

Population dynamics of Japanese threadfin bream *Nemipterus japonicus* from Pakistani waters

KALHORO Muhsan Ali^{1,2}, LIU Qun^{1*}, MEMON Khadim Hussain^{1,2},
CHANG Mohammad Saleem^{1,3}, ZHANG Kui¹

¹ College of Fisheries, Ocean University of China, Qingdao 266003, China

² Marine Fisheries Department, Fish Harbor west wharf Karachi, Karachi 74000, Pakistan

³ Department of Zoology, University of Sindh, Jamshoro 76080, Pakistan

Received 4 June 2013; accepted 29 September 2013

©The Chinese Society of Oceanography and Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg 2014

Abstract

Japanese threadfin bream *Nemipterus japonicus* (Bloch, 1791) is among the most abundant and commercially important species in Pakistan. From the coast of Pakistan, four demersal trawl surveys in October–November 2009 and May–June, August, October and November in 2010 were carried out. The purpose of this study is to estimate the population dynamics and status of the stock of the *N. japonicus* from Pakistani waters based on the research trawl surveys from the research area. The data consist of $n=784$ length-weight pairs and $n=7530$ length frequency with the maximum length and weight of 29 cm and 358 g respectively. The length frequency data were analyzed using ELEFAN method in FiSAT computer package. The parameters of length and weight relationship were $b=2.778$, $a=0.032$ and $R^2=0.973$. The estimated von Bertalanffy growth function parameters were $L_{\infty}=30.45$ cm, $K=0.270$ year⁻¹. Based on length-converted catch curve analysis the total mortality (Z) during this study was estimated at 0.960 year⁻¹. The natural mortality coefficient (M) was 0.74 year⁻¹ using Pauly's equation (the annual average sea surface temperature was 27°C), therefore, the fishing mortality coefficients (F) were 0.22 year⁻¹. The yield per recruit analysis indicated that when t_c was 2, F_{max} was estimated at 1.2 and $F_{0.1}$ at 1.1. When t_c was 1, F_{max} was estimated at 0.95 and $F_{0.1}$ at 0.8. Because current age at first capture is about 1 year and $F_{current}$ was 0.22, $F_{current}$ is smaller than $F_{0.1}$ and F_{max} , which indicated that the fishery is about in a safe condition. When using Gulland (1971) biological reference point, F_{opt} was equals to M (0.74). The current fishing mortality rate of 0.22 was smaller than the target biological reference point.

Key words: Pakistan, *Nemipterus japonicus*, length-weight relationship, growth, mortality

Citation: Kalhoro Muhsan Ali, Liu Qun, Memon Khadim Hussain, Chang Mohammad Saleem, Zhang Kui. 2014. Population dynamics of Japanese threadfin bream *Nemipterus japonicus* from Pakistani waters. Acta Oceanologica Sinica, 33(10): 49–57, doi: 10.1007/s13131-014-0401-1

1 Introduction

The fishing industry of Pakistan is an important source of foreign exchange earnings and employment. Pakistani coast line extends 1 100 km from the northwest Iranian border (Baluchistan coast) to the southeast Indian border (Sindh coast) with an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of 240 000 km² from which Pakistan can explore and exploit its marine resources (Fig. 1). The Sind coast has a large discharge of fresh water from Indus River which creates an ecosystem to serve as nursery grounds for many finfish and shellfish species (Snead, 1967). In 2007 the total inland and marine fish production was 750 300 t in Pakistan, of which 60% came from marine. The production of marine fisheries had decreased since 1999. The commercially important resources of marine includes about 250 demersal fish species, 50 small pelagic fish species, 15 medium-sized pelagic species and 20 large pelagic fish species and in addition there are also 15 commercial shrimp species and 12 cephalopods (squid, cuttlefish, octopus) and 5 species of lobster (FAO, 2009).

The Japanese threadfin bream, *Nemipterus japonicus* (family Nemipteridae) is widely distributed throughout the Indian Ocean and West Pacific (Russell, 1990). Ninety percent of the

threadfin bream fishery of Pakistan is contributed by two species *Nemipterus japonicus* (Bloch, 1791) and *Nemipterus randalli* (Russell, 1986). The *N. japonicus* locally known as Lal pari in Sindhi and Kolonto in Balochi, has a widespread distribution throughout Pakistani waters. *N. japonicus* is a benthic species, mostly found in schools in coastal waters with muddy or sandy bottoms, with water depth of 5–80 m (Russell, 1990). *N. japonicus* is the low price food fish and a good source of food for poor people in Pakistan.

During our study the *N. japonicus* catch was throughout the Pakistan coastline but most of the catches were caught from Sindh coast and near Sonmiani Bay (Fig. 1). These areas are favorable habitat and fishing ground for this fish species due to freshwater flow from Indus River which provides better spawning grounds. *N. japonicus* spawns over extended periods in May to November with the peak spawning season in July–August (Joshi, 2010). We would recommend avoiding fishing activities during that period so that fish can breeds at least once in their life time. The present study shows that the utilization of this fish species in the research area is in a sustainable state.

N. japonicus during the present study were commonly found

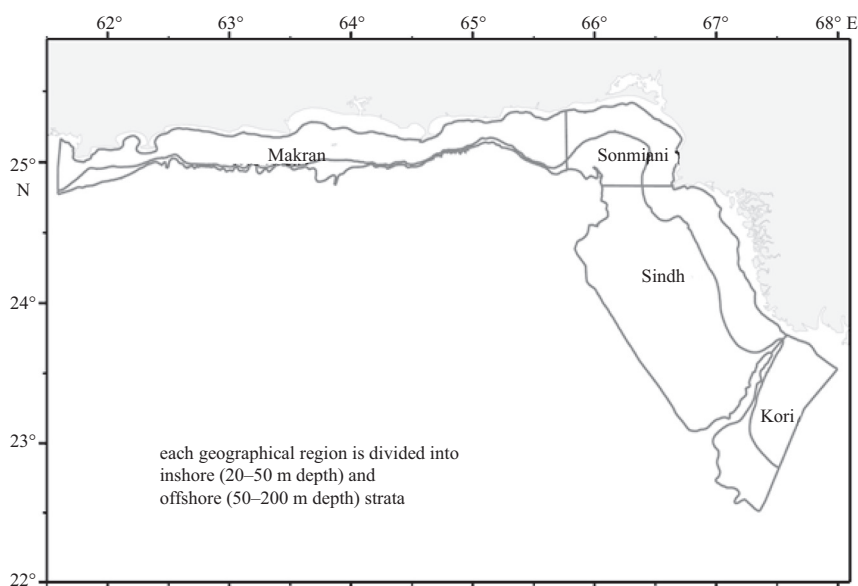


Fig.1. Map of Pakistani coast line. The sampling stations were randomly chosen from demersal survey strata during 2009–2010.

throughout all four demersal trawl surveys. They are commonly found on sandy and muddy bottoms and usually found in schools. Iqbal (1991) described the distribution of *N. japonicus* throughout the Pakistani waters and suggest that the optimum depth range for threadfin bream was between 50 m and 100 m.

