

## Exploring the importance of fishing in Marsaxlokk

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## Abstract

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<b>Research/Project Title</b> Exploring the importance of fishing in Marsaxlokk	<b>Number of words excluding abstract, references and appendices – 5033</b>
<p>Marsaxlokk is recognised as the largest fishing village in Malta. The aim of this research is to explore the significance of fishing by examining the multifaceted impacts of fishing methods on the fishing community. The study seeks to assess the influence of technology advancements and aquaculture on the fishing industry. The research was conducted by means of semi-structured interviews with people who contribute directly or indirectly to the fishing industry. Findings from the research show that fishing still remains important in Marsaxlokk; however, other aspects such as the open market and restaurants are becoming as equally important. Fishing methods utilised by fishermen affect the taste of fish, the timing of the village's feast celebrations, sports activities and more. From the study it was also denoted that technology contributes greatly to fishing, not only to enhance the fishing methods used by fishermen, but to also increase their security when out at sea. Fish farm cages attract dolphins posing a challenge to fishermen as they cause tears in trammel nets to eat the best captured fish. Nonetheless, the research indicates a positive collaboration between fish farmers and fishermen exists.</p>	
<b>Keywords</b> Fishing, Marsaxlokk, fishing methods, fishermen, community	

## Declaration of Authenticity



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**Programme** : HND in Tourist Guiding

**Research Title** : Exploring the importance of fishing in Marsaxlokk

### Declaration:

I hereby declare that this research study is based on the outcome of my own research. I, as the author, declare that this research study is my own composition which has not been previously produced for any other qualification.

The research study was conducted under the supervision of Mr David Pace.

*31<sup>st</sup> January 2024*

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Date

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'A. Mifsud'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial 'A'.

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Student's Signature

## **Acknowledgements**

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## 1. Introduction

Marsaxlokk stands as one of the earliest inhabited areas and one of the latest villages to develop on the island. This is attributed to artefacts and building remains discovered at Tas-Silġ spanning over 3000 years which reflect the presence of various civilisations of the past (Cardona, 2013). However, centuries later, the bay was used for disembarking by those interested in raiding the island (Camilleri, 2008). Therefore, fear from such attacks is what probably made inhabitants abandon the area and start living far away from the sea.

With the arrival of the Order of the Knights of St John in 1530, heavy investment in fortifications commenced. Few years after adequately fortifying the Grand Harbour area, a series of coastal defensive towers were built, starting with the construction of Fort St Lucian in 1610 at Marsaxlokk Bay (Freller, 2010). With the decrease of corsair attacks and the exponential investment in the defensive system in the area, people started to slowly reside in Marsaxlokk. Villagers from Żejtun, Luqa, Żurrieq and other hamlets interested in fishing started to move to the village, probably because of the natural protection this harbour can provide for fishing boats. Over the past century, this potential was exploited by the government who invested in Marsaxlokk and developed it into what is known today, that is, the largest fishing village of Malta (Farrugia Randon, 2007).

This study aims to explore the multifaceted impacts fishing methods used by fishermen have on the inhabitants of the fishing community of Marsaxlokk. Moreover, the researcher aims to find out how technology contributes to the methodologies used and how fishing methods are affected by aquaculture.

## 2. Literature Review

Marsaxlokk is a village that stands out from others; its uniqueness and identity lie in the picturesque view of the vibrant-coloured traditional fishing boats contrasting the azure water and the fishermen's busy routines revolving around the use of diverse traditional fishing methods enhanced over the years. Fundamental activities in the community have always revolved around such fishing methods as shall be explained in further detail in this research. These activities are what makes the village contribute greatly to the local and national fishing cultural heritage (Said, et al., 2019).

### 2.1 Marsaxlokk's development

In 1954, T. W. Burdon was invited to Malta by the government to assess the fishing industry. In his report, Burdon made several recommendations which included a flat area to dry nets, a change in fishing nets material (from cotton to nylon), a new slipway for the larger fishing crafts, the dredging of the inner harbour to provide safe anchorage for fishing boats, the opening of a District Fisheries Office with a store selling fishing gear, and an efficient way of exploiting fishing territory around Malta. He stated the current boats were relatively small; therefore, restricted by the fishing range they could cover. Henceforth, he proposed a government loan fund to provide financial aid to fishermen to invest in larger fishing vessels.

Burdon also suggested the development of Marsaxlokk Bay to accommodate these fishing crafts. Zurrieq fishermen were advised to transfer to Marsaxlokk given their former location did not have the same growth potential. As a result, the government invested in stores and housing to lease to fishermen (Farrugia Randon, 2007). From censuses held in the past century, it can be deduced that this project influenced the greatest population growth in the fishing village until that time. In 1967, there were a total of 1,462 residents whereas till 1985 the population increased to 2,405 (National Statistics Office, 2022). Over the years, other investments were made in Marsaxlokk with the latest being the *Qrejten* 110m breakwater project completed in December 2020 (Infrastructure Malta, 2021).

## 2.2 The economic aspect

Fishermen are mostly engaged in catching migratory fish such as swordfish, dorado and tuna since these species are most consumed by locals (Attard Ghiller, 2021). Furthermore, swordfish and tuna fetch great prices especially when exported (Busuttil, 2006). Nonetheless, fishermen were not always in a position to generate significant profits. In earlier times, the majority of fishers depended on the middlemen (*pitkala*) who had authority over the fish market in Valletta.

Fish were auctioned using the *sotto voce* method, that is, interested buyers whispered the price they were willing to pay in the middlemen's ears. Consequently, fishermen were not informed of their hard earned catch's true worth; thus, sold their catch to the middlemen at a low price, only for the latter to gain more profit. As a result, the majority of fishermen became indebted to middlemen who loaned money to fishermen to cover expenses or to support their families during hard times. The *sotto voce* practice was abolished in 1938 (Busuttil, 2006).

Fishermen were aware of the situation and tried to stay as independent from middlemen as possible. To achieve this, the boat owner (*padrun*) involved his family members in his fishing expeditions (Chircop, 2010). Women's role also helped fishermen become less dependent from the middlemen.

## 2.3 Women's contribution

Before First World War, women and other members of the family generated additional income by creating excellent quality fishing gear which was exported to the North African coast (Chircop, 2010). Other women would go fishing for shrimps with a shrimp hoop either from somewhere close to the quay or from a fishing boat in the bay (Wilhelmsen, 1976).

Fish hawkers from Marsaxlokk sold fish to nearby villages such as Żejtun, Għaxaq and Birżebbuġia. Before the introduction of public transport, women walked to these locations. Later on, they used the bus service under the condition they do not spill any nasty water on the bus. Other women would go to the fish market to sell fish to the middlemen after waiting for fishermen to dock next to the quay and filling their baskets with the freshly caught fish. A full basket weighed about sixteen kilograms (Busuttil, 2006).

Until 2021, 90 of the 1,134 individuals engaged in fishing activities were women, indicating the presence of women remains relatively significant in this sector. They contribute plenty to the fishing community

by mending fishing nets, maintaining well-organised financial records and hawking the top-selling and locally favoured fish (Vella & Vella, 2022).

## **2.4 Fish gastronomy**

Migratory fish such as the dorado, tuna and swordfish are considered to be a great delicacy for locals (Attard Ghiller, 2021). Dorado is traditionally cooked as a pie or fried after dipped in flour. Tuna is either baked or grilled whereas swordfish is preferred grilled (Sammut, 1975). The most famous fish recipe is the soup (*aljotta*) which is made from non-migratory fish, making it easily available in the majority of restaurants' menus. Some fish recipes gain popularity during lent since people abstain from red meat due to their religious beliefs (Mula, 2013).

## **2.5 Religious traditions and the parish church**

Religion and fishing methods in Marsaxlokk mutually influenced each other over time. The village feast date which was originally celebrated in May before 1918 moved to mid-June with the discovery of dorado's financial potential (Wilhelmsen, 1976). The date was shifted again to when it is celebrated nowadays, which is either on the fifth week of July or the first week of August. This shift was probably prompted when the tuna and swordfish potential was exploited.

The dorado season for fishermen is highly important; therefore, a meaningful religious tradition which commenced around 1967 occurs annually at the beginning of the season (Incorvaja, 2011). Before departing to cast fish aggregating devices (*kannizzati*), fishing vessels equipped with the necessary gear are blessed by the parish priest. Strong religious beliefs are also reflected on their fishing crafts since a substantial amount bear names from the Holy Bible (Cumbo, 2013).

Fishermen always contributed financially to the church. In 1888, a decision to build a church closer to the village centre was taken and in 1890 construction commenced. The community paid for half of the expenses whereas the other half was paid by an Italian noblewoman, Rosina Sabbatini, who lived in Marsaxlokk (Għaqda Mużikali Madonna ta' Pompei, 2003). Many fishermen contributed to manual labour during extensions made to the church in the 20th century (Grech, 2010).

