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# Determinants of Poverty Levels in Regencies and Municipalities of West Sumatra

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**ABSTRACT**

This study aims to analyze the effect of the Human Development Index (HDI) and Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) growth on poverty levels in regencies and municipalities of West Sumatra Province. This research employs a quantitative approach with an associative research design. The study uses secondary data obtained from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) and other relevant institutions, covering 19 regencies and municipalities in West Sumatra. Panel data regression analysis was applied using statistical software to examine the relationship between the variables. The findings reveal that HDI has a significant and negative effect on poverty levels, as indicated by a significance value of 0.000. This result suggests that improvements in human development contribute to reducing poverty. In contrast, GRDP growth does not significantly affect poverty levels, with a significance value of 0.710. Simultaneously, HDI and GRDP growth significantly influence poverty levels, with a significance value of 0.000. The coefficient of determination ($R^2$) indicates that both variables explain 52.8% of the variation in poverty levels, while the remaining 47.2% is influenced by other factors not included in the model. These findings highlight the importance of improving human development through better education, health services, and living standards as an effective strategy for poverty reduction. Therefore, local governments should prioritize human development policies while promoting inclusive and equitable economic growth to achieve sustainable poverty alleviation.

**Keywords**: *Economic Growth, Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP), Human Development Index (HDI), Poverty Rate*

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## INTRODUCTION

Poverty is a social and economic problem which is still a major challenge in development in Indonesia. Poverty is not only defined as a community's inability to fulfill basic needs such as food, clothing, housing, education and health, but also reflects limited access to economic resources, employment opportunities, public services and various opportunities that can improve the quality of life and welfare of the community (Trisdianti & Syam Kusufi, 2025). From a development perspective, poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon that has an impact on the low quality of human resources, increasing social inequality, and hampering inclusive and sustainable development processes (Nasirudin & Haviz, 2025). The level of poverty is influenced by various factors, both economic and non-economic, such as high levels of unemployment, low levels of education, uneven economic growth, and low Human Development Index (HDI) which reflects the quality of education, health and living standards of the community (Nurrizqi et al., 2022). Therefore, efforts to eradicate poverty require comprehensive and integrated policies through improving the quality of human resources, expanding employment opportunities, equalizing development results, and strengthening social protection programs so that community welfare can increase sustainably and support the creation of more inclusive economic development (Lestari & Imaningsih, 2022).

The problem of poverty in Indonesia is still a strategic issue in national development although in recent years it has shown a downward trend. Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), in March 2025 the percentage of poor people in Indonesia was recorded at 8.47 percent or around 23.85 million people, a decrease compared to September 2024 which was 8.57 percent (BPS, 2025). However, these figures show that poverty is still a challenge that needs serious attention because it can hinder efforts to improve people's welfare. In addition, the poverty rate in rural areas is still higher than in urban areas, which is 11.03 percent compared to 6.73 percent, which indicates that there is still inequality in welfare between regions (BPS, 2025). In March 2025, the national poverty line will be recorded at IDR 609,160 per capita per month as the minimum spending limit to meet the basic needs of the community (BPS, 2025). This condition shows that although various development and poverty alleviation programs have been implemented, the success of poverty reduction is still influenced by various factors, such as economic growth, increased employment opportunities, the effectiveness of social protection programs, and the improvement of the quality of human resources through education and health (Windari & Imaningsih, 2025)

Theoretically, this relationship can be explained through the Human Development Theory put forward by Amartya Sen, which states that improving the quality of education, health, and living standards of the community will expand individual capabilities so that they can increase productivity and income and reduce poverty. In addition, the Economic Growth Theory explains that sustainable economic growth can increase production activities, expand employment opportunities, and encourage an increase in people's incomes, which ultimately contributes to a reduction in poverty rates. Thus, the success of poverty alleviation is not only determined by an increase in people's income, but also by the quality of human development and the equitable distribution of the results of economic development (Sen : 1999).

The phenomenon of poverty in West Sumatra Province is still a relevant issue in regional development because the reduction in poverty levels that occurred has not been fully followed by the equitable distribution of welfare between regions. The disparity in socio-economic conditions between districts and cities shows that the benefits of development and economic growth have not been felt equally by the entire community. Some regions still face various obstacles to development, such as limited access to employment, low levels of income for the community, and high dependence on traditional agricultural sectors that are vulnerable to changes in commodity prices, climate change, and natural disasters (Afri & Amar, 2025).

In addition, high unemployment rates, uneven economic growth, and low investment in a number of regions also contribute to high poverty rates (Rinaldi & Joko, 2025). This condition is reflected in the fact that there are still many poor households with low levels of education, a large number of family dependents, and uncertain sources of income due to working in the informal sector (Afri & Amar, 2025). Therefore, although local governments have made various efforts through social protection programs, improving the quality of human resources, and developing productive economic sectors, the effectiveness of these policies needs to be continuously improved in order to be able to accelerate poverty reduction more evenly and sustainably throughout West Sumatra Province (Putra & Yuliarti, 2025).

