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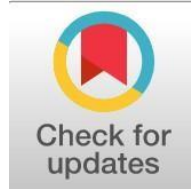
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Leading Sectors for Reducing Regional Inequality in Maluku: Sektor-Sektor Utama untuk Mengurangi Ketimpangan Regional di Maluku

Jeanee Belthia Nikijuluw, jeanenikijuluw@gmail.com (*)

Faculty of Economics and Business, Pattimura University, Ambon, Indonesia

Jopie Tamtelahitu, jopietamtelahitu@gmail.com

Faculty of Economics and Business, Pattimura University, Ambon, Indonesia

Muspida Muspida, muspida.pps@gmail.com

Faculty of Economics and Business, Pattimura University, Ambon, Indonesia

Ali Tutupoho, alit081175@gmail.com

Faculty of Economics and Business, Pattimura University, Ambon, Indonesia

Terezia Valency Pattimahu, lency24.valency@gmail.com

Faculty of Economics and Business, Pattimura University, Ambon, Indonesia

(*) Corresponding author

Abstract

General Background: Regional inequality remains a major development challenge in archipelagic economies characterized by uneven resources, infrastructure, connectivity, and economic opportunities. **Specific Background:** Maluku Province exhibits substantial disparities among regencies and cities, requiring region-specific economic priorities and development strategies. **Knowledge Gap:** Previous research has discussed leading sectors as instruments for addressing regional disparities but has not specifically formulated regional development strategies integrating inequality, sectoral potential, competitiveness, and strategic policy analysis. **Aims:** This study assesses regional inequality, identifies competitive priority sectors, and formulates strategies for addressing disparities in Maluku Province. **Results:** Using 2019–2024 secondary data, Klassen Typology and the Williamson Index identified very high inequality and five relatively lagging regencies. Location Quotient and Shift-Share analyses identified four priority sectors: agriculture, forestry and fisheries; wholesale and retail trade including vehicle repair; public administration, defense and compulsory social security; and education services. SWOT analysis further emphasized sectoral development, inter-island connectivity, human resource development, downstream processing, digitalization, governance reform, and resource oversight. **Novelty:** The study combines inequality measurement, sectoral specialization, competitiveness analysis, and SWOT-based strategy formulation in one regional framework. **Implications:** Maluku's development policy should prioritize these sectors while strengthening intersectoral linkages to support inclusive and sustainable economic growth and reduce regional disparities.

Highlights:

- Five regencies were classified as relatively lagging during the study period.
- Agriculture-related activities, commerce, public administration, and education emerged as strategic economic fields.
- Connectivity, human capital, downstream processing, and governance form the principal policy directions.

Keywords: Regional Inequality, Klassen Typology, Williamson Index, Location Quotient (LQ), Shift-Share (SS)

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Introduction

Regional inequality is a fundamental issue in Indonesia's economic development. As the world's largest archipelagic nation characterized by diverse resources and extreme geographical conditions Indonesia faces significant challenges in achieving equitable development. Economic development inequality is a problem wherein varying levels of regional progress lead to the emergence of both developed and underdeveloped regions [1]. Economic development inequality is a universal phenomenon and a natural outcome of the development process itself. Certain regions typically develop faster than others due to factors such as natural and physical resources, differences in social parameters and attitudes, institutional structures, and discriminatory state policies [2] [3], [4], [5].

Various factors contribute to development disparities, including differences in natural and human resource potential as well as diverse geographical conditions across regions. Regions possessing abundant natural resources, adequate transportation access, and a skilled workforce tend to develop more rapidly. Conversely, remote regions lacking infrastructure often lag behind due to difficulties in attracting investment and limited market access [4], [6]. These conditions result in varying regional capacities to drive the development process. Uneven government policies regarding development budget allocations can exacerbate such disparities. Most regions contain a mix of developed areas and those that remain underdeveloped.

This inter-regional disparity impacts the level of community well-being across various regions. A resulting consequence is that this aspect of inter-regional development inequality also influences the formulation of regional development policies by local governments [1], [3]. One strategy for regional economic development involves fostering leading economic sectors or "base" sectors capable of driving regional economic growth [7], [8], [9]. This approach encourages local governments to develop such leading sectors, thereby stimulating economic growth while simultaneously addressing inequality [5]. Strengthening leading sectors in each region can be achieved by creating investment opportunities to tackle various economic challenges. These leading sectors play a crucial role in driving the development of other sectors, particularly those that supply inputs or those that utilize the leading sectors' outputs as inputs in their own production processes [7], [10].

