

THE ROLE OF LABOR SERVICES IN EFFORTS TO REDUCE THE RATE OF OPEN UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE CITY OF SUKABUMI

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the role of the Sukabumi City Manpower Office in reducing the open unemployment rate. Sukirno (2016) argues that the main factor contributing to unemployment is the insufficiency of aggregate demand. Additionally, other reasons contributing to unemployment include (i) voluntary unemployment driven by the pursuit of better job opportunities, and (ii) companies adopting advanced industrial technologies that minimize the need for labor. The results of the study indicate that despite government efforts to create jobs, the unemployment rate in Sukabumi City remains high. In 2022, the number of underemployed or unemployed workers reached 46.29 million people. Data from *BPS* shows fluctuations in the unemployment rate in Sukabumi City, with an increase in male unemployment from 2019 to 2021 and a decrease in female unemployment during the same period. COVID-19 has also contributed to the increase in unemployment due to restrictions on business and social activities. The Sukabumi City Manpower Office has undertaken various efforts, such as job training and job fairs, but has not been optimal in placing training participants into the workforce. The challenges faced include unclear information about job training and the lack of follow-up from the manpower office. This study provides suggestions and input for the Sukabumi City Manpower Office to improve efficiency in reducing the open unemployment rate through a more comprehensive and integrative approach.

Keywords: *Unemployment, Manpower Office, Sukabumi City, Job Creation*

A. INTRODUCTION

The government has an obligation to fulfil the citizens' right to humane and decent work. This effort is realized through the creation of jobs that are expected to absorb as much labour as possible amidst increasing competition. This is stipulated in the *Pasal 27 Ayat 2 Undang-Undang Dasar Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 1945* which states: "Every citizen has the right to work and to a livelihood that is humane."

The government, both central and local, is responsible for ensuring that the population has access to job opportunities and receives fair and satisfactory treatment. Job creation is a crucial responsibility of the central and local governments, aiming to maximize job opportunities while ensuring balanced economic growth and regional development across the country.

Labour holds significant importance in human existence. Employment is a means to generate income to meet personal and family needs. Additionally, work is often seen as a medium to express and actualize one's abilities, thereby enhancing self-esteem and the individual's value to themselves, their family, and their community.

The right to work and achieving a satisfactory standard of living are fundamental elements of national progress, occurring within the framework of the overall advancement of the Indonesian population. The government has implemented several initiatives to encourage and expand job prospects with the aim of reducing unemployment rates and integrating new workers, thereby boosting the national economy and the welfare of the population.

Although the unemployment rate has been declining, Indonesia must continue to create quality jobs. According to *BPS* data from 2022, the number of workers who are either underemployed or unemployed remains very high, reaching 46.29 million people. Data from *BPS* indicates that the unemployment rate in Sukabumi City, in particular, is still fluctuating, with an increase among males from 2019 to 2021, while the unemployment rate among females has decreased.

The COVID-19 pandemic has restricted business and social activities, leading to layoffs and incomplete integration of high school and vocational graduates into the workforce. According to the *Peraturan Pemerintah Republik Indonesia Nomer 33 Tahun 2013* concerning the Expansion of Job Opportunities, relevant agencies or departments in the regions responsible for labour issues play a vital role in reducing unemployment and creating alternative job opportunities for the community.

The Sukabumi City Department of Manpower has made efforts to reduce the unemployment rate through job training and job fairs. However, most interactions are conducted through media and online rather than directly with companies, communities, and other parties. The socialization of job training

information has not been optimal, and many people have not adapted to the available technology.

Many initiatives by the Sukabumi City Department of Manpower are conducted through media and online platforms to connect job seekers with employment opportunities. However, empirical data on the effectiveness of these interactions compared to direct engagement methods remain limited. There is insufficient empirical evidence to evaluate whether media-based and online approaches are more or less effective in increasing labour absorption rates compared to direct approaches such as physical job fairs and company visits. Additionally, the dissemination of information about job training by the Sukabumi City Department of Manpower has not achieved the expected results, as there is no comprehensive empirical analysis on why the socialization has been ineffective and what strategies could be used to improve communication.

