

Analysis of the Effect of Wages and Reduction of Working Hours on Poverty in Indonesia with Gross Regional Domestic Product as Moderator

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ABSTRACT

Poverty is a multidimensional problem that is influenced by many factors that can change according to the circumstances of each region or country. This study aims to analyze the effect of average wages and reduced working hours on poverty with Gross Domestic Regional Product (GRDP) as a moderator. The researcher explores whether her Covid-19 pandemic will affect the outcome of this study. Secondary data is used, namely wages, reduced working hours, GRDP, and poverty in 34 provinces in Indonesia. The regression analysis shows that wages did not directly affect poverty. This is indicated by a significance value of 0.059. This finding shows that there are differences in results from previous studies, where wages have a direct influence on poverty. Furthermore, the GRDP can moderate and strengthens the relationship between wages and poverty, which is indicated by the significant value of wage interaction of 0.000. While reducing working hours has a positive relationship with poverty, GRDP cannot moderate those relationships. This study contributes to the enrichment of literacy related to the relationship of the variables tested against the Vicious Circle of Poverty theory. This research also contributes as a reference for policy makers in making policies related to poverty eradication.

Keywords: Average wage, Reduced working hours, Poverty, Pandemic Covid-19, Indonesia.

1. INTRODUCTION

Poverty is still one of the big problems faced by countries, especially developing countries such as Indonesia (Lowing, et al., 2021). Poverty is an absolute or relative condition that causes a person or society in an area not to have the ability to meet their basic needs following certain values or norms that apply in society due to natural, cultural, or structural causes (Nugroho, 2004). Therefore, along with the times, the causal factors, indicators, and problems related to poverty have become increasingly complex. This causes the definition of poverty to expand (Tisniwati, 2012). Furthermore, the various formulations of views on poverty illustrate that

poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon, which is difficult to define as a special meaning (Budhijana, 2020).

Wages are believed to be one of the determinants of poverty (Agustina et al., 2019). Wages can be interpreted as workers receiving compensation after a job (Sukirno, 2003). Therefore, low wages cause low income received by workers. In addition, the job creation and minimal absorption of labour in Indonesia cause the population to be unable to meet their daily needs, so poverty is still high (Lowing et al., 2021). Another factor is the Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP), which is one of the requirements to reduce poverty levels. However, rapid GRDP growth cannot automatically have an impact on decreasing poverty levels in an area (Todaro, 2011).

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected many aspects of life. Affect Not only health but also impacts the continuity of work and the workforce's income. The International Labor Organization (ILO) even predicts that four out of five workers, around 81%, will be affected, which results in the cessation of company operations or a reduction in working hours (Rahmawaty and Zulkifli, 2021). Based on the National Labor Force Survey for August 2020, it was found that around 14.28 per cent of the total working-age population in Indonesia was affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. This includes 24,027,576 or 11.78 per cent experiencing a reduction in working hours. More detail, based on the total working-age population, 17.41 per cent are experienced by male workers and 11.15 per cent by female workers (Badan Perencanaan dan Pengembangan Ketenagakerjaan, 2021).

In addition, the Covid-19 pandemic also decreased the average wage, from Rp2,907,530/month in August 2019 to Rp2,756,345/month in August 2020 or decreased by 5.20 per cent compared to the previous period in the same month. (Badan Perencanaan dan Pengembangan Ketenagakerjaan, 2021). Simultaneously, the poverty rate increased by 24.79 per cent in September 2019. Then in September 2020, it increased to 27.55 per cent (BPS, 2020). Departing from these conditions, a study will be conducted to see how the variables of average wages, reduced working hours, and GRDP affected poverty in Indonesia in 2020. Plus, there have not been many studies that have examined topics with these variables, so it is hoped that the results can be used as a reference. A reference to formulating better policies to deal with poverty in Indonesia, especially amid various challenges due to the Covid-19 pandemic, cannot be ascertained when it will end. This study contributes to the enrichment of literacy related to the relationship of the variables tested against the Vicious Circle of Poverty theory. This research also contributes as a reference for policy makers in making policies related to poverty eradication.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

2.1. Poverty and The Vicious Circle of Poverty

Nurwati (2008) states that poverty is a social problem that continues to exist in people's lives in the long term and involves various forms or characters of human life. The definition of poverty is based on identifying and measuring a group of people or society after this, referred to as poor (Nugroho, 1995). Generally, each country defines the poor based on certain conditions such as average income, purchasing power or average consumption ability, educational status, and health conditions.

