

CHALLENGES AND IMPACT ON FISHERIES MIGRATION

J. JEMI ROOTH KANOSA,

Research Scholar (full time), Reg. No: 21113041012004, Department of Commerce Research Centre, Holy Cross College (Autonomous), Nagercoil, Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli. Mobile No: 9943707049, Email id:

jemiroothkanosa@holycrossngl.edu.in

Dr J. DIVYA MERRY MALAR,

Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce Research Centre, Holy Cross College (Autonomous), Nagercoil, Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli.

Mobile No: 7806988946, Email id: divyamerrymalar@holycrossngl.edu.in

Abstract

Migrant workers, moving in search of jobs, encounter various challenges and shifts within the fisheries sector. This study delves into three crucial facets: challenges faced by these workers, socio-economic impacts on local communities, and the effects of working conditions. Fisheries migrants encounter hurdles like language barriers, poor living conditions, discrimination, and limited healthcare access. Transitioning into this industry presents difficulties such as work-related hazards, unequal treatment, and delayed wages. Most of the migrant fishermen originate from Uttar Pradesh, primarily married and possessing over 1-3 years of experience. The study finds no significant socio-economic gap between married and unmarried migrants. Workers aged 35-45 face heightened work stress and safety concerns, while those below 25 experience delays in receiving their share of the catch. Improving housing infrastructure and providing adequate laundry facilities and clean water sources within fishing sectors can significantly enhance living conditions and promote hygiene among migrant workers. These challenges paint a complex picture that deeply affects the socio-economic fabric of these migrant workers. By examining these challenges this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the intricate realities faced by fisheries migrants and their migration experiences.

Keywords: Fisheries Migration, Socio-economic Impact, Migrant Workers.

Introduction

Migrant workers relocate seeking better economic opportunities, contributing significantly to new regions despite facing integration challenges. Their movement drives local economic growth and workforce diversity. Migration in India significantly contributes to its social and economic progress, with laborers playing a crucial role through remittances and skill acquisition (Moyce & Schenker, 2018). Male migrants are primarily motivated by employment opportunities, while family considerations drive female migration (Kadi & Sivamurthy, 1988). In Tamil Nadu, migration occurs bidirectionally across various states for employment in sectors like construction and fishing at Colachel Harbor (Tata Institute of Social Sciences, 2019). However, migrant laborers encounter challenges such as unsafe

working conditions, language barriers, limited healthcare access, and inadequate living conditions, with some facing near-slavery conditions (Moyce & Schenker, 2018; Thompson et al., 2012; Cremers, 2022). The coastal communities have long relied on marine fishing, an essential source of sustenance dating back to the 19th and 20th centuries. Despite its economic importance, the fishing community has faced physical and social marginalisation. Recent estimates from the International Labour Organization (ILO) indicate a global migrant workforce of 150 million, with approximately 11.1 percent engaged in agriculture, forestry, and fishing (ILO, 2015). Remittances are vital for poverty alleviation, funding education, and healthcare (Pitkin Derose et al., 2007). Migrant workers, particularly in industries like agriculture, domestic work, and fishing, face discrimination, restrictions on labor rights, and occupational safety concerns (Pitkin Derose et al., 2007). This vulnerability is heightened for migrant fishers, subject to unique challenges lacking in non-migrant fishers' experiences, leading to deficiencies in decent work conditions (Loughran et al., 2002). Fishing, known for its occupational hazards, poses high risks for migrant fishers, resulting in increased accidents and fatalities (Loughran et al., 2002). Compensation based on catch value incentivizes productivity but often leads to extended working hours and fishing in hazardous conditions (Loughran et al., 2002).

In Kanyakumari district, located in the southernmost part of India. Migrant workers in the fisheries sector in Kanyakumari district come from various states within India, including Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Assam, and others. These individuals migrate to Kanyakumari in pursuit of employment opportunities within the fisheries industry, contributing to the diverse workforce in the region. These migrant workers engage in various fishing-related activities. The convergence of workers from different states fosters cultural diversity and enriches the social dynamics, adding to the vibrant tapestry of the local community. The complexities faced by fisheries migrants are a tangle of obstacles that have a significant impact on their livelihood. Transitioning into the fishing industry brings forth struggles in adapting to the work and navigating hazards within this domain. Delays in wage payments and unequal treatment compound these challenges, affecting the day-to-day lives of these workers.

