

Artisanal fishing in the coastal fishing community of Paraná, Brazil: an ethnographic study

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Abstract

Introduction

Artisanal fishing is essential for the livelihood and culture of many traditional communities in Brazil and around the world.^{1,2} Present in environments such as seas, rivers, lakes, and mangroves, it is estimated that one in every 200 Brazilians is an artisanal fisher, highlighting the importance of this activity in the country.³

Objective

To analyze the behaviors, interactions, and cultural practices involved in artisanal fishing and their relationship with the health-disease process among fishers on an island in the state of Paraná, Brazil.

Methods

This is a qualitative study with an ethnographic approach, conducted on Superaguí Island, in the municipality of Guaraqueçaba, Paraná. The research is based on the ethnographic method proposed by Bronislaw Malinowski, using participant observation. The study population consists of local fishers, both men and women, aged 18 or older. Data collection includes participant observation, ethnographic interviews, semi-structured questionnaires, and records such as field diaries, photographs, and audio recordings. Data analysis follows the steps of ethnographic research: preparation, immersion, observation, documentation, and interpretation. The study began in 2024 and is expected to continue until 2027. Data will be analyzed using Microsoft Word, Excel® 2016, and Iramuteq software.

Results

During visits conducted in February and October 2024, it was observed that the main local economic activity is shrimp fishing. The health unit has a physician and a dentist available only once a week, which makes continuous access to healthcare difficult. For emergency care, residents must travel by boat to Guaraqueçaba (approximately 30 to 35 km, with a duration of 50 minutes to 1 hour and 30 minutes) or to Paranaguá (approximately 35 to 46 km, with travel time ranging from 50 minutes to 2 hours and 5 minutes). Travel time varies depending on the type of vessel and sea conditions, and residents face transportation difficulties, such as the absence of water ambulances.

Conclusion

The partial study highlighted vulnerabilities in access to healthcare among artisanal fishers, suggesting the expansion of primary healthcare, culturally sensitive professional training, and specific intersectoral public policies aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-Being and SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth.

Keywords

Occupational Health; Fishing; Fishery Resources; Ethnography.

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