



## . THE IMPORTANCE OF FURTHER EDUCATION (A STUDY ON FURTHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN IN EMPLAWAS VILLAGE, EAST BABAR DISTRICT, SOUTHWEST MALUKU REGENCY)

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**Abstract:** The aim of this writing and research is to explore and analyze the ongoing issues surrounding community-based education, particularly for children, in the context of a rapidly advancing and developing era. Despite progress in many areas, there are still children who drop out of school and do not continue their education. Ideally, education should be a continuous journey that every child undertakes from early childhood education, kindergarten, and elementary school, through to junior high, senior high, and even university. Education plays a vital role in shaping children's futures, nurturing their cognitive, emotional (affective), and physical (psychomotor) development. However, in many communities, the strong dependence on natural resources and deeply rooted cultural traditions has led to a different prioritization, one in which education is no longer seen as essential. People tend to place greater value on their environment and inherited cultural identity, viewing these as sufficient to sustain their way of life. As a result, formal education is often overlooked. Sociologist David Popenoe (1971) emphasized the critical functions of education, which include transmitting cultural values, helping individuals identify and fulfill social roles, fostering social cohesion, and serving as a source of innovation within society. This study uses a qualitative research approach as described by Creswell (in Safrudin et al., 2023), where the researcher gathers insights from the lived experiences and perspectives of participants or informants. The findings of this research reveal that community members hold diverse views on the importance of education. For many, natural resources are seen as a primary source of wealth, while culture and tradition remain central to their identity sometimes taking precedence over the pursuit of formal education.

**Keywords:** *The Importance of Further Education.*

## INTRODUCTION

Education plays a vital role in shaping a nation's development. Through a structured and continuous system from early childhood to kindergarten, elementary, junior high, senior high, and university, each learner is nurtured to become part of the next generation that carries the future of the nation. This is especially significant for the people of Emplawas Village, where access to education still lags behind. At its core, education allows individuals to truly grasp the meaning and value of life. That's why shaping whole, well-rounded individuals requires strong support in the form of quality human resources, something that education directly nurtures. To this end, community support, encouragement, involvement, and motivation in any form of educational initiative are crucial to improving the quality of learning and paving the way for a better future.

In reality, however, people hold varying, even conflicting, views about the role of education, particularly in remote or underserved villages. These communities often remain isolated, both geographically and in terms of access to change and supporting infrastructure. That isolation sometimes leads to a stagnant mindset. To move forward, communities like these need to be encouraged to adopt a forward-thinking perspective, one that empowers them to improve their quality of life and envision a better future grounded in education. Education, in this sense, can serve as a tool of liberation, freeing people from outdated traditions and narrow ways of thinking that may no longer serve them.

“Liberating education” is a concept where learners are guided to recognize and critically engage with the realities of their lives. In contrast, restrictive education imposes a kind of false awareness that conditions students to passively accept the status quo. Yet true liberation in education doesn't come from teachers enforcing freedom, it comes through dialogue and engagement. Restrictive models often involve the simple transfer of information, while liberating education encourages learners to question, explore, and grow through real-life application (Paulo Freire, 1999, p.176).

This highlights two distinct approaches to education. One is education as a liberating force, as advocated by Freire. The other is a form of limiting education, rooted in traditional norms that often pressure children to adopt inherited ways of thinking and behaving, ways that may suppress critical thinking and stifle personal growth. In such cases, instead of helping children move forward, education becomes a tool that maintains cycles of underdevelopment.



Bringing these ideas together, we can see that “wealth” often refers to the abundance of natural resources and the hope these offer for a community’s future. On the other hand, “poverty” in this context is not just economic, it is educational. The people of Emplawas Village, for example, remain far behind in terms of educational access and opportunity when compared to neighboring villages.

