

**STUDY THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF FISHERS BESIDE THE CHAMPA
CANAL AT CHATRI GRAM PANCHAYET UNDER EGRA-I BLOCK OF PURBA
MEDINIPUR DISTRICT, WEST BENGAL, INDIA**

Abstract

The present study was carried out to assess the socio-economic condition of fishermen beside the Champa canal at Chatri gram panchayat under Egra-1 block of Purba Medinipur district during the period from August 2021 to December 2021. The data were collected from 65 fishermen through survey sheet. The study was executed on the basis of personal interview. The study shows that most of the fishermen (95%) were hindus, where 5% muslims. The educational level of fishermen was very poor, 2% illiterate, 75% primary pass, 15% Secondary pass and only 8% Higher Secondary pass. The housing condition of fishermen is maximum kucha (65%), pucca (25%) and semi- pucca (10%). It was observed that there were 85% nuclear and 15% joint families. The annual income of fishermen were varies from 45,000- 1,00,000. The main occupation of fishermen is the cultivation of paddy and ground nut. Fishing are the secondary occupation. Due to the current shallowness of the Champa Canal and the inability of fishermen to catch fish in a modern way, fish are not available in large quantities.

Keywords : Fishermen, Socioeconomic status, Champa canal, Livelihood

Introduction

From the stand point of income and employment fishery is an important sector in most of the developed and developing countries. Fisheries sector has an important role in the economy of West Bengal. In the community a family's socioeconomic status is based on family structure, annual income, educational level, housing condition and occupation. The role of socio- economic study is in delineating economic and social problems and identifying the losses encountered due to technical, social and economical constraints. The socioeconomic appraisal

of culture based fishermen in West Bengal explaining the various aspects of their life (Dutta and Kundu, 2007). Girippa (1994) evaluates the impact of fisheries sector on the development process of the country and the contribution of marine and inland fisheries sector in Karnataka, Kerala and West Bengal for rural and economic development of the country. For nearly 7 million people of India, fishery related activities are important source of livelihoods (source- Handbook on Fisheries Statistics,1996). In a marginal community the socioeconomic factors influence educational standards (Jessy Thomas,1989). Globally the livelihoods of over half a billion of people are supported by fishery (FAO, 2010).

The Champa canal is situated in the district of Purba Medinipur. The length of the canal is about 30.3 km and from Siphon (near Paniparul) up to Bay of Bengal (near Digha Mohana) approximately 16.5 km and width varies from 110-140 meter depending upon the seasonal changes and tidal fluctuation of water of the Bay of Bengal. The length and wideness of the canal is very helpful in multidimensional activities of the local fishermen community.

Materials and methods

Study area

The study was conducted at Chatri gram Panchayat under Egra-1 block of Purba Medinipur district which is near to Champa canal. The Canal originated from Kudi and finally meets into Bay of Bengal at Sankarpur (near Digha Mohana) and in its way it shows characteristic water quality which supports numerous aquatic species including fishes. The study period was from August 2021 to December 2021.

Data collection

The study was based on field survey. A survey sheet was prepared for collecting data. The primary data were collected from 65 fishermen.

Results and Discussion :

1. Marital status

Most of the fishermen(93%) were married, 5% fishermen were unmarried and there are only 2% widow.

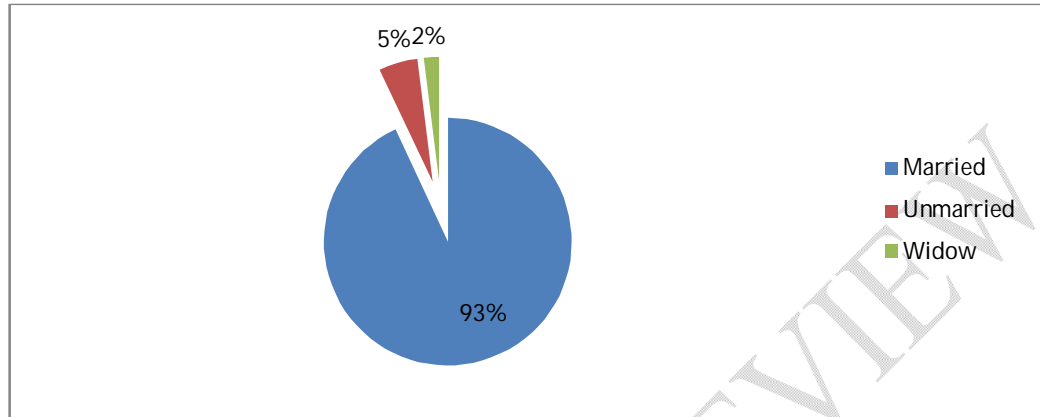


Figure 1: Marital status of fishermen

2. Religion

In the social and cultural environment the religion plays an important role of people in a given area (Khatun et al.,2013). The maximum numbers of fishermen were hindus (95%) and muslims were only 5% in the present study. There are no any other religion fishermen involved in fishing.

