



## Analyzing the factors affecting the high school dropout in Ca Mau

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### ABSTRACT

The yearly dropout rate of high school students of Ca Mau was relatively high (as of 5.61% in the school year 2019–2020). The problems and consequences of dropping out of school might raise numerous social problems. Therefore, this study is to examine the factors affecting the students' dropout of high school in Ca Mau province and propose several solutions to reduce the dropout rate. Data were collected from 06 districts in Ca Mau in 2019–2020 by interviewing 268 parents and 16 educational managers and surveying 168 homeroom teachers in high schools. The analysis results demonstrate that the main reasons for students' dropout were poor academic performance (57.46%), economic difficulties (26.87%), living in an unhappy family (9.33%), and improper learning motivation (6.34%). The findings provided crucial information for practically efficient solutions in reducing the high school dropout rate in Ca Mau.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Dropout is a problem that refers to the student stopping going to class or registering for future classes. The risk of high dropout rate presents almost all of the high schools in Viet Nam, particularly the mountainous provinces, the ethnic minority regions, and the Mekong Delta. In addition, it is also interested in all levels of government, schools, and society as a whole and is often discussed in numerous meetings, seminars, and conferences.

Ca Mau is the southernmost province of Vietnam, located in the Mekong Delta region with 5,294 km<sup>2</sup> and three sides facing the sea. As in Ngoc (2013), most people's lives are settled down, but there are some poor/near-poor households, families with complicated relationships, lonely families (family with only the older people and children, middle-

aged people living far away from home to work in other provinces). In addition, some families live on jobs such as factory workers, going out to sea, etc. Therefore, these families do not have enough money for their children to go to school. Moreover, in some families, parents do not have time to care for their children's learning because they have to earn to take care of their family. These reasons have many effects on children's psychology, making them depressed, participating in social evils easily, and dropping out of school (Bang, 2020; Quang, 2020).

Most districts in Ca Mau Province have at least one high school. In addition, each commune/ward/town in the district has at least one or two secondary schools with numerous pupils. However, in recent years, numerous concerns have been raised on the dropout of students in Ca Mau as reported in Pham (2019) and Bang (2020). According to the summary report of the school year 2019–2020 by Ca Mau

Department of Education and Training (CMDT, 2020), the number of students dropping out of high school in the 2018-2019 school year is 3.67%, and the 2019–2020 school year is 5.61%. On the other hand, with an important strategic position for economic development and especially for national security, Ca Mau needs a significant high-quality human resource for performing these tasks well and enhancing people's intellect/intellectual standard. If these issues were not considered carefully to find appropriate solutions as soon as possible, it might result in a lack of high-quality human resources and hinder the development of the province as well as national security issues. Therefore, the main objective of this study was to identify and analyze the root causes for dropping out of high school students in Ca Mau province. Several solutions were proposed to reduce the students' high school abandonment rate from the six main causes (were informed by the surveys, interviews of parents, homeroom teachers, and educational managers). The following section introduced findings from previous studies on withdrawal from school in general.

## 2. RELATED WORKS

Dropping out of school in Viet Nam was a problem that the government and educational leadership were finding solutions to resolve. Many studies were conducted in the previous years on investigating reasons for students' stopping attending school.

Reasons related to family are mentioned in numerous studies. According to a study on the reasons for dropping out of children aged 11–18 years old in Viet Nam, Dang (2010) presented four main groups of reasons affecting children's status of stopping going to school, including causes from family, school, society, and students themselves. Among the causes, the author focused on the issues related to students' families. They could be a family's difficult economic situation and living an unhappy family. The study also presented some issues related to mass migration. In another study, Le and Tran (2013) stated some difficulties in the cases, students had to live in poor condition, lacked parents' attention and numerous students were affected by parents' education level. However, this study also explained some reasons, such as parents from ethnic minorities. In Pham and Thach (2016), the authors investigated Khmer students and pointed out many reasons related to economic issues. Other reasons included lack of motivation to study, low

academic performance, parents' disinterest in their children's learning, and unhappy families (e.g., parents' divorce status). The other reasons derive from families including unhappy families, difficult economic status, or the living condition of students (Randolph et al., 2006; Rumberger & Lim, 2008; Goulet et al., 2020; Ogresta et al., 2020).