This study aims to examine the role of the Sukabumi City Department of Manpower in reducing the open unemployment rate and identify the challenges faced. This research is expected to provide suggestions and input for the Sukabumi City Department of Manpower to enhance efficiency in reducing the open unemployment rate through a more comprehensive and integrative approach

B. METHOD

This research will use qualitative research methods with a descriptive approach. Qualitative methods are chosen as a means of analysis, understanding, investigation, and explanation regarding the role of the Sukabumi City Manpower Office in reducing unemployment rates, not only theoretically but also with empirical data. This research employs the Role Model theory according to Suharto (2006), namely (1) Policy, (2) Strategy, and (3) Communication. After the data is obtained, it is then analyzed and interpreted according to development, with stages of data reduction, data presentation, and data verification to draw conclusions in the form of findings for further research (Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, 2014).

To conduct research on the role of the Department of Manpower in efforts to reduce the unemployment rate in Sukabumi City, the researcher will use qualitative research methods with a descriptive approach. In this study, the unit of analysis is the Department of Manpower of Sukabumi City, which is responsible for efforts to reduce the unemployment rate in Sukabumi City. The data collection techniques used by the researcher are observation, interviews, and documentation. The validity of the data selected in this study includes data source triangulation and technique triangulation. The data analysis used, as revealed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014: 18), includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Finding suitable employment today is a challenge that requires active involvement from the government as an intermediary to meet the community's need for decent jobs. In the context of increasing job competition, the role of the government becomes crucial, especially in assisting job seekers with lower skills and expertise. Article 27, Paragraph (2) of the *Undang-Undang Dasar Negara Republik Indonesia 1945* Constitution states that every citizen has the right to a job and a livelihood that is decent for humanity, highlighting the state's obligation to provide the necessary facilities.

The Sukabumi City Manpower Office plays an active role in reducing the unemployment rate in the area. As a progressive city in West Java Province, Sukabumi attracts many job seekers from outside the city, increasing competition and adding complexity to unemployment issues. The Sukabumi City Manpower Office acts as a regulator, communicator, and facilitator to address these challenges.

Role as Policy Maker (Regulator)

As a regulator, the Manpower Office develops guidelines and policies to maintain balance in governance and reduce unemployment. These policies include training programs tailored to the interests and talents of job seekers and collaborations with companies with CSR programs. According to the Head of the Sukabumi City Manpower Office, budget policies are focused on organizing training sessions and cooperating with companies through CSR funds, which are allocated for beneficial activities such as training and business assistance.

The programs implemented by the Sukabumi City Manpower Office include:

1) Job Fair

Job fairs bring together job seekers and companies in one location to explore job opportunities. Job seekers register through the website and bring their CVs for direct selection by companies. In 2023, the job fair in Sukabumi City involved 40 companies and offered 2,600 job vacancies, providing significant opportunities for job seekers and reducing unemployment.

2) Job Canvassing

Job canvassing is the effort of the Manpower Office to offer labor services to companies in need. The Manpower Office gathers job vacancy information from companies and matches it with registered job seekers in their database, including through the issuance of *AKI* Cards (Yellow Cards/Job Seeker Cards) that contain detailed information about job seekers.

3) Expansion of Employment Opportunities

This program aims to create or expand job opportunities through skills training in areas such as sewing, culinary arts, welding, and motorcycle mechanics. The goal is to enhance the skills and expertise of job seekers so they can secure employment or create their own job opportunities.

Role as Communicator

The Sukabumi City Manpower Office also acts as a communicator, conveying information about programs and activities through the official website and social media. The aim is for the community to easily access and shares this information, supporting active participation in the Manpower Office's programs. The use of social media and the official website allows job seekers to quickly and efficiently obtain information about training, job fairs, and job vacancies.

Based on interviews with various sources, including the Head of the Sukabumi City Manpower Office, the Secretary of the Manpower Office, and the community, it can be concluded that the role of the Sukabumi City Manpower Office in reducing unemployment includes policy formulation, implementation of training programs and job fairs, job canvassing, and dissemination of information through digital media. These efforts aim to improve job seekers' skills, facilitate connections between job seekers and employers, and provide the necessary support to reduce the unemployment rate in Sukabumi City.

Role as Facilitator

The Manpower Office (*Disnaker*) of Sukabumi City acts as a facilitator to reduce the unemployment rate in the city. The *Disnaker* facilitates various programs and activities, such as job training and the provision of equipment for community businesses. For example, in sewing training, *Disnaker* provides instructors, locations, raw materials, and equipment at no cost to the participants.

