International Journal of Education, Vocational and Social Science
https://e-journal.citakonsulindo.or.id/index.php/IJEVSS
E-ISSN : 2963 4954
IJEVSS

The Role Of Local Governments In Handling School Dropouts (Study On Senior High Schools In Sidenreng Rappang Regency)

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Abstract

Children dropping out of school at the high school level are still a problem in the implementation of education in Sidenreng Rappang Regency. This study aims to analyze the factors that cause children to drop out of school, examine the role of local governments in handling it, and describe coordination and collaboration between the government, schools, and the community. The research uses a qualitative descriptive approach with data collection techniques through interviews, observations, and documentation. Data analysis was carried out using Miles and Huberman's interactive models with the help of NVivo 12 software. The results of the study show that family economic factors are the most dominant cause of the occurrence of school dropouts. In addition, low motivation to learn, the influence of the social environment, children's involvement in work, early marriage, and lack of parental attention also affect the sustainability of students' education. The role of local governments is realized through functions as regulators, dynamizers, facilitators, and supervisors which are carried out through data collection, socialization, intervention, as well as monitoring and evaluation. This study shows that strengthening coordination and collaboration between the government, schools, and the community supports the effectiveness of handling school dropouts at the high school level.

Keywords: Children Dropping Out of School; Collaborative Governance; the role of local governments; High School; Coordination

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INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental aspect in human resource development because it plays a role in improving the quality of life, intellectual abilities, and the formation of community character. Through education, individuals are expected to be able to face increasingly complex social, economic, and technological developments. Therefore, education is one of the important indicators in the success of a region's development (Aprianty et al., 2023). The Government of Indonesia also continues to strive to improve access to education through various policies, such as the 12-year compulsory education program, School Operational Assistance (BOS), and the Smart Indonesia Card (KIP) (Nikmah et al., 2020). However, the problem of school dropouts is still a serious challenge in various regions, including in Sidenreng Rappang Regency.

Regulatically, local governments have a responsibility in ensuring the implementation of education for the community. Law Number 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government places education as a mandatory affair of basic services that must be carried out by local governments. This provision is strengthened by Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System which affirms that every citizen has the right to receive quality education without discrimination. In addition, Government Regulation Number 57 of 2021 concerning National Education Standards emphasizes the importance of equitable access to education throughout Indonesia. From the perspective of education decentralization, local governments have strategic authority to adjust education policies to the needs and conditions of the local community (Arwidayanto, Arifin Suking, 2018)

Although various policies have been implemented, the problem of school dropouts is still found in Sidenreng Rappang Regency. Based on data from the Sidenreng Rappang Regency Education Office in 2023, there are still thousands of children who do not continue their education at the Senior High School (SMA) level. This condition shows that the sustainability of upper secondary education is still a problem that requires serious attention from local governments. In addition to family economic factors, low motivation to learn, the influence of the social environment, and the lack of parental attention to education are also the causes of the increasing number of children dropping out of school in the area (Merani et al., 2023)

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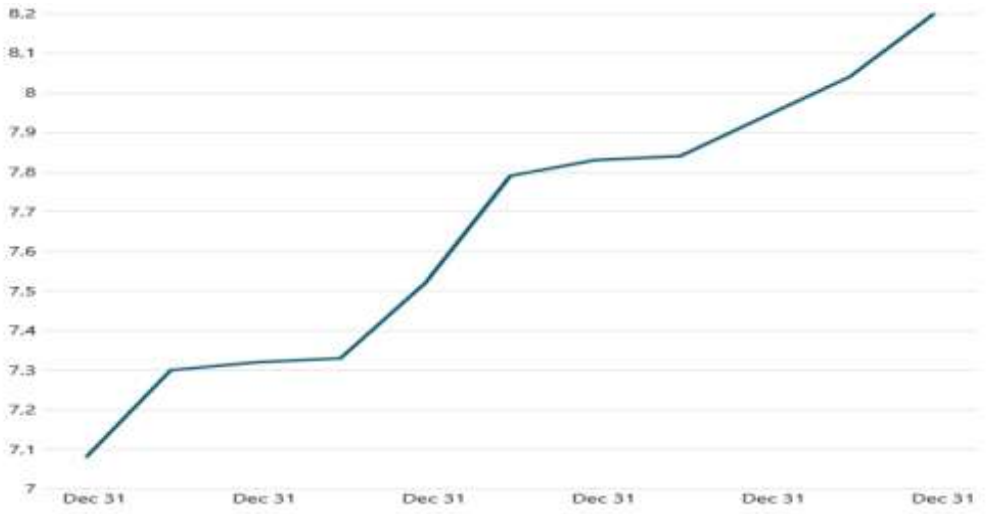


Figure 1 Average School Length (RLS) in Sidenreng Rappang Regency (2013-2023)
Source: Central Statistics Agency (BPS)

Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) of Sidenreng Rappang Regency in 2023, the average length of school (RLS) for residents aged 25 years and older in Sidenreng Rappang Regency reached 8.2 years. This figure shows that the average person only takes education until around grade VIII or the junior high school (SMP) level. This condition also shows that the level of sustainability of community education is still relatively low because it is below the average of South Sulawesi Province of 8.76 years and slightly below the national average of 8.77 years in 2023 (Fadhlurrahman, 2024). In addition, limited access to education is also one of the obstacles, where the number of high schools (SMA) in Sidenreng Rappang Regency is only 16 schools so that it is not yet able to fully reach the entire high school age community (Ulfah Farihah, Farras Ali Rasyid, 2023).

