

## The Distinctive Asymmetrical Decentralization in the Archipelagic Region: The Case of West Nusa Tenggara Province of Indonesia

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**Abstract.** Decentralization has repercussions for the area in a variety of areas, including political, social, cultural, financial, defense and security, and public services, among others. Sumbawa Island and Lombok Island are the two principal islands that make up West Nusa Tenggara. There are 280 islands in all, 32 of which are inhabited. Sumbawa Island is one-third the size of Lombok Island in terms of area, but Lombok Island has a population that is about three times that of Sumbawa Island. This study contends that because the archipelagic region is not organized by its island-specific traits but rather around land-based development, this has the potential to exacerbate discrepancies between islands. This study found that, there are only minimal maritime authorities in the archipelagic province in managing archipelagic water, and there is fiscal and ethnic disparity between the Lombok and Sumbawa Islands. Moreover, there are inequalities in health care facilities and medical staff between Lombok and Sumbawa Island, the small population of Sumbawa Island has an impact on educational resources, and the maritime infrastructure on the other small islands surrounding Sumbawa Island is inadequate.

**Keywords:** West Nusa Tenggara Province, Decentralization, Public Service, Asymmetrical.

**Abstrak.** Implikasi desentralisasi bagi daerah dapat dilihat dari banyak aspek, seperti politik, sosial, budaya, pertahanan dan keamanan, fiskal, pelayanan publik, dan lain sebagainya. Nusa Tenggara Barat terdiri dari dua pulau utama: Pulau Sumbawa dan Pulau Lombok. Jumlah pulaunya 280 pulau, 32 diantaranya berpenghuni. Luas Pulau Lombok sepertiga luas Pulau Sumbawa, namun Pulau Lombok mempunyai jumlah penduduk hampir tiga kali lipat jumlah penduduk Pulau Sumbawa. Kajian ini berargumen bahwa karena wilayah kepulauan tidak ditata dengan menitikberatkan pada ciri-cirinya berupa kepulauan, melainkan menitik beratkan pada pembangunan di daratan, maka hal ini berimplikasi pada semakin besarnya disparitas antar pulau. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Barat hanya memiliki sedikit kewenangan dalam mengelola ruang laut diperairan kepulauan. Kemudian terdapat ketimpangan dari sisi fiskal dan pengaruh etnisita antara Pulau Lombok dan Sumbawa. Adanya keesenjangan dalam fasilitas dan tenaga kesehatan, populasi yang lebih sedikit di Pulau Sumbawa berakibat kepada kurangnya sumber daya manusia yang terdidik dan infrastruktur maritim pada pulau-pulau kecil disekitar Pulau Sumbawa kurang memadai.

**Kata kunci:** Desentralisasi, Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Barat, Pelayanan Publik, Asimetris.

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## INTRODUCTION

### West Nusa Tenggara Province Case

The fourth-longest coastline in the world, stretching 95,093 km<sup>2</sup>, belongs to Indonesia, the largest archipelagic nation in the world (Amtu, 2014, p. 1). With the Djuanda Declaration, which was published in 1957, Indonesia began to push for recognition as an archipelagic nation. Only after the 1982 United Nations agreement on the Law of the Sea (United Nations, 1982), was Indonesia recognized as an archipelagic state (Nasution, 2019, p. 121). What exactly is an archipelagic nation? An archipelagic state, according to Unclos 1982, is a nation made up entirely of one or more archipelagos (Nasution, 2019, p. 122). The authority of Indonesia to manage and control its marine space is affected by its classification as an archipelagic nation. Only six nations—Indonesia, Fiji, Trinidad and Tobago, The Bahamas, Papua New Guinea, and the Philippines—are officially listed as archipelagic nations by the United Nations (Pariona, 2018). 18,018 islands were listed as being controlled by Indonesia in a study from 2003, of which 14,752 had been registered with the UN and given official names by the Indonesian government (Pariona, 2018). The United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, which takes place every five years, is where the island's official name is registered.

Indonesia can fully utilize the sea thanks to the management autonomy it has acquired because of being recognized as an archipelagic nation. The administration of shipping operations, trade, the investigation of marine resources like petroleum, as well as fisheries and other economic activities, can all contribute to the sea's economic value (Nasution, 2019, p. 122). However, during the Jokowi administration, there was a paradigm shift from Java-centric to Indonesia-centric, with the aspiration to make Indonesia the world's maritime axis in 2024 (Polyando, 2020). The implementation of the global maritime fulcrum would involve maritime security, maritime diplomacy, maritime connectivity, and maritime culture (Supandi, 2015).

To safeguard Indonesia's sovereignty and prevent future incidents like the loss of Sipadan and Ligitan, it is crucial to govern tiny islands, particularly those that are close to neighboring nations. According to Law Number 23 of 2014 regarding Regional Government, only the provinces and the central government are responsible for managing marine areas. Previously, the regencies/municipalities had the power to control the marine area out to a distance of four nautical miles from the nearest point of land. The province

currently controls the administration of 0–12 nautical miles in its entirety. Additionally, it is entirely controlled by the central government above 12 nautical miles. The central and provincial governments oversee maritime management, with city districts only playing a very modest role in empowering local fishermen, overseeing fish auction locations, and awarding fishing company licenses. While the province has the power to make administrative decisions, plan the use of space, participate in maintaining maritime security, and contribute to maintaining state sovereignty, it also has the power to explore, exploit, conserve, and manage marine resources in addition to oil and gas (BPK, 2020).

