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SCHOOL DROPOUT CONTROL AND HANDLING STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT THE ACCELERATION OF INCREASING THE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX (HDI) IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR IN CIANJUR DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the strategy for controlling and handling school dropouts to support the acceleration of increasing the human development index (HDI) in the Cianjur Regency education field. The research method used is qualitative with a case study approach. The primary data source is questionnaires obtained from 362 respondents spread across 35 villages in Cianjur Regency. Meanwhile, the data analysis technique uses descriptive analysis. This study concludes that economic factors (22 percent) and working to help parents (18 percent) are the causes of the high school dropout rate in the Cianjur Regency. Lack of family income causes parents to work hard to meet basic daily needs, so children's education gets less attention, and even children are involved in meeting basic needs for daily food. For this reason, four strategies are needed to control and handle school dropouts: an integral approach involving many related sectors, a movement approach, a poverty alleviation approach, and a preventive approach. Meanwhile, in the intervention to control school dropout rates, a back-to-school movement and a movement to continue school are needed.

Keywords: HDI, Education, Welfare, Poverty, and Control Strategy.

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INTRODUCTION

The Human Development Index (HDI) is an important indicator for measuring the success of efforts to build the quality of human life. It is a determinant of the development ranking of a region. The HDI has 3 dimensions that are used as the basis for calculation, namely: 1) Longevity and healthy life as measured by life expectancy; 2) Knowledge calculated from school expectancy

and the average length of schooling; and 3) Decent standard of living calculated from Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Per Capita. The United Nations (UN) has set a standard measure of human development, namely the Human Development Index (HDI) (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2023).

The concept of human development, as explained by the Human Development Report and the Central Bureau of Statistics, includes: 1) Productivity: People must be able to increase their productivity and participate fully in the process of earning income and wage employment. Therefore, economic growth is one part of the type of human development; 2) Equity: People must have access to fair opportunities. All barriers to economic and political opportunities must be removed so that people can participate in and benefit from these opportunities; 3) Sustainable: Access to opportunities must be ensured not only for the current generation but also for future generations. All forms of capital, such as physical capital, human resources, and the environment, must be equipped; 4) Empowerment: Development must be carried out by the community as a form of community independence, and must fully participate in making decisions and processes that affect their lives. Based on information from the Central Statistics Agency of Cianjur Regency 2023 in 2023, the life expectancy (UHH) of Cianjur Regency was 74.61 years, an increase of 0.24 years compared to 2022. From 2010 to 2023, UHH continued to increase.

Meanwhile, the average length of schooling (RLS) indicator for Cianjur residents is 7.22 years (up to the first grade of junior high school), an increase of 0.02 years compared to 2022. The average expected length of schooling (HLS) in 2023 is 12.03 years, an increase of 0.02 from 2022, which was 12.01. The per capita expenditure of Cianjur residents in 2023 is IDR 8,626 million per year, an increase of IDR 382 thousand compared to 2022. In 2023, the Human Development Index (HDI) of Cianjur Regency was 68.18, an increase of 0.63 points compared to 2022. When compared to the HDI in regencies and cities throughout West Java Province, the Human Development Index (HDI) of Cianjur Regency in 2023 is still in the lowest position (ranked 27th out of 27 regencies/cities in West Java Province) (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2023).

The Education Dimension in the HDI is formed by 2 (two) indicators, namely the expected length of schooling (HLS) and the average length of schooling (RLS). These two indicators continue to increase from year to year. In 2023, the Expected Length of Schooling in Cianjur Regency reached 12.03, which means that children aged 7 years have the opportunity to complete their education until graduating from high school.

Meanwhile, the average length of schooling in Cianjur Regency in 2023 was 7.22 years (up to grade 1 of junior high school), which means that on average, the population of Cianjur Regency aged 25 years and over has almost received education up to grade 1 of junior high school (Grade VII). Related to these two indicators. Therefore, efforts are needed from the Cianjur Regency Government to follow up through program activities or activities in collaboration with Dikti (Higher Education) personnel. School participation at the ages of 7-12 and 13-15 (elementary and junior high school age) is very high. Almost all residents aged

7-15 years attend school. However, participation for ages 16-18 (high school age) is getting smaller, at 61.98% (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2023). Government intervention should be directed at increasing school participation to improve HLS and RLS.

