International Conference on Sustainable Economics, Management, and Accounting (ICSEMA 2026)
Proceedings
Vol. 02 Year 2026, 2913 – 2923
ISSN: 3109-3337

DETERMINANTS OF POVERTY ON THE ISLAND OF JAVA 2011-2025

Rachel Dwitya Angellita[1], Kikin Windhani[2], Dicky Satria Ramadhan[3], Werdha Candratrilaksita[4]

[1-3]Faculty of Economics and Business, Jenderal Soedirman University, Indonesia
[4]Central Java Regional Office of the Directorate General of State Treasury, Indonesia

[*]Email corresponding author: rachel.angellita@mhs.unsoed.ac.id

Article Information: Received --- June 25, 2026, Published --- August 10, 2026

Abstract

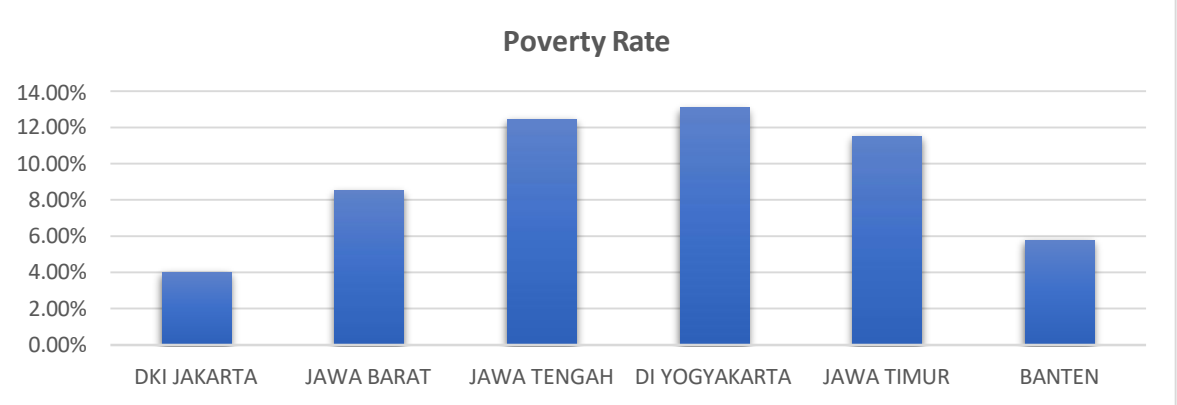
Poverty is a structural challenge in regional development; although Java is the center of national economic growth, disparities in poverty rates across regions persist, indicating the need for a comprehensive identification of determining factors. This study aims to analyze the effects of social assistance spending, per capita GRDP, open unemployment rate, average years of schooling, and the industrial sector on poverty rates in Java during the 2011–2025 period. A quantitative approach using panel data from six provinces was employed to measure causal relationships among variables. Panel data regression analysis was conducted by selecting the best model through the Chow and Hausman tests, leading to the application of the Fixed Effects Model. The results indicate that social assistance spending has a positive effect on poverty, suggesting that increased social assistance has not yet optimally reduced poverty. Conversely, per capita GRDP, average years of schooling, and the contribution of the industrial sector have a significant negative effect on poverty levels, indicating that economic growth, improved educational quality, and industrial sector development play a role in reducing poverty. The open unemployment rate has a negative but insignificant effect, reflecting the role of the informal sector in the labor market structure. GRDP per capita is the most dominant variable, underscoring the importance of inclusive economic growth that is job-creation-oriented.

Keywords: poverty, social assistance spending, per capita GRDP, education, industrial sector

INTRODUCTION

Poverty remains a major challenge to development in Indonesia because it is linked to people's ability to meet their basic needs (D'Attoma, 2024). Although the national economy has shown relatively stable growth in recent years, the reduction in poverty has not been evenly distributed across all regions of Indonesia (BPS, 2025). The Vicious Circle of Poverty theory states that poverty can occur repeatedly due to low income, savings, investment, and productivity (Nurkse, 1953). This phenomenon becomes particularly significant when viewed from a regional context, especially on the island of Java, which serves as the center of national economic activity. Java contributes approximately 57% of Indonesia's GDP and has the largest population (Wijayanti et al., 2023). Despite high economic growth, 50% of the provinces on Java still have poverty rates above the national average (BPS, 2025). This is reflected in the average poverty rates for the years 2011–2025, as shown in Figure 1.

