



Socio-Economic and Occupational Status of The Fisherman Community in Thoothukudi District

Saraswathi S.^{1*}, Parthiban C², Elangovan M³, Selvendran M⁴, Suriya Nisha M.S⁵

¹Assistant Professor, Department of Zoology, Kamaraj College, Thoothukudi.

²Assistant Professor, PG Research and Department of Zoology, V.O.Chidambaram College, Thoothukudi.

³Assistant Professor, Department of Marine Biology, Sethupathi government Art college, Achundanvayal, Tamilnadu, India.

⁴Assistant Professor, Department of Microbiology, Sardar Raja Arts and Science College, Vadakkankulam.

⁵Aarupadaiveedu Medical College, Kirumampakkam, pondicherry.

*Corresponding author's: Saraswathi S.

Article History	Abstract
Received: 15 June 2023 Revised: 15 Sept 2023 Accepted: 16 Oct 2023	This research study aims to examine the socioeconomic and occupational status of the fisherman community in the Thoothukudi district, located in the southern part of Tamil Nadu, India. The fishing community plays a vital role in the region's economy, contributing to the livelihoods of numerous households and supporting the local fishery industry. The study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to gather comprehensive data on various aspects of the fisherman community's socioeconomic conditions and occupational dynamics. A representative sample of fishermen and their families residing in different coastal villages within the Thoothukudi district will be selected for data collection. The quantitative phase involves administering structured surveys to collect data on demographic characteristics, education levels, household income, asset ownership, and access to social welfare programs. Additionally, information related to occupational factors such as fishing techniques, equipment, fishing practices, and income generated from fishing activities will be collected. The qualitative phase comprises in-depth interviews with a subset of participants to explore their perceptions, challenges, and aspirations related to their occupation and socio-economic circumstances. The qualitative data will provide a nuanced understanding of the fisherman community's lived experiences, social networks, and community support systems. The collected data will be analyzed using appropriate statistical methods and qualitative thematic analysis techniques. The findings of this research are expected to shed light on the current socioeconomic and occupational status of the fisherman community in the Thoothukudi district. The study will also identify key challenges and opportunities faced by the community, including issues related to poverty, education, healthcare, and infrastructure. The results of this study can inform policymakers, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations working towards the welfare and development of the fisherman community. By understanding the socio-economic and occupational dynamics, stakeholders can design targeted interventions and policies to enhance the livelihoods, well-being, and sustainable development of the fisherman community in the Thoothukudi district and similar coastal regions.
CC License CC-BY-NC-SA 4.0	Keywords: Socio-Economic Status, Occupational Status, Fisherman Community, Thoothukudi District, Sustainable Development

1. Introduction

The fisherman community in Thoothukudi District, located in the southern part of Tamil Nadu, India, plays a significant role in the region's economy and cultural heritage. With a long history of maritime traditions and fishing practices, this community forms an integral part of the coastal ecosystem and contributes to the livelihoods of numerous households. The socioeconomic and occupational status of the fisherman community in Thoothukudi District has been a subject of interest for researchers, policymakers, and development practitioners. Understanding their living conditions, income levels, education, health, and overall well-being is crucial for formulating effective policies and interventions aimed at addressing their specific needs and challenges. This research aims to delve into the socioeconomic and occupational aspects of the fisherman community in Thoothukudi District, shedding light on their current conditions, challenges, and opportunities. By examining these factors, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the community's dynamics, identify key areas of concern, and propose potential strategies for improving their quality of life.

Objectives of the Study

The primary objectives of this research are as follows:

1. To assess the socioeconomic status of the fisherman community in Thoothukudi District, including income levels, employment patterns, and asset ownership.
2. To explore the occupational characteristics of the fisherman community, including fishing practices, access to fishing resources, and technological advancements in the fishing industry.
3. To examine the educational attainment and literacy levels within the fisherman community, considering the impact of education on their socioeconomic mobility and empowerment.
4. To evaluate the health and well-being of the fisherman community, focusing on the prevalence of occupational hazards, healthcare access, and the overall quality of life.
5. To identify the major challenges faced by the fisherman community, such as climate change impacts, fluctuating fish stocks, market dynamics, and social exclusion.

Statement of the Problem

Thoothukudi District, located in the state of Tamil Nadu, India, is known for its vibrant fishing industry. The district is home to a significant population of fishermen who rely on fishing as their primary occupation. However, despite the importance of the fishing industry to the local economy, there is a lack of comprehensive research that examines the socioeconomic and occupational status of the fisherman community in Thoothukudi District. Understanding the various dimensions of their lives, such as income levels, educational attainment, access to healthcare, social mobility, and quality of life, is crucial for identifying the challenges they face and designing targeted interventions for their well-being and development.

