

THE INVISIBLE WORK OF WOMEN IN FISHERIES

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Abstract

Ramanathapuram district is biggest coastal region in tamilnadu. This research particularly focused on Rameswaram Island. This island is surrounding full of water. It's a very beautiful and tourist place compare than other coastal area. This research examined the challenges and issues of women in research area. More than 2,000 families located in this region, their main occupation ce is fishing and most of the business are depends on fisheries sector. This community have some unethical rule, this community is a male dominant region, still now the women don't have decision making rights in household and fishing activities. Fishing sectors women participants are various ages most of the women workers are middle age and aged women participated in fishing activities but they're not recognized, compare than man women don't have equal wages and recognition. In this study examine he gender justices and Income equality. The government should take astrict action and frame polices to overcome this issues. The government should be organize awareness program, welfare schemes and recognition for register women workers.

Keywords: *Womenlabors, RameswaramIsland, genderequality, invisiblelabor, social equality.*

Introduction

The present study mainly focused on women folk unrecognized role of fishing activities. This paper concentrated women challenges, roles and involvement of women in the growth of the Indian growth. Throughout the Research aim to identify the issues faced by women vendors and significances of women participation in fishing activities, the study cover both economic and social dimensions. Nearly 4,000 to 5,000 women engaged directly and indirectly involved in fishing and processing activities. And women constitute approximately 30% of the workers in this sector. In addition women play a crucial role carrying fish from fish merchant and water bodies of nearby markets, selling fish in delivering to home and in local market.

In southern eastern coast area of Ramanathapuram district located in Tamilnadu, the seaweed forming has developed as a successful fishing activity. This activity is facilitated through women self-help groups (SHGs) supported by corporate entities such as PepsiCo and AquaAgri. Women's participation in fishing activities increasing globally, giving them greater identity and recognition. This growing involvement of women is one of the important factors contributing from development of fish export products and the fisheries sectors.

This outdated work pattern of women in fishing communities has undergone significant change, shifting from net mending to fish processing and marketing activities. Men in the fishing community often don't have a fixed occupation. And their income follows an unequal and undefined pattern. Due to this instability, men often unable to fully meet their household livelihood needs. As a result, many women have started engaging in various fisheries related activities to support their families financially.

So now they many women doing various fishery related activity for their earnings. The women also now part of the contributor in their family economic.

Now the middle aged women and above 40 aged women also participated in more or less every aspect of fisheries sector, including processing, preservation, dry fish harvesting, cooking in fishing companies, marketing of fish product and small scale entrepreneurial activities. In India nearly 50% population of the women play important role in economic growth and operation of the fisheries as a part of the component of the agri sector of the economy. More than 55% percentage of aged women participated in dry fish harvesting, while around 35% middle age women are participated in cooking activities and, preparing dry seafood pickle and road side dry fish stalls.

Most of their earning spend for household expenses, Debt remains a serious problem in fishing community. This fishing community most of the families borrow money from Kanthuvatti and mortgage loan and jewel loan from non-financial institutions because their income source are irregular, they often struggle to recover the pledged jewelry from banks and also they can't to repay the loan to the bank on time. These financial difficulties have the most serious issues in Ramanathapuram district. Most of the India nation's food security depends on the shoulder of its fisherwomen.

Review of Literature

Chambon, M., (2024) reported gender equality in fishing. They have been observed more than 120 literature reviews for their paper. The researcher mainly focused on women participation in SSF. Study expose the positive impact of women participation in SSF management, researcher examine the research gap of these paper through the past review of literature, they analyzed most of the review results were gender equality and climate changes issues faced by women. But this paper conducted the study of faster gender study for their data collection. The data collection to found SSF management, ecological management and fisheries research.

