



Spatio-temporal occurrence and distribution of copepod in the Karnaphuli river estuary, Bangladesh

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Abstract

A total of 25 major taxa of zooplankton were identified from the Karnaphuli River of which 23 taxa during monsoon, 20 taxa during post monsoon and 20 taxa during pre-monsoon. The sampling sites count started from the Karnaphuli River mouth towards the upstream. The seasonal highest peak of zooplankton recorded 423.54 indivs/m³, 654.4 indivs/m³ and 437.39 indivs/m³ accordingly during monsoon, post-monsoon and pre-monsoon season at site-6, site-4 and site-6 respectively. Copepod occurred at all sites as a dominating species and contributed 40.18% annually. The seasonal highest peak of copepod was 83.02% at site-2 during monsoon, 89.39% at site-4 during post-monsoon and 36.82% at site-1 during pre-monsoon season. Copepod exhibited a weak positive linear relationship with dissolved oxygen; a moderate negative linear relationship with air temperature, water temperature, pH, salinity and a weak negative linear relationship with TDS. In this study copepod showed euryhaline nature. As a consequence, their abundance increased with decreasing salinity and maximum was found in the freshwater region.

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Introduction

The Karnaphuli river originated from the Lusai hills (in Mizoram, India) enter into the eastern boundary of Chittagong and flows after a course of 194.73 km through Bangladesh and falls into the Bay of Bengal (O' Mallery, 1908). Very few or no remarkable study was conducted on the copepods of the Karnaphuli River. Copepods are one of the most dominant group in zooplankton communities (Castel and Feurtet, 1986; Soetaert and Van Rijswijk, 1993; Peitsch *et al.*, 2000; Bollens *et al.*, 2002; Lo *et al.*, 2004; Hooff and Bollens, 2004; Lopez-Ibarra and Palomares-Garcia, 2006; Bouley and Kimmerer, 2006; Cordell *et al.*, 2007; Cordell *et al.*, 2008; Devreker *et al.*, 2008; Bollens *et al.*, 2011) in terms of density and biomass (Froneman, 2002; Kibirige and Perissinotto, 2003).

Generally they are secondary producers (Islam *et al.*, 2006) in coastal and marine environment (Lo *et al.*, 2004; Magalhaes *et al.*, 2010) primarily feed on phytoplankton (Lo *et al.*, 2004). In tropical and subtropical estuaries, phytoplankton populations are limited by the zooplankton populations and zooplankton are limited by the accessibility of feeding resources (Rios-Jara, 1998; Ara, 2002; Marques *et al.*, 2007). The significant effects of planktonic copepods in food web are the contribution to organic matter fluxes as well as nutrient recycling (Parsons *et al.*, 1984; Miller *et al.*, 1991; Dam *et al.*, 1994; Landry *et al.*, 1994; Banse, 1995). They are also playing a paramount role in the energy transfer between producer and large heterotrophic organisms like fish (Parsons *et al.*, 1984; Banse, 1995). Moreover, they are well-known natural food source for fish larvae (Schipp *et al.*, 1999; Sommer *et al.*, 2002). The organic matter produced by phytoplankton is eaten by copepods thus energy in direct way transfers from autotrophic level to heterotrophic level- explains in classical food web.

The dynamics of fishery resources are also affected by the distribution of copepods as they are consumed by the fish and other organisms of higher levels directly or indirectly (Lo *et al.*, 2004; Payne and Rippingale, 2001; Evjemo *et al.*, 2003). Stimulatingly, copepods

are playing crucial role in consuming carbon produced by the microbial loop (Champalbert and Pagano, 2002; Sommer and Stibor, 2002).

Composition, distribution, density and biomass of estuarine copepods varied spatially and temporally. The occurrence and distribution of copepods are influenced by ecological variables, especially in estuaries, bays, and lagoons (Castel and Courties, 1982; Ferrari *et al.*, 1985). These ecological variables include temperature (Degtereva, 1973; Timofeev, 1997), predation (Zelikman and Kamshilov, 1960; Hassel *et al.*, 1991), and advection of zooplankton (Skjoldal *et al.*, 1987; Loeng *et al.*, 1997; Helle, 2000). Revis (1988), Mckinnon and Klumpp (1998), Ara (2004) and Osore *et al.*, (2003) reported that salinity, turbidity, tidal regime, food availability, etc. Salinity plays vital role in the distribution and occurrence of copepods reported by (Ara, 2004; Froneman, 2004; Uriarte and Villate, 2005; Li *et al.*, 2006).

