

**Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies**

Tackling Unemployment: The Role of the Family in the Fishing  
Sector in Ghazaouet Area (Algeria)

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RSC No. 2002/10  
Mediterranean Programme Series

**EUI WORKING PAPERS**



**EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE**

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The Mediterranean Programme has received generous financial support for Socio-Political Studies from three major institutions who have guaranteed their support for four years: ENI S.p.A, Ente Cassa di Risparmio di Firenze, and Mediocredito Centrale. The European Investment Bank, Compagnia di San Paolo and Monte dei Paschi di Siena have offered generous financial support for four years for studies in Political Economy which will be launched in Spring 2000. In addition, a number of grants and fellowships for nationals of the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries have been made available by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (for doctoral students) and the City of Florence (Giorgio La Pira Fellowship for post-doctoral fellows).

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## **INTRODUCTION\***

Fishermen are those social and professional categories, which have developed with the social and economic development of the Algerian society. The number of fishermen has seen a high development as soon as intense private investments have appeared in the sector of fishing. These investments can be a key and a solution to the unemployment problem in Algeria during the 1986 economic crisis that led to a decrease in public investment in industrial sites. These sites which used to employ huge numbers of workers as a socialist ideology was defended.

The fishing sector in Ghazaouet area is one of the economic sectors, which have seen such development. This has been a source of our curiosity to find out the social and anthropological characteristics of fishermen and try to give an account of the role of this sector in the creation of employment in the region.

Approaching this social category led us to present the scientific interest of studying fishermen and give a historical process of the practice of fishing occupation in Ghazaouet area. We ought to present the inheritance and the development of a know-how of this occupation among local families. These latter have played a major role in this inheritance and the development of the fishing occupation in the area through the learning of this occupation to their relatives.

### **1. SCIENTIFIC INTEREST OF STUDYING FISHERMEN**

The fishing labour market in Ghazaouet has been affected by socio-economic changes at a macro level. At the same time demographic factors represent another important element that affect the destiny of this labour market. Algeria has seen an annual increase in its growth rate that has influenced the number of the active population (see Table N°1).

As a result there have been structural shifts between the number of employment settles that the economy produced and numbers of active people who are ready to be occupied. Unemployment becomes a real problem that faces the society due to the change of modes of organization, which has seen the companies and units of production: they produce more and more quickly goods and services with less and less employment.

\* This paper was presented at the Second Mediterranean Social and Political Research Meeting, Florence, March 21-25, 2001, Mediterranean Programme, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute.

**Table N°1 Algerian Population and Labor Force Indicators**

Population				Labor Force	
Years	Total in Millions	Years	Average annual growth rate (%)	Years	Average annual growth rate (%)
1970	14	1970-80	3.1	1980-90	4.9
1990	25	1980-90	3.7	1990-95	5.3
1996	29	1990-95	2.3	-	-

Source: WDI 1997 and 1998, World Development Report 1992, World Bank staff calculation based on data from WDI

Regarding these data we cannot imagine the Algerian labor market without social problems mainly the problem of unemployment, which touches nowadays a high number of young people<sup>1</sup>. This problem urged us to study the participation of the fishing sector in Ghazaouet in reducing this dilemma.

Fishermen as a social category has been marginal and absent from social studies in Algeria. Social researchers have not given any interest to such studies due to the characteristics of the professional and social environment of these fishermen. This situation cannot be a unique Algerian case but it seems to be a universal problem as there are not many studies, which have treated this occupation. Yvan Breton stated this problem when he says: "We critically transpose surveys and questionnaires which grant a priority to data of fish species and to fishing apparatus rather than to those that directly touch producers and their families" (Breton 1994, 102).

The majority of the population has ignored the fishing sector and the life of fishermen. The social environment of fishermen has been unknown due to its characteristics, that is the nature of its task and its space. There are many difficulties to meet fishermen and study them and try to find out their daily life in the sea. Geistdoerfer present the same reasons of the ignorance of the French population of fishermen when he says: "The nature of fishing task lets anthropologists and sociologists away from studying this society (maritime society)" (Geistdoerfer 1994, 653).

In spite of these difficulties, the scientific interest of this subject urge some researchers in western countries to study the social category of fishermen

<sup>1</sup> Official statistics gives us the number of 1519 unemployed person in 1993 and 1660 in 1994. The rate of the unemployed in 1993 was 23.15 % of the active population to reach 24.4 % in 1994.

in order to find out social characteristics and psychological effects of practicing this kind of work. The nature of this latter has got an impact fishermen's attitudes and values which have made them presenting a marginal and self-restraint social category.

