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Emerging Social Issues Division

Social Policy and Population Section

Asia-Pacific Population Journal

Article **Influence of Son Preference on Contraceptive Use in Bangladesh**

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Abstract This article, based on 1996-1997 Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey data, investigates the effect of son preference on contraceptive use among 6,996 currently married women aged 12-49 years who had at least one child. The study participants had an average age of 30.3 years and had a mean of 3.1 children. The analyses revealed that the sex composition of the surviving children significantly influenced women's decisions regarding contraceptive use at lower parities, but did not attain statistical significance among families with four or more children. The study finds that son preference has a moderately adverse effect on contraceptive use among women with one to three children. Future fertility could be reduced if the couples' inclination towards sons were diminished at the earlier stages of family formation.

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