

An assessment of gender roles in livelihood activities of Tan Duong villagers

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents the results of a study conducted in 2000 on gender issues and gender roles in livelihood activities of Tan Duong village, Thuan An Commune of Thua Thien Hue Province. The research focused on 2 groups of households: the aquaculture group, which consists of the majority of households and the remaining households - the non-aquaculture group. The water area controlled by each household varies, as do their economic condition and knowledge of aquaculture and aquatic fishing. Thus the livelihood activities vary among households in the research site.

Participatory research was used to assess gender roles in productive, reproductive and community activities, the type of work that each household member participates in, the time devoted to various activities, and responsibility required to fulfill the work of wife and husband in each household. This paper assesses the effects of livelihood activities on the gender role and position of household members in the family and in society.

INTRODUCTION

The changing experience of Viet Nam can be analyzed through a model of the restructuring of the economy. In the past, the state determined the direction of all important activities and collectivized enterprises were responsible for most of the production. In such an economic system, the market mechanism operated only in small businesses and household economy; that is to say part of the agricultural, handicrafts and consumer goods were retailed through the trading sector. The consequences of changes that have been introduced since the 1980s have led to the recognition of a multi-sectoral economy (Vu Tuan Anh, 1994).

The role of women in the development of the household economy in urban and rural areas must be brought into full play through socioeconomic policies. In rural areas, greater attention should be given to women whose role is to manage the household economy. In small scale production, diversification, and non-farm occupation development, women play a major role. Priority should be given to socioeconomic policies that take into account gender and the labor division between male and females in various domains of activity (Peter Boothroyd and Pham Xuan Nam, 2000). In recent years, together with economic development and investment in Thua Thien Hue province in the diversification of production activities, aquaculture and fishing in the lagoon area have also developed. It attracted the attention of not only producers and investors but also of researchers of Viet Nam.

Tan Duong village is located in Thuan An commune. It has a total population of 978 people in 176 households of whom 100% are fishers engaged in fishing and aquaculture. Presently there are 2 types of aquaculture systems: net enclosures and earth ponds. At the same time, they have many other livelihoods activities in their daily life.

There are two main production groups in Tan Duong – the aquaculture group and the non-aquaculture group – whose production activities and economic conditions are completely different. Among individual households, access to aquaculture area and production condition also vary. Especially for non-aquaculture households, income is still low. Women and men in Tan Duong village play a key role in most production activities and other livelihood activities, especially women in order to generate income. They also have an important role in family and social life.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In general, the educational level of women is low, therefore they have less opportunity to learn technical and scientific knowledge as compared to the men. That is a consequence of traditional attitude and it is also an unhappy situation in rural Viet Nam (Binh, 1997). Gender roles must be understood within communities if appropriate livelihood activities are to be developed that are inclusive and beneficial within a community.

The roles of gender consist of reproduction, production, community management and community politics. Reproductive role include child bearing responsibilities and domestic tasks required to guarantee the maintenance and reproduction of the labor force (Angeles and Stewart, 1998). It includes not only biological reproduction but also the care and maintenance of the workforce and the future workforce.

"Productive role of gender mean that works done by both women and men for pay in cash or kind. It includes both market production with an exchange value, and subsistence / home production with actual use value, and also potential exchange value. For women in agricultural production this includes work as independent farmers, peasant wives and wage workers" (Angeles and Stewart, 1989, page III A).

Men have a more formal, recognized role at the community level. For example, although women play an active role, as an extension of their productive role, to ensure the provision and maintenance of scarce resources of collective consumption, such as water, health care and education, this is voluntary unpaid work, undertaken in free time. At the same time, primarily men, often within the framework of national politics undertake the political work at the community-level. This is usually paid work, either directly or indirectly, through status or power (Angeles & Stewart, 1998).