There are many understandings / concepts about the meaning of the use of the term poverty, according to *Gutierrez*, trying to divide it with the following approach:

- **Structural Individual.** The individual and structural approaches to poverty are closely related to the factors causing poverty. If the cause of poverty lies within the poor person themselves, namely laziness, then this type of poverty is called individual poverty. This type of poverty can be overcome through education, development (training, etc.). However, if the causes of poverty lie outside the poor person, such as oppression and exploitation, then this type of poverty is called structural / institutional poverty. Social structures cause poverty. Therefore, only through radical (comprehensive) social change can the poor have the opportunity to live a decent life, and education can provide the right answer.

Education holds a central role in the progress of a nation. Therefore, it is essential that society offers its full support through attention, encouragement, and active participation, in every initiative aimed at improving the quality of education. Yet in reality, differing views about the value of education can sometimes lead to stagnation, especially in remote and underdeveloped regions where geographic isolation and limited access to information pose serious challenges. In today’s rapidly changing world, however, communities are expected to begin embracing transformation and cultivating forward-looking mindsets in order to enhance their quality of life and work toward a brighter future.

People’s understanding of life and their place in the world is often shaped by cultural traditions and social structures passed down through generations. In many such communities, a deep dependence on nature has influenced how people think, behave, and set their life goals. Nature provides for their daily needs, it is their foundation for survival. However, this reliance can lead to complacency and result in a lack of motivation to seek education as a way to build new hopes for a better life.

In these circumstances, migration becomes difficult. Their lives are tightly interwoven with the natural environment, and their daily activities are centered on providing for their families and ensuring the survival of future generations. Unfortunately, education often falls by the wayside,

receiving little serious attention, whether from parents or local authorities. This is reflected in the high number of students who drop out and never return to complete basic levels of schooling, be it elementary, secondary, or higher education.

Still, any conversation about the quality of human resources cannot ignore the vital role of education, whether formal or informal. Education is the backbone and the beacon of national development. It is the mechanism through which societies nurture individuals who are skilled, capable, and equipped to contribute meaningfully in their respective fields (Suyanto, 1992).

The value of school-based education lies not only in its stated goals, but also in the crucial functions it serves. Sociologist David Popenoe (1971) identifies several key roles of education: it transmits cultural values, helps individuals define and assume social roles, promotes social cohesion, and serves as a driver of innovation in society.

“Learning to know,” as Nadjamuddin Ramly emphasizes, is not about rote memorization of facts. It means understanding one’s environment, developing abilities, and nurturing a sense of curiosity. When students expand their knowledge of the world around them, it should ignite their intellectual enthusiasm and turn them into lifelong learners and, as he puts it, “friends of science” (Ramly, 5005:110).

The social environment also plays a significant role in shaping educational outcomes. **It** brings its own set of challenges, influencing how education is experienced and valued within a community. Education is not optional, it is a necessity for everyone. When education is mandated by law, it becomes the state’s responsibility to ensure that it is consistently provided, accessible, affordable, high in quality, and responsive to the needs of individuals, communities, and the nation as a whole.

### **The Importance of Education**

Etymologically, the word “education” stems from two Latin roots: *educatus*, associated with the terms *educare* and *educere*. *Educare* means “to nourish, to care for, to help grow strong and healthy,” while *educere* means “to lead out or guide from one place to another.” Taken together, these definitions suggest that education is a conscious and purposeful effort to equip individuals or groups with the guidance and tools they need to transition from one stage of life to a better one (Samuel, 1996).

More broadly, education can be seen as a set of intentional actions undertaken by older generations to pass down knowledge, experience, skills, and values to younger generations. This



transmission is done with the goal of preparing them physically, mentally, and spiritually to fulfill their roles in life. Education must be pursued across its many forms: formal, informal, and non-formal learning, all of which are part of a continuous and progressive process.

At its core, education is about nurturing the intellectual and emotional capacities of human beings in relation to both the natural world and the human community. It is a deliberate process—either direct or indirect by which adults support children in their growth toward maturity. As Ahmad Bahrizi (1991) describes, education involves conscious, intentional, and responsible actions that foster meaningful interactions between adults and children. These interactions guide the child toward becoming a mature, self-sustaining individual.

