

## Contribution of Fishermen's Wives to Household Income in Kawal Village, Bintan Regency

### *Kontribusi Istri Nelayan Dalam Meningkatkan Pendapatan Keluarga Di Kelurahan Kawal Kabupaten Bintan*

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**Abstract.** Fisher households are coastal community groups that depend heavily on unpredictable marine catches, resulting in fluctuating household income. This condition encourages fishermen's wives to participate in economic activities to help meet household needs. This study aimed to analyze the contribution of fishermen's wives to household income in Kawal Urban Village, Bintan Regency. A quantitative descriptive method was employed, with purposive sampling used to select respondents. Data were analyzed by calculating total costs, total revenue, total income, and the percentage contribution of wives' income to household income. The results showed that fishermen's wives engaged in ten types of work: processed food seller, tailor, small-scale retailer, teacher, domestic helper, clothing reseller, fisher, religious teacher, babysitter, and food stall operator. Each occupation had different cost and income structures, resulting in varying contributions to household income. The highest average income was obtained from operating a food stall, while the lowest income came from low-capital service work. The percentage contribution of fishermen's wives to household income ranged from 7.69% to 51.63%, with the highest contribution from the food stall business.

**Keywords:** fishermen's wives, contribution, household income, Kawal Urban Village.

**Abstrak.** Rumah tangga nelayan merupakan kelompok masyarakat pesisir yang memiliki ketergantungan tinggi terhadap hasil tangkapan laut yang bersifat tidak menentu, sehingga kestabilan pendapatan keluarga sering mengalami fluktuasi. Kondisi tersebut mendorong istri nelayan untuk turut berperan dalam kegiatan ekonomi guna membantu memenuhi kebutuhan rumah tangga. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kontribusi istri nelayan terhadap pendapatan rumah tangga di Kelurahan Kawal, Kabupaten Bintan. Metode yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kuantitatif dengan teknik pengambilan sampel secara purposive. Analisis data dilakukan dengan menghitung total biaya, total penerimaan, total pendapatan, serta persentase kontribusi pendapatan istri terhadap pendapatan rumah tangga. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat sepuluh jenis pekerjaan yang dilakukan istri nelayan, yaitu penjual olahan makanan, penjahit, pedagang kelontong, guru, asisten rumah tangga, reseller pakaian, nelayan, guru ngaji, babysitter, dan usaha warung makan. Setiap pekerjaan memiliki struktur biaya dan pendapatan yang berbeda, sehingga menghasilkan kontribusi yang bervariasi terhadap pendapatan keluarga. Rata-rata pendapatan tertinggi diperoleh dari usaha warung makan, sedangkan pendapatan terendah berasal dari pekerjaan jasa dengan modal rendah. Persentase kontribusi istri nelayan terhadap pendapatan rumah tangga berkisar antara 7,69% hingga 51,63%, dengan kontribusi tertinggi berasal dari usaha warung makan.

**Kata Kunci:** istri nelayan, kontribusi, pendapatan, kelurahan Kawal.

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## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is the largest archipelagic country in the world, comprising approximately 17.380 islands (BIG, 2024) and vast marine territories, including archipelagic waters, territorial sea, and exclusive economic zone. This geographical context reflects the substantial potential of marine resources, particularly the fisheries sector, as a primary support for the livelihoods of coastal communities (Arrazy & Primadini, 2021). Utilization of marine resources by coastal communities has been conducted traditionally through fishing, aquaculture, and processing of marine products, not only to meet household consumption needs but also as a source of household income and contribution to regional economies (Dahuri et al., 2004). Fisher income is defined as the total earnings obtained from fishing activities over a specific period, whether daily, monthly, or annually (Mulyana et al., 2021).

In coastal societies, fishing occupations are predominantly male-dominated, reflecting the persistence of patriarchal cultural norms. Patriarchy positions men as the primary breadwinners, while women are often economically dependent. However, in traditional fisher households that rely on a single income from the husband, economic stability is vulnerable due to the uncertainty of catch yields and fluctuating income. Household welfare is influenced not only by the income of the household head but also by contributions from other family members. Income instability among fishers encourages wives and other household members to participate in economic activities to meet daily household needs (Bawolye et al., 2020).