The study research question is based on the What are the primary challenges encountered by migrant workers in the fisheries sector? How does migration affect the socio-economic structure of communities associated with the fisheries sector? How do the working conditions impact migrant workers involved in the fisheries sector?

Review of literature

Author name & Year	Methods	Variables / Elements	Sample	Findings
Arnold et.al 2019	Empirical	Physical hazards, unfavorable machinery	69 units of the 25 factories	A highly unsatisfactory condition since in an emergency such as a fire a large number of

		operation & Safety measures		workers are being exposed to a major hazard. Safety measures have not been duly addressed in a Majority of industries.
Bakotic & Babic 2013	Empirical	Job satisfaction & working conditions	60 workers	The overall job satisfaction between workers facing challenging conditions at the facility and those in standard administration roles doesn't show statistically significant differences. Workers in administrative roles tend to express higher satisfaction with their working conditions compared to those facing difficult working conditions at the facility.
Belton, B., et.al 2019	Conceptual	Fisheries Development, and Working Conditions	Various samples from various studies	The crew members received fixed daily wages, and the boat owners and crew members shared the complete catch based on a pre-agreed profit percentage.
García-Herrero 2012	Empirical	Hygiene conditions, ergonomic conditions, Job demands & occupational accidents	11,054 people	There were strong relationships between hygiene conditions and occupational accidents.
Hanson et.al 2021	Empirical	Empirical	Call center work (N = 139), corrections	Workers experiencing poor safety, health and well-being outcomes.

			(N = 85), construction (N = 348), homecare (N = 149), and parks and recreation (N = 178)	
International Labour Office. (2017).	Report	Working and living conditions, issues, international labour standards and protection of migrant fishers	In the global population engaged in fisheries and aquaculture activities: 84% were from Asia, 10% from Africa, 4% from Latin America and the Caribbean, and less than 1% each from Europe, America, and Oceania	FAO estimates indicate 56.6 million people involved in fisheries and aquaculture, with 38 million engaged in capture fisheries. The fishing industry presents a variety of risks and difficulties for its workers, including long working hours, hazardous conditions, and a distinct payment structure based on the value of the catch
Johnson and Hall 1988	Empirical	Psychological job demands, work control, social support & cardiovascular disease	13779 male and female workers	The study found that workers with high demands, low control, and low social support had a higher of health problems compared with low demands, high control, and high social support.
Jonathan & Mbogo 2016	Conceptual	Health & Safety	Various samples from various studies	Maintaining health and safety at the workplace is the responsibility of both employers and

				employees. Employers must take measures to identify and mitigate workplace hazards and provide appropriate training and equipment to employees to ensure their safety.
Kumar, A. N. (2011).	Empirical	Vulnerability of migrant and responsiveness of the state	Inter-state migrants From North, East and North-eastern parts of India (sample size not defined)	Challenges such as language barriers, long work hours, lack of proper registration and limited awareness of government health provisions create obstacles to accessing healthcare services, leaving this population vulnerable to various health concerns.
Raju, S. S., et.al 2021	Empirical	Livelihood and socio-economic conditions	147 migrant fishermen households	The major problems confronted during migration Are language barrier, cultural lag and conflicts with established migrant labourers. Labor mobility benefits the marine fishery economy, but ecological and social changes may lead to conflicts between migrant and native fishers over scarce resources. Thus, actions are needed for skill development, improving socio-economics, and managing conflicts among fishers.

Raziq & Maulabakhsh 2015	Empirical	Working environment & Job satisfaction	210 employees	There is a positive relationship between the working environment and employee job satisfaction
Roshan, M. (2017)	Empirical	Economic and social factors, benefits, government interventions and economic and social impacts	40 fishers	Moving from Andhra Pradesh to Gujarat, Indian internal migrant fishers reveal issues such as the lack of formal contracts, work-related injuries, long hours, irregular wage terms, inadequate living conditions, limited healthcare, and insufficient safety equipment
Salagrama, V. (2004).	Empirical	Migration in fishing communities	85 villages	The pull factor represents an opportunity for migrants to enhance their economic situation and consequently, their social standing. Local fishing income often meets their basic needs, while migration earnings allow them to save.
Sathiadhas, R., & Prathap, S. K. (2009).	Empirical	Socio economic implications of migration	20 sample units	The phenomenon of migration reflects alterations in both place and employment. These changes arise from various factors such as socio-economic, geographical, and skill-based disparities, resulting in diverse economic and social outcomes within communities.

