

CHAPTER TWO FISHERIES AND FISHERMEN COMMUNITY OF KUAKATA

2.1 Historical background of Kuakata

The *Rakhain* Community, who inhabited Kuakata first, introduced fisheries at Kuakata. In 1782-84, about 50 families migrated to Kuakata from Myanmar (Burma), cleared the *Sundarbans* and developed settlement at Kuakata. In course of time, mainly the Muslims of Barisal, Pirojpur, Patuakhali and Barguna districts started to migrate and settle at Kuakata. Fishing was the main occupation of the *Rakhain* Tribe and the Muslims worked mainly as day labourer in the crop fields of the *Rakhain*. Now there are very few *Rakhain* families at Kuakata and the Muslims dominate the entire area. The *Rakhain* are now migrating to Burma, native land of their forefathers. Fishing has become the main occupation of the local people (Muslims) of Kuakata since 1960 and onwards.

Most of the fishermen have mentioned that agriculture was the main occupation of their fore fathers. Poverty, landlessness and unemployment (due to population explosion and riverbank erosion) have pushed the people to Kuakata. Availability of fish in the sea has brought them in the fishing profession.

2.2 Location and settlement pattern of the fishermen communities

The fishermen villages of Kuakata are located on the south and west part of the Bay of Bengal and its embankment. The river *Moudubi* is on the east and Alipur-Mohipur road is on the north of the villages. Most of the fishermen of Kuakata are landless people. They have no land of their own. They have developed mainly linear type settlements on government owned *Khash* land on both sides of the embankment along the river and sea. They prefer to settle near the sea as they can easily go to the sea for fishing. It saves their time to a great extent. At incidences of cyclone, storm and tidal surge, they can also easily and quickly return home. Thus, the fishermen communities of Kuakata have frequently built their villages near the embankment of the sea and rivers. Map of the settlement pattern of the fishermen communities and villages of Kuakata is shown in Annex-E.

2.3 Demographic and Social Structure

Most of the people of the fishermen community of Kuakata have migrated here and the surrounding villages from the districts of Barisal, Patuakhali, Pirojpur, Barguna and Jhalokathi. Riverbank erosion, social problems, landlessness, poverty, population growth and unemployment have driven them to this place.



2.3.1 Age-sex structure

Table 2.1: Age structure of fishermen community of different villages of the study area

Sl.	Name of villages	Respondents of different age group in percentage								Total
		0-5	6-9	10-14	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-60	60+	
1.	Kuakata	15	11	10	28	18	5	10	3	100
2.	Melapara	25	0	25	25	0	25	0	0	100
3.	Nabinpur	9	9	9	28	13	16	9	6	100
4.	Keranipara	16	11	21	11	21	5	16	0	100
5.	Panjupara	15	12	6	27	18	6	15	0	100
6.	Hossainpara	27	20	4	11	20	13	2	2	100
7.	Musalliabad	16	13	13	19	15	10	9	4	100
8.	Mombipara	20	20	20	0	20	20	0	0	100
9.	Alipur	8	8	15	23	15	10	21	0	100
10.	Naioripara	17	0	33	0	17	17	17	0	100
11.	Farshipara	18	7	4	29	25	11	4	4	100
12.	Khajura	11	14	17	23	8	11	11	4	100
Total		15	12	12	22	16	10	11	2	100

Source: Field Survey, 2002.

About 39% of the population of the fishermen villages are below 14 years of age and the rest are above 14 years. 2% of the population are above 60 years of age and 48% are within the range of 15-44 years.

Table 2.2: Sex structure of fishermen community of different villages of the study area

Sl.	Name of villages	Male Female in Percentage		Total	F/M in percentage
		Male	Female		
1.	Kuakata	50	50	100	100
2.	Melapara	50	50	100	100
3.	Nabinpur	59	41	100	68
4.	Keranipara	45	55	100	122
5.	Panjupara	56	44	100	78
6.	Hossainpara	39	61	100	156
7.	Musalliabad	53	47	100	89
8.	Mombipara	40	60	100	150
9.	Alipur	56	44	100	79
10.	Naioripara	50	50	100	100
11.	Farshipara	61	39	100	65
12.	Khajura	56	44	100	78
Total (Average)		52	48	100	92

Source: Field Survey, 2002.

