

# WORKSPACE OF WOMEN IN THE ORNAMENTAL FISH VALUE CHAIN IN KERALA

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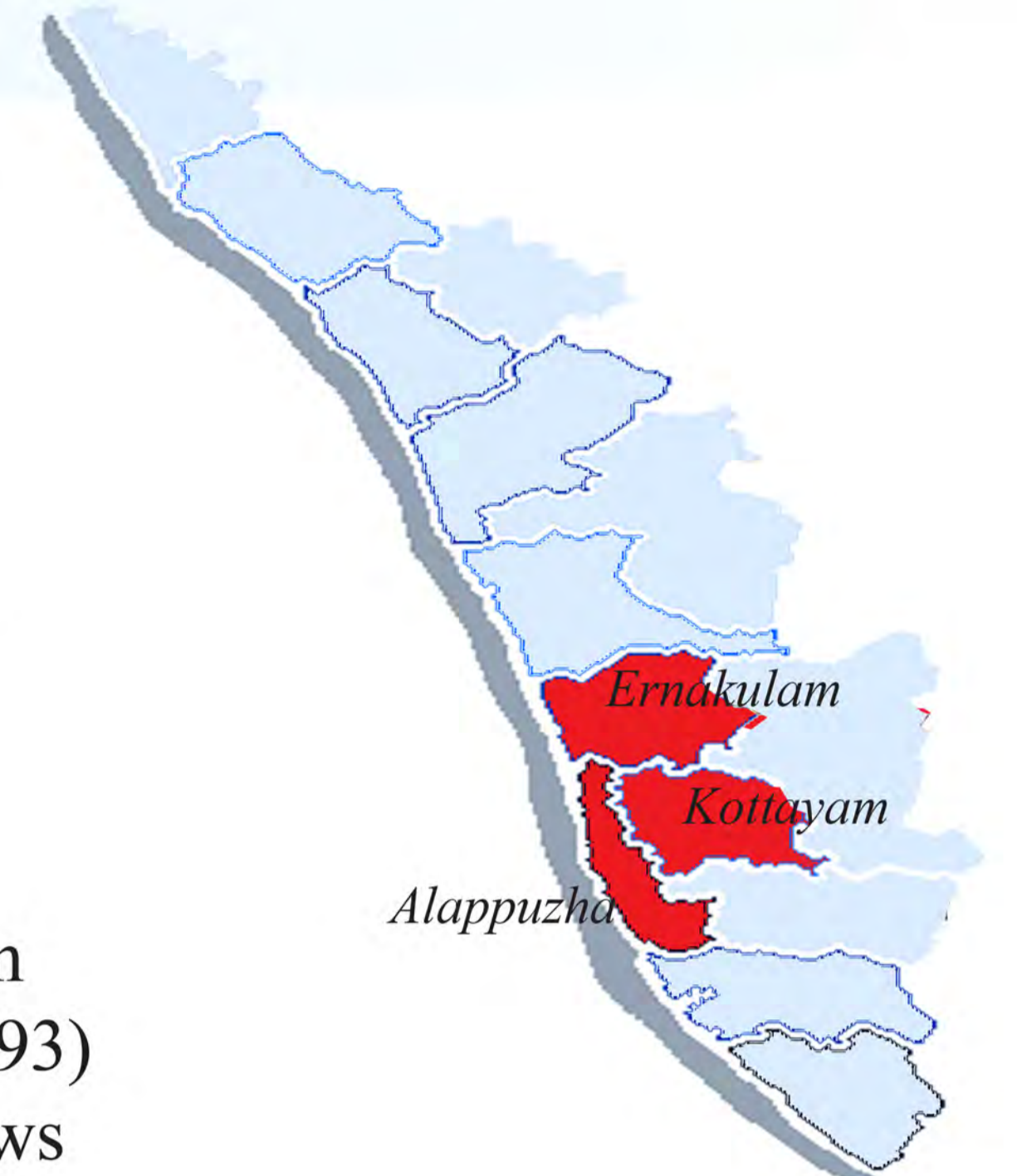
Ornamental fish industry worth **\$ 8 billion** globally

## Introduction

- Potential to empower women.
- Important source of employment and income.
- Allows the balance between productive and reproductive roles.
- Also a leisure time activity.

