

SKILLS-BASED NON-FORMAL EDUCATION IN WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT: A CASE STUDY OF THE SAMARINDA WEAVING COMMUNITY

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ARTICLE HISTORY

Received : 07-08-2025

Revised : 15-09-2025

Accepted : 27-09-2025

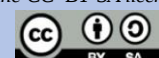
KEYWORDS

Women's Empowerment, Non-Formal Education, Weaving Communities, Skills, Local Wisdom

ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the implementation of skills-based non-formal education in efforts to empower women through activities in the Samarinda Weaving Community by using a qualitative approach of case study methods. The research subjects included community managers, artisans, and instructors, with data collection techniques in the form of in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation studies, which were then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model. The results of the study show that non-formal education activities include weaving training from the introduction stage of tools and materials, learning basic techniques, developing distinctive motifs, production management, to product marketing which is carried out through *the learning by doing* method and a community-based continuous learning system. The program contributes to improving technical skills, expanding women's access to productive resources, strengthening decision-making capacity, increasing income and economic independence, and active participation in social activities and preserving local culture through traditional weaving motifs and techniques. Of the total of about 30 active artisans, more than 60% are now major contributors to family income and 40% of participants have played a role in social activities at the RT, sub-district, and sub-district levels, including as PKK administrators, training facilitators, and cultural event committees. However, this program still faces obstacles in the form of high raw materials, limited tools, and lack of regeneration of young artisans. In conclusion, skills-based non-formal education has an important role in women's empowerment, so synergy between stakeholders, strengthening digital literacy, and regeneration strategies is needed to strengthen the sustainability and development of programs in the future.

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INTRODUCTIONS

Women play a strategic role in community development, both in the domestic and public spheres. However, in social reality, many women still face structural barriers that limit their active participation in various areas of life, including social, economic, and educational. In Indonesia, a strong patriarchal culture often places women as domestic

actors, with limited access to education and public spaces. People still view women as weak creatures who do not have a significant role in social life in their environment (Nurisman, 2024). Ongoing gender inequality causes women to miss out on many opportunities to acquire resources, skills, and opportunities to develop independently. Gender inequality in education, for example, directly limits women's space to develop their potential, realize their ideals, and contribute to the progress of society (Parancika & Mufida, 2024). Therefore, women's empowerment is an important issue that needs serious attention, not only as a form of social justice, but also as the main foundation for the realization of inclusive and sustainable development.

One effective approach that can be taken to overcome limited access to formal education and encourage women's empowerment is through non-formal education pathways. As stated by (Latifah et al., 2025) The development of the creative economy based on traditional weaving can be strengthened through the use of digital platforms such as social media, e-commerce, and creative content that highlights local cultural values. This kind of strategy not only expands the market reach, but also increases the appeal of the product among the younger generation of consumers and the global market. Non-formal education is an education system that takes place outside the formal pathway and is designed to meet the learning needs of individuals who are not reached or not met in the formal education system (Ahmad, 2023). Through a flexible and contextual approach, non-formal education provides space for women to acquire knowledge, life skills (*Life skills*), digital literacy, and understanding of their rights as citizens. In addition, non-formal education also allows women to build confidence and increase bargaining power in social and economic life. Therefore, non-formal education is not only a learning medium, but also an empowerment tool that is able to encourage social transformation in the community based on women's participation.

The condition of women in Samarinda City, East Kalimantan, reflects the challenges commonly faced by Indonesian women, namely limited access to and participation in education and the economy. Based on data from the Samarinda City Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office (2023), women's participation in the productive economic sector is still relatively low, around 51%, with dominance in the informal sector and small micro enterprises. Although women's education levels have increased in recent years, many of them have not continued to higher levels due to family economics and domestic burdens. In addition, the influence of local culture that is still patriarchal also limits women's participation in public spaces. This situation shows the need for empowerment strategies that are relevant to social conditions and local potential. One approach that can be used is the development of skills-based non-formal education such as weaving crafts, which is not only a cultural heritage, but also a means for women to develop their potential and improve their economic well-being independently.

One of the real examples of skills-based non-formal education can be seen in the Weaving Community in Samarinda City located in the Samarinda Seberang area. This area is known as the Weaving Village, and it has two main functions: as a cultural center and a tourist destination. In addition to being a place for the production of Samarinda's typical woven sarongs, this area also attracts the attention of many tourists because of its historical value and uniqueness of its crafts. Therefore, the preservation of Samarinda sarongs is not only the responsibility of the craftsmen, but also the community at large (Samsir & Nurwati, 2018). This weaving craft has strong historical roots. It was originally brought by the Bugis people from South Sulawesi led by La Mohan Daeng Mangkona, who settled in the Tanah Rendah (now Samarinda Seberang) area around 1668 and this area later became the forerunner of the establishment of the city of Samarinda (Darmawati, 2023). Until now, weaving activities in Kampung Tenun have not only become a filler of free time, but have become an important part of cultural identity as well as a source of life for women in the community (Rifandi, 2024)

Weaving activities in the Samarinda Weaving Community are not only a cultural heritage, but also serve as a learning medium that empowers women through a non-formal education approach. In this context, non-formal education serves as a flexible and contextual learning space, where women acquire skills, build confidence, and expand social and economic participation. This process can be explained through empowerment theory which emphasizes that empowerment is the process of change from inability to ability to make important decisions in life (Yanti et al., 2023). This theory divides empowerment into three important dimensions, namely *Resources* (resources), *agency* (decision-making ability), and *Achievement* (achievement). Through training and weaving practices, women gain access to skills and income (*Resources*), able to play a more active role in the family and society (*agency*), as well as showing concrete results in the form of improved well-being (*Achievement*) (Sukmawati, 2018).

