



Between Divine Destiny and Economic Transactions: A Qualitative Study of Underprivileged People's Perceptions of the Role of Education

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to critically analyze the dynamics of poor people's perceptions in Sukorejo Village, Kendal, Indonesia regarding whether education functions as a liberating theological intervention or merely as a material necessity for survival. This research employs a qualitative approach with a case study design. Participants were selected purposively, and data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis. Data analysis used the Miles and Huberman interactive model. The findings reveal a dialectical tension between spirituality and economic pragmatism. Community perspectives are divided into three orientations: education as divine destiny, education as an economic transaction, and education as a spiritual-material hybrid. The hybrid perspective is the most dominant but often constrained by economic pressure. This study identifies a hermeneutical meaning crisis as a root problem, where poverty is not only financial but also related to limited understanding of education's role. This research offers a strategic framework integrating material and spiritual dimensions as an innovative approach to inclusive education policies.

Kata Kunci:

Kata kunci: pendidikan; orang miskin; Intervensi Teologis

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji secara kritis dinamika persepsi masyarakat miskin di Desa Sukorejo, Kendal, Indonesia mengenai peran pendidikan apakah sebagai intervensi teologis yang membebaskan atau sekadar kebutuhan material untuk bertahan hidup. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipatif, dan analisis dokumen. Analisis data menggunakan model interaktif Miles dan Huberman. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya ketegangan antara spiritualitas dan pragmatisme ekonomi. Pandangan masyarakat terbagi menjadi tiga: pendidikan sebagai takdir ilahi, pendidikan sebagai transaksi ekonomi, dan pendidikan sebagai hibrida spiritual-material. Pandangan hibrida menjadi yang paling dominan, meskipun masih dibatasi oleh tekanan ekonomi. Penelitian ini menemukan adanya krisis makna hermeneutis sebagai akar masalah, di mana kemiskinan tidak hanya bersifat finansial tetapi juga berkaitan dengan pemahaman terhadap peran pendidikan. Penelitian ini menawarkan kerangka strategis yang mengintegrasikan dimensi material dan spiritual dalam kebijakan pendidikan inklusif.

INTRODUCTION

Ideally, education for the poor is considered a basic right that must be governed by a harmonious combination of humane theology and the fulfillment of urgent materialistic needs; Religion in this case does not stop at the anesthetic for the people, but becomes a certain moral force that encourages distributive justice, while material aid serves as a concrete bridge with more than a sum of money so that children from marginalized families can go to school literally without starving and without spending large amounts of money and on them.(Nadziroh et al., 2018). In fact, in today's social reality a painful paradox is that the two elements may continue to work alone even against each other, creating an increasingly deep threshold for the poor. In many societies, theological narratives may be used as a tool of legitimization of poverty, by preaching surrender and acceptance of destiny without structural criticism, thus obscuring the right to a decent education(Ruhulestin, 2025). In contrast, the materialistic approach that exists is often trapped in paternalistic momentary charitable programs, providing physical assistance without empowering or changing the oppressive system, so that education is simply considered an unaffordable luxury commodity. This form of contradiction is evident when religious institutions focus more on worship rituals than advocacy for inclusive education policies, while government aid programs or NGOs only touch the surface without touching the root of the problem of inequality of access. As a result, poor children remain trapped in a cycle of ignorance; They are taught to accept their fate spiritually but are left physically hungry, making the goal of education as a tool of social mobility unattainable (Zurwanti et al., 2023). Instead of being a liberating dual solution, the interaction between faith and material often perpetuates the status quo of injustice, where poverty is considered natural and education remains an exclusive privilege for those who can afford it, not a universal right for all human beings created by God.

