The purpose of this study is to find out the impact of social capital on the social wellbeing of the coastal communities of Kanyakumari district. There are a few sociological and anthropological studies of Indian fishing communities. Scanty ethnographic and allied information on this group is available in travelogues and in district gazetteers. Thurston (1987), Nagam Aiya, (1906) L.K. Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909), Vellupillai (1940) and William Logan (1951) are a few such sources mostly based on oral tradition and on material available on fishermen’s traditional occupation.

Ram (1991) presents a detailed survey on the basic information of the fishing communities in Kanyakumari district gathered on age pattern, educational level, size of residential units, household information, credit generation, marriage payments, health care, kinship system, social net of production and exchange fishing crafts and gears, labour process in traditional and mechanized sectors. The author states that with adoption of mechanization of fishing crafts and gears, the fishing communities have been exposed to new forces for change in the most intimate facets of life: work, marriage, and living pattern. The fishing communities in Kanyakumari district had to some extent entered into new form of investment, which in turn introduced them in to a global made of production. The relations of ownership,
authority, distribution, trade and exchange have articulated fishing with wider economy.

In 1992, a study was done by Peppin on ‘Production Relations in fish Economy and its impact on the health and wellbeing of fishermen in Kanyakumari district’. It revealed that technology played an important role in fish production. In the case of Kanyakumari district, fishing technology has undergone a revolutionary change, since 1956 when, under the Indo-Norwegian Project (INP), the fishery sector was subjected to mechanization in Kerela. Introduction of trawlers led to the following consequences.

1. Fishing community was sharply divided into mechanized boat owners and traditional fishermen.
2. Traditional fishermen began to resist the use of trawlers as they felt that the sea-bed in their areas of operation was destroyed by the trawl-nets which led to the depletion of resources that were the main sources of income for the traditional fishermen.
3. The motorization of traditional crafts was introduced as an option for the agitating traditional fishermen. Later, the traditional crafts such as Kattumaram and the boat-canoe or Vallam made of wood and plywood were replaced by fibre.
4. Thus, the workers and owners of traditional-motorized-mechanized crafts came into existence.
A survey method was used to study on the ‘Basic needs of 39 coastal fishing communities in Kanyakumari district, Tamil Nadu, India’ by Vernduijn (2000). It was conducted to investigate and prioritize problems regarding services and infrastructure such as a safe drinking water, sanitation, Health Care facilities, land availability and housing, schooling, washing, and bathing water, electricity, road access and telephone. The findings of the study are shown in the diagram.

The most urgent need of the fishing communities is inaccessibility to safe drinking water (43%), 26% of sanitation, 15% of health care, 8% of schooling, 5% of land availability, 3% of water for bathing and washing respectively.
Concept of Community

The village community is often nostalgically interpreted as an ideal of human relationships and community bonding. According to Tonnies who has coined the contrastive typology of gemeinschaft / gesellschaft (usually translated as community / society), these are ideal types which never existed. He defines gemeinschaft-like relations as based on natural will with key elements such as sentiment, tradition and common bonds. It is characterized by a “strong identification with the community, emotionalism, traditionalism and holistic conceptions of other members of the community (i.e. viewing another as a total person rather than only as a segment of his status or viewing a person as signification in her own rights rather than as a means to an end). In contrast, gesellschaft-like relations are based on a rational will governed by rationality, individualism and emotional disengagement. It is characterized by “little or no identification with the community, affective neutrality, legalism, and segmental conceptions of other members of the community. Instead of expecting human organizations to fall into either one of the two types, Tonnies maintains that it is more realistic to expect them to fall somewhere between the two, “what they represent are ideal types, and they serve as standards by which reality may be recognized and described.” (Tonnies, 1975).
SOCIAL CAPITAL

Social capital is fast becoming a core concept in many contexts ranging from studies in family, youth behaviour (Bourdieu and Waequant 1992), schooling (Coleman 1990), public health, community life (Lin Nan, 2001), larger system (Burt 1992; Putnam 1993).

Social capital is characterized by trust, norms, networks, reciprocity, and collective action, which are non-material forms of capital, invisible to the eyes but having visible effects. It encompasses institutions, relationship and customs that shape the quality and quantity of a society’s social interactions. Social capital, when enhanced in a positive manner, can improve the community’s capacity to work together to address their common needs by facilitating coordinated actions (Leonard and Nanetti, 1993:18). The community must own the fruits of their success or failure in solving the collective problems they face. In order to achieve this the community members must generally own “the Social Assets” i.e. “the Social Capital.” Social capital highlights the value of social relations. Social capital is result of social relations, and consists on the expectative of benefits derived from the preferential treatment and the cooperation between individuals and groups (Matthew, 2001).

Social capital ensures a community to make strategic efforts to improve upon the social wellbeing not only at the individual but also at community as whole. A person’s family, friends, associates and
neighbours constitute an important asset that, one can call on a crisis, enjoyed for its own sake and leveraged for material gains. The social capital contributes to the economic development, which can be assessed by considering role of social cohesion that result from network of trust and reciprocity in meeting the objectives like poverty allocations (Knack, 1999).

**FACTORS AFFECTING SOCIAL CAPITAL**

1. **Familism**

   Fukuyama points out that radius of trust will enable connections across borders of all sorts and serve as a basis for organizations. In "Social Capital and Development: The Coming Agenda," he points out that social capital is a necessary precondition for successful development, but a strong rule of law and basic political institutions are necessary to build social capital. He believes that a strong social capital is necessary for a strong democracy and strong economic growth. Familism is a major problem of trust because it fosters a two-tiered moral system, in which a person must favour the opinions of family members (Fukuyama, 2000).

2. **Extreme homogeneity**

   Portes and Landolt (1996) posit that communities, which are largely homogenous and isolated, can turn productive social capital, which hinders development. Examples of this are ghettos or gangs in communities. Similarly, on the assessment of “Civil Society and
Political Institutionalization”, Brewer (2003) holds that it is not at all clear, how in practice one determines when an organization is vertically or horizontally organized. For example, Militant and Nationalist organizations do not appear to be more vertically and horizontally organized than other types. The shape of any network horizontal / vertical does not by itself indicate much about the nature of human relationships within that network.

3. Weakening of Social values

When people develop cynicism about fairness of social arrangements, and a perception of dependence on others, then there is a situation of serious threat to social capital. For example, a youth experiencing continued unemployment may feel psychologically a sense of exclusion and a feeling grievance against the world that does not give the jobless an opportunity to earn an honest living.