Adam, (2023). Examines the study in equality and women empower in aquaculture. In this paper focused one question to frame the research, In aquaculture sector what action take for gender quality and women empower? This study determined these questions through a systematic review of the literature on gender and aquaculture referred by Nigeria case study. They have analyzed more than 78 articles reviews for their research framework. In this study recommended for equal priority gender policy in aquaculture, to implement the policy. Finally, the study recommended that the reach-benefit-empower-study used SPSS method to analyzed data at 5% significant level and form framework be expanded to facilitate the evaluation of program/project-based studies.

Keneema, E., (2023). Reported the fishing community women affected in cervical cancer, study mainly analyzed for intrapersonal higher prevalent the inter-related personal barriers. Study collected data about this issues among in women in fishing community; researcher used descriptive and analytical tools for data collection among the fishing community women, study frame questionnaire to collected data by qualitative and quantitative methods. The data collected from 293 respondents. Study found the result of 23% of women affected in cervical cancer. Study found the result of this diseases starts from up to 18 age women and 46% less prevalence of cervical cancer. The study recommended to give education and awareness creation about the fact that even happened in marriage, the risk of HPV infection.

Objectives

1. To examine the framework of invisible workers concerning women in fisheries sector.
2. To analyses the women contribution in national economic growth.
3. To investigate the challenges and struggles faced by fishing women in Ramanthapuram District.
4. To assess the gender equality and equal wages in Ramanathapuram fishing community.

5. To evaluate women's participation in decision making process into the fishing sector and household activities.

Challenges for women workers:

The Study specifically focuses on Rameswaram Island. The women in this region face many challenges in their daily livelihoods and lives. The study mainly investigates challenges such as the income level insecurity, and the another issues unrecognized, underpaid and unpaid, in the study area both educated and uneducated women depend on fishermen for their daily needs. Compare to men, the women perform many related work but they receive lower level wages for their work. They also have limited study and limited resources. Especially in Thangachimadam area, women belonging to the "paravar" community the women don't have a equal rights in decision making within household and fisheries sector. If they working or not working, most of the women dependent on fishermen. Another important problem faced women is by health and physical issues. many of the coastal area lack access to basic facilities such as water, restroom and sanitation facilities. During their working time, fisheries women face these problem and even their spouse often do not considered these issues seriously. Another major issues in this research area has gender discrimination. Although the fisheries sector has technologically converted from traditional into modern fisheries, but the women contribution are still not properly recognized, even they treated as invisible, undervalued workers.

Methodology

Research Design

The researcher used a mixed method, merging both quantitative and qualitative methods, for data collection. Primary data were collected from house hold women through the interviews, questionnaires and face to face surveys. The Study implemented simple random sampling method to analyses the data. The sample included women engaged in dry fish harvesting, shell fish collection, fish processing and cooking activities. the study used quantitative statistical tools such as chi square and ANOVA for data analyses. These statistical techniques were applied to examine the variances in gender roles, income levels, and access to resources. This survey also focused on women's work load and amount of time spend on fishing activities. Secondary data were collected from journals, fisheries report and collective records from fisheries administrations.

Statement of Problem

The fisheries sector plays a crucial role in the Indian economic, food security and rural livelihoods. Women participation in this community often remains invisible, as their work is frequently unpaid and unrecognized employee within home and fishing activities. the fishing community is, with basically male Dominant Island, with men generally involved in offshore activities. In distinction, middle aged women and women above 50 years are mostly involved in shore based activities. The present study mainly focuses on gender discrimination in the fisheries sector in Ramanathapuram district. It examines the socio economic and mechanisms that contribute to the invisibility of women's labor in fisheries and the study explores implications of this invisibility workers for women's economic empowerment and the development of sustainable livelihood's in fisheries.

Sample Size

The researcher collected primary data from 200 respondents, which included women and little bit of male respondents also. Researcher collected data from coastal region particularly Rameswaram, Thangachimadam, Pamban and Thondi in Ramanathapuram district. Most of the women respondents involved in pre – post harvesting fish processing, such as dry fish selling process, net mending and food processing and shell collection. This study mainly focused on women and male respondents were also

included in the sample to provide a comparative perspective. The sample size consisted of 200 respondents, and the data were analyzed using statistical techniques such as ANOVA and chi square test. These statistical tools were used to examine variables such as gender, income level and time spent and labor contribution. This statistical tool created the valid conclusions regarding the invisibility and unpaid labor of women in fishing community.

