

Discussing poverty is unavoidable from gender issue (Malaysia, 2004, Brandth, 2002 & Malaysia, 2001). The men are perceived as tough and hardworking and in control of their environment whereas women are caring, nurturing and expected to be there for children as well as extending their caring role beyond the home (Little, 1977). In short woman is expected to play the feminine role and man is expected to play the masculine role. Fishing activities are always associated as masculine and therefore fishing is more suitable for man. Fisherwomen and household with many female members in fishing community are in the poverty risk.

OBJECTIVES

- 1) To explore the household distribution patterns by the categories of poverty and the sex ratios of households' members
- 2) To identify the likelihood of fishing household to be in the risk of hardcore poverty



METHOD

Data were collected using semi structured questionnaire through interview among the selected samples. The respondent names and addresses were obtained from Malaysia Department of Social Welfare. The respondents of the study comprised of those earning income from open sea fishing or aquaculture activities. The respondents were classified as poor and hardcore poor using per capita income set by Malaysia government for each district. In addition the households were classified based on household members ability to work namely:

Able-body : All the household members are capable to work

Vulnerable : at least one of the household member is either a single mother, elderly people, suffering of serious illness or handicapped

Sex-ratio: total adult male/female per total number of adult household respectively. The cut off point was the mean of sex ratio.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: The Distribution of Poor and Hardcore Poor Fishing Household by the Sex Ratio of Household Members (adult men ($m_{AM}=0.3336$, S.D=0.15826) and adult women (AW) ($m_{Aw}=0.2986$, S.D= 0.13965))

Type of member	FEWER		MORE	
	Male (a)	Female (b)	Male (c)	Female (d)
Able-body	54.24	58.82	35.00	33.33
Vulnerable	45.76	41.18	65.00	66.67
Total	100	100	100	100

Table 2: The Distribution of Poor and Hardcore Poor Fishing Household by Type of Household Members (adult men ($m_{AM}=0.3336$, S.D= 0.15826) and adult women (AW) ($m_{Aw}=0.2986$, S.D= 0.13965))

Type of member	FEWER		MORE		TOTAL	
	Male (a)	Female (b)	Male (c)	Female (d)	a+c	b+d
Able-body	69.56	65.22	30.44	34.78	100	100
Vulnerable	50.94	39.62	49.06	60.38	100	100



Table 3: The Wald Chi Square Statistics (Hardcore Poor Fishing Household = 1)

Variables	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Number of adult male	.162	.170	.915	1	.339	1.176
Number of adult female	.057	.165	.117	1	.732	1.058
Number of children	.635	.168	14.364	1	.000	1.887
Constant	-1.621	.694	5.455	1	.020	.198

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Group of sex ratio and household member with high percentage of poor household:

1. Both more-male and more-female households were in the vulnerable group. Nevertheless, significantly higher percentage of more-female households were in the vulnerable group compared to more male-household.
2. Within the able-body category of household, there were slightly higher percentage fewer-female-household compared to fewer-male-household .
3. In the vulnerable category household group there were higher percentage of more-female-household member compared to more-male-household
4. Among the able-body category household with fewer-male household category had slightly higher percentage compared to fewer-female-household category.
5. One additional child in a family of fishing household will add 89% likelihood for the household to fall into a hardcore poor household.

The findings may support that fishing activities are too masculine for female and children (conclusion no. 1, 3, 4 and 5). However the present of female is important to generate income through fishing activities (conclusion no. 2 and 5). For the vulnerable households with members or dependent children to look after, female family members can not contribute to the fishing activities then the family may suffer of poverty.

Efforts should be taken to empower the female household member in income generating activities through micro enterprise especially in processing fish based food such as salted fish, smoked fish, fish chip and anchovies. The female household member can generate income without living the house.

The adoption appropriate technology will improve productivity and accelerate the poverty eradication efforts among fishing community.