Returning to our field study, we find very interesting to study this socio-professional category as soon as it represents the result of an occupational transmission from one generation to another. Historical conditions have given rise to the development of the fishing activity as the colonizer developed it all over the Algerian coast since the beginning of the French colonization. This reality has led to the inheritance of this task with its social and economic organization, which still has its presence among crews of fishing boats.

The scientific interest of studying the fishing sector is to find out the cultural process of the practicing of the fishing task and its mechanism of work organization among crews. Then it is very fruitful to pay attention to the manpower management and especially in matters of recruitment.

Our curiosity led us to do some observations of the fishing sector and fishermen in Ghazaouet, and have interviews with a sample of 20 fishermen .We had the chance to get in touch with them, as we used to share with them the same environment. I found very interesting to use some of collected data in order to develop my actual paper.

## **2.THE FISHING SECTOR IN GHAZAOUET DURING COLONISATION**

Geographical factors of the region made of Ghazaouet, a space where a kind of economic development had appeared since the first years of colonization. The port has been built during this time in order to export minerals and agricultural product to Europe.

Some monographic studies made by some colonizer scholars, shows the commercial importance of this port. They present some statistics, which shows that in 1900, 372 commercial boats coast on the port to carry 10.445 tons of products, and in 1929, 634 boats to carry 255.912 tons of products (cf. Cardonne1930, 121). The activity of Ghazaouet port did not rely on commerce but fishing as well, as a development of fishing boats has appeared since the beginning of the twenty-century. This has led to the building and the appearance of some small canning workshops<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> For example, in 1906 M. Labador and M.Pitzini have developed the canning industry in the region to reach the number of 14 canning workshops, and it exported yearly from 1000 to 1200 tons of canned fish to France and Italy. For more details, see Cardonne, P et al., *La colonisation dans l'ouest ouranais*, Alger: Heintz.1930

The canning activity has encouraged the colonizers to develop the fishing sector by the investment in this sector. Thus, in 1926 the fishing port of Ghazaouet reached the first place in the region of Oran in matters of fish production. Tables N° 2 shows the quantity of fish production in tons in western ports of Algeria.

**Table N° 2** presents the quantity of fish production in tons in western Algerian ports (1926).

Ports	Oran	Mer El Kebir	Beni Saf	Mostaghanem	Arzew	Ghazaouet	Total
Blue Fish	4.133	5.673	9.902	1.800	19.800	21.997	45.445
Trawl Fish	4.480	//	11.393	5.839	6.960	751	29.623
Shell-fish	33	15	//	//	2	//	50
Other Fish	1.525	2.026	403	423	3.602	176	8.155
Total	10.171	7.714	21.898	8.062	12.504	22.924	83.273

Source: M. Novella, " Le quartier d'Oran: Pêche et pêcheurs " in Bulletin de Géographie et archéologie d'Oran, 1927 : 45

It is obvious from Table N°2, the economic importance of the fishing sector especially in Ghazaouet, as the quantity of fish captured in this area made it reach the first place in the western coast of Algeria. This huge amount of fish production in Ghazaouet area may be a good idea to say that this sector had created a kind of a fishing Labor market in the area<sup>3</sup>.

The practicing of fishing by local inhabitants represents the main factor that led them to be in touch with the colonizer, who were either owner or fishermen, and learn ways of fishing and got certain efficiency in fishing. They manage to get a *know how*. At the same time, the fishing port represents a space of meeting and living fishing community with different ethnic origins. One of the fishing director witnessed this reality when he says: "there are a lack of homogeneity between fishermen of the ports of Oran's region, especially in Nemours (Ghazaouet) where all the ethnic categories of the region were represented" (Novella 1927, 47).

<sup>3</sup> Concerning the number of fishermen, we later give statistics about the enrolled fishermen since 1950 and treat the importance of the fishing sector in job creation.

The French colonizer facilitated the movement of Europeans to the Algerian labor market in order to invest in the fishing sector. This latter and the agricultural sector had been the main attractive sectors to these Europeans. The wealthy nature of the fishing in western Algeria encouraged Spanish and Italians to move to these ports searching for this wealth. Novella states that: " On January, 1<sup>st</sup>, 1926, there were 1760 fishermen in the Oran region, among them we find: 234 stranger, 60 French, 786 with Spanish origins, 571 are original from Italy, 319 indigenous (local inhabitants), and 24 Israelis" (Novella 1927, 47)

The appearance of this activity and its development helped local inhabitants to rise the standard of living of their families. Beside the agricultural work, peasants of the region fulfil the high labor demand, as boat owners needed this local Labor force to complete their fishing task, mainly during the end of the agricultural activity. According to Novella: " Among the enrolled fishermen in Ghazaouet, we find 195 seasonal fishermen who went to fish only when the agricultural work is completed" (Novella 1927, 49).

The fishing activity had been a living source for some of the social categories even if they did not represent it as a stable job where can somebody fulfil their economic and social needs, due to the conditions of work and the fluctuation of the fishing revenues.