All Indonesian provinces are required to create a Zoning Plan for Coastal Areas and Small Islands (RZWP3K), often known as marine spatial planning, as of the passage of Law No. 23 of 2014. Since 2016, the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries has been implementing RZWP3K. 27 provinces have turned in the RZWP3K through the year 2020. Due to the open-access nature of the sea, its use is regarded as common property or a shared pool of resources. This is significant because managing marine space involves numerous interests, including conflicts. A confrontation between traditional fisherman in Bangka Belitung and a firm that mines tin at sea serves as an illustration. The district and city oversee issuing permission to catch small fisherman, whereas the national government is in charge of issuing permits for tin mining. Conflicts over who has the authority to decide on marine exploration are unavoidably caused by the existence of overlapping authorities (Sujadmi & Murtasidin, 2020). Therefore, to prevent overlapping authority and disagreements amongst stakeholders, integrated marine spatial planning is crucial.

Decentralized management of the province archipelagic water is lacking. The central government should reconsider its decision to decentralize its authority at sea and grant more autonomy to regions, especially those with archipelagic characteristics, considering the numerous economic opportunities offered by the sea as well as the significant potential for conflict due to the open access nature of sea space and common pool resources. One of the main factors in granting local governments decentralization, particularly in terms of public services, is geographic conditions. Decentralization is regarded as one of the ways to achieving effective and efficient public services since it brings services closer to the community. However, there is very little study on decentralization that addresses decentralization in managing marine space. This study

concentrates on the effects of decentralization on public services, particularly in Indonesian provinces with an archipelagic landscape. The management of sea space can be seen in the archipelagic province, whose territory is predominately ocean, where it has become fragmented with the division of authority from 0-12 nautical miles to be managed by the province, while above 12 nautical miles the management is under the authority of the central government.

Indonesia is a maritime country like Japan, the Philippines, and the U.K. (Polyando, 2020). Of the 34 provinces, 8 provinces are in the form of islands (West Nusa Tenggara, East Nusa Tenggara, Riau Islands, Maluku, North Maluku, Bangka Belitung, North Sulawesi, Southeast Sulawesi). In 2018, the eight provinces proposed special autonomy of the archipelago. Unfortunately, the disparity of development in Indonesia is not only between west and east, Java and non-Java but also between mainland and islands. Archipelagic regions, in general, are far behind in all respects; education, health, basic infrastructure such as roads, water, electricity, and internet network. For this reason, it is necessary to build a growth hub outside Java, especially in the archipelago. The autonomy, purpose, and obligations of areas with archipelagic characteristics are the same as those of regions with land characteristics. The marine area is larger in the archipelago than on the mainland. The management of sea space is one area where archipelagic regions do not have any privileges. The "archipelagic regions fight for autonomy at provincial archipelagic waters"<sup>1</sup>. The idea of submitting a law on archipelagic regions has not been accommodated either by the central government or the legislature (Polyando, 2020).

Support for the provision of asymmetric decentralization for archipelagic regions is presented by the research of Rahmatunnisa et al. (2018); that the desire of the archipelagic regions to obtain asymmetric decentralization is more than the desire to have a better capacity in carrying out the development and governance process. Therefore, the basis for the eight archipelagic provinces to acquire asymmetrical decentralization is not as political as the previous provinces but rather administrative and fiscal decentralization. However, asymmetric decentralization must be provided with a careful design to achieve the intended benefits (Rahmatunnisa et al., 2018). Research on asymmetric decentralization in Indonesia focuses more on granting authority at the provincial level (Azis et al., 2020;

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<sup>1</sup> A statement from one of the interviewees

Huda, 2015; Madubun & Akib, 2017; Polyando, 2020; Rahmatunnisa et al., 2018), but few have analyzed the possibility of granting asymmetrical decentralization in areas with archipelagic characteristics.

According to McGarry (2007), there are at least two objectives of granting asymmetric autonomy. The first is particularly centrifugal, i.e., to strengthen local government with certain responsibilities. Second, democratic accountability (McGarry, 2007). Asymmetric in terms of administration refers to the degree of autonomy or authority from the states or through applying central rules that are not uniform in the regions (Bird, 2003). Furthermore, asymmetric decentralization can distort the decision-making process by introducing new elements in the spectrum of centralization and decentralization, particularly with efficiency and suppressing spillovers caused by free riding (Fiorillo et al., 2021).

Meanwhile, according to Bird and Ebel (2007), the provision of asymmetric decentralization is due to two motives, i.e., political motives and administrative motives. Political motives are due to political and cultural reasons, while administrative motives are driven by economic and efficiency factors (Bird & Ebel, 2007, p. 21). Tan and Uster (2021) referred to asymmetric decentralization as the arrangement of fiscal and administrative competencies and policy responsibilities delegated to sub-national level governments with the same legislative status (Tan & Avshalom-Uster, 2021). The type of asymmetric decentralization can be divided into extended autonomy, limited autonomy, and special autonomy (Utomo, 2009). Wehner stated that asymmetry was given for two reasons, particularly political driven and capacity driven (Wehner, 2000). According to Lele (2019), asymmetric giving is due to political motives (to tame separatism) and economic motives (increasing efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of public services and improving the quality of policymaking) (Lele, 2019).

Asymmetric decentralization is needed to recognize differences in geography, population, economic, or socio-cultural conditions (Rahmatunnisa et al., 2018). Madubun and Akib (2017) argued that Indonesia, as an archipelagic country, needs to provide asymmetric decentralization to provinces with archipelagic characteristics because public services in the archipelagic regions have not run as expected. The main obstacles faced by residents living in the archipelago are inadequate sea transportation, natural conditions that are challenging for the community to access services and resources (human, funds,

and facilities) (Madubun & Akib, 2017). However, asymmetric decentralization has its challenges: laws and regulations must treat all government units uniformly/standardly. In other words, there is no difference in the eyes of regulations. Even though, in practice, each unit has a different capacity in implementing these regulations. Local government capacity is the main issue in providing asymmetric decentralization (Litvack et al., 1998).