Male-female ratio is found to vary from village to village. Average household size is found to be higher in comparison with the national household size. It indicates that people are not conscious and aware about family planning. They do not use contraceptives for birth control and to keep the family size small. Lack of recreational facilities at household level, and poor Government and NGO programs for family planning are the main reasons for high birth rate in these villages. People are also very conservative and faithful towards traditional religious belief that does not advocate adopting family planning and birth control measures. Tables 2.2 reveals that 52% population of the study villages are male and the rest 48% are female.

Table 2.3: Marital status of fishermen community of different villages of the study area

Sl.	Name of villages	Fishermen community in percentage				Total
		Married	Unmarried	Widowed	Divorced	
1.	Kuakata	48.7	50.4	0.9	0	100
2.	Melapara	50.0	50.0	0	0	100
3.	Nabinpur	59.4	40.6	0	0	100
4.	Keranipara	52.6	47.4	0	0	100
5.	Panjupara	51.6	45.2	3.2	0	100
6.	Hossainpara	44.4	53.3	2.2	0	100
7.	Musalliabad	50.0	48.5	0	1.5	100
8.	Mombipara	40.0	60.0	0	0	100
9.	Alipur	55.0	41.7	3.3	0	100
10.	Naioripara	33.3	50.0	16.7	0	100
11.	Farshipara	57.1	42.9	0	0	100
12.	Khajura	46.5	52.1	1.4	0	100
Total		51.0	46.0	2.8	0.2	100

Source: Field Survey, 2002.

Table 2.3 reveals that 51% population of the study villages are married, 46% are unmarried and 3% are widowed.

2.3.2 Literacy and education

Table 2.4: Education level of fishermen community of different villages of the study area

Sl.	Name of villages	Fishermen community in percentage					Total
		Illiterate	Class I-III	Class IV-V	Class VI-VIII	SSC+	
1.	Kuakata	39.2	34.3	21.6	4.9	0	100
2.	Melapara	50.0	0	0	50.0	0	100
3.	Nabinpur	51.6	19.4	25.8	3.2	0	100
4.	Keranipara	33.3	27.8	33.3	5.6	0	100
5.	Panjupara	50.0	26.9	19.2	3.8	0	100
6.	Hossainpara	34.3	37.1	25.7	2.9	0	100
7.	Musalliabad	54.0	23.8	9.5	7.9	4.8	100
8.	Mombipara	60.0	20.0	20.0	0	0	100
9.	Alipur	18.6	35.6	28.8	13.6	3.4	100
10.	Naioripara	16.7	16.7	33.3	33.3	0	100
11.	Farshipara	30.4	21.7	26.1	21.7	0	100
12.	Khajura	22.7	40.9	28.8	6.1	1.5	100
Total		36.5	31.1	23.1	8.0	1.4	100

Source: Field Survey, 2002.

Table 2.4 reveals that 37% people of the study villages are illiterate and 54% have primary level education. Among the people having primary level education, 31% have class I-III education and 23% have education of class IV-V. Only 1.4% have education above Secondary School Certificate (SSC). Female members are more literate than the male members.

2.3.3 Religion

It is found from the study that about 90% population of the study villages are Muslims, 4% are Hindus and 6% are Buddhist by religion.

2.3.4 Occupation

Most of the households are found to be involved in fishing, fry collection and fishery related business. Fishing in the sea is a risky profession. Cyclone, depression, robbery, loss of fishing gears due to strong current and waves, etc. make the life of the fishermen very hazardous. They may die at any time in the sea grabbed by natural calamities. They have to go to the sea, about 10-20 km. away from the shore. They can not communicate with the land and their family when they become victim of disasters. Most of the fishermen have reported that they would not fish in the sea if they were economically well off.

A few people of the fishermen community of Kuakata are involved in agriculture, day labouring, transport sector (van driver) and in tourism activities (hotels, restaurants, grocery and souvenir shops, tea stalls, plying tourist boats etc.) etc.