Kawal Urban Village, located in Bintan Regency, is a coastal area where the majority of residents rely on fisheries for their livelihoods. Income uncertainty due to weather, seasonal variation, and fluctuating seafood prices, these conditions motivate fishermen's wives to actively participate in economic activities, including processing and marketing of catch and other entrepreneurial activities. The economic participation of fishermen's wives has become increasingly strategic; however, empirical studies specifically quantifying the economic contribution of fishermen's wives and analyzing the types of businesses and income generated remain limited.

Therefore, this study is essential to address this information gap and to provide an empirical basis for understanding the extent to which fishermen's wives contribute to household income and economic resilience. The findings are expected to enrich the literature on socio-economic fisheries and inform more inclusive, data-driven policies for coastal women's economic empowerment. This study aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the economic role of fishermen's wives in supporting household economic resilience in Kawal Village. Specifically, the objectives are to identify the contribution of wives' income to total household income.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Research Time and Location

The study was conducted from March to April 2024 in Kawal Urban Village, Bintan Regency, Riau Islands. The study site was selected purposively based on the presence of fishermen's wives actively engaged in economic activities to support household needs (Figure 1).

### Population and Sample

The study population comprised all fishermen's wives who were employed or running their own businesses, totaling 257 individuals (Kawal Village Monograph, 2021). Simple random sampling was used to select respondents. Sample size was calculated using Slovin's formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+(N \times e^2)} \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

Description:

- n : sample size
- N : population size
- e : precision value

Based on the formula:

$$n = \frac{257}{1 + (257 \times 0.15^2)} = \frac{257}{1 + 5.7825} = \frac{257}{6.7825} \approx 37$$

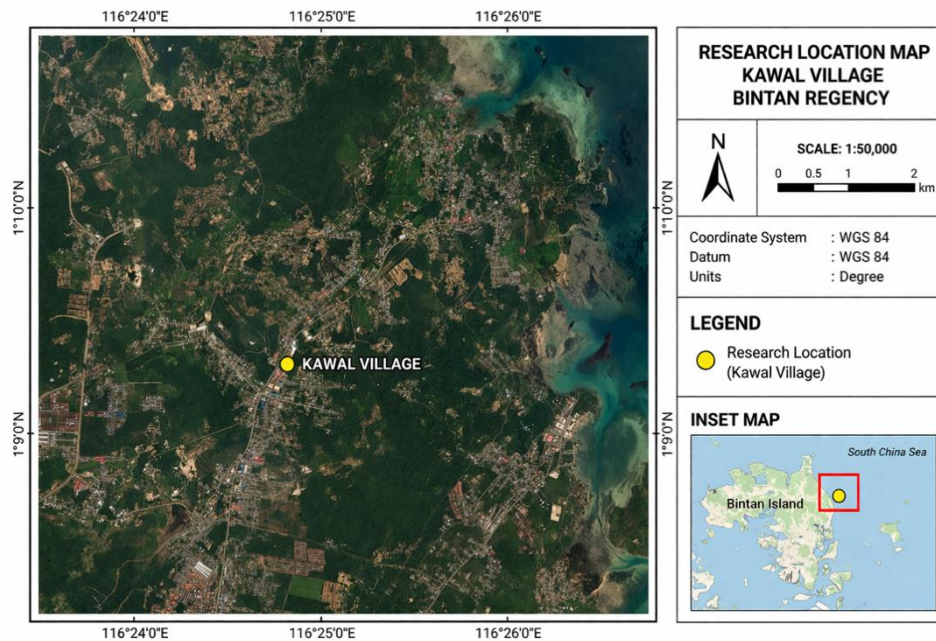


Figure 1. Research Location Map

### Study Design and Approach

This study used a quantitative descriptive approach. The quantitative component measured income, costs, and the economic contribution of fishermen’s wives to household income, while the descriptive component was used to illustrate the types of economic activities carried out by fishermen’s wives. The study design was a survey, with data collected directly from respondents via structured questionnaires and interviews.

