

# THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EDUCATION AND SKILLS TRAINING FOR JOB SEEKERS IN REDUCING UNEMPLOYMENT IN TIMOR TENGAH SELATAN REGENCY, EAST NUSA TENGGARA PROVINCE

Elkis Alle<sup>1</sup>, Hendrawati Hamid<sup>2</sup>

Department of Economic Development and Community Empowerment, Faculty of Government Politics, Institut Pemerintahan Dalam Negeri, Jatinangor

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## Abstract

*The workforce is one of the most valuable assets and a key factor in a country's economic development. The availability of a qualified, skilled, and productive workforce plays an important role in enhancing global competitiveness and the overall welfare of society. One way to ensure a qualified workforce is by providing skills training. Such training is expected to equip workers and job seekers with the necessary skills to compete in the labor market and help reduce unemployment. Therefore, this study, entitled "The Effectiveness of Education and Skills Training for Job Seekers in Reducing Unemployment in Timor Tengah Selatan Regency, East Nusa Tenggara Province," aims to analyze the effectiveness of education and skills training for job seekers in reducing unemployment, the inhibiting factors, and the efforts made to overcome obstacles in the implementation of such training. This research employs a descriptive qualitative method, with data collected through semi-structured interviews using purposive sampling, supported by observation and documentation. The results show that the effectiveness of education and skills training programs in Timor Tengah Selatan Regency is reflected in the clear targeting of participants and active engagement, although access through non-Musrebang channels and the variety of training types remain limited. Program socialization is conducted through various media, although challenges remain in ensuring equal information dissemination. As many as 98% of training participants succeeded in obtaining employment or starting their own businesses; however, the overall impact on reducing unemployment remains limited (5-10%) due to budget constraints and a limited variety of available training types. Post-training monitoring and mentoring are well-implemented and have a positive impact on sustainability. Nevertheless, the lack of supporting facilities such as a Vocational Training Center (BLK) and limited budget remain significant obstacles. Solutions implemented include direct village-based training, provision of work equipment, and improvement of training quality.*

**Keywords:** Education, Training, Skills, Job Seekers, Unemployment

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### Corresponding Author:

Elkis Alle  
[elkisalle@ipdn.ac.id](mailto:elkisalle@ipdn.ac.id)

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## 1. Introduction

The workforce is one of the most valuable assets and a key factor in a country's economic development. The availability of a qualified, skilled, and productive workforce not only drives economic growth but also plays a crucial role in enhancing global competitiveness and the overall welfare of society. Indonesia, as the fourth most populous country in the world,

possesses an extraordinary human resource potential to support national development and realize the vision of an advanced Indonesia.

Recognizing this potential and the importance of effective workforce management, the government has established various policies and regulations to optimize national workforce utilization. One of the primary legal foundations governing employment in Indonesia is Law Number 13 of 2003 on Manpower, which regulates various aspects of employment including job training, workforce placement, employment expansion, and worker protection. Article 4 of Law No. 13/2003 affirms that manpower development aims to empower and utilize the workforce optimally and humanely; achieve equal employment opportunities; provide protection for workers; and improve the welfare of workers and their families.

Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS, 2024), Indonesia's labor force in February 2024 reached 149.38 million people, of which 142.18 million were employed. The Open Unemployment Rate (TPT) in February 2024 was recorded at 4.82%, a decrease from 5.32% in the same period the previous year. Nevertheless, with 7.20 million people still unemployed, continued efforts are needed to expand employment opportunities and improve workforce quality (BPS, 2024).

The limited availability of domestic employment has prompted the government to adopt strategic measures through the Workforce Placement Program, encompassing inter-provincial placement (AKAD) and overseas placement (AKAN). This program has been implemented across various provinces, including East Nusa Tenggara (NTT).

Table 1. Outmigration Figures for AKAD and AKAN, 2020-2023, East Nusa Tenggara Province

