

A Study on Socio-Economic and Health Status of Fishermen in Chinagollapalem Village Krishna District, AP, India

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Abstract

Fish and rice are staple food for the people of in Andhra Pradesh. Andhra Pradesh is gifted with abundant freshwater resources which can generate food and income if utilised to their full potential. The study was conducted in Chinagollapalem village to identify factors that influence the socio-economic condition of fish farmers, who were involved in capturing fish species in ponds and in the sea nearest to them. A questionnaire survey and a structured interview schedule were used to collect data from 120 randomly selected respondents. Most of the farmers were Hindus (70%) and remaining 30% were Christians. 75% of fishermen were male and all were engaged in fishing. The majority of respondents were married and lived in nuclear families. It was found that 75% fishers educated and only 25% were illiterate. Nearly 60% of them were leading life with all the basic facilities. They were not aware of different govt schemes available to them.

Key words- socio-economic traits, lifestyle standards, education, health issues, income, credit access.

I. INTRODUCTION

Fishing provides income and employment to many people in many countries; it is an important source of diet for over one billion people and a source of livelihood for hundreds of thousands more. The fishing sector plays a prominent role in the country's socio-economic development. It serves as a form of income, provides employment to about 16 million people, and stimulates the growth of several subsidiary industries and is a source of cheap and nutritious food.

Fishermen are those whose primary source of income is fishing and associated pursuits. The

socioeconomic development of the fishing community is greatly influenced by the fishing industry (Jonwal and Deshmukh, 2017). Fishermen are gifted with great knowledge of types of fish, fish habits, waves, and currents in ocean etc., Though fishermen are holding a high position, yet they are treated as backward community. The socioeconomic status of Indian fishermen is extremely poor. (Bijayalakshmi and Ngangbam, 2014). This is because many people are still thinking of fishing as a low-level profession. And also, those who are engaged in capture fisheries are still poor when compared to those who have taken up culture fisheries. Many of them are illiterate, superstitious, lead an unhygienic life with poor sanitation facilities. Hence, it is the prime role of government to plan and develop and frame policies for their socio-economic upliftment. This will definitely help to improve fishing sector in the state. According to Carney (1998), a livelihood consists of the skills, pursuits, and possessions (including both material and social resources) that go into a way of life. Hence, the present study was undertaken to assess the socio-economic status of fisher communities residing in chinagollapalem village, Krishna district in Andhra Pradesh. Problems faced by the people associated with the sector was also assessed and related with the data obtained.

II. METHODOLOGY

The current study was founded on a field survey in which primary data were collected from fishermen. According to Dillion and Hardaker there are three methods by which survey and data can be gathered, including direct observation, interviewing

see parents and married brothers living together in one house. Here. In this condition, there are both benefits and demerits. Work, love, and affection are all shared. But at the same time, for some or other reasons, repeated disputes will arise.

In any area, religion plays a vital role in the social and cultural environment. A strong relationship exists between religion and the socio-economic status of the people. In India, being a secular country, many religions are practised by people, viz. Hinduism, Christianity, Muslims, etc., In the present study, majority of fishermen are found to be practising Hinduism. However, some fishers were found to be practising Christianity in this area (25%). According to a study on the economic feasibility of fish culture in the Faizabad district of Uttar Pradesh, India, 100 percent of the fishermen in this district are Hindus Saidby Pandey and Mishra (2001).

There are three types of houses in the study area such as Kutcha, that are made of bamboo and trees leaves with mud floors. Semi-pucca houses were made of brick in one part of either floor or wall, but the roof was of wood or tin. Puccahouses were made of brick, with floor and roof cemented strongly.

Housing condition are one the indicators of the economic conditions of the people. Hence, an attempt was made to know the housing condition of the respondents. The results are presented in the following table 1.

According to the study, Most fishermen (58%), lived in semi-pucca followed by pucca houses (25%) and thatched houses (16%). This reflects that only half of the respondents are comfortable; still, half of them are living in areas underdeveloped, which is an important point for the government to concentrate on. Alam et al. (2009) reported that 82.22% of housing structures were kaccha, while 11.11% were semi-pucca and only 6.66% were pucca.

