



## FACTORS INFLUENCING WORK LIFE BALANCE OF THE WOMEN WORKERS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO FISHING COMMUNITY OF TAMIL NADU

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### Abstract

*Work-life balance is the term used to describe practices in achieving a balance between the stress of employees' family and work life. The demands and pressures of work make difficult to stretch time for balancing work-life activities. This research paper deals with the Factors Influencing Work Life Balance of the women workers who are engaged in fishing sector. The researcher has taken a sample of 500 women workers working in the Fishing Community in Tamil nadu and has prepared questionnaires. One the major finding of the study is that there is no significant relationship between Age and health issues arising due to work. The researcher concludes by stating that in order to improve health and productivity of the worker the owners of the work place or the employer have to provide supporting facility to these women workers in such like medical services, rehabilitations like small breaks in the work timings.*

**Keywords:** Factors Influencing Work Life Balance - Women Workers - Fishing Community.

### INTRODUCTION

In the recent times, Any working community for an incidence are confronting great competition than ever before. They are also severely challenged by the external and internal environment to achieve their goals effectively and efficiently. Working community plays an important role in determining the quality of output of an output in the work. Work life balance and commitment towards the work are paramount importance for workers because they are playing extremely crucial roles in their performance on the work and their family wellbeing at the same time. Work-life balance is a concept that supports the efforts of employees to split their time and energy between work and the other important aspects of their lives. It is a daily effort to make time for family, friends, community participation, spirituality, personal growth, self-care, and other personal activities, in addition to the demands of the workplace. The pursuit of work-life balance reduces the stress that the workers experiences in the workplace. When they spend the majority of their days on work-related activities and feel as if they are neglecting the other important components of their lives, stress and unhappiness result. Work-life balance enables the working group to feel as if they are paying attention to all the important aspects of their lives and thereby feel relaxed. The concept of work-life balance, also referred to as 'work-life conflict' or 'work-family conflict', has received a great deal of attention from scholars in recent times.

### FISHING SECTOR IN INDIA

India is the world's third largest producer of fish and next only to China in the area under fish production but it is facing serious challenges that are hampering realisation of full potential of the sector.

Besides being a major source of revenue, fisheries sector is increasingly contributing to nutritional security of the country. It is therefore imperative that a proper strategy is drawn to increase productivity in all forms of cultivable waters and address other important issues on hand from a larger perspective, said S. Ayyappan, Director General of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). Delivering Dr. Y. Radhakrishna Memorial Endowment Lecture at Acharya Nagarjuna University on the topic 'Fish for all', Mr. Ayyappan said the fisheries sector faced multiple challenges such as loss of biodiversity, depletion of fish stocks, and the adverse impact of climate change and unless a well-planned strategy was put in place, the fishermen and the industry would face some serious problems. The shoreline degradation and loss of coral reefs are major problems being faced by fishermen and the prospect of a rise of even one degree in sea surface temperature having a devastating impact on fisheries looks real.

Fishing in India is a major industry in its coastal states, employing over 14 million people. In 2014-15, the country exported over 10,50,000 metric tonnes of fish to 75 countries, earning over \$5.51 billion. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, fish production has increased more than tenfold since 1947 and doubled between 1990 and 2010. India has 8,129 kilometres (5,051 mi) of marine coastline, 3,827 fishing villages and 1,914 traditional fish landing centers. India's fresh water resources consist of 195,210 kilometres (121,300 mi) of rivers and canals, 2.9 million hectares of minor and major reservoirs, 2.4 million hectares of ponds and lakes, and about 0.8 million hectares of flood plain wetlands and water bodies. As of 2010, the marine and freshwater resources offered a combined sustainable catch fishing potential of

over 4 million metric tonnes of fish. In addition, India's water and natural resources offer a tenfold growth potential in aquaculture (farm fishing) from 2010 harvest levels of 3.9 million metric tonnes of fish, if India were to adopt fishing knowledge, regulatory reforms and sustainability policies.

### **AN OVERVIEW OF FISHING COMMUNITY IN INDIA**

Fishing communities in India, are not homogenous, as they belong to different castes. These communities have their distinct social, cultural governance structures and traditional practices, depending on the coast, where they inhabit. At least 2-3 castes are exclusively involved in marine fishing in each maritime State, and are not related to the mainstream agrarian system. The community institutions, (such as the caste panchayats, peddalu, padu system etc.), mostly organized along caste, kinship or religious lines, play an important role in resolving conflicts, besides regulating and allocating resource use, ensuring equitable access to resources and providing some form of social insurance. Most communities have evolved their own management systems over time to regulate human interaction with the resource especially when large number of people bank on a limited resource to avoid conflicts. The evolution of traditional management system depended on the resource and the environment in which the resource existed and the interactions between people to extract these resources (Kurien, 1998).

