



The Phenomenon of School Dropouts in the Pujut, Mandalika SEZ: An Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis from the Perspective of Education Actors and Society

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Abstract

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The development of the Mandalika Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Pujut district, while driving economic growth, has raised concerns about declining school interest and high dropout rates among local students. This qualitative study, employing interpretive phenomenological methods, explores the experiences and perceptions of education actors, including the vice principal for student affairs, counseling guidance teachers, Mongge madrasah teachers, and the Head of Sukadana Village, to understand the underlying factors. Findings reveal economic constraints as a primary cause of dropout, with many students from low-income families unable to afford education. Early marriage, particularly among female students, is another significant factor influenced by economic, social, and cultural pressures. Additionally, broken homes, unsupportive social environments, the negative influence of social media, and a lack of motivation contribute to the problem. Schools have responded with counseling, parental engagement, and restrictions on mobile phone use. However, deeper issues like early marriage and broken homes necessitate broader interventions involving government policies and socio-cultural change. This research illuminates the complexity of school dropout in the Mandalika SEZ and highlights the need for a comprehensive approach engaging all stakeholders to ensure educational access and success for all students.



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INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of dropping out of school is a complex problem that significantly impacts individuals and society[1]. In Islam, studying knowledge is an obligation for every Muslim, both men, and women, and is also the most important part of human life [2]. The Prophet PBUH said, "Seeking knowledge is mandatory for every Muslim." (HR. Ibn Majah). This hadith emphasizes the importance of education in Islam, not only for worldly interests but also for the hereafter. In Islam, the obligation to study knowledge is not only mandatory in exploring religious knowledge but also in general sciences such as mathematics, astronomy, and so on[3]. This knowledge can generally be obtained in formal schools. Dropping out of school means ignoring this obligation and can hinder the development of one's potential that Allah SWT has bestowed. In addition, education also plays an important role in improving the quality of life, both individually and in society[4]. Thus, dropping out of school can worsen the community's socio-economic conditions and hinder the people's progress.

Research in various parts of the world shows that school dropout is a global problem that has a significant negative impact on individuals and society[5]. Some of the negative effects of dropping out of school include poverty caused by individuals who drop out of school tend to have lower incomes and are more vulnerable to poverty and other social problems as a result of low-quality education. Research also shows that dropping out of school can hinder a country's economic development[6]. More educated individuals tend to be more productive and innovative, which can drive economic growth. Therefore, overcoming the problem of dropping out of school is an important investment for the future of a nation.

Sukadana Pujut Village is located in the Mandalika Special Economic Zone (SEZ). Mandalika SEZ is an area that is experiencing rapid development, especially in the tourism sector [7]. Special development in this area aims to improve the economy and welfare of the local community [8]. However, rapid development can also have various social impacts, including changes in people's values, norms, and expectations. In the Mandalika Special Economic Zone (SEZ), which is experiencing rapid development, the issue of dropping out of school is a special concern because it can hinder the potential of human resources and economic development in this area. This research aims to deeply understand the reasons behind the decision to drop out of school in the Mandalika SEZ through *interpretative phenomenological analysis* (IPA). The issue of dropping out of school is a special concern because it can hinder the potential of human resources and sustainable development in the Mandalika SEZ. Dropouts are not only detrimental to the individual concerned but also have an impact on the family, society, and overall economic development. This research is important because it can provide a deeper understanding of the factors that affect the decision to drop out of school in the Mandalika SEZ. By understanding these factors, more effective and targeted interventions can be developed to overcome

the problem of school dropouts so that they can maximize the potential of human resources in the Mandalika SEZ and support sustainable development. In addition, this research can also contribute to developing education policies that are more responsive to the needs and challenges faced by communities in rapidly developing areas such as the Mandalika SEZ. Thus, this research is locally relevant and has broader implications for creating educational policies and practices in Indonesia.

