

Prevalence and demographic factors of betel quid chewing among people aged >18 years in Bangladesh: findings from national health survey

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Study Title: “Prevalence and demographic factors of betel quid chewing among people aged ≥ 18 years in Bangladesh: findings from national health survey”

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Study Title:

Prevalence and demographic factors of betel quid chewing among people aged ≥ 18 years in Bangladesh: findings from national health survey

Background and Objective: Around 10% of world's population (roughly 600 million people), chew areca nut in conjunction with betel leaf. Betel quid chewing is a growing public health concern in Bangladesh. A nationwide survey has revealed that about 23.5% of men and 25.2% of women chew betel quid. The aim of this paper is to project the current prevalence of betel quid chewing along with the associated socio demographic factors for both males and females which will help us identify any vulnerable group for further future policy making in addressing this problem.

Methods: A national cross sectional survey was conducted between March and June 2016. Multistage cluster sampling method, considering probability-proportional-to-size (PPS) both for urban and rural samples, were applied in this survey. A pretested standard semi-structured questionnaire was used to gather information for all the households.

Result:

In Bangladesh there is a betel quid chewing prevalence rate of 31.4 % in persons aged 18 and above and males and females living in rural areas have a higher prevalence rate (36.8% and 32.4% respectively) in comparison to urban areas. The elderly population had a high prevalence rate where more than half (56.09/100 population) of males aged 60 and above were at an 11.98 times greater risk of becoming habituated to betel quid chewing than the young. Similarly, for elderly females (60 and above) the prevalence rate was 59.4/100 population. Occupation wise male and female agricultural workers (male 45%, female 34.8%) and laborers (male 37%, female 41.5%) had a high prevalence while students had a 58% lower risk of becoming habituated to chewing betel compared to the reference group. People with informal (*Maktab*) and primary education were at a 1.723 and 1.147 times respective risk of chewing betel quid rather than the illiterate people. Non-smokers had a 47% lesser risk of getting habituated to chewing betel quid compared to smokers.

Conclusion:

Several previous population-based epidemiological studies have overlooked or underestimated the threat to health from chewing betel quid. This research will go deep into extracting prevalence data of betel nut chewing and study associated socio demographic pattern for identifying possible future intervention.