### Income and Contribution Calculations

The income of fishermen’s wives ( $I_2$ ) was calculated using the following formula (Sinadia et al., 2017):

$$I_2 = TR - TC \dots\dots\dots (2)$$

Description:

- $I_2$  : Income of fishermen’s wives
- TR : Total Revenue
- TC : Total Cost

Household income ( $I$ ) was obtained from three sources—husband, wife, and other sources—calculated as:

$$I = I_1 + I_2 + I_3 \dots\dots\dots (3)$$

Description:

- $I$  : Total household income
- $I_1$  : Husband’s income
- $I_2$  : Wife’s income
- $I_3$  : Other sources of income

The contribution of fishermen’s wives to household income ( $K$ ) was calculated as (Handayani & Arini, 2009):

$$K = \frac{I_2}{I} \times 100\% \dots\dots\dots (4)$$

Description:

- K : Contribution of fishermen’s wives to household income (%)
- $I_2$  : Total income of the wife (IDR)
- I : Total household income (IDR)

Contribution levels were interpreted as follows (Sajogyo, 1983):  
 If  $K \leq 50\%$ , the contribution of the wife is considered low.  
 If  $K \geq 50\%$ , the contribution of the wife is considered high.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Identification of Occupations or Businesses of Fishers’ Wive

The occupations of fishermen’s wives are generally still within the fisheries sector, as these activities are directly related to local conditions and resource potential. Managing household affairs is a primary responsibility of fishermen’s wives in Kawal Urban Village. However, the need to support household economic requirements and alleviate the husband’s burden motivates them to engage in various additional occupations or businesses to increase household income.

One common activity is selling processed foods, including crackers, salted fish, fermented foods (*tapai*), fish cakes (*otak-otak*), and cassava chips. Other respondents worked as tailors, grocery sellers, teachers, domestic helpers, clothing resellers, fishers, religious instructors, babysitters, or operated food stalls. Notably, wives who processed salted fish sourced raw materials from their husbands’ catches, providing an additional income without incurring operational costs for raw materials.

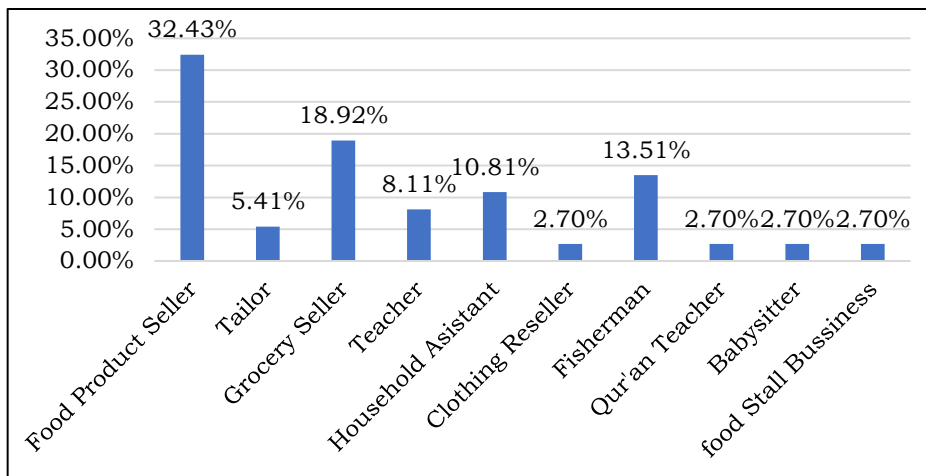


Figure 2. Occupations/Businesses of Fishermen’s Wives

Figure 2 shows that there were 10 types of occupations or businesses undertaken by fishermen’s wives, one of which was selling processed food products. This category included sellers of crackers, salted fish, *tapai*, *otak-otak*, and cassava chips. Other respondents worked as tailors, grocery sellers, teachers, domestic helpers, clothing resellers, fishers, Qur’an teachers, babysitters, and food stall operators. Respondents engaged in salted fish production used their husbands’ catch as raw materials, which were processed by the wives to generate additional income without incurring operational costs for raw materials.

### Motivation of Fishermen’s wives to Work

As shown in Figure 3, the primary motivation for fishermen’s wives to work was to support household economic needs, accounting for 62% of respondents. Other motivations included occupying free time, supplementing household income, and personal interest. All work and business activities were voluntarily undertaken, with the

primary goal of contributing to household income. Wives proactively seek opportunities aligned with their skills and expertise.

