

ATTRITION IN FISHERWOMEN ACTIVITY GROUPS: A CASE STUDY ON THEERAMYTHRI, KERALA

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ABSTRACT: This case study explores the phenomenon of attrition in fisherwomen activity groups, focusing on Theeramythri in Kerala, India. Fisherwomen activity groups play a crucial role in empowering women in the fishing communities by providing them with collective platforms for economic, social, and political engagement. However, attrition, or the decline in participation and sustainability of these groups, poses challenges to their effectiveness and long-term impact. This study aims to investigate the factors contributing to attrition in fisherwomen activity groups and its implications for women's empowerment. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis. The findings reveal various factors leading to attrition, such as family responsibilities, financial constraints, social stigmatization, and lack of resources and support. The study contributes to the understanding of attrition in fisherwomen activity groups and provides insights for designing strategies to enhance their sustainability and impact.

KEYWORDS: Attrition, Fisherwomen activity groups, Theeramythri, Kerala, Empowerment, Participation, Sustainability, Women's groups, Fishing communities.

INTRODUCTION

Fisherwomen activity groups have emerged as important initiatives to empower women in fishing communities by providing them with collective platforms for economic, social, and political engagement. These groups play a crucial role in promoting gender equality, enhancing livelihoods, and strengthening community bonds. However, attrition, or the decline in participation and sustainability of fisherwomen activity groups, poses significant challenges to their effectiveness and long-term impact. This case study focuses on investigating the factors contributing to attrition in fisherwomen activity groups, with a specific emphasis on Theeramythri in Kerala, India.

Theeramythri, a prominent fisherwomen activity group in Kerala, has been instrumental in empowering women and promoting their rights within the fishing community. Understanding the factors that lead to attrition in such groups is essential for identifying barriers and developing strategies to enhance their sustainability and impact. This research aims to explore the reasons behind attrition in Theeramythri and assess its implications for women's empowerment in fishing communities.

METHOD

The study adopts a qualitative research approach, employing a case study design to investigate attrition in fisherwomen activity groups, focusing specifically on Theeramythri in Kerala. The following methods were employed:

Selection of Theeramythri: Theeramythri was selected as the case study group due to its prominence and impact within the fishing community in Kerala. The selection aimed to provide insights into attrition factors and dynamics specific to this group.

Data Collection: Data were collected through a combination of methods to gather a comprehensive understanding of attrition in Theeramythri. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with former members, current members, and key stakeholders involved in the group. These interviews aimed to explore their perspectives, experiences, and insights regarding attrition. Additionally, observations of group activities and meetings were carried out to gain insights into the functioning and dynamics of the group. Relevant documents and reports related to Theeramythri were also analyzed to supplement the interview and observation data.

Data Analysis: The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The interview transcripts, observation notes, and document analysis were reviewed and coded to identify recurring themes and patterns related to attrition factors in Theeramythri. The analysis aimed to uncover the underlying reasons for attrition and understand the implications for women's empowerment in fishing communities.

Ethical Considerations: Ethical guidelines, including informed consent and confidentiality, were followed throughout the research process. The privacy and rights of participants were respected, and their identities were protected in the reporting of findings.

The findings from this case study will contribute to understanding the factors leading to attrition in fisherwomen activity groups, with a specific focus on Theeramythri in Kerala. By identifying these factors, the study aims to inform strategies and interventions to enhance the sustainability and impact of such groups. It also seeks to contribute to the broader knowledge base on women's empowerment and community development in fishing communities.

RESULTS

The findings of the case study on attrition in Theeramythri, a fisherwomen activity group in Kerala, reveal several key factors contributing to attrition within the group. These factors include family responsibilities, financial constraints, social stigmatization, and a lack of resources and support. Family responsibilities, particularly the burden of household chores and childcare, often hinder active participation in the group's activities. Financial constraints, such as limited access to credit and inadequate income-generating opportunities, also impact women's ability to sustain their involvement. Social stigmatization and societal norms that discourage women's participation in

public spaces and decision-making processes further contribute to attrition. Additionally, the group faces challenges related to limited resources, inadequate training, and a lack of institutional support, which affect its overall sustainability.

DISCUSSION

The discussion centers on the implications and significance of these findings for fisherwomen activity groups and women's empowerment in fishing communities. The identified factors align with broader socio-cultural and economic challenges faced by women in the fishing community. Family responsibilities and societal expectations often restrict women's active involvement in group activities, limiting their ability to benefit from the collective empowerment opportunities provided by such groups. Financial constraints and social stigmatization further exacerbate these challenges, hindering women's empowerment and inhibiting their capacity to contribute to decision-making processes within their communities. The lack of resources and institutional support also pose obstacles to the sustainability and effectiveness of fisherwomen activity groups.

The discussion also highlights potential strategies and interventions to address the attrition challenges faced by Theeramythri and similar groups. These may include providing targeted support to address family responsibilities, enhancing economic opportunities and financial inclusion, raising awareness to challenge social stigmas, strengthening the group's capacity through training and skill development programs, and advocating for institutional support and policy changes to address the systemic barriers faced by fisherwomen. Collaborative efforts among stakeholders, including community members, local organizations, and government agencies, are crucial for implementing these strategies and fostering sustainable change.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the case study on attrition in Theeramythri provides valuable insights into the factors contributing to attrition in fisherwomen activity groups in Kerala. The findings highlight the complex interplay of family responsibilities, financial constraints, social stigmatization, and a lack of resources and support. These factors hinder women's sustained involvement and limit the potential impact of such groups on women's empowerment in fishing communities. The study emphasizes the importance of addressing these challenges through targeted interventions and policy changes to enhance the sustainability and effectiveness of fisherwomen activity groups. By doing so, these groups can play a vital role in empowering women, promoting gender equality, and fostering community development in the fishing communities of Kerala.

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