



Reasons for Dropouts of Girls from the Formal Secondary Education Living in Rural Areas *

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Abstract

This study, aimed at determining the reasons for dropouts of the formal secondary education of girls living in rural areas, employed phenomenological methodology from the qualitative research approaches. The study group includes 30 female students, who live in a town in the Black Sea Region of Turkey and who dropped out of formal secondary education, and their parents. The data were collected by interview technique. In the interviews, personal, social, economic and cultural information about the students and the families, and the reasons why the children did not attend school were obtained. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis technique. Precautions were taken to increase the validity and reliability of the data collection, processing and analysis processes. As a result, the vital causes for school dropout of the girls in the study group were found as insecurity, conservatism, poverty, and failure. The school dropout of the majority of children is resulted from two or more reasons coming together. Insecurity / conservatism, insecurity / poverty and insecurity / conservatism / poverty are the leading reasons for the girls leaving the school in the study group. The combination of reasons for dropout differs from student to student. It is suggested that, within this context, preventive measures for student dropouts should be diversified by the government on a student basis.

Keywords

School dropout
School-leave
Educational issues
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Introduction

Education is one of the basic human rights, and governments issue legislation that makes education obligatory for a certain period of time. But there are obstacles for women to use these rights. (Aslan, 2011, 2015). The most striking manifestation of gender inequality in education is that girls are not sent to school or leave school without completing compulsory education (Özaydınlık, 2014). As a priori, when education is considered a useful process, it is irrational that girls do not go to school. So, why is not one of every five girls at school age in Turkey going to formal secondary school?

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The duration of compulsory education in Turkey was increased to 12 years in 2012. However, after four years, secondary school enrollment rate reached to just 82.5% in the 2016-2017 school year. This rate was 82.4% for women (Ministry of National Education [MEB], 2017). According to this, despite being compulsory, 18 of every hundred children at secondary school age are not enrolled in school. On the other hand, school dropout is a common problem in secondary education (Öğülmüş et al., 2013). When the change in the number of students according to the classes in the last two academic years is examined, it is seen that at least 34.2% of male students and 20.8% of female students dropped out of school (Ministry of National Education Strategy Development Presidency, 2016; MEB, 2017). One of the countries that has the highest rate of school dropout among the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) countries is Turkey (OECD, 2016), and research indicates that school dropout at secondary level in Turkey is a serious problem (Otaran, Sayın, Güven, Gürkaynak, & Atakul, 2003; Özkan & Selcik, 2016; Uysal, Alp, Şahin, Özden, & Gürcüoğlu, 2006).

The term school dropout (leaving school, dropping students), which means "leaving school without any diploma" (Oğuzkan, 1993), is defined by OECD (2016) as leaving the education system without completing secondary education. School dropout is "an important problem for both individuals and the society" (OECD, 2016). Young people dropping out without completing secondary education face various challenges in entering the labor market (OECD, 2016). School dropout has negative consequences such as income and tax loss; unemployment, homelessness, and poverty; increased risk of crime, and tendency to violence and bullying; early marriage; and so on (Baker, Sigmon, & Nugent, 2001; Campbell, 2003; Coşkun & Bebiş, 2014; House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training, 1996; Özgür, Yörükoğlu, & Baysan Arabacı, 2011; Sevim & Soyaslan, 2009). School dropout may result in futility in terms of adolescents, because the level of future expectation of students who tend to leave the school is significantly lower than the others (Şimşek, 2012).

The school dropout is an issue that has been observed in all of the developed or undeveloped countries (UNESCO, 2008), and examined by many researchers (Bowers, Sprott, & Taff, 2013). Majority of the research is related to the causes of school dropouts. The causes of school dropout are examined under four headings which are; the causes originated from individuals, families, schools, and societies. Individual reasons often draw attention to the psychological attitudes, mental abilities and physiological characteristics of the student (Özer, Gençtanırım, & Ergene, 2011). Academic failure comes first among the individual reasons of the student dropouts (Bayhan & Dalgıç, 2012). The effect of the family on school dropout is addressed in research within the framework of the structural, cultural and environmental characteristics of the family. Families of the most of the dropout students are in poverty and need child support to overcome their financial difficulties (Taş, Selvitopu, Bora, & Demirkaya, 2013). Also, the educational level of the parents is an effective variable in the child's continuing the secondary education (Oral & McGivney, 2014). School, which is another factor that is considered as one of the reasons for dropout is addressed in research in the frame of attitudes of teachers and managers, infrastructure sufficiency, management processes, and the structure of the curriculum. In particular, attitudes of teachers towards students are the effects that increase or decrease school dropout rates (Şimşek, 2011). The last factor related to the reasons for school dropout is the environment where the family lives. The structural, cultural, geographical and economic features of the environment where the family lives are the variables the present study examined under the heading social/environmental factors. The most frequently mentioned problem among the factors originating from the family's environment is that the student was negatively influenced by the peer groups (Şimşek & Şahin, 2012).

Many of the common reasons for school dropouts also apply to women. However, there are also factors that constitute obstacles to the education of women only (Eğitim Reformu Girişimi [ERG], 2009). According to research, one of the reasons why girls are not sent to school or dropout of school is the family's feeling of insecurity towards the child, the school, and/or the environment. Parents, who think that their children's morals will deteriorate in school (İlhan Tunç, 2009); that the school, the school's surroundings, and the distance between home

and school are not safe (Makwinja-Morara, 2007), prevent their daughters from continuing to the school. Families, especially those living in rural areas, may withdraw their child from school because they do not want their daughters to ride on the same bus with boys going to and from school (United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF], 2003). In Philadelphia, 70% of the students who had been neglected or harassed during their high school years had to leave the school (Kennelly & Monrad, 2007). Another reason why girls are not sent to school is the insufficient economic situation of the family. Although poverty is one of the reasons for the dropout of boys as well, it has been found that "the dropout rate of school children may increase with the worsening of the economic situation of the families where the investment to education is not seen valuable" (United Nations Development Fund For Women [UNIFEM], 2000). The traditional family structure is also one of the reasons why girls are not sent to the school. "The role cut for women by the conservative values created by traditional relationships makes it more appropriate for girls to undertake domestic roles rather than studying and thus has a negative impact on girls' schooling" (Bakış, Levent, İnel, & Polat, 2009, p. 22). In addition, mixed-sex education, the child entering the adolescence period and the appearance of physiological changes related to sexual identity, early marriage, helping with housework, caring for child, sick or elderly at home, the preference of sending boys to the school in the cases the number of children being high, the family being unconcerned about the education of the child, customs, and ignorance are among the reasons why girls are left out of school in various surveys (Börkan, Levent, Dereli, Bakış, & Pelek, 2014; Sekine & Hodgkin, 2017; Şimşek, 2011; Tan, Ecevit, Üşür, & Acuner, 2000; UNICEF, 2014; Uysal, 2008).

