

The Level of Children Not Going to School Based on Demographic Factors

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Article history: received 01-04-2025, revised 20-06-2025, accepted 30-07-2025

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Abstract

The problem of children not attending school is still a challenge that continues to be faced today. The increasing number of children not attending school at various levels of education has become a crucial problem in society so that this condition has the potential to threaten the quality of human resources in Indonesia. This study uses a quantitative descriptive approach with data collection. The purpose of this study is to determine and analyze the differences between two or more groups through a comparative approach. The data used comes from official documents of the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), including statistics on Children Not Going to School based on Education Level, Gender, Expenditure Group, and Area of Residence, which were collected in the period 2022 to 2023. The transition from junior high school to high school is a critical point where many children, especially boys, decide to drop out of school. Economic conditions are the main factor causing the high dropout rate, especially in rural areas. Although negative impacts are often associated with the trend of children not attending school, some children are able to take positive steps in dealing with the problems they face. A comprehensive approach to these children, involving all relevant parties, is essential to ensure the sustainability of their education. The government and society need to understand that the reasons why children do not go to school often stem from factors beyond their control, such as economic conditions that force them to help their families. Therefore, greater attention from the government is needed to prevent potential damage to the nation's future generations.

Keywords

Out-of-school children, education demographics, social impact

Introduction

Children not attending school is still a problem that is found to this day. Based on initial research data obtained in Sonuo Village until the end of 2019 and mid-2020, there were 21 children who dropped out of school from various levels of education, from elementary school, junior high school, to high school, from a total of around 70 students. This condition is certainly very concerning and is feared to have a negative impact in the future, especially if children who drop out of school have a negative influence on other students who are still in school (Assa, 2022). The development of school participation

rates (APS) in Indonesia shows quite good results for the age groups 7-12 years and 13-15 years, but the APS for the age group 16-18 years still needs to be improved. According to BPS data (www.bps.go.id), APS in the age groups 7-12 years and 13-15 years has reached more than 95 percent. Meanwhile, the age group 16-18 years is still below 75 percent. Over the past three years, the APS for ages 16-18 years has increased, from 71.42 percent in 2017, rising to 71.99 percent in 2018, and again increasing to 72.36 percent in 2019. Based on these data, the dropout rate, especially in the age group 16-18 years, is still relatively high (Judge, 2020). The details are 3 children dropped out of school at elementary school level, 8 children at junior high school level, and 18 children at high school level (Paddy, 2023). Several relevant studies that have been mentioned show that the rate of children not attending school at various levels of education tends to increase along with the level of education achieved, so that the number of children not attending school is high at the high school level. This indicates that the higher the level of education, the greater the number of children not attending school.

The increasing number of children not attending school at every level of education is a very crucial problem in society today (Paddy, 2023). Based on the results of interviews and observations in the field, it is known that not completing education causes most children in Laba Village to have difficulty in finding work, especially decent work. The abilities of children who drop out of school in Laba Village are generally still limited to jobs such as working in the fields, gardens, or becoming construction workers, which are indeed common in their environment. It is also known that when they do not have work, children who drop out of school tend to only spend time at home or hanging out with friends. According to (Anin, 2023) in (Musfiquon, 2016), dropping out of school is one of the factors that hinders progress in people's lives, especially amidst the rapid development of an increasingly modern world. In the current era of globalisation, development challenges are increasingly clear and complex, full of fierce competition. Therefore, to face these challenges, what needs to be prepared carefully is the provision of Human Resources. This condition has the potential to affect the quality of human resources in Indonesia. The higher the number of children who do not go to school, the greater the possibility of a decline in the quality of human resources in Indonesia. This condition can also have an impact on the progress of the nation and an increase in unemployment due to limited skills and knowledge. Children who drop out of school tend to have difficulty in getting a job because they lack the competencies needed in the

world of work. In addition, dropping out of school can cause limitations in social networks, with the formation of a narrow circle of friends.

This problem has not shown any significant decline. A comprehensive approach to children, involving all stakeholders, is essential to ensure the sustainability of their education. This includes efforts to improve the development of educational infrastructure and facilities, as well as efforts to raise awareness of the importance of education, both at the school level and among parents. In addition, providing scholarships to students with economic limitations is also a crucial step to support the sustainability of their education.

This study offers a new approach to understanding the factors that influence the rate of out-of-school children at various levels, by highlighting demographic factors such as the number of out-of-school children by gender, expenditure group and area of residence. This study also presents the latest data discussing changes in the number of out-of-school children in recent years based on data from BPS (www.bps.go.id) and provide a clearer picture of the existing dynamics.