In general and in a narrow sense, poverty is defined as the inability of income to meet basic needs so that it is less able to guarantee a minimum standard of survival (Suryawati, 2004 & Annur, 2013). In a broad sense, Chambers (1983) says that poverty is an integrated concept with five dimensions: proper, powerless, state of emergency, dependence, and isolation. Poverty is one of the macroeconomic problems that are of particular concern in any country. A country said to be poor is usually characterized by low per capita income, high population

growth rates, and most of the workforce engaged in agriculture and shackled in a vicious cycle of poverty.

Sharp et al. (2000) identified the causes of poverty from an economic perspective, such as (1) unequal patterns of resource ownership that lead to unequal income distribution, (2) poverty arises due to differences in the quality of human resources, and (3) based on the vicious circle of poverty theory. Nurkse (1953) proposed that a developing country is poor because it is poor. The Vicious Circle of poverty is one of the poverty theories that explain the causes that influence each other, causing poverty. This theory explains that poverty occurs because of backwardness, market imperfections, and lack of capital, causing low productivity. Low productivity results in low income received. Low income will have implications for low savings and investment. Low investment results in underdevelopment and so forms an interrelated circle.

Poverty is closely related to the wages received by a worker, reduced working hours, and GRDP or Gross Regional Domestic Product. Kurniawan (2017) stated that wages significantly affect poverty levels because they affect family income. In addition, if wages in an area are high, welfare will also increase along with an increase in income (Prayoga et al., 2021). Prayoga et al. (2021) also explained that the higher the value of GRDP, this has impact on economic growth in an area that will also become richer. This means that poverty in the region will decrease when economic growth increases. Reducing working hours will also directly affect wages and GRDP. The consequence of reducing working hours is that people work less, reducing wages. If this happens continuously, the GRDP will show a regional economic growth decline. Thus, there is an increase in poverty in the community.

2.2. Wages

According to Law Number 13 of 2013 concerning Employment, wages are the rights of workers received in the form of money as a reward from the employer, which are determined and paid according to an employment agreement or statutory regulations, including allowances for workers and their families for a job and/or service that has been or will be performed. Based on the Indonesian Dictionary, wages are defined as salaries, namely wages paid for a fixed period or remuneration received by workers in the form of money based on a specific time.

The value of wages received by workers varies greatly, depending on their work and with whom they work. In this regard, the term minimum wage is known to protect workers' rights in Indonesia. The background of the determination of the minimum wage as a government policy to protect the interests of workers serves as a safety net so that the value of wages is not too low (Kurniawati et al., 2017). Not only that, the minimum wage also functions as a protector and guarantor of business continuity and encourages the growth of productive employment. The minimum wage can be set in the province (Provincial Minimum Wage) or in the Regency/City (Regency/City Minimum Wage).

The debate regarding the impact of minimum wage on poverty is still an exciting topic. Proponents argue that the minimum wage can improve the economic conditions of low-wage workers so that the minimum wage contributes to poverty reduction for workers affected by this regulation (Kurniawati et al., 2017). Others argue that minimum wages lead to rigidity in the labour market, thereby slowing job creation (Gindling and Terrell, 2010). Opponents of minimum wage regulations also argue that minimum wage policies have had only a limited impact on poverty, especially since most low-income families do not have a minimum wage (Burkhauser et al., 2000). Opponents also gave the fact that household income disparity has widened continuously in the last twenty years (Lui, 2019) so that the minimum wage may not be able to overcome the poverty that occurs in the community.

Research by Addison and Blackburn (1999) found that minimum wage affects poverty reduction among teenagers and the junior high school dropout group. Gindling and Terrell

(2010) found that minimum wages strongly influence poverty, where they found that an increase in the minimum wage reduces poverty. In their study, Bird and Manning (2008) found that an increase in the minimum wage could help some households escape poverty. Research by Kurniawati et al. (2017) found that every 1% increase in the minimum wage will reduce poverty by 5.7%, so it can be concluded that when the wages are received to meet their daily needs, it prevents people from experiencing poverty.

