



## Research Article

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Received: 27 August 2022 / Accepted: 25 October 2022 / Published: 5 November 2022

# The Phenomena of Life Skill Education of a Coastal Community: An Empirical Study of Education from The Aspect of Community's Productivity

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36941/jesr-2022-0157>

## Abstract

*As part of a nation, a coastal community has the potential and characteristics to develop for future success. Most studies explain that the poverty of a coastal community is due to several factors, including economic and socio-cultural factors where lifestyle is based on their mental capacity. Despite such a condition, they have positive expectations through programmed and sustainable efforts by focusing on non-formal education through the optimization of life skill education. This qualitative research is intended to map life skills for the coastal community to develop and describe their responses to the development of life skills or productive skills. Further, data collection techniques consisted of observation, interview, and documentation. The Source of data came from the coastal community and local government of Gorontalo Regency and theoretical sources, i.e., literature relevant to the study. The results suggested that life skill education required by the coastal community was dominantly related to vocational skills as their potential can build up such skills. The community also had a great response to the skill education through the intervention of non-formal education activities. The majority of them stated that acquiring life skills is an urgent need to meet. The local source potential as materials used for developing life skills for the community is sufficiently available. Next, the identification of the community's response to the development of life skills has not been conducted much by other studies in the context of the behavior and life of a coastal community.*

**Keywords:** Life Skill, Education, Coastal Community, Productivity, Lifestyle

## 1. Introduction

A coastal community serves as one of the strategic components of building up a nation's independence. Such a community commonly works in the sector of marine resources, such as fishing and fish farming (fishpond and ocean farming). According to economic and anthropological studies that have been carried out, the poor living of a coastal community is caused by various factors, including economic and socio-cultural factors. In general, their lifestyle is based on their

unconstructive mental capacity. A coastal community with progressive changes is mainly influenced by the use of equipment and technology that supports the production of the fishing industry.

A coastal community is widely acknowledged as an underprivileged and retarded community whose economy depends on utilizing and managing marine and coastal resources through fishing and farming (Rahmanto, 2015). Nugroho, 2015. Witarso. 2015). This community has different characteristics and living conditions from other communities, making them constantly able to adapt to any economic dynamics.

As an archipelagic country, Indonesia unquestionably consists of coastal areas that potentially become the community's economic resource and nation's development asset, making many people living in these areas work as fishers. There are four groups of coastal communities from their livelihood as a fisher, namely (1) fishers, (2) collecting fishers, (3) fishing workers, and (4) pond fishers, processing fishers, and fishery workers. (Hamid adapted by Isa, Abd. Hamid. 2012)

Traditional communities and fishing workers generally dominate the community that works as a fisher. Traditional communities of fishers are those with simple fishing gear, leading to limited fishing areas and low incomes. Meanwhile, fishing workers do not have any fishing facilities; they rely on their physical energy to work. Their disadvantaged lifestyle and poverty have always become inevitable problems for them. Limited capital assets, insufficient facilities, and low quality of education and skill lead them to have an unproductive business and low income.

Considering the objective characteristics of the people's activities described earlier, it is essential to better the lives of the coastal community by referring to the perspective of non-formal education. Accordingly, they will manage to deal with their problems and improve their life quality. Sudiapermana (2021: 76) argues that non-formal education intends to make changes in knowledge, behavior, skills, and social actions individually, in groups, or broad social system. Education should provide competencies and skills that enable individuals to participate in society and live successful life (Wijaya Y.E. 2016).

An effort to support the improvement of life quality of the coastal community is to conduct an empirical study on the phenomena of community life. The scientific data and information obtained can be offered as a solution in the form of a strategic program of life skill education for the coastal community. An education-based effort is required for the community as a significant and continuous concern to change their life behavior. Therefore, they will have supportive environmental condition-based economic resilience that will impact their income and well-being. Simply put, improving the well-being of a coastal community is carried out by educating them to be more self-resilient and live better by utilizing surrounding resources optimally in a sustainable manner (Zamzami. 2011).

Life skills are also called life skill education in a literature review. Life skills are urgent since a community regularly deals with various problems. Having productive life skills-based behavior and character will enable the community to adapt to the current changes, survive, and contribute to their country's development.