This learning activity in the weaving village community reflects the principles of adult education (*Andragogi*). This concept was introduced by Malcolm Knowles, who emphasized that adult learning should take into account characteristics such as independence, life experience, and more internal motivation (Yahya & Purnama, 2024). In the weaving community, women learn based on the real needs of their lives, through hands-on practice that is relevant to their experiences and social roles. This learning process is not one-way, but occurs in a participatory manner through

discussions, collaborative work, and sharing experiences between participants. This shows that learning in the weaving community not only improves technical skills, but also strengthens women's self-identity, social awareness, and capacity to be agents of change in their own lives.

Research on the Samarinda Seberang Weaving Village has so far highlighted more on the economy, tourism, and cultural preservation, while the dimension of non-formal education is still less explored. In fact, non-formal education has a strategic role in developing community skills, especially women who are the main actors in weaving. Previous studies (S. A. Sari et al., 2024) It only discusses tourism management training and has not linked it to improving weaving skills, design innovation, digital marketing, or strengthening non-formal education itself. Similar research conducted by (Arnady, 2024) in Bekasi shows that community-based non-formal education has proven to be effective in improving skills and building students' confidence. The findings reinforce the view that a community-based approach can be a relevant strategy in community empowerment efforts through non-formal education pathways. Similar findings were also shown in the study (Prasetyo et al., 2024) which discusses the economic aspects of the community, especially weaving as a source of income, as well as supporting factors such as the availability of raw materials, skills, and government support. However, the study has not specifically touched on the role of non-formal education as a means of increasing women's capacity. From various previous findings, it can be identified that there is a significant research gap, namely the absence of a comprehensive study on the contribution of non-formal education based on weaving skills in women's empowerment in Samarinda Seberang Weaving Village. Aspects that are still rarely studied include how non-formal education plays a role in improving technical competence in weaving, encouraging design innovation and product diversification, expanding access to digital marketing, and strengthening women's socio-psychological capacity, including their self-confidence, economic independence, and bargaining position both in the family and community environment

Seeing the reality that is happening in the Samarinda Weaving Community, the skills-based non-formal education applied there not only focuses on mastering weaving techniques, but also includes training in small business management, marketing, and social capacity building. The learning process takes place informally, through hands-on practice and interaction between community members, where the values of independence, solidarity, and social responsibility are continuously instilled. This activity is an empowerment space that is relevant to the local context, because it is not only oriented towards improving technical skills, but also encourages the formation of women who are confident, productive, and able to take strategic roles in their social environment. Based on this background, the study has two main objectives: (1) To describe the form of implementation of skills-based non-formal education in the Samarinda Weaving Community, and (2) To describe the contribution of non-formal education in increasing self-capacity, economic independence, and the social role of women in the weaving community.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to describe in depth the skill-based non-formal education process run by the Samarinda Weaving Community. This approach was chosen because it is able to capture complex and dynamic social realities, and places the local context as an important element in understanding the process of women's empowerment (Malahati et al., 2023). The location of the research is strategically determined in the Samarinda Seberang area because this area is known as a center for community-based traditional weaving activities. The research subjects consist of managers, instructors, and women craftsmen who actively participate in training and production activities. The technique of selecting informants based on certain criteria is used to select informants who have direct experience and in-depth knowledge of non-formal education practices in the community (Nadhiroh et al., 2025) .

The data collection technique in this study uses three main techniques, namely in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and documentation studies. Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner to key informants to explore experiences, perceptions, and non-formal educational practices carried out in the Samarinda Weaving Community. Participatory observation was carried out by directly observing weaving training and production activities in the community. Documentation is used to collect secondary data such as photos of activities, training archives, and weaving results (Ardiansyah et al., 2023). The data analysis technique uses the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which includes three stages, namely: (1) data reduction to simplify and select important information; (2) the presentation of data in the form of descriptive and thematic narratives; and (3) drawing conclusions or verifying to obtain meaning and patterns from the data that has been collected (Malahati et al., 2023).