This condition is still much lower than the achievement of the West Java Provincial Government, with an Average Length of Schooling of 8.15 and an Expected Length of Schooling of 12.45. This causes the Cianjur Regency to be at the lowest level of education index achievement at the West Java Province level. The Average Length of Schooling is the most fundamental problem in efforts to develop the education sector in Cianjur Regency. Based on a study of related regional apparatuses in Cianjur Regency, the pockets or contributors to the low Average Length of Schooling are at the age of 25 years and over (25 to 50 years). This should be used as evaluation material to create innovative efforts or creations and be carried out massively in the field of education to solve the problem in question. Based on preliminary research, several factors were found to cause the low average length of schooling in Cianjur Regency, including 1) Unequal access to education services; 2) High cost of education; 3) Inadequate availability of educators and education personnel; 4) The community's economic level is still low; and 5) Community understanding of education is still low. Based on these problems, there needs to be a strategy for controlling and handling school dropouts so that the RLS increases and can contribute to accelerating the increase in the human development index (HDI) in the education sector in Cianjur Regency.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative research method with a case study approach. In this study, the research method is used to determine the factors that influence school dropouts in Cianjur Regency. The data collection method used a questionnaire distributed to 362 school dropout respondents from 35 villages in Cianjur Regency. The questionnaire consists of four parts, namely the reasons for not continuing school, the reasons for dropping out of school, the condition of the relationship with the family, and the condition of the school as perceived by the respondents. The results of the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Factors Causing the Low Average Length of Schooling in Cianjur Regency

Dropping out of school is the process of a student being forced to stop attending an educational institution where he or she is studying. A dropout is a child who is abandoned by a formal educational institution, which is caused by various factors. According to Mujiati et al., (2018), the phenomenon of dropping out of school is a state of stopping educational activities in school-age children, both formal and informal education, before gaining sufficient knowledge to survive in society.

Asmiati et al., (2022), stated that dropping out of school is a predicate given to former students who are unable to complete a level of education so that they cannot continue their studies to the next level of education. For example, a member of the community or a child who only attends elementary school until grade five is referred to as an elementary school dropout. Likewise, a member of the community who has an elementary school diploma and then attends junior high school until grade two is called a junior high school dropout, and so on. Compulsory education is one of the programs that is being intensively promoted by the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud). This program requires every Indonesian citizen to attend school for twelve years at the basic education level, namely from the first grade of elementary school or MI to the ninth grade of junior high school or MTs and senior high school or MA.

Through the nine-year compulsory basic education program, it is hoped that it can develop attitudes, knowledge, and basic skills that all citizens need to have as provisions to be able to live properly in society and be able to continue their education to a higher level, either to school or non-school educational institutions (Dewi et al., 2014). School dropouts are students who cannot complete their learning program before the time is up or students who do not complete their learning program (Neuman & Powers, 2021).

Efforts made to reduce the dropout rate in order to complete the twelve-year compulsory education must receive serious attention. The existence of the twelve-year compulsory education program from the government has also not been able to resolve the problem of the high number of children dropping out of school. Although the twelve-year compulsory education program (fair) applied with the provision of BOS has a positive impact, such as in the 2007 Balitbang Kepdiknas study that BOS can reduce the dropout rate from 0.6% to 0.4%. This proves that economic factors are not the only factors that influence children to drop out of school. However, other factors besides economic factors may cause children to drop out of school, such as micro (technical) access factors such as distant school locations, can also influence children to drop out of school (Ririk et al., 2021). In addition, the socio-cultural views of families and communities about the importance of school often determine the fate of students in continuing their education.

Sugianto & Bahri (2017), stated that at least six factors cause school dropouts, especially at the elementary education level: economic factors, low interest in going to school, lack of parental attention, inadequate learning facilities, cultural factors, and the location of the school.

- 1) Economic factors are the first factor causing children to drop out of school. The inability of the child's family to finance all the processes needed during education or school at a certain level, although the government has launched a twelve-year Free Education Program, it has not had a maximum impact on reducing the number of children dropping out of school (Mujiati et al., 2018);
- 2) Lack of parental attention is the second factor. Low parental attention to children can be caused by the family's economic conditions or the low income of the child's parents, so the parents' attention is more focused on

efforts to meet family needs. The percentage of children who do not and drop out of school due to low parental attention;