Recent scholarship highlights a persistent disconnect between educational idealism and the harsh realities faced by impoverished communities, yet these studies often treat symptoms rather than the root cause. Sitorus and Sitanggang (2025) note how resigned theological narratives in slums dampen educational aspirations, framing poverty as an unchangeable fate. Similarly, Rahawarin et al. (2025) argue that material aid without value-based mentoring yields only temporary, consumptive benefits, failing to improve long-term school retention. This fragmentation is further evident in Arifin's (2025) observation that religious institutions frequently prioritize ritual over structural empowerment, while Haliim and Fatkhurrohmah (2025) critique government programs for their paternalistic view of the poor as passive aid recipients rather than active knowledge seekers. Seneng et al. (2023) confirm that such disjointed approaches perpetuate intergenerational poverty. While these five studies effectively diagnose the dichotomy between theological intervention and material needs, they stop short of addressing the underlying hermeneutical meaning crisis—the fundamental breakdown

in how sacred texts are interpreted to relate to economic struggle. Existing literature analyzes these elements in isolation, failing to offer a unified framework that bridges this interpretive gap. Therefore, the true novelty of this research lies in explicitly tackling this hermeneutical crisis. Unlike previous works that merely identify the problem, this study proposes an empirical model that integrates pro-social justice interpretations of sacred texts with asset-based material strategies, transforming theological discourse from a potential barrier into a tangible driver of educational empowerment.

This study aims to carefully analyze the dynamics of the views of low-income people in Sukorejo Village, Sukorejo District, Kendal Regency, Central Java, regarding the role of education whether as a liberating theological tool or simply a material need for survival (Noviawati & Narendri, 2017). With three main questions, this study will investigate how they view education, how far spiritual aspects are considered as the main basis for acquiring knowledge, and whether motivation to improve the quality of life dominates the existing narrative. The selection of location in Sukorejo Village is based on strong reasons related to specific social, religious, and economic characteristics; This village reflects a microcosm of Central Java society where a very high level of religiosity is directly related to economic vulnerability in the agricultural sector and daily labor. The phenomenon observed in the field shows that there is a real tension between the values of deep religious surrender and the demands of urgent material needs, making Sukorejo a suitable social laboratory to witness the paradigm conflict. In addition, preliminary data shows that school dropout rates and low educational aspirations continue to increase despite various government assistance programs and religious da'wah have been included. This suggests that there is a difference between the interventions provided and the local understanding. This study is strategically important because the results found in Sukorejo can serve as a representative model for thousands of other villages in Indonesia that face similar problems. The results of this analysis are important to create inclusive education policies that take into account the culture and beliefs of grassroots communities, avoiding generalizations that often ignore local aspects of poverty management.

This research is very important and urgent to be carried out immediately because it is related to the survival of the younger generation in the midst of an increasingly complex multidimensional crisis. Not understanding the basic perception of education for the poor has the potential to perpetuate the cycle of structural poverty permanently. This urgency is due to the fact that current education policies and social assistance programs are often made based on false beliefs, assuming that the main problem is simply a lack of funds. In fact, the biggest obstacle may lie in the narrow materialistic view or the passive theological construction that has become inherent in the consciousness of society. If this research is not carried out, current interventions will be wasted and consume limited public resources without resolving the main problem. As a result, children from poor families in Sukorejo Village and similar areas will continue to miss out on golden opportunities for social mobility. In addition, this weakness has been exacerbated by the dynamics of socio-economic changes after the pandemic and global inflationary pressures. The time to change the paradigm is getting narrower before

fatalism to education becomes the cultural norm. This research is more than just an academic study; It is an important effort to prevent the loss of large amounts of human capital, which could undermine the country's long-term development base (Omayra, 2021). Any attempt to reform education will fail and be irrelevant if society does not understand education as an economic act or a divine obligation. Therefore, this research must be done immediately if we want to obtain empirical data that can be used to build effective hybrid intervention strategies. This must be done to combat poverty before it is too late and ensure that education is a liberating universal right and not a privilege that is far out of reach.

METHODS

To study in depth the complexity of educational perceptions among the poor, this study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. This is a wise methodological choice because the phenomenon being studied has many contextual nuances, cultural values, and spiritual beliefs that cannot be measured by numbers. This design was used to concentrate on Sukorejo Village in Central Java Province, Indonesia (Gammelgaard, 2017). Using a single, strictly limited unit of analysis, the researcher can see how theological doctrine interacts with material demands in the daily lives of the speakers. With a qualitative approach, the subjective meanings constructed by participants can be explored more flexibly (Amane et al., 2023). This is because researchers serve as the main tools directly involved in the social dynamics of the field. The study did not aim to generalize the results to a broad population. Instead, the goal is to gain a broader and deeper understanding of how poverty affects our perspective on education. With a case study design, it is easier to thoroughly investigate the processes, reasons, and motivations behind a family's decision to continue or terminate their children's education. By limiting their reach to one specific location, researchers can identify hidden patterns and internal contradictions that may not be visible in large-scale surveys. This allows researchers to generate an accurate understanding of the conflict between spiritual expectations and economic realities faced by those communities.

