

INTERROGATING DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION AND MIGRATION AMONG THE NORTH COASTAL FISHING COMMUNITIES

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Article History

Received : 23 September 2021

Revised : 16 October 2021

Accepted : 29 October 2021

Published : 30 December 2021

Keywords

Development, Education,
Fishing, Migration,
Visakhapatnam.

Introduction

The studies of fishing communities both marine and inland have been given a considerable role in understanding the socio-economic conditions among the marine fishers in particular. The popular monographs on the fishing communities provided insightful documentation of cultural aspects. These monographs are the Valayans of Palmban, Madras (Moses 1929) and Son Kolis of Bombay (Punekar 1959); the fisherfolk villages of Orissa and Kerala (Ahmed 1966; Trivedi 1967). The works on indigenous knowledge systems, the social life of the fishing communities, economic and social organization, psychological dimensions of the fishing communities, livelihood and micro-enterprise development, fisheries

To cite this article

Srinivasu Kodi (2021). Interrogating Development, Education and Migration among the North Coastal Fishing Communities. *Man, Environment and Society*, Vol. 2, No. 2, pp. 236-243.

development and globalization etc has given a significant contribution to fisheries studies (Suryanarayana 1977; Mathur 1977; Raychaudhuri 1980; Subba Rao, 1986; Nuckolls 1996; Chandrika Sharma 2004; Tietze et al 2007). Further, the recently published articles on the Jalari fishing community's occupational health etiologies (Dalibandhu and Sharma 2018); local knowledge and marine livelihoods (Dalibandhu and Rama Mohan 2021); divinatory functionalities and healing systems (Dalibandhu and Sharma 2020a) and Jalari fishing knowledge (Dalibandhu and Sharma 2020b) are notably contributed to comprehend the culture of the Jalaris in contemporary times. Similarly, the earlier studies also made a noteworthy focus on Jalari community's family and kinship dynamics (Kodanda Rao 1975); gender and economic roles (Sridevi 1989); psychological facets of the community dynamics too (Nuckolls 1996). Marine fishing and technological development are some of the aspects which played role in changing institutional mechanisms. The technology and economy are interrelated to establish the developmental change in terms of the mechanization of fishing. The mechanization of fishing and marine livelihoods are connected to each other to view the social and economic wellbeing of the marine fishing communities (Prasada Rao and Yatiraj Kumar 1984; Dalibandhu and Rama Mohan 2021). And, these expansions of socio-economic and technological change are possible through the migration patterns of these communities to figure out the cultural development of these communities (Rama Mohan 2016). The study by

Tietze *et al.* (2007) write that women's contributions in the fishing communities have significant importance that helps them empower their development. For that, various measurements and strategies are needed for the capacity building of women by promoting self-help groups. Hapke (2001) writes that the survival strategies of the household economy through gender, caste, and religion investigate the economic transformation. Fishing is dependent on various factors such as seasonal variations, climatic conditions, and fishermen's engagement. Fishing is one of the complex tasks and is associated with the knowledge execution to perform fishing expeditions. Further, fishing is a kind of hunting-gathering and mode of livelihood to raise the fishing economy in this context, how the development of the fishing economy is connected with social and cultural empowerment. Social development has been connected with cultural and educational development. The community has been experiencing the low literacy and poverty that determines social development. The fishing communities have lower social development, which is responsible for changing the social structure of these communities over the decades.

Aims and Objectives

The main aim of this study is to understand how the fishing communities are negotiating the different aspects in the field areas that have been developing their socio-cultural dynamics

through institutional mechanisms. The study focused on community approaches towards social institutions and the development of the communities. This paper tries to provide the community perception by understanding different facets of interrogating development, education, migration in the fishing communities in the studied areas.

Methodology

The study has been carried out among the rural Jalari (Pudimadaka) and rural Vadabaliya (Mukkam); urban Jalari (Peda Jalaripeta) and urban Vadabaliya (Vasivanipalem) are selected. The study used the ethnographic method in understanding the nature of the problems faced by the fishing community. All the standard anthropological techniques are used for the collection of the data. schedules, interviews and group discussions were used for in-depth collection of the data among the fishing communities.