The social constitution of this army of fishermen, who used to live on the western Algerian coast, did not differ in its cultural characteristics from the local peasants due to the nature of the activity. One of the colonizers asks about the social origins of these fishermen when he says: " All the world knows the social origins of fishermen who came from the most poor, underdeveloped and illiterate areas of the Spanish and Italian coasts. They are real social wastage who are known with their loafers and they are uncommunicative... They are secluded from the rest of the members of the society, they lived marginal... They do not do any effort to improve their situation, they do not send their children to schools... they have not any ability to change their social status" (Novella 1927, 51-52).

These characteristics may be good sociological variables to study our recent fishermen, especially in matters of the non-consciousness of the need of children education and the pursuit of their training. The majority of fishermen's children leave the school in an early time waiting the age to enter the fishing Labor market. At the same time, the uncommunicative and the secluded facts of these fishermen are well represented when their ladies play the role to ask for the opportunity to get a fishing job for their sons among a fishing crew. Regarding the neighborhood and family relationships, the mother is charged to

contact the ladies of the boat owner or captain in order to ask for this fishing job<sup>4</sup>.

In spite of these sociological factors, the fishermen have succeeded in the creation of an important economic sector in the region and to develop a kind of a fishing labor market. It led to implement a fishing tradition in the region and generate certain *Know how*, which has been transmitted from one generation to another one. The social economic benefit of fishing sector in Ghazaouet may well be represented through the table N° 3.

*Table N° 3 presents the evolution of the fishing sector in Ghazaouet 1950-1962*

Years	Number of fishing boats	Number of enrolled fishermen	Quantity of fish (in Tons)
1950	//	//	3.524.648
1952	//	//	4.616.766
1954	//	//	2.367.983
1956	60	730	2.751.981
1958	74	866	1.970.088
1960	69	808	2.903.694
1962	75	880	3.108.981

Source: unpublished statistics, Merchant Navy of Ghazaouet

The main observation one can make from the table N°3, is that until the years of the Algerian independence (1962), the fishing sector had been a living resource of a high number of families. Beside fishermen's families, other local families benefited from the existing and the development of this activity in the area as well. The existing of this activity has given rise to other related activities such as fishing commerce and industry.

The fishing port gave rise to small canning industries since the first years of the twenty- century. The development of such industries has augmented the investment in the sector of boats and fishing materials in order to satisfy the demand of fishing units. "The activity of fishing has participated in creating employment as there were 600 fishermen in 1954... and the canning fish workshops has led to the employment of a labor force constituted of 2000 women and children" ( Tinthoin 1958, 299).

<sup>4</sup> We later develop these ideas in more details.

Fishermen with Spanish origins represent the main social category, which owned fishing boats and practiced this occupation. In this sector of activity, Spanish influences were not only economic but cultural as well. The practice of the fishing occupation inculcated Spanish concepts and languages within the local fishermen, which are still used between them during their daily life. These Spanish origins have an important place in the local tradition and folklore among old and retired people.

### **3. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FISHING SECTOR IN GHAZAOUET**

Independent Algeria had a negative effect upon colonizers who find themselves insecure with the advance of time. They left their all what they owned, as they could not secure their properties and their lives in front of a people that have suffered, for more than a century, from war.

Fishing has been the main local resource in Ghazaouet for a while after the Algerian independence. Fishermen who used to work in this fishing sector before independence, benefited from the colonizer depart. The benefice resumes first of all in the acquisition of the fishing capital (boats, nets and other equipment) and then the *know how* transmission as we mentioned earlier.

This transmission can be an inheritance of an economic and a social structure for a few families who have not any source for life in comparison to those agricultural families. They were very attached to this sector even if the condition of work could not afford them the possibility to leave a welfare life with very traditional means of fishing. These families which inherited these boats could not leave this occupation as they acquire a certain fishing culture.

Due to this occupational attachment, local fishing boat owners have improved their fishing equipment with modern instruments. Fishermen experienced a great improvement in their work conditions. One of our interviewees' says:

“We have suffered in this occupation, we used to stay for along time in the sea as boats had weak engines. We used to pull the net by our hands, we suffered from bad weather and cold and there was very weak revenue. We suffered from poverty due to our traditional means of work. Nowadays the condition of work are more helpful and fishermen work little and earn a lot of money because of the development of the environment, which leads to the increase of fish demand, which led to an increase in the revenues" (interviewee 57 years old).

Until 1970 or thereabouts, conditions of work were considerably worse than they are now. The old fishermen suffered from poverty. They used to work in small boats lacking any sophisticated equipment. These small boats could not

resist bad weather; they could not go out to sea for fishing. For this reason, their earnings were closely related to the weather and therefore fluctuated violently. The lack of alternative employment at that time compelled some fishermen to stay in fishing work even if they could not manage to feed their children properly. This does not mean that other fishermen tried to get rid of their poverty and immigrate to other countries such as France<sup>5</sup>.