Previous research on school dropouts in Indonesia focused on the national or urban level [9], with little research discussing this phenomenon in rural areas or special areas such as the Mandalika SEZ in depth. This study fills this gap by providing a more comprehensive understanding of the specific factors that affect school dropouts in the area. This research uses an interpretive phenomenological approach, allowing an in-depth knowledge of the experiences and perceptions of education actors related to school dropouts. This approach provides rich and nuanced insights into the factors that cause dropouts, going beyond statistical data alone. The development of the Mandalika SEZ significantly impacts the socio-economic conditions of the local community, including the education sector. This study examines how the socio-economic changes that occur due to the development of the Mandalika SEZ contribute to the phenomenon of school dropouts so that it can provide relevant policy recommendations. The findings of this study can provide valuable information for education policymakers to design targeted programs and interventions to overcome the problem of school dropouts in the Mandalika SEZ. By understanding the root of the problem in depth, it is hoped that the resulting policies can be more effective and sustainable. This research involves the active participation of education actors and local communities to increase their awareness and understanding of the problem of dropping out of school. Thus, this research generates new knowledge and contributes to community empowerment in overcoming educational problems.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with the interpretive phenomenology (IPA) method [10]. Science was chosen because it is suitable for understanding the subjective experience of individuals, in this case, the phenomenon of dropping out of school. With this approach, researchers can explore deep meanings from informants' perspectives and interpret how the experience shapes their understanding of the phenomenon.

The participants in this study are four education observers in Pujut District, Mandalika SEZ, namely the vice principal for student affairs and the Guidance and Counseling Teacher at SMKN 1 Pujut, who provide a perspective from the school regarding the factors that cause school dropout and the efforts that the school has made to overcome it; Teachers at Madrasah Mongge and education observers in Sukadana Village who provide perspectives from religious leaders and educators regarding the factors that cause school dropouts, especially in the madrasah environment, as well as the efforts made to prevent

and overcome them; and the Head of Sukadana Village who provided a perspective from the village regarding the socio-economic conditions of the community, the factors that cause school dropouts observed at the village level, as well as the programs that the village has carried out to overcome these problems.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews (*in-depth interviews*) with the three informants. Interviews are conducted in a semi-structured manner using pre-prepared interview guidelines. The interview guidelines include open-ended questions that allow the informant to explore their experiences and perceptions in depth. The analysis steps in this study include transcription of interviews conducted verbatim, repeated transcription reading to understand the data and identify emerging themes, theme grouping, and pattern search. Finally, conclusions are drawn based on the patterns found and the interpretation of the researcher [11].

To ensure the validity and reliability of the research, several strategies will be used, including triangulation of data collected from various sources, such as interviews with participants, observations, and related documents[12]; *Member Checking* or verifying the results of the analysis with participants to ensure the researcher's interpretation is by their experience[13]; and *Peer Debriefing*, i.e., discussing the results of the study with other researchers to get feedback and alternative views[14].

The study has adhered to the principles of research ethics, including *informed consent*, confidentiality, and protection of participants from potential risks. Participants were provided complete information about the study's objectives, procedures, and potential benefits and risks before participating.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Factors Causing School Dropout

This study reveals that the factors that cause school dropouts in Mandalika SEZ, especially Pujut District, are a complex combination of economic, social, and cultural problems. Based on the results of interviews with three key informants, namely the Head of Sukadana Village, Ustaz Sukanti (Teacher at Madrasah Mongge), and the Deputy Principal for Student Affairs of SMKN 1 Pujut, the factors that caused the dropout were

1. Early Marriage

Data obtained from Ustaz Sukanti shows that most of the cases of dropping out of school, especially women, are caused by early marriage or marriage at school age. He stated, "In Madrasah Mongge itself, especially for Aliyah children (at the high school level), most students drop out of school because they are married." Ustaz Sukanti also revealed a strong influence from peers in encouraging early marriage among Madrasah Mongge students. When a student decides to get married, this triggers a chain reaction among his friends, who consider marriage an option. This phenomenon is

exacerbated by their limited view of the future, where they feel that the only option after graduating from school is to return to farming. He stated, "The influence of the peer environment is quite large. When one child gets married, his friends are often affected and think about getting married too, especially if they feel that the future after graduating from school will only return to being a farmer".