In all activities, gender plays an important role. Women in Tan Duong are responsible for most family activities and gender determines the roles and responsibilities of men and women in fishing activities. Women spend hours wading in the water using push nets, drag net and clam collection. Drag net and aquaculture are activities in which men and women work together. Men, often, hire out their labor for heavier activities such as farm work and helping fixed gear fishers harvest their catch (Binh, 1999).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted from February to October 2000 at Tan Duong village belonging to Thuan An town, on the Tam Giang lagoon. The general and specific objectives of the study were:

To assess gender roles in livelihood activities and the effect on their lives

- To assess the role of gender in productive activities,
- To assess the roles of gender in reproductive activities, and
- To assess the effects of all livelihood activities on gender position in family and society.

During the research, participatory learning and discussions were conducted to collect data and build awareness among the local people and the researchers. Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) were combined with questionnaire surveys, group interviews, intensive interviews, specialized interviews and comparative statistics as well as story telling and validation by observation to get data for research topic.

Group discussions with key informants

Review, validation and analysis of current situation regarding production and reproduction were conducted through three meetings with key informants at commune level. In these meetings participants were commune leaders, head of Tan Duong village and representatives from the aquaculture and non-aquaculture groups.

In the first meeting, background information of the village and commune, such as natural resources and social economic condition, was collected. This meeting involved 8 participants. They were the village leader, the chairman of commune's People Committee (PC), the officer in charge of land management, leaders of the Women's Union (WU) and Farmer's Union, and representatives from aquaculture and non-aquaculture groups.

The second meeting was conducted with the aquaculture group in Tan Duong village. There were 5 participants representing men (3), women (2), and a group representative who attended the first meeting. In this meeting, the information on productive and reproductive activities of the aquaculture group was collected.

The third meeting was for the non-aquaculture group with 5 participants, the group representative, 3 women and 2 men. In this meeting, the information on production and reproduction of the non-aquaculture group was collected.

During the above meetings households were identified for follow up group discussions and individual interviews. A total of 20 households were selected from the aquaculture and non-aquaculture groups – 10 from each. Selection considered the gender make up of the household (representing men- and woman-headed households). The households also represented different household classification in the village.

Group discussion

Two group discussions were carried out in Tan Duong village; one was for aquaculture, and one for non-aquaculture group. These two group discussions were focused on the roles of the wives

and the husbands in productive and re-productive activities in the village. Each group discussion consisted of 10 participants (5 women and 5 men as selected above).

Questions for the discussion were concerning their production systems: “What are your productive activities? Who participate in which activities? How were decisions on labor division made in each family? What is the difference between men and women at the research site?”

Participatory mapping was also conducted in these group discussions. The basic map of Tan Duong was used for filling in the location of activities, for example pond/net enclosures and fishing grounds.

Household Interviews

To understand the resources and socio-economic conditions and activities at household level in the village, 10 households were interviewed – 5 from the aquaculture group and 5 from non-aquaculture group.

Interview questions consisted of information about their production systems and other related issues. For example: “What are your productive activities? How is labor division of wife and the husband in the household? What are the different in roles and responsibilities of gender in each production system and each production activity? How was income in the each production activities?” Many questions were asked for data and information collecting as mentioned above.

Observation and description

The use of observation and description to collect information and data on living and working conditions was concern about all livelihood activities of gender in the village in each production system. Observations were combined with interviews.

Statistical and comparative methods

The methods applied in collecting, analyzing and data processing progress are statistics and comparative methods such as average values, relative comparisons, etc. In addition, we also used research method of sociology to this survey.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Productive Activities

Fishing and aquaculture are the 2 main activities of Tan Duong villagers. Conditions of each household in the village varies depending on water area, culture techniques and fishing pattern. Most households in the village have access to water area for aquaculture development. However, some households as implied above have no access to water area and are active mainly in fishing and as hired labor for aquaculturists and other villages in the region.

The role and position of women in each family are different. Women participate in the main production activities, fishing and aquaculture, as well as in processing and trading aquatic products.

Women and men also take part in other production activities including hired fishing (in net enclosures), pond digging and cultivation at other villages. Although income from these activities is not very high, it plays a significant role in their daily family living. In the past, local people were mostly involved in fishing and had no other sources of income had low productivity and low income. In recent years, other productive activities such as aquaculture, farming, business, processing and many other activities, have developed and increase their income.