The fishing sector in Ghazaouet area has seen a fluctuation in the number of fishermen. The withdrawal of colonizers has affected the fishing employment, as the number of boats has decreased from 75 boats in 1962 (Algerian independence) to 20 boats in 1964, and the fish production has decreased from 3.108,981 tons in 1962 to 1.848, 844. Table N°4 shows us this consequent decline in fishing number, whereas an increase in matters of employment and production has appeared with the Algerian political development since the eighties.

**Table N° 4** presents the evolution of the fishing sector in Ghazaouet 1962-1999

Years	Number of fishing boats	Number of enrolled fishermen	Quantity of fish ( in Ton)
1962	75	880	3.108,981
1964	20	250	1.848,844
1970	27	340	2.529,239
1972	23	280	2.494,880
1975	29	370	4.112,630
1980	40	400	2.399,900
1983	61	718	4.190,800
1986	76	921	5.506,406
1988	80	1088	6.409,649
1990	92	1202	8.413,500
1992	99	1311	10.289,745
1994	100	1380	13.540,200
1997	105	1591	9.478,330
1999	105	1573	12.604,000

Source: unpublished statistics, Merchant Navy of Ghazaouet

The most striking feature we can observe it from Table N°4, is the decline in matters of employment after the years of independence. Europeans depart and the

<sup>5</sup> Official statistics shows that by 1977, 3025 immigrants in France had come from Ghazaouet county, form details: cf. Caisse Algérienne d'aménagement du territoire, étude socio-économique des 8 communes de la wilaya de Tlemcen, Alger: Publication officielle, 1977.

limited investment of the local population in this sector due to the nature of the Algerian development, which had been oriented with a socialist ideology.

The socialist economic development has given rise to industrial sites in the region that helped the local labor market to offer employment to a high number of the local population. Ghazaouet benefited from the installation of two industrial units by 1974 and 1976. These units used to employ respectively 500 employees and 900 employees. The majority of the local population active, which had no relation with the fishing culture that is those who had not any of their parents or family as fishermen, prefer to work in stable jobs with a stable salary rather to choose the job of fisherman.

Political change in Algeria has affected the socio-economic development. This was resulted on the more freedom of capital investment and the encouragement of the private sector to invest in economic sector. The fishing sector in Ghazaouet has seen a development of the investment since 1980 when an increase in numbers of fishing boats have appeared. This increase is a result of the contribution of the local bourgeoisie and the immigrants who live in France to invest in this sector. The investment in fishing has the same experience as agriculture. "In agriculture" Claudine Chaulet states " The emigration was the principal source of intensification investments" (Chaulet 1987, 552).

During this era and with the international crisis of the 1986, the Algerian labor market has been affected when the public sector has limited its effort in mater of job creation. In Ghazaouet, the fishing private sector has participated in job creation, as it is obvious from Table N°4. The existing fishing sector has opened a kind of employment for those young people who leave the school and enter the labor market. They no later hesitate to enter the fishing sector as they have limited alternative jobs. They observe an improvement in work conditions in this sector and they notice a high demand of fish production that has led to an improvement in the standard of living of fishermen. In 1980 the number of enrolled fishermen has been 400 and has seen a yearly increase to reach 1573 in 1999.

Table N°5 gives us a good idea about the age characteristic of the fishing labor force in Ghazaouet area as we can notice that the majority of fishermen are less than the age of 30.

*Table N°5 represents the distribution of the fishing labor in Ghazaouet by age*

Age categories	Number	Percentage
18-30 years	803	51.05
30-45 years	560	35.60
45-60 years	200	12.71
+ 60 years	10	0.64
Total	1573	100

Source: unpublished statistics, Merchant Navy of Ghazaouet

The improvements in equipment have led to greatly improved working conditions and an enlarging of the number of young fishermen. Indeed, old fishermen constantly taunt their younger successors with difference. Today, fishing provides a much more secure employment and has been integrated into the wide economy of Algeria with supply networks to Oran and other cities. This improvement had been noticed by the increase in fish production in this port, in order to satisfy the high demand of fish by the Algerian cities of the east and the south of Algeria.

#### **4. PROBLEMS OF THE FISHING LABOUR MARKET IN GHAZAOUET**

The labor fishing market is well known by three main social problems, which are related to the absence of certain legislation that organizes this sector. The fishing activity in this area has inherited from the Spanish owners, besides the boats and the fishing equipment a kind of habits and morals in work organization.