The finding that early marriage also occurs at the vocational high school level, as seen at SMKN 1 Pujut, adds to the complexity of this problem. According to the student statement, "Every month there is, "last week only two students got married." This statement shows that child marriage while still in school occurs in the area, and this makes the child not continue his schooling.

The Village Head also expressed the same thing. He explained that "Early marriage is also a factor, especially for girls. Early marriage has been happening for the last 4 years, and the influence of digitalization and the change of the times is very big in this regard.

The phenomenon of early marriage among students, especially female students, has become the dominant factor in causing school dropouts in Indonesia. These findings align with research by Rumble et al. (2018), which revealed that early marriage significantly impacts girls' education levels in developing countries [15]. It also indicates a gender disparity in the context of education and early marriage, where girls tend to be more vulnerable to the risk of dropping out of school due to early marriage. This phenomenon impacts the individuals involved and has long-term implications for society's social and economic development.

Factors contributing to early marriage among students include economic aspects, social environment, and social media influence. Research by Efevbera et al. [16] shows that poverty and limited access to quality education are often the main drivers of early marriage practices. In the Indonesian context, economic factors can play a dual role: on the one hand, families may view early marriage as a solution to reduce the financial burden, while on the other hand, economic limitations may limit access to education and information that can prevent early marriage. The social environment, including cultural norms and societal expectations, also plays an important role in perpetuating this practice. Meanwhile, the influence of social media is a new factor that needs to be considered, considering its role in shaping adolescents' perceptions and behaviors toward romantic relationships and marriage.

The result shows that early marriage is not only a problem faced by high school students but also those pursuing vocational education. The implications of these findings are significant, considering that vocational education is designed to prepare students for the workforce. Early marriage

can interrupt the vocational education and training process, hindering an individual's future career prospects and economic independence. Furthermore, this can impact the government's efforts to improve the quality of human resources and national economic competitiveness.

2. Family Economy

Economic factors have been identified as the main cause of dropouts at SMKN 1 Pujut, with many students coming from low-income families and some even being the backbone of the family. As conveyed by the Vice President for Student Affairs at SMKN 1 Pujut, "many of us find that what is called they drop out of school because of the cost factor of their parents who cannot afford it."

This finding is in line with the research of Gubbels et al. [17], which shows that household poverty significantly impacts school dropout rates in developing countries. Data from the Vice President for Student Affairs reveals that economic problems in the Southern region are the dominant factor in causing school dropouts, with many cases related to *family-broken homes*. Student dropout indicates a complex relationship between economic conditions, family structure, and educational continuity. This phenomenon not only impacts individual students but also has long-term implications for the cycle of poverty and the socio-economic development of society.

The statement of the Head of Sukadana Village strengthened the finding that economic factors are the main cause of school dropouts in the region. When asked about the factors that cause many children in his village to drop out of school, he replied, "A small part is due to employment factors, but the biggest factor is still economic and self-motivation. For college, the cost factor is indeed the main obstacle, even though there are scholarship programs such as Bidikmisi". From his statement, the village head revealed that economic factors and self-motivation are the main causes of dropping out of school in his village. Although there are several cases of dropping out of school due to employment factors, the number is relatively small compared to those caused by economic factors and self-motivation. He also highlighted that tuition fees are the main obstacle for some villagers to continue their education to a higher level, despite scholarship programs such as Bidikmisi.

The Head of Sukadana Village also added that the children who dropped out of school wanted to continue their schooling, but economic factors made them unable to do so. The village chief states, "Sometimes children want to go to school, but their parents are not economically able." From his statement, some parents have difficulty financing their children's education, which reflects structural challenges in the education system and the economy. A study by Dachi and Garrett [18] underlines that the direct and indirect costs of education are often an unbearable burden for low-income families, causing children to be forced to leave school. This situation

shows the gap between educational aspirations and many families' economic realities. Furthermore, this indicates the need for policy interventions that holistically focus on education, poverty alleviation, and family economic empowerment.