Several previous studies have highlighted the role of leading sectors in regional development as a means to address inequality; however, these studies have not specifically outlined regional development strategies [7], [10], [11], [12], [13], [14]. This study employs the Klassen Typology and the Williamson Index to characterize regional inequality across the regencies and cities of Maluku Province. It utilizes base sector analysis to identify regional potential and competitiveness, as well as SWOT analysis to formulate strategies for addressing regional inequality within the province. Inter-regional inequality in Maluku Province stems from disparities in the resources possessed by each area; therefore, it is necessary to develop the leading sectors of each regency and city and to formulate appropriate planning strategies. This study aims to analyze inequality in Maluku Province, determine the competitive potential of each economic sector in the province, and identify strategies to address the existing inequality.

Methods

This study employs a qualitative approach utilizing various secondary data published by Statistics Indonesia (BPS) of Maluku Province (2019-2024). Klassen Typology analysis and the Williamson Index are used to assess regional inequality in Maluku Province. Leading sectors are identified through Location Quotient (LQ) and Shift-Share analyses, while SWOT analysis is used to formulate regional development policy strategies.

Results and Discussion

A. Regional Inequality

Klassen Typology analysis is used to provide an overview of the regional economic growth structure across regencies and cities in Maluku Province from 2019 to 2024. Further details are presented in Table 1.

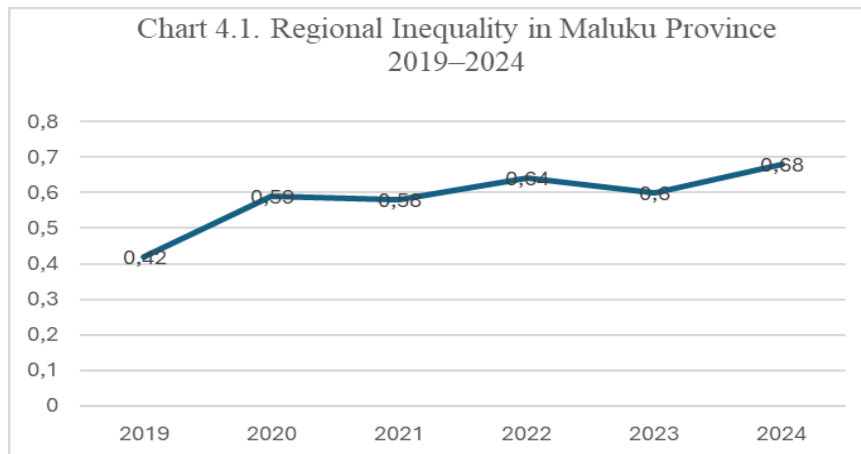
Table 1. Klassen Typology Classification

PDRB Perkapita Laju Pertumbuhan	$\bar{y} > y$	$\bar{y} < y$
$\bar{r} > r$	Daerah cepat maju & cepat tumbuh 1. Kepulauan Aru 2. Maluku Tenggara 3. Tual	Wilayah berkembang cepat Maluku Barat Daya
$\bar{r} < r$	Wilayah maju tapi tertekan Ambon	Wilayah relatif tertinggal 1. Kepulauan Tanimbar 2. Maluku Tengah 3. Buru 4. Seram Bagian Barat 5. Seram Bagian Timur 6. Buru Selatan

Based on the Klassen Typology results (Table 1), three areas are categorized as "advanced and rapidly growing": Aru Islands Regency, Southeast Maluku Regency, and Tual City. These three areas exhibit average economic growth rates and average community income levels that exceed the provincial averages. Southwest Maluku Regency is classified as a "rapidly developing" area; while it has a high average economic growth rate compared to the provincial level, its average per capita income remains low. Ambon City, the provincial capital, falls into the "advanced but depressed" category; although it boasts a higher average per capita income, its average economic growth rate is lower than the provincial average. Five regencies are classified as "relatively lagging" due to their low average economic growth rates and low average per capita incomes: Tanimbar Islands, Central Maluku, Buru, West Seram, and East Seram. A higher concentration of areas in Quadrant IV compared to Quadrant I tends to indicate high regional inequality; this is evident from the Williamson Index analysis results (Graph 1).

The extent of disparity in per capita GRDP across regencies and cities provides an overview of development conditions and progress in Maluku Province. Regional development in Maluku Province is examined here by analyzing the distribution of per capita GRDP across regencies and cities using the Williamson Index.

