

Bangladesh - Report of the Bangladesh Household Expenditure Survey 1981

BANGLADESH BUREAU OF STATISTICS

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Overview

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Overview

ABSTRACT

A basic objective of all economic systems is to produce goods and services for the members of the society. One way of measuring the success of an economic system is by measuring the ability to provide for its people, to feed them, to clothe and shelter them and offering access to social services such as health, education, recreation and to a wide range of consumer goods. Generally the material welfare of the citizens depends upon the level of consumption of the different items of goods and services.

The Household Expenditure Survey is the tool through which such measurement is done. The result of such survey gives knowledge about the levels of living, how the patterns of these levels change over time and also how widely the levels of living vary among different individuals and income groups. Such information is essential to evaluation of the present policies of the Government or proposed policies of the future. The Household Expenditure Surveys are, therefore, very important to policy formulation for welfare of the citizens. It is with this end in view that the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics have been conducting such surveys. This is the seventh survey since independence.

KIND OF DATA
Sample survey data [ssd]

UNITS OF ANALYSIS

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KEYWORDS
Bangladesh, BBS, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Report of the Bangladesh Household Expenditure Survey

Coverage

GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE
National coverage

UNIVERSE
Table-1 shows the size and the distribution of households by number of members from the 1981 population census and two HES surveys. The average household size is similar for the two surveys, but its distribution is slightly different. At the national level, both surveys show the proportion of one to two person households are lower than for the census; whereas, the proportion of three to five person and six to eight person households are higher than for the census.

Producers and Sponsors

PRIMARY INVESTIGATOR(S)

Name	Affiliation
BANGLADESH BUREAU OF STATISTICS	Statistics Division, Ministry of Planning

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Name	Abbreviation	Role
Statistics Division	SD	

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Sampling

Sampling Procedure

A two-stage probability, sample of households was used in this survey. The first stage consisted of 240 primary sampling unit's (PSU) selected for the Integrated Multipurpose Sampling (IMPS). This same sample of PSUs has been used in surveys of household expenditure, labour force activity and the nutritional status of children. A detailed description of IMPs appears in Appendix-3. (Appendix-1 & 2 detailed results classified by income and expenditure groups). The second-stage was a sample of households selected systematically for the 240 sample PSUs with stratification of certain variables. Rural PSUs were stratified by agriculture/non-agriculture activity and land ownership. Urban PSUs were stratified by major occupation of household heads and monthly income of household. Every year all the households within the PSUs were listed and updated and then the sample households were selected within the listed households.

Response Rate

The estimated income according to 1981HES was at Tk. 30,933 per household per annum. The average household size was 5.86 persons, which gives a per capita income of Tk. 5,279 as shown in table I. The 7 national income accounts estimated showed the per capita G.N.P. for that year at Tk. 4409 which is about 16.5 percent lower than the estimate obtained from the HES. The average number of earners per households was about 1.45. An earner on an average earned Tk. 21,333 in that year. The average household size in 1995 was larger than that in 1981, whereas the average number of earners in 1995 was lower than that in 1981. There was a considerable rural/urban disparity in income. The per capita income for rural areas was estimated at Tk. 4967 as against Tk. 7420 for the urban areas. The per capita income in urban areas was about 49 percent higher and per earner income 48 percent higher than in rural areas. With the low literacy rate (about 25%) in Bangladesh only few educated heads (or members) of households to record diary entries were available in urban sample areas and almost none in rural sample areas. Thus the work-load for the diary keeper was too heavy in both the 1981 experiment and in the 1981 HES as in many rural sample areas the diary keeper was required to maintain all the 16 household diaries in his assigned sample area. To remedy this situation, consideration was given to shortening the diary period from a month to a fortnight. To investigate this, a study was made in the August, 1981 diaries in which 15-day recordings (both the 1st 15 days and the 2nd 15 days) were compared with 30-day recordings. The study showed very little difference in the level of expenditures between the 15 days and the 30 days for major food groups. Thus, it was decided that it was not necessary to collect food & beverage data for an entire month and that a shorter period would suffice. On the basis of this finding, the 1981 HES which began from July 1985 adopted this 15-day diary recording by selecting 8 sample households for the first fortnight and the remaining 8 households for the second fortnight in a given sample area.

Questionnaires

Overview

On receipt from the field, preliminary checking of the field in diaries and main questionnaires was made following the points mentioned below and in case of any kind of gross inconsistency, those diaries & questionnaire were sent back to the field for due verification and correction.

(i) Main questionnaires and diary books were matched in respect of some demographic characteristics such as number of members, sex, age, relationship to the head of household etc.

(ii) Consistency in income & expenditure data in the main questionnaire and diary book was also checked and corrected if required.