A vast amount of previous work also focused on exploring the influence of educational curriculum and student performance. Dang (2010) revealed the connection with educational curriculum such as impractical and monotonous content, lack of attractiveness and creativity in teaching methods making students uninterested in learning, etc. Furthermore, the socialization of education was still a puzzle and lacked cooperation mechanisms, so educators met with difficulties in encouraging the children to go to school again. The study pointed out that students did not spend time studying and lacked the discipline and patience to attend school continually. Others, as Le and Tran (2013) and Pham and Thach (2016), also showed that poor academic performance and lack of learning motivation were the most popular of dropping out of school. Moreover, recent studies on the relationship between academic performance and dropping out of school by Goulet et al. (2020), and Ogresta et al. (2020) and Stevenson et al. (2021), have determined that students' academic performance have a great influence on going to school or not. Besides, different problems from schools were introduced in Ralph (1997), such as focusing on academic achievement, focusing on teaching, in Rumberger and Lim (2008) attributed to factors related to students' individual characteristics. On the other hand, some reasons could be from serious diseases infections, as presented in Vaughn et al. (2014), Hjorth et al. (2016), Ramsdal et al. (2018) and Syvertsen et al. (2020).

The previous studies have shown that the causes of students dropping out of school were the student's family situations (family economic and parents' separation status), low academic performance, lack of awareness of learning, and the impact of the social environment. However, at the same time, the above studies have shown that the social environment did not have much impact compared to the students' awareness of learning. In addition, each area or region was different characteristics, so the dropout rate is also different.

Based on the above reasons and specific socio-economic characteristics in Ca Mau, the study

hypothesis was that the main factors leading to students dropping out of high school in Ca Mau might be low academic performance, the family's economic difficulties, lacking awareness of the importance of learning. Therefore, in this work, the causes of dropping out of high school in Ca Mau Province were investigated to propose solutions from the considered reasons.

### 3. METHOD

This section presented the research methods to determine the main reasons for high school dropouts in Ca Mau Province and proposed solutions to reduce this phenomenon. First, data from various high schools with different participants, including 168 homeroom teachers, 268 students' parents, and 16 school leaders (vice-principals and principals) were analyzed. For each class in a high school, homeroom teachers were responsible for managing and monitoring students' status in learning and other activities in their class, while educational managers included vice-principals and principals in the considered high schools. Therefore, they were important bridges between the school and students' parents to ensure the students obtaining a good quality education. The data collected from 284 interviews and 168 answers from the survey questionnaires were analyzed by excel tools with statistics functions, charts. In addition, the SWOT (S - Strengths, W - Weaknesses, O - Opportunities, T -

Threats) matrix analysis method was deployed, which was based on the collected data, and found solutions to reduce the students' high school abandonment rate.

In Ca Mau Province, the administrator boundary was divided into eight districts and one city. However, the number of students dropping out of school in each district was different and mainly concentrated in a few schools. At the top school of districts or cities, the school *abandonment* rates were minimal, so the data collection/survey/interview was mainly concentrated in some high schools in remote areas with a large number of students dropping out. A number of schools with a higher dropout rate in the school year 2019–2020 than Ca Mau Province's (5.61%) were selected for the investigation. Based on the end-of-year summary report for the 2019–2020 school year, some schools in districts such as Tran Van Thoi, Cai Nuoc, Dam Doi, Nam Can, and Ca Mau City were selected. Table 1 shows the percentage of high school dropouts in the 2019–2020 school year in the above districts. As observed from the table, two high schools in Tran Van Thoi district were also selected for this study. Although the dropout rate of these schools was less than Ca Mau Province's dropout rate (5.61%), these were two of four high schools with the highest dropout rate in this district.