2.3. Reduction of Working Hours

The Covid-19 pandemic has caused changes in many institutions (Malayu et al., 2022). One of them is the application of new habits that lead to reduced face-to-face interactions (Mustajab et al., 2020). This has an impact on reducing working hours, one of the policies that began to be implemented during the pandemic. Reduction of working hours is a situation where workers work for a shorter time than usual. The reduction of working hours is implemented to prevent and break the chain of the spread of Covid-19.

Reducing working hours will impact workers' income, especially for workers who receive wages based on work intensity. Thus, the income of workers will be smaller than usual. Furthermore, it has been mentioned in the previous discussion that wages or income received by workers will have an impact on the ability of workers to meet their daily needs. In line with this, if a worker can no longer meet his daily needs due to a reduction in income due to reducing working hours, he will experience poverty.

Tarigan and Rahmawati (2020) state that poverty is measured by the ability of the population to meet basic needs. This approach views poverty as an inability from an economic perspective so that poverty status is measured according to the poverty line (the ability to meet basic needs). Reducing working hours' impact on poverty was illustrated during the Covid-19 pandemic. Workers have lost a lot of work time throughout the pandemic due to reduced working hours. Tarigan and Rahmawati (2020) stated that the Covid-19 pandemic caused the development of poverty because income reductions due to reduced working time, job loss, and loss of business significantly impact poverty.

2.4. Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP)

GRDP (Gross Regional Domestic Product) is the amount of gross added value arising from all economic sectors in the area. Gross Regional Domestic Product is one of the essential indicators to determine economic growth in an area within a certain period, both based on current and constant prices. GRDP is the sum of the gross value-added that emerges from all regional economic sectors, including income, depreciation, and net direct taxes (BPS, 2020).

Ruliansyah (2013) states that economic growth is defined as the development of activities in the economy that causes goods and services produced in society to increase and the prosperity of society increases. Economic growth is defined as an increase in Gross Domestic Product or Gross National Income regardless of whether the increase is more significant or less than the population growth rate or whether changes in economic structure occur.

GRDP is a concept of per capita income whose explanation is implemented at the regional/regional scope. The amount of income per capita in a region reflects income distribution using the average value of the overall household income in the regional economy. The concept of per capita income like this is still relevant to explain the formation of the number of poor people in the area. If per capita income increases, the ability of the average income of the people in an area will increase.

Suppose the ability to meet basic needs increases, and the number of poor people in the area will decrease. On the other hand, if the income per capita in a region decreases, the ability of the average income of the people in that area will also decrease. When there is a reduction in working hours, the income received by workers will also decrease. As a result, per capita

income when working hours are reduced will be smaller than regular working hours. When this happens for a long time (monthly or annually), the value of GRDP will show a decline, indicating an increase in the potential for poverty in the region.

2.5. Hypothesis Development

2.5.1. The Effect of Wages on Poverty

Wages are the rights of workers received in the form of money as a reward from the employer, which is determined and paid according to an employment agreement or statutory regulations, including allowances for workers and their families for a job and service that has been or will be performed. The first hypothesis in this study is that wages have a negative effect on poverty. This hypothesis is supported by the findings of previous researchers who stated that the wages of family members significantly affect the poverty rate because it affects family income (Kurniawan, 2017). Then, Prayoga et al. (2021) state that if wages in an area are high, welfare will also increase along with the increase in people's income so that, in the process, the community will be free from poverty. And low minimum wages make workers unable to meet their daily needs (Kurniawati et al., 2017).

Economic growth is often a benchmark for a region's economic performance. However, it is not certain that high economic growth indicates a high level of people's welfare. It is undeniable that economic growth is significant for poverty alleviation and economic development. Siregar and Wahyuniarti (2008) state that economic growth is necessary for reducing poverty. GRDP provides an overview of the community's economic growth in an area. The findings of previous studies stated that one indicator of the welfare level of the population of a region is the GRDP per capita (Kuswantoro and Dewi, 2016). His research explains that the higher the GRDP per capita of a region, the greater the potential source of regional revenue because of the more significant the income of the region's people. This means that the higher the GRDP per capita, the more prosperous the population of a region will be. In other words, the number of poor people will decrease.

