# Problems and Prospects of Fishermen in Ramanathapuram Districts of Tamilnadu

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## Abstract

This paper is attempted to analyze the problems and prospects of fishermen. Fishing has been one of the oldest economic activities of human race. It comes next only to agriculture. The study was done on the different fishermen villages in Ramanathapuram Districts. The data was collected by questionnaire to 150 fishermen in different area of Ramanathapuram Districts. The important objectives of the study were to find out the income and expenditure pattern of fishermen, to study the Socio-economic conditions of fishermen, to study the problem faced by the fishermen and to identify the steps taken by the government to improve the socio- economic conditions of the fishermen.

Keywords:  Fishermen, Problems, Prospects, fishing

## Introduction

The fishing industry includes any industry or activity concerned with taking, culturing, processing, reserving, storing, transporting, marketing or selling fish or fish products. Millions of people all over the world have been profitably engaged in fishing and fish trading over the years. Fishing has been one of the oldest activities of human race. Fishing is a important industry and economic corner stone of the Indian market. These resources are one of the main sources of livelihood for the rural people, particularly the fishermen community. In India, 'fisheries' is considered to be a sub sector of agricultural sector. The increasing trends in fish production place an important role in earning foreign exchange. Fisheries have been recognized as a powerful income and employment generator owing to the continuous growth of fish production. Fish is an important source of protein and

its harvest, handling, processing and distribution provide livelihood for millions of people as well as providing valuable foreign exchange earnings to the country. It is a highly perishable food, requires proper handling, processing and distribution, if it is to be utilized in a cost effective and efficient way. Fishing is one of the oldest means of livelihood of mankind, which has developed into a multifarious industry. Fisheries have tremendous potential for employment generation and beside the employment, opportunities in fishing not only in the sea but there are enormous opportunities in aquaculture. Developing countries like India make considerable foreign exchange earning out of fisheries. The fisheries sector provides gainful employment to about 5.95 million people in full time and part-time with an equally impressive segment of the population engaged in ancillary activities associated with fisheries and aquaculture.

The state of Tamilnadu with a coastline of 1076km. covers both east and west coast, which constitutes about 15% of India's total coastal length. About 6.8 lakhs marine fisher folk like in 13 coastal districts and they depend on the continental shelf of 41,412 sq.km for their livelihood. Tamilnadu contributes 10% of India's total marine fish production. By way of exporting marine products, the state earns about Rs. 1450 crores as foreign exchange, which comprises 28.5% of India's total marine product export value. The fisher folk who are responsible to bring such a huge foreign exchange to the state still live below poverty line. The honourable chief minister and the honourable minister for fisheries have proposed to implement various welfare measures to improve the socio-economic conditions of the fishermen.

### Statement of the Problems

Despite of the enormous increase in the fishing population, the wealth, welfare and development of the fishermen in Ramanathapuram district as measured by the government authorities are seemed to be a very poor or a matter of ever concern. The majority live under poverty and financial instability and therefore, they are the lowest level of their profile in all economic aspects. Hence, it throws lights to an aspect that existing fishing and marketing practices of fishermen and its impact on their socio-economic and culture backwardness of the fishermen should be analysed in an entirely different angle. The present study in an attempt made to illustrate the problems and prospects of fishermen in Ramanathapuram District.

## Objectives of the Study

The following are the important objectives of the present study

1. To find out the income and expenditure pattern of fishermen.
2. To study the socio-economic conditions of fishermen in Ramanathapuram District
3. To study the problems faced by the fishermen
4. To offer suggestion based on findings of the study

## Hypothesis

1. There is no significant relationship between the age and monthly income of the respondents.
2. There is no significant relationship between the age and savings of the fishermen.
3. There is significant relationship between the gender and per-trip of wages of the fishermen.

## Scope of the Study

This study covers the problems and prospects of fishermen of Ramanathapuram district. The fishermen communities are economically weak, in spite of moderate earning the find in different to run the family. As their income is unsteady and they have, wrong spending habits this results in poverty. To compensate this they seek the help of moneylenders for the economic needs of lite the focus of the study is on the socio-economic conditions of the fishermen in Ramanathapuram. They study has been made from the point of view of all types of fishermen such as small medium and large fishermen. The study is conducted in different area like Rameswaram, Madapam, Bampan, Thondi, Devipattinam, Kilakarai, Ervadi, Valinokkam of Ramanathapuram district, situated along the gulf of manner belt in India.