It could be said that different approaches have been used in the researches that investigated the causes of school dropout. In some studies, approaches of categorizing the reasons for school dropouts, the individual examination, and the explanation with only one reason are overwhelming (e.g. Günöz, 2007). These approaches lead to the ignorance of the relationships between the reasons for dropouts. Research in recent years has begun to identify whether school dropouts could not be linked to a single reason, and that the reasons are related to each other and are complex (e.g. Bayhan & Dalgıç, 2012; Bowers & Sprott, 2012; Rumberger, 2001; Taylı, 2008). Especially in research using quantitative methods, reasons for dropout are examined within the framework of the literature-based reasons set by the researcher, which in turn limits, in part, the responses of participants to the study (e.g. Özer et al., 2011). It could be said that this problem has been largely overcome with more use of qualitative or mixed methods in research on school dropout (e.g. Taş et al., 2013). In some studies, the reasons for dropout are examined solely as if it is a consequence of the student's psychological disturbances (e.g. Inglésa, González-Maciáb, García-Fernándezb, Vicentb, & Martínez-Monteagudob, 2015; Kearney, 2008; Shrivastava, Janghel, & Bhatt, 2016). Other reasons for school dropout are ignored in the studies where this approach dominates the study. On the other hand, there are also studies addressing the social origins of the problem (e.g. Uysal, 2008). Another approach that has been observed in research is the lack of discussion why some children do not leave school even though they have categorically similar characteristics with the ones who dropout. For example, in some studies, the poverty of the family is shown as the reason for the school dropout, but the reasons why other poor children still go to school are not discussed. It is seen in a study by Özdemir, Erkan, Karip, Sezgin, and Şirin (2010) that this was discussed though partially. Another difference in research approach is related to the working group. In some research, the reasons for school drop-out are being asked the people who have no school drop-out experience (school manager, inspector, teacher, etc.) (e.g. Adıgüzel, 2013; Aküzüm, Yavaş, Tan, & Uçar, 2015). Collecting data in this way causes the views of the participants that are subjective, limited, and perhaps observer-based to enter the literature. According to Patton (2014), "in-depth interviews should be conducted with people who directly experience the phenomenon that they are interested in, as opposed to individuals who have indirect experience, that is, they have experienced experiences".

As explained above, a large number of researches have been done on school dropout. However, the present study is the first study on the reasons for dropping-out of girls in rural areas following the duration of compulsory education becoming 12 years in Turkey. One feature that distinguishes this research from the previous ones is that the reasons for dropout are addressed separately for each child in a way to show the relationships between reasons.

The purpose of the research in this context is to examine the reasons why girls living in rural areas drop out of formal secondary education. For this purpose, the questions were tried to be answered about the demographic characteristics of the girls and their families, who made the decision about leaving the school, and why the child left the school. In addition, the crucial reasons for school dropout, and the relationship between those reasons were tried to be explored. It is expected that this study will contribute to the implementation of the solution proposal by putting the obstacles in the way of rural secondary school girls to continue compulsory secondary education.

Method

Research Model

This research was conducted using the phenomenological methodology from qualitative research approaches. Phenomenology is "the definition of a phenomenon in terms of the experience of individuals or a particular group" (Christensen, Johnson, & Turner, 2015). In this framework, the reasons why girls living in rural areas drop out of formal secondary education was studied extensively in the context of the experiences of the children and the statements of their parents.

Study Group

In the selection of the study group, homogenous sampling technique was used from purposeful sampling methods. This technique is "the identification and selection of a small and homogeneous group or a number of homogeneous states" (Christensen et al., 2015, p. 176). The research was carried out in the villages and borders of the Reşadiye district of Tokat province. 70.5% of the population live in rural areas (Tokat İl Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü, 2014) and Reşadiye District was included in the scope of the study due to the fact that the low schooling rate of the girls living in rural areas in the province is a problem (Reşadiye İlçe Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü, 2015). The identity and communication information of the girls dropped-out of school was obtained by examining the absentee records of the high schools in the sub-province. Through a high school principal in the sub-province, parents of the children were telephoned, and the ones who volunteered to participate were included in the study group. The study group, reached by this way consisted of 30 girls who lived in a small town in the Black Sea Region of Turkey, were absent from school more than 30 days though enrolled in secondary education in 2014-2015 academic year, and did not continue school in the next academic year, and their parents.

The personal characteristics of the girls in the study group are shown in Table 1. According to this, the age of children is distributed in a balanced way between 15 and 18. All of the girls help with housework except for only three who work in an income-generating business. Among the works done at home domestic works (cleaning, dishwashing) come first, and agricultural work (garden and animal care, etc.) and nursing (sister, elderly care, etc.) follow the domestic works.

Table 1. Personal Characteristics of the Children

Question	Answer	f	%	Participant Codes
Age of the Child	15	9	30,0	C4, C5, C6, C7, C13, C14, C22, C26, C27
	16	7	23,3	C1, C3, C11, C12, C18, C23, C25
	17	6	20,0	C8, C16, C17, C19, C28, C29
	18	8	26,7	C2, C9, C10, C15, C20, C21, C24, C30
Working Status	Yes	3	10,0	C7, C8, C21
Help with housework	Yes	30	100,0	C1, ... C30
Works Done at Home	Housework	30	100,0	C1, ... C30
	Agricultural Work	10	33,3	C4, C9, C13, C15, C20, C21, C22, C25, C27, C28
	Care Giving	8	26,7	C3, C5, C15, C16, C20, C22, C27, C28

Findings related to the occupation and education status of the parents included in the study are given in Table 2. All of the mothers of the children interviewed are unemployed. The number of mothers who never went to school is 22. There is only one mother who is a high school graduate. The majority of the fathers (76.7%) are farmers. Only two of the fathers graduated from high school, 24 received education at a lower level, and four never went to school.