##### **4.1 Unemployment**

Due to the problem of high population growth and the limited role of the public sector in employment creation, a large number of young people who enter the labor market find themselves unemployed. In Ghazaouet, as the case in the majority of Algerian urban areas, unemployment has become a daily problem, which urges these young to think for other alternative solutions to get rid of this social problem.

Immigration to France represents the main aim of the majority of these unemployed young people, and the same hope we find it in those who are

employed in the fishing sector. Working as a seaman can represent a phase to collect some money to get a visa and an air ticket to fly to Paris<sup>6</sup>.

The fishing labor market even if it has participated in job creation in Ghazaouet region, with more than 1500 jobs, still represents the sector where there is no application of strict work legislation that organize the practice of this task. There are no norms or status to protect the fisherman. The latter faces the danger to loose his place easily, there is no law, which forbids the boat owner to make him redundant. This can easily appear when one of the boat captain's or owner's member of the family, enter the fishing sector labor market.

One of our interviewees' states:

" We are very humiliated and there are no respect in this sea job. We have no rights and no status. We daily meet problems with the boat captain or the owner and we have not the right to speak otherwise we loose our job and we will be replaced by one of their family members. There are plenty of their family members in the labor market waiting for such occasion". (Interviewee 28 years old)

Another fisherman explains:

" I used to work in X boat, and one day, I was late to get to the port. My colleagues go out to fish and I was absent this night. The day after the boat owner sent me his son to tell me that I am redundant from my job and I have to collect my equipment from the boat. The day after I heard that his nephew has replaced me. They search you the cause to get you out of your job. This is the fishing employment". (Interviewee 30 years old)

Then the fishing labor force, and due to the absence of work legislation, sometimes lives the problem of unemployment. Those unlucky persons who are not desirable by the fishing community due to their nature may suffer from unemployment. They may wait for a while asking a working place and using all their kinship relations to intervene with boat owners asking for a job. Vincent

<sup>6</sup> The disparity of their social and economic state and the conditions of theirs relatives and friends in Europe, make these young people thinking about reaching the status of immigrants. The presence of a high number of relatives in France, and their usual movement, on summer, to the native community developed a kind of a hope, among young persons, to immigrate and become one day as their uncles and neighbors. At the same time, we find these young people defending those people who immigrate during the sixties and the seventies as they state that unemployment, poverty and the absence of justice are the main reasons for migration. The immigration to Europe has been a social phenomenon as all young persons have developed a new culture and a knowledge of the ways to get out of from their native countries, their principle discussion is about *El Hadda* (migration).

These statements have been developed in our communication entitled: " Intercontinental disparities and migration" in Conference 2000: *Rich and poor*,\_international Sociological Association, Social Science Research center (WZB) Berlin, Germany, October 13-14,2000.

Gaulejac claims that: "Today, one can affirm that the fight of the places replaces the fight of classes" (Gaulejac 2000, 129).

A man who is out of work cannot fulfill the requirement of the society so his family suffers a drastic cut in their standard of living and the man is placed in the socially degrading position of not supporting his family, which can have a damaging psychological effect.

Those fishermen who are married and have children are less afraid from this kind of comportment as social and humanistic factors do not let them out of work for a long time. The fishing community evaluates the need for the married person to get a job in order to feed his children. It seems unfair that one family has two or three wage earners whilst in another family (male) find himself unemployed for a while.

One of our interviewees' says:

" My neighbor is a fisher with a long experience, he is married and he feeds 04 children, once had been redundant from the X boat. He had been for 2 months without working. Some fishermen observed his declined condition of life why they urged to ask some boat owners for a Job" (Interviewee 30 years old).

For the young person, it is not the case; he may suffer from unemployment for a long time as long as people knows that he is single and he has no family in charge. This young fisherman may not feel in need for such a job as a married fisherman, as long as he got a family, sustained him in housing, feeding and pocket money. Pierre Durand makes it clear when he says "In general family solidarity plays the main role in accepting unemployment: material solidarity, the sharing out of the existing means and mainly the affective solidarity". (Durand 1999, 74). This kind of family solidarity with the unemployed persons is very familiar within the Algerian family<sup>7</sup>.

## **4.2 Labor mobility**

The labor mobility is a second social problem facing the fishing labor market in Ghazaouet area, due to the absence of the work legislation. The nature of work and its condition let the turn over reach its top among those fishermen who find a stable job with a stable salary in another sector of activity.

This sector of activity has seen the instability in its labor force especially during the last decade when young persons have become hoping for

<sup>7</sup> For more detail about unemployment and the Algerian family solidarity cf., Abdelmadjid Messaoudi, " chômage et solidarités familiales", in *Peuples méditerranéens*, n° 52-53, juillet-décembre 1990: 195-218.

immigration. The majority of these young persons leave their jobs as soon their families manage to find them a wife from the Algerian immigrant community of France. Marrying with these social categories give them the right to get the French resident card. (Moulai-Hadj 2000).