Several studies have been done on *N. japonicus* in the world especially from the Indian Ocean region. *N. japonicus* constitutes an important part of the trawl catch in South China Sea (Eggleston, 1972; Lee, 1975; Weber and Jothy, 1977), Andaman Sea (Senta and Tan, 1975), W. Bay of Bengal (Krishnamoorti, 1971), Persian Gulf and Oman Sea (Valinassab et al., 2006).

N. japonicus has been studied on population dynamics (Vivekanandan and James, 1986; Zacharia, 1998; Rajkumar et al., 2003; Khan and Mustafa, 1989; Iqbal, 1991; Mustafa, 1994); on reproductive biology, maturity and spawning and fecundity (Krishnamoorti, 1974; Acharya, 1990; Bakhsh, 1994; Rajkumar et al., 2003; Manojkumar, 2004); food and feeding habits (Bakhsh, 1994; Manojkumar, 2004; Kerdgari et al., 2009); length and weight relationship (Murty, 1984; Bakhsh, 1994; Zacharia, 1998; Rajkumar et al., 2003; Manojkumar, 2004) and on morphological characteristics (Russel, 1990). However there is limited work done on population dynamics of *N. japonicus* from Pakistani waters.

The length based stock assessment was frequently used where age-structure data are limited (e.g., in tropical fisheries, Sparre and Venema, 1998). Based on length frequency data collected from four demersal trawl surveys in 2009–2010 from Pakistani waters, growth and mortality rates of Japanese threadfin bream (*N. japonicus*) inhabiting the region were estimated. The results obtained in this study can be helpful for fish stock assessment and fishery management in Pakistan.

2 Materials and methods

2.1 Sample collection

The samples were collected from four demersal trawl sur-

veys in Pakistani waters during 2009–2010 (Fig. 1). The 250 total randomly stations were trawled and out of total from 110 stations we were caught *N. japonicus* during October–November 2009, and May–June, August, October and November in 2010. Total of 7530 lengths of Japanese threadfin bream (*N. japonicus*) were measured, with 3493 in October–November 2009, 2260 in May–June, 245 in August, and 1532 in November 2010. The seasonal distribution of 784 length and weight pairs, both sexes combined was 263 in October–November during 2009, and 169 in May–June, 78 in August and 274 in November during 2010. The fork length (FL) was measured in cm and weight was measured in grams (g).

2.2 Analysis of data

The length frequency data were analyzed using computer software package FiSAT II (FAO-ICLARM stock assessment tool, Gayanilo et al., 2003) in the present study we estimated parameters such as length-weight relationship, growth, mortality rate, biological reference points, growth performance index, virtual population analysis.

2.3 Length weight relationship

The total $n=784$ pair of length-weight relationship of observed length (L , cm (FL)) and weight (W , g) for Japanese threadfin bream was described by the power function: $W = aL^b$ where a is a constant condition factor and b is slope or allometric growth parameter.

2.4 Growth parameters

The growth of *N. japonicus* was described by von Bertalanffy growth function (VBGF) (Haddon, 2011) :

$$L_t = L_{\infty}(1 - \exp(-K(t - t_0))) ,$$

where L_t was the length at age t , L_{∞} was the asymptotic length, K was the growth coefficient and t_0 was the theoretical age at zero

length which can be calculated using the empirical equation (Pauly, 1983):

$$\log_{10}(-t_0) = -0.3922 - 0.275 \log_{10} L_{\infty} - 1.038 \log_{10} K.$$

2.5 Mortality rate

From the estimated growth parameters values (L_{∞} , K), the annual total mortality rate (Z) was estimated using the length-converted catch curve analysis method (Pauly, 1983). The natural mortality coefficient was obtained by

$$\log_{10} M = -0.006 - 0.279 \log_{10} L_{\infty} + 0.654 \log_{10} K + 0.6434 \log_{10} T,$$

where L_{∞} and K are the asymptotic length in cm and growth rate in per year respectively. T is the annual average sea surface temperature, which was 27°C in Pakistani waters. The fishing mortality (F) was calculated by subtracting M from Z , whereas the exploitation ratio (E) was obtained from F/Z .

2.6 Biological reference points

Biological reference point was put forward by Gulland (1969), the optimum fishing mortality is $F_{\text{opt}} = M$.

2.7 Beverton-Holt Y/R analysis

The yield per recruit was estimated following Beverton-Holt model

$$Y_w / R = F W_{\infty} e^{M(t_c - t_r)} \sum_{n=0}^3 \frac{Q_n e^{-nK(t_c - t_0)}}{F + M + nK} (1 - e^{-(F + M + nK)(t_r - t_c)}),$$

where Y_w/R was yield per recruitment, t_c was the mean age of fish at first capture, t_r was the recruitment age, t_s was the asymptotic age, Q_n was a constant value and equals to 1, -3, 3 and -1 when n was 0, 1, 2 and 3, respectively (Picther and Hart, 1982).

2.8 Growth performance index

Growth performance index (ϕ') of *N. japonicus* was estimated after Pauly and Munro (1984):

$$\phi' = \log_{10} K + 2 \log_{10} L_{\infty}.$$

3 Results

3.1 Length-weight relationship

A total of 784 pair of length and weight pairs were examined in this study, the minimum length was 4 cm and the maximum length was 29 cm, the total weight ranged from 1 to 358 g, and the dominant length range of *N. japonicus* are from 12 to 17 cm (Fig. 2).