Chart Regional Inequality in Maluku Province 2019–2024



A Williamson index value that decreases or approaches zero indicates reduced inequality or, in other words, greater equity whereas a value moving further away from zero signifies high inequality. Graph 1 reveals that inequality in Maluku Province was very high from 2020 to 2024. Annual inequality levels consistently exceeded 0.5, reaching 0.68 in 2024 a figure indicative of high inequality. Several factors contribute to this inequality in Maluku Province, including: the archipelagic geography, which drives up transportation costs (logistics for goods distribution) and public service expenses; uneven basic infrastructure development, leading to regional isolation; disparities in economic activity; suboptimal natural resource management; and a lack of industrialization and value-added activities. These findings align with research by [15] in Pangkep Regency and [16] in the Riau Islands, which identified geographical factors specifically high logistics costs and uneven infrastructure availability as causes of inequality that dampen investment interest. Consequently, to address regional inequality, the government could implement policies such as developing adequate basic infrastructure to attract investors, optimizing natural resource management, and prioritizing regional development that aligns with each area's specific potential and leading sectors [11].

B. Regional Potential

Location Quotient (LQ) analysis is used to identify leading or "base" sectors in Maluku Province. A base sector is one that produces goods and services for both local and external markets, thereby generating an inflow of income into the region. An LQ value greater than one ($LQ > 1$) indicates that a sector is a base sector, whereas a value of less than one ($LQ < 1$) indicates that it is not. The classification of sectors in Maluku Province into base and non-base categories is presented in the following table 2.

Table 2. Base Sectors in Maluku Province 2019–2024

NO.	Kategori Lapangan Usaha	Tahun						Rata-rata	Ket
		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024		
1	Pertanian, Kehutanan, dan Perikanan	1.88	1.86	1.84	1.9	1.98	2.03	1.92	Basis
2	Pertambangan dan Penggalian	0.33	0.33	0.31	0.29	0.28	0.26	0.30	Non Basis
3	Industri Pengolahan	0.26	0.25	0.27	0.29	0.33	0.32	0.29	Non Basis
4	Pengadaan Listrik, Gas	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.10	Non Basis
5	Pengadaan Air, Pengelolaan Sampah, Limbah dan Daur Ulang	5.56	5.3	5.26	5.18	5.2	5.21	5.29	Basis
6	Konstruksi	0.7	0.71	0.73	0.74	0.73	0.71	0.72	Non Basis
7	Perdagangan Besar dan Eceran, dan Reparasi Mobil dan Sepeda Motor	1.14	1.12	1.12	1.13	1.15	1.19	1.14	Basis
8	Transportasi dan Pergudangan	1.25	1.26	1.3	1.14	1.04	1.02	1.17	Basis
9	Penyediaan Akomodasi dan Makan Minum	0.56	0.57	0.56	0.52	0.48	0.46	0.53	Non Basis
10	Informasi dan Komunikasi	0.73	0.66	0.66	0.65	0.64	0.62	0.66	Non Basis
11	Jasa Keuangan dan Asuransi	0.95	0.98	1	0.97	0.96	0.95	0.97	Non Basis
12	Real Estate	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	Non Basis
13	Jasa Perusahaan	0.52	0.54	0.56	0.55	0.53	0.51	0.54	Non Basis
14	Administrasi Pemerintahan, Pertahanan dan Jaminan Sosial Wajib	6.19	6.12	6.36	6.45	6.45	6.44	6.34	Basis
15	Jasa Pendidikan	1.84	1.77	1.84	1.93	1.96	1.98	1.89	Basis
16	Jasa Kesehatan dan Kegiatan Sosial	1.85	1.71	1.64	1.71	1.77	1.75	1.74	Basis
17	Jasa lainnya	0.9	0.91	0.91	0.84	0.84	0.81	0.87	Non Basis

Table 2 shows that during the 2019–2024 period, there were seven "base sectors" in Maluku Province: Agriculture, Fisheries, and Forestry (average LQ: 1.92); Water Supply, Sewerage, Waste Management, and Remediation Activities (LQ: 5.29); Wholesale and Retail Trade and Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles (LQ: 1.14); Transportation and Warehousing (LQ: 1.17); Public Administration, Defense, and Compulsory Social Security (LQ: 6.34); Education Services (LQ: 1.89); and Human Health and Social Work Activities (LQ: 1.74). These findings align with the results of the study by Kotngoran et al [17].