Terry et.al 1993	Empirical	Work stress, Psychological well-Being, Job satisfaction & Social support	153 employees of a large public sector organisation	Work overload didn't significantly impact psychological well-being or job satisfaction. Additionally, some evidence indicates that having work-related support from a supervisor mitigated the adverse effects of work stress, particularly role conflict and work overload.
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Methodology

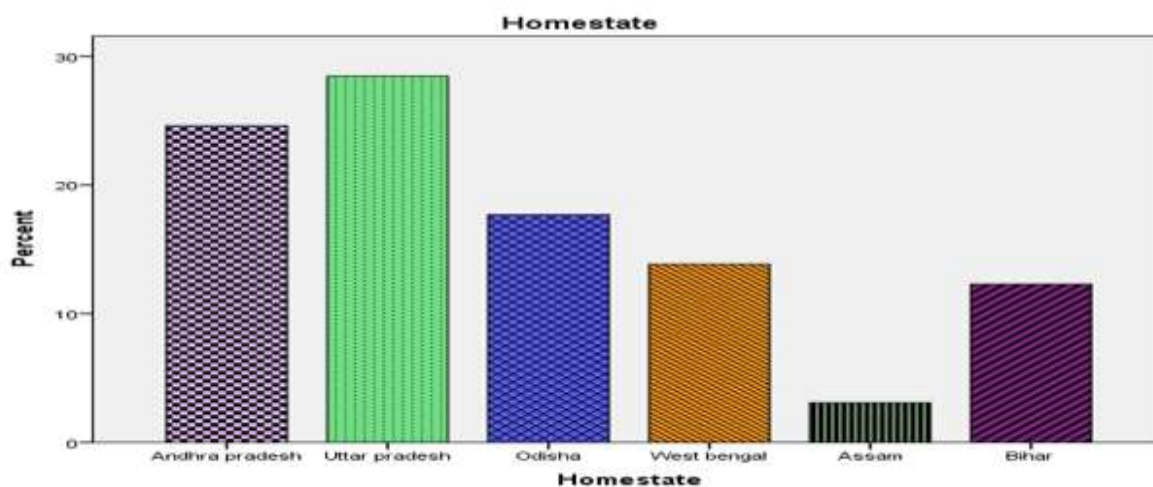
The study focuses on the regular migration patterns of fisher communities, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The study is a combination of primary and secondary data sources. The research employed an interview schedule method, specifically targeting male migrant workers. A non-probabilistic convenient sampling method was utilised. A sample of 130 units was collected from the harbors of Colachel, Muttom, Kanniyakumari, and Thengapattinam, primarily focusing on inter-state migrants. Mean score analysis identified migrant workers' challenges, while an independent t-test compared the socioeconomic impact of married and unmarried migrants. The Compare Mean method assessed working conditions across various migrant age groups.

Analysis and Interpretation

The data analysis reveals challenges encountered by migrant workers in Kanniyakumari's fisheries sector, highlighting key socioeconomic factors impacting migration. A well-structured interview schedule was used, and subsequent analysis offers a comprehensive overview. Findings on Challenges and Impact on Fisheries Migration in Kanniyakumari are discussed under specific headings.

Demographic Profile

The demographic profile of migrant fishermen is typically multiple and includes several key parameters including factors such as age, sex, education, and work experience, which is crucial for tailoring targeted support and policies to meet their specific needs in the fishing sector. It illustrates the demographic distribution of age, gender, marital status, educational background, income, and work experience among fisheries sector workers.



