

Analysis of the Political Process in Formulating Youth and Sports Development Policies in Maros Regency

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Abstract

This study analyzes the political process of formulating youth and sports development policies in Maros Regency, Indonesia, emphasizing the interactions between government, legislative bodies, youth organizations, sports communities, and civil society. Employing a qualitative approach with a life story method, the research explores how problem identification, policy formulation, and decision-making are shaped by power relations, negotiations, and political pressures rather than purely technocratic or administrative procedures. The study finds that youth and sports issues often face low priority due to institutional fragmentation, limited resources, and competing regional development agendas. External actors, such as the Indonesian National Youth Committee (KNPI) and the Indonesian National Sports Committee (KONI), play a critical role in advocating for policy attention, leveraging informal networks, public opinion, and achievements in sports competitions to influence the policy agenda. Policy formulation involves negotiation and compromise, reflecting both coalition interests and fiscal constraints, while decision-making combines formal procedures with informal political bargaining to ensure policy acceptance. Outputs include regional regulations, draft policies, training programs, and budget allocations, yet implementation remains constrained by capacity, funding, and coordination challenges. This study demonstrates that the development of youth and sports policies in Maros is a dynamic, cyclical, and politically contested process, where the interplay of actors, interests, and local political structures ultimately shapes policy priorities and outcomes.

Keywords: *Youth Policy, Sports Development, Political Process, Policy Formulation, Maros Regency.*

Introduction

The study of public policy continues to evolve in line with the complexity of the problems faced by society and the state. Public policy, as a government instrument for directing development and resolving social, economic, and political issues, has undergone changes in accordance with the dynamics of the times (Kay, 2006). Initially, public policy studies emphasized administrative and bureaucratic approaches, but with the development of a participatory paradigm, public policy is now more inclusive, accommodating the interests of various stakeholders (Geerlof, 2019; Edelenbos, 1999; Pahl-Wostl, 2002). Furthermore, technological developments and globalization have driven transformations in policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation, making them more adaptive to changes in the social and economic environment (Weber, K. M., & Rohracher, 2012; Dolata, 2009; Steward, 2012).

In the context of youth policy, the government must design strategies oriented towards increasing the capacity and quality of youth so they can become productive actors in development. Youth policy encompasses various aspects, from education and skills training to entrepreneurship, to active participation in social and political life. With targeted policies, youth can have broader access to job opportunities, competency enhancement, and character development based on national values and innovation. Tri & Van (2022) said that, developing quality human resources is key to a nation's progress. Youth, as the next generation, play a strategic role in national development, across social, economic,

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and political contexts. Therefore, policies that support youth development are crucial to ensuring sustainable development. Furthermore, sports, as part of youth development policies, not only serve to improve physical health but also build character, discipline, and teamwork, which are essential assets for the younger generation to contribute to society.

Policy can be defined as a set of decisions made by individuals or political groups in an effort to determine goals and the methods needed to achieve them. In general, the party formulating this policy has the power and authority to implement the decisions made. The relationship between policy and politics is clearly seen in Ngongoloy's view (2015), who asserts that policy is a key concept in political science. Therefore, public policy cannot be separated from the political process, both in its formulation and implementation stages.

The political process in formulating youth and sports development policies in Maros Regency is dynamic, involving various political actors and interest groups working together to formulate and implement these policies. In this context, public policy is not only the end product of government decisions, but also the result of complex interactions between local governments, community leaders, political parties, and youth and sports communities. The Maros Regency Government plays a central role in formulating these policies, but cannot be separated from the pressure and influence of various other actors with vested interests (Arman, 2022; Haning & Tahili, 2018). This political process is guided by discussion, negotiation, and compromise between the various parties involved, including the legislature, the bureaucracy, and the community.

This perspective is relevant to research on the political process in public policy formulation, particularly regarding youth and sports development in Maros Regency. Currently, most actors involved in formulating youth and sports policies in the region come from the government (executive) and a small number from the private sector or sports organizations, while the wider public, the policy users, is often neglected (Giulianotti, 2011; Skille, 2009). The mass media is often used as a tool to politicize policies, and sometimes unfinished policies are leaked to the public, resulting in public opinion and protests that outweigh the substance of the policies themselves.

