

Strategy for Strengthening Stakeholder Capacity to Improve the Quality of Education in Konawe Selatan Regency

Sulsalman Moita

FISIP Halu Oleo University

Corresponding Author: Sulsalman Moita moitasulsalman@yahoo.co.id

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze strategies for strengthening stakeholder capacity to enhance the quality of education in Konawe Selatan Regency. A qualitative approach with a descriptive method was employed. Data was gathered through interviews, observations, and document analysis, involving education stakeholders as informants. Data analysis involved data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The study focused on seven stakeholders: the contributions of Teachers' Associations, the functions of the Education Council, the roles of teachers' unions, the roles of the Principals' Working Group, the synergy of Subject Teacher Forums, the existence of School Committees, and community participation in School-Based Management. The findings indicate that these seven stakeholders play a vital role in improving educational quality through competency strengthening, professional development for teachers and principals, coordination, supervision, communication, and community participation. However, synergy and coordination among stakeholders require further strengthening to ensure educational programs are more integrated and sustainable. Capacity-building strategies are directed toward enhancing competence, strengthening networks and coordination, clearly defining roles, fostering participatory decision-making, and implementing data-driven monitoring and evaluation. Collaboration among stakeholders is a crucial factor in achieving educational governance that is participatory, accountable, and focused on improving the quality of education in Konawe Selatan Regency

INTRODUCTION

The various substantial problems that plague the national education system holistically so that it is unable to make the nation's life more intelligent include more errors in regulation and implementation. In terms of regulation, the limited education budget in the past was a factor contributing to the low quality of Indonesia's human resources. In contrast, countries such as Japan, Malaysia, South Korea, and China which prioritized education in their national development budgets—are now reaping the rewards, ranking among nations with highly competitive economic quality and human development indices.

In terms of implementation, the capacity of education stakeholders has proven insufficient to effectively realize various educational programs, spanning from the central to the regional levels. Consequently, these programs often appear fragmented and driven merely by the pursuit of targets, without adequately assessing or evaluating whether the implementation has truly reached and benefited the school-age population. Hamidah (2020) states that educators function not only as implementers of learning activities but also as preservers, innovators, transmitters, transformers, and organizers in shaping the development of learners. Furthermore, Nurhayati et al. (2019) emphasize that educators, particularly teachers, play a crucial role in implementing the educational process through instructional planning and design. Meanwhile, Nurhayati (2025) states that the successful implementation of education is significantly influenced by adaptive leadership, collaboration among educational stakeholders, human resource capacity, and the ability to respond to various issues in the field.

In the current era of reform, the priority placed on educational development is so significant that the government and parliament have legislated an allocation of 20% of the state budget to this sector (RI, 2022). However, this substantial budget allocation will not yield optimal or effective results if education management policies are driven solely by the government. Therefore, the participation and contribution of the community (stakeholders) are required to support various educational development programs, spanning the stages of planning, coordination, implementation, and evaluation, through to oversight.

Government policy collaboration in education, synergized with community participation, represents an effort to enhance educational quality across regions through educational autonomy, utilizing an approach that is clear, targeted, and effective. Improving the quality of education is a process integrated with the enhancement of human resource quality itself. According to Saepuddin (2018), quality improvement needs to be achieved through the reform of education management using a Total Quality Management approach. This approach positions quality management as a process that must be carried out systematically and continuously, ensuring that quality improvement focuses not only on final outcomes but also on the educational delivery process. Meanwhile, according to Sulastri et al. (2026), improving school quality is a process that requires professional, systematic, and continuous management.

Based on the foregoing, two factors explain why efforts to improve the quality of education have thus far met with limited success. First, the prevailing

strategy for educational development has been primarily input oriented. This approach relies on the assumption that once all educational inputs—such as teaching materials, learning aids, educational facilities, and training for teachers and educational staff, are provided, educational institutions will automatically yield the expected high-quality outputs (Hanushek, 2021). Kedua, pengelolaan pendidikan selama ini lebih bersifat macro-oriented, yang diatur oleh jajaran birokrasi di tingkat pusat. Akibatnya, banyak faktor yang diproyeksikan di tingkat makro tidak berjalan sebagaimana mestinya di tingkat mikro (satuan pengelola pendidikan/sekolah). Diskusi tersebut memberikan pemahaman bahwa pembangunan pendidikan bukan hanya terfokus pada penyediaan faktor input pendidikan tetapi juga harus lebih memperhatikan faktor proses pendidikan.