The majority of individuals fall within the 25-35 age accounting for 30 per cent (39), followed by those under 25 years old 26 per cent (34), indicating a relatively youthful workforce. The workforce is predominantly male, representing 100 per cent, showing a lack of gender diversity in this field. Regarding marital status, most individuals are married, constituting 77 per cent while unmarried individuals 23 per cent (30). The highest frequency lies in the “Illiterate” category, constitution of 54 per cent (70), followed by “Up to primary” category representing 35 per cent (45), Only a small 8 per cent holds a graduate degree. In terms of income distribution, the majority, 41 per cent (53), earn incomes in the range of ₹10,000-₹15,000, with a significant portion, 47 per cent (61), earning above ₹20,000. A substantial 35 per cent (46) of workers have more than 1-3 years of experience, while a smaller proportion, 13 per cent (7), have no prior working experience.

Regarding home state distribution, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, and Odisha constitute the primary representations among the surveyed individuals.

I. Challenges of migrant workers

Exploring the hardships faced by migrant workers forms the focus of this section, shedding light on the difficulties encountered away from their native regions. The mean scores and rankings provide insights into challenges faced by migrant workers in the fisheries sector. Among the eleven identified challenges encountered by migrant workers “Language barriers” is the most significant challenge reported by migrant workers, ranking first with a mean score of 3.52. The variable “Difficulty adapting to work” ranked second with a mean score of 3.48, followed by “Discrimination”, “Health Hazards at Work”, “Cultural barriers”, “Unequal treatment of work and payment” and “Housing facility” ranking third to seventh which ranging from 3.46 to 3.09. “Inadequate living conditions”, “Limited healthcare access”, “Separation from family” and “Limited job security” ranked eight, nine, ten and eleven respectively. Workers face language barriers because they come from diverse linguistic backgrounds, making communication tough. Adjusting to new work environments with different cultural norms and practices creates adaptation challenges. Challenges with living conditions, healthcare access, family separation, and job security differ due to industry

conditions, varying economic capacities, and individual situations among migrant workers in this sector.

II. Socio-Economic Impact

The socio-economic impact study delves into the broader implications of migration and work in the fisheries sector. It examines how these activities influence livelihoods and economic stability within migrant communities. This section explores the broader ramifications of employment and migration on both individuals and their communities.

Hypothesis:

Ho: there is no significant difference between the impact of socioeconomic conditions of married and unmarried fisheries migrants.

	Marital Status	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Socio-Economic Impact	Married	100	3.2788	.35881	.03588
	Unmarried	30	3.2625	.38751	.07075

Independent Samples Test										
Socio-Economic Impact		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	t-test for Equality of Means							
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
	Equal variances assumed	.003	.953	.214	128	.831	.01625	.07609	-.13430	.16680

	Equal variances not assumed			.205	44.965	.839	.01625	.07933		.14353	.17603
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Levene's Test (Equality of Variances): The p-value of .953, indicating no significant difference in variances between the married and unmarried groups ($p > .05$).

T-test Assuming Equal Variances: The t-value of .214 with 128 degrees of freedom and a p-value of .831. This suggests no significant difference in the mean scores of socioeconomic impacts between married and unmarried individuals when assuming equal variances ($p > .05$).

T-test Without Assuming Equal Variances: The t-value is .205 with 44.965 degrees of freedom and a p-value of .839. Again, this indicates no significant difference in the mean scores of socio-economic impacts between the two groups without assuming equal variances ($p > .05$). Even when the assumption of equal variances isn't made, the result remains insignificant.

As both t-tests result. there are yield p-values greater than .05, signifying that the formulated hypothesis of no significant difference in socioeconomic impact between the marital status is accepted.

III. Evaluating working conditions and its impact

The evaluation of working conditions and their impact is vital for understanding occupational well-being. This study assesses how various work-related factors influence overall occupational health.

Age		HL H	PM S	M RI	HW RS	SD S	PW WB	EF JL	LLP AS	VV A	DS C	D W	DF WD
<25 yrs	Mean	3.06	3.53	2.91	3.79	3.68	3.41	3.50	1.74	3.32	3.97	3.88	2.91
	N	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34
	Std. deviation	1.556	1.482	1.694	1.067	1.065	1.076	.992	.898	1.007	.797	.769	1.379
25-35 yrs	Mean	2.72	3.69	2.64	3.85	3.85	3.23	2.00	1.90	2.56	3.67	2.77	2.00
	N	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39
	Std. deviation	1.572	1.507	1.495	.904	1.040	1.063	1.395	1.188	1.231	1.199	1.459	1.573