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Result

This study aims to provide an in-depth overview of skills-based non-formal education in women's empowerment, focusing on the case study of the Samarinda Weaving Community. Based on the results of interviews with community managers, instructors, and participants, it was found that the implementation of non-formal education took place systematically under the pressure of direct practice methods, which included the participant recruitment process, training stages, learning methods, and evaluation mechanisms. The focus of the research is directed at two main aspects, namely the implementation of skills-based non-formal education and its contribution to women's social and economic empowerment. The results of the study show that the program has a significant impact, not only on improving technical skills and economic independence, but also on strengthening women's social capacity and participation in communities:

A. Implementation of Skills-Based Non-Formal Education in the Samarinda Weaving Community

1. Profile of the Samarinda Weaving Community

Skills-based non-formal education programs in the Samarinda Weaving Community have been organized since 1990. The birth of this program was motivated by the condition of the majority of women in Samarinda Seberang who previously carried out more domestic activities, such as taking care of the household, participating in social gatherings, or helping small family businesses. The lack of opportunities to obtain formal education or jobs still encourages the formation of a learning forum based on local potential, namely the skill of weaving sarongs Samarinda. Program planning is carried out in a participatory manner between community managers and senior artisans who have been pursuing the weaving tradition for a long time. From the beginning, the main goal of the program was not only to preserve culture, but also to be a means of economic empowerment for women. This was confirmed by the community manager, named Haji Arsyad:

"We wanted from the beginning to create a place to learn to weave for mothers who did not have time to go to high school or work outside the home. So this place can be an alternative, they can still do activities, produce, and at the same time maintain the cultural heritage of Samarinda weaving."

The above statement emphasizes that this program has a dual vision from the beginning, namely the preservation of culture and women's empowerment through non-formal education. To realize this vision, the community then opened opportunities for people who were interested in participating in weaving training. It aims to produce empowered women, namely having the skills to produce quality weaving works, being independent in economic aspects, and remaining active in playing a role in social life and cultural preservation of the community.

The organizational structure of the community is simple, but it is participatory. The manager plays the role of a coordinator who regulates the running of the program, facilitates training needs, as well as serves as a liaison with external parties, such as local governments and business partners. In the recruitment process, managers open up opportunities widely without certain educational requirements, but rather emphasize more on the motivation and seriousness of the participants. Haji Arsyad said:

"The recruitment process is open to anyone, especially women who have a high will and work spirit. We usually invite local women through RT meetings or social gatherings. There are no special requirements, the important thing is that there is a willingness to learn. If they are serious, we accept it."

This statement illustrates that managers play an important role not only as an organizer of activities, but also as a driver of community participation.

Thus, the Samarinda Weaving Community grew as a non-formal institution that has a historical foundation, a clear vision, and management that is able to maintain the continuity of the program and the sustainability of the weaving tradition in Samarinda Seberang.

2. Form of Non-Formal Education Implementation

The implementation of non-formal education in the Samarinda Weaving Community focuses on a hands-on learning model of weaving skills. Participants took part in the training gradually, starting from the introduction of traditional looms, mastery of basic techniques, to the making of typical Samarinda motifs. The training stages are designed systematically: the first two weeks are used to get to know the tools and materials, the next one month is to master basic techniques, the next two months are geared towards motive development, and the last month is focused on production management and quality control. The learning process lasts two to three times a week with a meeting duration of between two to four hours, so that participants have enough time to master the skills slowly. The following are the results of the researchers' observations and observations as well as documentation studies showing that participants are seen weaving using traditional tools directly.



Picture 1. Weaving Process with Traditional Tools

This shows that learning is truly practice-based so that every step of the skill can be learned through real experience. A warm and informal learning atmosphere is also an important factor that accelerates participants' understanding. This was confirmed by one of the participants, Mrs. Irna, who said:

"The learning atmosphere was relaxed and participatory. Participants not only learn formally, but also through daily interactions, such as discussing while weaving"

This quote shows that a hands-on practice-based learning pattern with a familiar atmosphere is key in accelerating skill mastery. In the process of skill transfer, the role of the coach or instructor becomes very important. Most of the instructors are senior craftsmen who have decades of experience in weaving. They accompany the participants intensively in the early stages, then provide flexibility for the participants to practice independently while remaining supervised. The following are the results of the researchers' observations and observations as well as the documentation study featuring instructors accompanying participants in the process of weaving using traditional tools.



Picture 2 Instructors accompany participants in the process of weaving with traditional tools at the Samarinda Weaving Community

This shows that the success of learning is greatly influenced by the role of the instructor as a companion as well as a motivator. Mrs. Sumarni, one of the instructors, explained:

"The training is hands-on practice. The method is not very formal, as basic skills can only be acquired through experience and perseverance. Additional materials such as simple digital marketing have also been provided, although they have not been maximized due to the limited knowledge of the participants."

This statement shows that the instructor not only channels technical skills, but also seeks to introduce supporting aspects according to the needs of the participants, although it is still limited. In addition to instructors, the success of the implementation is also determined by the role of the community manager. The manager is in charge of organizing the training schedule, coordinating the role of the instructor, and ensuring that participant recruitment is open and participatory. They also serve as a liaison between the community and external parties, such as local governments and business partners, to support the sustainability of the program. As explained by Haji Arsyad:

"We usually invite women around here through RT meetings or social gatherings. There are no special requirements, the important thing is that there is a willingness to learn. If they are serious, we accept it."