Standard of living

Production activities in Tan Duong village are diversified as the country's economy has diversified in which aquaculture and aquatic exploitation are traditional and dominant activities for income generation. Aquaculture in this area began in 1986 with simple pond systems, small in terms of both area and scale. In 1994, the government followed a policy of promoting economic development under many different production activities. Since then in Tan Duong aquaculture has developed in 2 forms – net enclosures and earth ponds. The boom in aquaculture has changed the villagers' lives. Production activities are more abundant and diverse such as aquaculture by earth pond, net enclosure systems, fishing, processing, marketing and many other production activities that improve livelihoods in the community.

At present there are two kinds of household groups in the village. The aquaculture group hold water areas for aquaculture by earth pond and net enclosure systems, and their income is higher. The non-aquaculture group has no opportunities for utilizing water area for aquaculture development. Hence, they earn their living from fishing with gear such as dragnet, pushnet, and gillnet and crab and clam collection by hand. They also work as hired labourers in the community. The income of non-aquaculture households is often low and dependent on seasonal and climatic conditions.

Although there are differences in the standard of living among these two groups, the income of both groups is unstable due to adverse natural conditions such as floods and disasters. Table 1 compares the average monthly incomes of people in Thua Thien Hue province.

Table 1: Average monthly income of various economic groups in Tan Duong village as compared to provincial averages.

Economic group	# of households	% of total hhs	Average monthly income (1 000 VND)		
			Tan Duong ^c	Around Lagoon ^d	Province ^e
Rich ^a	21	12	125	120	110
Better off ^a	53	30	95	90	85
Medium ^a	82	47	75	70	60
Poor ^b	20	11	40	35	30

^a Households belonging to the aquaculture group;

^b Households belonging to the non-aquaculture group;

^c Average of Tan Duong villagers estimated by survey (2000)

^d Average of lagoon people as estimated by Provincial Statistics Department (2000);

^e Average of Thua Thien-Hue people as estimated by Provincial Statistics Department (2000).

According to provincial statistics of average monthly income around the lagoon, taken at the end of 2000, the income levels are higher for villagers around the lagoon area than in other parts of Thua Thien-Hue province, particularly in upland areas. Income levels of Tan Duong villagers are even higher than those of other villages around the lagoon area.

Classification of the 4 economic groups were based on the amount earned per month and criteria decided by the Commune. Some households in Tan Duong have a much higher income than the statistical average of rich households around the lagoon. In contrast, some households of the non-aquaculture group have a very low and unstable income level because they have no access to fishing grounds or aquaculture areas, leading to unemployment. Small-scale fishing activities are dependent upon the season.

Table 1 indicates that most Tan Duong villagers fall in the medium to better off economic groups. This means that aquaculture activities are a very important economic activity in area which has increased incomes and stabilized livelihoods of Tan Duong villagers. Table 1 also infers that the lagoon area has a high economic potential for the development of local people as well as local government in Thua Thien Hue province (Phu, 1998). To solve problems of unemployment of non aquaculture households is a very important issue of government at the commune, district and provincial levels. Until it is solved, the livelihood circumstance of non-aquaculture households in Tan Duong Village will be the concern of government and local people.

Economic development in Tan Duong

Aquatic Production

According to the research, fishing and aquaculture are the main income generating activities in Tan Duong. They rely on technology and hard work for production however, production varies among households depending on access to resources, fishing patterns and aquaculture techniques. Non-aquaculture households earn from 20,000 - 25,000 VND per worker and they often only get work for 15 - 20 days/month. Women and men of the non-aquaculture group work harder.

Livestock production

There is no agricultural land belonging to Tan Duong, however, people raise pigs and ducks using residual foods from baby shrimp, crab and fish. About 14 and 18 households raise pigs and ducks, respectively, in which 5 households raise pigs on a larger scale producing 6 - 7 pigs per year. Most households raising pigs are from the aquaculture group, because of these households have residual food and money to invest in pig production. Some households raise ducks to provide eggs for their food, to increase income and to improve living standard. In livestock activities, women are responsible for all stages of work consisting of buying, raising and feeding. However, there are no local pig breeders.

