

Nosaka, Akiko. 2000. "Effects of child gender preference on contraceptive use in rural Bangladesh." *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 31(4):485-501.

### **Research and Theoretical**

In Bangladesh, boys are preferred over girls because they are viewed as having a greater socioeconomic potential, and males are viewed as being the head of the household. Women depend on their husbands or sons in order to own property and they depend on them for their physical well-being. The researcher is studying how sex-selective desires are associated to contraceptive usage. The study explores whether the son preferences are different from areas where contraceptives are used and where they are not. The data was collected in 11 village treatment areas and in six village comparison areas. It was found that in the treatment villages a woman's desire to have a son is more strongly associated with contraceptive usage than her desire to have a girl is; whereas, the control villages did not support the finding. In the treatment villages' and the control villages' women have a stronger desire to have boys than girls, and they desire to have more boys than girls. There is a strong association between religious affiliation and contraceptive usage, but it may be more strongly associated with a family's religiosity.

### **Policy Implementations**

The study suggests that religiosity needs to be examined in Bangladesh in order to understand how much it influences contraceptive usage. Religious organizations could be targeted by the government in order to reduce sex-selective practices in the culture if it is one of the strongest predictors of whether or not women use contraceptives. The government could change laws to give women more equal power with men by allowing them to own land, and by allowing them to work more in the public sector of society.

Ronnie Miller