



Research in

ISSN : P-2409-0603, E-2409-9325

AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK and FISHERIES

An Open Access Peer Reviewed Journal

Open Access

Res. Agric. Livest. Fish.

Research Article

Vol. 5, No. 3, December 2018 : 391-397.

LIVELIHOOD STATUS OF WOMEN WORKERS IN SHRIMP SECTOR AT SOUTH WESTERN REGION IN BANGLADESH

Nasrin Nahar Begum^{1*}, Md. Nazrul Islam Khan², Sk. Shafiqur Rahman³ and Sheikh Nazrul Islam²

¹Food and Nutrition Department, KCC Women's College, Khulna, Bangladesh; ²Institute of Nutrition and Food Science, Dhaka University, Bangladesh; ³District Fisheries Officer, Department of Fisheries (DoF), Jessore, Bangladesh.

*Corresponding author: Nasrin Nahar Begum; E-mail: nasrin.kccwc@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Received
12 September, 2018

Accepted
20 September, 2018

Online
27 December, 2018

Key words

Hygiene
Life style
Shrimp sector
Women workers

In Bangladesh, women are engaging in shrimp sector to support themselves and their family as well. Current study was designed to study the socio-economic and hygienic status of the women working in shrimp sector (employee) in South Western region in Bangladesh (N=150). The study also selected women who are not working in shrimp sector (non-employee) in the same community (N=75) to evaluate impacts of shrimp industry on women. In socio-economic background analysis of the women, medium household size (46% and 65.3%), primary education level (63.3% and 48%), married (79.3% and 97.3%), drinking tube-well water (93.3 % and 92%) and polli electric facility (77.3% and 84%) was dominant in both cases. Average monthly household income and expenditure was found better among the employees (9235 ± 4042 Tk and 765 5± 3032 Tk, respectively) than the non-employees (9068 ± 3113 Tk and 7208 ± 2147 Tk, respectively). In summary, the study observed and suggesting that life style and hygienic condition is better among the women engaged in shrimp sector than the non-employee in the same community.

To cite this article: Begum N N, M N I Khan, S S Rahman and S N Islam, 2018. Livelihood status of women workers in shrimp sector at south western region in Bangladesh. Res. Agric. Livest. Fish. 5 (3): 391-397.



This is an open access article licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License

www.agroid-bd.org/ralf, E-mail: editor.ralf@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Shrimp remains as one of the most popular and highest valued seafood selections throughout the world. In Bangladesh shrimp and prawn (known as white gold) are important as food and consider as the second largest export commodity. About 1 million people are engaged in shrimp farming in the areas excluding fisherman and people working in the processing plants (DoF, 2015). Shrimp farming is mostly concentrated in south-western Bangladesh in the Khulna, Bagerhat and Satkhira district represents about 75% of the country's total shrimp farming area (Rahman et al., 2017).

Women are involving in aquaculture sector to support their family. In Bangladesh more than 1.4 million women are working in aquaculture sector mostly in low-status, low-paid and arduous jobs (Neate, 2018). Shrimp farming activities has significant impact on environment and economy of the country (Rahman et al., 2013). At the village level it has enhanced women position in families and societies through economic independence (Ahmed et al., 2010). The shrimp processing plants in South-western Bangladesh offers real prospects for women empowerment in the region. Women are heavily involved in shrimp processing plants in Bangladesh to clean and behead prawns, as well as for freezing and packaging. As for example, 80% of casual laborers in shrimp processing plants are women (Neate, 2018). Therefore it is important to study and determine the life style of the women involved in this sector to assess, evaluate and improve the current situation. Literatures on livelihood status of fisherman in different regions of Bangladesh are very rich. On the contrary, women employee's life style of shrimp sector has not been studied yet. But, the role and economic status of women are key determinants of the food security and nutritional status of households (Smith et al., 2003). Considering the issues, current study is designed to study livelihood status of the women has involved in shrimp industry. The study would be beneficial for the policy makers, researchers and students to understand the current socioeconomic status of women working and contributing in commercial shrimp sector.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study site and primary data collection

The survey was conducted among the women working in shrimp industries in South-western region of Bangladesh. To understand the scenario the study surveyed 150 employed women and 75 non-employed women (Table 1). The respondents were selected randomly from the shrimp processing plants. We conducted semi-structured questionnaire survey at respondents' home and direct observation to collect primary data from women labourers.

