

## Economic Growth, Poverty, and Unemployment as Key Determinants of Welfare in Jambi Province

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** This study examines the impact of economic growth, poverty rate, and unemployment rate on community welfare in Jambi Province from 2015 to 2024, measured by the Human Development Index (HDI). The study aims to provide empirical evidence on how these socioeconomic factors collectively and individually influence regional welfare.

**Design/Methodology/Approach:** A quantitative explanatory research design was employed using annual time-series secondary data. Multiple linear regression analysis with the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) method was applied. To ensure robustness, stationarity tests, cointegration tests, and classical assumption tests were conducted to avoid spurious regression and satisfy econometric requirements.

**Findings:** The results demonstrate that economic growth, poverty, and unemployment have a significant simultaneous effect on community welfare. Partially, economic growth positively affects HDI, poverty exerts a negative impact, and unemployment shows a positive association with HDI during the study period.

**Research Implications:** The findings highlight the importance of comprehensive regional development policies that not only promote economic growth but also focus on poverty alleviation and human capital development through sustained investments in education, healthcare, and social protection. The observed relationship between unemployment and welfare underscores the need for integrated employment strategies aligned with broader human development objectives.

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## INTRODUCTION

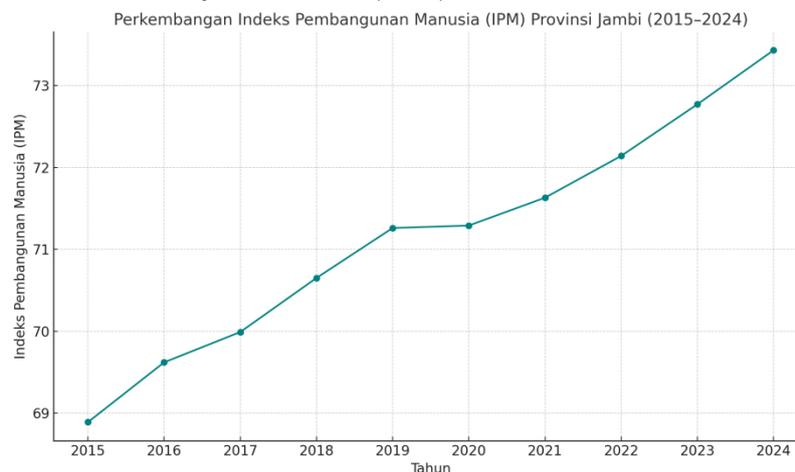
Community welfare is a key indicator for assessing the success of regional development. From a sustainable development perspective, welfare is determined not only by economic growth but also by the quality of development outcomes and access to essential services such as education, healthcare, and employment opportunities. In Indonesia, efforts to enhance welfare are operationalized through human development approaches measured by the Human Development Index (HDI), which reflects the quality of life through three core dimensions: health, education, and a decent standard of living (Badan Pusat Statistik [BPS], 2023).

Macroeconomic factors play a strategic role in shaping community welfare. Economic growth, typically measured by the Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) growth rate, is widely considered a benchmark for regional development success. According to Mankiw (2016), sustainable economic growth can enhance production capacity, increase household income, and expand employment opportunities. However, several studies indicate that high economic growth does not automatically translate into improved welfare unless accompanied by equitable distribution of development outcomes, particularly in developing regions such as Jambi Province. In addition to economic growth, poverty is a critical determinant of community welfare. Poverty reflects the inability of individuals or households to meet basic needs and

access social services. Suharto (2015) emphasizes that poverty is multidimensional and closely linked to low human capital quality. Empirical evidence shows that high poverty levels negatively affect HDI and overall quality of life (Dewi et al., 2017). Therefore, poverty alleviation is a prerequisite for sustainable improvement in community welfare. Unemployment also significantly influences welfare by limiting labor absorption in productive economic activities and reducing household income, which can lead to social pressures. Theoretically, unemployment negatively affects community welfare (Mankiw, 2007). Empirical studies in several Indonesian regions, such as Padang City and other parts of Sumatra, have reported a negative relationship between unemployment and HDI (Mulia & Saputra, 2020; Furqoni et al., 2019). Nonetheless, these findings are not always consistent across all provinces, indicating the need for localized analysis.

