

## **Implications of School Dropout for Children's Future in West Nusa Tenggara Indonesia**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study aims to explore, analyse, and describe the implications of children dropping out of school for their future in West Nusa Tenggara Indonesia. The research was conducted in West Lombok Regency using a qualitative method. Interviews, observation, and documentation were conducted to collect the data. Meanwhile, to analyse the data, the researcher used Miles & Huberman model of qualitative data analysis. The results of this study indicate that the implications of children who have dropped out of school for their children's future are; inferior in relationships, children become lazy, and less open to develop themselves. It also has implications for families and communities such as; children become unemployed, work odd jobs, create problems in society, and produce new poor families. Given that fact, the implications of dropping out of school for children's future are quite crucial, the local government together with the community have an obligation to solve the problem thoroughly from various perspectives, so that the right formulation can be found to handle it with the appropriate policies.

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### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Various crisis that occurs in modern human life often trigger the opinion of social observers, especially education observers. One of the causes of these crises is due to the powerlessness of policy makers in the field of education to anticipate all problems that occur. Social crises that occur in modern human life include; poverty, urbanization, population explosion, unemployment, low education, illiteracy, dropout and other crises, all of which can always be linked to education (Watson, 2009). It can be understood that of civilization always begins with the development of human resources, and the next goal is also for the welfare of human life. Thus, the human entity is actually the epicentre of all aspects of development, both in the economic, political, socio-cultural, even defence and security fields.

Educational institutions are one of the most important instruments for all nations in the world in developing their human resources (Anwar, 2017). Empirical facts show that all advanced civilized nations are always supported by quality human resources (Darmadi, 2018; Pan, 2016; Swanson, 2022).

With quality human resources, countries that carry out development in various fields can make innovations by creating cutting-edge technology to support the production of higher quality goods and services to make it easier to meet the needs of human life.

The development of quality human resources is the task of educational institutions (Rahmi, 2010). Education in general is always associated with the school system, from the level of Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education level, Secondary Education level, and Higher Education level. While education can actually be interpreted broadly, so that education can last a lifetime, can be carried out in all places; at home, in the community, in the social environment, in places of training, including at school (Redja, 2002). This broad educational paradigm is supported by romantic humanists, one of which is Carl Roger, who argues that the purpose of education is the same as the purpose of life itself, not limited, contained in every learning experience, and growth of human learners.

Understanding education in a broad sense intrinsically implies that every human being is obliged to get education in an effort to prepare himself to face life in the present and in the future. In economic development and even in the development of civilization, education is an investment (human capital investment). A nation that invests in education will indeed not get results in a short period of time. However, the government is obliged to invest in human capital through education, because it is with education that a nation will be able to build the progress of its civilization (Ford, 2016). The important meaning of investment in human capital is that the process of knowledge and skills through education is not a mere form of consumption, but is an investment.

Indonesia has paid quite good attention to the education sector of its citizens since the independence era, normatively we can find it in the 1945 Constitution, Article 31 Paragraph (1) which states that every citizen has the right to education. It is also continued in Paragraph (2) which states that every citizen is obliged to attend Basic Education and the government is obliged to pay for it. With the mandate of this constitution, it expressly obliges the government to provide opportunities and access to education for all its citizens, there is no reason because of being poor, the nation's children do not get their social rights in the field of education, at least at the basic education level, namely at school level, Elementary and Junior High School (Manan, 2015).

At the empirical level, we can always find the phenomenon of educational equality which is paradoxical between facts and expectations. Although the various policies that have been taken by the government in implementing the mandate of the 1945 Constitution are related to education, in practice there are always citizens who do not have access and opportunities to enjoy education, for example the high dropout rate, and other aspects (Kulyawan, 2015). Of course, this phenomenon is not only an error in government policy, but the phenomenon can occur due to various aspects (complexity) of the problems that surround it (Liani, 2019).

