CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

Social capital and social wellbeing among the coastal communities of Kanyakumari district are the core issues to be explored in this study. The present study posits that a strong and vibrant social capital is the key element for a community to prosper. Social capital generally refers to trust, concern for one’s associates, a willingness to live by the norms of one’s community and punish those who do not. It reflects of how people interact in their daily lives in families, neighbourhood and work place (Bowles and Gintis, 2000). Social capital is viewed to be as a resource rooted in social structure that may aid in the pursuit of a wide variety of beneficial outcomes (Krishna, 2007). To possess social capital, a person must be related to others, and it is those others, not himself, who are the actual source of his or her advantage. People may pay their debts in time, give alms to charity, and obey traffic rules because they feel an obligation to behave in this manner. The internalized norms that make such behaviors possible are then appropriable by others as a resource (Putnam, 1993). In this instance, the holders of social capital are other members of the community who can extend loans without fear of nonpayment, benefit from private charity, or send their kids to play in the street without concern. Coleman (1988) refers to this source in his analysis of norms and sanctions: "Effective norms that
inhibit crime make it possible to walk freely outside at night in a city and enable old persons to leave their houses without fear for their safety.”

What constitutes social capital in the present study is that social and historical dimensions of coastal people’s lived social capital practices that are located and built upon. The dimensions of social capital such as group participation, trust, generalized norms, togetherness, everyday sociability, reciprocity, neighbourhood connections, and voluntarism are the main focus of investigation. The impacts of social capital on the indicators of social wellbeing such as breadth and depth of belonging, positive attitude towards others, contributing to broader society, pro-social behaviours, and belief that society can develop positively are measured in the present study. The strengths of social capital and social wellbeing come into play when communities have to deal with conflict, problems or change. A community with high accumulations of social capital will be able to manage difficulties while one with low levels will manage less well. This is likely to be because collective action involves the use of norms and networks in situations where individuals might otherwise be reluctant to be co-operative or socially engaged. Using these indicators, the present research aims to study the level of social capital and its role in improving the social wellbeing of coastal communities in Kanyakumari district.
SOCIAL INTERACTION AS BASIS FOR SOCIAL RELATIONS

Social interactions pervade all aspects of life. They are inextricable part of social life. The network of social interactions determines the human environment. Social interaction holds together the social system.

Levinger & Huesmann (1976) presents a beautiful view of how interaction between two people can progress possibly at four levels leading to stronger relations, capable of producing social capital.

Level I  Zero contact
(Two unrelated persons)

Level II  Awareness
(No interaction)

Level III  Surface contact
(Some interaction)

Level IV  Mutuality
(Minor interaction)

Level V  Total unity
(Major interaction)
At the first level, there is no contact between A and B. It is possible that in society people will not even know of each other’s existence in spite of living with each other in neighbourhoods. At the second level A and B become aware of one another; this is before any interaction takes place. At the third level, there is an interaction, which takes place in the form of surface contact. Here persons begin to find out about the other in terms of likes and dislikes, beliefs, values etc. Fourth level is concerned with the types of relationship both A and B will enter into i.e. the development of relationship based on mutuality. Levinger characterizes this on a continuum ranging from acquaintance (minor interaction) to strong friendship (major interaction). Even though Levinger may explain the levels of interaction taking place at the individual level, it throws light on the kind of relationships that are possible to exist in a community. Homans (1950) defines social interaction as process of reciprocal stimulus and response between two or more persons or groups. According to Gillin and Gillin (1942), “Social process is a way of interacting when individuals and groups meet and establish systems of relationships or what happens when changes disturb already existing modes of life.” Social interactions become complicated because the environment an individual experiences is in part provided by social pattern. They describe people’s understanding and interpretation of social life. In his seminal book “Division of Labour in
Society”, Durkheim (1893) describes how the transformation of societies changes the nature of social interactions. In a traditional society, social interactions are generally built on a kind of “Mechanized Solidarity” among its members, which arises from the relative homogeneity of their activities. As the society develops, however, interactions shift towards “organic solidarity” as people engage in different specialized labour. According to Weber (1949), social interaction involves subjective interpretation of social life. That is the subjective meanings used by people in social interactions are a starting point for the objective analysis of society. As Weber wrote of action, it is social insofar as, by virtue of the subjective meaning attached to it by the acting individual(s), it takes account of the behaviour of other and is thereby oriented in its course. In contrast to Weber, the phenomenologist Schutz focuses on intersubjectivity that is, how people ‘make up’ the social world by sharing meanings and how they ‘get on’ with each other. He presupposes that there are shared meanings in the social world through which people interact with each other. In contrast to Schutz, Garfinkel (1967), who firmly established enthomethodology as a field of enquiry that seeks to understand the methods people employ to make sense out of their world, argues that one must do away with all presuppositions of social world. One must not try to uncover meanings behind appearances rather take those appearances at the face value. As a result, all social
interactions are treated as skilled performances by people and our presuppositions about the social world would then be open for full scrutiny.