Fishermen also contributed a third of their profits from fishing to the church, a tradition known as *it-terz tal-Madonna* which is still practiced today (Incorvaja, 2007). Furthermore, some fishermen contribute a percentage from their tuna or dorado earnings to cover certain feast expenditures (Cumbo, 2013). In earlier days, fishermen in Marsaxlokk donated profits made on Sundays to the church. Whenever no fish was sighted, or fishermen arrived and left the harbour, they prayed or recited the rosary, a tradition which declined in popularity (Cumbo, 2013).

## **2.6 Importance of technology**

Technological advancements impact fishing. Owning GPS technology helps fishermen to locate and consistently navigate to their favourite fishing spots as the device helps them save the coordinates (Gray, 2014). In earlier days, fishermen followed their fish aggregating devices (*kannizzati*) whilst navigating by a magnetic compass to head back home. Technological progress empowers boat owners (*padruni*) to require fewer crew members. Motored vessels allow a crew to stay longer out at sea. Additionally, boat engines reduced inherent risks when compared to the use of sails and oars (Cumbo, 2013).

With the absence of fish and depth finders, fishermen fastened lead to a rope and tied a knot approximately every nine metres (five fathoms). To try and forecast the weather, they distinguished between different cloud types and noted rises in sea level (Cumbo, 2013). In the 20th century, the absence of advanced maritime technology resulted in some fishermen never returning back to their families as they faced higher risks at sea (Incorvaja, 2011). While technology aids fishermen greatly, it also contributed to the depletion of fish stock (Cumbo, 2013). Therefore, alternative methods had to be introduced to meet the fish demand.

## **2.7 Aquaculture**

There is a total of eight fish farms on the Maltese islands, three of which operate from Marsaxlokk focusing on breeding the Northern Blue Fin Tuna, the gilthead sea bream, European sea bass and the greater amberjack (Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Rights, 2023).

Fish farming uses certain areas to hold fish captive; therefore, limiting the Fisheries Management Zone (FMZ) for fishermen. The latter must be careful where to cast their nets as they need to stay away from designated fish farming areas. To prevent over-fishing for the Blue Fin tuna, both fish farms and the national fishing community must share a quota. Once the quota is reached, the tuna fishing season closes (Vella & Vella, 2022).

In his thesis, Attard Ghiller stated that 24 of his questionnaire respondents argued that fish feed used for fish farming left a positive impact as the fish feed attracted more fish. However, 16 others argued it left a negative economic impact (Attard Ghiller, 2021).

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This section provides an insight of the method used to gather data for this study. The aim of the research was to delve into the significance of fishing in Marsaxlokk by examining the multifaceted impacts fishing and fishing methods have on the community, analysing the contribution of technology in fishing and assessing whether aquaculture influences fishing methods and fishermen.

#### **3.2 Research methodology and considerations implemented**

A qualitative research approach was chosen to conduct this study by means of one-to-one semi-structured interviews. Five interviews were held with a fisherman, a fish hawkler who is also a fisherman's wife, a local councillor, a restaurant owner and an aquaculture officer, all of which shall remain anonymous for confidentiality purposes.

Face-to-face semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to establish a connection with the respondents which encouraged the latter to express themselves freely and comfortably. Therefore, whenever they highlighted unexpected and interesting responses which did not occur or were unknown to the researcher, the latter was able to explore these views.

By using the correct body language such as eye contact, the researcher was able to build a rapport with the participants, resulting in truthful and insightful responses. Each interview was specifically tailored to align with the participant's personal opinions and experiences. Wording used was carefully selected to be simple and unbiased; henceforth, questions were understood and the researcher did not influence the interviewee to respond in a particular way.

A one hour and a half tour was organised in Marsaxlokk. The researcher provided a historical overview of the fishing village, explained prevalent fishing methods used by fishermen, and the social, economic, cultural and culinary impacts of fishing on the village. The importance of technology and how is it incorporated in fishing ventures was also addressed. Despite the majority of the audience lacking a fishing background or a particular interest in the subject, there was a positive feedback. Moreover, the audience was engaged and appreciated the challenges faced by the fishing community.

### **3.3 Limitations**

Despite this method being a great tool to gather information, it can be time-consuming both for conducting and transcribing the interviews. Additionally, a 5,000 word count proved to be limiting; therefore, the researcher had to be very selective with the information presented in this research.

### **3.4 Ethical considerations**

Prior to the interviews, an information letter was sent to participants describing what the research is about and how will data be collected. The interviewer ensured respondents that their participation was voluntary and the interview could be terminated at any moment. This was verbally reassured before the commencement of all interviews. Participants were also assured their identity will stay anonymous.

Interviewees were provided with the set of questions asked in the interview prior to the interview date to be able to decide whether they were comfortable with the questions beforehand. The researcher allowed respondents to choose the interview location to maximise their comfort. The researcher refrained from using any specific and sensitive information that might reveal the identity or potentially harm the reputation of participants.

## 4. Results, Analysis and Discussion

### 4.1 The interviewees

A total of five semi-structured interviews were made to a fisherman, fish hawker (also a fisherman's wife), local councillor, restaurant owner and an aquaculture officer, four of which are from Marsaxlokk and one is female. All of the participants were overjoyed with the interviews as some of them said their voice is never heard. They all showed great passion and dedication at what they do and a displeasure about the fact that the fishing trade is slowly dying. From these interviews, the researcher managed to confirm certain aspects that were referred to in the Literature Review, whilst other interesting concepts emerged.

### 4.2 A fisherman's life

The fisherman interviewed stated his job is dependent from the fishing methods he uses as they affect his working time. For certain methods, fishermen travel miles out at sea; therefore, they leave early to reach the location on time. Firstly, from January till June, the interviewed fisherman uses trammel nets (*parit*) to catch a variety of fish. Secondly, from April till July he utilises long-line fishing (*konz*) to catch swordfish. Lastly, from August till December he employs fish aggregating devices (*kannizzati*) and purse-seine nets to catch dorado. The fishing gear used to catch the swordfish and the dorado is used by the majority of fishermen. The trammel net is also one of the most popular fishing methods used in Marsaxlokk; however, there are other fishermen that opt for bottom long-line fishing gear (*konz tal-qiegħ*). The preferred methods depend on what their fathers and grandfathers used. The literature review's statement that fishermen target tuna and swordfish due to their profitability has been confirmed by both the fisherman and the local councillor.

The fishing methods used also affect the amount of people employed. With the trammel net he might need from one to three persons whereas for the dorado season he needs to employ three or four other fishermen. In the older days, his father employed seven or eight people for the dorado season; therefore, they worked more comfortably.

The local councillor stated that fishermen cannot simply opt to go fishing for something else as they would need to invest thousands of euros on new fishing gear and apparatus as a different setup is required. During the swordfish season, the tuna season is also open. Some fishermen opt to go fishing for tuna whilst others, like the fisherman interviewed, prefer to sell their quota to the fish farms. As discussed in the aquaculture chapter in the literature review and confirmed by the fisherman, a national

quota of tuna is issued annually; therefore, selling their quota to fish farms will result in gaining a sum of money without the necessity to invest in tuna fishing gear.

In response to an inquiry about the expenses incurred by fishermen, the fisherman, fish hawker and local councillor replied major expenses include purchasing technologies such as boat engines and other apparatus, fishing gear, bait, fuel (despite government subsidies) and paying wages for other fishermen employed. Therefore, before embarking to a fishing expedition, fishermen face a predetermined deficit and are always uncertain whether they will manage to break even or make profit.

The financial challenges coupled with the hardship and prolonged hours of manual labour are the reasons why the younger generation is not pursuing this career. All interviewees who reside in Marsaxlokk affirmed that not even fishermen themselves are encouraging their children to pursue this career as they do not want their children to pass from such encounters. The local councillor and restaurant owner continued to add that despite all challenges, some people simply love the serenity and tranquillity the sea offers. Consequently, some fishermen shifted to alternative sea-related occupations such as offering boat trips to Marsaxlokk and its adjacent bays.

#### **4.3 Women: “the pillars of the family”**

As previously stated in the literature review, fish hawkers tend to sell fish to nearby villages. This has been confirmed by both the local councillor and the fish hawker, with the latter stating she sells fish in Żejtun three times a week. She did not choose Żejtun herself but rather followed after her mother-in-law's steps. She sells fish at the Sunday open market in Marsaxlokk. According to the local councillor, on Sundays there are a total of 180 stalls, 18 of which are fish hawkers, all with the presence of women. The fish hawker stated that buyers from Żejtun are more knowledgeable on fish than buyers from Marsaxlokk. However, she is grateful for the Sunday open market as certain products not bought from locals are bought from foreigners. For example, locals are disgusted with caviar but foreigners love it.

