

## Exploring Sexual Behavior among Unmarried Male Youth in Bangladesh: A Cross-Sectional Study

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**Abstract :** Little is known about the sexual behavior of male youth, particularly unmarried young men in Bangladesh as most of the sexual and reproductive health and rights-related research and intervention are mainly focused on females and married couples. To understand the unmarried youth's sexual behavior, data from a nationwide survey conducted in all 64 districts of Bangladesh were analyzed. Using multistage systematic random sampling, a survey was conducted among 11,113 male youth aged 15-24 years from May-August, 2019. This article analyzed and presented findings of the sexual behavior of unmarried respondents based on the data collected from 10,026 unmarried male youth. Findings showed that 18% had ever experience of sexual relationship, and the reported mean age of first sexual intercourse was 16.5years. For unmarried male youth, those who had a sexual experience, their first sexual partners were female friends/classmate (57%), female neighbors (16%), and female sex workers (12%), relatives (6%) and girlfriends with whom they had love relationship (4%). However, about 36% reported that they had a love relationship with girlfriends, and among them, 23% reported that they had sexual intercourse with their girlfriend. Those who had sexual relations with their girlfriend, 47% reported that they did not use the condom in their last sex with their girlfriend. Furthermore, 29% reported that they had sexual relationships with others besides their girlfriends. Other reported partners were female sex workers (32%), neighbors (29%), female friends (19%), relatives (12%), and cousins (5%). Also, 46% reported that they did not even use the condom during sex with other partners. About 9% used some sort of sexual stimulant to increase their libido. Among the respondents, 376 reported that they bought sex in the last six months, and the mean expenditure of buying sex for the respondent was 1,140 Taka (13.46 US Dollar). Though premarital sexual relations are not socially accepted, findings showed a large portion of male youth are engaged in these relationships and risky sexual behavior. Lack of awareness of sexual and reproductive health, unprotected sexual intercourse, use of the drug during sexual intercourse also increase the threats to health. Thus these findings are important to understand the sexual behavior of male youth in policy and programmatic implications. Therefore, to ensure a healthy sexual life and wellbeing, an immediate and culturally sensitive sexual health promotion intervention is needed for male youth in Bangladesh.

**Keywords :** Bangladesh, male youth, sexual and reproductive health, sexual behavior

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