SOCIAL RELATIONS

All patterns of human behaviours are the outcome of social interaction. Social interaction is about social relationship. It is a stimulus-response mechanism in human relationship. Social Relation takes its focus on the relationships between people and their social world. It can refer to a multitude of social interactions, regulated by social norms, between two or more people, with each having a social position and performing a social role. It could be argued that a social relation is simply a relation between people, but more specifically

- a relation between individuals insofar as they belong to a group,
- a relation between groups of people, or
- a relation between an individual and a group of people.

(Hawkley & Cacioppo, 2003)

The group could be an ethnic or kinship group, a social institution or organization, a social class or social stratum, a nation, a population, or a gender etc. The fruits of social relations are “the Social Assets” that is, “the Social Capital.” Social capital highlights the value of social relations. Social capital as social resources is determined by relationships and network, which exist with nuclear
and extended families, in and among communities and groups. These relations influence the way in which people can access and make use of their assets. Social relations based on trust, reciprocity, and exchange can contribute to a sense of wellbeing and belonging. Such informal social relations form the basis of informal safety nets, which people use to pursue their livelihood strategies in times of problems and emergencies (Sharma, 2005).

**TYPES OF CAPITAL**

Social capital is as one amongst other types of capital (natural capital, produced economic capital and human capital) that contribute to well being. Individuals, groups, and communities may have access to and use varying amounts of each type of capital, and there are also significant interactions that occur between the uses of different types of capital.

Black and Hughes (2001) have offered definitions for the different types of capital.

**Natural Capital**

Natural capital is considered to consist of natural resources, ecosystem services, and the aesthetics of nature. Natural resources are the material and energy inputs into production. Ecosystem services are the natural processes that we depend on in some way such as the process of conversion of carbon dioxide into oxygen by
trees. The aesthetics of nature are those aspects of nature valued for their beauty such as rainforests, seashores, birds and flowers.

**Produced Economic Capital**

Produced economic capital includes all products that are harvested or manufactured, the built environment, physical infrastructure that has been constructed and financial resources such as money.

**Human Capital**

Human capital is the knowledge, skills and health embodied in individuals. Human capital is defined as those aspects of a person that can be used to enhance their economic productivity including health, education, skills and capacity (eg motivation). Human capital can be measured using indicators such as educational attainment (Coffe, 2009).

**Cultural Capital**

Cultural capital is defined “specific behaviors, values, and skills transmitted among and between members of a population, including across generations, applied to their adaptation to specific environments including the transformation and utilization of natural, human, and social resources in those environments... Cultural and intellectual property is also form of produced economic capital.
Social Capital

Social capital deals networks, group membership, civic and political participation as well as subjective aspects such as confidence in institutions and trust in people. It is the feature of the community which considers the degree of civic engagement and the level of trust that exists among its members.