One of the main problems faced is the minimal attention to youth and sports issues on the local policy agenda. Agenda-Setting Theory, popularized by Mukherjee & Howlett (2015), highlights that issues that make it onto the policy agenda depend heavily on the strength of support from interest groups and the level of media attention to them. In Maros Regency, issues related to youth development and sports facilities often receive little attention from local political actors and the media. This results in programs related to youth and sports not being prioritized in regional budget allocations.

Methods

In examining the political process involved in the formulation of youth and sports development policies in Maros Regency, a qualitative approach is appropriate. Qualitative research is a research method that aims to understand and explain phenomena or events by collecting and analyzing data that is not in the form of numbers or statistics. This research focuses on interpretation, description, and in-depth understanding of the social, cultural, and human experience contexts. According to Creswell, qualitative research is a research approach that seeks to understand the meanings given by individuals or groups to the phenomena under study, as well as to explore and develop a deeper understanding of the social and cultural context in which these phenomena occur. This approach focuses on an in-depth understanding of the social and political phenomena that occur behind the scenes, particularly in the interactions between political actors involved in public policy decision-making. With a qualitative approach, researchers can explore the motives, interests, and negotiations that occur in the formulation of these policies (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). This research uses a qualitative approach using the life story method. Life stories were used to deeply explore the personal and subjective experiences of key actors involved in the youth and sports development policymaking process in Maros Regency. This approach allows researchers to understand the dynamics of the political process from the perspective of the actors directly involved, including the motives, strategies, conflicts, and power relations that shape these policy decisions.

Research Focus

This study aims to analyze the political process in formulating youth and sports development policies in Maros Regency, emphasizing the lived experiences of key actors in shaping decisions, resolving conflicts, and interpreting their roles in the context of power and interests. The study focuses on the stages of policy formulation, from problem identification and formulation of policy alternatives to

decision-making, as well as interactions and negotiations between the local government, the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD), youth organizations, sports communities, and civil society. This study also examines internal and external factors that influence the political dynamics in the policy process.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis in the research on the political process of formulating youth and sports development policies in Maros Regency followed a qualitative approach aimed at understanding the meaning, patterns, and dynamics of politics. Data were collected from primary sources, including the words and actions of actors through interviews, observations, and audio/video recordings, and from additional sources such as documents, archives, photographs, and statistics. Next, the data were reduced by sorting, simplifying, and categorizing relevant information based on key themes or issues to focus the analysis and identify important patterns. The reduced data were then presented in a structured format, such as tables, diagrams, or concept maps, to facilitate understanding of the relationships between data and actor interactions. The final stage was drawing conclusions and verifying them through triangulation between interviews, observations, and documents to ensure the consistency, validity, and accuracy of the findings related to the political process in formulating the policy.

Results and Discussion

The political process of formulating youth and sports development policies in Maros Regency takes place through dynamic interactions between government actors, the legislature, youth organizations, sports communities, and civil society. This process is not linear or purely technocratic, but rather influenced by power relations, political interests, and social demands from the external environment. Initial demands typically emerge from youth organizations and sports communities, as well as civil society, through formal and informal forums. These demands are then filtered by the local government based on the regent's vision and mission, RPJMD priorities, budgetary capacity, and legislative pressure. Negotiations and lobbying between actors determine which issues rise to the agenda, with issues with strong political support being more easily accommodated than minor or less popular aspirations.

The policy formulation stage is carried out by the DISPARPORA technical team with input from external actors, followed by decision-making through executive-legislative coordination, where the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) influences issue priorities based on political interests and constituents. Policy outputs, such as Sports Regulations, training programs, and budget allocations, are often compromised due to internal and external constraints. Public feedback then becomes input for the next policy cycle. Overall, this political process is cyclical and contested, demonstrating that youth and sports policy in Maros emerges from a complex interaction of contested interests, negotiations, and local socio-political dynamics, not simply administrative procedures.