This study aims to provide an overview of the number of out-of-school children in Indonesia based on various demographic factors. By utilizing this data, it is hoped that effective strategies can be designed by related parties to address the problem of out-of-school children. This study also explores the impacts caused, both for out-of-school children and for their surroundings. Therefore, handling this issue is very important. Furthermore, this study will discuss the methods used, results, discussion, conclusions, and supporting references.

Method

This study uses a quantitative descriptive approach by collecting data. Quantitative research is a systematic investigation of phenomena by collecting data that can be measured through the application of statistical, mathematical, or computational techniques. The descriptive method itself is one type of quantitative research method designed to formulate problem formulations that direct research in exploring or describing social situations that will be studied comprehensively, deeply, and broadly. This method aims to systematically describe facts or characteristics of a particular population or field in a factual and accurate manner.(Rustamana et al., 2024). According

to(Candra Susanto et al., 2024), quantitative research is a type of research that utilises numerical data collection and applies analytical techniques to test hypotheses, draw conclusions, and analyse relationships between the variables studied. Quantitative research is essentially a research approach that utilises standardised data collection techniques, with the aim of supporting the research process factually and accurately.

Meanwhile, according to (Syaripudin et al., 2013) in (Saschia et al., 2022), comparative research is a type of research that aims to find out and test the differences between two or more groups. This research is conducted to compare a research object, either between different subjects or at different times, and to identify possible cause-and-effect relationships.

This study applies a quantitative descriptive method by utilising data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS). This approach was chosen to make it easier for researchers to obtain accurate data without having to collect data directly in the field, which can take longer. In addition, the scope of the variables studied is also wider, so that the results of the study can provide a more comprehensive picture, and apply a comparative approach to understand several objects based on the data presented.

The data obtained comes from official documents provided by the Central Statistics Agency (BPS). The data used includes the Number of Children Not in School According to Education Level and Gender, Expenditure Group and Area of Residence, which was carried out in the period 2022 to 2023. This data is covered nationally in the Republic of Indonesia and is obtained through downloads from the official BPS website (www.bps.go.id) in the form of a table and modified by the author using statistical data to facilitate data analysis. The data analysis method used is descriptive statistics to describe the pattern of numbers of children not attending school according to education level, which is categorised by gender, expenditure group, and area of residence. To describe certain patterns. The analysis was carried out with the help of Microsoft Excel which allows data visualisation and accurate statistical calculations.

Results

The data discussed is the result of data that categorises the number of children not attending school according to education level, gender, expenditure group, and area of residence. The results of this data can provide a more factual picture and serve as a basis

for a deeper discussion of the problem. With accurate information, analysis can help identify patterns and trends that occur, so that they can be used as a basis for taking strategies for community needs.

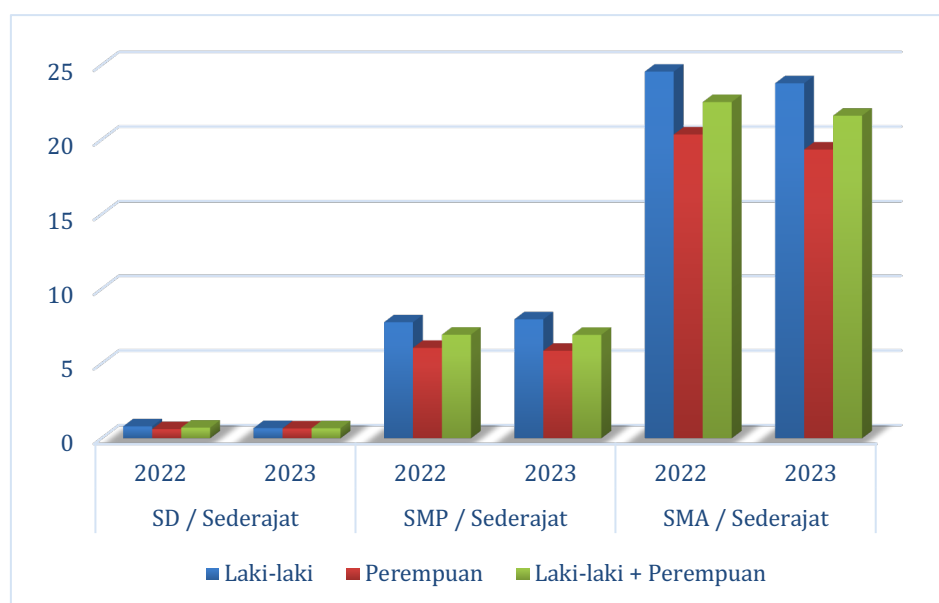


Figure 1. Number of Children Not in School According to Education Level and Gender