OECD – Organization for Economic and Cultural Development (2001) has identified some important ways in which social capital differs from other types of capital. Firstly social capital is relational rather than the property of any one individual, whereas some other forms of capital (human, produced economic and natural) can either belong to or be appropriated by individuals or businesses. Also important is that social capital is produced by societal investments of time and effort, but in a less direct fashion than is human or produced economic capital. Rather social capital is the result of historical, cultural and social factors, which give rise to norms, values, and social relations that bring people together in networks or associations, which result in collective action.

Social capital also differs from some of the other forms of capital in that it increases if used, through reinforcing the networks, norms and values, and decreases if not used. It takes a lot of positive effort to be built up incrementally, but can be quickly diminished. Social capital is characterized by features of social organization such as
trust, norms, reciprocity, networks and co-operation. They are non-material forms, invisible to eyes but having visible effects on the member(s) of the community in their social relations. When members in the communities are cemented with a constant form of social interaction it will creates a sense of belonging and concrete experience of the relationships of trust and tolerance in the community. This will bring great benefits to community (Robison et al, 2002). Trust between individuals becomes trust between strangers and trust of a broad fabric of social institutions; ultimately, it becomes a shared set of values, virtues, and expectations within the community as a whole. Without this interaction, on the one hand, trust decays; and on the other hand, this decay begins to manifest itself in serious social problems. “Whereas economic capital is in people’s bank accounts and human capital is inside their heads, social capital inheres in the structure of their relationships. To possess social capital, a person must be related to others, and it is these others, not himself, who are the actual source of his or her advantage (Portes, 1998). As an attribute of the social structure in which a person is embedded, social capital is not the private property of any of the persons who benefit from it (Coleman, 1990). It exists only when it is shared. Social capital is embedded in social structure and has public good characteristics (Narayan, 1997). The value of this term is that it explores the impact of social relations. Social capital is defined as the norms and social
relations embedded in the social structures of society that enable people to co-ordinate action and to achieve desired goals.

**Development of the Concept of Social Capital: Different Perspectives and Emphasis**

The concept of social capital has been traced back as far as 1961 to an article by Hanifan Lyda Judson a West Virginia school reformer, in the analysis of rural community centres (Winter, 2000). The author says that the social capital consists of goodwill, fellowship, mutual sympathy and social intercourse among a group of individuals and families who make up a social unit in daily life. If people in the community are exposed to their neighbour, and they with other neighbours, there will be an accumulation of social capital, which may immediately satisfy their social needs and which may bear a social potentiality sufficient to the substantial improvement of living conditions in the whole community (Hanifan, 1916).

The concept of social capital after some period of silence appears again in Jane Jacob’s work on urban planning. North American social science in the 1970s also witnessed passing reference to social capital in the work of economist (Loury, 1977) who observed that social capital is a set of resources in family relations and also in community/social organization, which is useful especially in the development and socialization of children (Karunanithi & Ramakrishnan, 2010). The term has been rediscovered within the
European sociological theatre by the work of Bourdieu (1986) who presents capital in three fundamental guises:

1. **Economic capital:**
   It is immediately convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights

2. **Cultural capital:**
   It is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of educational qualifications.

3. **Social capital:**
   It is made of social obligations, convertible on certain conditions into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of a title of nobility.

Bourdieu defines social capital as ‘the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to membership in a group- which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively owned capital.’ His particular application of the concept of social capital relates to understanding how individuals draw upon social capital to improve their economic standing in the capitalist societies. He holds that privileged individuals maintain their position by using their connections with other privileged people.
In comparison with Bourdieu, James Coleman (1990) uses different terms to define social capital, uses the concept for a different purpose, and works within a different theoretical, but fundamentally constructs the same theoretical concept. If Bourdieu is interested in social as a resource to economic capital for individuals, in a range of social settings, Coleman is interested in how social capital in family and community networks, is a resource to human capital for individuals. He is particularly concerned to understand variation in the educational achievement of high school children and the role that family support plays in this. The relationship between children and parents on the one hand and the children and the community around the school on the other hand play a crucial role in promoting the effectiveness of education that is unquestionably accumulating human capital.