Besides the traditional caste-based organization of fishing communities, they are also organized into various sectors such as the mechanized sector – boat owner associations, trade unions, cooperatives (both State-run and private), associations based on gear type, self help groups, federations etc

Some of the important fishing castes State-wise include:

- Tamil Nadu: Pattinavars, Mukkuvars, and Paravas
- Andhra Pradesh: Vadabalijas, Jalaris, Pattapu, and Palles
- Orissa: Jalaris, Vadabalijas, Kaibartas, Khandayats, and Rajbhansis
- West Bengal: **Kaibartas**
- Gujarat: Kharvas, Kolis and Macchiyaras
- Maharashtra: **Kolis**
- Karnataka: Mogaveeras
- Kerala: Mukkuvar, Anjootty, Dheevera, and Pooislan

### **PROBLEMS FACING CONTEMPORARY SMALL-SCALE FISHING COMMUNITIES**

Despite their preponderance in the world's fisheries, their contribution to human food supplies, and, compared with large-scale fishing, their generally lesser degree of impact on fish stocks and more efficient utilization of capital and energy, most small-scale fishing communities these days are beset with serious problems. Their small-scale political power leaves them vulnerable to threats arising externally to them, and perhaps the

greatest external threat facing them is the large-scale fishing sector. In the post-war era development trends have favored forms of economic growth which are characterized by increasingly large accumulations of capital, and which have facilitated rates of exploitation of natural resources such as never seen before. In the fisheries this trend has favored the development of large-scale approaches to fishing over small-scale ones, and as a result access to fisheries resources has often been concentrated in fewer and fewer hands. Special market demands arising in the increasingly globalized world economy, for example, have increased pressures on politicians and investors to promote larger-scale, more industrialized, and more productive approaches to fishing. These larger-scale enterprises usually enjoy greater economies of scale, and often greater economic efficiency, at least in the short run. Their competitive advantages over small-scale approaches therefore usually stem from their being better financed, their use of highly productive technologies, their receipt of other external support and government subsidization, and their continuing support by the politicians and investors who initially promoted them. Unfortunately, however, the phenomenal growth of the large-scale fishing sector in the post-war era, and the management and development policies which have favored this growth, has often been at the expense of small-scale fishing communities (readers are encouraged to review Annex 10.6 of this paper, which describes how small-scale fishing communities in western Scotland are being impoverished by policies favoring larger-scale fishing enterprises).

In some regions the foregoing developments have merely put small-scale fishing communities at a competitive disadvantage when larger-scale competitors have been able to offer mass-produced seafood at lower prices. More egregious for small-scale fishing communities, however, has been the encroachment of large-scale fishers in their traditional fishing grounds. This has often brought about the depletion of important fish stocks, degradation of coastal-marine ecosystems, and the inadvertent destruction of various sorts of passive fishing gear that small-scale fishers typically utilize. The foregoing problems may also be exacerbated by the large-scale sector's emphasis on production for export, which ships locally-produced seafood out of the region, further reducing its availability in local and regional markets while bidding up its price.

The foregoing developmental transitions have often gone unchallenged by negatively-impacted small-scale fishing communities, whose members are usually geographically dispersed, politically disorganized, unaware of their rights of appeal, and unable to take time off from fisheries activities to press their grievances. Thus, while increased levels of production by large-scale fishing has increased total economic returns in certain regions, the benefits have often not been widely distributed. And in the absence of effective and formal challenges by the small-scale communities, these negative impacts are almost never comprehensively

evaluated and tallied.