4. Cultural belief

Certain beliefs rooted in culture, which excludes other groups leading to abuse of sectors of population, will seriously affect social capital.

Human Capital and Social Capital

Human capital is in individual. Social capital is in groups. Social capital is naturally linked with people’s human capital (Kilpatrick 1998). Whereas physical capital refers to physical objects and human capital refers to the properties of individuals, social
capital refers to connections among the individuals - social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them. Social capital is the contextual complement to human capital. Society is viewed as a market in which people exchange all variety of goods and ideas in pursuit of their interests. The interests of some are better served than the interest of others. Social capital delineates that people who do better somehow are better connected. They trust certain others, obligated to support certain others, dependent on exchange with certain others (Coleman, 1988).

**MEASUREMENT OF SOCIAL CAPITAL**

Different tools to assess the social capital have been developed and employed according to context of investigation. Different measurement concepts that are applied for research are justified on the grounds of contextual diversity. The sum of categories that are useful to examine social capital will nevertheless remain constant as even inquiry shifts from one context to another (Krishna 2001).

Uphoff (1999) developed a tool for the assessment of social capital. He divides social capital into two levels: The Macro and The Micro. The macro level includes formal relationships and structures given as the rules of the law, legal frameworks, the political regime, the level of decentralization and the level of participation in the policy formulation process. The macro level refers to the institutional context on which organizations operate. The micro level is made of two
components such as cognitive and structural. The cognitive refers to values, beliefs, attitudes, behaviour and social norms, trust, solidarity and reciprocity that are shared among members of community and that create the conditions under which community can work together for common good. Structural social capital includes the composition and practices of local level institutions, both formal and informal, that serve as instrument of community development. Structural social capital built through horizontal organizations and networks that have collective and transparent decision-making process, accountability of leaders, and practice of collective action and mutual responsibility.

**Figure - 1 Social capital assessment tool**
The Social Capital Assessment Tool used to measure macro level indicators of social capital and on the structural and cognitive social capital at the micro level, and the ways that these types of social capital interact at the community, household, and institutional levels (Uphoff, 1999).

Lin (2001) has developed a model of social capital that is presented in Figure 2 below. He defines social capital in simplest terms as an investment in social relations with expected returns. This indicates that individuals, who invest time and effort to maintain a social network, can then benefit from embedded assets. For example keeping in touch with colleagues from one’s current workplace, can create future opportunities as people leave jobs and move elsewhere. They can also uncover new information about individuals that can help each other. The critical variables of interest are the returns, or effects of social capital, which Lin categorizes under Instrumental or Expressive headings as wealth, power, reputation and physical health, mental health and life satisfaction.
Grootaert and van Bastelaer (2001) argued that measurement of the effectiveness of social capital building initiatives should:

- include indicators related to governance, institutions; local networks and institutions; trust, norms and values
- use both quantitative and qualitative methods;
- include inputs (membership of local organisations and institutions) and outputs (trust and adherence to norms, collective action)

These authors also identified where best to invest resources to build social capital:
• build skills and capacity of local leaders
• build the capacity of small organisations and support collective representation to obtain resources and engage in dialogue with government
• include assessment of social capital as part of planning and service development processes.

There are many studies, which focused on the certain dimensions of social capital and their parameters.

**Components of Social Capital**

Social capital is broken down into different dimensions for the purpose of practical and operational level in many studies.

**Trust**

This section investigates various notions and theories of trust provided in literature, discusses different definitions of trust, its various dimensions (*i.e.* interpersonal and institutional trust), their relation to the broader notion of social capital, and the different factors that affect it. It then overviews the measures currently used to assess trust, discussing their advantages and disadvantages.

**Meaning of Trust**

Trust is commonly viewed as a proxy indicator of social capital, and a high level of trust is considered a factor that can enhance economic growth and social wellbeing. Indicators of trust inform about the quality of people’s interactions with others, hence on their
assessment of the extent to which other people in the community are perceived as potential partners rather than as rivals (Morrone et al, 2009). Generally speaking, Trust refers to the confidence that people have in others that they will act as we might expect. Hence, it reflects people’s subjective perception of people’s reliability. However, the relevance of trust goes further than that: trust may be regarded as a key driver of progress within a specific society. Trust, if it is matched by trustworthy behaviour in others, reduces the costs of dealing with risks and uncertainty (Helliwell and Hunag, 2008). Trust speaks of elements of interpersonal behaviour, which fosters greater cohesion and collective action. It has two aspects: trust in others, and trust in community. The operative principle, which underpins social capital, is fundamentally trust. Trust between members of a community will result into a trust of wide spectrums of shared set of norms within a community as whole. When members of a community are trusting and trustworthy it will grease the wheels of constant interaction with fellow members and that will allow communities to advance smoothly. Without this interaction trust decays and thereby mistrust develops that will manifest in serious social problems.

**Definitions of Trust**

Many authors have given different definitions of trust.

Sarageldin and Dasgupta (2001) described trust as “the expectation of one person about the action of others that affects the person’s choice”.

Gambetta (2000) gave a similar definition, while also introducing the concept of subjective probability: he described trust as the subjective probability with which a person (or a group) assesses that another person (or a group) will perform a particular action, with this subjective probability influencing a person’s own actions. In this perspective, trust is important because it allows this kind of assessment before the person can actually observe such action, or even independently of his capacity to monitor it.

A slightly different definition was given by Fukuyama (1995), who introduced the concept of shared norms, defining trust as the expectation that arises within a community when other people behave in predictable, honest and co-operative ways. This expectation is typically rooted in people’s adherence to a shared set of norms.

A different perspective is provided by Williamson (1993), who explained trusting behaviour in terms of a calculative response to the incentive structure confronting each person, where this incentive structure encompasses material, social and psychological rewards. Hence, Williamson used the term trust to describe personal relationships like friendship, love and kinship, or features of the institutional environment in which contracts and transactions are embedded. The trading networks of diamond dealers, which allow them to monitor each other closely and to operate with high levels of trust is an example of these types of relations.
Kohn (2008) defines trust as the relation between two parties concerning a particular action or range of actions. “A trusts B to do X”. Depending on the characteristics of A and B, and on whom the trust is directed to, it is possible to distinguish different forms of trust.

Trust is associated with the concept of social capital, and it is even considered a proxy for it. Indeed, several authors have focused on trust when studying social capital and the determinants of human wellbeing. Arrow (1972), for example, remarked that much of the economic backwardness in the world can be explained by the lack of mutual confidence and trust.