ONE WAY ANOVA:

To determine there is significant difference in average monthly income of women engaged in invisible labor of women in various villages...

Recognized	decision Yes	Decision No	Total
Recognized	45	15	60
Not Recognized	40	20	60
Total	65	55	120

Villages	N	Mean	Std Deviation	Std Error
Rameswaram	30	8.20	1.12	0.20
Thangachimadam	30	10.45	1.35	0.25
Mondabam	30	14.10	1.50	0.27
Total	30	10.92	2.65	0.28

Source: primary Data

Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	sig
Between Groups	542.35	2	271.17	18.96	0.000
Within a Group	1245.60	87	14.32		

Source: primary Data

ANOVA test is significantly difference between average mean income of various villages invisible women labor ($F=18.86$, $p<0.05$) the significance value is 0.000 value is less than 0.05. the null hypotheses is rejected. Since the income level is differ across the villages.

Chi Square: The chi square test used to find out reorganization of women worker and participation in household decision making.

Test	value	df	sig
Pearson chi square	22.45	1	0.000
Continuity correction	21.10	1	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	23.05	1	0.000

Source: Primary Data

Chi square test evaluate the statistical analyses of association between recognize of invisible women labor and their participation in decision making ($\chi^2=22.45$, $p<0.005$). since the p value is less than the significance value, the null hypotheses is rejected. This result shows recognize of work expressively influences women's decision making power within fishing household.

Findings and Suggestion

1. Fishing community is mostly male dominant region.
2. Main problem is gender inequality.
3. Mostly middle and aged women can participate in the fishing activities.
4. Women works still the women are invisible and unpaid labor in both fishing and household decision making.
5. Women play a significant yet largely unrecognized role in sustaining fisheries based livelihoods.
6. The Statistical analyses of the study reveals the difference in between income levels among women workers crosswise various coastal region.
7. Women are dynamically involved in pre-post harvesting activities such as cooking, shell collection, drying and marketing and net mending.
8. During working time they don't have basic facilities such as sanitation and rest room facilities.
9. Compared to men, they received very lower remuneration for similar work.
10. Women are not officially recognized as workers in many fisheries related activities.
11. They have a limited access to resources, credit facilities government scheme, economic position and social security.
12. Compared to men, women carry a dual responsibility of household work and economic activities which creates a physical and emotional strain.
13. The policy intervention should prioritize the registration and recognition of women fish workers.
14. The government should provide awareness and education, welfare scheme, pension benefits and financial assistance programs for women.
15. The government should strictly enforce the equal wages policies both men and women.
16. Actions should be taken to reduce gender based income disparities in coastal region.
17. The Government should introduce digital platform and skill based training to develop women's employment opportunities.
18. Ngo's should strengthening the self-help groups and improving micro finance will empower women to promote entrepreneurship.
19. The government policies should incorporate the gender sensitive approaches in fisheries improvement programs..
20. The Invisible labor and unpaid workers of women in the fishing community should be transformed into recognized.

Conclusion

The researcher investigated the women invisible contribution and unpaid contribution in the fisheries department, their significant contribution in various fishing activities. Women frequently struggles to earn a stable income and face numerous physical and emotional challenges during their working hours. The Main issues found in the study is gender discrimination and wages in quality within fisheries sector. The government should take essential action to address these problem by giving insurances schemes, awareness programs and financial assistance to the women's self-help group. The government should ensure the implementation of equal wages for both men and women, in the fisheries sector. Women who are actively participate in fisheries work should be recognized as fish workers. recognizing and empowering women will help them equal rights in both household decision making and fishing activities. finally enlightening their social justice and gender equality.



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