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Analysis of the Direction of the NTB Provincial Government's Policy in Employment Development

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to determine the West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) Provincial Government's policy in implementing strategic policies in workforce development. The main focus of this policy includes reducing unemployment, creating harmonious industrial relations, and developing productive transmigration areas. This study uses a comparative descriptive method with a qualitative approach and uses library research to obtain secondary data. The results of the study indicate that in 2022, the number of workers in NTB will reach 2.79 million people, with 2.71 million of them already employed, so that the unemployment rate will decrease to 2.98 percent, exceeding the RPJMD target of 3.17 percent. However, with the addition of more than 50 thousand new workers each year, a special strategy is needed to create more jobs. The NTB Manpower and Transmigration Office has established six strategic steps to overcome unemployment, including workforce planning, improving human resource competency through vocational training, workforce placement and empowerment, social protection for workers, workforce development and supervision, and implementation of presidential regulations regarding the Integrated Plus Workforce Training and Empowerment Program (PePaDu Plus).

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1 Introduction

Indonesia has experienced improvements in the last thirty years in terms of economic recession and stagnation, however, its growth has not been able to overcome the unemployment problem. So that the unemployment problem is currently a national strategic issue that can pose a national threat. (Pratomo, Y. S, 2020). One of the threats that can increase the unemployment rate includes the increasing number of vocational high school graduates, graduates from universities from various universities who cannot be directly absorbed by the job market, as well as the lack of adequate employment opportunities provided by the government resulting in an increasing unemployment rate every year, in August 2023 the number of unemployed in Indonesia reached 7.86 million people or 5.32% (BPS, 2023).

Unemployment is a serious and complex problem in Indonesia, as it is a developing country with a large population. This large population means that labor input, or the size of the workforce, is sufficient to drive economic growth in Indonesia.(Boubakri et al., 2021)However, if we look at the current reality, the large population is still not able to increase the rate of economic growth or become a potential national asset, but what happens is that it becomes a burden on the state in economic development. In fact, this is not because of the quantity or number but because of the quality of the Indonesian population.(Surya et al., 2018).

Since the implementation of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) policy, which has given foreign workers the opportunity to freely enter Indonesia with easier requirements and permits, our workforce, which is not prepared in terms of skills and inadequate technical capabilities, is less competitive in its own country. The impact is that the surge in domestic labor is not optimally absorbed, resulting in increasing unemployment. Simultaneously, the rapid advancement of information technology has driven the fourth generation industrial revolution, commonly known as Industry 4.0, which has had a major influence on current digital developments, facilitating data management and decision-making in various sectors, including employment. However, it has also raised concerns about the replacement of human jobs and increased unemployment.(Cahya Narendra et al., 2024). by utilizing the sophistication of artificial intelligence, so that it is no longer necessary to require a lot of human labor, so that the emergence of supercomputers, smart robots, driverless vehicles, genetic editing and the development of this new technology encourages humans to innovate more in order to survive and no longer need human work on a large scale, simply by utilizing the sophistication of artificial intelligence technology (Schwab, K, 2024)

Employment issues in Indonesia are often considered a separate issue, separate from economic and other policies. Consequently, employment policies often fail to address the issues themselves. As a result, these policies appear narrow and incomprehensive. Employment-related policies should be more macro- and inter-sectoral in nature, as they are closely linked to economic issues. As stated by AGB Fisher, the economic structure will undergo changes in the process of economic development. This illustrates that if employment issues are to be addressed effectively, policies addressing changes in the economic structure should also receive attention (Wulansari, C, Dewi, 2016).

In general, many developing countries have a mindset that one way to strengthen employment development is by expanding the industrial sector, as a larger industrial sector will be able to address economic problems, supported by the absorption of a large, productive workforce. Therefore, economic development is a series of policies aimed at improving people's standard of living, expanding employment opportunities, and equitable income distribution. Therefore, economic development is integrated with employment development and development in other sectors, which always involve human resources as one of the actors of development. Therefore, a country's population is a key element in development (Kuncoro, 2003; Fadel, M, at., el, 2021).

Employment policy is an urgent matter in government activities related to the workforce, both before, during, and after the employment relationship, both in jobs that produce goods and services.

The goal of employment development is to realize equal employment opportunities and the provision of a workforce that is in accordance with national and regional development needs. Looking at the current state of the workforce in Indonesia, it can be said that it still experiences various problems. Problems faced in the employment sector include the continued large number of workers working in the informal sector, coupled with low productivity from human resources who expect instant results (Echlesya, Lewanatur, et.al., 2024).