Research on decentralization tends to be fragmented, in a matter that it only focuses on political decentralization, fiscal decentralization, or administrative decentralization. This is understandable because each form of decentralization alone is very complex to explain. Research that focuses on examining the implementation of decentralization in countries with archipelagic characteristics is still rare. Currently, many studies discuss small countries with archipelagic characteristics in the Pacific Region. Research on asymmetric decentralization is beginning to gain attention, especially in federalized countries. However, research on asymmetric decentralization focuses more on political and fiscal motives. Meanwhile, the provision of asymmetric decentralization based on geography, i.e., archipelagic, still needs to be improved.

## Methodology

With the help of interviews, observations, and a literature review, this study used a qualitative methodology. The interview is semi-structured. There are twenty-one interviewees total, including informants from sixteen West Nusa Tenggara Province officials, two academics, two locals, and one representative of a non-governmental group.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### West Nusa Tenggara Province Case

With 287 islands, West Nusa Tenggara has the fewest islands out of the eight provinces that make up the archipelago. Out of the 287 islands, Lombok Island and Sumbawa Island are the ones with the most people and government facilities. These two major islands allow for comparisons to be drawn in terms of both political dynamics and infrastructure. With a population of 5,320,092 in 2020 under NTT, NTB is in second place. West Lombok Regency, Central Lombok Regency, East Lombok Regency, North Lombok Regency, and Mataram City are the four districts and one city that make up the island of

Lombok. The island of Sumbawa is divided into four regencies and a city, namely the Sumbawa, Dompu, Bima city, West Sumbawa, and Bima regencies.

Sumbawa Island is 15,414 km<sup>2</sup>, whereas Lombok Island is 4,739 km<sup>2</sup>. This demonstrates that Sumbawa Island's area is three times more than that of Lombok Island. In 2020, there were 3,768,631 people living in Lombok Island, compared to 1,561,461 people on Sumbawa Island. This demonstrates that despite having an area that is only a third that of Sumbawa Island, Lombok Island has a population that is nearly three times as large, making up 70.8% of NTB. Even though Sumbawa Island has three times the area of Lombok Island, Lombok Island is where growth and development are concentrated.

The infrastructure on the islands of Lombok and Sumbawa clearly differs from one another. Compared to Sumbawa Island, Lombok Island offers better infrastructure for education, health, transportation, and tourism. Asphalt has been used for all road access on the island of Lombok, but not all of it on Sumbawa Island, particularly East Sumbawa. There are several problems with the quality of public service delivery and infrastructures when two main islands are compared in NTB. It stands to reason that additional archipelagic provinces with more numerous and dispersed islands will encounter relatively trickier problems.

In NTB, the Sasak, Samawa, and Mbojo or Bima, often known as Sasambo, are the three primary ethnic groups. Data from 2000 place the Sasak ethnic group in first place with 67.75% of the population. Samawa had 8.34% of the population while Bima had 13.4% (Suryadinata et al., 2003, p. 23). While the Samawa and Bima ethnic groups are primarily found on the island of Sumbawa, the Sasak ethnic group is predominately found on Lombok. The three largest ethnic groups in NTB have an impact on the local political landscape.

In Indonesia, direct elections for regional leaders started in 2005. In NTB, the first direct election for governors took place in 2008. Two governors have been chosen since 2008 through direct regional head elections, including Muhamad Zainul Majdi of the Star Moon Party (Partai Bulan Bintang), who served twice from 2008 to 2013 and again from 2013 to 2018. From 2018 to 2023, it was presided over by Zulkieflimansyah of the Prosperous Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera). It's interesting to note that while Badrul Munir, Muhammad Zainul Majdi's first vice governor, is of the Samawa ethnicity. Muhammad Zainul Majdi was matched with Muhammad Amin, a Samawa ethnic, for the

second period. Zulkieflimansyah is of the Samawa ethnic group, and Siti Rohmi Djalilah, his vice governor, is of the Sasak group. The NTB community is aware that the constellation of pairs symbolizes the disparate ethnicities and the islands of Lombok and Sumbawa. The vice governor is from Sumbawa Island if the candidate for governor hails from Lombok Island, and vice versa.

This ethnicity has an impact on how the two islands have developed. Since Muhammad Zainul Majdi is Sasak and is from Lombok Island, Lombok Island has received the majority of NTB's development funding. Development and funds started to move to Sumbawa Island when Zulkieflimansyah, who is of Samawa ethnic heritage, took the initiative. Social resentment has been fueled by political processes influenced by ethnicity. Sumbawa Island wanted to split and establish Sumbawa Island Province in 2012 while the development center concentrated on Lombok Island. The political process for Sumbawa Island Province's growth was hampered, nonetheless, by the central government's imposition of an expansion ban in 2012.

### Disparity among Lombok and Sumbawa Island

In Indonesia, inequality between islands is well-known. Many islands felt that neither the central government nor the regional leaders, who were at the time attempting to separate themselves through expansion, had paid any attention to them. This has a negative effect, particularly in the archipelago. Because of the expansion, the archipelago's already few resources will become even more scarce because new territorial divisions will force their division. The political climate may influence the desire to break away from the main island in a province with more than two main islands and a widely dispersed population. The population and area distribution in West Nusa Tenggara are shown below.

**Table 1.**  
**Distribution of Area and Population in West Nusa Tenggara**

County/City	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )		Population
	Land	Sea	2020
West Lombok Regency	1053.87	757.78	704,586
Central Lombok Regency	1208.39	397.56	95,5411