Table 2.5: Occupation of the fishermen community of different villages of the study area

Sl.	Name of villages	Fishermen community in percentage								Total
		Fishing	Agriculture	Fry collection	Fishery business	Housewife	Student	Day laborer	Others	
1.	Kuakata	15	3	8	7	32	24	0	12	100
2.	Melapara	33	0	33	0	33	0	0	0	100
3.	Nabinpur	11	4	25	4	32	21	0	4	100
4.	Keranipara	33	0	6	0	33	28	0	0	100
5.	Panjupara	12	0	32	4	36	16	0	0	100
6.	Hossainpara	15	0	18	9	26	32	0	0	100
7.	Musalliabad	16	0	18	5	35	22	0	4	100
8.	Mombipara	25	0	0	0	25	50	0	0	100
9.	Alipur	12	14	0	17	32	25	0	0	100
10.	Naioripara	14	0	14	0	29	43	0	0	100
11.	Farshipara	17	0	8	17	33	17	0	8	100
12.	Khajura	14	8	12	4	31	26	1	4	100
Total		15.3	4.1	12.1	7.3	32.0	24.4	0.2	4.6	100

Source: Field Survey, 2002.

Table 2.5 reveals the occupation of family members of the fishermen community of different villages. It is found that 15% of the family members are involved in fishing, 12% in fry collection, 7% in fishery business, 4% in agriculture, 32% are housewives, and 24% are students.

Table 2.6: Fishery related activities of the fishermen community of different villages of the study area

Sl.	Name of villages	Community people in percentage									
		Fry collection	Fishing	Drying	Transporting	Retailing	Vending	Middlemen	Fishery business	Others	Total
1.	Kuakata	30.0	36.0	14.0	0	2.0	0	2.0	10.0	6.0	100
2.	Melapara	33.3	33.3	0	0	0	33.3	0	0	0	100
3.	Nabinpur	40.0	53.3	0	6.7	0	0	0	0	0	100
4.	Keranipara	50.0	50.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100
5.	Panjupara	50.0	37.5	0	0	0	6.3	0	0	6.3	100
6.	Hossainpara	40.0	45.0	0	0	5.0	0	10.0	0	0	100
7.	Musalliabad	38.2	29.4	0	2.9	8.8	2.9	8.8	5.9	2.9	100
8.	Mombipara	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100
9.	Alipur	0	50.6	0	0	0	0	6.2	43.2	0	100
10.	Naioripara	50.0	50.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100
11.	Farshipara	20.0	40.0	0	0	0	25.0	0	15.0	0	100
12.	Khajura	34.6	46.2	0	0	0	0	3.8	11.5	3.8	100
Total		34.0	40.5	3.4	1.0	2.5	2.0	3.9	9.8	3.0	100

Source: Field Survey, 2002.

Regarding involvement of family members in fishery related activities, table 2.6 reveals that 41% members are involved in fishing, 34% are in fry collection, 10% in fishery business, 3% in fish drying and 4% act as middlemen in fishery business.

2.3.5 Daily activities of people

Daily activities of the people of Kuakata and its adjacent villages include fishing and fry collection in the sea, share cropping, pulling vans and pushcarts, day laboring in crop fields, construction works, working in hotels, restaurants and boats etc. The high tide and low tide of the sea rotate every six hours a day. The fishermen community carries out their fishing and fry collecting activities on the basis of the tidal period. It is generally found that they spend about 12 hours (6 hours by day and 6 hours at night) per day in fishing or fry collecting in the sea. They collect fry during low tide and go for fishing during high tide.

Activities other than fisheries

Only the people of Kuakata resort areas and its adjacent villages are involved in tourism related activities. People who live in villages far away from the resort areas are not involved in tourism related activities. They can only vaguely comment on the positive and negative impact of tourism on fisheries and fisheries related activities.

2.3.6 Family pattern

In Bengali culture, the tradition of joint family is very common, but in course of time, the tradition is gradually breaking down. Most of the rural families in Bangladesh now a days are found to be small/single, made of only husband-wife and their kids. Poverty, lack of resources and gradual deterioration of traditional values are the main causes for the formation of small families. It is found from the study that a very few families of different villages of the study area are joint families. Number of small families is found higher than joint families.

2.3.7 Recreation and entertainment facilities

Recreation and entertainment facilities at household level of the fishermen villages of Kuakata are quite inadequate. TV, Audio cassette player, Radio etc. are merely found to the households of medium income level, the poor households can not afford these. There is a cinema at Alipur. People go to the cinema often and enjoy films.

