

Covid-19, Unemployment, Effort to Tackle It

Indriana Damaianti¹, Ruli Mochammad Chaerudin²

^{1,2}Universitas Insan Cendekia Mandiri, Bandung, Indonesia

Indrianadamaianti05@gmail.com

Abstract

The significant increase in Covid-19 cases illustrates the economic condition of the community and has an impact on the high unemployment rate. Object of study is economic growth, inflation, and unemployment rate. The type of study is an associative quantitative approach that aims to determine the effect of economic growth and inflation on the unemployment rate in West Java Province in 2015-2020. Data collection was obtained from secondary data taken from the Statistics Indonesia (BPS) of West Java Province. Technical analysis of the data used is multiple regression analysis using SPSS version 25.0 program. The results showed that economic growth affects the unemployment rate in West Java, while inflation does not affect it. The government must make the right policies and focus more on the stimulus for handling the pandemic going forward.

Keywords

covid-19; unemployment rate;
economic growth; inflation



I. Introduction

The Covid-19 virus in December 2019 first appeared in Wuhan and it was also known that in January 2020 for the first time there were new cases of this virus outside Wuhan. In Indonesia, the first case was announced on March 2, 2020. After that, the world health organization, namely WHO, on March 16, 2020, declared COVID-19 as a pandemic. Since the Covid-19 virus was announced as a pandemic, the policy made by the government was Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) and Indonesia began to implement it for approximately two months and around June 2020 economic and social activities slowly began to reopen (BPS Provinsi Jawa Barat, 2020).

Covid-19 cases that occurred in West Java until July 2021 reached 536,756 cases (Pusat Informasi & Koordinasi Covid-19, 2021). The high number of cases has caused shocks to the economic condition of the community. The increase in Covid-19 cases is in line with the increase in the number of unemployed. Unemployment can be defined as residents or people who are not working and their activities can be said because they are in the process of looking for work, planning a business, people are not looking for work with reasons because they feel it is not possible to get a job and already have a job but they have not started work (BPS Provinsi Jawa Barat, 2020).

The open unemployment rate is an indicator in measuring the unemployment rate which indicates the population whose working age is included in the unemployment group (Sukirno, 2015). The usefulness of indicators in units or people as well as percent will be useful as a benchmark for the government in creating new jobs and as evaluation material in the success of a regional economic development. The open unemployment rate will be measured as a measure or percentage of the number of unemployed divided by job seekers to the total workforce.

The open unemployment rate can identify every worker which cannot be absorbed by employment in the labor market and illustrates the lack of utilization of the supply of labor.

The open unemployment rate re-reflects the economic capacity of the labor market which has not been able to open jobs for those who really want to work but do not get the job. Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency in February 2021, the number of open unemployment rates reached 8.75 million people. This increase is quite significant compared to the previous year of 6.93 million people (Teguh, 2021).

The outbreak of this virus has an impact of a nation and Globally (Ningrum et al, 2020). The presence of Covid-19 as a pandemic certainly has an economic, social and psychological impact on society (Saleh and Mujahiddin, 2020). Covid 19 pandemic caused all efforts not to be as maximal as expected (Sihombing and Nasib, 2020). The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic does not only cause health problems, but almost all aspects or sectors of life are affected by this, one of which is the economic aspect. Economic growth can describe the performance of development in the economic field. Based on data from Kementerian Keuangan Direktorat Jenderal Perbendaharaan (2021) that economic growth in West Java in 2020 experienced a contraction of 2.44 percent and decreased compared to 2019. This situation was apparently greater than the national economic growth of 2.07 percent, but it is still said to be better than economic growth in the Java region, which is 2.51 percent. The impact of the pandemic caused production activities to decline and the PSBB policy was an effort to mitigate the spread of Covid-19. However, inflation in West Java during 2020 remains under control at 2.18 percent and is still in line with the inflation target range of the Government and West Java's RPJMD for 2018-2023, which is targeted for inflation in 2020 of 2 percent. The inflation achievement will be lower when compared to the inflation achievement in 2019 which reached 3.21 percent. The economic slow-down and people's consumption patterns have changed due to the pandemic, which has reduced demand and maintained strategic food supplies, thus pushing the inflation rate which tends to be low.

The main factor that determines the unemployment rate is economic growth which is an indicator to assess economic performance and analyze the results of economic development that has been carried out by a country or region. Increased economic growth illustrates that the economy is developing well, on the contrary if economic growth does not develop well, then bad things will definitely happen, namely the problem of high unemployment (Sukirno, 2015). Okun's law is a law that explains the relationship between economic growth and the unemployment rate, where there is a negative correlation between GDP and unemployment. The theoretical basis is that an increased workforce should be able to produce more goods and services. Arthur Okun found that high real growth made the unemployment rate decrease, and vice versa (Soylu et al., 2018).