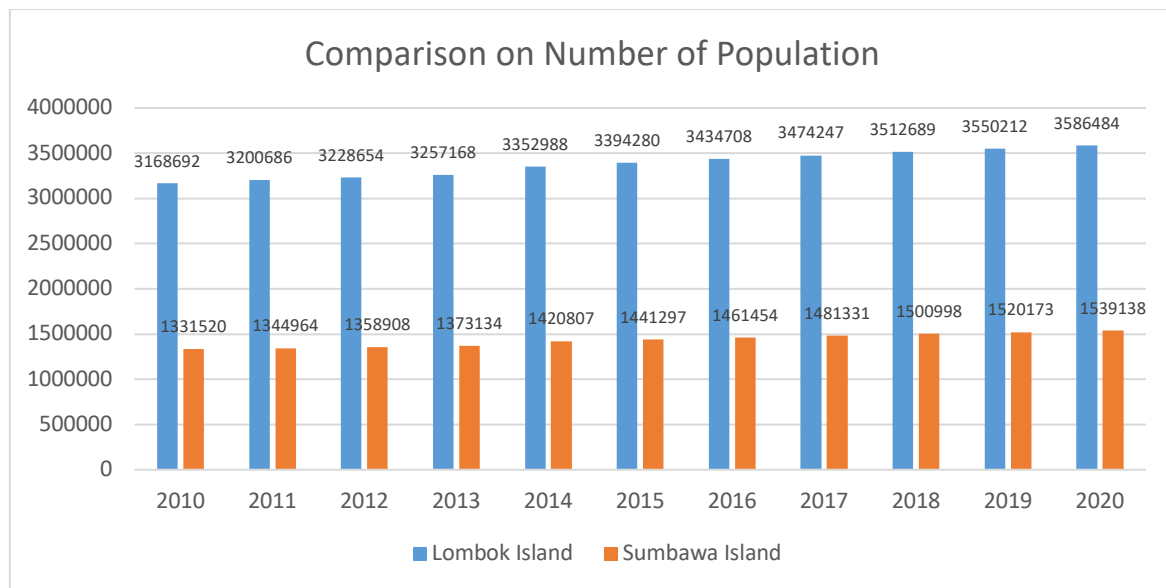


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East Lombok Regency	1605.55	1.074,33	1,208,594
North Lombok Regency	809.53	757,78	222,212
Mataram City	61.3	56.8	495,681
Sumbawa Regency	6643.98	3.831,72	461,502
Dompu Regency	2321.55	1.298,17	255,569
Bima Regency	4389.4	3.572,31	493,198
West Sumbawa Regency	1849.4	1.080,74	152,437
Bima City	222.25	188,02	176,432
Province	-	16.306,90	
Total province	20.153,15	29.159,04	5,125,622

Source: The Office of Marine Affairs and Fisheries NTB, 2019

According to Table 1, the province has a total size of 49,312.19 km<sup>2</sup> when land and water are included. 40.87% of the area is land, and 59.13% is the ocean. Sumbawa Island's area is 15,414.50 km<sup>2</sup>, whereas Lombok Island's area is 4,738.0 km<sup>2</sup> (23.51%) larger. Because 70% of people live on the island of Lombok and the remaining 30% reside on the island of Sumbawa, the population is not spread fairly. The population is not in line with the available space and capacity. More than 3.5 million people reside on the smaller island of Lombok, compared to only 1.5 million on the larger island of Sumbawa. The unequal population distribution between the two islands causes a variety of environmental issues, including a shortage of water sources, deforestation and other land damage, changes in land use, environmental pollution, river silting, and others.



**Graph 1. Comparison of the Population of Lombok Island and Sumbawa Island**

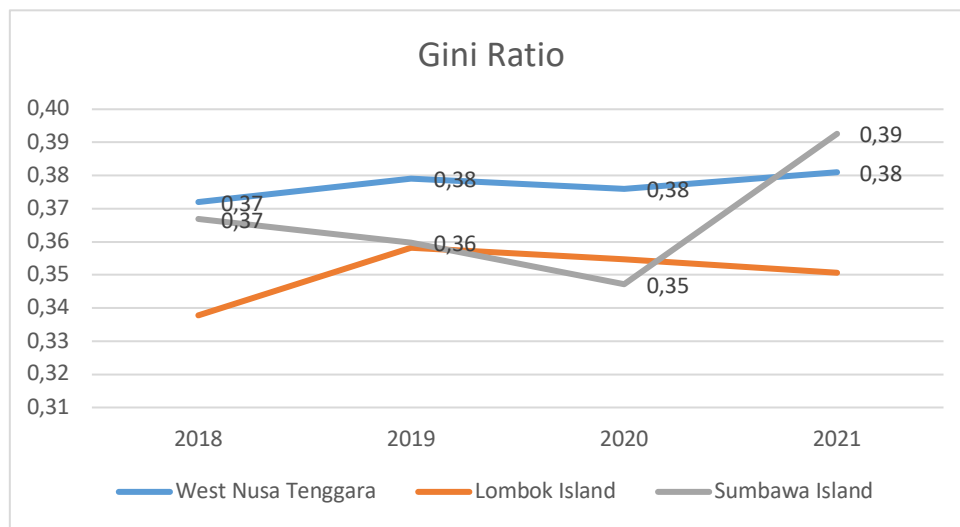
Source: Processed from Statistics of NTB, 2022<sup>2</sup>

The total population of Lombok Island and Sumbawa Island is shown in Graph 1. Year after year, Lombok Island consistently has a larger population than Sumbawa Island. In NTB, the population is expected to increase by 1.63% between 2010 and 2020. The population density in NTB, which has a land area of 20,153.15 km<sup>2</sup>, is 264 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>. The two islands' unequal populations have an impact on the fundamental infrastructure and public services. As a result, construction of the public infrastructure is concentrated primarily on the island of Lombok. Most of the provincial offices are found on the island of Lombok because it is home to NTB Mataram City, the country's capital city. Political considerations, such as the governor's native island being either Lombok Island or Sumbawa Island, also have an impact on development choices. The amount of population has an impact on both local and central revenue, with Lombok Island having a far higher potential for taxation than Sumbawa Island. Additionally, Lombok Island receives greater central transfers and local revenues than Sumbawa Island.

Even though the poverty rate has declined, the Gini index, which measures economic inequality, is sometimes unstable in the NTB. The Gini ratios of Sumbawa Island and Lombok Island are contrasted in the table below. With 190,840 residents, East Lombok Regency will have the poorest people on Lombok Island in 2020, followed by Central Lombok Regency with 131,940 residents and West Lombok Regency with 105,240

<sup>2</sup> Accessed from the BPS NTB website. Url: <https://ntb.bps.go.id/site/pilihdata>. Accessed October 31, 2022.