Secondary data collection

Secondary data was collected from journals, textbooks and newspapers published in Bengali and English language. Government organizations (GOs) and non-government organizations (NGOs) located in the study area were also visited to collect secondary data.

Statistical analyses

Raw data, collected from the field, were processed by removing illegal codes, reducing logical inconsistencies, dropping improbabilities and by solving ambiguities. Survey data and laboratory data were tabulated and analyzed using MS Excel 2010 and MS Word 2010 (Microsoft Corporation, USA).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-economic background

In the study area, the socio-economic parameters of the employee and non-employee showed that medium household size (46% and 65.3%, respectively), married (79.3% and 97.3%, respectively), drinking tube-well water (93.3% and 92 %, respectively) and polli electricity (77.3% and 84%, respectively) the highest percentage (Table 2). Mean household size was 3.97 and 4.47, respectively. House ownership was higher

among non-employee than employee. A total of 52% of the fishermen in Rajshahi had 4-5 family members (Ali et al., 2008) and 65% of the fisherman had 4-6 family members in south-western region of Bangladesh (Das et al., 2015). Zarin (2014) reported that 40% and 17.5% of the women workers in shrimp processing industry are married and unmarried, respectively. The percentage of married workers in our study was higher than Zarin (2014). In a study, 61% and 83% of fisherman at Shirajgonj district had own house and own tube-well, respectively (Rahman et al., 2014). Compare to the fisherman of different regions of Bangladesh the shrimp industry women found a better life style. Other social advantages in terms of access to safe drinking water, sanitary facility and electricity were available among the respondents.

Age distribution and education

Current study found that 48.7% of the employees were 25-34 years old whereas 42.7% of the non-employees were ≥ 45 years old (Figure 1). In our study, most of the respondents completed primary study. The study found that 63.3% of the employees were completed primary study whereas 48.0% of the non-employees were completed primary study (Figure 2). No respondent was found \geq Higher secondary. Zarin (2014) reported that 29.2%, 43.3% and 13.3% of shrimp industry women were 21-30, 31-40 and 41-50 years old, respectively. Moreover, the study also mentioned that 65%, 30% and 5% respondents were in illiterate, primary and secondary education category. Our study suggests that educational status of the women workers are increasing. This might be due to the increasing educational facilities from GOs and NGOs.

Income and expenditure

Income and expenditure was higher among the shrimp industry women (Figure 3). Only 15% of the respondent's income was above 3500 BDT that is much lower than the current research. In our study average income of the respondent's was 4103 ± 349 BDT. Employee's income (4103 ± 349 BDT) was higher than non-employee's income (3099 ± 1162 BDT). Income level of the shrimp industry women is very low for the survival and support family (Halim, 2004). Zarin (2014) found that 62.5% of the employee income was below 2000 BDT and only 15% of had income 3500 BDT and above. In the current study, expenditure was also higher among the employees.

Table 1. Study site and number of respondents in the areas

Study Area	Strata	Number of respondents	
		Employee	Non-employee
Khulna	Khulna Sadar		
	Rupsha		
	Batighata	123	60
	Doulatpur		
Bagerhat	Kachua		
	Fakirhat	27	15
Total		150	75

Table 2. Socio-economic background of the respondents

Parameters		Respondents			
		Employee (150)		Non-employee (75)	
		No.	%	No.	%
Household size	Small (2-3)	62	41.3	12	16.0
	Medium (4-5)	69	46.0	49	65.3
	Large (≥ 6)	19	12.7	14	18.7
Marital status	Unmarried	2	1.3	1	1.3
	Married	119	79.3	73	97.3
	Widow	11	7.3	0	0.0
	Left/separated	11	7.3	1	1.3
	Divorced	7	4.7	0	0.0
House ownership	Own	55	36.7	39	52.0
	Rented	89	59.3	36	48.0
	Others	6	4.0	0	0.0
Main material of the house	Wood	16	10.7	6	8.0
	Concrete	54	36.0	27	36.0
	Clay	80	53.3	42	56.0
Drinking water source	Tube-well	140	93.3	69	92.0
	Tap water	6	4.0	0	0.0
	Others	4	2.7	6	8.0
Ownership of drinking water source	Own	46	30.7	9	12.0
	Government, NGO and others	104	69.3	66	88.0
	Polli electricity	116	77.3	63	84.0
Lighting facility	Kerosene lamp	27	18.0	6	8.0
	Others	7	4.7	6	8.0
	Well based	111	74.0	33	44.0
Sanitation facility	Flash based	6	4.0	3	4.0
	Others	33	22.0	39	52.0

