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# Aspirations of Fisherfolk Communities on Their Children's Education in Albay, Asid, and Ragay Gulfs of Bicol, Philippines

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#### **Abstract**

The study explores the yearnings of fisherfolks on their child's education, hindrances, and factors that shape their desire as parents. Field observations and key informant interview among elder members of fisherfolk communities surrounding the Albay, Ragay, and Asid Gulfs of the Bicol Region was utilized. The study revealed that the majority of the fisherfolk parents do not want their children to continue fishing as their main source of livelihood because of potential risks, hardships, and cultural factors like collectivism, close family ties, and dependence on the elders. The parents' aspirations were shaped by their persistence over various threats, fears, personal unfulfilled dreams, and career opportunities thru education. Most of the parents desired a college education and a safe and secure profession for their children. The study deduced that these challenges can be a contributory factor for the declining number of fisherfolks surrounding the gulfs. Influencing this sector is the factor motivating fishers in their aspirations for their children's education. The study recommends introducing strategies for fisherfolks to develop a strong sense of hope and drive in realizing their aspirations and further research on the impact of culture, the role of women and children, and fisherfolks and their success stories.

# **Keywords**

Aspirations, Motivation, Fisherfolk

# 1. Introduction

"Our aspirations are our possibilities", Samuel Johnson.

Aspiration and expectation sound confusing to many. Aspiration is what an individual hope will happen in the future (Gorard, Huat See & Davies, 2012). The root word "aspire" means to have a great ambition or an ultimate goal, while expectations may be thought of as a more realistic belief. This implies that aspirations could be less concrete, not necessarily indicating achievable objectives that are based on reality. This could be perceived as a "hope" or "desire" (Glick & White, 2004).

In a domestic setting, parents developed personal aspirations for their kids. Research shows that parental aspirations have significantly predicted student expectations (Hossler & Stage, 1992; Jodl, Michael, Malanchuk, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2001). Parental support can be reflected through both actions (e.g., engaging with the child about school-related matters, aiding with homework, etc.) and beliefs (e.g., having expectations and aspirations for the child's academic success or educational achievements).

Contradicting findings were observed in different groups of literature. One group of literature showed that parents of lower socioeconomic status and parents who have completed lower level of school expect their children to complete less education (Hossler & Stage, 1992) while parents who are of higher socioeconomic status and have attained more education expect their children to complete more education (Jodl, Michael, Malanchuk, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2001). Limited studies show the process through which these aspirations are communicated to their children. Other studies revealed that low-income parents and parents of color share the same core aspirations and motivations around early childhood education as higher-income parents. In the Philippines, it was observed that both parents' educational attainment influenced the aspirations and educational achievement of their children (Gipson & & Hindin, 2015). The same study revealed that women's aspirations for their children were reflections of the women's own life experiences, as well as their beliefs of what could be achieved in the future.

Parents' aspirations can be referred to as their beliefs about their child's educational attainment, particularly graduating from college (Jacob & Wilder, 2010; Hill et al., 2004). In fishing communities, some parents normally develop this belief for their children, particularly in education and career. Considering the economic and geographic condition of the families and the communities in general, they never stop dreaming and hoping for a better life ahead. Parents have greatly influenced the career selection process of their children. The research recommended that further investigation of parents' aspirations for their children should be explored as it may be a possible predictor of the children's outcomes (Gipson & Hindin, 2015). With this phenomenon and gap in mind, the study aimed to identify the hindrances in achieving the aspirations of the fisherfolks on their children's education, determine the factors that shape the aspirations, and provide strategies to strengthen the aspirations of this community sector.

# 2. Materials and Method

Non-probability sampling was used in the initial data gathering in each setting. Interviews and focus group discussions were primarily utilized as data collection methods. An interview guide was developed and later validated by the representative from the Bureau of Aquatic Resources assigned in the area. The researcher first identified the persons in authority from the Municipal Agriculture Office (MAO) of each municipality across the three gulfs. Thru the help of the Municipal Agricultural Officer, a list of fisherfolks was derived as possible respondents for the interview and FGD. The MAO office personnel have a wide knowledge of whom among the community and families of fisherfolks are involved in fishing activities. Respondent-driven sampling was used through a referral from the personnel in charge who was asked to recommend names of persons or families that have qualified as participants guided by the criteria. Officers of fisherfolk organizations were then identified as participants in the focus group discussion. Recall interview was used in gathering primary data from fisherfolk communities in exploring their phenomenological experience related to their aspiration for their children's education. The same questions were also asked during the FGD sessions to validate the findings guided by the data-gathering procedures. A facilitator for each FGD was assigned to guide the participants and likewise encourage them in exploring their phenomenological experiences. A total of 200 respondents across the fisherfolk communities were involved. Among them, 65 were derived from the barangays of Albay Gulf, which comprise the municipalities of Bacacay, Sto. Domingo, Manito, Rapu-Rapu, and Legazpi City in Albay Province, as well as the LGUs of Prieto Diaz, Bacon District, and Sorsogon City in Sorsogon Province. Another 60 respondents were interviewed covering the barangays of Ragay Gulf consisting of the municipalities of Ragay, Balatan, Pasacao, Minalabac, Del Gallego, San Fernando, Bato, Bula, Sipocot, and Lupi of Camarines Sur and San Pascual of Masbate Province; and 75 from Asid Gulf, Masbate covering the barangays of the municipalities of Balud, Milagros, Cawayan, Placer, and Esperanza. The data and information taken from the interview and focused group discussions were classified according to themes guided by the objectives of the study.

