

The Dynamics of Social Inequality in Urban Areas: A Case Study of Poor Communities in Makassar

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ABSTRACT

This research discusses the dynamics of social inequality in urban areas through a case study of poor communities in Makassar City. Social inequality is a crucial issue that arises along with rapid urbanization and uneven economic growth in everyday life. Although cities like Makassar are experiencing infrastructure development and modernization, this does not always have a positive impact on all levels of society. On the contrary, some groups of people, especially the poor, are increasingly marginalized from the development process.

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to deeply understand the social, economic and spatial conditions of poor communities in several areas of Makassar city. Data were obtained through in-depth interviews, field observations, and analysis of policy documents related to urban development. The findings show that social inequality in Makassar is not only characterized by income differences across all levels of society, but also by limited access to basic services such as education, health, decent housing, and employment opportunities, especially in the peripheral areas of Makassar city. In addition, the urban planning process, which is less participatory and more oriented towards the economic interests of the elite, has also widened the social gap in people's lives.

This research confirms that social inequality in urban areas is the result of a complex interaction between structural factors, public policies, and the social dynamics of the community. Therefore, a more inclusive development approach, based on social justice, and encouraging the active participation of the poor in the decision-making process is needed. Thus, urban development does not only prioritize economic growth, but also ensures a fair distribution of benefits for all citizens. Therefore, efforts to reduce social inequality in cities require a comprehensive approach, ranging from housing policy reform, improving the quality of public services, to active community involvement in urban planning processes.

Keywords: Social gap, urban, poverty, inequality, social policy, Makassar.

INTRODUCTION

Social inequality is one of the major problems faced by many large cities in the world, including Jakarta, the capital city of Indonesia. Makassar, as the economic and political center of the country, is also home to a concentration of socially, economically, and culturally diverse populations. Although the city has experienced rapid development in recent decades, the social gap between the rich and poor remains an unsolved issue. Many studies have shown that high social inequality can have a negative impact on social stability, including high crime rates, social discontent and tensions between social classes. This study aims to identify the dynamics of social inequality in Makassar, with a focus on the causal factors and their impact on the lives of the urban poor.

Makassar, as the capital of South Sulawesi Province, is one of the major cities in Indonesia that is experiencing rapid social, economic and cultural dynamics. The city is the center of trade, industry, and education in Eastern Indonesia, with a relatively high economic growth rate. However, although Makassar has various facilities and

developed infrastructure, poverty is still an important issue that must be addressed. Poverty in Makassar is not only associated with low per capita income, but also with limited access to education, health services, and decent work opportunities. This phenomenon often shapes unequal social opportunities between people in the city center and those in the suburban areas.

The Poverty Phenomenon in Makassar In general, poverty in Makassar can be seen in two main forms: absolute and relative poverty. Absolute poverty occurs when a family's income is insufficient to fulfill the basic necessities of life, such as food, shelter, and health services. Meanwhile, relative poverty is more related to the social inequality that occurs in the community, where most of the city's citizens have limited access to resources and economic opportunities.

The study of social inequality has been conducted by many sociologists, among whom is Social inequality is a phenomenon that involves inequalities in the distribution of social, economic, and political resources within a society. Experts in various disciplines, including sociology, economics, and politics, have developed various theories and concepts to understand the dynamics of social inequality. Here are some of the experts and their key concepts related to social inequality: Studies on Social Gap by Experts. Social inequality is a phenomenon that involves inequalities in the distribution of social, economic, and political resources within a society. Experts in various disciplines, including sociology, economics, and politics, have developed various theories and concepts to understand the dynamics of the social divide. Here are some experts and their key concepts related to social inequality:

Giddens, A., Duneier, M., Appelbaum, R. P., & Carr, D. (2017). discusses various concepts in sociology, including social inequality and poverty. Giddens examines the structural factors that cause poverty and the role of social policy in reducing economic inequality. Sen, A. (1999). Conceptualizes poverty not only as a lack of income, but also as a lack of freedom to choose alternatives in life, including education, health, and social participation. Ravallion, M. (2016). An ideal concept to provide insight into the economic theories that explain poverty, as well as the various policies implemented to reduce global poverty. Ravallion also discusses metrics for measuring poverty and the challenges faced in development. Todaro, M. P., & Smith, S. C. (2015). that the relationship between poverty and economic development, as well as the challenges that developing countries face in overcoming poverty. Todaro and Smith highlight the importance of education, health, and inclusive economic policies in reducing poverty. World Bank. (2020). that an in-depth analysis of global poverty, focusing on extreme poverty, economic inequality, and the impact of COVID-19 on poverty in developing countries, including Indonesia. UNDP. (2019). examining inequality in poverty measurement based on dimensions other than income, such as education