Data Collection

Data Collection Dates

Start	End	Cycle
1981	1981	N/A

Data Collection Mode

Other [oth]

Data Collection Notes

The Household expenditure survey (HES) was the most frequent and important survey conducted by BBS. Five such surveys have been conducted since 1973-74. These surveys till 1981 were conducted using an interview approach with retrospective questioning. In 1982 the BBS initiated an experiment with the diary in combination with retrospective system to collect information of daily consumption. Based on this experiment, the household expenditure survey was conducted using this combination in 1983-84. The data collection methodology for each sample household consisted of two main field operations, viz., (i) recording of daily consumption expenditure at the end of each day for a period of one calendar month and (ii) recording at the end of the month expenditures on non-food (semi-durable & durable) items with quarterly and yearly reference periods plus income data for the past year and selected socio-economic characteristics of all adult members of the households. The first field operation, i. e. recording of daily purchase and consumption in a diary booklet, was performed by either a literate and knowledgeable adult member of the household or, in the absence of such a person in the sample household by a local educated person who was well known and relied upon in the locality. This person was called the "diary keeper" who paid a nominal amount of Taka 200/- for this work. Immediately before starting the monthly diary operation, a BBS officer visited the sample area and recruited and trained the local diary keeper. The diary keeper was introduced to the sample households and his role as a diary keeper was explained. The sample households which had an educated adult person, capable of recording daily consumption, maintained the diary themselves. Such adult household members were also trained by the BBS Officers. This officer stayed at the sample area for the first few days of the month to ascertain that the diary keeper and the relevant household members were recording the consumption information as instructed. The diary keeper, in addition to maintaining the daily consumption expenditures of sample households without any adult educated person, had to also check the diaries maintained by the households themselves every few days to correct any inadequacy/inaccuracy in the diary entries. The second field operation, i. e. collection of information on semi-durable items of consumption, household income and socio-economic characteristics, utilized a special HES schedule of 21 pages. This was performed by a BBS field staff at the end of the month of enquiry. With the low literacy rate (about 25%) in Bangladesh only few educated heads (or members) of households to record diary entries were available in urban sample areas and almost none in rural sample areas. Thus the workload for the diary keeper was too heavy in both the 1982 experiment and in the 1983-84 HES as in many rural sample areas the diary keeper was required to maintain all the 16 household diaries in his assigned sample area. To remedy this situation, consideration was given to shortening the diary period from a month to a fortnight. To investigate this, a study was made in the August, 1983 diaries in which 15-day recordings (both the last 15 days and the 2nd 15 days) were compared with 30-day recordings. The study showed very little difference in the level of expenditures between the 15 days and the 30 days for major food groups. Thus, it was decided that it was not necessary to collect food & beverage data for an entire month and that a shorter period would suffice. On the basis of this finding, the 1985-86 HES which began from July 1985 adopted this 15-day diary recording by selecting 8 sample households for the first fortnight and the remaining 8 households for the second fortnight in a given sample area. Having reduced the period of maintaining daily consumption expenditures from a month to a fortnight the content of diary booklet in which consumption of one day on two pages accommodating more items of expenditures in each day. This is likely to minimize the omission of items consumed during a day.

Questionnaires

On receipt from the field, preliminary checking of the field in diaries and main questionnaires was made following the points mentioned below and in case of any kind of gross inconsistency, those diaries & questionnaire were sent back to the field for due verification and correction.

(i) Main questionnaires and diary books were matched in respect of some demographic characteristics such as number of members, sex, age, relationship to the head of household etc.

(ii) Consistency i income & expenditure data in the main questionnaire and diary book was also checked and corrected if required.

Data Collectors

Name	Abbreviation	Affiliation
BANGLADESH BUREAU OF STATISTICS	BBS	STATISTICS AND INFORMATICS DIVISION, MINISTRY OF PLANNING

Supervision

The survey was conducted in July, 1981 through June, 1981. This survey was conducted on a monthly basis. In each month 20 PSUs (mauza/mahalla) were covered. Under the guidance of the Director, four senior officers of the Research, Training and Sample Survey (RT&SS) Wing co-ordinated the field operations. They were responsible for the field supervision and preliminary checking in filled in schedules and diary books. Statistical Officers (S.O.) and Assistant Statistical Officers (A.S.O.) at the Regional Statistical Offices (R.S.O.) were responsible for the selection, appointment and training of the diary keepers and for the supervision of interviewers and diary keepers. Statistical Assistants at the Regional Offices were engaged as interviewers. The diary keepers were local educated unemployed persons or students. Training of the supervisors (RSO/ASO) was conducted at Dhaka training centre by the Director and Senior Officers of the RT&SS Wing. Training of the interviewers was conducted in 21 Regional Offices by the Senior Officers of RT&SS Wing in Regional Offices. During the training period supervisors and interviewers received detailed instructions concerning the contents of the questionnaire and interviewing techniques.

Data Processing

Data Editing

A total of 3840 diary books and schedules were received from the field. One Deputy Director, two Statistical Officers and twenty-five Statistical Investigators/Statistical Assistants were engaged in manual editing of the diary books and schedules. After manual editing diary books & schedules were sent to the computer wing for electronic processing. Computer edit was done to ensure consistency of the data and tabulation were made from such edited data.

Data Appraisal

Estimates of Sampling Error

Estimates based on the sampling design are subject to sampling error. It is therefore essential to provide some measure of reliability for these estimates. The sample size was designed to provide national, urban and rural estimates. The Random group method is applied to the mean of selected variables for the calculation of relative standard errors. Table 1 and 2 present estimates of the mean and the relative standard error.