Employment development in West Nusa Tenggara Province (NTB) is one of the priorities in order to improve community welfare and regional economic growth.(Anita, 2016)The West Nusa Tenggara Provincial Government has implemented various policies to improve the quality and competitiveness of the local workforce, particularly in facing the challenges of globalization and industrial development. One of the main policies implemented is strengthening vocational education and training.(Arliman S, 2017)The NTB government is collaborating with various educational and training institutions to improve workforce skills, particularly in leading sectors such as agriculture, tourism, and the creative industries. This vocational education program aims to bridge the gap between workforce skills and industry needs.(Ashari, 2023).

Furthermore, another significant policy is the development of entrepreneurship and MSME (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) programs. The NTB government provides various incentives, training, and access to capital for local businesses to create new jobs. This program is also supported by the provision of infrastructure and regulations conducive to business growth.(Sinaulan, 2019)In the area of job placement, the West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) government has adopted a policy of strengthening the labor market information system. Through digital platforms and employment service centers, job seekers can more easily access information regarding available job and training opportunities. This policy aims to reduce unemployment and improve worker welfare.(Wahidin et al., 2021).

The NTB government is also active in improving labor protection, both in the formal and informal sectors.(Fatahillah & Padang, 2019)Through stricter labor regulations and social security programs, it is hoped that workers can obtain their rights fairly.(Sihombing et al., 2022)NTB's workforce development policy focuses on skills development, job creation, and worker protection. With the various strategies implemented, it is hoped that NTB Province can continue to develop a high-quality and highly competitive workforce.(Nasution, 2021).

Trading Economy data, seen from the percentage in Southeast Asia, Indonesia ranked second highest in unemployment in 2023 at 5.45%. However, according to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), this unemployment rate decreased compared to the February 2022 unemployment rate, which reached 5.83%. BPS data also recorded that the unemployment rate in Indonesia in February 2023 reached 7.99 million people, a decrease of 410,000 people compared to February 2022. (BPS, 2024). In West Nusa Tenggara Province, the number of workers in February 2023 reached 2.87 million people, an increase of 85.74 thousand people compared to February 2022, and the labor force participation rate (TPAK) increased by 0.91 percentage points. The open unemployment rate (TPT) in February 2023 was 3.73%, down 0.20 percentage points compared to February 2022 and 0.24 percentage points compared to February 2021. (NTB Manpower Office, 2023).

Data on the employed population in February 2023 was 2.76 million people, an increase of 88,020 people from February 2022. The employment sectors that experienced an increase in percentage were the Education Services sector (2.44% points), Transportation and Warehousing (0.68% points), Government Administration (0.51% points), while the sectors that experienced the largest decline were the Agriculture sector (3.17% points), the Manufacturing Industry (1.21% points) and Wholesale & Retail Trade (0.92% points). (BPS, 2023).

Judging from the data above, it provides information on the progress of the NTB Provincial Government in Employment Development through the Manpower and Transmigration Office which is quite good with the increasing number of workforce that continues to rise from year to year, but the author wants to know more about employment development policies in NTB Province not just

statistical figures that present increasing workforce data, but more than that, what kind of strategic policies are made through the preparation of the Regional Government Work Plan (RKPD) of the NTB Manpower and Transmigration Office which aligns work programs between the Provincial and Regency/City governments so that the goal is to reduce unemployment rates, create harmonious industrial relations, and develop productive transmigration areas.

The difference between this research and previous research that only looked at the legal and economic aspects, this research is more comprehensive by examining it from the perspective of government policy with a Structuralist approach so that we can know the estuary of employment development policies in NTB is not just reducing unemployment rates but rather creating a sustainable employment ecosystem with the aim of increasing the absorption of formal employment and reducing the dominance of the informal sector in NTB through collaboration between the government, the business world and the community and creating sustainable regional economic growth as well as community welfare.

2 Research methods

This research uses a comparative descriptive method.(Oktavian et al.,2022). with a qualitative approach by describing similarities or differences and comparing natural and artificial phenomena which include activities, characteristics, relationships, changes, work procedures, and views on cases, events or ideas related to government policies in making employment development decisions. This study uses literature analysis to search for data and information through secondary data obtained through books, online media, bulletins, scientific articles, statistics, reports, government publications, annual reports of non-governmental organizations related to the direction of the NTB Provincial Government's policies in employment development by using online platforms such as Mendeley, Sinta, ProQuest, Google Scholar, and other online media to search for publications published between 2020 and 2025 can see for search results "Government Policy", " Employment" To ensure broad coverage while maintaining relevance to the research topic.A testing or verification model is essential during the data input process to validate or verify research data. Data validation is performed by checking and ensuring that each piece of data aligns with the research problem. Data that does not align will not be displayed. The collected data is then selected based on relevance and actuality. Next, the data is edited and presented in tables, figures, and graphs for narrative explanation.