Infrastructure

Tan Duong village is connected to the national electricity net, but 7 households can not afford electrical service. Tap water system is available from the Hue Water Company and, according to our survey, 65% of non-aquaculture households use tap water daily while the rest buy water from other families. For those without access to the water supply, there is a shortage of safe water and the lagoon is used for washing resulting in many diseases. Women and children specifically complained of bellyaches and upset stomachs.

Inter-village transportation system is poor compared with other villages in Thuan An commune. This makes the transportation of fish products difficult, especially in the rainy season. In 2000, 2 km of new road was built which has helped this situation although there are still 6 km of poor road. Tan Duong village is located close to the commune PC headquarters and a primary school and the health service office of Thuan An town. Therefore, villagers have better access to examinations, curing diseases and monitoring health situation.

The literacy rate in the village is 70 %, meaning that some women and men cannot read or write. Also, some villagers have only completed primary school meaning that it is also more difficult to access information and technical expertise.

Production activities, livelihood and position of gender in Tan Duong

Fishery activities

Fishing and aquaculture technology are less developed because fishers do not understand about using appropriate resources and techniques in culture and fishing. They also focus on short-term benefits due to a lack of money. In 10 surveyed households, the number of people that participated in aquaculture training is still limited and consists of mostly men. In general, women mostly did not take part in community activities.

The project researchers organized many training courses on aquaculture in Tan Duong in 2000. Limited by literacy, women were always self-denying and opted out in favour of their husbands and children unless the project sent them personal invitations. In practice not all husbands transfer the knowledge they obtain from training courses to their wives. But women themselves participate in all production activities. In order to help women assimilate knowledge from training courses, the project researchers changed their usual practice and invited women personally by name. As a result, women actively participated in workshops and training courses and contributed many quality ideas. In 2000, 15 women from aquaculture and 7 women from non-aquaculture groups attended training courses on techniques in aquaculture and fishing as well as discussions on livelihood activities of non-aquaculture group.

Women and men's participation in productive activities varies based on labour division. Table 2 summarizes the results of a group discussion with 10 participants on the roles of household members in each productive activity.

Table 3. Participation of family members in production activities.

Activity	Relative Participation (based on a scale of 1 to10)			
	Mother	Father	Son	Daughter
Aquaculture				
Pond construction	8	10	7	5
- Fingerling buying	3	9	3	1
Protection	9	9	9	8
Feeding	9	9	9	9
Product harvest	9	10	10	9
Product selling	10	1	0	4
Fishing equipment preparation	9	10	8	7
Processing	8	3	1	5
Fishing				
Fishing equipment preparation	9	10	9	8
Fishing	10	10	10	9
Product selling	10	0	0	4
Animal production				
- Pig raising	5	2	0	2
- Duck raising	4	3	1	0
Other activities				
Hired labor	3	5	4	2

Source: Group discussion in Tan Duong , 2000

In Table 3, participation levels are the mean of responses from interviews and group discussions. In some family's women and men filled out the form together, while in others either the woman or the man filled out the forms for the rest of the family.

These results indicate how families perceive their relative labor contribution at the family-level. Women and man are present in every work including both aquaculture and fishing activities however, participation level depends on each family. Physically hard work is the responsibility of men such as pond construction and night-time protection and buying fingerling. In families without a husband, women must take responsibility for all activities in daily life. In families with enough capital and water surface area, the husband and wife work together in fishery activities as well as other work in the family. Women are responsible for caring for children, food processing, cleaning house and other housework. Product selling is the responsibility by wives and daughters. Product harvesting and sorting is done by both women and men.

Women's participation in community work is quite limited because in such work, the family is represented by the husband. This situation is the same as in much of Viet Nam.

Women and men discuss about decisions regarding productive activities for the economic development of family. However women have less rights than men do in all livelihood activities. Man's role is usually higher than women in productive activities.

There are differences in gender roles among the two household groups of Tan Duong village namely aquaculture and non-aquaculture groups. Non -aquaculture household group there is low income compared with aquaculture household group as mention above. The gender role in production activities and livelihood there are different. There are different in time and works participate as well as gender responsibility and rights of gender in family and community. The woman of Tan Duong like to other villages in Viet nam they are usual rights higher when their husband delegated to do some things in the family. So that woman's rights in each family are very different.