2. Materials And Methods

This research will employ a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. Quantitative data will be gathered through structured surveys and questionnaires, aiming to capture demographic information, income sources, employment patterns, and educational profiles. Qualitative data will be obtained through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, enabling the exploration of community perspectives, experiences, and perceptions. Sampling techniques will be employed to ensure the representation of diverse subgroups within the fisherman community, considering factors such as age, gender, and fishing practices. The study will adopt a systematic sampling approach, targeting a representative sample size of fisherman households.

3. Results and Discussion

Educational status of fishermen

This section analyses the educational status of the fishermen community in the study area. For this purpose, the literacy rate has been evaluated. Along with this, the educational qualification of the male and female population has been taken for evaluation.

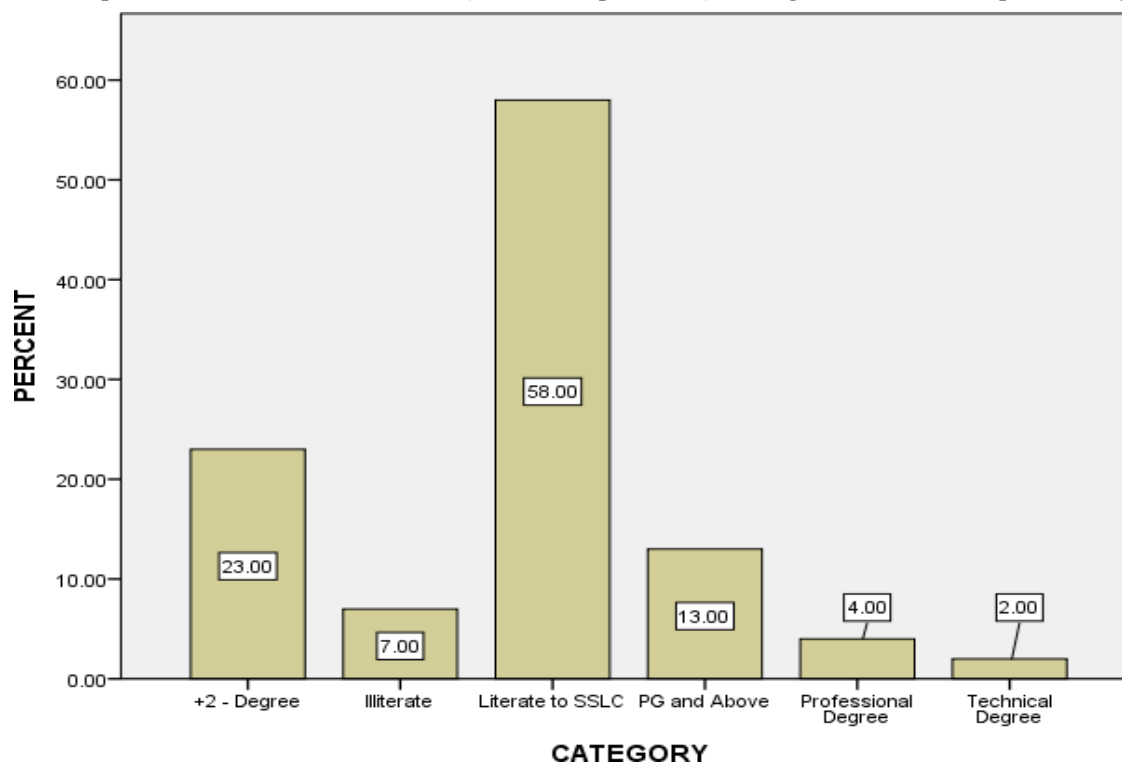
Table 1 Educational Status

Sl No	Education Status	Number of Respondents
1	Illiterate	21
2	Literate to SSLC	174
3	+2 - degree	69
4	PG and above	19
5	Professional degree	12
6	Technical degree	6
	Total	300

Source: Primary survey

Figure 1 Educational Status

Three percent of educated fishermen (about 9 respondents) among the selected sample are employed in



some firms though not in government regular service. They go for fishery related activities Three percent of educated fishermen (about 9 respondents) among the selected sample are employed in some firms though not in government regular service. They go for fishery related activities in free times. Maximum number of fishermen is having educational qualification below SSLC. Nearly 23 percent are having +2 to degree education. 13 percent have PG and above level of education. 4 percent are having professional degree and another 2 percent are holders of technical qualification.

Economic status

Fishermen community lead not financially well life. This is because of their uncertain fish collection; marketing risk etc. the case is not different in the present study area too. The economic status of fishermen community has been analyzed. in order to analyse the economic status various factors are taken for consideration such as housing situations of fishermen community, Details regarding the ownership of land holding of fishermen, Availability of drinking water and other basic amenities, latrine facilities, Nature of ownership of boats, annual income, expenditure details, debt position etc.