**Social Capital Theory of James Coleman**

Coleman (1990) defines social capital as a function of social structure producing advantage. Various entities consist of some aspects of social structure; and which facilitates certain actions of individuals who are within the structure. Coleman sees the function of social capital as values and shared norms to underpin and sustain social order. He regards the concept of social capital typically as a resource, rooted in social structure that may aid in the pursuit of a wide variety of beneficial outcomes. For example, with regard to
childhood and adolescent outcomes, social capital has been hypothesized to foster the effective socialization of youth within families. He is interested in how social capital in family and community networks, is a resource to human capital for individuals. He considers social capital, not by what it is, but what it does, or by its function. He defines social capital as the component of human capital that allows members of a given society to trust one another and to cooperate in the formation of new groups and associations. In Coleman’s perspective, individuals do not act independently of each other but develop trust through continuous interactions. In other words, the pattern of social organizations and interactions determine social capital. For him, the degree of trustworthiness of social organizations is the most important form of social capital. Coleman’s view of ‘aspects of Social structure’ refers to comprise obligations and expectations, information channels, norms and effective sanctions that constrain and or encourage certain kinds of behaviour and these exist in the relations among persons. If A does something for B and trusts B to reciprocate in the future, this establishes an expectation in A and obligation on the part of B. Information is said to be as basis for action and norms, and effective sanctions are said to facilitate certain form of action and constrain others. Coleman speaks of network closure as social capital. Linkages exist among members of a community, which he simply calls it as networks closure because it
promotes feelings of social belonging, trust, and reciprocity within a closed circle of family and friends.

After Bourdieu, Loury, and Coleman, a number of theoretical analyses of social capital have been published. In 1990, Baker defined the concept as "a resource that actors derive from specific social structures and then use to pursue their interests; it is created by changes in the relationship among actors" (Baker 1990). More broadly, M Schiff defines the term as "the set of elements of the social structure that affect relations among people and are inputs or arguments of the production and/or utility function" (Schiff 1992).

Granovetter (1973) coined the term "strength of weak ties" to refer to the power of indirect influences outside the immediate circle of family and close friends to serve as an informal employment referral system. As Granovetter had noted, teenagers seldom find jobs; instead jobs come to them through the mediation of parents and other adults in their immediate community. The idea was original because it ran contrary to the commonsense notion that dense networks such as those available through family circles would be most effective in finding jobs. Almost two decades later, Burt (1992) built on Granovetter's insight by developing the concept of "structural holes." Burt did employ the term social capital and, like Bourdieu's, his definition is instrumental. In Burt's case, however, social capital is based on the relative paucity of network ties rather than on their
density. Burt sees it as "friends, colleagues, and more general contacts through whom you receive opportunities to use your financial and human capital" (Burt 1992). Whereas Coleman and Loury had emphasized dense networks as a necessary condition for the emergence of social capital, Burt highlights the opposite situation. In his view, it is the relative absence of ties, labeled "structural holes," that facilitates individual mobility. This is so because dense networks tend to convey redundant information, while weaker ties can be sources of new knowledge and resources.

Putnam (1993, 1998, 2000) operationalized the concept of social capital as “trust, norms and networks” that facilitate cooperation for mutual benefits. This definition recognizes that both networks and shared norms play a role in creating the conditions for co-operative behaviours among people based on trust. For Putnam, the dense network of secondary associations generates social capital and civic spirit through norms of reciprocity, trust that develops as a result of the networks of interaction that accompany membership in such associations. Trust among members of associations also is believed to have a radiating effect on society in general, leading to some form of generalized trust. The aspect of social capital said by Putnam is the norm of generalized reciprocity that fuels social trust. This is the trust possessed by community members that their short-term altruistic
actions that contribute other’s welfare, will be rewarded at some point in the future.

