International Journal of Public Policy and Administration Research
2026 Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 1-21
ISSN(e): 2312-6515
ISSN(p): 2313-0423
DOI: 10.18488/74.v13i1.4588

Slum management and urban poverty policy in Makassar city

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Article History
Received: 12 September 2025
Revised: 13 November 2025
Accepted: 15 December 2025
Published: 19 December 2025

Keywords
Resilient cities
Slums
Urban policy
Urban poverty
Collaborative governance.

ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze governance policies in handling slums and urban poverty in Makassar City. The method used in this study is a mixed method with a sequential explanatory approach through observation, questionnaires, and in-depth interviews. In qualitative research, the focus is on understanding the process, meaning, and social dynamics in slum organization management policies and the implementation of poverty alleviation. The quantitative approach focuses on testing four variables, including other informal relationships, plans to return to their hometowns, life opportunities in the community, and challenges faced by residents and the government. The dependent variable is slum organizations, with a sample of 100 respondents. The quantitative analysis approach is carried out through multiple linear regression, with data processed using the SPSS application. The results of the qualitative analysis show that slum organization management and poverty alleviation planning policies in Makassar City are still dominated by a top-down approach from the government, while community participation through social, economic, and environmental approaches is not carried out through strengthening community social relations, empowering the local economy, and improving institutional governance. Meanwhile, the results of the quantitative analysis of the four variables show that informal relationships, plans to return to hometowns, opportunities for living in the community, and challenges faced by residents and the government have a significant influence on the existence of slums.

Contribution/Originality: This research can provide input to stakeholders both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, it is useful in developing a more collaborative model of slum and urban poverty management, while practically, it can improve the quality of life of the community, encourage community empowerment and participation, and strengthen collaboration between stakeholders.

1. INTRODUCTION

Slums in urban areas are one of the most difficult problems to solve. The lack of housing for the poor has led to the emergence of illegal buildings occupying state-owned land. These buildings do not comply with applicable government regulations, are physically cramped, and are of very poor construction quality. The ineffectiveness of

efforts to address slums is also due to the fact that government intervention is only physical in nature and does not take into account other aspects, namely human and economic development, which are part of sustainable development (Ramanath, 2016).

Referring to Law No. 1 of 2011 concerning housing and residential areas, one of the objectives of housing and residential area development is to create sustainable residential areas. The sustainable management of slums needs to be a concern for various parties, especially in realizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda in 2030. Settlement development that focuses on improving the quality of the environment, economy, society, culture, and institutions plays an important role in achieving sustainable urban development in accordance with the direction of SDG 11 (Suhono, 2016).

The debate on slum improvement has been a subject of academic interest for some time. This debate is reinforced by global concerns about inclusive governance, an approach to sharing public knowledge (Parisi et al., 2016; Sesan et al., 2022). Most authors in the field of slum research recommend the involvement of slum dwellers in urban planning to achieve effective slum management (Bensus, 2021; Oteng-Ababio & Grant, 2019). In order for the needs of slums to be recognized and addressed, it is very important for policymakers to actively engage and involve slum leadership in the decision-making process and to understand the mindset of people living in slums, which is more focused on meeting the economic needs of their families (Sobirin, 2023). Therefore, in a policy-making process, community participation is crucial in determining the success or failure of the policy to be implemented (Sore & Sobirin, 2017). Although the existing literature does not provide a consensus on this issue, scientific works provide evidence that the failure of slum improvement initiatives can be attributed to the absence of an efficient and comprehensive integrated administrative system (Agyabeng, Peprah, Mensah, & Mensah, 2022; Saharan, Pfeffer, & Baud, 2018). The idea that involving slum dwellers in decision-making processes increases their capacity to navigate policies that affect their livelihoods is an important topic in scientific inquiry (Takyi, Amponsah, Yeboah, & Mantey, 2021). Inspired by this debate, the main objective of this study is to investigate the involvement of slum dwellers in policy and how this policy makes sense in the context of education and health programs in Indonesia.

Furthermore, sense-making is described as a process in which members of an organization interact with one another to understand, interpret, and "make sense" of their surroundings (Weick, 1988). This study contextualizes sense-making as the involvement of slum dwellers in policy and their ability to evaluate education and health programs in relation to their living conditions. Studies have shown that the sense-making process is based on knowledge sharing between meaning givers (policy makers) and meaning receivers (policy beneficiaries) (Angeli & Montefusco, 2020; Schildt, Mantere, & Cornelissen, 2019). It has been argued that the inability of slum dwellers to "understand" policies related to their communities can be blamed on a top-down hegemonic approach to decision-making. The failure of policy actors to integrate slum leadership into decisions intended to address their various challenges can affect their communities (Muchadenyika & Waiswa, 2018). This development contradicts the bottom-up approach that reflects the needs and aspirations of slum areas (Jones, 2017). In other words, there appears to be a lack of literature on slum dwellers' evaluation of health and education policies in relation to their livelihoods and how slums are involved in policy formulation. This study attempts to fill this gap in the literature for the following reasons: First, given that slum governance is based on SDG 11 (Denaldi & Cardoso, 2021), the results will provide an understanding of Indonesia's commitment to achieving target 1 of SDG 11. Second, the results of this study will provide practical evidence of inclusive governance in slums and serve as a learning curve for other contexts with similar phenomena.

The approach to solving slum problems in Makassar City should involve physical renewal, improving the quality of life, community empowerment, and collaboration between stakeholders. The approach to solving slum problems must be carried out in an integrated manner through: (1) A Tribina approach, whereby slum management must involve physical, social, and economic aspects. (2) A sustainable approach, whereby the proposed solutions must be sustainable and not merely temporary. (3) A normative approach, whereby existing norms and regulations must be

taken into consideration. (4) A facilitative and participatory approach, in which the community must be involved in the planning and implementation process. (5) A technical-academic approach, in which appropriate knowledge and technology must be utilized.

It is known that programs established by the Indonesian government to tackle slum areas, including the KIP program, have been successful in improving the infrastructure of a region. In addition, the P2KP program is said to have helped Indonesia enter a new era in poverty alleviation by reducing the economic crisis rate from 23.4% to 17.75%. Then, the implementation of the PNPM Mandiri program is said to have played a role in helping and bringing about changes in the economic life of the community. Furthermore, the implementation of the KOTAKU program is known to have facilitated community access and activities.

The handling of urban slum areas/environments must be a shared awareness. Urban slum areas can take the form of slums: residential areas or environments with physical conditions below acceptable standards, or settlements: residential areas inhabited by a group of people without legal certainty, which are generally also below acceptable housing standards. If not handled properly, this can lead to various harmful excesses.

Comprehensive handling of this issue requires awareness and commitment from various groups based on their respective authorities and functions. Multi-sectoral synergy between the central government, regional governments, community representatives, the general public, and parties with competence and concern, acting within established corridors, will be able to promote better results.

Despite various efforts, problems related to slums remain unresolved. It is not uncommon for programs to be considered partial because they focus only on physical development and seem to merely "beautify" the area, without considering various possibilities that may occur in the future, including the sustainability of the arrangement. This is reinforced by the lack of control programs and follow-up after the improvement of settlement quality, which creates the opportunity for the return of slums due to the inability of residents to maintain and develop their environment.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research employed a sequential explanatory approach, which combines quantitative and qualitative research methods applied sequentially. Qualitative research is used to investigate, discover, describe, and explain the qualities or characteristics of social influences that cannot be fully explained or described through a quantitative approach (Sugiyono, 2019). The use of qualitative research in this study emphasizes interpretation and theory as a basis for formulating the research focus based on facts developed in the field. Consequently, the researcher acts as the primary instrument for data collection in the field. Furthermore, the qualitative approach in this research is utilized to construct a hypothesis that will be tested using a quantitative approach.

The quantitative research method in this study utilizes numerical data and emphasizes objective measurement of results for statistical analysis. The focus of the quantitative approach is to collect data and make generalizations to explain certain phenomena experienced by the population (Sudjana & Rivai, 2019). This approach is employed to examine the relationships between the variables under study, including the subjects, the data collected, the data sources, and the data collection tools, all in accordance with the previously planned methodology. The primary objective is to test the hypotheses formulated in qualitative research. The measurement scale used is an ordinal scale, and the main instrument is a questionnaire. Therefore, the quantitative approach in this research serves descriptive, associative, and correlational purposes.

The combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches in this research was conducted with the following considerations: (1) Triangulation logic, in this case, the results of qualitative research are rechecked in quantitative research and vice versa, with the aim of strengthening the validity of the findings; (2) Quantitative and qualitative research are combined to provide an overview; (3) Quantitative research is used for the structural characteristics of social life, while qualitative research prioritizes the quality of the subject as the starting point for research; (4) The quantitative approach is used to analyze the relationship between changes, while the qualitative approach is used to

help harmonize the factors underlying the established relationship; (5) The quantitative approach is used to reveal the structural characteristics of large-scale social life, while the qualitative approach is more towards small-scale behavior, so that when researchers try to reveal both levels, quantitative and qualitative guidelines are used simultaneously; and (6) To obtain data from different realities, it is necessary to combine the two approaches (quantitative and qualitative). Furthermore, this research employed a concurrent triangulation strategy, which is the simultaneous collection of quantitative and qualitative data in one stage of research. The combination of qualitative and quantitative research in this study can be seen in Figure 1.

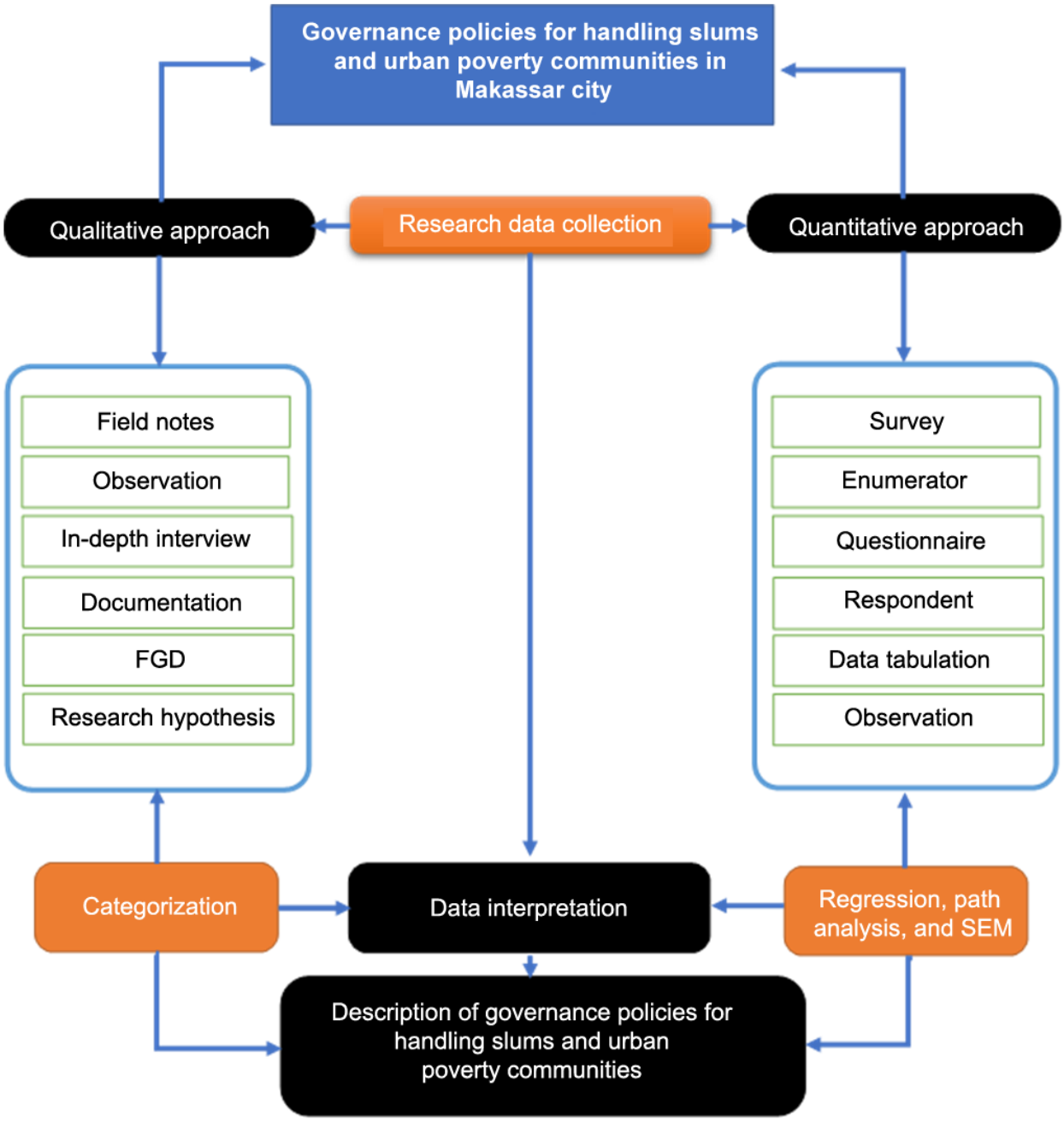

Figure 1. Methodology flowchart.

Urbanization, modernization, and economic growth in Makassar City are determining factors in the development of slums. Informal urban settlements, which are usually defined by certain criteria such as self-built houses, substandard services, and low incomes, are often considered problematic because they are associated with poverty, disorder, and marginalization (Lombard, 2014).

In qualitative research, the researcher himself is the main instrument who goes into the field to collect data or information through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation (Musterd, Van Gent, Das, & Latten, 2014; Sadorsky, 2014). Furthermore, according to these two experts, the main instrument in quantitative research is a questionnaire, which is conducted by collecting data from respondents through a survey. In the implementation of this research, both instruments were triangulated. Thus, the data collection methods in this research were divided into four main categories, namely observation, in-depth interviews, structured interviews, questionnaires, and documentation.

The number of informants in this research was set at 18 people, consisting of 10 respondents and 8 non-respondents. The sample in this research was the head of the family and was determined based on certain characteristics. The characteristics used by the researcher to determine the sample were residents who lived in slums with their families, had lived there for at least five years, and understood the mechanism of slum management based on community economic empowerment. The researcher then used these characteristics to determine the respondents. The sampling method was according to Cochran (1977) using the following formula.

$$n = \frac{N}{Ndx^2 + 1}$$

Where n refers to the sample size, N refers to the population size, and d refers to the margin of error (0.5) or 5% at the 95% confidence level (Cochran, 1977).

Furthermore, data analysis was carried out by combining qualitative and quantitative analyses sequentially. This means that the steps used for qualitative research were also used for quantitative research. In terms of interpretation or analysis, the data were then reduced, i.e., qualitative and quantitative data were categorized for statistical calculation. The data is then interpreted using triangulation based on resources obtained in the field. Next, data reduction is carried out by grouping and categorizing data according to the research objectives.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The slum areas in Makassar City are not only a matter of physical and infrastructure issues but also a reflection of interrelated social, economic, and policy dynamics. In fact, residents living in narrow and densely populated alleys have informal networks that bind the community together but also perpetuate the complexity of governance issues (Suhono, 2016). Makassar City, as the largest metropolitan city in eastern Indonesia, faces major challenges in managing slum areas inhabited by low-income communities. Based on data from the Housing and Settlement Agency, the area of slums in Makassar City reached 299 hectares at the end of 2024, with a target of zero slums by 2025 (Mappe, Hafid, & Amandaria, 2024). In relation to the above data, the Makassar City government has issued several regulations that form the basis for slum housing management, including Local Regulation No. 3 of 2024 concerning the Prevention and Improvement of Slum Quality, Mayor Regulation No. 43 of 2024 concerning the Plan and Improvement of Slum Housing and Slum Areas, and the *KOTAKU* (City Without Slums) program, which focuses on improving infrastructure quality and community empowerment. Therefore, it is necessary to address the root causes of slum formation in Makassar City through coordinated inter-sectoral efforts, integrating programs and activities based on sustainable, area-based approaches to create a decent, healthy, safe, and orderly living environment. In 2015-2018, the city of Makassar had 740.10 hectares of slum areas, divided into three categories: severe slums, moderate slums, and mild slums. There were 36 sub-districts in the severe slum category, 50 sub-districts in the moderate slum category, and 17 sub-districts in the mild slum category. By 2018, the total reduction in slum area was 196.90 hectares from 740.20 hectares (Makassar City Housing and Settlements Agency, 2018). Referring to Law No. 1 of 2011 concerning housing and residential areas, one of the objectives of housing and residential area development is to create sustainable residential areas. However, in reality, the implementation of this objective still faces various structural and spatial challenges, as reflected in the dominance of residential areas that cover almost the entire city

and give rise to new problems related to limited space, unequal access to basic infrastructure, and the emergence of new slum areas.