Establishing life skill education is vital to enhance one's life quality along with the advancement of technology and society (Isa, Abd. Hamid. Anu Zulkarnain. 2021). In connection with the output of life skill education for future life quality, Sondra Stein (Isa, Abd. Hamid: 2012) mentions four significant factors to cultivate life skill education for future society, as follows; (1) gaining accurate data and information, (2) processing information wisely and communicating it accountably, (3) being able to make a careful decision with an appropriate and measurable consideration, and (4) being open and adaptive to science and technology development.

The present study focuses on analyzing two aspects: mapping life skills for the coastal community to develop and describe their responses to the development of life skills or productive skills. Next, the identification of the community's response to the development of life skills has not been conducted much by other research in the context of the behavior and life of a coastal community. This research is expected to become a useful reference for performing a scientific study of non-formal education. It can also be an input to stakeholders and practitioners of community empowerment to implement integrated, programmed, and sustainable movement that can enable

and cultivate the coastal community to better their life quality through beneficial skill education with creative and productive economic value.

## 2. Method of Study

This study relied on a qualitative approach. A qualitative approach is the right approach to study the social life, by using a phenomenological formula that refers to an empirical study of the life skill education approach in empowering the life of a coastal community. Phenomenology is the study of phenomena that appear from the researcher's consciousness (Yusuf: 2014: 147). Phenomenology is commonly understood as the study of indications or things that appear. Furthermore, phenomenology focuses on the activity of a life skill program for the coastal community in the coastal area of Gorontalo Regency. This is consistent with Sugiyono (2013: 18) that a qualitative method is applied to examine the condition of natural objects.

The Gorontalo Regency's local government and coastal community served as the data's primary sources, as well as theoretical sources, i.e., literature relevant to the study. The data collection techniques consisted of interview, observation, and documentation. Next, the data analysis technique relied on the analysis of Miles and Huberman (Sugiyono, 2013: 195), involving data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

Miles and Huberman (Sugiyono. 2013) divides the stages of analyzing qualitative research as in the following figure:

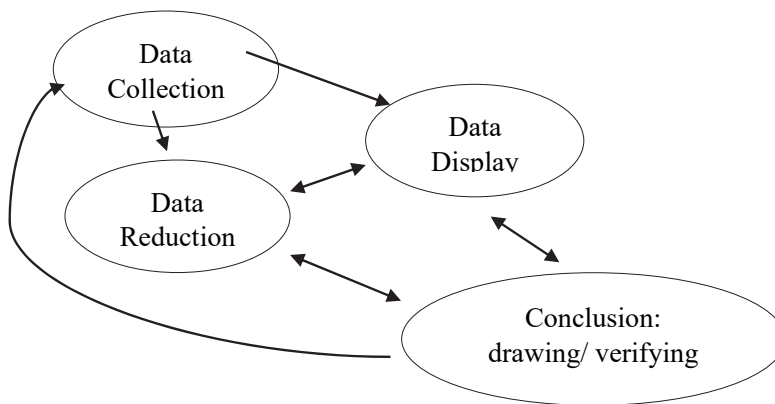


Figure 1: Data Analysis Model

In terms of data validity, here are the four primary standards or criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability standards (Sugiyono, 2013).

## 3. Results

It has been elaborated previously that a coastal community with various potentials needs productive educational services, i.e., skills, to fulfill their needs. Life skills are necessary since a community regularly encounters different problems to be addressed. Ones with good and conducive life skills have productive ideas for local activities, manage and overcome problems, thus making a positive impact on their self-development and their surroundings. Life skills are highly required for every individual to be ready to live independently as part of society.

As stated in empirical analysis and relevant literature review, three general factors also

influence the development of skill services in a coastal community. The factors are the implementation of skill services, provision of opportunities, and financial facilities to support the developed skills.

### 3.1 The life skills for the coastal community to develop

Based on the field data through an instrument appropriate to the target's characteristics, an overview of the life skills to be developed by the coastal community is obtained, as presented in Table 1 below.

**Table 1:** Data of Life Skills

No.	Skills	Target's Characteristics
1.	Making fish and shrimp sticks	Fisher
2.	Making fish and shrimp balls	Fisher
3.	Making pickled and candied seaweed	Fisher
4.	Making seaweed <i>dodol</i> (Indonesian snack)	Fisher
5.	Processing the product of the rainbow runner ( <i>sulo-sulo</i> )	Fisher
6.	Maintaining outrigger boat machines	Fisher
7.	Managing Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) and Community Surveillance Group (Pokmaswas) of Water Tourist Destination	Managing Community of Water Tourist Destination
8.	Youth Organization Leadership and Management	Managing Community of Youth Organization

**Source:** Processed from primary data in 2022

The above table points out that the needs for life skills of the coastal community are dominated by vocational skills, i.e., related to job skills that can be immediately performed to meet urgent needs. Vocational skills are more likely associated with specific jobs in society.