In the literature review, it has been said that fish hawkers went by foot or caught the bus to sell fish. Nowadays fish hawkers use a privately owned car or truck. The interviewee stated that prior to becoming a fish hawker, she had to learn how to drive. Over the years, she consistently upgraded her transportation and nowadays uses a truck; she stressed that transportation is indispensable for her job.

In section 2.3, it has also been stated that women contribute greatly to the fishing community by fixing nets, maintaining financial records and selling fish. This has been confirmed and elaborated on from

the fish hawker, the local councillor and the fisherman. In fact, participants residing in Marsaxlokk were asked about the importance of women's contribution to the community, all of which spoke highly and showed utmost respect for women.

The fish hawker and the local councillor stated how difficult it is for a fisherman's wife to take care of the children by herself whilst her husband is out at sea. The latter referred to women as "the pillars of the family". He affirmed that women still take care of the household's accounts as well as tax papers and other necessary paper work, which is crucial nowadays as lack of documentation makes the fisherman's job impossible. Additionally, the wife sells the fish as fishermen are not capable. The local councillor stated some fishermen are so dependent on their wife they even ask her what they should wear.

When asked whether her job gives her satisfaction, the fish hawker said that despite the long hours she has to work (almost twelve hours a day), she is satisfied with her job. Her husband works hard to catch fish; however, he does not sell it, she does. Henceforth, it gives her great satisfaction that with her job she gets her wage, her husband's wage, and pay for other fishermen's wages. She continued to add that her husband praises her for the hard work she does as he will never be capable to sell his catch.

#### **4.4 The effects of fishing on the community**

According to the local councillor, fishing not only shaped the village but also paved the way to other equally significant enterprises such as the open market and restaurants, which contribute to the present identity of Marsaxlokk. In the past, fishing also affected certain social sports activities like water polo and football clubs as these struggled to assemble enough players for their games due to the majority being out at sea.

Social and cultural activities sometimes need to align with the fishing seasons and offices like the *Kooperattiva Nazzjonali tas-Sajd* have adhere to specific opening hours according to the fishing seasons. Despite the general decline in faith, popular traditions such as the blessing of the boats are still celebrated and south after. Moreover, during feast week, fishermen typically take a week off from work to celebrate with the fishing community whilst temporarily forgetting the competition and rivalry among themselves.

## 4.5 Fish Cuisine

According to the restaurant owner, the fishing method used by fishermen affects the flavour of fish. He personally prefers fish caught with long-line fishing as fish caught with trammel nets get entangled in the net and by trying to escape waste a lot of energy. As a result, this affects its visual presentation and taste. The long-line fishing method on the other hand is quick; therefore, the fish retains its vibrancy and tastiness. Furthermore, the fish's taste also depends on where it is caught. He gave me an example with a red mullet, stating that should it be caught from the proximity of the harbour it would have a brownish colour and be smaller in comparison to when it is caught from other areas. The fishing spots are a secret, even for him. Not even his best friend shared the locations with him. On the other hand, he finds it disrespectful to ask.

The taste is also affected from how meticulous the fisherman is with its upkeep until it is brought back to land. This includes the number of hours it stayed alive after capture, how long it is kept fresh, and whether ice is applied directly or indirectly. Certain fish like the red scorpion fish, grouper and meagre are sometimes brought in an aquarium. The interviewed restaurant owner prefers to buy fish directly from fishermen and resorts to the fish market in Marsa when there are no catches. Throughout his career, he seldom bought anything from fish farms as he claimed the fish would normally be too oily to cook.

82 per cent of his menu is based on fish. To confirm what was stated in the literature review, the fish soup (*aljotta*) is always on the menu, accompanied with the local beer battered fish and chips, with the latter being the top seller. For his best-selling dish, he uses seasonal fish such as the dorado. The decision to focus his menu on fish is because of the village's identity as a fishing village. Furthermore, he takes advantage from the great opportunity of buying fresh wild fish directly from fishermen. When asked whether religious festivities affect his

When it comes to the fisherman's household, they tend to incorporate fish in their diet by using unwanted or unpresentable fish such as a half-eaten fish (as it would be eaten from another fish). According to the fish hawker, a fried half-eaten fish is extremely tasty since it has a saltier flavour. She also enjoys preparing fish cooked *al cartoccio*. Sometimes she also prepares rissoles (*pulpetti*) with swordfish caviar; although, they are more likely to sell it due to its high market value. Her family's favourite dish is the fish soup (*aljotta*), which they consume throughout all year. They enhance its flavour by adding parts which are typically discarded by customers such as fish liver, fish bones and caviar. The fisherman stated that boiling a fresh and high quality fish in sea water is tasty.

## 4.6 Technology

Technology continues to be of great importance in the fishing industry. As stated in section 2.6, it has been confirmed by the fisherman that in earlier days fishermen did use fish aggregating devices (*kannizzati*) to navigate through. This also meant that they had to depart early to catch dorado but nowadays thanks to what the fisherman referred to as the plotter (GPS), he can find the devices easily as all coordinates are registered.

For safety reasons, the fisherman installed three engines. While he works with one, he uses the others as back-up. To enhance further their safety, fishermen also carry VHF and satellite phones. After the *Simshar* accident in 2010 and other near misses over the years, the local councillor said that fishermen realised how important is it to invest in such safety equipment and for the authorities to know their location. According to the fisherman, they utilise websites like [www.windfinder.com](http://www.windfinder.com) to monitor weather conditions which enables them to anticipate bad weather. However, checking the weather from out at sea is sometimes not possible; therefore, fishermen rely on their wives to inform them about the weather conditions during satellite phone calls.

## 4.7 The impacts of aquaculture

A prime example of aquaculture in Malta is tuna, since it is not cultivated directly from the parents' eggs but simply put in an enclosure until it is well fed and fattened. When asked about the impact of fish farming on fishermen (including close-cycle), the aquaculture officer said it has its advantages and disadvantages. Fish farming attracts fish and consequently, the fish farming area may serve as a nursery ground given the area is off-limits to fishermen.

Nonetheless, it can also attract sea mammals like dolphins, which are not good news to fishermen. This was confirmed by the fisherman himself, stating that dolphins are highly intelligent since they eat the best fish captured in his trammel nets. Extracting fish from the net often results in tearing, which in turn requires costly repairs. Moreover, dolphins hunt their prey and use the trammel nets to trap their meal. Consequently, fishermen tend to avoid the proximities of fish farm areas. Nevertheless, dolphins still manage to find fishermen by recognising the sound of the fishing boat engine. As a result, they follow the boat, anticipating the setup of trammel nets.

Despite this, according to the fisherman, the local councillor and the aquaculture officer, there is a good rapport between fish farmers and fishermen mostly because fishermen contribute greatly in fish farming as they are often requested to capture tuna which will eventually be reared inside cages. Furthermore, fishermen are also asked to assist in dragging fish farmers' tuna fishing cages.

## 5. Final Arguments

According to interviewed locals, Marsaxlokk is a village which started to develop over 200 years ago as a fishing village. This is still an important aspect of the village but other commercial activities such as the open market, restaurants and aquaculture have become as important as fishing. However, it is thanks to fishing that all of these things have been developed over the years, forming Marsaxlokk as we know it today.

### 5.1 Conclusions

In this long essay, the researcher explored how fishing is still important in Marsaxlokk despite its decline. It has been concluded that fishing methods as well as fishermen have an impact and alter the way of living of the fishing community of Marsaxlokk. Fishing and the traditional fishing methods adopted effect directly fishermen and their families. Social, economic, cultural and religious activities are affected by fishing. Fishing methods adopted also impact the fish's freshness and flavour. Fish recipes in the household of fishermen are adapted to include parts of fish which are normally discarded by their customers. It has been proven that women contribute greatly to this community and are treated with utmost respect.

Despite financial and other challenges faced by fishermen, technological advancements proved to contribute greatly in fishing by enhancing fishing methods and guarantee more safety for fishermen to avoid possible accidents. Aquaculture also has an impact on fishing methods as feed given to reared fish in cages is attracting sea creatures and mammals like dolphins which in return eat any fish trapped resulting in costly damages to fishing nets. On the other hand, some fishermen are employed from fish farms to help catch tuna that fish farmers will eventually rear and drag cages into designated places. This shows there is a general good relationship between fishermen and fish farming as fish farmers pay fishermen to do this job.

### 5.2 Recommendations

Future research can focus on aquaculture, a government entity located at Fort San Lucian in Marsaxlokk, as it is a fascinating topic on its own. People working with aquaculture contribute greatly to conserve endemic species such as the freshwater crab (*qabru*) (Rossitto, 2021) and the Mediterranean killifish (*buzaqq*) (Nature Trust Malta, 2015); thus, deserve more recognition.