Putnam identifies six dimensions to social capital:

1. Formality- there are both formal and informal types of civic engagement;

2. Purpose-some institutions are public rewarding, some are private rewarding.

3. Bridging- bonds of trust and reciprocity can bridge cleavages in society or, conversely, bring like-minded or like-ethnic individuals together;

4. Immediacy- trust may stem from immediate face-to-face connections or generalized anonymous bonds;

5. Strandedness/Intensity- at one end of this spectrum are durable, intense, and multi-stranded networks (i.e. people know each other through multiple, overlapping networks)

6. Social location- neighbourhood ties represent the place-based end of the social capital spectrum, while Internet groups represent the function-based end.

Putnam holds that ‘whereas physical capital refers to physical objects and human capital refers to the properties of individuals, social capital refers to connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them. In that sense, social capital is closely related to what some
have called “civic virtue.” The difference is that “social capital” calls attention to the fact that civic virtue is most powerful when embedded in a sense network of reciprocal social relations. A society of many virtuous but isolated individuals is not necessarily rich in social capital' (Putnam, 2000).

Fukuyama (1995, 2000) defined social capital as “an instantiated informal norm that promotes co-operation between two or more individuals”. The norms that constitute social capital can range from reciprocity among friends, to complex and articulated doctrines such as religions. The emphasis here is on two key words: Co-operation and Instantiation. The potential social norms are instantiated in a given social relationship (for instance, the norm of reciprocity in a friendship) in order to establish mutually benefitting co-operation. Here, the economic term ‘capital’ can be explained by instantiation of norms-hiding in social relationship and aiming at co-operation-can be used to build and destroy society similar to material/physical and human capital.

Woolcock (2004), a social scientist with World Bank makes a distinction between three types of social capital. He distinguishes between

1. **Bonding capital** deals with the ties that exist within small units like the family, close friends, and neighbours. It remains
instrumental in strengthening social cohesion, group trust and collective identity.

2. **Bridging capital** - the ties that exist across the entire community. It is the linkages existing among members of different communities/entities. It facilitates members’ connections to groups and institutions beyond their close circles. In doing so, it may facilitate access to valuable resources outside the immediate community, including information about jobs, services, and other assets.

3. **Linking capital** - the ties that exist between community and the state of other relevant power groups. It is composed of norms of respect and networks of trusting relationship between people who are interacting across explicit, formal, or institutionalized power or authority in society. While bridging social capital connects individuals of more-or-less equal social status, linking social capital connects those of unequal status, providing them with access to power.

Gittel and Vidal (1998) elaborate the concepts of *bonding social capital* and *bridging social capital*. Bonding refers to the value assigned to social networks between homogeneous groups of people and Bridging refers to that of social networks between socially heterogeneous groups. Typical examples are that criminal gangs create bonding social capital, while choir and bowling clubs create
bridging social capital. Bridging social capital is argued to have a host of other benefits for societies, governments, individuals, and communities. The distinction is useful in highlighting how social capital may not always be beneficial for society as a whole though it is always an asset for those individuals and groups involved. Horizontal networks of individual citizens and groups that enhance community productivity and cohesion are said to be positive social capital assets whereas self-serving exclusive gangs and hierarchical patronage systems that operate at cross-purposes to societal interests can be thought of as negative social capital burdens on society.

Furstenberg and Hughes (1995) defines social capital as the stocks of social goodwill created through shared social norms and a sense of common membership from which individuals may draw in their efforts to achieve collective or personal objectives (Furstenberg and Hughes, 1995).

Paul (1997) states, "Social capital represents the degree of social cohesion which exists in communities. It refers to the processes between people which establish networks, norms and social trust, and facilitate co-ordination and co-operation for mutual benefit".

Paldam and Svendsen (2000) define social capital as the level of trust within a group, rather than just as one of its components, where the group may extend to the whole society. This definition reduces de facto social capital to trust and implies that measures of trust provide
the best single indicator of the level of social capital in a group. This reductionist definition of social capital is not the one shared by most authors, which rather regards trust as one of the most important components of social capital, but is very influential in empirical research where very often trust is used as a proxy to measure social capital.