The combined total length-weight relationship of both sexes was calculated as $W = 0.032L^{2.778}$ ($R^2 = 0.973$), $n = 784$ (Fig. 3).

The seasonal distribution of length weight relationship parameters were the following: During October–November 2009, the minimum and maximum length were from 4 to 28 cm (FL) and weight range from 1 to 288 g, the length-weight relationship parameters were estimated at $W = 0.033L^{2.757}$ ($R^2 = 0.984$), $n = 263$. During May–June 2010 the minimum and maximum length were from 4 to 18 cm (FL) with weight ranging from 1 to 104 g, the length-weight relationship parameters were estimated at $W = 0.014L^{3.139}$ ($R^2 = 0.961$), $n = 169$. During August 2010 the minimum and maximum length and weight were ranging from 6 to 22 cm (FL) and 4 to 167 g respectively, and the length-weight relationship parameters were estimated at $W = 0.015L^{3.063}$ ($R^2 = 0.958$), $n = 78$. During October–November 2010 the length weight range from 6 to 29 cm (FL), 7 to 358 g respectively, and results were estimated at $W = 0.056L^{2.593}$ ($R^2 = 0.981$), $n = 274$.

3.2 Growth parameters

Using the ELEFAN method in FiSAT computer package (Pauly, 1983) the estimation of von Bertalanffy growth function parameters of *N. japonicus* were $L_{\infty} = 30.45$ (cm, FL) and 0.270 year⁻¹ (K) (Fig. 4). The goodness of fit of model estimation were $R_n = 0.289$.

3.3 Mortality rate

Using the input values of VGBF growth parameters (L_{∞} , K) into the length-converted catch curve analysis, total mortality rate from pooled data was estimated as $Z = 0.96$ year⁻¹ (Fig. 5). Using Pauly's empirical formula, natural mortality was calculated as $M = 0.74$ year⁻¹ at an average annual sea surface temperature of 27°C, therefore the fishing mortality was calculated

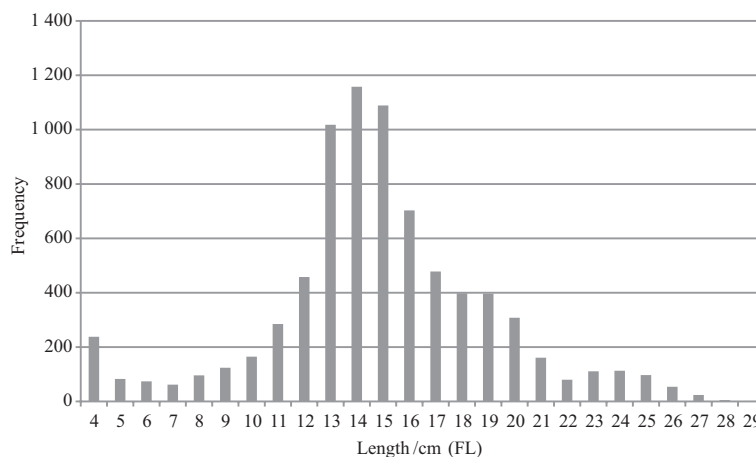


Fig. 2. Length frequency distribution ($n=7530$) ranging from 4 to 29 cm (FL) and the dominant length frequency range from 12 to 17 cm (FL) of both sexes combined of *Nemipterus japonicus* using the trawl survey data from Pakistani waters during 2009–2010.

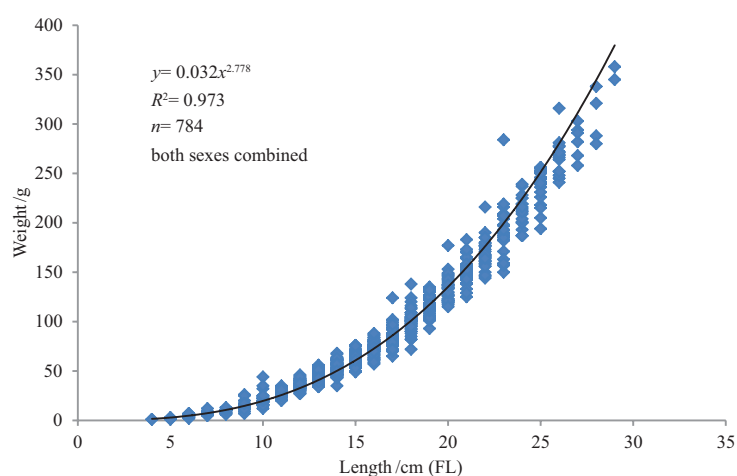


Fig.3. Length-weight relationships both sexes combined of *Nemipterus japonicus* length and weight ranging from 4 to 29 cm (FL) and 1 to 358 g respectively, using trawl surveys data from Pakistani waters during 2009–2010.

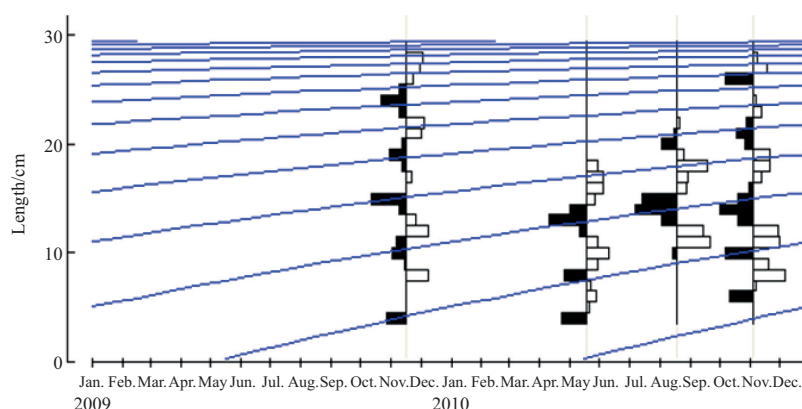


Fig.4. Length frequency distribution data ($n=7\,530$) and the growth curves estimated using ELEFAN for *Nemipterus japonicus* were ($L_{\infty}=30.45$ (cm, FL) and 0.270 year $^{-1}$ (K)) using the trawl surveys data from Pakistani waters during 2009–2010.