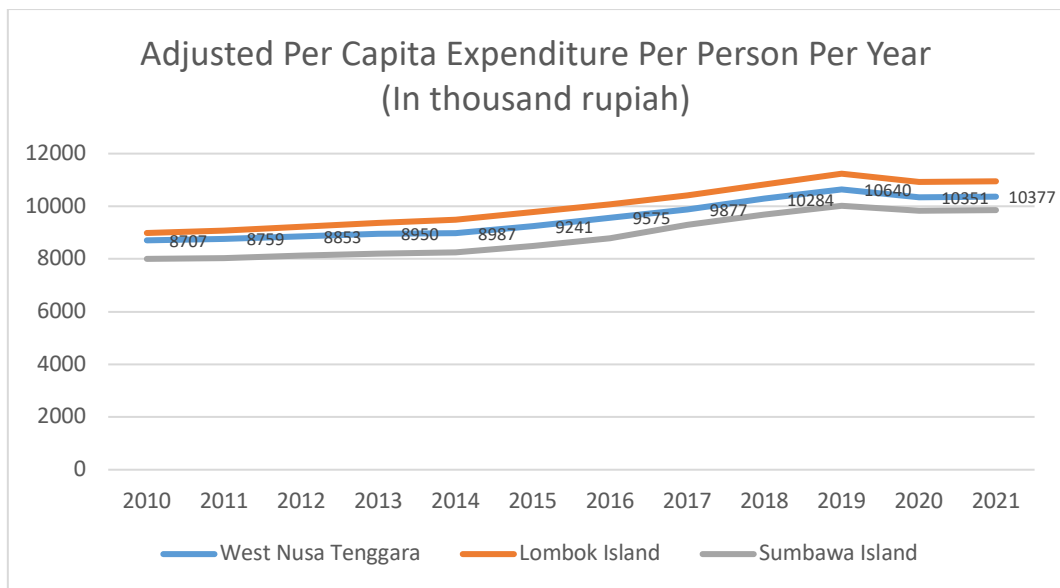
residents. On Sumbawa Island in 2021, Bima Regency had 75,490 of the island's poorest residents, followed by Sumbawa Regency with 66,000 and Dompu Regency with 33,260.



**Graph 2. Gini Ratio between Lombok Island and Sumbawa Island**

Source: Processed from BPS NTB data, 2022

The number of individuals living below the absolute poverty line in urban areas in 2021 was 325,304, while it was 311,547 in rural regions. In comparison to 2020, this figure grew by 17,705 for rural areas and 13,216 for urban areas. In NTB, there is a larger urban to rural population ratio. The average Gini ratio in the NTB is 0.381, with urban regions having a Gini ratio of 0.413 and rural areas having a Gini ratio of 0.332. In comparison to 2020, this imbalance has increased in metropolitan regions. While the Gini ratio in rural regions is 0.403 in 2020, the Gini ratio in urban areas is 0.337, an increase of 0.076. As a result, rural areas' Gini ratio will drop by 0.071 in 2021. Due to the pandemic's effects and limitations on people' mobility in 2019–2020 and 2021, inequality on Sumbawa Island has sharply increased. by placing restrictions on locals' freedom of movement, which hinders the distribution of products and services once they reach Sumbawa Island. On the island of Sumbawa, this has led to extreme inequality. Similarly, Sumbawa Island has a smaller selection of medications and vaccines that are harder to find. The quantity and percentage of poor individuals are not the only aspects of the poverty problem. The depth and severity of poverty, however, is a different factor that must be considered.



**Graph 3. Comparison of the Purchasing Power of the Residents of Lombok and Sumbawa Island**  
 Source: Processed from BPS NTB data 2022

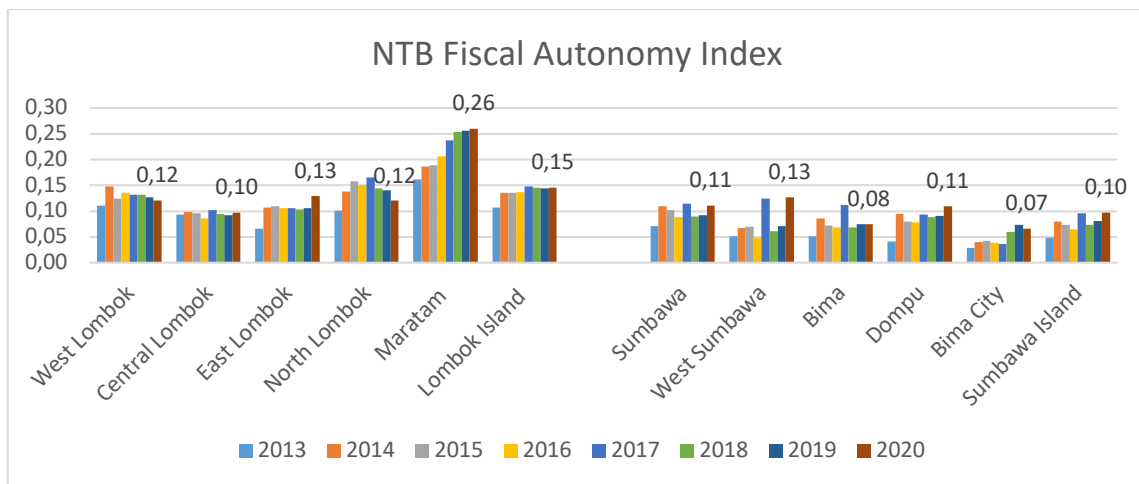
A measure of a population's purchasing power is adjusted per capita spending. The capacity of a person to spend money on products and services is known as purchasing power. The level of community wellbeing can be expressed in terms of per capita spending. The population of Sumbawa Island has less purchasing power than that of Lombok Island, as seen in Graph 3. Despite the fact that both regions exhibit rising purchasing power over time. In 2010, the average annual purchasing power of the Lombok population was approximately Rp 8,986,400, or Rp 750,000 per month. The purchasing power of those residing on the island of Lombok will rise to Rp 10,960,400 per year in 2021, which is almost Rp 914,000 per month. In 2021, Mataram will have the greatest per capita income on the island of Lombok, followed by West Lombok Regency (Rp. 11,334,000) and Central Lombok Regency (Rp. 9,962,000). On the island of Lombok, North Lombok Regency and East Lombok Regency have the lowest per capita incomes (9,057,000 and 9,450,000, respectively).