The process of formulating youth and sports policies in Maros Regency is driven by various structural, institutional, and public service issues that emerge through interactions between the local government, youth organizations, sports communities, and other stakeholders. Key issues include weak institutional support, limited facilities, disproportionate budget allocations, unfocused agency structures, and suboptimal opportunities for youth participation in the policy formulation process. These issues shape public issues that then drive new policy agendas. However, the problem identification process is not merely technical, but rather a political arena influenced by the interests, resources, and preferences of different actors.

External actors such as youth organizations (KNPI, GP Ansor) and sports communities (KONI, FORKI) play a crucial role in raising issues through formal and informal forums. The local government, through the DISPARPORA (National Sports and Sports Agency), acts as a gatekeeper, assessing issues based on the regent's vision and mission, RPJMD (Regional Medium-Term Development Plan) priorities, budget capacity, and potential resistance from the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD). The DPRD itself influences issue priorities based on political interests, constituents, and electoral considerations. This interaction creates competitive negotiations where issues with strong political support are more easily placed on the agenda, while minor issues are often delayed or neglected.

Institutional issues are the most fundamental issue affecting the entire policy process. The multi-function structure of the Department of Youth and Sports (DISPARPORA) leads to a lack of focus on youth and sports, hinders coordination between actors, and slows down regulatory processes such as

the Youth Regional Regulation. Internal technocratic capacity is also limited, so youth aspirations are not always translated into policy. This institutional fragmentation results in a lack of long-term strategic planning, limited facilities, disproportionate budget allocations, and poor intersectoral coordination.

Thus, the identification of problems in the development of youth and sports policies in Maros Regency is the result of political construction involving competing interests, negotiations, and issue selection. The issues raised are not merely the most pressing objective issues, but also those that have gained attention, political support, and opportunities for discussion within the local government system. Weak institutions serve as a gateway for other problems and determine the direction, priorities, and effectiveness of the resulting policies.

The Deputy Chairperson of the National Mandate Party (KNPI) emphasized that the merger of three sectors into one agency resulted in an imbalance of focus:

"The current merger of the Tourism, Youth, and Sports Agency has displaced its primary function from youth and sports issues. The work and budget are concentrated in one agency that serves three functions simultaneously."

This view was reinforced by informants from the government.

The Head of the Social Affairs Agency explained:

"The Tourism, Youth, and Sports Agency handles too many issues. This results in a lack of focus, from planning to implementation."

Institutions lacking a focus on youth and sports have resulted in suboptimal strategic functions such as coaching, youth human resource development, and the provision of sports facilities and infrastructure. This has prompted the Indonesian National Sports Committee (KNPI), sports communities, and youth organizations to demand structural changes and increased government attention. Another fundamental issue is the lack of adequate sports facilities, both in terms of quantity, distribution, quality, and governance, which is a major obstacle to sports development in Maros Regency. These findings indicate that limited facilities reflect not only physical deficiencies but also the weaknesses of government institutions in meeting public needs in the youth and sports sector.

The Daily Chair of KONI (Indonesian National Sports Committee) outlined the fundamental problems in the sports sector:

"The fundamental problem in the sports sector in Maros Regency lies in budget constraints and a lack of facilities and infrastructure. One of the most urgently needed facilities is a sports hall (GOR), which is currently lacking."

In addition to the limited availability of basic facilities such as sports halls, standardized fields, and sports training facilities, the athlete development process in Maros Regency has not been optimal despite high public interest. This limited availability is closely related to budgetary issues, where the procurement of sports facilities requires significant costs, but the construction of sports facilities has never been a political priority, reflecting low political will and minimal advocacy from relevant actors. Limited budgets are a dominant factor hampering the implementation of strategic programs, indicating that the youth and sports sectors have not been prioritized in regional budget allocations. Furthermore, youth participation in the policy process, although formally available, is still not institutionalized systematically and is highly dependent on personal closeness, political connections, and specific momentum, thus limiting the effectiveness of youth and sports policies.

The Indonesian National Committee (KNPI) is the main actor pushing for the accelerated drafting of the Youth Regional Regulation.

"Since the first term of the Regent, there has been no Youth Regional Regulation. We are holding hearings to encourage the creation of such a regulation."