In general, the city of Makassar covers an area of 175.77 km², consisting of 15 subdistricts and 153 urban villages. Among these subdistricts, there are nine (9) subdistricts that border the coast, namely Mariso, Mamajang, Rappocini, Makassar, Ujung Pandang, Wajo, Bontoala, Ujung Tanah, Sangkarrang Islands, Tallo, Panakkukang, Manggala, Biringkanaya, and Tamalanrea. The city of Makassar is located on the southwestern coast of Sulawesi Island. Biringkanaya District is the largest district with an area of 48.22 km², while the smallest is Sangkarrang Islands District with an area of 1.54 km² in the city of Makassar. For more details, see Table 1.

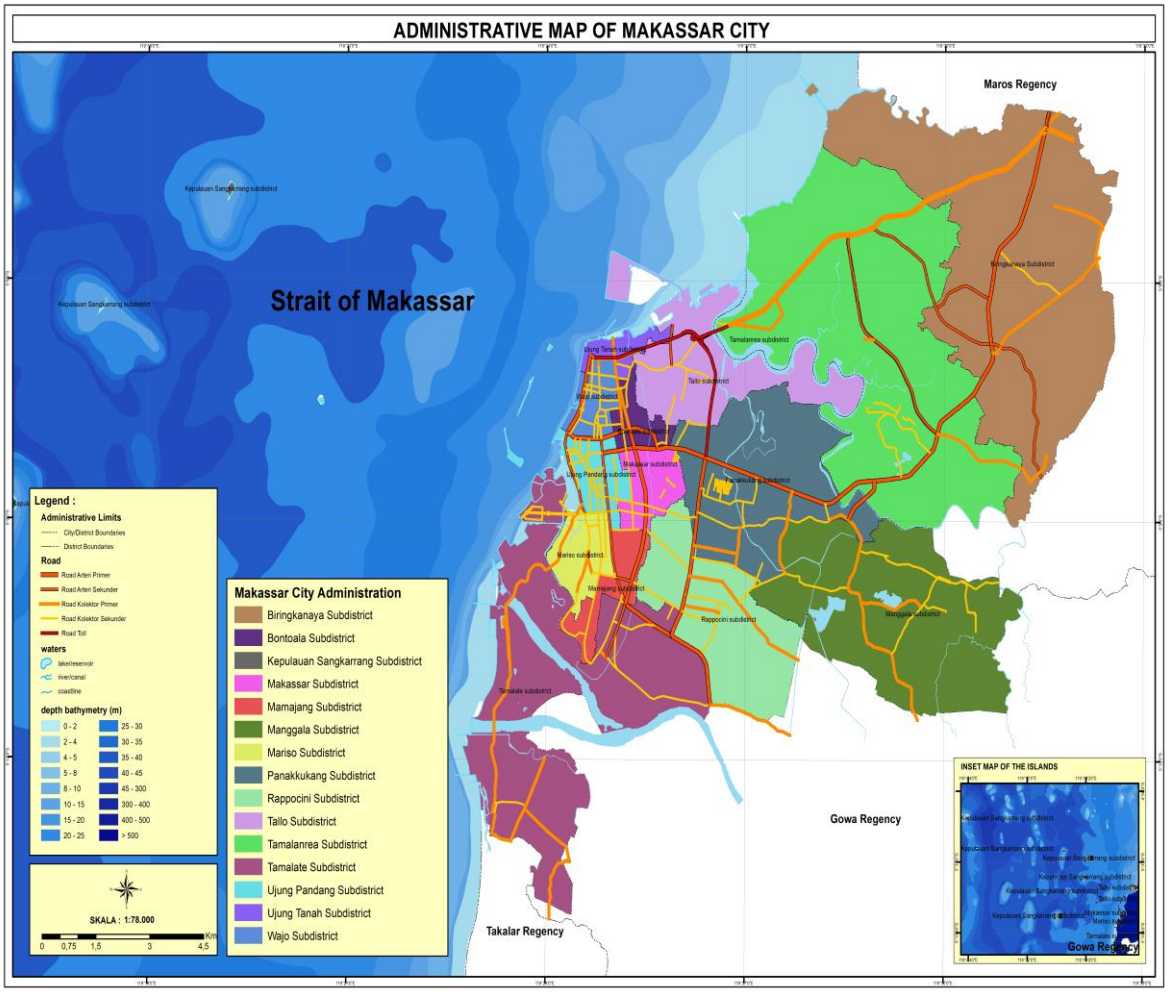

Figure 2. Administrative Map of Makassar City.

Source: Makassar City Statistics Agency, 2025.

Figure 2 shows that Makassar City covers an area of 175.77 km², consisting of 15 subdistricts and 153 urban villages. Among these subdistricts, there are nine (9) subdistricts that border the coast, namely Mariso, Mamajang, Rappocini, Makassar, Ujung Pandang, Wajo, Bontoala, Ujung Tanah, Sangkarrang Islands, Tallo, Panakkukang, Manggala, Biringkanaya, and Tamalanrea.

The city of Makassar is located on the southwestern coast of Sulawesi Island. Biringkanaya District is the largest district with an area of 48.22 km², while the smallest is Sangkarrang Islands District with an area of 1.54 km² in the city of Makassar. For more details, it can be seen in Table 1 as follows:

Table 1. Area of Makassar City Subdistricts.

District	Capital of District	Total Area (km²/sq. km)
(1)	(2)	(3)
Mariso	Kampung Buyang	1.82
Mamajang	Maricaya Selatan	2.25
Tamalate	Maccini Sombala	20.21
Rappocini	Gunung Sari	9.23
Makassar	Maradekaya	2.52
Ujung Pandang	Baru	2.63
Wajo	Melayu Baru	1.99
Bontoala	Wajo Baru	2.10
Ujung Tanah	Pattingaloang Baru	4.40
Kepulauan Sangkarrang	Kodingareng	1.54
Tallo	Ujung Pandang Baru	5.83
Panakkukang	Paropo	17.05
Manggala	Manggala	24.14
Biring Kanaya	Bulurokeng	48.22
Tamalanrea	Tamalanrea	31.84
	Makassar	**175.77**

Source: Makassar City Statistics Agency, 2025.

As a metropolitan city and economic growth center in Eastern Indonesia, Makassar continues to develop into a hub for trade, services, and tourism. Amidst this progress, the Makassar City Government is committed to resolving the issue of slum areas through various approaches that have been implemented. Therefore, the sustainable management of slum areas needs to be a concern for various parties, especially in realizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda in 2030. Housing development that focuses on improving the environment, economy, society, culture, and institutions plays an important role in achieving sustainable urban development in line with SDG 11 (Muchadenyika & Waiswa, 2018).

Table 2. Results of Multiple Regression Analysis Using SPSS.

Coefficients[a]					
Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.057	5.411		0.565	0.580
Informal relationships	0.207	0.220	0.256	1.941	0.002
Plans to return to hometown	0.582	0.389	0.406	1.697	0.004
Opportunities for life in the community	0.156	0.228	0.170	1.683	0.004
Challenges faced by residents and the government	0.072	0.127	0.138	1.672	0.002

Note: a. Dependent Variable: Slums

3.1. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis on Each Variable

Based on the values in the Unstandardized Coefficients-B column above, the regression equation is formulated using the following mathematical formula.

$Y = \alpha + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2\,\beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4$

$Y=3.057+0.207X1+0.582X2+0.156X3+0.072X4$

a. Coefficient of Determination

The coefficient of determination test is used to determine the extent to which the independent variable explains the dependent variable.

Table 3. Test results for the coefficient of determination (R^2).

Model summary[b]										
					Change statistics					
Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate	R square change	F change	df1	df2	Sig. F change	Durbin-Watson
1	0.674[a]	0.455	0.424	1.39454	0.008	0.952	4	95	0.437	2.163

Note: a. Predictors: (Constant), Challenges Faced by Residents and Government, Plans to Return to Hometown, Opportunities for Life in Slum Communities, Informal Relationships
b. Dependent variable: Slums

Table 3 shows that the results of the coefficient of determination test indicate an R^2 (adjusted R^2) value of 0.424 for the regression model. This suggests that 40% of slum conditions are influenced by informal relationships (X1), plans to return to the region (X2), opportunities for life in the community (X3), and challenges faced by residents and the government (X4).

