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## Assessment of the livelihood status of fish retailer at new market in Patuakhali district

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Mohammad Ali and Md. Mukhlesur Rahman**

### Abstract

To determine the socioeconomic condition of fish retailers a study was undertaken from August to October 2015 in New Market, Patuakhali. It was found that most of the retailers were in the age range 35 to 44 years (33.34%), 55 years (3.33%), represented by 90% Muslim and Hindu 10%. The family size usually consisted of 5-6 members. Among them, 76.69% were literate and 23.31% were illiterate. Around 53.28% used wood & tin house, 9.99% lived in other type of house. Majority portion (43.29%) used paka toilet, where 33.3% had no sanitary toilet facilities. About 84% of the retailers have electricity facilities while 17%, 43.29%, 72% and 56.61% have refrigerator, agricultural land, good communication system and television respectively. Per day average income was around BDT. 300-400. To develop their socio-economic condition and sustainable livelihood status, more institutional, organizational and technical supports needs to be carried.

**Keywords:** Livelihood Status, fish retailer

### 1. Introduction

Fisheries play an important role in the economy of Bangladesh in terms of nutrition, employment and income generation. At the same time, the country is located in one of the world's major river delta systems, with the rivers meeting the Bay of Bengal in the South of the Country. For its geographical position, Bangladesh has a nice environment for the fisheries sector. Both fisheries and aquaculture in Bangladesh play an important role in mitigating protein deficiency and malnutrition in generating employment and foreign exchange earnings. Fish market is a place where different types of fish and fisheries commodities are accumulated from different sources like river, beel, haor, pond, gher, estuaries and sea [2]. Bangladesh ranked as 4<sup>th</sup> largest aquaculture producing country with its estimated production of 856 956 tones in 2003 [4]. Moreover, the fisheries sector contributes 2.01 percent of the country's export earnings, 3.69 percent of its GDP and provides 60 percent of the national animal protein consumption [3]. Bangladesh has earned Tk. 47030.95 million by exporting 92,479 MT of fish and fisheries product in 2011-2012 and almost 10.78 million people (11% of total population) directly or indirectly depend on fisheries sector for their livelihood [3]. Patuakhali is a Southern district of Bangladesh. There are different types of fishes available in this district. Presence of a large number of ponds, canals and also the vicinity of the area to Paira river ensures the significance of the district in total fish capture of the country. This district is important in terms of fisheries where a large amount of people are engaged in fish retailing activities which is an important income sector. But livelihood status of fish retailer in this region is not so well developed. Most of them are poor and live below the poverty line [6]. New market is considered as one of the ideal fish market in Patukahli. Different types of business man who are based on fisheries such as aratdar, paiker and retailer also available here. There were about 80 fish retailers in New market. They are considered as most vulnerable and poorest communities in Bangladesh fisheries sector. Lack of adequate and authentic information on socio-economic condition of these population, is one of the serious impediments in the successful implementation of the developmental program. Considering the above fact, the present study was carried out to assess the livelihood status at New market under Patuakhali district of Bangladesh.

**2. Materials and methods**

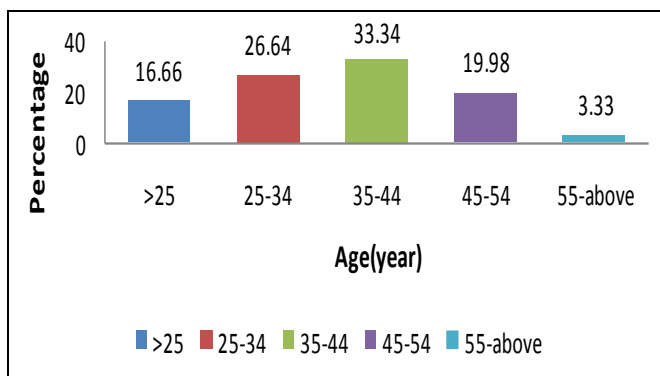
The present information was collected by direct survey and observation method. Data were collected by direct interviewing of the fish retailers. Several visits were made from August to October, 2015 to the study area to collect accurate data. Data were assembled through field survey at the area by using a structural questionnaire based on FGD (Focus Group Discussion) methods. Qualitative and quantitative analysis of all kinds of data were carried out. MS Excel was used to store all the data. Total 30 fish retailers were selected randomly for questionnaire interview from Patuakhali New Market for livelihood information. During the collection of data both primary and secondary sources were considered. Primary data was collected from respondent by the researcher himself. Several visits were made to collect the data. For the study a combination of interview schedule, PRA tools were used. The secondary data were collected from fisheries office and internet.