2.4 Economic Structure

Fishermen of Kuakata extract fisheries resources from the Bay of Bengal. It has a contribution towards national foreign currency earning. Sea fishes extracted by the fishermen community of Kuakata are important export items. Fisheries activities meet up local demand and have a strong role in employment generation. The community lives with poverty. They are always struggling for their existence and survival. Population growth, river bank erosion, gradual loss of paternal land, unemployment and poverty have brought them to Kuakata. Availability of fishes in the sea and higher income during the fishing season have attracted them to be involved in fishing. Some have chosen this profession considering fishing as an easy means of livelihood and as a family tradition. Most of the fishermen of Kuakata are very poor. They live from hand to mouth. They have no land of their own. They mainly live on the earning from fishing profession. They have settled on both sides of the embankment along rivers and the sea. A few fishermen have fishing boats and gears of their own. A large portion of them has no fishing boats and gear. They work as day labourers in mechanised boats owned by rich fishermen and catch fish in the sea.

The poor fishermen are gradually being extorted by investors (local rich fishermen and rich businessmen), owners of fishing boats and gears, middlemen or brokers, depot holders, money lenders and fishery businessmen.

2.4.1 Land ownership pattern

Most of the fishermen of Kuakata are either landless or near landless people. Landless fishermen have developed their settlements on government owned *Khash* land on both sides of the embankment along the river and sea. About 60% fishermen of Kuakata are landless. They have no arable land. About 25% of the fishermen own only 1-40 decimal homestead land.

2.4.2 Ownership of fishing boats and gears

The fishermen of Kuakata and its surrounding villages mainly catch mainly Hilsa fish by small manual boats and medium sized mechanized boats. Small and medium sized mechanized boats are used to catch *Zhatka* (Juvenile Hilsa) and other fishes in winter season.

Hilsa, *Rupchanda*, *Bhol*, are delicious fishes available in the sea. Small mechanized boats have engines with horse power ranging from 6-12. These engines are normally imported for use in water pumps (for irrigating croplands) which are then converted for using in boats. Engines which are especially designed for fishing boats and trawlers are very expensive. A large number of fishermen have no boat and fishing gear of their own. They work as day labourer in fishing boats on daily wage/payment basis.

2.4.3 Categories of fishermen at Kuakata

People, who are involved in fishing, fry collection and fishery related business, are fishermen in broader sense. The owners of fishing boats and money lenders or *dadandars* (to carry out fishing and fisheries activities) are also fishermen. The study found the following categories of fishermen at Kuakata:

1. Fishermen who catch fish in the sea in a group of 6 persons. They have a small boat owned by them. Each person has 2 Hilsa net. They mainly catch Hilsa in the sea by 2 trips a day. The fishermen borrow money as loan (*dadan*) from money investors or *dadandars* to buy fishing boats and gears. They take *dadan* in conditions of selling the fish to the *dadandars* at prices fixed by them, and thus to repay the *dadan* or loan gradually.
2. Fry collectors using pull and *behiundi* nets
3. Owners of fishing boats and gears. A few of them go for fishing in the sea and the others send hired fishermen for fishing.
4. *Aratdars* or depot holders who invest money or give *dadan* (loan) to the poor fishermen to buy fishing boats and gears for fishing in the sea.
5. Middlemen as (*Faria*, *Bepari*) broker and their associates who are involved in fishery business.
6. Fishermen and businessmen involved in fish drying, fish processing and trading of dried fish.

2.4.4 Income, expenditure and savings pattern of the fishermen

Income pattern of the fishermen community of Kuakata is not satisfactory. Their income rises during the period of *Hilsa* catch that starts in June and ends in September. Families having secondary and tertiary occupation along with fishing, normally earn more. The families, which have more family members (who are involved in fishing and fry collection) also earn more. They can save a significant amount of their earning. Only fishing can not bring economic solvency of these families. So, they are found to be involved in agriculture, day labouring, transportation and tourism-related activities.

Average monthly income of the fishermen community during the fishing season is around Tk. 2,000/- to Tk. 3,000/-. About 27% of the respondents have reported that their monthly average income during fishing season is Tk. 2,000/ to Tk. 3,000/-. 25% of the respondents have reported that their monthly income is within the range of Tk. 1000/- to Tk. 2000/-. Only 7% have reported that their average monthly income is above Tk. 10,000/-.