Konawe Selatan Regency, the study area for this research, faces complex challenges regarding educational development from both input-oriented and macro-oriented perspectives. Regarding input-oriented aspects, obstacles identified across most primary and secondary schools include high dropout rates at the secondary level, suboptimal teacher quality and competence, high educational costs, a frequently changing and non-standardized curriculum, and inadequate infrastructure. From a macro-oriented perspective, however, regulations and education development policies originating at the central level generally prioritize immediate targets, such as the quantity and quality of graduates' performance in national examinations while failing to foster a sustainable paradigm of education development for the future of society.

Addressing the educational issues outlined above also requires taking into account community support, specifically public awareness regarding the importance, function, and benefits of education. In this regard, ensuring quality education is not solely the responsibility of local government; it also hinges on community participation, particularly in fostering awareness and encouraging family members to pursue education at all levels, from primary and secondary school through to higher education. Currently, there are 511 schools in Konawe Selatan Regency, comprising 340 elementary schools, 110 junior high schools, 50 senior high schools, and 11 vocational high schools that require collaboration, commitment, and synergistic efforts between the local government and stakeholders to advance educational development.

The Konawe Selatan Regency Government consistently allocates significant funds for educational development through its regional budget (APBD). However, these funding sources will prove insufficient unless supported by a commitment from all stakeholders to manage and utilize them effectively, thereby cultivating the high-quality human resources needed to drive development.

The management and utilization of education funds, including the crucial role of stakeholder responsibility in educational development, represents an effort to enhance the quality of education in Konawe Selatan Regency. One essential aspect of improving educational quality in any region is the implementation of educational autonomy through an approach that is clear, targeted, sustainable, and effective. According to Tilaar (2002), educational

autonomy is fundamentally linked to the democratization of education, specifically providing the community with the opportunity to participate in determining and managing education in accordance with its own needs and characteristics. Meanwhile, according to Hasbullah (2010), educational autonomy relates to granting broader authority to regions and educational units to manage education based on regional needs and potential.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Given this context, stakeholders in Konawe Selatan Regency occupy a strategic position, as education is a social process involving a wide range of actors. Education stakeholders encompass not only the government and educational institutions but also school principals, teachers, students, parents, the community, the business and industrial sectors, and civil society organizations. UNESCO (2026) emphasizes that the process of developing and evaluating education systems must be conducted in a participatory manner through national dialogue, stakeholder consultations, the strengthening of institutional capacity, and inter-party coordination. This approach demonstrates that improvements in educational quality are more robust when education policies and programs garner support and involvement from diverse actors who possess a stake in, and knowledge of, educational issues.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted in Konawe Selatan Regency using snowballing sampling technique. This approach focuses the data collection process on the research subjects as the primary sources of information. The research subjects included the Head of the District Education Technical Implementation Unit, school principals, teachers, school supervisors, school committee members, parents, community leaders, government officials, and students. To ensure both depth of data and breadth of information, several data collection techniques were employed: document analysis, in-depth interviews, questionnaires, and observation. Data processing and analysis were carried out using both quantitative and qualitative methods. This study also employed data validity checks using several techniques: first, triangulation, which serves to verify the accuracy of specific data by comparing it with data obtained from other sources; second, sustained participation, which enhances credibility as the researcher maintains continuous interaction with the research subjects, thereby allowing for the detection of any inaccuracies in the data provided by them; and third, discussions with peers considered knowledgeable about the aspects under investigation.

RESULTS

Research findings indicate that there are seven strategies for strengthening stakeholder capacity to enhance the quality of education in Konawe Selatan Regency, including:

Capacity Building and Contribution of the Indonesian Teachers Association

The establishment of the Konawe Selatan Regency branch of the Indonesian Teachers' Association (Ikatan Guru Indonesia) was driven by a commitment to improving the quality of education, starting with the enhancement of teacher capacity through training and mentoring. Teacher training focuses on delivering content such as instruction on learning models, the *Merdeka* (Independent) Curriculum, the 2013 Curriculum, the development of lesson plans and syllabi, and the writing of scientific papers. Meanwhile, teacher mentoring aims to provide targeted support to teachers who require assistance in areas such as teaching techniques and didactics, discipline, professional and pedagogical competencies, and the improvement of work ethics, both inside and outside the classroom.