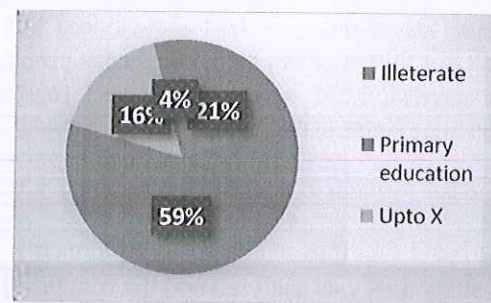


Fig.1.4 Percentage of Education Status

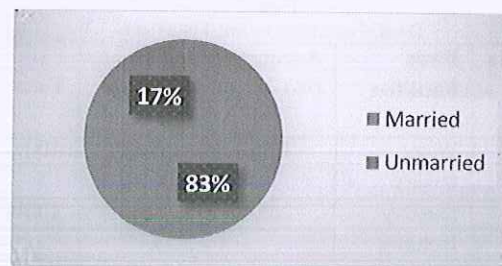


Fig.1.5 Percentage of Marital Status

To create social awareness among people education is a must. An educated fisherman easily adopts new technology than an uneducated one. Education can help fishermen get jobs, start businesses, gain extra knowledge in various fields, keep proper records and accounts for their businesses, and effectively participate in fishing cooperatives of which they are members.

With regard to the education status of fishermen, 58% of respondents have only a primary level of education, and 16% of respondents at a secondary level. Further, it was found that 20% of the respondents were uneducated, and only 4% were highly educated, seeking government jobs in different sectors. Ujjain and Patel (2011) in their study on the socio-economic status of the fishermen community of Danti village in Valsad district, Gujarat reported that the majority (90.0 %) of fishermen had primary and HSC level, followed by 10.0% of fishermen were illiterate, while no one had higher education.

The socioeconomic and cultural character of fishermen depends heavily on marital status because it shapes people's behaviour. This study shows that 84% of the respondents are found to be married, and the remaining 16 % are unmarried. Once a person gets married, it becomes his prime duty to earn and feed his family. So, there are increased responsibilities, and he will try to

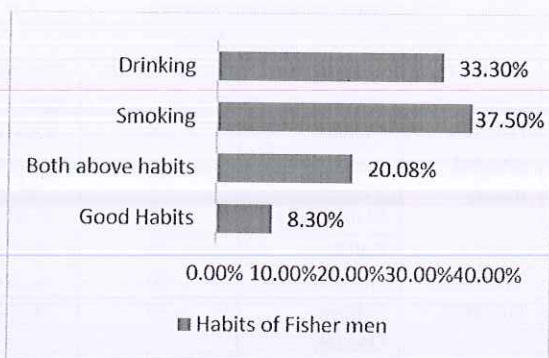


Fig.3.1 Representing the percentage of habits of Fisher men

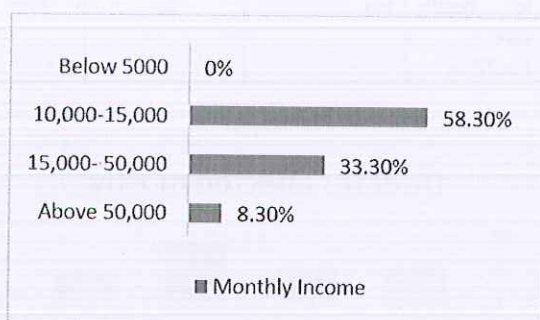


Fig.3.2: Representing the percentage of Monthly Income of Fishermen

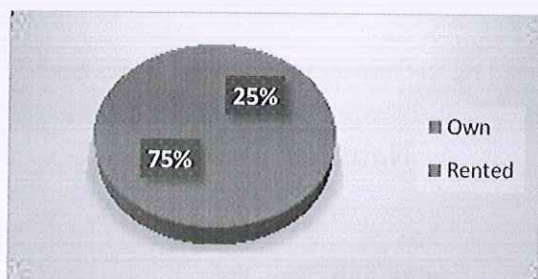


Fig.3.3. Representing the percentage of Nature of Ownership of Boat

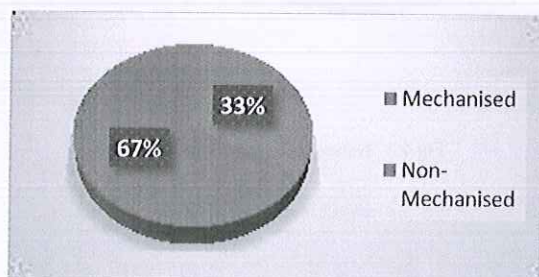


Fig.3.4 Representing the percentage of type of Boats

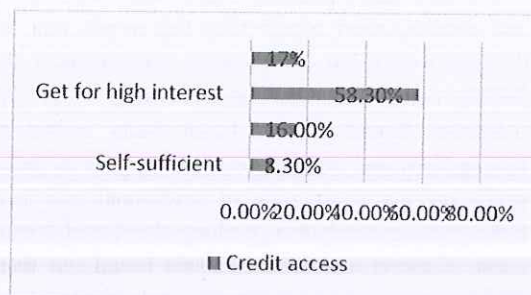


Fig.3.5 Representing the percentage of credit access

The results from table -3 will tell us about the bad habits fishermen have, and how is their economic status been affected because of these bad habits.