**MEASURING TRUST**

The different forms of trust are measured in different ways. Most of the studies have stressed the interpersonal trust and institutional trust and they are operationalized in different ways. The need for distinguishing them lies in the fact that people live in different ways, and that they have different effects on various dimensions of their lives.

**Interpersonal trust**

Contacts with other members of the community allow people to know each other better and to improve their level of trust; in turn, this positive disposition, derived from their civic experience, is often extended to strangers. The material value of having a trusted friend/companion might be that the individual may turn to for help
during difficulties or for showing opportunities that leads to material gain or satisfaction (Levi, 1997). Inglehart argues that societies with stronger self-expression values (e.g. tolerance of different groups, emphasis on civil and political freedoms) tend to rank higher on interpersonal trust. Interpersonal trust is influenced by increasing political and social participation. However, civic participation does not necessarily increase institutional trust. Veenstra (2002), for instance, argues that, in Canada, participation in civil society organizations increases interpersonal trust but not institutional trust. A trustworthy government generates interpersonal trust, rather than the other way around.

The World Values Survey (WVS) is the most commonly used cross-country survey to measure interpersonal trust. The WVS is a worldwide investigation of socio-cultural and political change. It is conducted by a network of social scientists at leading universities all around the world. The WVS relies on the question developed by Rosenberg (1956): “Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people?” to measure interpersonal trust. Possible answers: A lot of trust; Some trust; Not very much trust; No trust at all. The main indicator resulting from Rosenberg’s question is the percentage of people who reply, “Most people can be trusted”. The WVS also collects a set of questions on trust in different groups of people such as
neighbors, people you know personally, people you meet for the first time, people of another religion and people of another nationality. This set of questions allows to measure different dimensions of trust.

Another type of question that has been occasionally used to assess interpersonal trust and which is based on the same general idea is the so-called WALLET QUESTION. The wallet question allows the measurement of different forms of interpersonal trust: a) trust in neighbours; b) trust in strangers; c) a particular aspects of institutional trust, i.e. trust in police staff. This question is also useful to assess the relations between specific forms of trust and other dimensions of progress.

**Radius of Trust**

All groups embodying social capital have a certain radius of trust that is the circle of people among whom co-operative norms are operative. If a group’s social capital produces positive externalities, the radius of trust can be larger than the group itself. It is also possible for the radius of trust to be smaller than the members of group. The trust as perceived an indispensible element for a community to prosper. Fukuyama (1995) illustrates the relation between thick and thin trust using the concept of “radius”, defined as the circle of people among whom co-operative norms operate. Building on this distinction, Fukuyama suggests that, in many Latin American societies, a narrow radius of trust produces a two-tier moral system, with high thin trust
and good behaviour reserved for family and personal friends, and a lower standard of trust applied to interactions with strangers and public institutions. This two-tier moral system provides, in Fukuyama’s opinion, a cultural foundation for corruption.

Trust, conclude Jackman and Miller (1998) after reviewing arrange of empirical evidence, is clearly not isomorphic with group membership. Generalized trust is developed because of network interaction among the members of the community. Mutual trust once established it may be activated towards informal social control, encouraging collective participation in civic and community activities for its improvement. The context of group membership is an important, they submit as its density or structural form.

**Institutional Trust**

Institutional trust is essential for the stability of societies and for the functioning of democracy. A vital civil society with a high level of interpersonal trust is a prerequisite for a good level of institutional trust. Trust in political institutions measures the degree in which individuals have confidence in the institutions (government and parliament) and public administration of the country where they live. Institutional trust is generally measured through surveys asking individuals to rate their confidence in a number of organizations. The WVS is often used to asks individuals to rate their confidence in a large number of institutions and organizations starting from the
parliament, which is the central representative institution of democracies, and including government, civil service, political parties, armed forces, police, press, churches, labour unions, the justice and education systems (OECD, 2007).

**Importance of trust**

Collier (1998) in his study on “Social Capital and Poverty, Social Capital Initiative” differentiates between government social capital and civil social capital. The government social capital is enforceability of society contacts, rule of law, and the extent of civil liberties. The civil social capital is common values, shared traditional norms, informal networks and associational membership in communities. The author argues that in societies where government social capital is limited, a large proportion of contracts may depend on civil social capital and people’s trust.

**FACTORS INCREASING OR STIFLING TRUST**

Both individual and social characteristics, as well as their interactions, influence how much people trust each other. Trusting others may, in some communities, be a moral or cultural attitude, derived from past experience or tied to the composition of one’s community. Alesina and La Ferrara (2000) argued that trust towards strangers is mainly related to three factors:

a) individual characteristics, such as education, income and race;
b) belonging to groups traditionally discriminated against;

c) the characteristics of the community to which people belong.

Homogeneity within a given community is a key factor in the development of trust because individuals tend to trust more those similar to them. From this perspective, interactions between people are an important factor to foster trust. People have more trust in others with whom they are used to interact. Thus, trust will be higher in more open societies that reward co-operative behaviours and encourage interactions among people. On the contrary, in close societies dominated by strong family ties and shared norms, and where social interactions among people are strongly formalized, interpersonal trust is less developed, and high level of thick trust (among relatives and people who belong to the same group) will coexist with low levels of thin trust (towards strangers). Trust is influenced by the psychological process that allows recognizing someone as similar to us. It is hence likely that variables such as age, gender, race, family status and education have an important role in its development (Zucker, 1986).

A key factor for increasing the level of trust is the extent to which a society can smooth the differences between social groups, e.g. by striving to achieve equal opportunities and strengthening cooperation. Knack and Zack (2001) showed that interpersonal trust towards others is higher in societies that are fairer, ethnically, socially
and economically more homogeneous, and where legal and social mechanisms for constraining opportunism are better developed. In societies where minorities are historically discriminated against, discrimination plays a negative effect on the general level of trust of the society. Even when trust between members of the minority is high (e.g. as they need to protect each other from outsiders), the level of trust between the different groups may be very low.

Legal institutions and freedoms also play a central role in breeding trust. In a community where criminal behaviour is effectively prosecuted, for example, individuals will trust other people more because they will feel better protected against improper conduct. The level of civil liberties, along with the legal structure of a country, the security of property rights, the regulations of credit, labour and business, the quality of bureaucracy and of welfare provision, all affect the development of trust (Alesina & La Ferrara, 2000).