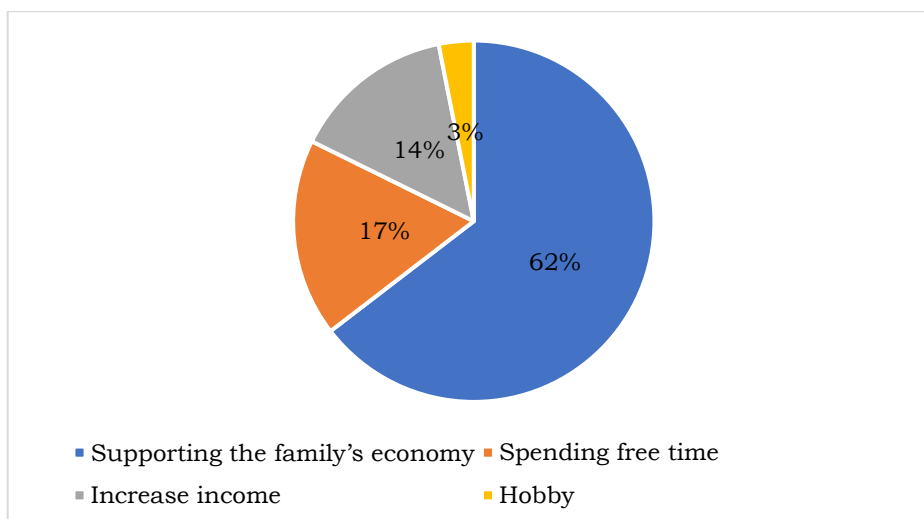


Figure 3. Work Motivation of Fishermen's Wives

Economic necessity is a key driver, as husbands' income is often unpredictable due to the influence of fishing seasons, weather conditions, and natural factors. Consequently, many women pursue alternative income sources through small businesses, selling fish products, or daily labor. [Kurniawati \(2017\)](#) reported that the primary motivation of fishermen's wives is to meet basic family needs, including food, children's education, and household expenses. Furthermore, many feel a moral responsibility to maintain household economic stability, particularly when their husbands are unable to fish. Women in fisher households are more vulnerable to economic pressure, often leading them to engage in informal home-based businesses. This highlights that economic motivation is the dominant factor driving fishermen's wives' participation in productive activities ([Wardhani et al., 2025](#)).

## Income of Fishermen's wives in Kawal Urban Village

### 1. Depreciation Costs

Depreciation represents the systematic allocation of the reduction in value of fixed assets over their useful life ([Mulyadi, 2010](#)). The depreciation cost depends on the initial investment, the asset's useful life, and the depreciation method applied ([Hansen & Mowen, 2009](#)). Higher initial investment for fixed assets, such as production equipment or supporting facilities, results in higher depreciation allocation per period ([Kasmir, 2019](#)). This indicates that depreciation reflects the gradual recovery of investment costs over the asset's usage, affecting production cost and business profit.

Table 1. Average Depreciation of Fishermen's Households

No	Type of Occupation/Businesses	Average investment cost (Rp)	Average depreciation cost of fishermen's wives (IDR/Month)
1	Food Product Seller	430.000	4.022
2	Tailor	950.000	6.250
3	Grocery Seller	4.670.000	41.021
4	Teacher	0	0
5	Household Asistant	0	0
6	Clothing reseller	0	0
7	Fisherman	56.670.000	207.819
8	Qur'an teacher	0	0
9	Babysitter	0	0
10	Food Stall Bussines	1.500.000	14.083

As shown in [Table 1](#), the highest average depreciation cost was for fishers, IDR 207,819, with an investment of IDR 56,670,000, while the lowest was for processed food sellers, IDR 4,022, with an investment of IDR 430,000. For businesses such as clothing resellers, domestic helpers, teachers, religious instructors, and babysitters, no significant depreciation occurred as their main operations involved purchasing and reselling products without substantial fixed assets.

In cost accounting, depreciation occurs only when a business owns tangible fixed assets that are repeatedly used in operational activities and have a useful life of more than one accounting period ([Mulyadi, 2010](#)). These assets may include machinery, production equipment, buildings, or vehicles with significant economic value.

In clothing reseller, domestic helper, teacher, Qur'an teacher, and babysitter occupations, the main activities generally involve purchasing products from suppliers and reselling them to consumers, without production processes or the use of large-scale fixed assets. According to [Kasmir \(2019\)](#), depreciation costs are not relevant to trading businesses that do not own long-term fixed assets, because merchandise is classified as inventory, not fixed assets.

## 2. Fixed Costs

Fixed costs are expenditures that do not vary with production volume or activity level. They are incurred regardless of whether the business operates at full capacity or not ([Mulyadi, 2010](#)). [Table 2](#) presents the average fixed costs for fisher households. The highest fixed cost was recorded for food stall operations (IDR 596,000/month) due to recurring expenditures such as gas and electricity, whereas the lowest was for domestic helpers (IDR 80,000/month) with minimal operational requirements.