This research is specifically focused on the Senior High School (SMA) level because at that stage students are in the final phase of secondary education which determines their readiness to continue their education to higher education or enter the world of work. Children who drop out of school at the high school level are considered very unfortunate because they have gone through the process of primary and secondary education for a long time, but have not succeeded in completing their education at the final stage. This condition has the potential to limit students' chances of getting a decent job because a high school diploma is still one of the important requirements in the world of work (Ariansyah et al., 2024). In addition, the high dropout rate at

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the high school level can also affect the quality of human resources and the competitiveness of the regional workforce, so it requires serious attention from the local government and other stakeholders in efforts to handle it (Widiasanti et al., 2023)

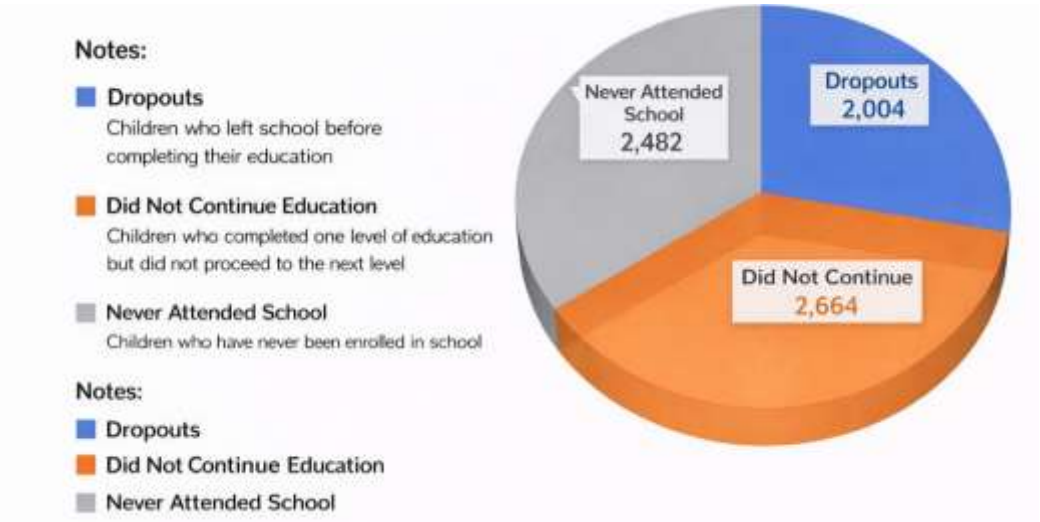


Figure 2 ATS (Children Out of School) Data of Sidenreng Rappang Regency
Source: October 14, 2025 https://ats.data.kemendikdasmen.go.id/

Based on data from the Sidenreng Rappang Regency Education Office, the number of out-of-school children (ATS) in Sidenreng Rappang Regency reached 7,150 children, with the number of school dropouts (DO) as many as 2,004 children. The data shows that the problem of school dropout is still a serious challenge in the education sector because it has the potential to affect the quality of human resources in the region. The high rate of school dropouts indicates that there are still various obstacles in the sustainability of education, so that sustainable handling is needed through more optimal education policies and programs to reduce the dropout rate in Sidenreng Rappang Regency.

The phenomenon of high school dropouts shows that there is a gap between national education policies and implementation at the regional level. Local governments not only function as policy implementers, but also have an important role in building coordination between schools, communities, and related agencies. However, in practice, the implementation of the program to handle school dropouts still faces various obstacles, such as weak coordination between institutions, budget limitations, and low community participation in supporting education

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(Labibah Jilan Fadillah, 2025). In addition, social and cultural factors such as early marriage and children's involvement in helping the family economy also affect the high rate of school dropouts in Sidenreng Rappang Regency

Previous research identified economic factors, low motivation to learn, and the social environment as the dominant causes of school dropouts in Sidenreng Rappang Regency (Aswar, 2024). The success of handling this problem is highly dependent on inter-agency coordination and community participation in supporting educational programs (Labibah Jilan Fadillah, 2025). In perspective *Collaborative Governance*, solving public problems requires integrated cooperation between the government, schools, and the community so that policies run effectively and sustainably (Haritz & Muliawaty, 2020). Although many studies on school dropouts have been conducted, most of them still focus on the causes and treatment aspects in general or partial. Research that specifically highlights the role of local governments in building coordination and collaboration between stakeholders at the high school level is still very limited, especially at the district level.

The novelty of this research lies in the use of *a collaborative governance* perspective in analyzing the role of local governments in handling high school dropouts in Sidenreng Rappang Regency. This perspective is used to examine how local governments build coordination and collaboration with various stakeholders, including education units, village governments, and communities, in an effort to reduce school dropout rates. In particular, this study aims to: (1) analyze the main factors that cause school dropouts at the high school level in Sidenreng Rappang Regency; (2) analyze the role of local governments in dealing with the problem of school dropouts in Sidenreng Rappang Regency; and (3) describe the form of coordination and collaboration between the government, education actors, and the community in an effort to reduce the number of school dropouts. The results of the study are expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors that cause school dropouts, the role of local governments, as well as coordination and collaboration mechanisms between stakeholders. In addition, the findings of this research are expected to be input for local governments in policy formulation and enforcement

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework is a conceptual foundation used to explain, analyze, and understand the phenomenon that is the focus of the research. Through the theoretical framework, researchers obtain a scientific basis in interpreting research findings and connecting empirical facts with concepts that have been developed by experts. In this study, a theoretical

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framework was used to analyze the factors that cause child dropouts, the role of the government in handling them, and the form of coordination and collaboration between the government, schools, and the community. Therefore, this study uses three theoretical foundations, namely Determinants of Education Sustainability (School Dropouts), the Role of Government, and Collaborative Governance as the basis for analyzing the research results.

1. Determinants of Education Sustainability (School Dropouts)

Educational sustainability is a condition when students are able to continue the educational process until completing the level taken without dropping out of school. In this context, school dropouts are understood as a form of failure in maintaining the sustainability of education which is influenced by various internal and external factors. This phenomenon is not only related to individual students, but also shows the relationship between broader social, economic, and environmental conditions. Therefore, dropping out of school needs to be seen as a multidimensional problem that requires comprehensive analysis (Hadi & Muhlishoh, 2025).

According to (Levin, 1972), the sustainability of education is influenced by four main groups of factors, namely individual factors, family factors, school factors, and social environmental factors. Individual factors include students' learning motivation, interests, and academic achievement. Family factors are related to economic conditions, parental education levels, and family support for children's education. Meanwhile, school factors include the quality of educational services, teacher-student relationships, and the availability of learning facilities. The social environment factors include the influence of peers, community conditions, and social norms that develop in the surrounding environment. These four factors show that the sustainability of education is the result of the interaction of various conditions that affect each other (Levin, 1972).