Details Regarding the Ownership of Land Holding of Fishermen

The economic status of the fishermen community is analysed using details regarding the ownership of land holding of fishermen. Usually, the coastal areas are thickly populated and hence the area of land available for the fishermen is very less compared to other areas of study.

Table 2 Details Regarding the Ownership of Land Holding of Fishermen

Sl No	Size of land (in cents)	Number	Percentage
1	0-5	75	25
2	5-10	93	31
3	10-15	39	13
4	15-20	33	11
5	20-25	24	8
6	25-30	18	6
7	30-35	9	3
8	35-40	6	2
9	Above 40	3	1

Source: Primary survey

It can be seen that majority of fishermen households have less than 10 cents of land area. That is 25 percent have only less than 5 cents of land. Another 31 percent have between 5 and 10 cent land. Very less number of households has more than 20 cents of land. It can be calculated that only 20 percent respondents have more than 20 cents of land area.

Availability of drinking water and other basic amenities

Accessibility of drinking water is a serious issue in the coastal areas. It has very much importance in determining the health status of the fishermen community in the coastal areas.

Hence the enquiry was made for knowing the accessibility in terms of drinking water in premises, drinking water near premises and away from premises. It can be noted that 45 percent of the households in the study area do have drinking water in premises. At the same time 39.3 percent have drinking water near premises while 15.6 households take water from distant places.

Table 3 Availability of Drinking Water

Sl No	Availability of drinking water	Number of respondents	Percentage
1	Drinking water in premises	135	45
2	Drinking water near premises	118	39.3
3	Away from premises	47	15.6
	Total	300	100

Source: Primary survey.

Other Basic Amenities of Fishermen Households

Basic Amenities of Fishermen Households are shown below. The economic status of the fishermen community can be measured using various indicators. One such criterion used in the present study is to identify the average number of amenities for the fishermen households. The ownership of household amenities like chairs, tables, coats, almirah, TV, radio, fridge, car, two-wheeler etc. are considered for analysis. It can be thus seen that majority are having basic amenities like chairs, coats, tables, mixie etc. It is also noticed that 75 percent fishermen families in the study are have TV. Only 2.3 percent of the total sample have car. However, 38 percent have two wheelers. It is interesting to notice that almost all the households have mobile phones; even many are having more than one phone in their families. Table 4 shows that all of the respondents have mobile phones unlike other factors. Thus, it is clear from this analysis that the fishermen community is holding many of the requirements at home. However, their accessibility of transportation facilities especially four wheelers is very less.

Table 4 Amenities of Fishermen Households

Sl No	Amenities	Percentage of Respondents Owning the Amenities
1	Chairs	96
2	Tables	89
3	Coats	87
4	Almirah	60
5	TV	75
6	Radio	35

7	Two wheeler	38
8	Car	2.3
9	Fridge	56
10	Mixie	70
11	Mobile phones	100

Source: Primary survey

Nature of Ownership of Boats

Ownership of boat is an issue of existence for the fishermen community. In that sense it determines their economic status too. Hence query is made about the nature of ownership of boats. It can be learn that 53 percent of the total respondents have their own boats for fishing. The rest 26.3 percent do not own boats. It is interesting to note that 62 respondents that are 20.6 percent fishermen in the selected are hiring boats for fishery activities.

Table – 5 Nature of Ownership of Boats

Sl No	Ownership of Boats	Number	Percentage
1	Have own boat	159	53
2	Hire boat	62	20.6
3	No boat	79	26.4
	Total	300	100

Source: Primary survey

Primary Source of Income

Source of income of the fishing community is also very important. It has been analyzed to get an idea about their main source of income.

Table -6 Primary Source of Income

Sl No	Source of Annual Income	Number	Percentage
1	Fishing	202	67.3
2	Business (fishing secondary)	69	23
3	Service (fishing secondary)	9	3
4	others	20	6.6
	Total	300	100

Source: Primary survey

It can be thus seen that majority i.e.; 67 percent household depend on direct fishing activities for their living. In case of 23 percent households, business is the primary source of income, but carries on fishery activities as a secondary source of income earning activity. Similarly, 3 percent consider service sector activities as significant source of their income. Thus, it is clear that fishing and allied activities are the significant/ primary source of source of income for two third households in the study area. But it is quite interesting to see that a third of respondents are not relying on fishing and allied activities as a primary source of their income.

Distribution of Fishermen Households by Monthly Income

Apart from the main source of income, the distribution of fishermen households on monthly income has been made in the study. The result of the categorized data has been given in table 7.