To ensure the accuracy and richness of the information, the data collection method is combined with participant observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. Research relies on in-depth interviews (Nurdiani, 2014), which lasted 180 minutes and was conducted for each of the eight selected speakers: four parents (Ot1-Ot4) and four children who were not pursuing higher education (A1-A4). To create a sense of comfort and cultural familiarity, the interview process was conducted in Javanese. This allows the interviewees to express their feelings and beliefs without linguistic barriers. Once ethical approval is obtained, the transcript of the interview is translated verbatim into Indonesian for the purpose of international scientific publications; To maintain the confidentiality of personal data, the name is replaced with initials. To collect non-verbal context and social interactions that support verbal data, observations were carried out directly in the home environment and place of worship of the resource persons. Village social assistance data and records of local religious institutions were studied during the document analysis. The triangulation model of techniques and sources ensures the validity of the data, and the analysis of the data uses the Miles and Huberman

interactive flows, which consist of data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. This ensures that the interpretations made are truly based on empirical evidence collected systematically and can be accounted for in the field.

Table 1. Informant Profiles

NO.	Initials	Gender	Residence	Age
1.	Ot1	Women	Sapen, Sukorejo	45
2.	Ot2	Male	Sapen, Sukorejo	55
3.	Ot3	Male	Sapen, Sukorejo	75
4.	Ot4	Male	Tlangu,Sukorejo	46
5.	A1	Women	Tlangu,Sukorejo	18
6.	A2	Women	Sapen, Sukorejo	24
7.	A3	Women	Sapen, Sukorejo	18
8.	A4	Male	Sapen, Sukorejo	19

During the research process, not only after the data collection is completed, the data analysis is carried out cyclically and continuously using the Miles and Huberman interactive model (Qomaruddin & Sa'diyah, 2024). In the first stage, data condensation, data from Javanese interview transcripts that have been translated are selected, focused, simplified, and abstracted. In this process, the researcher discovers important codes related to the theme of theological intervention and materialistic needs. Irrelevant data is filtered to focus the analysis on the main problem of the study. In the second stage, the presentation of data, the information has been condensed into structured text such as a matrix, flowchart, or narrative text. This makes it easier for researchers to see patterns of relationships between variables, such as the relationship between levels of religiosity and school dropout decisions. During the field, these presentations help visualize the initial findings and test working hypotheses. Drawing conclusions and verifying is the third stage of the iterative process. Here, the researchers make an initial proposal based on the observable pattern and then return to the original data to test its validity by triangulation. Researchers will collect additional data or conduct re-interviews if the initial findings are unreliable. To guarantee the credibility of the results, this entire process is publicly recorded in the audit trail. By applying these measures rigorously, the research will be able to produce results that are not only descriptive but also analytical (Jailani & Saksitha, 2024). These results will meet the strict standards of modern qualitative research methodologies and will explain the socio-cultural mechanisms that influence the view of education in Sukorejo Village, Central Java Province, Indonesia.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

The Views of the Poor on Education in Sukorejo Village, Sukorejo District, Kendal Regency

The findings of this study show that in Sukorejo Village, Sukorejo District, there are variations in the poor's views on education that reflect the relationship between ideal values, economic reality, and spiritual beliefs. Based on the results of the latest interviews, these views can be categorized into three main forms, namely education as a divine destiny, education as an economic necessity, and education as a spiritual-material hybrid. However, in contrast to previous findings that tended to be extreme, field data showed that most of the community was in a more moderate and contextual position.

First, the view of "education as divine destiny" is still to be found, although not very dominant. In this perspective, the limitations of education are understood as part of God's will that must be accepted. This can be seen from Ot2's statement which said, "I think education is important, but yes, we live according to the circumstances, while still believing in the destiny that Allah loves." This statement shows an attitude of accepting conditions with a religious approach, where efforts are still made, but the final result is left to God's will. This view is not entirely fatalistic, but it still reflects the belief that the success of education is inseparable from divine intervention.