Regulatory issues are evident in the Draft Regional Regulation on Youth, which is still under discussion despite its drafting having begun in 2022. This is due to weak political priorities, limited technocratic capacity of the drafters, political coalition dynamics in the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD), and a lack of commitment from relevant regional agencies. The lack of synchronization between Regional Regulation on Sports No. 8 of 2023 and field conditions also reflects a regulatory gap, where major mandates such as the provision of sports facilities, sports development, sports center construction, and development of competitive sports have not been fully implemented due to budget constraints, organizational capacity, and government priorities. This

indicates that the formulation of regulations is not always accompanied by realistic implementation planning, thus limiting the effectiveness of youth and sports policies.

On the sports side, although Regional Regulation No. 8 of 2023 has been passed, implementation remains a major challenge. A sports figure stated:

"After the Regional Regulation is passed, the government should provide wider publicity. Sports facilities should be expanded in the sub-districts." (Interview, Sports Figure)

Regulatory issues in Maros Regency are evident in the absence of a Youth Regulation, limited implementation of the Sports Regulation, minimal outreach, a lack of synchronization between regulations and government capacity, and weak cross-sectoral coordination, resulting in ineffective regulation in promoting youth and sports human resource development. This reflects that the policy stream is not moving as quickly as the problem stream, resulting in many identified problems not being addressed regulatory, resulting in sporadic, reactive, and unfocused youth and sports policies.

Table 1. Mapping of Youth and Sports Problems in Maros Regency

Aspect	Findings	Problem Indication	Political Implication
Youth	Most youth organizations are still focused on practical politics, not optimal in youth services	Low substantive youth participation	Weak policy input (Easton)
Youth	Influence of foreign culture and weak youth character	Issues in values and development	Not a priority agenda
Sports	Increasing need for sports facilities	Disparity of facilities across regions	Increased pressure from KONI
Sports	Sports development system is not integrated	Fragmented development actors	Weak policy coordination

Source: Disparpora Strategic Plan 2021–2026

The problem identification process in developing youth and sports development policies in Maros Regency is political in nature, with issues shaped through the interactions and interests of various actors, including youth organizations, sports communities, the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD), and the community. Input from these parties is processed by the local government through an issue selection mechanism, in accordance with the Easton and Multiple Streams Frameworks. Therefore, issues that enter the policy agenda do not emerge automatically, but are the result of political construction and competitive and selective interest networks.

Formulation

The process of formulating youth and sports policies in Maros Regency takes place within a complex local political context, where the relationships between the local government, the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD), youth organizations, sports communities, and other stakeholders shape a dynamic political configuration. The Department of Youth and Sports (DISPARPORA) plays a key role in developing academic texts and initial policy drafts, but limited internal capacity allows external actors such as youth organizations, sports communities, and academics to influence the content of the documents through revisions, advocacy, and negotiation. The DPRD plays a significant role in reviewing and modifying draft policies, particularly regarding budgets, public support, and political implications, resulting in frequent adjustments or delays to strategic issues.

Policy formulation reflects a negotiated and competitive political process, with the youth coalition focusing on youth participation and empowerment, while the sports coalition emphasizes facilities, support for athletes, and the organization of competitions. Negotiations take place not only in formal settings but also through undocumented personal and political interactions, influencing key policy issues such as funding sources, program implementation authority, and success indicators. These dynamics are also influenced by regional institutional structures, asynchronous medium-term planning, limited fiscal capacity, and political demands, so that policy formulation proceeds through compromises that reflect institutional limitations while also demonstrating that policies are born from the political arena, not merely a technocratic process.

The initiative to formulate the policy stemmed from the need to provide a strong legal foundation for sports and youth development in Maros Regency. The local government recognized that without

clear and systematic regulations, sports development and youth development would continue to be sporadic. However, politically, the greatest impetus came from pressure from youth organizations and sports communities. As the Chairman of the Indonesian National Sports Committee (KNPI) emphasized:

"KNPI always strives to ensure that input from youth organizations is conveyed and accommodated in the drafting of policies."

