

GENDER ROLES IN FISHERIES LAWS DISSEMINATION AND ENFORCEMENT

Liah C. Catedrilla, Caridad N. Jimenez*, Genna D. Serofia and Liberty N. Espectato
Institute of Fisheries Policy and Development Studies, College of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences, UP
Visayas, Miagao, 5023 Iloilo Philippines. cnjimz@yahoo.com

An important basis for planning for effective dissemination and enforcement of relevant fisheries laws is an understanding of existing roles played by various stakeholders in the process. Sixty-six coastal barangays in the municipalities of Oton, Tigbauan, Guimbal, Miagao and San Joaquin in District 1 south of Iloilo Province served as the study sites. A total of 603 registered fisherfolk, extension workers as represented by the Municipal Agricultural Officers (MAOs) and Agricultural Technicians (ATs) or Fisheries Technicians (FTs); and Sangguniang Bayan (SB) Chairpersons of the Committee on Agriculture and Fisheries were interviewed for the study.

Results show that in some towns, women usually accompany their husbands in their fishing activities and have also registered themselves in the municipal fisherfolk registry. Perceptions on the gender orientation of information and communication materials, as well as the strategies employed for the dissemination of the Fisheries Code and Municipal Fisheries Ordinances indicate that the majority of the respondents found that the materials were designed for both males and females although some believe that women are the target clients whenever livelihood programs are the agenda. Nevertheless, they all agree women are good in disseminating information because they are also good listeners.

The extension workers did not encounter any gender-related problem in the dissemination process thus, it was not an issue. They usually target the fisherfolk in most of their activities, regardless of their gender. The present pattern is that there are more male than female fisherfolk. However, they also believe they should also target the women in the fishing communities in the dissemination of fisheries laws because they are easier to communicate with and there are some functions which can only be done by women. Women can serve as conduits to their husbands since there are instances when they attend meetings and activities for their husbands. Moreover, the extension workers see that the role of women as mothers is critical in dissemination of relevant information to the family.

Giving the capacity to handle the demands of the job, 21.9% of the respondents preferred male extension workers, while 12.7% preferred females and 65.7% have no preference at all. The male extension workers are seen as more capable in terms of physical strength (21.9%), and more knowledgeable about fishing (18.5%). Others believe that the distance an extension worker has to travel between different barangays makes it difficult for a woman extension worker. On the other hand women extension workers are believed to be more dedicated and sincere (8.6%); more approachable (3.6%), and less troublesome (0.6%).

Although results reveal some differences in the roles played by men and women in the dissemination and enforcement of fisheries laws, gender is still not considered as an issue among the fisherfolk. This is in terms of their preference for extension workers, on how they perceive the preference of communication materials and dissemination strategies, and fisheries law enforcement. Planning for dissemination of fisheries laws will therefore target fisherfolk and other resource stakeholders regardless of gender although the role differences noted should be used as a basis in the strategies to be employed.