In 2010, the average person's purchasing power on the island of Sumbawa was Rp. 8.004,000, or Rp. 667,000 a month. The population of Sumbawa Island will have a purchasing power of about Rp 9,848,800 per year, or about Rp 822,000 per month, in 2021. Residents of the West Sumbawa Regency would have the highest purchasing power on Sumbawa Island in 2021 with Rp. 11,548,000 (or Rp. 962,333 per month), followed by those of the City of Bima with Rp. 11,135,000 (or Rp. 927,916) per month. Then came Sumbawa Regency residents, who paid Rp. 9,167,000, or Rp. 763,916 per month. The two regions on

Sumbawa Island with the lowest per capita incomes are Bima (Rp. 8,495,000) and Dompu (Rp. 8,99,000).

### West Nusa Tenggara's Fiscal Decentralization

The profit-sharing fund from the fishing industry is Rp. 19,538,110,000 in 2022 (up until October). The provinces and the districts/cities in NTB will each receive a portion of this amount. The amount of the profit-sharing fund has increased from 2021, which was Rp 16,745,001,500 at the time. Regions lose the potential for tax and non-tax revenues like this when the central government withdraws more and more authority. The fisheries industry, however, has not been able to maximize non-tax state revenues when it has been handled centrally. The Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries reported non-tax state earnings from 2013 to 2018 that were consistently below than the central government's aim. Only 229.35 billion rupiahs (91.7%) of the 250-billion-rupiah targets were met in 2013, followed by 86.5% in 2014, 13.7% in 2015, 52.3% in 2016, 51.7% in 2017, 74.8% in 2018, and 18.3% in 2019 (BKF, 2020, p. 21). This demonstrates that central management is not always able to achieve the best results. To optimize revenue from the marine sector, the central needs to work with the regional because there is a very substantial fisheries potential, particularly in the archipelagic zone. The Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries' unmet goal is evidence that the central government cannot monopolize the marine sector's income. The regions receive 80% of the revenue-sharing payments from the fisheries sector, with 20% going to the central government. As a result of dividing this 80% by all of Indonesia's regions, the value decreases dramatically. Due to a lack of regional authority, archipelagic places cannot manage their marine resources to their full potential, particularly in the sectors of tourism and fishing.



**Graph 4. West Nusa Tenggara Fiscal Autonomy Index**

Source: Processed from data (BPK, 2021)

The low fiscal autonomy index in both Lombok and Sumbawa is depicted in Graph 4. The provincial fiscal autonomy index is below the threshold in all ten provinces and cities. Regarding the fiscal autonomy index category, the scale ranges from 0.00 to 0.25 on the scale of independence, 0.25 to 0.50 on the scale of independence, 0.5 to 0.75 on the scale of independence, and 0.75 to 1 on the scale of extremely independence. On Lombok Island, the fiscal autonomy index is typically 0.14, falling into the "not independent" group. The districts and cities on Sumbawa Island, however, have an even lower average fiscal autonomy score (0.09), indicating a high reliance on central transfers.

### Islands Interconnectivity on Health Service Delivery

The high maternal mortality rate, the high infant mortality rate, and stunting are West Nusa Tenggara's three significant health issues. The number of maternal and infant deaths in NTB is shown in the table below. N42 claims that the infrastructure and medical facilities in NTB are sufficient. Seen in relation to the spread of hospitals and health centers. The distribution of medical personnel, such as doctors, nurses, and midwives, is uneven, particularly between urban areas and distant areas, which results in inadequate health care. Infrastructures like restrooms, clean water, education, and the economy are also affected by health issues, in addition to medical facilities.

A health center must be established according to the population, hence there aren't many or any health facilities on small islands. because it does not satisfy the population's minimum number. The health personnel in NTB are dispersed at the moment and are more interested in working in the district capital. Lombok Island's medical facilities are superior

to those of Sumbawa Island, notably for specialists in cancer and heart disease. The issue is that many Sumbawa Island patients are reluctant to travel to Lombok Island since they do not have accommodations there. The provincial government set up a patient care house within the provincial hospital for this endeavor. Most of the families residing in this patient care home are cancer patient families. The author had visited the shelter, which was not very sufficient, even though the treatment of cancer patients can take months. It has no door and solely consists of a compartment covered in curtains. Families who visit must bring their own mats or bedding because no beds are supplied.