Table 3. Maintaining hygiene at home during cooking, eating and others

Parameters		Respondents			
		Employee (150)		Non-employee (75)	
		No.	%	No.	%
Clean house and kitchen inside	Clean	121	80.7	51	68.0
	Partly clean	27	18.0	21	28.0
	Dirty	2	1.3	3	4.0
Separate kitchen	Yes	98	65.3	54	72.0
	No	52	34.7	21	28.0
Ingredients wash during cooking	Before cutting or peeling	18	12	34	45.3
	After cutting or peeling	42	28.0	21	28.0
	Before and after cutting or peeling	90	60.0	20	26.7
Everyday tooth brushing	Yes	140	93.3	66	88.0
	No	10	6.7	9	12.0
Garbage disposal	Dustbin	115	76.7	37	49.3
	Open space	27	18.0	24	32
	Here and there	8	5.3	14	18.7

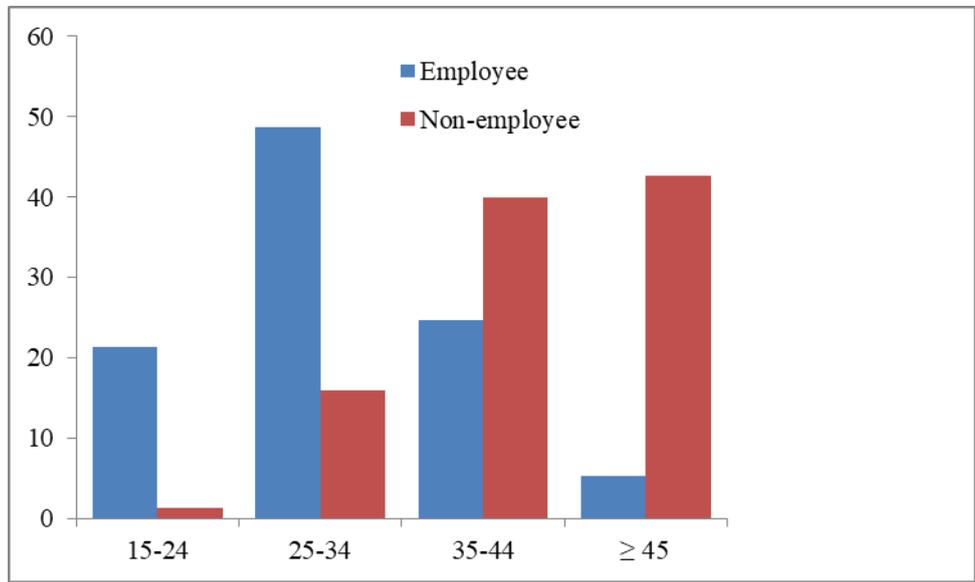


Figure 1. Age distribution of the respondents

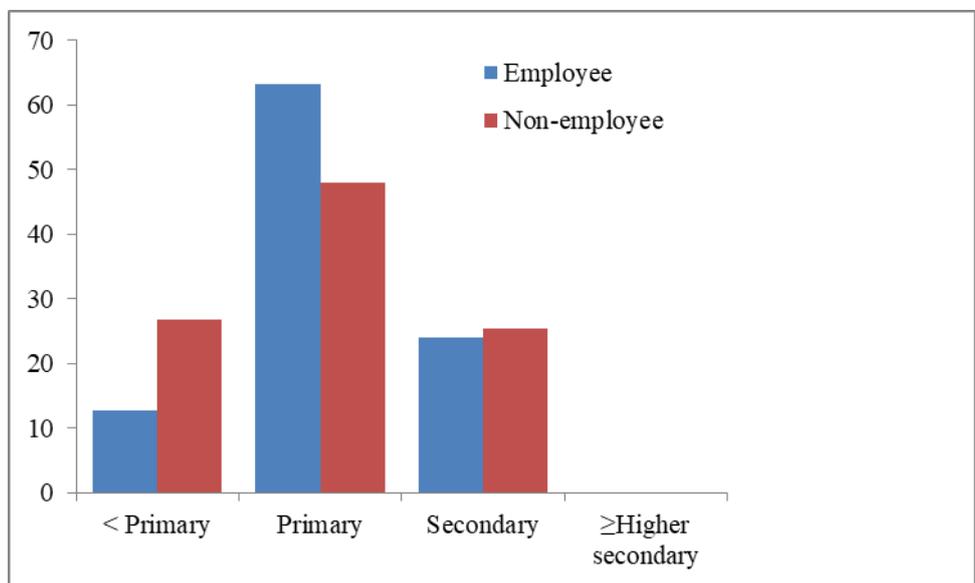


Figure 2. Educational status of the respondents

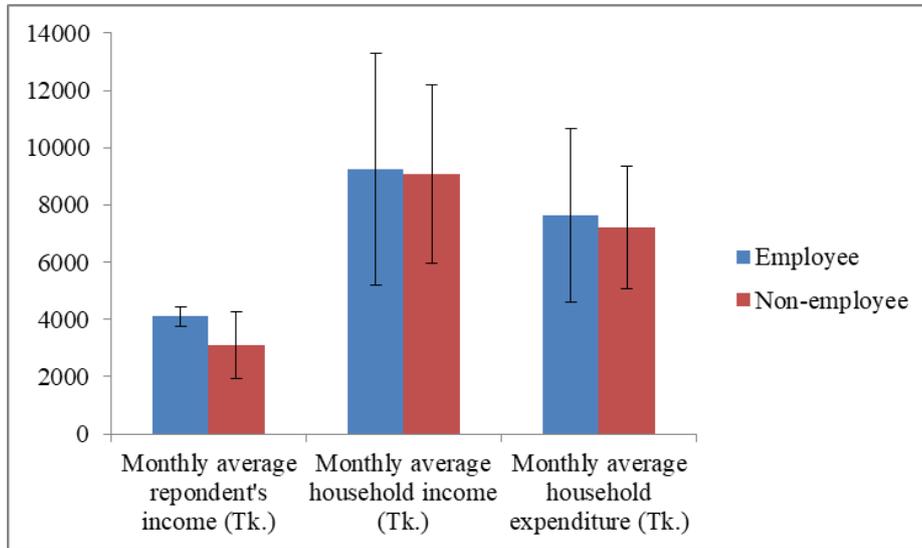


Figure 3. Monthly income and expenditure of the respondents

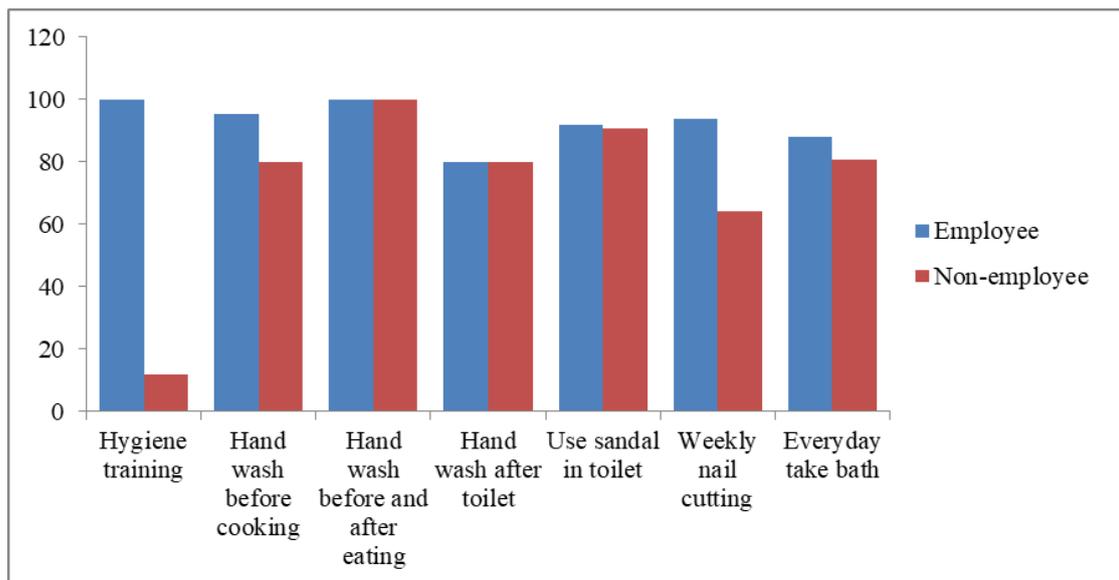


Figure 4. Hygiene condition at home during cooking, eating, toilet and others

Maintaining hygiene at household

The project conducted survey to study hygiene during cooking, eating and others (Table 3). Most of the household was found clean and separate kitchen. Majority percent of the employee and non-employee respondents had knowledge on maintain hygiene during cooking, hand wash during eating and after toilet, cutting nails etc. (Figure 4). Current study observed that 100% employee and non-employee was hand before and after eating. Among the employee, 92% use sandal in toilet, 94% weekly clean and cut nail and 88% everyday take bath. On the other hand, among the non-employee 90.7% use sandal in toilet, 64% weekly cut nail and 80.7% women everyday take shower. The results revealed that maintaining hygiene was better among the employee women. This might be due to training on maintaining hygiene in the factory (100%) and this may influenced them.