In Emplawas Village, however, educational development continues to face serious challenges. Compared to other areas, it remains far behind. Raising public awareness about the importance of education especially for children and youth is a crucial first step in sparking transformation. A renewed understanding of education can create a ripple effect, empowering communities to better manage their abundant natural resources and invest in a more promising future. Sustained awareness and community responsiveness to education are needed to ignite this process of generational renewal.

A significant barrier to this lies in lingering cultural and historical perspectives that still shape daily life. Many members of the community remain unaware of how outdated beliefs limit their progress, even though some have already begun experiencing positive change through education. These rigid, narrow views need to be addressed and opened up so that no one is left behind in a world that is growing ever more complex, competitive, and fast-paced.

As Paulo Freire noted, the journey toward educational liberation begins with a continual process a "commencement" that never truly ends. This constant restarting reflects the nature of awareness: it must always be active, growing, and evolving. It is, in fact, the very essence of the educational experience. Consciousness cannot remain still; it must move forward, progressing from "naïve awareness" to "critical awareness," and eventually reaching the most profound state: "awareness of awareness" itself.

Freire further argues that if we separate consciousness from reality, we risk making consciousness a passive byproduct of the world rather than its active transformer. While reality informs consciousness, it is through the transformation of our awareness that we also transform the world around us. Human consciousness, at its core, is always directed toward something toward understanding. In this sense, education must begin with a desire to know the real world,

and from that desire emerges true awareness. Learning requires that we fully engage with what we seek to understand blending objectivity with subjectivity, action with reflection, and theory with practice. (Freire, 1999). Some of the new educational paradigms offered include:

- Education is a process of liberation
- Education is a process of enlightenment
- Education upholds children's rights
- Education is a process of empowering human potential
- Education produces people who care about the environment. (Johar, 2005).

The new paradigm of education emphasizes a model that responds to the demands of globalization. This approach highlights freedom in developing individual potential and promotes democratic principles in both educational management and practice. It also calls for a balanced and holistic integration of spiritual values within the learning process. As such, effective education today requires collaborative management involving various elements of society.

In a world where communities are continuously evolving, each generation must strive to keep pace especially in mastering science and technology. The key to meeting the increasingly complex challenges of the global and information age lies in producing high-quality human resources: individuals who are not only knowledgeable, but also innovative, creative, and capable of using technology and information effectively.

### **Improving the Quality of Education**

Several agendas and policies need to be outlined within the framework of improving the quality of education: First, *the “child-centered” approach*. This approach isn't entirely new in the world of learning. In practice, this approach manifests itself as follows:

- Children are central to the implementation of learning
- Learning focuses on the child as a whole
- Teachers provide opportunities for children to naturally develop themselves to a higher level.
- The center of change is in the child
- Change is only understood in the context of the child (student) as a whole.



- Children's changes and motivation are internal, while teachers are limited in providing encouragement and facilities. The philosophy of child-centered learning places greater emphasis on the learning process (*Sudarman Danim, 2003*).

Both the Indonesian government and society at large continue to monitor the progress and development of education in the country. While concerns have been raised over the decline in education quality and in some views, a continuing downward trend any steps taken by the government to address these issues, no matter how small, deserve recognition and support. After all, the responsibility for improving education does not rest solely on the government; it is a shared responsibility that includes all stakeholders who contribute to educational success.

On July 10, 1990, the government issued Government Regulation No. 20 of 1990 concerning Basic Education, which outlined the objectives and structure of Indonesia's basic education system. The regulation defines basic education as a general nine-year program comprising six years of elementary education and three years of junior high school or its equivalent. Its goal is to shape students into whole individuals as members of society, citizens, and human beings—and to prepare them for further education at the secondary level (*Sudarman Danim, 2003*).

Efforts to improve the quality of education must be consistently carried out not only by the central government but also by regional governments and the broader community. This is especially relevant in the context of regional autonomy as mandated by Law No. 32 of 2004, which delegates authority over education to regional administrations.