Furthermore, through ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1977) explained that the sustainability of children's education is influenced by an environmental system that is multi-level and interacts with each other. The immediate environment such as family and school (microsystem) has a direct influence on the child's learning process, including in the formation of motivation, discipline, and support received in daily educational activities. The relationship between family and school (mesosystem) also determines the consistency of educational support obtained by students, especially in the face of various learning obstacles and the risk of dropping out of school. At a broader level, external factors such as family economic conditions, education policies, and social structures of society (exosystem and macrosystem) also play an important role in determining access to and sustainability of children's education. This condition shows that the

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child's decision to continue or stop education is inseparable from the influence of the environment that is interrelated at various levels of the system. Thus, the phenomenon of dropping out of school is the result of complex interactions between individuals and the social environment that surrounds them (Bronfenbrenner, 1977).

2. The Role of Government

In the study of public administration, the role of the government is understood as the main function in the administration of government which is not only limited to regulatory aspects, but also includes public services, community empowerment, and control over various public affairs. The government has a responsibility to ensure that the policies that have been formulated can be implemented effectively to achieve the goals of community welfare.

Ndraha explained that the government has three main functions in the administration of government, namely service, empowerment, and development. The service function is related to the government's efforts to meet the basic needs of the community directly. The empowerment function leads to increasing the capacity and independence of the community to be able to manage their potential. Meanwhile, the development function is oriented towards efforts to improve community welfare in a sustainable manner through various government programs and policies (Ndraha, 2003).

Furthermore, in the development of public administration studies, these functions are then operationalized into several strategic roles of the government in the implementation of public policies, namely as regulators, facilitators, dynamizers, and supervisors. The role of regulators shows that the government has the authority to establish norms, rules, and policies as the legal basis for the implementation of development programs. The role of facilitators describes the government's function in providing support, ease of access, and resources needed by the community in obtaining public services. Meanwhile, the role of dynamizers shows the government's efforts to encourage participation and build synergy between various stakeholders. The role of the supervisor shows the government's function in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of policies so that they run in accordance with the goals that have been set (Rasyid, 1997)

3. Collaborative Governance

Collaborative Governance is a governance approach that emphasizes the importance of cooperation between the government and various stakeholders in solving public problems.

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According to Chris Ansell and Alison Gash, collaborative governance is a decision-making process that involves government agencies and non-government actors directly in a joint forum that is formal, consensus-oriented, and aims to produce more effective policies. This approach emerged because various public problems are increasingly complex and cannot be solved by just one institution. Therefore, collaboration is needed that is able to integrate resources, information, and capacities owned by various parties to achieve common goals (Ansell & Gash, 2008)

According to Ansell and Gash (2008), the success of collaborative governance is influenced by several main components, namely *Starting conditions*, *Institutional Design*, *Facilitative Leadership*, and *Collaborative Process*. The initial conditions describe the relationship and capacity of the actors before the collaboration is carried out, while the institutional design serves as a guideline in the implementation of the cooperation that is built. Facilitative leadership is needed to encourage communication, build trust, and resolve conflicts that arise during the collaborative process. Meanwhile, the collaborative process includes dialogue, commitment to common goals, trust building, and a shared understanding of the issues at hand. (Bianchi et al., 2021) It also explains that effective collaboration requires the active involvement of all stakeholders so that it can produce sustainable collective action in solving public problems.

In addition, collaborative governance emphasizes that the success of public policy implementation is greatly influenced by the ability of actors to build communication, trust, and mutual commitment during the collaboration process. The involvement of various stakeholders in collaborative forums allows for the exchange of information, the unification of resources, and the development of more comprehensive solutions to various public problems. In its implementation, collaborative governance is not only oriented towards achieving policy goals, but also on creating participatory, transparent, and sustainable cooperative relationships between the actors involved. Therefore, a collaborative approach is considered to be able to increase the effectiveness of governance because each party has the opportunity to contribute according to their capacity and authority in solving public problems together (Bianchi et al., 2021)

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach to analyze the role of local governments in handling high school dropouts in Sidenreng Rappang Regency. The qualitative approach is used because this research aims to understand in depth the social phenomena related to the factors that cause school dropouts, the form of local government handling, and coordination and collaboration between local governments and schools in handling school dropouts.

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1. Research Location

This research was carried out in Sidenreng Rappang Regency with research locations at the Sidenreng Rappang Regency Education and Culture Office as well as SMAN 1 Sidrap, SMAN 3 Sidrap, and SMAN 9 Sidrap. The selection of the location is based on the consideration that each school is located in different regional characteristics, namely urban, semi-urban, and rural. The diversity of regional characteristics is expected to provide more comprehensive information about the phenomenon of school dropouts and the role of local governments in efforts to handle them in various social contexts and educational environments in Sidenreng Rappang Regency.

2. Informants

Research informants were determined using the purposive sampling technique, which is a technique for determining informants that is deliberately carried out based on certain considerations by taking into account the level of involvement, experience, and understanding of the informant's focus (Scott, 2022). In this study, the Head of the Sidenreng Rappang Regency Education Office and the data collection officer for out-of-school children (ATS) at the Sidenreng Rappang Regency Education and Culture Office became key informants because they have a strategic role in the implementation of data collection coordination, ATS data verification, and facilitation of handling out-of-school children at the regional level. In addition, this study involved three school principals, three Counseling Guidance (BK) teachers, and three school operators who were selected because they had direct involvement in the process of identifying, mentoring, and handling students who were at risk of dropping out of school. Although the authority to manage education at the high school level is administratively under the Provincial Government, the involvement of the District Education and Culture Office remains relevant in supporting the implementation of handling school dropouts through coordinating and facilitative functions at the regional level (Arwidayanto, Arifin Suking, 2018)

The number of informants in this study was not determined precisely from the beginning of the study, but was adjusted to the principle of data saturation or data saturation, which is a condition when the information obtained has shown a repeating pattern and no longer produces new relevant data (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Thus, the number of informants is determined based on the need for data and the depth of information needed to answer the research focus comprehensively.

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3. Data collection techniques

Data collection techniques are carried out through interviews, observations, and documentation (Saádi, 2025). Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner with research informants to obtain information about the factors that cause children to drop out of school, the role of the government, as well as forms of coordination and collaboration between the local government and the school. Observation was carried out by observing the implementation of handling school dropouts in schools and related agencies. Meanwhile, documentation is used to obtain supporting data in the form of data on school dropouts.