The statement describes that managers play an important role not only as the organizer of activities, but also as a driver of community participation so that more women can be involved in weaving activities.

Thus, the form of implementation of non-formal education in the Samarinda Weaving Community has proven to run in a structured and participatory manner. The hands-on practice-based learning model, the active role of instructors in skill transfer, and the management of open activities are important combinations in maintaining the continuity of the learning process while preserving the Samarinda weaving tradition.

3. Skills Learning Methods and Strategies

The learning method in the Samarinda Weaving Community applies a face-to-face approach, hands-on practice, and a mentoring system. Participants attend regular training two to three times a week with a duration of meetings ranging from two to four hours. In the initial stage, the instructor accompanies the participants intensively to ensure that the basic techniques are mastered, then gradually provides space for them to practice independently. As also conveyed by Mrs. Irna, one of the participants:

"Learning here is delicious because it is immediately practiced. If something goes wrong, the instructor immediately guides. Sometimes we also study together while chatting casually, so we understand faster."

This quote shows that a relaxed and hands-on, hands-on learning atmosphere is an important factor that accelerates participants' understanding. In terms of facilities, learning still relies on traditional tools that have been inherited from generation to generation, such as gedogan looms, threads, needles, and simple sewing machines. Although facilities are limited, these facilities are enough to support basic training in weaving skills.

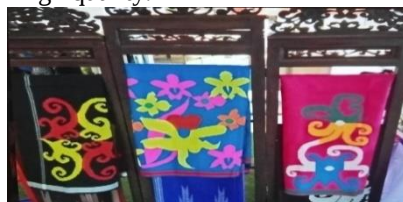
Challenges arise in the use of modern media, especially digital technology, which is still limited in its use. Most of the participants had difficulty in operating social media or marketplaces as a means of promotion. Mrs. Sumarni, one of the instructors, said:

"Additional materials such as simple digital marketing have also been provided, although they have not been maximized due to the limited knowledge of the participants."

This quote shows that the use of media is still focused on traditional tools, while digital means are only beginning to be introduced on a limited basis. There is even a skill evaluation system that is carried out regularly to maintain the quality of participants' learning outcomes. The evaluation focuses on technical skills, such as motif precision, weaving neatness, and material strength. In addition, the manager also assessed changes in the attitude of the participants, such as independence, discipline, and the ability to complete orders on time. Haji Arsyad explained:

"The evaluation of activities is carried out through a direct assessment of woven products from the aspects of quality, precision of motifs, neatness, and strength of materials. In addition, observations were also made on changes in work attitudes, independence, and the ability of participants to complete orders independently and on time."

In fact, the results of evaluations and observations and observations of researchers and documentation studies show that Samarinda weaving products are of high quality.



Picture 3 Results of Samarinda Typical Weaving Products

This can be seen from the neat motifs, strong colors, and subtle details that hands-on learning methods, instructor mentoring, and rigorous evaluation are able to produce works that are not only culturally valuable, but also have marketability in the market.

With a practice-based learning and mentoring approach, support of traditional facilities, and evaluations that focus on technical quality and attitude change, the learning strategies in the Samarinda Weaving Community have proven to be able to produce participants who are not only skilled in weaving, but also more independent and disciplined in carrying out their roles as craftsmen.

4. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

The sustainability of this program is not only determined by the learning pattern, but also influenced by supporting factors and a number of obstacles. From the side Internal support, women's motivation to learn to weave is the main strength. The majority of participants were housewives who wanted to increase their skills while improving the family economy. This spirit is strengthened by the solidarity of the tightly knit community, so as to create a comfortable, mutually supportive, and familiar learning atmosphere. This was expressed by Mrs. Irna:

"Since we started weaving, I feel more enthusiastic because we encourage each other. If someone has difficulties, usually other friends help immediately, so they don't feel alone in learning."

In line with that, Haji Arsyad added that togetherness is a social capital that strengthens the community:

"If the mothers study together, the atmosphere is more lively. There's a sense of family, so it's not easy for them to stop halfway."

This statement confirms that emotional support and togetherness between members are reinforcers that encourage participants to stay in training. There is also external support, the local government plays an important role in maintaining the existence of the program. The Samarinda Weaving Community is often facilitated to participate in exhibitions, receive additional training assistance, and grant support for development. The market and the private sector also contribute to absorbing woven products, so that the participants' work has real economic value. According to Haji Arsyad:

"Now many people can discuss prices, find their own markets, and manage materials. In the past, they just participated, now they have ideas and initiatives."

This statement shows that external support is not only material, but also provides space for participants to develop more independently in business management. However, there are several obstacles that the community still faces. Limited facilities are the main obstacle because most looms are still traditional and in limited quantity. In terms of time, many participants had to divide roles between weaving and housekeeping, so the attendance and consistency of training were often hampered. Regeneration is also a serious challenge because the younger generation's interest in weaving is getting lower. This was confirmed by the instructor, Mrs. Sumarni:

"Now it is difficult to find young people who want to learn to weave. Most of them choose to work outside the city or continue their studies, so those who are still actively weaving here are dominated by adult and elderly women."