Jambi Province, as a developing region in Indonesia, has experienced fluctuating economic dynamics over the past decade. Economic growth, poverty rate, and unemployment rate serve as macroeconomic indicators commonly used to evaluate regional development quality. These three factors are closely interrelated with community welfare because they affect the population's access to education, healthcare, and productive economic opportunities. Despite the recognized importance of these indicators, limited empirical studies have simultaneously examined their collective and individual impact on welfare in Jambi Province, creating a research gap that this study aims to address.

**Figure 1.** Human Development Index (HDI) Trends in Jambi Province, 2015–2024



Based on Figure 1, the Human Development Index (HDI) in Jambi Province shows a relatively consistent upward trend throughout the observation period, although growth slowed during the COVID-19 pandemic. This pattern indicates gradual improvements in human development quality. However, the observed increase does not necessarily reflect a stable macroeconomic condition, highlighting the need for empirical analysis to identify the factors that significantly influence HDI changes in the province.

Theoretically, economic growth is believed to enhance community welfare by increasing income and employment opportunities. Conversely, high poverty and unemployment rates can reduce the quality of life. Empirical findings, however, are mixed. Several studies report that economic growth positively affects HDI, while poverty and unemployment negatively affect it. Yet, other research indicates that the relationship, particularly between unemployment and human development, is not always consistent. Most prior studies employed panel or cross-sectional data across regions, limiting their ability to examine the consistency of these relationships over time at the provincial level, particularly in resource-based economies like Jambi Province. Moreover, few studies have tested models using time-series data with a limited observation period while rigorously addressing classical

assumptions. These gaps indicate a methodological and contextual need for empirical research based on regional time-series data to provide more specific and relevant insights.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the determinants of economic growth, poverty rate, and open unemployment rate on community welfare in Jambi Province during 2015–2024 using multiple linear regression with the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) method. Despite the relatively small number of observations ( $n = 10$ ), the OLS approach is methodologically appropriate for annual aggregated time-series macroeconomic data, meeting the degrees of freedom requirement ( $n > k$ ) and validated through a series of classical assumption tests. This approach is expected to provide robust empirical evidence to inform more effective and targeted regional development policies.

Novelty of this study lies in its focus on time-series analysis at the provincial level in a resource-based economy, rigorously testing the simultaneous and individual effects of economic growth, poverty, and unemployment on HDI while strictly adhering to classical econometric assumptions. This provides a more contextualized and precise understanding of the determinants of community welfare in Jambi Province, filling a gap in previous empirical research.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Concept of Community Welfare

Human development as a measure of community welfare is based on Sen's (1999) Capability Approach. This theory emphasizes that welfare is not only about income but also about access to education, health, and decent life opportunities. This concept underlies the Human Development Index (HDI) developed by UNDP (2023) as a comprehensive indicator of human development. Classical and neoclassical economic growth theories suggest that higher output and income improve welfare through more jobs and better income distribution (Todaro & Smith, 2015; Mankiw, 2016). However, structural poverty theory states that growth alone does not reduce poverty without equitable distribution (Ravallion, 2020). Labor market theory also highlights that unemployment affects welfare through income and access to productive resources (Blanchard & Summers, 2019; ILO, 2022).

HDI is widely used as a composite welfare indicator, integrating health, education, and standard of living (BPS, 2022). While effective, it has limitations in capturing inequality and subjective welfare (Alkire & Foster, 2011). Studies also show that perceptions and public service quality influence welfare (Mulia & Saputra, 2020; OECD, 2020). Therefore, combining objective and subjective indicators provides a more complete understanding of welfare.