Work mobility in the fishing sector in Ghazaouet can be familiar in those boats, which do not produce enough fish, due to the lack of fishing equipment. This decline in production lead to a decline in revenues. Thus fishermen can not be satisfied with working in such boats, they try to search for other boats in order to increase their revenues. They try to use all their relationships in order to be enrolled in one of the boats in the port. The family can play the major role in this situation.

All our respondents claim that they have worked in the majority of the existing fishing boats in Ghazaouet. Besides the non-stability of revenues, the absence of work legislation that organize work relations between fishermen and the boats owner, has been the major factor of work mobility. We have developed such behaviors earlier as the majority of fishermen feel themselves in danger to redundant due to a simple error.

One respondent says:

" You see these boats, I have worked in the majority of them. I change the place when I see that there is no production, I have to search for another better boat. This movement was easy in the eighties when there were a lack in labor force. Nowadays if you are made redundant from your job, you will suffer to get a place unless you have a family relationship with the boat owner or the captain. This is fishing job reality, we have no alternative, we can not leave this occupation as long as we have salted water in our body" (Interviewee 47 years old).

This respondent speaks for others when he says that they can not leave this fishing occupation. First of all about the problem of the nonexistence of other employment possibilities, and secondly due to the problem of the acquisition of a certain way of life and a fishing culture that they can not easily leave it.

### **4.3 Wages**

The third main social problem of the fishing labour market in Ghazaouet, is the remuneration system. This system of the sharing out of the revenues has been inherited from the Spanish. There have been no evolutions in the way of managing this system.

The remuneration in the fishing sector depends on the weakly fish production. The weekly revenue of the fishermen is related on the amount of the

quantity of produced fishing, its quality and its monetary values. One respondent says:

" This kind of remuneration has been inherited from the Spanish who used to own fishing boat. We work for a week and at the week end the owner comes to divide us our parts, each fisherman has his part in relation to professional status in the boat" (Interviewee 56 years old).

The occupational position of fishermen in the boat lets some fishermen to have more parts than others. This differentiation is the main factor that keeps the family members of the boat owner or captain in the best position in order to enlarge their revenues. For example, The occupational position of the responsible of a boat engine or the light man has two parts and the simple fisherman has only one part.

Boat owners take 50 % of the revenue in trawlers and 45% of the revenue in sardine boats. Other deductions relate to the weekly expenditures of the boat and those expenditures relating to the management of the fishing task. Table N°6 makes, this sharing out of the remaining revenue, very clear.

*Table N°6 presents the revenue sharing out in the fishing sector*

Occupational categories	Revenues sharing out in sardines boats	Revenues sharing out trawlers boats
The captain	3 parts	5 parts
The sub-captain	-	2 parts + 1/2 part
Engine fisherman	2 parts	3 parts
Light man	2 parts	-
Fisherman with additional work	1 part + 1/4 part	1 part + 1/2 part
Kitchen man	-	1 part + 1/2 part
Simple fisherman	1 part	1 part

It is obvious from Table N°6 that there is no justice in the sharing out. The fisherman who has no family relationship with the boat owner may stay, during all his occupational life, a simple fisherman and his revenue does not exceed the one part each week, and this depends on the production of fish.

Asking our respondents about their attitudes to their revenues, one of the respondents claims:

" Regarding the conditions of work in fishing and the absence of a certain legislation to protect the fisherman, the revenue is very weak. Even if the salary of some employees in other sectors is low, it is regular in comparison to the fisherman who can earn for a week an amount of money and stay for a month without revenues" (interviewee 56 years old).

## **5. THE ROLE OF THE FAMILY IN THE FISHING SECTOR**

We mentioned earlier that some local families have inherited equipment of fishing after the Spanish and Italian fishermen depart and at the same time they have acquired a fishing culture and fishing know how. These lucky families find themselves in a welfare position as they got means of work to feed their families as well as an economic investment that helps their relatives to live for many years. They have renewed their equipment and tried to improve their means of work in order to conserve its existence.

Young people who left the school in an early age enter the labor market searching for a job. This has been a normal fact when there have been a high labor demand in the labor market as the Algerian economy used to create employment. At that time, the fishing sector was not very attractive for the young people who left the school in an early age. They are afraid from the conditions of work and they have no idea about this occupation.

In spite of difficult work conditions in the fishing sector, there are many young people who ask for a fishing occupation. They want to save themselves from the problem of unemployment; they have a limited chance to get a job in another economic sector. They use all their efforts to get a job in this sector. Family relationships play a major role to help these people for this matter.

