have daughter	ns	ns	ns
Women's education	(+) ***	(+) ***	(+) ***
Residence	---	---	***
Religion	ns	ns	ns
Visited by FPW	(+) ***	(+) ***	(+) ***
Administrative regions	***	***	***
Wealth index	(~) ***	(~) ***	(+) ***
Total	48.8%	44.4%	45.4%

**Note:** Level of significance \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*  $p < 0.05$ ; and <sup>ns</sup> not significant.

## Results:

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Factors associated with inter-spousal communication on FP are:

Positive association:

- Women's level of education.
- Visitations by FPW.
- Wealth index.

Negatively association:

- Current age of women.
- Husband-wife age difference.

Factor showed curvilinear association:

- Duration of marriage.

Factor showed inverted U-shaped association:

- Number of living children.

Factor showed heterogeneous association:

- Administrative region.

Inter-spousal communication was more prevalent in urban than rural areas.

## Results:

**Table 2:** Results of logistic regression analyses showing the odds ratios (OR) with 95% confidence interval of contraceptive use among urban women of Bangladesh

Characteristics	Model I	Model II	Model III
Discussed FP with husband (ref: never)			
Once or twice	6.53 (5.29-8.05) <sup>***</sup>	8.07 (6.39-10.20) <sup>***</sup>	8.09 (6.37-1.27) <sup>***</sup>
Frequently	10.65 (7.14-15.86) <sup>***</sup>	16.54 (10.79-25.37) <sup>***</sup>	16.16 (1.45-25.00) <sup>***</sup>
Have son (ref: no)		2.52 (1.96-3.24) <sup>***</sup>	2.65 (2.05-3.43) <sup>***</sup>
Have daughter (ref: no)		1.97 (1.55-2.50) <sup>***</sup>	2.13 (1.67-2.72) <sup>***</sup>
Women's education (ref: no education)			
Primary			0.80 (0.60-1.06) <sup>‡</sup>
Secondary			0.72 (0.53-0.97) <sup>*</sup>
Higher			1.09 (0.73-1.62)
Religion (ref: Islam)			1.43 (0.99-2.06) <sup>*</sup>
Visited by FPW (ref: no)			1.96 (1.35-2.83) <sup>***</sup>
Wealth index (ref: poorest)			
Poorer			1.59 (0.88-2.86) <sup>‡</sup>
Middle			1.28 (0.74-2.21)
Richer			1.50 (0.89-2.51) <sup>‡</sup>
Richest			1.59 (0.96-2.63) <sup>*</sup>

*Note:* Level of significance <sup>\*\*\*</sup>  $p < 0.001$ ; <sup>\*\*</sup>  $p < 0.01$ ; <sup>\*</sup>  $p < 0.05$ ; and <sup>‡</sup>  $< 0.10$ .

## Results:

**Table 2:** Results of logistic regression analyses showing the odds ratios (OR) with 95% confidence interval of contraceptive use among rural women of Bangladesh

Characteristics	Model I	Model II	Model III
Discussed FP with husband (ref: never)			
Once or twice	6.62 (5.94-7.38)***	7.85 (6.97-8.83)***	7.23 (6.39-8.17)***
Frequently	8.91 (7.29-10.88)***	12.06 (9.75-14.91)***	11.20 (8.99-13.94)***
Have son (ref: no)		2.30 (2.01-2.63)***	2.66 (2.31-3.06)***
Have daughter (ref: no)		1.60 (1.41-1.81)***	1.78 (1.56-2.03)***
Women's education (ref: no education)			
Primary			1.06 (0.92-1.21)
Secondary			1.06 (0.90-1.24)
Higher			1.29 (0.93-1.80)‡
Religion (ref: Islam)			1.37 (1.14-1.65)***
Visited by FPW (ref: no)			2.68 (2.29-3.13)***
Region (ref: Barisal)			
Chittagong			0.57 (0.45-0.72)***
Dhaka			0.92 (0.73-1.15)
Khulna			1.59 (1.24-2.05)***
Rajshahi			1.58 (1.26-1.98)***
Sylhet			0.33 (0.25-0.45)***

*Note:* Level of significance \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*  $p < 0.05$ ; and ‡  $< 0.10$ .

## Results:

**Table 3:** Results of logistic regression analyses showing the odds ratios (OR) with 95% confidence interval of contraceptive use among women in national level of Bangladesh

Characteristics	Model I	Model II	Model III
Discussed FP with husband (ref: never)			
Once or twice	6.61 (6.00-7.28) <sup>***</sup>	7.90 (7.12-8.79) <sup>***</sup>	7.41 (6.64-8.27) <sup>***</sup>
Frequently	9.31 (7.79-11.13) <sup>***</sup>	12.95 (10.72-15.66) <sup>***</sup>	12.06 (9.92-6.64) <sup>***</sup>
Have son (ref: no)		2.32 (2.06-2.61) <sup>***</sup>	2.64 (2.33-2.99) <sup>***</sup>
Have daughter (ref: no)		1.65 (1.48-1.85) <sup>***</sup>	1.84 (1.64-2.07) <sup>***</sup>
Residence (ref: urban)			0.69 (0.60-0.78) <sup>***</sup>
Women's education (ref: no education)			
Primary			1.01 (0.89-1.14)
Secondary			0.97 (0.84-1.12)
Higher			1.24 (0.97-1.58) <sup>***</sup>
Religion (ref: Islam)			1.37 (1.16-1.62) <sup>***</sup>
Visited by FPW (ref: no)			2.54 (2.20-2.93) <sup>***</sup>
Region (ref: Barisal)			
Chittagong			0.59 (0.48-0.73) <sup>***</sup>
Dhaka			0.94 (0.76-1.15)
Khulna			1.50 (1.19-1.88) <sup>***</sup>
Rajshahi			1.50 (1.22-1.84) <sup>***</sup>
Sylhet			0.34 (0.26-0.44) <sup>***</sup>

*Note:* Level of significance <sup>\*\*\*</sup>  $p < 0.001$ ; <sup>\*\*</sup>  $p < 0.01$ ; <sup>\*</sup>  $p < 0.05$ ; and <sup>†</sup>  $< 0.10$ .