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b. Simultaneous test

Simultaneous testing is used to determine the combined effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable. The results of the simultaneous test are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. F-test results – simultaneous test.

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	7.409	4	1.852	0.952	0.000[b]
	Residual	184.751	95	1.945		
	Total	192.160	99			

Note: a. Dependent variable: Slums
b. Predictors: (Constant), challenges faced by residents and government, plans to return to hometown, opportunities for life in slum communities, informal relationships

Table 4 shows the F count result of 0.952 from the multiple regression test, which is smaller than the significance level of 0.05, with a p-value of 0.000. This indicates that the variables Informal Relationships (X1), Plans to Return to Hometown (X2), Opportunities for Life in the Community (X3), and Challenges Faced by Residents and the Government (X4) collectively influence Slums (Y).

Based on Table 4, the F count result of 0.952 from the multiple regression test is smaller than the significance level of 0.05, which is 0.000. This indicates that the variables Informal Relationships (X1), Plans to Return to Hometown (X2), Opportunities for Life in the Community (X3), and Challenges Faced by Residents and the Government (X4) collectively influence Slums (Y).

The results of the interpretation of the proposed research hypothesis can be observed as follows.

1. Informal Relationships Leading to Slum Formation

The rapid development of Makassar as a metropolitan city cannot be separated from the issue of slums, which remain a problem due to the complexity of their construction. One of the contributing factors often overlooked in handling slums is the informal relationships between communities. These informal relationships are manifested through social networks based on kinship, regional origin, or friendships formed within these slum areas. Many newcomers (urban) who come to Makassar in search of work tend to choose to live near relatives or friends in similar circumstances.

Initially, these relationships are positive because they provide social support, temporary shelter, and assistance in adapting to the new environment. However, when the number of newcomers increases without being balanced by

the provision of adequate housing, these informal networks will indirectly contribute to the spread of slum areas in locations where relatives already reside.

The results of the F-test and the multiple coefficient test conducted in this study indicate that there is a linear relationship (X1) between informal relationships and the occurrence of slums, as shown in Table 4: F-Test Results – Simultaneous Test above.

From the analysis results, it can be seen that the effect of informal relationships (X1) on slums, based on the table, shows a t-value of 1.941 with a Sig value of 0.002, which is smaller than 0.05. This indicates that, with a 95% confidence level, it can be interpreted that the informal relationships variable (X1) has a significant effect on slums (Y).

The quality of informal relationships (X1) has a positive coefficient of 0.207, meaning that every 1-unit increase in informal relationships (X1) is predicted to increase slum conditions by 0.207. The F test shows a value of 111.145 and a significance of 0.000, indicating that this model is statistically significant overall. The R^2 value of 0.455 explains that the informal relationship variable accounts for 45.5 percent of the variation in slum conditions. This finding aligns with the results of in-depth interviews with informants in several slum areas, where informants generally stated that they came to live in these areas because they were invited by family members who were already residing there, which influenced their decision to settle there.

Empirically, informal relationships in urban contexts often take the form of political patronage, personal connections with officials, or informal agreements between residents and landowners or private parties. These relationships are often considered a form of social capital that benefits poor communities, as they provide easier access to land, employment, and basic services without having to go through complicated bureaucratic procedures. However, this study finds another side to these informal relationships, namely that they actually reinforce the status quo of poverty and prolong the existence of slums. Residents who rely on informal relationships feel more secure even though they have no legal certainty about their place of residence, thereby reducing their incentive to fight for legal rights or improve the quality of their settlements.

From a theoretical perspective, this phenomenon can be understood through the concept of negative social capital, which is a condition where social networks that should be a source of strength actually function as obstacles to structural change. Strong patron-client relationships make residents dependent on certain figures, whether they are village officials, landowners, or local political figures. This dependence makes residents reluctant to demand formal rights for fear of losing the protection of the informal networks they have built. Thus, informal relationships are not merely a social phenomenon but also have implications for urban governance that fails to promote legality, justice, and sustainable development (Musterd et al., 2014).

Taking into account the government's frequent involvement in these informal relationships makes the situation even more complex. Instead of enforcing spatial planning and housing regulations, the government often allows slums to exist due to political, economic, and social considerations. This results in a cycle of slums that is difficult to break. Residents continue to live peacefully because they feel protected, while the government loses the impetus to take decisive action. This situation ultimately prolongs the slum problem, making it not just a spatial problem but also a deep-rooted structural problem. The following is a histogram of the relationship between the variables in question:

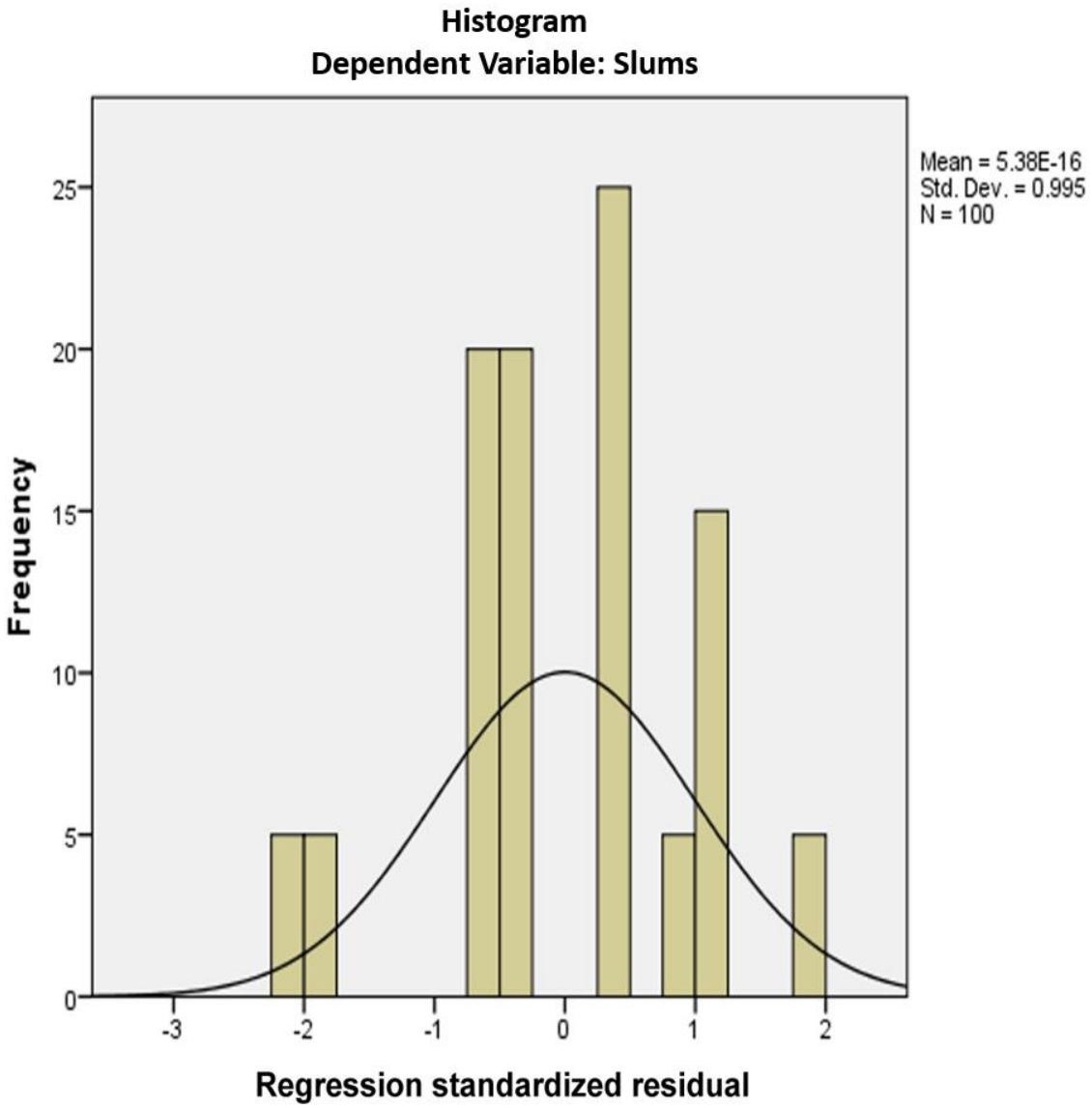

Figure 3. Histogram of informal relationships leading to slum formation.