35-45 yrs	Mean	3.00	3.63	3.00	4.00	3.91	3.06	2.81	1.56	3.31	3.03	3.66	4.31
	N	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32
	Std. deviation	1.626	1.238	1.778	.984	1.146	1.076	1.281	.669	1.281	1.425	1.035	.821
>45 yrs	Mean	2.76	3.40	3.56	4.12	4.16	3.48	3.16	1.72	3.40	3.76	3.96	3.04
	N	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25
	Std. deviation	1.739	1.607	1.417	.927	.943	1.085	1.675	.980	1.041	1.451	1.172	1.513
total	Mean	2.88	3.58	2.98	3.92	3.88	3.28	2.82	1.74	3.11	3.61	3.51	3.01
	N	130	130	130	130	130	130	130	130	130	130	130	130
	Std. deviation	1.602	1.446	1.621	.969	1.057	1.073	1.446	.961	1.196	1.261	1.240	1.592

Notes: HLH: Heavy lifting hazards; PMS: Potential muscle strain; MRI: Machinery-related injuries; HWRS: High work-related stress; SDS: Supervisory disregard for safety; PWWB: Pressure to work without breaks; EFJL: Extreme fear of job loss; LLPAS: Lack of legal protection against supervisor abuse; VVA: Vulnerability to verbal abuse; DSC: Delayed share of the catch; DW: Delayed in wage; DFWD: Deprivation of food and workplace discrimination.

Different age groups encounter distinct work-related challenges. The age range of 35-45 reported the highest perceived work stress (4.00) and supervisor neglect for safety (4.16) compared to other age categories. Individuals above 35 experienced more pressure to work without breaks (3.48) and delays in wage payments (3.96) compared to younger groups. Conversely, those below 25 reported the most delays in receiving their share of the catch (3.97). Overall, older individuals, particularly those above 35, face more pronounced challenges such as work stress, safety concerns, pressure to work without breaks, and wage payment delays compared to their younger counterparts.

Practical implications

- Develop and create specific training sessions based on age and education levels to improve skills and increase potential earnings.
- Help illiterate or low-educated migrants with simple learning programs or job training for better opportunities in fishing work.
- Establish income-boosting avenues such as mentorship programs or workshops focusing on financial literacy, encouraging savings, and investment practices among migrants to improve their financial stability.

- The Union Government should implement educational programs specifically tailored for migrant workers, aiming to enhance cultural awareness. These initiatives are intended to reduce discrimination, fostering an inclusive environment that embraces diversity.
- Addressing language barriers by offering language training programs or employing translators could significantly enhance communication and understanding among migrant workers.
- Improving housing infrastructure and providing adequate laundry facilities and clean water sources within fishing sectors can significantly enhance living conditions and promote hygiene among migrant workers.
- Offer programs on financial guidance, job skills, and health to both married and unmarried migrants. This promotes their well-being without focusing solely on their marital status.
- Make special plans for different age groups. For older workers, helps reduce stress. Younger ones need training for fair pay and timely wages.
- The state government should devise comprehensive support plans encompassing mental health aid, legal assistance, and skill enhancement programs within their respective states. These measures aim to improve the overall work-life balance for individuals across different age groups in the fishing sector.
- The government can encourage job growth and economic development within people's native states, thereby reducing the need for migration in search of work.

Conclusion

The suggestions and findings reveal key ways to better the lives of migrant fishermen. Customizing training based on age and education, improving financial know-how, and dealing with housing and language challenges help boost skills and living standards. A large portion of the migrant fishermen are married, mostly with over 1-3 years of work experience, and predominantly hail from Uttar Pradesh. Transitioning into fishing work presents challenges for many individuals. In the realm of fishing work, unlike other sectors supported by intermediaries, the absence of such facilitators allows for a sense of freedom and autonomy among migrant workers. The hypothesis stating no significant difference in the socioeconomic impact between married and unmarried migrants is accepted. Those aged 35-45 encounter elevated work stress, supervisor neglect regarding safety, and pressure to work continuously. Conversely, younger individuals, particularly those below 25, often face delays in receiving their fair share of the catch. Efforts focused on cultural understanding and supportive programs for mental health and legal aid create a more caring atmosphere. These steps aim to lift the happiness, skills, and general life quality of fishermen, making the fishing industry fairer and more inclusive.

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