Research findings reveal that several informants agree the Indonesian Teachers' Association in Konawe Selatan Regency serves as a community platform for teachers to exchange information and share experiences aimed at advancing the field of education. The association focuses on enhancing teacher quality through academic forums, such as training sessions, workshops, seminars, and various other quality-support programs that actively involve teachers.

Based on the research findings, the strategy for strengthening the capacity of the Indonesian Teachers' Association (IGI) in Konawe Selatan Regency is structured as follows: a. The Association strengthens its network by bolstering internal institutional capacity and commitment through periodic consolidation, while simultaneously strengthening external networks across educational institutions; b. The Association leverages the internet as a medium for learning and global communication connecting teachers via social media to support 21st-century learning programs; c. It enhances scholarly activities aimed at improving teachers' professional and pedagogical competencies through training sessions, workshops, seminars, symposiums, and other academic events; and d. It establishes partnerships with the local government to conduct studies, research, discussions, and educational mentoring to address educational issues and formulate solutions to them.

Strengthening the Function of the Education Council

The provision of education in Konawe Selatan Regency requires constructive and substantial community support. One alternative approach to securing community participation in the education sector is to foster tangible

commitment from all segments of society. This tangible commitment needs to be politically channeled into a collective movement facilitated by the regency's Education Council.

In reality, the existence of the Education Council in Konawe Selatan Regency has not met the expectations of the community and education stakeholders who could serve as partners to the local government and the public in resolving educational issues and driving innovation in educational programs. Ideally, the education board serves as a vehicle for channeling public aspirations to shape educational policies and programs. Research findings from several sampled schools indicate a continuing need for laboratory facilities, as well as issues regarding literacy and high dropout rates. The Konawe Selatan Regency Education Board must step in to gather these inputs and convey them to policymakers, particularly the Education and Culture Office.

The education council must act as a driving force and initiate the establishment of education consultation forums in every sub-district and village, while also strengthening the role of school committees as representatives of students' parents. In reality, however, this function is inadequately fulfilled, as the council's activities tend to focus more on ceremonial events, such as National Education Day ceremonies and national forums rather than on concrete programs to advance education in the region.

Another aspect that the education board must champion is the creation of transparent, accountable, and democratic conditions for the delivery of quality education. This means the board can act as a mediator to align the interests of the local government with those of education stakeholders for instance, by proposing measures and conveying public aspirations during parliamentary budget deliberations, playing an active role in drafting local education regulations, and advocating for education budgets that prioritize the needs of the poor and marginalized.

The highly complex educational challenges in Konawe Selatan Regency necessitate strengthening the functional capacity of the Education Council as a key education stakeholder. These functions include: a. Fostering community commitment to the provision of quality education by engaging, communicating, deliberating, and seeking solutions to educational issues; b. Collaborating with the community (individuals and organizations), the government, and the legislature regarding the provision of quality education; c. Gathering and analyzing aspirations, ideas, demands, and various educational needs put forward by the community; d. Providing input, considerations, and recommendations to the local government and the legislature regarding regional performance criteria for educational development, criteria for education personnel (specifically teachers and school principals), and criteria for

educational facilities and infrastructure; e. Encouraging parental and community participation in education; and f. Conducting evaluations and oversight regarding educational policies, programs, implementation, and outcomes.

The Activities and Role of the Konawe Selatan Regency Teachers' Association

One of the stakeholder institutions that is expected to be able to contribute to solving education problems in Konawe Selatan Regency is the Republic of Indonesia Teachers Association. The Teachers' Association as a forum for teachers to come together as a profession, seems to be only symbolic. This means that de yure this organization exists at the district level, because it has a management structure. However, talking about programs, performance, progress and implementation of activities is almost non-existent.

In reality, the Teachers' Association has largely limited its participation to ceremonial activities, such as attending national congresses, National Education Day ceremonies, independence commemorations, and annual events hosted by the Konawe Selatan Regency Education and Culture Office. However, the true spirit that the Teachers' Association should foster is that of a forum where teachers gather to discuss various issues, challenges, opportunities, and the dynamics of educational development. In many regions, the Association's leadership acts as a partner to local governments, specifically relevant agencies and other education stakeholders in analyzing, reviewing, and identifying educational problems. Furthermore, while the Teachers' Association is not directly accountable to the government, it serves as a vital platform for communication and professional networking among teachers across all educational levels, aiming to enhance competence, advocate for welfare, and play a significant role as a key education stakeholder.