Therefore it will little matter how well fisheries managers understand and respect small-scale fishing cultures if ultimately these are further eclipsed by the growth of larger-scale modes of fishing and fisheries policies that favor them. If that trend is allowed to proceed unchecked more small-scale fishing communities will lose access to fisheries resources, and those which are no longer able to sustain fishing activities will become extinct as distinct fishing cultures. Yet the growth of large-scale fishing has not been the only problematical external threat to small-scale fishing communities. With the increasing growth of the planet's human population, increasing levels of seafood production, and the generally increasing competition for living marine resources practically everywhere, encroachments by other types of fishers from other fishing communities, including other small-scale fishers, has also brought hardship to small-scale fishing communities. And still other external threats have prompted severe problems in small-scale fishing communities: marine pollution, for example, which remains a virtually intractable problem in many developed and developing countries, and which has had dire consequences for many small-scale fishing people, ranging from sudden and disastrous to slow and subtle. In recent decades burgeoning coastal-tourism industries have also threatened the well being of small-scale fishing communities by increasing pressures on fish stocks and marine ecosystems, displacing fishers from important fisheries resources and radically disrupting their cultures. At the same time the worldwide animal-protection movement has also been successful in preventing some small-scale fishing communities from harvesting certain marine resources that they had traditionally relied upon. As small-scale fishing communities have been increasingly linked with new and larger marketing spheres, cultural, political, and economic changes taking place in regions which are geographically remote from them have also prompted rapid and disruptive changes within them. Thus, if fisheries officials are to more successfully manage small-scale fishing communities it will be important for them to understand not only these communities' internal cultural dynamics, but also their dynamic links with communities existing well beyond their geographical boundaries.

Closer to home, another more subtle problem faces many people living in small-scale fishing communities: the low esteem in which they are held by their non-fishing neighbors, others living beyond the community, and sometimes even fisheries officials themselves. The reasons are varied. For one, fishers who work at sea are frequently dissociated from their families and everyday community affairs, which promotes their estrangement from the non-fishing populace and stress and instability within their own families. Moreover, because many fishing livelihoods can be undertaken without significant capitalization and formal education, the fisheries often attract the poorest, least educated, and

already least-esteemed members of a community. Capture fishers are also often criticized by their non-fishing counterparts because they extract natural resources without making investments to sustain or enhance them. Moreover, while personality traits such as independence, self-reliance, and willingness to take risks are necessary for undertaking many fishing activities, these traits are often not favorably regarded by a community's non-fishing populace. Many small-scale fishers also routinely violate fisheries-management rules and policies, especially when they feel these are unfair or unduly threaten their livelihoods. Such behaviors may further decrease their non-fishing neighbors' esteem for them, at the same time undermining fisheries officials' esteem as well. On the other hand, low esteem for small-scale fishing people has sometimes been capitalized upon to justify management practices and policies that are detrimental to them.

### ROLE OF WOMEN WORKERS IN FISHING COMMUNITY

*Fisher or fisherman?* What do you call a person who catches fish? When it comes to fishing, language has a gender bias, and not just in English. For hundreds of years, anglers at sea were known as *fishermen*. Even the modern gender-neutral alternative *fisher* actually predates *fisherman* as an Old English word with a masculine origin. These masculine-biased terms are not surprising. Catching fish, the first step in the enterprise of large-scale deep-sea commercial fisheries, is still predominantly performed by men. But women are often involved in the landing, processing, and marketing of fish, and fishing is more diverse than the exploits of big boats plying the deep sea. There is a lot of numerical uncertainty in determining what proportion of global fisheries workers are women, but extrapolating from available data, the World Fish Center estimates roughly 50 percent. But quantifying women's contributions is tricky. In many places around the world, the role of women in fisheries has long been invisible, underestimated, or not enumerated at all. Now, researchers worldwide are beginning to shed light, making the invisible visible, with important implications for the validity of data informing fisheries science, management, policy, and food security. Women are involved in all aspects of the fishing industry, including skinning, drying, curing, salting, processing, and marketing seafood. In India, women's work in fisheries is often unpaid. "It's invisible work," Gopal says. Although their contributions are difficult to quantify, the work that women do directly benefits their families. Sex-disaggregated data have been collected in just a few states and not at a national level. Women shuck and market the clam meat, but "there is extreme drudgery involved in shucking and sorting," Gopal says. Because many families involved in the clam fishery work individually, Gopal is attempting to cluster women fishers into a common unit to pool resources, provide access to microcredit, and assist them with better

shucking technology.

**METHODOLOGY**  
**SAMPLING DESIGN**  
**SAMPLE SIZE**

The researcher has taken a sample of 500 women workers working in the Fishing Community in Tamil nadu and have prepared questionnaires.

**AREA**

We have chosen women workers engaged at fishing sector from different sections to know whether the workers are balancing their work & life. Research design Research design is a purposeful scheme of action proposed to be carried out in a sequence during the process of focusing on the management problems to be tackled. It is only guidance for the research to enable to keep his track of his action and to know whether he was moving in the right direction in order to achieve his goals. Research is a process of systematic & in depth study or search of systematic & in depth study or search for any particular topic, subject or area of investigation, backed by collection, completion, presentation & interpretation of relevant data. Research simply means

**DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION**

**TABLE I**  
**AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONDENTS**

s.no	Scale	No of respondents	Percent
1	18-25	50	10
2	26-36	100	20
3	36-46	200	40
4	46-55	100	20
5	Above 55	50	10

Source: Primary data

From the above table out of 500(100%) women workers, 50(10%) fall under the age group 18-25, 100(20%) women workers fall under the age group 26-36, 200(40%) women workersfall under the age group

search for facts, answers to questions and solutions to problems. It is a purposive investigation. It is an “organized inquiry” it seeks to find explanations to unexplained phenomenon, to clarify the doubtful facts and to correct the misconceived facts.