Researchers can focus on fish farming by elaborating on the different techniques adopted by fish farms to rear their fish, the process for packaging, shipment and exportation, and the environmental impacts of such companies. Research can also be focused on the craftsmanship in creating the Maltese traditional fishing boats and their history given it is a unique and interesting skill which is also declining.

### **5.3 Evaluation, Reliability and Validity**

A fisherman, fish hawker, local councillor, restaurant owner and aquaculture officer were chosen by the researcher as interviewees. The sample size is good enough given the fishing community is not large. This choice proved that all participants are indeed affected by fishing and fishing methods whether directly or indirectly.

Interviews exemplify primary research, and their validity is based on the information gathered confirming certain aspects highlighted in the literature review whilst also discovering other concepts. Since certain information passed from the participants reflects the same information gathered from the literature review, the research is proved to be reliable.

## 6. References

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[crab/#:~:text=Nature%20Trust%20Malta%20and%20the,this%20endemic%20species%20called%20](http://www.tvmnews.mt/en/news/project-aimed-at-preserving-our-endemic-freshwater-crab/#:~:text=Nature%20Trust%20Malta%20and%20the,this%20endemic%20species%20called%20)

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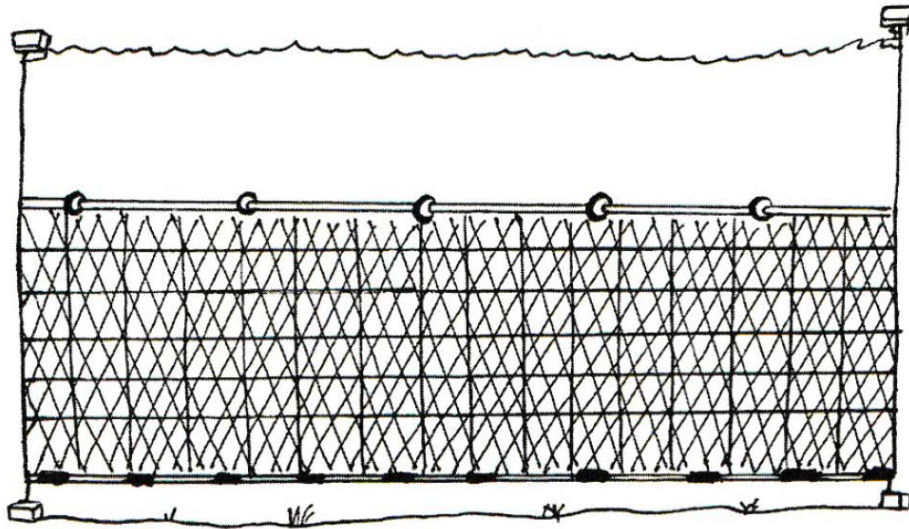
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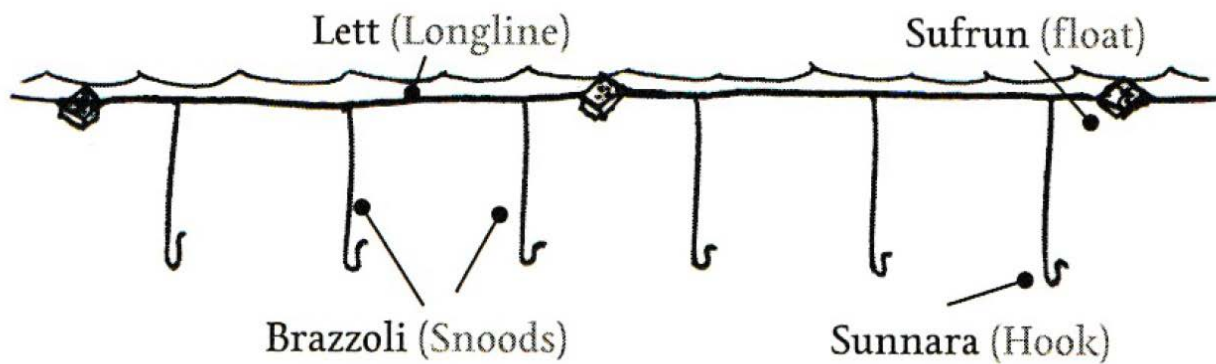
## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Pictures of fishing methods mentioned in the long essay

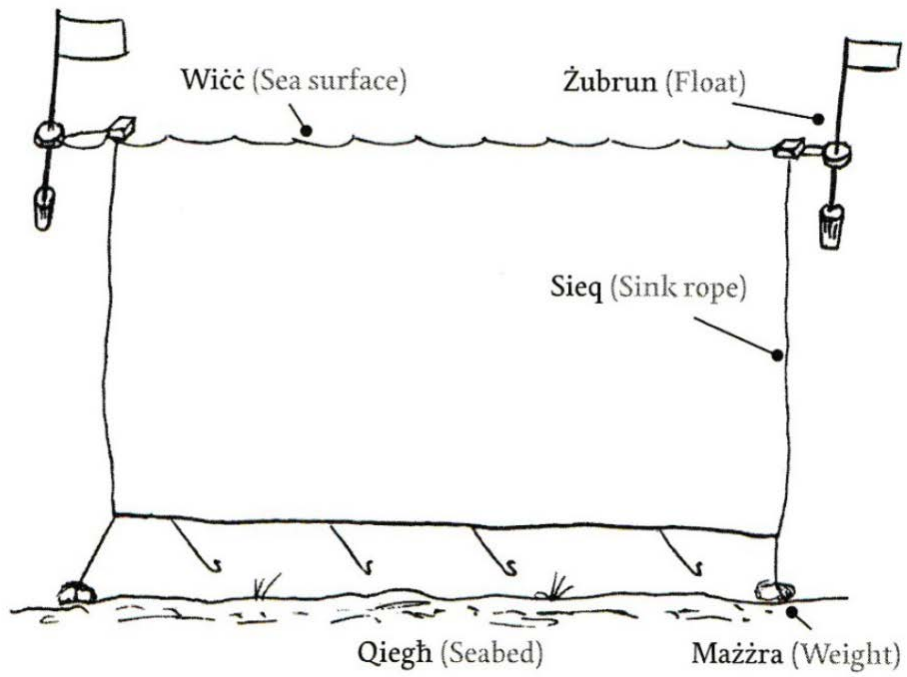
#### The Trammel Net (*Parit*)



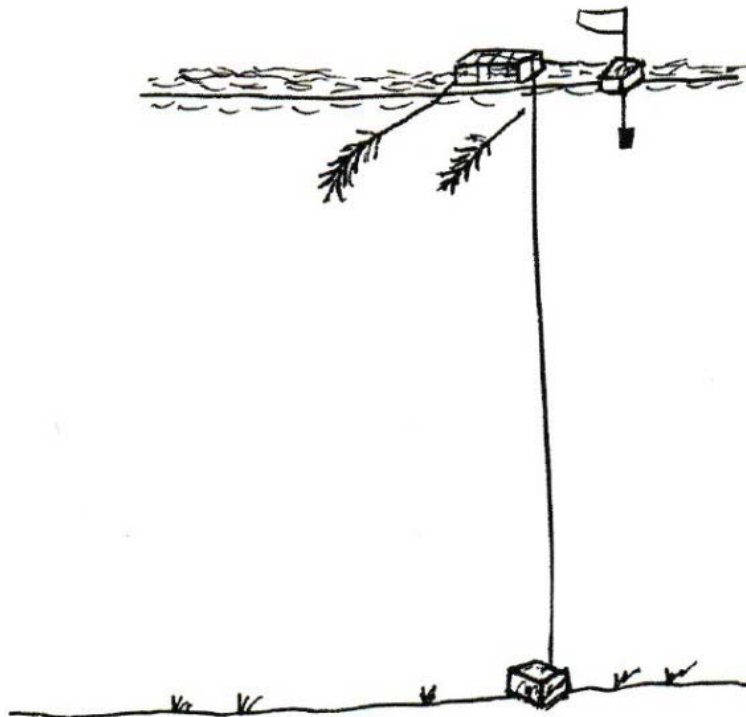
#### The Long-line fishing (*Konz*)



