An assessment of women’s participation in aquaculture in southwest region of Bangladesh

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Aquaculture has an important role in the income generation and poverty alleviation as well as household nutrition of rural people in Bangladesh. Rural women in south-west Bangladesh are now playing a substantial role in aquaculture, taking part actively in all range of activities related to aquaculture production. Although being active in aquaculture, their role is not often acknowledged and documented. The purpose of the present study is to assess the level of their participation in aquaculture production activities in some selected areas of south-west Bangladesh.

INTRODUCTION
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METHODOLOGY

Direct observation
Household Survey (Questionnaire survey)
Focus group discussion (FGD)
Key informants interview (KII)

RESULTS

1. Involvement in aquaculture
The study reveals that women in 65% households were involved in aquaculture along with their male counterparts, among them 48% played active role in aquaculture production and management activities.

2. Participation in different types of aquaculture
The women participation was observed to vary with types of aquaculture and the inclusion in project. Women were more involved in activities of homestead aquaculture (30%) than that of commercial fish (23%) and shrimp culture (12%).

3. Participation in different activities of aquaculture

4. Factors influencing the participation
Factors Influence
Family size +
Pond size +
Membership of Cooperative +
Training received +
Pond distance from homestead –

5. Factors hindering women’s participation in aquaculture

Socio-cultural Constraints
Lack of decision making power
Social insecurity
Dominancy of male
lack of access to markets
Lack of information and networks
Congenital custom
Restriction of mobility
Religious misinterpretation

Practical Constraints
Lack of time
Limited access to quality inputs
Inaccessibility to credit

Knowledge Constraints
Lack of education and skills
Limited access to training
Lack of awareness
Inaccessibility to extension services

Conclusion
Education, motivation, need-based training, credit facilities and access to quality inputs have the potential to increase women’s participation in aquaculture production and management.