## Methodology

The investigator has selected the "convenient sampling" to collect data from the respondents. Respondents were selected from the fisher folk through random sampling. The data required for the study have been obtained from both primary and secondary source. The primary data were collected through questionnaire and interview schedule and secondary source of data were collected through, journals, magazines, and websites. Data has been collected from 150 respondents from the study area. The researcher has personally interviewed all the respondents. The present study covers Ramanathapuram District.

## Tools of Analysis

Data collected through Interview Schedule and secondary data have been analysed with the help of various statistical tools. Statistical techniques like percentages and chi-square test have been use to analyse the data.

## Analysis and Interpretation

Most of the fishermen in Ramanathapuram districts and other marine districts of Tamilnadu are living under the verge of extreme poverty. Their socio-economic conditions are pathetic and fisherman face lot of problems. Hence, they are degraded among the other societies. Data are tabulated for easy understanding and good presentation

## Gender of Respondents

**Table: 1 Gender of the Respondents**

| SL. NO | GENDER | NO. OF RESPONDENTS | PERCENTAGE |
|--------|--------|--------------------|------------|
| 1 | Male | 125 | 83 |
| 2 | Female | 25 | 17 |
| **Total** | | **150** | **100** |

**Sources:** Primary data

Gender is the important factor for analyzing the problems and prospects of fishermen. It is clear from this study, 83 per cent of respondents are male and only 17 per cent of respondents are female.

## Age Group of Respondents

**Table: 2 Age Group of the Respondents**

| SL. NO | AGE | NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS | PERCENTAGE |
|--------|-----|-----------------------|------------|
| 1 | 20-30 | 75 | 50 |
| 2 | 30-40 | 51 | 34 |
| 3 | 40-50 | 40 | 13 |
| 4 | Above 50 | 4 | 3 |
| **Total** | | **150** | **100** |

**Source:** Primary data

Age is the important factor for analysing the problems and prospects of fishermen. It is clear from the study majority of the respondent's age is between 20-30 years, 3% of the responded were in the age group of above 50 years, 34% of the respondents were in the age group of 30-40 years, and 13% of the respondents were in the age group of 20-30.

## Marital Status of Respondents

### Table: 3 Marital Status of the Respondents

| SL. NO | MARITAL STATUS | NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS | PERCENTAGE |
|--------|----------------|------------------------|------------|
| 1 | Married | 105 | 70 |
| 2 | Unmarried | 45 | 30 |
| Total | | 150 | 100 |

**Source:** Primary data

Marital status is the important factor for analyzing the problems and prospects of fishermen. It is clear from this study, 70 per cent are found to be married and the remaining 30 per cent unmarried.

## Housing Types of Fishermen

### Table: 4 Housing Types of Respondents

| SL. NO | HOUSING | NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS | PERCENTAGE |
|--------|---------|------------------------|------------|
| 1 | HUT | 43 | 29 |
| 2 | TILED | 77 | 51 |
| 3 | CONCRETE | 30 | 20 |
| Total | | 150 | 100 |

**Source:** Primary data

The above table reveals that 29 per cent belongs to hut, 51 per cent belong to tiled and 20 per cent belongs to concrete among the 150 respondents. Respondents with tiled types of house are larger in this case.

## Electricity Facility of the Houses

**Table: 5 Electricity Facility of the Respondents**

| SL. NO | ELECTRICITY | NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS | PERCENTAGE |
|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| 1 | Electricity | 129 | 86 |
| 2 | Non-electricity | 21 | 14 |
| **Total** | | **150** | **100** |

**Source:** Primary data

Researcher found that, 86 per cent of the respondents electrified their houses. Moreover, the rest are depending on lamps and candles to light up their homes 14 per cent.

