School Dropout Causes in Turkish Education System (2009-2022): A Pareto Analysis by Grade Level *

Türk Eğitim Sisteminde Okul Terk Nedenleri (2009-2022): Eğitim Kademelerine Göre Bir Pareto Analizi

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ABSTRACT: This research examines the reasons for school dropout occurring at varying education levels in the Turkish education system (TES). To this end, research on school dropouts pertaining to TES has been targeted. The systematic data analysis method was used in the research. 47 studies suitable for the purposes of the study were analyzed through content analysis. A total of 290 coding processes were carried out. The results suggest that the family factor emerges as the main factor for school dropout in primary education in TES. The inadequacy of families' financial situation and low interest in education are effective. At the high school level, students' academic failure, absenteeism, peer pressure, and indifference of families appear as the causes of school dropouts. In higher education, difficulties learners experience in adapting to novel social environments, academic failure, financial problems and the thought of being a misfit for the selected department seem to be among the causes of school dropout. In the other group, the reasons for dropping out are determined as academic failure, financial difficulties, early marriages, dislike of school, indifference of family, negative effects of friend groups, and indifference towards school.

Keywords: School dropout, Turkish education system, Pareto analysis.

ÖZ: Bu araştırmanın amacı Türk eğitim sistemindeki eğitim kademelerine göre okul terki nedenlerini incelemektir. Bu doğrultuda TES'te okul terki üzerine yapılan araştırmalara ulaşılmıştır. Araştırmada sistematik veri analizi yöntemi ile araştırmanın amaçlarına uygun olan 47 araştırma içerik analizi ile incelenmiştir. Toplamda 290 kodlama işlemi gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırma sonucuna göre TES'te ilköğretim kademesinde okul terki nedenlerinde aile faktörü öne çıkmaktadır. Ailenin maddi durumun yetersizliği ve eğitime karşı düşük ilgisi etkilidir. Ortaöğretim kademesinde öğrencinin akademik başarısızlığı, devamsızlığı, akran baskısı, ailelerin ilgisizliği okul terklerine neden olmaktadır. Yükseköğretimde ise öğrencinin sosyal çevreye uyum sağlamada güçlük yaşaması, akademik başarısızlık, maddi sorunlar ve eğitim gördüğü bölüme uygun olmadığını düşünmesi okul terkinden ortaya çıkan sonuçlardır. Hiçbir eğitim kategorisine girmeyen diğer grubunda okul terki nedenleri de akademik başarısızlık, maddi imkânsızlıklar, erken evlilikler, okulu sevmemek, ailenin ilgisizliği, arkadaş gruplarının olumsuz etkisi ve okula karşı ilgisizliktir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Okul terki, Türk eğitim sistemi, Pareto analizi.

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School dropout is undoubtedly one of the most important problems affecting education systems because the losses caused by school leavings are not only academic but also societal. That is why, the investigation of the causes of school dropout (SD) has been the subject of worldwide studies, particularly of education research (Vasconcelos et. al., 2019). Accordingly, SD has received increasing attention in recent years (Blöndal, 2014). Similarly, for the last two decades, the SD problem has been on the agenda of all developed and developing countries, and it indeed worries decision-makers in both education and social fields (Said, 2021).

Dropout rates present a multifaceted challenge, characterized by their potentially abrupt and unpredictable occurrence, as well as their widespread prevalence, highlighting the need for a thorough understanding of this problem (Gul & Arshad, 2013). Consequently, educational institutions in developed countries have been actively putting their greatest efforts to prevent and decrease dropout rates. (Foley, et. al., 2014; Mahoney & Cairns, 1997; Ream and Rumberger, 2008; Wallace, 2016). In a similar vein, SD is recognized as a critical problem impacting institutions worldwide (de Sousa et. al., 2021). For example, the high SD rates in the USA are causes for concerns for policymakers. Several theories have been developed towards figuring out why and how SDs occur. Still, as noted by various theoretical frameworks, such factors as students' academic performance, social behavior, and level of engagement in school activities significantly influence SDs (Ream & Rumberger, 2008).

Given that SD is a multifactorial process extending to very early ages (Papachristopoulou et. al., 2018), it should be regarded as both a social issue and a public health concern (Valkov, 2018). Drop-out is a critical social phenomenon and often leads to daunting conditions for adolescents and is linked to low academic achievement (Jana, et. al., 2014). In addition, SD disproportionately affects several disadvantaged groups, with higher dropout rates. Especially in rural areas, such factors as parents' reluctance towards education, students' helping out with housework, financial difficulties, and giving more importance to the education of boys than girls often lead to school dropouts among all relevant demographic groups, including girls (Jana, et. al., 2014). According to the research results of Ioana et. al., (2015), dropout rates in disadvantaged neighborhoods are alarmingly high.. Those living in poverty are 2.9 times more likely to drop out of school than those whose income exceeds the poverty threshold by 150% (Chenge, et. al., 2017).

Arguably on account of its complicated geographical, cultural, social, and sociological structure, the Turkish education system (TES) has not been able to reach a solution that addresses SDs. In light of the data collected from 35.475 households in Türkiye, the reasons behind SDs are as follows: marriage, working, living in a village or a town, living in a divorced family, academic failure, and economic problems (Boyacı, 2019). Studies emphasize that the factors that cause dropouts in TES are absenteeism of students, insensitivity of families towards their children, economic difficulties, the inadequacy of school facilities, early marriages, and the education system itself (Aküzüm et. al., 2015; Aslan, 2022; Ergül, 2019; Kartal & Ballı, 2020).