3 Results and Discussion

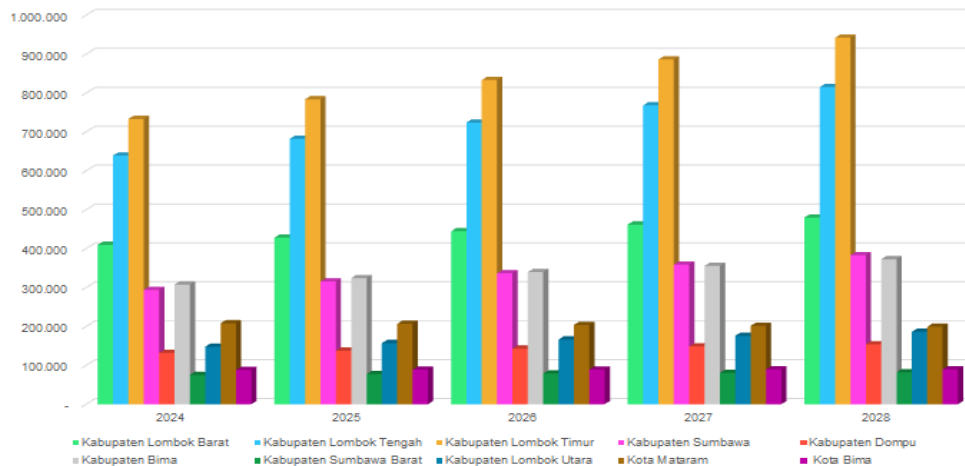
Direction of the Employment Development Policy of the NTB Provincial Government

This section will discuss the policy direction of the NTB Provincial Government regarding workforce development, ensuring that strategic steps and decisions are aligned with community needs and have a broad impact on increasing employment and reducing unemployment. Employment development is a crucial aspect in efforts to improve community welfare and economic growth.(Lianto & Najicha, 2022)Various countries and local governments have implemented various policies to improve the quality and competitiveness of the workforce in facing the challenges of globalization and industrial development. One of the main policies in workforce development is strengthening vocational education and training.(Muharam et al., 2022)The government is collaborating with various educational and training institutions to improve workforce skills, particularly in leading sectors such as agriculture, tourism, and the creative industries. Vocational education programs aim to bridge the gap between workforce skills and industry needs.(Wibowo, 2023).

The training policy aims to coordinate ongoing collaboration with the industrial world regarding internships for training alumni from government and private training institutions, thereby optimizing cooperation or partnerships between vocational training institutions and industry such as the Communication Forum for Training Institutions with Industry (FKLPI) and the Skill Development Center (SDC). With good cooperation and partnerships, the potential for training institutions managed by the government, the private sector, and companies will be created to revitalize and complete

supporting infrastructure to improve the quality of graduates with priority for superior vocational skills that are in high demand for the job market. The following data shows projected opportunities for labor needs in NTB Province from 2004 to 2028.

Table 1. Projection of Estimated Employment Opportunities for the NTB Province Workforce 2024-2028



Source: NTB Manpower and Transmigration Office, 2024

Based on the graph above, the total estimated employment opportunities for the NTB Province workforce in 2024 reached 3,034,903 people and increased by 3,703,069 people in 2028, with the highest proportion in East Lombok Regency at (25.45%), Central Lombok Regency at (22.01%) and West Lombok Regency at (12.96%). The number of employment opportunities could actually increase annually if the strengthening of new regulations had been properly implemented, but the newly elected Governor and Deputy Governor had not been able to realize this, the main focus was on how the mining sector which contributed the largest Regional Original Income (PAD) could operate again for export.(Afriyana et al., 2023) focuses on the influence of infrastructure development on structural economic inclusion, while this graphical analysis provides employment opportunities, emphasizing the role of mining sector policies and exports in encouraging the growth of formal employment opportunities in the future. In the Determinant Factors(Wazari & Agustiarini, 2022)Examining human capital and the digital economy as strategic factors in absorbing the formal workforce. This study emphasizes fiscal-political policy factors (regulations, mining exports, and regional leadership) as determinants of increased employment opportunities. It is hoped that the reopening of exports in the mining sector will increase formal labor absorption, and the impact will certainly be an improvement in the economy and a reduction in unemployment, thus increasing employment opportunities. However, if we look at the trend of promising business fields based on the Gross Regional Domestic Product of NTB Province 2024-2028, the agriculture, livestock, and fisheries sectors are the highest, as shown in the data below:

**Table 1. Estimated Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) by Business Sector
66 NTB Province 2024-2028**

LAPANGAN USAHA	TAHUN					
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Pertanian, Kehutanan dan Perikanan	22,643	23,184	23,517	23,908	24,363	24,886
Pertambangan dan Penggalian	18,218	19,148	19,712	20,326	20,998	21,734
Industri Pengolahan	4,645	4,765	4,843	4,932	5,035	5,152
Pengadaan Listrik dan Gas	119	128	136	144	153	162
Pengadaan Air, Pengelolaan Sampah, Limbah dan Daur Ulang	80	83	85	87	90	92
Konstruksi	10,575	10,486	10,677	10,895	11,143	11,422
Perdagangan Besar dan Eceran, Reparasi Mobil dan Sepeda Motor	14,738	14,935	15,320	15,745	16,213	16,730
Transportasi dan Pergudangan	5,844	4,972	4,774	4,587	4,409	4,238
Penyediaan Akomodasi dan Makan Minum	1,556	1,317	1,283	1,252	1,223	1,197
Informasi dan Komunikasi	3,015	3,254	3,417	3,589	3,771	3,967
Jasa Keuangan dan Asuransi	3,819	4,205	4,362	4,530	4,711	4,907
Real Estate	3,268	3,393	3,493	3,603	3,723	3,854
Jasa Perusahaan	196	197	203	209	216	224
Administrasi Pemerintahan, Pertahanan dan Jaminan Sosial Wajib	5,233	5,502	5,628	5,768	5,924	6,098
Jasa Pendidikan	5,080	5,306	5,477	5,662	5,864	6,084
Jasa Kesehatan dan Kegiatan Sosial	2,393	2,501	2,594	2,695	2,803	2,920
Jasa Lainnya	2,485	2,497	2,570	2,650	2,737	2,832

Source: NTB Manpower and Transmigration Office, 2024

Based on table 1 above, the economic structure of West Nusa Tenggara Province in the projection for 2024 to 2028 shows a strong dependence on the primary sector, especially agriculture, forestry, and fisheries, which consistently increased from IDR 23,184 billion in 2024 to IDR 24,886 billion in 2028. The mining and quarrying sector also experienced a similar trend, increasing from IDR 19,148 billion to IDR 21,734 billion in the same period. On the other hand, the manufacturing industry sector, although showing annual growth, still contributes relatively little to the overall GRDP, reflecting limitations in the value-added-based economic transformation.(Indrani & Rachman, 2024)emphasized that investment and labor significantly contribute to the increase in NTB's economic growth rate, particularly in labor-intensive sectors such as agriculture and mining. This aligns with NTB's GRDP projections, where the agriculture, forestry, and fisheries, as well as the mining sector, show consistent growth and serve as the backbone of the provincial economy. Meanwhile, findings from(Sanjani & Sari, 2024)lies in the emphasis that NTB's economic growth is heavily influenced by structural factors such as unemployment rates and government spending. This is in line with GRDP projection data, which shows a dominant contribution from the agricultural and mining sectors, but with the role of the processing industry remaining small. Service sectors such as education, finance and insurance, and information and communication recorded stable growth, which can be interpreted as an early sign of a shift towards a knowledge-based economy, although their contribution is still not dominant in the regional macroeconomic structure.

In Research(Oktavian et al., nd, 2024)He stated that to encourage economic growth, development is based on the strategic ability to create added value, increase competitiveness, and reduce dependence on external resources. For example, (Porter, 1990) in his theory of competitive advantage emphasized that regions that are able to identify and develop their leading sectors will be more successful in creating an environment that supports innovation, efficiency, and productivity. In addition, development that focuses on leading sectors also allows local governments to allocate resources more effectively, support the development of relevant infrastructure, and attract appropriate investment. This not only increases economic growth, but also creates jobs and improves community welfare.(Raja et al., 2025).