4. Data analysis techniques

This study uses the Miles and Huberman interactive analysis model which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Ash-shiddiqi et al., 2025). Data reduction is carried out by selecting and simplifying data that is relevant to the focus of the research. The presentation of data is carried out in the form of narrative descriptions so that the relationship between data can be easily understood. Furthermore, conclusions are drawn based on the results of data interpretation obtained during the research process. To assist in the data analysis process, the researcher used the help of NVivo 12 software in the process of coding data and grouping research themes (Wirza et al., 2025).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results of research obtained through analysis of data from interviews, observations, and documentation. The analysis process was carried out using the Miles and Huberman interactive analysis model with the support of NVivo 12 software to facilitate the coding process, grouping of themes, and visualizing the relationship between research findings. Furthermore, the findings obtained are presented systematically based on the research focus and interpreted by linking empirical data, theoretical frameworks, and previous research results so as to produce a more comprehensive, in-depth discussion, and are able to provide a complete understanding of the phenomenon being studied.

FACTORS THAT CAUSE CHILDREN TO DROP OUT OF SCHOOL

The results of the study show that the phenomenon of school dropouts at the high school level in Sidenreng Rappang Regency is a complex and multidimensional problem. A student's decision to stop education does not happen suddenly, but rather is the result of a process that

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takes place over a period of time and is influenced by the interaction of various interrelated factors.

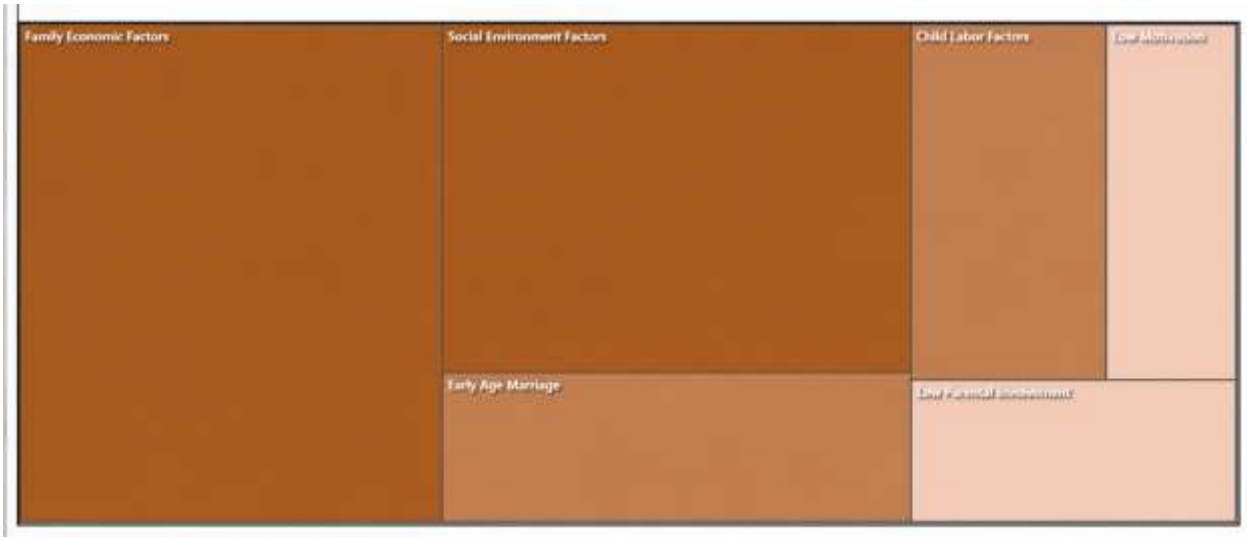


Figure 3 Visualization of the Factors Causing High School Dropouts in Sidenreng Rappang Regency
Source: NVivo 12 (Hierarchy Chart Data Coding)

Based on the results of the interviews, these factors include the family's economic condition, social environment, children's involvement in work, early marriage, lack of parental attention, and low student motivation to learn. These findings show that the cause of school dropouts does not only come from students, but is also influenced by family conditions and the surrounding social environment. This condition is in line with the theory of Determinants of Education Sustainability put forward by Levin (1972), which explains that educational sustainability is influenced by factors of individuals, families, schools, and social environments that interact with each other in determining the success of students to continue their education.

Family economic factors were the most dominant cause in this study. Financial limitations make parents unable to meet their children's educational needs to the maximum, both related to direct costs and other supporting needs. In addition, financial pressure encourages children to get involved in work to help the family economy. As a result, the focus on education is reduced, and in some situations, children choose to drop out of school permanently. These findings are in line with research (Gunawan, 2019) who found that low parental income is the main factor causing

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children to drop out of school, due to the inability to meet educational needs.

In addition to economic factors, the social environment is also one of the causes of students dropping out of school. The results of the study show that association with friends who do not go to school can affect students' interest in continuing their education. The community environment that thinks that working makes money faster than school also shapes students' view that education is not the top priority. In addition, the lack of support for family and the surrounding environment towards education makes students more easily influenced to leave school. This condition shows that the social environment plays an external factor that affects the motivation and sustainability of students' education. These findings are in line with research (Titik et al., 2016) which states that the community environment that does not support formal education can increase the dropout rate.

Early marriage is also one of the factors that cause school dropouts. Based on the results of interviews, some informants stated that students who marry at school age are less likely to continue their education. This condition is influenced by the community environment that considers early marriage as a common thing so that school is no longer a priority for some teenagers after marriage. These findings are in line with research (Sari et al., 2023) which explains that early marriage can have an impact on the cessation of adolescent education, especially at the secondary level.

Children's involvement in the world of work is one of the dominant factors in influencing the occurrence of school dropouts. Based on the results of interviews with several informants, it is known that some students have to help their parents work, both in the agricultural sector, odd jobs, and other informal jobs. This condition causes students to have difficulty dividing their time between school and work, which has an impact on decreasing study concentration. In some cases, students prefer to work rather than continue their education because they feel they can help meet the needs of their families directly. This condition shows that economic pressure can encourage children to prioritize work over formal education. These findings are in line with research (Indra Syamsuri Abdurahman, 2024) which states that children's involvement in work is often the cause of reduced educational participation in low-income families.