The responsibility for providing education, once centralized, has now shifted to regional governments. This change marks a significant opportunity to reform the way education is managed at the local level. For too long, education policy and development were dominated by the central government, a top-down approach that often failed to yield the expected results. This is evident in the many programs launched to expand educational access, increase community involvement, and improve quality efforts that have fallen short of their goals. In this light, embracing autonomy in educational management is not just timely it is essential.

Regional autonomy is intended to promote public welfare, equity, justice, democracy, and respect for local cultural values. It also seeks to tap into local potential, increase community participation, and recognize regional diversity. The hope behind granting education authority to district and city governments is the realization of educational democracy where education is developed from the community, by the community, and for the community. More importantly, this approach empowers local stakeholders to address the specific challenges they face in

education. Local communities are often best positioned to understand their own needs and solutions. In this way, community engagement becomes a key pillar that strengthens and supports the broader policy of educational autonomy implemented by the government.

### **Community-Based Education Paradigm**

To implement a community-based paradigm on non-formal channels, in helping people (young generation) who do not continue their education and drop out of school, there are several important things for the community in responding to current educational developments:

- The technology used should be appropriate to the real conditions and situations experienced by the community.
- There are institutions or institutions with a clear status of being owned or borrowed, managed, and developed by the community. This requires community participation in the planning, procurement, use, and maintenance of out-of-school education.
- The learning program must have social value or be meaningful to the lives of students or learners as they participate in society. Therefore, its design must be based on environmental potential and market-oriented, not solely academic.
- Learning programs must belong to the community, not government agencies. This is important to emphasize, as past experience has shown that government-owned educational institutions have been unable to foster community participation. Instead, programs are simply imposed, as all educational programs are designed by the agencies concerned.
- Non-formal education providers do not manage their programs themselves, but partner with community organizations. These organizations act as implementers and partners with the community in meeting their learning needs and connecting with program support resources.

### **Community Awareness Programs**

Human resource development is a crucial part of human life, as individuals organize and equip themselves with the knowledge and skills they possess. Therefore, several fundamental programs are crucial for us, including the following:





- Education as a Process of Liberation. Our education system still seems restrictive. This restrictive educational system, in turn, produces individuals who are stereotypical, obedient, uncreative, and even highly dependent. This makes them a social burden, lacking independence, and even lacking a sense of identity. Such education can be described as a closed system, lacking the freedom and experience to allow learners to be creative.
- Education as a Process of Enlightenment. Many criticize our education system as a process of dumbing down. This isn't limited to schools; it's also evident in everyday life. Students, from various academic backgrounds, have differing learning styles.
- Education Upholds Children's Rights. In our country, children's rights appear to be violated. This is because society views schools as a stage, not as a training ground or a learning laboratory. Therefore, the ranking system in schools fosters a misperception about education.
- Education Produces People Who Care About the Environment. The authoritarian attitude in our education system makes children obedient. However, on the other hand, this restrictive system can also lead to rebellious children. Then, morality is blamed. Children are not encouraged to care about the environment because their only educational resource is text. Children's experiences, while so diverse and invaluable, are rarely defined by textual, rather than conceptual, dimensions.
- Education as Awareness. Education is a conscious effort to prepare students through guidance, teaching, and/or training for their future roles. Therefore, education can be defined as an effort to foster human personality in accordance with societal and cultural values.
- The process of awareness (concentration), liberation and humanization of human beings can only be implemented in the true sense if a person is truly aware of the reality of themselves and the world around them. Someone who is not aware of the reality of themselves and the world around them will never be able to express what they truly want to do. They will never be able to understand what they truly want to achieve. And in essence, they are capable of understanding the reality of themselves and the world around them before they themselves are truly aware that this ability is their human nature and that understanding itself is important and indeed possible for them.

### **Human Dependence on Nature.**

From the moment of conception even while still in the womb humans are inseparable from their environment. The environment itself is a complex system made up of various interconnected subsystems: living organisms (biosphere), climate (atmosphere), water systems (hydrosphere), soil and land (pedosphere), geology and the Earth's surface (lithosphere), and human society (anthroposphere). These systems interact constantly, forming a dynamic web of relationships. Together, the natural, social, and cultural environments shape what we understand as *human ecology* (JE Louhanapessy, 2006).