The skills needed by the community include making fish and shrimp sticks, fish and shrimp balls, pickled and candied seaweed, and seaweed *dodol*; processing the product of the rainbow runner (*sulo-sulo*). Rainbow runners are abundant in particular coastal areas. Fishers also need the skills to maintain outrigger boat machines (fishing facilities) and manage water tourist destinations.

In some coastal areas, the potential for water tourism is currently being developed. It is also essential to improve the management aspect of tourist destinations and their managing community called tourism awareness group and community surveillance group of the water tourist destination. This research has also found that the coastal community needs to strengthen their organizational leadership and management skills. Such skills, however, are only required by the minority of the community, particularly young fishers. They will be able to manage their businesses and livelihoods and engage in a village youth organization that, at the same time, contributes to their self-development and village development.

### 3.2 Community's Response to Life Skill Development

The establishment of a life skill education program for the coastal community intends to help improve their life quality and lifestyle by fulfilling different learning needs according to the target's characteristics and supporting facilities. For this reason, the goal of this program provided to the coastal community is to acquire life skills and develop potentials relevant to their needs. According to the data sources, the coastal community's response to the need for productive life skill education services is as follows:

**Table 2:** Community's Response to Life Skills

No.	Description
1.	Life skill education and development for the coastal community is an urgent need.
2.	The local source potential as materials used for developing life skills for the community is sufficiently available.
3.	The community is willing to participate in skill development activity according to the relevant skill.
4.	Life skills can fulfill needs and increase incomes.
5.	Giving roles and opportunities and providing facilities are crucial for the continuity of life skills development.
6.	Life skill development should also be supported by other life skills that are appropriate and relevant to the needs of the coastal community.
7.	Cooperation of all parties is essential in developing the life skills of the coastal community.
8.	Life skill development also needs to involve young men and women in its implementation. They are even given the opportunity to carry out roles according to their potentials.
9.	Life skill development for the coastal community should be integrated with other development programs, so that the output can be benefited efficiently and effectively.
10.	Life skill development for the coastal community can also involve the village-owned enterprises to develop villagers' skills and businesses.

The above table elaborates on the coastal community's response to the importance of life skill development. This indicates that the community, with their potential in fulfilling needs, has a positive tendency to learn certain productive skills based on their conditions. The teaching process should be done in a programmed and organized manner by paying attention to the characteristics of the community and relevant approaches.

#### 4. Discussion

The present work focuses on the objective condition of the coastal community with different socio-cultural, mental, and economic characteristics that need an integrated and programmed development effort. Such an effort will contribute to changes and improvement of their well-being, enabling them to participate in development activities. The effort is central to ensuring that the coastal community can get access, take part, have control, and have equal and fair benefits in development activities. Mohanty (1991).

As stated by Kourachanis (2020), changes in society do not have a positive or negative 'a priori' meaning; it depends on the nature of the transformation being occurred. Moreover, Fairclough (Kourachanis, 2020) points out that societal changes highlight the significant changes taking place in a structure that underlies an object or situation over time.

The findings also show that a coastal community tends to learn and work according to their potential. The skills they need to learn are even varied and relevant to their urgent needs. Services provided to the community should be adequately performed to lead them to the expected result. Thus, a method that is considered strategic in empowering the community according to their potential and tendency is by synergizing various integrated programs with development. It starts by identifying urgent and perceived needs, finding out, and using potential resources appropriately and productively. A. Rahmat A. Izudin (2018).

As one of the non-formal educational services, life skill education is expected to contribute to programs and activities that focus on life skills and the life quality improvement of a coastal community. Life skill education for a coastal community aims to strengthen the aspects of knowledge, behavior, and skills that are functional, practical, and useful to better the quality of oneself and life. In other words, the implementation of this service intends to provide appropriate and effective educational services to the community to acquire life skills. The reality, life skills, and educational materials are correlated with each other.



**Figure 2. 1:** The Correlation between Reality, Life Skills, and Educational Materials

Figure 2.1 illustrates that the stages of implementing life skill education are as follows: (1) identifying the life skills needed to face reality. (2) based on the identification, the forms of skills are arranged following the knowledge, skills, and behavior that support the skill formation. (3) classifying them in the form of themes or topics formulated in educational materials (Isa, Abd.Hamid. 2012).