Table 2. Average Fixed Costs of Fishermen's Households

No	Type of Occupation/Businesses	Average Fixed Cost (IDR/Month)
1	Food Product Seller	132.875
2	Tailor	127.000
3	Grocery Seller	151.143
4	Teacher	430.000
5	Houshold Asistant	80.000
6	Clothing Reseller	0
7	Fisherman	480.000
8	Qur'an Teacher	0
9	Babysitter	100.000
10	Food Stall Bussines	596.000

This variation in fixed costs is consistent with [Mulyadi \(2010\)](#), who stated that the amount of fixed costs is strongly influenced by the type of business and its operational requirements. Businesses that require more facilities and equipment tend to incur higher fixed costs than occupations that do not require substantial assets or work equipment.

## 3. Variable Costs

Variable costs fluctuate in proportion to the volume of activity or output. They increase with higher production and decrease when output declines ([Mulyadi, 2010](#)). Fisher households engaging in direct fishing had the highest variable costs (IDR 2,687,200/month), while clothing resellers had the lowest (IDR 75,000/month) ([Table 3](#)). Occupations such as domestic helpers, teachers, religious instructors, and babysitters did not incur substantial variable costs since daily operational expenses were minimal, relying primarily on labor and time.

These data illustrate a form of economic diversification or livelihood diversification within fishing households. Since fishing as the main occupation involves high operational costs, particularly variable costs, and generates fluctuating income depending on seasonal conditions, other household members adapt by seeking additional income sources. They tend to choose service-sector occupations that require no capital or

operational costs at all (IDR 0) or establish micro-enterprises with operational costs that can be adjusted according to the household's financial capacity.

Table 3. Average Variable Cost of Fishermen Households

No	Type of Occupation/Businesses	Average variable cost (IDR/Month)
1	Food Product Seller	570.833
2	Tailor	1.265.000
3	Grocery Seller	2.240.000
4	Teacher	0
5	Houshold Asistant	0
6	Clothing Reseller	75.000
7	Fisherman	2.687.200
8	Qur'an Teacher	0
9	Babysitter	0
10	Food Stall Bussines	2.130.000

#### 4. Total Costs

Total cost (TC) is the sum of all expenditures required to produce goods or services in a given period, including both fixed and variable costs (Carter & Usry, 2006). Average total costs for each occupation are presented in Table 4. The highest total cost was for fishers (IDR 3,272,982/month), while the lowest was for clothing resellers (IDR 75,000/month). Religious instructors incurred no operational costs as they conducted activities at home without special facilities or equipment.

Table 4. Average Total Cost of Fishermen Households

No	Type of Occupation/Businesses	Average total cost of fishermen's wives (IDR/Month)
1	Food Product Seller	694.149
2	Tailor	1.398.250
3	Grocery Seller	2.429.214
4	Teacher	396.333
5	Houshold Asistant	80.000
6	Clothing Reseller	75.000
7	Fisherman	3.375.019
8	Qur'an Teacher	0
9	Babysitter	100.000
10	Food Stall Bussines	2.730.083

Operational costs are one of the main challenges faced by fishers, typically including fuel, logistics (food, water, ice), boat and engine maintenance, and repair of fishing gear. Fuel is the largest component of daily operational costs, often exceeding 50-70% (Yuliarti et al, 2023). Fluctuations in fuel prices and limited access to subsidized fuel exacerbate challenges for small-scale or traditional fishers. High operational costs do not always correlate with income, particularly when catches are low or weather conditions are unfavorable, increasing the risk of business losses (Tantri & Alansori, 2025).

#### 5. Total Revenue

Total revenue (TR) represents all income generated from sales of output during a specific period, calculated as the unit price multiplied by the number of units sold (Mankiw, 2012). Average total revenues per occupation are shown in Table 5. The highest revenue was recorded for fishers (IDR 7,484,000/month). The low income from this occupation was due to its nature, which places greater emphasis on service and dedication than on financial gain. According to Afaradi (2026), occupations in the religious sector are often not intended to generate material profit but rather serve as a form of social contribution to the community.