The findings, which emerged as a result of the examination of numerous reports on SDs in TES, draw attention to similar results. To cite an example, drop-outs have an increasing graph by years in TES (Yorğun, 2022). Due to compulsory education, the schooling rate in secondary education has increased in TES, but the number of students

per classroom and teacher is decreasing (Can & Sezer, 2022). High-achieving countries in PISA have lower out-of-school child populations or lower illiterate youth and adult populations (Maya, 2013a), yet Türkiye lags behind EU countries in gross enrollment rates for girls at all levels of education (Maya, 2013b). As Bayhan and Dalgıç (2012) underpin, SD is an ongoing problem in TES, and the current studies on SD focus solely on the causes and intervention models of compulsory education at the primary level. There exists a lack of research examining the dropout phenomenon at the high school level. As a result, it would be fair to say that no study examines SD in TES according to education levels. Determining the causes of SDs for different education levels can also support effective education policy production in this context. Thus, dropouts can be reduced and prevented in a reductionist approach. This research then attempts to determine the factors that cause dropout in TES according to education levels.

Literature Review

Causes of SD

SD is the main cause of unemployment, social exclusion, poverty, and poor health. The reasons why groups of young people drop out of school earlier are personal and family problems, learning difficulties, or being in a difficult socio-economic situation. Besides, the (dis)functionality of the education system, the lack of a positive school climate, and negative relationships between teachers and students are the reasons for dropping out (Gherasim, 2022). All these imply that dropping out of school is a severe issue having impacts both individually and socially. For example, drop-out can be observed as a final result of a longer withdrawal process, which begins with frequent absenteeism, low course grades, and reduced social interactions with teachers and peers (Krstić, et. al., 2016). Even though it is mostly defined in this way, it should be underlined that SD has a comprehensive structure, which hints at the fact that it is not always easy to predict SD action. What is more, SD frequently negatively influences both the life of the individual who leaves school and the whole social structure in the long run.

According to Yassin (2020), the dropout rate is not a single factor, it is a combination of plentiful factors. In this context, it can be put forth that researchers need to focus on the individual and social consequences as well as the causes of SDs. Similarly, as pinpointed by Nguyen, et. al., (2022), students drop out of school for several reasons and SD has negative effects on society as well.

SD and child labor are also associated with low socioeconomic status (Raccanello & Garduño, 2018). Child labor, the education level of parents, and early marriages are prominent factors that pave the way for SD (Mambo et. al., 2019). The migration of parents for harvest work results in dropouts too (Rathod & Koli, 2015), like drug use (Valkov, 2018), poverty, ignorance, parental ignorance, and educated unemployment (Gul & Arshad, 2013).

The research results of Ioana et. al., (2015) cast light on that low-income levels, low educational levels of parents, difficulty in maintaining a basic life at home, and the existence of divorced family or single parents are explained as high risks of SD. Not studying regularly, poor quality of the living environment, frequent moving of families, not being in a safe environment, and poor teacher-student rapport are among the factors that escalate the risk of SD (Hasan & Irhaif, 2021). Unhealthy ways of living and

malnutrition, child labor, financial inadequacies, ethnic origin, family's perspective on education, having a large family, teacher absenteeism, the location of the school, and education services' being not quality are some of the causes of SD as well (Hasan & Muneer, 2019).

According to Hartnack (2017), on the other hand, the causes of SD can be classified as social factors, family factors, individual factors, and school factors. Nita, et. al., (2021) show that there are two main causes of SD. These are explained by the concepts of family and poverty. Poverty emerges as a determinant of SD in two ways. The first is that parents deprive their children of school for reasons such as not being able to buy clothes or school equipment, which are necessary for their children to continue their education. The second is that students have to contribute to family income. As put forward by Ioana, et. al., (2015), high absenteeism, learning difficulties, low school performance, and low motivation to participate in school activities are linked to SD. The decrease in household income as a result of the unemployment of the parents is also effective on the SD of the child (Di Maio, et. al., 2016). Moreover, the difference between schools shows that dropping out of school is not only due to the characteristics of the students but also other factors such as the school environment (Zorbaz & Özer, 2020).

When SD is examined in terms of gender, it can be stressed that girls constitute a disadvantaged group. The social reasons for girls to drop out of school are enlisted here: the pressure to get married, ignoring education, preferring boys to be educated, having problems and arguments within the family, and the death of the father (El-shaer & Radwan, 2019). Further, the main factors that lead to girls' dropping out of school are of economic origin and are also connected to situations such as child labor, distance from school, marriage, and migration to different countries (Yassin, 2020).

As can be understood from what the line of literature italicizes, it can be argued that risk groups with a high probability of SD are inclined to have a similar family structure, with the environment or individual factors that may resemble each other. Whatever the reason may be, the alienation of a child from the school environment is a problem that needs to be resolved for the sake of society within the frame of authority of education systems.