**Table 1. Dropout rates in high schools in the 2019–2020 school year (CMDDET, 2020)**

No.	School	District/ City	The number of students	Dropout	
				Amount	Ratio
1	Nguyen Viet Khai high school	Ca Mau	1336	137	10.25%
2	Ly Van Lam middle school and high school	Ca Mau	962	61	6.34%
3	Phan Ngoc Hien high school	Nam Can	1550	81	5.23%
4	Phu Hung high school	Cai Nuoc	1433	86	6.00%
5	U Minh high school	U Minh	794	50	6.30%
6	Thai Thanh Hoa high school	Dam Doi	1418	106	7.48%
7	Huynh Phi Hung high school	Tran Van Thoi	772	41	4.02%
8	Song Doc high school	Tran Van Thoi	953	44	4.62%
Total			9218	606	6.57%

Data were collected about students' personal information, contact addresses, education level, and behavior in these high schools. In addition, in this study, 268 parents (parents of students who stopped going to school) and 16 school leaders (vice-principals and principals) were interviewed, while 168 survey questionnaires were sent to homeroom teachers to determine the reasons for dropping out of a high school of students in Ca Mau Province. The number of homeroom teachers, parents, and school leaders participating in the survey/interviews

is shown in Table 2. There were 5 questions for interviewing 268 parents of students who had dropped out, with the aim of finding the reason that the student dropped out. For the School Leaders interview, 3 questions were administered to 16 School Leaders, questions with the objective of finding the common causes of dropped and remedial measures in their schools (Table 3). The survey was conducted with 168 homeroom teachers in some high schools in Ca Mau province, including 20 closed questions with multiple choice answers,

divided into 7 main parts around the problem of students dropped out at their schools stemming from causes such as educational programs, school facilities, school violence, teachers' professional competence, the social environment, the interest of

the family and the students themselves. The open-ended question is intended for teachers to state their measures to reduce the number of students dropping out (Table 4).

**Table 2. Number of homeroom teachers, parents, and school leaders participating in the survey and interview**

No. School	District/ City	Number of classes	Number of Homeroom teachers	Number of parents	Number of school leaders
1 Ca Mau high school	Ca Mau	80	15	0	1
2 Nguyen Viet Khai high school	Ca Mau	33	20	62	1
3 Ly Van Lam high school	Ca Mau	23	14	24	1
4 Tan Loc high school	Thoi Binh	12	10	0	1
5 Nguyen Van Nguyen high school	Thoi Binh	26	15	0	1
6 U Minh high school	U Minh	19	13	24	1
7 Thai Thanh Hoa high school	Dam Doi	33	14	32	2
8 Phu Hung high school	Cai Nuoc	35	15	42	1
9 Phu Tan high school	Phu Tan	16	11	0	2
10 Phan Ngoc Hien high school	Nam Can	36	16	36	1
11 Song Doc high school	Tran Van Thoi	22	13	22	2
12 Huynh Phi Hung high school	Tran Van Thoi	21	12	26	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>356</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>16</b>

Table 2 shows that the number of managers surveyed is small (only one or two persons in each school), but they received many reports and measures from teachers on the causes which led to dropping out of school. However, this number was not much due to three reasons. Firstly, the interviewee is a professional manager who knew well about the dropout situation of students in his school. Secondly, each high school had a maximum of 3 administrators (1 Principal and 2 Vice Principals). Finally, because of the peculiarities of the dropout rate of each school, managers in specific high schools were selected to interview. In addition, in comparison with Table 1, some high schools

(Ca Mau high school, Tan Loc middle school and high school, Nguyen Van Nguyen high school and Phu Tan high school) were also added to Table 2 to gather more homeroom teachers' opinions.

The content of the interview included open-end questions about the common reasons for students dropping out of school. Table 3 lists some of the questions are used to interview parents and leaders. For school leaders (Principals and Vice Principals), interviews were investigated at some high schools in Ca Mau Province. The interview questions mainly aimed at determining some of the reasons for withdrawal from school that occurred at the schools where the manager was in charge.

**Table 3. List of Parent and Leadership Interview Questions**

No.	Content Questions	Interview subject
1	Do parents know the reason why their children drop out of school?	Parents
2	Do students often go out with friends outside of school?	Parents
3	Does the family have difficulties with money while their children are studying in school?	Parents
4	Do you have many brothers and sisters in your family?	Parents
5	Do parents often listen to their children about how they are studying at school?	Parents
6	Why students drop out of school?	Leader
7	What are the common reasons?	Leader
8	What measures do you have to help reduce the number of students dropping out of your school?	Leader

In addition, the survey questionnaire was not only closed-end questions but also open-ended questions for teachers to add measures to help prevent students from dropping out. Survey sheets were sent to homeroom teachers in high schools in Ca Mau province to collect their opinions on students' reasons for dropping out. The homeroom teacher relied on the practical experiences in their teaching to assess whether a cause affects the student's dropping out of school. In the survey, there were 20 closed-end questions and one open-end question.