**DATA COLLECTION**  
**PRIMARY DATA**

Questionnaire: To generate primary data Questionnaire method was used and information was collected from women workers.

Personal interaction was conducted to get more information & suggestions regarding the study.

**SECONDARY DATA**

The sources of secondary data were collected from company journals, reports, hand books. Internet Articles.

**LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

- Perceptions of individual differ from one to another person.

36-46, 100(20%) women workers fall under the age group 46-55, 50(10%)fall under the age group above 55 years.

**TABLE II**  
**BEING AN EMPLOYED WOMAN TAKING CARE OF CHILDREN IS EASIER**

s.no	Scale	No of respondents	Percent
1	Strongly Agree	100	20
2	Agree	130	26
3	Neither Agree Nor disagree	150	30
4	Disagree	100	20
5	Strongly disagree	20	4

Source: Primary data

From the above table out of 500(100%) women workers, 100(20%) says strongly agree,130(26%) women workers agree, 150(30%) women workers neither agree nor disagree,100(20%) women workers

disagree, 20(4%) strongly disagree. Interpretation: The most of the women workers neither agreed nor disagreed that it’s easier to take care of their children.

**TABLE III**  
**HOW MANY HOURS A DAY DO YOU SPEND TRAVELLING TO WORK?**

s.no	Scale	No of respondents	Percent
1	Less than 10 min from Home	70	14
2	15- 30 minutes	300	60
3	More than 30 min	130	26

From the above table out of 500(100%) women workers, 70(14%) women workers travel for 5-10min, 300(60%) women workers travel for 15-30min,

130(26%) women workers travel for more than 30min. Interpretation: The time taken by most of the women workers is 15-30min.

**TABLE IV**  
**I AM NOT ABLE TO BALANCE MY WORK AND LIFE**

s.no	Scale	No of respondents	Percent
1	Strongly Agree	100	20
2	Agree	240	48
3	Neither Agree Nor disagree	120	24
4	Disagree	20	4
5	Strongly disagree	20	4

From the above table out of 500(100%) women workers, 100(20%) women workers strongly agree, , 240(48%) women workers agree, 120(24%) women workers neither agree nor disagree,20(4%) women

workers disagree, 20(4%) strongly disagree. Interpretation: The most of the women workers agreed that they can balance their work as well as life.

**TABLE V**  
**I HAVE SPENT FEW QUALITY TIMES WITH MY FAMILY OR FRIENDS WITHOUT ANY WORK PRESSURE. SOURCE: PRIMARY DATA**

s.no	Scale	No of respondents	Percent
1	Strongly Agree	90	18
2	Agree	150	30
3	Neither Agree Nor disagree	140	28
4	Disagree	80	16
5	Strongly disagree	40	8

Analysis: From the above table out of 500(100%) women workers, 90(18%) women workers strongly agree,150(30%) women workers agree, 140(28%) women workers neither agree nor

disagree,80(16%) women workers disagree, 40(8%) strongly disagree. Interpretation: Most of the women workers agreed that they have spent few quality times with their family or friends without any work pressure.

**TABLE VI**  
**I FEEL SATISFIED ABOUT THE AMOUNT OF TIME I SPEND AT WORK**

s.no	Scale	No of respondents	Percent
1	Strongly Agree	120	24
2	Agree	170	34
3	Neither Agree Nor disagree	150	30
4	Disagree	40	8
5	Strongly disagree	20	4

Source: Primary data

Analysis: From the above table out of 500(100%) women workers, 120(24%) women workers strongly agree,170(34%) women workers agree, 150(30%) women workers neither agree nor

disagree,40(8%) women workers disagree, 20(4%) strongly disagree. Interpretation: Most the women workers agreed that they feel satisfied about the amount of time they spend at work.