The Fisheries Development and Community Perspectives

The development is always connected with various aspects which reflect from their community view. The development is also dependent on the use of assets and its occupational management which leads to the endorsement of developmental changes in terms of their socially, culturally and technologically to bring into mainstream societies. Based on the fieldwork, the following major observations are made significant in the context of contemporary development and welfare of the fishers under the study.

Table 1: Distribution of the Status of Fishing Villages and Population in Andhra Pradesh

<i>District</i>	<i>Traditional fishermen families</i>	<i>BPL families</i>	<i>Fisherfolk population</i>	<i>Landing Centres</i>
Srikakulam	25274	25295	98450	55
Vizianagaram	5137	5134	20812	12
Visakhapatnam	28738	28118	113632	66
East Godavari	43800	43021	165208	29
West Godavari	2438	1350	9188	7
Krishna	13061	13040	43005	37
Guntur	10492	11650	39333	8
Prakasam	15055	14530	51511	39
Nellore	17044	16963	64289	100
Total	161039	159101	605428	353

Source: Marine Fisheries Census 2010

The marine fishing communities are strewn in the state of Andhra Pradesh and provide their population distribution. The data shows that the distributions of traditional fishermen families are reported with 161039 in the state of Andhra Pradesh. The majority of the families (159101) are under the Below Poverty Line (BPL) which divulge the current status of the fishermen socio-economic development in the state of Andhra Pradesh. The total population of fisherfolk population in Andhra Pradesh is 605428. And, the distribution of landing centres reflects their development towards the possibility of accelerating the market economy and reducing occupational accidents where landing centres are established. The field insights are also provided that if government installs more landing centres, there will be more chances of reducing the deaths of the fishermen during fishing expeditions. The fishermen noted that the government should promote beneficiary schemes for the welfare of these communities through the larger developmental program where they can be direct stakeholders.

Living at the Sea Coast Margin and Habitation Patterns

The fishermen generally live a little away from the mainstream villages and adjacent to the margins of the seacoast. While living at the seacoast margins, the fishermen villages are always hit with tides during the heavy winds or cyclones. The majority of the fishermen villages are vulnerable and have lesser socio-economic development in the state. The recent government policies are made to develop the coastal corridor around the fishing villages which causes tension and pressure among the fishing communities. The Jalari and Vadabalija are the fishing castes in Andhra Pradesh which habitats in the form of villages around the sea coasts. These castes live independently or share a common habitat in the coastal villages. The shift from traditional houses to semi-pucca houses/ concrete houses have been observed among these fishing villages. However, the initiation of housing schemes from the government made them construct these houses for better adaptive habitations as part of coastal development.

Perception of School Education in Fishing Villages

Education is one of the developmental parameters which reflects in community development. The informants revealed that over two decades, the school education has been improved among them but not reached to higher education which shows a higher level of dropout rate among them. And, it is reported that the students prefer to opt the skill-oriented technical education, particularly technical diplomas. The SSC pass outs and intermediate students who dropouts mostly preferred to join skill training centres which are located in towns/district headquarters. Some students after intermediate or graduation, are interested in joining the offshore oil rigs, ports, merchant navy or any other marine-related jobs. In fact, the marine

census (2010) shows that primary education (18%), secondary education (13%), above secondary education (3%) has been reported among the fisherfolk of Andhra Pradesh. Similarly, the field insights also show that the educational attainment among fisherfolk is low. Further, it is needed to promote education through the intervention of a special category of educational schemes to accelerate the educational levels among the fisherfolk.

Fishing as a Gender-dependent Activity

The division of labour is clearly visible in the fishing communities and fishermen go to fishing and processing done by the fisherwomen. The women vend the fish caught at the neighbour streets. Some of the women are also selling the fish caught at the daily markets, weekly markets on specific days at the local towns. The fisherwomen are also know-how the fish processing and again it is a gender-dependent activity. After processing the fish, the dried fish is traded in the bulk way, unwanted/ spoiled fish can be given to poultry feed purposes. The fisherwomen expressed that while vending the fish catch or travelling to different towns, the transport facilities are less; and, there will be no proper hygienic facilities including sufficient bathrooms, restrooms at the marketplaces. In fact, the men and women in fishing, are contributing to national income growth directly or indirectly through the fishing sector. The informants say that the government should come with innovative strategies for the hastening of the fish market economy and women empowerment for the improvement of the fishing communities and their welfare too.