Table 2. Occupation and Education Status of Parents

Question	Answer	f	%	Participant Codes
Mother's Occupation	None	30	100,0	P1, ... P30
Mother's Education Status	No schooling	22	73,3	P1, P3, P4, P6, P8, P9, P11, P12, P14, P15, P16, P18, ... P21, P23, P24, P25, P27, ... P30
	Literate	1	3,3	P7
	Dropout of Primary School	1	3,3	P26
	Graduate of Primary School	5	16,7	P2, P5, P10, P13, P22
Father's Occupation	Graduate of High School	1	3,3	P17
	Farmer	23	76,7	P1, ... P6, P8, P10, ... P14, P16, P18, P20, ... P23, P25, ... P29
	Monger	4	13,3	P7, P15, P24, P30
	Worker	1	3,3	P17
Father's Education Status	Unemployed	2	6,7	P9, P19
	No Schooling	4	13,3	P3, P8, P27, P29
	Literate	1	3,3	P18
	Dropout of Primary School	2	6,7	P9, P20
	Graduate of Primary School	17	56,7	P1, P2, P4, P6, P7, P10, P11, P12, P14, P16, P19, P21, P23, P24, P26, P28, P30
	Graduate of Middle School	3	10,0	P5, P17, P22
	Dropout of High School	1	3,3	P25
Graduate of High School	2	6,7	P13, P15	

The information on the socio-economic status of the participants in the study group is given in Table 3. The majority of the participants reside in the villages and districts (63.3%), and the others live in the towns (36.7%). Number of children ranges between 3-8; and the household size varies between 3 and 12. The average monthly income per capita in the participants' homes is between \$ 27-83.

Table 3. Socio-Economic Status of the Participants

Question	Answer	f	%	Participant Codes
Place of Residence	Village	13	43,3	P1, P3, ... P6, P9, P10, P14, P19, P20, P25, P26, P29
	District	6	20,0	P12, P15, P16, P22, P23, P27
	Town	11	36,7	P2, P7, P8, P11, P13, P17, P18, P21, P24, P28, P30
Number of Siblings	3	10	33,3	P2, P6, P7, P10, P11, P16, P19, P23, P26, P27
	4	8	26,7	P4, P13, P17, P22, P24, P25, P29, P30
	5	7	23,3	P1, P5, P9, P12, P18, P21, P28
	6	3	10,0	P3, P14, P20
	7	1	3,3	P8
	8	1	3,3	P15

Table 3. Continued

Question	Answer	f	%	Participant Codes
Household Size	3	2	6,7	P10, P28
	5	9	30,0	P2, P4, P6, P11, P17, P20, P25, P26, P29
	6	9	30,0	P3, P7, P9, P13, P15, P19, P22, P24, P27
	7	6	20,0	P5, P16, P18, P21, P23, P30
	8	3	10,0	P1, P12, P14
	12	1	3,3	P8
Average Monthly Income per Capita (\$)*	Betw. 27-40	6	40,0	P1, P3, P9, P12, P16, P19
	Betw. 41-60	17	50,0	P2, P4, ... P8, P11, P14, P15, P18, P20, P22, ... P25, P27, P30
	Betw. 61-83	7	10,0	P10, P13, P17, P21, P26, P28, P29

* Monthly income is shown in dollars (\$) to avoid depreciation against inflation.

Data Collection

The data were collected by interview technique. In the interviews, the semi-structured interview form prepared by the researcher was used. During the preparation process of the interview form, eight experts opinion from the educational sciences were consulted and pre-trial test has been done with three students and their parents outside the study group. After this process, the structure of the form was finalized. There are totally 13 questions in the form, 4 related to the personal information of the girls who dropout the school, 4 related to the parents' vocational and educational status, 4 related to the socio-economic status of families, and 1 for the reasons for the dropout. Interviews were made in October-November 2015 by visiting the families at their homes. Participants' responses were recorded with hand writing by the researcher, because they did not allow voice recording. Interviews were completed within 15-30 minutes. During the interview, questions were asked to the children regarding their personal information, and to the parents regarding the family profile and the reasons why the child did not attend the school. Regarding the reasons for the child leaving school, the parents were asked the question "What are the reasons for your daughter not to attend the school?"; depending on the answers, questions that require explanation to deepen the interview such as "What do you mean by that?" and "Would you open it a little?" were asked. Parent interviews were conducted with both parents, or only with the father. The answers given by the parents at the same interview were evaluated together.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Interview records were analyzed by thematic analysis technique. Thematic analysis is a technique of searching theme and patterns within the data (Glesne, 2012), and is carried out when an in-depth analysis is needed (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). In the analysis process, first the interview notes were transferred to the computer environment. Then the data were coded to determine the concepts and themes that reflect the participants' opinions. In order to examine the reliability of coding, the same data were coded again by the researcher three months after the first coding. Reliability in qualitative research can also be examined by coding at different times (Türnüklü, 2000). In order to determine the level of similarity between the two encodings, the reliability ratio between codings was calculated as 88.5% by using the formula "Reliability = [Consensus / (Consensus + Dissensus) X 100]" (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The codes corrected after the second analysis were tabulated in the themes, presented with frequency, percentage and participant codes. Participant codes for girls were C1, C2, ... C30; and for parents P1, P2, ... P30. The same numbers in the participant codes indicate that the parent and the child are from the same family.

Pareto analysis was conducted to reveal the "vital" reasons (Balci, 2000) among the reasons why the girls included in the study dropped out of the formal secondary school. Pareto analysis is an analysis that helps to find the most important factors by ranking the data related to a particular subject from the highest recurrence frequency to the lowest. According to the analysis, while cumulatively 80% of the causes of a problem show "vital few" of reasons, 20% show "useful many" of causes (Karuppusami & Gandhinathan, 2006). Pareto analysis facilitates the decision-making process through the classification of data and graphical representation of data (Özcan, 2001), and is widely used in the field of management (Aktan, 2012). Within this context, the reasons for school dropouts of the female students in the study were lined from large to small and cumulative totals and cumulative percentages according to the frequency of repetition by the parents were calculated. Then, the graph containing the frequency and cumulative percentages of the reasons for dropout was prepared in the Excel program, and 80% line was added to the graph for ease of interpretation. The reasons in the area of the graph where cumulative percentage reached to 80 were considered to be the vital reasons for dropout of the girls participated in the study.

When the interview data were analyzed, it was observed that more than one reason was effective in the dropping out of the 29 children. For example, one child left school because of both "insecurity" and "academic failure". In order to fully understand this situation, a new table and figure were prepared and the reasons true for each child were shown together. This arrangement of analyzing data shows how different numbers and types of reasons could combine and affect a child's school dropout.