Indonesia is still facing a fairly high dropout rate. Data for 2020 of all school-age children in Indonesia is 53 million children, 6%, namely 4, 336, 503 children have dropped out of school, this was conveyed by the Director of Education and Religion of the Ministry of National Development Planning/Bappenas, Amich Alhumami, in a video conference, Wednesday 15 July 2020, as follows:

*"West Nusa Tenggara as one of the provinces in Indonesia, is also experiencing various problems in developing its human resources through education. One of the problems that will be explored in depth in this research is related to the dropout rate and the various problems that cause this phenomenon to occur."*

Based on data from the Department of Education and Culture in NTB, one data stated, the dropout rate for elementary, junior high, high school / vocational school for the 2019/2020 school year was still quite large. For the elementary school level, the dropout rate reached 344 people, the junior high school level was 43 people, the vocational level was 249 people, the high school level was 47 people.

The phenomenon of dropping out of school in Indonesia, especially in the Province of West Nusa Tenggara, is certainly caused by various factors, and is also based on various community reasons according to the cultural values that apply to each community group. The problem of children dropping out of school can be presumed not to be caused by a single factor such as poverty, but is a complex problem. In order to understand the problem of school dropouts in depth, it is necessary to

conduct serious research, so that various factors can be found that cause this to happen, and also understand the underlying background. Thus, this research is done to analyse the complexity of the school dropout's phenomenon in West Lombok Regency, West Nusa Tenggara Province, Indonesia to figure out the implications of this social crisis on the future of children in this area.

## 2. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method (Arikunto, 2002; Riyanto, 2003; Moleong, 2012). The use of qualitative methods is intended to reveal, analyse, and describe various factors that cause children to drop out of school in West Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. Data was collected through observation at the research site, interviews, and documentation. Determination of informants is done purposively. Primary data were obtained from the head of the hamlet, parents of children who dropped out of school, brothers or sisters of children who had dropped out of school, children who had dropped out of school, principals, teachers, heads of the education and culture office. Determination of informants like this aims to obtain adequate information about the various factors that cause children to drop out of school. The main instrument used was the researcher himself, and was assisted by a recording device used during interviews, a camera to take pictures, and field notes. To analyse, the researchers implemented Miles & Huberman's (1994) model of qualitative data analysis comprising data reduction, data display, and verification.

## 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1. Self-Destruction: Inferiority, Laziness, and Closeness

The low level of education of children in general caused by many factors, such as not having access to education because they live far away in the interior or in the mountains where there are no schools. This condition certainly has negative implications for the children. As a consequence, the opportunity to socialize with peers becomes hampered which impacts on the students' emotional maturity that might also be hampered (Orfield, 2014). Likewise, children who drop out of school can have negative implications for the intellectual and mental spiritual development of the children concerned (Suresh et al., 2017). In connection with this study, after observations were made at the research site, data were found for various implications for children as a result of dropping out of school, such as feeling inferior when meeting their educated peers, indicated by behaviour that tends to avoid, compared to meeting and chatting as usual. done with friends who are both not in school.

Empirical data found at the research location are supported by the explanations of the informants obtained through related interviews with, what is the negative impact on children who drop out of school in the hamlet concerned. Most of the informants gave almost the same picture, although there were differences in views but they were not significant. A community leader in Labuan Poh Hamlet explained that, children who have dropped out of school usually work in the garden to help their parents, the income is only to meet their daily needs. When interviewed at the research location, the informant IM.II.1 gave the following information.

*"Yes, those whose parents own land, usually work to help their parents in the garden. If you don't have one, you will be unemployed. There are also like my neighbour who works odd jobs helping people grow cucumbers in the garden, and helping builders and so on."*

Based on this explanation, it explicitly illustrates that children dropping out of school have negative implications for themselves. Children who drop out of school at the elementary school and junior high school levels tend to be unemployed, because apart from being too young, they also don't have the skills they have, besides that of course they also don't have a diploma as a formal requirement to develop themselves more (Ramsdal et al., 2013). In addition to being unemployed, as an implication, children who drop out of school also become inferior in relationships (Nurhidayah et al., 2017). In daily interactions, children who are still in school usually gather in the afternoon while playing with their

peers, meanwhile children who have dropped out of school tend to avoid because they feel inferior to their situation. Psychologically, this certainly causes children's emotional maturity to be hampered as an implication of dropping out of school.

