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# The Influence of Government Expenditure on Poverty Levels in Banten Province

Diyana Mila Hafsari[1]*, Sishadiyati[2]
Universitas Pembangunan Nasional "Veteran" Jawa Timur, Indonesia
**Corresponding Author:** Sishadiyati sishadiyati.ep@upnjatim.ac.id

A R T I C L E I N F O

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A B S T R A C T

The poverty rate is an important indicator in assessing the welfare of society and the performance of regional development. This study aims to determine the effect of government expenditure on the poverty level in Banten Province during the period from 2009 to 2023. The data used is secondary data in the form of time series, and it is analyzed using the Vector Autoregression (VAR) method with stationarity tests, Johansen cointegration, Granger causality, Impulse Response Function (IRF), and Forecast Error Variance Decomposition (FEVD). The results show a short-term causal relationship between government expenditure and the poverty rate; however, no long-term relationship was found between the two. The contribution of government expenditure to changes in the poverty rate is also considered low. Conversely, the poverty rate has a greater influence on government expenditure. This reflects that expenditure policies have not been sufficiently effective in sustainably reducing poverty levels and remain responsive to prevailing socio-economic conditions.

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## INTRODUCTION

Constructivism refers to a series of ongoing changes affecting various aspects of life, such as the economy, education, human resources, natural resources, and industry. The primary focus of this process is to create a more efficient societal and financial condition while improving the quality of life for the community. Poverty should not be viewed simply, as it involves various interrelated aspects. Most international countries, particularly those with lower-middle economies like Indonesia, continue to grapple with this challenge. Numerous theories have been developed and policies implemented to address these issues. However, the achievements thus far have not fully met expectations (Arifin, 2020). The Banten region has been identified as one of the provinces in Indonesia that still faces significant economic limitations. From 2009 to 2023, the poverty rate in this province has fluctuated both in total numbers and percentages.

The Banten region has been identified as one of the provinces in Indonesia that continues to face significant economic challenges. From 2009 to 2023, the poverty rate in this province has fluctuated both in total numbers and percentages. Several periods have shown an increase in poverty figures, such as in March 2015, September 2017, and September 2018. This surge was primarily driven by rising prices of basic necessities due to fuel price hikes. Additionally, the period from September 2020 to March 2021 also recorded an increase, largely attributed to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, as of March 2023, the poverty rate in Banten Province has shown a downward trend in both urban and rural areas.

The poverty rate in Banten Province is lower than that of other provinces on Java Island, primarily due to the strong role of the industrial and services sectors. The disparity between urban and rural areas remains a major challenge, making it essential to ensure more equitable regional development policies to achieve sustainable poverty alleviation. Poor health, low education levels among the poor, and low wages due to a lack of skills are all directly related to low living standards. From an economic perspective, several factors contribute to poverty. First, the imbalance in asset utilization leads to unequal income distribution, which exacerbates poverty issues. Second, there are disparities in human resource levels among the population. Lastly, poverty can also occur due to unequal access to investments held by individuals or groups.

The central government recognizes the urgency of poverty eradication in improving health services and has launched various initiatives. One of these is the Jamkesnas Program, which aims to ensure equitable physical welfare coverage and reduce the financial burden on vulnerable groups (Anindya et al., 2020). The 2004 Law Number 40 regulates welfare guarantees as part of social protection policies intended to ensure that all citizens can meet their dignified living needs. Within the framework of economic development, the government is responsible for implementing state interventions in the form of social protection programs aimed at strengthening the capacity of households to cope with various life risks.

The Covid-19 pandemic period had a significant impact, causing many people to lose their jobs and reducing incomes. This explains the increase in poverty rates from September 2020 to March 2021. However, the downward trend in poverty rates as of March 2023 offers hope. This decline may be attributed to economic recovery efforts, social assistance programs, and increased job opportunities. In both urban and rural areas, this decrease indicates a potential for growth that can help communities break the cycle of poverty.