### Economic Growth and Community Welfare

Economic growth, usually measured by GRDP, is a key indicator of regional development. It reflects long-term increases in production capacity through capital, labor, and technology (Mankiw, 2016). Higher GRDP is often assumed to improve community welfare. However, the link between growth and welfare is not always linear. The trickle-down theory suggests benefits spread across society, but results vary. Stiglitz et al. (2009) argue for inclusive growth to ensure opportunities are shared. Empirical studies also show mixed results: Mulia and Saputra (2020) found GRDP positively affected welfare in Padang, while Saputri et al. (2020) found no significant impact in some provinces. This shows that economic structure, institutions, and income distribution matter.

*H1: Economic growth positively affects community welfare*

### Poverty and Community Welfare

Poverty limits welfare by restricting access to education, health, and economic opportunities (Kuncoro, 2013). Empirical studies confirm poverty negatively affects HDI.

Dewi et al. (2017) found higher poverty reduced HDI in Riau, and UNDP (2023) showed high-poverty regions have slower human development. Reducing poverty requires more than short-term aid. Social protection and community empowerment are essential for sustainable welfare improvement (Suharto, 2015; Ravallion, 2020).

*H2: Poverty negatively affects community welfare*

### Unemployment and Community Welfare

Unemployment reduces income, creates social pressures, and limits access to education and healthcare, lowering HDI (Mankiw, 2007; Blanchard & Summers, 2019). Low education also increases unemployment risk, creating a reciprocal relationship. Studies in Jambi show unemployment increases poverty and lowers welfare (Hastin & Saswandhi, 2021). Social protection, training programs, and basic service access can mitigate these effects (ILO, 2022).

*H3: Unemployment negatively affects community welfare*

### METHODS

This study uses a quantitative descriptive approach to examine the causal relationship between macroeconomic factors and community welfare in Jambi Province. This approach allows for systematic and objective analysis of numerical data to identify patterns and measure the impact of economic growth, poverty, and unemployment on welfare, proxied by the Human Development Index (HDI). Secondary data were obtained from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) at both the national and provincial levels. The variables analyzed include HDI, Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) growth at constant prices, poverty rate, and open unemployment rate. Annual time-series data from 2015 to 2024 were used to capture economic and social dynamics over time. The study period was selected because it reflects post-reform regional development planning, includes the periods before, during, and after the COVID-19 pandemic, and provides consistent and complete data for HDI and macroeconomic indicators. Community welfare is measured by HDI on a scale of 0–100. Economic growth is proxied by GRDP growth at constant prices expressed in percentage. Poverty rate is measured as the percentage of the population below the poverty line, while open unemployment rate is calculated as the percentage of unemployed individuals in the labor force. Data were analyzed using multiple linear regression with the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) method. To ensure the robustness and validity of the results, classical assumption tests, including stationarity, multicollinearity, autocorrelation, and heteroscedasticity, were conducted. This methodology provides clear empirical evidence on how economic growth, poverty, and unemployment influence community welfare in Jambi Province.

### RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### Stationarity Test Results

Since the data used in this study are annual time series from 2015 to 2024, a stationarity test was conducted before regression estimation to avoid spurious regression. The Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) test was applied at the first difference level.

**Table 1.** ADF Test Results at First Difference

Variable	ADF Statistic	Probability (Prob.)	Stationarity Status
$\Delta \ln(Y)$	-4.3265	0.0187	Stationary
$\Delta X_1$	-3.9542	0.0261	Stationary
$\Delta X_2$	-4.1027	0.0214	Stationary
$\Delta X_3$	-3.8459	0.0293	Stationary

Source: Data processed by Eviews, 2025

The results show that all variables are stationary at first difference, with probabilities below 0.05, indicating integration of order one, I(1). This allows the analysis to proceed with

cointegration testing. All variables are integrated of the same order, confirming that cointegration testing can be conducted in the next step.

**Cointegration Test Results**

A cointegration test was conducted to examine whether a long-term relationship exists among the variables in the model. The test was performed by examining the stationarity of the residuals from the OLS regression.