**3. Results and Discussion**

**3.1 Livelihood Status**

**3.1.1 Age Structure**

In this study below 25 years of retailers were 16.66%. At the range of 25 to 34 ages the retailers were 26.64%. Age range 35 to 44 fish retailers were 33.34%. Between age ranges 45 to 54 the number of retailers was 19.98%. Above the 55 age the number of retailer was 3.33%. In the present study it was clear that age range of 35 to 44 years were the highest retailer members in Patuakhali New Market. The lowest number was above 55 years (Fig.1). So it can be concluded that middle aged were the majority, where old aged were lesser. Kabir *et al.* (2012) said that age group of 31-40 years was the highest (50.00%) and 41-60 years were the lowest (10.00%) considering all fishermen of the Old Brahmaputra River which was more or less similar to this research [5].



**Fig 1:** Age distribution of fish retailers in the study area

**3.1.2 Education level**

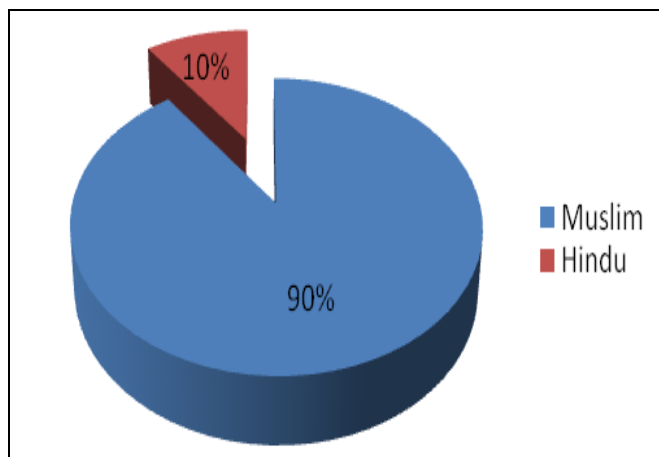
Education status of retailers had been grouped into six categories according to the level of education. In the present study, 23.31% were totally uneducated. Here 39.96% was the highest percentage of retailers with primary level educated. Class eight passed retailers were 23.31% as same as uneducated number. S.S.C passed were 9.99% (Table. 1). Mahbubur (2001) reported that 68% of hoar fishermen were illiterate, 28% up to primary level and 4% had only secondary level, which is less than this report [7].

**Table 1:** Education level of fish retailers in New market

Education level	No. of farmer	% of total fish retailer
None:	7	23.31
Primary:	12	39.96
Eight:	7	23.31
SSC:	3	9.99
HSC:	1	3.33
Higher:	0	0

**3.1.3 Religion**

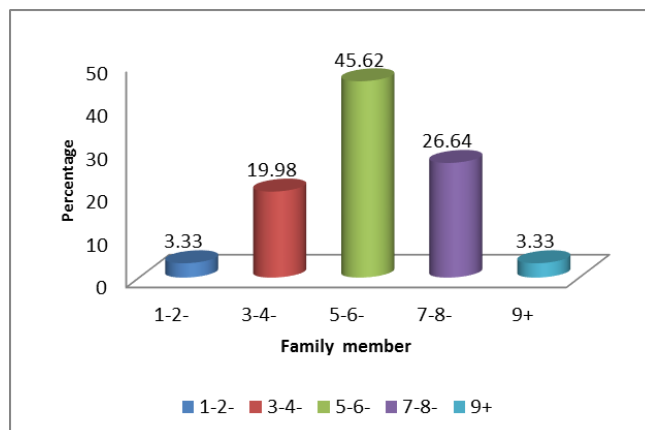
In this study it was observed that majority respondent were Muslim, which were 90%. On the contrary Hindu were lower in number with a percentage of 10%. (Fig.2). Ali *et al.* (2014) found that most of the fishermen were Muslim (75%) in Lohalia River, Patuakhali [1].