Second, the view of "education as a material economic transaction" arises from the pressure of urgent living needs. In this perspective, education is considered based on its economic benefits. If it is considered not proportional to the costs incurred, then education tends to be abandoned. This is clearly illustrated in A4's statement, "I think education is important, but because of the high cost, I ended up choosing to work first rather than continue school." This statement shows that decisions related to education are not due to a lack of awareness of the importance of education, but rather due to economic conditions that force individuals to prioritize short-term needs. In addition, Ot1 also expressed the economic expectations of education by saying, "Sometimes parents have hope, their children will be able to help the family or raise the status of the family." This confirms that education is seen as a tool of social mobility.

Third, the view of "education as a spiritual-material hybrid" is the most dominant in the latest findings. This group sees education not only as an economic means, but also as a process of self-formation and the meaning of life. A1 revealed, "In my opinion, education is not just about school or degree, but the process of us becoming more aware of life. It's just that in reality, many also pursue education for work." This statement shows an awareness of the intrinsic value of education as well as the social reality that cannot be avoided. In line with that, A2 stated, "Education is important, not only for work, but also for shaping our daily way of thinking and attitude." Meanwhile, A3 added, "For me, education is very important, because from there we know things that we didn't know before." From the parents' side, this hybrid view is also seen in Ot3 who said, "If I think education is important, but yes we must look at abilities as well." and Ot4 who said, "Education is a provision for life, but we also can't force it if the

situation is not possible." These statements show a balance between expectations for education and economic constraints faced.

Interview Evidence

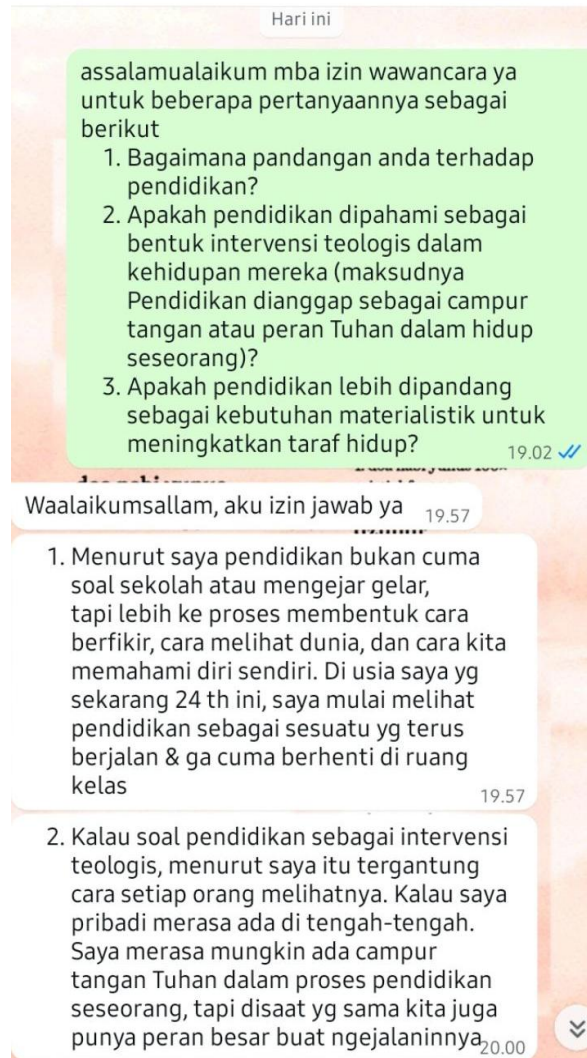


Figure 1. Documentation of WhatsApp interviews with research informants

Overall, these findings suggest that the poor in Sukorejo Village are no longer fully trapped in the extreme view between religious fatalism and economic pragmatism. Instead, they tend to develop a more flexible and realistic understanding, where education is still seen as important, both as a means of self-formation and as an effort to improve living standards, although it is still limited by existing economic conditions. This confirms that poverty not only affects access to education, but also shapes the way society interprets education itself.