Poverty is a multidimensional issue that extends beyond mere income limitations; it is also linked to the lack of quality human resources and unequal access to economic resources. Education plays a crucial role in improving the quality of human resources. Allocating funds for education strengthens an individual's productive capacity, thereby increasing the opportunities to secure better employment and raise income levels. Thus, education functions as an essential human capital that drives economic growth and alleviates poverty.

To address income inequality, the government implements income redistribution policies by taxing high-income individuals, with the revenue subsequently reallocated for the benefit of low-income communities through subsidy spending or social assistance. Through this policy, it is hoped that social welfare levels can be achieved if the marginal utility of tax payments by high-income individuals is equivalent to the marginal utility received by those receiving Social Assistance (Rosen & Gayer, 2014). Government spending is closely linked to improving the living standards of social groups, particularly in alleviating economic disparities (Riva et al., 2021). Therefore, budget allocation should be focused on public interests, such as the development of education services, health services, and social protection.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Theory of Poverty*

According to Adolf Wagner's theory, government spending tends to increase each year as the role of government in society becomes more significant. With the rise in per capita income, government expenditures also tend to rise. This occurs due to the growing needs across various sectors, such as social, legal, education, recreation, and culture (Ferry Prasetya, 2012).

In the study by Aditia (2021) on the impact of regional spending on poverty in Indonesia, it was found that government expenditure has a negative and significant effect on the poverty rate. This indicates that as government spending increases, the poverty rate tends to decrease. According to the research by Dewi & Yuliani (2020), the findings show that government spending in the education sector significantly negatively impacts the poverty rate, as it can enhance the quality of human resources.

### *Teori Human Capital*

According to Schultz (1961), the human capital theory is defined as the knowledge and skills acquired by individuals, which serve as capital in the form of education, encompassing both general and technical skills. Thus,

investment in education plays a crucial role as a key factor in enhancing the quality of human resources aimed at promoting economic growth.

In the study by Safitri (2021), it was found that although government expenditure has increased, its impact on reducing poverty is not significant. This is attributed to the weak implementation of programs and the lack of budget effectiveness. According to the research by Wulandari (2020), in her study conducted in several major cities, it was found that government spending does not directly reduce poverty, especially if not allocated to sectors that have a direct impact on the poor.

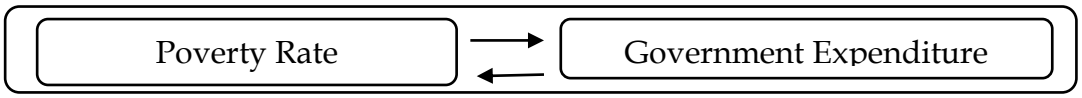


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

***Hypothesis***

H1: A causal relationship exists between government expenditure and the poverty rate in Banten Province.

H2: No causal relationship exists between government expenditure and the poverty rate in Banten Province.

## METHODOLOGY

***Research Approach***

This study implements statistical methods, emphasizing the use of numerical data to uncover and analyze the phenomena under investigation. The quantitative approach is based on a positivist paradigm and is typically applied to investigate a specific population or sample, where data is obtained using standardized tools and analyzed with hypothesis testing techniques. In this study, the method used is the Granger causality test. Information was obtained from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) and processed using EViews software.

***Place and Time of Research***

The primary focus of this study is Banten Province. This province was chosen as the research location due to its fluctuating poverty rates in recent years, as well as its active role in implementing various government programs in the sectors of social assistance, education, and health. This study utilizes annual data covering the period from 2009 to 2023.

***Operational Definition and Measurement of Research Variables***

Practical definitions provide a detailed description of the concepts in the research in the form of measurable variables, both theoretically and empirically. The aim is to clarify how each variable is interpreted and measured in the context of this research, which involves two types of variables. The two independent variables are:

1. The poverty rate is derived from official data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), presented in percentage (%).

2. Government expenditure is obtained from official data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), presented in thousands of rupiah.