Effects of SD

Most of the empirical studies concentrate on the socio-economic effects of SD and emphasize the psychological effects attributed to school failure resulting in dropout (Curelaru, et. al., 2010). SD has prominent effects on personal development as well as short, medium, and long-term consequences on human resource development and community development in general (Nita, et. al., 2021). The prevention of SD is an eminent policy objective, as young people who leave school without a diploma are worse in almost every aspect later in their lives. Additionally, dropouts receive lower wages, are more likely to be unemployed, engage in more criminal activities, and face worse health outcomes (Bolhaar, et. al., 2019). The research results of Huisman and Smits (2009) cast light on the strong evidence that once SD is delayed until completing primary education and provided it extends primary education the probability of staying in school longer gets higher.

The persistent refusal of SDs leads to the waste of public resources in terms of time, money, and personal power, and leads to opportunity costs to society. SD needs to be considered as a manifestation of a dysfunctional education system and social organization (Amgoth, et. al., 2019). On top of that, SD has a major impact on students' academic performance, and leads to drug use and undisciplined behavior boosts owing to school dropout (Ayesiga Kaahwa, 2011). Further to these, high SD has negative consequences, including negative effects on employment, lifetime earnings, and physical health (Lee-St. John, et. al., 2018), hence high school dropouts not only affect the individual but also society (Wallace, 2016), and finally, the higher the SD rates, the greater the social corruption becomes. An individual's dropping out of school not only reveals a self-limited result but also has a social impact as has been underlined earlier in this paper. All these make it essential to produce and implement functional education policies to reduce and eventually fully prevent SD.

SD Concerning Educational Levels

There are dropouts at education levels from primary school to university, and it emerges as a phenomenon that even advanced education systems have difficulty in solving this. To be able to produce effective education policies for dropouts, determining the causes of dropouts in line with education levels can provide important clues in this context.

Khan, et. al., (2017) argue that the reasons behind dropping out of primary school students are listed as lack of an appropriate curriculum, too strict discipline practices of schools, the lack of physical and educational equipment, insufficient educational support from parents, and low socioeconomic status. In addition to these, the main reasons for leaving secondary school arise from the family. These are financial difficulties, low educational level of parents, divorce, or parental death (Chenge, et. al., 2017). Ioana, et. al., (2015) unearth that the dropout rate in primary school is lower than in secondary school, and boys drop out more than girls in primary school.

High SD rates pose a serious threat to education systems. There are approximately 7.000 students who drop out of high school every day across America (Wallace, 2016), and dropout rates are higher in the early years of high school than in middle school (Mahoney & Cairns, 1997). What the current outlook of the Turkish education system portrays is not different from what has been depicted above. SD is one of the most alarming issues waiting for a permanent solution. That being said, how to initiate a process toward a solution brings uncertainty. This is because the prevention of SD, which comprises multifactorial and intertwined problems, is only possible with applicable education policies derived from the results of reductionist research. No research has been found that systematically inspects the causes of SD according to education levels in TES. This research seeks to identify the factors that cause dropout in TES by education levels in view of empirical research findings. The problem of this research is to seek an answer to the question "What are the reasons for dropout in the Turkish education system by education levels?" In doing so, the answers to the following sub-problems were pursued:

1. What are the reasons for dropping out of students at the primary education (primary/secondary school) level?

2. What are the reasons for dropping out of students at the high school level?

3. What are the reasons for the dropout of students at the tertiary level?

4. What are the reasons for school dropout according to studies that do not specify any level of education?

Method

This research was conducted based on the stages of the systematic literature review proposed by Kitchenham, (2004) and Gough (2007). This four-stage process entails the following route:

Identification of The Need for A Review and Establishing the Review Question

Though there exist studies investigating the factors that cause SD in TES, no systematic research was spotted that does so for the causes of SD by education levels i.e., for primary/high school/higher education levels. This research endeavors to answer the question: "What are the reasons for dropout in the Turkish education system by education levels?" In this frame of reference, it can be effective to come up with an education policy according to education levels that can aid in preventing or reducing school dropouts. This study can also guide education policymakers in this sense.

Articulating The Search Strategy, Including Information Sources

The research is centered only on SD in TES. A review of the literature for SD was executed using both Turkish and English keywords, to wit, *"Okul terki", "school dropout", "okuldan ayrılma", "school leaving", "Türkiye'de okul terki", "school dropout in Turkey".* TR Index, Yök Tez, Eric, Ebsco, Scopus, Google Scholar, ProQuest, and Web of Science indexes were scanned in this regard. The studies to be analyzed were attained in two separate periods. The first data collection round took place between April 2022 and May 2022. The second one was held in November 2022.

Selection of Studies, Data Extraction, and Inclusion

The inclusion or exclusion criteria of the studies that is consistent with the purpose of the study are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Inclusion or Exclusion Criteria of Studies from The Analysis

Criteria	Inclusion (First stage)	Exclusion (Second stage)
empirical studies	•	
Main focus on SD	•	
article, master's, or doctoral dissertation	•	
Dealing with Turkish education system	•	
Presenting clear findings on SD	•	
Papers, reviews, and reports		•
When a finding is not available		•
Not related to the Turkish education system		•
Studies on absenteeism from school		•

According to the first set of searches, 72 studies were reached in the literature. As appears in the inclusion (first stage) criteria stated in Table 1, 72 studies were probed. In the first stage, 13 of these studies were eliminated and 59 studies remained. Afterward, 12 studies were eliminated according to the exclusion (second stage) criteria and 47 studies remained. The data analysis of this study was completed in accordance with the 47 studies specified in the appendix (Annex-1).