Trust can also be affected by the media. In particular, information about other countries or about specific groups or minorities, disseminated by the media can affect people’s opinions and feelings. For example, Guiso, (2007) highlight the negative association between information about other countries and trust towards people from other countries, as newspapers tend to report principally bad news nurturing negative stereotypes.
THE ROLE OF TRUST FOR THE PROGRESS OF SOCIETIES:

Most of the studies on the relationship between trust and societal progress suggest that trust is associated to a range of positive outcomes.

Economic Growth

A vast literature has documented the existence of a positive relationship between interpersonal trust and economic growth. This evidence is consistent with the intuition that when people trust each other they are more willing to trade, which raises their economic wellbeing. Essentially, when A trusts B to do X, where X is an economic transaction, interpersonal trust facilitates co-ordination and co-operation for mutual benefit, reduces the incentives for opportunism, and helps finding solutions to collective action problems (Roth, 2006).

Several studies provide empirical support to the notion of a positive relationship between trust and economic development. Tabellini (2006) analyzed the correlation between culture (measured by trust, respect for others and confidence in individual self-determination) and economic development in a sample of European countries, showing that these variables favour economic development. These cultural traits are strongly correlated with economic development not just in European countries, but also in a broad sample of countries.
Governance

There is also evidence that higher levels of various types of trust can foster better governance and increase institutional effectiveness. The study of La Porta (1997) shows that, across countries, the effects of institutional trust on governance performance are both statistically significant and quantitatively large. Since citizens and bureaucrats have few opportunities to interact directly, and to develop high level of interpersonal trust, confidence in institutions must rely on the trustworthiness of the institution as an abstract entity.

Interpersonal trust has long been associated with trust in government institutions and with citizens' political participation. Considerable amounts of empirical research demonstrate that interpersonal trust can enhance governmental accountability, facilitate agreement when political preferences are polarized, and promote political innovation. Furthermore, where interpersonal trust is higher there is less need for the government to invest in formal mechanisms to enforce contracts and rules, leaving more resources available for other purposes. Moreover, trust through political participation, increases individuals' knowledge of politics and public affairs. Such knowledge, especially if shared among a large number of citizens, increases government accountability and is an important check on the inclination of politicians and bureaucrats to pursue their personal interests (Knack, 1999).
Subjective Wellbeing

The relationship between interpersonal trust and subjective wellbeing has been highlighted in several studies. The study of Helliwell (2008) shows that living in an environment where other people can be trusted has substantial effects on the subjective wellbeing of respondents, as high level of trust improves the network of interpersonal relationships among people. Trust in the workplace also has also a strong effect in improving subjective wellbeing. Higher levels of trust are closely associated with greater life satisfaction and subjective wellbeing in communities, workplaces and nations.

Income Inequality

Interpersonal trust is also correlated with income inequality: in countries with wider income inequalities, Wilkinson (2005) argues, it is more difficult to establish bonds between those at the top and those at the bottom of the income scale. Economic inequality reduces trust because people in different strata will be less likely to share a sense of common purpose and to trust each other. Moreover, economic inequality reduces the optimism for the future and a high level of pessimism may stifle interpersonal trust. Inequality is a powerful social divider, which corrodes trust and divides people. We tend to choose our friends among our near equals and we usually have little to do with those much richer or much poorer than us: as a consequence, it is harder for us to trust them.
SOCIAL NORMS

Meanings and Definitions of Social Norms

Social norms are the explicit or implicit rules specifying what behaviours are acceptable within a society or group. This sociological and social psychological term has been further defined as "the rules that a group uses for appropriate and inappropriate values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviours. They have also been described as the "customary rules of behaviour that coordinate our interactions with others (Appelbaum 2009). Once a particular way of doing things becomes established as a rule, it continues in force because we prefer to conform to the rule given the expectation that others are going to conform (Lewis, 1969). Social norms are rules that define the behaviour that is expected or acceptable in particular circumstances.

Social norms are neither static nor universal; they change with respect to time and vary with respect to culture, social classes, and social groups. What is deemed to be acceptable dress, speech or behaviour in one social group may not be acceptable in another. Social norms can be enforced formally (e.g., through sanctions) or informally (e.g., through body language and non-verbal communication cues). By ignoring or breaking social norms, one risks becoming unpopular or an outcast (Bicchieri, 2006).
Role of Social Norms in Society

Virtually all forms of traditional culture- social group like tribes, clans, village associations, religious sects, etc. are based on shared norms and use these norms to achieve co-operative ends. Norms in a community support and provide effective rewards for and high achievement (Rommetveit, 1955). The function of a social norm is to coordinate people’s expectations in interactions that possess multiple equilibriums. Norms govern a wide range of phenomena, including property rights, contracts, bargains, forms of communication, and concepts of justice. Norms impose uniformity of behaviour within a given social group, but often vary substantially among groups. They shape our sense of obligation to family and community. They determine the meanings we attach to words. Indeed, it is hard to think of a form of interaction that is not governed to some degree by social norms.

Reynolds and Zontini (2006) argue that norms and values are important in shaping community, but they are fluid and subject to change, and to social and material conditions. Kelly (1996) in her study on ‘social and cultural capital in the urban ghetto: implication for the economic sociology of immigration, in the economic sociology of immigration’ interviewed and observed young girls in urban ghetto communities in Baltimore, and discovered that normative pressures to leave school have a baby while still a teenager, and reject formal
employment were very powerful. Surrounded on a daily basis by violence, unemployment, and drug addicts, the girls’ only way of establishing their identity and status was through their bodies.

Menon (2003) highlights the issue of bottom trawling which is at the centre of a simmering conflict between the traditional and mechanized sectors of the fishing industry. The traditional sector fishermen allege that the trawlers as the best catches are available near the inshore areas routinely violate not only the Tamil Nadu Marine Fisheries Act of 1993 which prohibits the entry of mechanized trawlers to fish within the three nautical miles distance from the seashore but also damage their fishing nets and baits. The sectoral divides often loggerhead with each other. In order to resolve the conflicts among the sectoral divides, the fishermen of Rameswaram, Mandapam and Thoothikudi worked out an informal agreement. Trawlers are given three days to fish in the waters outside the three nautical miles limits and the traditional fishermen are given four days. This is to avoid the contact between the conflicting two groups of fishermen.

Kurien (1998) in his study on the socio-cultural aspects of fisheries examines two patterns of sharing of fish-catch in the artisanal fishery, which are very much conditioned by the fishing community’s perspective of the fishery resource as community property. He notes that these norms of division are situated in the
context of communitarian norms composed of strong social and cultural mores that do not change as rapidly as technology. His apprehension is that the sharing patterns of fish and income are today under considerable stress. The overt commercialization of fishery tends to rob it of certain built-in social security nets.