Table -7 Distribution of Fishermen Households by Monthly Income

Sl No	Distribution of Fishermen Households by Monthly Income	Number
1	Below 2000	8
2	2000-5000	57
3	5000-10000	132
4	10000-15000	76
5	Above 15000	27

Total	300
Source: Primary survey	

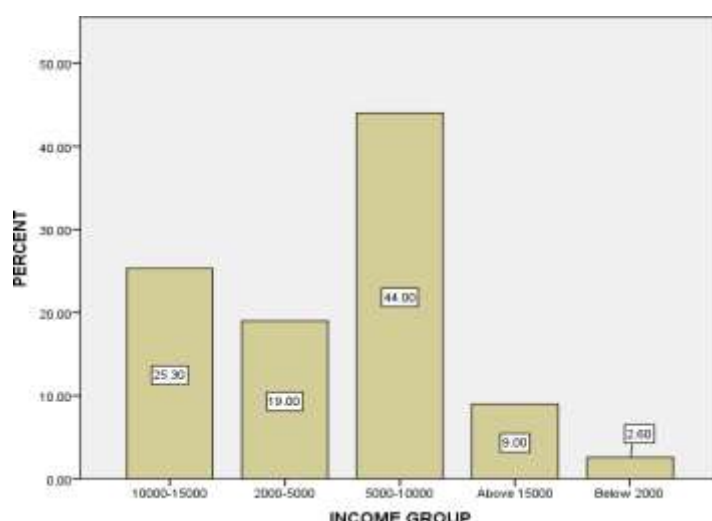


Figure 2 Distributions of Respondents by Income

It can be seen from the table that the monthly income of the fishermen community in the study area varies significantly. There are only 8 respondents having less than 2000 rupees as monthly income. 57 persons have an income between 2000 and 5000. Majority of them i.e., 132 respondents are having income between 5000 and 10000. There are also 76 persons earning income between 10000 and 15000. Only 27 respondents earn more than 15000 per month.

Details of Debt

It is an interesting fact to be noted that huge majority of the fishermen community is under debt. It can be noticed that 94.3 percent of them in the study area are having debt. The results are given in table 8.

Table -8 Details of Debt

Sl no	Debt Position	Number	Percentage
1	Having Debt	283	94.3
2	Not Having Debt	17	5.6
Total		300	100

Source: Primary survey

Even though the majority are using the facility of credit for financing their needs, about 5.6 percent (17 in absolute terms) respondents is neither borrowed nor access to the credit. Since the fishermen community is not well fit with their income to meet expenditures for maintaining both their fishing crafts and daily life, access to the credit should be assured.

Table 9 Fishermen Accessibility to Credit and Its Predictors: Discriminate Analysis

Group Statistics			
Accessibility To Credit		Mean	Std. Deviation
Yes	Gender	.78	.146
	Fishing as Primary	.88	.493
	Employment		
	Income	4335.65	2089.44
	Level of Education	.61	.406
No	Gender	.43	.317
	Fishing as Primary	.96	.111
	Employment		
	Income	2244.12	1018.714
	Level of Education	.41	.481

Total	Gender	.39	.488
	Fishing as Primary		
	Employment	.96	.204
	Income	2991.28	2158.8
	Level of Education	.44	.455

Source: SPSS output on analysis of Primary Data

Table 9 depicts the descriptive statistics of respondents' credit behaviour and its probable predictors. The accessibility to credit is taken as categorical variable. The response yes represents the availability or accessibility of credit to the respondents. Whereas no represents non availability or inaccessibility of credit to the respondents. For running the discriminate function four probable predictors are chosen. They are gender, employment (Fishing as Primary), income and level of education.

Table 10 Canonical Discriminant Function Coefficient

	Function 1
Gender	-1.698
Fishing as Primary	
Employment	-2.023
Income	0.04520
Level of Education	.078
(Constant)	-2.888
Un standardized coefficients	

Source: SPSS output on analysis of Primary Data

Discriminate Function

The impact of all probable predictors is represented in table 10 shows that gender and employment have negative impact on the group membership of fishermen as having accessibility to credit. As far as the model is concerned, a fisher folk with gender as female and employment as fishing respectively has 1.698 times and 2.023 times lesser probability being the member of credit accessible group. The income and level of education have positive on the group membership of fishermen as having accessibility to credit. Discriminate function shows that, fishermen with higher income and level of education respectively has 0.04520times and .078 times probability being the member of credit accessible group.