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Source : Badan Pusat Statistik (2025)

Figure 1. Average Provincial Poverty Rates on the Island of Java, 2011–2025: The poverty rate in most provinces on the Island of Java shows a gradual downward trend. This trend reflects a gradual improvement in the equitable distribution of prosperity, although 50% of the provinces on the Island of Java still have relatively high poverty rates compared to the national average.

One indicator frequently used to describe economic well-being is per capita GRDP (Todaro & Smith, 2024). Empirically, DKI Jakarta has the highest GRDP per capita and low poverty rates, in contrast to East Java, which, despite having a relatively high GRDP per capita, still records poverty rates above the national average (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2022). This indicates that high economic capacity does not necessarily lead to a direct reduction in poverty if the distribution of its benefits is unequal.

In addition to per capita GRDP, the quality of human resources is also a key factor. Yogyakarta Special Region (DIY) has a high average years of schooling and a low poverty rate, while DKI Jakarta which has the highest average years of schooling still has a relatively high poverty rate (BPS, 2026). This situation indicates that improvements in education are not always accompanied by optimal labor market absorption, thereby creating a distinct dynamic in the reduction of poverty.

Industrial sector growth on the island of Java also influences poverty. West Java has the largest industrial contribution and a low poverty rate. However, in Central Java and East Java, despite having large industrial sectors, poverty rates remain high (BPS, 2024). This phenomenon indicates that industrial growth does not automatically reduce poverty without equitable and inclusive job creation.

Another effort undertaken by the government is increasing social assistance spending through the PKH and BPNT programs (Purba et al., 2025). In theory, social assistance is expected to reduce poverty by increasing the purchasing power of the poor. However, empirically, the reduction in poverty across provinces remains uneven, indicating that the effectiveness of social assistance depends heavily on the accuracy of targeting and the quality of program implementation (Thorbecke et al., 2024).

Based on current observations, the main issue addressed in this study is the uneven distribution of welfare across provinces on the island of Java. Some provinces with high economic capacity are still able to cope with relatively high levels of poverty, while improvements in education, the industrial sector, and social assistance have not always reduced poverty evenly. These conditions highlight the need for a comprehensive analysis to understand the interactions among these factors; therefore, this study is important to provide empirical evidence regarding the dominant factors influencing poverty and to serve as a basis for formulating more effective and sustainable poverty alleviation policies.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS FORMULATION

Poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon influenced by various economic and social factors. The "Vicious Cycle of Poverty" theory proposed by Nurkse (1958) explains that low income leads to low savings, investment, and productivity, thereby keeping people trapped in poverty. In this context, social assistance serves as one of the government's tools to break the cycle of poverty. Research by Afrida et al. (2023) shows that social assistance plays a role in reducing poverty by improving the well-being of beneficiary households.

In addition to government interventions, the level of community well-being is also influenced by regional economic capacity. Solow's growth theory explains that economic growth is driven by the accumulation of capital, labor, and technological progress, which is reflected in an increase in per capita GRDP. Research by Uyun et al. (2025) found that an increase in per capita GRDP contributes to poverty reduction by raising community income.

On the other hand, the quality of human resources is a key factor in poverty alleviation. Average years of schooling reflect the population's educational level, which influences productivity and opportunities for better employment. The findings of Firmansyah & Khairunnisa (2023) indicate that an increase in average years of schooling has a negative effect on poverty rates. In addition to the quality of education, labor market conditions also play a role in determining poverty levels. The open labor market reflects the economy's ability to absorb labor. Generally, a large number of poor people has the potential to increase poverty, however Acevedo et al. (2021) show that this relationship is not always linear in developing countries because some of the poor work in the informal sector despite their low incomes.

Furthermore, Lewis's theory of structural change explains that the shift of labor from traditional sectors to modern sectors, particularly industry, can increase productivity and household income. Consistent with this theory, Pratama & Projo (2024) found that the development of the industrial sector contributes to reducing poverty through job creation and increased economic activity.