This statement demonstrates that policy formulation is not merely a technocratic process, but also a response to socio-political pressure from non-governmental actors. The presence of youth organizations as vocal actors encouraged the government to expedite the process of formulating regulations that had previously not been a priority.

In the sports sector, the initiative to establish a Sports Regulation stemmed from the need for KONI (Indonesian Sports Committee) and sports branches to gain stronger legitimacy and policy support. The Chairman of KONI explained:

"The fundamental problem in the sports sector is limited budget and facilities. With the Regulation, we hope to ensure more serious support."

This phrase illustrates that sports policy arose from the need to improve relations between the state and the sports community. Regulations are not viewed simply as legal products, but as political instruments to strengthen the sports community's bargaining position within local government structures.

The sports community has significant influence in the formulation of sports policy. The Indonesian Sports Committee (KONI) is the most decisive actor in pushing for the technical substance of sports regulations. As stated by the KONI Daily Chair:

"We propose that sports development be clearly regulated in a Regional Regulation. So far, development has not been sustainable."

KONI champions the interests of developing high-performance sports with a strong legal basis. They push for the Regional Regulation to cover aspects of athlete development, provision of coaches, regular funding, and the construction of facilities such as sports halls (GOR). In the policy subsystem (ACF) theory, KONI is part of a coalition of practitioners with technical expertise and extensive experience. Sports figures also emphasize the importance of equitable distribution of facilities:

"Sports facilities must be expanded to the sub-district level, so that high-achieving athletes grow from the bottom."

The role of the sports community is not only technical but also political. They exert moral pressure on the government to ensure that the Regional Regulation on Sports is not merely a formality but a genuine instrument for sports development. Certain sports, such as archery, soccer, silat, and martial arts, also convey their aspirations through KONI. An archery athlete stated that athlete development requires consistency:

"The facilities and scholarships are already in place, but other sports have different needs."

This quote demonstrates that sports development requires a differentiated approach recognized in regulations. Thus, the sports community is the key actor in ensuring that the substance of the Sports Regulation does not stop at the normative level but addresses the real needs of sports development and achievement.

Table 2. Analysis of Goals, Targets, and Policy Implications

Objective	Strategic Target	General Indicator	Analysis Notes
Improvement of youth quality	Increased role and participation of youth	Indicators still general	Large room for political interpretation
Strengthening sports	Improvement of sports achievements	Focus on events	Policy oriented toward outputs
Governance	Accountability of OPD performance	SAKIP scores	Dominance of administrative approach

Source: Disparpora Strategic Plan 2021–2026

The policy formulation process does not occur technocratically, but rather through a political process involving negotiation, exchange of interests, and interaction between actors. Changes in policy content reflect the influence of youth and sports coalitions, as described in the Advocacy Coalition Framework, where actors with similar values and goals seek to influence the policy's content. The way these actors behave to strengthen their positions, budgets, and legitimacy demonstrates the principle of Rational Choice, namely that decisions are made based on calculating costs and benefits within a political context. This stage also demonstrates that the policy formulation phase of the policy cycle is not a straightforward process, but rather a competitive arena that results in political compromise. Thus, policy formulation is a political process fraught with negotiation, ultimately determining the policy's content based on a balance of interests between advocacy coalitions and the strategic calculations of policymakers.

Decision Making

Decision-making in the development of youth and sports policies in Maros Regency takes place within a complex local political landscape, where interactions between the local government, the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD), youth organizations, sports communities, and non-governmental actors shape policy direction. Decisions are not simply born of administrative logic or technocratic urgency, but through negotiations of interests, political pressure, and a network of personal relationships that occur throughout the process. The DPRD plays a crucial role in reviewing, amending, or approving draft policies, taking into account budgetary impacts, political interests, and the stability of relations between the legislature and the executive branch. Many important decisions are also made outside of official channels through personal communications, informal meetings, and advocacy from youth and sports coalitions. This process reflects the dynamic policy window within the Multiple Streams framework, where issues, policies, and political currents converge to create opportunities for policy enactment. Political compromise is often the end result, including adjustments to policy substance, wording, or the scope of articles to ensure acceptance by all parties. Furthermore, the regional head's vision and development priorities, such as a focus on the tourism sector, influence how youth and sports issues are prioritized on the regional political agenda. Thus, decision-making is not merely an administrative procedure, but the culmination of political interactions that determine the substance and direction of youth and sports policies at the local level.