The closed-ended questions mainly focused on seven groups of causes affecting students' dropping out of school, including educational programs, school facilities, school violence, teachers, social environment, reasons from family, and causes from students themselves. The open-ended questions mainly focused on measures to prevent students from dropping out of school. The survey questionnaire and some examples of questions for interviewing parents and leadership were presented in Table 3, Table 4.

**Table 4. An illustration of questions in the survey for homeroom teachers**

<b>Question in the survey</b>	<b>Answer form</b>
1.1. The new education curriculum doesn't inspire student to learn.	True/False
1.2. Does the new education curriculum cause students to drop out of your school?	Yes/No
2.1. How are your school facilities?	Not good/Good/ Very good
2.2. Have students of your school dropped out because of school facilities recently?	(A lot/Very little/ None)
3.1. Do students of your school often fight at the school?	(Yes/No)
3.2. Is there any school violence at the school you are teaching?	(Yes/No)
3.3. According to teacher, is school violence the main cause for students dropping out of school?	(Yes/No)
4.1. Every year, do teachers at your school get professional training/teaching methodology training?	(Yes/No)
4.2. Do you have counseling psychology group team at your school?	(Yes/No)
4.3. Are there any students who drop out because of the teacher's teaching method or the homeroom teacher's strictness?	(A lot/Very little/ None)
4.4. According to your view, the relationship between teachers and students has on dropout of school?	(Yes/No)
4.5. Will the homeroom teacher/organizations in the school encourage returning school if students drop out of school?	(Yes/No)
4.6. According to teachers, do homeroom teachers/organizations to mobilize dropouts to getting back school?	(Yes/No)
5.1. Are there any immigrants who are living and working at your local?	(Yes/No)
5.2. According to your opinion, how does the mass migration from many local have effects on drop out of school?	Very Influential/ Slight Effect/ No Effect
6.1. How do the parents at your school take interest in their children's education?	Most interests/ Less interests/ Not interest
6.2. How do parents' economic status have strong impacts on dropping out of school?	Very Influential/ Slight Effect/ No Effect
6.3. Does student live in an unhappy family (parents' divorce, living with parents or grandparents) which effect on dropping out of school?	Very influential/ A few effects/ Few effects
7.1. According your opinion, dropout rate of students at your school has poor academic performance and doesn't keep up with their friends so they are bored with dropping out of school	Majority/ A few/ Few
7.2. According to teachers, do student's lack discipline and have unconscious of learn and practicing which cause for dropping out of school?	(Yes/No)
Based on your own experience, please give some ideas on solutions to reduce the number of students dropping out of school.	Open-end

## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1. Dropout reasons

The results shown in Figure 1 were synthesized from phone interviews directly with 268 parents of

dropouts, 16 administrators (Principals, Vice Principals), and 168 homeroom teachers' questionnaires which were used excel tools to survey.