Source: Primary data after processing, 2025.

Figure 3 illustrates the frequency distribution of the standardized regression residuals with the dependent variable of Slums. This figure shows that the residual data distribution is close to a bell curve, indicating that the data is normally distributed.

The histogram above illustrates the frequency distribution of the Standardized Regression Residuals with the dependent variable of Slums. This figure shows that the residual data distribution is close to a bell curve, indicating that the data is normally distributed. This is supported by the statistics listed on the graph, where the mean of the residuals is very close to zero, namely 5.38E-16. The standard deviation of the residuals is 0.995, and the total number of samples (N) used in this research is 100. The highest frequency peak is around zero on the horizontal axis, indicating that most of the residuals, or the differences between the predicted and actual values, are clustered around the mean value. The shape of the normal curve overlapping with the histogram further strengthens the assumption that the normality of residuals has been fulfilled in this regression model.

The results of the study on this variable also confirm that informal relationships play a dual role: on the one hand, they are a survival strategy for the urban poor, but on the other hand, they are a major obstacle to environmental improvement and urban transformation. Slum management cannot be achieved solely through technical approaches,

such as the construction of apartment buildings or infrastructure improvements, but also through interventions in the social structure.

The government needs to introduce strict but inclusive regulations that can replace residents' dependence on informal relationships with formal guarantees of land and housing rights. In this way, informal relationships, which were originally the mainstay of slum sustainability, can be replaced with a more equitable and sustainable management system. Interpretation of variable (x1): Strong informal relationships within the community actually reinforce the pattern of slum sustainability because access to public services and land rights are more determined through non-formal channels.

2. Plans to Return to Their Hometowns

Behind the portrait of slums, which are often characterized by poverty and limitations, there are stories that are far more complex. This research also reveals an interesting phenomenon from in-depth interviews with several informants, where the majority of residents who come from outside the area say they are reluctant to return to their hometowns. This reluctance is not an impulsive decision but rather a strongly internalized choice based on careful consideration and life experiences that have shaped them. Their reason for coming to the big city is very simple: to seek a better life. However, over time, the city has become more than just a place to earn a living; it has become their home.

The analysis of the questionnaire results found that the Plan to Return to Hometown (X2) had a positive coefficient of 0.582. This means that a 1-fold increase in the Plan Not to Return to the Region (X2) is predicted to result in a 0.582-fold increase in the number of slum dwellers, as can be seen in Table 2.

The results of the regression analysis above show that the variable of plans to return to the area of origin has a significant effect on slum conditions in Makassar City, with a coefficient value of 0.582 and a significance level of 0.004. This value confirms that the stronger the desire or tendency of residents not to return to their area of origin, the greater the possibility that slum conditions will persist in the long term. The F test with a value of 111.217 and a significance level of 0.000 shows that this model is valid, while the R^2 value of 0.455 shows that this variable is able to explain 45.5 percent of the variation in slum conditions. This figure is quite large for a single variable and shows the importance of the psychological and social dimensions of residents in understanding the sustainability of slums.

The phenomenon of returning to one's area of origin is one of the paradoxes of rural-urban migration in Indonesia. Many slum dwellers initially came to the city with temporary intentions, simply to earn additional income, save money, or accumulate capital to return to their hometowns. This narrative has become part of the social imagination passed down from generation to generation. Migration is seen as a household strategy: some family members leave for the city to work, while others remain in the village. However, in practice, most migrants end up staying in the city longer than planned, even for generations, due to various economic, social, and cultural factors (Marta, Fauzi, Juanda, & Rustiadi, 2020).

Plans to return to their hometowns often remain unrealized dreams. Poor city dwellers remain trapped in slums due to limited economic capital, which makes it difficult for them to start a new life in the village. Agricultural land is becoming increasingly scarce, the cost of living in villages is no longer cheap, and job opportunities in villages are becoming more limited. Thus, even though they rhetorically say that they will return one day, structurally, they remain tied to the city. This shows the illusion of temporary migration, where migrants believe that their presence in the city is only temporary, when in fact they have become a permanent part of the city.

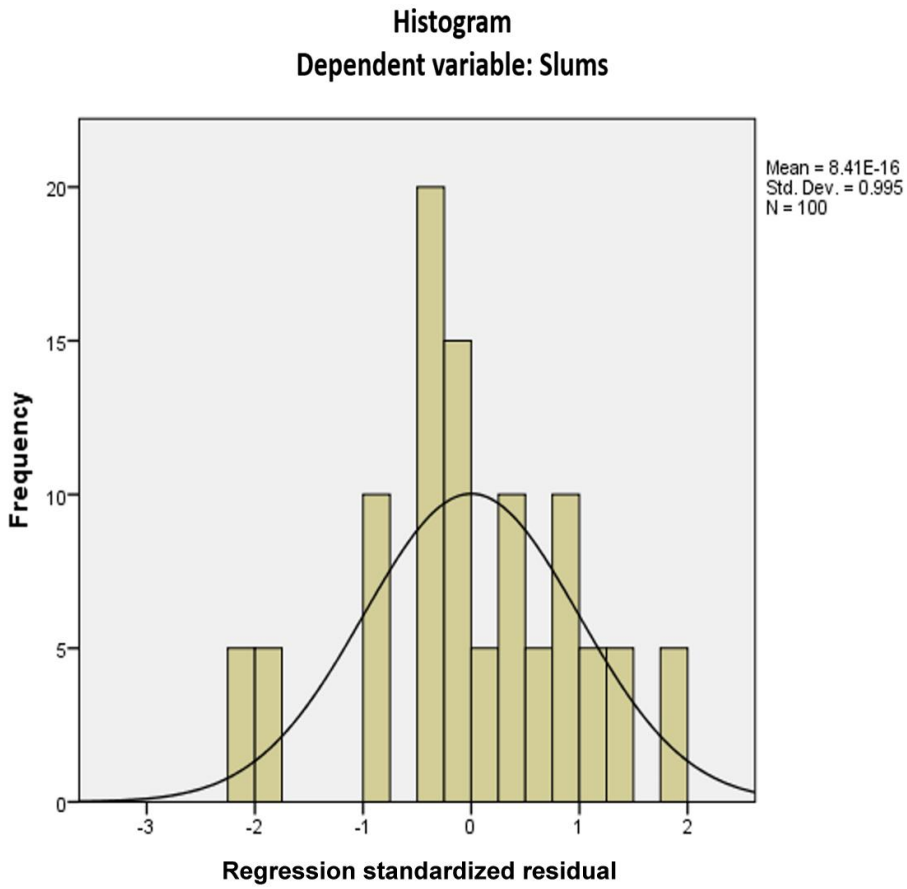

Figure 4. Histogram of return to hometowns variables against slums.

Source: Primary data after processing, 2025.

Figure 4 illustrates the frequency distribution of the regression standardized residuals, with the dependent variable analyzed being "Slums." This graph shows that the distribution of residual data tends to follow a normal curve pattern, which is depicted in the form of a bell curve above the histogram bars. The histogram illustrates the frequency distribution of the regression standardized residuals, with the dependent variable analyzed being "Slums." This graph shows that the distribution of residual data tends to follow a normal curve pattern, which is depicted in the form of a bell curve above the histogram bars. In the statistics section, it is shown that the mean value of the residuals is 8.41E-16, the standard deviation is 0.995, and the total number of samples (N) is 100. The highest frequency peak on this histogram is located around zero on the horizontal axis, indicating that most of the regression model prediction errors (residuals) are clustered near the mean value, which is zero. This condition explains that the residual data from the regression model is normally distributed. More deeply, the meaning of this condition is that the differences between the observed values of the dependent variable, Slums (actual values), and the values predicted by the regression model (theoretical values) are randomly and evenly distributed around the mean of zero. The highest frequency peak is near zero on the horizontal axis, indicating that the majority of the model's prediction errors are small. In other words, the model has good accuracy in predicting the "Slums" variable.

The implications of this illusion of temporary migration are enormous for the sustainability of slum areas. First, residents who feel that they are only temporarily living in the city tend to be reluctant to invest in improving their homes or environment. They leave conditions as they are because they feel there is no need to improve a place of residence that is only considered a temporary stopover. Houses are left to fall into disrepair, sanitation is not improved, and shared facilities are poorly maintained. As a result, slum areas persist and deteriorate. Second, plans to return also affect residents' involvement in government programs. Many slum dwellers are less serious about

participating in environmental improvement programs because they feel that these are irrelevant to their future. As a result, various empowerment or restructuring programs often fail to achieve their objectives (Sore & Sobirin, 2017).