## 3. Results and Discussion

# 3.1. Hindrances in Achieving Aspiration of the Fisherfolks on Their Children's Education

Most of the world's poorest people reside in remote locations, such as coastal communities, far from the city with deprived terrains and economic opportunities, healthcare, and education (Cahaya, 2015). Early research shows that parents with high aspirations for their children set high standards and make demands which result in high academic achievements (Boocock, 1972). Parents can help their child plan for their future as their aspiration is a factor that can influence their plans for education and future career. Aspirations in education can in-

crease the intention of the learners to stay and pursue levels of higher learning (Cuthbert & Hatch, 2008; Gorard & Smith, 2010). Access to education is challenged by the "close family ties" culture which sometimes hinders in achieving aspirations to pursue higher education. Likewise, the lack of basic infrastructures supporting access to education, like bridges, roads, and building facilities can deprive children of poor communities to attend school even at a very young age (Cahaya, 2015; Ujjania & Patel, 2011).

The fisherfolk communities across the three gulfs have expressed their sentiments on their difficulty in obtaining the government's education program as they are geographically disadvantaged being in the coastal areas and often isolated from institutions of higher learning. As one of the fisherfolks in Asid Gulf has mentioned, "Sinongmagulang ang hindigustongmakatapos ng pagklase ang anak. Dito sa amin problematalaga kasi malayo kami samgapaaralan. Ang pagtatapos ng isanganaksakolehiyo ay swertihan lang kasi maramisamgaestudyante ang hinditalaganakakapagtapos. Kahit hindimaka-gradweyt, mabuti pa rinyungnakatuntongsilasakolehiyo. Para naman sakanilayun." (No parents do not want their children to finish college education. Apparently, it is really a problem that we are situated far from any learning institutions. Students who finished college are deemed lucky since most of the students were really unable to graduate. Even though they do not graduate, it's still good that they have reached college, as this is for their own benefit.) Conforming comments were also mentioned by a fisherfolk from Albay and another from Ragay Gulf, "Harayuonbaga kami sasiyudad. Sa dagat lang an viyahe para makaabot an samuyangakisaunibersidad. Kaya sa boarding house mi na lang pina estar, mina puli lang sindapagbakasyon para bakorugado ta kunpabalik-balikdelikado man. Sana makatapos ta nasa second year college pa lang." (We are situated far from the city proper. Sea transport is the only available means to reach the university. This is why we allowed them to stay in a boarding house so that they will not be going home on a daily basis because it will really be too risky given the distance from school. Hope my student who now is in second-year college be able to graduate.)

The study is consistent with the Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO, 2015) observation that fishing communities, especially small-scale fishermen, are commonly located in remote areas. Similarly, recent findings reveal the challenges faced by indigent families and communities isolated from urban areas regarding access to education and transportation, affecting school enrollment and attendance in school activities (Wilson et al., 2010; Jochim, DeArmond, Gross, & Lake, 2014; Starkey & Hine, 2014; Logan & Burdick-Will, 2016). The study of Ujjania & Patel (2011) also implies that fishing villages in India lack suitable roads and transportation. In the Philippines, farm-to-market road government projects have an impact on accessing the education of communities specifically situated in far-flung coastal and upland communities. Despite the aggressive project implementation by the government, a large sum of money still needed to be allocated to be able to build infrastructures to reach islands and coastal villages. The "Education for All" program of the government providing tuition-free

schooling from pre-school to a tertiary level still presents a considerable challenge given the conditions of roads, transportation issues, and the distance of fisherfolk communities from learning centers (Kindergarten Education Act. RA 10157, 2012).

Studies on students found that those not attending their neighborhood school were less likely to walk or bike to school and more likely to rely on bus service (Wilson et al., 2010). Some parents factor student transportation into their decisions on where to send their children to school (Jochim, DeArmond, Gross, & Lake, 2014). As stated by the Urban Institute of Student Transportation (2017), transportation options can encourage and allow students to attend higher-quality schools. On the other hand, students' cost of transportation has generally increased over time, although students can still avail of fare discounts in riding public utility vehicles in the Philippines. Thirty-three percent of low-income parents in Denver, Colorado, and Washington, DC pointed out that they would send out their children to enroll in better schools if transportation were provided by the government (Teske, Fitzpatrick, & O'Brien, 2009).