Validity

The validity of a qualitative research "corresponds to the accuracy and robustness of the results of the research or of the conclusions made from the results" (Christensen et al., 2015). Creswell (1998; as cited in Glesne, 2012) describes eight methods that contribute to credibility (validity) in qualitative research. According to Glesne (2012), it may not be necessary to use all of the methods in every study. Measures taken to increase the validity of this study were: (1) *Long-term interaction and observation*. The interviews with the study group lasted for approximately two months; and the interviews were conducted in the living areas of the study group. During the interviews, a school principal, recognized by the girls in the study group, accompanied the researcher. (2) *Variation*. Before and after the data collection period, the national and international literature on the subject was searched in detail and common and different results were determined and used in the interpretation of the findings obtained. In addition, the findings obtained from the thematic analysis of the interview data were analyzed using different techniques (Pareto graph, multiple impact analysis) to strengthen diversity. (3) *Peer review and obtaining information*. During the preparation of the interview form, necessary remedies were made by obtaining the opinions and recommendations of the field experts. (4) *Rich and detailed description*. Findings were written in detail to allow readers to enter the research context. To do this, participant codes were arranged and presented in a way to allow checking the consistency of the data in the findings. In addition, some of the participant statements were quoted and presented in the "Findings" section. (5) *External audit*. The interview notes and the thematic coding table used in the study have been preserved in the computer environment and can be opened to external audit when requested.

Results

In this part, the findings taken from the analysis of data, collected in the direction of the purpose of the research are presented without comment. In the presentation of the findings, it was firstly given who took the decisions of the girls to leave the school, and then the reasons for the abandonment. Finally, the reasons for the abandonment of girls in the study were examined by Pareto analysis, multiple impact analysis is presented which shows the effect of causes together.

Findings Related to the Person/Persons who Decide the Dropout of the Children Participated in the Study

The most influential person in making decision about the dropout of the children is the father. On the dropout of 70.0% of the girls, the father was effective alone (43.3%) or with other family members (26.7%). The second most influential figure was with father and mother (26.7%), or alone (16,7%) is the child itself (% 43,4) The family member who has the least effect (40%) on the child's dropout was the mother (Table 4).

Table 4. Person/Persons Deciding the Dropout of Children

Person/Persons	f	%	Participant Codes
Father	13	43,3	C2, ... C4, C10, C11, C13, ... C15, C18, C20, C22, C25, C30
Father, Mother and Herself	8	26,7	C5, C7, C12, C16, C21, C26, C28, C29
Herself	5	16,7	C1, C8, C17, C23, C27
Mother	4	13,3	C6, C9, C19, C24
Total	30	100,0	

Findings Related to the Reasons for Dropout of the Children Included in the Study

The views of the parents of the children in the study were obtained by asking the question "What are the reasons why your daughter does not attend school?" "Insecurity" comes first among the reasons why girls in the study group do not attend school (Table 5). Of the thirty participants, 29 said that not trusting the child, the people living in the surrounding, and/or the school was effective in the child's discontinuing the school. Some of the statements of the participants under the theme of "insecurity" are (the three points in square brackets [...] represent the statements that are not included here and the writings represent the statements altered by the researcher):

"[...] We see directly or indirectly on TV the immorality that the girls who go to the high school are involved. [The town we live in] is a small place, but there are things happening we hear about here too. [...] I do not trust the environment, the people. Since I am a monger, I hear everything every day." (E7)

"[...] [We heard about what happened to some of the girls going to high school; even this year, one of them died in a river. My daughter is ignorant; I cannot handle such a thing. [...] Society is now corrupt, no one can trust anybody." (E10)

The reason with the second highest frequency for the girls in the study group to leave the school is "conservatism", (Table 5). Some parents think it is better for their child to receive religious education and prefer their child to go to the Qur'an Course. These parents are often against mixed education. One participant stated that he was "against the education system" (E12), one said they were a "religious family" (E21), and another stated that he did not approve that his daughter continued high school in accordance with their "religious beliefs" (E29). Some of the views of the parents in which the reason for the girls to discontinue school was considered as "conservatism" are:

"I have five children. I did not send any of them to high school. I am opposed to the education system in our country, and to girls and boys to be educated in the same place, there are other things too but whatever. [...] If we had a school suitable for us in the town, we would have sent

our children. We are people devoted to our religion, our holy book. Education has to be according to the rules of Islam, the society is corrupted because of this. [...]" (E12)

"[...] she can go to Qur'an. I want my daughter to receive religious education, learn the Qur'an. Her mind does not work on other courses anyway. [...] If I believed she could succeed, and if there was not the issue of finding a place to stay, I would have sent her to the Imam Hatip." (E14)

Table 5. Views of the Parents on the Reasons for School Dropout of the Children Included in the Study

Reasons	f	%	Participant Codes
Insecurity	29	96,7	P1, ... P27, P29, P30
Conservatism	16	53,3	P2, P4, P7, P8, P10, ... P12, P14, P15, P18, P21, P22, P25, P27, P29, P30
Poverty	14	46,7	P1, P4, ... P7, P9, ... P12, P17, P19, P21, P23, P26
Failure	10	33,3	P3, P5, P6, P8, P14, P16, P17, P20, P24, P27
Housework	8	26,7	P1, P6, P7, P9, P10, P13, P18, P24
Social Pressure	7	23,3	P4, P8, P12, P16, P24, P25, P30
Health	2	6,7	P3, P16
Bullying	1	3,3	P28

Other reasons that came out at the interviews are listed as "poverty", "failure", "housework", "social pressure", "health" and "bullying". Related to the poverty, parents talk about mostly the household size being large, and the living being difficult in the village. Statements related to failure indicate that the child had difficulty completing even elementary school or secondary school, and that she would not be able to do high school classes. Household work often leads the girl to leave the school because her mother needs help. Social pressure is the suggestions by close relatives and neighbours who do not send their daughters to school that that would be better if the child is taken away from school. It was stated that one of the two children with health problem was "slow", and the other had psychological problems. Bullying reflects the experience of one child who continued high school for one year that she was subjected to violence by schoolmates. Examples from interview records for each of these reasons are listed below:

"There are four children, one boy and three girls. The boy is doing his army duty and his wife is staying at the house opposite. I provide their living. [...] I have a father and a father at home. There is no work in the village. I have five cattles. And a farmland. Our living is from them, money is not enough. How can I send the girl to the school? I did not send the one with husband to school either. [...]" (E4, Poverty)

"I have three children. The oldest one is my daughter. The others are successful in their lessons. My daughter's lessons are all bad. Would a child's lessons be all bad? She passed the class with the teachers' meeting decision. How many times I told her to sit down and study. I have never seen a book in her hands. The examination results were terrible. [...]" (E27, Failure)

"[...] All of her siblings are young and boys. She has to help her mother at home. My wife is diabetic, so can not do hard work.. [...]" (E9, Housework)

"[...] There were influences of my sons, my brother, my father, my brother did not send their daughters to the school either. [...]" (E24, Social Pressure)

"My daughter was going to high school. Since the school is [in the town] we did not want her to suffer by going to and from school every day. We set up a house for three or five girls. [...] the

school principal, the teachers were constantly calling me. She had some psychological problems. They still continue; she is on medication. [...]" (E16, Health)

"[...] My daughter was going to high school. [...] She dropped out at the second semester of the second grade of the high school. [...] she had problems with some of her friends at school. Neither the school administration nor the teachers looked out for her. My daughter was always threatened by her friends. [...]" (E28, Bullying)

Results of Pareto Analysis Related to the Reasons for School Dropout of the Girls

Table 6 and Figure 1 show the results of the Pareto analysis, which was conducted to determine the vital ones of the reasons for school dropout obtained from the interviews with parents. Generally speaking, although there are eight different reasons for the school dropout of girls included in the study, Pareto analysis shows that the first four of the eight reasons correspond to 80% of the problem. According to this, the vital reasons of school dropout of girls are insecurity, conservatism, poverty and failure.