Sociologically, this phenomenon can be explained through the theory of relative deprivation. Rural migrants who come to the city often compare their conditions with those of other city residents. They feel left behind but still maintain the hope that one day they can return to their villages with something to show for themselves. This hope is the source of strength to survive in difficult conditions. However, when that hope is never realized, the plan to return becomes mere rhetoric that actually hinders real change.

From an economic perspective, the plan to return to their hometown reflects the limited social mobility of the urban poor. They cannot truly return because there is no economic base waiting for them in the village, but they also cannot escape the slums due to limited access to formal housing. This situation creates a stuck-in-the-middle condition, trapped between two worlds: not fully belonging to the village but also not accepted in the formal urban structure. Thus, the plan to return becomes a psychological compromise for this structural entrapment (Sobirin, 2023; Takyi et al., 2021).

This situation is exacerbated by cultural factors. Many slum communities in Makassar are formed by residents who come from the same region, whether Bugis, Makassar, Toraja, or other ethnic groups. This shared origin reinforces the narrative of "one day we will return home together." This narrative is passed down even to the second generation, even though their children were born and raised in the city. Thus, the plan to return is not merely an individual choice but also part of the collective identity that binds the community.

In the context of policy, the plan to return to their region of origin poses a serious challenge for the government. Slum improvement programs often fail because they are unable to change residents' perspectives about their permanence in the city. For example, apartment programs built to relocate slum dwellers are often rejected because residents feel they do not need to settle permanently in the city. Even if they are willing to move, many end up returning to the slums because they feel alienated in a new place that does not match their imagination of returning home. This shows that without a change in perspective, technical programs will be difficult to succeed.

Therefore, the government needs to intervene in the psychosocial dimension of slum dwellers. The first step is to acknowledge that most residents are actually permanent city dwellers, even though they still rhetorically express plans to return. This acknowledgment can be realized by providing legal certainty regarding their land or homes. With clear ownership, residents will be encouraged to invest in improving their environment. In addition, the government also needs to provide better access to education, healthcare, and employment so that residents feel they have a future in the city.

Another intervention is through economic empowerment. If the main reason residents want to return is the limited opportunities in the city, then creating job and business opportunities for them is an important step. Labor-intensive programs, skills training, or access to microfinance can help them break out of their dependence on unstable informal work. Thus, they can build a more decent life without having to rely on the fantasy of returning home.

In conclusion, the variable of plans to return to one's hometown plays an important role in perpetuating slum conditions in Makassar City. It reflects the paradox of rural-urban migration, where residents come with temporary intentions but end up settling permanently without really realizing it. This illusion of temporary migration hinders environmental improvement because it reduces residents' commitment to invest and participate. In the long term, the plan not to return actually reinforces the slum status quo. Therefore, slum management policies must change residents' perspectives from temporary to permanent by providing legal certainty, economic opportunities, and social integration. Without this change in perspective, various technical programs will only be patchwork solutions that do not address the root causes of the problem in slum areas.

3. Life Opportunities in Slum Communities

Research findings related to survival opportunities in slum communities in Makassar City reveal a paradox. Despite facing structural limitations, these communities possess strong resilience and adaptation strategies. Life in

slum settlements in Makassar City is often viewed through the lens of poverty and limited access. However, field findings reveal opportunities and survival strategies developed by the communities themselves. These opportunities do not always come from formal sources but rather from independent initiatives and social solidarity constructed within the community. In general, residents rely on the informal economy as their main source of income. They do not wait for formal employment but create it themselves. From street vendors and scrap collectors to home service providers, all play a role in supporting the family economy. The flexibility of these jobs allows them to adapt to economic fluctuations and manage their time better, especially for women who also play dual roles.

Amidst the limitations faced by residents of slum communities, social capital becomes their most valuable asset. Kinship networks, neighbors, and bonds between fellow migrants form a strong bond of solidarity. They help each other financially, with childcare, and even in finding job opportunities. This system functions as a social safety net that is not available from formal institutions. It is this solidarity that prevents them from falling into extreme poverty. Despite facing financial difficulties, they remain committed to their children's education. Parents realize that education is the only way to break the cycle of poverty. They are willing to make sacrifices so that their children can go to school, even if it means working harder. Life in the slums of Makassar is not only about surviving today but also about investing in hope for future generations.

The results of the regression analysis on the variable of survival rate in the community show a regression coefficient value of 0.156 with a significance level of 0.004. This value indicates that the survival rate in slum communities has a significant effect on the sustainability of slum conditions in Makassar City. The F-test, with a value of 0.232 and a significance level of 0.000, further confirms the validity of the model, while the R^2 value of 0.455 demonstrates that life chances in the community contribute to explaining almost half of the slum conditions. Although the coefficient value is not as large as the return plan variable, this finding remains important because it highlights that slums are not only a physical phenomenon but also a social phenomenon supported by the strength of the community within them.

The chances of survival in slum communities can be understood as the existence of internal socio-economic mechanisms that enable residents to survive even though they are formally in a vulnerable position. In many urban studies, slum communities are described as spaces full of limitations, but at the same time, they possess extraordinary solidarity and social support. Residents in slum communities often help each other, whether in the form of small loans, labor exchanges, or moral support. These informal networks serve as alternative social security systems when access to formal institutions is severely limited (Weick, 1988). In other words, slums provide opportunities for survival that are not always available to poor residents who live in scattered areas.

From an economic perspective, slum communities also provide access to the informal labor market. Many residents work in informal sectors such as small traders, day laborers, motorcycle taxi drivers, or domestic workers. The existence of slum communities allows them to have direct access to customer or employer networks. This shows that slums are not just problematic spaces, but also productive spaces that support the city's economy from the bottom up. The opportunities for survival in these communities are the reason why many poor urban residents are reluctant to leave slum areas, because that is where they have a strong social and economic base (Saharan et al., 2018).

However, the findings of this research also reveal the dark side of these opportunities for survival. Although slum communities provide protection and support, they also function as traps that prolong the existence of a slum area. Social solidarity does help residents survive, but at the same time, makes them comfortable with conditions that are actually vulnerable and unfit. In sociological theory, this phenomenon can be explained through the concept of the dual function of communities, where communities play a dual role as both a support and an obstacle. They are a support because they provide opportunities for survival, and an obstacle because they weaken the motivation to escape from slum conditions.

The histogram display, the result of an analysis of the dependent variable Slum, is as follows.

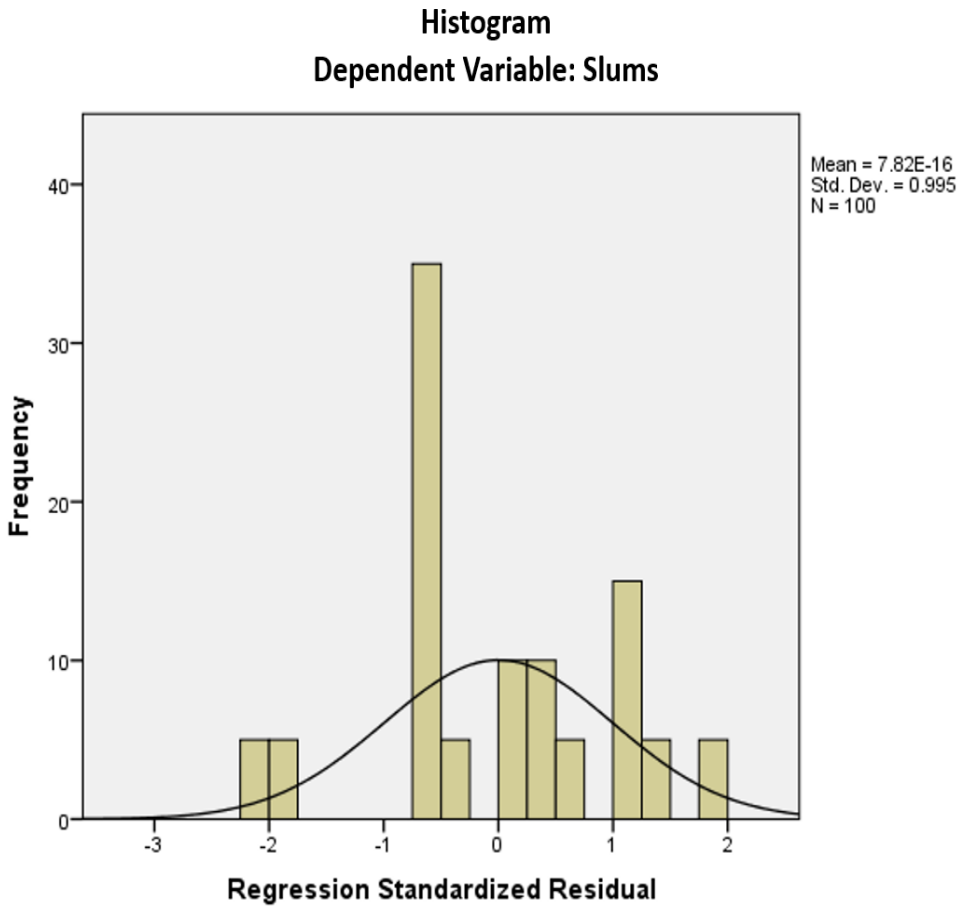

Figure 5. Histogram of life opportunities in slum communities.