***Population and Sample***

In this study, the observed population includes data on the poverty rate, government expenditure in the education sector, government expenditure in the health sector, and social assistance spending in Banten Province from 2009 to 2023. The representation selection technique applied in this study is the time series technique, utilizing periodically measured annual data from 2009 to 2023.

***Data Collection Methods***

In this study, data is obtained from several official sources, including the BPS website (https://banten.bps.go.id), the DATAKU website of the Regional Development Planning Agency of Banten Province (http://bappeda.bantenprov.go.id/), and Directorate General of Financial Balance, Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Indonesia (https://djpk.kemenkeu.go.id/).

***Data Analysis Techniques***

To process the statistics in this study, Eviews 12 software was utilized on the Windows operating system. This application was used to evaluate the effect of the independent variable, Government Expenditure (X), on the dependent variable, Poverty Rate (Y), in Banten Province.

**RESEARCH RESULT**

***Stationarity Test***

The focus of this test is to determine whether a variable possesses stationary properties, meaning that its mean, variance, and autocovariance remain stable over time. Non-stationarity in the data can undermine the validity of the analysis results, as it has the potential to lead to spurious regression, which is a statistical relationship that appears significant but does not reflect the true causal relationship.

Table 1. Stationary Test

| Method | Statistic | Prob.** |
|---|---|---|
| ADF - Fisher Chi-square | 14.6594 | 0.0055 |
| ADF - Choi Z-stat | -2.74519 | 0.0030 |

*Source: Data were processed*

According to the findings, the stationarity test indicates that both the ADF-Fisher statistic and Choi Z-stat produce p-values below 0.05. Therefore, it can be stated that the panel statistics for element X (government expenditure) and Y (poverty rate) have been constant at the first difference level."

***Cointegration Test***

In the context of this research, long-term relationship analysis is applied to examine whether there is a structural linkage between government expenditure and the poverty rate in Banten Province.

Table 2. Cointegration Test

| Hypothesized No. of CE(s) | Eigenvalue | Trace Statistic | 0.05 Critical Value | Prob.** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| None | 0.486741 | 8.007436 | 15.49471 | 0.4646 |
| At most 1 | 0.000312 | 0.003740 | 3.841465 | 0.9500 |

*Source: Data were processed*

Based on the results, the probability values (p-values) for all hypotheses are above 0.05, indicating no cointegration association among the tested variables. Therefore, there is no significant long-term relationship between government investment and the poverty rate in the model. Consequently, the appropriate model approach for further analysis is VAR (Vector Autoregression) without an error correction component, as no evidence of long-term cointegration was found.

***Optimal Lag Test***

The determination of lag is aimed at accurately capturing the temporal dynamics between variables, ensuring that the model can represent the relationships that occur without causing overparameterization or neglecting relevant information.

Table 3. Optional Lag Test

| Lag | LogL | LR | FPE | AIC | SC | HQ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | -313.5080 | NA* | 2.81e+22* | 57.36509* | 57.43743* | 57.31948* |
| 1 | -313.1573 | 0.510052 | 5.61e+22 | 58.02860 | 58.24564 | 57.89179 |
| 2 | -310.4167 | 2.989758 | 7.91e+22 | 58.25758 | 58.61931 | 58.02957 |
| 3 | -307.7736 | 1.922266 | 1.39e+23 | 58.50429 | 59.01070 | 58.18507 |

*Source: Data were processed*

Based on the output in the table, all information criteria (AIC, SC, and HQ) indicate a minimum value at lag 0. Thus, the optimal lag used in the model is lag 0. This indicates that there is no statistically significant delay in the relationship between the variables in the model.

***VAR Stability Test***

A VAR model is considered stable or stationary when all characteristic roots lie within the unit circle, meaning they have a modulus of less than one (modulus < 1).