Based on the unstandardized coefficients, discriminate function is given as;

$$D = -2.888 - 1.698(G) - 2.023(F) + 0.04520(Y) + 0.078(E)$$

Where,

D = Discriminate function of credit G = Gender

F = Employment (Fishing as Primary) Y = Income

E = Level of education

Table 11 Credit and Predicted Group Membership

Classification Results ^{a,c} (Credit)					
		Accessibility of Credit	Predicted Group Membership		Total
			No	Yes	
Original	Count	Yes	80	34	114
		No	53	245	298
	Percent	Yes	74.3	31.7	106
		No	20.1	85.9	106
Cross- Validated b	Count	Yes	80	34	114
		No	53	245	298
	Percent	Yes	74.3	31.7	106

No	20.1	85.9	106
a. 80.9% of original grouped cases correctly classified.			
b. Cross validation is done only for those cases in the analysis. In cross validation, each case is classified by the functions derived from all Cases other than that case.			
c. 80.9% of cross-validated grouped cases correctly classified.			
Source: SPSS output on analysis of Primary Data			

The given table 11 shows how the predictor model is able to predict the actual group membership of fishermen's being the member of credit group or not. As far as credit members are concerned, it is able to correctly predict about 74.3 percent of group membership using our four discriminating predictors. As far as fishermen being not the member of credit group are concerned four predictors are good discriminators as they are able to predict about 85.9 percent of group membership.

Table 12 Tests of Equality of Group Means (Credit)

	Wilks' Lambda	F	df1	df2	Sig.
Gender	0.826	104.713	298	0	0.826
Fishing as Primary Employment	0.912	55.521	298	0	0.912
Income	0.844	93.647	298	0	0.844
Level of Education	0.923	70.187	298	0.001	0.923

Source: SPSS output on analysis of Primary Data

The table 12 shows that the given variables are good predictors of group membership. Gender, employment (Fishing as Primary), income and level of education are significantly different among two groups of fishermen even at one percent level of significance. The variables are discriminating the given function with high statistical significance. These predictors can be used as good discriminators for determining the group membership of fishermen as having credit or not having credit. Women those who are involved in fishing don't have much access to the credit. Similarly respondents those who do fishing as their primary occupation also don't have much access to credit. Whereas individual with better education and income has better access to the credit as detailed in the discriminate function.

Sources of Debt/Borrowing

The source of debt/borrowing of the fishermen community is shown in the table given below.

Table 13 Source of Debt/Borrowing

Sl.No	Source of Debt/Borrowing	Number	percentage
1	Public sector banks	39	13.8
2	Private banks	55	19.4
3	Money lenders	111	39.2
4	Cooperative societies	66	23.3
5	Friends and relatives	12	4.2
	Total	283	100

Source: Primary survey

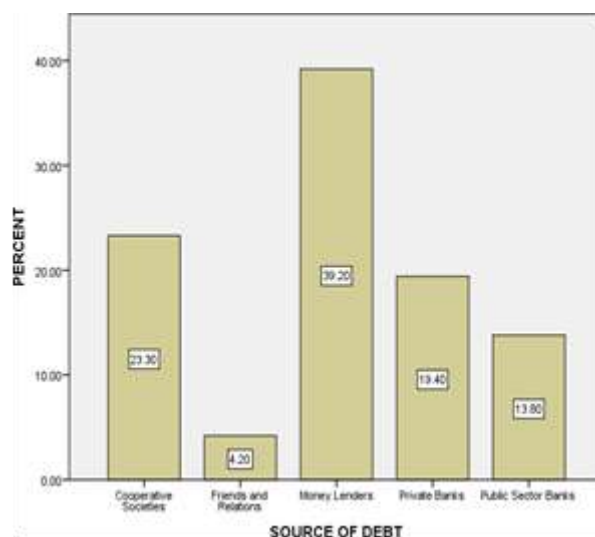


Figure 3 Source of Debt/Borrowing

It can be seen that the fishermen community depend on various sources for funds such as public sector banks, private sector banks, Private individuals/money lenders, cooperative societies and so on. Out of 283 respondents having credit about 39.2 percent depend on sector banks for their financial requirements. This figure concludes that either respondents or public sector banks are reluctant to have mutual banking relations. Most probably the attitude of formal credit sources will be villain in financial credit habit of fishermen. The delay in getting finance, formalities and terms and conditions usually keep respondents away from the public sector banks as it is in other marginalized sectors. Money lenders and friend's relations together satisfy the credit needs of about 43.4 of respondents. This rate is alarming, which shows the dirty hands of money lenders plays a crucial role in fishing sector in Kerala like other unorganized sectors. Figure shows about 23 percent respondents depend on cooperative banks and 19.4 percent depend on private sector banks. Only 13.8 percent respondents depend on public private money lenders. Again, about 4.2 percent of respondents are depending on friends. During the survey certain qualitative information are collected regarding the purpose of their borrowing. It is found that Most of them are officially borrowing (from formal source like public sector banks and cooperative banks) money for fishery related activities, but unfortunately a major chunk of credit is using for other purposes than fishing and allied activities. Their credit requirements (officially and unofficially recorded) include maintenance of fishery equipment's, nets, boats, education of children, marriage, day to day expenses as well as hospital related needs.