The phenomenon of students who are the backbone of the family adds to the complexity of the problem of dropping out of school. This condition reflects the dilemma faced by many adolescents from low-income families, where they must choose between continuing their education or meeting the family's economic needs. Gubbels et al. [17] highlight that child labor and adolescent participation in the informal economy are often survival strategies for low-income families but with negative consequences for the education and prospects of those children. This situation requires policies and programs that can bridge the short-term economic needs of families with long-term investment in education. Interventions such as conditional cash assistance programs or comprehensive scholarship schemes may need to be considered to help families keep their children in school while reducing economic pressures.

Familial prevalence of *broken homes* as a factor that contributes to school dropouts, as revealed by the Vice President for Student Affairs, adds a social dimension to this problem. Dachi and Garrett [18] emphasized that family structure and household dynamics significantly influence children's educational participation and achievement. In the context of *a family-broken home*, emotional and financial instability can increase the risk of dropping out of school. These findings show the need for a more holistic approach to dealing with school dropouts, which focuses on economic aspects and considers psychosocial factors and family support. Intervention programs that combine psychological support, family counseling, and economic empowerment may be more effective in addressing the complexity of this problem.

3. Broken Home

The study results show that broken home is the main cause of school dropout among male students at Madrasah Mongge and are one of the causing factors at SMKN 1 Pujut. As conveyed by the Vice President for Student Affairs:

"What I see is the economy, indeed, in the South, many children drop out of school because of the existence of their parents, there are still many broken homes, many broken homes. His family separated, his parents separated, his name was also fathers who married again, then separated from his wife and his children were sacrificed. That's a lot".

From this statement, the Vice President for Student Affairs of SMKN 1 Pujut revealed that many cases of dropping out of school were caused by

family conditions that were not harmonious or *broken homes*. Parental divorce and complex family dynamics, such as separation and remarriage, have a significant impact on children. Children who fall victim to these situations are often neglected and under-supported, both emotionally and financially, affecting their motivation and ability to continue their education.

International research has shown a strong link between disharmonious families and an increased dropout risk. Children from the family *broken homes* tend to experience emotional difficulties, behavioral problems, and low academic achievement, all of which can contribute to the decision to drop out of school [19]. In addition, parental divorce can also cause family economic instability, which can be a financial obstacle for children to continue their education [20].

These findings also align with research conducted by Zuilkowski et al. [21] in Kenya, which revealed that family structure, including parental absenteeism, significantly impacts the risk of dropping out of school. In the context of Madrasah Mongge, the condition of broken homes causes a lack of support and supervision of children's education. A broken home family creates an environment that is less conducive to students' academic development, where the absence of a stable parental figure can reduce the motivation and emotional support needed to undergo the educational process. This phenomenon has a particularly impactful impact on male students, who may feel more pressured to take on the role of breadwinner or face emotional challenges without adequate guidance.

The impact remains significant at SMKN 1 Pujut, although *broken home*, Not the dominant factors such as the economy and early marriage. The Vice President for Student Affairs underscores the complexity of this situation, where parental divorce and remarriage often result in children becoming victims. This finding is in line with the findings of Daniel et al. [22], which examines the impact of family transition on adolescents' well-being and academic achievement. They found that changes in family structure, especially those involving conflict and instability, can interfere with a child's socio-emotional and educational development. In the context of SMKN 1 Pujut, the situation in which "the child is sacrificed" due to the separation of parents reflects how complex family dynamics can directly affect the continuity of student education.

The impact of *broken homes* Against dropping out of school may be more complex than it seems. Zuilkowski et al. [21] highlight that parental absences impact emotional support and practical aspects such as education financing and school-related decision-making. In the case of Madrasah Mongge and SMKN 1 Pujut, a lack of supervision can result in decreased school attendance, increasing the risk of dropping out. In addition, household instability can create psychological stress that interferes with students'

concentration and motivation to study. It is important to note that although *broken homes* affect both male and female students, the impact may differ by gender, with traditional social expectations and gender roles that may exacerbate the situation for male students in some contexts."