H1a: Wages have a negative effect on poverty

H1b: GRDP moderates the relationship between wages and poverty

2.5.2. The Effect of Reduction of Working Hours on Poverty

The following hypothesis is that reduction of working hours has a positive effect on poverty. This hypothesis is that poverty is measured by the ability of the population to meet needs (Tarigan and Rahmawati, 2020). Workers have lost a lot of work time throughout the pandemic due to reduced working hours. Tarigan and Rahmawati (2020) stated that the Covid-19 pandemic increased poverty due to reduced income due to reduced working time, job loss, and loss of business. Another study by Dewi et al. (2020) stated that reducing working hours during the Covid-19 period led to decreased employee income. Large-Scale Social Restrictions are being promoted to reduce the spread of Covid-19, resulting in a significant economic impact as it ends in closing financial markets, corporate offices, businesses, and events that contribute to increasing poverty (Ozili & Arun, 2020).

GRDP moderates the relationship between reduction of working hours and poverty. This hypothesis is formulated based on the GRDP function, which is an indicator to determine the economic condition of a region. Based on the GRDP, it will be known whether the area is experiencing an increase or a poverty reduction. This statement is in line with the research results of Hermawan and Bahjatulloh (2022), which state that high GRDP will reduce poverty levels because high GRDP development can be optimized to achieve community welfare. Conversely, low GRDP will increase the number of poverties in the community because the development carried out for the community's welfare is not optimal. Reducing working hours

causes workers to spend more time being unemployed. On the other hand, they also experience a decrease in income. The research findings by Hermawan and Bahjatulloh (2022) stated that unemployment has a positive relationship with poverty.

H2a: Reduction of working hours has a positive effect on poverty

H2b: GRDP moderates the relationship between wages and poverty

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Sample

This study uses the Indonesian Central Statistics Agency (Badan Pusat Statistik or BPS) database to obtain data related to the average salary of workers. The number of workers experiencing reduced working hours, Gross Regional Domestic Product, and the number of people living in poverty. The sample used is all provinces in Indonesia, totalling 34 provinces. The data used are monthly data from each province in 2020. Therefore, the total sample used is 408.

3.2. Variables

This study uses two independent variables: wages and working hours reduction. The wage data is the average income a worker receives each month in each province. Data on the reduction of working hours is the number of workers who experience a reduction in working hours each month in each province. The dependent variable used is poverty, namely the number of people in the poor category each month in a province. This study also uses the GRDP value as a moderating variable. All data is taken from the database of the Central Statistics Agency.

Table 1: The Variable Definition

Dependent	Poverty	The total population in the poor category	Central Statistics Agency
Independent	Wages	Average wages received by workers	Central Statistics Agency
Independent	Reduction of Working Hours	Number of workers who experienced reduced working hours	Central Statistics Agency
Moderator	GRDP	GRDP value for each province	Central Statistics Agency

Source: own compilations

3.3. Research Design

This study uses multiple linear regression to examine the effect of wages and reduction of working hours on poverty. After that, we use moderated regression analysis to examine the moderating role of the GRDP variable in the relationship between wages and the reduction of working hours in poverty. Finally, to analyze the effect of the independent variable on the dependent and also the moderating role of the moderator variable, we form the following formula:

$$Y_1 = a_1 + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 = e$$

$$Y_2 = a_2 + b_3X_1 + b_4X_2 + b_5M + b_6X_1.M + b_7X_2.M$$

Y = Poverty

α = Constanta

b 1...b 7 = Regression Coefficients
 X1 = Wages
 X2 = Reduction of Working Hours
 M = GRDP
 E = Error

4. RESULT

4.1. Descriptive Test

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimu m	Maximu m	Mean	Std. Deviation
Wage	408	12,707	32,138	19,537.76	4,721.599
Reduced Working Hour	408	62,887	5,104.409	706,693.41	1,115,037.356
GRDP	408	28,021	1,792.403	318,762.65	456,111.990
Poverty	408	52.70	4,585.97	810.2853	1,157.91407
Valid N (listwise)	408				

The descriptive statistic of the research variable describes that the minimum wage is Rp12,707/hour and the maximum is Rp32,138/hour with a mean of Rp19,537,76/hour. Workers that have reduced their working hours range from 62,887 workers to 5,104,409 workers, with an average of 706.693 workers in 34 provinces. Provinces in Indonesia have a GRDP range of 28.021 billion rupiahs to 1,792.403-billion-rupiah with an average of 318,762.65 billion rupiahs. The poverty range in 34 provinces is from 52.7 thousand people to 4,585.97 thousand people, an average of 810.29 thousand. This indicates that poverty is still a major problem in Indonesia because the poverty rate is still high.