**Table 2.**  
**Numbers of Maternal Mortality Rate and etc.**

Information	2018	2019	2020	2021
Maternal Mortality Rate	99	97	122	144
Neonatal, Infant and Toddler Mortality Rate	908	903	909	842
Stunting <sup>3</sup>	65,662	16,172	53,009	82,581

Source: Data processed by the NTB Health Office, 2022<sup>4</sup>

According to Table 2, the key health issues in NTB are the high rates of neonatal, baby, and toddler death. Hypertension and hemorrhage are the leading contributors to maternal mortality. However, 20 moms gave birth in 2020 and died because of Covid-19. Because many pregnant women were scared to see the doctor or the hospital during the pandemic, the maternal death rate increased in 2020 and 2021. Unfortunately, many fail to check their pregnancy as a result, which is fatal when they give birth. Numerous factors can contribute to stunting. both direct and indirect causes are possible. The root cause of infants' and toddlers' inadequate or unsatisfactory nutrition is. Young age at first marriage is another indirect factor. The high divorce rate brought on by parents who become migratory workers is another indirect factor. Most migrant worker children are left in the

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<sup>3</sup> Stunting is a condition of growth failure in children (body and brain growth) due to malnutrition for a long time. Thus, children are shorter than normal children their age and have a delay in thinking. Children measured are aged 0-59 months

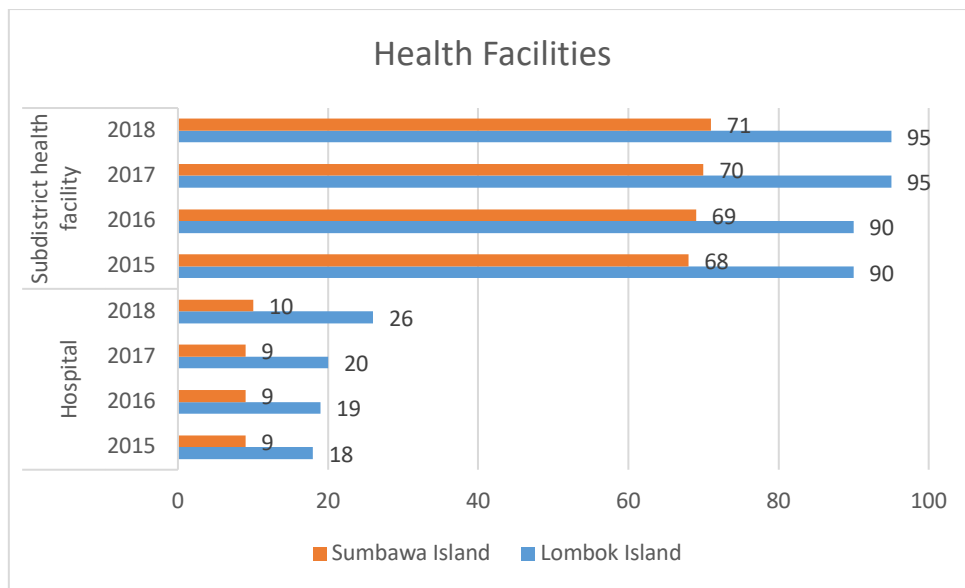
<sup>4</sup> Accessed from NTB Satu Data. Number of Neonatal, Infant and Toddler Deaths in NTB Province. url: <https://data.ntbprov.go.id/dataset/jumlah-kematian-neonatal-bayi-dan-balita-provinsi-ntb> Accessed November 6, 2022. And Number of Maternal Mortality by Cause in NTB Province. url: <https://data.ntbprov.go.id/dataset/jumlah-kematian-ibu-menurut-penyebab-di-provinsi-ntb>. Accessed November 6, 2022. And the nutritional status of toddlers based on the index of weight-age, height-age, and weight-height. url: <https://data.ntbprov.go.id/dataset/status-gizi-balita-berdasarkan-indeks-bbu-tbu-dan-bbtb-di-provinsi-ntb/resource/ea322dc>. Accessed November 6, 2022.

care of their grandmothers. The grandma may occasionally ignore the nutritional components that the youngsters take. A sickness is the primary direct cause.

There are not enough specialists in the archipelagic area. Many specialized medical professionals oppose being stationed on the islands. When doctors were in the internship stage during the Soeharto era, the Ministry of Health would assign them to isolated areas. Additionally, the doctor applicant cannot decline the assignment. But as of today, medical students have a choice in where they intern. The regions have offered strong incentives for doctors to serve in the islands, even though NTB itself is a place that is infrequently picked for a doctor's internship. However, this has not yet been the primary reason for doctors to serve on the islands. The NTB province has made an attempt to give local males scholarships to study medicine. They cannot, however, compete with students from Java to enroll in respectable colleges, particularly those on the island of Java. The issue is the same for doctors who are specialists as well: there are only a restricted number of slots available for specialists. Additionally, NTB specialists generally lack the ability to compete with Java's future medical professionals. Specialists like oncologists and ophthalmologists are quite scarce. There are times when there are no patients, which is a concern. There is an orthopedic expert in West Sumbawa Regency, but because there are so few patients, the doctor eventually shifted his practice to Lombok Island.

Access to transportation is another barrier to the development of the health industry in the archipelago. The ports will be closed during specific months when the waves are very high. However, NTB does not possess a marine ambulance. Small populations and modest local economies are characteristics of archipelagic regions. As a result, central transfer is frequently heavily dependent by the archipelagic regions. Specific physical and non-physical allocation funds are part of the central transfer funds for health. Physical funds are typically used to construct hospitals or healthcare facilities, whereas non-physical funds are used to run hospitals and healthcare facilities. This central transfer fund has strict regulations and can only be used in accordance with them. As a result, the region must adhere to the centrally decided classification, which may not be appropriate given the needs of the region. There are differences between national technical guidelines issued by the central and regional needs.



