

Abstract

Degradation of fishery work population in Japan and the possibility of its recovery in the ergonomic perspective.

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The number of fishermen halved to approximate 0.2 million persons during last three decades, and the proportion of older fishermen (65 years old or more) exceeds 30 percent in Japan. Though there are many theories concerning these problems, principal causes may be the decrease of fishery catches (probably caused by the decrease of natural resources), the stagnations of fish prices (probably relevant to the economic conditions and the miniaturizations of caught fish), and the unchanged and unmodified work conditions for many years. In other words, the Japanese fishery is losing its attraction as an occupation because its work is hard and risky despite of its poor profitability. The author focuses on the investigations and the KAIZEN (improvements of the work condition) of Japanese fishery from ergonomic perspective. A fisherman is able to do KAIZEN by itself and it may contribute to improve its fishery management. In this study, the author will introduce some information about the actual work circumstances of Japanese fishermen, and discusses the possible plans to improve their work conditions. The information will include some examples of actual circumstances of small trawl fishery, set net fishery and oyster farming in Japan, and an attempt to educate fishermen to do spontaneous KAIZEN activities.