Socio- Cultural Status

It can be noted that fishermen community in the study area do participate in various organizations like political parties, trade unions, NGOs etc. Around half of them are participants in the political parties. Nearly 28 percent participate in trade unions and 3 percent fishermen participate in NGOs. It is also noted that 19.6 percent respondents do not participate in any of the organizations. Thus it is clear from the analysis that around 80 percent fishermen in the study area have participation in different organizations showing their interdependence and involvement in the social activities.

Participation of Fishermen in Different Organizations

It can be noted that fishermen community in the study area do participate in various organizations like political parties, trade unions, NGOs etc. Around half of them are participants in the political parties. Nearly 28 percent participate in trade unions and 3 percent fishermen participate in NGOs. It is also noted that 19.6 percent respondents do not participate in any of the organizations. Thus, it is clear from the analysis that around 80 percent fishermen in the study area have participation in different organizations showing their interdependence and involvement in the social activities.

Table 14 Participation of Fishermen in Different Organizations

Sl No	Participation in Organizations	Number	Percentage
1	Political parties	147	49
2	Trade unions	85	28.3
3	NGOs	9	3
4	No participation	56	19.6
	Total	300	100

Source: Primary survey

Modern technology in fishing

The fishing occupation is related to technology. The advent of modern technology in fishing sector is a question of discussion in the present study. Majority of fishermen engaged in fishery activities for more than 10 years face reluctant to adopt modern technology. However, it is interesting to note that majority of the respondents that is 60 percent adopt modern technology. Only 21 percent respondents in the study area do not adopt modern technology. It is also interesting to note that 18.6 percent fishermen are not aware of modern technologies. Thus, it can be summarized that fishermen are not fully against modern technologies. They are ready to adopt changed in the technology side.

Table 15 Modern Technology in Fishing

Sl no	Modern technology in fishing	Number	Percentage
1	Adopt modern technology	180	60
2	Do not adopt modern technology	64	21.3
3	No idea about modern technology	56	18.6
	Total	300	100

Source: Primary survey

Women Folk Involvement in Fisheries sector

Fishing activities are traditionally done by family members together. Involvement of women also is seen in this occupation. Women are usually involved in post fishing activities like processing, selling etc. Hence the respondents are asked about women involvement in fishing occupation. It can be seen that among the 300 respondents 111 admit that there is women involvement in fishing related occupation. This figure includes the number of women respondents also.

Table 16 Women folk Involvement in Fisheries Sector

Sl No	Women folk involvement	Number	Percentage
1	Yes	111	37
2	No	189	63
	Total	300	100

Source: Primary survey

Nature of womenfolk Involvement

Women are involved in various types of fisheries related occupation in the coastal areas. Their activities include selling the final product, processing, cleaning vessels and boats etc. there is also overlapping of these activities. Many women are engaged in more than one of the above occupations. However, 74 percent are involved in processing of fish products. 32 percent are used to go for selling activities. Cleaning related works are also assisted by women. Hence the active involvement of women is found in the fisheries occupation.

Women folk Involvement in Fisheries Activates

Fishing activities are traditionally done by family members together. Involvement of women also is seen in this occupation. Women are usually involved in post fishing activities like processing, selling etc. Hence the respondents are asked about women involvement in fishing occupation. It can be seen that among the 300 respondents 111 admit that there is women involvement in fishing related occupation. This figure includes the number of women respondents also.

Table 17 Women folk Involvement in Post fishing Activities

Sl No	Woman folk involvement	number	percentage
1	Yes	111	37
2	No	189	63
	Total	300	100