4. Lack of Learning Motivation and Negative Influence of Social Media

The results showed that students' lack of motivation to learn and the negative influence of social media, especially uncontrolled mobile phone use, became significant factors that exacerbated the problem of dropping out of school. This finding aligns with research by Linda et al. [23], which revealed that excessive smartphone use negatively correlated with academic achievement and students' psychological well-being. In Madrasah Mongge and SMKN 1 Pujut, this phenomenon manifests in various forms, including students' difficulty getting up early and absenteeism at school. Ustaz Sukanti further highlighted the negative impact of mobile phone use on student behavior, especially in the context of promiscuity and early marriage. This situation reflects the complexity of the challenges faced by educational institutions in the digital era, where technology that is supposed to support learning can become a significant barrier to academic success if not managed properly.

The influence of social media and excessive use of mobile phones on student's motivation to learn is an increasingly prominent phenomenon in contemporary education. Research by Sohn et al. [24] identified a link between smartphone addiction, decreased academic performance, and sleep disturbances in adolescents. In the case of SMKN 1 Pujut, students' difficulty waking up early due to excessive use of mobile phones at night directly impacts their school attendance. These findings show how digital habits can disrupt daily routines and jeopardize the continuity of students' education. Furthermore, this phenomenon not only affects the physical aspect of school attendance but can also reduce the quality of student participation and engagement in the learning process, even when they are physically present in class.

Ustaz Sukanti's statement on the relationship between mobile phone use, promiscuity, and early marriage underscores the wider social impact of digital technology on the lives of adolescents. Linda et al. [23] emphasize that excessive smartphone use can lead to social isolation and decrease interpersonal communication skills, affecting healthy social relationships. In the context of Madrasah Mongge and SMKN 1 Pujut, this can mean that students are more vulnerable to negative influences and peer pressure mediated by technology, including in terms of association and the decision to marry early. This phenomenon demonstrates the need for a holistic approach to addressing the problem of school dropouts, which not only focuses on

academic aspects but also considers social and technological factors that affect students' lives outside of school.

The Village Head conveyed the same thing in addition to some children who drop out of school due to the ability of parents who are not economically able. Some do because the main factor is the need for more motivation from their children who do not want to continue school. As stated by the Village Head, "On the contrary, parents are able, but children who do not want to go to school because of lack of motivation." From his statement, the village head found that the dropout factor was not only due to economic difficulties but also because of the lack of motivation of children to complete their schooling.

The results of this study show that the factors that cause school dropouts in the Mandalika SEZ align with previous studies conducted at the international and national levels. Economic factors, early marriage, broken homes, and lack of motivation to study are the main factors that contribute to the high dropout rate in this area. These findings are in line with research conducted by Wijana [19], which shows that the main factors that cause students to drop out of school in Lombok are early marriage, poverty, low child motivation, lack of parental support, low IQ of children (unable to follow lessons), and also social influence factors. These findings confirm that the problem of school dropouts in the Mandalika SEZ is not an isolated phenomenon but reflects a broader pattern identified in various contexts. These findings demonstrate the need for a comprehensive and sustainable approach to addressing this issue, considering multiple interrelated factors.

This economic factor is the main cause of adolescents dropping out of school. As per the research conducted by Sarker et al. [25], the cost of education, including schooling, textbooks, uniforms, and transportation, can be a heavy financial burden for low-income families, so some choose to work to meet the needs of families. These findings emphasize the importance of policies and programs to reduce the economic burden of education for low-income families. This can include more comprehensive financial aid programs, such as scholarships covering tuition fees and living expenses, and programs to increase the family's overall income. Developing a more flexible education system, which allows students to work part-time without leaving school entirely, is a long-term solution.