# Results:

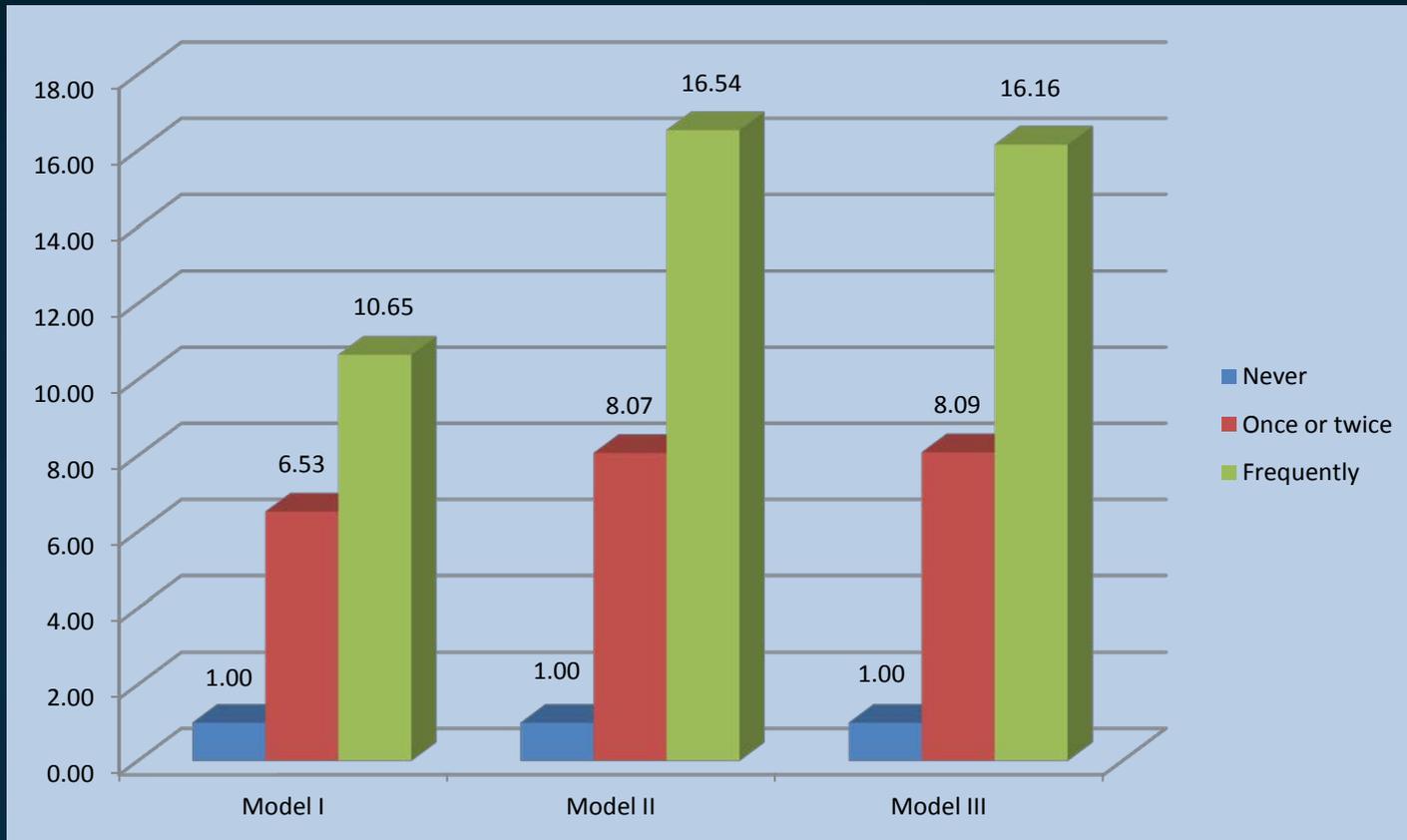


Figure: Odds ratios of contraceptive use for inter-spousal communication

## Results:

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Multivariate logistic regression yielded significantly increased risk on contraceptive use for:

Inter-spousal communication on FP.

Women who had at least one son.

Women who had at least one daughter.

Urban women.

Women with higher education.

Non-Muslim women.

Women who were visited by FPWs; and

Women from Khulna and Rajshahi divisions.

## Policy implications:

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- ★ Greater efforts are needed to influence the husbands' awareness of and attitude towards family planning as husbands play a decisive role in their wives' reproductive choices and behavior in the patriarchal society like Bangladesh.
- ★ The programs should not focus only on women; it should also address men as principal stakeholders.
- ★ Men should be inspired to confer opportunities to their wives to participate in decision-making process including fertility regulation.
- ★ Efforts should be made to enhance home visitation of family planning workers and door-step delivery services should be continued targeting the poor and backward regions of the country.
- ★ Couples should be inspired to talk about family size including other familial issues that they may understand each other's views and attitudes.

**Thank you all**