A group of fishermen (consisting of 6 members) take loan from moneylenders (of about Tk. 70,000/ to Tk. 80,000/) for catching fish in the sea. This money is needed to buy boat, net, rope, floats, bamboo and anchors.

Table 2.7 reveals that monthly average income of most of the fishermen families of Kuakata is Tk. 2,500/-. Each of the families are in debt. Their income rises during the month of July to October (due to availability of Hilsa fishes in the sea). For the rest of the year, they have very little or no income.

2.4.5 Poverty level and indebtedness of people

Most of the fishermen of Kuakata are poor. They earn barely minimum to maintain their livelihood. Small fishermen who catch fish by small manual boats (borrowing money from the *dadandars*) are normally very poor. They can not save a little amount. Well off fishermen are those who have large sized or medium sized mechanised fishing boats. They can save a satisfactory amount. Small fishermen have to sell their fish to the *aratdars* and *dadandars* at a lower price. They also have to repay the loan (taken previously by them) regularly. Lower price of fish and repayment of *dadan* prohibit the

fishermen to save money. Fishermen of Kuakata borrow money mainly from *dadandars*. A few of them received loan/micro-credit from NGOs. They borrowed money to buy boats and gears required for fishing. They have to take loan also to maintain their family and to repay loans previously taken from *dadandars*. Sometimes they take loan from relatives to run fishery business. It is found from the research that the people who started fishery business at an early stage took loan from different sources, namely NGOs, *dadandars*, relatives and co-operatives. 45% respondents (who are involved in fishery business) took loan from NGOs, 34% from *dadandars*, 13% from co-operatives and 2% from relatives. Fishermen can not get rid of the web of extortion by the *dadandars* or money investors due to previously taken loans.

Fishermen are not used to save money. A few families that are associated with NGOs (as beneficiaries) save very little amount (as pre condition of the NGO) to get the loan. In real sense, it may not be called savings.

Table 2.7: Average monthly income of the fishermen community of different villages of the study area

Sl.	Name of Villages	Respondents in percentage							Total
		Income range (Tk.)							
		<1000	1000-2000	2000-3000	3000-5000	5000-8000	8000-10000	>10000	
1.	Khajura		2.0	9.0	3.0				14.0
2.	Farshipara		1.0		3.0	2.0	1.0		7.0
3.	Naioripara			1.0					1.0
4.	Alipur		2.0	2.0	4.0	3.0		1.0	12.0
5.	Mombipara			1.0					1.0
6.	Musalliabad		5.0	3.0	3.0	1.0		2.0	14.0
7.	Hossainpara	2.0	1.0	3.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	10.0
8.	Panjupara		3.0	4.0	1.0				8.0
9.	Keranipara			1.0	1.0	1.0			3.0
10.	Nibinpur	1.0	3.0	2.0	1.0				7.0
11.	Melapara							1.0	1.0
12.	Kuakata		8.0	1.0	7.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	22.0
Total		3.0	25.0	27.0	24.0	10.0	4.0	7.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2002.

Table 2.8: Average monthly expenditure of the fishermen community of different villages of the study area

Sl.	Name of Villages	Respondents in percentage							Total
		Expenditure range (Tk.)							
		<1000	1000-2000	2000-3000	3000-5000	5000-8000	8000-10000	>10000	
1.	Khajura		2.0	9.0	3.0				14.0
2.	Farshipara		1.0	2.0	3.0	1.0			7.0
3.	Naioripara			1.0					1.0
4.	Alipur		2.0	4.0	5.0			1.0	12.0
5.	Mombipara			1.0					1.0
6.	Musalliabad		5.0	3.0	4.0		2.0		14.0
7.	Hossainpara	2.0	3.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0		10.0
8.	Panjupara		5.0	3.0					8.0
9.	Keranipara			1.0	2.0				3.0
10.	Nibinpur	1.0	3.0	2.0	1.0				7.0
11.	Melapara							1.0	1.0
12.	Kuakata		8.0	6.0	4.0	3.0	1.0		22.0
Total		3.0	29.0	34.0	23.0	5.0	4.0	2.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2002.