Source: Primary data after processing, 2025.

Figure 5 shows the frequency distribution of the regression standardized residuals from the model used. In detail, the histogram shows that the distribution of residual data tends to follow a normal curve pattern, although there are some anomalies. The highest frequency peak (around 35) is between -1 and 0, indicating that most of the regression model prediction errors (residuals) are clustered in that range.

The graph shows the frequency distribution of the regression standardized residuals from the model used. In detail, the histogram shows that the distribution of residual data tends to follow a normal curve pattern, although there are some anomalies. The highest frequency peak (around 35) is between -1 and 0, indicating that most of the regression model prediction errors (residuals) are clustered in that range.

In addition, there is supplementary statistical information supporting the analysis, namely the mean residual value of 7.82E-16, a standard deviation of 0.995, and a sample size (N) of 100. The mean residual, which is very close to zero, indicates that the assumption of residual normality is satisfied, suggesting that the regression model is valid. However, the frequency distribution is not completely symmetrical and exhibits a high peak on the left side, indicating that the data may be slightly skewed toward the negative side. Nonetheless, it generally still satisfies the normality assumption for regression analysis purposes. The standardized regression residuals are indirectly related to the survival rate of slum communities. Regarding the chances of survival within the community, the histogram shows that the regression model used to predict slum conditions is quite accurate, as the residuals are normally distributed with a mean close to zero. This suggests that the Community Survival Chance variable can be considered a reliable predictor for assessing the level of slum conditions.

In the context of Makassar, the chances of survival in slum communities are also closely related to cultural factors. Many slum communities are formed based on similarities in regional origins, ethnic ties, or kinship solidarity. These cultural ties strengthen the sense of togetherness so that residents feel safer living in these areas even though

they are physically unsuitable. With moral support, a common language, and shared traditions, residents find it easier to adapt than if they had to move to more heterogeneous formal housing areas (Surya, Salim, & Idris, 2021). This shows that slums have a strong cultural basis, which is difficult to intervene in with a technical approach alone. Opportunities for life in the community are also often exploited by external actors, including the government and politicians. During campaigns, slum communities become an easily mobilized voter base due to their internal solidarity. This often leads to politicization, where promises of environmental improvements or economic assistance are capitalized on for electoral gain. As a result, slum areas are often preserved because of their political value. This situation shows that opportunities for survival in communities do not only come from within but are also reinforced from outside by power structures.

From a policy perspective, the existence of livelihood opportunities in communities poses a major dilemma. On the one hand, community strength is a valuable asset that can serve as social capital in settlement planning. On the other hand, this strength can hinder change if not properly directed. For example, when the government attempts to relocate slum dwellers to apartment buildings, many communities resist because they fear losing their social networks (Jones, 2017). Without these networks, they feel they have lost their chance of survival. As a result, relocation programs often fail or are only partially successful. Therefore, this analysis emphasizes that opportunities for survival in slum communities need to be viewed critically. They are a force that must be mobilized, not eliminated. Settlement management programs should not sever community ties but rather integrate them into the new environment. For example, the construction of community-based apartment buildings with designs that allow residents to continue to interact intensively can be a solution. In addition, strengthening community cooperatives, savings and loan groups, or joint ventures can transform social solidarity, which was originally only for survival, into an engine of economic change.

In the broader framework of urban development, the opportunities for survival in communities emphasize that solutions to slums must combine physical, social, and economic approaches. Interventions focused solely on infrastructure without considering social ties will only result in partial and unsustainable policies. Conversely, relying solely on community strength without adequate infrastructure support will only reproduce slums in new forms. Thus, the findings of this research convey an important message that slums are both social and physical spaces, whose sustainability cannot be separated from the opportunities offered by the communities within them.

In conclusion, life opportunities in slum communities are a significant factor in prolonging the existence of slums in Makassar City. The power of social solidarity, informal economic support, and cultural ties makes slums not just spaces of limitation but also spaces of opportunity. However, these opportunities also become traps that hinder transformation. The biggest challenge for public policy is how to transform the opportunities for survival in slum communities into opportunities to escape from the slums while maintaining the existing social strength.

4. Challenges Faced by Residents and the Government in Slum Settlements

Descriptively, the background of the challenges faced by residents and the government regarding slums in Makassar City is a very complex and integrated issue, rooted in the rapid pace of urbanization and population growth that is not balanced with the availability of adequate infrastructure and housing. Poverty is one of the main triggers, as most residents in slums have low incomes, making it difficult for them to access decent housing and basic facilities such as clean water, sanitation, and drainage. This situation forces them to build their homes irregularly, often on land that does not have official licenses.

In terms of the environment and infrastructure, slum areas in Makassar face serious problems. Poor road quality, drainage systems that are unable to accommodate water, substandard waste management systems, and garbage accumulation are common problems. In addition, the lack of basic facilities such as proper drinking water and fire protection systems also poses major challenges. Challenges also arise from social and institutional aspects. Although communities in slums often have strong social ties, the government faces obstacles in implementing policies. There is a mismatch between policies at the central level and their realization in the field, compounded by a lack of

coordination between relevant agencies. Established community behavior patterns can also be an obstacle to efforts to improve the situation, in addition to spatial planning issues. Rapid population growth without proper spatial planning has led to the emergence of dense and irregular settlements. Limited land in the city center has also encouraged the construction of substandard housing on the outskirts of the city (Mardiansjah & Rahayu, 2019).

The regression analysis results indicate that the variables of challenges faced by residents and the government have a significant effect on slum conditions, with a regression coefficient of 0.072 and a significance level of 0.002. The R^2 value of 0.455 confirms that these structural challenges can explain nearly half of the variation in slum conditions in Makassar City. The F test, with a value of 0.232 and a significance level of 0.000, demonstrates that this model is valid overall. Although the coefficient value is smaller than that of other variables, these challenges hold a strategic position because they reflect the fundamental obstacles experienced by both the community as slum dwellers and the government as city managers. Slums are primarily born out of limited access to decent housing. For residents, the challenges include economic, social, and legal factors. Economically, most slum dwellers work in the informal sector with irregular incomes, making it difficult for them to access formal credit or housing programs that require stable financial capabilities. Consequently, they are forced to occupy marginal lands prone to flooding, riverbanks, or other prohibited spaces. From a social perspective, challenges manifest as negative stigma. Slum dwellers are often labeled as lazy, uncaring about the environment, or criminal, despite the fact that slum conditions result from structural limitations rather than personal choices. This stigma further marginalizes them, complicating efforts to advocate for their rights.

From a legal perspective, many slum dwellers have no certainty of land ownership. They occupy land without certificates, so they are always under threat of eviction. This legal uncertainty makes them reluctant to invest in improving their homes or environment. They prefer to leave things as they are for fear of being evicted one day. This becomes a vicious cycle: because they fear eviction, they do not repair their homes, and because their homes are slums, they become increasingly stigmatized and vulnerable to eviction. Meanwhile, the government also faces serious challenges. One of them is budget constraints. Slum improvement programs require large amounts of funding, while urban development priorities must be divided among various other sectors. As a result, slum improvement programs are often inconsistent and only reach a small portion of the area. Another challenge is the lack of coordination between agencies. Slum management is not only the responsibility of the housing agency but also relates to spatial planning, public works, health, and social issues. Without cross-sectoral coordination, programs overlap or even conflict with each other. In addition, the government also faces resistance from residents. Many redevelopment programs have failed because residents refuse to be relocated or do not trust the government's promises. This resistance arises from bad experiences in the past, where relocation was often not accompanied by economic and social support. Residents who were moved to flats or formal housing often returned to slum areas because they could not afford the cost of living in their new homes or lost their social networks. Thus, the challenge is not only technical but also one of trust between residents and the government.