**TABLE VII  
I OFTEN FEEL DEPRESSED BECAUSE OF WORK**

s.no	Scale	No of respondents	Percent
1	Strongly Agree	100	20
2	Agree	90	18
3	Neither Agree Nor disagree	100	20
4	Disagree	90	18
5	Strongly disagree	120	24

Source: Primary data

Analysis: From the above table out of 500(100%) women workers, 100(20%) women workers strongly agree,90(18%) women workers agree, 100(20%) women workers neither agree nor

disagree,90(18%) women workers disagree, 20(4%) strongly disagree. Interpretation: Most the women workers strongly disagreed that they often feel depressed because of work.

**TABLE VII  
THE TYPE OF WORK THEY EXECUTIVE HAS PROVISIONS FOR WORK-LIFE BALANCE**

s.no	Scale	No of respondents	Percent
1	Strongly Agree	320	64
2	Agree	140	28
3	Neither Agree Nor disagree	20	4
4	Disagree	0	0
5	Strongly disagree	0	0

Source: Primary data

Analysis: From the above table out of 500(100%) women workers, 320(64%) women workers strongly agree,140(28%) women workers agree, 40(8%)

women workers neither agree nor disagree. Interpretation: Most the women workers strongly agreed that the company has provisions for work-life balance

**TABLE IX  
THERE ARE HEALTH ISSUES ARISING DUE TO WORK**

s.no	Scale	No of respondents	Percent
1	Strongly Agree	150	30
2	Agree	100	20
3	Neither Agree Nor disagree	70	14
4	Disagree	100	20
5	Strongly disagree	80	16

Source: Primary data

Analysis: From the above table out of 500(100%) women workers, 150(30%) women workers strongly agree,100(20%) women workers agree, 70(14%) women workers neither agree nor

disagree,100(20%) women workers disagree, 80(16%) strongly disagree. Interpretation: Most of the women workers strongly agreed that there is health issues' arising due to work.

**TABLE X  
I TEND TO SUFFER FROM STRESS-RELATED THINGS ON THE WORKPLACE**

s.no	Scale	No of respondents	Percent
1	Strongly Agree	200	40
2	Agree	120	24
3	Neither Agree Nor disagree	80	16
4	Disagree	80	16
5	Strongly disagree	20	4

Source: Primary data

Analysis: From the above table out of 500(100%) women workers, 200(40%) women workers strongly agree,120(24%) women workers agree, 80(16%) women workers neither agree nor

disagree,80(16%) women workers disagree, 20(4%) strongly disagree. Interpretation: Most of the women workers strongly agreed that they suffer from stress related things on the workplace.

**TABLE XI**  
**I HAVE A GOOD ENVIRONMENT IN MY WORK PLACE WHICH MOTIVATES ME TO COME FOR WORK REGULARLY**

s.no	Scale	No of respondents	Percent
1	Strongly Agree	0	0
2	Agree	50	10
3	Neither Agree Nor disagree	100	20
4	Disagree	150	30
5	Strongly disagree	200	40

**Source: Primary data**

Analysis: From the above table out of 500(100%) women workers, 0(0%) women workers strongly agree,50(10%) women workers agree, 100(20%) women workers neither agree nor disagree,150(30%) women workers disagree, 200(40%) strongly disagree. Interpretation: Most of the women workers strongly disagreed that they have good environment.

**HYPOTHESIS TESTING**

To test the association between Age and health issues arising due to work.

H0 – There is no relationship between Age and health issues arising due to work

H1 – There is a relationship between Age and health issues arising due to work.

The calculation of chi-square test is conducted by referring the table no 8 in the survey.

At 5% level of significance for 4 degree of freedom the table value is 9.4 & calculated chi-square value is 3.8.

The calculated chi-square value is lesser than the table value.

Conclusion: Null hypothesis is accepted that refers that there is no relationship between Age and health issues arising due to work

**DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

The position and status of women in any society is an indicator of the socio-economic and cultural achievement of that society. There have been some changes in the position of women in India over the years but these changes are not uniform. The working conditions of women workers in the fishing sector have been improved during the past decades and efforts have been made to reduce the amount of heavy lifting and carrying, but hard physical labour, static work, climatic influences, noise, and foul smell are still consider able burdens for these workers.

The work life balance is directly reflected through the practices at work place. The work place flexibility is an important factor but limited to the high income and position of women, where as in the sector

where women’s are low earner and have young child it becomes very difficult to establish work life balance. The women working in fishing sector/ communities have to work for long hours, over time increase the stress level at family needs. The impact of these problems leads to the shift in the family structure as there are several women loss their mortality, post phone their first child birth. Therefore in order to improve health and productivity of the worker the owners of the work place or the employer have to provide supporting facility to these women workers in such like medical services, rehabilitations like small breaks in the work timings.

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