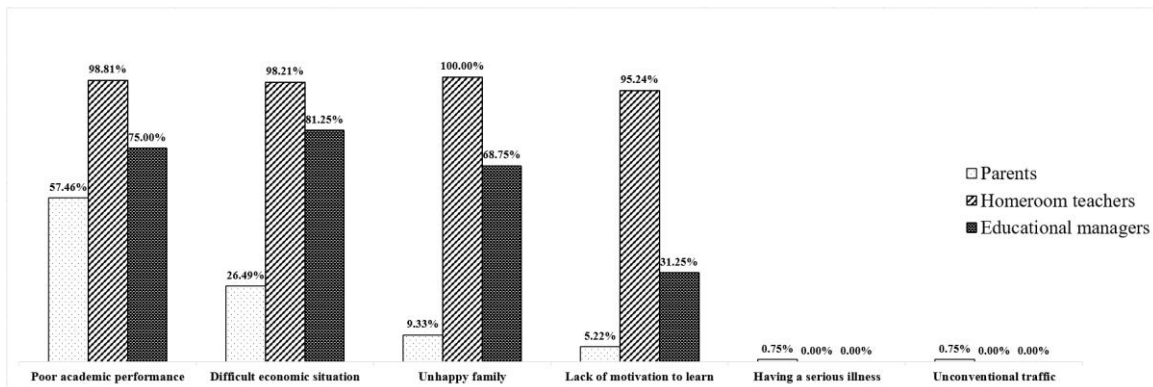


Figure 1. Reasons for dropping out of school

Figure 1 indicated that there were four main factors that contribute to students' high school abandonment. These reasons included poor academic performance (parents: 57.46%, teachers: 98.81%, administrators: 75.00%), difficult family economic situations (parents: 26.49%, teachers: 98.21%, managers: 81.25%), unhappy family (parents: 9.33%, teachers: 100%, managers: 68.75%), lack of study motivation, poor sense of learning (parents: 5.22%, teachers: 95.24%, administrators: 68.75%), serious diseases (parents: 0.75%, teachers: 0.00, administrators: 0.00%), and unconventional traffic (parents: 0.75%, teachers: 0.00%, administrators: 0.00%). Among these, low academic performance (57.46%) and *difficult family economic* circumstances (26.49%) were the two causes that were commonly acknowledged by most parents, while serious illness and unconventional traffic were found to be rarely mentioned (only 0.75% of parents agreed). Low academic performance also appeared in previous studies of Le and Tran (2013) and Pham and Thach (2016) and Ogresta et al. (2020) and Stevenson et al. (2021).

Besides, if the economic situation were difficult, students could leave school for work. This reason held second place as shown in the chart with 26.49% comments from parents, 98.21% from homeroom teachers, and 81.25% of managers.

Another reason was unhappy issues in students' families, including 9.33%, 100%, 68.75% from parents, homeroom teachers, and educational managers, which can lead to these students dropping out of school.

Lacking motivation took fourth place with 5.22%, 95.24%, and 31.25% from parents, homeroom teachers, and educational managers.

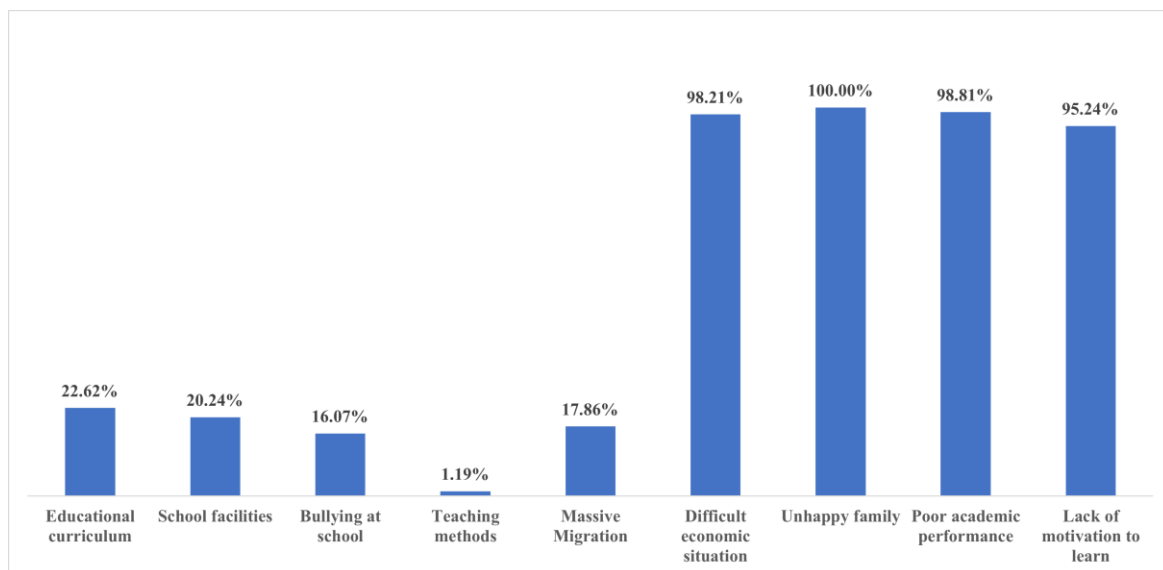
Some other reasons, such as serious disease infection and unconventional traffic, were sometimes a challenge that prevented students from returning to school.