Economic growth is needed to be able to know the state of the economy and performance in the development of a country or region in a certain period, either on the basis of prevailing prices or constant prices as measured by Gross Domestic Regional Product (GDRP). This study uses GDRP based on constant prices which indicate the added value of goods and services is calculated using the prices prevailing in one particular year as the base year reference. Determination of GDRP at constant prices is needed to remove the influence of inflation (Arifin, 2009; Achmad, 2021). Research conducted Priastiwi & Handayani (2019) explains that the unemployment rate as measured by GRDP has a significant effect on the unemployment rate. In contrast to Palindangan & Bakar (2021) which explains that economic growth does not affect the unemployment rate.

The development of an economy requires higher national income and is a choice that must be made. However, the problem is not just how to spur growth, but who will implement it and also who has the right to enjoy the results. Every increase in economic growth is always expected to absorb a lot of workers, so that it can reduce the number of

unemployed people (Todaro & Smith, 2011). This is in line with the research of Anggoro & Soesatyo (2013) which found that the variable economic growth significantly affected the unemployment rate in the city of Surabaya.

Another factor is inflation which is also used to measure the stability of the economy of a country or region. Inflation is a symptom in which the level of general prices such as the price of food, raw materials, etc. increases continuously. As a result, the increase in the labor force is not supported by the expansion of the availability of jobs and an increase in the unemployment rate. Inflation is a condition where there is an increase in the price of goods in general continuously from time to time. The rate of increase in new prices is said to be inflation if the increase is widespread and can affect the increase in prices of other goods. So that the increase in prices for some goods cannot be said to be inflation, unless it has an effect on the prices of other goods (Putong, 2013). This is in line with research from Bintang & Prana (2020) which shows that inflation does not affect the open unemployment rate in Medan City. In contrast to the research that has been done by Lisani et al (2020) which states that the inflation rate has a positive and significant relationship to the unemployment rate.

Based on sources from Fakultas Ekonomika dan Bisnis UGM (2017), inflation is a tendency to increase the price of goods and services that has taken place continuously. If there is an increase in inflation, it means that the prices of goods and services in the country have increased. In this study, the inflation indicator is measured using the Consumer Price Index which calculates the average change in the prices of groups of goods and services consumed by households in a certain period of time. Changes in the Consumer Price Index from time to time show the level of increase in prices (inflation) or the level of decline in prices (deflation) of goods and services.

Economically these two variables are interrelated with an inverse correlation relationship. When inflation is low, unemployment will be high, and vice versa (Jelilov et al., 2016). Study by A.W. Philips proves that there is a negative relationship between an increase in the inflation rate and the unemployment rate. The Philips curve explains that it is not possible to occur simultaneously between price stability and high employment opportunities because there must be a trade off. The lower the inflation, the higher the unemployment rate. The increase in inflation is encouraged to maintain a decrease in the unemployment rate (Hasyim, 2016).

The Philips Curve Theory cannot fully explain the nature of the relationship between inflation and unemployment. According to Chletsos et al (2016) this curve model can be used in the United States, but is not relevant in Canada. Safdari et al (2016) also found mixed findings regarding the relationship between inflation and unemployment, where the relationship between the two is usually negative on certain time scales but positive on other time scales.

The formulation of the problem studied is whether economic growth affects the unemployment rate and whether inflation affects the unemployment rate. The novelty in this research is the situation at the time of the covid-19 pandemic and the scope of the research was carried out in West Java Province. This study aims to determine the effect of economic growth and inflation on the unemployment rate in West Java Province. This research is important because it is able to explain what factors influence the unemployment rate and provide ideas about what efforts should be made by the government and the community to reduce the unemployment rate, especially in West Java.

II. Research Method

The level of explanation used is associative research with a quantitative approach, the aim is to determine the relationship between the variables studied. Quantitative methods are used to examine the influence between the independent and dependent variables. The data used is secondary data sourced from official publications, namely the Central Statistics Agency of West Java Province in 2015-2020. The data source used is data from the number of registered open unemployment rates in the West Java Province from 2015 to 2020.

Variables whose existence is affected by the independent variable are described as the definition of the dependent variable. The unemployment rate as the dependent variable is proxied by the independent variable. Furthermore, variables whose existence affects the position of the dependent variable can be termed independent variables which in this study consist of two variables, namely economic growth and inflation. The targeted population is economic growth, inflation, and the unemployment rate in West Java Province. According to Sugiyono (2016) the sample is a part of the number of characteristics possessed by the population. The samples used are economic growth, inflation, and the unemployment rate in West Java Province from 2015 to 2020.