In line with the sub-problems of these studies, 47 studies were divided into four categories, considering the groups (samples) through which the attached studies were performed. These are primary education, high school, higher education, and other groups. Should a study not belong to any level of education or if no education level was specified, then, this was transferred to the other group. While the most recent research in the appendix belongs to 2022, the oldest research belongs to 2009 (Annex-1).

Data Synthesis

This research spotlights the findings of each attached study. The research findings were analyzed by content analysis and using pareto analysis methods. In the content analysis, 'word' was preferred as the unit of analysis.

A total of 290 coding processes were applied for the content analysis. In the primary education category, a total of three studies were included and 19 coding processes were carried out. In the high school category, 28 studies were analyzed, and 171 coding processes were accomplished. Nine studies were delved into in the higher education category, and 55 coding processes were embarked on. Finally, seven studies were evaluated in the other category and 45 coding processes were run (Annex-1). I

used the MAXQDA software program to analyze the data and the data was stored in the '.mx20' file.

The frequencies resulting from each coding process were referred to in the pareto analysis. The Pareto principle, often entitled the 80/20 rule, was introduced by Vilfredo Pareto to show that eighty percent of Italy's wealth is distributed among twenty percent of the total population (Craft and Leake, 2002). Later, it was developed as a method to be used in almost every branch of science. In this study, the factors causing school SD in TES were ranked from the most coded to the least coded by education levels. The codes that were coded the most and that made up 80% of the total coding were identified. In doing so, the areas where most of the problem takes place are listed cumulatively according to the Pareto analysis. In line with the 80/20 principle, it was struggled to unveil the factors that cause SD at every education level, which make up nearly 80% of the problem.

Ethic

This present study research was planned, carried out, and reported in line with the ethical principles of APA and COPE with the approval of Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University Ethics Commission dated 24/02/2023 and numbered 2023-02-56.

Limitations of the study

The research is limited to the results of 47 studies on SD in TES and the data of the above-mentioned indexes in 2022.

Findings

In this section, the findings of the research are given in order following the sub-problems of the research. The causes of SD in primary education are presented below.

Table 2

Pareto Analysis Results of Primary School Students' SD Reasons

Themes	Frequency	Cumulative Percent (%)	Themes	Frequency	Cumulative Percent (%)
Financial impossibilities	4	21.05	Peer bullying	2	84.19
Indifference of the family and low education level	4	42.1	Lack of social support	1	89.45
Academic failure and absenteeism	4	63.15	Physical incompetence of the school	1	94.71
Negative attitude towards school	2	73.67	Negative attitudes of teachers and administrators	1	100
Total Number of Codes: 19			Number of Studies Analyzed: 3		

According to the results of the three studies analyzed according to Table 2, eight themes emerged. The causes of SDs of students at the primary (primary/secondary school) level of TES are listed in order of importance as financial impossibilities, indifference of the family and low education level, academic failure and absenteeism, and negative attitude towards school. These four factors occupy 73.67% of the causes of SDs in primary education (primary/secondary school). The rest are peer bullying, lack of social support, physical incompetence of the school, and negative attitudes of teachers and administrators. The reasons for SD for students at the secondary (high school) level in TES are in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Pareto Analysis Results of Secondary School (High School) Students' Reasons for Leaving School

Themes	Frequency	Cumulative Percent (%)	Themes	Frequency	Cumulative Percent (%)
Academic failure and absenteeism	36	21.05	Health problems	5	87.56
Negative influence of peer group	18	31.57	Low education level of the family	5	90.46
Family problems and apathy	16	40.92	Inadequate teaching techniques	3	92.21
Financial constraints and having to work	15	49.62	Belief that education cannot offer employment	3	93.96
Low commitment to school	13	57.22	Low self-esteem and feeling worthless	3	95.71
Poor communication	10	63.06	Marriage at an early age	2	96.87
Negative impact of the environment	9	68.32	Tendency to violence	1	97.45
Inadequate vocational guidance	8	72.99	Lesson intensity	1	98.03
Disciplinary measures	8	77.66	The school is in a remote area	1	98.61
Anti-social behavior	6	81.16	Perceived abuse from the father	1	99.19
Teacher/school administrator attitudes	6	84.66	Control-oriented school approach	1	100
Total Number of Codes: 171			**Number of Studies Analyzed: 28**		

According to the results of 28 studies analyzed in Table 3, 22 themes emerged. The causes of SD for secondary school (high school) students of TES are in order of importance, are academic failure and absenteeism, the negative influence of peer groups, family problems and apathy, financial impossibilities and having to work, low

commitment to school poor communication, the negative impact of the environment and inadequate vocational guidance. These nine factors compose 77.66% of the causes of SD in high school. The other reasons for leaving school are anti-social behavior, teacher/school administrator attitudes, health problems, low education level of the family, inadequate teaching techniques, education's not being able to warrant employment, low self-esteem, and feelings of worthlessness, early marriage, the tendency to violence, lesson intensity, the school's being in a remote area, perceived abuse from the father, control-oriented school approach. The reasons for SD of students at higher education (university) level at TES are demonstrated in Table 4 below.