It is one of the main factors that control copepods development as because osmoregulation affects its ecological tolerances (Rippingale and Hodgkin, 1977; Cervetto *et al.*, 1999). Moreover, spatial variation is affected by local feeding (Zelikman and Kamshilov, 1960), grazing by planktophagous fish (Hassel *et al.*, 1991) and grazing (Zelikman and Kamshilov, 1960; Swanberg and Bamstedt, 1991).The relationship between dispersal of copepods and environmental factors have been studied in several estuaries (Hassel, 1986; Soetaert and Rijswijk van, 1993; Sarkar and Choudhury, 1998; Lawrence *et al.*, 2004; David *et al.*, 2007). Some ecological features of copepods have recently been studied, including behavior (Hwang and Turner, 1995), co-occurrence with ichthyoplankton (Cheng, 1998; Hsieh and Chiu, 2002), diversity and biomasses (Shih and Chiu, 1998), grazing rates (Hwang *et al.*, 1998; Wong *et al.*, 1998), in the estuarine and coastal distributions (Hsieh and Chiu, 1998; Lo *et al.*, 2001).

There is very few or no remarkable study on the copepods of the Karnaphuli River. The present study will uncover the abundance and seasonal distribution of copepods in the lower Karnaphuli River with reference to physico-chemical parameters.

Materials and methods

Study Area

Copepod occurrences and distribution was studied from six sampling sites in the Karnaphuli River (Table 1 & Fig. 1). The sampling sites count started from the Karnaphuli River mouth up to the Karnaphuli River above the Halda's (canal) Confluence. The salinity, temperature, pH, DO, TDS were recorded during the investigation.

Table 1. Sampling sites with respective geographical co-ordinates.

Sites No.	Name of the Sites	Geographical Location
Site-1	15 No. Jetty	22°14'28.2"N and 91°49'26.8"E
Site-2	Marine Fisheries Academy	22°17'49.5"N and 91°48'06.1"E
Site-3	Bridge Ghat	22°19'06.9" N and 91°50'30.6" E
Site-4	Nazirchar	22°21'44.7" N and 91°52' 33.8" E
Site-5	Halda Mouth	22°24'50.7" N and 91°53' 141.1" E
Site-6	Karnaphuli River above Halda's Confluence	22°24'27.6" N and 91°53' 58.7" E



Fig. 1. Map showing the sampling sites in the Karnaphuli River Estuary.

Sampling Duration

Considering the annual hydro-meteorological cycle of Bangladesh three sampling seasons were chosen to cover an annual cycle; Monsoon, Post-monsoon and Pre-monsoon.

Sampling and Preservation

Sub-surface water samples were drawn by Rutner water Sampler for hydrographic physic-chemical parameter determination.

Water temperatures were recorded using a centigrade thermometer; Hydrogen-ion-concentration (pH) was determined using a (Hanna digital HI98107 pHep® pH Tester) pen pH meter (after calibrating by buffer pH 4 and buffer pH 10); Dissolved Oxygen (DO) was determined following Winkler's titration method; Salinity were determined following the standard Mohr-Knudsen method (Barnes, 1959); Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) was measured by following the standard methods (APHA, 1975).

The working procedures also included zooplankton sampling, preservation and identification in the laboratory. Zooplankton samples were collected from the subsurface water using a zooplankton net of 300 µm. A flow meter was attached at the mouth of the net and a weight attached to keep the net at subsurface level while towing. After about 15 minutes towing the sample was kept in labeled bucket then preserved in 70% ethanol and transferred to the laboratory for further analysis. The stored samples were stained with Rose Bangle and left over night for efficient sorting. All the zooplankter's attained pink color rendering easy identification. The stained zooplankton was sorted out from debris and further preserved fresh in 70% ethanol. The sorted organisms were brought under microscope and identified following Mizuno (1976); Yamaji (1972, 1974.); Pennak (1978); Davis (1955); Santhanam and Srinivasan (1994); Newell and Newell (1973); Sterrer (1986); Parsons *et al.*, (1985); Mahmood *et al.*, (1976); Wickstead (1965); Zafar (1986); Mohi (1977); Edmondson (1959) etc.