Disnaker also connects job seekers with companies through Job Fairs and Job Canvassing. At Job Fairs, *Disnaker* facilitates meetings between job seekers and employers at a single location. In Job Canvassing, *Disnaker* gathers information on job vacancies and provides a database of job seekers that match the company's requirements.

According to the community, *Disnaker's* facilitation greatly assists job seekers by providing skill training and organizing job fairs. This gives them opportunities to find employment and enhance their skills. Additionally, *Disnaker* supports entrepreneurs by providing equipment to help them grow their businesses, thereby creating more job opportunities.

Overall, *Disnaker* Sukabumi City plays a crucial role in providing facilities and facilitating various activities aimed at reducing unemployment, with the hope of making a positive contribution to addressing the unemployment issue in the city.

Resources

According to Riyadi (2002:138), the term "role" can be understood as an orientation and understanding within the context of social conflict. Actors in this function, whether individuals or organizations, adjust to the expectations of individuals or the environment. A role can be described as a predetermined structural obligation, which includes conventions, expectations, taboos, and duties. There are certain limitations and conditions that restrict and support their

position within the organization. A role refers to a set of tasks and responsibilities carried out by individuals in both large and small groups.

Role Dimensions

Suharto (2006:32) states several dimensions of roles as follows:

1. Functioning as policy (regulator). Proponents of this perspective argue that a role is an appropriate policy that is effectively implemented.
2. Functioning as strategy (facilitator). Proponents of this perspective argue that the position functions as a tactic to gain community support. This perspective is based on the premise that individuals' choices and concerns are comprehensively recorded at all decision-making levels, thereby generating trust in their decisions.
3. Functioning as a communication tool (communicator). This function serves as a mechanism or instrument to obtain input in the form of information during the decision-making process. This recognition is based on the concept that the government's objective is to meet the needs of citizens, whose viewpoints and choices provide important insights for making quick and accountable decisions.

Department of Manpower (*Disnaker*)

The Department of Manpower (*Disnaker*) is a government agency responsible for fostering, controlling, and supervising employment issues. *Disnaker* also provides training to job candidates to acquire specific skills according to the demands of employers. Additionally, *Disnaker* aims to improve employment placement services, provide labour market information, and facilitate job fairs to create wide-ranging employment opportunities.

The Department of Manpower of the City of Sukabumi, previously under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Manpower of the Republic of Indonesia, has been re-established in accordance with the *Peraturan Walikota Sukabumi Nomor 112 Tahun 2021*. This regulation outlines the position, organizational structure, main duties, functions, and working procedures of the Department of Manpower of the City of Sukabumi. This department is led by a Head of Department who is accountable to the Mayor through the Regional Secretary.

The main duties of the Department of Manpower are to assist the mayor in carrying out administrative tasks within the scope of regional authority and to support the region in the field of employment. The department performs the following functions:

- a. Formulating and creating policies in the fields of manpower and transmigration;
- b. Implementing policies in the fields of manpower and transmigration;
- c. Conducting studies and preparing reports in the fields of manpower and transmigration;
- d. Managing the department in the fields of manpower and transmigration; and
- e. Performing other tasks delegated by the Mayor in accordance with its duties

and functions

D. CONCLUSION

Based on the research on the Role of the Manpower Office in Reducing Unemployment Rates in the City of Sukabumi, considering the applicable regulations and policies as well as analyzing the data and discussions conducted, the researcher can conclude as follows:

1. The Manpower Office of Sukabumi City has successfully carried out its role effectively in reducing the unemployment rate in the city. It can be seen from the implementation of roles as a regulator, communicator, and facilitator, where the Manpower Office of Sukabumi City has made great efforts to ensure that every policy and program/activity implemented yields maximum results and achieves the goal of reducing the unemployment rate in the city. This is done by utilizing the skills, expertise, and information provided by the Manpower Office of Sukabumi City.
2. In carrying out its roles as a regulator, communicator, and facilitator to reduce the unemployment rate in Sukabumi City, the Manpower Office still faces several challenges. These challenges involve budget limitations and a lack of professionalism and responsibility in the available Human Resources (HR). Therefore, the Manpower Office of Sukabumi City has a great responsibility to provide guidance and understanding to employees who do not fully understand their duties and functions. This is aimed at making them more professional and responsible in order to achieve optimal goals in implementing programs/activities.

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