Norton (2001) say that "the building of healthy communities through collective, mutually beneficial interactions and accomplishments, particularly those demonstrated through social and civic participation".

Castle (2002) defines social capital for social work as a process of building trusting relationships, mutual understanding and shared actions that bring together individuals, communities and institutions. The author also claims that the processes involved facilitate further cooperative action. These generate opportunities and/or resources that are realized through networks, shared norms and social agency.

**SOURCES OF SOCIAL CAPITAL**

Portes (1998) differentiates two sources of social capital, and two kinds of consequence. One source he calls *consummatory*, deriving from socialization processes in families, kin networks, class and occupational groups; and the other he calls *instrumental*, entailing purposive exchanges based on expectations of reciprocity. He also points out that the outcomes can be either *positive* or *negative*. 
There are also numbers of key sources of social capital

1. **Families**: As the main source of economic and social welfare for its members, the family is the first building block in the generation of social capital for the larger society. Social capital resides in families and rather a narrow circle of personal friends. Furstenberg & Hughes argues that families operate, as tiny social system, a sort of microcosm of the wider community. In the families, couples stay together, interact and develop a reciprocal understanding of values and practices especially when they have children. In this sense, social capital operates as a resource generated within families that, at its best, functions to create meaningful and sustaining relationship.

   "**Family cohesion**" is defined as the degree of emotional bonding among family members. It is an indication of interpersonal attachment at the emotional level. Strong family cohesion also motivates a family to stay committed to the family firm. Social capital also enables the family to function as a team as they are agreed on norms and trust each other. They also have agreement on goals. Social capital operates as the glue that bonds the core family members, extended family, loyal staff, and business networks together. It also serves as a "lubricant" as it enables the families to bridge across to other family businesses, new contacts, and business opportunities (Olson et al, 1988).
2. **Communities:** Social interaction among neighbours and friends brings about social capital which promotes the ability to work together for a common good. This is especially important for the poor as social capital can be used as a substitute for humans and physical capital.

3. **Civil society:** Social capital is crucial to the success of any non-organization because it provides opportunities for participation and gives voice to those who may be locked out of more formal avenues to affect change.

4. **Public sector:** The public sector i.e. the state and its institution, is central to the functioning and welfare of any society.

5. **Ethnicity:** Ethic relations come up frequently in discussions of social capital. Whether it is immigration, micro enterprise development, tribal nepotism or racial conflict, ethnicities is a clean example of how actors who share common values and culture can be banded together for mutual benefits.

6. **Gender:** Gender relations are very important for social networks (Hulme, 2000).

**USE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL**

1. Social capital allows citizen to resolve collective problems more easily. People often might be better off if they cooperate with each other doing their share.
2. Social capital greases the wheels that allow communities to advance smoothly. Where people are trusting and trustworthy, and where they are subject to repeated interactions with fellow citizens, everyday business and social transactions are less costly.

3. Social capital improves our lot by widening our awareness of the many ways in which our fates are linked. When people lack connections to others, they are unable to test the veracity of their own views, whether in the give and take of casual conversation or in more formal deliberations. Without such an opportunity, people are more likely to be swayed by their worse impulses (Putnam, 2000).

4. The networks that constitute social capital also serve as conduits for the flow of helpful information that facilitates achieving our goals.

5. Social capital is important for policy-making. It is from the elements of social capital in individual’s families and communities, the policies are drawn, justified and legitimized. Social capital impacts outputs by providing human capital and access to other resources (Woolcock, 2000).

**SOCIAL WELLBEING**

Wellbeing is a widely used term and there is currently no universally accepted definition. There has, however, been increasing discourse, measurement and action on wellbeing in policy and
practice over recent years, as well as a growing body of academic research in the field.

The definition of the concept of ‘community wellbeing’, as noted in Australia’s Rural Assist Information Network, refers to “an optimal quality of healthy community life, which is the ultimate goal of all the various processes and strategies that endeavor to meet the needs of people living together in communities.”