Sekhar’s (2007) article shows how social capital impacts upon fisheries management at the local level in Chilika Lake, located in the State of Orissa in India. In Chilika, the different fishing groups established norms and “rules of the game” that determine who can fish and in what areas, **temporal** restrictions about when and for how long people may fish, **gear** constraints about what harvesting gear may be used by each group, and **physical** controls on size and other characteristics of fish that may be harvested. A survey of the members of fishing groups has shown that the bonding social capital is strong within the Chilika fishing groups. Bonding and bridging social capital keeps the fishers together in times of resource scarcity, checks violations of community rules and sanctions, and strengthens the community fisheries management.

**Gender Based Social Norms**

Social norms are the essential ingredients for a community to grow. A community encouraging women’s participation in labour force it will therefore bring much needed income for the household.
Gulati (1999) says that when men migrate, the female take up household responsibilities. As a result of male migration, the women enjoy higher autonomy. But, it does not contribute to the increase of social status. Social Expectations about men's roles as breadwinners often foster male-out migration.

Based on data from in-depth interviews and fieldwork in rural fishing communities, an article by Yodanis (2000) examines how the process of gender construction works to keep women from being fisher [men]. A number of common explanations for occupational sex segregation are considered to explain why women do not fish, including biology, gender role socialization, cultural traditions, and discrimination. The article then presents a complementary explanation, the social construction of gender. In fishing communities, where man is defined as a fisherman, women maintain boundaries between themselves and fishing as they construct gender. They define their work as "not fishing," even when they work on fishing boats. The consequence is that women do not aim to work or succeed in one of the few and most lucrative industries in a rural community. When examined from this perspective, occupational segregation appears to be more difficult to eliminate than prevailing explanations suggest.

**RECIPROCITY**

Reciprocated exchange leads to the accumulation of social ties between actors. There will be obligations but it is without specification of the form or timing of repayment. This will lead to viable norms of
reciprocity providing the foundation for such transaction in the community. The motivation of exchange emerges from mutual trust rather than altruistic sentiments. Reciprocal practices operate as a resource in the community. They generate mutual obligation that motivates exchange of information and knowledge; other forms of giving and receiving as well. This term is quite familiar in sociology, dating back to the classical analysis of social exchange by Simmel (1964), the more recent ones by Homans (1961) and Blau (1964), and extensive work on the sources and dynamics of reciprocity by authors of the rational action school (Schiff 1992, Coleman 1994).

**Mutual Support**

Jigyasu (2004) wrote an article on ‘Sustainable Post Disaster Reconstruction through Integrated Risk Management’. It is well known that certain communities bear the brunt of disasters much more than others. This has been strongly brought out in the wake of the Gujarat earthquake when the author stated that, “The rural communities in South Asia have traditionally been coherent entities with distinct social hierarchy but well-defined roles and relationships. However, these communities are transforming in many respects, one of which relates to inherent structural changes in traditional patterns and relationships within communities, which determine their mutual support systems. These contribute to lessening their vulnerability, although one must admit that some of these patterns of relationships
are exploitative in some respects and lead to increasing vulnerabilities of certain groups.

**Mutual Obligation**

A research was done by Crona and Bodin (2006) on the communication pattern among coastal villages in Kenya. The data were collected through the research methods of focus group discussion and personal interviews with the heads of 206 households. It investigates a number of different social networks such as, social support, gear dependency, network, type of exchange, frequency of interaction, in addition to social relations, personal attributes such as gender, age, civil status, occupation, and residence time in village were also assessed. Their findings show that communication occurs primarily between fishermen who use the same gear type, which may inhibit exchange of ecological knowledge within the community. That is why the community has been unsuccessful in regulating resource extraction. The deep-sea fishermen are the most dominant and influential fishermen who are less motivated to initiate collective action for resource management. The study concludes that a lack of collective action to remedy an unsustainable situation may be attributed to various but distinct aspect of the specific structure of the social relations among the fishermen.
Motivating Factors for Mutual Exchange

Abraham (1985) says that there is no alternative employment during the off-season and off time for the fishermen. They have to depend on other people’s assets for their livelihood. There is also a lack of adequate institutional credit facilities for them, which often force them to depend on informal credit. The author identifies the agencies of economic exploitation in the fishing community. The economic exploiters are the merchants, moneylenders and the owners of the fishing implements from whom the traditional fishermen borrow money on a high rate of interest. Pledging ration cards, gold ornaments, fishing tools with individuals in the fisher village who are not necessarily connected with fishing are some of the survival strategies of the traditional fishermen.

Lack of Motivation for Mutual Help

Kumar (2006) argues that the joint ownership system of productive assets among fishermen did not work in the village as it lacked the motivation of the members to work together. This form of ownership though may reduce the social inequality has also become a major source of conflict in the village. The coolie workers becoming the owners of the crafts were not appreciated by the owners (motorized sector) because they did not want their social status to change.
SOCIAL NETWORKS

Network is one of the constitutive elements of social capital. It is certainly on the basis of trust, network is built upon. Network facilitates the free flow of information among the members of a community and their membership of groups and associations. The density of network, which the members are involved, may generate positive social ties, which are foundation of social process in a community. Shape of any network- horizontal or vertical, homogenous or heterogeneous, formal and informal networks are central to the concept of social capital. They are defined as the personal relationships, which are accumulated when members interact with each other in families, work place, neighbourhood, and more importantly government machineries and a range of informal and formal meeting. Kumar (2006:6). Some important variables connected with the concepts of networks are reviewed from different studies.

DEFINITIONS OF SOCIAL NETWORK

Katz (1953) defines social net as ‘the set of persons who can get in touch with each other’. Mitchell (1994) defines a social network as ‘a specific set of linkages among a defined set of persons, with the additional property that characteristics of these linkages as a whole may be used to interpret the social behaviour of the persons involved. Bott (1971) defines a network as ‘a social configuration in which some
but not all of the component external units maintain relationships with one another’, thus translating it into a specific variable.

Boissevain (1974) conceives social network as ‘the social relations in which every individual is embedded in an egocentric sense, the chain of persons with whom a given person is in actual contact and their interconnection. Walker (2008) see social network as ‘that set of personal contacts through which the individual maintains his social identity and receives emotional support, material aid and services, information and new social contacts’. Sprecher et al (1983) points out the minimum requirement of the process: Networking is ‘a purposeful process of linking three or more people together and of establishing connections and chain reactions among them.