**Table 2.** ADF Test Results for Residuals

Variable	ADF Statistic	Probability (Prob.)	Stationarity Status
Residual	-4.5872	0.0125	Stationary

Source: Data processed by Eviews, 2025

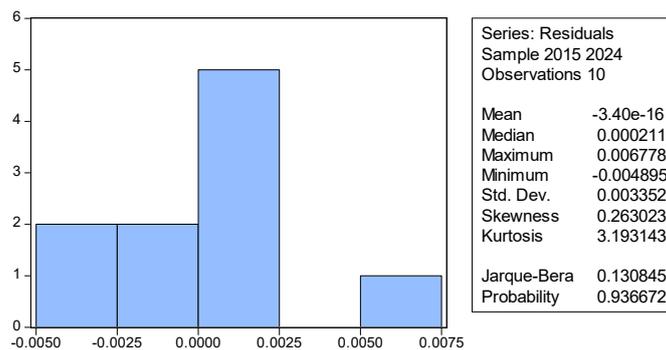
The results indicate that the residuals are stationary with a probability below 0.05, confirming the presence of cointegration among the variables. This implies that the model exhibits a long-term equilibrium relationship, and the OLS regression estimates are not spurious and can be interpreted econometrically. These findings confirm that all variables in the model are cointegrated, supporting the validity of the long-term relationship analysis.

**Classical Assumption Test Results**

**Normality Test**

The normality of residuals was tested to ensure that the error terms in the regression model are normally distributed, which is a key assumption for OLS estimation.

**Figure 2.** Normality Test



Source: Data processed by Eviews, 2025

The results, shown in Figure 2, indicate that the standardized residuals follow a normal distribution. The Jarque-Bera (JB) statistic is 0.130845 with a probability of 0.9366, which is greater than the significance level of 0.05.

**Multicollinearity Test Results**

A multicollinearity test was conducted to examine whether there is a high correlation among the independent variables, which could distort the regression estimates. The results of the correlation coefficients among economic growth ( $X_1$ ), poverty rate ( $X_2$ ), and open unemployment rate ( $X_3$ ) are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Correlation Coefficients Among Independent Variables

Variable	$X_1$	$X_2$	$X_3$
$X_1$	1.000000	0.124911	-0.622730
$X_2$	0.124911	1.000000	-0.291154
$X_3$	-0.622730	-0.291154	1.000000

Source: Data processed by Eviews, 2025

The correlation coefficients among the independent variables are all below 0.9, indicating that multicollinearity does not exist in the model. This ensures that the regression

estimates are reliable and the effects of each independent variable can be interpreted independently.

### Autocorrelation Test Results

The autocorrelation test was conducted using the Breusch-Godfrey Serial Correlation LM Test to determine whether there is correlation among residuals in the regression model. The results are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Breusch-Godfrey Serial Correlation LM Test Results

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	0.045150	0.028785	1.568516	0.1918
X1	-0.000310	0.000874	-0.355116	0.7404
X2	-0.001915	0.002138	-0.895988	0.4209
X3	-0.006871	0.003823	-1.797283	0.1467
RESID(-1)	-1.328418	0.486224	-2.732108	0.0523
RESID(-2)	-1.724839	0.692145	-2.492021	0.0673
R-squared	0.670536	Mean dependent var		-3.40E-16
Adjusted R-squared	0.258706	S.D. dependent var		0.003352
S.E. of regression	0.002886	Akaike info criterion		-8.574137
Sum squared resid	3.33E-05	Schwarz criterion		-8.392586
Log likelihood	48.87069	Hannan-Quinn criter.		-8.773298
F-statistic	1.628187	Durbin-Watson stat		1.447712
Prob(F-statistic)	<b>0.328572</b>			

Source: Data processed by Eviews, 2025

Based on the test results, the probability value of Obs\*R-squared (Prob. Chi-Square) is 0.0567, which is greater than the significance level of 0.05. This indicates that there is no autocorrelation in the model, meaning that the residuals are independent and the regression model satisfies the autocorrelation assumption.