In 2006, the UK Government cross-departmental Whitehall Wellbeing Working Group sought to develop a ‘shared understanding’ of wellbeing. Wellbeing, it states, is:

“a positive physical, social and mental state; it is not just the absence of pain, discomfort and incapacity. It requires that basic needs are met, that individuals have a sense of purpose, and that they feel able to achieve important personal goals and participate in society. It is enhanced by conditions that include supportive personal relationships, strong and inclusive communities, good health, financial and personal security, rewarding employment, and a healthy attractive environment” (Abdallah et al, 2008).

The terms, such as social wellbeing, social welfare, and human development are often used as equivalent or analogous terms. Social wellbeing is the appraisal of one’s circumstances and functioning in society. This aspect has its philosophical roots in Aristotle’s concept of
eudaimonia, the life well lived, and creates a bridge between the more private realm of personal happiness to the more public issues of competencies, freedoms and opportunities. These ideas have been powerfully elaborated in the work of Amartya Sen (1999) which highlights the necessity of having freedom and democracy in order for individuals to develop their capabilities and function effectively.

Social wellbeing adopts a definition of well-being, which incorporates not only how people feel, e.g. the experiences of pleasure, enjoyment, satisfaction, but also how people function, e.g. their sense of autonomy, competence, interest, engagement and meaning or purpose in life. It gives emphasis to inter-personal, or social well-being as well as personal well-being. Social well-being measures breadth and depth of belonging, positive attitude towards others, contributing to broader society, pro-social behaviours, belief that society can develop positively. Social well-being is not merely to be a recipient of what other people or society have to offer, whereas it is about what the individual does for other people or for his community. In other words, it is about pro-social behaviour. It is concerned with reducing anti-social behaviour, which builds social capital, improves the well-being of both the person behaving pro-socially, and those around them.

One investigator who has taken a particular interest in social wellbeing is Keyes (1998) who suggests that it can be studied in terms
of five components: social coherence, social integration, social acceptance, social contribution and social actualization.

**Social Integration**

Social integration is the evaluation of the quality of one’s relationship to society and community. Integration is the extent to which people feel they have something in common their social reality as well as the degree to which they feel that they belong to their communities and society. Social integration draws on conceptions of social cohesion (Durkheim), cultural estrangement and social isolation (Seeman), and class-consciousness (Marx). According to Durkheim, the benefit of social integration is the sense of belonging and interdependence, and a sense of shared consciousness through norms and collective fate. In Seeman’s view, cultural estrangement and social isolation is the cleavage of self from society. Estrangement is the rejection of society or realization that society does not reflect one’s own values and lifestyle. Social isolation is the breakdown of personal relationships that provide meaning and support. According to Karl Marx social integration is the construal of collective membership and fate.

**Social Acceptance**

Social acceptance is the construal of society through the character and qualities of other people as a generalized category. Individuals who illustrate social acceptance trust others, think that
others are capable of kindness, and believe that people can be industrious. Socially accepting people hold favourable views of human nature and feel comfortable with others. Social acceptance is the social analogue to personal acceptance.

**Social Contribution**

It is the evaluation of one’s social value. It includes the belief that one is a vital member of society, with something of value to give to the world. It means giving to others or doing thing for others. It reflects whether, and to what degree, people feel that whatever they do in the world is valued by society and contributes to common wealth. This is an important contribution to our general well-being.

**Social Actualization**

It is the evaluation of the potential and the trajectory of society. This is the belief in the evolution of society and the sense that society has potential, which is being realized through its institutions and citizens. Parallel to self-determinism, social actualization is the sense that society controls its destiny. The focus on the realization of social potential also is similar to the theme of self-realization.

**Social Coherence**

It is the perception of the quality, organization, and operation of the social world and it includes a concern for knowing about the world. People care about the kind of world in which they live in, but also feel that they can understand what is happening around them.
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The coastal communities are traditional societies. They are often segmentary. They are composed of a large number of identical self-contained social units. They live along the coastal shoreline with limited social networks. It is often said that there is an existence of social mistrust and intolerance in the communities. Their interpersonal relationship with their fellowmen is said to be superficial. There is limited form of social interaction among many of the members of the community. The nature of their main occupation, i.e. venturing into the sea for days together, does not allow them enough time or space for continuous social interaction in the residential or community settings. They are increasingly becoming disconnected from families, friends, neighbours, and daily community affairs.