Economic growth indicates a long-term increase in productive capacity, often measured by an increase in Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) per capita. An important aspect in driving economic growth is increased productivity, which is often associated with innovation, especially in the

economic context, referring to the development of new ideas, products, or processes that have the potential to increase efficiency and competitiveness and increased productivity that leads to economic growth. This explains that the workforce can support economic growth.(Razzaq et al., 2023). meaning that if the number of workers increases then economic growth will also increase, conversely if there is a decrease in the number of workers then economic growth will decrease, with the increase in the number of productive workers, the production of goods and services will increase so that the Gross Regional Domestic Product will also increase as a result, economic growth will also increase.

From the evaluation of intersectoral growth trends in the GRDP of West Nusa Tenggara Province, it can be concluded that the direction of regional development policy requires a more progressive approach to reduce the dominance of the extractive and primary sectors. Significant increases in the education and information services sectors, which grew by approximately 16% and 22%, respectively, over five years, indicate significant potential for strengthening human resource capacity and digital infrastructure as pillars of long-term economic development. However, the slow growth of the manufacturing sector and the decline in the transportation and accommodation sectors reflect stagnation in intersectoral integration. Therefore, the West Nusa Tenggara Provincial Government needs to adopt a cluster-based economic development strategy and downstreaming of leading commodities, accompanied by strengthening interregional connectivity and incentives for investment in the processing industry. This approach will not only boost GRDP growth quantitatively but also ensure a more inclusive and sustainable distribution of economic benefits until 2028.

Figure 1. NTB Employment Structure

STRUKTUR KETENAGAKERJAAN NTB



Source: Department Employment and Transmigration in NTB, 2024

Based on Figure 1 above, the employment structure in West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) Province from August 2023 to August 2024 shows the absorption of 212.57 thousand workers. Of the total working-age population of 4.13 million, 3.19 million people are included in the labor force (AK), while 941.22 thousand people are outside the labor force (BAK). Of this total workforce, 3.11 million people are registered as employed, divided into 1.85 million full-time workers (≥ 35 hours/week) and 785.96 thousand part-time workers (< 35 hours/week). In addition, there are 472.91 thousand people in the underemployed category. The number of openly unemployed in NTB reached 87.01 thousand people, an increase of 3.77 thousand people compared to the previous year. These data indicate complex employment dynamics, where the high proportion of part-time and underemployed workers indicates challenges in the quality of labor absorption, despite the quantitative increase in the number of workers. Despite the absolute increase in the number of workers, there has not been a structural

transformation in the labor market capable of absorbing the workforce productively and sustainably. Therefore, the formulation of employment policies in NTB must be oriented towards improving job quality through competency-based training, expanding formal employment opportunities, and integrating regional development planning with workforce demographic dynamics. In this view, (Firmansyah et al., 2024) highlighted that labor absorption in the MSME sector is influenced by limited capital, education levels, and low labor productivity, so the sector's capacity to optimally absorb labor remains limited. This is in line with NTB employment data, which shows a high number of part-time and underemployed workers, reflecting that many workers are absorbed in jobs that are not fully productive or do not correspond to full working hours. This contrasts with findings from (Salihin, 2020) shows that the number of workers has a positive and significant effect on the economic growth of NTB, although it does not directly highlight the quality of work or the differences between the formal and informal sectors.

Economic growth is inseparable from the overall economic situation to increase economic growth in the Province of West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) strategic steps are needed. The government is expected to start paying attention to the quality of society, education, health and expansion of employment and is also expected to increase infrastructure development developing its leading sectors will be more successful in creating an environment that supports innovation, efficiency, and productivity. In addition, development that focuses on leading sectors also allows local governments to allocate resources more effectively. The NTB Provincial Government needs to adopt a cluster-based economic development strategy and downstreaming of leading commodities, accompanied by strengthening inter-regional connectivity and incentives for investment in the processing industry. This approach will not only encourage quantitative GRDP growth, but also ensure a more inclusive and sustainable distribution of economic benefits until 2028.

4 Conclusion

Referring to the Regional Government Work Plan (RKPD) of the NTB Manpower and Transmigration Office, the projected five-year workforce supply for the period 2024-2028 is 4,186,375 people in 2024, increasing to 4,747,490 people in 2028, with the highest proportion in East Lombok Regency (25.56%), Central Lombok Regency (20.92%), and West Lombok (13.06%). The number of workforce figures is calculated based on estimates of the working-age population. These results provide an overview of the steps that must be taken by the Provincial Government, namely how to issue policies that are aligned with the work plan that has been prepared, so that the plan and implementation are in line with the output. Considering that the elected Governor and Deputy Governor have only been in office for six months, political commitment is needed to realize the implementation of workforce development, which aims to create jobs, reduce unemployment, and improve community welfare.

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