Table 5. Average Total Revenue of Fishermen Households

No	Type of Occupation/Businesses	Average Total Revenue of Fishermen Households (IDR/Month)
1	Food Product Seller	2.075.000
2	Tailor	3.250.000
3	Grocery Seller	3.750.000
4	Teacher	1.466.667
5	Household Asistant	787.500
6	Clotheng Reseller	600.000
7	Fisherman	7.484.000
8	Qur'an Teacher	250.000
9	Babysitter	700.000
10	Food Stall Bussines	7.000.000

## 6. Total Income of Fisher Wives

Total income includes all monetary earnings from various sources over a period, including primary business activities and additional income from rent, interest, or services. Table 6 presents the average total income of fisher wives. The highest average income was from food stall operations (IDR 4,269,917/month), while the lowest was for religious instructors (IDR 250,000/month). Income from food stall businesses was generally higher than that from other types of occupations, such as grocery stores or fishing activities. This was influenced by several factors, including rapid cash turnover and relatively high profit margins. Food products sold at food stalls are daily necessities that are consumed directly; therefore, demand tends to remain stable. In addition, the added value generated through the cooking process allows food stall owners to set selling prices higher than the cost of raw materials, with profit margins reaching 30–50%.

Table 6. Average Total Income of Fishermen's Wives

No	Type of Occupation/Businesses	Average Total Income of Fishermen's Wives (IDR/Month)
1	Food Product Seller	1.870.434
2	Tailor	1.934.000
3	Grocery Seller	1.745.095
4	Teacher	1.036.667
5	Houshold Asistant	707.500
6	Clothing Reseller	525.000
7	Fisherman	4.211.018
9	Qur'an Teacher	600.000
10	Food Stall Bussines	4.269.917

Unlike food stall businesses, grocery businesses have lower profit margins, typically ranging from only 10% to 20%. The prices of goods sold in grocery stores are generally familiar to consumers; therefore, the opportunity to obtain higher margins is very limited. Inventory turnover is also slower because not all products are purchased on a daily basis (Fahmi, 2015).

## 7. Household Income of Fishermen

Household income is generally variable and depends on marine catch, seasonal conditions, weather, and resource availability. During periods of abundant catch and high fish prices, income increases significantly. In Bintan Regency, including Kawal Village, fish prices fluctuate seasonally. During the north wind season (November–January), high waves and poor weather reduce fishing activity, decreasing fish supply and increasing market prices. Conversely, during normal weather or periods of high catch (June–December), fish supply increases and prices tend to decrease. To stabilize household income, fishermen's wives often engage in supplementary economic activities,

such as running small businesses, selling fish, or daily labor (Suryani & Jaya, 2020). Average household income is presented in Table 7.

The highest household income (IDR 9,751,018/month) was observed when wives were directly involved in fishing activities, indicating the substantial potential of wives' direct participation in increasing household income. Conversely, the lowest household income (IDR 3,025,000/month) was observed for households with wives working as domestic helpers, reflecting fixed-wage employment with limited opportunities for additional income (Winarni, 2018; Miftahurrahmah & Yusuf, 2024). These findings align with previous studies emphasizing the role of diversified occupations among fisher wives in reducing economic vulnerability and enhancing household resilience (Kusumawardhani & Susilowati, 2021).

Table 7. Fishermen's Households Income

No	Type of Occupation/ Businesses	Total Income of the Household Head (IDR/Month)	Average Income of Wives (IDR/Month)	Average Other Income (IDR/Month)	Total Household Income (IDR/Month)
1	Food Product Seller	3.291.667	1.870.434	1.041.667	6.203.768
2	Tailor	5.250.000	1.934.000	0	7.184.000
3	Grocery Seller	3.125.000	1.745.095	957.143	4.870.095
4	Teacher	4.666.667	1.036.667	833.333	5.703.333
5	Household Asistant	2.425.000	707.500	750.000	3.132.500
6	Clothing Reseller	2.500.000	525.000	1.250.000	3.025.000
7	Fisherman	4.540.000	4.211.018	1.000.000	9.751.018
8	Qur'an Teacher	3.000.000	250.000	0	3.250.000
9	Babysitter	4.000.000	600.000	0	4.600.000
10	Food Stal Bussines	2.500.000	4.269.917	1.500.000	6.769.917

## 8. Contribution of Fishermen's Wives to Household Income

The contribution of fishermen's wives to household income was generally classified as low, as 90% of respondents contributed within the low category, with contribution values ranging from 7.69% to below 50% of total household income (Figure 4). This indicates that the economic activities undertaken by fishermen's wives were not merely supplementary but had become a major source of household income. This finding suggests a shift in women's roles from the domestic sector to the productive sector, directly contributing to the improvement of fishermen household welfare. Meanwhile, only 10% of fishermen's wives made a high income contribution to household income, as indicated by the highest contribution value of 51.63%. The low contribution of fishermen to household income is caused by their dependence on fluctuating and uncertain marine catches. In addition, small-scale or traditional fishermen often face limited fishing gear, limited capital, and restricted market access, resulting in suboptimal catch yields (Stacey et al., 2021).