4.2. Regression Result and Discussion

Table 3. Regression Results

Variables	Coefficients	Sig.	Adjusted R-Square
Wage	-0.08	0.059	0.079
Reduced Working Hour	0,001	0,000	
Wage*GRDP	-0,614	0.004	0.212
Reduced Working Hour*GRDP	0,000	0.747	

Based on table 3, the regression analysis shows that the Wage variable has a significant value above 0.05 (5%), which is 0.059, so the wage variable is declared to have no effect on poverty. This indicates that the wages received by workers in the period may not be sufficient to meet their daily needs, so they are still in the category of the poor. In addition, the wage variable does not affect poverty because most of the poor still receive wages below the minimum threshold needed to fulfil their daily needs, so they still cannot get out of the poverty circle (Burkhauser et al., 2000). Therefore, work does not always guarantee decent living conditions (Gammarano, 2019). And then, in 2020, when the pandemic Covid-19 happened, it makes the

government made an extraordinary effort, some of which were providing government assistance to affected communities who are part of the program called “*Jaring Pengaman Sosial (JPS)*” in the form of cash social assistance, *Keluarga Harapan* program, pre-employment cards, social assistance for necessities, and electricity subsidies. Even though it was unequal and has not been effective (Mashuri and Taufiq, 2021; Noerkaisar, 2021; Suparman, 2021), it is extraordinary and unpredictable conditions during a pandemic making a lot of things can cause this to happen.

Variable Reduction of Working Hours shows a significant positive effect on poverty. This is evidenced by the significance value of the hypothesis test at 0.000, and the coefficient value is positive. This proves that during the COVID-19 pandemic, workers who received reduced working hours also experienced a decrease in income, increasing the number of people experiencing poverty (Dewi et al., 2020 & Tarigan and Rahmawati, 2020). The reduction in working hours occurred in various business sectors, especially the night entertainment sector due to the large-scale social restrictions or PSBB (Yusida, et al., 2021). The two independent variables together affect the dependent 7.9%.

The GRDP variable can moderate the relationship between the wage and poverty variables. This can be seen in the table, which shows the significant value of wage interaction being smaller than 0.05, which is 0.000 and then the coefficient is -0,614, which means it has a significant negative effect. This is because wages are the fundamental reason a person works to meet the necessities of life and family and improve their social status. In addition, the determination of wages also affects the sustainability of a business or company in any sector (Lubis, 2021). But government policy in implementing large-scale social restrictions to reduce the pandemic's impact makes businesses or companies implement work from home (Nasruddin and Haq, 2020). Moreover, society relies on online shopping, causing the demand for goods online to increase significantly (Chaudhary, 2020). Therefore, it makes sense that the wage variable that previously had no effect on poverty turned into a given effect after being moderated by GRDP.

Even so, the GRDP variable cannot moderate the relationship between the reduction of working hours and poverty. The interaction significance value is above 0.05, which is 0.747. The variables of wage and reduction of working hours after being moderated by GRDP could increase their impact on poverty to 74.7%. The finding supports previous studies stating that one indicator of the welfare level of the population of a region is the GRDP per capita (Kuswantoro and Dewi, 2016). It is explained that the higher the GRDP per capita, the more prosperous the population of a region will be. In other words, the number of poor people will decrease.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This study provides empirical evidence that wage has no effect on poverty, but after being moderated by GRDP, it has a significant negative effect. On the other hand, a reduction in working hours has a positive effect on poverty, but GRDP cannot moderate the relationship between the two variables. The new finding in this study is that wages have an effect on poverty if moderated by the GRDP or have an indirect effect. In contrast, the reduction in working hours due to the Covid-19 pandemic will directly affect poverty in Indonesia.

This research contributes to the addition of literature related to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the economy and society. However, this research is still not perfect due to the lack of observation period. It is hoped that further research will examine the relationship between these variables over a more extended period so that the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the economy and society will be more clearly visible. In addition, it is hoped that further research will also examine other variables that can be determinants of poverty. Practical

implications in this research show that the central and local government, through the relevant state apparatus, must make various efforts to protect the rights of workers and the rights of the community, especially for those affected by Covid-19, most of them are the lower middle class. Further efforts to overcome the inequality in the distribution of government aid can also be done.

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