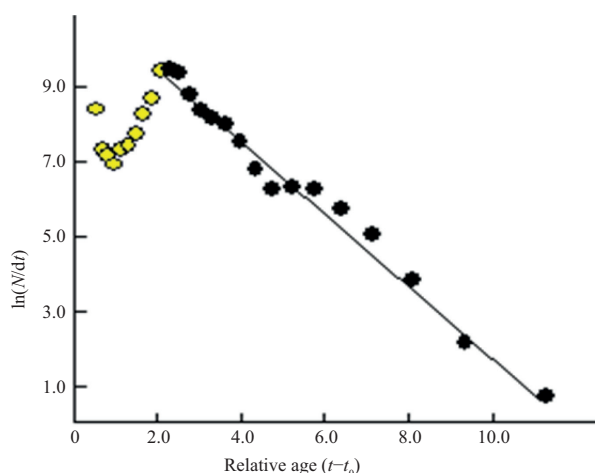


Fig.5. Length converted catch curve analysis of *Nemipterus japonicus* applying growth parameters ($L_{\infty}=30.45$ (cm, FL) and $K=0.270$ year $^{-1}$) from Pakistani waters during 2009–2010. N means population number.

as $F=Z-M=0.22$ year $^{-1}$. The exploitation ratio (E) was obtained from $F/Z=0.23$.

3.4 Biological reference points

Figure 6 showed yield per recruit contour map when the maximum age was 8 year. When t_c was assumed to be 2, F_{\max} was estimated at 1.2 and $F_{0.1}$ at 1.1. When t_c was assumed to be 1, F_{\max} was estimated at 0.95 and $F_{0.1}$ at 0.8. Current age at first capture is about 1 year and F_{current} was 0.22 therefore F_{current} was smaller than $F_{0.1}$ and F_{\max} . Using Gulland (1971) biological reference point F_{opt} was equal to M (0.74). The current fishing mortality rate 0.22 was lower than the target biological reference point.

3.5 Growth performance index

Growth performance index (ϕ') was estimated at 2.399 for *N. japonicus* trawl surveys data from Pakistani waters during 2009–2010.

3.6 Virtual population analysis

The results of virtual population analysis (VPA) were ana-

lyzed from pooled data from four surveys and from the input of growth and length-weight relationship parameters (L_∞ , K , a , b) given above. The output of the length structured VPA using FiSAT for *N. japonicus* are in Fig. 7 and shows that the maximum fishing mortality was at 24 to 26 cm (FL) length.

4 Discussion

4.1 Length weight relationship

Length weight relationship (LWR) gives information on the condition and growth parameters of fish which is the basis for stock assessment of fishes (Abdurahiman et al., 2004). This relationship is also helpful in estimating the gonad development, rate of fish feeding, and metamorphosis (Wootton, 1992). The values of b of 3 indicate that the growth of fish is isometric. When the b values are different from 3, it indicated that the growth of fish is allometric (Gayaniilo et al., 2003).

The values of length weight relationship of *N. japonicus* in this study are compared with the results for the same species from different areas (Table 1). The estimated exponential b values were similar between previous studies and this study. There is little difference between males and females shows in Table 1. The differences may be due to the sampling differences such as timing, area, vessel and some ecological factors such as temperature, sex, age, food availability and spawning conditions.

4.2 Growth parameters

In this study the VBGF growth coefficient was estimated, using a non-parametric method commonly used in length frequency analysis of fish, which is basically *ad hoc* and does not depend on estimating the parameters of cohort distribution directly. So it makes only weak assumption about the distribution of sizes within the cohorts. The model lengths of each cohort are fixed to lie upon a curve described by growth models such as

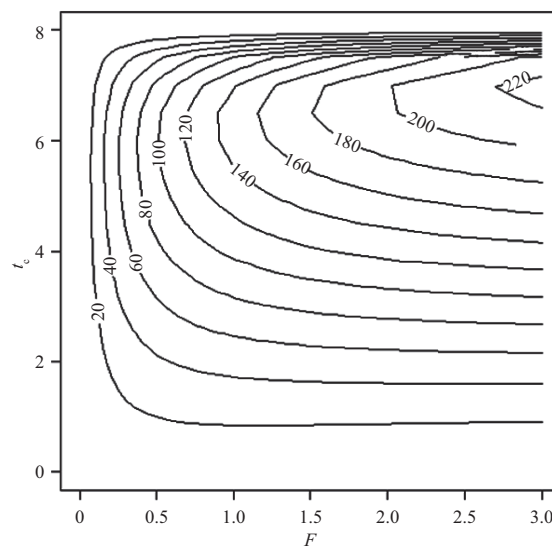


Fig. 6. Yield per recruit contour map of *Nemipterus japonicus* using trawl surveys data from Pakistani waters during 2009–2010. F is fishing mortality and t_c is the mean age of fish at first capture.

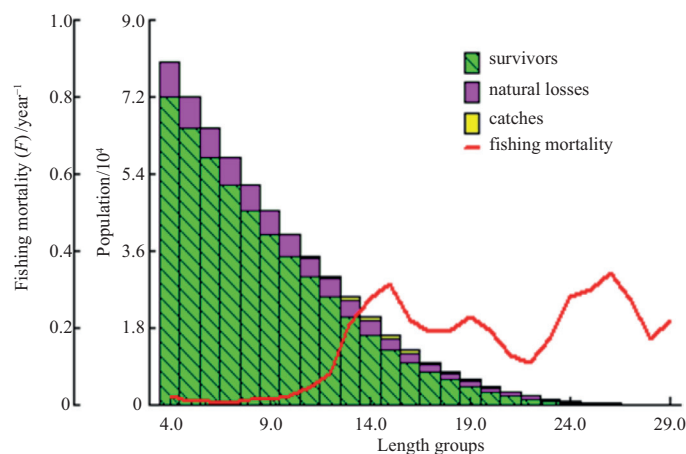


Fig. 7. Length-structured virtual population analysis (VPA) of *Nemipterus japonicus* from Pakistani waters during 2009–2010.