The most fishermen in Indonesia fall into the poor or near-poor category, as reflected in the low contribution of fishing income to total household income (BPS, 2021). Under these household conditions, wives and other family members usually take a more active economic role, such as running small businesses, trading, or providing certain services.

In some cases, income earned by fishermen's wives through home-based businesses, such as operating food stalls, selling fish, or working as laundry laborers, is more stable than the income earned by husbands who work as fishermen. This condition occurs because the husband's contribution as the household head is categorized as low, considering that his income is not the main source within the household economic structure (Kurniawati, 2017).

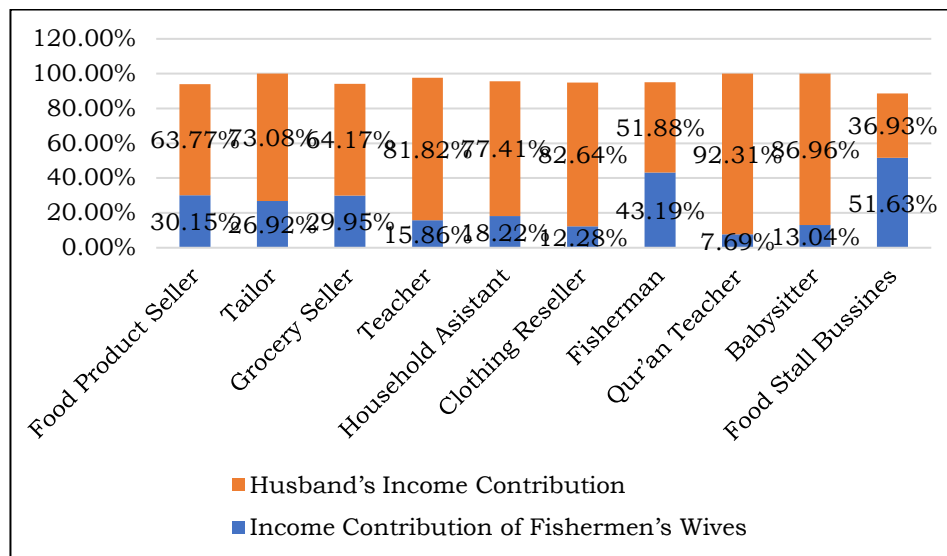


Figure 4. Income Contribution of Fishermen's Wives

### Policy Implications

Local governments need to develop skills-based training programs for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) specifically targeting fishermen's wives. These training programs should not only focus on improving production capacity, but also include business management, fishery product processing, and digital marketing to enhance product competitiveness. Diversification of income sources among fishing households is needed to reduce dependence on fluctuating marine catches. Coastal women's empowerment programs should be integrated into regional development policies to strengthen their role in supporting household economic resilience. Gender-responsive policies should be implemented to recognize the economic role of fishermen's wives within fishing households. Thus, the contribution of fishermen's wives should not be viewed merely as a supplementary activity, but as an important component of the fishing household economic system that requires structural support.

### CONCLUSION

Fishermen's wives play an important economic role in supporting household income through various types of occupation, including processed food selling, tailoring, grocery trading, teaching, domestic work, online clothing selling, fishing, Qur'an teaching, babysitting, and food stall businesses. Their income contribution varied according to the type of occupation, business scale, cost structure, and revenue generated. These findings indicate that fishing households have developed a multiple livelihood strategy to adapt to income uncertainty in the fisheries sector. Therefore, strengthening the economic capacity of fishermen's wives through business development, skills training, and access to capital is essential to improve household welfare and economic resilience.

### AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

The authors declare the contribution of each author in the preparation of this manuscript. GP, as the first author and main contributor, was responsible for designing the study, collecting data, and analyzing the data. HH, as the second author and corresponding author/member, contributed to data analysis, conceptualization, review of the data analysis, and language editing of the manuscript. FU, as the third author/member, contributed to language editing of the manuscript. The authors have attached the author declaration statement.

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest with any party regarding the publication of this article.

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