One of the factors that influences the poverty level is the Human Development Index (HDI), because the HDI describes the quality of life of society as measured through the dimensions of health, education and decent living standards. Human development theory explains that development does not only focus on economic growth, but also on improving the quality of human resources so that society is able to increase its productivity and welfare. People with good levels of education and health tend to have greater employment opportunities so they are able to earn a decent income and avoid poverty (Amalia & Mahalli, 2022). In addition, increasing HDI can expand people's ability to access education, health services and economic opportunities so that people's quality of life becomes better and poverty levels can decrease (Pratama & Utama, 2019). Other research also shows that HDI has a negative and significant influence on poverty levels, meaning that the higher the HDI value, the number of poor people tends to decrease due to the increase in the quality of human resources and labor productivity (Sari & Kaluge, 2021). In Indonesia, increasing the HDI is an important indicator of the success of regional development because it is able to encourage increased community welfare through better education, adequate health, and a sustainable increase in people's purchasing power (Putri & Handayani, 2021).

Another factor that influences the level of poverty is the growth rate of Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP), because GRDP reflects the ability of a region to produce goods and services during a certain period. In the theory of economic growth, it is explained that increasing regional economic growth will encourage an increase in people's income, expand employment opportunities, and increase welfare so that it can reduce poverty levels. The higher the GDP growth rate of a region, the economic activity of the community will also increase and have an impact on increasing the per capita income of the community (Nasirudin & Haviz, 2025). In addition, high GRDP growth can increase the ability of local governments to provide infrastructure, public services and social programs that support sustainable poverty reduction (Mukti & Soraya, 2024). Other research shows that GRDP has a negative relationship with poverty levels, meaning that increasing GRDP can reduce the number of poor people due to increased employment opportunities and community economic activity (Dama, 2016). However, uneven economic growth can cause the benefits of increasing GRDP to only be felt by certain groups so that its effect on reducing poverty is less than optimal (Clara et al., 2024).

The Human Development Index (HDI) and the growth rate of Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) theoretically have an influence on poverty levels because improving the quality of human resources and regional economic growth should be able to improve community welfare. However, the conditions occurring in West Sumatra show a different phenomenon, where the increase in HDI and GRDP growth rate has not been fully able to reduce poverty levels significantly as can be seen in the following table. This shows that high HDI and economic growth are not necessarily accompanied by equal distribution of income and community welfare in all districts/cities. In addition, the economic growth that occurs tends to be concentrated in certain sectors and regions so that the benefits are not felt evenly by low-income communities.

This condition can also be influenced by other factors such as inequality in income distribution, unemployment rates, limited employment opportunities, and the dominance of informal work which makes it difficult for people to escape the cycle of poverty. Thus, increasing HDI and GRDP growth in West Sumatra needs to be balanced with development policies that are more equitable and targeted so that their impact on reducing poverty levels can be more optimal.

Based on the phenomena and problems that have been described, this study was conducted to analyze the influence of the Human Development Index (HDI) and the growth rate of Gross Regional Domestic Product (GDP) on the poverty rate in districts/cities of West Sumatra Province. This research is motivated by the gap between theory and empirical conditions, where improving the quality of human development and economic growth that should be able to reduce poverty rates has not shown optimal results in several regions. These conditions indicate that there are other factors that also affect the relationship between human development, economic growth, and poverty levels. Therefore, this study is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the influence of HDI and GDP growth rate on poverty levels in districts/cities of West Sumatra Province. In addition, the results of this research are expected to make an academic contribution to the development of development economics studies and become a consideration for local governments in formulating development policies that are more effective, inclusive, and oriented towards accelerating poverty alleviation in a sustainable manner.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a quantitative approach with an associative research type that aims to analyze the influence of independent variables on dependent variables. The independent variables in this study are the Human Development Index (HDI) and the growth rate of the Gross Regional Domestic Product (GDP), while the dependent variable is the poverty level in districts/cities in West Sumatra Province. The data used is secondary data obtained from the publication of the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) of West Sumatra Province and related agencies in the form of time series and cross section data. The study population covers all districts and cities in West Sumatra Province totaling 19 districts/cities with observation periods adjusted to the availability of research data.