**Fig 2:** Religion status of fish retailers in the study area

**3.1.4 Family size**

In the present study family size was categorized into five groups according to the number of family member. The majority of family member was in 5-6 member groups (46.62%). On the contrary, in the family member range 3-4 & 7-8 were 19.98% & 26.64% respectively. Here 1-2 family members range was 3.33% as similar to 9 members (3.33%). It was clear that there was maximum medium ranged family size. Mahmud *et al.* reported that the highest family member percentage (60%) was in the 5-7 family members' group [9]. The lowest percentage(6%) was obtained in the above 10 members group. 14% people lived in 2-4 members family, 20% people were in 8-10 members in family which is as same as this study.



**Fig 3:** Family status of fish retailers in the study area

### 3.1.5 Other occupation

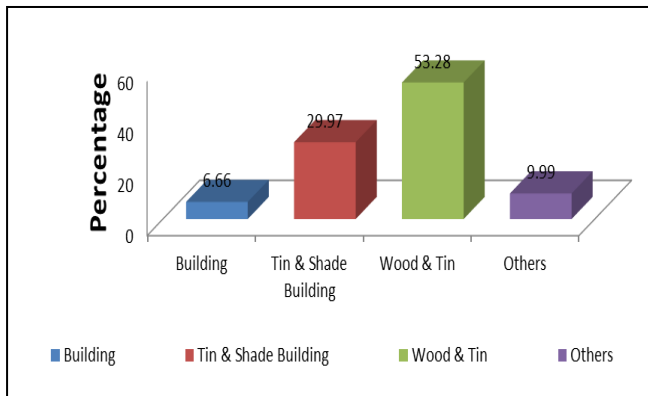
Here other occupation refers other income activity of retailers besides main occupation. Among the other occupations fish traders were in majority portion (53.28%). 19.98% were in other type business profession (shopkeeper, cosmetics seller, tea stall business), where Agriculture occupation holders were 3.33%. Fishing, Day labour and fish farmer were in the percentage gradually 13.33%,3.33%,6.66%. Zaman *et al.* (2006) found that at Mohanpur upazila in Rajshahi district Agriculture was the main profession, which accounts 51.1% and the second most common profession was aquaculture practice 18.9% [10].

**Table 2:** Different occupations of fish retailers

Occupation	No of retailer	% of occupation
Fish Trading		53.28
Business:	6	19.98
Agriculture	1	3.33
Fishing	4	13.33
Day labour	1	3.33
Fish farmer	2	6.66
others	0	0

### 3.1.6 House condition

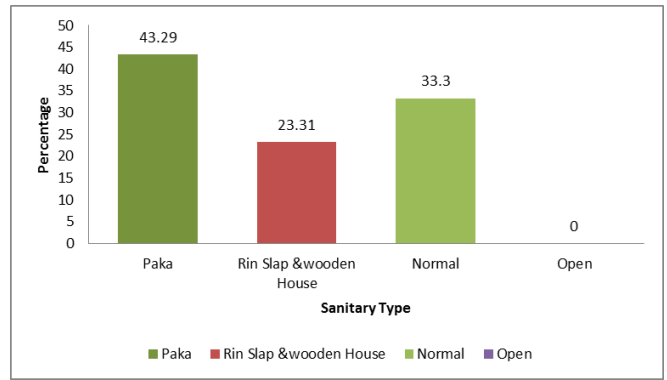
It was evident from data that 6.66% of the retailer live in building house, 29.97% live in tin & shed building. It was noticed that most of the retailers live in wood & tin houses. Probably for the economic insolvency or for the geographical reason they live in wood & tin house. Sharker *et al.* (2015) reported that 76% of respondent had kacha house (straw components) whereas 16% and 8% had semi pacca (tin shed with wooden wall) and pacca (brick and cemented building) house respectively [6].



**Fig 4:** Housing condition of retailers

### 3.1.7 Sanitary condition

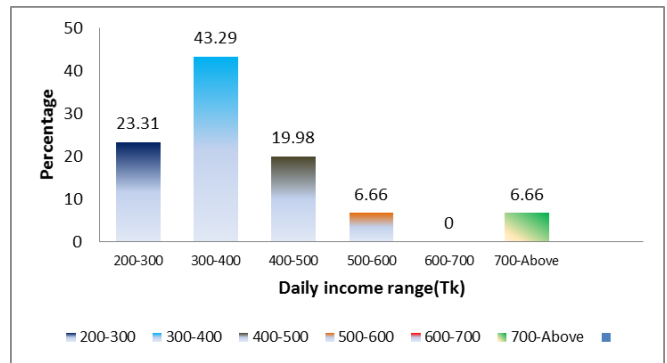
In the study it was noticed that the sanitary condition of Patuakhali New Market fish retailer's was not enough good. Majority portion (43.29%) used paka toilet where 33.3% used normal toilet. 23.31% used ring slap and wooden toilet (Fig. 5). Sharker *et al.* 2015 reported that most of the people about 76% used kacha latrines (Made of bamboo with leaf and inadequate drainage system) and rest of the 17% used semi pacca (made of tin or wood with inadequate drainage system) and 7% of fishermen was used as pacca latrine (made of brick with cement and well drainage system) where in this study report was comparably better [6].