Based on these considerations, the teachers' association in Konawe Selatan Regency must restore its function as a professional organization for teachers, grounded in Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, under which the association's mandate includes: a. Establishing and upholding the teachers' code of ethics. The teachers' association in Konawe Selatan Regency must serve as a pillar for fostering qualities such as good morality, honesty, responsibility, discipline, and innovation among teachers. The association should collaborate with other institutions, such as the Education Office and the education council to shape teacher ethics and morality, ensuring teachers set a positive example both in the teaching-learning process and as members of the community; b. Providing legal assistance to teachers involved in legal disputes with students whether inside or outside the school by establishing a legal consultation and aid body; c. Providing professional protection for teachers by advocating for income levels that exceed minimum needs and ensuring welfare guarantees; d. Conducting professional guidance and development by offering

opportunities for teachers to enhance their instructional competence, thereby facilitating their professional duties and enabling them to secure promotions and recognition based on their work performance and achievements; e. Advancing national education by taking responsibility for promoting education as a foundation for social change and embracing modernization.

The Role and Function of the School Principals' Working Conference

The Principals' Working Conference serves as an educational stakeholder group that emphasizes the ability of principals to build networks for communicating educational issues within their respective schools, thereby transforming them into shared concerns for which solutions can be sought.

The Principals' Working Conference focuses on strengthening leadership capacity, specifically the art of leadership and methods of school management grounded in educational principles and the values of transparency, participation, and accountability as well as developing schools based on innovation, ethics, integrity, and science and technology.

Research findings reveal that the Principals' Working Group (Musyawarah Kerja Kepala Sekolah) in the districts where the sampled schools are located holds regular meetings, specifically on a monthly, bimonthly, and quarterly basis.

There are several proposals to strengthen the position of the Principals' Working Group (Musyawarah Kerja Kepala Sekolah) in Konawe Selatan Regency as a vital pillar in advancing school-based management, namely: a. The forum regularly holds Technical Working Meetings to discuss the issues, challenges, potential, and opportunities facing each school, as well as resources including human, financial, and physical assets; b. The forum is committed to fostering a spirit and ethic of school leadership that prioritizes the interests of education stakeholders, particularly students and parents; c. The forum can build both internal and external networks. Internally, it strengthens communication among principals, creating effective channels for identifying and resolving problems. Externally, it serves as a powerful voice for conveying educational aspirations to local government bodies, the legislature, the Provincial Education and Culture Office, teacher associations, and other stakeholders; d. The forum acts as a platform to uphold leadership characterized by exemplary conduct grounded in moral values and a firm commitment to serving the community's interests while remaining open to constructive criticism.

Synergy between Subject Teacher Forums and Teacher Working Groups

The Subject Teacher Forum is a professional forum for teachers operating at the regency, district, and school cluster levels. Its scope encompasses subject teachers from both public and private secondary schools, including those with civil servant status and those employed privately. Its operational principles reflect activities that are "by teachers, for teachers." Consequently, the forum

functions as an independent, non-structural organization grounded in a spirit of collegiality, maintaining no hierarchical relationship with other institutions.

In Konawe Selatan Regency, teacher discussion forums are well-established, serving as vital platforms for communication among educators aimed at enhancing the quality of the teaching workforce. Research findings indicate that these forums operating at both the sub-district and regency levels regularly convene to discuss and examine current issues regarding educational innovation, teaching models, curriculum, and instructional challenges. These forums act as a driving force in efforts to improve teachers' competence and capacity.

At a macro level, the objectives of organizing teacher forums are quite complex, yet the teachers in Konawe Selatan Regency are able to effectively address them. Research findings indicate several benefits derived from these forums: a. Motivating teachers to enhance their capabilities and skills in planning, implementing, and evaluating instruction; b. Improving teachers' instructional abilities and proficiency; c. Discussing challenges faced by teachers in their daily duties and seeking alternative solutions tailored to the specific nature of the instruction; d. Assisting teachers in obtaining technical and educational information regarding science and technology activities, curriculum matters, and subject-specific evaluation systems; and e. Sharing information and insights from workshops, symposiums, seminars, training sessions, classroom action research, and other professional activities discussed collaboratively.

In practice, these five functions are effectively implemented in Konawe Selatan Regency. However, the approach varies by district in terms of both quality and quantity. Regarding quality, there is a macro-level correlation between teachers' regular participation in teacher forums and improvements in teaching competence, including the use of technology in the learning process. In terms of quantity, teachers involved in these forums have sufficient time to attend joint sessions, meeting at least once every three months.