In traditional societies, the relationship between humans and nature is one of balance and mutual respect. People see themselves not as superior to nature, but as part of it—often even considering themselves smaller or humbler than the natural world. In this worldview, humans are seen as a *microcosm* reflecting the larger *macrocosm* that is nature itself. They strive to live in harmony with the rhythms of the environment, such as by aligning agricultural practices with the changing seasons. Importantly, any interaction with or alteration of nature is done cautiously, often only after performing rituals or ceremonies that honor the environment (Robert P. Borrong, 2000:65).

## METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research approach. As emphasized by Mohamad Nasir, qualitative research seeks to explore and describe social issues and specific characteristics such as relationships, activities, attitudes, perspectives, ongoing processes, and the influence of informants (Mohamad Nasir, 1995, p. 163). The choice of this method is well-justified, as it provides a deeper understanding of the nature of the issue under investigation particularly those involving human experiences, historical contexts, behaviors, social roles, and the dynamic interactions studied within the social sciences.

## RESULT AND DICSUSSION

### Analysis of the Results

- The community environment in Emplawas Village, where people live and carry out their daily activities, is generally safe and offers a sense of comfort and stability. This environment also plays a significant role in shaping the character of the local people, influenced by longstanding traditions, customs, cultural values, and social institutions. Within this context, the role and responsibility of parents in supporting their children's



development especially in the area of education are crucial. The village's natural resources should serve not only as a means of livelihood but also as a foundation for fulfilling the educational needs of the younger generation. For this reason, education must become a top priority for families when it comes to their children's future.

- To foster real change, the community's perception of education must be continuously reshaped and renewed. This includes updating the way people understand, think about, and engage with education especially in a setting where easy access to nature may lead to complacency. Collective awareness and long-term strategies both personal and communal must be cultivated to improve educational outcomes for children. This effort requires the active involvement and collaboration of parents, teachers, government officials, and the broader community. These actors, along with the social environment, form the essential pillars that support children's education and contribute to shaping them as future members of the nation and society.

## **Conclusion and Suggestion**

### **Conclusion**

- Education stands as a foundational pillar in the lives of individuals and **communities**. Its fundamental aim is to cultivate a holistic Indonesian citizen one who is not only intellectually equipped but also deeply aware of their potential for personal growth and multidimensional development.
- A central aspiration of district and municipal governments in implementing educational autonomy is the realization of educational democracy. This concept envisions education as a process that originates from the community, serves the community, and is driven by the community itself. Such an approach is essential in promoting equity and inclusion, particularly for youth in rural areas who continue to face challenges in establishing strong linkages and cooperative engagement with governmental bodies.
- The abundant natural resources found within local communities offer substantial opportunities for sustaining livelihoods. Although traditionally managed, these resources possess considerable potential for long-term development especially in empowering the younger generation. The community exhibits a profound respect for nature, viewing it as a sacred endowment from God. For them, nature is not merely a resource but the very foundation of existence and continuity.

- This deep reverence for nature is reflected in the community's way of life. Natural resources are regarded as divine gifts that must be protected and honored. Consequently, the community engages in sustainable practices such as seasonal farming and traditional land management, all carried out in harmony with the environment. There is a strong cultural understanding that while humans are entirely dependent on nature for their survival, nature itself exists independently of human intervention.