Table 6. Pareto Analysis Table Related to the Reasons for School Dropout of the Girls

Reasons for Dropout	Frequency	Cumulative Total	Cumulative %
Insecurity	29	29	33%
Conservatism	16	45	52%
Poverty	14	59	68%
Failure	10	69	79%
Housework	8	77	89%
Social Pressure	7	84	97%
Health	2	86	99%
Bullying	1	87	100%
Total	87	---	---

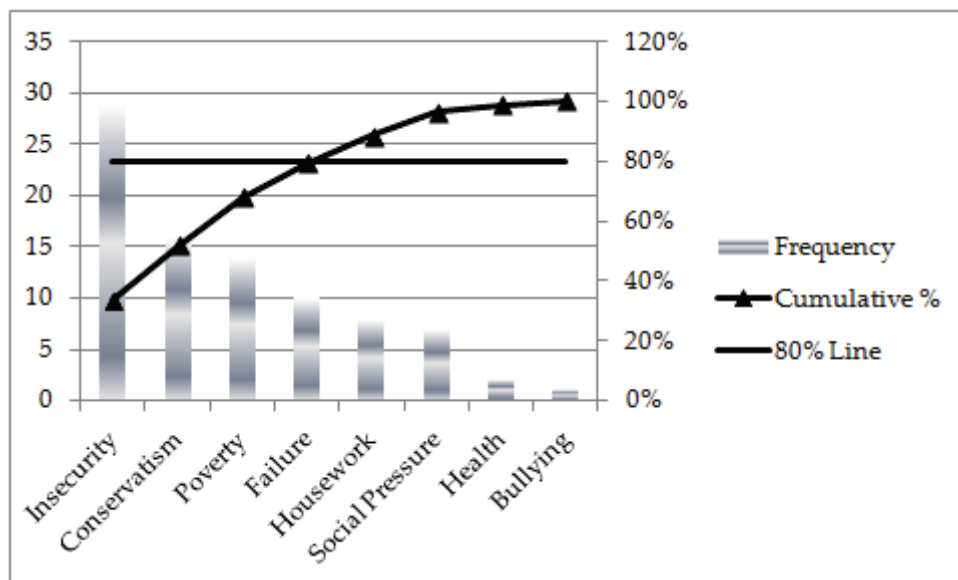


Figure 1. Pareto Graph Related to Reasons for School Dropout of Girls

In studies where Pareto analysis is applied, it is recommended to examine the variable with the highest frequency level by Pareto analysis (Özcan, 2001). In this framework, sub-themes related to insecurity derived from the analysis of the interview data were re-examined by Pareto analysis (Table 7, Figure 2).

Parents who do not send their daughters to high school because of insecurity are adversely affected by the events and news in their surroundings or in the country. Parents are afraid that something bad would happen to their daughter on the way to school because it is far away from home. Some parents think that there is corruption in the society and increase in immorality, thus no one can be trusted. The fact that his daughter is a high school student leads some parents to worry about getting a bad reputation and there would be gossips about him. Some of the girls are taken out of the school and kept in the house by their parents as they grow up, becomes dashing, is beautiful, and husband candidates start to come, in short with the time of entering the adolescence period To be grown up, to be flashy, to be beautiful, to start coming to the door of the tales, that is to say during the adolescence period, the girl child is taken away from the school by some parents and kept at home. Having a boy friend is the reason for some of the girls, who continued high school for a certain period of time, to be taken away from the school. Parents see this as a mistake and see the solution as taking the child away from the school. Some of the parents find it inconvenient for girls and boys to study together at secondary school level. Some families have two houses, one in the village and the other in the town center, and they spend certain days of the week in the village and certain days in town. Families who live in this way cannot leave their daughters alone in the town. When parents' opinions are examined, it is seen that the insecurity is mainly stemmed from the surroundings where they live, fed by the negative experiences at the national level, and the child's normal development indicators turn into anxiety sources as a result.

Table 7. Pareto Analysis Table Related to the Reasons for Insecurity by the Parents

Reasons for Insecurity	f	Cum. Total	Cum %	Participant Codes
News	16	16	21%	P1, P2, P4, P6, P7, P10, ... P12, P14, P16, P17, P19, P20, P23, P26, P27
Distance to School	15	31	41%	P1, P4, ... P6, P8, P14, P17, ... P19, P22, P25, ... P27, P29, P30
Corruption Perception	10	41	54%	P2, P10, P12, P17, P18, P20, P21, P23, P24, P29
Gossip	10	51	67%	P4, P6, P12, P18, ... P22, P26, P30
Adolescence	9	60	79%	P1, P5, P8, P13, P15, P18, P20, P25, P30
Male Friend	6	66	87%	P13, P15, P19, P22, P26, P30
Mixed-Sex Education	5	71	93%	P3, P5, P6, P9, P13
Life Style	5	76	100%	P7, P13, P18, P21, P24
Total	76	---	---	

According to the Pareto graph on the reasons for insecurity of parents who did not send their daughters to high school, 80% of the insecurities appeared to be due to the negative news about women, school away from home, corruption perception, gossip, and the child entering the adolescence period.