A similar opinion regarding the implications of children dropping out of school was conveyed by another resource person, who explained that apart from being unemployed, there are also those who work odd jobs such as being a construction worker, helping people work in the garden, and some just playing games with their friends. Both of them did not go to school, or their friends who had finished elementary school did not continue to junior high school, and also those who had graduated from junior high school but did not continue to high school level. The following is a statement from informant IM.II.2:

*"There are no activities, yes, there are those who play around every day, sometimes making trouble and making noise, there are also those who are asked to cooperate with their parents but do odd jobs, such as helping people with construction work and etc."*

As explained by the two sources, it can be identified the negative implications of the phenomenon of children dropping out of school; such as being unemployed, because they do not have the skills to get a decent job, besides that these children are still children and are not yet of working age (). Naturally, children are still happy with playing activities, and of course also going to school for children who are still lucky not to drop out of school. Furthermore, the explanation given by the child who dropped out of school due to the lack of transportation to go to school at a junior high school which is located quite far from his home in Labuan Poh Hamlet, illustrates that the child becomes lazy, his motivation is lost to develop himself, of course also his hopes are not clear, what he will do to look into his future. When asked about the activities he did after deciding to quit school in grade 3 of junior high school, the person concerned as an IM.II.3 informant gave the following answer.

*"There is nothing to do, sir, at home sometimes I am told to help neighbours grow vegetables in their gardens. They are given a modest wage; the money is for their parents to buy fish to eat."*

### **3.2. Social-Destruction: Unemployment, social problems, and poverty**

The negative implications experienced by children dropping out of school create an unbroken circle of social problems. When they have to become unemployed at a young age, you can imagine how they face it in his life when it was time to get married. As a child who grew up in a poor family, did not receive a good education, and even dropped out of school, it is certain that it will be difficult to get out of the cycle of poverty, when he has to struggle to build his household in the future (Peraita & Pastor, 2000). The data obtained during interviews with different informants are also in line with the explanations of the previous informants. Broadly speaking, a community leader from Nusa Sari Hamlet illustrates that the negative impact for children who drop out of school is that it is difficult for them to get good jobs, because the current job vacancies require workers who have certain diplomas, plus skill requirements. It is still considered lucky if children drop out of school, the condition of their parents still having plantation land, so they can still carry out their activities by helping their parents work in the garden, as farmers. The following is the statement of the informant IM.II.3 when interviewed.

*"My younger siblings both quit school in grades 4 and 5 of elementary school. I took them to the garden to help their parents with farming, and even then, if they wanted to, if they didn't want to, just go to the family's house to play. You can't apply for a job, because you don't have a diploma, now you have to have a high school diploma at least to apply for a job. My younger siblings did not finish elementary school, so they became unemployed, still grateful for not embarrassing their parents, such as causing trouble, for example, never doing things like that."*

If we look at the statements of the informants, it is quite clear that the impact of the phenomenon of children dropping out of school tends to be negative, not a single statement from the informants is found that explains that there is a positive impact on the phenomenon of children dropping out of school. The negative impact caused by these school dropouts is not only felt by the children who experience it individually, but also by the family and the surrounding community. In the long term the

negative implications caused by children dropping out of school can affect the surrounding environment such as unemployment, crime, poverty, and of course juvenile delinquency.

In line with the information obtained from previous informants, an informant who is a community leader in Nusa Sari Hamlet also gave a lengthy explanation when asked about the impact of children dropping out of school on the child, his family, and the community. Further explanation is given as follows. What is certain is that these children become unemployed, because finding work is difficult, especially if they do not have a diploma. If the children who experience it directly usually feel inferior to their peers who are still in school. An interview result reported the following information.

*"We can imagine what it will be like in the future, if they marry later, it will definitely create a new poor family, because they come from children who did not finish school whose families are also poor, then get married and have children, so it is like a cycle of poverty that never ends."* (August 29, 2021).