As shown from the results, there were some differences in perspectives of parents, homeroom teachers, and managers. While, for parents, the reason for poor academic performance took the first place and was significantly higher than other reasons with 100% of homeroom teachers considering the unhappy family as the primary reason. Moreover, the managers saw those difficulties in family economics could be the most crucial cause. Regarding family issues, only 9.33% of parents agreed that living in an unhappy family could cause students to drop out of school. In comparison, 100% of teachers and 68.75% of school leaders surveyed confirmed that school abandonment was related to this cause.

Homeroom teachers who had the closest relationship to students could have incisive comments about dropouts' situations. The results of surveys from the homeroom teachers exhibited in Figure 2. As seen from the chart, more than 95% of homeroom teachers admitted that the factors, including difficult economic, unhappy family, poor academic performance, and lack of motivation to learn, were the main reasons students' dropping out of high school. School managers also confirmed

these four factors. As observed from the analyzed data, the difficult household economy was the factor found to have the most impact (81.25%), while the lack of motivation to learn was having less impact (31.25%) on student dropout of school. However, according to homeroom teachers, these factors had the same effect on students' dropping out. In addition, these results also proved that the educational leader's point of view was the same as

that of the homeroom teachers and parents about the main reasons contributing to students' dropout of high school. According to the homeroom teachers' point of view, other causes (educational curriculum, school facilities, massive migration, bullying at school, and teaching methods) might have little effect on students' withdrawal from high school because less than 23% of teachers interviewed agreed with these causes.



**Figure 2. Reasons for dropping out of school from the point of view of the homeroom teachers**

Based on the opinions of parents, managers, and homeroom teachers, it could be concluded that poor academic performance, difficult economic situation, unhappy family, and lack of motivation to learn were the main factors leading to students dropping out of high school in Ca Mau province. These main reasons mostly came from students themselves and their families.

Some parents believed that their children dropped out due to poor academic performance and economic difficulties. Meanwhile, the homeroom teacher said that in addition to these two main reasons, there are also unhappy families, the students' motivation to study was incorrect. From School Leaders said that the three main reasons are difficult family economy, poor academic performance, and unhappy family.

However, those are just the expressions of parents and administrators through interviews and surveys with homeroom teachers. The following section would discuss these reasons in more detail.

#### 4.2. Discussion

As observed from the obtained investigations, some comments and explanations could be conducted as the following.

First of all, with poor academic performance, students did not keep up with their friends. During the parents' interview process, some parents pointed out that some requirements at the high school level were different from those at the secondary school level, resulting in students not keeping up with the program, getting poor grades while the teacher treated their weak students strictly, so the students could feel uncomfortable for their study. In this case, the students did not change the strategy to adapt to a higher level, which led to their poor performance. As a result, they felt ashamed and lacked motivation, and then dropped out of school. From the interview of parents, they mainly believed that their children dropped out of school due to poor academic performance or their family's economic difficulties, so their children must leave school early. On the other hand, the homeroom teachers

relied on their own experience to provide information that they found when students dropped out. Since then, as from analyzed results, the homeroom teachers found that the main reasons for dropping out of school were poor academic performance, challenging household economy, unhappy family, or lack of motivation in learning. For educational managers, they through the important reasons contributing to student's dropout of high school are poor academic performance, difficult economic situations, and the unhappy family. Parents accepted that their children dropped out of school due to poor academic performance or difficult economic situations. Furthermore, the reasons for living in an unhappy family and lacking motivation in learning were sensitive issues. Therefore, parents rarely acknowledge this. The cause of illness or unfavorable traffic is a minor cause. When homeroom teachers are investigated, they based on the practical experience which had encountered in many years and periods. As a result, there would be more influential than parents in the 2019–2020 school year. When carrying out interviewing administrators, they gave less cause than homeroom teachers, as stated in Phuong (2019).