No.	Region	AKAD 2020	AKAD 2021	AKAD 2022	AKAD 2023	AKAN 2020	AKAN 2021	AKAN 2022	AKAN 2023
1.	West Sumba	-	7	7	36	18	-	41	163
2.	East Sumba	-	-	-	6	11	-	56	210
3.	Kupang	-	46	50	175	41	4	24	241
4.	Timor Tengah Selatan	-	60	63	214	12	3	9	94
5.	Timor Tengah Utara	-	130	131	167	-	1	2	32
6.	Belu	5	267	270	162	34	3	29	146
7.	Alor	-	-	1	23	2	1	1	11
8.	Lembata	-	1	2	-	1	1	3	66
9.	East Flores	-	47	47	21	4	-	11	216
10.	Sikka	-	21	23	37	6	2	3	44
11.	Ende	1	24	25	5	2	1	-	29
12.	Ngada	9	1	1	5	-	-	1	12
13.	Manggarai	36	-	-	-	1	-	-	13
14.	Rote Ndao	-	58	58	37	11	-	16	65
15.	West Manggarai	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	7
16.	Central Sumba	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	27
17.	Southwest Sumba	-	206	206	8	47	-	57	334
18.	Nagekeo	4	30	30	14	-	-	-	11
19.	East Manggarai	-	19	19	-	1	-	4	8
20.	Sabu Raijua	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
21.	Malaka	-	91	91	79	15	-	9	79
22.	Kupang City	-	2	4	213	5	2	8	72
	<b>East Nusa Tenggara</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>1,010</b>	<b>1,028</b>	<b>1,204</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>1,882</b>

Source: BPS East Nusa Tenggara Province, 2024

Table 1 shows a significant increase in workforce placement through AKAD from 2020 to 2021, with placements jumping from 55 to 1,010 persons, continuing to rise to 1,204 placements in 2023. Meanwhile, the AKAN program experienced fluctuations, with a sharp decline in 2021 due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, followed by a significant recovery to 1,882 placements in 2023.



Timor Tengah Selatan (TTS) Regency in NTT has shown an increase in outmigration through both AKAD and AKAN. In addition to the workforce placement program, the Manpower and Transmigration Office (Disnakertrans) of TTS Regency also implements a program to improve workforce quality and productivity through various forms of education and skills training, as stipulated in the Regional Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMD) of TTS Regency 2019-2024. This program targets job seekers and includes skills training in sewing, furniture-making (carpentry), and tire patching.

Although education and skills training for job seekers has been proven effective in reducing unemployment in other regions, TTS Regency continues to face the problem of failing to achieve its Open Unemployment Rate (TPT) reduction targets.

Table 2. TPT Target and Realization in Timor Tengah Selatan Regency, 2022-2024

No.	Year	Labor Force (persons)	TPT Target (persons)	TPT Realization (persons)
1	2022	276,207	5,607	5,510
2	2023	284,860	4,074	7,507
3	2024	303,634	2,520	7,995

Source: RPJMD TTS Regency 2019-2024 and BPS TTS Regency

Table 2 shows that the TPT reduction target was only achieved in 2022. In 2023 and 2024, the actual number of unemployed persons far exceeded the targets: 7,507 persons against a target of 4,074 (2023) and 7,995 persons against a target of 2,520 (2024). This indicates that unemployment reduction efforts in TTS Regency have not been effective in the past two years.

Table 3. Comparison of Training Quota and Unemployment Figures in TTS Regency

No.	Year	Training Quota (persons)	Unemployment Total (persons)
1.	2020	150	6,491
2.	2021	60	6,718
3.	2022	150	5,510
4.	2023	150	7,507
5.	2024	150	7,995

Source: Disnakertrans TTS Regency and BPS East Nusa Tenggara Province, 2024

Table 3 shows that the available training quota is far too small relative to the scale of unemployment. Additionally, the lack of supporting infrastructure, particularly the absence of a Vocational Training Center (Balai Latihan Kerja/BLK), poses a significant challenge (Ulan, 2019).

Based on the above problem description, this study focuses on the effectiveness of education and skills training activities in reducing unemployment in TTS Regency, identifies implementation obstacles, and provides recommendations to improve its effectiveness in the future.

## 2. Method

This study employs a descriptive qualitative research method. According to Sugiyono (2024), qualitative research is grounded in post-positivist philosophy, used to examine phenomena in their natural setting, where the researcher serves as the key instrument, data are collected through triangulation techniques, analysis is inductive/qualitative in nature, and results emphasize meaning over generalization.

Descriptive research aims to portray phenomena as they genuinely and currently exist. It focuses on constructing a systematic, factual, and accurate description of facts, characteristics, and relationships among the phenomena being studied (Rukajat, 2018).

This research was conducted at the Manpower and Transmigration Office of TTS Regency and at skills training venues. Informants were selected using purposive sampling and comprised the Head of the Office, the Head of the Training and Workforce Placement Division, the Head of the Training, Productivity and Apprenticeship Section, a training instructor, and 5 training participants.

Data collection techniques included participatory observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Data analysis followed the interactive model developed by Miles and Huberman (1984), encompassing three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification.

