

Daily routing activities of the fisherwomen in the North-Western Province of Sri Lanka

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Abstract

This paper explored daily routing of fisherwomen in north western province of Sri Lanka and found that throughout the day they have engaged in many paid and non-paid activities for the wellbeing of their families. It was revealed that 98 percent of fisherwomen did not engage in full time job but support their families through productive activities by spending 19 hours and 45 minutes per day. Family supported activities were preparing meals, cleaning and gardening, washing cloths and social activities while leisure, sleeping and having meals were non-productive activities that women have performed. Among un-paid productive activities there were 66 percent of fisherwomen whom supported for their husbands who engaged in active fishing through sorting out of fish and repairing fishing gear that spending 3 hours per day.

Keywords: fisherwomen, daily routing, paid work, none paid work, North Western Province

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Introduction

Although the involvement of women in the fisheries has been recognised globally (Williams, 2008) more remains to be done to recognise and understand women's work in these sectors (Weeratunge *et al.* 2010). The lack of gender disaggregated data of fishers globally has hindered the recognition of the role and "invisible" work of women in the fisheries and fisheries production sector (Choo *et al.* 2008). Nevertheless, the situation is same in Sri Lanka. Lack of data and information on economic and social activities of fisherwomen and time of a day they spend daily on those activities is hindered the planning of productively utilization of their spare time on household economic development activities. Therefore, this study planned with the objective of identifying the daily routing of fisherwomen and their contribution for the household economic and social development in North western province of Sri Lanka.

Materials and Methods

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2010) and New Zealand statistic department (2014) were divided household activities into two categories such as productive and non-productive based on the 'third party criterion', which states that an activity is productive if the person can delegate it to a third party (and other person can still derive benefit). Accordingly, for an example, preparing a meal is productive while eating it is not productive. Productive activities

again can be further divided into paid and unpaid. Some of the productive activities do not yield direct financial benefit which are called un-paid activities. Based on the above conceptualization a questionnaire survey was conducted to gather primary data during the time period of January to December in 2014. The sample frame was the North-western province and a sample of 197 fisherwomen was drawn by using random sampling technique. In detail, 86 and 111 samples were represented for Chilaw and Puttalam districts respectively. Descriptive statistics and parametric statistics were used to analyse the data.

Results and Discussion

The majority of the fisherwomen (98%) in north-western province did not engage in full time income generated activities but of them 58% were directly contributing for their household income generation through paid-productive activities. Dried fish production and processing, producing coir based products, cultivating vegetables in home gardens, animal husbandry, selling wet fish and maintaining retail shops were the main self-employment activities while working as paid casual labourers in sorting out of fish at the beach or landing centre were fishing related paid activities that women involved. Throughout the day they have engaged in many productive and non-productive activities for the wellbeing of their families. These activities performed by fisherwomen were grouped into principal functions and average time spent on each activity is shown in Table 1.

Table 1.Activities performed and time spend by fisherwomen of the day

Description	Hours per day	Percentage of women
<i>Un-paid productive activities</i>		
Preparing meal	3	100 %
Look after infants	12	18 %
Caring children	4	64 %
Caring adults	3	22 %
Cleaning and gardening	3	100 %
Washing cloth	1	100 %
Social activities	1	100 %
Fishing related activities	3	66 %
<i>Paid productive activities</i>		
Self-employments	6	16 %
Government and private sector employments	8	2 %
Fishing related activities	4.75	47 %
<i>Non-productive activity</i>		
Leisure activities and associate with friends and relatives	2.75	100 %

Sleeping	7.5	100 %
Having meal	1.5	100 %
Religious activities	0.5	87 %
Watching TV	1.6	92 %

N.B. Fish processing done in fish catching high days only.

It is clear that preparing meals, cleaning and gardening, washing cloths and social activities are unpaid activities that performed by all fisher women and have collectively spent 8 hours by each woman per day. On the other hand a woman had spent 11hours and 45 minutes on non-productive activities such as leisure and associate with friends, sleeping and having meals at home per day. All together all fisher women in the province have spent 19 hours and 45 minutes for the above mentioned productive and non-productive activities while the rest of the time or 4 hours and 15 minutes for other activities per day. Among un-paid productive activities there were 66% of fisherwomen whom supported for their husbands who engaged in active fishing through sorting out of fish and repairing gear. They have spent 3 hours for those activities per day. On the other hand 47% of fisher women have engaged in paid productive activities such as fish selling and dried fish production and processing and have spent 4 hours and 45 minutes per day.

Conclusion

This paper explored daily routing of fisherwomen in north-western province of Sri Lanka. The research found that a number of productive and non-productive activities were performed by the fisherwomen spending 19 hours and 45 minutes out of 24 hours of the day. Although they had spent 8 hours in productive activities they were un-paid. There were 66 percent of fisherwomen that performed fishing related un-paid productive activities and had spent 3 hours per day. Results demonstrated that contribution of fisherwomen was inevitable to smooth functioning and wellbeing of their family.

References

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