Figure 1 shows a comparison of the number of children not attending school at various levels and genders. The higher the level of education, the higher the number of children not attending school. The number of children not attending school varies at elementary, middle and high school levels. The dropout rate is higher for boys than girls. A striking difference is seen in the transition from middle to high school. The higher the level of education, the higher the number of children not attending school. Significant changes can be observed in both 2022 and 2023, where the number of children not attending school at the high school level exceeds 20. This figure is quite high when compared to elementary and middle school levels. In 2022, the number of boys not attending school was almost 25, although it decreased slightly in 2023. This dominance of boys is seen at all levels of education, with the number of children not attending school at the elementary school level being very low, not even reaching 1. Meanwhile, at the high school level, the number exceeds 20, showing a very striking difference.

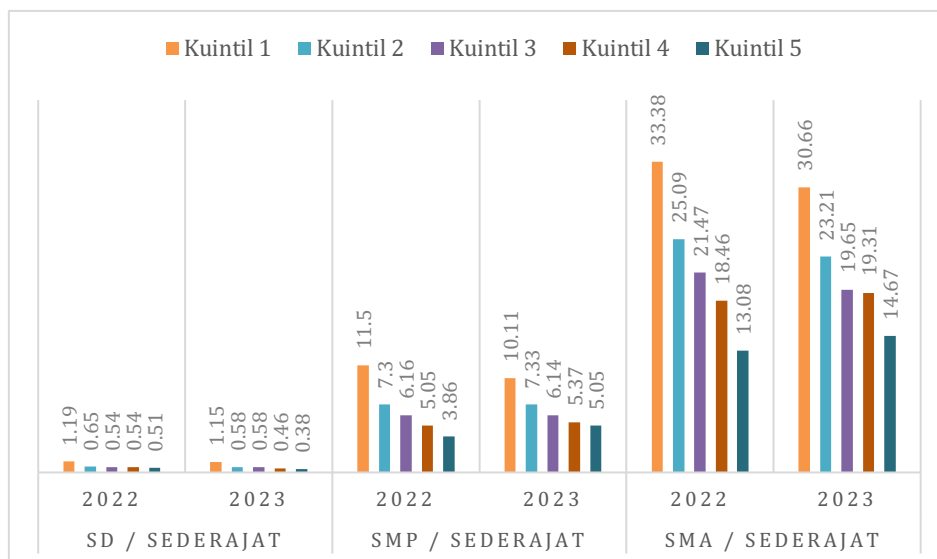


Figure 2. Number of Children Not Attending School According to Education Level and Expenditure Group

Figure 2 shows a comparison of the number of children not attending school at various levels and expenditure groups. The number of children not attending school has increased significantly at the high school level. Based on the data in Figure 2, the high school level has increased drastically, especially in quintile 1 which is always in the highest position every year. In quintile 1 at the high school level in 2022, it almost reached 35 and experienced a slight decline in 2023. However, each quintile has differences each year, for example at the high school level, quintile 5 has a higher number of children not attending school in 2023 compared to 2022. At the elementary school level, the number is small where all are below 5 and even below 3.