Based on this theoretical framework and these empirical findings, the research hypothesis is formulated as follows:

1. Social Assistance Expenditures

   Social assistance expenditures are a government tool aimed at reducing the economic burden on the poor through cash transfers and assistance with basic needs. Studies (Afrida et al., 2023) and (Widayat & Sugiyanto, 2025) show that social assistance is effective in reducing poverty rates by increasing purchasing power and access to education and health care.

   H1a: Social assistance spending has a negative effect on poverty rates in Java from 2011-2025.

2. GRDP per Capita

   GRDP per capita reflects the level of economic capacity and the average income of the population in a given region. An increase in GRDP per capita indicates increased economic activity, which has the potential to expand employment opportunities and improve community well-being. Studies by Uyun et al. (2025) and Agussalim et al. (2024) found that GRDP per capita has a significant negative effect on poverty rates.

   H1b: GRDP per capita has a negative effect on poverty rates on the island of Java from 2011-2025.

3. Open Unemployment Rate

   The open unemployment rate reflects the economy's ability to absorb labor. High poverty can reduce household income, thereby increasing the risk of poverty. However, in developing countries, this relationship is not always linear because a portion of the population works in the informal sector despite having low incomes. Research by Gozali et al. (2025) shows that an increase in the open unemployment rate contributes to an increase in poverty.

H1c: The open unemployment rate has a negative effect on the poverty rate on the island of Java from 2011-2025.

4. Average Years of Schooling

   Average years of schooling is an indicator of human capital quality that reflects the population's educational level. The higher the educational level, the greater the population's chances of obtaining more productive and higher-paying jobs. Research by Firmansyah & Khairunnisa (2023) and Rukmana & Imaningsih (2023) found that average years of schooling has a negative effect on poverty rates.

   H1d: Average years of schooling has a negative effect on poverty rates on the island of Java from 2011-2025.

5. GRDP of the Industrial Sector

   The industrial sector plays a role in driving economic growth through job creation, increased productivity, and higher household income. The greater the industrial sector's contribution to the regional economy, the greater the potential for poverty reduction. Research by Pratama & Projo, (2024) shows that the development of the industrial sector has a significant negative effect on poverty rates through increased employment opportunities.

   H1e: The contribution of the industrial sector has a negative effect on poverty rates in Java from 2011-2025.

6. Variables with the Greatest Influence on Poverty Rates

   Conceptually, per capita GRDP is expected to be the most dominant variable influencing poverty rates because it reflects a region's economic capacity and the population's ability to earn adequate income. Although other variables such as social assistance spending, education, or the industrial sector are also available, low economic capacity can limit the community's access to basic needs, making growth in per capita GRDP key to reducing poverty in the provinces of Java.

   H2: The Most Influential Variables on Poverty Rates in the Provinces of Java from 2011-2025

RESEARCH METHODS

1. **Research Design**

   This study employs a quantitative approach with an explanatory design to test the causal relationship among variables, namely social assistance spending, per capita GRDP, the open poverty rate, average years of schooling, and the industrial sector's contribution to poverty levels on the island of Java. Secondary numerical data is statistically analyzed to measure the magnitude and direction of the independent variables' effects on the dependent variable, thereby enabling a clear explanation of the cause-and-effect relationship (Sugiyono, 2022).

2. **Research Subject**

   The research object is the poverty rate in six provinces on the island of Java (DKI Jakarta, West Java, Central Java, Yogyakarta, East Java, and Banten) during the 2011–2025 period. The dependent variable is the poverty rate (%), and the independent variables include social assistance spending, per capita GRDP, the open poverty rate, average years of schooling, and the contribution of the industrial sector.

3. **Data Collection Methods**

   Data were obtained through documentary and literature reviews. Secondary data were collected from official publications of the Central Statistics Agency and the Directorate General

of Fiscal Balance. The literature review was used to support the theoretical framework and hypothesis development. All data were then processed using EViews 12 for panel data analysis.