However, several interesting findings are specific to the context of the Mandalika SEZ. The influence of the Mandalika SEZ's development on the community's socio-cultural changes, especially related to early marriage and the use of social media, is a factor that needs more attention. This result is in line with research conducted by Sekine and Hodgkin [26], which shows that poverty is the main factor causing school dropouts and is also a driving factor for child marriage because it is considered one of the ways to reduce the economic burden or gain financial security. They also found that in some

remote areas, the social and cultural norms that favor child marriage are stronger, so many girls are married at a young age. This cultural aspect also happens in Central Lombok, where the culture "*MERARIK KODEQ*" or getting married when they are still children when the child has not reached adulthood, which is generally still of school age, is considered to affect school dropouts in the area [26].

Countermeasures

From the interviews conducted, we also found the main themes related to the countermeasures sought by the school and the village government to overcome this school dropout problem, namely:

1. Socialization and Motivation

Efforts to socialize and provide motivation about the importance of education carried out by the village government and Madrasah Mongge are important steps in overcoming the problem of school dropouts.

The village government has tried its best to provide non-material assistance to children in their villages so that they do not drop out of school by providing motivation and socializing the impact of dropping out of school and its benefits if they can continue school. As stated by the Village Head, "There is a budget to collect them and provide motivation. We also explain the consequences of not going to school and the benefits of continuing school. The result depends on them". The village head also stated that his party motivates the children to go to school at the nearest Madrasah that does not burden them with fees or is free. In addition to encouraging them to participate in formal education, the village encourages teenagers there to participate in non-formal education, such as the United Kingdom language program. The goal is for the teenagers there to have United Kingdom language skills to work in the Mandalika SEZ, which requires United Kingdom language skills. The Village Head states, "We have motivated those who dropped out of school to continue to Tsanawiyah or Aliyah, free. We also have a program to teach the United Kingdom because many job vacancies in the Mandalika SEZ require English language skills."

SMKN 1 Pujut also stated that they always provide motivation and guidance so that students can continue school and not be affected by the environment that causes them to drop out. As stated by the school, "We provide motivation and guidance both at home and at school." The guidance and motivation are carried out so that students have a good mindset to avoid getting married early and other problems that can cause them to drop out of school. The importance of this motivation is felt so that students can be excited to continue school and optimize their potential; as he stated, "Yes, we are here, there is a team, there is a BK motivation team. Now, BK has changed its orientation, sir. In the past, BK was only for students with problems; now it is not."

This approach is in line with Mu'allimah's findings [27], which underscores the importance of the role of communities and educational institutions in raising awareness of the value of education in the community. By involving students and parents in the socialization process, the school and the village government try to create an environment that supports the sustainability of education. These efforts aim not only to increase school participation rates but also to build a collective understanding of how education can be a means to improve the quality of life and prospects. However, the effectiveness of this socialization program depends largely on the extent to which the messages conveyed can be internalized and applied by students and parents in their daily lives.

Despite the school's socialization and motivational efforts, the need for more support from parents, especially in monitoring mobile phone use and ensuring children's attendance at school on time, is a significant challenge. Mu'allimah [27] emphasizes that parental involvement in children's education is key to academic success. Misalignment between school efforts and home practices can reduce the effectiveness of the motivation program conducted. Uncontrolled use of mobile phones at home, for example, can interfere with students' sleep patterns and study concentration, affecting their attendance and performance at school. This situation demonstrates the need for a more comprehensive and collaborative approach between schools and families in addressing contemporary educational challenges, where technology plays an increasingly significant role in students' lives.

A more integrated strategy involving all stakeholders is needed to increase the effectiveness of socialization and motivation programs. Mu'allimah [27] suggested the importance of building strong partnerships between schools, families, and communities in supporting children's education. In the context of Madrasah Mongge, this can involve the development of educational programs for parents about the importance of supervising the use of technology and managing children's time. Schools may consider holding regular workshops or counseling sessions focusing on the importance of general education and providing practical strategies for parents to support their child's learning at home. In addition, establishing a parent support group or mentor system can facilitate the exchange of experiences and strategies between families in overcoming educational challenges. Strengthening the synergy between school efforts and family support, socialization, and motivation programs can significantly and sustainably reduce the dropout rate.