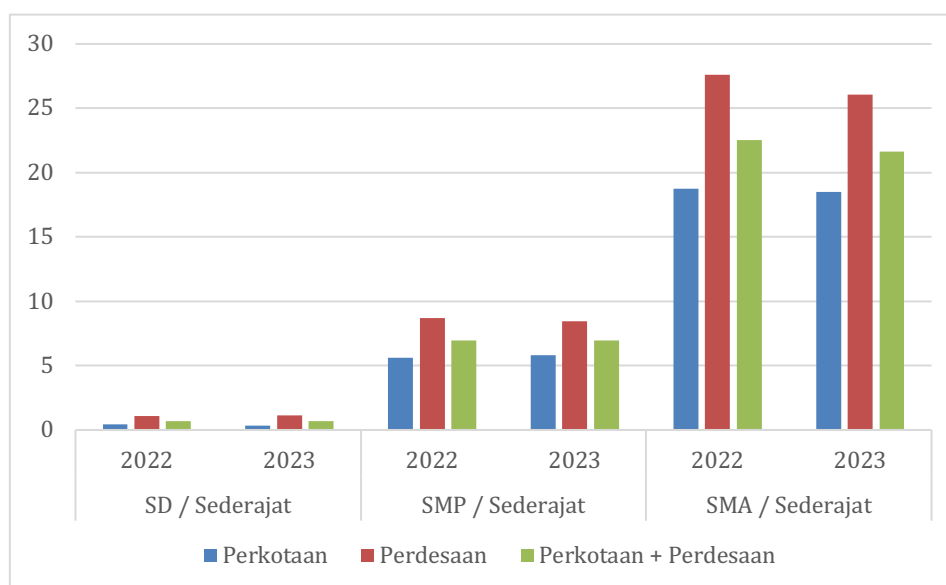


Figure 3. Number of Children Not in School According to Education Level and Area of Residence

Figure 3 shows a comparison of the number of children out of school at various levels and residential areas. The number of children who do not attend school is dominated by rural areas. Based on the data in Figure 3, the high school level has increased drastically, especially in rural areas which are always in the highest position at each level and year. In 2022, the rate of children out of school at the high school level in rural areas reached 27.6 and experienced a slight decrease to 26.6 in 2023. At the high school level, both in urban and rural areas, this figure is the highest compared to the other two levels of education. Meanwhile, at the elementary school level, the average number is below 1, and for the junior high school level it is below 10.

Discussion

In this study, researchers analyzed various demographic factors that influence the number of children dropping out of school. The data are used as a basis for comparison to evaluate the problems that occur. In addition, there are a number of statements that generally describe the condition of education in Indonesia based on the data. Data from three demographic factors, namely the number of children not attending school based on education level and gender, expenditure group, and area of residence, were analyzed to understand the phenomenon of children not attending school. Based on the analysis carried out systematically, the data comparison shows that the highest rate of children not attending school is at the high school level in all demographic aspects. Based on the gender category, males show the highest number. The same thing is also seen in the category of expenditure group and area of residence, where the high school level recorded the highest value.

Analysis of the first data shows that the number of children out of school increases with the level of education, with a striking difference between elementary, junior high, and senior high schools. Dominated by men, more attention is needed at the senior high school level because at this stage, education is very crucial to provide children with provisions. The transition from junior high to senior high school is a critical point where many children, especially boys, decide to drop out of school. If this is not addressed, the direct impact will be felt on the quality of human resources and the potential for

economic and social development of the country. According to the results of Susenas, 2021 in (Sinaga & Sitorus' Son, 2021), Table 2 shows that children who drop out of school in North Sumatra are dominated by several factors. As many as 18.81% come from children who are working, 11.43% have incomplete parents, and 13.74% live in poor families. In addition, 10.15% are boys, 8.90% are children who are not the first child in the family, and 45.45% have behavioral or emotional disorders. In accordance with the results of data analysis, the rate of children dropping out of school based on gender shows that the percentage of boys reaches 10.15%, higher than that of girls which is at 6.34%. The high number of children not attending school at the high school level and in boys

The number of children not attending school also experienced a significant increase at the high school level in the expenditure group category, especially in quintile 1 which showed the highest number every year. Although there are variations between each quintile, the number of children not attending school at the high school level in quintile 5 was actually higher in 2023 compared to 2022. The most common main factor causing the high school dropout rate in Indonesia is economic conditions, as previously explained. Data shows that provinces with low income levels tend to have high school dropout rates. Of the 34 respondents studied regarding the factors causing students to drop out of school at the high school level in Bukit Lipai Village, Batang Cenaku District, Inderagiri Hulu Regency, the majority, namely 14 respondents or around 41.18%, said that the main reason for dropping out of school was the poor economic conditions of their families. (Sugianto Supervisor & Bahri, 2017).

Meanwhile, according to the area of residence, it is dominated by rural areas. In the data that has been analyzed, the high school level has also experienced a drastic increase in rural areas. In 2022, the number of children not attending school at that level reached 27.6, but experienced a slight decrease in 2023 to 26.06. At the high school level, both rural and urban areas have the highest numbers compared to elementary and junior high school levels. Relevant to the previous statement, based on the 2021 Susenas Kor source, in (Amelia & Agustina, 2021) conducted in the Bangka Belitung Islands, the results showed that the number of children not attending school in rural areas tended to be higher compared to urban areas.