A complete illustration outlined by Sukirno, S. (2017). The theory and policy of development economics, including discussions on structural poverty, economic growth, and social inequality in developing countries, including Indonesia. Bappenas. (2021). examines the situation of poverty and social inequality in Indonesia, including regional analysis such as in Makassar, and the policies needed to effectively reduce poverty. Alkire, S., & Foster, J. (2011) that developed a multidimensional poverty measurement approach that combines various social welfare indicators, such as education, health, and access to basic services. Kuncoro, M. (2006) provided an overview of poverty issues in economic development in Indonesia, with a discussion of policies that can be implemented to reduce poverty, as well as the challenges faced by the government. Patel, S., & Thakur, S. (2020). This research examines urban poverty in several developing countries, including Indonesia. This research provides a perspective on the challenges faced by the poor in urban areas, such as in Makassar and other major cities. Sachs, J. D. (2005). discusses how extreme poverty can be eliminated with the right policies, including improved access to health, education, and basic infrastructure. Sachs proposes concrete steps to address poverty

METHODS

This research used a qualitative approach with a case study design. The location of this research is a dense residential area in Makassar that has a high poverty rate, such as the Manggala Sub-district area of Bangkala Village (Pemulung group). Data was collected through:

In-depth Interview: Interviews were conducted with 15 respondents consisting of poor family members, community leaders, and policy makers.

Participatory Observation: The researcher spent time in the selected communities to observe the social interactions and lifestyle of the urban poor.

Documentation: Secondary data collection through government policy documents and reports related to social inequality in Makassar.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of interviews and observations, this study found several main causal factors of social inequality in Makassar, including:

Unequal Access to Education: Many poor families in Makassar are unable to access proper education, so their children cannot acquire the skills needed to compete in the job market. This exacerbates the existing cycle of poverty.

Limited Employment Opportunities: Although Makassar offers many employment opportunities, most of the jobs available require skills that the poor do not possess. Low-paid and insecure jobs worsen their economic condition.

Social Policy Deviations: Although there are various government programs to address poverty, most of the policies are ineffective due to lack of supervision, uneven implementation, and limited community participation in decision-making.

The impact of this social inequality is very evident in everyday life. The poor in Makassar often face difficulties in obtaining adequate health care, decent housing, and access to other public facilities. Some of the factors that affect the poverty rate in Makassar include:

Unequal Education: Access to quality education is still a problem for most poor families in Makassar. Many children from poor families cannot continue their education to a higher level due to financial constraints and inadequate education facilities in some suburban areas.

High Unemployment Rate: Although Makassar as a large city offers a variety of employment opportunities, many residents are trapped in low-wage jobs or informal jobs that do not provide financial security. The high unemployment rate, especially among youth, also exacerbates poverty levels.

Social and Infrastructure Inequality: There are significant inequalities in access to infrastructure and basic services between the city center and peripheral areas. Residents in the peripheral areas of Makassar often do not have adequate access to health services, clean water, electricity, and proper transportation, which in turn affects their quality of life. **Uneven Development Policy:** Oak development

Uneven Development Policy: Economic development that is more focused in urban centers is often not matched by policies that pay attention to more remote and poorer areas. While there are government programs to reduce poverty, such as the Family Hope Program (PKH) or other social assistance, their implementation often does not reach the neediest.

Social Change and Migration: The rapid urbanization process has also contributed to the increase in poverty in Makassar. Many people from areas outside Makassar migrate to the city in search of work, but not all of them manage to find decent jobs. As a result, they are trapped in urban poverty.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that social inequality in Makassar is caused by various structural factors, such as limited access to education and employment opportunities, as well as unequal implementation of social policies. Although there

are several government efforts to reduce poverty, these programs have not been effective in addressing the root causes of social inequality. Recommendations from this study include the need to increase access to education for the poor, strengthen community-based economic empowerment programs, and increase community participation in the social policy-making process.

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