According to the perspective of educational materials for students or community members, the materials are in accordance with their learning needs. Each material is expected to build characters and life skills required in society or the workplace.

To sum up, educational materials come from nature (any productive and relevant materials); meanwhile, the goal to be achieved is to form life skills. The life skills being formed are essential once one faces reality as an individual, community member, and citizen. Learning outcomes achieved in each material are competencies to realize the actual abilities that a person wants in the context of life skills.

The approaches and substances of life skill education are very relevant and effective. Being effective means that the community will acquire knowledge, skills, and behavior that support their activities. They will also have the same opportunity to take normative education that can improve the production process, along with excellent and productive service towards the increase in their income and standard of living (Gilchrist, A., & Gilchrist, A. (2016).

A community whose livelihood is fisher has distinctive behavior from the characteristics of other communities. As in the social context, the community has cultural values they preserve and adhere to in doing daily activities. Such values affect their lives, both in terms of insight orientation, interaction with others, and their tendency to carry out their activities. To be specific, cultural values and ecological factors have become precious assets for the urgency and continuity of an educational application in a community. This objective condition is of consideration of the need to build an educational model to be implemented (Isa, Abd. Hamid. Anu. Zulkarnain. 2021).

At this point, commitment and concern to the improved living standard of the coastal community and small islands have been given with strategic and sustainable programs through cross-program and cross-sectoral policies. The program's focus is in accordance with the vision and mission of respective institution and authority. This is quite reasonable because coastal areas store potential natural resources for socio-economic development to be empowered. The resources are not only from the diversity of marine resources, but also beaches that offer beautiful exotic views and are worth selling. The socio-economic potential is the coastal community themselves, who will process the natural resources.

Other phenomena found in most coastal communities are less conducive socio-economic conditions and low-quality education, which contribute to their quality of life. This is in line with a study by Adharti et.al (2012) 1 suggesting that factors leading to the poverty of fishers are low-quality education and lack of skills, affecting their knowledge and skills in processing quality and high-marketable value marine resources.

Based on scientific epistemology, the study of non-formal education as a form of community-based education is potentially flexible and effective in fostering and developing innovative and productive programs according to the community's potential and socio-economic conditions. Non-formal education, as an education sub-system, is among the means that is expected to serve and reach the learning needs of the community in any situation and dimension (Isa, Abd. Hamid, 2012). Therefore, the life skills developed in the coastal community primarily focus on two outputs, namely

providing job skills and motivating the community to be self-reliant. This serves as a programmed and integrated effort to increase fishers' income and life productivity in improving their empowerment and socio-economic conditions.

The previous notion indicates that among the strategies to better fishers' life quality is to give a good and productive educational service following their characteristics and supporting facilities around. An educational service becomes meaningful if the community can actively adapt to the process and system provided, implying that they can adapt to any dimensions programmed in every educational activity. Such dimensions are the essence of educational personalization (Shahroom & Hussin, 2018). Another urgent thing to optimize potential marine resources is overcoming the main poverty problem experienced by most fishers (Durianto, Suryono, & Hermawan, 2014).

The goal of non-formal education is to empower the community according to their potential and tendency, making them able to develop themselves and society (to help people help themselves). Life skill education is vital for the coastal community as its mission focuses on three critical things that work together: providing skills, providing roles and opportunities, and feasibility of facilities and funds. The effort to improve the welfare and lifestyle of the coastal community can be actualized if there is more attention and effective provision of quality skills education to them with adequate and supportive facilities and maintaining optimal collaboration with all parties, government, academic, business, and industry.

## 5. Conclusion

There is a strong correlation between life skill education development and the life quality of each individual. A skill is influenced by the quality of educational materials as the substance of its implementation. The better the quality of the materials provided, the better the achievement of learning objectives leading to the real quality of life. Life skill education required by the coastal community is dominantly related to vocational skills as their potential and tendency can build up such skills. Other skills, including the management of water tourist destinations and leadership of youth organizations, relatively require improvement.

The community also had a great response to the skill education through the intervention of non-formal education activities. The majority of the people claim that the development of life skills is an urgent need to meet. The local source potential as materials used for developing life skills for the community is sufficiently available. The community is also willing to participate in skill education activities according to the relevant skill. Life skills can fulfill needs and increase incomes and productivity. Life skill development for a coastal community should be integrated with other development programs, so that the output can be benefited efficiently and effectively for community empowerment.

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