Education is understood as a form of theological intervention in their lives in the village. Sukorejo, Sukorejo District, Kendal Regency

In Sukorejo Village, Kendal Regency, the understanding of education as a form of theological intervention is manifested in three distinct patterns that shape community

behavior. Reinforcing previous findings regarding education as a "Compulsory Ritual Worship", some informants explicitly linked learning activities to the value of worship. A4 states that "from a religious point of view, learning is worship, so education is indeed important because we carry out the commandment to seek knowledge." This statement shows that education is not just a worldly activity, but a part of religious practice. In this context, the A4 view reinforces the pattern already found in Ot1 and Ot3, where education is prioritized not because of economic benefits, but because of the spiritual consequences of religious merits and obligations.

Meanwhile, the pattern of "The Path to Destiny That Has Been Written" appeared to be more dominant in the results of additional interviews. Ot1 said in a resigned tone that "if children can go to school to high school, it means that there is indeed a way and sustenance from God," which was then emphasized by Ot2 with the statement "everything has been arranged by God, we can only try as much as we can." A similar perspective also emerged from A2 who revealed that "not everyone has the opportunity to go to school, so it feels like it has been the path that God has given." This narrative is in harmony with previous analyses of fatalistic tendencies, in which education is understood as part of a divine scenario. As a result, human efforts are often placed as secondary factors rather than God's will, potentially weakening the drive to implement concrete strategies in the face of economic limitations.

On the other hand, the dimension of "Moral Trust of Moral Guardians" appears more implicitly in interviews. A1 said that "being able to go to school, meet a good teacher, or get knowledge is not only an effort, but also a way from God," which shows that education is understood as a process of self-formation, not just academic achievement. This view indicates that school functions as a space for moral and spiritual development, in line with previous findings that some parents place more emphasis on moral values than material success.

Interestingly, there is also a tendency for "hybrid understanding" that bridges theological and rational aspects. A3 states that "knowledge is from God, but it comes to us through human beings such as teachers and parents," emphasizing that education is neither wholly divine nor purely human effort. This view shows the awareness that the success of education is the result of the interaction between God's will and human efforts. Thus, these findings enrich the previous analysis that the theological intervention in Sukorejo was not single, but rather layered and dynamic.

Interview Evidence



Figure 2. Interview with research informant

Education is seen as a materialistic need to improve the standard of living in the village. Sukorejo, Sukorejo District, Kendal Regency

In Sukorejo Village, Kendal Regency, the dominance of the view of education as a materialistic need to improve living standards is manifested in three very thick pragmatic forms. Reinforcing the pattern of "Golden Ticket Out of Poverty", most of the informants openly interpreted education as the main way to improve the economic condition of the family. A2 said that "education is considered a path to better jobs, higher incomes, and a more decent life," indicating a strong orientation to economic mobility. This is reinforced by Ot1 who hopes that "if high school children can get a better job and their lives are not as difficult as their parents." A similar view also emerged from Ot3 which emphasized that education is a hope so that children "have a better life and not have difficulties like us." This narrative is in line with the concept of the "golden ticket", where education is reduced to the main tool to get out of poverty, so that its success is measured by how quickly it produces real economic change.

Meanwhile, the pattern of "Cost-Benefit Analysis" is seen in the way informants rationally consider the practical value of education. A4 revealed that "now many people see education in terms of work, the important thing is to graduate and have a diploma," which shows that the learning process is often sidelined compared to the final result in the form of a certificate. A1 also provides critical reflection by saying, "education is often seen as a tool to get good work and a better life, but if it is only that it becomes narrow," which indirectly shows the existence of an awareness of the logic of profit and loss in education. From the parents' side, Ot2 emphasized, "if you don't go to school now, it is difficult to find a job, so education is important to help the family economy," which shows that school decisions are based on consideration of future economic benefits. This reinforces the analysis that education is treated like an investment that should provide concrete benefits.

On the other hand, the pattern of "Family Asset Diversification Strategy" emerged in the form of long-term expectations for education as a support for the family economy across generations. A3 states that "with education, usually the standard of living can improve and become better in the future," which shows that education is seen as capital to strengthen the economic position of the family. This view is reinforced by Ot4 who hopes that "with school, children can get better jobs, so their lives will not be as difficult as their parents are now." In fact, A1 adds a more reflective dimension that education is not only about money, but also "makes us wiser and have a mature way of thinking," which indicates that there is an awareness that education can be a non-material asset that supports the sustainability of life. Thus, education is not only positioned as a means of making money, but also as a form of family investment to avoid poverty in the future.