Table 4

Pareto Analysis Results of SD Reasons for Students at Higher Education (University) Level

Themes	Frequency	Cumulative Percent (%)	Themes	Frequency	Cumulative Percent (%)
Social maladjustment	7	12.72	Family education level	1	83.57
Academic failure and absenteeism	7	25.44	Health problems	1	85.38
Financial problems and having to work	7	38.16	The thought of not being employed	1	87.19
Realizing you don't have skills for the job	5	47.25	Change school	1	89
Choosing the department incorrectly or forcefully	5	56.34	Family problems	1	90.01
Faculty member mobbing	4	63.61	Enlist	1	92.62
Appointment as a civil servant or starting a business	3	69.06	Drug use	1	94.43
Inadequate facilities of the city	2	72.69	Close friends drop out of school	1	96.24
Alienation from school	2	76.32	Conducting a disciplinary investigation	1	98.05
Marriage	2	79.95	Dating violence	1	100
Shelter and nutrition problems	1	81.76			
Total Number of Codes: 55			Number of Studies Analyzed: 9		

According to the results of the nine studies analyzed in Table 4, 21 themes emerged. In order of importance, the reasons for SD of students at the higher education (university) level of TES are social maladjustment, academic failure and absenteeism, financial problems and having to work, one's realizing they do not have the skills for

their future job, choosing the department unconsciously or without discretion, faculty members' mobbing, being appointed as a civil servant or starting a business while still studying, inadequate facilities of the city of the university, alienation from school, marriage. These 10 factors incorporate 79.95% of the causes of SD in higher education. The others causing school dropout are shelter and nutrition problems, low family education level, health problems, the thought of not getting employed after graduation, changing school, family problems, being enlisted, drug use, close friends' dropping out of school, having a disciplinary investigation, dating violence. The reasons for SD in the other category, which embodies the SD of students who do not specify their education level in the research or of those studied through the open education system, are also outlined in Table 5 below.

Table 5

Pareto Analysis Results of SD Reasons of Students in Other Level

Themes	Frequency	Cumulative Percent (%)	Themes	Frequency	Cumulative Percent (%)
Academic failure and absenteeism	10	22.22	Negative thoughts of the family about education	2	82.18
Financial difficulties and poverty	9	42.22	child labor	2	86.62
Marriage and early child marriage	4	51.1	Teacher's negative attitude and incompetence	2	91.06
Not liking school	3	57.76	Low self-level	1	93.28
Fellowship influence	3	64.42	Failure of education to provide employment	1	95.5
Family problems	3	71.08	Disciplinary measures	1	97.72
Low level of education and indifference of the family	3	77.74	Health problems	1	100
Total Number of Codes: 45			**Number of Studies Analyzed: 7**		

According to the results of the seven studies analyzed in Table 5, 14 themes emerged. In parallel with the results of the studies that could not be enclosed at any of the education levels, the causes of SD are given in order of importance as academic failure and absenteeism, financial difficulties and poverty, marriage and early child marriage, dislike school, fellowship influence, family problems, low level of education and indifference of family. These seven factors represent 77.74% of the reasons for SD in the other category. The remaining reasons for dropout manifested as negative thoughts of the family, negative thoughts about education, child labor, teachers' negative attitude and incompetence, low self-level, education's being incapable of offering employment opportunities, disciplinary measures, and health problems.

Discussion

The family factor comes to the fore in the SD at the primary (primary/secondary school) level of TES. Insufficient financial investment of the family, indifference to education, and low level of education of parents can be articulated as the main reasons. Academic failure and negative thoughts about the school can also be strongly explained as the causes of SD. The causes of SD in primary education (primary/secondary school) are not any different, namely, fiscal difficulties, low education levels of parents, divorce, or parental death (Chenge, et. al., 2017). Frequent study, poor quality of living environments, frequent moving of families, not being in a safe environment, and poor teacher-student relationships are the parameters that add to SD (Hasan & Irhaif, 2021). According to the research results of Ioana, et. al., (2015), high rates of absenteeism, learning difficulties, low school performance and low motivation to participate in school activities are the main reasons for dropping out. Khan, et. al., (2017) count inadequate curriculum, strict disciplinary practices of schools, lack of physical and educational equipment, insufficient educational support of parents, and socioeconomic status as the factors in this manner.

Children dropping out of school due to abandonment by their peers emerges as a dominant factor in school dropout (Gagica, et. al., 2022). Similarly, Masing and Astuti's (2022) research revealed that the two main factors affecting children's school dropout are abandonment by their peers and dropping out of school due to dislike of school. Other factors include distance from school to home, relocation of parents, bullying of students, failure to enroll, and neglect by parents. According to the results of another research, the main reasons why students drop out of school are the necessity of making a living, housework, health problems, lack of interest, and failure in classes and exams (Khan & Samad, 2022). Similarly, housework, lack of parental guidance in classes, large family size, poor economic situation of the family, failure in exams, lack of time to study, teachers' punishment, and lack of interest in classes also cause school dropout (Baruah & Goswami, 2012). Inadequate teacher-student relationships, students having to study on their own, not being ready to learn, not encouraging school environment and disciplinary punishments cause school dropouts (Katolo, 2014). In addition, having a good school infrastructure and qualified teachers reduces the risk of students dropping out of school. Although family-level factors cause school dropout, school-level factors also reduce this risk (Wortsman, et. al., 2022).

