

Problems of the Dalit Fisherman Community with Reference to Pichavaram Village, Cuddalore District

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ABSTRACT

The global patterns of fish production owe much to the activities of China, which reports production in weight that accounts for 32 percent of the world total. At present, Japan and Russia are the leading producers of fish in the world. Peru, China and U.S.A are among the first five fishing countries. India is at present holding only the seventh position with the total production of 3.83 million tones. This is due to relatively primitive methods of fishing and large areas remaining unexploited. The growth of the world's supply of fish per capita from 9.9 kg (live weight) in 1960 to 18.8 kg per capita in 2011. India is major supplier of fish in the world. In 2011, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) reported that 28.8% of the stocks were overexploited, 9.9% were exploited moderately or underexploited and the rest were fully exploited. Therefore, catches are considered close to their maximum sustainable limits, without the possibility of increasing. The present study aims to find out the problems of the dalit fisherman community with reference to Pichavaram village, Cuddalore district. A samples of 50 respondents selected randomly were studied. Primary data were collected by using a structured interview scheduled. All the respondents were asked the some questions in the same fashion and they were informed the purpose of study. Percentage analysis and Cross tabulation analysis were applied to test the hypotheses. The findings and observations are the result and outcome of the interpretations made during the study of analysis.

Key words : Dalit Fisherman Community, Problems and Demographic Variables

INTRODUCTION

Dalit Fisherman mean the person who engaged mainly in fishing and related activities for their livelihood. They are very close to nature and element of great risk to life make him as superstitious as he is generous and care free. The greatest asset of Dalit Fisherman in their accumulated Knowledge about the fish, fish habits, waves, currents and stars. They have a tradition of learning by doing, handed over from generation to generation. Family background influences mental ability of children through pre-natal and post-natal care, intake of food, and the ability to go through a sustained educational process.

To go to school implies keeping away from fishing. Most of the arts of fishing, particularly with traditional craft and gear, can only be picked up through a process of learning by doing from young age.

One of the paramount reason for the poor quality of life and substandard conditions of habitat of marine fishing community of the state is crowding of the whole community on a narrow strip of the coastline. As a result, there are 222 fishing villages in 590 km. and none of these villages is more than half km wide from the sea front. In some districts like Trivandrum and Quilon they are hardly half km wide. This is the one of the reason for during monsoon the sea may take away land and houses of Dalit Fisherman. The life is always in the doldrums. That makes an unsuitable environment for studies.

Consequently schooling on one hand result in putting the out of their traditional occupation and also the dropout rate is higher in fisher folk. Mainly because of the reason such as

- Problem of Crowding Dalit Fisherman
- Health Conditions Dalit Fisherman
- The Housing Problem Dalit Fisherman
- Recreational Facilities Dalit Fisherman
- Economic Backwardness Dalit Fisherman
- Inadequate Facilities for Studying

- Lack of Parallel Attention and Encouragement from Parents
- Influence of Political Party
- Behavioral Issues
- The High Rate of Unemployment among the Educated Children

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Balasubramaniyan (2015) in his study compared the economic status of Dalit Fisherman in two marine fishing villages of Orissa State viz.. Pentakota and Belinoliasahi. They measured the economic status and the mean scores of respondents in the two villages, which differed significantly at one per cent level realisation of full potential of development schemes and adoption of new technologies.

Gupta (2016) in this work on "Challenges in sustaining and increasing fish production to combat Hunger and poverty in Asia" has concluded that while there are ample opportunities for fish and fisheries to make a major contribution to food and nutritional security and to contribution to the eradication of the poverty, the number of challenges that need to be addressed, their requirement; and that political will, policy change and effective and efficient implementation. Our fight against hunger is a long process and we need patience, endurance and great commitment.

Namasivayam (2016) in his article entitled* India marine Exports: An over view, observed that the marine food export fetches several crores of foreign exchange to our country and provides employment opportunities for people directly and indirectly. To increase the export of marine food products to various countries, the hurdles such as exam duties, over tax in the exports is to be taken into consideration with immediate effect.

S.K. Mazumder (2019) conducted a study on the socio-economic conditions of Dalit Fisherman in Jelepara under Pahartoli of Chittagong district. Randomly selected 50 were interviewed among 200 Dalit Fisherman. From the survey it was found that 94% Dalit Fisherman were male and 6% were female. A large portion was Hindus (88%) and rest was Muslims (12%). About 84% were found married. Single family was much more (94%) than

joint families. It was found that the number of school going children was 1.9 per house and 54% were school dropout boy and 46% were girl. Eighty eight percent houses were full katcha, while semi-pacca were 12% and all the families have electricity facilities. Different types of net were used viz: the set bagnet, tong jal, current jal, tanajal etc. They used engine boats and engine power ranges from 8 to 22 HP. On average a group of Dalit Fisherman (4) caught 35-80kg/day using a boat. Maximum Dalit Fisherman sold their fish after fulfilling their demand. Monthly average income was around BDT. 6000-15000. Fifty six percent of the Dalit Fisherman borrowed money from money lenders and 44% from the NGO's. They need more institutional, organizational and technical help for the betterment of their socio-economic condition and sustainable livelihood.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the social conditions of Dalit Fisherman community in the study area
2. To analyse the economic conditions of Dalit Fisherman community.
3. To examine the problems faced by the Dalit Fisherman community in the study area, and.
4. To find out the felt needs of Dalit Fisherman community in the study area.