## Educational Level of Respondents

**Table: 6 Education Level of the Respondents**

| SL. NO | QUALIFICATION | NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS | PERCENTAGE |
|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| 1 | Primary | 15 | 10 |
| 2 | Middle | 18 | 12 |
| 3 | Secondary | 28 | 19 |
| 4 | College | 3 | 2 |
| 5 | Illiterate | 86 | 57 |
| **Total** | | **150** | **100** |

**Source:** Primary data

Education is the important factor for analyzing the problems and prospects of fishermen. It is clear from this study, the educational level of the fishing communities. A majority of the respondent 57 per cent are illiterate. Here 10 per cent of the respondents have completed only primary and 12 per cent of the respondents have just completed their middle education. About 19 per cent of the respondents got higher secondary education; two per cent of the respondents have done the college level.

## Monthly Income of the Respondents

**Table: 7 Monthly Income of the Respondents**

| SL.NO | INCOME | NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS | PERCENTAGE |
|-------|--------|----------------------|------------|
| 1 | Below- 5000 | 75 | 50 |
| 2 | 5000 – 10,000 | 42 | 28 |
| 3 | 10,000 – 15,000 | 20 | 13 |
| 4 | 15,000 – 20,000 | 13 | 9 |
| | **Total** | **150** | **100** |

**Source:** Primary data

Income is the important factor for analyzing the problems and prospects of fishermen. It is clear from this study, 50 percent of the respondent have monthly income of less than rupees five thousands. Families, which were having monthly income from 5000-10000 and 10000- 15,000 amounted to 28 per cent and 13 per cent respectively. Moreover, 9 per cent of the respondent belongs to 15,000- 20,000.

## Per Trip Wages of the Respondents

**Table: 8 Per Trip Wages of the Respondents**

| SL. NO | PER TRIP WAGES | NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS | PERCENTAGE |
|--------|----------------|----------------------|------------|
| 1 | Below -500 | 55 | 37 |
| 2 | 500-1000 | 50 | 33 |
| 3 | Above 1000 | 45 | 30 |
| | **Total** | **150** | **100** |

**Source:** Primary data

Wages is the important factor for analyzing the problems and prospects of fishermen. It is clear from this study, 37 percent of the respondent have per trip wages of less than rupees five hundred. 33 per cent of the respondents per trip wages from 500-1000 and 30 per cent of the respondent belong to above 1000.

## Saving Habit of the Respondent

It is a common fact that most of the fishermen do not have the habit of savings. The above table also pin point this aspect with 58 per cent. Any way it is found that 42 per cent of the respondents have developed a habit of savings for their future life.

## Mode of Saving of the Respondents

**Table: 9 Mode of Saving of the Respondents**

| SL. NO | SAVING | NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS | PERCENTAGE |
|--------|--------|------------------------|------------|
| 1 | Bank | 41 | 27 |
| 2 | Post Office | 19 | 13 |
| 3 | Home | 36 | 24 |
| 4 | Lic | 33 | 22 |
| 5 | Chit Fund | 21 | 14 |
| **Total** | | **150** | **100** |

**Source:** Primary data

Mode of saving is the important factor for analyzing the problems and prospects of fishermen. This study brings out the point that almost 27 per cent of the respondents put their savings in bank. 13 per cent of the people wished to invest their savings in the post office. Another 24 per cent of the people show homes followed by 22 per cent in LIC. Again, we find other 14 per cent of the people investing their money in chit fund.

## Problem of Fishermen

**Single opinion of the fishermen problems about during the fishing.**

| SL.No | Source | SA | A | M | DA | SDA | Intensive value | RANK |
|-------|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----------------|------|
| 1 | During the fishing | 53 | 41 | 28 | 13 | 15 | 3.69 | II |
| 2 | During the selling | 59 | 38 | 25 | 12 | 16 | 3.75 | I |
| 3 | Transportation | 34 | 24 | 26 | 35 | 31 | 2.96 | VI |
| 4 | Storages facility | 46 | 34 | 30 | 19 | 21 | 3.43 | III |
| 5 | Financial | 31 | 29 | 31 | 32 | 27 | 3.02 | V |
| 6 | Owner and labour | 21 | 19 | 27 | 38 | 45 | 2.55 | VIII |
| 7 | In the society | 35 | 27 | 29 | 34 | 25 | 3.08 | IV |
| 8 | In the family | 25 | 21 | 32 | 34 | 38 | 2.74 | VII |

**Source:** Primary Data

This study also focused on various issues faced by the fishermen. The areas on which they come across with problems are mainly during fish selling. So it scored the first rank in the list. The second rank of issue arises during the fishing time and third rank is storages facilities. The fourth rank of issue starts when the society. It followed by the fifth rank of issue that is based on the bank and financial sources. The sixth rank of issue comes within the transportation and the seventh rank of issue comes within the family itself. The last rank in the serial is between the owner and the labours so on.