From the perspective of urban governance theory, this phenomenon can be understood as a failure of collaborative governance. Ideally, slum management should involve all actors: the government, the private sector, NGOs, and the community. However, in practice, the role of residents is often reduced to that of program recipients, rather than equal partners. In fact, citizen participation is crucial to ensure that programs meet real needs on the ground. Without citizen involvement from the planning stage, redevelopment programs become technocratic projects that are easily rejected. Another equally important challenge is the political and economic interests that overshadow slum management. Some slum areas are located in strategic locations that attract developers or investors. This often gives rise to conflicts of interest, where the government prefers to vacate the area for development projects rather than improve the environment for the residents who have lived there for a long time. As a result, slum management policies are often considered unfair and more favorable to capital interests than to the needs of the poor.

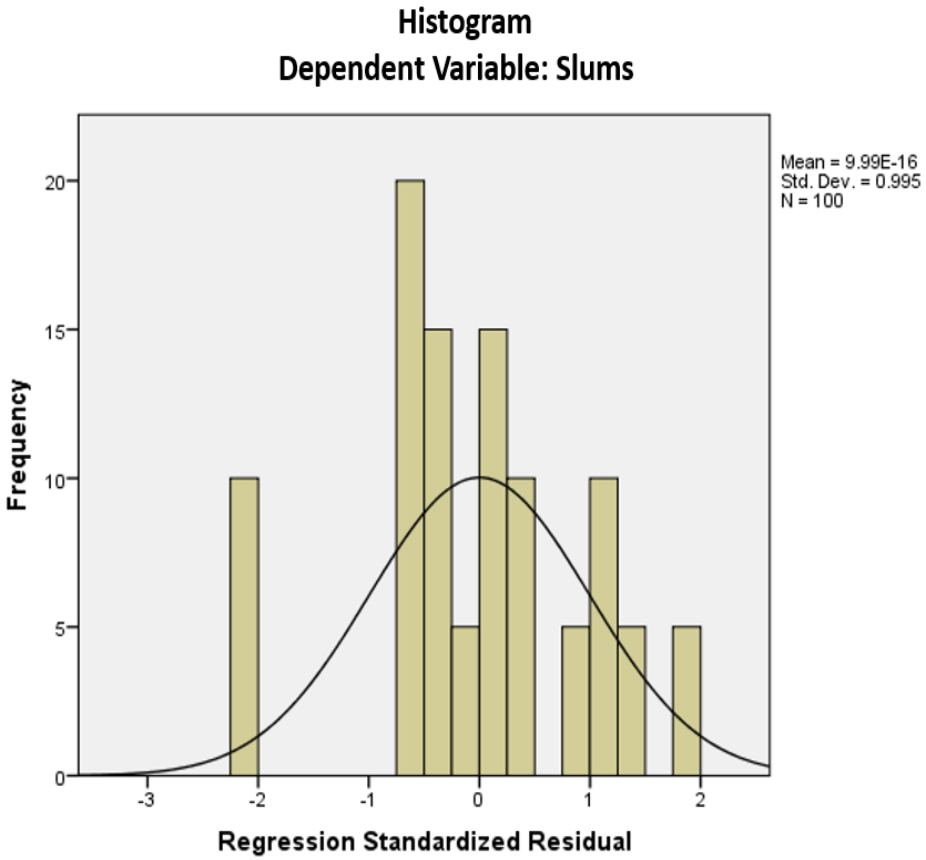

Figure 6. Histogram of the challenges faced by residents and the government in slum settlements.

Source: Primary data after processing, 2025.

Figure 6 illustrates the distribution of standardized regression residuals from a regression model with the dependent variable Slums. Residuals in the context of regression are the differences between actual values and predicted values. Residual histogram analysis is very important for testing the assumption of normality, which is one of the main requirements in classical linear regression.

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The graph shows a relatively symmetrical pattern with a peak around a standard residual value of 0. Most residual values are in the range of -2 to +2, with a few outliers below -2 and above +2. The normal curve superimposed on the histogram indicates that the residual distribution is close to a normal distribution, although there is a slight imbalance on the left side. Additionally, there is supplementary statistical information supporting the analysis, where the mean = 9.99E-16 (approximately 0) is the mean value of the standard residual approaching zero. This aligns with regression theory, which expects the residual to have a mean value of zero. The standard deviation = 0.995 (approximately 1), indicating that the residuals are not overly dispersed. N = 100 represents the number of samples in the analysis used to statistically test the assumption of residual normality.

The residual histogram shows that the regression model used in this research has a relatively normal error distribution, with a mean close to zero and a standard deviation close to one. Most of the residuals are concentrated around the mean value, indicating that the model predictions are quite accurate. Although there are slight deviations on the left side and the presence of several outliers, in general, the normality assumption is satisfied so that the regression results can be relied upon to draw conclusions.

From a policy perspective, this challenge demonstrates that addressing slums is not solely a technical issue but also a structural and political one. Providing public housing or improving infrastructure constitutes only a small part of the solution. More fundamentally, it involves building a governance system capable of balancing the interests of the poor with those of urban development as a whole (Surya et al., 2020). This requires political courage to prioritize the rights of the urban poor, as well as administrative capacity to manage resources effectively. This analysis confirms that the challenges faced by residents and the government in addressing slums are interrelated. The economic and social limitations of residents are exacerbated by government budget and institutional constraints. Conversely, the government's weakness in providing legal certainty and trust actually reinforces residents' vulnerability. This situation creates a vicious cycle in which slums persist. To break this cycle, a new, more participatory and collaborative approach is necessary. One strategy involves developing a collaborative governance model for slum management. This model involves residents not merely as objects but as subjects engaged in planning, implementation, and evaluation. The government must create space for dialogue with the community, provide access to transparent information, and ensure the sustainability of programs with economic support. In this way, residents' trust can be rebuilt, and resistance minimized.

Finally, the challenges faced by residents and the government teach us that slums cannot be resolved with a unilateral approach. It is a shared problem that can only be overcome through synergy between the community and the state. If the government is able to overcome its limitations by building inclusive governance, and if residents are able to break out of their dependence by organizing themselves collectively, then this challenge can be turned into an opportunity for transformation. However, if both parties continue to work independently, slums will remain a permanent feature of urban areas.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that the slum and urban poverty management policy in Makassar City focuses on improving the quality of the residential environment, strengthening community participation, and integrating the physical, social, and economic aspects. The Makassar City Government has improved access to basic infrastructure, such as clean water, sanitation, neighborhood roads, and waste management, while also strengthening the socio-economic capacity of poor communities in slum areas through programs such as City without Slums (*KOTAKU*) and *National Program for Community Empowerment (PNPM) Urban*. However, despite the collaborative approach taken by the government and the private sector to benefit the poor in Makassar, these efforts have not had a significant impact on the improvement of slum areas and urban poverty. The study found that variables significantly influencing urban slums and poverty include informal relationships, intentions to return to the area, opportunities for community life, and challenges faced by residents and the government. Based on this, slum and urban poverty management policies in Makassar must integrate social, economic, and environmental approaches in a balanced manner rather than focusing solely on infrastructure management. Strengthening community social relations, empowering the local economy, and improving institutional governance are key to overcoming urban poverty sustainably and creating livable settlements with social justice. Future research should focus on developing a collaborative model for managing slum areas and urban poverty.

Funding: This study received no specific financial support.
Institutional Review Board Statement: The Ethical Committee of the Universitas Sawerigading Makassar, Indonesia has granted approval for this study on 30 June 2025 (Ref. No. 698/LL9/PG/2025).
Transparency: The authors state that the manuscript is honest, truthful, and transparent, that no key aspects of the investigation have been omitted, and that any differences from the study as planned have been clarified. This study followed all writing ethics.
Data Availability Statement: The corresponding author can provide the supporting data of this study upon a reasonable request.
Competing Interests: The authors declare that they have no competing interests.
Authors' Contributions: All authors contributed equally to the conception and design of the study. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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