Results and discussion

Hydrological Parameters

The hydrographic physico-chemical parameters were examined from the Karnaphuli are tabulated (Table 2). The air temperature of sampling sites varied between 15°C to 32.5°C. The water temperature ranged between 21°C to 32°C. The pH was recorded 6.5 to 7.6 during the investigation. The Dissolved Oxygen (DO) concentration in the surface water varied from 2.66ml/l to 5.37ml/l during the study period. The Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) ranged from 111mg/l to 782.5mg/l and the surface water salinity recorded from 0.2‰ to 24.5‰ (Table 2).

Table 2. Showing hydrological parameters recorded from the Karnaphuli River sampling sites during the study.

Parameters/ sites	Site-1	Site-2	Site-3	Site-4	Site-5	Site-6	
Air Temperature (°C)	Monsoon	29	31	31	32	32	31.5
	Post-monsoon	21	22	26	20	15	16.5
	Pre-monsoon	32	30	31	32.5	32	32
Water Temperature (°C)	Monsoon	30	32	31	31.5	31.5	30
	Post-monsoon	21	21	21	21	22	22
	Pre-monsoon	30.5	32	32	31.5	30.5	30.5
pH	Monsoon	6.8	7.3	7.2	7.5	7.2	7
	Post-monsoon	6.5	6.7	6.5	7	6.6	6.5
	Pre-monsoon	7.5	7.4	7.3	7.5	7.6	7.2
DO (ml/l)	Monsoon	3.94	4.73	3.35	2.66	3.26	2.82
	Post-monsoon	4.11	4.12	3.89	4.35	4	5.37
	Pre-monsoon	4.43	3.29	4.15	4.57	4.15	4.72
Salinity (‰)	Monsoon	16.0	8.0	5.2	0.6	0.2	0.2
	Post-monsoon	24.5	17.0	11.6	3.5	0.3	0.3
	Pre-monsoon	19.0	9.4	3.0	0.3	0.2	0.2
TDS (mg/l)	Monsoon	432	602.5	780.5	231	114	143
	Post-monsoon	551.5	278	505.5	247.5	183.5	189
	Pre-monsoon	509	453.5	782.5	111	119.5	166.5

The relation between copepod abundance and hydrographic parameters (air temperature, surface water temperature, pH, DO, salinity and TDS) of monsoon, post-monsoon and pre-monsoon are shown in fig. 2. According to Rios-Jaha (1998), the abundance of copepod clearly go through seasonal changes in Phosphorescent Bay, Puerto Rico. Madhu *et al.*, (2007) reported that seasonal fluctuations in salinity have great influence on the distribution and

abundance of micro and mesozooplankton in a tropical estuary. Magalhaes *et al.*, (2015) recorded significant relationship between the occurrence of copepods and salinity in tropical mangrove estuary (Amazon coast, Brazil). The present study results completely acquiesced with these results. It was recorded that copepod is euryhaline as its occurrence varied seasonally in different saline zone of the study area.