Category	Percentage
Hindu	95%
Muslims	5%

Table 1: Religion of fishermen

3. Age structure

In the present study there are 20% fishermen were 18-30 years old, 49% were 31-45 and 31% were 46-65 years old. But there are no fishermen below 18 years old and more than 65 years old.

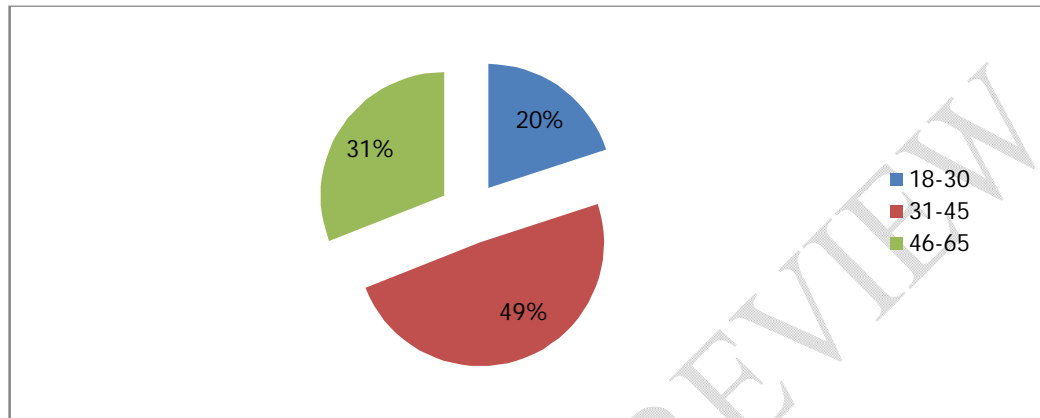


Figure 2: Age structure of fishermen

4. Family structure

There are two types of families in our survey including 15% joints and 85% nuclear family.

Category	Percentage
Joint	15%
Nuclear	85%

Table 2: Family structure of fishermen

5. Assets

All the fishermen have mobile phone. 90% fishermen have by-cycle, 5% have motorcycle, 45% have sparyer and 35% have pump set.

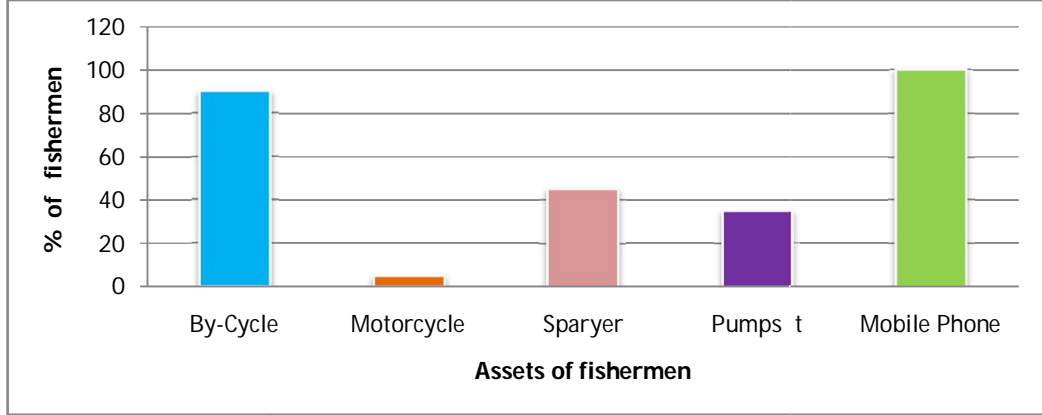


Figure 3:Assets of fishermen

6. Annual income

Fishermen mainly make their livelihood by cultivating paddy and ground nut. In addition to farming, they make their livelihood by fishing. The annual income of 65% fishermen were 45,000- 65,000 and 30% fishermen were 70,000-1,00000.only 5% fishermen have earned more than 1,00000 annually.