- 3) Inadequate learning facilities are the third factor. Learning facilities available at school, for example, inadequate learning devices (tools, materials, and media), inadequate textbooks, and so on. The learning needs and facilities required by students cannot be met by students, which can cause a decrease in children's interest, which ultimately leads to dropping out of school;
- 4) Children's interest in school is the fourth factor. Low interest in children can be caused by a lack of parental attention, the distance between the child's residence and the school being far away, inadequate learning facilities, and the influence of the surrounding environment. Lack of interest can be caused by environmental influences, such as low levels of community education followed by low awareness of the importance of education. The family's economic inability to support education costs has an impact on children's psychological problems so that children cannot socialize well in relationships with their school friends, besides the role of the environment;
- 5) Culture is the fifth factor related to the habits of the surrounding community. Low awareness of parents or the community about the importance of education. Environmental factors influence the behavior of rural communities in sending their children to school. They assume that even without going to school, their children can live decently like other children who go to school because in the village, the number of children who go to school is greater, and they can live decently, so conditions like that are used as a basis for determining their children's future. The view that many children bring good fortune makes people in rural areas direct more of their children who are still of school age to help their parents earn a living;
- 6) The location or location of the school is the sixth factor that can cause children to drop out of school. Long distances with difficult access are things that the community must consider to be able to send their children to school. Lack of transportation and the distance between home and school is quite far. In addition, with access that is considered difficult, safety is also considered not guaranteed (Zuhri & Dwiyanoro, 2014).

The most dominant reasons for dropping out of school in Cianjur Regency are economic factors and helping parents earn a living. Lack of family income forces parents to work hard to meet basic daily needs, so children's education gets less attention, and even children participate in meeting basic needs for daily food. For example, children help their parents go to sea because it is considered to lighten the burden on their parents. Children are invited to work so they do not go to school. The lack of parental attention to their children can be seen in the way parents meet their children's needs in learning at home and school. In addition, some students become "coolies" or subordinates to help their family life after feeling the benefits of having their income as a reward for the work they do.

Slowly, the child will forget about school, and in the end, the child chooses to drop out of school.

The above conditions are in accordance with the opinion put forward by Neuman & Powers (2021), which states that children who are studying, in addition to having their basic needs met, such as food, clothing, protection, health and others, also need learning facilities such as study rooms, tables and chairs, lighting, stationery, books and others. These learning facilities will be fulfilled if the family has enough money. If a child lives in a low-income family, the child's basic needs will not be met. As a result, the child's health is disrupted, so the child's learning is disrupted. As a result, they are always sad, and the child feels inferior to other friends. This certainly interferes with the child's learning. The child may even have to work to earn a living as a servant for his parents even though the child is not yet ready to work. Something like that will also interfere with the child's learning.

The above factors greatly affect children's ability to achieve success in the world of education. A family's income that is lacking also causes a lack of parental attention to their children because every day, all that is on the parents' minds is how to meet the family's needs. This is also by the opinion put forward by Ririk et al., (2021), who said that differences in sources of income or earnings affect parents' expectations about their children's education; many children drop out of school for financial or economic reasons. Education requires money, not only for school but also for clothes, books, transportation, extracurricular activities, and others (Wulansari et al., 2023).

The results of a survey conducted by researchers revealed that at least eight factors have been present that have caused school-age children in Cianjur Regency not to continue or even have to be thrown out of formal school before being able to complete their upper secondary education, as can be seen in the chart below:

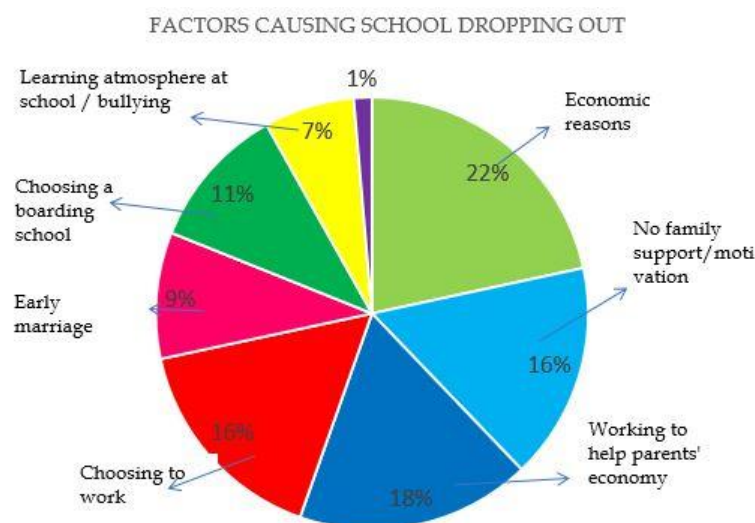


Figure 1 Factors that Cause School Dropouts in Cianjur Regency

Based on Figure 1, it was found that economic factors or poverty are the biggest cause (22%) that have been present as the cause of the high school dropout rate in Cianjur Regency, followed by reasons for working to help parents

