

## **A Study on Socio-Economic Conditions and Financial Status of Fishermen- With Special Reference to Pudhucherry and Karaikkal**

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**Abstract:** *Fishing is one of the oldest avocations of man, older than even hunting and farming. This study is confined to the fishermen who are living in Pondicherry and Karaikkal. The primary data was collected through well-structured questionnaire from 50 fishermen in Pudhucherry and 50 fishermen in Karaikkal. The total 100 as the sample size in this study. The Collected data were analysed through their percentage ratio. The Study reveals that majority of fishermen are found to be practicing Hinduism. No fisherman is found under the present study belonging to OC or other community. Average age of farmers in the present study is found to be 26 years to 40 22 years followed by 41 years to 60 years of age group. Majority of the respondents have upto Rs. 3,00,000 as their total asset value and very few fisher men have more than Rs. 10,00,000.*

**Keywords:** socio-economic status, financial conditions, income level, asset value, etc.,

### **Introduction**

Many millions of people around the world find a source of income and livelihood in the fisheries and aquaculture sector. The most recent estimates indicate that 56.6 million people were engaged in the primary sector of capture fisheries and aquaculture in 2014. Of this total, 36 percent were engaged full time, 23 percent part time, and the remainder were either occasional fishers or of unspecified status.

Fish is expected to remain predominantly utilized for human consumption, making a valuable and nutritious contribution to diversified and healthy diets. The main utilization for non-food uses will continue to be reduction into fishmeal and fish oil, and other uses will be for ornamental purposes, aquaculture purposes (fingerlings, fry, etc.), bait, pharmaceutical purposes and as direct feed for aquaculture, livestock and other animals.

Fisheries sector occupies a very important place in the socio-economic development of the country. It has been recognized as a powerful income and employment generator as it stimulates growth of a number of subsidiary industries, and is a source of cheap and nutritious food, besides being a foreign exchange earner. Most importantly, it is the source of livelihood for a large section of economically backward population of the country. Yet the above said benefits are at risk as the exploitation of natural fish stocks is reaching limits and aquaculture production has not yet fulfilled its potential. In aquaculture production freshwater and brackish water resources are utilized to certain extent. The freshwater aquaculture production is targeting the

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domestic consumption and brackish water aquaculture contribution is towards major exports to gain foreign exchange.

Fishing is one of the oldest avocations of man, older than even hunting and farming. As an industry with wide backward and forward linkages, the employment and income generation potential of fisheries has increased unprecedentedly in recent decades. Technological innovations in fishing, processing and marketing have given rise to a host of subsidiary occupation related to boat building, net making, fish processing and so on; all these leading to industrial diversification and further strengthening of the economy.

The Union Territory of Puducherry comprises of four region namely, Puducherry, Karaikal, Mahe & Yanam with a total coastal line of 45 kms, 1000 sq.km of continental shelves enriched with marine fisheries potential. It has a fishermen population of about 75,965 of which 20,000 nos. of fishermen are actively engaged in fishing from 27 marine fishing villages and 23 inland fishing villages/hamlets scattered in and around the Union Territory of Puducherry.

Fishery Sector has become a vital sector rich with a source of livelihood for generating employment to a larger extent and sharing for national food security and earns valuable foreign exchange. Under marine sector, coastal fisheries in many parts of the country reached a saturation level and hence the unexploited potential lies in the deep sea needs to be tapped up by adopting diversified method of fishing, by implementation of code of conduct for responsible fishery (CCRF), observance of closed season in the east & west coast etc.

### **Statement of the Problems**

Various development & welfare oriented schemes is implemented with the objectives of augmenting marine, fresh water and brackish water fishery production and also for uplifting the socio-economic status of the fisherfolk. Special thrust is given to accomplish the above goals through successive plan periods. As a result, the socio-economic status of the fishermen have improved. After Tsunami more emphasis is given for alternate livelihood so as to improve the standard of living of fishermen.

### **Scope of the Study**

This study is confined to the Pondicherry and Karaikkal. The study has a limited scope of analysing the various facets of production and marketing of fish in the Union Territory of Pondicherry in the pre and post mechanisation period. It also studies about the marketing behaviour and problems and issues of price spread in marketing fish in the Union Territory of Pondicherry. This study does not deal with every other aspect of fishing in the Union Territory of Pondicherry.

### **Review of Literature**

Gaurab Jyoti Kalita et.al (2015) evaluate the socio-economic condition of fishermen and their different kinds of fishing gears. The result of the study revealed that most of the responded belonged to the Muslim community (68.48%). Illiteracy was found one of the major problem of the studied area as about 72.10% respondents were found to be illiterate. Here, fishing business was totally male dominated (97.10%) and maximum (90.22%) fishermen had married. About

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49.28% of total respondents were found to belong under the age group between 31-40 years. About 52.17% respondents working as farmer for other earning apart from fishing.<sup>3</sup>

Mahender. J and Rajashekhar A.V. (2016) reveals that the socio-economic condition of the fishermen community of Chenugonipally Pedda cheruvu Gadwal, Mahabubnagar dist, Telangana. The results indicated that very miserable condition of the fish farmers. The literacy among the respondents is very low.<sup>4</sup>

Mulla A.Mand Shiralashetti A.S (2015) overview of the marine fisheries of India and coastal Karnataka. It covers the main fisheries resources, present social-economic profile production and export trends and fisheries gears in India and coastal Karnataka. They revealed that the potential for continuing growth of personal income from small and medium size fisheries, benefiting if employment in value added activities from upstream and downstream linkages and dependents.<sup>5</sup>

The Union Territory of Pondicherry is a maritime one with unique problems and features, no comprehensive and systematic study on fisheries development of this Territory has been carried out till date. The ensuing chapters are the outcome of humble effort to fill up this research gap.

