

**BEYOND THE CATCH: EXAMINING THE GENDERED AND MIGRANT
WORKFORCE IN SCOTLAND'S FISH-PROCESSING INDUSTRY**

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Research on the fishing industry often centres on the male-dominated catching sector, neglecting the post-harvest fishery historically sustained by fishermen's wives. This study explores how industrialisation, social change, and migration have reshaped Scotland's fish-processing sector, which is now 80% migrant in the research site. It asks how women's fishing identities are constructed and how they experience wellbeing. The research was part of a qualitative doctoral study using ethnographic fieldwork and Photovoice in a Scottish fishing community. A wellbeing framework guided the analysis across three groups: (1) fishermen's wives, and (2 & 3) migrant and local women fish processors. To deepen the social analysis, an intersectional lens was applied to their experiences.

Findings show that women's identities were shaped by policies that both enabled and constrained them and shaped their identities. In their wellbeing experiences, women were not passive recipients of material conditions but actively cultivated wellbeing through relational investments in family and community. While material security was essential yet unevenly distributed, relational wellbeing, rooted in marriage, kinship, and community, ultimately defined their lived experiences. These relational skills were common across the groups, but migrant women in particular acted as "kinkeepers" (Rosenthal 1985), fostering social networks critical to surviving policy failure, racial capitalism, and gendered expectations that produced everyday precarity.