The data analysis technique in this study used multiple linear regression analysis. Multiple linear regression has a function to determine how much influence economic growth and inflation have on the unemployment rate in West Java Province. This regression analysis uses the classical assumption test by running the normality test, multicollinearity test, heteroscedasticity test, autocorrelation, and hypothesis testing t test and coefficient of determination test. All data analysis calculations using SPSS version 25.0 program.

The regression model used is:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon \quad (1)$$

Y = Unemployment Rate

X1 = Economic Growth

X2 = Inflation

α = Constant

β_1 = Economic Growth Regression Coefficient

β_2 = Inflation Regression Coefficient

ε = error

III. Results and Discussion

This study was conducted to determine the effect of economic growth and inflation on the unemployment rate. Data collection techniques using multiple linear regression analysis. According to Sugiyono (2016) the classical assumption test is an initial requirement that should be met before further data testing is carried out because fraud detection can be carried out in research. This classical assumption test consists of normality test, multicollinearity test, heteroscedasticity test, and autocorrelation test so that it can be continued with hypothesis testing.

The normality test is used to identify or find out whether the data being studied is normal or not. If the results are found to be normally distributed, it means that the data is valid. Detection can be carried out with statistical data analysis or graphs.

Table 1. Normality Test Result

| | | Unstandardized Residual |
|----------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| N | | 6 |
| Normal Parameters ^{a,b} | Mean | 0,0000000 |
| | Std. Deviation | 0,08827447 |
| | Absolute | 0,293 |
| Most Extreme Differences | Positive | 0,293 |
| | Negative | -0,17 |
| | Test Statistic | 0,293 |
| Asymp Sig. (2-tailed) | | 0,117 |

a. Test distribution is Normal

b. Calculated from data

The result of the normality test is using the Kolmogorov Smirnov test. The research data is declared normally distributed if the significant value in Asymp.Sig.(2-tailed) is above 0.05. Table 1 indicates a significant value of 0.117, meaning that it is greater than 0.05 or in other words, this research has met the normal as-sumptions.

Multicollinearity test indicates whether there is a relationship between the independent variables. On a study, it is said that the regression form is correct if there is no relationship between the independent variables (Ghozali, 2018).

Table 2. Multicollinearity Test Result

| Model | Collinearity Statistics | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|-------|
| | Tolerance | VIF |
| (Constant) | | |
| Economic Growth | 0,520 | 1,924 |
| Inflation | 0,666 | 1,502 |

Multicollinearity test results were obtained using the Variance Inflating factor (VIF) value. The data of this study is declared to have multicollinearity if the tolerance value is above 10. The Variance Inflating factor (VIF) value in table 2 for the variable economic growth is 1.924 and inflation is 1.502, meaning that all inde-pendent variables (independent) have a value lower than 10 or with in other words, in this regression model, there is no multicollinearity between variables.

Heteroscedasticity test detects the presence or absence of asymmetry of some observer residuals in the regression model. The correct form of regression in a study is if there is no indication of heteroscedasticity (Ghozali, 2018). The heteroscedasticity test in this study used the Glejser test. The regression model is said to have no heteroscedasticity if the significance value is above 0.05.

Table 3. Heterokedasticity Test Result

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | | t | Sig. |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|--------|-------|--------|-------|
| | Std | | | | |
| | B | Error. | Beta. | | |
| (Constant) | 3,338 | 1,613 | - | -2,070 | 0,174 |
| Economic Growth | 0,022 | 0,009 | 1,138 | 2,564 | 0,124 |
| Inflation | 0,022 | 0,014 | 0.569 | -1.453 | 0,283 |

The results of the heteroscedasticity test are obtained in table 3 with the results of all independent variables having a significant value above 0.05 with details of the economic growth variable of 0.124 and the inflation variable of 0.283, which means that in the regression analysis there are no symptoms of heteroscedasticity.

According to Ghazali (2018) the autocorrelation test detects the presence or absence of a relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable in the current period and the previous period. The autocorrelation test in this study used the Run test. The regression model is said to be feasible to use if the significant value is above 0.05.

Table 4. Autocorrelation Test Result

| | Unstandardized Residual |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Test Value ^a | 0,00280 |
| Cases < Test Value | 3 |
| Cases >= Test Value | 3 |
| Total Cases | 6 |
| Number of Runs | 5 |
| Z | 0,456 |
| Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) | 0,648 |

The results of the autocorrelation test are obtained in table 4 with significant results of 0.648 above 0.05. it means that there is no autocorrelation problem between independent variables so that the regression model is said to be feasible to use.

Multiple linear regression is used in order to identify the relationship between variables through an equation. Statistical calculations in this study using the SPSS version 25.0 program.