The chief reason for SD in high school in TES is the student's academic failure and absenteeism. The negative effect of peer groups, the indifference of families, and problems within the family also cause SD. Another reason is that because of financial difficulties, education is not a primary choice. Not liking the school enough, students' poor communication with others, choosing the wrong major, the negative effects of the environment, and disciplinary punishments are also influential in the SD, respectively. The problems seem to be caused by academic failure, financial inadequacies, family problems, and inadequacy of vocational guidance. Research results also indicate similar issues. Dropping out of high school has negative consequences, including negative effects on employment, lifetime earnings, and physical health (Lee-St. John, et. al., 2018). Poverty, ignorance, ignorance of parents, and unemployment of the educated are the main causes of SD (Gul and Arshad, 2013). To prevent SD, parental involvement in academic studies is a positive factor affecting students' graduation from high school for

low-achieving high school students (Nguyen, et. al., 2022). Studies within the scope of TES at the high school level also draw similar conclusions. Peer influence and academic failure (Yorğun, 2014), family interference in school, school intervening in family, problems in student-teacher relations, and negative effects of friend groups inside and outside the school stand for SD (Boyacı & Öz, 2018). Along the same lines, the main causes of academic failure, family environment, discipline problems, and social incompatibility (Çakır & Çolak, 2019) and dropout are stressed out as school, environment, family and individual (Taş, et. al., 2013).

School dropout is a phenomenon that consists of multiple factors and is dynamic in nature. It is understood that this situation prevents the implementation of effective public policies towards the problem (de Lima Kanashiro, et. al, 2023). In particular, it is understood that high school students drop out of school due to reasons such as low academic success, course repetition, absenteeism, insufficient economic status, reluctance, indifference, negative behaviors, bad peer group, bad social environment, negative role models, different career orientations and disciplinary punishments (Arslan & Peker, 2023). Similarly, in high school, the majority of students who drop out do so due to poverty, apathy, or being negatively influenced by their peers (Amoroso, et. al., 2021). School dropout is also caused by inadequate academic performance, depression, insufficient parental support, life satisfaction at school, violation of student privacy, and factors affecting learning (Lee, 2023). Additionally, it shows that several determinants are associated with school dropout, such as truancy, lack of motivation, health, bullying, and living in economically distressed areas (Ripamonti, 2018). Poverty, students getting pregnant at a young age, substance addiction, peer pressure, social behavior and not caring about school cause school dropouts (Snyders, 2013).

The most powerful reasons for SD in higher education are the student's adaptation to the social environment and academic failure. Not being able to attend school due to financial problems, realizing that possessed and required professional skills do not match, and selecting an inappropriate major also cause students to drop out of school. Plus, the oppressive behavior of the faculty members, starting a business, the insufficient opportunities of small cities, the alienation of the student from the school, and getting married result in school dropouts. According to the results of Paura and Arhipova's (2014) higher education research, the main reason for dropping out is the inadequate high school knowledge brought by students to university and their low motivation to study at university. The studies conducted in TES at the higher education level have similar findings. Academic adjustment problems, financial difficulties (Bülbül, 2012), and factors that cause leaving postgraduate education are itemized as academic and social adaptation, not quality education, orientation to different fields, and transportation issues (Deniz, 2019). In addition, as the alienation of students in higher education increases, so does their tendency to drop out (Dündar and Bülbül, 2022). According to Gülşen's (2017) research results, leaving higher education in TES has three basic processes. These are pre-higher education, tertiary education, and the process of leaving higher education. Whereas the choice of department before higher education is effective in SD, it subsumes social cohesion, and academic and organizational factors in the higher education process.

College dropout is a multidimensional matter, broadly classified into five primary categories: student adaptation, personality, socio-economic status, teacher-

student relationships and the quality of university education. Among these categories, such sub-factors as a lack of motivation, low self-esteem, and unexpected life occurences including pregnancy, among others, play vital roles. This is because addressing these factors is of great importance to reduce dropout rates (Lorenzo-Quiles, et. al., 2023). There is evidence to suggest that the most impactful determinants of dropout include are personal, academic, economic and institutional domains, highlighting the. It has also complexity of the problem that encompasses a wide range of factors that affect a student's academic life in different ways (Silva, & Diaz, 2023). Further, it has been revealed by Long and Noor (2023) that personal economic factors, academic satisfaction, academic performance satisfaction, and family economic conditions are key factors contributing to the problem. Therefore, 73.8% of school dropout can be attributed to such factors as employment status, social relationships, technology skills, and gender differences (Mojdeh, 2014). Moreover, the family's economic situation, lack of interest, experiences of bullying, constant academic failure, difficulties in adapting, and academic pressure also significant causes of SDs (Figueiredo, & Salles, 2017; Mahesh, et. al., 2018; Sulayman & Ahmed, 2021).

This present study concludes that academic underperformance as well as financiak difficulties are the primary factors leading to SDs. Additionally, such factors as early marriages, disinterest in schooling, the influence of peer groups, the low educational attainment within families, and a lack of engagement with the school are the contrinuting factors. In summary, the primary causes of SD in the TES can be attributed to economic challenges, academic failures, family problems such as neglect and the negative effects of peers, the absence of vocational guidance, and the prevalence of early marriages.

Conclusion

In this study, financial constraints have emerged as the predominant factors linked to SDs in TES. Further, such additional factors as a lack of engagement with the school environment and the low educational attainment of family members has been found to associated with the incidence of SD. Since there is an education system focused on academic success, students who experience academic failure tend to drop out of school. Although not a leading factor, students' negative attitudes towards school, peer bullying, lack of social support, physical equipment of schools, and negative attitudes and approaches of educators also cause students to drop out of school at the primary education level.