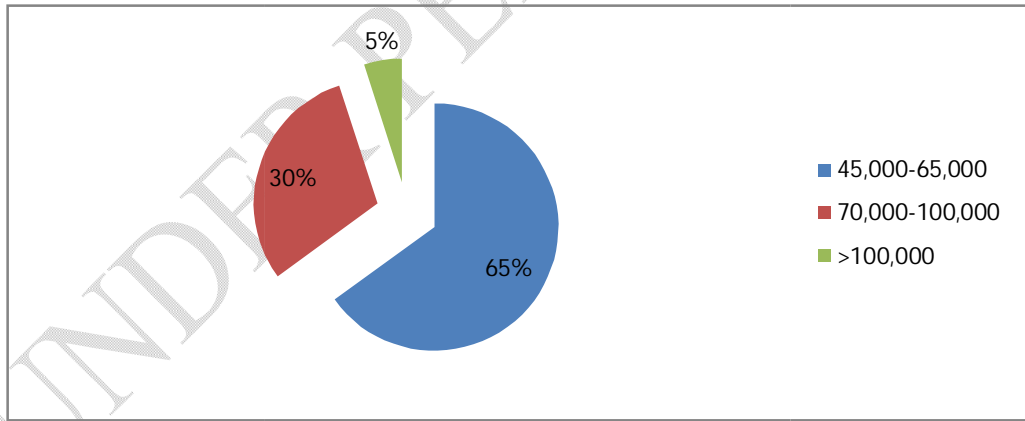


Figure 4:Annual income of fishermen

7. Educational status

The educational qualification of fishermen are not satisfactory. Almost 2% fishermen were illiterate, 75% primary pass, 15% Secondary pass and 8% Higher Secondary pass.

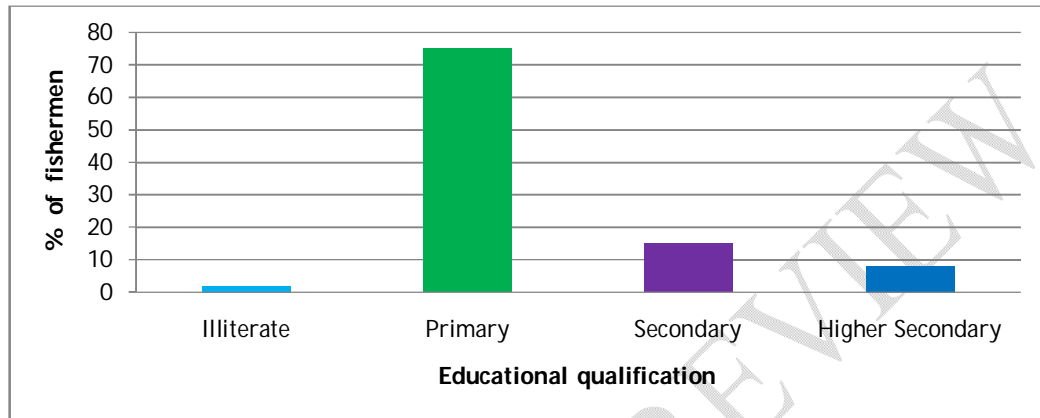


Figure 5: Educational status of fishermen

8. Housing condition

The fishermen have three types of houses- kucha, pucca and semi-Pucca. Almost 65%, 25% and 10% fishermen are living in kucha, pucca and semi-Pucca houses respectively.

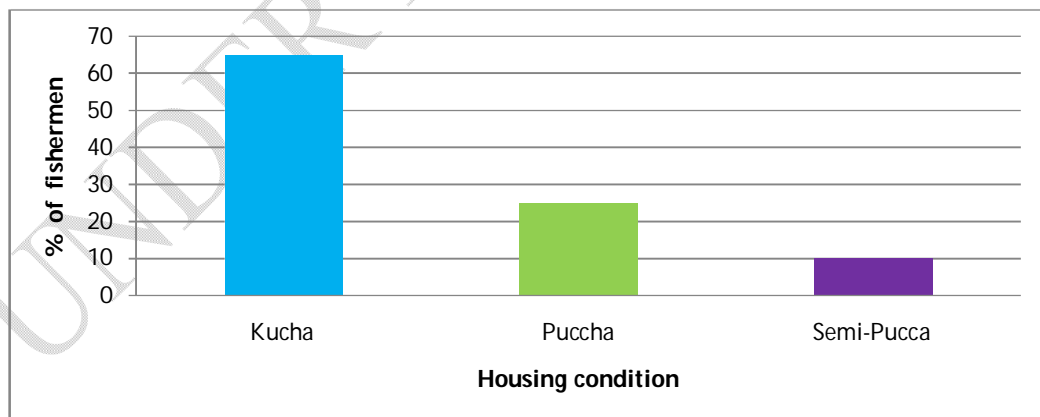


Figure 6: Housing condition of fishermen

Conclusion

The socioeconomic condition of fishermen were very poor. Most of the fishermen were live in under poverty. Their educational status were not satisfactory. The housing condition of them were not good. Both the state and central Government need to take appropriate measures to alleviate the plight of fishermen. However, Government assistance alone is not enough to improve the economic condition of fishermen. Various non-governmental organizations should also come forward for help. The Government has to make them get loans from banks at very low interest rates. Above all, the socioeconomic condition of the fishermen will improve if the Government takes the initiative to increase the depth of water by digging the Champa canal and to enable fishermen to fish in a modern and scientific way.

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