### Multiple Linear Regression Results

The multiple linear regression analysis was conducted using the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) method to examine the effect of economic growth, poverty, and unemployment on community welfare. The estimation results are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Regression Estimation Results

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	4.463792	0.034075	130.9995	0.0000
X1	0.004602	0.001085	4.242063	0.0054
X2	-0.037390	0.002828	-13.22003	0.0000
X3	0.017960	0.004030	4.456529	0.0043
R-squared	0.954043	Mean dependent var		4.266000
Adjusted R-squared	0.954261	S.D. dependent var		0.021705
S.E. of regression	0.004105	Akaike info criterion		-7.863849
Sum squared resid	0.000101	Schwarz criterion		-7.742815
Log likelihood	43.31924	Hannan-Quinn criter.		-7.996623
F-statistic	81.85556	Durbin-Watson stat		2.645330
Prob(F-statistic)	0.000029			

Source: Data processed by Eviews, 2025

The estimated regression equation is expressed as follows:

$$\ln(Y) = 4.464 + 0.0046X_1 - 0.0374X_2 + 0.0180X_3 + \varepsilon$$

The results indicate that all independent variables significantly affect community welfare. Economic growth (X<sub>1</sub>) has a positive and significant effect on HDI (p < 0.01), suggesting that an increase in GRDP growth contributes to improved welfare. Poverty (X<sub>2</sub>)

shows a negative and significant effect ( $p < 0.01$ ), indicating that higher poverty levels reduce community welfare. Interestingly, unemployment ( $X_3$ ) has a positive and significant effect ( $p < 0.01$ ). This result suggests that, within the observed period, an increase in unemployment is associated with an increase in HDI. This finding may reflect the influence of other supporting factors, such as education participation, social protection programs, or structural shifts in the labor market. The model also demonstrates strong explanatory power, with an R-squared value of 0.954, meaning that approximately 95.4% of the variation in community welfare can be explained by economic growth, poverty, and unemployment. The F-statistic is significant ( $p < 0.01$ ), indicating that the model is jointly significant and suitable for explaining the relationship among variables.

### Statistical Test Results

The statistical tests were conducted to examine both the simultaneous and partial effects of economic growth, poverty, and unemployment on community welfare in Jambi Province during the period 2015–2024.

#### F-test

The F-test results show that the model is statistically significant, with an F-statistic value of 81.856 and a probability of 0.000029, which is below the 0.05 significance level. This indicates that economic growth, poverty, and unemployment jointly have a significant effect on community welfare. These findings suggest that changes in the Human Development Index (HDI) are influenced by the combined interaction of macroeconomic factors rather than by a single variable.

#### t-test

The t-test results further confirm the partial effects of each independent variable. Economic growth has a positive and significant effect on HDI ( $t = 4.242$ ;  $p = 0.0054 < 0.05$ ), indicating that increased regional economic activity is associated with improved quality of life, particularly in terms of education, health, and living standards. Poverty shows a negative and significant effect ( $t = -13.220$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ), implying that higher poverty levels reduce human development outcomes due to limited access to basic services. Interestingly, unemployment has a positive and significant effect on HDI ( $t = 4.457$ ;  $p = 0.0043 < 0.05$ ). This finding suggests that during the study period, higher unemployment did not correspond to lower human development outcomes. Instead, it may reflect structural dynamics, such as increased participation in education, government social programs, or transitions within the labor market.

#### Coefficient of Determination (R square)

The coefficient of determination shows that the model has strong explanatory power. The adjusted R-squared value of 0.954 indicates that 95.4% of the variation in HDI can be explained by economic growth, poverty, and unemployment, while the remaining 4.6% is influenced by other factors outside the model.