In the Turkish education system, high school can be seen as the education level where the highest number of school dropouts occur. In particular, academic failure, absenteeism, negative influence of peer groups, irresponsibility and indifference of families, financial difficulties, negative attitudes towards school, and lack of communication emerge as the main reasons. School dropouts are also observed due to students' characteristics. For example, anti-social behavior, health problems and low self-perception can be listed. School dropouts due to education also occur at the high school level. It can be shown as inadequate teaching methods and high course intensity.

Although the reasons for school dropout at the tertiary level vary depending on the primary and high school levels, there are also similar aspects. Especially at the tertiary level, social disharmony, academic failure, and financial inadequacy are among

them. Realizing that a profession is not preferred based on individual characteristics and having to go to the preferred department can be listed as one of the prominent reasons. Other than these reasons, the factors that cause school dropout, although not prominent, are getting married, inadequate city facilities, housing, and nutrition problems, being drafted into the military, drug use, and receiving disciplinary punishment are also among the factors that cause school dropout.

The findings from this present study that did not specify specific educational level. I also focused on the studies on students in non-formal education such as open education were also examined. Within this broad context, academic underachievement, financial constraints, early marriage, disinterest to school and the adverse effects of the peer group, familial issues, and negative attitudes towards education have also been found to be linked to school dropout.

Suggestions

Bearing in mind the findings and results of this study, the following suggestions can be made to reduce and prevent SD in TES:

Strengthening School-Family Partnerships:

1. School-family collaborations should be strengthened. Particularly, in school adult education in the form of seminars and alike should be carried out for parents.

Purposeful Support for At-Risk Students:

2. Students at risk of dropping out should be identified and individual programs should be established to make sure that each student is brought to school.

3. The school should be provided with a physical environment that the student can enjoy being a part of.

4. University students with financial difficulties should be provided with part-time employment opportunities by universities.

Improving School Environment:

5. Academically low-performing students should be specified, and individual academic plans should be made to improve their academic competencies.

Monitoring and Intervening for Absenteeism:

6. Students with high absenteeism rates should be spotted and their reasons should be determined by commissions to be formed at schools. Thus, student follow-ups can be carried out more systematically.

Financial and Social Support:

7. Families with insufficient financial means and who are unable to provide their children with quality environment assisting in development at home should be detected by schools and the cases need to be reported in detail to the authorized institutions so that they can be provided with social support.

Vocational Guidance:

• Vocational guidance should be given to students effectively. Upon graduating from high school, they should be placed in departments that match their interests and abilities.

• Any environmental impact that may harm students should be noticed and eliminated through the collaborative work of school and law enforcement officials.

Social Integration:

• Orientation practices should be functional to guarantee social cohesion in universities.

Faculty Development:

• Faculty members should be trained for students to be successful both socially and academically.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author conducted the study alone. There is no conflict of interest.