In other countries, the cost of the student's transportation is paid out by the state and local government and most states provide funds exclusive for the student's transportation (Vincent et al., 2014). According to Chambers, Parrish, and Lam (2002) increasing access through road construction has reduced poverty and increased enrolment in education and literacy. It also reduced poverty by 5.7 percentage points (Gibson & Rozelle, 2003). Transportation has a positive implication on the learner's performance in school activities and access to high-quality schools. Moreover, ease of transportation helped in addressing students' punctuality and absenteeism problems and increased the availability to participate in school-related activities (Blackmon & Cain, 2015; Canfield et al., 2016).

Also observed were the optimistic attitude of some members of fisherfolk communities on how they view the challenge caused by the limited access to education considering their geographical location. Fishers from Albay Gulf have claimed that: "An hanapbuhay ko puon pa kaitopagsirana. Bata halos sarong oras an viyahesadagat para makaabotsa Legazpi. Nagi akungkapitansa barangay. Ambisyon mi talagana mag agomnamakatapos an mgaakimaskiharayosasiyudad. Maray ta nagtapussinda. So Matua ko nasa Coast Guard na. So pangduwa man teacher na. Nahilingnindana mas maray an buhaypag professional". (My source of income since then is only from fishing and it takes an hour of boat ride to reach Legazpi City. As a former Barangay Captain, our family's ambition for our kids is to finish their studies, though we live far from the city. Good that they have already graduated, the eldest is with the Coast Guard and the second child is already a teacher. They perceived that being professionals really matters).

Road opening also improved the number of primary and secondary schools in far communities. It also shifts the community's mindset in sending their children to school. The construction of a new rural road directly led to the erection of a new secondary school in Nepal. A program on rural pathways

and feeder roads in Peru increased primary school enrolment for girls by 7% and secondary school attendance for boys by 10% (McSweeney & Remy, 2008). Rural road projects are linked with school attendance and increased by 22% as a result of access roads in India (Bell & van Dillen, 2012; Mukherjee, 2012). The construction of the rural road in Morocco improved the quality of education through the recruitment of new teachers and other personnel.

There is a clear indication that rural isolation and poor access to education caused by the absence of roads, bridges, and poor transportation are linked with poor education and low school enrolment rate from primary to tertiary level. This has negative implications for the attainment of the parent's aspirations for their children's education specifically if parents are not properly motivated to pursue their ambition. Road access and transportation often unlock opportunities for families of fisherfolk communities to throw their nets and catch school with quality education and avail the government's program on education accessible in the urban areas. This uncovers the manifestation of the influence of the Bicolano culture as hindering factor in realizing the aspiration of the fisherfolk communities on their children's education.

Indian and Asian families, like the Philippines, are more concerned with caring for family members, most likely their old parents who were prompted by the culture of the nuclear and extended family system in comparison to western cultures of Europe and America, where independence and differences are emphasized as part of being individualistic (Triandis, 1993; Nelson & Fivush, 2004; Chadda & Deb, 2013). Other studies identified the unique characteristics of Asians like Vietnamese and Filipinos who do not show the descriptions of individualistic society namely; value self-reliance, independence, autonomy, and personal achievement (Skillman, 1999; Desai, 2007), which conforms to the current study.

The culture of Bicolanos, being collectivist was a common observation in all the three gulf areas, which was manifested by the fisherfolks who mentioned that, "Kami bagamga senior citizen na, peronagatagaburubanwit pa man nin-pansira mi sapamilya. Maray ta parasira man an aki ko ta magkairiba kami saharong. Sa siring nasitwasyon, narereparo kami ninda ta paggurangnadakulnabaga an mgapigmamati. Saka, delikadobagakunnagsosolo-solo." (We are considered as senior citizens already, but from-to-time we go fishing for our family's consumption. It is good that we are a family of fishers living in one house because it may be risky if we live alone. Our children tend to our needs as we sometimes have health complaints, because of our age).

Fisherfolks share the same set-up commonly characterized by having nuclear families. Similarities were also observed in Indian households where the income of the male members are expected to support the old members of the family, take care of the widows, and assist members with illness (Chekki, 1996). Another fisher from Albay Gulf shared that, "Matua akosa mag turugangnaapat, saro lang an babae. Akotalaga an pig iibani papa kaitosapagsira kaya iyoini an naginghanapbuhay ko. Sa sarong banda, ok man ta so ibakongmgatugang may mgafamilia

naman, harayodigdisalugar mi. Uro-aldawkongkaiba an mgamagurang ko digdisaharong, ta ako lang an pig asahan mag hanapbuhay." (I am the eldest of four siblings with only one sister. My father always keeps me company every fishing trip, which is why I grew up with this livelihood. Though my other siblings live afar with their own family, I am the one left to earn a living as both my parents solely depend on me).