Table 1. Summary of the estimated length weight relationship parameters compare with studies from different areas of the world of *Nemipterus japonicus*

Location	Slop “b”	Source
India	male 2.076 female 2.942	Krishnamoorthi (1971)
Kakinada, India	male 2.43 female 2.95 pooled 2.69	Murty (1984)
Madras waters, India	both sexes 2.94	Vivekanandan and James (1986)
Kuwait waters	both sexes 2.97	Mathews and Samuel (1989)
Veraval, India	male 2.66 female 2.90 both sexes 2.74	Gopal and Vivekanandan (1991)
Visakhapatnam, India	both sexes 2.70	Murty et al. (1992)
Jizan Region of Red Sea	males 2.42 females 2.76	Bakhsh (1994)
Kerala Coast, India	male 2.78 females 2.988	Sophy and Shahul Hameed (1994)
Karnataka, India	both sexes 2.66	Zacharia (1998)
Gulf of Aden	both sexes 2.66	Al-Sakaff and Esseen (1999)
Verval, India	male 2.99 female 3.04 both sexes 3.004	Raje (2002)
Peninsular west coast, Malaysia	both sexes 2.73	Ahmad et al. (2003)
Verval waters from Gujrat, India	both sexes 2.99	Manojkumar (2004)
Saurashtra coast, Gujarat, India	male 2.77 female 2.62	Kizhakudan et al. (2008)
Northern of Persian Gulf	males 2.99 females 3.00	Kerdgari et al. (2009)
Beibu Gulf, South China Sea	both sexes 2.94	Wang et al. (2011)
Chennai, India	male 2.84 female 2.84 combined 2.84	Kizhakudan and Rajapackiam (2011)
Ratnagiri, Maharashtra, India	males 2.76 female 2.618	Kumar et al. (2011)
Goa states, India	both sexes 3.02	Pawar et al. (2011)
Persian Gulf	both sexes 2.664	Raeisi et al. (2012)
Gulf of Suez, Egypt	both sexes 2.73	Amal (2012)
Pakistan	both sexes 2.778	present study

Note: b =slope.

von Bertalanffy growth model, thus it makes a strong assumption about growth (Pitcher, 2002).

The estimation of VBGF parameters of asymptotic length (L_{∞}) and growth coefficient (K) using the pooled data of *N. japonicus* from present study were compared with other studies in Table 2. These results were obtained using different data and different methods. Small differences in Table 2 may be due to some variations in population structure and environmental conditions, different trawl methods, timing and area and environmental parameters are affecting on spawning, yield and recruitment of marine fish (Banse, 1959; Ramamirthan and Rao, 1974; Jayaprakash, 2002). Overall the trawl samples that we collected from those surveys can fully represent the length class in the Pakistani waters we can assume that our study is satisfactory because the results are almost same with previous studies from the world.

4.3 Mortality rate

The mortality rates of the same species from different areas

and the present study are in Table 3. The values in Table 3 were overall higher than the present study which may be due to the high commercial demand therefore resulting the higher fishing mortality and some other environmental factors which may affect on natural mortality.

In the light of the above results of mortality and exploitation ratio from present study the fish stock of *N. japonicus* from Pakistani waters is in a stable condition. Gulland (1971) stated that when the exploitation ratio is above 0.5 then the fish stock is considered at an over-exploitation state and Patterson (1992) also stated that the exploitation ratio should be maintained at the 0.4 level. Therefore the mortality of *N. japonicus* from Pakistani waters is in a stable condition but the fisheries managers should take some steps to maintain the stock of this important fish in Pakistani waters.

4.4 Biological reference points

Biological reference points from the procedures of Patterson (1992) were estimated as 0.74 year^{-1} . The yield per recruit anal-

Table 2. Summary of growth parameters estimates of *Nemipterus japonicus* in different regions

Location	L_{∞}	K	t_0	ϕ'	Source
India (Andra, Orissa)	30.50	0.314	-1.107	2.740	Krishnamoorthi (1973)
India	20.90	0.648	—	2.450	Krishnamoorthi (1971)
India	30.30	0.249	—	2.430	Krishnamoorthi (1971)
Hong Kong (females)	34.10	0.190	—	2.340	Lee (1975)
Hong Kong (males)	38.20	0.130	—	2.280	Lee (1975)
Northern Myanmar (Burma)	37.00	0.235	—	2.510	Pauly and Sann Aung (1984)
Southern Myanmar (Burma)	37.00	0.243	—	2.520	Pauly and Sann Aung (1984)
Manila Bay, Philippines	30.00	0.700	—	2.800	Ingles and Pauly (1984)
Kakinada, India	31.40	0.751	-0.173	—	Murty (1984)
Carigara Bay, Philippines	23.50	0.730	—	2.610	Corpuz et al. (1985)
Samar Sea, Philippines	26.50	0.600	—	2.620	Corpuz et al. (1985)
Gulf of Aden	29.10	0.310	0.048	2.420	Edward et al. (1985)
Madras, India	30.50	1.004	0.226	2.970	Vivekanandan and James (1986)
India	33.90	0.520	-0.160	2.776	Murty (1987)
India	29.80	0.821	—	2.860	Deveraj and Gulati (1988)
Kedha State Pen, Malaysia	31.50	0.530	—	2.720	Isa (1988)
Kedha State Pen, Malaysia	31.40	0.550	—	2.730	Isa (1988)
Bay of Bengal, Bangladesh	26.50	0.600	—	2.620	Humayun et al. (1989)
Bangladesh	24.16	1.061	—	2.791	Khan and Mustafa (1989)
Pakistan	28.80	0.460	—	2.580	Iqbal (1991)
Veraval, India	33.70	0.733	-0.116	2.910	Gopal and Vivekanandan (1991)
Visakhapatnam, India	33.90	0.400	—	—	Murty et al. (1992)
Gulf of Suez	28.64	0.495	-0.122	2.609	Breikaa (1992)
Bay of Bengal, Bangladesh	24.50	0.946	—	2.750	Mustafa (1994)
Bombay, India	35.60	0.755	0.033	2.984	Chakraborty (1995)
Gulf of Suez	29.27	0.462	-0.198	2.597	Breikaa (1996)
Philippine	28.30	—	—	—	Lavapie et al. (1997)
Karnataka, India	33.50	0.900	—	3.030	Zacharia (1998)
Bay of Bengal, Bangladesh	25.60	0.940	-0.616	2.790	Mustafa (1999)
Peninsular west coast	34.80	0.850	—	—	Ahmad et al. (2003)
Visakhapatnam, India	34.00	0.520	—	—	Rajkumar et al. (2003)
Gulf of Suez	28.35	0.630	-0.435	2.794	El-Ganainy and Mehanna (2003)
Cochin, India (males)	31.80	0.690	—	—	Joshi (2010)
Cochin, India (females)	26.50	0.770	—	—	Joshi (2010)
Gulf of Suez, Egypt	33.65	0.450	-0.123	2.710	Amal (2012)
Pakistan	30.45	0.270	-0.616	2.399	present study

Notes: L_{∞} is asymptotic length (cm, FL), K is growth rate, t_0 is hypothetical age at which length of the fish is equal to zero and ϕ' is growth performance index. — means data not available in papers.