Children's roles in Tan Duong depends on the economic condition of their family. Most children take part in productive activities at an early age. After they finish primary and secondary schools most children stay at home to help their mother and father in work such as fishing and day-time pond protection in the aquaculture area. Sons leave school early to go fishing and daughters participate in house work and help their mother with cooking, cleaning and caring of younger siblings, etc. Many children stop attending school and stay at home to care for siblings as well as participate in productive work. Observation and household interviews found some households with 5 school-aged children but only 2 of them go to school at 4 and 6 levels and after that they stay at home to help their parents in house works and production activities.

Livestock Production

In Tan Duong, 22 out of 176 families raise animals. Women are responsible for livestock raising, from buying, feeding and marketing livestock. The income from pig raising, in which 10 families engage, can be rather high i.e. Mrs. Tran Thi Ty earns 6 - 7 million VND per year and Mrs. Dan 2 - 3 million VND per year. Duck raising, practiced by 12 households, provide meat and egg to improve food resource in daily life of local people in community. At the same time, it uses residual food resource as well as labor resource in the lagoon area and increases income.

Regardless of wealth, women play an important role in looking after children, old people, working as housewife and taking part in social organizations and so on. The group discussion with 10 participants from aquaculture group showed results presented in table 4.

Table 4: Gender roles in reproductive activities in Tan Duong village

Type of work	Relative Participation (based on a scale of 1 to 10)			
	Wife	Husband	Both	Others ^a
House work	10	10	10	2
Looking after children	10	5	2	2
Looking after old people	10	4	5	5
Teaching children	9	5	3	2
Furniture buying	8	8	5	1
Livestock product selling	8	1	1	0
Training	3	10	0	0
Community activities	5	10	1	0

^A others refer to grandparents or older children.

Source: Group discussion in Tan Duong, 2000.

Table 4 indicates that responsibility and role of gender in reproductive work are different. Role and position of men and women also varies within a family. Women participate in all reproductive activities, contributing significantly to the family. Indeed, women take on more responsibilities and work a longer number of hours in this area (both men and women agreed on this point in the household interviews). Poor women from non-aquaculture households must spend additional time earning an income and/or working for other people.

The gender role in reproduction activities there is different in each family. Usually, women devotes a lot of time and responsibility for reproductive activities compared with men. Women care and teach children, look after old people etc, while in contrast, men participate in reproductive activities for short time and work a little.

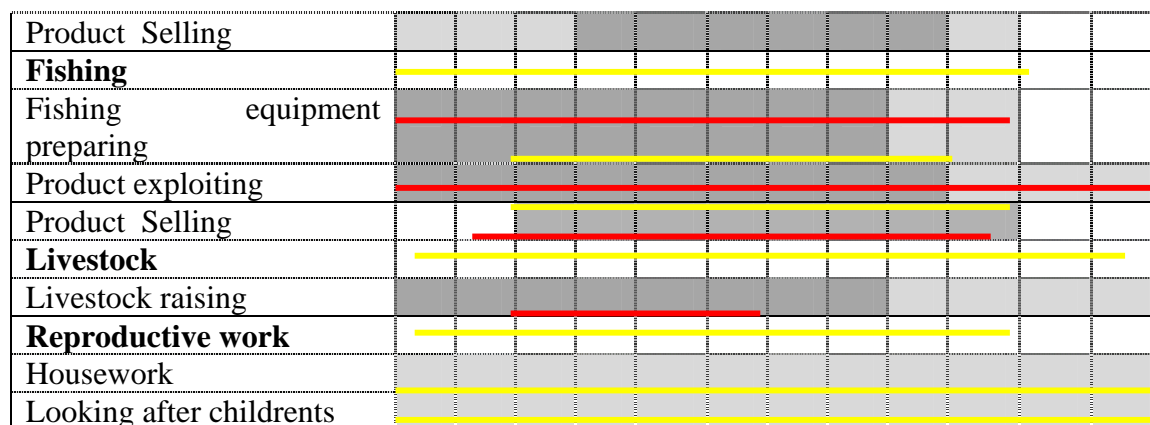
Women participate in many works daily and say that there is no one to substitute for them. So that women become very busy in their daily lives. They have no time to participate meeting and discussion of village and community. This leads to woman having low knowledge and there are negative impacts in technology of Tam Giang lagoon resource management.