The findings of the study also support the characteristics of Asians who are more typically involved in caring for its family members. Same is also observed from families who form a valuable support system which contribute to addressing stresses (Chadda & Deb, 2013). These characteristics are within boundaries of the collectivist culture where families are concerned with belongingness, dependency and empathy (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). According to a fisher from Asid Gulf, "Dito salugarnamin, magkakatabi lang ang mgafamilia. Kaya magkakasama halos ang mag-anakaraw-araw. Tumutulong lahat pagkatinatahi ang nasirangpangke. Maayos ang samahan ng isangfamiliangmangingisdasimulasamagulanghanggangsamgaanak. Lahat magkakasamabilangmgamangingisda. Kahit hirapperomasayalalona kung kasamana ang mga apo nila." (Families live close with each other here in our place. That's why families are almost always together every day. It is nice to see families of fishers from the parents down to the children, tending the nets together. Though, badly off sometimes, but still happy especially when they are with their grandchildren).

This is inherent in the culture of Filipinos. Positive associations between family relationships and health were also observed and conformed to observations in other studies as experienced by fisherfolk communities across the Albay and Asid Gulf. Previous and recent studies revealed that the quality of the family relationship is related to disease morbidity and low mortality. Supportive relationships increased 46% in the survival rate of family members (Cohen, 2004; Holt-Lunstad, Smith, & Layton, 2008). Social support from close family members has been linked to lower urinary catecholamine, and the more positive relationships they have dampened cardiovascular reactivity (Grewen, Girdler, Amico, & Light, 2005; Nealey-Moore, Smith, Uchino, Hawkins, & Olson-Cerny, 2007; Manczak, McLean, McAdams, & Chen, 2015). The same variable also lower inflammation and the negative family relationship result in acute inflammation (Kiecolt-Glaser et al., 2005; Yang, Schorpp, & Harris, 2014).

# 3.2. Factors That Shaped Fisherfolks' Aspiration for Their Children's Education

Thousands of individuals risk their lives every day because of work-related injuries and fatalities. The life of fishers is vulnerable to danger when they are out fishing. Weather in the marine environment is unpredictable, sometimes wrecking fishing vessels, specifically used by small-scale fisherfolks. Others are caused by natural disasters, like typhoons and storm surges. These factors negatively affect the production and number of fish caught by the fisherfolk communities (Belardo, Candelaria, & Dioneda, 2020). On the other hand, these same factors served as

motivators and increase their drive in encouraging their children to formal education since education offers better career opportunities and stability of work ahead.

# 3.3. Experiences of Risk and Danger

Fishing is an occupation with a high risk of traumatic injury since 1731, consistently ranked as the deadliest occupation since 1992 and considered as the world's most dangerous occupation (Drudi, 1998; Knapp, 2016). The risks and dangers of this occupation was associated with various factors associated to it, like human, equipment and environmental factors. Similar experiences were disclosed by respondents through the interview with the three different areas of Albay, Ragay and Asid Gulfs. These were their respective disclosures: "Kun an pagbuhayngunyanparehaskanpanahon mi kaidto, sapagsira sana okay na an familia. Ngunyandipisilonna ta sige an diitkandakopdigdisa Albay Gulf, sigurodahilankaiyan an illigal fishing saka climate change. Harani ka sadiskwedo ta mina bigla sana an pagraotkanpanahonsalawud. Kaya kung akobilang ama, mag klasesakamagtarapos an mgabagongtubongunyan para magi sindang professional. Sa opisina an trabahoninda, magianbaga, sigurado pan ansuweldo." (If life today is the same as long before, fishing would have been a very good source of livelihood. Nowadays, catching fish in Asid Gulf is very hard, maybe because of illegal fishing and climate change. It becomes too risky at times because of the sudden change in weather condition. As a father, I want our kids to graduate and become professionals. Unlike fishing, the work in an office is light and sure to obtain the monthly salary). Another from Ragay Gulf mentioned, "Pigsasabihan ko an mgaakina mag eskuwelasakamagtaraposlalonasakolehiyo ta daingkasiguruhan an income sapagsiradigdisa Ragay, sakadilikado pa anbuhay. Anpinakapangiturugan ko talagamakatapussinda. Magi sindang professional'. (I am telling my children to continue their studies to graduate college because income from fishing here in Ragay is so uncertain and at times becomes too risky. My dream for them is really to finish their studies and become professionals). Another fisher further states that, "Napakadelikado ang hanapbuhaysadagatngayonditosaAsid Gulf. Kagayanitong may low pressure na naman, hindiakomakapangisda. Kung inaabot ng biglaangsama ng panahonlalonakapagmalakas ang ulan at matataas ang alonnapakadelikadolalo pa kung maliit ang bangka." (Fishing as our livelihood here in Asid Gulf is very dangerous. Just like today, the weather in our area is again under low pressure and fishing is hampered. Times like this is aggravated by heavy rains and storm surges which becomes too risky for our small fishing boats).