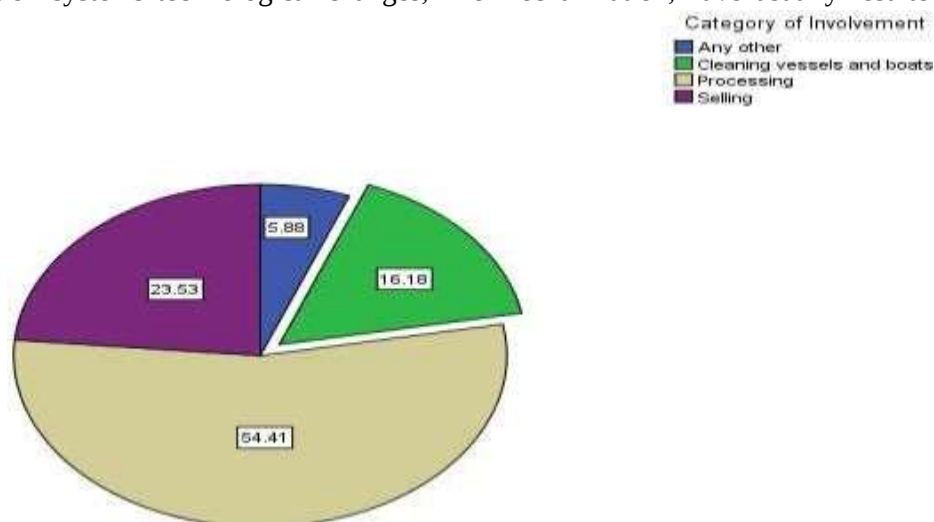
Source: Primary survey

Nature of Womenfolk Involvement

Women are involved in various types of fishing related occupation in the coastal areas. Their activities include selling the final product, processing, cleaning vessels and boats etc. there is also overlapping of these activities. Many women are engaged in more than one of the above occupation. However, 74 percent are involved in processing of fish products. 32 percent are used to go for selling activities. Cleaning related works are also assisted by women. Hence the active involvement of women is found in the fishery occupation.

Figure 4 Nature of woman folk involvement

In most food production systems technological changes, like mechanization, have usually resulted



within the displacement of ladies from their ancient roles. This paper appearance at 3 totally different fisheries within the ancient sector within the central a part of the state of Kerala, Asian country and tries to analyse the changes in gender roles. The ring seine workplace that was ab initio little scale has currently remodeled into a capital intensive, high supercharged, labour intensive workplace with landings shifting from the beaches to the harbours. With the landings shifting to the harbours and changing into connected to the worth incentives of the market, girls have slowly been marginalized from promoting activity. The stake internet workplace is mostly practiced by the Dheevera community. Women square measure fully excluded from fishing operations and is available into the image solely once the catch is landed. In the localized clam fishery, women were once actively involved in handpicking for the clams. But motorised canoes gave more scope for men and hence women were displaced. These changes, would like fishery-specific interventions to grant girls bigger access to the advantages of the fisheries.

Youth in Fishing

An emerging trend found in the fishery sector of Kerala is the reluctance of the young generation to take up the fishery activities. Education is considered as the determining factor leading the new generation into the fishery sector or not. As it is noted the coastal community facing the problem in all basic sectors including housing, education, sanitation, hygienic issues, drinking water issues etc. Many children have the same complaint of their parents have no time to listen them, and they were always engaged in work- and work-related activities. This is common in all parts of Kerala. The educated youth in the fishery sector do not like to take fishery as their occupation Nazy P. (2007). The primary data collected reveal the common recent trend as observed the age composition of fishermen and the arrival of children into this sector.

Difficulties Encountered in Fishing

Fishery activities are not so smooth and easy. They are involved several difficulties. The respondents are asked about the difficulties involved in the fishing occupation. The problems suggested are summarized as in table

Table 18 Difficulties Encountered in Fishing Sector

Sl. No	Problems	Percent
1	Cleaning vessels and boats	44
2	Damage caused to the fishing net due to rocks and dolphins	35
4	Shortage of kerosene	100
5	Lack of fish	92
7	Fisher men face unemployment due to seasonal fishing	100
8	Problems due to lack of nearby harbor	67
9	Banned on trawling	62

Source: Primary survey

Shortage of kerosene and seasonal fishing are the major difficulties faced by fisher folk in the study area. All respondents are facing the above said difficulties in their work. 92 percent of respondents are facing the difficulty of lack fish. About 67 percent of respondents are facing the problem of lack of nearby harbour. Only 35 percent respondents are facing the problem damage caused to the fishing net due to rocks and dolphins.

Findings

This study analysed the socio - economic and occupational status of the fishermen community For the purpose of analysis this chapter has been sub divided into four parts such as demographic and educational status of fishermen, economic status of fishermen community, Socio- cultural status of fishermen community and Occupation status of the fishermen community. Important findings of the data analysis are pointed out below

- The average size of the households is comparatively very large.
- It can be noted that majority of the respondents are belonging to Hindu community
- The participation of 22 percent female population is found in fishery sector
- It can be seen that the male literacy rate among the fishermen is estimated to be 94 percent and female literacy rate among the fishermen community is 89.3 percent
- Maximum number of fishermen is having educational qualification below SSLC. Nearly 23 percent are having +2 to degree education. 13 percent have PG and above level of education
- It can be noticed that majority of fishermen community in the study is having semi pucca houses. This accounts for nearly 60 percent of the respondents
- It can be seen that majority of fishermen households have less than 10 cents of land area.
- Fishermen community is holding many of the requirements at home.