Table 3. Estimation of mortality rate of *Nemipterus japonicus* from different areas and compared with the present study

Area	Z	M	F	Source
Madras, India	2.98	2.52	0.45	Vivekanandan and James (1986)
Kakinada, India	2.64	1.11	1.53	Murty (1987)
Bangladesh coast	3.75	1.97	1.07	Khan and Mustafa (1989)
Visakhapatnam, India	2.12	0.94	1.18	Murty et al. (1992)
Bangladesh Bay of Bengal	1.33	0.75	0.55	Mustafa (1994)
Bombay, India	3.58	1.55	2.03	Chakraborty (1995)
Visakhapatnam, India	3.52	1.11	2.41	Rajkumar et al. (2003)
Peninsular west coast	3.76	1.58	2.18	Ahmad et al. (2003)
Cochin, India (male)	2.32	1.30	1.02	Joshi (2010)
Cochin, India (female)	2.06	1.30	0.76	Joshi (2010)
Cochin, India (pooled)	3.35	1.30	1.87	Joshi (2010)
Gulf of Suez, Egypt	1.75	0.529	1.22	Amal (2012)
Pakistan	0.96	0.74	0.22	present study

Notes: Z is total mortality, M is natural mortality and F is fishing mortality.

ysis (Fig. 6) indicated that when t_c was assumed to be 1, F_{\max} was 0.95 and $F_{0.1}$ was 0.8. Currently, the age at first capture is about 1 year and F_{current} was 0.22, this indicated that the current fishing mortality rate is lower than the biological reference point (F_{opt} , 0.74). Therefore it is recommended to maintain the current fishing efforts in Pakistani waters. Because the information and available data is limited, it is very difficult to compare the life history parameters in this study with the others, i.e. that what biological and ecological differences contributes with this process.

5 Conclusions

Fisheries resources of Pakistan are entirely open accessed and there is lack of effective management and planning. Because the present study showed that the stock of the *N. japonicus* fish species from research area is in a sustainable state, we would recommend that the stock should be maintained at the current fishing effort level and the adults must be protected specially during the spawning season so as to provide them with better breeding opportunities. A feasible fishery management measure for this species may be the closing season in Pakistan to protect the breeding stock especially in monsoon season.

Finally the nursery grounds of this economically important species must be protected from pollution especially from the Sind coastline because the Sind coast has the large discharge of fresh water flow from Indus River which creates an ecosystem to serve as nursery grounds for many shellfish and finfish (Snead, 1967) and in particular for this species. Therefore fisheries managers need to take good actions on these issues so as to get more and more benefits from our fisheries resources.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank Ministry of Ports and Shipping and Director General Marine Fisheries Department, Karachi, Pakistan, for to get opportunity to part of the project to get the data and the approval of data. The data collected from FAO (UN) project (FRAP) “*Fisheries Resources Appraisal in Pakistan*”, Karachi, Pakistan. The first author is thankful to Chinese Scholarship Council (CSC) for funding his Ph.D. Degree.