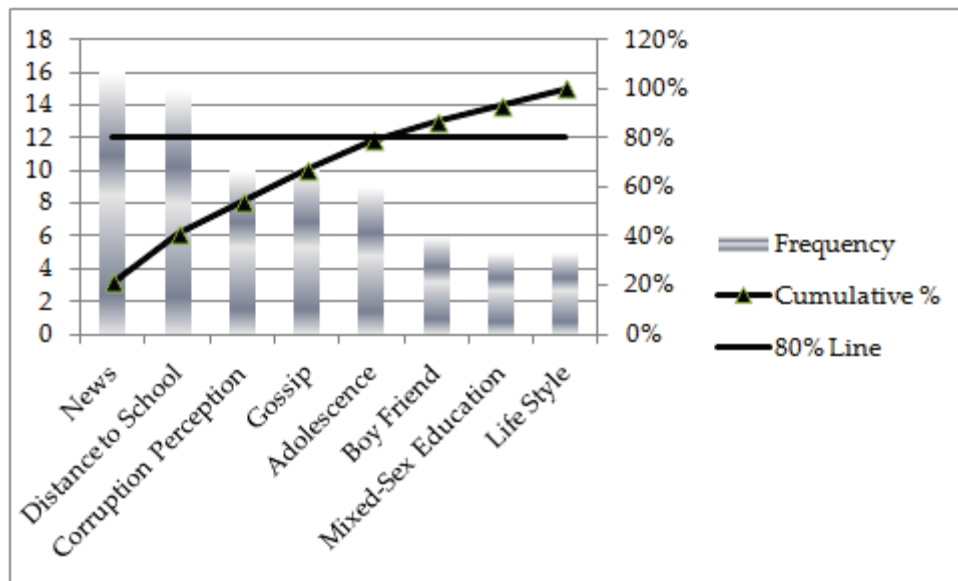


Figure 2. Pareto Analysis Graph Related to the Reasons for Insecurity of the Parents

Results of the Analysis Related to the Multiple Effects of the Reasons for the Dropout of Girls

One of the most significant findings from the interviews with parents was that more than one reason was effective at the same time in the dropout of a child. Table 8 and Figure 3 show the reasons for dropout of the girls of the formal secondary education together. According to these, dropout of only one out of the 30 children in the study group was due to a single cause (bullying). The dropout of the others was the result of a combination of at least two reasons. The number of children whose school dropout could be explained by three reasons is 12. Four different reasons were effective in the dropout of eight children. The words of three of the parents of the children who left school for four different reasons are given below.

Table 8. Reasons for Dropout of the Children According to the Number of Children

Number of Reasons	Participant Views	f	Participant Code
1	Bullying	1	P28
2	Insecurity + Conservatism	4	P2, P15, P22, P29
2	Insecurity + Poverty	3	P19, P23, P26
2	Insecurity + Failure	1	P20
2	Insecurity + Housework	1	P13
3	Insecurity + Conservatism + Poverty	2	P11, P21
3	Insecurity + Conservatism + Failure	2	P14, P27
3	Insecurity + Conservatism + Housework	1	P18
3	Insecurity + Conservatism + Social Pressure	2	P25, P30
3	Insecurity + Poverty + Failure	2	P5, P17
3	Insecurity + Poverty + Housework	2	P1, P9
3	Insecurity + Failure + Health	1	P3
4	Insecurity + Conservatism + Poverty + Housework	2	P7, P10
4	Insecurity + Conservatism + Poverty + Social Pressure	2	P4, P12
4	Insecurity + Conservatism + Failure + Social Pressure	1	P8
4	Insecurity + Poverty + Failure + Housework	1	P6
4	Insecurity + Failure + Housework + Social Pressure	1	P24
4	Insecurity + Failure + Social Pressure + Health	1	P16

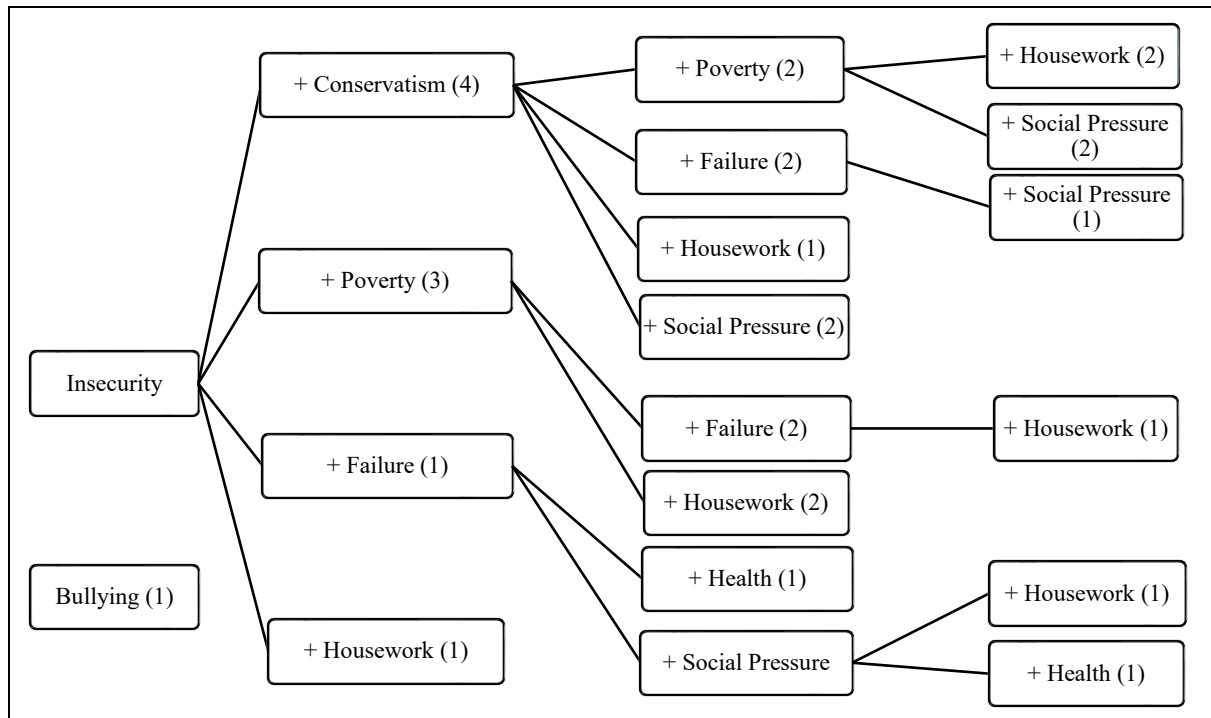


Figure 3. Reasons for Dropout According to the Number of Children

"I am in financial difficulty. I have three children, the oldest is my daughter. One of her siblings is in the third grade and the other is in the seventh. They go to school in the village. The district governor is providing food, coal aid. It's hard to do a living if we do not get help from them. If she goes to the high school, it will cause tons of expenditure, [Poverty] they said education is compulsory, and said that if you do not send to school you have to register her at open high school, we registered her there, she takes the exams. She failed in the exams, she doesn't have intension for studying [Academic failure]. She helps wife/her mom anyway [Housework]. There is no high school where we live. The roads are shabby in the winter, I would probably send her if there is a dormitory. I do not want boys and girls study together, the distance from the village [and town] is long, she will come home in the dark. Anyway, she has no interest in school or courses. She completed the middle school with difficulty. She doesn't understand the subjects; all she does is watching television and doing her hair. There are those in our village who go to high school. I do not hear good things when I go to the coffee shop. I would not want the same things to be said for us. We hear bad things in the news, newspapers [Insecurity]." (E6)