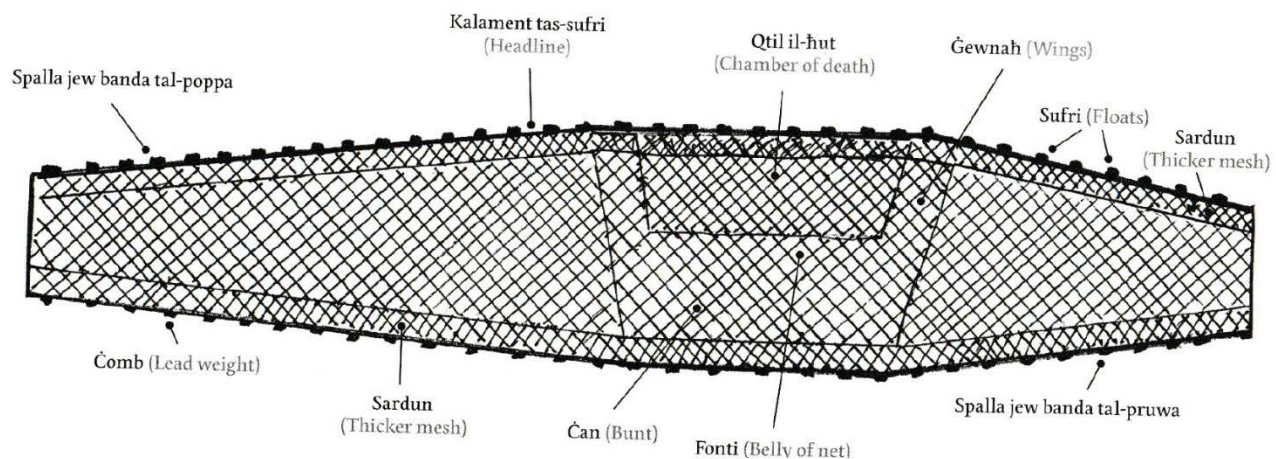
**The Bottom Long-Line fishing (*Konz tal-Qiegh*)**



**The Fish Aggregating Device (*kannizzata*)**



## The Purse-Seine Net used for dorado fishing



Note: All photos in this appendix were taken from the book “Dizzjunarju ta’ Termini Nawtici u tagħrif marittimu lokali” written by Joseph Caruana in 2019.

## Appendix 2: Long Essay Tour Itinerary

A half-day tour in Marsaxlokk is proposed in relation to this research. The tour comprises the following stops and topics:

### Stop 1: Promenade of Marsaxlokk

- A historical overview of the fishing village of Marsaxlokk

### Stop 2: Fisherman's store

- A thorough explanation of the most popular fishing methods used such as the trammel net, long-line fishing, purse-seine net and the fish aggregating device (*kannizzata*). The audience can also view the fishing gear mentioned; however, since fishing nets tend to be quite big, visuals will be shown to help better understanding.

### Stop 3: Next to the quay

- Details about the different types of traditional and modern fishing boats, their history and adaptations over the years
- The technology used by fishermen on their fishing vessels
- The possible dangers fishermen might encounter while out at sea

### Stop 4: The *Kooperattiva Nazzjonali tas-Sajd*

- The benefits of joining a co-op
- Changes the co-op made to make the fishermen's life easier
- How is the co-op affected from fishing methods

#### Stop 5: The Open Market

- The history of the fish and open markets in Marsaxlokk and the fish market in Marsa (*pixkerija*)
- Auctioning of fish in the past versus today
- The relevance of fish hawkers, what fish would they typically sell and how is it sold
- The importance of women in the fishing industry in the past and nowadays

#### Stop 5: St Andrew's statue

- The reason why St Andrew is the patron saint of fishermen but not the patron saint of Marsaxlokk
- The story related to St Andrew's statue

#### Stop 6: In front of the parish church

- The history behind the building of the parish church of Marsaxlokk dedicated to Our Lady of Rosary of Pompeii and how is it related to fishermen and Rosina Sabbatini
- Traditions and historical facts which connect fishing with religion
- The titular painting dedicated to Our Lady of Rosary of Pompeii

#### Stop 7: The first pier at the promenade

- The development of Marsaxlokk over the years
- How was it transformed into the largest fishing village of the country
- Who were the people responsible for these embellishments?
- Giuseppe Despott and his contribution as the First Superintendent of Fisheries

#### Stop 8: In front of police station

- The reason behind the police being involved in fishing
- How did the fishermen's wives make additional income during World War 1
- The transformation of Marsaxlokk into a sea plane base during World War 2 and the impacts the war left on the fishing community
- What fishermen used to wear as a result of World War 2's aftermath

### Stop 9: Vendome Tower

- The story behind Vendome tower and Philippe de Bourbon, Duke of Vendôme
- How did fortifications help with the development of Marsaxlokk

### Stop 10: Fort St Lucian

- The history behind the fortification and its embellishment over the years
- History of aquaculture
- The Malta Aquaculture Research Centre
- The impact of aquaculture and fish farming on Marsaxlokk
- How do certain conservation projects impact fishing

### **Appendix 3: Fisherman's Interview**

- 1) What does your working day consist of?
- 2) What fishing methods do you use for fishing throughout the year and why do you use them?
- 3) Were there any particular fishing methods you stopped using or failed?
- 4) What is the procedure behind selling your catch?
- 5) What are the expenses incurred to do this job?
- 6) What technology helps you in your line of work?
- 7) What do you think of the community in Marsaxlokk?
- 8) Are there any important religious customs held in Marsaxlokk?
- 9) Do you think women play a significant role in the community? If yes, how?
- 10) Does aquaculture affect your line of work? If yes, how?

#### **Appendix 4: Fish Hawker's (also a fisherman's wife) Interview**

- 1) What would your typical working day consist of?
- 2) Does this job give you satisfaction? If yes, how?
- 3) Where do you hawk fish and why?
- 4) What happens when there are days in which fish is not caught?
- 5) How often do you incorporate fish in your diet and what are the typical fish dishes you cook?
- 6) Does fishing form part of Marsaxlokk's culture?
- 7) Does aquaculture affect your line of work? If yes, how?
- 8) Did Marsaxlokk change over the years? If yes, how?
- 9) Why is the fish market only open on Sundays in Marsaxlokk?
- 10) Do you need a permit to sell? If yes, what is the process of obtaining it?
- 11) Do you think women play a significant role in the community? If yes, how?

## Appendix 5: Local Councillor's Interview

- 1) How would you describe Marsaxlokk and its community?
- 2) How many people from the village would you say are involved in fishing? Directly or indirectly?
- 3) Do you think fishing is part of Marsaxlokk's culture?
- 4) How important is fishing to the community of Marsaxlokk?
- 5) When I mention traditional fishing method and fishing methods in general, what are the methods you would think of?
- 6) Do you think the part of the community which is not involved in fishing is also knowledgeable about the different fishing methods fishermen in Marsaxlokk use?
- 7) How do traditional fishing methods affect the social, economic, cultural and culinary aspect of the village?
- 8) Do you think technology is crucial for a fisherman's job? If yes, how does technology contribute to the Maltese fishing methods? How does the community of Marsaxlokk react to technology?
- 9) What do people in Marsaxlokk eat? Is their diet based on fish given it's a fishing village? Or not/ If yes, what recipes do they eat?
- 10) Is there any educational program in schools or other intuitions that addresses these fishing methods or fishing in general?
- 11) What is the history of the fish open market and why is it only open on Sundays?
- 12) Any festivities or activities related to fishing?
- 13) Are people from Marsaxlokk religious? If yes, what do you think makes them devoted to religion?
- 14) Do you think women play a significant role in the community? If yes, how and why?

## Appendix 6: Restaurant Owner's Interview

- 1) Why was Marsaxlokk chosen for the restaurant's location?
- 2) Are people from the community attracted to this restaurant? If yes, why?
- 3) How many items do you have on the menu and how many of the items include fish?
- 4) From who do you buy fish and what kind of fish do you buy?
- 5) What is the procedure of buying fish?
- 6) What is the restaurant's most popular dish and is the fish soup (*aljotta*) incorporated in the menu?
- 7) What do you think attracts restaurant owners to open their business in Marsaxlokk?
- 8) How do you think fishing methods affect the social, economic, social and culinary aspects of the fishing village?
- 9) Do you think religion effects the eating lifestyle of the community?
- 10) Do you think women play a significant role in the community? If yes, how?

## **Appendix 7: Aquaculture officer's Interview**

- 1) What is the history of aquaculture?
- 2) How has aquaculture evolved over the years?
- 3) What happens to the fish cultivated in fish farms when it is harvested?
- 4) If I had to mention fishing methods, what methods would you think of?
- 5) Do you think aquaculture impacts traditional fishing methods or fishermen in general?
- 6) What is the relationship between fishermen and fish farmers?
- 7) What was the fishermen's reaction when aquaculture was introduced in Malta?
- 8) Why was the tuna quota introduced?
- 9) Why do you think that 3 out of 8 of the fish farm companies in Malta operate in Marsaxlokk?
- 10) Why was the department of aquaculture set up at Fort San Lucian in Marsaxlokk?