The high number of children not attending school at the high school level shows the urgency to immediately take strategic steps. This situation requires in-depth attention

because at this age it is a crucial phase that determines an individual's ability to enter the workforce or continue their education. The high number at this level has an impact on increasing unemployment rates, social inequality, and limited opportunities for the younger generation to contribute to development. Targeted interventions from various parties are needed to support the education process that supports children's abilities.

Negative impacts are often associated with the trend of children not going to school. According to the results of research conducted by Nurdalia (2021) in (Darmayanti et al., 2023), research results show that the impact of dropping out of school includes increasing unemployment rates, adolescent involvement in deviant behavior, and reduced job opportunities. In line with this opinion, according to Asmirin (2014:18), in (Soselisa & et al., 2024), children who drop out of school can cause a number of negative impacts, including increased unemployment rates, future losses, narrow insights, and less openness to various opportunities. Children who drop out of school are also at risk of becoming less skilled workers, which can ultimately increase the possibility of being involved in criminal acts. Handling this problem is crucial because it has a significant impact on both individuals and society. From an individual perspective, children who do not attend school lose the opportunity to gain the knowledge and experience they should have, which in turn can reduce the quality of human resources in the country. The negative impacts arising from children not attending school are not only felt by individuals, but also by the country. The increase in the number of children who do not attend school can threaten productivity and has the potential to affect development and the Indonesian economy as a whole.

Behind the various negative impacts that exist, some children choose to take positive steps in dealing with their problems. The conclusion of the research conducted (Sarese et al., 2024), the patterns and impacts of social actions of school dropouts in Pangolombian Village, Tomohon City indicate positive and negative impacts. Positive patterns include activities such as working as public transportation or micro drivers, construction workers, and helping parents or family. Conversely, negative patterns include behaviors such as lazing around, getting drunk, and making noise in the surrounding environment. In line with this opinion, the impacts experienced by school dropouts include a lack of self-confidence and the habit of gathering at night while getting drunk. Based on the results of the interview, most of them chose to work, such as becoming fishermen with their parents, working in palm oil companies, or migrating to the city to help the family economy. However, even though they work, the increase in unemployment in Tanjung

Perepat Village due to the high number of school dropouts slows down the development of the area (Kurniawan & Asnar, 2024). Based on the results of the initial data survey, it was found that 87% or 26 school dropouts felt that they did not give up easily when facing problems, 77% or 23 school dropouts were able to find alternatives to overcome the problems they were facing, and 57% or 17 school dropouts remained confident and optimistic about the problems they were facing. This shows that these teenagers tend to have quite good resilience characters. Based on the initial data survey, as many as 77% or 27 research subjects stated that they needed help from family, friends, and people around them to solve the problems they were facing. The expected support is in the form of motivation and solutions, which can make them more enthusiastic in facing the problems they are experiencing. (Aditya Pratama et al., 2023).

This issue should receive serious attention, especially from the government, to strive for the importance of education and provide guidance to the community, especially teachers and parents, about how important education is. Not without reason, the impact caused by children dropping out of school will be detrimental to both the individual himself and society as a whole. Realizing that there is still hope through the positive impacts that arise, the government and society need to understand that the causes of children not going to school often come from factors beyond their control, such as economic conditions that force them to help their parents. Therefore, the government must pay more attention to the conditions of children who do not go to school so that potential damage to the nation's generation can be avoided. Meanwhile, for children who experience negative impacts due to internal or external factors, an active role is needed from teachers and parents to provide a deeper understanding of the importance of education as the foundation of their future.

The data used in this study comes from BPS and is comprehensive, providing opportunities for further research that can explore more specific variations so that in utilizing more detailed data in order to provide more in-depth and representative results. The case study model approach that focuses on demographic conditions in general opens up opportunities to involve other relevant contextual factors in the study. Combining the case study approach with other research methods can enrich the understanding of demographic conditions in Indonesia in the analysis results.

Conclusion

The results of the data analysis show that the highest number of children not attending school is at the high school level, especially among the low economic group (quintile 1) and rural areas. Boys dominate the number of children not attending school at all levels of education, with the most significant gap occurring in the transition from junior high school to high school. Economic factors, gender, and location of residence are the main determinants of this phenomenon.

Therefore, the main focus in efforts to reduce the number of children out of school needs to be directed at the high school level, especially in low-income groups and rural areas. Recommended interventions include providing economic assistance, increasing awareness of the importance of education, and providing more accessible educational facilities. This problem requires more serious attention to support the progress of the nation through empowering the younger generation. Hope remains for each individual child to continue their education, in order to develop the knowledge and skills they have for a better future.

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