At the household level, decision-making and product distribution of community is not similar. Often, women have an inferiority complex and are shy of participating in social activities. Because of women never have a chance to participate in a community meeting and other meetings in the village, their opinions are often not heard. This is a common problem through all villages in Viet Nam. Women are non-assertive and do not make decisions in production and living. It is ironic that they have no decision-making power in production activities and in living even though they are directly involved in these activities.

Surveys, group discussions, household interviews, visiting sites and direct observation indicate that women at Tan Duong village are hard workers and make personal sacrifices for their husbands and children and other members in the family. Women in rural region spend much time for family works and production activities as well as reproduction in their family. Participation time in working of each member as well as women in a family is different among families depending on economic, family condition, water area and opportunities for using water area.

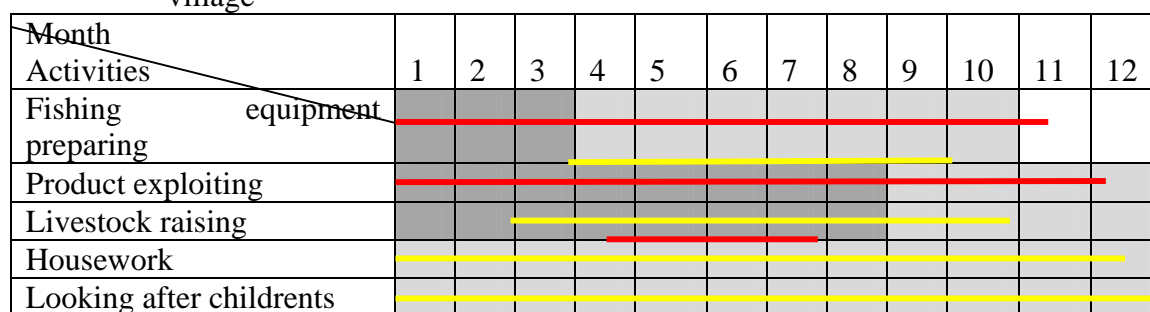
Figure 1 (see appendix) present 4 bioclocks representing daily working schedule of Men of aquaculture households, men of non-aquaculture households, women of aquaculture households and women on non-aquaculture households. The figures, drawn from collected data from group discussions with keys informants and household key informant interviews in 2000, indicate the participation and working time of women and men in livelihood activities in Tan Duong village.

Figure 1 indicates that there are differences in working time and productive activities between the two production groups in the village. As well, there are differences in other activities such as time for take a rest, sleep, and housework activities of local people. Aquaculture households have water area which entail many activities such as digging pond, caring, protection, processing, product harvest and product selling. They are have more opportunities (in terms of economics and time) to participate in community activities.



Note: Dark color is long participation time (mean that intensity of work) and Lighter color is short participation time. Red line indicates men's work and Yellow indicates women's work.
Source: Group discussion in Tan Duong, 2000.

Figure 2.2. Seasonal calendar of women and men of non-aquaculture households in Tan Duong village



Note: Dark color is long participation time (mean that intensity of work) and Lighter color is short participation time. Red line indicates men's work and Yellow indicates women's work.
Source: Group discussion in Tan Duong, 2000.

Figures 2.1 and 2.2 indicate that working time of local people lasts year-round especially housework and product exploiting. Aquaculture and fishing activities require a peak labor force at high season. In general, these activities are concentrated in ten months of the year. In October and November, fishery activities cease due to bad weather therefore, at this time non-aquaculture households meet many difficulties in living condition. There are very different seasonal calendars for men and women of the two groups.

Activities and role of aquaculture and non-aquaculture women and men

Each family in Tan Duong has differences in water area and circumstances such as capital, labor, and technique in using and managing water resource. In response, there are differences in men and women's participation in production activities, role and responsibility. Both genders have high roles and responsibility to earn money, to increase income of family and their life guarantee.