Furthermore, the lack of parental concern was also found to be a contributing factor to school dropouts. Based on the results of the interviews, several informants said that parents did not pay attention to children's learning activities, such as rarely monitoring school progress or not giving encouragement to continue their education. This condition generally occurs because parents are more busy with work so that attention to children's education becomes reduced. As

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a result, students tend to lack motivation and direction in undergoing the educational process. These findings are in line with research (S&P 2023) which states that low parental attention can affect the sustainability of children's education.

Another factor that is no less important is the low interest or motivation of students to learn. Based on the results of interviews, several informants revealed that students tend to have less enthusiasm to participate in learning activities at school and are more easily influenced by the surrounding social environment. These conditions causing a decrease in motivation to learn, thus encouraging students to quit school. Low motivation to learn is also influenced by an environment that lacks support for the importance of education, so students do not have a strong drive to maintain the sustainability of their education. These findings are in line with research (Tressia Liani, 2019) which states that low motivation to learn and a less supportive social environment can influence students' decision to drop out of school.

Overall, the results of the interviews show that the factors that cause children to drop out of school do not stand alone, but are interrelated with each other. Economic pressure, social environmental influences, family conditions, and internal factors of students form a complex condition that ultimately influences students' decisions to stop education. Therefore, a thorough understanding of these various factors is needed so that the handling efforts carried out can be more effective and on target.

The findings of this study are in line with the theory (Levin, 1972) which states that the sustainability of education is influenced by individual, family, school, and social environmental factors. In this study, it was found that family factors, individual factors, and social environmental factors were the most dominant factors influencing the occurrence of school dropouts at the high school level in Sidenreng Rappang Regency. Meanwhile, the school factor was not found to be the dominant factor because most of the informants emphasized the influence of family economic conditions, low learning motivation, social environment, children's involvement in work, early marriage, and lack of parental attention to children's education. The findings show that the causes of school dropouts in this study are more likely to come from factors outside the school environment.

THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN HANDLING SCHOOL DROPOUTS

The role of local governments in handling school dropouts is not only realized through policy formulation, but also through various actions that are responsive and sustainable. These efforts are made to ensure that children who are at risk of dropping out of school and those who

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have dropped out of school receive assistance and access to educational services. In its implementation, the local government builds synergy with the school as an actor who interacts directly with students so that the identification and handling process can be carried out more optimally.

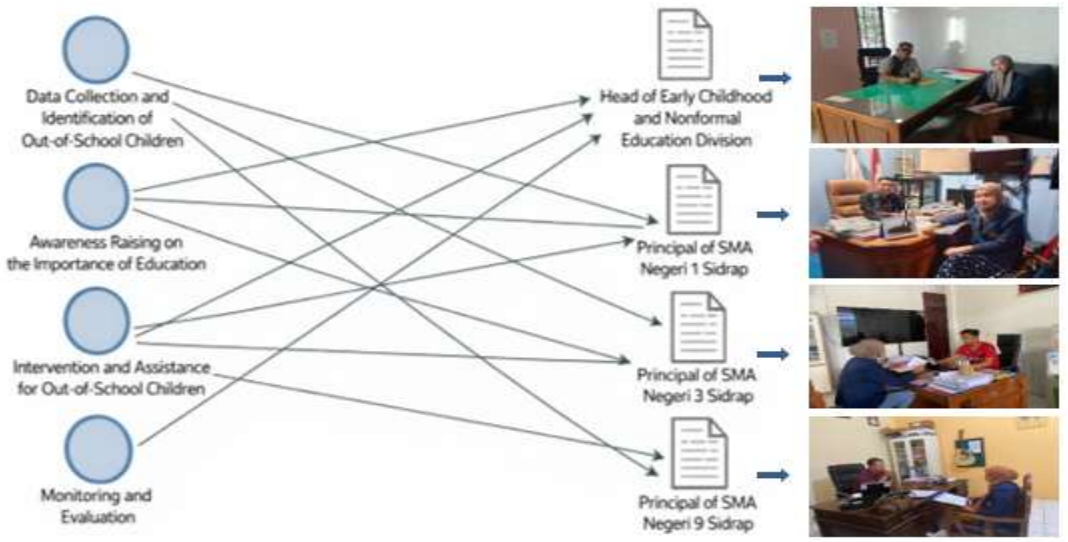


Figure 4 Visualization of the Handling of School Dropouts through the Role of Local Government in Sidenreng Rappang Regency
Source: NVivo 12 (Project Map Data Coding)

Based on the results of data visualization using NVivo 12 in Figure 4, the handling of school dropouts is carried out through four main roles, namely the collection and identification of data on school dropouts, socialization of the importance of education, intervention and mentoring, and monitoring and evaluation. These four aspects are connected to the Head of Early Childhood Education and Non-Formal Education, the Principal of SMA Negeri 1 Sidrap, the Principal of SMA Negeri 3 Sidrap, and the Principal of SMA Negeri 9 Sidrap. These findings show that the handling of school dropouts is not only carried out through the administrative work of local governments, but also involves schools as parties that interact directly with students and know their conditions factually in the field.

If analyzed through the theory of the role of the government, the findings can be understood as a manifestation of the government's function as a *regulators, dynamizers, facilitators, and supervisors.* The government as a regulator plays a role in regulating the handling

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mechanism, providing policy bases, and ensuring the availability of data as a foothold for programs. The government as a dynamizer functions to encourage public awareness and participation in the importance of education. The government as a facilitator is present through the provision of support, mentoring, and opening access to education for children who are disconnected from school. Meanwhile, the government as a supervisor plays a role in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the program so that the handling of school dropouts can run more effectively and sustainably (Ndraha, 2003; Rasyid, 1997).

1. The Government as a Regulator through the Collection and Identification of Data on School Dropouts

Based on Figure 4, the aspects of collecting and identifying data on school dropouts are connected to the Head of Early Childhood Education and Non-Formal Education, the Principal of SMA Negeri 1 Sidrap, the Principal of SMA Negeri 3 Sidrap, and the Principal of SMA Negeri 9 Sidrap. This connection shows that the data collection process is a very important initial stage in handling school dropouts because it serves to recognize children who have dropped out of school, children at risk of dropping out of school, and determine the necessary follow-ups. From the perspective of the government's role theory, these findings reflect the government's function as a regulator, namely the party that regulates the working mechanism, provides databases, and sets the direction of accurate information-based handling.