## Materials & Methods

Study was conducted in  
 ■ Ernakulam  
 ■ Alappuzha and  
 ■ Kottayam districts of Kerala, India



## Survey

- Focus Group Discussion (Moulton & Roberts 1993)
- Key Informant Interviews (Kumar 1989)
- Telephonic surveys
- Activity profile & Gender needs analysis adapted from Moser Gender Framework



## Objectives

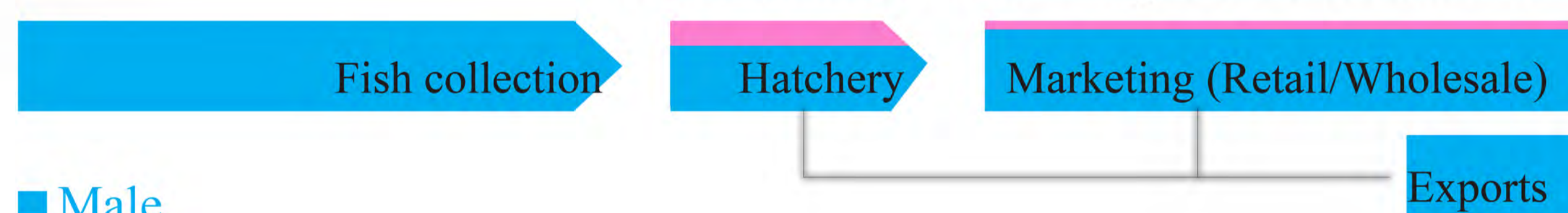
- Mapping the generic value chain of both exotic and wild caught ornamental fish in Kerala
- Identifying the gender roles and women's practical gender needs and strategic gender needs
- Identifying the factors constraining the participation of women

## Results & Discussion

## Major Constraints

- Poor family support
- No technical knowhow
- Little market awareness
- Lack of technical training
- Lack of traditional knowledge
- Losing interest after gaining the initial subsidy amount from Government
- No interest to gain technical knowledge and too much dependence on the extension officers
- Failure to balance productive and reproductive activities
- No hopes and aspirations to develop the activity into a mainstream business

### Value Chain of Wild-caught Ornamental Fish



### Value Chain of Exotic Ornamental Fish



Table 1: Activity Profile for Exotic Ornamental

Activities	Women	Men
<b>Productive</b>		
Selection of breeders		✓
Breeding	✓	✓
Nursing	✓	✓
Rearing	✓	✓
Feeding	✓	✓
Water quality check	✓	✓
Cleaning the premises	✓	✓
Packing	✓	✓
Retail Marketing	✓	✓
Wholesale Marketing	✓	✓
Export	✓	✓
Income generation	✓	✓
Employment	✓	✓
<b>Reproductive</b>		
Child care	✓	✓
Food preparation	✓	✓
Caring the elders	✓	✓
Washing & Cleaning	✓	✓
Health related	✓	✓
<b>Community Involvement</b>		
Attendance at meetings	✓	✓
Religious meetings	✓	✓
Recreation	✓	✓
Community activities	✓	✓
Trainings	✓	✓
Self help groups	✓	✓

Table 2: Gender Needs Assessment Matrix

Women's practical gender needs	Women's strategic gender needs
Access to pure strains of broodstock	Technology upgradation
Better water filtration & treatment system	Knowhow about the market, demand of species
Automatic water quality analyser	Collective organisation
Paid work	Technical knowhow
Packing machine	Training
	Leadership qualities to take up the activity as a main source of income

Huge potential of an industry with vast opportunities for women is going largely untapped. It requires little space and less initial investment than most other forms of aquaculture (Ghosh et al. 2003). The participation of women is restricted mainly to the hatchery stage of the value chain. Even those women who come forward does not tend to sustain. Women-led units have been shutdown as they consume the initial subsidy capital without bothering about running capital.

## Conclusion

The study highlights the fact that most of the women-led units are failure, while units that are run by men and spouses together are successful. It is largely a matter of attitude towards this hobby that can be taken as a full time business activity, which can fetch them consistent income. Awareness has to be imparted to include the women into a bigger industrial part of the value chain such as marketing and exports, which will make them capable of gaining the actual financial benefits of the industry.

## References

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