2. Financial and Skills Aid Program

The Vice President of Student Affairs of SMKN 1 Pujut explained that the school has a policy to waive BPP (Education Implementation Fee) fees for students who come from underprivileged families, which is marked by the

ownership of PKH (Family Hope Program) and PIP (Smart Indonesia Program) cards. This policy has been implemented for almost 4 years and shows the school's commitment to helping students from underprivileged families to continue their education without being burdened by tuition fees. As stated, "If we have a school policy, all children who have a PKH card, who get a PKH card, their parents get PKH, then PIP, and so on, we will free the BPP. We have been doing it for almost 4 years, it is all free".

Financial aid programs provided by schools to underprivileged students, such as tuition fee waivers and scholarships, are an important step in overcoming economic barriers to access to education. This initiative aligns with the findings of Wahyuni and Reswita [28], which emphasize the importance of financial support in increasing educational participation among low-income families. By eliminating or reducing the burden of education costs, schools open opportunities for students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds to stay in school. This kind of program not only helps reduce the dropout rate but also can increase students' motivation to learn by reducing the financial pressure their families face. However, the effectiveness of these financial aid programs needs to be supported by targeted and sustainable disbursement mechanisms to ensure a positive long-term impact on student participation and academic achievement.

Sukadana Village's initiative to hold a United Kingdom language training program shows a proactive approach to overcoming the problem of dropping out of school while improving the work skills of the younger generation. This finding aligns with Wahyuni and Reswita's research [28], highlighting the importance of developing skills relevant to the job market's needs to reduce dropouts. Considering job opportunities in the Mandalika SEZ that require United Kingdom language skills, the program provides educational alternatives for those who drop out of school and improves the community's economic prospects. The village chief's efforts in motivating school dropouts to continue their education through formal and non-formal channels reflect a comprehensive understanding of the importance of continuing education. This approach combines efforts to prevent dropouts with providing a second chance for those who have left the formal education system.

The village head's awareness of the economic potential of the Mandalika SEZ and its efforts to equip residents with relevant skills shows a strategic approach to developing local human resources. Wahyuni and Reswita [28] emphasize the importance of aligning education and training programs with the needs of the local job market to increase the relevance and attractiveness of education for adolescents. By focusing on United Kingdom language training, Sukadana Village not only improves the ability of its citizens to participate in the tourism economy but also opens up opportunities for those

who drop out of school to find alternative paths to economic independence. This approach reflects an understanding that addressing school dropouts requires solutions beyond the formal education system and integrating aspects of community economic development. Thus, Sukadana Village's efforts aim to reduce the dropout rate and improve the young generation's quality of life and prospects.

The English language training program organized by the village shows adaptive efforts to improve human resources quality during tourism development in the Mandalika SEZ. This initiative reflects an awareness of the importance of aligning education with the needs of the local job market. This kind of program not only has the potential to reduce the dropout rate by increasing learning motivation and job prospects but can also help local communities to better take advantage of the economic opportunities that arise from the development of the Mandalika SEZ. However, it is important to ensure that these kinds of programs do not divert the focus away from formal education but rather serve as a complement that enriches the student's learning experience and increases the relevance of their education to the local context.

3. HP Usage Restrictions

Restricting the use of mobile phones in the school environment is a strategic step implemented by SMKN 1 Pujut and Madrasah Mongge to overcome the negative impact of technology on the learning process and student behavior. According to Ustaz Sukanti, "The use of cell phones is one of the factors that greatly affects school dropouts, especially because of early marriage and promiscuity. Negative content on cellphones can trigger unwanted behavior." From his statement, Ustaz Sukanti identified the use of cell phones as a significant factor that contributes to dropping out of school, especially through two main paths: early marriage and promiscuity. He highlighted that negative content that is easily accessible through cell phones can trigger risky behaviors in adolescents, which can ultimately lead to the decision to marry young or engage in promiscuity that interferes with education. Therefore, Madrasahs and Islamic Boarding Schools have very strict rules related to using cell phones and provide an understanding of the policy of using cell phones to students and students' parents. He states, "We have strict rules regarding the use of cell phones in schools. In fact, cell phones are not allowed for children living in Islamic boarding schools. We also try to explain to students and parents the wise use of cell phones."