These results were validated further during the conduct of focus group discussions which was found to conform with the personal experiences associated with the risks and danger related to the fishing occupation. This has been consistent with the findings of recent studies conducted on the different factors encountered by fishers that label the risk and danger of the fishing occupation, which are associated with high winds, large waves, bad weather conditions brought

about by the monsoon period (Knapp, 2016; Njaya & Banda, 2008). The results, as supported by recent studies, have shown how dangerous fishing operations may become. Despite the threats, the communities in the three gulfs are still into fishing for economic reasons that have become part of their daily routine and common source of livelihood. In many cases, the catch for the day may only be for home consumption, especially during the lean months. Most fisherfolk, amidst their hardships often still believe in catching a jackpot in their production. However, the majority are still hopeful that the government and civil society organizations can support their plight in terms of upgrading their fishing gear units, boats, and communication system and capacity building on providing basic medical care to someone experiencing a sudden injury or illness. Training that is focused on developing entrepreneurial skills, alternative livelihood sources, and first aid are support mechanisms that can empower fishing communities to be self-reliant despite their distance from urban centers (FAO, 2015).

# 3.4. Education Offering Better Career Opportunities

Education can set the individual's direction toward good health, empowerment, career opportunities, employment, and success. Studies reveal that educational attainment is the key to employment as primary education was linked to selfemployment and agriculture-related occupations (Reardon, Berdegué, & Escobar, 2001). The set of interviews has disclosed the importance of education, specifically its implication on the economic facet of the family. Common features of experiences were observed as what the respondents have shared across the three gulfs. On the aspect of technical school and other career options, a parent shared that: "Magulangako ng apatnaanak. Pangarap ko namakataossilasapag-aaralkahitdito lang sa Technical and Vocational School kasi malapit lang sa amin. Makakapagtrabahosilasa bayan kasi kung tapossila ng technical. Mas magandakumparasapangingisdaditosa Asid Gulf. Walang asensodito kasi paliitnangpaliit ang laman ng hulinamin." (I am a parent of four children. My aspiration is for them to graduate even from technical or vocational courses as the school is just adjacent to our place. Such capacity will ensure employment at the town proper, which is more advantageous as compared to our decreasing catch from Asid Gulf). Another fisher from Ragay Gulf has disclosed regarding education to obtain a stable job mentioning that: "Kan panahon, elementary sana an school digdisamo, kaya kunmakatapus ka kan elementary okay na. Pagsirana an buhaykanpanahonsagkodnamagdarakula kami. Sa ngunyan, dapat may tinapusan ka para magiaan an paghanapbuhay." (Long before, only elementary education was available in our place. Being a graduate from the elementary level was enough and fishing was the only income source since we were kids. But times have changed, our children have to graduate college so that they will have ease of employment. Fishers along Albay Gulf also shared their financial difficulties related to fishing trips and their aspiration on their children's education: "Iba nangunyan an pagsira ta halos kadaviyahemautangnguna kami sakapitalista. Bawasna lang pag may dakop. Pati susapagklasekanmgaaki mi pig uutang mi pa. Okay lang basta makatapossindasapageskwela ta iyan an parangap mi sainda para magingmaray an buhaynindakomparasabuhay mi ngunyan" (Unlike before, our situation now is different as we have to get an advance from the middlemen for our family's consumption needs before any fishing trip is undertaken and paid later through our fish catch. Even the educational expenses of our kids come from borrowings, but it's okay as long as they graduate. It is our dream for them to have a better future contrary to our life today).

Participants of the focus group discussions, from various fisherfolk communities across the gulfs, also expressed their insights. A participant from Albay Gulf validated the advantage of obtaining education: "Nakapagtipon man kami sapagsiradidgi sana sa municipal water. Tiniyagaanmingmapaeskuwela so matuangbabae. Ngunyan teacher nasiyadidgisamo. Pigtatabangan man niya kami mapatapos so duwa mi pang akinglalaki. Bintahetalaga an may trabaholalonasagobyerno. Gusto ko so sarokonglalakimakalaogsa military." (Our savings came from fishing within our municipal waters. With our persistence, our eldest daughter is already a teacher here in our place. With her support, her two younger brothers will eventually finish school. Having a job in the government service is truly an advantage. I want my other son to take up military service). Still, another fisher from Ragay Gulf also mentioned regarding achieving a better life through education: "Akobilang ama, na an hanapbuhaypagsira sana, naaako ko na man iningsamuyangsitwasyonngunyan. Pero, mas gusto ko namagingmaray an buhaykanmgaaki ko kaya an pangiturugan ko namakatapossindasapageskuwelasa college. Iyan an capital ninda para mag asensosabuhay". (Given these current situations in life, as a parent where fishing is the only known livelihood source, I want my children to have a better life ahead. My aspiration for them is to finish college as this will be their investment towards achieving their goals in life). On obtaining a stable job as teacher or government worker for his children, an Asid Gulf fisher from the focus group has said, "Mahirap ang buhayditosa Masbate, peroambisyon ko din namakatapos ng kolehiyo ang solonganak ko. Sana magingganapna teacher siyasagobyerno." (Life as fisher is hard here in Masbate, but my ambition for my child is to graduate and become a full-fledged government school teacher). The findings likewise agree with the study showing positive association among the basic factors, like educational attainment, work compensation and long-term employment. College degree holders were most likely employed on white collar jobs and received medium income. On the other hand, primary education was likely engaged to focus on self-employment and some were in agricultural occupation and related activities (Chen, 2018).