The inheritance of the same social class tends to occur as an implication of children who drop out of school. Parents who have never been to school think it's natural for their children to make the decision to drop out of school prematurely (Aina, 2013). From the results of observations, interviews and documentation, it is very clear that families who are economically poor, and do not have concern for education, have a tendency for their children to not go to school or drop out of school. As a result, these children do not have the knowledge or skills to find decent jobs, eventually become unemployed, or work odd jobs as farm laborers, construction workers and so on. It can be ascertained that economically the out-of-school children will still have the social status of poor children (Saroni, 2011). According to theory of class reproduction initiated by Pierre Bourdieu, it essentially explains that families from certain classes tend to pass on their social class as a special inheritance to the next generation.

Bourdieu's theory of class reproduction is based on three concepts, namely; habitus (habits, character), capital (capital), and field (domain). Habitus is indeed not enough to be interpreted as a person's habit or character, but also to be interpreted as a person's history that has been internalized continuously. In the context of this research, class reproduction by referring to the concept of habitus as a habit or habit that occurs continuously, or in a different meaning, namely habitus as a historical process that lasts a long time, really occurs in the problem of children who drop out of school. Children who drop out of school are in habitus, or habits in families who come from families that do not attach importance to the meaning of education.

Based on the history that has been entrenched in families who have dropped out of school, it does happen to parents who are not in school, from older siblings and friends around them who also consider dropping out of school as something normal. Meanwhile, families who consider the importance of education, unconsciously also pass the same habitus to their children. Thus, for children who come from families whose character, or from a historical perspective, considers it important to go to school, none of their children will drop out of school.

Based on the analysis of the Bourdieu class reproduction theory based on concepts other than habitus, it can also be analysed based on the concept of capital (capital). Capital according to Bourdieu is not defined only in the form of economic capital, but is grouped into four types of capital; namely economic capital, cultural capital, symbolic capital, and social capital. The four types of capital are interrelated with each other, even mutual negation can occur, for example the achievement of one capital can reduce or eliminate other capital or vice versa.

Overall capital is related to habitus, ownership of economic capital for example can affect a person's habitus. In relation to the problem of children dropping out of school, it can be ascertained also because it is influenced by low capital ownership in families whose children have dropped out of school (Turner, 2012). Families who work as cultivators in gardens whose land is owned by the government, earn very low incomes, and only enough to survive for their families. Such families do not have sufficient economic capital to pay for their children's schooling, even at the basic education level. In the absence of economic capital, the struggle to obtain other capital is also incompetent, such as

cultural capital, one of which includes education, as well as other capital, namely symbolic capital and social capital.

In line with the analysis based on concepts, habitus, and capital, empirical facts about children dropping out of school can also be discussed based on the concept of field (arena), which can be interpreted as an arena where habitus struggles with other habitus. The struggle between habitus is carried out to fight over; resources, recognition, prestige, and so on (Yusuf, 2011). Facts are found in the arena or field where the out-of-school children and their families struggle to obtain economic and other capital, of course, they are always on the periphery. The good fact is that many families who are in the same field are still able to seize various capitals, through economic capital, so that they are still able to pass on good habits to their children, so they can survive and not drop out of school.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion of research results using relevant theories, and relevant research results, several conclusions can be put forward according to the research focus as follows. The implications of the phenomenon of children dropping out of school based on the results of this study are quite broad, not only having a negative impact on children who experience it, but also having a negative impact on families, and society. Negative implications for children such as for example; inferior in relationships, children become lazy, less open to develop themselves. It also has implications for families and communities such as; children become unemployed, work odd jobs, create problems in society, produce new poor families. The implications of dropping out of school for the child's future are very crucial, therefore the parties who have the obligation to solve the problem should be approached thoroughly from various perspectives, so that the right formulation can be found to handle it with the right policy as well. This study needs follow ups. The future researchers can explore the solutions to reduce the numbers of dropout students in West Nusa Tenggara.

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