Interview Evidence



Figure 3. Interview with research informant

The results of this interview emphasized that the people of Sukorejo tend to interpret education in a materialistic framework, but with varying levels of intensity. Some see it as a "golden ticket" to get out of poverty, some rationally count it as an economic investment, and some see it as a long-term strategy to strengthen family conditions. However, behind the dominance of this economic orientation, there is still an awareness that education also has non-material value, although it is often in a secondary position.

Discussion

This study shows the dialectical tension between the spiritual-theological and pragmatic aspects of the economic-material in the perception of the poor in Sukorejo Village towards education. Key findings suggest that community perspectives are not monolithic; it is divided into three main orientations: education as God's destiny that tends to resign, education as a calculative economic transaction, and education as a spiritual and material combination that seeks to balance the two but is often wavering by necessity. In the context of theological intervention, education is interpreted in a variety of ways, including compulsory ritual worship, the path to a written destiny, and the moral mandate of moral guardians. If not criticized, this interpretation serves as a coping mechanism and motivates structural passivity. Education, on the other hand, is considered a materialistic need and is reduced to a ticket to getting out of poverty, a strict cost-benefit calculation tool, and a family asset diversification strategy. The intrinsic value of science is often discarded by the need to survive. One of the most important results of this study was the finding that there is a crisis of meaning influencing educational decisions at the grassroots level. Poverty in Sukorejo is not only due to lack of funds, but also due to hermeneutical confusion in interpreting the role of education in the midst of life's difficulties. Thus, this study finds that inclusive education policies cannot succeed with material assistance alone or a separate religious normative approach. Instead, there needs to be an integrated intervention model that can integrate transcendental expectations with immanent reality. Thus, education can function as a tool of liberation that empowers spiritually as well as prospers materially.

These results have significant theoretical significance due to their validity and elaboration of Pierre Bourdieu's Social Reproductive Theory, especially the concept of habitus, which is shaped by objective poverty structures (Karnanta, 2013). A study in

Sukorejo Village shows how the habits of the poor are uniquely divided. The view of education as God's destiny reflects the internalization of structural limitations into a resigned mental disposition (fatalism), in which material incompetence is considered God's will, an adaptation mechanism that perpetuates poverty by eliminating the agency of resistance (Mulyono, 2020). When theological narratives are used to justify inequalities in access to education, victims feel the dominance of structures as natural and natural. This is a clear example of Bourdieu's theoretical indicators of symbolic violence. The view of Education as an Economic Transaction, on the other hand, suggests that the scarcity of economic capital controls a narrow rational calculus habitus, forcing people to ignore the long-term accumulation of cultural capital in favor of momentary survival, which stops the path of social mobility (Estede et al., 2025). These results show the dialectical tension between spirituality and materialism, which reinforces Bourdieu's theory by showing that habitus is not just the result of class determinism; It is an arena of meaning-fighting in which agents seek to negotiate their identities through the interpretation of pragmatic and religious needs. Therefore, this study shows that the education system will only function as a tool to reproduce injustice if there is no intervention that changes the objective structure and reconstructs the habitus through free theological interpretation.

This research supports and deepens five studies (Sitorus & Sitanggang, 2025), (Rahawarin et al., 2025), (Arifin, 2025), (Haliim & Fatkhurrohman, 2025), (Seneng et al., 2023) which shows the difference between failed materialistic aid and passive theological narratives. This research supports the conclusion of Sitorus & Sitanggang and Arifin that religious interpretations often repeat what has already happened. It also confirms the analysis of Haliim & Fatkhurrohman and Rahawarin that material approaches alone are not effective in changing educational behavior in the long run. However, this study is very different from previous research because it does not only detect problems or analyze the two pillars separately. Rather, he uncovers the dynamics in dialectical tensions within the subject in which the three orientations of view (destiny, transaction, and hybrid) compete in the same understanding. This research shows that, although previous research has tended to see poor communities as passive objects of structures or policies, hermeneutical crises demonstrate their complex role in constructing meaning. One of the main surprises of this finding was the discovery that the idea of a "Crisis of Hermeneutical Meaning" was the source of a problem that had been neglected, namely the great confusion in interpreting sacred texts in the midst of the economic challenges that divide habitus. Recently, it fills the research gap by saying that the solution is not just to increase material assistance or change da'wah; It requires an interpretive reconciliation that unites transcendental hope with immanent reality within one comprehensive framework of empowerment. This dimension has not been addressed by the current literature.