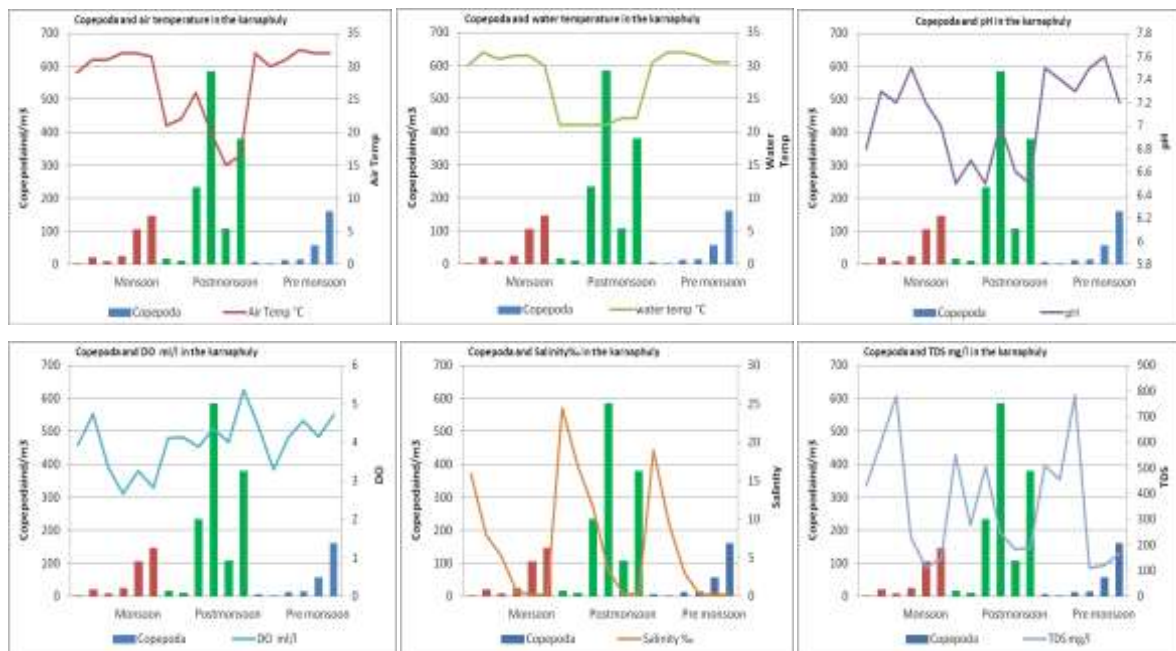


Fig. 2. Graphs showing physico-chemical parameters and copepod numerical abundance in the study area.

Copepod Abundance

A total of 29 zooplankton individual group were identified under microscopic observation. The zooplankton individual included 25 major taxonomic group viz; acetes, amphipoda, balanus, bivalvia, caridean, ciliophora, cladocera, copepod, megalopa (crab larvae) and crab zoea, cumacea, diptera, gastropoda, hydromedusae, hydroyda, isopoda,

lucifer, mites (acari), mysidaceae (mysid), odonata, oligochaeta, ostracoda, penaidae/penaid, porifera, sagitta, shrimp zoea (Fig. 3). Besides these 25 taxonomic groups; egg (unidentified sp.), fish larvae (unidentified) and unidentified (may be broken or damaged organisms) were also recorded from study sites. The crab zoea and Megalopa (crab) were recorded as single taxonomic group.



Fig. 3. Photographs of zooplankton occurred in the Karnaphuli River during the study.

The composition and abundance of zooplankton and copepod (Table 3) varied with the sites as well as seasons. During monsoon, post-monsoon and pre-

monsoon the maximum 13, 14 and 15 major zooplankton taxa and the minimum 8, 9 and 12 zooplankton taxa were recorded respectively.

Table 3. Seasonal no. of major taxa and zooplankton and copepod abundance /m³ of each site.

Sampling sites & seasons	No. of major taxa (Zooplankton composition)			Zooplankton indivs/m ³			Copepod indivs/m ³		
	Mon	Pos	Pre	Mon	Pos	Pre	Mon	Pos	Pre
Site-1	11	10	12	15.00	19.86	15.27	12.16	17.69	5.62
Site-2	9	14	15	24.32	19.09	9.87	20.19	9.87	3.36
Site-3	11	11	13	34.01	262.78	40.92	8.87	233.08	13.14
Site-4	9	13	14	71.99	654.40	68.97	25.16	584.95	15.66
Site-5	8	10	13	73.20	141.93	219.11	106.96	108.02	58.15
Site-6	13	9	12	423.54	604.78	437.39	147.24	380.23	160.78

