

EFFECT OF FISHERY SOCIETIES IN MANAGING OPEN ACCESS RESOURCES (CASE IN MAHAVILACHCHIYA TANK)

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This study applied the Structure-Conduct -Performance paradigm to the fishery society, Mahavilachchiya to assess its performance in managing common property resources; inland fishery. Descriptive statistical methods were used to analyze the data, collected through a field survey from a random sample of 55 fishermen. Results obtained under the structure reveals that most of the fishery families were nuclear families. Around 70% of the fishermen have low levels of education, while 8 1% of them are engaged in fulltime fishing, using three “*thotupola*” societies. Only 77% of the respondents are having their own vessels while others are using either tubes or rented vessels. Results of conduct revealed that the society had imposed restrictions on fishing time, type of nets and “eye sizes” to be used. The society also maintains a healthy relationship with the extension agent. Only 36% families had received support to uplift the living standards To uplift the fishery industry 38% families had received support either by the government or private sector. When performance was considered

it was revealed that the average catch size is 6-15 kg day. The average total income of a fulltime fisherman was Rs. 1 0,000 - 20,000 per month. 53% is not interested about credit facilities supplied by the society. They attend meetings of the society regularly and participate actively in the societal activities. V iolation of rules is at a low level (33%). Also 65% of the respondents do not want to see their children becoming fishermen. The performance of the society is not at a high level despite both organizational structure and the conduct are at satisfactory levels. Therefore, planned intervention of both government and private sectors to promote positive ideas in the community about fishery as a successful occupation is of paramount importance in order to motivate the young generation to become fishermen.

Key words: Conduct, Fishery society, Open access, Performance, Structure