Overhauling the policy paradigm from a sectoral approach to an intervention model that unites material and spiritual aspects is a strategic step that needs to be taken today based on the novelty of findings regarding the crisis of hermeneutical meaning as the root of the problem (Judge, 2025). It is necessary to create an empowerment program from the perspective of government policy that involves theological-critical

assistance involving local religious leaders in addition to providing financial assistance such as KIP or PKH. To transform religious beliefs into a driver of social mobility, not a structural justification for poverty, the government must educate village dai and scholars to transform sacred texts into transformative ethos of effort that transforms the narrative of fatal surrender. Schools should serve as discussion spaces that validate parents' transcendental expectations while equipping students with vocational skills that promise economic certainty (Sapphire et al., 2025). Pedagogical curriculum and practices must be adapted to the sociocultural realities of the community in rural education. It is imperative to build a new meaningful environment in which education is seen as an investment in a God-pleased civilization, not as a rigid cost-benefit transaction. To ensure that the interventions provided are not paternalistic, but rather empower local agencies, it is critical that the community is actively involved in program planning. Education policy can really deal with the crisis of meaning experienced by the poor; They can transform hermeneutical chaos into a clear understanding, and ultimately stop the cycle of poverty through education that is spiritually liberating while sustainably materially prospering.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study brings a surprising reality and shakes the general assumption: the main obstacle to education for the poor in Sukorejo Village is not simply the absence of money or facilities, but a crisis of hermeneutical meaning hidden in their own souls. These findings are surprising because they reveal a tragic paradox in which religion, which is supposed to be a source of hope and strength to rise, is often hijacked by fatalist interpretations into a tool of legitimacy to remain oppressed in structural poverty. Even more astonishing, when a materialistic approach is applied, it instead reduces education to a cruel cold trade transaction, in which the future of children is valued only on short-term profit-loss calculations, killing human potential for the sake of today's mouthful of rice. This study slaps our awareness that the billions of rupiah in social assistance and thousands of hours of da'wah that have been poured out may be in vain because they fail to touch the heart of the problem: the deep confusion of society in reconciling faith and stomach. The fact that parents consciously choose to let their children drop out of school not because they don't love their children, but because they are caught in an inner conflict between God's destiny and economic rationality, is a heart-wrenching social irony. The conclusion finally demands a radical change; Without this spiritual-material reconciliation that changes this mindset, education will forever become an unreachable ivory tower, and the cycle of poverty will continue to reproduce not because of lack of resources, but because of the loss of a vision of liberation in the midst of the suffocating squeeze of life.

The fundamental weakness of this study lies in its geographical and contextual limitations which only focus on Sukorejo Village, Sukorejo District, Kendal Regency, so that the findings regarding the crisis of hermeneutical meaning and the fragmentation of educational views have the potential to not be generalized broadly to represent all the dynamics of the poor in Indonesia which has a very heterogeneous cultural diversity, level of religiosity, and economic structure. The specific characteristics of Central Java

societies with hierarchical traditions of obedience and certain religious interpretations may result in different response patterns compared to societies in other regions such as Sumatra, Sulawesi, or Papua, where communal and theological values operate within a unique logic. As a result, these integrated intervention models formulated based on local data are at risk of being less effective if applied uniformly in different contexts without in-depth adaptation. To address these weaknesses, future researchers should conduct cross-regional comparative studies involving various villages with diverse socio-cultural and economic characteristics throughout the archipelago. A mixed-methods approach with a larger, representative sample is needed to test the external validity of this concept of crisis of meaning, whether it is a universal phenomenon for the poor or merely a local artifact of Sukorejo. In addition, long-term longitudinal research is also recommended to observe the stability of this view in line with changes in policy and macroeconomic conditions. By expanding the scope and variety of subjects, science can build stronger theories and more inclusive policies, ensuring that the education solutions offered are truly relevant and transformative for all layers of Indonesia's poor, not just those who live at one particular coordinate point.

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