Apart from religious structures, there is no secular democratic structure as such in which, they can interact; decide upon their needs of their communities. They are closed social groups with less access to ideas and information. In view of social relations, there is a need to take into consideration a complex whole of system involving an interaction between physical resources, and the human activities. Modes of production in fishing are inevitably embedded in social relations. People confront nature through social interaction and relations and the mental universe is produced, reproduced and
transformed into these relations. The mental universe is the fragmentary, contradictory and ambivalent realm of knowledge, ideas, values, norms, belief, and expectations.

Most of the fishing communities are geographically isolated from the mainstream development. This is indicated in their limited access to infrastructure and development assistance, poor transport and communication system and vulnerability to natural disasters. The poor quality of life is also reflected in their sub-standard housing and sanitation systems, and their meager accesses to basic amenities such as clean drinking water and healthcare. Many diseases are attributable to the unsafe, unhealthy and unhygienic working and living environment and of their poor healthcare facilities. Alcoholism contributes not only to poor health condition but also poses a serious threat to the co-existence of fellowmen. The rates of literacy in coastal villages contribute to be below the national average.

Seasonal nature of fishing occupation poses another serious threat to the quality of life. There is a lack of alternative income sources during lean season. When the fishermen want to invest for fishing assets, they borrow money from the moneylenders on high interest rate. They cannot approach the banking agencies because they ask for security. Therefore, their usual creditors are intermediaries. Due to lack of adequate intuitional credit facilities on reasonable terms, fisher folk are forced to depend on informal credit,
which brings in a number of disadvantages to fishing communities such as low price for catch, high rate of interest and perpetual indebtedness. The economic relations of affluent members in the fishing communities are one of exploiting agency.

There is a pattern of corporate system crewmembers team. Even though, they show a strong bond, corporation and camaraderie among co-workers at seas, their interpersonal relations with other fellowmen are sometimes found to be with conflicts, alienation and superficiality. This dichotomy still continues to exist in coastal communities.

The fishing communities socially are dispersed, politically disorganized, unaware of their rights of appeal, and unable to take time off from fishing activities to press upon their grievances. Fishers who works at sea are frequently dissociated from their families and everyday community affairs, which promoters their estrangement from the non-fishing populace and stress and instability within their own families. The household patterns are female-headed.

Fisher folk are not poor but made poor by their social customs. Social functions call for extravagant and irrational spending. Dowry system is a vicious tyrant. Many families are destroyed in consequence. The family relations are governed by mutual obligations. The community problems are rarely taken to civil courts but are settled by the community elders.
Many fishing livelihood tasks can be taken without formal education. Their spiritual life is closely interconnected with the sea. Fishing at sea involves risks and uncertainties. As a result, many fishers develop elaborate sets of magical belief, ritualized behavior and taboos, superstitious practices that facilitate the psychological coping with these risks.

Many studies have been conducted on the socio-economic status of the fishing communities. These studies provide vital background information to the present study. They focus more on the economic aspect of the fishing communities and accordingly offer quantitative data. The earlier studies, however, have neglected the importance of social capital embedded in the social relations of members of fishing communities. They have failed to view how an individual’s wellbeing may grow when the community members are interconnected. The present study treats social capital and social wellbeing as inseparable components of the social dynamics of community life. It looks closely into the empirical evidence to explain analytically verifiable indicators of social capital and social wellbeing. A community, which has adequate social resources or social capital and which has avenues for its members to participate collectively in the wide areas of social development activities, will be able to maintain and enhance social wellbeing among its members. The present study focuses on social capital and social wellbeing of coastal communities. It investigates how social capital works in the coastal community in maintaining social wellbeing of its members.