Secondly, if the family's economic situation was difficult, the children might have to leave school to work in industrial zones, in the industrial areas such as Ho Chi Minh, Binh Duong, Dong Nai, or work at the local to support their family economic in the problematic situation Cuu (2020) and Quang (2020) and Bang (2020). In some low-income families, children often drop out of school after finishing secondary school because their parents have an incorrect perception of the importance of learning. Moreover, their children did not want to burden their families, so these children left school and looked for a job to help their families. The parents thought that their children could stop learning and attend vocational training or find a job when they had little difficulty in money or their children were incapable of learning well or lacked awareness of learning. Therefore, parents let their children drop out of school.

Third, the reason could come from family issues where students' families could be unhappy. This cause provided features similarity with findings from some previous research, including Le and Tran (2013) and Pham and Thach (2016). The investigated interviews have shown that some students did not live with their parents because of some private reasons. If they lived with their

grandparents or relatives (aunts, uncles), the student could lack parental affection. Because their life did not have material enough, so in the students' own perception, learning had no meaning when their teachers scolded them for learning or their friends looked down on them. The family's economic difficulties or an unhappy family was really a delicate matter. Usually, parents could not share with other people or denied that their children dropped out of school due to economic difficulties or unhappy families.

Fourthly, because of the improper motivation in learning, students easily got bored of studying and thought wrongly in learning. This cause came from weak learning, so they thought that learning was not meaningful and did not have a bright future. This reason is similar to the cause presented in the studies of Le and Tran (2013) and Pham and Thach (2016).

Fifthly, the students had a serious illness that required long-term treatment. This cause was an objective cause that students, parents, teachers, and schools did not expect. However, if it happened, it would be a direct cause of dropping out of high school as introduced in (Vaughn et al., 2014; Hjorth, et al., 2016; Ramsdal et al., 2018; Syvertsen et al., 2020).

The final reason was unconventional traffic for going to school. In general, the current traffic problem was very convenient to travel everywhere. However, in some families with economic difficulties and lack means of transportation, going to school was quite difficult. This made students tired and unable to acquire knowledge well. Gradually, they were bored with learning and dropped out of school. Ca Mau was an area with many rivers and canals, so infrastructure conditions have not been developed yet. Schools' locations can be far from home, while transportation is inconvenient for the student to go to school.

The results reveal that the different roles (parents, teachers, leaders) that can determine why students drop out of school were also different. Specifically, the causes of illness and unfavorable traffic were the reasons that parents consider as having an impact on dropping out of school. However, with the role of homeroom teachers and administrators, these causes were rarely influential. On the other hand, the cause comes from the student's family, who might admit it due to the private problem. Nevertheless, the homeroom teachers and administrators showed that this was why students drop out of school. Besides, the homeroom teachers indicated other reasons for



teaching methods, schools (educational curriculum, school facilities, bullying at school), and society (massive migration) that both parents and school leaders did not mention. However, these other reasons had little effect on students' dropout.

From the analysis of the reasons for dropping out of high school students in Ca Mau province, the primary reasons could be poor academic performance and difficult economic circumstances. These circumstances affected dropping out of school and directly affected other causes such as improper study motivation and unhappy family. In addition, unfavorable traffic and lack of transportation to travel were also direct causes. Moreover, the objective reason was a severe illness

that was required for long-term treatment in a hospital. Thus, this prevented students from returning to school.

### 5. SOLUTIONS FOR REDUCING THE DROPOUT RATE

The solutions proposed to decrease the high school abandonment rate were collected and synthesized from group discussions, interviews, surveys with homeroom teachers and administrators about reasons for withdrawal from high school. The results are analyzed and presented in Table 5 with S: Strengths, W: Weaknesses, O: Opportunities, and T: Threats - (Challenges).