The seasonal highest peak of zooplanktons were 423.54 indivs/m³, 654.4 indivs/m³ and 437.39 indivs/m³ during monsoon, post-monsoon and pre-monsoon seasons at site-6, site-4 and site-6 respectively; and the lowest seasonal peak during monsoon, post-monsoon and pre-monsoon were 15 indivs/m³, 19.09 indivs/m³ and 9.87 indivs/m³ at site-1, site-2 and site-2 respectively. It is evidently observed that the abundance of copepod determine the profusion of zooplankton in the study area (Table 3). In case of copepod the maximum peak during monsoon, post-monsoon and pre-monsoon seasons were 147.24 indivs/m³, 584.95 indivs/m³ and 160.78 indivs/m³ at site-6, site-4 and site-6 respectively. Whereas the lowest peak during monsoon, post-monsoon and pre-monsoon seasons were 8.87, 9.87 and 3.36 at site-3, site-2 and site-2 respectively.

Copepod (fig. 4) showed a moderate negative relationship with air temperature and water temperature; weak negative linear relationship with the pH, salinity as well as TDS and a weak positive relationship with DO.

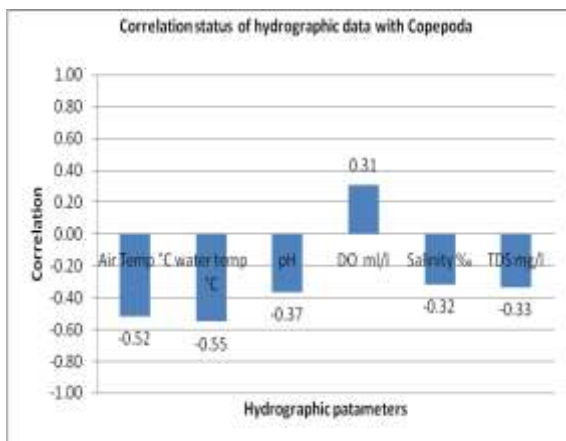


Fig. 4. The correlation between copepod and hydrographic data of the Karnaphuli River.

A total of 25 major taxa of zooplankton were identified from the Karnaphuli River of which 23 taxa during monsoon, 20 taxa during post monsoon and 20 taxa during pre-monsoon. Islam and Aziz (1975) identified 18 genera of zooplankton from the off shore coast of Bangladesh. The abundance of zooplankton occurred in the sampling sites are tabulated in the table 3. Das *et al.*, (1982) identified 21 groups of zooplankton from the continental shelf of the Bay of Bengal. Sharif (2002) identified 23 major taxa of zooplankton from the Meghna river-Estuary. Further 3 orders of copepod (counted in the same taxonomic group) were identified namely calanoida, cyclopoida, harpacticoida in the present study from the Karnaphuli river. The abundance of zooplankton individual groups from the Karnaphuli are shown in table 4.

In the present study it was observed that during monsoon and pre-monsoon season copepods numerical abundance and concentration was very low (>25 indiv/m³) near the estuary where salinity was recorded (>3‰). There was a little difference in copepod abundance at site-3 and site-4 considering the salinity during post-monsoon season. It was also observed that the concentration and numerical abundance of copepods were recorded (>100 indiv/m³) in the sites where salinity was recorded relatively less (<1‰) (fig. 5). Magalhaes *et al.*, (2010) also recorded higher abundance in low salinity zone of Caete Estuary. On the other hand it was also observed that the percentage frequency of copepod considering total zooplankton abundance was recorded higher near the estuary than that of the upstream sites (fig. 6) during monsoon and post-monsoon season and in case of pre-monsoon season it was relatively lower.

Table 4. The abundance of zooplankton at sampling sites during monsoon, post-monsoon and pre-monsoon seasons.