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Annex

Annex-1: Studies from which data was collected

Education levels	Research: Title, Authors and Year	Number of Codes
Primary education	Ortaokul öğrencilerinin okul reddi ve okul terki risklerinin zorbalık-mağduriyet kategorilerine göre incelenmesi (Özgü, 2015)	5
	İlköğretim Kurumu Öğrencilerinin Devamsızlık ve Okul Terki Nedenleri (Aküzüm, Yavaş, Tan ve Uçar, 2015)	6
	Ortaokul öğrencilerinde okul terki riski, okul tükenmişliği ve algılanan sosyal desteğin bazı değişkenlere göre incelenmesi (konak ilçesi örneği (Tırpancıoğlu, 2019)	8
High school	The investigation of school-dropout at the secondary level of formal education: the stated reasons by the school administrators and school counselors: a preliminary study (Kirazoğlu, 2009)	12
	Yükseköğretimde Okul Terki: Nedenler ve Çözümler (Bülbül, 2012)	6
	Liseyi Terk Eden Öğrencilerin Tecrübelerine Göre Okul Terki (Bayhan, Dalgıç, 2012)	7
	Meslek Lisesi Öğrencilerinin Okul Terk Nedenleri (Taş, Selvitopu, Bora, Demiraya, 2013)	3
	Lise öğrencilerinde okul terki riskinin incelenmesi (Yorğun, 2014)	4
	Liselerde Akademik Başarısızlık: Nedenleri ve Önlenmesine İlişkin Öğretmen ve Okul Yöneticilerinin Görüşleri (Sezgin, Koşar, Koşar, 2016)	1
	Ortaöğretimde okul terkinin bireysel ve kurumsal nedenleri: Şanlıurfa ili örneği (Karacabey, 2016)	11
	Meslek Lisesi Öğrencilerinin Riskli Davranışlarının Yordayıcısı Olarak Sosyal Görünüş Kaygısı ve Mükemmeliyetçilik (Ekşi, Arıcan, Yaman, 2016)	1
	Metaforik Okul Algısı ile Okulu Terk Eğilimi Arasındaki İlişkinin Öğrenci Görüşlerine Göre İncelenmesi (Yüner, Özdemir, 2017)	5
	Öğrencilerin Özsaygılarının Artırılması Yoluyla Okul Terkinin Önlenmesi (Bademci, Karadayı, Karabulut, Vural, 2018)	2
	Üç öykü üzerinden "okul terki": eğitimsizlik, yoksulluk, ataerkillik (Küçüker, 2018)	3
	Erken Yaşta Evlenen Ergenlerin Bireysel ve Ailesel Özellikleri, Okul Terkinin Nedenleri ve Evlilikle İlgili Sorunları (Koçtürk, Bilge, Yüksel, 2018)	7
	Lise Öğrencilerinin Riskli Davranışlar Gösterme Düzeyleri ile Okula Bağlanma Düzeyleri Arasındaki İlişkinin İncelenmesi (Şimşek ve Çöplü, 2018)	3
	Lise öğrencilerinin okul terk risklerini etkileyen öğrenci ve okul düzeyindeki faktörler (Zorbaz, 2018)	4
	Ortaöğretimde Okul Terki ve Sosyal sermaye: Nitel Bir Araştırma (Boyacı ve Öz, 2018)	9
	Mesleki ve teknik ortaöğretimde okul terkinin nedenleri ve çözüm önerileri: Bütüncül bir program önerisi (Güngör, 2019)	31
	Meslek Liselerinde Başarısızlık Kaynaklı Okul Terkinin İncelenmesi (Ergül, 2019)	8
	Meslek lisesi öğrencilerinin okul terkinde rol oynayan faktörler ve önleme stratejilerine ilişkin yönetici, öğretmen ve öğrenci görüşleri: AB ülkeleri ile karşılaştırılması (Küçükarslan, 2019)	5
	Lise Öğrencilerinin Okul Terki Riskine İlişkin Görüşleri (Çakır ve Çolak, 2019)	8
	Liselerde okul terkinin çeşitli değişkenler açısından incelenmesi (Özger, 2019)	4
	Lise öğrencilerinde okul terki riskinin okul iklimi ve yapısal özellikler kuramı açısından incelenmesi (Çetin, 2019)	9
	Okul terkinin eşiğinde geleceği düşünmek: sınıf tekrarı yapan öğrencilerin gelecek emelleri (Türk, 2019)	4
	Do Student Characteristics Affecting School Dropout Risk Differ from One School to Another? (Zorbaz ve Özer, 2020)	9
	Ortaöğretim kurumlarında okul terkinin incelenmesi (Dirik, 2020)	6
	Ergenlerin anne babalarından algıladıkları duygusal istismar durumu ile riskli davranışları arasındaki ilişki (Orak, Kırbaş, Şahin, Gülırmak, 2020)	2
	Ortaöğretim Öğrencilerinde Okul Terki Riskinin Yordayıcıları: Okula Bağlılık ve Okul Tükenmişliği (Arslan, 2021)	3
	Meslek liselerinde okul terkinin nedenleri, sonuçları ve önlemeye yönelik çözüm önerileri (Öztürk, 2021)	8
	Açık öğretim liseleri öğrencilerinin okul terki ve mezuniyet durumlarının eğitsel veri madenciliği ile incelenmesi (Polat, 2021)	2
Tertiary	Üniversite Öğrencilerinin Okulu Bırakma Eğilimleri ve Nedenleri (Şimşek, 2013)	6
	Üniversite Öğrencilerinde Riskli Davranışların Ortaya Çıkmasında Yordayıcı Bir Etken Olarak Uyumsuz Şemaların Telafileri (Körük, 2017)	1

	The Reasons of School Dropouts in Higher Education: Babaeski Vocational College Case (Can, Aktaş, Arpacioğlu, 2017)	4
	Yüksek Din Öğretiminde Okul Terki (Baltacı, 2019)	7
	The relationship between the attitudes of Turkish university students towards dating violence with risk-taking behaviors, emotion regulation and emotional autonomy (Yıldız, Eldeleklioğlu, 2020)	2
	Üniversite öğrencilerinin örgütsel imaj algılarıyla okula yabancılaşma düzeyleri ve okul terki eğilimleri arasındaki ilişki (Dündar, 2020)	3
	Yükseköğretimde okul terkinin değerlendirilmesi (Gülşen, 2017)	20
	Yükseköğretimde okul terki ölçeği'nin Türk kültürüne uyarlanması ve kültürlerarası ölçme değişmezliğinin belirlenmesi (Uyumaz, 2021)	3
	İlahiyat Fakülteleri'nde Okul Terki: İlahiyat Fakültesinden Kayıt Sildirenler Üzerine Fenomenolojik Bir Araştırma (Ay, 2021)	4
Studies that do not specify any level of education	Acarlar Beldesinde okul terkleri ve devamsızlık sorunu (Köse, 2014)	10
	Kız öğrencilerin örgün eğitimlerini sürdürmeme nedenleri (Yavuz, Özkaral, Yıldız, 2016)	5
	Öğrencilerin Okula Devamından Sorumlu Paydaşların Görüşlerine Göre Okul Devamsızlığının Nedenleri ve Buna Yönelik Çözüm Önerileri (Balantekin ve Kartal, 2016)	5
	Exploring the Factors Associated with the School Dropout (Boyacı, 2019)	5
	Okul Terkinin Maliyeti: Kamu Gelirleri Kapsamında Türkiye Değerlendirmesi (Bakırtaş ve Nazlıoğlu, 2021)	11
	Okul terkinin önlenmesi için öğretmenlerin aktif katılımıyla gerçekleştirilen psikolojik dayanıklılık programının niteliksel yöntemle değerlendirilmesi: Soyaç örneği (Kardaş, 2022)	5
	Evlilik Nedeniyle Okul Terkinin Toplumsal Hareketlilik Bağlamında Değerlendirilmesi (Aslan, 2022)	3
	Total	***290***