Table 2.8 reveals that 34% of the respondents have reported that their monthly expenditure is within the range of Tk. 2,000/- to Tk. 3,000/- and 29% respondents reported that their expenditure is within the range of Tk. 1,000/- to Tk. 2,000/-

Table 2.9: Average monthly savings pattern of the fishermen community of different villages of the study area

Sl.	Name of villages	Respondents in percentage							Total
		Savings pattern (Tk.)							
		<1000	1000-2000	2000-3000	3000-5000	5000-8000	>10000	0	
1.	Khajura	4.7						11.8	16.5
2.	Farshipara	3.5	2.4	1.2	1.2				8.2
3.	Naioripara	1.2							1.2
4.	Alipur	8.2	2.4			1.2		1.2	12.9
5.	Mombipara							1.2	1.2
6.	Musalliabad	3.5		1.2		2.4		2.4	9.4
7.	Hossainpara	4.7	2.4		2.4			2.4	11.8
8.	Panjupara	3.5		1.2				3.5	8.2
9.	Keranipara	1.2						1.2	2.4
10.	Nibinpur	3.5						2.4	5.9
11.	Melapara						1.2		1.2
12.	Kuakata	9.4	4.7	1.2		1.2	1.2	3.5	21.2
Total		43.5	11.8	4.7	3.5	4.7	2.4	29.4	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2002.

29.4% respondents have reported that they have no savings, 44% reported that their savings is below Tk. 1000 and 2.4% have reported that their savings is above Tk. 10,000.



Livelihood Pattern:

During the month of February, March and April when the community gets very little fish or fry, they require a large sum of money to buy fishing gears (nets, boats, anchors, floats etc.) as the fishing and fry collection season starts from the next month (May). During this period, they get ready for fishing and fry collection by becoming well equipped.

Changes in Socio-Economic Condition of the Fishermen Community

A few fishermen in the study area have become rich from fishing. It is rare to find a poor fisherman who has become owner of fishing boats and gears. However fishing has become graceful to few of them. They have now become money lenders or money investors. Some of them have fishing business and they engage the poor fishermen who have no fishing

boats and gears for fishing in the sea. The poor fishermen work as day labourer or zero shareholder with the rich fishermen in their boats. The poor fishermen can not change their socio-economic condition by breaking the cycle of poverty and exploitation of the *dadandars* (money investors). Remaining poor, they are barely maintaining their family by fishing. But day labouring and agricultural activities could not help them to maintain their family. They have considered fishing as “*something is better than nothing*”.

2.5 Reasons for being involved in fishing

Most of the people of the fishermen community have migrated to Kuakata and its surrounding villages from Barisal, Patuakhali, Pirojpur, Barguna and Jhalokathi districts. Riverbank erosion, social problems, injustice and landlessness, poverty, population growth and unemployment have driven them to this place.

Table 2.10: Reasons for being involved in fishing (of fishermen community) of different villagers of the study area

Sl.	Name of villages	Community people in percentage								
		Poverty	Family tradition	Skill	Hobby	Easy means of livelihood	Less competition	Higher income	Availability of fish	Total
1.	Kuakata	39.5	5.3	2.6	0	15.8	5.3	23.7	7.9	100
2.	Melapara	33.3	0	33.3	0	33.3	0	0	0	100
3.	Nabinpur	45.3	0	9.4	0	12.5	0	25.0	7.8	100
4.	Keranipara	14.3	14.3	14.3	0	14.3	0	14.3	28.6	100
5.	Panjupara	38.5	7.7	7.7	0	23.1	0	15.4	7.7	100
6.	Hossainpara	18.3	13.4	4.9	0	20.7	0	36.6	6.1	100
7.	Musalliabad	36.0	8.0	8.0	0	4.0	0	40.0	4.0	100
8.	Mombipara	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	100
9.	Alipur	16.7	5.6	0	0	16.7	0	33.3	27.8	100
10.	Naioripara	25.0	0	0	0	25.0	0	25.0	25.0	100
11.	Farshipara	30.9	3.6	5.5	0	20.0	0	29.1	10.9	100
12.	Khajura	46.9	4.6	3.1	1.5	13.1	0	0	30.8	100
Total		33.9	6.2	5.9	0.2	15.2	1.1	23.6	13.8	100

Source: Field Survey, 2002.