## Chi-Square Analysis

The Chi-square test is one of the simplest and most widely used non-parametric test in statistical work. The symbol $\chi2$ is the Greek letter chi. the $\chi2$ test was first used by Karl Pearson. The quantity $\chi2$ describe the magnitude of the discrepancy between theory & observation. It is defined as:

$$\chi2 = \frac{(O-E)\ 2}{E}$$

Where,

O = observed frequency

E = expected frequency

In this study, this is used to best the null hypothesis of find out the relationship.

## Age and Monthly Income

**Null hypothesis:** There is no significant relationship between the age and monthy income of the respondents.

Result of the chi-square test

| Degree of freedom | 9 |
|---|---|
| Table value at 5 percent level | 23.6 |
| Calculate value | 15.95 |

Since the calculation value is less than the table value, the hypothesis is accepted. Hence, there is no significant difference between the age and the monthly income of the respondents.

## Age and Savings

**Null hypothesis:** There is no significant relationship between the age and savings of the respondents.

Result of the chi-square test

| Degree of freedom | 15 |
|---|---|
| Table value at 5 percent level | 32.8 |
| Calculate value | 22.20 |

Since the calculation value is less than the table value, the hypothesis is accepted. Hence, there is no significant difference between the age and savings of the respondents.

### Gender and Per-Trip Wages

**Null hypothesis:** There is no significant relationship between the gender and per-trip of wages of the respondents.

Result of the chi-square test

| Degree of freedom | 2 |
|---|---|
| Table value at 5 percent level | 10.6 |
| Calculate value | 11.98 |

Since the calculation value is less than the table value, the hypothesis is rejected. Hence, there is significant difference between the gender and the per-trip of wages of the respondents.

### Findings

- ✓ Socio economic condition of the fishermen of Ramanathapuram district are very poor
- ✓ Out of the total respondents, 83 per cent are male members.
- ✓ Majority of the respondent's age is between 20-30 years
- ✓ The majority of the fishermen are illiterate.
- ✓ Majority of the fishermen monthly income belong to the income group of below Rs. 5,000
- ✓ Majority of the respondents are married 70 per cent
- ✓ Majority of the respondents having per trip wages below Rs.500
- ✓ Bank deposits, home and LIC are the important investment of fishermen community in Ramanathapuram District.
- ✓ Majority of the person lived in tiled house i.e., 51 per cent

- ✓ Majority of the respondents have electrified i.e. 86 per cent

**Suggestion**

- ✓ More devices that are technical should be introduced in the fisheries industry. It will enable the fishermen to catch more fish and it will help to earn more income.
- ✓ Fishing is the seasonal occupation so the government should provide alternative employment opportunity.
- ✓ More markets and processing units should be open for the marketing of the fish.
   The students from fisheries communities should be provided with more reservation quotas for their higher studies.
- ✓ District authorities should arrange awareness classes relating to saving habits and Investment.
- ✓ Banks and other financial institutions make necessary arrangements for collecting the savings from Fishermen Community on daily or weekly basis.
- ✓ Government should arrange regular awareness classes against anti-social element like alcohol and drugs
- ✓ To promote the welfare of fishermen and their households.

- ✓ The government must take steps to salve transportation problems in the fishing community.
- ✓ The government must provide in fraters such as drinking water, housing facilities, roads, post office, transport, health facilities and storage facility of fish processing units to improve their economic condition.

**Conclusion**

In spite of tremendous increase in the GDP income of the Government of India, from the Fisheries Sector during the last two decades, the standard of living of the Fishermen all over India remains unchanged. In this situation, it is essential to take steps to improve their income and reduces their expenditure to obtain socio-economic balanced society. The fishermen should be encouraged to get proper education in order to plan their budget and flourish their life. They should be motivated and educated to save the surplus of their income for their future and for the nation. It will boost up our economy.

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