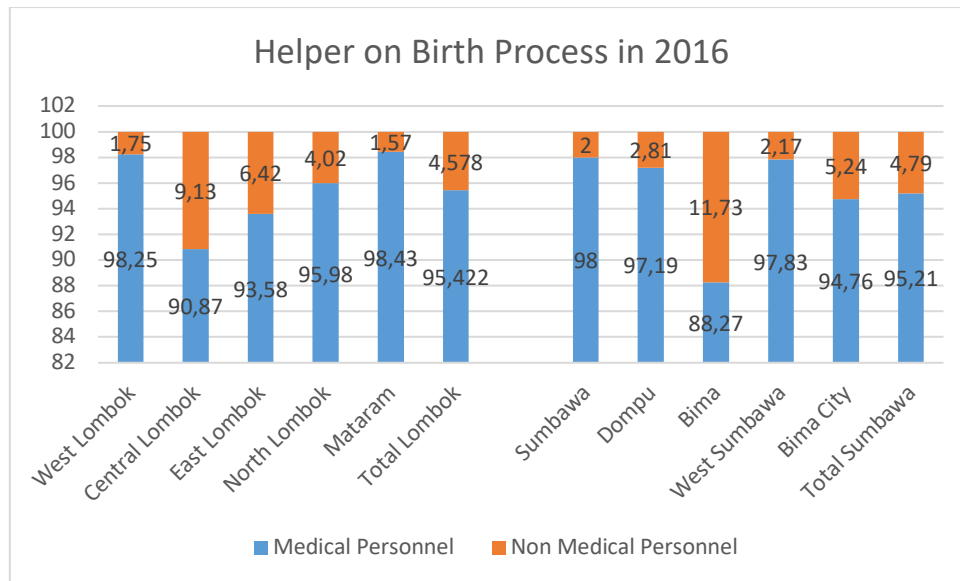


**Graph 5. Comparison of the number of health facilities**

Source: Processed from BPS NTB, 2022

The number of medical facilities on the two major islands in NTB is affected by the demographic comparison between Lombok Island and Sumbawa Island. A particular number of residents must reside in the area to build a hospital or health center. As a result, it is frequently seen that residents on small islands lack access to healthcare facilities. They had to travel over to an island with medical facilities to receive treatment. Unfortunately, even maritime transportation is insufficient to allow people living on small islands to receive medical care as soon as they become ill. For instance, Gili Tramena Island, which generates 70% of North Lombok Regency's tourism-related revenue (Cornelia et al., 2016), lacks a speedboat that could be used to transport sick locals to Lombok Island.

Whether or not medical personnel or non-medical personnel assist the mother and child during delivery, this has an impact on the high rate of maternal and newborn mortality. Medical professionals such as doctors, midwives, and nurses assist with childbirth. Traditional birth attendants are an example of non-health workers who assist with childbirth (Kartika & Rachmawati, 2013).



**Graph 6. Birth Process Helper**  
 Source: Adapted from RPJMD NTB, 2017

In 2016, Graph 6 compares the number of birth attendants on Lombok Island and Sumbawa Island. According to the table above, 4.578% of the people on Lombok Island give birth with traditional birth attendants. On Sumbawa Island, however, 4.79% of women used traditional birth attendants. 11.73% of the districts utilize conventional healers most frequently. However, in reality, traditional birth attendants continue to offer care for up to 40 days following delivery. The risk of giving delivery with non-medical assistance is, however, substantially higher. The cost and distance to the health center are the key factors that influence whether or not expectant moms choose to be accompanied by traditional birth attendants. The poorest region on Sumbawa Island is Bima Regency, which nevertheless employs a significant number of non-health workers. Bima Regency has 75,490 impoverished residents as of 2021 (BPS, 2022). The distance to the health center is still a factor even when the childbirth process itself is covered by health insurance. Additionally, postnatal care influences the choices that expectant women make.

**CONCLUSIONS**

West Nusa Tenggara Province differs from provinces that are predominately on land in that it is an archipelago. The most important factor is island connectivity. Based on the previous section, West Nusa Tenggara Province's primary distinguishing feature—its lack of authority in regulating sea space—has prevented development planning in island provinces from using a maritime approach. The inference is that Lombok Island and

Sumbawa Island's differences are obvious. Public services in health sector, economic factors, and fiscal autonomy index all demonstrate this.

The seven other island provinces, including East Nusa Tenggara, Maluku, North Maluku, North Sulawesi, Southeast Sulawesi, Riau Islands, and Bangka Belitung, cannot be compared to the findings in West Nusa Tenggara Province. But as this study demonstrates, there will always be disparity between islands in an archipelago with a small population. Additionally, this divide may lead to a far larger urge for expansion than the mainland region. At the same time, island regions do not have as many resources as mainland regions. As a result, resource sharing in archipelagic environments is ineffective and inefficient. The central government must take this into account while establishing asymmetric decentralization for island regions. The asymmetric decentralization offer is different from the asymmetric form that was given to the previous five provinces. Political, administrative, and fiscal decentralization are all features of the asymmetric shape granted to the previous five provinces. Meanwhile, asymmetric decentralization for island regions focuses on administrative and fiscal decentralization only. The unique geographical shape of island areas, which is not possessed by mainland places, can make asymmetric decentralization for island areas stand out.

Archipelagic regions should grant the power to plan island-based services for fundamental amenities including health care, education, and infrastructure. Specifically, services that are unrestricted inside buildings and have significant mobility capabilities. The features of coastal and island settlements are taken into account when designing this service. Education curricula can also be modified to meet the needs of children on small islands, without being overloaded with topics that the island community may not necessarily need, such as nature-based education and conservation. Medical staff are provided with vehicles, such as sea ambulances, that enable them to offer emergency care while afloat for the benefit of the public's health. In addition, medical staff is prepared and trained to offer healthcare in transportable facilities like ambulances on the water. Like the capability to help women give birth while traveling. In order to conform to zoning and conservation, basic infrastructure preparation is focused on marine-based development and makes use of spatial planning.

The selection of research locations, which only includes one archipelagic province, is one of the study's limitations. Seven additional island provinces also need to be

investigated. However, clustering the eight current islands is also essential. For instance, the Riau Islands have both a high fiscal autonomy index and a high human development index. Therefore, it is necessary to differentiate between the degree of autonomy or asymmetric decentralization granted to these eight archipelagic provinces. In comparison to island provinces with lower fiscal autonomy index and lower human development index, archipelagic provinces with high fiscal capability and good governance can receive a higher degree of asymmetric decentralization. The first step in proving this claim is to encourage more thorough investigation into asymmetric decentralization for archipelagic regions. One factor in determining the degree of autonomy for asymmetric decentralization in island regions will be regional capacity should take into consideration.

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