## Appendix 8: Consent Forms, Information Letters and Permission Forms

### Consent Form



Name and Surname of Researcher: Althea Mifsud

ID number of researcher: 536994M

Email address of researcher: althea.mifsud.22@its.edu.mt

Mobile number of researcher: +356 7993 2966

Course: HND in Tourist Guiding

Tutor name and surname: Mr David Pace

Tutor office telephone number: +356 2379 3225

Title of the Long essay/Dissertation: Exploring the importance of fishing in Marsaxlokk

Dear Sir / Madam,

I, Althea Mifsud, a student at the Institute of Tourism Studies am currently in the final year of my Higher National Diploma, I am carrying out research on the above-mentioned title.

I had already sent you the information letter about my research and you had provided me with a signed information letter. If you have any further questions for clarification, please do not hesitate to ask me.

By signing this consent form, you are giving me your consent to use the data collected through the interview for the analysis of the results. I will send you a list of questions before the interview so you can prepare yourself beforehand. The questions asked will be about Marsaxlokk and its community, traditional fishing methods, the multifaceted impacts of such methods on the community and fishermen, the life of a fisherman, the impact of technology on fishermen and the impacts of aquaculture on fishermen (if any).

The information collected will be kept strictly confidential. All data will be stored securely and will be made available only to those individuals conducting the study. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link you to the study. Your identity will not be revealed in any publications that result from this study.

You can terminate your participation at any time without prejudice. Participation is voluntary. You do not have to answer individual questions if you do not want to. Your name will not be attached to the interview and will ensure that your participation remains confidential. Kindly, contact me if you have any queries or require any further clarification.

#### **Participant's declaration**

I have read this consent form and am giving the researcher the opportunity to carry out the research at my department. I hereby grant them permission to use the information provided as data in the above-mentioned research project, knowing that it will be kept confidential and anonymous.

Michael Bugeja  
Participant's Name

Michael Ziji  
Participant's Signature

20-November-2023  
Date

Althea Mifsud  
Researcher's Name

SA Mifsud  
Researcher's Signature

20-November-2023  
Date

## Information Letter



Name and Surname of Researcher: Althea Mifsud

ID number of researcher: 536994M

Email address of researcher: althea.mifsud.22@its.edu.mt

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- 1) How do traditional fishing methods affect the social, economic, cultural and culinary aspects of a fishing village?
- 2) How did technology contribute to the traditional fishing methods?
- 3) Does aquaculture influence traditional fishing methods? If yes, how?

Dear Sir / Madam,

I, Althea Mifsud, a student at the Institute of Tourism Studies am currently in the final year of my Higher National Diploma in Tourist Guiding, I am carrying out research on the above-mentioned title.

My research is about exploring the importance of fishing in Marsaxlokk by exploring the multifaceted impacts this trade had on the community, the contribution of technology in fishing and whether it is affected by aquaculture. The method of data collection will be a one-to-one interview. The data collected from the interviews will be used for the sole purpose of

this research. The data will be collected by audio recording a face to-face semi-structured interview at your home. The data will be collected in a thematic analysis manner and will be transcribed. The data will be thoroughly analysed to collect the answers to the above-mentioned aims of the research. I am kindly asking for your consent to have an audio recorded face-to-face semi-structured interview with you. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with information so you can decide whether to participate in this study. Any questions you may have will be answered by the researcher.

There are no known risks related with this research project other than possible discomfort with the following:

- You will be kindly asked to be honest when answering questions.
- Any audio recorded data will be used for transcription purposes, after which it will be destroyed.

The information collected will be kept strictly confidential. All data will be stored securely and will be made available only to researcher. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link you to the study. Your identity will not be revealed in any publications that result from this study.

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#### **Participant's declaration**

I have read this consent form and am giving the researcher the opportunity to carry out the research at my department. I hereby grant them permission to use the information provided as data in the above-mentioned research project, knowing that it will be kept confidential and anonymous.

Michael Bugeja  
Participant's Name

Michael Bugeja  
Participant's Signature

20-November-2023  
Date

Althea Mifsud  
Researcher's Name

Althea Mifsud  
Researcher's Signature

20-November-2023  
Date

## Consent Form



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Grace Bugeja  
Participant's Name

M Grace Bugeja  
Participant's Signature

20-November-2023  
Date

Althea Mifsud  
Researcher's Name

A Mifsud  
Researcher's Signature

20-November-2023  
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- 3) Does aquaculture influence traditional fishing methods? If yes, how?

Dear Sir / Madam,

I, Althea Mifsud, a student at the Institute of Tourism Studies am currently in the final year of my Higher National Diploma in Tourist Guiding, I am carrying out research on the above-mentioned title.

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Participant's Name

M' Grace Bugeja  
Participant's Signature

20-November-2023  
Date

Aithea Mifsud  
Researcher's Name

A. Mifsud  
Researcher's Signature

20-November-2023  
Date

## Permission Letter



Name and Surname of Researcher: Althea Mifsud

ID number of researcher: 536994M

Email address of researcher: althea.mifsud.22@its.edu.mt

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- 2) How did technology contribute to the traditional fishing methods?
- 3) Does aquaculture influence traditional fishing methods? If yes, how?

Type of participants: A fisherman, a fish hawker, a local councillor, a restaurant owner and an aquaculture officer

Number of participants required: 5

Dear Sir / Madam,

I, Althea Mifsud, a student at the Institute of Tourism Studies am currently in the final year of my Higher National Diploma, I am carrying out research on the above-mentioned title.

I would like your permission to ask you some questions about Marsaxlokk and its community, the traditional fishing methods and their multifaceted impacts on the community, the process of buying and selling fish, technology's contribution to fishing and the life of a fisherman's

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M. Grace Bugeja  
Participant's Signature

20-November-2023  
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Tutor name and surname: Mr David Pace

Tutor office telephone number: +356 2379 3225

Title of the Long essay/Dissertation: Exploring the importance of fishing in Marsaxlokk

Dear Sir / Madam,

I, Althea Mifsud, a student at the Institute of Tourism Studies am currently in the final year of my Higher National Diploma, I am carrying out research on the above-mentioned title.

I had already sent you the information letter about my research and you had provided me with a signed information letter. If you have any further questions for clarification, please do not hesitate to ask me.

By signing this consent form, you are giving me your consent to use the data collected through the interview for the analysis of the results. I will send you a list of questions before the interview so you can prepare yourself beforehand. The questions asked will be about Marsaxlokk and its community, traditional fishing methods, the multifaceted impacts of such methods on the community and the impact of technology on fishermen.

The information collected will be kept strictly confidential. All data will be stored securely and will be made available only to those individuals conducting the study. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link you to the study. Your identity will not be revealed in any publications that result from this study.

You can terminate your participation at any time without prejudice. Participation is voluntary. You do not have to answer individual questions if you do not want to. Your name will not be attached to the interview and will ensure that your participation remains confidential. Kindly, contact me if you have any queries or require any further clarification.

**Participant's declaration**

I have read this consent form and am giving the researcher the opportunity to carry out the research at my department. I hereby grant them permission to use the information provided as data in the above-mentioned research project, knowing that it will be kept confidential and anonymous.

Daniel Zerafa  
Participant's Name

  
Participant's Signature

12-December-2023  
Date

Althea Mifsud  
Researcher's Name

  
Researcher's Signature

12-December-2023  
Date

## Information Letter



Name and Surname of Researcher: Althea Mifsud

ID number of researcher: 536994M

Email address of researcher: althea.mifsud.22@its.edu.mt

Mobile number of researcher: +356 7993 2966

Course: HND in Tourist Guiding

Tutor name and surname: Mr David Pace

Tutor office telephone number: +356 2379 3225

Title of the Long essay/Dissertation: Exploring the importance of fishing in Marsaxlokk

Aims of the research: To answer the following central and secondary research questions:

- 1) How do traditional fishing methods affect the social, economic, cultural and culinary aspects of a fishing village?
- 2) How did technology contribute to the traditional fishing methods?
- 3) Does aquaculture influence traditional fishing methods? If yes, how?

Dear Sir / Madam,

I, Althea Mifsud, a student at the Institute of Tourism Studies am currently in the final year of my Higher National Diploma in Tourist Guiding, I am carrying out research on the above-mentioned title.

My research is about exploring the importance of fishing in Marsaxlokk by exploring the multifaceted impacts this trade had on the community, the contribution of technology in fishing and whether it is affected by aquaculture. The method of data collection will be a one-to-one interview. The data collected from the interviews will be used for the sole purpose of

this research. The data will be collected by audio recording a face to-face semi-structured interview at your esteemed work place. The data will be collected in a thematic analysis manner and will be transcribed. The data will be thoroughly analysed to collect the answers to the above-mentioned aims of the research. I am kindly asking for your consent to have an audio recorded face-to-face semi-structured interview with you. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with information so you can decide whether to participate in this study. Any questions you may have will be answered by the researcher.