(18%), motivational factors in the form of absence of parental support (16%), choosing to work (16%), preferring Islamic boarding schools (11%), early marriage (9%), bullying (7%), and others, the remaining 1 percent. Based on these findings, the problems behind the high school dropout rate are so complex. This means that an integral approach is needed, not a partial one, in handling it. This also means that many parties are needed to handle it. Involvement from the government and the active involvement of the community itself. 4 (four) of the 8 (eight) factors that cause the high school dropout rate above are factors that are directly or indirectly very related to the problem of poverty economically.

The four factors include (1) economic reasons, (2) helping parents work, (3) choosing to work, and (4) marrying at an early age. This means that the problem of poverty is the root of the problem that is worthy of being raised as the most dominant reason for school dropouts. This also means that whatever form or type of program intervention will be implemented by the government to control the number of school dropouts, it will only be possible to realize with intervention in solving the root of the problem, namely the problem of poverty.

2. Strategy for Controlling and Handling School Dropouts

There are several strategies and policy directions based on the survey results, as explained above, that need to be taken by the regional government in order to control the number of school dropouts, which is still a concern so far. First, because the causes of the problems behind this school dropout issue are so serious and complex, the handling cannot be done by only using a partial approach but must go through an integral approach that involves many related sectors, including community participation itself. Community participation is very important not only because it will help ease the burden (limited costs and workforce, even thoughts or ideas) owned by the government but also because the community is the one who actually knows more about the many problems faced by its citizens. Second, based on the policy direction in point one above, the strategy is not enough to use a program approach but must be taken through a money movement approach involving all components of government and society at all levels. Third, because the most dominant factor causing school dropouts so far is poverty, this one program intervention is very fundamental to be carried out. This means that whatever type of program is carried out, the results will be lacking, even ineffective, and will not be supported by success in poverty alleviation. Fourth, in the long term, the target of handling the school dropout problem is not only directed at efforts to intervene for those (children/residents) who have been thrown out of school, aka curative but also directed at efforts to prevent school dropouts for those who are currently still or are in school, with a preventive approach, as can be seen in the image below:

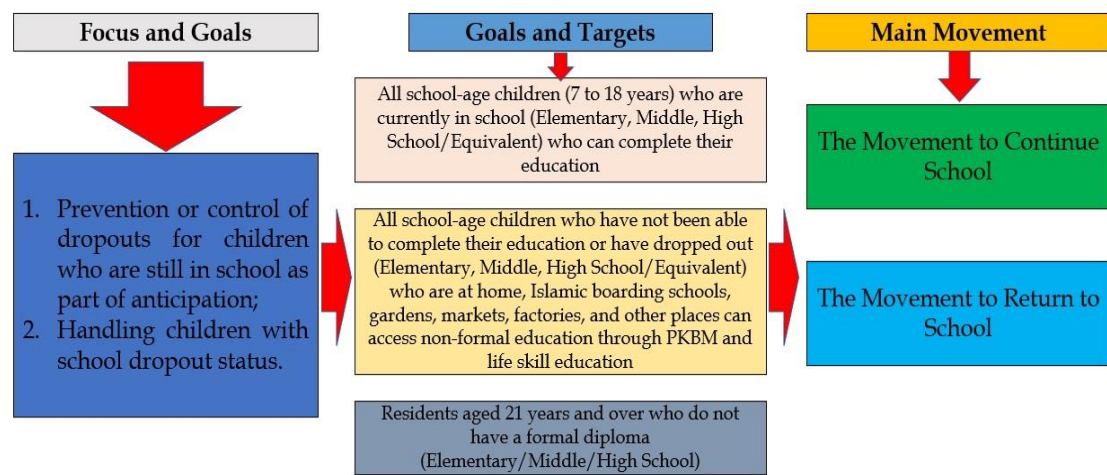


Figure 2 Direction of Controlling School Dropout Rates

Based on Figure 2, there are two ways to control dropout rates in schools. The focus and objectives in controlling dropouts are 1) Prevention or control of dropouts for children who are still in school as part of anticipation; 2) Handling children with school dropout status. Meanwhile, the targets and targets for controlling dropouts are 1) All school-age children (7 to 18 years) who are currently in school (Elementary, Middle, High School/Equivalent) who can complete their education; 2) All school-age children who have not been able to complete their education or have dropped out (Elementary, Middle, High School/Equivalent) who are at home, Islamic boarding schools, gardens, markets, factories and other places can access non-formal education through PKBM and life skill education; 3) Residents aged 21 years and over who do not have a formal diploma (Elementary/Middle/High School). To realize dropout control at the school level, two main movements are needed, namely, the movement to continue school and the movement to return to school.

3. School Dropout Control Intervention Program

Under the policy direction outlined in the previous explanation, there are two movements as well as program approaches that will be recommended in the results of this study, including:

- 1) Implementation of the Back to School Movement with its target directed at efforts so that all children, or at least most of them, who are currently dropouts for various reasons, can return to school, either through formal or informal education. The form and type of program intervention, including the implementers and those responsible, can be seen in the table below:

Table 1 Back to School Movement

Goals and Targets	Alternative Interventions	Prime Mover	Technical/Service Responsible Person
All residents or children who, due to	a. Social campaigns to increase awareness through various events	Parents, Neighborhood Association,	a. Department of Education; b. Department of

various factors, have the status of school dropouts	<p>and media;</p> <p>b. Expansion of the scope of PKBM program services (Packages A, B, and C) integrated with poverty alleviation programs;</p> <p>c. Expansion of the provision of courses/skills;</p> <p>d. Establishment of special formal education services in the Salafi Islamic boarding school environment and factory environment.</p>	<p>Citizens' Association, Village Head, PKK, and Toga/Toma, Karangtaruna, Assessment Center Cadres.</p>	<p>Social Affairs;</p> <p>c. Department of Manpower;</p> <p>d. Ministry of Religious Affairs;</p> <p>e. Course Institutions.</p>
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- 2) Movement to Increase School Continuation Rates. Suppose the intervention movement in point one above is directed at efforts to handle children who have dropped out. In that case, this movement to increase school continuation rates aims to control dropout rates, the target of which is all children who are still in school.

Table 2 Continuation to School Movement

Goals and Targets	Alternative Interventions	Prime Mover	Technical/Service Responsible Person
All children aged 7-18 years who are currently in school (elementary school, middle school, high school/equivalent) can complete their education up to high school/equivalent.	<p>a. Socialization or social campaign through various events and media;</p> <p>b. Coaching by teachers or schools;</p> <p>c. Teacher visits to parents of students who are vulnerable to dropping out;</p> <p>d. Provision of</p>	<p>Principal, Teachers, Parents, School Committee, Village Head, Neighborhood Association, Citizens Association, PKK, Toma and PLKB.</p>	<p>Regional Assistant 1, Department of Education, Ministry of Religion, Department of Social Affairs and Manpower, Education Council.</p>

	<p>school financing assistance;</p> <p>e. Foster parent movement;</p> <p>f. PKH services related to school children.</p>		
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CONCLUSIONS

Economic factors or poverty are the biggest cause (22%) that have been present as the cause of the high number of school dropouts in Cianjur Regency, followed by reasons for working to help parents (18%), motivational factors in the form of absence of parental support (16%), choosing to work (16%), preferring Islamic boarding schools (11%), early marriage (9%), bullying (7%), and others, the remaining 1 percent. Lack of family income causes parents to work hard to meet basic daily needs so that children's education gets less attention, and even children participate in meeting basic needs for daily food; for example, children help their parents work because it is considered to lighten the burden on parents. Children are invited to work so they don't go to school. So, four strategies are needed to control and handle school dropouts: an integral approach involving many related sectors, a movement approach, a poverty alleviation approach, and a preventive approach. Meanwhile, in the intervention to control school dropout rates, a movement to return to school and continue school is needed. If raised, there may still be many program interventions that can or even must be carried out to control the number of school dropouts, which until now is still a problem in efforts to accelerate the increase in the Human Development Index (HDI) in the field of education in Cianjur Regency. However, the results of this study at least it can provide input regarding the direction of policy and the outline of the intervention program that can be carried out by the Cianjur Regency Regional Government, especially as one of the input materials for policymakers and formulators in the field of education development.

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