Education is the hope of most parents, specifically for fisherfolk communities in the various municipalities covering the three gulf areas. It can transform children's lives and family status. It is the most powerful investment to change life for the better. For that reason, all sectors of the community from the most vulnerable to the rich families are investing in their children's education. Success stories have characterized their plight from poverty to riches, where some of these originated from marginal communities. However, the study was delimited

to explore the different high-achieving stories of families, which experienced such transformation and changes. On the one hand, there is a need to advocate awareness of the positive benefits of having a college graduate in the family and to inspire others to promote education in the community focusing specifically on families located in the isolated communities of the country. Also, the government needs to open its window to the most vulnerable sector of different communities to explore their potential and widen the opportunities for stable careers for children in the years to come. It is because education is strongly correlated with individual success (Gindling & Newhouse, 2014).

# 3.5. Construction of High School Building

A respondent from Ragay Gulf expressed his observation and implications of the presence of the school building in their community. As he stated, "Dakulangta-bangsapagbagokanmgapangarapkanmgamagurangdigdisapagkakaiguanin high school ta nagkainteres so mgaaki mag ereskwela ta haraninabaga. An college ugaringharayo ta sa Naga pa, pero an ibanasa college na man. Anpagsira kaya bagangunyannagpaparaluyana an dakop, kaya dapatmagtarapossapagklaseining-mgaeskwela mi ta pag may tinapusan, madalimakakuanintrabaho." (Establishing a high school building here is a big help in changing the perspective of the parents because the children became interested in enrolling in school since it is already near. Going to college still remains a problem as the schools are in Naga City, though some are already enrolled. The decrease in fish production has been a persistent problem, and that is why we would like our children to finish college. If you have a college degree, it is easier to find work).

#### 3.6. The Desire for Child's Education

Success story was shared by a fisherfolk along Ragay Gulf, who said, "Gustuhon mi namakapatapos ki akisa college, kaya supurtado mi syasakolehiyomaskinalubog kami sa utang ta harayobaga an samuyangharong. Maestro na an aki, ko po ngunyan. Ansabi ko saiya, so mgadai ko pa nabayadanna utang sapagpaklasesaimo, ikana lang an magbayad. Okey man inisaiya." (We really wanted our child to finish college, which is why we supported his expenses even though we are delinquent in our debts since we live in a very remote place. He is now a teacher. I told him to pay the debts that we still owe which accumulated on account of his schooling. He agreed to settle them for us."

# 3.7. Education: Parent's Unfulfilled Dream

In psychology, parents see their children as part of themselves and an extension of self (Aron et al., 2004). Freud (1914), the father of psychoanalysis noted that many parents feel that "the child shall fulfill those wishful dreams... which they never carried out." Jung (1970), a Neo-Freudian psychologist noted that parents want their children "to compensate for everything that was left unfulfilled in their lives." Previous and recent literature show that in terms of the parent's unfulfilled ambition, they particularly transfer this to their offspring and attempt to

fulfill the ambition for themselves through their child (Aron et al., 2004). Studies reveal that in some cases, parents consider their children as an object of their unfulfilled ambitions (Weinhold & Weinhold, 2008).

These theoretical insights were also observed in the fisherfolk communities across the gulfs of Albay, Ragay and Asid. From the interview, a member of fisherfolks from Albay Gulf shared, "Parasiratalaga an mgamagurang ko puon pa salolokan ama ko. Nag college akosa Legazpi perohanggangone-year lang ta naabuso ko man. Naka agomakosaatabnaedad ta dainaako pina klasekanmgamagurang ko. Eh, wara man akoaramnahanapbuhaykundipagsira ta nagaibaakokaitosa ama ko. Sana an mgaaki ko mgatarapussakoleheyo ta iyan an ambisyon ko kaito, sakamaluyahunna an pagsirangunyan, magastussakadilikaduhonna ta saharayona kami nagsisira." (My parents have been descendants of fishers. I took up college in Legazpi City for a year only and never continued because I fumbled and abused their trust. I married at a young age and had to stop college. The only job I knew was fishing because when I was a child, I usually accompanied my father on his fishing trips. I hope that my kids will finish college as it was my ambition. Nowadays, the catch is declining and fishing is becoming too costly and risky at times since we fish in distant areas). The findings of the study also agree with the study of Kahl (1957), wherein the respondent blamed his failure on insufficient education, and was determined that his child would do better. It implies that parents who are not happy and satisfied with their jobs had higher educational aspirations for their sons (Kahl, 1957). Studies also suggested that mothers have influenced their children's educational plans (Krauss, 1964). The findings are consistent with the study of Brummelman et al. (2013) where parents' desire for their child to fulfill their unfulfilled ambitions as their child is the extension of themselves. Children have further opportunities ahead to achieve their parents' unfulfilled ambitions, and the parents hope to live out their unfulfilled ambitions through their children (Brummelman et al., 2013).