The conceptual framework of this study refers to the effectiveness theory proposed by Subagyo as cited in Budiani (2009), which measures program effectiveness through four main dimensions: Target Accuracy, Program Socialization, Program Objectives, and Program Monitoring.

Table 4. Conceptual Operationalization of Effectiveness (Subagyo in Budiani, 2009)

Dimension	Indicators
Target Accuracy	1. Participant criteria and requirements 2. Participant engagement level 3. Relevance of activities to participant needs
Program Socialization	1. Socialization methods/forms 2. Frequency/intensity of socialization 3. Information accessibility for participants
Program Objectives	1. Alignment of program outcomes with stated objectives 2. Impact on unemployment reduction
Program Monitoring	1. Monitoring methods used 2. Monitoring frequency 3. Post-training follow-up actions

Source: Adapted from Subagyo in Budiani, 2009

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1. Overview of the Research Location

Timor Tengah Selatan Regency is located on the island of Timor, with its capital in Kota SoE sub-district, East Nusa Tenggara Province. The regency was officially established on August 9, 1958, under Law Number 69 of 1958. According to BPS (2024), TTS Regency has a population of 481,281 inhabitants and covers an area of 3,955.36 km<sup>2</sup>, dominated by hilly and mountainous topography. The regency comprises 32 sub-districts, 228 villages, and 12 urban villages (kelurahan).

The Manpower and Transmigration Office of TTS Regency is located at Jalan Moh. Hatta No. 18, Taubneno Village, Kota SoE Sub-district. The office assists the regent in administering government affairs in the fields of manpower and transmigration, in accordance with Regional Regulation (Perbup) TTS No. 68 of 2016. The education and skills training service falls under the Training and Workforce Placement Division and the Training, Productivity and Apprenticeship Section.

#### 3.2. Effectiveness of Education and Skills Training for Job Seekers

The effectiveness of education and skills training is analyzed using four main dimensions according to Subagyo as cited in Budiani (2009): Target Accuracy, Program Socialization, Program Objectives, and Program Monitoring.

##### 3.2.1. Target Accuracy

Target accuracy is a key dimension in determining program effectiveness, focusing on the alignment between program outputs and predefined objectives. In the context of skills training, target accuracy is measured through participant eligibility criteria, participant engagement levels, and relevance of activities to participant needs.

Based on interviews with the Head of the Manpower and Transmigration Office, Mr. Josis H.I. Banamtuan, S.Sos., participant requirements include a minimum age of 18 years, a minimum of primary school education, and possession of a national identity card (KTP). Priority is given to underprivileged families and those without jobs. Training is also open to participants nominated through the POKIR DPRD (Regional Legislative Assembly Priority Program) channel, subject to the same requirements.

Each training class is limited to approximately 20 participants, allowing instructors to provide more personalized attention and thereby improve learning quality. Participants demonstrated high enthusiasm and active engagement throughout each training session. Training materials were designed to be relevant to practical field needs and current labor market demands, delivered through a combination of theoretical instruction and direct practice.

However, several limitations were identified. The absence of an official guideline document for participant requirements and selection procedures may lead to implementation inconsistencies. The reliance on the Musrebang and POKIR DPRD channels for participant recruitment may limit access for job seekers without connections to these pathways. Furthermore, the variety of training types offered, only 2-3 types per year, does not yet fully address modern skills demands. These findings are consistent with Ananda et al. (2021), who found that the target accuracy indicator was rated as sufficiently effective but in need of further development.

### 3.2.2. Program Socialization

Program socialization refers to the capacity of program organizers to convey information about the program to the target community. Socialization methods employed include direct outreach to villages, use of local government radio (RPD), and distribution of posters.

Direct socialization is conducted once a year in villages with significant unemployment issues. Radio broadcasts are aired every working day (Monday-Friday) for one month per year. Training participants obtained information through various sources, including friends, members of the Regional Legislative Assembly, radio, and family.

Although the socialization methods are diverse, their intensity requires improvement. Direct socialization has not yet reached all villages, as it is conducted only in selected locations and only once per year. The effectiveness of radio broadcasts is also declining due to changing media consumption habits. Improving socialization effectiveness calls for innovation, particularly through the use of social media or digital platforms. These findings are consistent with Wahyudi et al. (2023), who found that program success is significantly influenced by the effectiveness of socialization in reaching the target participants.

### 3.2.3. Program Objectives

The program objectives dimension measures the extent to which achieved results align with predefined goals. Research findings show that the skills training program has performed well at the individual level. Nearly all participants succeeded in obtaining employment or establishing their own businesses after completing the program, with a success rate of approximately 98% over the past three years (2021-2023). Participants also received starter capital in the form of physical tools appropriate to their respective skills.

