

Socio-economic Development of Small Scale Broiler Farmers in Rural Areas of Bangladesh: A Case Study of *Mymensingh* District

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Broiler production has become a specialized and speedy business at present time for the small-scale farmers of the country. Short life cycle of the broiler and requirement of relatively less amount of capital attributed to its popularity to the farmers. A large number of energetic men and women are coming forward to undertake broiler farming as a means of self employment. Broiler farming has also been playing an important role in improving livelihoods of the farmers involved in broiler farming. There are some examples where the broiler raisers have changed their socio-economic conditions to a considerable extent. Studies showed that the socio-economic condition of about 76% of broiler beneficiary has been improved. Commercial broiler farming provided employment opportunities for unemployed family members, improved socio-economic conditions and increased women empowerment among rural people of Bangladesh. All these evidences suggested that commercial broiler farming deserve wider scale expansion throughout the country as a poverty reduction activity. Despite its high potential the broiler farming is not based on sound footings. The broiler farm owners face various problems like shortage, high price and poor quality of DOC (Day-old chick); high price, poor quality and unavailability feeds; high cost and low quality of medicine, vaccine and veterinary services; shortage of capital; inadequate marketing facilities; and poor transportation and communication.

Though broiler farming faces various problems, a huge scope exists for development of broiler industry in Bangladesh. It is interesting to note that broiler farming is solely in the private sector particularly in the hands of small farmers who are running their enterprise through self-finance. So it is very much necessary to assess whether broiler farming is contributing positively for the socio-economic development of the broiler farmers. The overall objective of the present study is, however, to determine and analyze the magnitude of socio-economic development of small scale broiler farmers. It also identifies and analyzes the problems faced by the farm holders.

In order to fulfill the objectives of the study *Sadar Upazilla* of *Mymensingh* District was purposively selected due to the concentration of the broiler farm. In *Mymensingh* district small-scale broiler farming started its journey in around 1980 and since then number of farms has been increasing. There is huge demand of broiler meat in *Mymensingh* district as there are many educational institutions, hotels and restaurants and hospitals. So broiler farming is expanding day by day in *Mymensingh*. Another reason of selecting *Mymensingh* as the study area is that it is 121 km from Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh, and well communicated by both road and train.

In view of the above circumstances, the following findings of the present study will be addressed-

1. Increased annual employment opportunities
2. Increased annual household income and expenditure
3. Increased amount of cash in hand and saving with banks
4. Increased consumption of meat, fish, egg, milk, vegetables, rice and pulse
5. Improved household assets and health status
6. Participation in mitigating social conflict
7. Increased women empowerment
8. As a whole improved socio-economic condition