**Fig 5:** sanitary conditions of retailers

### 3.1.8 Daily income

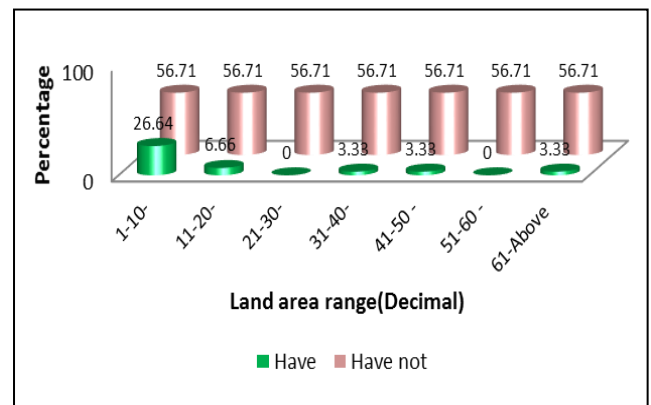
The average income range of retailers was 300-400 BDT (43.29%). 6.66% retailers earned BDT 500-600 or 700 above. BDT 200-300 income range was 23.31% retailer's where 19.98% income was BDT 400-500 (Fig.6). So their economic condition was moderately good. Rahman *et al.*(2015) found that 24% fishermen annual income between BDT 25000 to 35000 and 64% fishermen income of BDT 35001 to 55000 and only 12% fishermen annual income above BDT 55000 [8].



**Fig 6:** Daily income statuses of retailers

### 3.1.9 Agricultural land

In this experiment 43.29% had agricultural land and 56.71% had no agricultural land. Most of the agricultural land owner (26.64%) had 1-10 decimal land. 11-20 decimal agricultural land had 6.66%'. 31-40, 41-50 and 61- above decimal lands had 3.33%. Rahman *et al.* (2015) reported that majority of the fishermen (46%) had landless, while 38% of them had 1-20 decimal lands and only 16% had above 20 decimal lands [8].



**Fig 7:** Agricultural land properties of retailer

**3.1.10 Communication**

Communication refers to the way from where retailer come and goes to market to perform his activities. In the study it was found that 72% of the retailer’s had good communication system (Fig. 8). So it was very helpful for their business. Communication is the best support for conducting their business. 26% of the retailers had moderately good (both paka and kaca road) communication. But rest of 2% had a bad communication system (crossing river by boat).

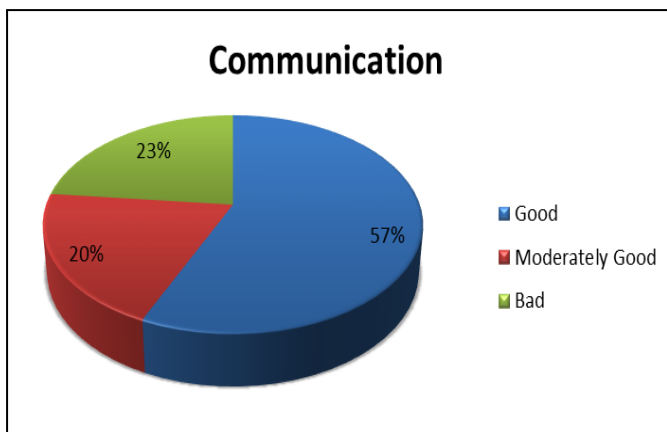


Fig 8: Communication systems of retailers

**3.1.11 Refrigerator**

This study was done to identify their assets condition. Refrigerator is one of the physical assets. Among the retailers 83% had no refrigerator (Fig.9). Only 17% had refrigerator. Though they are moderate economically solvent.