The role of local government regulators can be seen from the use of the Perval ATS (Updating and Validating Children Out of School) application as a data collection instrument for out-of-school children. Through this system, the Education Office collects initial data, then distributes it to schools to be re-verified based on the factual conditions of students in the field. This was emphasized by the Head of Early Childhood Education and Non-Formal Education as follows:

> "Data collection is carried out through the Perval ATS application from the Ministry of Education and Culture, then the data is distributed to schools for re-tracing in the field." *(Interview with the Principal of SMA Negeri 3 Sidrap, March 10, 2026).*

The quote shows that local governments carry out regulatory functions through the provision of structured data collection mechanisms. The data collected does not stop at

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administrative records, but is used as a basis to trace the condition of children in more depth through schools. Thus, data collection in this study is not just an administrative activity, but is part of the arrangement of the handling process so that the interventions provided can be adjusted to the conditions of children in the field.

In addition, the involvement of schools in the identification process shows that the role of local government regulators is also realized through integrated work arrangements. Schools not only function as data recipients, but also as parties that verify the correctness of the data, trace the whereabouts of students, and provide additional information about the background of children who are indicated to have dropped out of school. In other words, local governments play a role in connecting the data collection system with implementers in the field so that the identification process becomes more accurate and operational.

However, the results of the study also show that there are obstacles in the data collection process, namely the incompatibility between government ATS data and school data because there are still students who have not been optimally inputted into the Dapodik system. This condition shows that data accuracy is still a challenge in handling school dropouts. Therefore, the government's role as a regulator is not enough to provide data collection instruments, but also needs to ensure regular synchronization, validation, and data updates so that handling policies are truly in accordance with field conditions. These findings are in line with (Springfield, 2025) which emphasizes that data accuracy has an important role in determining the success of out-of-school child handling programs so that the data collection process must be carried out in an integrated and sustainable manner.

2. Government as a Dynamizer through Socialization of the Importance of Education

The second aspect that appears in Figure 4 is the socialization of the importance of education. These findings show that it is not enough to handle school dropouts only through data collection and administrative steps, but also requires efforts to build awareness among the public, parents, and students about the importance of educational sustainability. In the theory of the role of government, this function reflects the government as a dynamizer, namely a party that plays a role in moving, encouraging, and fostering community participation so that educational goals can be achieved more effectively.

In the context of this study, socialization is understood as an effort by local governments and schools to instill an understanding that upper secondary education is an important stage for children's future. Socialization is not only aimed at students, but also families and communities

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who have a great influence on children's educational decisions. This was confirmed by the Principal of SMA Negeri 3 Sidrap who stated:

> "The government needs to increase socialization to the public regarding the 12-year compulsory education program. The socialization is directed to build a community mindset to prioritize education rather than choosing to work at school age or get married early." *(Interview with the Principal of SMA Negeri 3 Sidrap, March 10, 2026).*

The quote suggests that socialization is seen as an important instrument to change the orientation of some people who still place school-age work or early marriage as a more realistic option than continuing education. In such a situation, local governments are not enough to provide educational programs, but must also be present as actors who drive changes in people's mindsets. This is where the function of dynamizers becomes relevant, as the government plays a role in building collective awareness that education must be prioritized as a long-term investment in children's futures.

These findings also indicate that socialization in handling school dropouts does not solely function as an information delivery, but as a strategy to build social support for educational sustainability. A supportive family and social environment has been proven to have a great influence on students' motivation to learn and educational sustainability. Positive environmental conditions, both from families and the surrounding community, can encourage students to maintain their enthusiasm for learning and continue their education in a sustainable manner (Halifax, 2025).

3. The Government as a Facilitator through Intervention and Assistance for School Dropouts

Based on Figure 4, another form of handling carried out by the local government is intervention and assistance for school dropouts. In the theory of the role of government, these findings reflect the government's function as a facilitator, namely a party that provides support, opens access, and helps communities find solutions to the obstacles they face. In the context of school dropouts, the role of facilitators means that the government not only identifies problems, but is also present to help children to return *to receiving* educational services, both through formal and non-formal channels.

The results of the study show that interventions are carried out through various forms of support, such as the provision of educational assistance, student assistance, and the provision of

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non-formal education pathways in the form of Package C and life skills training. This finding is strengthened by the statement of the Principal of SMA Negeri 1 Sidrap who stated that:

> "The local government runs the Innovative Movement of Psychology program which aims to assist out-of-school children so that they can regain access to education." *(Interview with the Principal of SMA Negeri 1 Sidrap, March 05, 2026).*

The quote shows that the local government does not stop at the data collection stage, but continues with interventions that are facilitative in nature. The Psychology Innovative Movement program shows that there are efforts to reach children who have left the education system and reconnect them with access to learning. In this case, the role of the facilitator is not only related to the provision of material assistance, but also concerns social assistance, strengthening motivation, and providing alternative education for children who cannot return to formal school.

Furthermore, the intervention and mentoring in this study showed that the handling of school dropouts requires a flexible approach according to the student's condition. Children who drop out of school due to economic factors certainly need a different form of handling than children who drop out due to low motivation to learn, environmental influences, or family problems. Therefore, the function of government facilitators is important because the government must be able to provide support that is not uniform, but adjusted to the real needs of children in the field. These findings are in line with (Sukardi, M. Ismail, 2024) which emphasizes that the existence of non-formal education and skills training is a relevant policy strategy in expanding educational opportunities for children who are unable to return to formal school due to certain conditions. In addition, the handling of school dropouts through cross-sector mentoring and support also shows the importance of a collaborative approach in ensuring the sustainability of access to education (Ansell & Gash, 2008).

Thus, intervention and assistance not only reflect the government's concern for school dropouts, but also show the government's function as a party that reopens educational opportunities for children who are dropped out of school. The role of facilitators in this study is important because it bridges the needs of children with educational services that are still accessible, both through formal schools, equality education, and other mentoring programs.