References

- Abdurahiman K P, Harishnayak T, Zacharia P U, et al. 2004. Length-weight relationships of commercially important marine fishes and shellfishes of the Southern Coast of Karnataka, India. *J Worldfish*, 27(1–2): 9–14
- Acharya P. 1990. Studies on maturity, spawning and fecundity of *Nemipterus japonicus* (Bloch) off Bombay coast. *J Indian Fish Assoc*, 20: 51–57
- Ahmad A T, Isa M M, Ismail M S, et al. 2003. Status of demersal fishery resources of Malaysia. In: Silvestre G, Garces L, Stobutzki I, et al., eds. *Assessment, Management and Future Directions for Coastal Fisheries in Asian Countries*. World Fish Center Conference Proceedings, 67: 83–136
- Al-Sakaff H, Esseen M. 1999. Length-weight relationship of fishes from Yemen waters (Gulf of Aden and Red Sea). *Naga*, 22(1): 41–42
- Amal M A. 2012. Biology and assessment of the threadfin bream *Nemipterus japonicus* in the Gulf of Suez. *Egypt J Aquat Biol Fish*, 16(2): 47–57
- Banase K. 1959. On upwelling and bottom trawling off the southwest coast of India. *J Mar Biol Ass India*, 1: 33–49
- Bakhsh A A. 1994. The biology of threadfin bream, *Nemipterus japonicus* (Bloch) from the Jizan Region of the Red Sea. *J King Abdulaziz Univ (Mar Sci)*, 7: 179–189
- Biswas S P. 1993. *Manual of Methods in Fish Biology*. New Delhi: South Asia Publishers, 195
- Breikaa M I M. 1992. A study of population dynamics of the threadfin bream *Nemipterus japonicus* in the Gulf of Suez [dissertation]. Oula, Giza, Egypt: Cairo University, 260
- Breikaa M I M. 1996. The dynamics and fisheries management of the threadfin bream *Nemipterus japonicus* (Pisces: Nemipteridae) in the Gulf of Suez [dissertation]. Oula, Giza, Egypt: Cairo University, 318
- Can M F, Başusta N, Cekic M. 2002. Weight-length relationships for selected fish species of the small-scale fisheries off south coast of Iskenderun Bay. *Turkish Journal of Veterinary & Animal Sciences*, 26: 1181–1183
- Chakraborty S K. 1995. Growth, mortality and yield per recruit of threadfin bream *Nemipterus japonicus* (Bloch) off Bombay. *Indian J Marine Sciences*, 24: 107–109
- Corpuz A, Saeger J, Sambilay V. 1985. Population parameters of commercially important fishes in Philippine waters. Department of Marine Fisheries, University of the Philippines in the Visayas Tech Rep, 6: 99
- Deveraj M, Gulati D. 1988. Assessment of the stock of threadfin bream (*Nemipterus japonicus*) in the northwest continental shelf of India. In: Joseph M M, ed. *The First Indian Fisheries Forum Proceedings*. Mangalore: Asian Fisheries Society, Indian Branch, 159–164
- Edward R R C, Bakhader A, Shaher S. 1985. Growth, mortality, age composition and fishery yield from Gulf of Aden. *J Fish Biology*, 27(1): 13–21
- Eggleston D. 1972. Patterns of biology in the *Nemipterus japonicus* (Bloch). *Indian J Fish*, 24: 48–55
- El-Ganainy A, Mehanna S F. 2003. Resource assessment and management prospective of two *Nemipterid* species (*Nemipterus japonicus* and *N. Zysron*) in the Gulf of Suez. *Bull Nat Inst Oceabogr fish*, 29: 15–29
- FAO. 2009. Fishery and Aquaculture Country Profile, FID/CP/PAK/FAO 2009. Rome: FAO's Fishery Department, 1–18
- Froese R. 1998. Length-weight relationships for 18 less-studied fish species. *Journal of Applied Ichthyology*, 14: 117–118
- Froese R. 2006. Cube law, condition factor and weight-length relationships history, meta-analysis and recommendations. *Journal of Applied Ichthyology*, 22: 241–253
- Gayanilo F C, Sparre P, Pauly D. 2003. FAO-ICLARM Stock Assessment Tool (FISAT II) User's Guide, FAO Computerized Information Series (Fisheries). No. 8. Rome: FAO, 266
- Gopal C, Vivekanandan E. 1991. Threadfin bream fishery and biology of *Nemipterus japonicus* off Veraval. *Indian J Fish*, 38(2): 97–102
- Gulland J A. 1969. *Manual of Methods for Fish Stock Assessment: Part 1. Fish Population Analysis*. Rome: Fishery Resources and Exploitation Division, FAO, 154
- Gulland J A. 1971. Fish resources of the ocean. FAO Fisheries Technical Paper (97). West Byfleet: Survey, Fishing News Books Ltd, 425
- Haddon M. 2011. *Modelling and Quantitative Methods in Fisheries*. 2nd ed. London: Chapman & Hall/CRC Press, 449
- Humayun M, Khan M G, Mustafa M G. 1989. Some aspects of population dynamics of the Japanese threadfin bream (*Nemipterus japonicus*) of the Bay of Bengal, Bangladesh. *Bangladesh J Agric*, 14(1): 73–80
- Ingles J, Pauly D. 1984. An atlas of the growth, mortality and recruitment of Philippine fishes. ICLARM Tech Rep, 13: 127
- Iqbal M. 1991. Population dynamics of *Nemipterus japonicus* from the Northern Arabian Sea, Pakistan. *Fishbyte*, 9(1): 16–22
- Isa M B M. 1998. Population dynamics of *Nemipterus japonicus* (Pisces: Nemipteridae) off Kedah State, Malaysia. In: Venema S C, Moller Christenson J, Pauly D, eds. *Contribution of Tropical Fisheries Biology*, pp 126–140. Papers by the participants of FAO/DANIDA follow-up training courses in the stock assessment in the tropics. FAOIFish I Rep, (389): 519
- Jayaprakash A A. 2002. Long term trends in rainfall, sea level, and solar