CONCLUSION

Our study found that, employee women lead a better life than non-employee since livelihood levels and standards are influenced by income level, education and social changes. The new knowledge would help to formulate strategies and policies to address the major constraints to improve the lifestyle of the community. The study recommend to develop appropriate tool to improve socioeconomic status of shirmp sector women certainly offer an improved option and add a significant value to the sector. Policy makers and regulatory agencies would be benefited from being better informed regarding the livelihood and hygeine information of shrimp industry women. More research and effective actions should be implemented to train the women in order to improve their working efficiency for better production and life style.

REFERENCES

1. Ahmed AU, RV Hill, LC Smith, DM Wiesmann and T Frankenberger, 2007. The world's most deprived characteristics and causes of extreme poverty and hunger. 2020 discussion paper 43, pp. 130.
2. Ali MH, MD Hossain, ANGM Hasan and MA Bashar, 2008. Assessment of the livelihood status of the fish farmers in some selected areas of Bagmara upazilla under Rajshahi district. *Journal of Bangladesh Agricultural University*, 6: 367-374.
3. Das MR, S Ray, U Kumar, S Begum and SR Tarafdar, 2015. Livelihood assessment of the fishermen community in the south west region of Bangladesh. *Journal of Experimental Biology and Agricultural Sciences*, 3: 353-361.