4. The Government as a Supervisor through Monitoring and Evaluation

The last aspect that appears in Figure 4 is monitoring and evaluation. In the theory of the

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role of government, these findings reflect the government's function as a supervisor, namely the party that monitors the implementation of programs, assesses their effectiveness, and uses the results of the evaluation as a basis for policy improvement. Monitoring and evaluation are important because the handling of school dropouts cannot stop at the data collection and intervention stages, but needs to be controlled continuously so that the results can be measured and improved.

Based on the results of the research, monitoring and evaluation are more connected to the Head of Early Childhood Education and Non-Formal Education, which shows that the Education Office has a central role in assessing the effectiveness of the program to handle school dropouts. The evaluation was carried out through monitoring the development of Perval ATS data to see the number of children who were successfully returned to the world of education as well as children who still needed follow-up. The results of the evaluation are then used as a basis for determining further policies and improving programs that have not run optimally.

The findings show that the government's surveillance function is not only limited to recording results, but also includes efforts to ensure that children who have been recorded actually receive follow-up treatment. In this context, monitoring is an instrument to see the extent to which schools carry out follow-up on students at risk of dropping out, while evaluation serves to assess whether the data collection, socialization, and intervention mechanisms that have been carried out are really effective in reducing the dropout rate.

Furthermore, evaluation also functions as a means of policy reflection. Through evaluation, local governments can identify various obstacles that still arise in the handling process, such as data inconsistencies, limited program coverage, or low community participation. These findings then became the basis for the government to improve its handling strategy in the next period. This is in line with (Darmayanti et al., 2014) which explains that evaluation is an important part of the implementation of education policies because it is able to provide an overview of the success rate of the program as well as the obstacles faced during implementation.

Thus, monitoring and evaluation confirm that local governments are not only in charge of initiating programs, but also responsible for ensuring the sustainability and effectiveness of their implementation. The role of this supervisor is important so that the handling of school dropouts does not stop at the administrative level, but produces real changes to the sustainability of children's education in Sidenreng Rappang Regency.

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International Journal of Education, Vocational and Social Science
https://e-journal.citakonsulindo.or.id/index.php/IJEVSS
E-ISSN : 2963 4954
IJEVSS

COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION IN HANDLING SCHOOL DROPOUTS

The problem of school dropouts is a complex educational problem because it is influenced by various factors, such as family economic conditions, low motivation to learn, the influence of the social environment, lack of attention to children's education, and other factors (Aswar et al., 2025; Merani et al., 2023). This condition causes the handling of school dropouts cannot be done by just one party, but requires the involvement of various institutions and elements of society together (Ansell & Gash, 2008b). Therefore, integrated coordination and collaboration are needed so that efforts to prevent and handle school dropouts can run effectively and on target. According to (Yahya, 2021), coordination between institutions is one of the important factors in increasing the effectiveness of the program to handle school dropouts because it is able to strengthen synergy between education stakeholders.

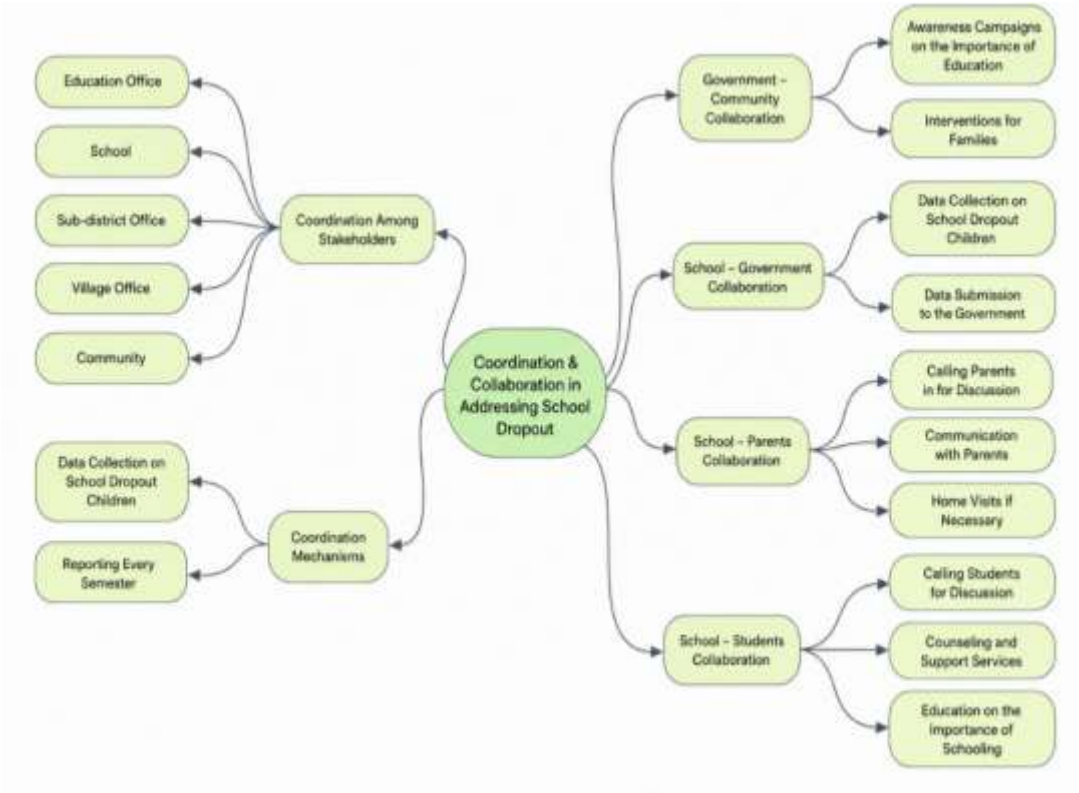


Figure 5 Visualization of Coordination and Collaboration in Handling High School Dropouts in Sidenreng Rappang Regency
Source: NVivo 12 (Mind Map Data Coding)

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1. Coordination

Based on the image above, it can be seen that coordination in handling school dropouts is carried out across stakeholders involving the South Sulawesi Provincial Government through the Education Office, the sub-district government, the village or sub-district government, the school, and the community. The involvement of these various parties shows that the local government has a major role in coordinating the handling of school dropouts, while schools, sub-districts, villages/sub-districts, and the community play a supporting role in the implementation of the program to handle school dropouts. The Education Office has a role in formulating policies and supervising educational programs, while the school is in charge of identifying students who are at risk of dropping out of school. In addition, the sub-district and village/sub-district governments collaborate with schools in the process of collecting data on school dropouts and approach students' families to find out the conditions and problems that cause children to choose to drop out of school. Meanwhile, the community plays a role in providing social support so that children continue their education. Coordination between these actors is important to ensure that every student who experiences educational barriers can immediately receive appropriate attention and treatment. These findings are in line with research (Yahya, 2021) which explains that coordination between actors is an important factor in the success of programs to handle school dropouts.