There are no known risks related with this research project other than possible discomfort with the following:

- You will be kindly asked to be honest when answering questions.
- Any audio recorded data will be used for transcription purposes, after which it will be destroyed.

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**Participant's declaration**

I have read this consent form and am giving the researcher the opportunity to carry out the research at my department. I hereby grant them permission to use the information provided as data in the above-mentioned research project, knowing that it will be kept confidential and anonymous.

Daniel Feenb  
Participant's Name

[Signature]  
Participant's Signature

12-December-2023  
Date

Aithea Mifsud  
Researcher's Name

A Mifsud  
Researcher's Signature

12-December-2023  
Date

## Permission Letter



Name and Surname of Researcher: Althea Mifsud

ID number of researcher: 536994M

Email address of researcher: althea.mifsud.22@its.edu.mt

Mobile number of researcher: +356 7993 2966

Course: HND in Tourist Guiding

Tutor name and surname: Mr David Pace

Tutor office telephone number: +356 2379 3225

Title of the Long essay/Dissertation: Exploring the importance of fishing in Marsaxlokk

Aims of the research: To answer the following central and secondary research questions:

- 1) How do traditional fishing methods affect the social, economic, cultural and culinary aspects of a fishing village?
- 2) How did technology contribute to the traditional fishing methods?
- 3) Does aquaculture influence traditional fishing methods? If yes, how?

Type of participants: A fisherman, a fish hawker, a local councillor, a restaurant owner and an aquaculture officer

Number of participants required: 5

Dear Sir / Madam,

I, Althea Mifsud, a student at the Institute of Tourism Studies am currently in the final year of my Higher National Diploma, I am carrying out research on the above-mentioned title.

I would like your permission to ask you some questions about Marsaxlokk and its community, religious traditions, the impacts of fishing methods on the community, the life of a fisherman, technology's contribution to fishing. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with

information so you can decide whether to participate in this study. Any questions you may have will be answered by the researcher.

There are no known risks related with this research project other than possible discomfort with the following:

- Everyone will be asked to be honest when answering questions.
- Any audio recorded data will be used for transcription purposes, after which it will be destroyed.

The information in the study records will be kept strictly confidential. All data will be stored securely and will be made available only to those individuals conducting the study. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link you to the study. Your identity and the identity of the participants will not be revealed in any publications that result from this study.

Participants can terminate their participation at any time without prejudice. Participation is voluntary. Participants do not have to answer individual questions if they do not want to. Your name and the participant's names will not be attached to the semi-structured interviews and this will ensure that everyone's information remains confidential. Please, kindly contact me if you have any queries or any further information or clarification.

#### Participant's declaration

I have read this consent form and am giving the researcher the opportunity to carry out the research at my department. I hereby grant them permission to use the information provided as data in the above-mentioned research project, knowing that it will be kept confidential and anonymous.

Daniel Lopez  
Participant's Name

[Signature]  
Participant's Signature

12-December-2023  
Date

Althea Mifsud  
Researcher's Name

AR Mifsud  
Researcher's Signature

12-December-2023  
Date

## Consent Form



Name and Surname of Researcher: Althea Mifsud

ID number of researcher: 536994M

Email address of researcher: althea.mifsud.22@its.edu.mt

Mobile number of researcher: +356 7993 2966

Course: HND in Tourist Guiding

Tutor name and surname: Mr David Pace

Tutor office telephone number: +356 2379 3225

Title of the Long essay/Dissertation: Exploring the importance of fishing in Marsaxlokk

Dear Sir / Madam,

I, Althea Mifsud, a student at the Institute of Tourism Studies am currently in the final year of my Higher National Diploma, I am carrying out research on the above-mentioned title.

I had already sent you the information letter about my research and you had provided me with a signed information letter. If you have any further questions for clarification, please do not hesitate to ask me.

By signing this consent form, you are giving me your consent to use the data collected through the interview for the analysis of the results. I will send you a list of questions before the interview so you can prepare yourself beforehand. The questions asked will be about Marsaxlokk and its community, traditional fishing methods, the multifaceted impacts of such methods on the community and the impact of technology on fishermen.

The information collected will be kept strictly confidential. All data will be stored securely and will be made available only to those individuals conducting the study. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link you to the study. Your identity will not be revealed in any publications that result from this study.

You can terminate your participation at any time without prejudice. Participation is voluntary. You do not have to answer individual questions if you do not want to. Your name will not be attached to the interview and will ensure that your participation remains confidential. Kindly, contact me if you have any queries or require any further clarification.

**Participant's declaration**

I have read this consent form and am giving the researcher the opportunity to carry out the research at my department. I hereby grant them permission to use the information provided as data in the above-mentioned research project, knowing that it will be kept confidential and anonymous.

NEIL CRAMPTON  
Participant's Name

[Signature]  
Participant's Signature

11-December-2023  
Date

Althea Mifsud  
Researcher's Name

AMifsud  
Researcher's Signature

11-December-2023  
Date

## Information Letter



Name and Surname of Researcher: Althea Mifsud

ID number of researcher: 536994M

Email address of researcher: althea.mifsud.22@its.edu.mt

Mobile number of researcher: +356 7993 2966

Course: HND in Tourist Guiding

Tutor name and surname: Mr David Pace

Tutor office telephone number: +356 2379 3225

Title of the Long essay/Dissertation: Exploring the importance of fishing in Marsaxlokk

Aims of the research: To answer the following central and secondary research questions:

- 1) How do traditional fishing methods affect the social, economic, cultural and culinary aspects of a fishing village?
- 2) How did technology contribute to the traditional fishing methods?
- 3) Does aquaculture influence traditional fishing methods? If yes, how?

Dear Sir / Madam,

I, Althea Mifsud, a student at the Institute of Tourism Studies am currently in the final year of my Higher National Diploma in Tourist Guiding, I am carrying out research on the above-mentioned title.

My research is about exploring the importance of fishing in Marsaxlokk by exploring the multifaceted impacts this trade had on the community, the contribution of technology in fishing and whether it is affected by aquaculture. The method of data collection will be a one-to-one interview. The data collected from the interviews will be used for the sole purpose of

this research. The data will be collected by audio recording a face to-face semi-structured interview at your esteemed work place. The data will be collected in a thematic analysis manner and will be transcribed. The data will be thoroughly analysed to collect the answers to the above-mentioned aims of the research. I am kindly asking for your consent to have an audio recorded face-to-face semi-structured interview with you. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with information so you can decide whether to participate in this study. Any questions you may have will be answered by the researcher.

There are no known risks related with this research project other than possible discomfort with the following:

- You will be kindly asked to be honest when answering questions.
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You can terminate your participation at any time without prejudice. Participation is voluntary. You do not have to answer individual questions if you do not want to. Your name will not be attached to the analysis of the results and will ensure that your participation remains confidential. Kindly, contact me if you have any queries or require any further clarification.

**Participant's declaration**

I have read this consent form and am giving the researcher the opportunity to carry out the research at my department. I hereby grant them permission to use the information provided as data in the above-mentioned research project, knowing that it will be kept confidential and anonymous.

Neil Parsons  
Participant's Name

[Signature]  
Participant's Signature

11-December-2023  
Date

Aithea Mifsud  
Researcher's Name

[Signature]  
Researcher's Signature

11-December-2023  
Date

## Permission Letter



Name and Surname of Researcher: Althea Mifsud

ID number of researcher: 536994M

Email address of researcher: althea.mifsud.22@its.edu.mt

Mobile number of researcher: +356 7993 2966

Course: HND in Tourist Guiding

Tutor name and surname: Mr David Pace

Tutor office telephone number: +356 2379 3225

Title of the Long essay/Dissertation: Exploring the importance of fishing in Marsaxlokk

Aims of the research: To answer the following central and secondary research questions:

- 1) How do traditional fishing methods affect the social, economic, cultural and culinary aspects of a fishing village?
- 2) How did technology contribute to the traditional fishing methods?
- 3) Does aquaculture influence traditional fishing methods? If yes, how?

Type of participants: A fisherman, a fish hawker, a local councillor, a restaurant owner and an aquaculture officer

Number of participants required: 5

Dear Sir / Madam,

I, Althea Mifsud, a student at the Institute of Tourism Studies am currently in the final year of my Higher National Diploma, I am carrying out research on the above-mentioned title.

I would like your permission to ask you some questions about Marsaxlokk and its community, the impacts of fishing methods on the community, the restaurant's ties with fishermen and the community, and the inclusion of fish in the restaurant's menu. The purpose of this letter

is to provide you with information so you can decide whether to participate in this study. Any questions you may have will be answered by the researcher.

There are no known risks related with this research project other than possible discomfort with the following:

- Everyone will be asked to be honest when answering questions.
- Any audio recorded data will be used for transcription purposes, after which it will be destroyed.