In addition, limitations in digital marketing also hinder the expansion of the market. Most craftsmen are still not used to using social media or marketplaces. Mrs. Irna said:

"When it comes to selling online, it is still difficult. We lack digital understanding, the social media we currently use is only Facebook. So sometimes it is confusing to manage sales and finances. We need more training to keep up with the current market trends."

Thus, it can be seen that participant motivation, community solidarity, and government and market support are the main forces that maintain the sustainability of the program. However, limited facilities, the double burden of women, lack of regeneration, and difficulties in digital marketing are still obstacles that need to be overcome so that non-formal education programs in the Samarinda Weaving Community can continue to develop and be sustainable.

B. Contribution of Non-Formal Education to Women's Social and Economic Empowerment

1. Women's Self-Capacity Enhancement

Non-formal education programs in the Samarinda Weaving Community have a real impact on increasing women's self-capacity, especially in the aspects of technical skills, confidence, and cultural awareness. From the side Weaving technical skills and design development, the participants not only learned basic weaving techniques, but also developed creativity in creating new motifs. With the assistance of experienced instructors, they are able to produce woven fabrics with high quality and a wider variety of designs. One of the instructors, Mrs. Sumarni, said:

"Initially, mothers could only weave simple patterns. Now many can develop new motifs according to buyers' requests. So not only follow the old pattern, but also innovate."

This statement shows that technical skills acquired through non-formal education provide space for women to innovate, so that Samarinda's woven products remain relevant to market needs. From the aspect of confidence and communication skills, the group-based learning process encourages participants to interact, discuss, and share experiences. This activity fosters their courage in expressing opinions, making decisions, and negotiating with buyers or business partners. Haji Arsyad, as the community manager, said:

"Now many have dared to talk about prices, arrange materials, and negotiate orders. In the past, they just kept quiet and followed, now they are confident."

This shows that communication skills are an important part that develops along with increasing women's self-capacity in the community. And this program also strengthens awareness of the importance of preserving culture. The process of learning to weave is not only oriented to the economic aspect, but also to the cultural values inherent in each typical Samarinda motif. The participants felt that they had a moral responsibility to maintain the sustainability of the weaving tradition so that it would not be lost to the times. Mrs. Irna, one of the artisans, revealed:

"In addition to increasing income, weaving is also a legacy from our parents. If it is not continued, it can be lost. So we feel like we are taking care of the culture."

This quote confirms that the weaving skills learned through non-formal education are not only an economic means, but also a medium to maintain local cultural identity.

Thus, non-formal education in the Samarinda Weaving Community has succeeded in increasing women's capacity through mastery of technical skills, increasing self-confidence, and growing cultural awareness. The combination of these three aspects makes women not only economically productive, but also play an active role in preserving traditions and strengthening social values in society.

2. Women's Economic Independence

One of the most tangible contributions of non-formal education in the Samarinda Weaving Community is the growth of women's economic independence. Through weaving skills, participants are able to produce products with selling value, manage simple income, and expand market access through product diversification. This skills-based non-

formal education has had a significant impact on women's economic independence. Through weaving training, participants are able to produce high-quality products. The typical Samarinda woven fabrics produced have neat motifs, strong colors, and distinctive details so that they are in demand not only in the local market, but also at the national level, even penetrating the international market, including Malaysia. As expressed by one of the participants, Mrs. Irna:

"Yes, it really helps increase family income. From the results of weaving, I can finance my children's school to college, repair the house, and even have savings."

This statement confirms that weaving skills have provided real opportunities for women to sustain the family economy independently. Second, women in this community also began to learn simple financial management from the results of weaving. The income earned is not only used for daily needs, but part of it is set aside for savings, education costs, and emergency needs. This habit shows an increase in financial awareness that was previously rarely done by housewives. According to the community manager, Haji Arsyad:

"Now the mothers can manage the weaving results. Some are used for shopping, some are saved, and some are even specially prepared for children's school fees. So they are more focused on managing money."

This shows that weaving skills not only provide income, but also encourage the birth of a smarter financial management culture among women. Third, economic independence is also supported by efforts to diversify products and access to the market. In addition to sarongs, artisans are now starting to produce various product derivatives, such as shawls, scarves, bags, and accessories made from weaving. This diversification makes woven products more flexible to suit the needs of the modern market. The following are the results of the researchers' observations and documentation studies featuring Samarinda's typical woven products marketed by the Community manager.



Picture 4 Samarinda's typical weaving products marketed by community managers

It can be seen that the skills taught not only produce works of economic value, but also maintain local cultural identity. The market response to woven products is quite positive, with prices varying from hundreds of thousands to millions of rupiah per piece, depending on the level of difficulty and the details of the motive. While most still rely on direct sales and personal relationships, access to the market is slowly opening up more widely through exhibitions and community networks. Sumarni's mother said:

"Now it's not just sarongs, but also bags and shawls. So it is easier to sell because many like practical products. If you participate in the exhibition, it will sell faster."