**Properties and Measurement of Social Network**

The followings are the properties of social networks.

1. **Network size**

   It is a basic indicator of interest, in the number of direct ties involving individual/family units. Granovetter (1985) says that social networks provide essential information, support, and guidance through strong and weak ties. He makes the distinction between strong ties and more loosely tied relationships, which he called weak ties. Weak ties traditionally exist between colleagues, acquaintances, and strong ties deals with type of network existing among family circles, group of relatives, close friends and kin. The existences of
these ties are not always categorized by those sets of relationships, but rather various measures of such as frequency of contacts, closeness, intimacy and reciprocity. Granovetter identifies that while it may be natural for us to think of our strong ties as those most valuable, it is weak ties that have more immediate embedded resources. Information requires links to spread. Weak tie relationships allow us to make those connections. Thus, individuals with many weak-ties will have access to more information and opportunities.

2. Network density

It means the strength of connection among units is a network or the proposition of links present relative to the number of possible links (Maruthakutti, 1994). Coleman (1988) speaks of network closure. Close networks have densely knit membership, making individuals highly accountable for their actions. They build relationships of trust, and form norms. One can see applications of accountability in high-risk job environments that work with teams. The team members must trust each other, as well as have a way to recognize when someone is behaving in a way that is not appreciated by the group.

Network density among the group members has positive impact. Working through groups reduces the cost of delivering services to many individuals, making the outreach of programme more cost-effective. This has been reflected in the study of Godquin and
Quisumbing (2005) in their research on ‘Groups, Networks, and Social Capital in the Philippine Communities’ explored the determinants of group membership and social networks of rural households using a unique longitudinal data set from the rural Philippines. The survey instrument includes section on social capital that asks the household members to list all the groups, associations and co-operatives at least one household member belong to. Several questions on group procedures and operations such as the number of group members, existence of a membership fee, availability of financial services, and homogeneity of group members. Two types of social capital are investigated: 1. Membership in groups in terms of production, credit, burial, religious and civic groups; 2. Informal networks or size of trust- based networks i.e. number of groups and number of network members. It also explores various reasons why people join groups. It analyses whether increased trust among the members of a group increase the wellbeing of its members. The findings of the study show that the assets-rich and better-educated households are more likely to participate in groups so as to have larger social and economic assistance networks. Different aspects of village level heterogeneity have different impacts on group membership, and greater exposure to shocks and a higher incidence of peace and order problems increase group membership.
Spread or Extent of Social Networks

That is the extent to which people are engaged with others in informal, social activities; and their membership of groups and associations. Residential segregation in village life makes inter-group relationship difficult to build. This has been reflected in the study on ‘Social Capital in India’ by Vanneman et al. (2006). The data were collected from 40000 households across India. The study examines various dimensions of social capital such as social networks, membership in formal organization, and a subjective index of confidence in institutions. The analysis of the data reveals that all three scales expose strong geographic patterning across India, but the social networks measure shows strong relationship with social position within communities. Network contacts are more extensive for high caste, wealthy and well-educated households. Similar household status associations are much weaker for confidence in institutions and for membership in organizations.

Shape of Network

Shape of networks deals with whether a network is homogenously or heterogeneously organized. Putnam (1993) regards in his article on ‘The Prosperous Community-Social Capital and Public Life’ that the horizontally organized networks are an essential form of social capital. Vertical networks, no matter how dense and no matter
how important to its participants, cannot sustain social trust and cooperation.

Portney and Jeffrey (1997), drawing data gathered from five American cities, conclude that more homogeneous neighbourhoods are more likely to have more effective neighbourhoods associations. Diversity and heterogeneity are counter-productive in this reckoning. Homogeneous associations do better by way of social capital. Homogeneous group has more generalized trust, and not the ones that accommodate people from diverse backgrounds.

**Durability of Network**

That is the number of years that membership in a network exists. Bowles and Gintis (2000) in their study on ‘Social Capital and Community Governance’ conclude that communities can often do what the government fails to do because their members, but not outsiders, have crucial information about their members’ behaviour, capabilities, and needs. They can make an efficient use of it for resource management. A community becomes effective when it monitors the behaviour of its members, rendering them accountable for their actions.

**Neighborhood Social Network**

As networks expand beyond close kin and friendship groups within neighbourhoods, a basis for collective social organization develops. Through extra familial social exchanges, actors develop
ongoing obligations and expectations, trust, and shared normative orientations. Suttles (1968) cites the importance of actors who are weakly tied across close primary groups in the emergence of effective communities. Actors who bridge neighborhood groups serve the vital role of linking otherwise unconnected residents providing the structural basis for the development of broad-based trust and solidarity.

In a seminal article, Kasarda and Janowitz (1974) developed the systemic model of community social dynamics in which extensive friendship and kinship bonds rooted in residential stability were hypothesized to strengthen neighborhood attachment.

**APPLICATION AND USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKS**

The scope, type and quality of our network of relationships are of great import to our success in many areas of life. This is consistent with the findings of numerous researchers such as Mellor et al (2008) who identified, when examining the dimensions that impact on subjective ratings of worst or good life, say, “the aspect that dominates is relationships with others. This comprised 43% of the aspects imagined for a worst life and 39% for a good life.”

Burt (2001) in his comparative research demonstrated that people occupying positions associated with educational success and employment in professional occupations will tend to belong to different social networks from people occupying positions associated
with poor educational attainment and unemployment, or employment in poorly paid unskilled occupation. Burt identifies that the groups, which were weakly, connected; there are opportunities for holes in the network. He calls them simply structural holes. Individuals who span the holes then have a structural advantage of circulating in different flows of information. These positions are referred to as brokers (of information) or bridges (spanning the holes).

Grootaert (2004) integrated a measure of social networks focusing on three items-size of the network, the internal diversity by the economic status of the members and the extent to which the network provided assistance when needed. The authors concluded that with the assistance of network, the assets-rich and better-educated households are more likely participate in groups.

Friedkin (2004) analyzed a wide of range of literature to define social cohesion. The most of the literature reviewed, laid emphasis on different aspects of social cohesion, which lagged behind offering a comprehensive view of social cohesion. Some of the investigator viewed social cohesion in terms of duration of group membership and others defined it according to the desire to maintain membership. But, the author opined that social cohesion depends on the individual member’s attitude and behaviour and positive interpersonal ties among group members.
Sampson (1988) in his research on “Crime: Testing Social-disorganization theory” held that social capital may produce either a positive or a negative output, for example, he argued that if a community social organization has density of kinship, friendship, and acquaintanceship and the high level of participation it may contribute to the control of crime. These factors may contribute to the emergence of social cohesion i.e. solidarity and mutual trust among community members. The positive aspect of social capital is that it can foster social control. The solidarity and mutual trust of the community members is once established, it may be activated towards effective informal social control.