The data analysis technique used was panel data regression to analyze the influence of HDI and GDP growth rate on poverty levels in districts/cities in West Sumatra Province. Before the regression test is carried out, a classical assumption test is first carried out which includes a normality test, a multicollinearity test, a heteroscedasticity test, and an autocorrelation test to ensure that the regression model used meets statistical criteria. Furthermore, hypothesis testing is carried out through a t-test to partially analyze the influence of variables, an F test to test the influence of variables simultaneously, and a determination coefficient test ($R^2$) to measure the ability of independent variables to explain the variation of dependent variables. The entire process of data processing and analysis is carried out with the help of EViews software.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result

*Partial Test*

Partial tests (t-tests) are used to determine the influence of each independent variable on the dependent variables individually. In this study, the t-test was used to analyze the influence of the Human Development Index (HDI) and the growth rate of Gross Regional Domestic Product (GDP) on the poverty level in districts/cities in West Sumatra Province. The test was carried out by comparing the probability value (p-value) with a significance level of 5 percent ($\alpha = 0.05$). If the probability value is less than 0.05, then the independent variable is declared to have a significant effect on the dependent variable. On the other hand, if the probability value is greater than 0.05, then the independent variable is declared to have no significant effect on the dependent variable. After data analysis, the results of the partial test were obtained as follows :

**Coefficients**[a]

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 6.239 | .588 | | 10.618 | .000 |
| | HDI | -.061 | .008 | -.743 | -7.989 | .000 |
| | GRDP | .020 | .054 | .035 | .374 | .710 |

a. Dependent Variable: y_poverty

Based on the results of the partial test (t-test) in the coefficient table, it was obtained that the Human Development Index (HDI) variable had a regression coefficient value of -0.061, a t-calculation value of -7.989, and a significance value of 0.000. A significance value of less than 0.05 indicates that HDI has a significant effect on the poverty level in districts/cities in West Sumatra Province. A negative regression coefficient indicates that any increase in HDI by one unit will reduce the poverty rate by 0.061 units, assuming other variables are considered constant. These results show that the higher the quality of human development as reflected in the improvement of education, health, and people's living standards, the poverty rate tends to decrease.

Meanwhile, the variable GDP growth rate has a regression coefficient value of 0.020, a t-calculation value of 0.374, and a significance value of 0.710. A significance value greater than 0.05 indicates that the GDP growth rate does not have a significant effect on the poverty rate in districts/cities in West Sumatra Province. These results indicate that the economic growth that has occurred has not been able to have a direct impact on reducing poverty rates. This condition can be caused by the uneven distribution of economic growth results, so that the benefits of economic growth have not been fully felt by low-income groups.

*Simultaneous Test (F-test)*

The simultaneous test (F test) is used to find out whether the independent variables together have an effect on the dependent variable. In this research, the F test was carried out to analyze the influence of the Human Development Index (HDI) and the growth rate of Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) simultaneously on poverty levels in districts/cities in West Sumatra Province. The testing criteria are carried out by comparing probability values (Sig.) with a significance level of 5 percent ($\alpha = 0.05$). If the probability value is smaller than 0.05, then the independent variable simultaneously has a significant effect on the dependent variable. Conversely, if the probability value is greater than 0.05, then the independent variables simultaneously have no significant effect on the dependent variable. The results of the simultaneous test can be seen in the following table:

**ANOVA[b]**

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 4.231 | 2 | 2.116 | 32.343 | .000[a] |
| | Residual | 3.532 | 54 | .065 | | |
| | Total | 7.764 | 56 | | | |

a. Predictors: (Constant), HDI, GRDP

b. Dependent Variable: y_poverty

Based on the results of the simultaneous test (F test) in the ANOVA table, the value of F was calculated at 32.343 while the critical F-value was 3.17, where value of F as greater than the critical F-value (32.343 > 3.17) with a significance value of 0.000. The significance value is smaller than the significance level of 0.05 (0.000 < 0.05), so $H_0$ is rejected and $H_3$ is accepted. These results show that the variables of the Human Development Index (HDI) and the growth rate of the Gross Regional Domestic Product (GDP) simultaneously have a significant effect on the poverty level in districts/cities in West Sumatra Province. Thus, the regression model used in this study is feasible to explain the relationship between independent variables and dependent variables.

*Coefficient of Determination ($R^2$)*

The determination coefficient ($R^2$) test is used to measure the ability of independent variables to explain the variation of dependent variables in the research model. Here are the r square results

**Model Summary**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .738[a] | .545 | .528 | .25576 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), HDI, GDRP

The coefficient of determination was assessed using the Adjusted R-squared value. Based on the Model Summary table, the Adjusted R-squared is 0.528, indicating that the Human Development Index (HDI) and Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) jointly explain 52.8% of the variation in poverty levels across regencies and municipalities in West Sumatra Province. The remaining 47.2% is explained by other variables not included in the model. These findings suggest that HDI and GRDP have a relatively strong explanatory power in explaining poverty levels, although other socioeconomic factors may also contribute to poverty dynamics in the study area.