On the other hand, those young people who belong to fisherman families find it very easy to get an occupation in this sector of activity. They get a certain professional socialization and a development of a fishing culture within the family where they had get up as well as the occupation of the parents influences the occupational destiny of their sons as Hughes states:

"The occupation of the parents undoubtedly has certain tendencies to affect that of the children" (Hughes 1958, 30).

The majority of those families who had a fishing tradition prepared their sons to this fishing task especially for those children who fail in their education. They start working with their parents as a mousse then they reach higher status in the fishing boat to end with the position of captain of the boat. Among the 10 fishing boats that we interviewed its fishermen we find that 05 captains of this fishing boat, are sons of the owners.

This kind of a phenomenon, we cannot find it in the other boats as long as the owners have entered this economic sector in a later time. They have no ready sons to command their fishing boats, but they use other fishermen who got a kind of experience in this sector. This does not mean that these owners are not preparing their sons to reach one day the position of commanding their proper fishing boats.

Table N°7 confirms our statements clearly as it presents the occupational category of the sons of the fishing boat owners.

**Table N°7** presents the occupational of the sons of the fishing boat owners<sup>8</sup>

Fishing boat Owners	Number of children	Number of sons as fisherman	Sons' Occupational position
Retired fisherman	8	3	(1)-captain/ (1) engine man / ( 1) Lighter
Boat owner	6	4	(1) mousse / (1) engine man/(2)simple fishermen
Retired fisherman	5	3	(1)-captain/ (1) engine man/(1) simple fisherman
Retired fisherman	7	4	(1)-captain/ (1) engine man/(2)simple fishermen
Boat owner	5	2	(1) mousse / (1) engine man/
Boat owner	6	3	1) mousse / (1) engine man/(1) fishermen
Retired fisherman	7	4	(1)-captain/ (1) engine man / ( 2) S. fisherman
Retired fisherman	8	3	(1)-captain/ (1) engine man / ( 1) Lighter
Boat owner	7	3	(1) mousse/ (1) engine man / ( 1) Lighter
Boat owner	6	3	(1) engine man / ( 1) Lighter/ (1) S. Fisherman

It is clear from Table N°7 that the family represents a job guarantee for the sons. These later find themselves secure in their environment and they are attached to their tasks, especially among these persons who find that their parents and their grand parents left them this economic patrimony and they have to conserve it and transmit it to the coming generation. Addi claims that: " interfamilial solidarity, reposing on the common exploitation of the inheritance, is reinforced

<sup>8</sup> This table is constructed from the interviews, we conducted on the studying sample.

by the joint ownership that the father inherited his ascending and that it will transmit it to his male descendants ( Addi 1999, 42).

The fishing boat represents a fishing job guarantee not only for the sons but even for the members of the large family as well. We treat in the following paragraphs the role of family relationship in recruiting the member of the family. One respondent says:

" Now in all the boats you find about 50 % of the crew who have the same family name. They are right they can not leave their family members unemployed and employ other person. There is a priority, every person has this behavior, if I have a fishing boat I will employ the members of my family who are unemployed" (interviewee 45 years old)

### **5.1.1 Recruiting brothers and brothers in law**

Brothers and brothers in law comes in the second position after the sons, they have many chances to get a place as fisherman. The family plays its role to ask for a place for these categories. The fishing boat owner feels certain psychological effect if he leaves his bother unemployed. He will try to find him a position in the fishing crew. At the same time the wife of the owner intervenes to ask a fishing position for his brother who left the school and he is unemployed. The wife is generally a daughter of a fisherman because "only a daughter of fisherman may be a good spouse for the fisherman" (Geistdoerfer 1997, 654).

The same attitudes, we find it in the boat of the captain who has to employ his brother and his brother in law if they have no salaried jobs. All the members of the family may insist on the boat captain to employ his brothers.

Among the interviewed fisherman, we find 02 brothers and 01 brother in law of the fishing boat owner and 03 bothers and 2 brothers in law of the boat captain. The captain has a power in the boat and he can employ his brothers in each boat he commands. One respondents states:

" Here in this port, there are some captains who have the same crew, especially his family members. They can not stay in the boat where they used to work if their captain leave the boat they have to follow him and they may stay unemployed for a while until their captain find another boat to command". (Interviewee30 years old)

### **5.1.2 Recruiting nephews**

Nephews are another members of the family that this latter has to intervene to find them a place among the crew. The same mechanism of recruitment is used

as the one used for the brothers. The fishing boat owner or the captain has to respect the desire of their sisters or their bothers in order to employ their sons. Otherwise, the grand mother or the grand father, as respected members of the family, asks their sons to get a solution to these unemployed nephews. At the same time, the wife of either the fishing boat owner or the captain asks their husbands for a possibility of getting a fishing place among the crew. Table N° 8 shows the number of nephews in the studying boats.