"I have three children, I married the two, they have gone. Only my daughter is at home, my wife's left side is paralysis. I needed someone to stay with him at home. [Housework] There is already no money, the money goes to my wife's medical expenses. [Poverty] The girl goes to the mosque, where she is studying two hours a week. [Conservatism] I can not send her away because of my wife's illness [Housework]. [In the district] we heard what happened to some girls who study in high school, and this year, one of them died in the river. My daughter is untutored and I can not handle such a thing. My family can not handle either. Society is now corrupted, you will not trust anyone [Insecurity]." (E10)

"The middle school ended hard, the lessons were not always good. It has difficulty in understanding, teachers were constantly complaining. Mother said "not understanding, not working, why are we sending to school?, [Failure] high school at one side, home at one side, where will she stay when we go to village?, stay at home, we come and go to village [Insecurity],

helps me [Housework]". Brothers said "father your condition is already bad, house is crowded, dont send" [Social pressure]. She has understanding difficulty, was bad at lessons [Failure]. It was the effect of my sons, my brother and my father. My brother did not send his daughters to the school either [Social pressure], time is bad, you will not trust people [Insecurity]." (E24)

Discussion

The ages of the girls in the study ranges from 15 to 18 years. While only three of the children work in an income-generating business, all of the others help with housework. Children's mothers do not work, and the majority of the fathers are farmers. Education level of parents is below Turkey average (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu (TÜİK), 2016a). The majority reside in villages and towns. The number of children in the family (3-8) and the size of households (3-12) are above the national average. The average number of children in the family in Turkey is two, and the average size of households is four (TÜİK, 2016b, 2016c). Monthly income per capita (between 27-83 dollars) is below the hunger limit. The hunger limit per person in Turkey in October 2015 was 114 dollars (Türkiye İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu [TÜRK-İŞ], 2014). In the light of this data, it could be seen that the education level of the parents of the girls who do not attend formal secondary education is very low; the families provide their living based on agriculture; and they live in rural areas, with many children, and living in poverty. Within the framework of these characteristics, it could be said that the families included in the study, with these features, are suitable for Ozankaya's (1996) definition of "village family". It could also be said that this family structure is a factor per se in girls' dropping out of the secondary education. In this context, dropout is the result of the socio-economic structure that the child is born into, and it is a kind of "withdrawal" (McNeal, 1997). The findings of other researches that school dropout is higher in families with lower education and income levels, higher sibling numbers, and living in rural areas (ERG, 2009; Hoşgörür & Polat, 2015; Özdemir et al., 2010; Şimşek, 2011; Uysal, 2008) overlap with the findings of the present study related to family profile.

Fathers have the largest part in the decision regarding the dropout of the girls included in the study. Although some of the children said that they made the decision to leave school by themselves or together with their parents, it was understood from the interviews with parents later on that the final word was from the fathers. The most important obstacle to girls' education was summarized as "families' not sending the girls" in a report related to the issue (Tan et al., 2000). In another study, school dropout was regarded as "a consequence the students are convicted rather than a choice for them" (Özdemir et al., 2010). There are also other researches with findings regarding the person who decides the girl to leave the school being the father most of the time (Dilli, 2006; Hoşgörür & Polat, 2015; İlhan Tunç, 2009). The least effective family member on the dropout of the child was the mother. According to Ozankaya (1996), "father/ husband in the village family is the absolute president and decision maker" and "the wife is given a little right in the designing of the future". This is a reflection of the position of women in patriarchal societies. There are evaluations in literature about the patriarchal society structure being a negative factor in girls' education (Sekine & Hodgkin, 2017). On the other hand, in western societies, those who decide about school dropout are mostly families at primary level, while it is the child herself/himself at higher levels (Harris, 2014).

As a result of the interviews with the parents, it was found that eight reasons are effective in girls' dropout of formal secondary education. As a result of the Pareto analysis related to these reasons, it was determined that four of the eight are of "vital" importance. According to this, the vital reasons in the school dropout of girls in the study are insecurity, conservatism, poverty and unsuccessfulness. Housework, social pressure, health, and bullying are the other reasons which are less effective on the dropout of girls.

The primary reason for the girls' dropout is the distrust of the parents towards the society, the school, and their children. Parents thought that there were dangers awaiting their children on the way to and from school, and inside and outside the school. Often, they feel "insecure" because of the prevalence of the negative news about women (harassment, murder, etc.). There are two dangers that

may happen to a child. First is being dishonored (having boyfriend, suffering of abuse, etc.); and the second is the threatening of the safety of life. Violence against women is one of the main problems in Turkey (TBMM Kadın Erkek Fırsat Eşitliği Komisyonu, 2010) and has been increasing. The number of women killed in 2015 rose from 303 to 328 in 2016 (Kadın Cinayetlerini Durduracağız Platformu, 2016, 2017). One woman every four hours was subject to harassment, rape or male violence in 2014 in Turkey (Milliyet Gazetesi, 2015). According to the data of TÜİK (2017), four out of every 10 women do not feel safe after dark in the environment they live. According to the applications made to the Human Rights Association, the number of children injured in violence, harassment, and rape was 507 in 2016 (İnsan Hakları Derneği [İHD], 2017). One in every 10 children at primary school age does not feel safe in school (MEB & UNICEF, 2009). Tendency in students who are subject to violence in school to leave school has been increasing (Bayhan & Dalgıç, 2012; Şimşek & Şahin, 2012). Insecurity as an obstacle to the schooling of girls or as a reason for them to leave school has also been emphasized in other research (Adıgüzel, 2013; Arastaman & Balcı, 2013; İlhan Tunç, 2009; Makwinja-Morara, 2007; Özdemir et al., 2010; Tan et al., 2000; Taş et al., 2013; Ward, 1995).