**COLLECTIVE ACTION AND CO-OPERATION**

Social capital resolves collective problems more easily. People in a community might be better off if they cooperate with each doing their share. Collective action is an indicator of increased social capital. Collective action and co-operation is facilitated to the degree to which a community uses social capital such as trust, shared norms, reciprocity and social networks.

Collective Action is often based on the efficiency of governance and leadership facilitates co-ordinated actions in determining the pace of infrastructural growth and development in the community. It deals with ability of people to work together towards solving communal issues. Arefi (2003) identifies consensus building as a direct positive
indicator of social capital. Consensus implies “shared interest” and agreement among various actors and stakeholders to induce collective action. Collective action is an indicator of increased social capital.

CHARACTERISTICS OF COLLECTIVE ACTION

Community participation

In the article on “Doing it differently: Networks of community Development Agents, Scottish Community Education Council” by Albee & Boyd, (1997) it is argued that people’s participation rarely happens spontaneously, rather involves social preparation. This is a process of supporting people to: Gather information about their circumstances and resources; Analyze the situations; Prioritize actions they wish to pursue; Join together into a group or an organization of their own choosing; and Work out the means to implement these actions.

Based on the research on “Social Capital and Mental Health”, McKenzie and Harpham (2006) conclude that community-based learning can create a stronger sense of personal and social efficacy. There are clear and definitive changes in bonding and bridging social capital, as well as in civic engagement. The positive experience of involvement and enhanced confidence and skills is likely to encourage greater participation in civic and community activities.

Social capital is very much affected when vulnerable section of the community is excluded from the participatory structures.
Research in Tanzania by Mercer (1999) has found that the very poorest and the marginalized women are under-represented in women’s organization.

A Ph.D. dissertation was done by Nair (2007), on “Livelihood assets and Survival strategies in coastal communities in Kerala, India.” Qualitative and quantitative techniques such as in-depth interviews, focus group discussion, household surveys were used. The study examines how single resource dependent households develop survival strategies to cope with changes in livelihood assets. It also considers fishing communities’ access to social, political, physical, human and financial assets. Results show that the government went ahead with modernization of fishery sector, which threatened the livelihood security of the artisanal fishermen. The author says that 50% surveyed households had accessed political assets such as fishery co-operatives and only 20% accessed financial assets such as government-sponsored schemes and loans. With changes in technology, from harvesting to processing, gender roles are being radically altered. Women are losing jobs and income. Politically, the study reveals that local participation so as to solve the community problems with the help of local governing bodies prioritize on housing, roads, water and sanitation.
**Voluntary participation**

Nakagawa and Shaw (2004) in their article on “Social Capital: A missing link to disaster recovery” argued that social plays an important role in disaster recovery. In their study on disaster recovery in Kobe, Japan, India, they found that localities with higher levels of social capital demonstrated better recovery following earthquakes. Higher level of proactive participation led to the successful and quick recovery from distaste. Localities with higher levels of social capital demonstrated better recovery following earthquakes in India and Japan. Social capital can reduce barriers to collective action.

**Cooperative Action**

An article of Chekkutty (1991) on “Trade Liberalization: The new threat to Kerala’s fishermen” says that the coastal social relations are now undergoing a significant transformation, mainly due to the impact of the on-going globalization policies. The age-old enmity between traditional fisher folk and mechanized boat crews, which has been the main source of conflict in the coastal region since the late-'60s, is giving way to new contradictions. Mechanized boat crews and traditional artisans are now coming together to fight trade liberalization policy.

**Mutual Benefits of Collective Action**

Narayan (2002) in her study concludes that social capital facilitates mutually beneficial collective actions. “The rules, norms,
obligation, reciprocity and trust embedded in social relations, social structures and society’s institutional arrangements which enable members to achieve their individual and community objectives.

In the book on “Learning by Monitoring: The Institutions of economic Development” the author (Sabel, 1994) argues that social capital builds up as a result of all actors committing themselves to ongoing negotiations based on shared understanding of common goals.

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

Bavinck (2001) “Caste Panchayats and the Regulation of Fisheries along Tamil Nadu’s Coromandel Coast” argues that the local caste or hamlet councils known as UUR PANCHAYATS in Tamil acts as a critical, institutionalized source of social capital on the southeast Indian coast. UUR PANCHAYATS are different from GRAMA PANCHAYATS, which are the lowest tier of the sub-national governance bodies established by the government. Where GRAMA PANCHAYATS serve as the locus for the local government in small village and towns throughout India and exit at the village, block, and district levels, UUR PANCHAYATS are hamlets-level councils structured by caste and occupation most commonly found in fishing villages. These non-governmental organizations reinforce existing caste and occupation ties.
Bowles & Herbert Gintis (2000) in their study on “Social Capital and Community Governance” conclude that communities can often do what the government fails to do because their members, but not outsiders, have crucial information about their members’ behaviour, capabilities, and needs. They can make an efficient use of it for resource management. A community becomes effective when it monitors the behaviour of its members, rendering them accountable for their actions.

An article written by Silvano and Valbo-Jorgensen (1997) on “Beyond fishermen’s tales: contribution of fishermen’s local ecological knowledge of fish ecology and fisheries management” in which the authors show that there is heterogeneity in local ecological knowledge held by groups of resource users. It is largely related to method of resource extraction. The article explains how this can be correlated with structure of social relations for transferring such information and knowledge among fishermen. It lays an emphasis on the role of community’s social capital, which can be initiated for collective action for marine resource management. It also looks at how Social Relations can help identify formal and informal leaders for collective action related to management of natural resource. The key concepts of this article are Communication among stakeholders and distribution of Traditional Ecological Knowledge, Social Capital, Leadership and Agency.
The vast majority of wellbeing research is individual-focused i.e. Subjective Wellbeing; examining personal experiences almost as if the individual lived in isolation from others. Moods and emotions, which together are labeled affect, represent people's evaluations of the events that occur in their lives.

To expand the measurement of wellbeing beyond how people feel (affect and satisfaction) to incorporate how well they function. Some surveys have extended the satisfaction measures to cover various domains of life, such as work, finances, relationships, health (e.g. Cummins, 1997) and this has led to more nuanced results, establishing for example, that different age groups show different profiles of domain satisfaction.