There are factors that can influence and shape the career path of children. However, parents and family have the most influence compared to other factors. Studies revealed that parents are greater influencers than other individuals like teachers and neighbors on career choice and even on what to pursue in college (Kniveton, 2004; Simpson, 2003). The authority parents have over their children can affect a child's decision. Parents can motivate their children deliberately or unintentionally in the direction where they want them to go. Some parents even dictate their child's career direction. Some parents, without a nudge, would want their child to fulfill their broken dreams. The children's exposure to the challenges within the domestic environment can be influential, especially if parents are uneducated and experiencing financial worries. Children may interpret this phenomenon as a challenge to achieve more and decide not to experience the same. Undertaking activities to raise career awareness for parents and children can help them explore their interests and skills. Moreover, this can increase parents' consciousness of their role in their child's future career opportunities. The parents' determination and involvement in their child's education can affect their interest, attendance, self-esteem, and motivation to finish an academic program. A child's proximity and emotional closeness with peers can also influence an individual's career decision which is commonly observed in high school or middle school students. Peer pressure can also influence a child on what course to pursue in college. Other research observed that aside from family, the community can also manipulate an individual's career decision (Ferry, 2006).

As what a 48-year-old fisher with two high school children from Albay Gulf has shared in the focus group discussion: "An magurangpirminang pig-iisip and kapakanansakafuturokanmgaaki. Maski kami tiusonninmarhay, ta waramgasadirinapwedeipamanasamgaaki, naghihingowakaming mag agomnamakatapos an mgaaki ta iyan man sana an maitataomingpamanasainda. An inadalansakatinaposandainawarara ta habangbuhaynindangdara-daraiyanbilangkapital para sasaindangpag-pamilya". (Parents always see to it that their children's welfare is prioritized. Though poor and without any resources for our children to inherit, my wife and I really work hard for our children to finish their studies because it is the only legacy that we can bestow on them. Knowledge and education cannot be taken away from them. It will also be their asset in setting up their own family). This disclosure shows how supportive the fisherfolks are, despite the financial problems they have brought about by the decreasing income from fishing trips. Indeed, education remains the best legacy that Bicolano parents can provide to their children as they strive to provide a good education for their children (Asis & Ruiz-Marave, 2013).

The findings also disclosed the sacrifices of the parents specifically from the marginalized sector just to support the educational needs of their children. As a fisher from Ragay Gulf had said: "Harayo kami sapoblacion, peropigsisikap mi namakatapos an duwamingakisapagklaselalonamakagraduwarsindasa college ta iyan an kamawutanming mag agom. Wara man kami panonamaipamanasainda, kundi an pagpaklasesainda. Habo man ninda mag ibasakosadagat." (We live far from the town proper, but we diligently strive for our two children to study and graduate from college. This is what we aspire for our children as we do not have material possessions to bequest, only education. My children do not want to fish with me either, as they do not want to be fishers all their life).

Another member of the fisherfolk community from Asid Gulf also mentioned regarding scholarship which could help in achieving their ambition for their child who said: "Siguro halos lahat namangmgamagulang gusto makatapos ang anaknilasapagaaral kasi ito an pinakamainamnapamanasakanila. Pero hindiitomadalilalonasakagaya naming mgamangingisda kung saaniaasa ang lahat sadagat. Malakingtulongsa amin at samga bata kung may scholarship sila." (Most parents want their children to graduate from college as this is the best legacy for them. But this is not an easy task for us fishers whose livelihood is dependent on the ocean. It would be a great help for all of us if our children can be granted a scholarship).

The Philippine government established a system of free public education from the elementary level (Philippine Constitution, 1987). Thirty years after the approval of the 1987 Philippine constitution, the government through the legislative branch extended free education to every Filipino up to the tertiary level (RA. 10931). The law promotes universal access to quality tertiary education by providing free tuition and other school fees in the state universities and colleges, and state-run technical-vocational institutions. The same law also established tertiary education subsidies and student loan programs (RA. 10931). Despite the existing laws promoting free education for families living in distant communities, specifically the fisherfolks where most are in the coastal and isolated islands, free tertiary education is hard to achieve. How can the youth be the country's hope and future if education can only be accessed by privileged families and communities living in urban places? Parents need to invest in their children's education to achieve academic success. In the cultural sense, education is a primary expression of parental love and family hope (Lin, 2019).

#### 4. Conclusion

Philippine culture and local setting of the environment served as the foundation of understanding community based framework of parent's desire for their children. Parents' aspirations for their children's education were being held back by the risks and dangers inherent to the fishers' occupation as parents, the culture of collectivism, close family ties, and living with their parents. Likewise, the parent's aspirations were shaped by their personal experiences with the risks and dangers of their occupation, their desire for their child's education and awareness of better career opportunities of education, the presence and access of a high school or middle school in the community, and their unfulfilled dreams. Personal reflection of the parents on their exposure to danger led to a realization of encouraging their children to consider other options to earn a living. Unpredictable catch and income also contributed in developing their desire for a better future for their children thru education. Though the community is located far from the urban area, the culture of providing education for their children as a parental legacy was observed across the scope of the study.