Zooplankton/ SI Sites (& seasons)	Monsoon					Post-monsoon					Pre-monsoon							
	St1	St2	St3	St4	St5	St6	St1	St2	St3	St4	St5	St6	St1	St2	St3	St4	St5	St6
1 Acetes	+	+	+	+	+	.	.	.	+	+
2 Amphipoda	.	.	+	+	.	.	+	+	+	+	+	.	+	+	+	+	+	+
3 Balanus	+
4 Bivalvia	.	.	+	+	.	.	.	+	.	+	+	.	.	+	+	+	+	+

Zooplankton/ Sl Sites (& seasons)	Monsoon					Post-monsoon					Pre-monsoon						
	St1	St2	St3	St4	St5	St6	St1	St2	St3	St4	St5	St6	St1	St2	St3	St4	St5
5 Caridean	+	+	+	+	+	+	.	+	+	+	.	+	+	+	+	+	+
6 Ciliophora	+	+	+	.
7 Cladocera	+	+	+	++	+++	+++++	+	+	+	+	.	.	+	+	+	+++++	+++++
8 Copepoda	+	+	+	++	+++++	+++++	+	+	+++++	+++++	+++++	+++++	+	+	+	++++	+++++
9 Crab megalopa	+	+	.	.	+	.	+	.	.
10 Crab zoea	+	+	+	+	+	+	.	+	++	+	+++++	+	+	+	+	++	+++
11 Cumacea	+	.	+
12 Diptera	.	.	+	.	.	+	+	+	+	+	+
13 Egg	.	.	+	.	+	+	+	+	+	.	.	.	+	.	+	+	+
14 Fish larvae	+	.	+	+	+	++	+	+	+	+	.	+	+	+	+	+	+
15 Gastropoda	+	.	.	.	+	+	+++	.	.	.	+	+
16 Hydromedusae	+	.	+	.	.	.	+	+	.	.	.	+
17 Hydroyda	+	.	.	+	.	.	+	.	.	+	.	.	.
18 Isopoda	+	+	+	+	.	.	.
19 Lucifer	+	+	+	.	+	+	.	.	+	+	+	.	.
20 Mites	.	.	.	+	+	+	.	+	.	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
21 Mysidaceae/ Mysid	.	.	.	+	.	.	+	+	+	.	+	+	+	+	.	+	.
22 Odonata	+
23 Oligochaeta	.	.	+	.	.	+	.	+	+	.	.	+
24 Ostracoda	+	.	.	+	+	+	.	+	+	+	+	+
25 Penaidae /Penaid	+	+	+	.	.	.	+	+	.	+	.	.	.	+	+	+	+
26 Porifera	+	+	.	.
27 Sagitta	+	+	+	+	+	+	.	.	+
28 Shrimp zoea	.	.	+	+	+	+	+	.	+	+	+
29 un-identified sp	.	+	+	+	.	+	+	.	.	+	+	.	.

Legends: . = absent, + = 0.001%-25%; ++ = >25%-50%; +++ = >50%-75%; ++++ = >75%-100% Crab megalopa, Crab zoea, Egg, Fish larvae and un-identified sp are not counted as taxonomic group rather zooplankton that occurred

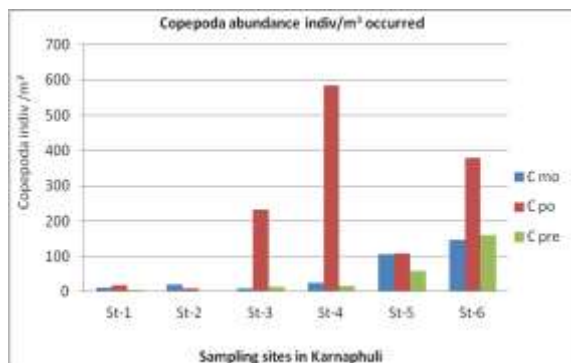


Fig. 5. Copepod abundance (indiv/m³) occurred in the Karnaphuli river.

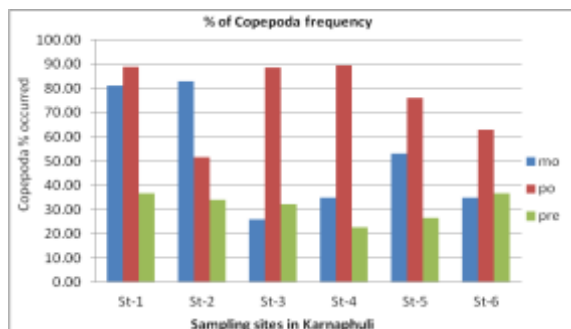


Fig. 6. Contribution % of copepod occurred in the Karnaphuli river.

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