- 53 percent of the total respondents have their own boats for fishing.
- Majority i.e. 67 percent household depend on fishery activities for their living
- 132 respondents are having income between 5000 and 10000
- It is an interesting fact to be noted that huge majority (94.3 percent) of the fishermen community are under debt.
- Most of the respondents i.e. 39.2 percent depend on private individuals/money lenders.
- It can be noted that fishermen community in the study area do participate in various organisations like political parties, trade unions, NGOs etc.
- It can be found that 48 percent respondents used to read newspapers and magazines in the selected study area. Most of them are viewers of TV that is 75 percent used to watch TV and 35 percent used to enjoy radio programmes.
- It can be thus seen that majority i.e. 67 percent household depend on fishery activities for their living
- Majority of fishermen in the study area go for fishing activities in 6 days in a week. They include 31.6 percent. Next comes 28.3 percent undertake fishing activities in 5 days in a week
- Majority of fishermen in the study area have fishing experience of more than 10 years. They comprise of 34 percent of the total respondents
- it is interesting to note that majority of the respondents that is 60 percent adopt modern technology
- Almost 88 respondents replied that their children are not taking up fishing activities because of their lack of interest. Only 12 percent respondents say their children prefer fishing activities.
- among the 300 respondents 111 admit that there is women involvement in fishing related occupation
- Women are involved in various types of fishing related occupation in the coastal areas. Their activities include selling the final product, processing, cleaning vessels and boats etc.

Research Recommendations

1. Conduct a comprehensive socioeconomic survey: A detailed survey should be conducted to gather information on the socioeconomic status of the fisherman community in Thoothukudi District. The survey should cover aspects such as income levels, education levels, employment patterns, access to healthcare, housing conditions, and social welfare schemes.
2. Study the occupational challenges faced by fishermen: Investigate the specific challenges faced by fishermen in Thoothukudi District, including issues related to fishing equipment, access to fishing grounds, climate change impacts, government regulations, and market dynamics. This will provide insights into the occupational status of the community.
3. Examine government policies and initiatives: Analyze the effectiveness of existing government policies and initiatives aimed at improving the socioeconomic and occupational status of the fisherman community. Identify gaps and areas where policy interventions can be strengthened to better support the community's needs.
4. Explore alternative livelihood opportunities: Investigate potential alternative livelihood opportunities for fishermen in Thoothukudi District. This can include diversification into aquaculture, tourism-related activities, or other income-generating ventures. Assess the feasibility and impact of such alternatives on the community.

4. Conclusion

A comprehensive research study focusing on the socio-economic and occupational status of the fisherman community in Thoothukudi District is essential to gain a deeper understanding of their challenges and identify avenues for improvement. The proposed research recommendations, including a detailed survey, examination of occupational challenges, assessment of industrial impacts, analysis of government policies, and exploration of alternative livelihoods, will provide valuable insights. The findings of such a study can contribute to evidence-based policy formulation and targeted interventions to uplift the fisherman community. By addressing the socioeconomic and occupational challenges faced by the community, it is possible to enhance their quality of life, promote sustainable fishing practices, and ensure the long-term well-being of the fisherman community in Thoothukudi District.

References:

1. Palanichamy, S., & Sumathi, M. (2017). Socio-economic status and problems faced by the fishing community in Thoothukudi district, Tamil Nadu, India. *International Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Studies*, 5(1), 198-202.
2. Alagarsamy, R., & Kannan, K. (2018). A study on the socio-economic condition of fisherfolk in Thoothukudi district, Tamil Nadu, India. *International Journal of Current Microbiology and Applied Sciences*, 7(8), 4394-4401.
3. Paramasivam, V., & Balasubramanian, S. (2019). Socio-economic conditions of fisherfolk in Thoothukudi district, Tamil Nadu. *Journal of Experimental Zoology, India*, 22(1), 93-95.
4. Sivakumar, M., & Priya, V. (2020). Socio-economic conditions of fisherfolk in Thoothukudi district, Tamil Nadu, India. *International Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences*, 8(3), 116-121.
5. Xavier, A., & Santhakumari, V. (2019). Socio-economic status of fisherwomen in Thoothukudi district, Tamil Nadu. *International Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Studies*, 7(6), 307-310.
6. Samanta, M. (2018). A study on the socio-economic conditions of fishermen in Thoothukudi district of Tamil Nadu. *Journal of Development Research*, 2(1), 45-50.
7. Kalpana, K., & Venkatesan, R. (2021). Socioeconomic empowerment of fisherwomen in Thoothukudi district, Tamil Nadu: A study. *International Journal of Community Medicine and Public Health*, 8(4), 1934-1938.
8. Gopal, G. (2017). Socio-economic status of fisherfolk in Thoothukudi district of Tamil Nadu. *Journal of Business Management & Social Sciences Research*, 6(8), 78-83.
9. Xavier, A., & Jasmine, S. (2018). A study on the socio-economic conditions of fisherwomen in Thoothukudi district of Tamil Nadu. *Journal of Research in Social Sciences*, 6(7), 123-128.
10. Marimuthu, T., & Venkatesan, S. (2020). Socioeconomic empowerment of fisherwomen in Thoothukudi district, Tamil Nadu. *International Journal of Business and Administration Research Review*, 3(5), 41-46