4. DoF, 2012. National Fisheries Week Souvenir-2015. Department of Fisheries, Matshaya Bhaban, Dhaka.
5. Halim S, 2004. Marginalization or empowerment? Women's involvement in shrimp cultivation and shrimp processing plants in Bangladesh. *Women, Gender and Discrimination*: 95-112.
6. Neate P, 2018. Women in shrimp processing in Bangladesh: challenges and ways forward. Available in: <http://blog.worldfishcenter.org/2018/03/women-in-shrimp-processing-in-bangladesh-challenges-and-ways-forward/> (Accessed: 05 August, 2018).
7. Rahman MC, MA Salam, NMF Rahman, MM Rahman and MM Hossain 2013. Present status and potentiality of shrimp in Bangladesh. *Australian Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences*, 7: 281-286.
8. Rahman KMM, M Nahar, RK Adhikary, NS Khan, MM Rahman, M Asadujjaman and MA Rahman, 2003. Socio-economic condition and occupation migration of fisherman of the Jamuna River under Shirajgonj district in Bangladesh. *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research*, 22: 633-638.
9. Rahman MM, MA Islam, MA Islam, SA Haque and KAU Ahmed, 2017. Investigation of semi-intensive culture system of shrimp with special reference to soil-water characteristics of Bangladesh. *International Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Studies*, 5: 42-49.
10. Smith LC, Ramakrishnan U, Ndiaye A, Haddad L and Martorell R, 2003. 'The importance of women's status for child nutrition in developing countries' Research report 131, International Food Policy Research Institute, Washington, DC. pp. 164.
11. Zarin R, 2014. 'Livelihood activities of female labor engaged in shrimp farming in south-western region of Bangladesh', *Journal of Business and Technology (Dhaka)*, 9: 22.