However, pressure from youth organizations such as the Indonesian National Youth Committee (KNPI) and religious youth organizations, as well as from the sports community, particularly the Indonesian National Sports Committee (KONI), has allowed youth and sports issues to regain ground in local politics. As the KNPI Chairperson stated:

"We always strive to ensure that the voices of youth organizations are heard in the policy-making process, and so far the local government has been quite open."

This demonstrates that there is pressure from civil society that the local government cannot ignore. This pressure creates political momentum that youth actors can capitalize on to influence policy formulation.

In an interview, the KNPI Chairperson emphasized:

"Our communication with the DPRD is very easy, because the commission chair used to be the KNPI Chairperson."

Decision-making regarding youth and sports policy in Maros Regency is not only structured through formal procedures, but also through local political practices involving negotiation, advocacy, and social interaction outside of bureaucratic channels. Pressure arises from tangible needs such as sports facilities and athlete development, as well as the achievements of sports communities, which enhance the political legitimacy of this issue within the Multiple Streams Framework. Youth and sports coalitions, as well as the community, actively influence policy substance through informal lobbying, hearings, and personal communication with executive officials and members of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD). Meanwhile, the bureaucratic capacity of the Tourism and Sports Agency (DISPARPORA), which oversees three sectors, limits its internal focus on youth and sports. Thus, decisions at the regional level reflect a balance between political pressure, administrative capacity, and the interests of local actors.

Formally, the decision-making mechanism follows the legal and procedural flow of regional regulations, starting with the preparation of an Academic Draft by DISPARPORA, harmonization with the Regional Development Planning Agency (Bappeda), legal alignment through the Legal Division,

and in-depth deliberation in the DPRD through commission meetings and public hearings. Each of these formal stages faces a dynamic tug-of-war between community needs, policy urgency, regional development priorities, and fiscal constraints. The Academic Draft is frequently revised to accommodate input from youth organizations and sports communities, while articles with budgetary implications are frequently adjusted. Thus, formal and informal processes synergize to shape the substance and final direction of youth and sports policy in Maros Regency.

The KNPI chairman explained that informal spaces are the most effective venue for championing youth interests in policy. The KNPI chairman said:

"There are several things we cannot convey in formal forums, but we can discuss them effectively in informal meetings. Our personal communication with members of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) has been very helpful in strengthening several articles in the draft regional regulation."

This quote illustrates how personal relationships are a strategic instrument in strengthening the bargaining position of youth organizations. With strong informal access, KNPI can influence the content of articles deemed crucial for developing creative spaces, strengthening organizational capacity, and sustainable youth development. In addition to lobbying between organizations and the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD), informal dynamics are also evident in interactions between the executive and legislative branches. Several informants within the government stated that there is a need for the government to negotiate with the DPRD regarding articles with significant budgetary implications. An official who wished to remain anonymous explained,

"Not everything can be discussed openly, especially regarding the budget. There are small discussions that must be held to avoid political resistance."

This quote indicates a pattern of informal fiscal negotiations, in which the government seeks to ensure that provisions in regional regulations do not exceed regional fiscal capacity or create a budget burden that is difficult to meet. Informal mechanisms are also evident in the efforts of youth organizations and sports communities to build a shared narrative to strengthen their political legitimacy. The Indonesian Youth Association (KNPI), for example, actively builds public opinion through social media to pressure the government to expedite deliberations on the Youth Regional Regulation. The KNPI chairman stated:

"If there are things that are slow, we often raise them publicly to speed things up."

By leveraging public opinion, the KNPI relies not only on personal lobbying but also on issue amplification strategies. This demonstrates how informal dynamics can transfer to the public sphere, creating socio-political pressure that accelerates the formation of formal decisions. The sports community uses athletes' achievements as an informal lobbying tool. When Maros athletes demonstrated their achievements at the Provincial Sports Week (Porprov), the Indonesian National Sports Committee (KONI) used this opportunity to convince the government and the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) that sports regulations needed to be ratified immediately. The KONI chairman emphasized:

"The athletes' achievements are proof that development requires clear regulations."