Figure 3 presents results of data collected by key informant interviews and group discussions on labor participation, production activities, working time, responsibility and income to evaluate role of women and men in livelihood activities. Figure 3 indicates that participation of each woman and man differ depending on allowed time and family situation, as well as rights to use water areas. Women spend more time on reproduction activities such as caring for children, teaching children, and caring for old people. Some women spend 3 to 4 hours per day on house work. Women think these tasks are their responsibility leading to the fact that women are busier than men in their daily life.

Gender roles in community activities vary by very little except for Theo who is a head of village and a staff member of Thuan An Town PC. Therefore Theo contributes 25% of his time to community activities.

Figure 3 indicates that aquaculture households are different to non-aquaculture households in their production activities and time in participating in each activities for both men and women in the family.

Women's roles in community work in Tan Duong village is to participate in meeting to give opinion on production as well as participate in general work of community such as in building new road of village and social hygiene to make the environment better.

Effects of traditional customs on role of women in family and society

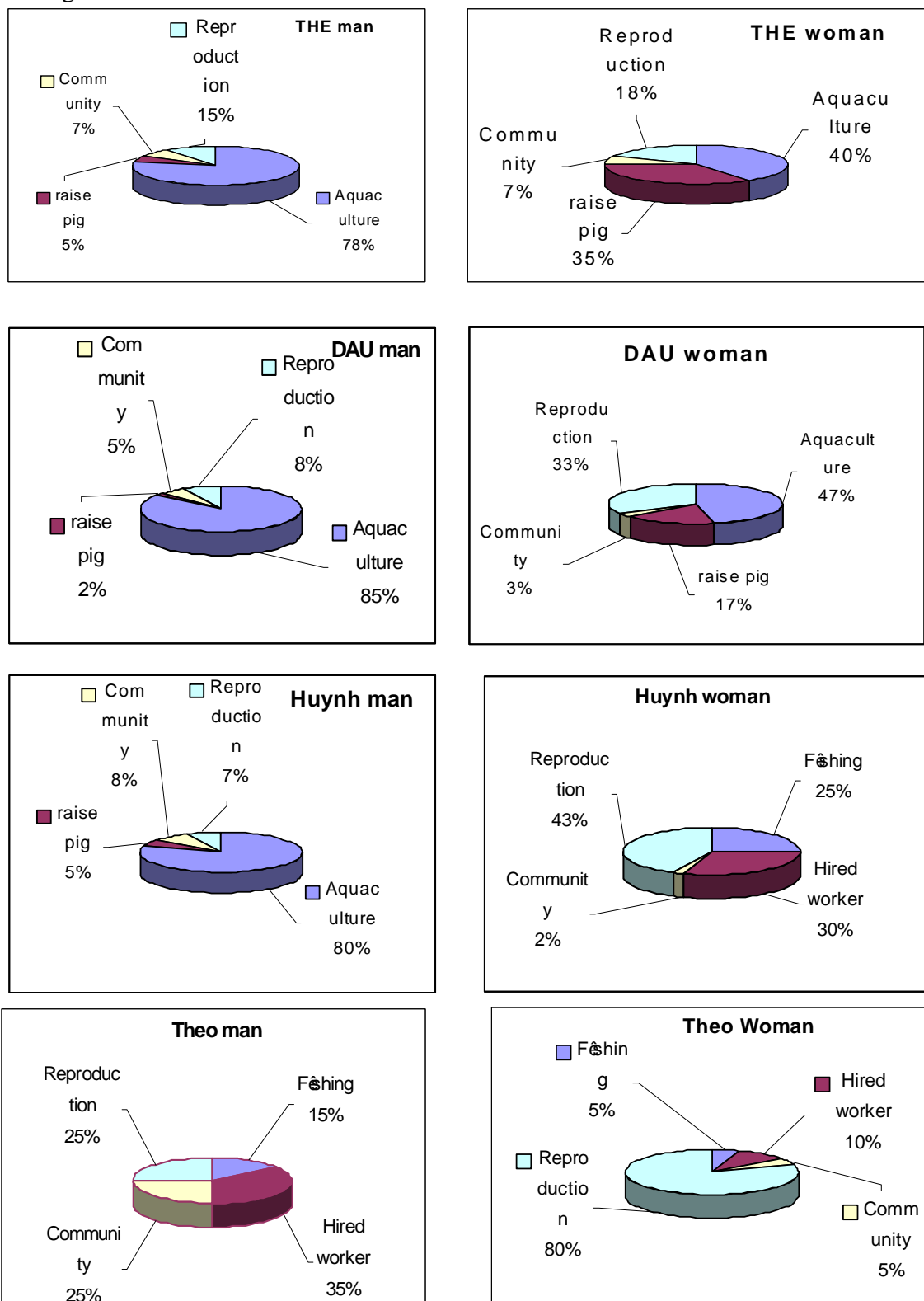
Viet Nam is affected by feudalism ideology. Besides participating in production activities, wives must take the responsibility for all reproductive activities such as taking care children, housework work, etc. Women consider these works as their duty, spontaneity and sacrifice. Because of traditional customs, role of men in family is more dominant. Men on behalf of family participate in community activities including meetings, celebrations, anniversaries and ancestor-worshipping days of village. Men receive guests and answer questions. Women's community roles in Tan Duong village is indicated in their participation in meetings to give opinion in production as well as participate in general work of community.