Through our observation, we came to know that fishermen had some of these bad habits, due to which their way of life was disturbed. In table-3 we can notice that 40 respondents had drinking habit (33,3%), 45 fishermen were smoking (37,5%), and we can also see that 25 had both drinking and smoking (20.8%). Not only this, in our survey we noticed that there were fishermen with all good habits, but they could occupy only 8%.

In general, work and income are the two main determining elements for every community's standard of living. An equitable distribution of income further enhances the social harmony among different sections of the population.

Table 3 shows that out of the respondents, the majority of the sample respondents' income is between Rs 10,000 and Rs 15,000 and 40 respondents were earning between Rs 15,000 and 50,000 per month, and just 10 of them were able to earn above Rs 50,000 per month. From the data in the above table, it can be concluded that the average monthly income level of the sample respondents is hardly sufficient to maintain their family at the minimum subsistence level.

Among the fishermen, holding ownership of a boat enjoys a higher status in the community. Hence, we made an attempt to know whether the sample respondents have their own boat or not, and the results are given in the table 3. The results in table 3 reflect that only 30 respondents had their own boats, and the remaining 90 respondents were dependent on rented boats. Hence, this is also one of the reasons for the fishermen's inability to grow economically. Even though they were getting good

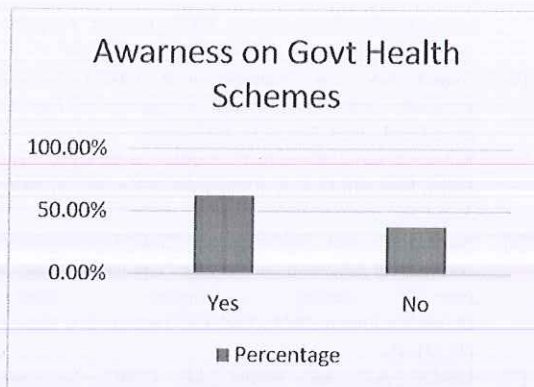


Fig.4.3 Awareness on Govt Health Schemes

The health of an individual not only develops that person but indirectly develops the nation. Health is very essential to leading a happy life for an individual and is also necessary for all productive activities in society. Disease results from a complex interaction between the person, the agent, and the environment. Disease arises when there is maladjustment of the individual with respect to their environment.

In this study, we observed that many fishermen in this study area were suffering from water-borne diseases both cholera and dysentery (53%) and some of them (35.8%) were also suffering from diseases caused by poor nutritional value food. The reasons for these observations are that they were living economically poor lives, so they were not able to have a good diet, and they were also not educated enough to know which foods have what types of nutrients in them. Hence, there is a need for the government to concentrate on the health issues of fishermen.

From table 4, it is reflected that though there are some government health schemes and services available for them, 58% depend on village doctors, and only 33% use government doctors. And just 8% are in a position to go to private doctors for treatment. So, the government should take the initiative to educate them to utilise government services, which are free and the doctors are also well qualified. On the other hand, this saves them money as they have to pay more to village doctors for their treatment.

In our study, we also came to know that only 62.5% had awareness about government health schemes and services available launched by the central and state governments, and nearly 37% of

them had no knowledge of this topic. So, repeated campaigns should be organised by the government officials to enlighten the fishermen about the facilities being provided to them by the government. This will save them a huge amount of money which they currently spend on their health issues, and this keeps them poor. They should be arranged by the govt officials to enlighten the fishermen about the facilities been provided to them by the government. This will save their huge amount which they spend for their health issues, and this turns them into poor.

IV. FINDINGS

Having discussed the various issues connected with the socio-economic aspects of the fishing community in Chinagollapalem, Krishna district, this study summarised the main findings. The findings, conclusions, and suggestions are based on the collected data in this study, which will definitely help with the development of this community. The study has identified the actual problems faced by the fishing community and it has resulted in some useful findings and conclusions, based on which we have tried to provide some practical suggestions towards the improvement and streamlining of the socio-economic conditions of the fishermen in general.

The present study highlights some of the major findings as follows:

- The socio-economic conditions of the fishermen in Chinagollapalem village, Krishna DT, are moderate (neither poor nor good).
- The good majority (75%) of fishermen belong to the Hindu religion; only 25% belong to the Christian community.
- The study reveals that 80% of the fishermen are married.
- It is found that 70% of the fishermen had primary education.
- According to the study, 83 percent of fishermen lived in nuclear families.
- It is found that basic facilities are only 60–70% adequate and the remaining people are living poor life standards.
- Their economic standards are also average; very few are self-sufficient and nearly 70% are below the poverty line.