The results of the Shift-Share analysis will explain the economic performance of Maluku Province and provide an overview of its economy. Specifically, economic growth in Maluku Province (Dij) is influenced by three interconnected components: national economic growth (Nij), the proportional shift (or industry mix effect, Mij), and the competitive advantage effect (Cij).

Table 3. Shift-Share Analysis of Maluku Province 2019-2024

Lapangan Usaha <i>Industry</i>	Komponen			Dij
	Nij	Cij	Mij	
Pertanian, Kehutanan, dan Perikanan	36,502.34	5,834.44	-3,867.03	38,469.76
Pertambangan dan Penggalian	3,902.06	492.94	-2,135.07	2,259.94
Industri Pengolahan	6,710.76	2,330.83	-99.91	8,941.68
Pengadaan Listrik, Gas	132.52	87.97	2.23	222.73
Pengadaan Air, Pengelolaan Sampah, Limbah dan Daur Ulang	751.07	-198.14	67.19	620.13
Konstruksi	8,324.19	1,938.79	895.67	11,158.64
Perdagangan Besar dan Eceran, dam Reparasi Mobil dan Sepeda Motor	17,556.16	5,837.66	-380.84	23,012.98
Transportasi dan Pergudangan	6,402.57	-2,806.79	2,696.09	6,291.87
Penyediaan Akomodasi dan Makan Minum	2,959.00	-457.77	279.57	2,780.80
Informasi dan Komunikasi	4,580.57	-3,252.51	6,418.09	7,746.15
Jasa Keuangan dan Asuransi	5,277.09	1,335.34	1,301.15	7,913.58
Real Estate	484.77	-128.41	9.89	366.26
Jasa Perusahaan	1,283.27	-593.49	716.82	1,406.59
Administrasi Pemerintahan, Pertahanan dan Jaminan Sosial Wajib	27,853.11	15,118.57	-7,728.72	35,242.97
Jasa Pendidikan	6,760.35	3,226.65	297.01	10,284.00
Jasa Kesehatan dan Kegiatan Sosial	2,936.18	-1,731.96	2,162.65	3,366.87
Jasa lainnya	2,075.60	-1,325.97	1,118.92	1,868.54
Total	134,491.61	25,708.15		161,953.48

Table 3 shows that during the 2019-2024 period, the influence of national economic growth on growth in Maluku Province yielded positive values (Nij) across all types of economic activities. The proportionality shift component (Mij) indicates th at the region's industrial mix resulted in relatively slow average growth for economic sectors in Maluku Province. Five economic sectors experienced slow growth: Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries; Mining and Quarrying; Manufacturing; Wholesale and Retail Trade and Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles; and Public Administration, Defense, and Compulsory Social Security. Among all economic sectors in Maluku Province, nine categories were classified as competitive (Cij)—demonstrated by positive total values—while the other eight were not. The competitive sectors are Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries; Mining and Quarrying; Manufacturing; Electricity, Gas, and Construction; Wholesale and Retail Trade and Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles; Financial and Insurance Services; Public Administration, Defense, and Compulsory Social Security; and Education Services.

Based on Location Quotient (LQ) and Shift-Share (SS) analyses, the priority economic sectors in Maluku Province identified for their competitiveness include agriculture, forestry, and fisheries; wholesale and retail trade (including motor vehicle and motorcycle repair); public administration, defense, and compulsory social security; and education services.

Prioritizing these sectors in Maluku's regional development can drive economic growth. The provincial economy is propelled by the agriculture, forestry, and fisheries sectors, driven by increased production and rising demand for agricultural commodities. Furthermore, the establishment of processing centers for fishery products adds value to the regional economy. Public administration is also a priority sector, reflecting the government's commitment to increasing the absorption of the regional budget (APBD) to stimulate local economic activity; this is pursued through the development of regional infrastructure such as roads, electricity, irrigation, and transportation facilities as well as human resource development.