Numerous surveys have shown a relationship between material circumstances and how people feel about their lives (Helliwell, 2003) but external circumstances account for only about 10% of the variation between individuals in measures of life satisfaction or happiness. These authors propose that a far greater amount of the variation is explained by "intentional activities", that is, aspects of functioning over which individuals have some control e.g. the way they behave towards others, the types of goals they pursue. This reinforces the importance of understanding wellbeing as an active
process, concerned with how well people function, rather than merely a passive process – how good they feel.

**MEASUREMENT OF SOCIAL WELLBEING**

Heiss (1981) suggested that pleasant affect and unpleasant affect form two independent factors and should be measured separately. Interpersonal and social interactions play a crucial role in our wellbeing.

The clinical tradition tends to operationalized wellbeing through measures of depression, distress, anxiety. Wellbeing therefore is the absence of negative conditions and feelings, the result of adjustment and adaptation to a hazardous world (Thoits, 1992).

The psychological tradition operationalized wellbeing as the subjective evaluation of life via satisfaction and affect or personal functioning. According to this view, emotional wellbeing is an excess of positive over negative feelings; personal psychological functioning is the presence is the presence of more positive than negative perceived self-attributes such as personal growth (Diener & Seligman, 2004).

Some investigators have adopted a very pragmatic approach to the assessment of wellbeing using global life satisfaction and domain satisfaction as their key indicators. Satisfaction indicates the extent to which one’s experiences match one’s expectations, so a high level of satisfaction will be reported by people who have very positive experiences, and by people who have less positive experiences but low
expectations. Although the existing models emphasize private features of wellbeing, individuals remain embedded in social structures and communities (Cummins, 1997).

Dasgupta and Weale (1992) suggest that there are two ways of measuring social wellbeing. One is to study the constituents of wellbeing (e.g. health, happiness, freedom to be and do; more broadly, basic liberties); the other is to value the commodity determinants of wellbeing (goods and services which are inputs in the production of wellbeing; for example, food, clothing, potable water, shelter, and resources devoted to national security). The former procedure measures "output", for example, indices of health, and civil and political liberties, whereas the latter values and then aggregates the required "inputs", for example, expenditure on health, and resources deployed for the protection and promotion of civil and political liberties.

Radloff (1989) has developed a ‘positive relations with others’ scale, and Ryan and Deci (2000) have developed ‘relatedness’ measures to measure social wellbeing. They have demonstrated that three basic psychological needs have to be satisfied in order for people to function in healthy or optimal ways; these are the need for autonomy (having a sense of control over one’s life), competence (a sense that one is functioning effectively) and relatedness (having positive interactions with others. They regard autonomy, competence
and positive relationships as the basic psychological needs, which must be met if we are to have wellbeing. In light of the overwhelming, evidence that interpersonal and social interactions play a crucial role in our wellbeing. These scales, which are concerned with interpersonal relationships usually, focus on measures of social support, i.e. what we receive from others. Important as social support is, particularly if we have a problem, there is evidence that social contribution, i.e. giving to others or doing things for others, is an important contributor to our general wellbeing (Huppert & Whittington, 2003).

Social wellbeing may be conceptualized according to individuals' perception of social support. Procidano and Helier (1983) conception of perceived social support is understood as the extent to which the individual perceives that his/her needs for support, information and feedback are fulfilled by friends and family. The perception of social support plays an important role in coping behaviour of individuals. The perceived social support scale from family (PSS-Fa) and friends (PSS-Fr) was used to measure social wellbeing.

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL CAPITAL AND SOCIAL WELLBEING**

The followings are some of the literature reviewed to tease out, or identify some of the direct and indirect linkages between the effects or outcome of the social capital, its impact upon the social wellbeing and linkages between these two concepts. Social capital may also
provide insights into society by recognising the value of ordinary daily interactions in strengthening communities.

Researchers have argued that higher levels of social capital are associated with higher social wellbeing, as well as greater economic development (Arrow, 1972; Fukuyama, 1995), more effective political institutions (Putnam, 1995), and lower crime rates (Sheri, 1997). The Australian Productivity Commission report (2003) states, “an improved level of Social Capital, including - adherence to social norms, well-developed networks and associated levels of trust – generally has beneficial effects”.

On this point, Cox (2000) believes that the strengths of social capital 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.

Society bears a high financial and social cost for crime and other anti-social behaviour. These costs are incurred by society in preventing crime, providing justice infrastructures, repairing criminal damage, supporting victims, and dealing with offenders. High crime rates can also diminish social resources such as community trust, confidence and freedom, and an overall climate of fear may overwhelm
or replace the spirit of cooperation and participation in community life.

A perception of safety in a community is an important factor underpinning healthy and vibrant communities, in the same way that crime is an indicator of some level of societal dysfunction. It has been suggested that in communities where there are shared values and norms, and where good informal social networks operate in neighbourhoods, the community may enjoy lower levels of crime. In addition, a perception of safety in the community is important to encourage people to feel confident in participating in activities in their community such as sport, recreation and cultural activities (Carcach & Huntley, 2002).

The relationship between social capital (measured in terms of social and civic participation) and health status at not only the individual level, but also the community level has been explored by Bush and Baum (2001) in the Adelaide Health Development and Social Capital Study. Bush and Baum observed that there is at least some evidence that social infrastructure in the form of networks, mediating groups and organizations are a prerequisite for a 'healthy' community.

As it is obvious from the discussion above, authors variously place stress on particular aspects of what constitutes social capital.
These emphases may differ somewhat, but all points towards the importance of understanding how social capital works in everyday life.

Further discussion on social wellbeing has given rise to numerous interpretations with respect to its definitions and objectivity. Broad ranges of studies have been done on the social wellbeing from the individual’s life situations. These studies deal with an individual’s wellbeing such as material-wellbeing, physical wellbeing, personal growth, occupation, sports activities, vocation etc. They somehow lacked to view how an individual’s wellbeing may grow when the communities with its social resources contribute to the social dimension of their living.

Although many literature on social capital has been published the conditions under which social capital may increase the wellbeing has not been conceptualized nor has been investigated empirically especially in the context of coastal communities of Kanyakumari district. It is a pioneering attempt towards this venture. The persuasive focus of present study is to assess the coastal communities’ lived social capital practices which are the constitutive elements of the present study as such they are group participation, trust, generalized norms, togetherness, everyday sociability, neighbourhood connections, and voluntarism, and their beneficial effects on the wellbeing.