This statement shows that product diversification is able to increase selling value and expand market share. Thus, women's economic independence is reflected through the ability to produce value products, regulate finances, and expand markets. Of the total of about 30 active artisans, more than 60% are now major contributors to family income, so weaving skills have a significant role in supporting household well-being.

3. The Social Role of Women in the Community

In the context of women's social roles, non-formal education in the Samarinda Weaving Community not only has economic implications, but also contributes to strengthening the social position of women in their environment. Women who were initially only active in the domestic sphere now have a wider space for participation in community organizations, mentoring roles, and real contributions to the preservation of local culture. First, there is an increase in participation in community organizations. Many women who were previously passive now play an active role in group management, RT activities, and social organizations such as the PKK. They are involved in decision-making, setting training schedules, and joint production management. This was expressed by Haji Arsyad:

"If in the past mothers only followed directions, now many are directly involved in organizing activities. Some are coordinators, some are in charge of administration, so they are more independent and courageous."

This statement shows that non-formal education also encourages the growth of women's leadership and participation in social organizations. Second, women also take on the role of mentors or trainers for new members. Senior craftsmen who have become proficient in weaving voluntarily guide new participants, resulting in a continuous process of skill transfer. This method strengthens community solidarity while fostering a sense of social responsibility among members. One of the instructors, Mrs. Sumarni, said:

"Mothers who can usually help guide new ones. So if the instructor is busy, they can still learn from fellow members. That way, skills can still be inherited."

This shows that non-formal education programs not only form skilled individuals, but also create new cadres who are able to become trainers in their environment. Third, the greatest contribution of women can be seen in the preservation of local culture. Through weaving activities, they maintain the existence of Samarinda sarongs as a hereditary cultural heritage. The awareness that weaving is not just an economic activity, but also a symbol of regional identity, encourages women to maintain this tradition. One of the participants, Mrs. Irna, revealed:

"We weave not only to sell, but also so that this culture does not disappear. If it is not continued, later children and grandchildren will no longer know what a Samarinda sarong is."

This quote emphasizes that the existence of women in the community is not only as economic actors, but also as guardians of cultural traditions. In addition, around 40% of participants have played an active role in social activities at the RT, sub-district, and sub-district levels, including as PKK administrators, training facilitators, and cultural event committees. This fact shows that learning in the community not only has an impact on technical skills, but also encourages women to be more active in the social sphere and local leadership.

Thus, through increasing organizational participation, role as mentors, cultural preservation, and involvement in social activities, non-formal education in the Samarinda Weaving Community has succeeded in strengthening women's social position. They are not only present as productive individuals, but also as agents of change who maintain cultural continuity and strengthen community solidarity. A continuous mechanism of knowledge transfer between members is one of the key factors for this success.

4. Wider Socioeconomic Impact

Skills-based non-formal education in the Samarinda Weaving Community not only provides individual benefits, but also results in a broader socio-economic impact on families, communities, and society as a whole. First, the program strengthens community solidarity and networking. Relationships between members are not only limited to weaving activities, but also develop into close social support. They help each other when facing technical difficulties and family problems, so that the community becomes a safe space as well as a source of mutual strength. As conveyed by one of the participants, Mrs. Irna:

"Since we started weaving, I feel more enthusiastic because we encourage each other. If anyone has difficulties, friends immediately help, so they don't feel alone."

This confirms that non-formal education is able to create social solidarity that strengthens women's togetherness in the community. Second, the contribution to the family and community economy is also increasingly real. The weaving products produced not only provide additional income, but for some participants even become the main source of the family economy. Furthermore, the existence of this community also has a double effect on the surrounding community, for example through the opening of job opportunities for raw material sellers, coloring services, and product marketing. Haji Arsyad said:

"If women weave, there are automatically those who sell yarn, some who help with sewing, and some who specialize in taking care of marketing. So the benefits are not only for the family of the craftsman, but also for the surrounding community."

This statement shows that weaving activities have made a real contribution to the local economy in Samarinda Seberang. Third, this program also strengthens the existence of Samarinda weaving as a local cultural identity. The woven fabrics produced not only function as an economic product, but also as a cultural symbol attached to the people of Samarinda. The use of distinctive motifs in various traditional events, celebrations, and cultural exhibitions emphasizes the position of weaving as a collective identity that should be preserved. As conveyed by Mrs. Sumarni:

"This Samarinda sarong is not just a fabric, but it has become part of the culture of the people here. If it is used at a traditional event or brought to an exhibition, people immediately know that it is from Samarinda."

This quote confirms that non-formal education in the Samarinda Weaving Community not only teaches skills, but also strengthens the cultural awareness inherent in each product.

Thus, it can be concluded that the socio-economic impact of non-formal education in the Samarinda Weaving Community extends to various aspects: strengthening community solidarity, improving the welfare of families and communities, and maintaining the existence of weaving as a local cultural identity. This impact makes the weaving community not only a learning space, but also a social and cultural driving force in the midst of the Samarinda community.

Discussion

The results of the study show that skills-based non-formal education in the Samarinda Weaving Community plays a strategic role in improving technical skills, economic independence, social participation, and cultural preservation. This

process is carried out through a *learning by doing* approach and the principle of *andragogy* which emphasizes the flexibility and life experience of learning citizens. Furthermore, the discussion will elaborate on the field findings by linking them to previous theories and research.