In addition to coordination between sectors, the coordination mechanism in handling school dropouts is also carried out through data collection of school dropouts and reporting every semester. Data collection is the initial stage carried out to identify the number, condition, and location of children who have dropped out of school. This process is carried out by the school through the identification of students who are no longer participating in formal education, then the results are coordinated with the local government to ensure that the data obtained is accurate and in accordance with conditions in the field. The data is the basis for the government and schools in determining the targets of the handling program, such as providing educational assistance, mentoring to students, and various other forms of intervention so that the handling of school dropouts can be carried out more on target. After the data collection process is carried out, the coordination mechanism is continued through reporting every semester submitted by the school to the Education Office as a form of submission of data developments as well as monitoring and evaluation materials. Through this periodic reporting, local governments can monitor changes in the number of school dropouts, evaluate the effectiveness of programs that have been implemented, and determine follow-up if there are still students who have not returned to receive education services. Thus, data collection and reporting every semester are complementary

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coordination mechanisms in supporting the sustainable handling of school dropouts, because both provide accurate, up-to-date information, and become the basis for decision-making and the preparation of more effective handling measures.

2. Collaboration

In another part, the picture shows collaboration between the government and the community through socialization activities on the importance of education and intervention to the community. Socialization is carried out to increase public awareness of the importance of education for children's future, while intervention is carried out as a form of approach to families experiencing economic and social constraints. The activity aims to encourage the community to be more concerned about the sustainability of children's education in the surrounding environment. Community involvement in handling school dropouts is considered important because the community is the closest social environment to the daily lives of students. (Bakari, 2025) explained that community support can help increase educational participation and prevent school dropouts among school-age children.

Collaboration between schools and education offices is also seen through data collection activities for school dropouts and data submission to the education office. Schools have an important role as the party closest to the condition of students so that they know firsthand the various problems experienced by students. The information obtained by the school is then reported to the education office for follow-up through assistance programs and educational assistance. This form of collaboration shows that there is a mutually supportive cooperative relationship between schools and local governments in dealing with the problem of school dropouts. This cooperation is important so that the handling process can run quickly, precisely, and in accordance with the conditions of students in the field.

In addition, the picture also shows collaboration between schools and students through student summons, BK counseling services, and education about the importance of education. This approach is carried out as an effort to provide motivation and assistance to students to continue their education. BK teachers have an important role in helping students overcome academic, social, and personal problems that affect their motivation to learn. Through counseling and coaching, students are expected to be able to understand the importance of education for their future so that they have the spirit to stay in school. Persuasive approaches such as counseling and education also assist schools in building better relationships with students at risk of dropping out.

Collaboration between schools and parents is also an important part of handling school

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dropouts. This form of cooperation is carried out through summoning parents, intensive communication between the school and the family, and home visits if parents are not present at school. Parental involvement has a great influence on the sustainability of children's education because the family is the first environment that shapes students' attitudes and motivations to learn. Good communication between schools and parents can help find solutions to educational problems faced by students, both economic problems, low motivation to learn, and the influence of the social environment. (Ahmad Muhklis, Izhar Salim, 2015) states that parental involvement in children's education can help prevent dropouts and increase students' motivation to learn.

Overall, the findings of the study show that the handling of school dropouts in Sidenreng Rappang Regency involves various actors, ranging from local governments, schools, village governments, parents, to the community. The involvement of these various parties reflects the existence of a collaborative governance process as stated by (Ansell & Gash, 2008b), which is characterized by communication, information exchange, coordination, and joint commitment in achieving the same goal, namely reducing the school dropout rate and improving education sustainability. Through this collaboration, each party can carry out their respective roles so that the handling of school dropouts can be carried out more effectively and sustainably.

The findings of the study also show the existence of a collaborative governance process as explained by (Ansell & Gash, 2008). This can be seen from the existence of face-to-face dialogue which is carried out through coordination meetings, communication between schools, the Education Office, village governments, parents, and direct visits to the homes of students at risk of dropping out of school. In addition, trust building is built through the involvement of various parties in collecting ATS data and handling students together. Commitment to process is shown through the implementation of socialization, mentoring, and interventions that are carried out on an ongoing basis to ensure that students continue to have access to education. The shared understanding is reflected in the common goals of all stakeholders in reducing the dropout rate and improving the sustainability of education in Sidenreng Rappang Regency.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that the problem of school dropouts at the high school level in Sidenreng Rappang Regency is a multidimensional problem and is influenced by the interaction of various interrelated factors. Family economic factors are the most dominant causes, followed by low motivation to learn, the influence of the social environment, children's involvement in work, early marriage, and lack of parental attention to

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education. These findings show that learners' decisions to stop education are not only influenced by individual conditions, but also influenced by family factors and the social environment that shape educational sustainability.

This research also shows that local governments have carried out their role in handling school dropouts through their functions as regulators, dynamizers, facilitators, and supervisors. This role is realized through the implementation of data collection and identification of school dropouts, socialization of the importance of education, intervention and assistance for students, and monitoring and evaluation of program implementation. However, the implementation of handling still faces a number of obstacles, especially related to the synchronization and validity of data on school dropouts and the limited range of interventions for all program targets. These conditions show that the effectiveness of handling is not only determined by the existence of the program, but also by the quality of implementation, data accuracy, and sustainability of supervision.

In addition, this study emphasizes that the handling of school dropouts cannot be done partially by the government, but requires continuous coordination and collaboration between the government, schools, and the community. The synergy between stakeholders is realized through continuous data collection, reporting, socialization, mentoring, and communication activities so as to strengthen efforts to prevent and handle school dropouts more effectively. Thus, collaboration between the government, schools, and the community is a strategic factor in increasing the effectiveness of handling school dropouts and supporting the sustainability of education at the high school level in Sidenreng Rappang Regency.

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