



RED SEMINAR

The Effects of Reading Glasses on Labour Market Outcomes and Quality of Life: Evidence from Bangladesh

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◀ Research Findings Presentation ▶

Abstract

In Bangladesh, Presbyopia or near vision problem is considered as an emerging public health concern, as one-fifth of its population are suffering from it. It is estimated that there are about 8.9 million Presbyopic patients in Bangladesh. Since 2006, BRAC and Vision Spring have been working to reduce near vision problem among the Presbyopic patients in the country through affordable reading glasses. BRAC-RED in collaboration with Vision Spring has initiated this study to assess the impact of reading glasses on economic returns as well as the quality of life (QoL) of the poor people. The study covers a total of 1,086 individuals, randomly assigning them to treatment and control group, equally. Our findings reveal that the intervention increases participants' earnings by about 18% and productivity by 10%. The study also shows that treatment women are less likely to face difficulty in performing household chores (such as cleaning premises, cooking, washing clothes etc.) compared to their control counterparts. Moreover, our results show that the QoL of study participants has improved significantly due to the intervention. For example, treatment individuals are less likely to feel ashamed or embarrassed compared to their control counterparts. These findings will help formulate policy strategies in promoting reading glasses among poor communities globally, where the presence of eye professionals is scarce.

Chair: Dr Md Mahfuzar Rahman, Programme Head, Health, Nutrition and WASH, BRAC RED