This policy aligns with Annisa's findings [29], revealing that uncontrolled smartphone use can lower academic achievement and trigger negative adolescent behavior. By banning the use of mobile phones in schools, this educational institution seeks to create a more focused learning environment free from digital distractions. However, as revealed by the Vice

President of Student Affairs of SMKN 1 Pujut, the main challenge lies in using mobile phones outside of school, where institutional control is limited. This problem shows the need for a more comprehensive approach involving cooperation between schools, families, and communities in managing adolescent technology use.

Ustaz Sukanti's statement that identified mobile phones as the main factor causing early marriage and promiscuity that leads to dropping out of school highlights the complexity of the challenges faced by educational institutions in the digital era. Annisa [29] In their research, they also emphasized that exposure to negative content through smartphones can affect the psychosocial development of adolescents. The policy of a total ban on the use of mobile phones in the pesantren environment reflects efforts to protect students from these negative influences. However, this approach also raises questions about preparing students to face the realities of the digital world outside the school's-controlled environment. Therefore, efforts to provide understanding to students and parents about the wise use of mobile phones are an important step in building digital literacy and resilience to the negative influence of technology.

The awareness of the Madrasah of the potential negative impact of uncontrolled mobile phone use shows a deep understanding of the challenges of contemporary education. However, as highlighted by Annisa [29], more than a purely restrictive approach is needed in the long run. They suggested the importance of developing a strategy that blends restrictions with comprehensive digital education. In the context of SMKN 1 Pujut and Madrasah Mongge, this can mean the development of a curriculum that integrates digital literacy, teaching about online security, and training critical thinking skills in consuming digital information. In addition, collaboration with parents in monitoring and managing mobile phone use at home can strengthen the effectiveness of school policies. With a balanced approach between restriction and empowerment, educational institutions can be more effective in protecting students from the negative impacts of technology while preparing them to participate positively in a digital society.

The results of the study show the importance of a holistic approach in overcoming the problem of school dropouts. Countermeasures focus on economic aspects and include social, cultural, and psychological elements. Collaboration between the government, schools, religious leaders, and the community is key to creating an environment that supports education and prevents children from dropping out. In the context of the Mandalika SEZ, this could mean the development of programs that not only address economic barriers to education but also target changes in social norms related to early marriage, increase digital literacy to overcome the negative impact of social media and strengthen psychosocial support for students from broken home

families. By adopting a comprehensive and contextual approach, efforts to reduce the dropout rate in the Mandalika SEZ can be more effective and sustainable.

CONCLUSIONS

This study reveals that several complex factors in the Mandalika SEZ, especially in the Pujut District, cause children to drop out of school. Economic factors are the main obstacle; many families need help to afford to pay for their children's education. In addition, early marriage, especially among women, is a dominant factor driven by economic, social, environmental, and socio-cultural changes due to modernization and digitalization. Another significant factor is the condition of the family (*broken home*), which causes a lack of support and supervision of children's education, especially boys. The lack of motivation to learn and the negative influence of uncontrolled social media use also contribute to this problem.

Further research can be carried out with a longitudinal design to track the development of individuals who drop out of school to see the long-term impact and to provide a comprehensive understanding of the consequences of dropping out. Comparative studies between the Mandalika SEZ and other areas with similar socio-economic characteristics can also be conducted to provide insight into how local and regional factors affect the dropout rate. Experimental or quasi-experimental research may also be conducted to test the effectiveness of intervention programs, such as family economic strengthening, life skills education, or adolescent counseling, in reducing school dropout rates. In addition, further research on the role of gender in school dropouts and the impact of the development of the Mandalika SEZ on education can provide important information for more effective education policy planning.

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