

# Review of: "Mental health in fishing communities: An overview of current knowledge and information gaps for fisheries"

Jamie Snook<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dalhousie University

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Hi Beaven Utete,

My name is Jamie Snook and I got an invite from the journal to review your article. I live in Canada on the traditional homelands of the Innu and Inuit in Labrador. My PhD is in Public Health and I work in the fish and wildlife co-management sector. Your study was interesting to me because I also come from a small fishing village with a rich history of colonization through the fishery in the area where I am from. I am sure the way these fisheries were managed continues to cause mental health challenges.

I've written a systematic literature review [\[1\]](#), and assisted with others so I am hoping this feedback finds you well and is received in the spirit in which it is shared. I say this because the topic of mental health is incredibly important and by bringing attention to it through your work you are making a positive contribution. More so, given the results that show less of this study is happening in low income countries.

1. While this is a scoping review and not a systematic literature review I think there are some things that can be applied to this article to help the reader understand your methods and results better.
  1. One of the aims of your paper is to "identify the breadth of mental health aspects in fisheries literature." The results are presented by geographic region because one of your other aims is to, "establish the geographic focus of the fisheries mental health literature". I am suggesting that a table in your results that captures all the mental aspects of the literature would be helpful and bring out these important topics in a clear way. I would suggest that the results could also be organized that way but I understand that your analysis does have a spatial objective to it.
2. I have a few comments for your methods sections.
  1. On page three you reference the databases that you used and I was just surprised that PubMed was not in the list given the topic area.
  2. For your document selection on page 3, it would be helpful if there was some indication of your inclusion and exclusion criteria. It is not clear how you got from 7452 to 83 items. Did you use any software for example? Did you have a second reviewer?
  3. Also on page 3 is the start of your analysis explanation. I am not familiar with AQUAD 7 and feel like you should

share more about what it is, and how you used it to analyze the 83 items presumably.

4. I would consider developing a figure that helps illustrate for the reader all the steps to your methodology.
5. I don't have any comments on the hotspot mapping or knowledge on the formulas.

3. Some comments on the results.

1. A definition of "significant frequency of recurrence" would be helpful.
2. My first instinct was to look for a table of the 83 items you analyzed. I would recommend a table that could organize the items by title, author, year, mental health topics, and spatial location.
3. For figures 1, 2, and 3 there needs to be a more elaborate caption to help guide the reader in being able to interpret what the figures are intended to communicate.
4. Given the broad geographic areas, I am thinking that this again would support the use of a table. In North America for example, I was interested to see if there were any Canadian examples but I could not tell as is.
5. Given the importance of bringing attention to the mental health challenges described in your results I'd think more about how this could be highlighted. The topics are so important and serious that they are a little lost in the geographic way that the results narrative is shared.
6. In your discussion you reference, "Studies on the mental health of fishers are more concentrated in high income European and North America continents with fewer studies in lower income continents such as Africa and Asia." I think this is true from your hotspot maps but other than based on the quantity of studies done, I am not sure if that is the main point, or the only point as a driver. Can you go deeper into your analysis and thoughts of why this might be. Can you get more data on this from your use of AQUAD 7 for example.

4. Minor category:

1. At the top of page 2, I'd use a more updated reference than, International Labour Organisation, 1999.
2. On page nine when the sentence starts with, "the incidences of health issues.....", should that be a block quote?

I hope this is helpful for your paper. In summary, I'd expand on your analysis, clarify the methods, and help the reader with some tables and figures to understand your results. Thank you for shedding light on an important topic.

Advancements in this area would help the well-being of so many people around the globe involved in small-scale fisheries. It could be argued that it is ocean equity and justice to be able to enjoy a livelihood on the sea. With that said, I'd be curious to know if any of the papers documented positive mental health benefits from fishing?

Kind regards,

Jamie

## References

1. <sup>^</sup> Jamie Snook, Ashlee Cunsolo, James Ford, Chris Furgal, et al. (2022). *The connection between wildlife co-*

*management and indigenous well-being: What does the academic literature reveal?. Wellbeing, Space and Society, vol. 3 , 100116. doi:10.1016/j.wss.2022.100116.*