**Table 5. SWOT analysis results on the reasons for students dropping out of school**

		Internal factors	
		List of strengths (S): S1. Students have the spirit to overcome difficulties in learning. S2. Parents care about their children's education. S3. Parents realize the importance of learning. S4. Parents are industrious and hard-working.	List of weaknesses (W): W1. Some students <i>lack family attention</i> . W2. Some parents work away from home. W3. Some students are not aware of the importance of learning. W4. Some family has economic problems (low-income, no stable job, no land). W5. Ability to acquire knowledge of some students is still limited. W6. Some students have had a serious illness for a long time.
<b>SWOT</b>			
<b>External factors</b>	<b>List of opportunities (O):</b> O1. The Department of Education and Training of Ca Mau invests in facilities for high schools. O2. Many programs support the poor to overcome difficulties by the local government. O3. Leaders at all fields and homerooms care about dropping out of school. O4. Many companies and businesses were established at the local.	<b>S+O: Take advantage of the opportunities to promote the strengths</b> S1, S2 + O1, O2, O3: It is necessary to create a close connection between family, school, and society in student's education. S3, S4 + O2, O4: Parents are diligent and hard-working to improve their lives and ensure material things for their children to study well.	<b>W+O: Make use of the opportunities to overcome the weaknesses</b> W2, W4 + O2, O4: It is necessary to create stable jobs and reduce the low-income family and its economic difficulties. W1, W2, W3 + O3: The homeroom teacher cares and closes with their students as family members of the students to help and educate them while they need the family affection. W5 + O1, O3: The care of leaders, teachers as well as investment in teaching <i>equipment</i> and modern practice equipment help students have more ways to acquire knowledge better.

List of challenges (T):	SO+T: Take advantage of opportunities to promote strengths and reduce threats	W+T: Overcoming weaknesses and avoiding challenges
T1. Many people are out of work at the local.	S2, S3, O4 + T1: The creation of many jobs at the local in Ca Mau province can help to reduce the number of people leaving the locality to work far away.	W1, W2 + T2: It is necessary to raise parents' awareness of their children's learning that studying well will bring them a better future in parent-teacher meetings.
T2. Students are unemployed after graduating from universities at the local.	S3, O4 + T2: It is necessary to create job fairs as well as job counseling sessions for graduated students at the local.	W5 + T4: The youth union educates students by saluting the flag and extracurricular activities to raise students' awareness about their health and create a healthy playground.
T3. People come from other places to reside temporarily at the local.	S4, O2 + T3: The government should create many job opportunities for parents to enhance their material life.	
T4. Many amusement parks and entertainment centers appear at the local.	S1, S3, O3 + T4: It is necessary to have the coordination of school leaders, teachers, and parents in the students' education so that students have the proper awareness of learning.	

Table 5 summarizes some solutions to reduce the dropout rate of school Ca Mau Province. Firstly, for the local governments, they should create many job opportunities for the parents of the students to avoid dropping out of school due to the family's economic difficulties. Secondly, the Ca Mau Department of Education and Training should have many experiential activities and vocational guidance for students to feel very highly enthusiastic in their studies. Thirdly, for schools, they need to create many healthy playgrounds in group activities, establish a school advisory group to encourage students promptly when they have difficulties, help students have good orientation in their learning, change the methods of test and assess to reduce the dropout rate of school due to poor academic performance. Fourth, for mass organizations in schools, it is necessary to organize many extracurricular activities, to help students refresh their minds coordinate with teachers in educating students regularly. Fifth, teachers should consider students as children in our family, and be close to students, try to understand what they are expecting. However, with a big pressure by teaching, teachers can meet numerous challenges to complete all missions. Therefore, educational managers should establish special groups who (it would be great if they are trained with professional degrees in counselling) can give good pieces of advices and provide valuable consultations for students. Finally, students must try their best to overcome difficulties

and learn well. In the case they meet the challenges or problems in their lives, they should contact teachers or professional consultants to seek advice to overcome the difficulties.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

This study investigated factors affecting the dropout rate in Ca Mau Province with data collected from students' parents, homeroom teachers, and educational managers. The analysis drawn from data collected at high schools in Ca Mau Province in the school year 2019–2020 showed that the leading causes of drop out of high school in Ca Mau Province included poor academic performance, low-income families, unhappy families, and improper motivation in learning, serious illness infections, and unconventional traffic. As observed, poor academic performance holds the highest percentage in all investigated causes for three interviewed and surveyed types of stakeholders. The analysis suggests solutions to students, parents, teachers, and managers with an expected target to enhance students' enthusiasm and improve their performance. The study is expected to find practically efficient solutions to reduce students quitting high school from analyzed results.

The results from this initial study prove that other relevant indicators for dropout of high school students in Ca Mau province are identified to

improve the solutions for reducing the number of students dropping out of school in Ca Mau province.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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