Table 4. VAR Stability Test

| Root | Modulus |
|---|---|
| -0.131272 | 0.131272 |
| 0.127164 | 0.127164 |

*Source: Data were processed*

All modulus values are below 1, specifically 0.131272 and 0.127164, indicating that the model is in a stable condition. Therefore, the VAR model used meets the stationarity requirement and can be utilized for further analysis, such as Granger causality, IRF, or FEVD, in a valid manner according to journal guidelines.

***Granger Causality Test***

This test does not demonstrate a deterministic causal relationship but rather evaluates whether historical information from one variable can significantly be used to predict another variable.

Table 5. Granger Causality Test

| Null Hypothesis: | Obs | F-Statistic | Prob. |
|---|---|---|---|
| X does not Granger Cause Y | 14 | 4.13813 | 0.0668 |
| Y does not Granger Cause X | | 0.04607 | 0.8340 |

*Source: Data were processed*

Based on the test results, the probability value for the hypothesis 'X doesn't Granger Cause Y' is 0.0668, slightly above the 5% significance threshold, but within the marginally significant range at the 10% level. This indicates a weak indication of a one-way causal relationship between government spending and the poverty rate, although it is not strong enough to be considered statistically significant at the 5% level. Meanwhile, the hypothesis 'Y doesn't Granger Cause X' has a p-value of 0.8340, well above 0.05, indicating no evidence of causality from the poverty rate to government spending according to journal guidelines.

***IRF Test***

The IRF test is utilized to examine how an endogenous variable responds to shocks originating from other factors within the VAR system. Through the IRF, the dynamic response of a variable to a one-standard-deviation shock in another variable can be mapped, observed over several future periods.

Table 6. IRF Test

VAR Model - Substituted Coefficients:
==========
D(Y) = 0.105627040735*D(Y(-1)) + 1.86001189638e-09*D(X(-1)) + 1.16255682829

D(X) = 2743005.14404*D(Y(-1)) - 0.1097348092*D(X(-1)) + 2716666384.57

*Source: Data were processed*

Based on the results, the response of the poverty rate to shocks in government spending is very small, as reflected in the impulse coefficient of 1.86×10. This indicates that short-term shocks in government spending do not have a significant impact on changes in the level of inequality. On the other hand, the government spending variable responds to fluctuations in the previous poverty level with a very large coefficient, though statistically insignificant, reinforcing that the two-way dynamic relationship is not strongly confirmed during the observation period according to journal guidelines

***FEVD Test***

FEVD explains the proportion of forecast error variation of a variable that can be attributed to itself as well as to other variables in the model over a specified time horizon.

Table 7. FEVD Test

| Variance Decomposition of D(X): Period | S.E. | D(Y) | D(X) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 3.79E+09 | 37.74958 | 62.25042 |
| 2 | 3.83E+09 | 38.24171 | 61.75829 |

*Source: Data were processed*

This result indicates that in the short term, the poverty rate begins to contribute significantly to fluctuations in government spending, although most of the variation is still explained by its own internal factors. The increasing contribution of D(Poverty Rate) from the first stage to the second stage reflects the potential influence of short-term interrelationship, although it is not yet dominant according to journal guidelines

**DISCUSSION**

Based on previous research, government spending plays a strategic role in reducing poverty levels, especially when allocated to sectors that directly support the improvement of residents' welfare. A study conducted by Aditia (2022) shows that government spending directed towards education and assistance programs significantly contributes to the reduction of economic limitations in several provinces in Indonesia. Similar results were obtained from the research by Aritonang (2021), which emphasizes that the effectiveness of regional spending heavily depends on the efficiency of allocation and the accuracy of policy targeting according to journal guidelines.

Banten Province is one of the regions experiencing significant development, particularly in infrastructure and the industrial sector. This is supported by its strategic location in the western part of Java Island and the presence of large industrial areas such as in Cilegon City, Tangerang City, and Tangerang Regency. The economic growth of Banten is also reflected in the increased contribution of the manufacturing and construction sectors to the regional Gross Domestic Product (GDP) according to journal guidelines

However, this rapid development has not fully provided positive impacts evenly across all communities in Banten. There are disparities in development between regions, where the central and western areas, such as Pandeglang Regency and Lebak Regency, still face higher poverty rates compared to urban and industrial regions. This situation is exacerbated by limited access to education and health services, as well as the low quality of basic infrastructure in underdeveloped areas according to journal guidelines.