Table 5. Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Test

| Model | Unstandardized | | | t | Sig. |
|-----------------|----------------|------------|-------|---------|-------|
| | Coefficients. | | Beta. | | |
| | B | Std Error. | | | |
| (Constant). | 28,242 | 5,026 | | 5,619 | 0,030 |
| Economic Growth | -0.36 | 0,027 | -1 | -13,265 | 0,006 |
| Inflation | 0,174 | 0,042 | 0,352 | 4,118 | 0,054 |

a. Dependent Variable:
Unemployment Rate

From the equation of the multiple linear regression analysis test results, the following equation is obtained:

$$Y = 28.242 - 0.360X_1 + 0.174X_2$$

The constant of 28.242 is if the economic growth variable is 0 and the inflation variable is 0, then the unemployment rate is 28.242. X_1 of -0.36 means that if the variable X_1 (economic growth) increases by 1 per-cent while the variable X_2 (inflation) remains constant, then Y (unemployment rate) will increase by 0.36 per-cent. The negative sign (-) is due to the opposite relationship between economic growth and the unemployment rate, that is, if there is a decline in economic growth, the unemployment rate will increase. X_2 (inflation) of 0.174 is if X_2 (inflation) increases by 1 percent while the variable X_1 remains constant, then Y (unemployment rate) will increase by 0.174 percent.

The hypothesis was tested using a partial hypothesis test - t test. Ghazali (2018) explains that this partial test is used to analyze the extent to which the influence of the independent variable individually affects the dependent variable. The results of the significance of the variables will be related to the hypotheses obtained in this study.

Table 5 can be interpreted as the results of testing the research hypothesis, namely the significance value of the economic growth variable is 0.006 smaller than 0.05 ($0.006 < 0.05$), meaning that economic growth significantly affects the unemployment rate in West Java Province. The significant value of the inflation variable is 0.054 which is greater than 0.05 ($0.054 > 0.05$), meaning that inflation does not affect the unemployment rate in West Java Province.

Analysis of the coefficient of determination (R square) is used to help produce a large percentage of the influence of the independent variable simultaneously on the dependent variable. R Square indicates that how big is the percentage of the dependent variable that is affected by the independent variable and is used to measure the level of mastery of the model to explain the variation of the independent variable. If the regression value turns out to be a value close to 1, then the regression line is categorized as good, but if it is close to 0, then the regression is categorized as poor.

Table 6. Coefficient of Determination Test

| Model. | R | R Square. | Adjusted R Square | Std Error of the Estimate. |
|--------|--------------------|-----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | 0,895 ^a | 0,890 | 0,876 | 0,12957 |

The results of the analysis of the coefficient of determination in table 6 indicate the Adjusted R Square value of 0.890 (89 percent), meaning that the variables X_1 (economic growth) and X_2 (inflation) simultaneously have an effect of 89 percent on the unemployment rate and as much as 11 percent is affected by other variables outside the study.

This study reviews the effect of economic growth and inflation on the unemployment rate in West Java Province in 2015-2020. The results of the study indicate that economic growth significantly affects the unemployment rate. This is in line with the results of research by Anggoro & Soesatyo (2013) which explains that economic growth has an influence on the unemployment rate. The impact of COVID-19 has made the regional economy slump drastically. The opening of economic activity in the midst of a pandemic is able to encourage economic growth. The government can take quick steps so that the regional economy returns to positive. If economic growth is stable, it will be able to expand employment opportunities so that it can absorb a larger number of workers. The

current COVID-19 pandemic has also made many people in West Java finally set up their own businesses in order to meet their daily needs. Not only for those who are unemployed due to layoffs or at home, but for those who are already working, they innovate to try their luck in the business sector. The second variable is inflation. This research has indicated that inflation does not affect the unemployment rate. In line with Shifa (2017) that inflation does not affect the unemployment rate. This means that there is no correlation between economic growth and the unemployment rate.

IV. Conclusion

The results of data processing and analysis in this study concluded that significantly economic growth affects the unemployment rate in West Java Province, then inflation does not significantly affect the unemployment rate in West Java Province. This is because in West Java the absorption of labor is very high spread across several sectors. The government is expected to focus more on stimulating appropriate policies to increase economic growth after the COVID-19 pandemic, because if economic growth is stable, it will be able to expand employment opportunities so that it can absorb a larger number of workers. The current COVID-19 pandemic has also made many people in West Java finally set up their own businesses in order to meet their daily needs. Not only for those who are unemployed due to layoffs or at home, but for those who are already working, they innovate to try their luck in the business sector.

There are still various shortcomings in this study because it is limited to applying two variables. It is advisable for further researchers to add other variables such as labor force growth, population growth, education level, as well as from non-financial variables to find out what factors influence the unemployment rate. If you are going to conduct a similar study, the period for observation is expected to be longer. In addition, further research can also be expanded not only in West Java Province but in other provinces or in Indonesia.

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