

Reproductive Health Care Services of Rural Women in Bangladesh: A Case Study of Belief and Attitude

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Summary

Reproductive health care services in Bangladesh are inadequate to say the least. Rural women have little or no access to health care services and remain reluctant to consult a doctor due to lack of encouragement from family members and their tendency to rely heavily on traditional healer's medicine. As a result, the maternal mortality rate is 240 deaths per 100,000 live births in Bangladesh (UNICEF, 2012). Despite the acknowledgement of high rate of mortality by the government and non-government organizations (NGOs), there is inadequate research in regard to the causes such as beliefs and attitudes towards reproductive health among Bangladeshi women. This study examined two research questions. The first research question of the study is what are the beliefs and attitudes of rural Bangladeshi women towards reproductive health? The second research question of the study is how these beliefs do and attitudes shape rural women's understanding and their subsequent decisions about their reproductive health and the services that are available?

This study used two tiered qualitative research methodology employing in-depth one-to-one interviews and focus group discussions using semi-structured questions; to confirm and validate the data collected from three villages in Rajshahi, Bangladesh. During the fieldwork 30 one-to-one interviews and three focus group discussions were conducted using snowball sampling technique. The findings reveal three critical themes regarding rural women's belief and attitudes toward reproductive health - a strong belief in traditional healers; a firm belief of following in-laws and seniors/elders, and superstitions regarding fertility, pregnancy and child-birth.

Publications from this research

Referred Conference Proceedings

Tarafder, T., Rashid, T. & Sultan, P. (2012), “Reproductive health care services in Bangladesh: A case study of beliefs and attitudes of Indigenous women” Proceedings of the Australia and New Zealand Regional Science Association International (ANZRSAI) Conference, University of Wollongong, pp. 283-295, 4-7 December, Australia (**Received the highly commended award 2012**).

Tarafder, T., Sultan, P. & Rashid, T. (2013), “Reproductive health beliefs and perceptions among slum women in Bangladesh: Is this a challenge to MDG 5 health goal? Proceedings of the Australia and New Zealand Regional Science Association International (ANZRSAI) Conference, University of Southern Queensland, 3-6 December, Australia (**Received the best conference paper award 2013**).

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