From the perspective of government spending, data show that regional budget allocations have made progress each year from 2009 to 2023, including for expenditures in education, health, and social protection. However, through Granger causality testing, it was found that government spending only impacts poverty reduction in the short term. There is no significant long-term relationship, as evidenced by the absence of cointegration in the Johansen test. This reflects that, although there is a fiscal role in influencing poverty, government spending has not yet been able to create deep structural transformation according to journal guidelines.

Additionally, the data processing results show that a significant portion of government spending tends to be absorbed by routine or operational expenditures, which means its effectiveness in empowering poor communities still needs improvement. The low efficiency of regional spending has also been highlighted in various empirical studies, indicating a weak monitoring and evaluation system for programs according to journal guidelines.

Given this situation, to achieve inclusive and sustainable development goals in Banten Province, government spending needs to be increased not only nominally but also directed more strategically and based on regional needs. Local governments must ensure that development expenditures are truly focused on improving the quality of life for communities in underdeveloped areas, by strengthening the sectors of education, health, and economic empowerment for poor communities according to journal guidelines.

Furthermore, the implementation of spatial data-based policies and evidence-based policy is crucial for identifying areas that most require fiscal intervention. The government also needs to strengthen performance-based budgeting systems so that each budget allocation can be directly linked to development outcomes, especially in efforts to consistently reduce poverty rates according to journal guidelines.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research findings regarding the impact of government spending on increasing social inequality in Banten Province from 2009 to 2023, it can be concluded that government spending has not been able to produce significant effects in reducing social inequality in the long term. The output of the Granger Causality test and Impulse Response Function shows that the relationship formed between the two variables is only short-term, while the analysis of FEVD reveals that the contribution of government spending to the variation in poverty rate changes is only 0.79% according to journal guidelines.

Conversely, the poverty rate has a significant impact on changes in government spending, at 38%, indicating that fiscal policy is more responsive to the dynamics of poverty rather than being a proactive instrument to address it structurally. This condition reflects that government spending in Banten Province tends to adjust to the existing socioeconomic situation, rather than being focused on creating long-term changes in the empowerment of poor communities according to journal guidelines.

This fact aligns with the conditions in Banten Province, which experiences disparities in development between regions. While industrial areas such as Tangerang and Cilegon are experiencing rapid economic growth, regions like Pandeglang and Lebak still face various social issues, such as limited basic infrastructure, low access to education and health services, and high poverty rates according to journal guidelines

Therefore, local governments need to direct public spending policies more strategically, measurably, and results-oriented. Strengthening the monitoring and evaluation system for programs is crucial to ensure that the budget is truly allocated to areas that directly impact the prosperity of the population, such as education, physical conditions, and community programs. A results-focused financial planning approach and evidence-based policy need to be implemented consistently to enhance the effectiveness of regional spending according to journal guidelines.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

To support the formulation of more inclusive development policies in the future, further research is also recommended to include additional variables such as education level, access to health services, employment opportunities, and the human development index. This would allow for a more comprehensive analysis of the relationships between factors contributing to poverty within the context of regional development according to journal guidelines.

## ADVANCED RESEARCH

This research has limitations in the number of independent variables used, as it only encompasses government spending in general. Therefore, for future research, it is recommended to expand the scope of variables, such as adding aspects of social inequality, more detailed distribution of social assistance, and considering other external factors such as inflation and unemployment. Additionally, the use of other methods such as VECM or ARDL could also be considered to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of long-term relationships. Future studies are also expected to utilize panel data across districts/cities in Banten Province to ensure that the results are more accurate and applicable to regional policies according to journal guidelines.

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