C. Strategies to Address Inequality

Based on Table 4, the policy strategy analysis employs a SWOT framework encompassing internal factors (strengths and weaknesses) and external factors (opportunities and threats) derived from the results of the Klassen Typology, Williamson

Index, LQ, and Shift-Share analyses, as outlined below:

Table 4. SWOT Analysis of Policies to Address Inequality in Maluku Province

Faktor Internal	Strengths	Weaknesses
	Memiliki sektor basis Potensi maritim besar Konektivitas laut alami/memungkinkan pengembangan transporasti laut Sumber daya alam melimpah	Infrastruktur terbatas Sumber daya manusia tidak merata Ketergantungan pada sektor tradisional dan nilai tambah rendah Biaya tinggi
Faktor external		
Opportunities	S-O	W-O
Program strategis nasional: menetapkan Maluku sebagai pusat kemaritiman, sentra perikanan, lumbung energi, dan destinasi pariwisata bahari berkelanjutan Digitalisasi sistem dapat mendukung pembangunan dan pemasaran produk Potensi pengembangan sektor pariwisata Pengembangan pelabuhan	Optimalisasi Sektor Basis Menjadi Penggerak Ekonomi Wilayah, Membangun rantai nilai perikanan, Mengembangkan kawasan agromaritim terpadu Pengembangan Pariwisata Bahari Berkelanjutan, Pemanfaatan Teknologi untuk Konektivitas	Pemerataan Infrastruktur dan SDM Program beasiswa dan pelatihan bagi SDM daerah terpencil, terutama di sektor basis (perikanan, pertanian) Pengembangan Industri Pengolahan untuk Nilai Tambah, Kembangkan agroindustri yang memiliki basis pertanian
Threats	S-T	W-T
Geografis kepulauan Regulasi nasional tidak akomodatif karakteristik geografis kepulauan Eksplorasi berlebihan: Illegal logging dan penambangan emas liar mengancam sektor pertanian dan lingkungan	Membangun Konektivitas Antar Pulau untuk Mengatasi Hambatan Geografis Melindungi Sektor Basis dari Ancaman Eksploitasi, Edukasi masyarakat tentang pengelolaan lingkungan berkelanjutan Diversifikasi komoditas pertanian	Reformasi Regulasi dan Tata Kelola Penguatan Koordinasi Lintas Sektor dan Pusat-Daerah

Based on an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, the strategies required to address regional inequality in Maluku Province are as follows: 1) Transform base sectors into drivers of inclusive economic growth across regencies and cities by leveraging local potential; key measures include developing agro-maritime zones and establishing fisheries value chains. The focus must shift toward increasing value-added through the processing of fishery and agricultural products (product diversification) rather than merely exporting raw materials while developing commodities based on regional comparative advantages. Currently, the agriculture and fisheries sectors yield only raw products, leaving them highly vulnerable to price fluctuations and failing to generate significant value for the community; therefore, downstream processing of key commodities must be developed. 2) The archipelagic nature of the region creates logistical hurdles that trigger price disparities (high costs) and economic isolation; consequently, establishing inter-island connectivity must be a priority. Constructing local piers and optimizing the "Sea Toll" (maritime highway) system can reduce logistics costs, equalize food prices, and open market access for remote areas. 3) The quality of human resources remains low and uneven, hindering Maluku's ability to capitalize on opportunities. To address this, scholarship and training programs must be aligned with future industrial needs rather than serving merely as financial aid; the goal is to cultivate a competent local workforce, reduce unemployment, and break the cycle of poverty. 4) Optimize opportunities through targeted digitalization by leveraging technology to market agricultural and fishery products directly to national and global markets, thereby bypassing the lengthy supply chains that keep farmers and fishermen in poverty. 5) Reform regulations and governance; existing national regulations often fail to accommodate the region's specific needs, necessitating special policies such as Special Autonomy. This policy represents more than a mere delegation of authority; it is a constitutional mechanism designed to provide the Maluku Provincial Government with greater fiscal space and exclusive powers. Thus, this archipelagic region can establish development priorities adapted to its geographical characteristics ranging from marine resource management and the acceleration of inter-island connectivity to the construction of basic infrastructure resilient to tropical climate conditions and archipelagic topography without being hindered by centralized bureaucracy that is often insensitive to realities on the ground. 6) Law enforcement to strengthen natural resource oversight in order to prevent illegal exploitation, protect the environment, enhance the effectiveness of poverty alleviation programs, and ensure economic equity.

Conclusion

Research findings indicate a very high level of economic inequality in Maluku Province; specifically, five regencies are classified as relatively underdeveloped due to slow economic growth structures and low per capita income. Furthermore, the province possesses four priority sectors agriculture, forestry, and fisheries; wholesale and retail trade and the repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles; public administration, defense, and compulsory social security; and education services that offer advantages, potential, and competitiveness for regional development aimed at addressing inequality. The implications of this study offer recommendations for the Maluku Provincial Government to evaluate and formulate economic development

policies based on these priority sectors while considering inter-sectoral linkages, thereby fostering sustainable economic growth that can mitigate regional inequality.

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