The fishing is involved with single or group operations during the fishing activity. The group operations have been involved with two to twelve members and based on the type of fishing. The operation of fishing activity is based on the type of boats and nets are used during the fishing. The material aspects of fishing and group operations are interconnected each to perform this activity. In addition, the ownership of property and tenancy networks are also significant in this context to understand how economic conditions played in the welfare of the community.

Migration and Livelihood of Fishermen

The fishing communities are the most vulnerable communities and live at the sea coast margins by coping with unforeseen weather conditions. The fishing villages are predicted their weather conditions based on their indigenous knowledge and pursue their livelihoods. The fishing communities are habituated in both rural and urban settings. There has been interaction between them when the economic collaborations at the market, fish vending places, fishing harbour or jetties. Through these interactions, they made their social networks to strengthen their community development. The fishing communities should always have certain factors to depend on to continue their fishing such as peak season, availability of

fish, and support from local ecological conditions. When fishermen are not able to get these aspects, getting supportive livelihoods is a difficult task for them. When the fishermen are in difficulty getting livelihoods, the fishermen prefer to go to migrate to different places through their social networks. Thereby, the fishermen revealed that the inclination of migrating to the enhancement of income opportunities. It is reported that the rural fishers are migrated to Visakhapatnam where the harbour is located. The fishermen mentioned that migrating to coastal towns is not only for economic stability but also for the children's education. Both rural and urban fishermen are seasonally migrating to different states too such as Kerala, Goa, Gujarat, Surat, Maharashtra etc.

The fishermen informed that during the seasonal ban of fishing, the fishing is restricted by the government. During this period, fishermen are having economic problems due to a ban on fishing. This ban aims to allow the fish to breed and lay eggs offshore. In fact, the government has been supporting with some beneficiary amount to the fishermen to overcome the financial constraints. To support towards household, the fishermen search for alternative income sources such as working as security, wage labourers at the construction works.

Case Study 1: Sattayya (55) from Vadabalija is a native of Mukkam village and moved to kottha Jalaripeta thirty years ago. After his settlement in the kottha Jalaripeta, he brought his family members along with his three brothers. Initially, he and his brothers had worked as wage labourers on the fibre boat to support their families.

Sattayya expressed that earlier in Mukkam village, it is difficult to live and run their families with insufficient returns from fishing. Then, he decided to move to kottha Jalaripeta from Mukkam village through his kin networks in search of livelihood at Visakhapatnam and later he joined as *raitu* on fibre boat. Gradually, he made his financial stability through fishing and bought a small boat along with his brothers by taking a loan from the local financier and leading happy life along with his family members.

Case study 2: Nooka Raju (48) who been living in Peda Jalaripeta for over a decade. His native place is Jalaripalem of Pudimedaka. He had three children. After his marriage, he moved to his wife's native place Jalaripeta for fishing. The first son is studying Intermediate, Second Daughter is Studying 10th class and the third Son is studying 9th class in the town. Nooka Raju's father-in-law supported him to buy a boat. When he settled in Jalaripeta, he leads with wealthy life and was able to support his children to educate. He revealed that if he stayed in Jalaripalem, he would not be owned a boat and could not provide education to his children.

Conclusion

The development is dependent on the various dynamics which influence community empowerment. Similarly, the fishing community's development is also associated with several

dimensions such as economy, education, migration, technology etc. These dimensions play a major role in changing the community perspectives towards development. Based on the field study, it is concluded that the educational rate is low comparatively with mainstream societies; migrating to coastal cities of various states, adopting mechanization of fishing, searching for alternative employment opportunities particularly youth of the fishing communities. However, the government should bring effective policies for the community development and welfare of these communities.

Acknowledgement

I thank my supervisors Prof P Vijaya Prakash and Prof Jai Kishan for their enormous support and encouragement during the Doctoral program. I also thank anonymous reviewers for their comments and help to strengthen this paper. I also thank the fishing communities for their time and patience during the fieldwork in the studied areas.

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