Thus, sports achievements are not only a competitive phenomenon but also a strategic instrument in informal bargaining to advance policy priorities. Interviews with GP Ansor also revealed that informal channels are used to convey criticism or input that is uncomfortable to discuss in formal forums. The chairman of GP Ansor stated:

"Sometimes we have to speak privately with certain officials so that our input is not perceived as offensive. Good relationships are important for maintaining communication." (Interview, Chairman of GP Ansor).

This pattern demonstrates how political sensitivities influence the choice of communication channels. Youth organizations choose informal spaces to avoid political friction that could negatively impact long-term relationships with the local government.

One of the most frequently encountered substantial debates concerns funding. This debate reflects the tension between the ideal needs of youth and sports development and the fiscal constraints of local governments. From the sports community's perspective, the demand for mandatory budget allocations

for athlete development, sports hall construction, and the provision of coaches remains fundamental. The KONI (Indonesian Sports Council) Executive Chair explained:

"If the budget is unclear and inconsistent, athlete development will never be stable. Development often stalls because we are waiting for uncertain budget decisions."

This statement demonstrates that KONI views funding as a structural instrument that determines the sustainability of sports development. Conversely, the government often responds to these requests by emphasizing regional fiscal constraints. One government official stated:

"The budget issue is not just a matter of willingness, but also regional capacity. Not all proposals can be accommodated because they must be aligned with development priorities." (Interview with government official)

These differing views create friction in discussions, with the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) attempting to mediate, understanding the technical needs of sports while remaining realistic about regional fiscal capacity. Substantive debates also arose regarding sports facilities, particularly the construction of sports halls (GOR) and the equal distribution of facilities down to the sub-district level. Sports figures asserted:

"Facilities must be evenly distributed down to the sub-district level. Athletes don't just grow from the city. If development is only carried out at the central level, many potential village athletes will be lost."

The government responded to this view by considering the budget burden and land availability. Government officials assessed that building a GOR requires significant funding and must be aligned with other, more pressing economic priorities. The Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) ultimately supported the use of the term "improving sports facilities" in the Regional Regulation, rather than explicitly mandating the government to build a GOR within a specific timeframe. This demonstrates that the contestation between the demands of the sports community and the government's capacity has resulted in a political compromise, manifested in more flexible regulatory language.

Table 3. Evaluation of Disparpora Performance Indicators

Performance Indicator	Target	Output	Political Implication
Number of youth trained in entrepreneurship	6,396 people	Training programs	Quantitative output, minimal evaluation
Number of sports achievement events	1 event	Competition or event	Political symbolism
Certified sports coaches	157 people	Sports human resources	Pressure from sports community

Source: 2025 Regional Development Plan for Changes to the Regional Tourism and Youth Agency (DISPARPORA).

Thus, the decision-making process is the culmination of a political process driven by compromise, stability, and a balance of power between various parties in the regional policy arena.

Conclusion

The political process of formulating youth and sports development policies in Maros Regency moves through three main stages problem identification, policy formulation, and decision-making which are interconnected within David Easton's Political System framework. Problem identification arises from environmental pressures in the form of youth aspirations, sports community dynamics, and political signals from the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD). The local government, through DISPARPORA (Regional Sports Agency) and Bappelitbangda, selects issues in line with the regent's vision and mission. The policy formulation stage involves negotiations between the executive, legislative, youth organizations, and sports communities to generate policy alternatives, influenced by power configurations, budget bargaining, and advocacy from coalitions of actors. Decision-making is the culmination of this process, where the DPRD grants approval or revisions and the Regional Government aligns policies with the regent's vision and mission, resulting in outputs in the form of Regional Regulations, Draft Regional Regulations, training programs, and budget allocations. The entire process is open-loop and dynamic, where community feedback becomes new input, so that policies are not only born from administrative procedures, but from the contestation of interests and power relations that shape the priorities and substance of policies at the regional level.

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