### **Suggestion**

- The involvement and shared responsibility of the government, parents, teachers, and the broader community as key stakeholders in the success of education must be consistently and sustainably upheld, particularly in rural settings. Their collective role in supporting educational processes is crucial to overcoming the various forms of underdevelopment still experienced by many communities. Ultimately, the advancement of education in these areas should align with and contribute to the broader goals of national education.
- The development of human resources, particularly educators, is a vital component in responding to the growing demands of a more dynamic and evolving educational landscape. Teachers must continue to enhance their professional capacities by participating in seminars, workshops, and training sessions. These efforts are necessary to keep pace with ongoing changes in curricula and to ensure that the learning process remains relevant, effective, and impactful for students the future stewards of the nation.
- Raising public awareness about the value of education for the younger generation must be supported by collaborative efforts from various stakeholders. It is essential to reshape and reconstruct the community's perception of education. In some families, the belief still persists that basic literacy being able to read and write is sufficient. Additionally, the community often places a strong emphasis on nature as a source of livelihood, prioritizing hard work and agricultural productivity over formal education. These views must be addressed through constructive dialogue and inclusive educational outreach



The table shows improved community perception of education through a three cycle

**Table 1.** Study on Further Education Opportunities for Children in Emplawas Village

Cycle	Min	Max
Pre-cycle	40	67
I	57	73
II	60	87
III	67	87

intervention program in Emplawas Village. Minimum scores increased from 40{pre-cycle } to 67 {Cycle III}, while maximum scores rose from 67 to 87. These results demonstrate the program's effectiveness in enhancing educational attitudes and expanding opportunities through community engagement.

## b. Figure and Equations

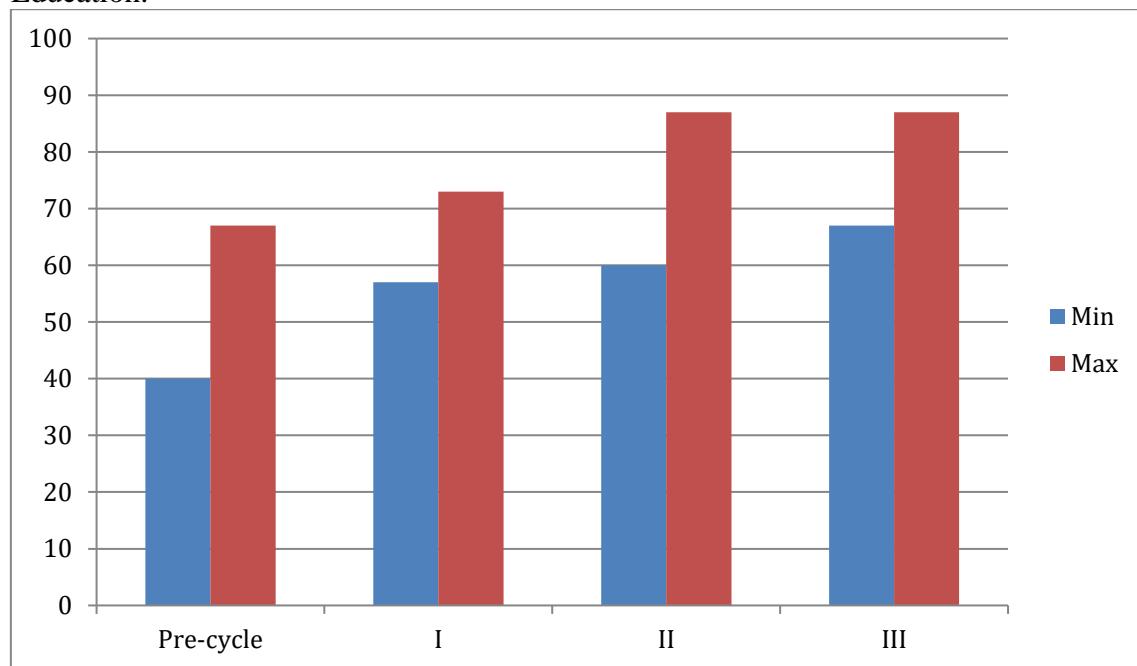
figure caption {including graphs} are written below the image using sequential figure numbering, e. g. The placement of the figure is tried to be below the related text, not too far away as in the example below.

### 1) Chart Sample

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**Figure 1.** Graph of Improvement in Community Perception Scores on Further Education.



## CONCLUSION

The community intervention successfully enhanced educational perceptions in Emplawas, with significant score improvements demonstrating effective addressing of socio-cultural barriers.

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