### **Methodology of the Study**

The methodology consists of two parts viz., method of data collection and method of analysis of data. Regarding the data, this study relied mainly on published secondary data and to some extent on the primary data collected from sample fishermen.

The data regarding the trends in production at the world and national level have been collected from FAO, (UN) and Handbook of Statistics, Government of India. With regard to production and marketing aspects of fishing in the Union Territory of Pondicherry, the data have been collected from the Administrative Reports of various years of the Department of Fisheries and Fishermen Welfare, and Abstract of statistics published by the Department of Economics and Statistics of the Government of Pondicherry.

The analysis relating to marketing system is based upon a primary investigation conducted by the researcher in the fishing villages of Pondicherry region. The primary data was collected through well-structured questionnaire from 50 fishermen in Pudhucherry and 50 fishermen in Karaikkal. The total 100 as the sample size in this study. The Collected data were analysed through their percentage ratio.

### **Results of the Study**

Socio-economic indicators are closely interrelated. Hence, a particular indicator alone, be it favourable or adverse, cannot reflect the status of a particular group or individual. In the present effort different demographic and socio-economic indicators of the fishermen have been studied which are summarised and explained in the following paragraphs.

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<sup>3</sup> Gaurab Jyoti Kalita, Pradip Kumar Sarma, Priyanuz Goswami, Srustidhar Rout (1015) "Socio-economic status of fishermen and different fishing gear used in Beki River, Barpeta, Assam" Journal of Entomology and Zoology Studies 2015; 3 (1): 193-198

<sup>4</sup> Mahender. J and Rajashekhar A.V. (2016) "Study On Socio-Economic Status Of Fishermen Community Of Chenugonipally Pedda Cheruvu Gadwal, Mahabubnagar Dist, Telangana", International Journal of Research in Zoology 2016; 6(2): 10-13

<sup>5</sup> Mulla A.Mand Shiralashetti A.S (2015) "An Overview Of Marine Fisheries Of India And Coastal Karnataka: Its Present Status" Abhinav International Monthly Refereed Journal of Research In Management & Technology

## **Socio- Economic Status of the Fishermen**

### **Religion**

Religion plays a vital role in the social and cultural environment of people in a given area. Pudhucherry a multicultural society and people practicing Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism etc. can be found in the society. In the present study majority of fishermen are found to be practicing Hinduism.

### **Community**

Community is one of the important factors affecting the choice of the occupation and possession of skill in different rural economic activities (Singh 2003). Majority of fishermen in Pudhucherry and karaikkal in the present study belong to Most Backward Class Community, followed by Scheduled Castes/Scheduled tribe and backward Class (22%) No fishermen is found under the present study belonging to OC or other community.

### **Age Structure**

Knowledge of age structure of fish farmers is important in estimating potential productive human resources (Hussain, et al. 2009). Average age of farmers in the present study is found to be 26 years to 40 22 years followed by 41 years to 60 years of age group.

### **Family Type**

Family type is an important socio-economic indicator as it reflects their cultural behavior and attitude. In this study, in both Pudhucherry and Karaikkal majority of the fishermen living with joint family.

### **Type and Ownership of House**

In the study majority of the fishermen living in thatched house followed by roof and tiled house. All the fishermen in Pudhucherry and karaikkal were living own house.

### **Drinking Water Facility**

In the present study majority of the fishermen in Pudhucherry and Karaikkal are getting drinking water through public tap water.

### **Bath Room and Toilet Facility**

Nearly half of the respondents have bath room facility in pudhucherry and 60%of the respondents have not bath room facility in karaikkal. Nearly half of the respondents have toilet facility and remaining have not this facility in both pudhucherry and Karaikkal.

### **Source of Cooking**

In puducherry and karaikkal, majority of the fishermen family using firewood for cooking purpose, very few respondents were using kerosene for cooking purpose.