4. Data Analysis Techniques

In this study, data were obtained from the official websites of the Central Statistics Agency and the Directorate General of Fiscal Balance..

Table 1. Data Sources

No	Variable Name	Data Source
1	Poverty (Y)	Percentage of the Poor Population by Province (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2025).
2	Social Assistance Expenditures (X1)	Directorate General of Fiscal Balance (DJPK), Implementation of the Regional Budget by Function and Type of Expenditure (Direktorat Jenderal Perimbangan Keuangan, 2024).
3	GRDP per Capita (X2)	[2010 Series] Gross Regional Domestic Product per Capita (Thousands of Rupiah) by Province (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2022).
4	Open Unemployment Rate (X3)	Open Unemployment Rate by Province (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2024).
5	Average Years of Schooling (X4)	Average Years of Schooling by Province (BPS, 2025).
6	Industrial Sectors (X5)	Distribution of Regional Gross Domestic Product by Economic Sector in Indonesian Provinces (percentage) (BPS, 2024).

This study uses panel data regression analysis, which combines time-series data and cross-sectional data. The time-series data covers the period from 2011 to 2025, while the cross-sectional data consists of six provinces on the island of Java (DKI Jakarta, West Java, Central Java, DIY, East Java, and Banten). The total number of observations was obtained from the combination of these six provinces over the 15-year observation period.

The panel data regression equation model in this study is formulated as follows:

$$Y_{it} = \alpha + \beta_1 X_{1it} + \beta_2 X_{2it} + \beta_3 X_{3it} + \beta_4 X_{4it} + \beta_5 X_{5it} + \varepsilon_{it}$$

Keterangan:

Y : Poverty Rate
X_1 : Social Assistance Expenditures
X_2 : GRDP per Capita
X_3 : Open Unemployment Rate
X_4 : Average Years of Schooling
X_5 : Industrial Sector
A : Constant
$\beta_1\beta_2\beta_3\beta_4\beta_5$: Regression coefficients for independent variables
ε : Error term
i : Provinces on the island of Java (DKI Jakarta, West Java, Central Java, DIY, East Java, Banten)
t : Study years (2011–2025)

In panel data analysis, there are three main approaches: the Common Effects Model (CEM), the Fixed Effects Model (FEM), and the Random Effects Model (REM). The CEM assumes that all units are homogeneous and is estimated using OLS; the FEM accounts for differences in fixed characteristics across provinces; and the REM assumes random differences across units and is estimated using GLS. Model selection is performed using the Chow test, the Hausman

test, and the Lagrange Multiplier (LM) test, while classical assumption tests, as well as the F-test and t-test, are used to assess the effects of independent variables on poverty levels, both simultaneously and partially. (Gujarati & Porter, 2020).

Results and Discussion

1. Panel Data Regression Model Estimation

   The selection of the panel data regression model was performed using the Chow test and the Hausman test. The results of the Chow test showed a p-value of 0.0057 (< 0.05), and the Hausman test yielded a p-value of 0.0031 (< 0.05) therefore, the FEM was selected as the best model for this study.

   The logarithmic transformation equations used for several study variables are formulated as follows:

$$TM_{it} = \alpha + \beta_1 \ln(BS_{it}) + \beta_2 \ln(PDRB_{it}) + \beta_3 TPT_{it} + \beta_4 RLS_{it} + \beta_5 SI_{it} + \varepsilon_{it}$$

2. Testing Classical Assumptions
   a. Testing for Multicollinearity

	Corelation				
	LN_X1	LN_X2	X3	X4	X5
LN_Social Assistance Expenditures	1.0000	0.5361	0.0639	0.1634	0.0318
LN_GRDP per Capita	0.5361	1.0000	0.2304	0.8022	-0.5347
Open Unemployment Rate	0.0639	0.2304	1.0000	0.1612	0.3815
Average Years of Schooling	0.1634	0.8022	0.1612	1.0000	-0.7163
GRDP of the Industrial Sector	0.0318	-0.5347	0.3815	-0.7163	1.0000

   Based on the correlation analysis among the independent variables, most values fell below the general threshold of 0.80, indicating no significant multicollinearity, thus overall the panel data regression model is deemed suitable for further analysis.

   b. Heteroscedasticity Test

   The results of the likelihood ratio test show a probability value of 0.000 (<0.05), indicating the presence of heteroscedasticity in the regression model. To address this, the study uses White's cross-section standard error to ensure more robust coefficient estimates and maintain the validity of the significance test.