Conservatism comes second in the reasons why girls leave formal secondary education. Parents who prefer their children to receive religious education, and who do not find it suitable for girls who are at "marriage age" to study with the boys in the same school do not send their children to formal secondary education in accordance with their religious beliefs. Opposing mixed education, preferring early marriage and religious education reflects a conservative world perspective (Toprak, Bozan, Morgül, & Şener, 2008). More than half of girls included in the study group are being removed from school as a consequence of living in a conservative family and environment. It could be said that there is a close relationship between conservatism and insecurity. In traditional and religious contexts, the views that female gender is second class, is sinful, and that men and women are not equal, etc. suggest that women are unreliable. In recent years, the increase in the frequency of using negative expressions regarding women by some politicians and mediators (Cindoglu & Unal, 2017) has been affecting the spreading of both conservatism and insecurity. Other research findings (Adıgüzel, 2013; Aküzüm et al., 2015; İlhan Tunç, 2009) support the findings of the present study that the conservative world view of the family and the environment is effective in preventing girls from going to school or in their school dropout at primary and secondary levels. Kalaycıoğlu and Toprak (2004), on the other hand, argue that there is no problem of "cultural conservatism" in Turkey regarding girls' education. The most important reason for them is economic.

It has been found also in the present study that the economic difficulties of the family are among the vital causes of girls' dropouts. About half of the parents interviewed indicated that they were having difficulty in sending their children to the school because they were in financial difficulty. When the participants' monthly average income per capita is considered, it is seen that poverty is in the upper levels. However, the majority of the parents did not state this as a reason to take their children out of school. A similar result was found also in a study by Bayhan and Dalgıç (2012). It could be said that the reasons for the direct cost of education for the families being low are that education in public schools is free, transportation expenses are covered by public resources, textbooks are provided free of charge, and so on. Poverty or the low economic level of a family are considered to be one of the most significant reasons for school dropout in many studies (Adıgüzel, 2013; Aküzüm et al., 2015; İlhan Tunç, 2009; Özdemir et al., 2010; Taş et al., 2013).

One of the vital reasons for the girls drop out of the formal secondary education is failure. According to the parents, it is not possible for children who had difficulty in completing primary or secondary school to succeed in high school. As Christenson and Thurlow (2004; as cited in Taylı, 2008) also state that unsuccessful school experiences which are effective in the child's dropout usually begin at primary school. Academic failure is shown as a major reason in the studies related to reasons for school dropout (Bayhan & Dalgıç, 2012). However, it could be said that it is necessary to discuss what academic failure addresses here. The academic failure of a high school student may cause her future expectation (such as a good university, good profession, and a good job) to be low. In that case, it would

not have an importance that the child finishes the high school. In other words, as failure may be one of the reasons for school dropout, having no hope in studying after high school may be one of the reasons for failure as well. Thus, it is necessary to discuss what kind of future the compulsory secondary education has prepared for children who do not have a hope to continue to the university. In Dekkers and Claassen's (2001) study of adults who dropped out of school, it was found that those who entered the labor market were happy with their lives, which means that it is necessary to question the individual benefits of the compulsory secondary education.

Other reasons other than the vital reasons for girls drop out of the formal secondary education included housework, social pressure, health, and bullying. It could be said that housework and social pressure are related to the vital reasons. It could be said that the main reason for a girl to drop out of the school to help with the housework is poverty. The main income sources of families living in rural areas are agricultural activities, and are mostly carried out with the participation of all family members. This is because the poor village people do not have the financial power to have labor in their agricultural work. Within this context, even if the child is not directly involved in agricultural activities, she can alleviate the burden on the mother by taking responsibility at home, so that the mother can work in the field and in the garden. Social pressure is a factor related to conservatism. Participants state that relatives and neighbors in the neighborhood are opposed to sending girls to the school. Within this frame, if there is a fight against poverty and conservatism, then housework and social pressure can no longer be a cause for girls to dropout of school.

One of the most striking results of the present study regarding the reasons for dropout is that a child's leave from school cannot be explained by a single variable. Only one out of the 30 children in the study group has a single reason for dropout. There are at least two reasons for the dropout of the other children. The number of children whose reason for dropout could be explained by three or more variables is 24. Suh and Suh (2007), in their study with a large sample, found that many students were affected by two or three risk factors that caused school dropout. The most important conclusion that can be drawn from this is that the examination of the reasons for dropout by categorizing prevents the understanding of the problem and producing suggestions for solution. School dropout is a complex issue, and as the number of children exposed to this problem increases, the level of complexity also increases.

Conclusion and Suggestions

The families of the girls included in the study who dropped out of formal secondary education have typical "village family" characteristics. Decision for drop out of the girl is often taken by the father. Vital reasons for the girls to leave formal secondary education are insecurity, conservatism, poverty, and failure. Other reasons are housework, social pressure, health, and bullying. School dropout of a girl occurs largely due to the combination of at least two reasons related to each other.

Within the frame of the conclusions reached in the study, necessary safety measures should be taken in the school, school surroundings, and school roads in cooperation with the relevant institutions in order to prevent secondary school dropout of girls living in the rural areas. For example, enforcement of a private security officer at the school, increased police checks around the school during entry and exit times, possession of female staff at school services, and security checks of services and regularly conducting security investigations of service drivers can be counted. Especially the prevention of violence against women and sexual assaults should be the primary agenda of the government. In order to change the negative perceptions of parents due to conservatism of girls' education, system arrangements need to be made regarding the improvement of the individual benefits of formal secondary education (a good profession, social esteem, etc.). An effective anti-poverty program needs to be implemented by the government; and precautions need to be taken to increase the quality of primary schools in rural areas in order to increase the academic achievement of students who attend primary schools.

The basic limitation of this study is that the girls living in the same region with the dropped out girls and who continue formal secondary education were not included in the study. It is thought that comparisons between the two groups will be helpful in understanding the reasons for school dropout in future studies. The second limitation of this study is that in the analysis of the data, the coding was done by a single researcher. In order to remove this limitation, the data encoding process was done twice in three months and the inter-coding consistency rate was found to be acceptable. Another limitation is that the results of this study can not contribute to the return of children in the study group. It is also doubtful that it will contribute to the prevention of school dropout of other children because this study showed that the reasons for school dropout vary from child to child. In other words, it is not possible to generalize the reasons for dropout found in this study. However, it is thought that, this study could contribute to the literature in terms of showing the vital causes of school dropout, indicating that a child is influenced by multiple causes together when leaving the school. The problem is also vital and urgent. New studies on the issue have moved their focus from the reasons for school dropouts to identifying related to prevention of school dropout, and searching early intervention (Kennelly & Monrad, 2007). Establishing an early warning system, especially towards the prevention of school dropout at high school level, is seen as an urgent need (Bayhan & Dalgıç, 2012). Within this context, it is proposed that more time be spent by the researchers interested in the issue and the government to the works on adapting an early warning system to the school management processes that would contribute to the prevention of school dropout.

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