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**Table 1: Socio-Economic Conditions**

		Pudhucherry		Karaikkal		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Age	below 25	14	28.0%	0	0.0%	14	14.0%
	26-40	18	36.0%	20	40.0%	38	38.0%
	40-60	18	36.0%	8	16.0%	26	26.0%
	above 60	0	0.0%	22	44.0%	22	22.0%
Religion	Hindu	27	54.0%	40	80.0%	67	67.0%
	Muslim	9	18.0%	5	10.0%	14	14.0%
	Christian	14	28.0%	5	10.0%	19	19.0%
Community	SC/ST	11	22.0%	18	36.0%	29	29.0%
	BC	11	22.0%	13	26.0%	24	24.0%
	MBC	28	56.0%	19	38.0%	47	47.0%
	OC	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Others	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Type of family	Joint	42	84.0%	48	96.0%	90	90.0%
	Nuclear	8	16.0%	2	4.0%	10	10.0%
Type of house	Thatched	22	44.0%	27	54.0%	49	49.0%
	Tiled	14	28.0%	9	18.0%	23	23.0%
	Roof	14	28.0%	14	28.0%	28	28.0%
Ownership Of The House	Own	50	100.0%	50	100.0%	100	100.0%
	Rent	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Drinking Water Facility	Public Tap	49	98.0%	50	100.0%	99	99.0%
	Private Tap	1	2.0%	0	0.0%	1	1.0%
Bath Room Facility	YES	25	50.0%	20	40.0%	45	45.0%
	NO	35	50.0%	30	60.0%	55	55.0%
Toilet Facility	YES	22	44.0%	25	50.0%	47	47.0%
	NO	28	56.0%	25	50.0%	53	53.0%
Cooking Fuel	Firewood	38	76.0%	35	70.0%	73	73.0%
	Kerosene	1	2.0%	1	2.0%	2	2.0%
	LPG	11	22.0%	14	28.0%	25	25.0%

**Source:** Primary data

### Financial Status of the Fishermen

#### Monthly Income

Maximum of the fishermen have upto Rs. 10,000 as their monthly income in both pudhucherry and Karaikkal.

#### Land Asset Value

Majority of the fishermen's land asset value is upto Rs. 10000 and very few fishermen have more than Rs. 3,00,000 as their land asset value.

#### House Value

Majority of the fishermen's house value is upto Rs. 1,00,000. Few fishermen's house value is more than Rs. 3,00,000 in Puducherry and no one fishermen in karaikkal have more than Rs. 3,00,000 as their house value.

**Table 2: Financial Status**

Financial status( in Rupees)		Pudhucherry		Karaikkal		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Monthly income	Upto 10,000	27	54	19	38	46	46
	10001-20000	11	22	17	34	28	28
	20001-30000	9	18	3	6	12	12
	30001-40000	3	6	11	22	14	28
Land value	Upto 100000	35	70	32	64	67	67
	100000-200000	3	6	6	12	9	9
	200001-300000	8	16	11	22	19	19
	Above 300000	4	8	1	2	5	5
House value	Upto 100000	34	68	32	64	66	66
	100000-200000	3	6	6	12	9	9
	200001-300000	8	16	12	24	20	20
	Above 300000	5	10	0	0	5	5
Durable asset value	Upto 100000	39	78	32	64	71	71
	100000-200000	3	6	6	12	9	9
	200001-300000	8	16	12	24	20	20
	Above 300000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vehicle value	Upto 100000	39	78	33	66	72	72
	100000-200000	3	6	6	12	9	9
	200001-300000	8	16	11	22	19	19
	Above 300000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Livestock asset value	Upto 100000	39	78	33	66	72	72
	100000-200000	3	6	6	12	9	9
	200001-300000	8	16	11	22	19	19
	Above 300000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other asset value	Upto 100000	39	78	33	66	72	72
	100001-200000	3	6	6	12	9	9
	200001-300000	8	16	11	22	19	19
	Above 300000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total asset value	Upto 300000	26	52	29	58	55	55
	300000-600000	3	6	6	12	9	9
	600001-1000000	8	16	11	22	19	19
	Above 1000000	13	26	4	8	17	17

Source: Primary data

### Durable Asset Value

Most of the respondents have upto Rs. 1,00,000 as their durable goods value in their home and on one have more than Rs. 3,00,000 in pudhucherry and karaikkal.

### Vehicle Value

Majority of the fishermen have Rs. 1,00,000 as their vehicle value and no one fisher men have more than Rs. 3,00,000 as their vehicle value in Pudhucherry and Karaikkal.

### Livestock Asset Value

Majority of the respondents' livestock value is upto Rs. 1,00,000 and no one have more than Rs. 3,00,000 as their livestock value.

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### **Total Asset Value**

Majority of the respondents have upto Rs. 3,00,000 as their total asset value and very few fishermen have more than Rs. 10,00,000.

### **Limitations of the Study**

This study examines only in Pondicherry. It is based on primary data and the findings of the study are applicable only to the Union Territory of Pondicherry and it should not be generalised for the entire country or to any other situation. Keeping these limitations in mind, the results of the study have to be interpreted very carefully.

### **Conclusion**

The economic conditions of the fishermen were very poor, even they were not fully involved in fishing occupational. Maximum numbers of fishermen were incapable to accomplish their basic requirements. The fisherman is not able to accept new scientific technologies to produce fish at estimated level. Another foremost problem to achieve scientific level fish production is unavailability of desired size and species of fish seed. Thus it is need to conduct fishermen training programmes with new technologies which helps to enhance the productivity of fish. Government may encourage and support on selling of yielded fish in markets by fishermen rather than businessmen to improve the fishermen's socio economic and financial conditions.

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