METHODOLOGY

The data were collected from Pichavaram Village, Cuddalore District. There are 270 households in this village at the time of data collection. Out of these 270 households 5% of the household i.e. 54 household were selected by using simple random sampling method for the study. Every tenth household (1, 11, 21,.....) was taken as sample household. However, despite effective attempts only from 50 households the data collection was possible. From the each of households, the head of the family was considered as respondent for the present study. Research design is purely and simply the framework or plan for a study that guides the collection and analysis of the data. The research design indicates the methods of research i.e. the method of gathering information and the method of sampling. Primary data were collected by conducting direct structured interview using questionnaire. All the respondents were asked the same questions in the same fashion and they were informed the purpose of

study. On the basis of the literature review, an interview schedule was framed. The schedule was used to collect the necessary data from the respondents using interview method.

The collected information was coded and tabulated. Simple percentage calculations were made interpret the data. The data collected through questionnaires have been tabulated. By using the above mentioned statistical tools, the data have been analysed. Interpretations have been drawn based on the analysis. The findings and observations are the result and outcome of the interpretations made during the course of analysis. Tables and figures have been used wherever necessary to facilitate the analysis and interpretation. Explanations for the tables were given for the tables wherever necessary.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1

Distribution of the Respondents by their Opinion on Facing Problems during Fishing

S.No.	Facing Problems	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)	Responses	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Yes	26	52	Compromising the problems at time of fishing	20	77
2.	No	24	48	Complaint to the fishery association	05	19
	Total	50	100	Ignored the problems	01	08
				Total	26	100

The above table reveals the distribution of the respondents by their opinion on facing problems during fishing. Out of total respondents, 48 per cent of them have not faced any problems during fishing and the remaining 52 per cent of them have faced problems during the time of fishing. Among them, 77 per cent of them reported that they are compromising their problems during the time of fishing, 19 per cent of them stated that they have complained to the fishery association and the rest of them (4%) stated that they ignored their problems.

Table 2**Distribution of the Respondents by Possession of Articles in their Houses**

S.No.	Possession of Articles in their Houses	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Radio/T.V.	29	58
2.	Radio/T.V./Mixie	06	12
3.	Radio/T.V./Mixie/ Grinder	10	20
4.	Radio/T.V./ Mixie/ Grinder / Refrigerator	05	10
	Total	50	100

Regarding the possession of articles in the respondents' house, Table 21 shows that 58 per cent of the respondents possess Radio and Television, 12 per cent of them have Radio/Television and Mixie, 20 per cent of them have Radio/T.V./Mixie and Grinder and the remaining 10 per cent of them have Radio, Television, Mixie, Grinder and Refrigerator. It could be noted that majority of the respondents have only Radio and Television.

Table 3**Distribution of the Respondents by Alcoholic Drinking Habit**

S.No.	Alcoholic Drinking Habit	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)	Consuming Alcohol	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Drinking	37	74	Daily	12	32
2.	Not Drinking	13	26	Weekly Once	07	19
	Total	50	100	Weekly Twice	08	22
				Rarely	10	27
				Total	37	100

The table shows the distribution of the respondents by their alcoholic drinking habit. Out of total respondents, 74 per cent of them have alcoholic drinking habit and the remaining 26 per cent do not have, alcoholic drinking habit. Among them 32 per cent drink daily, 19 per cent of them drink once in a week, 22 per cent of them drink twice in a week and the remaining 27 per cent of them drink rarely. It could be noted that majority of the respondents in the study are have alcoholic drinking habit.

Table 4
Distribution of the Respondents by Savings and Place of Savings

S.No.	Habit Saving	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)	Place of Savings	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Yes	22	44	Nationalized Banks	11	50
2.	No	28	56	Monthly Chits	9	41
	Total	50	100	Gold Saving Scheme	2	09
				Total	22	100

The data in table presents the distribution of the respondents according to the habit of savings. Out of total respondents, 56 per cent of them do not have the habit of savings and the remaining 44 per cent of the respondents are having the habit of savings. Regarding the analysis of the place of savings, 50 per cent of the respondents save their money in the Nationalized banks, 41 per cent of them save their money in the form of monthly chits and the remaining 9 per cent of them save their money in the form of gold saving scheme in Jewellery shops. It could be noted that majority of the respondents in the study area save their money in nationalized banks.

CONCLUSIONS

Regarding possession of articles in their houses, majority of the respondents (58%) have only Radio and Television. Most of the respondents have electricity facility in their houses. Majority of the respondents in the study area possess motor cycle. In this study, most of them (70%) do not have own boat and only few (15%) of them have own boat.

Majority of them have faced problems during the time of fishing and the most of them (77%) reported that compromising their problems during the time of fishing. All the respondents in the study are repairing their boats and fish nets at the time of 45 days fishing ban prolonged by the government.

Majority of the respondents (56%) have got house from government free housing scheme. Most of them (76%) are having mediclaim policy. All the respondents have membership in fishery association. Majority of the respondents (52%) have membership in

various political parties. Thus it is clear from the study results that the socio-economic conditions of the respondents are changing over the years and is also improving in terms of their status. However still it is clear that they have to go a long way in rising their overall status in terms and large the Dalit Fisherman community are better in terms of their well being. It efforts are made to improve their awareness in social, education and economic fields, they will be having better social well being. Thus the study highlights the problems and prospects of the Dalit Fisherman community in the study area.

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