To elaborate further on the existence of these teacher forums: at the elementary school level, the equivalent entity is known as the "Teacher Working Group" (*Kelompok Kerja Guru*). Fundamentally, both bodies serve the same purpose ultimately aiming to enhance the quality of education. The distinction lies in their scope of operation: the teacher forums at the junior and senior high school levels serve as gathering points for subject-specific teachers, whereas the Teacher Working Group serves as a forum for classroom teachers.

The Existence and Function of the School Committee

School committees established across all schools and educational levels in Konawe Selatan Regency vary significantly in terms of structure, management mechanisms, and the execution of their roles and functions; consequently, the

levels of effectiveness and efficiency in educational development also vary.

Research findings reveal that the performance of school committees in the sampled schools remains inadequate regarding the execution of their duties and functions. A key obstacle is the low level of organizational commitment among committee members; consequently, oversight, partnership, and educational functions tend to remain concentrated within the school's own authority. As a result, the school committees serve a merely symbolic role, lacking clear direction and function.

In the future, the position of school committees in Konawe Selatan Regency must be further strengthened through institutional revitalization and consolidation. Institutional revitalization entails restructuring the leadership by accommodating members who are experienced, disciplined, and able to dedicate the necessary time; sharpening the committee's mandate by bolstering the leadership's bargaining power while intensively raising awareness of their duties and functions; and establishing a system of periodic meetings with the school. Meanwhile, leadership consolidation aims to ensure that the school committee regularly holds meetings and deliberations to address current school issues and contribute to improving the quality of education.

Community Participation in the School-Based Management Program

School-Based Management paradigm posits that the most direct path toward enhancing the quality and relevance of education lies in democratization, participation, and accountability. Principals, teachers, and the community are the primary and frontline actors in the delivery of education; consequently, any decisions regarding the handling of educational issues at the micro level must emerge from the interaction among these three parties. The community constitutes a key educational stakeholder with a vested interest in the success of schooling as they fund education through tuition fees and taxes, and schools should therefore be accountable to the community.

Research findings reveal that the participation of education stakeholders, particularly the involvement of students' parents in supporting educational development, is generally limited to providing motivational support and facilitating learning opportunities. This motivation is linked to the importance of education as a means of establishing one's existence, securing employment, and improving social status. Education is viewed as crucial for self-actualization, encompassing career prospects, socialization, networking, personal identity, and social standing.

The growing public awareness in Konawe Selatan Regency regarding the importance of education at all levels is reflected in the annual rise in school participation rates, particularly at the primary and junior high school levels, where participation has reached 87%. Although the Gross Enrollment Rate, Net

Enrollment Rate, and continuation rate have increased, they have not yet met the national average targets. However, these targets could be achieved within one to two years if the current upward trend is sustained. This indicates that support from parents, school committees, community leaders, and other key figures is helping to drive this increase in participation.

Rising public awareness correlated with increased school enrollment rates across all levels, is certainly not the sole metric for gauging stakeholder commitment to resolving educational issues; the community's responsibility for enhancing the quality of education is equally vital. This improvement in quality entails more than simply encouraging children to attend school regularly; it involves providing learning facilities that foster greater intelligence, skill, and moral character among students.

Ironically, many parents mistakenly believe that the annual school operational assistance provided by the government equates to a "free education" program. In reality, the essence of these funds is an educational subsidy allocated to students to alleviate the financial burden on parents covering costs such as textbooks, exam fees, remedial programs, and learning facilities. This implies that the "assumption of free education" does not eliminate all costs for students; parents still bear a responsibility to contribute.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Research findings regarding strategies to strengthen stakeholder capacity for improving educational quality in Konawe Selatan Regency indicate that enhancing the quality of education requires the integrated involvement and capacity building of various stakeholders. Seven stakeholders play strategic roles in supporting the delivery of education: Teachers' Associations (through competency strengthening and advocacy for teachers' professional interests); the Education Council (through advisory, support, and oversight functions, as well as channeling public aspirations); teachers' unions (through professional development, protection, and capacity building); the Principals' Working Group (through coordination, experience sharing, and strengthening principals' leadership); Subject Teacher Forums (through teacher collaboration on competency development, instructional materials, and improving the quality of the learning process); School Committees (through advisory, support, and oversight functions, and by acting as a liaison between the school, parents, and the community); and the community (through participation in the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of educational programs). The roles of these seven stakeholders demonstrate that educational quality is not solely the responsibility of schools and the government but is the result of multi-stakeholder collaboration in building a participatory education ecosystem.

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