## 5. Recommendations

Motivation promotes a mindset, stimulates, and drives individuals to take action in accomplishing their goals. **Table 1** presents the recommended strategies to strengthen the aspirations of the fisherfolks regarding their children's education.

# 5.1. Strengthen the Communication Line with the Child

Children naturally want to be in contact with their parents (Poulter, 2006). Bridging communication lines with children can enhance the parent's awareness of their kids. If children disclose their views, needs, wants, and dreams to their parents, it can lead to their emotional literacy. This will help parents develop pictures, images, and an in-depth understanding of their child. This process will

**Table 1.** List of strategies, descriptions, and benefits to strengthen aspirations.

Strategies	Description	Benefits
Strengthen communication line with the child	Parents should initiate communication line with the children in all forms like dialogue, chat, telephone calls, text messages, and the like.	: Strengthens family relationship : Discovers and explores child's needs, wants, interests, concerns, plans, and dreams
Set goals	Parents should set long-term goals as the ultimate target and set short-term objectives toward the attainment of the long-term target. The target should be specific, measurable, attainable, and time-bounded	: Specific target leads to a strong sense of focus and guides every member of the family's specific direction : Serves as a vision for the day-to-day life journey
Set a family road map	Parents should design a family road map and identify targets, possible challenges and factors that can contribute in the journey for realizing the long-term target	<ul> <li>: Serves as the blueprint of possibilities and calculated risks</li> <li>: Serves as a step-by-step guide of the journey</li> <li>: Serves as a guide to monitor and measure progress, particularly on specific targets</li> </ul>
Identify a successful individual or family as a model for success	Parents should identify particular successful individuals and families as living testimony of success. This serves as empirical evidence of successful stories	<ul><li>: Serves as a model, inspiration, and living testimony of success.</li><li>: Success stories can increase the level of motivation and drive</li></ul>
Establish Community-based Peer Group	Parents should initiate a peer group within the community that will serve as a support system and an avenue to share the ups and downs such as challenges and strategies in coping with difficulties related to family concerns and aspirations	<ul><li>: Opportunity to identify and develop different coping skills.</li><li>: Can also enhance the feeling of hope, self-worth, and confidence</li><li>: Opens an avenue to release stress and emotional baggage</li></ul>
Promotion of optimistic thinking	Parents should develop the mindset of being positive thinkers, people with a high level of sense of hope, and address concerns, not in the perspective of problems and difficulties but as part of the challenges of being parents	<ul> <li>: Can increase a sense of hope</li> <li>: Can contribute to the state of being relaxed and comfortable.</li> <li>: Can also reduce stress, and improve health conditions and well-being.</li> <li>: Can lead to a high level of involvement in physical activities particularly work-related undertakings</li> </ul>

also help the parents come up with strategies in helping their children achieve their vision which is directly linked to their aspirations as parents. Parents may also initiate communication, and try to reach and connect frequently with their children to know more about them. Their knowledge will lead them in the right direction, particularly regarding their parental role and responsibilities. They can therefore seek acceptance by embracing the values of their parents and pursuing their professional goals. The research has shown that communication plays a significant role in the longevity of relationships.

# 5.2. Set Goals

Personal goals may come from any individual, and in some cases, they can be

from deeply personal-life orientation, history, and experiences. This serves as a target and guide for the day-to-day life journey. This will give children, as well as parents, a sense of focus and direction. It will also help them measure and monitor progress particularly on the short-term targets as goal setting plays an essential role.

#### Set a Family Road Map

A road map of goals, approaches on how to attain such, and identified pathways should be reflected in it. Without a blueprint image of plans and approaches, organizing daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly activities toward aspiration will be a complex situation. This will serve as a step-by-step guide on the journey to aspiration.

# 5.3. Identify a Successful Individual or Family as a Model

Robertdranath Tagore, an Indian philosopher, and religious leader once said, that "inspiration follows aspiration". The model serves as an inspiration as explained by Bandura in his theory on Social Learning (Nabavi, 2012). People love to listen to the personal stories of successful people. This serves as a living testimony and evidence of achievement and a model of the life and journey of others.

# 5.4. Establishing a Community-Based Peer Group

Peer group can be an opportunity to interact and communicate with the model after someone whom he has reached out to. This allows for identifying and developing different coping skills experienced by others. This can also enhance the feeling of hope, self-worth, and self-value. This can likewise be an avenue to share their personal experiences and observations, particularly challenges, coping, and success.

# 5.5. Promotion of Optimistic Thinking

Positive thinking can help to reach one's goals easier. As stated by Helen Keller, an educator, and author of Story of My Life "optimism is the faith that leads to achievement; nothing can be done without hope". Positive thinking can also reduce stress and improve health conditions and well-being. This can also get more people to get involved in physical activities particularly work related to motivation and goals.

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# **Conflicts of Interest**

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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