**Discussion**

*Human Development Index (HDI) as a Determinant of Poverty*

The results of the study show that the Human Development Index (HDI) has a negative and significant effect on the poverty level in districts/cities in West Sumatra Province. This is evidenced by the value of the regression coefficient of -0.061, the calculated t-value of -7.989, and the significance value of 0.000, which is smaller than the significance level of 0.05. These findings indicate that any increase in HDI will be followed by a decrease in poverty rates. The higher the HDI achievement of a region, the lower the poverty rate that occurs. This condition shows that improving the quality of human resources through education, health, and a decent standard of living has an important role in reducing the number of poor people. People who have a better level of education and health tend to have higher productivity, wider job opportunities, and the ability to earn better income so that they can improve their welfare and get out of poverty.

The results of this study are in line with the Human Development Theory put forward by Amartya Sen, which states that development is not only measured by increasing income, but also by expanding people's capabilities in obtaining education, health, and a decent life. According to Sen (1999), poverty is a form of limitation of individual capabilities to achieve a valuable life. Therefore, improving human quality through education and health will expand people's opportunities to participate in economic activities, increase productivity, and reduce vulnerability to poverty. Thus, the higher the HDI value of a region, the greater the ability of the community to improve their standard of living so that the poverty rate tends to decrease.

The findings of this study are also in line with the results of research conducted by Nurrizqi et al. (2022) which found that HDI has a negative and significant effect on poverty levels. Similar results were also found by Lestari and Imaningsih (2022) who stated that improving the quality of human development is able to reduce poverty levels through increasing access to education, health, and economic opportunities for the community. In addition, research by Nasirudin and Haviz (2025) shows that areas with higher HDI levels tend to have lower poverty rates than areas with low HDI. Thus, the results of this study strengthen the empirical evidence that human development is one of the important factors in poverty alleviation efforts. Therefore, local governments need to continue to increase investment in the education, health, and quality of life sectors so that poverty reduction can take place more effectively and sustainably in all districts/cities in West Sumatra Province.

*The Growth Rate of Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) as a Determinant of Poverty Levels*

Based on the results of the partial test, the variable growth rate of Gross Regional Domestic Product (GDP) has a regression coefficient value of 0.020, a calculated t-value of 0.374, and a significance value of 0.710. The significance value is greater than the significance level of 0.05 (0.710 > 0.05), so it can be concluded that the

GDP growth rate does not have a significant effect on the poverty level in districts/cities in West Sumatra Province. These results show that the increase in economic growth reflected in the GDP growth rate has not been able to have a real impact on reducing poverty rates. In other words, the economic growth that has occurred has not been fully enjoyed by all levels of society, especially low-income groups who are the main targets of poverty alleviation.

The findings of this study can be explained through the Trickle-Down Effect Theory put forward by Albert O. Hirschman, which states that the benefits of economic growth are expected to flow from high-income groups to low-income groups through job creation, increased investment, and expansion of economic activities. However, in practice, economic growth is not always followed by an equal distribution of income. In addition, according to Todaro and Smith in economic development theory, high economic growth is not necessarily able to reduce poverty if it is not accompanied by an equitable distribution of development results, increased employment opportunities, and community access to economic resources. Therefore, economic growth that is exclusive tends to be enjoyed only by certain groups, so its impact on poverty reduction is limited.

The results of this study are in line with the research of Rinaldi and Joko (2025) who found that economic growth does not have a significant effect on the poverty rate because the benefits of economic growth have not been evenly distributed to the poor. Similar findings were also put forward by Afri and Amar (2025) who showed that an increase in GDP does not automatically reduce poverty if the growth is concentrated in sectors that do not absorb much labor. In addition, research by Lestari and Imaningsih (2022) explains that the effectiveness of economic growth in reducing poverty is highly dependent on the quality of this growth, especially in creating productive job opportunities and increasing the income of low-income people. Thus, the results of this study indicate that poverty alleviation efforts in West Sumatra Province are not enough to rely only on economic growth, but also need to be supported by policies that encourage equitable development, increase employment opportunities, and strengthen economic sectors that are able to provide direct benefits to the poor.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the growth rate of Gross Regional Domestic Product (GDP) does not have a significant effect on the poverty rate in districts/cities in West Sumatra Province. These findings show that the increase in economic growth that occurred during the study period has not been able to have a real impact on the decline in the number of poor people. This condition indicates that the benefits of economic growth have not been fully distributed evenly to all levels of society, especially low-income groups. Therefore, the success of poverty alleviation is not only determined by high economic growth, but also by the quality of growth that is able to create job opportunities, increase people's income, and encourage equitable distribution of development results. Thus, regional development policies need to be directed not only at increasing economic growth, but also at strengthening inclusive and equitable development so that the benefits of growth can be felt more broadly and contribute to a sustainable reduction in poverty rates.

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