3. Coefficient of Determination

   Based on the results of the Fixed Effects Model estimation, the R-squared value was 0.9248. This value indicates that the variables of social assistance spending, per capita GRDP, open poverty rate, average years of schooling, and the industrial sector account for 92.48% of the variation in poverty rates on the island of Java. Meanwhile, the remaining 7.52% is influenced by other factors outside the research model.

4. Hypothesis Testing
   a. F-Test

   Based on the results of the F-test, the F-statistic value is 97.114 with a Prob (F-statistic) of 0.0000, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that the variables of social assistance spending, per capita GRDP, open poverty rate, average years of schooling, and the industrial sector collectively have a significant effect on the poverty rate on the island of Java from 2011 to 2025. In other words, all independent variables together can explain the variation in the poverty rate.

   b. t-Test

   This test is used to examine the partial effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable, namely the poverty rate.

Variabel	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	5.3499	3.2299	1.6563	0.0000
LN_Social Assistance Expenditures	0.8697	0.1858	4.6795	0.0004
LN_GRDP per Capita	-4.4385	0.4251	-1.0440	0.0000
Open Unemployment Rate	-0.2383	0.1211	-1.9676	0.0692
Average Years of Schooling	-1.4772	0.2032	-7.2666	0.0000
GRDP of the Industrial Sector	-0.2222	0.0289	-7.6657	0.0000

Based on the results of the data analysis, here is the interpretation:

1. Social Assistance Expenditures Variable
   The social assistance expenditures variable has a coefficient of 0.8697 with a p-value of 0.0004. Since the p-value is less than 0.05 (0.0004 < 0.05), social assistance expenditures have a partial, positive, and significant effect on the poverty rate. However, the positive direction of the coefficient does not align with the research hypothesis, which predicted a negative effect. Therefore, H_o is accepted and H_1a is rejected. These findings indicate that an increase in social assistance spending is not always accompanied by a decrease in poverty rates. Social assistance does play an important role in alleviating the economic burden on poor households, but its effectiveness can be hampered by targeting inaccuracies (Fuaddah & Fridayne, 2023). Several studies indicate that even though social assistance allocations have increased, poverty does not always decrease because the assistance is often used for short-term consumption (Taufik et al., 2025). Furthermore, assistance that is not accompanied by economic empowerment tends to foster dependency among beneficiaries (Pangera et al., 2025). From a policy perspective, the effectiveness of social assistance can be enhanced through precise targeting, clearly defined program durations, economic education, and rigorous monitoring (Retnaningsih et al., 2024). This approach enables social assistance to serve as capital while simultaneously fostering recipients' economic self-reliance
2. Per Capita GRDP Variable
   The per capita GRDP variable has a coefficient of -4.4385 with a p-value of 0.0000. Since the p-value is less than 0.05 (0.0000 < 0.05), per capita GRDP has a partial, negative, and significant effect on the poverty rate. Thus, H_o is rejected and H_1b is accepted. These results indicate that an increase in per capita GRDP can reduce poverty rates, as the growing economic capacity of a region can boost incomes and expand employment opportunities for the population (Falah & Rahmawati, 2024). These findings are consistent with Solow's theory of economic growth, which states that an increase in per capita GRDP reflects greater production capacity, thereby increasing business opportunities and labor demand (Balasubramanian et al., 2023). For poverty reduction to be more effective, efforts to increase per capita GRDP must be directed in an inclusive manner so that the benefits of economic growth are felt by the poor, regardless of specific sectors or regions.
3. Open Unemployment Rate Variable
   Variabel tingkat kemiskinan terbuka memiliki nilai koefisien sebesar -0.2383 dengan The open unemployment rate variable has a coefficient of -0.2383 with a probability value of 0.0692. Since the probability value is greater than 0.05 (0.0692 > 0.05), the open unemployment rate has no significant partial effect on the poverty rate at the 5% significance level. Thus, H_o is accepted and H_1c is rejected. These findings indicate that the open unemployment rate does not fully reflect the economic conditions of the poor, as the majority of the poor work in the informal sector with low

incomes (Todaro & Smith, 2024). This situation means that the relationship between unemployment and poverty is not always significant, particularly in regions where the labor market is dominated by informal employment and underemployment (Khairuddin, 2025).