The information in the study records will be kept strictly confidential. All data will be stored securely and will be made available only to those individuals conducting the study. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link you to the study. Your identity and the identity of the participants will not be revealed in any publications that result from this study.

Participants can terminate their participation at any time without prejudice. Participation is voluntary. Participants do not have to answer individual questions if they do not want to. Your name and the participant's names will not be attached to the semi-structured interviews and this will ensure that everyone's information remains confidential. Please, kindly contact me if you have any queries or any further information or clarification.

#### **Participant's declaration**

I have read this consent form and am giving the researcher the opportunity to carry out the research at my restaurant. I hereby grant them permission to use the information provided as data in the above-mentioned research project, knowing that it will be kept confidential and anonymous.

Neil Casiana  
Participant's Name

  
Participant's Signature

11-December-2023  
Date

Aitha Mifsud  
Researcher's Name

  
Researcher's Signature

11-December-2023  
Date

## Consent Form



Name and Surname of Researcher: Althea Mifsud

ID number of researcher: 536994M

Email address of researcher: althea.mifsud.22@its.edu.mt

Mobile number of researcher: +356 7993 2966

Course: HND in Tourist Guiding

Tutor name and surname: Mr David Pace

Tutor office telephone number: +356 2379 3225

Title of the Long essay/Dissertation: Exploring the importance of fishing in Marsaxlokk

Dear Sir / Madam,

I, Althea Mifsud, a student at the Institute of Tourism Studies am currently in the final year of my Higher National Diploma, I am carrying out research on the above-mentioned title.

I had already sent you the information letter about my research and you had provided me with a signed information letter. If you have any further questions for clarification, please do not hesitate to ask me.

By signing this consent form, you are giving me your consent to use the data collected through the interview for the analysis of the results. I will send you a list of questions before the interview so you can prepare yourself beforehand. The questions asked will be about aquaculture, traditional fishing methods, the impacts of aquaculture and the relationship between aquaculture and Marsaxlokk and its community.

The information collected will be kept strictly confidential. All data will be stored securely and will be made available only to those individuals conducting the study. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link you to the study. Your identity will not be revealed in any publications that result from this study.

You can terminate your participation at any time without prejudice. Participation is voluntary. You do not have to answer individual questions if you do not want to. Your name will not be attached to the interview and will ensure that your participation remains confidential. Kindly, contact me if you have any queries or require any further clarification.

**Participant's declaration**

I have read this consent form and am giving the researcher the opportunity to carry out the research at my department. I hereby grant them permission to use the information provided as data in the above-mentioned research project, knowing that it will be kept confidential and anonymous.

RAY CARINA  
Participant's Name

  
Participant's Signature

3/1/2024  
Date

Althea Mifsud  
Researcher's Name

AMifsud  
Researcher's Signature

3-January-2024  
Date

## Information Letter



Name and Surname of Researcher: Althea Mifsud

ID number of researcher: 536994M

Email address of researcher: althea.mifsud.22@its.edu.mt

Mobile number of researcher: +356 7993 2966

Course: HND in Tourist Guiding

Tutor name and surname: Mr David Pace

Tutor office telephone number: +356 2379 3225

Title of the Long essay/Dissertation: Exploring the importance of fishing in Marsaxlokk

Aims of the research: To answer the following central and secondary research questions:

- 1) How do traditional fishing methods affect the social, economic, cultural and culinary aspects of a fishing village?
- 2) How did technology contribute to the traditional fishing methods?
- 3) Does aquaculture influence traditional fishing methods? If yes, how?

Dear Sir / Madam,

I, Althea Mifsud, a student at the Institute of Tourism Studies am currently in the final year of my Higher National Diploma in Tourist Guiding, I am carrying out research on the above-mentioned title.

My research is about exploring the importance of fishing in Marsaxlokk by exploring the multifaceted impacts this trade had on the community, the contribution of technology in fishing and whether it is affected by aquaculture. The method of data collection will be a one-to-one interview. The data collected from the interviews will be used for the sole purpose of

this research. The data will be collected by audio recording a face to-face semi-structured interview at your esteemed department. The data will be collected in a thematic analysis manner and will be transcribed. The data will be thoroughly analysed to collect the answers to the above-mentioned aims of the research. I am kindly asking for your consent to have an audio recorded face-to-face semi-structured interview with you. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with information so you can decide whether to participate in this study. Any questions you may have will be answered by the researcher.

There are no known risks related with this research project other than possible discomfort with the following:

- You will be kindly asked to be honest when answering questions.
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The information collected will be kept strictly confidential. All data will be stored securely and will be made available only to researcher. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link you to the study. Your identity will not be revealed in any publications that result from this study.

You can terminate your participation at any time without prejudice. Participation is voluntary. You do not have to answer individual questions if you do not want to. Your name or the name of your department will not be attached to the analysis of the results and will ensure that your participation remains confidential. Kindly, contact me if you have any queries or require any further clarification.

**Participant's declaration**

I have read this consent form and am giving the researcher the opportunity to carry out the research at my department. I hereby grant them permission to use the information provided as data in the above-mentioned research project, knowing that it will be kept confidential and anonymous.

RAY CARUANA

Participant's Name



Participant's Signature

3/1/2024

Date

Aithea Mifsud

Researcher's Name

A Mifsud

Researcher's Signature

3-January-2024

Date

## Permission Letter



Name and Surname of Researcher: Althea Mifsud

ID number of researcher: 536994M

Email address of researcher: althea.mifsud.22@its.edu.mt

Mobile number of researcher: +356 7993 2966

Course: HND in Tourist Guiding

Tutor name and surname: Mr David Pace

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Title of the Long essay/Dissertation: Exploring the importance of fishing in Marsaxlokk

Aims of the research: To answer the following central and secondary research questions:

- 1) How do traditional fishing methods affect the social, economic, cultural and culinary aspects of a fishing village?
- 2) How did technology contribute to the traditional fishing methods?
- 3) Does aquaculture influence traditional fishing methods? If yes, how?

Type of participants: a fisherman, a fish hawker, a local councillor, a restaurant owner and an aquaculture officer

Number of participants required: 5

Dear Sir / Madam,

I, Althea Mifsud, a student at the Institute of Tourism Studies am currently in the final year of my Higher National Diploma, I am carrying out research on the above-mentioned title.

I would like your permission to ask you some questions about aquaculture, its presence in Marsaxlokk and its possible impacts on traditional fishing methods.

There are no known risks related with this research project other than possible discomfort with the following:

- Everyone will be asked to be honest when answering questions.
- Any audio recorded data will be used for transcription purposes, after which it will be destroyed.


The information in the study records will be kept strictly confidential. All data will be stored securely and will be made available only to those individuals conducting the study. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link you to the study. Your identity and the identity of the participants will not be revealed in any publications that result from this study.

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#### Participant's declaration


I have read this consent form and am giving the researcher the opportunity to carry out the research at my department. I hereby grant them permission to use the information provided as data in the above-mentioned research project, knowing that it will be kept confidential and anonymous.

RAI CARUANA  
Participant's Name

  
Participant's Signature

3/1/2024.  
Date

Althea Mifsud  
Researcher's Name

  
Researcher's Signature

3-January-2024  
Date

## LONG ESSAY – SUPERVISOR'S / TUTOR'S LOGBOOK

<i>Long essay Supervision Task</i>	
<b>Programme Name</b>	<b>HND in Tourist Guiding</b>
<b>Dissertation Title</b>	<b>Exploring the importance of fishing in Marsaxlokk</b>
<b>Supervisor Name</b>	<b>David Pace</b>
<b>Student Name</b>	<b>Althea Mifsud</b>
<b>Student ITS Number</b>	<b>2111400/1</b>

## Record of Meetings

<b>Meeting number</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Start Time</b>	<b>End Time</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Main Points Discussed in Meeting / Online correspondence</b>
<b>1</b>	06.05.23	19:00	20:00	1 hour	Discussed the proposal to see if it was suitable as the subject of a tour guiding long essay. Suggested some changes.
<b>2</b>	11.05.23	17:30	18:30	1 hour	Discussed the new proposal and provided more suggestions to be implemented by the student
<b>3</b>	20.10.23	17:30	18:15	45 mins	Final meeting about the proposal discussed the literature review.
<b>4</b>	23.12.23	20:00	21:00	1 hour	Discussed and corrected introduction and literature review.
<b>5</b>	04.01.24	16:00	16:45	3/4 hour	Received draft interviews. Suggested some changes.
<b>6</b>	07.01.24	15:00	16:00	3/4 hour	Discussed and checked Chapter 5.

7	12.01.24	16:00	17:00	1 hour	Analysis of methodology, results and discussion of the long essay. Suggested changes.
8	30.01.24	17:00	18:00	1 hour	Final analysis of the long essay and gave the student the go ahead to submit.



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Supervisor's Signature



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Student's Signature