Poverty, unemployment and non-availability of occupations other than fishing make the people bound to fish in the sea. Their life in the sea always remains risky. Courage, physical strength and experience are the requirements and quality of a man to become a fisherman in the sea.

Table 2.10 reveals that 34% fishermen have reported poverty as the main reason of being involved in fishing in the sea. 24% of the respondents have reported higher income in fishing that has brought them to this profession. 15% and 14% respondents have reported fishing as an easy means of livelihood and availability of fishes in the sea are the two main reasons that have brought them to this profession.

2.6 Period of involvement with fishing

Household survey, case studies and interviews have found that people of different ages, between 12 to 55 years of age are engaged in fishing. The fishermen who are now in the range of 50-55 years, started fishing from an average age of 15-20 years.

2.7 *Dadan* (Loan) and Vicious Circle of Exploitation

Fishermen of Kuakata are not used to form co-operatives for fishing in the sea. A negligible number of fishermen go for fishing with their own initiative and fund. Most of them go for fishing under the terms and conditions of the moneylenders (those who are very much prepared to exploit the fishermen community).

Most of the fishermen of Alipur and Mohipur go for fishing in the sea under the supervision of *Mahajan* or big fishermen. According to the terms and conditions, the *Mahajan* or owner of the fishing boat and gear give the fishermen money to buy firewood/fuel, ice and food items (before going to the sea) for fishing. In some cases, a few of the fishermen are paid in advance to maintain their family expenses. After deducting the expense of firewood/fuel, ice and food items, rest of the money from sale of fish is divided between the fishermen.

The owner gets 10 parts and the rest 6 parts are divided among the fishermen based on their status. In some cases, the sale amount is divided in the ratio of 11:5 between the owner and fishermen respectively. But during the winter season, when the amount of fish is comparatively low, the sale amount is divided in the ratio of 10:7 between the owners and fishermen. The normal system of share of the amount is 10:6. From the 6 dividends, the main boatman (of mechanized

boat) gets 3 dividends, fishermen boatmen or assistant boatmen get $\frac{3}{4}$ dividend; cook gets $\frac{3}{4}$ dividend and repairmen and others get 1 dividend each.

Table 2.11: Sources of drinking water of the fishermen community of different villages

Sl.	Name of villages	Respondents in percentage		
		Tube-well	Pond	Total
1.	Khajura	14.0		14.0
2.	Farshipara	7.0		7.0
3.	Naioripara	1.0		1.0
4.	Alipur	12.0		12.0
5.	Mombipara	1.0		1.0
6.	Musalliabad	14.0		14.0
7.	Hossainpara	10.0		10.0
8.	Panjupara	8.0		8.0
9.	Keranipara	3.0		3.0
10.	Nibinpur	7.0		7.0
11.	Melapara	1.0		1.0
12.	Kuakata	19.0	3.0	22.0
Total		97.0	3.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2002.

Table 2.11 reveals that about 97% respondents have reported the use of tube-well as the main source of drinking water. It is due to the success of the water and sanitation promotion programs of DANIDA and DPHE in Kuakata and its adjacent villages.

Table 2.12: Type of toilets used by the fishermen community of different villages

Sl.	Name of villages	Respondents in percentage					Total
		Sanitary	Katcha	Open	Hanging	Temporary	
1.	Khajura	11.0		1.0		2.0	14.0
2.	Farshipara	5.0	2.0				7.0
3.	Naioripara	1.0					1.0
4.	Alipur	10.0	2.0				12.0
5.	Mombipara		1.0				1.0
6.	Musalliabad	4.0	9.0	1.0			14.0
7.	Hossainpara	3.0	7.0				10.0
8.	Panjupara	2.0	5.0			1.0	8.0
9.	Keranipara	1.0	1.0		1.0		3.0
10.	Nibinpur	2.0	4.0			1.0	7.0
11.	Melapara	1.0					1.0
12.	Kuakata	7.0	13.0	2.0			22.0
Total		47.0	44.0	4.0	1.0	4.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2002.

Table 2.12 reveals that 47% of the respondents use sanitary latrines (made of ring, slab, and fenced by locally available raw materials) and 3% use open latrines.