4. Average Years of Schooling Variable
   The average years of schooling variable has a coefficient of -1.4772 with a p-value of 0.0000. Since the p-value is less than 0.05 (0.0000 < 0.05), average years of schooling has a partial, negative, and significant effect on the poverty rate. Thus, H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted**.** These results indicate that an increase in the average length of schooling can reduce poverty rates, as higher levels of education improve the quality of human capital, productivity, and opportunities for better employment (Spada et al., 2023). This finding is consistent with research in Indonesia showing that average years of schooling significantly explains most of the variation in poverty, reinforcing the role of education as a strategic tool for poverty alleviation (Fernando & Samsuddin, 2025)
5. Industrial Sector GRDP Variable
   The industrial sector variable has a coefficient of -0.2222 with a p-value of 0.0000. Since the p-value is less than 0.05 (0.0000 < 0.05), the industrial sector has a partial, negative, and significant effect on the poverty rate. Thus, H_0 is rejected and H_1e is accepted. These results show that the development of the industrial sector can create jobs and increase people's incomes, thereby contributing to a reduction in the poverty rate. This finding aligns with (Pratama & Projo, 2024) who state that growth in the manufacturing industry contributes to poverty reduction through increased employment opportunities and economic activity. Thus, the industrial sector serves as a key instrument in poverty alleviation through its multiplier effect on the regional economy.
6. Variables with the Greatest Influence on Poverty Rates
   Based on the estimation results, per capita GRDP is the most dominant variable influencing poverty rates on the island of Java during the 2011–2025 period, with a coefficient of -4.4385 significantly larger than that of other variables such as social assistance spending (0.8697), the open unemployment rate (-0.2383), average years of schooling (-1.4772), and industrial sector GRDP (-0.2222). This indicates that increasing regional economic capacity plays a crucial role in reducing poverty by raising household income and expanding employment opportunities, in line with Solow (1956) who stated that economic growth results from capital accumulation, improvements in labor quality, and technological progress that drive per capita output, as well as Todaro & Smith (2024) who emphasize per capita income as the primary benchmark for economic development that strengthens communities' capacity to meet basic needs and reduce poverty. Thus, inclusive economic growth is a key factor in poverty alleviation efforts on the island of Java.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study show that social assistance spending has a positive and significant effect on poverty rates, while per capita GRDP, average years of schooling, and the contribution of the industrial sector have negative and significant effects on poverty rates on the island of Java. Meanwhile, the open unemployment rate has no significant effect, and per capita GRDP is the most dominant variable influencing poverty rates. These findings indicate that poverty alleviation requires a comprehensive approach through strengthening inclusive economic growth, improving

the quality of education, developing an industrial sector capable of absorbing labor, and enhancing the effectiveness of social assistance to ensure it is more targeted and promotes community economic self-reliance.

This study has limitations because it did not include the COVID-19 pandemic period as a specific variable in the model; consequently, the specific effects of these variables on poverty rates under normal conditions versus during a crisis cannot be distinctly distinguished. Therefore, future research is recommended to include a pandemic dummy variable and expand the unit of analysis to the regency/city level so that local variations can be explained in greater detail, leading to a more comprehensive understanding of the determinants of poverty.

The completion of this research would not have been possible without the support of various parties who have made tangible contributions to its implementation. Therefore, the author would like to express gratitude to the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) Research program for providing the opportunity and platform for the author to be directly involved in scientific research activities. The author also extends his deepest appreciation to the Directorate General of Treasury (DJPB) of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Indonesia for the guidance, facilities, and access to data provided throughout the research process. The support from both parties served as a crucial foundation that enabled this research to be successfully completed.

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