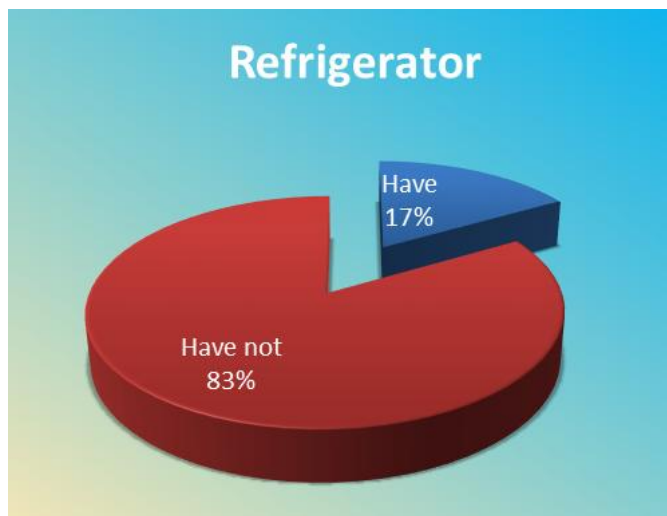


Fig 9: Refrigerator owner statuses of retailers

**3.1.12 Electricity**

Electricity condition of this area is good. 83% of retailer had electricity facility where 17% had no electricity facility (Fig.10). Rahman *et al.* (2015) reported that 86% fishermen were far from power plants and the rest (14%) had access to electricity which was almost similar to these findings [8].

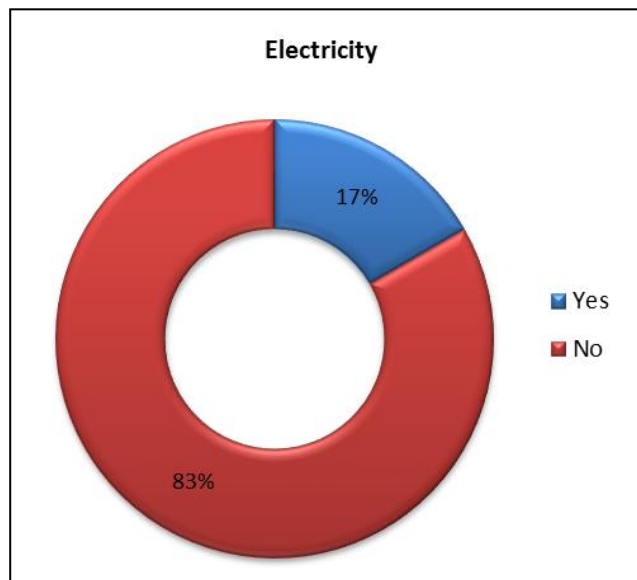


Fig 10: Electricity fascinator among retailers

**3.1.13 Television**

Here television occupier was 56.61%. Where 3.33% had black & white television and 53.28% had color television. 43.29% had not any television (Fig.11).

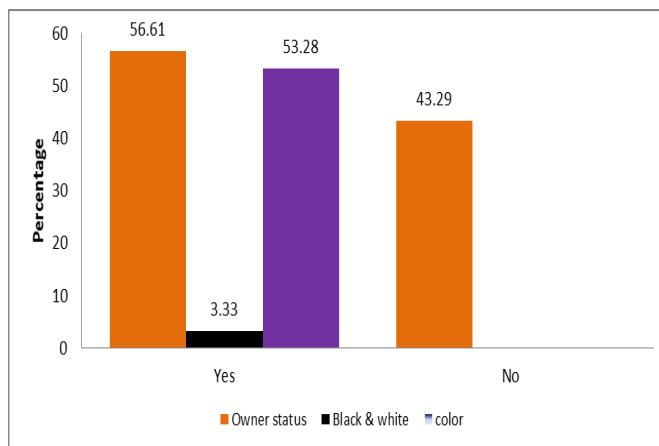


Fig 11: Television owner statuses of retailers

**4. Conclusion**

Fish retailers are the root level public who is the basement of the marketing level of fisheries. In this study the overall livelihood condition of fish retailer of Patuakhali New Market was not satisfactory. To get proper price of fish in the market the number of middle man should be reduced. Information about daily market price though out the country in not available there. So they should be digitalized and informative. Government should take necessary measures for proper extension work, which will improve the social, moral and scientific education among the retailers; therefore the fish economy will be ultimately improved.

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