

Women and Food Security: Evidence from Bangladesh Demographic Health Survey 2011

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Abstract : Introduction: Food security refers to the availability of food and a person's access to it. It is a complex sustainable development issue, which is closely related to under-nutrition. Food security, in turn, can widely affect the living standard, and is rooted in poverty and leads to poor health, low productivity, low income, food shortage, and hunger. The study's aim was to identify the most vulnerable women who are in insecure positions. Method: 17,842 married women were selected for analysis from the Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey 2011. Food security defined as dichotomous variables of skipped meals and eaten less food at least once in the last year. The outcome variables were cross-tabulated with women's socio-demographic characteristics and chi2 test was applied to see the significance. Logistic regression models were applied to identify the most vulnerable groups in terms of food security. Result: Only 18.5% of women said that they ever had to skip meals in the last year. 45.7% women from low socioeconomic status had skip meal for at least once whereas only 3.6% were from women with highest socioeconomic status. Women meal skipping was ranged from 1.4% to 34.2% by their educational status. 22% of women were eaten less food during the last year. The rate was higher among the poorest (51.6%), illiterate (39.9%) and household have no electricity connection (38.1) in compared with richest (4.4%), higher educated (2.0%), and household has electricity connection (14.0%). The logistic regression analysis indicated that household socioeconomic status, and women education show strong gradients to skip meals. Poorest have had higher odds (20.9) than richest and illiterate women had 7.7 higher odds than higher educated. In terms of religion, Christianity was 2.3 times more likely to skip their meals than Islam. On the other hand, a similar trend was observed in our other outcome variable eat less food. Conclusion: In this study we able to identify women with lower economics status and women with no education were mostly suffered group from starvation.

Keywords : food security, hunger, under-nutrition, women

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