Over the course of this study, we were fortunate enough to take part in praying for fishery celebration of hamlet. Women took responsibility of buying the necessary materials for the celebration, but men were allowed to participate in works such as cooking, worshipping in praying for fishery celebration. Women were not allowed to participate.

The traditional custom handed down from generation to generation is one of “respecting men and looking down on women”. This makes women suffer losses. They have no time and good condition to take part in community activities. Their role in decision-making in most activities was similar to that in all production activities: men and women usually discuss together to decide how to do all work in the family.

However, woman's rights in the family are lower compared with men. Sometimes women are dependent on their husband when their opinions were similar to that of husband about the daily activities as well as production activities providing that husband authorized wife.

Figure 3. Participation in livelihood activities of men and women of 4 households of Tan Duong Village



CONCLUSION

- Women in Tan Duong are hard workers and make sacrifices to personal interest for their husband and children and other members in family. Women in rural areas spend much time for family work and production activities as well as reproduction in their family. Participation time in work varies among families depending on economic, family condition, water area and opportunities for using water area of local people in Tan Duong.
- The living standard of people in Tan Duong village is unequal. Most households fall in the middle income level. Non-aquaculture households' livelihood are very miserable and their income is very unstable because they are dependent on weather and are unemployed. Most households in this group are the poor group of village, however, their income level is higher than that in other villages in Thua Thien Hue Province.
- The natural and socio-economic conditions have considerable affect on the role of gender in livelihood activities. Literacy of women and men in general and fishers in particular at Tan Duong is very low – most fishers can only read and write a little. They lack opportunities to learn, and enhance social awareness on natural resources management as well as understand other aspects of scientific knowledge. Natural and socio-economic conditions also impact production and livelihood activities and gender roles of local people as well as condition for children to attend school.
- There are different gender roles in livelihood activities in terms of participation, time devoted and responsibility. Usually, woman spend a lot of time in reproduction activities such as caring for children, cooking, washing, cleaning the house, etc. Therefore women are busy with house work and have no chance to take part in community activities.
- The role of women and men in production activities consist of aquaculture, fishing, livestock raising, hired labor, business and others. Local people participate in many production activities and this diversification has changed economic condition of household. However, income of households in Tan Duong is unequal particularly between aquaculture and non-aquaculture households.

RECOMMENDATION

The government should have appropriate economic development policy, prior to developing regions whole ecological condition is not advantageous for economic development. This is the case for Thuan An Town particularly and Thua Thien Hue province in generally. This policy should help local women and men have more opportunity to rise up progressively in economic development and to improve livelihood of local people.

It is necessary to have further studies on the role of gender in production activities aiming at confirming scientifically above conclusions about the role of women and men as well as evaluate generalization on the role of gender in economic, cultural and social activities of fishers who live

next to Tam Giang lagoon area. Specific measures on the role of women and men in production and livelihood activities should be suggested, particularly regarding women's role in reproduction activities. Local government should consider gender issues in general socio - economic development plans and natural resources utilization and management strategies.

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