However, the program's aggregate impact on reducing unemployment at the regency level remains limited, approximately 5-10%. This is primarily due to budget constraints resulting in a far smaller number of training participants than the Strategic Plan (Renstra) target, a limited variety of training types, and the absence of a permanent BLK in the area. Documentation from the Government Institutional Performance Accountability Report (LAKIP) for 2023 shows that the Renstra quota of 150 persons was only fulfilled for 30 persons.

These findings are consistent with Wahyudi et al. (2023), who affirmed that the effectiveness of job training in reducing unemployment is highly dependent on the number of participants reached and the relevance of training types to labor market needs.

Romadhon and Zikra (2022) also highlighted the importance of diversifying competency-based training to be more adaptive to industry dynamics.

### **3.2.4. Program Monitoring**

Program monitoring refers to activities carried out after program implementation as a form of attention and follow-up toward participants. Monitoring methods include periodic reports from instructors, direct field visits, participant attendance checks, and observation of instructor-participant interactions.

Monitoring is conducted on a weekly basis, with additional ad hoc monitoring when problems arise. Monitoring intensity is adjusted to the type of training; more complex training receives more intensive oversight.

Post-training follow-up was carried out effectively through the provision of completion certificates, job-related equipment (sewing machines for sewing participants, carpentry tools for furniture participants, tire repair tools for automotive participants), business capital, and ongoing mentoring from the office. Nearly all participants reported that the provision of equipment and business capital greatly helped them apply the skills they had acquired. Challenges remain, however, in integrating monitoring data from multiple sources and increasing the frequency of field visits.

## **3.3. Inhibiting Factors and Efforts Undertaken**

### **3.3.1. Inhibiting Factors**

The education and skills training program faces obstacles from both internal and external factors. Internal factors include: (a) low participant motivation to fully engage in training; (b) inconsistent participation rates; (c) limited participant creativity in utilizing acquired skills; and (d) insufficient training duration.

External factors include: (a) limited operational budget; (b) absence of a Vocational Training Center (BLK) as a supporting facility; (c) insufficient post-training mentoring; and (d) a lack of modern equipment for practice that meets current industry standards.

### **3.3.2. Efforts Undertaken**

Efforts already implemented include: (a) direct training in remote villages to reach more job seekers; (b) provision of work equipment to training participants as starter capital; and (c) submission of budget increase requests to the regional government to improve training facilities.

Ongoing efforts include: (a) continuous improvement of training quality by aligning content with local labor market needs and providing supplementary training; and (b) collaboration with village officials in the socialization and participant selection process to ensure that selected participants genuinely need and are prepared for training.

## **4. Conclusions and Suggestions**

### **4.1. Conclusions**

Based on the results and discussion, the following conclusions are drawn. First, the effectiveness of the education and skills training program for job seekers in Timor Tengah Selatan Regency is evident in the clear targeting of participants and their active engagement, although access through non-Musrebang channels and training variety remain limited. Program socialization has been conducted through various methods enabling community access to information, though intensity and innovation in delivery need improvement for broader reach. In terms of objectives, training has proven effective in improving participant skills and encouraging employment or self-employment, with a high individual success rate (98%); however, its impact on reducing regency-level unemployment remains limited (5-10%) due to budget constraints, inadequate facilities, and the limited types of training available. Program monitoring is routinely conducted through instructor reports, field visits, and the provision of equipment and post-training mentoring, yet data integration and the frequency of field visits still need improvement.

Second, internal inhibiting factors include low participant motivation, inconsistent participation rates, limited participant creativity, and insufficient training duration. External inhibiting factors include budget limitations, the absence of a BLK, inadequate post-training mentoring, and insufficient modern practice equipment. Efforts to overcome these obstacles have been implemented through direct village training, provision of work equipment, budget increase requests, training quality improvement, and collaboration with village officials.

#### 4.2. Suggestions

For the Government of Timor Tengah Selatan Regency, it is recommended to realize the construction of a Vocational Training Center (BLK) to support improved education and skills training facilities, and to allocate additional funding to increase the number of training participants.

For the Manpower and Transmigration Office of TTS Regency, instructors, and training venues, it is recommended to: develop an official guideline document for the implementation of education and skills training activities; utilize digital media to disseminate program information to job seekers; and expand the variety of skills training to align with current labor market needs.

For training participants and job seekers, it is recommended to make good use of the provided equipment and business startup capital, and to utilize social media for business promotion.

#### Thank-you note

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