**Table N° 8** presents nephews' family relations to the owners, the captains and their spouses

The number of fishing boat	Owners' nephews	Spouse owners' nephews	Captains' nephews	Spouse captains' nephews
I	2	1	1	0
II	1	2	3	2
III	2	0	2	1
IV	0	1	0	1
V	2	1	1	1
VI	1	0	0	1
VII	2	1	1	2
IIIX	1	0	0	1
IX	0	0	1	0
X	2	1	0	2

It is clear from Table N° 8 that the family has played a major role in finding for these nephews an occupational position among the crew. And we find the influence of the spouse on her husband on accepting employing her nephews, as long as he employs his nephews. One respondent says:

" The captain of the boat is my aunt's husband. He employed his nephews and then he employed me because my aunt has seen me unemployed for along time, this is why she asked her husband to recruit me among his crew. I thank him for recruiting the family, no one can employ you, you have to get certain relationship with the owner or the captain in order to reach the fisherman position" (interviewee 20 years old)

Another respondent states:

" I left school at the age of sixteen, I stayed for two years searching for a stable job but I did not find any job. You should have relationships to get a job. I did not want in the first times, to work in the fishing sector as my father was a fisherman and he died in the sea by an accident. But at the end I accepted to work as a fisherman to support my family after the proposition of my uncle who asked me to work with him in this fishing boat" (interviewee 19 years old)

### 5.1.3 Recruiting cousins and neighbors

Cousins are other categories who have the power a family relationship that helps them to acquire a place in fishing boat. The employment strategy can not differ from the one used with other members of the family. Mothers and grand mothers have the power to ask their relatives to employ employed cousins and even the fishing boat owner or the captain prefer to employ his cousin to conserve certain honor to the family and he can not accept to see one of the relatives without.

The cousins have the priority from the other people who ask for the recruitment.

Addi explains the same kind of family solidarity in other Algerian economic sectors when he states that:

"The 'tribalisme' is in the façade, and it calls upon solidarity chalk-linings to be in position of force concerning the recruitment of employees. .. These workmen issued from (the director's) village of origin, whose grand mother of one worker is cousin of grand mother of his wife, whose father of the other one is a childhood friend of his father etc.." (Addi 1999, 170).

In fishing boats we studied, we have found 7 fishermen who have family relationship either with fishing boat owners or captains and their spouses. They are cousins and they find themselves in a kind of a familial unity that they have to defend it and preserve it for the coming generation. The fishing boat is a familial patrimony that some owners give it the family name, or the name of a grand father or mother that represent and conserve the familial solidarity.

Neighbors are the other remaining fishermen who have the possibility to get an occupational position in the boat. The mother, the father, the grand mother or the grand father, play a major role as an intermediate to get in the fishing boat owner or the captain's home in order to ask for their sons a fishing job. The majority of our respondents live in the same city as the fishing boat owner or the captain and they find that they know each other.

There is a mechanical solidarity between them as they have the priority of getting a fishing job than the other persons who come from other cities. The city of Sidi Amar has been the main city where a fishing community has developed since the appearance of the fishing task in Ghazaouet area.

The family has the main role in finding a job for its sons, as due to their nature of timidity as we mentioned it earlier, these fishermen could not ask the captain for a fishing place. They generally send their mothers or their wife to the

home of the captain to ask the wife of the fishing boat owner or the wife of the captain to intervene for a fishing job.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Fishing has been the main economic sector in the region of Ghazaouet that participate in the creation of employment of the native population. The colonizer developed this activity by the investment in fishing boats and the creation of fish canning units in the region. These activities had a good influence on the employment, it used to feed thousands of the native population.

The depart of the colonizer does not affect the destiny of this activity as some local families inherited some fishing boat and a certain know how, that led the fishing port of Ghazaouet reaches the first places of the Algerian fishing ports in matters of fishing. This has been encouraged by the socio-economic occurred in the region that led it to be open on other cities of the hinterland towns.

This situation has encouraged the local fishing fishermen to ask for bank credits in order to renew their fishing boats. At the same time the development of this sector in the area has encouraged other local rich persons and even immigrants to invest in this sector and enlarge the number of fishing boats and the labor demand as well.

The creation of employment in this sector has benefited the local young persons who failed in their education. They find the fishing sector as a solution of their unemployment and they base on their family to intervene in order to find them a fishing job in good fishing boats to rise their earnings and revenues.

In our field study we find that the family has played a major role in recruiting their relatives and their neighbors. The fishing boats used to work with 15 or 16 fisherman, but due to the problem of unemployment and the usually intervene of the families in asking for fishing position, now most of fishing boats work with 22 or 23 fishermen even if there is a development of fishing equipment.

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Printed in Italy in February 2002  
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I – 50016 San Domenico (FI)  
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