

**“PATRIARCHAL BARGAINING” – EXPLORING WOMEN’S AGENCY**

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The agency of female labourers in Teknaf dried fish value chains is far more constrained than women involved in fisheries in some other parts of the world. Nonetheless, women dried fish labourers in Teknaf continually bargain with, resist, and sometimes outwit the patriarchal constraints they face. Female labourers’ negotiation strategies are their choice of course, which is the core factor of agency. Patriarchal bargaining is interlinked with everyday engagements and patriarchal constraints, because female labourers’ patriarchal bargaining strategies are visible in their everyday engagements and in responses to the patriarchal constraints they face within the dried fish value chains in Teknaf. They have specific bargaining strategies for the specific patriarchal constraints they face. They produce, modify, and engage with the existing social structure while bargaining with the patriarchy within the dried fish value chains in Teknaf, Bangladesh. Their bargaining and negotiation with the patriarchal Teknaf society within the dried fish value chains is to achieve subjective, objective, and relational wellbeing. The patriarchal bargaining strategies of the female labourers include and relate to numerous facets of their lives. The aspects of their lives that were most apparent during my research: female laborers’ skills and knowledge, networking capabilities, women’s associations, laborer scarcity, age, habits, clothing, place of residence, savings in the form of belongings, single women as heads of the family, negotiation of wife of the owner, women’s perspectives regarding their contribution, and everyday resistance. These various patriarchal bargaining strategies are not separate from each other but are used to negotiate for women’s collective agency in different times and situations. Through patriarchal bargaining, women in Teknaf continue their engagements with the dried fish value chains after facing different kinds of patriarchal constraints, which become the source of patriarchal bargaining for other women to engage in dried fish value chains in Teknaf.