### DISCUSSION

The findings confirm that economic growth has a positive and significant effect on community welfare in Jambi Province, indicating that increases in regional GDP are associated with improvements in HDI. This supports the conventional view that economic expansion remains a fundamental driver of human well-being. From a theoretical standpoint, this result aligns with neoclassical growth theory, which emphasizes that economic growth enhances productivity, income, and employment opportunities (Mankiw, 2016). It is also consistent with the human development framework, where increased income expands fiscal capacity for public

investment in education and health (Sen, 1999; UNDP, 2023). However, international empirical evidence suggests that the relationship between growth and human development is not always linear or automatic. Studies in developing countries show that economic growth does not necessarily translate into improved welfare without inclusive policies and equitable distribution mechanisms. In some cases, growth-led development may even exacerbate inequality if the benefits are concentrated among certain groups. In this context, the findings from Jambi Province reinforce the argument that growth still plays a significant role, but its effectiveness depends on how it is distributed and managed. Compared to prior studies (Mulia & Saputra, 2020; Saputri et al., 2020), this study provides more recent and context-specific evidence by incorporating the pandemic and post-pandemic periods. The novelty lies in capturing structural shifts in the growth–HDI relationship during periods of economic disruption, offering a more dynamic and policy-relevant perspective at the regional level.

The results show that poverty has a negative and significant effect on HDI, confirming that higher poverty levels reduce community welfare. This finding is theoretically grounded in development economics, which views poverty as a multidimensional deprivation affecting access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities (Todaro & Smith, 2015; Alkire & Foster, 2011). This study also supports the capability approach, which argues that poverty limits individuals' ability to achieve valuable functionings and improve their quality of life (Sen, 1999; Ravallion, 2020). Empirical evidence across developing countries consistently demonstrates that poverty is a key constraint on human development outcomes. Nevertheless, a more critical observation emerges in the case of Jambi Province. While poverty reduction has occurred, the improvement in HDI has not been proportional. This suggests the presence of structural inefficiencies, such as unequal access to public services or disparities in regional development. Similar patterns have been identified in cross-country studies, where reductions in income poverty do not always lead to equivalent gains in human development indicators. Thus, this study contributes by highlighting a contextual gap between poverty alleviation and welfare improvement. The novelty lies in revealing that poverty reduction alone is insufficient to drive optimal human development, emphasizing the importance of service quality, institutional effectiveness, and distributional equity in regional policy design.

The finding that unemployment has a positive and significant effect on HDI is counterintuitive and contrasts with standard economic theory, which associates unemployment with lower income and welfare. From a critical perspective, this result reflects the limitations of interpreting macro-level relationships without considering structural dynamics. HDI, as a composite index, captures long-term improvements in education and health, which may not immediately respond to short-term fluctuations in employment. In some developing regions, rising unemployment may coincide with increased school participation, delayed labor force entry, or structural shifts toward higher-skilled employment sectors. International literature also documents similar anomalies, where unemployment does not always negatively correlate with human development in the short run, particularly in economies undergoing structural transformation. This suggests that the labor market may not fully capture the complexity of welfare dynamics. Therefore, this result should not be interpreted as evidence that unemployment improves welfare, but rather as an indication of underlying structural adjustments. The novelty of this study lies in providing empirical evidence of this non-linear and counterintuitive relationship at the regional level, offering new insights into the interaction between labor market conditions and multidimensional welfare indicators in developing economies.

## CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that economic growth, poverty, and unemployment simultaneously influence community welfare in Jambi Province, as measured by the Human

Development Index (HDI). Partially, economic growth contributes positively to improving welfare, while poverty remains the main inhibiting factor. Meanwhile, unemployment shows a positive relationship with welfare, indicating the presence of more complex structural dynamics in human development that are not solely determined by employment status. Although the model has undergone stationarity and cointegration testing to reduce potential bias, the findings should still be interpreted with caution due to the limited number of observations. Therefore, future research is recommended to extend the time horizon, include additional relevant variables such as regional government expenditure and income inequality, and apply alternative methodological approaches to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the determinants of community welfare at the regional level.

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