- periodicity: A case study for forecast of Malabar sole and oil sardine fishery. *J Mar Boil Ass India*, 42(1-2): 163–175
- Joshi K K. 2010. Population dynamics of *Nemipterus japonicus* (Bloch) in the trawling ground off Cochin. *Indian J Fish*, 57(1): 7–12
- Kerdgari M, Valinassab T, Jamili S, et al. 2009. Reproductive biology of the Japanese threadfin bream, *Nemipterus japonicus*, in the Northern of Persian Gulf. *J Fish Aquat Sci*, 4(3): 143–149
- Khan G, Mustafa G. 1989. Length-Frequency based population analysis of the threadfin bream *Nemipterus japonicus* of the Bangladesh coast. *Indian J Fish*, 36(2): 163–166
- Kizhakudan S J, Rajapackiam S. 2011. Length-weight relationship in six species of threadfin breams occurring in the trawl landings at Chennai. *J Mar Biol Ass India*, 53(2): 268–271
- Kizhakudan S J, Sujitha T, Kizhakudan J K, et al. 2008. Fishery of threadfin breams along Saurashtra coast (Gujarat), and some aspects of biology of *Nemipterus japonicus* (Bloch, 1791) and *N. mesoprion* (Bleeker, 1853). *J Mar Biol Ass India*, 50(1): 43–51
- Krishnamoorthi B. 1971. Biology of the threadfin bream *Nemipterus japonicus* (Bloch). *Indian J Fish*, 18: 1–12
- Krishnamoorthi B. 1973. An assessment of *Nemipterus* fishery off Andhra-Orissa coast based exploratory fishing. In: *Proceeding of the Symposium on Living Resources of the Seas Around India*. Cochin: CMFR Institute, 495–516
- Krishnamoorthi B. 1974. A note on the size different between males and females of *Nemipterus japonicus* (Bloch). *Indian J Fish*, 21(2): 608–609
- Kumar P S, Mohite S A, Naik S D, et al. 2011. Length weight relationship in *Nemipterus japonicus* of Ratnagiri coast along Maharashtra. *Indian J Appl Pure Bio*, 26(1): 79–84
- Lavapie-Gonzales F, Gonaden S R, Gayanilo F C Jr. 1997. Some population parameters of commercially-important fishes in the Philippines. Philippines: Fisheries Resources Research Division, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, 114
- Lee C K C. 1975. The exploitation of *Nemipterus japonicus* (Bloch) by Hong Kong vessel in 1972–1973. In: Morton B, ed. *Symposium Papers of the Pacific Science Association Special Symposium on Marine Science*. 7–16 December 1973, Hong Kong. Hong Kong: PSA, 48–52
- Manojkumar P P. 2004. Some aspects on the biology of *Nemipterus japonicus* (Bloch) from Veraval in Gujarat. *Indian J Fish*, 51(2): 185–191
- Mathews C P, Samuel M. 1989. Multi-species dynamic pool assessment of shrimp by catch in Kuwait. *Proceeding of the Eighth Shrimp and Fin Fisheries Management Workshop*, 1989, Kuwait. *Bull Mar Sci*, 10: 147–158
- Murty V S. 1984. Observation on the fisheries of Threadfin Bream (*Nemipteridae*) and on the biology of *Nemipterus japonicus* (Bloch) from Kakinada. *Indian J Fish*, 31(1): 1–18
- Murty V S. 1987. Further studies on the growth and yield per recruit of *Nemipterus japonicus* (Bloch) from the trawling grounds off Kakinada. *Indian J Fish*, 34(3): 265–276
- Murty V S, Apparao T, Srinath M, et al. 1992. Stock assessment of threadfin breams (*Nemipterus* spp.) of India. *Indian J Fish*, 39(1–2): 9–41
- Mustafa M G. 1994. Length-based estimates of vital statistics in the threadfin bream (*Nemipterus japonicus*) from the Bay of Bengal, Bangladesh. *Naga, ICLARM Quarterly*, 17(1): 34–37
- Mustafa M G. 1999. Population dynamics of *penaeid* shrimps and demersal finfishes from trawl fishery in the Bay of Bengal and implications for the management [dissertation]. Dhaka, Bangladesh: University of Dhaka, 223
- Patterson K. 1992. Fisheries for small pelagic species: An empirical approach to management targets. *Reviews in Fish Biology and Fisheries*, 2(4): 321–338
- Pauly D. 1983. Some simple methods for the assessment of tropical fish stocks. *FAO Fisheries Technical Paper*, 234: 52
- Pauly D, Munro J I. 1984. Once more on the comparison of growth in fish and invertebrates. *FishByte*, 2: 21–23
- Pauly D, Sann Aung S. 1984. Population dynamics of some fishes of Burma based in length-frequency data. A report prepared for the Marine Fisheries Resources Survey and Exploratory Fishing Project FI:DP/Bur/77/003. Rome: Field Doc & FAO
- Pawar H B, Shirdhankar M M, Barve S K, et al. 2011. Discrimination of *Nemipterus japonicus* (Bloch 1791) stock from Maharashtra and Goa states on India. *Indian Journal of Geo-Marine Sciences*, 40(3): 471–475
- Pitcher T J. 2002. A bumpy old road: size-base methods in fisheries assessment. In: Hart P J B, Reynold J D, eds. *Handbook of Fish Biology and Fisheries: Vol.2, Fisheries*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 189–210
- Pitcher T J, Hart P J B. 1982. *Fisheries Ecology*. London: Croom Helm, 250–292
- Raeisi H, Paighambari S Y, Davoodi R, et al. 2012. Length-weight relationships and relative weights of some demersal fish species from the Persian Gulf, Iran. *African Journal of Agriculture Research*, 7(5): 741–746
- Raje S G. 2002. Observation on the biology of *Nemipterus japonicus* (Bloch) from Veraval. *Indian J Fish*, 49(4): 433–440
- Rajkumar U, Narayana Rao K, Jose-Kingsly H. 2003. Fishery, biology and population dynamics of *Nemipterus japonicus* (Bloch) off Visakhapatnam. *Indian J Fish*, 50(3): 319–324
- Ramamirthan C P, Rao D S. 1974. On upwelling along the west coast of India. *J Mar Boil Ass India*, 15(1): 306–317
- Ricker W E. 1973. Linear regressions in fishery research. *Journal of the Fisheries Research Board of Canada*, 30(3): 309–434
- Russell B C. 1990. *FAO Species Catalogue*, Vol. 12. *Nemipterid fishes of the world. (Threadfin breams, Whiptail breams, monocle breams, dwarf monocle breams, and coral breams). Family Nemipteridae. An annotated and illustrated catalogue of Nemipterid species known to date*, *FAO Fish Synop*, 125(12): 149. Rome: FAO
- Senta T, Tan K S. 1975. Species and size-composition of threadfin snappers in the South China Sea and Andaman Sea. *Singapore J Pri Ind*, 3: 1–110
- Snead R E. 1967. Recent morphological changes along the coast of West Pakistan. *Annals of the Association American Geographers*, 57(3): 550–565
- Sophy J T, Shahul H M. 1994. Length-weight relationship in threadfin breams *Nemipterus japonicus* and *Nemipterus mesoprion* from Cochin Kerala. *Mahasagar*, 27(2): 143–148
- Sparre P, Venema S C. 1998. *Introduction to tropical fish stock assessment—Part 1: Manual*. *FAO Fisheries Technical Report*, 306/1, Rev 2. Rome: FAO, 407
- Valinassab T, Daryanabard R, Dehgani R, et al. 2006. Abundance of demersal fish resources in the Persian Gulf and Oman Sea. *J Mar Biol Ass U K*, 86(6): 1455–1462
- Vivekanandan E, James D B. 1986. Population dynamics of *Nemipterus japonicus* (Bloch) in trawling grounds off Madras India. *Indian J Fish*, 33(2): 145–154
- Wang X H, Qiu Y S, Zhu G P, et al. 2011. Length-weight relationship of 69 fish species in the Beibu Gulf, northern South China Sea. *J Appl Ichthyology*, 27(3): 959–961
- Weber W, Jothy A A. 1977. Observation on the fish *Nemipterus* spp. (Family: Nemipteridae) in the coastal waters of East Malaysia. *Arch Fisch Wiss*, 28: 109–122
- Wootton J T. 1992. Indirect effects, prey susceptibility and habitat selection: impacts of birds on limpets and algae. *Ecology*, 73(3): 981–991
- Zacharia P U. 1998. Dynamics of the threadfin bream, *Nemipterus japonicus* exploited off Karnataka. *Indian J Fish*, 45(3): 265–270