A. Implementation of Skills-Based Non-Formal Education in the Samarinda Weaving Community

1. Profile of the Samarinda Weaving Community

The results of the study show that the Samarinda Weaving Community has been organizing non-formal education since 1990 with the main goal of maintaining cultural preservation and empowering women's economy. The presence of this community was born from the real needs of Samarinda Seberang women, the majority of whom spend time in the domestic realm and have limitations in accessing formal education. The presence of the community provides an alternative learning space that fits their social reality.

This illustrates that learning in the community is in line with the concept *lifelong learning*, i.e. lifelong learning that is not limited to formal institutions (Ahmad, 2023). In addition, the principle *Andragogi* is also evident, because adult participants learn based on their life experiences and daily needs. (Loeng, 2018) affirming that life experiences are the main foundation in the adult learning process. In line with that, (Yahya & Purnama, 2024) found that the implementation of *Andragogi* able to increase the motivation and involvement of learning residents. Thus, the profile of the Samarinda Weaving Community not only shows the existence of a forum for cultural preservation, but also answers the formulation of the first problem by showing its role as a skill-based non-formal education center that strengthens the position of women in social and economic life.

2. Form of Non-Formal Education Implementation

Research shows that the learning process in this community is carried out with a *pattern of learning by doing* or direct practice. Participants were trained starting from the introduction of traditional looms, mastery of basic techniques, development of distinctive motifs, to production management. Learning activities take place in stages, two to three times a week with a duration of two to four hours per meeting. In the initial stage, senior instructors accompany new participants intensively, then provide opportunities for them to practice independently. In addition to practice, there are also group discussions, technique demonstrations, and joint reflections to assess the quality of the work.

This fact shows that the form of non-formal education in the Samarinda Weaving Community emphasizes direct experience as the core of learning. This is in line with the view (Lewis & Bryan, 2021) which confirms that active learning strategies such as hands-on practice, case discussion, and simulation are very effective for adult participants. In line with this opinion, other theories have found that community-based non-formal education is able to improve skills while building participants' confidence (Arnady, 2024). If it is associated with the local cultural context, (Rifandi, 2024) emphasized that weaving activities in Samarinda are part of the hereditary cultural identity since the 17th century. Thus, the form of learning implementation in this community not only serves to improve technical skills, but also strengthens the position of weaving as a cultural symbol of the Samarinda community.

3. Skills Learning Methods and Strategies

The research found that the learning methods used in the Samarinda Weaving Community focused on face-to-face meetings, hands-on practice, and mentoring systems. Participants learn by observing, imitating, and then practicing weaving skills repeatedly. Senior instructors act as mentors who guide the learning process, while learning outcomes are evaluated through product quality assessments and changes in participants' attitudes, such as discipline and independence.

The picture shows that the learning strategies applied emphasize the linkage between the skills learned and the real needs of the participants. This reflects the principle of *Andragogi* as affirmed (Loeng, 2018) and (Yahya & Purnama, 2024), namely learning that is relevant to the life experiences of learning citizens. Research (Sukmawati, 2018) It also emphasized that hands-on practice-based courses are able to produce strong technical skills while building participants' independence. Meanwhile, in terms of evaluation, this strategy is in line with the principle of *lifelong learning* (Ahmad, 2023) which emphasizes the importance of continuous assessment so that the skills acquired remain relevant to daily life. Therefore, the methods and strategies in the Samarinda Weaving Community have proven to be effective in producing participants who are not only skilled, but also confident, disciplined, and adaptive.

4. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

The research also found that the sustainability of non-formal education programs in the Samarinda Weaving Community is supported by a number of important factors. Local government support in the form of exhibition facilitation, capital assistance, and promotion of regional official activities has opened up economic opportunities and expanded participants' social networks. The high community solidarity is also reflected in the mutual assistance attitude between members, both in sharing raw materials, equipment, and manpower to complete large orders. In addition, the existence of senior instructors with decades of experience is key to success because they are able to guide new participants despite having limited formal education. All of these factors create a conducive learning environment, strengthen

participant motivation, and facilitate continuous skill transfer (Sukmawati, 2018). In fact, this success is further strengthened by a community-based learning model that maintains local wisdom, including the preservation of traditional weaving motifs and techniques (Setyowati et al., 2023).

However, the program also faces various obstacles that affect sustainability. The lack of regeneration of young artisans is a major challenge because the majority of the younger generation prefer to continue their education or work outside the region. As a result, weaving activities are still dominated by adult and elderly women. In addition, the limitation of digital literacy is also an obstacle in marketing, because most sales still depend on the local market with unstable export access. This condition is in line with the findings (Saragih et al., 2024) and (W. N. Sari et al., 2022) which emphasizes the importance of mastering digital literacy and modern marketing strategies to increase the competitiveness of traditional handicraft products. Therefore, while there are supporting factors that strengthen the program's success, challenges such as regeneration, innovation, and technology integration remain fundamental things that must be addressed to ensure the program's sustainability in the future.

