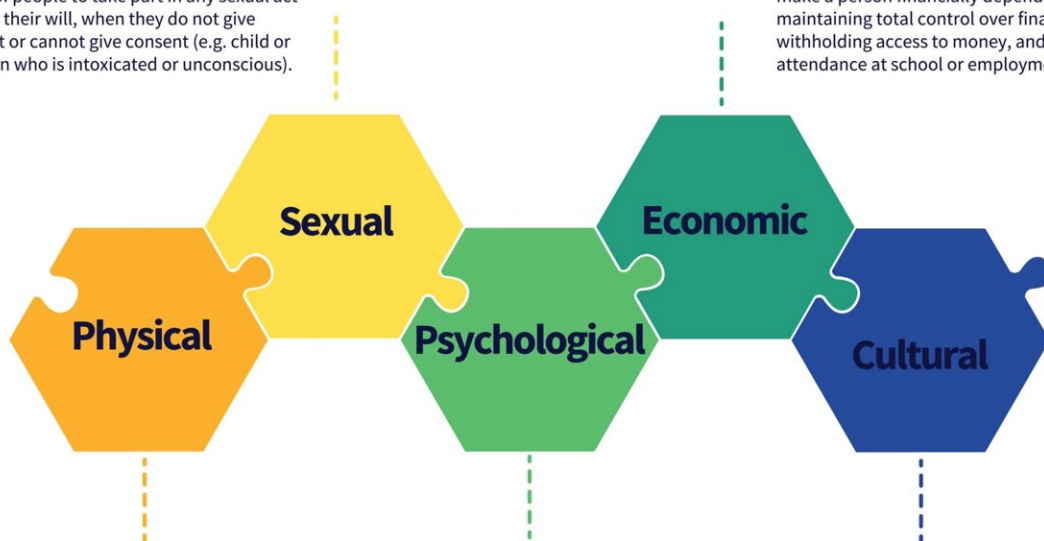


Global review throws light on gender-based violence in fisheries

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Sexual violence is the forcing of a person or group of people to take part in any sexual act against their will, when they do not give consent or cannot give consent (e.g. child or a person who is intoxicated or unconscious).

Economic violence is making or attempting to make a person financially dependent by maintaining total control over financial resources, withholding access to money, and/or forbidding attendance at school or employment.



Physical violence is the physical hurting of another individual or groups of individuals. It includes denying of medical care or forcing drug use or the drinking of alcohol, and intentional physical damage to a person's property.

Psychological violence is the causing of fear through intimidation, threatening physical harm, forcing isolation from family or friends, and can include the destruction of property. This includes coercive control where a person is made to feel scared and isolated through manipulation and intimidation.

Cultural violence is any aspect of culture (exemplified by religion, ideology, language and art) that justifies or legitimises violence.

Definitions of the five types of gender-based violence relevant to capture fisheries—physical, sexual, psychological, economic (UN Women, 2020) and cultural (Galtung, 1990). Credit: *Fish and Fisheries* (2023). DOI: 10.1111/faf.12747

A new study published today in *Fish and Fisheries* argues that gender-based violence (GBV) cannot be separated from other actions taken to

achieve equitable social outcomes through fisheries management.

UN Women defines gender-based violence as any act of violence against a person or group of individuals based on their gender, and includes physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, psychological threats, harassment, coercion, or any other deprivations of liberty.

Globally, there has been increased attention on understanding and integrating gender dimensions in fisheries. However, the intersection between fisheries and gender-based violence has received much less attention.

To better understand the issue, four gender and fisheries experts conducted a global review of capture fisheries and identified five types of gender-based violence – these were physical, sexual, psychological, economic and cultural violence.

Dr. Sangeeta Mangubhai, an Industry Fellow at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) Fijian Consultant with Talanoa Consulting and Pew marine fellow said the term 'gender-based' is used when violence is shaped by [gender roles](#) and expectations, power and status in society.

"There is a general misconception that gender-based violence is not relevant to fisheries or a topic that practitioners have a responsibility to address. Our paper shows there are a variety of activities associated with these forms of violence in the fisheries sector, such as labor and [human rights abuses](#), unsafe working and living conditions for children, women and men, and the cultural acceptance of various forms of discrimination," said Dr. Mangubhai.

The authors argue that GBV cannot be separated from other actions taken to achieve equitable social outcomes through [fisheries](#)

[management](#), and therefore it is incumbent on fisheries practitioners and policy makers to address this in their sector.

UTS Professor Kate Barclay, co-author of the study, said, "If those working in fisheries are not aware of how gender-based violence can occur in their sector, they can unintentionally reinforce or perpetuate different forms of violence through policies and practices."

Key recommendations to address gender-based violence

Rather than just focus on the problem and leave fisheries practitioners and [policy makers](#) overwhelmed or unclear on what to do about it, the authors provide seven recommendations to help work towards addressing gender-based violence in capture fisheries.

These recommendations are:

- Remove gender blindness and bias by investing in gender-sensitisation of the sector;
- Form strategic partnerships with organizations with expertise in gender-based violence;
- Improve policy and coordination between [regulatory bodies](#) especially in the areas of prevention and protection;
- Increase investments in labor rights and laws to protect those working in capture fisheries throughout the value chains;
- Gender integrative program design and implementation;
- Invest in specific programs for the empowerment of women; and
- Invest in specific programs for men seeking healthy models of masculinity.

The study finds that gender-based violence is not a stand-alone topic and

should be dealt with in conjunction with other pressing issues such resource depletion, climate change, poverty, and unemployment. Holistic and interconnected fisheries interventions and management is critical to socially equitable, sustainable fisheries and is an opportunity for the sector to contribute to the sustainable development goals.

How was the study conducted?

The research was conducted through a collaboration with the UTS Climate, Society and Environment Research Centre (C-SERC). C-SERC researchers investigate the social, political and economic aspects of challenges facing the natural world that are transforming the way we live. In starting a conversation among practitioners and researchers about gender-based violence in fisheries, this paper aligns with C-SERC and UTS' agenda of pursuing social justice in research.

The research is supported by the Pacific Community (SPC) through the Pacific-European Union Marine Partnership (PEUMP) program. Investigating nuanced forms of gender-based [violence](#) in fisheries to better understand linkages to the sector at small and large scale, including informal and formal contexts, PEUMP is committed to shed light on this blurred and often ignored issue with future research investment planned on GBV in [fisheries](#) in selected countries in the Pacific region.

More information: Sangeeta Mangubhai et al, Gender-based violence: Relevance for fisheries practitioners, *Fish and Fisheries* (2023). [DOI: 10.1111/faf.12747](https://doi.org/10.1111/faf.12747)

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