B. Contribution of Non-Formal Education in Women's Empowerment

1. Women's Self-Capacity Enhancement

The findings of the study show that the trainees not only master technical weaving skills, but also experience increased confidence and growing cultural awareness. Many women who were previously passive now dare to set product prices, interact with buyers, make decisions in groups, and even participate in social organizations such as the PKK. This change shows a transformation of women's roles, from mere domestic actors to active individuals in the public sphere.

This shows that non-formal education in the Weaving Community is able to change the social position of women and strengthen their existence in the community. Technical skills weave into the resources they have; the courage to set prices and negotiate with buyers reflects the agency; Meanwhile, achievements in the form of increased revenue and organizational participation are real achievements (Yanti et al., 2023). This view is reinforced by (Bano et al., 2021) which explains that traditional skills can increase confidence while expanding the space for women's participation in the public sphere. (Hisyam et al., 2025) adding that women's involvement in households and communities can strengthen social cohesion. Thus, non-formal education generates not only technical skills, but also psychological and social transformations that place women as agents of change in the community.

2. Women's Economic Independence

The results show that more than 60% of active artisans are now the main breadwinners of the family economy. The woven products produced are not only marketed locally, but also penetrate national markets and even international markets such as Malaysia. Participants also began to develop simple financial management, such as setting aside a portion of their income for savings, children's education costs, and family emergency needs. The diversification of products in the form of bags, scarves, scarves, and accessories made of woven material further strengthens the attractiveness of products and expands market access.

This fact confirms that non-formal education plays an important role in creating women's economic independence. They are no longer solely dependent on their husbands' income, but are able to make a significant contribution to supporting the household economy. These findings are in line with (Darmawati, 2023) which mentions that Samarinda sarongs have great potential in the creative economy. However, the limitations of digital literacy are still an obstacle in market development. This condition is consistent with (Latifah et al., 2025) which confirms that digital marketing strategies greatly determine the success of traditional crafts in the global era. (Nadhiroh et al., 2025) shows that women's economic empowerment based on creative crafts can improve family welfare. (Ayaviri-Nina et al., 2025) It also found that family entrepreneurship is an important pillar in strengthening the local economic structure. In other words, non-formal education not only provides production skills, but also paves the way for women to adapt to the demands of the modern economy.

3. The Social Role of Women in the Community

The findings of the study show that women in the Weaving Community not only play the role of artisans, but also are active in social and cultural organizations. Many of them occupy strategic positions in the PKK, customary activity committees, and mentors for new members. Senior craftsmen volunteer to guide novice participants, resulting in continuous skill transfer and social solidarity among members.

From these results, it can be seen that non-formal education is able to produce women who are not only technically skilled, but also play the role of community leaders. Women grow up to be social actors who dare to lead, organize activities, and take social responsibility. This is in line with (Hisyam et al., 2025) which affirms that women's involvement in community organizations strengthens social cohesion. (Setyowati et al., 2023) also added that community-based skills can strengthen social capacity and community welfare. Thus, non-formal education in the Weaving

Community contributes to the birth of a generation of women who have the social capacity to move the community while maintaining traditions.

4. Broader Socioeconomic Impacts

The results of the study show that weaving activities have a wider impact, not only on individual participants but also on families, communities, and surrounding communities. Weaving activities strengthen solidarity between members, open up job opportunities for other parties such as yarn suppliers, dyeing services, and product traders, and improve household welfare. In addition, Samarinda weaving products are still used in traditional events, exhibitions, and festivals, so that their existence is also a symbol of local cultural identity.

From these findings, it can be understood that non-formal education in the Weaving Community has a dual function, namely as a means of economic empowerment as well as an instrument of cultural preservation. The presence of the weaving community has an impact on the formation of a local economic network involving many parties, as well as strengthening the cultural identity of the region. This is consistent with research (Setyowati et al., 2023) which confirms that traditional crafts have a dual function: an economic source as well as an instrument of cultural preservation. (S. A. Sari et al., 2024) adding that tourism based on local wisdom can expand the function of community education in strengthening the creative economy. Therefore, non-formal education in the Weaving Community not only creates individual change, but also has a significant collective impact on socio-economic development based on local wisdom.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of skills-based non-formal education in the Samarinda Weaving Community has taken place systematically based on the principles of *lifelong learning*, *learning by doing approach*, and andragogy, while affirming the value of local wisdom through the preservation of traditional weaving motifs and techniques. The activities developed include a series of trainings ranging from the introduction of tools and materials, mastery of basic techniques, motif innovation, production management, to marketing strategies that are implemented in a communitative manner with the assistance of experienced instructors and support between members. This program makes a real contribution to women's empowerment, both in the economic sector through increasing skills, income, and business independence, as well as in the social realm through strengthening decision-making capacity, increasing confidence, involvement in community activities, and preserving local culture. However, the implementation of the program still faces challenges in the form of high raw materials, limited tools, and low regeneration of young artisans because most of the younger generation prefers to continue their education or work outside the city.

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