

# Paradiplomacy Practice in Indonesia: a Lesson From West Nusa Tenggara Province in 2013-2018

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## **Abstract**

*This article attempts to reveal the factors inflicting the decision-making process of paradiplomacy in West Nusa Tenggara within six years between 2013 and 2018, including the problems faced by them under the administration of two governors, Tuan Guru Bajang and Dr. Zulkieflimansyah. Utilizing rational choice theory in the form of qualitative-descriptive research, various field findings and kinds of literature indicate one primary matter. It is that external and internal factors consisting of a combination of individual and bureaucratic rationalities and influence play significant roles in driving the trend of halal tourism-based paradiplomacy by Tuan Guru Bajang and education and investment-based one by Dr. Zulkieflimansyah. There are attempts from both governors and their administration to achieve the full potential of both paradiplomacy policies. the policies, however, are not flawless as errors and issues due to economic disparity, development rate inequality, and lack of proper management of information systems become points of critics by many parts of the society, both public and official.*

**Keywords:** *Dr. Zulkieflimansyah, Education, Halal Tourism, NTB, Paradiplomacy, Tuan Guru Bajang*

## **Abstrak**

*Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap faktor yang memengaruhi proses pembuatan kebijakan paradiplomasi di Nusa Tenggara Barat dalam kurun waktu enam tahun antara 2013 dan 2018 termasuk masalah yang dihadapi*

*dalam administrasi dua gubernur, Tuan Guru Bajang dan Dr. Zulkieflimansyah. Melalui teori pilihan rasional dalam bentuk penelitian kualitatif-deskriptif, penemuan lapangan dan literatur menunjukkan bahwa faktor eksternal dan internal yang terdiri dari gabungan rasionalitas dan pengaruh individu dan birokrasi memengaruhi tren paradiplomasi pariwisata halal oleh Tuan Guru Bajang dan pendidikan dan investasi oleh Dr. Zulkieflimansyah secara signifikan. Meskipun usaha untuk memaksimalkan potensi kebijakan telah dilakukan oleh kedua gubernur beserta administrasi mereka, kebijakan yang diterapkan belum sempurna dikarenakan kesalahan dan isu yang terkait dengan ketimpangan dan kurangnya manajemen yang mumpuni menjadi poin kritik oleh banyak orang, baik dari kalangan publik maupun pejabat.*

**Kata Kunci:** *Dr. Zulkieflimansyah, NTB, Paradiplomasi, Pariwisata Halal, Pendidikan, Tuan Guru Bajang*

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## INTRODUCTION

The term “paradiplomacy” is indeed unpopular but not without reason. At first, the term paradiplomacy is not a common term in public. It is mainly used by social and political science academicians and researchers to mention foreign relations conducted between sub-state actors across national borders (Mukti, 2013), which becomes the initial focus of this research. Secondly, the public, especially in Indonesia, tends to be more familiar with the word “diplomacy” and as “meant to be coordinated by the central government by any means” as the classic form. Thirdly and presumably, lastly, there has been a limited number of researches

conducted by scholars in Indonesia, explicitly pointing “paradiplomacy” as their concern of analyses. These situations challenge the author to further introduce this term to the public and policymakers and possible lessons from the already existing practices worldwide, including those nearby.

With the rise of various new actors in the realm of international relations along with new issues to tackle, central governments worldwide start to open their tables for options to enforce their interests further while guaranteeing others’ and paradiplomacy is among them. Indonesia is arguably among the latest to include paradiplomacy in its foreign relation options aside

from the traditional state-to-state relations with the first being the sister city agreement between Bandung and Braunschweig, Germany, in 1960. Under the principle of regional autonomy, Indonesian central government guarantees the rights of local/provincial governments to arrange, manage, and oversee various aspects of domestic affairs without significant intervention from the central government with a general assumption that local governments “recognize” their area the most (Rasyid, 2007). Initially, paradiplomacy serves one of or all three primary purposes: purely commercial purposes (open market and investment), multipurpose (economic, social, culture, technology, and education), and regional identity and political interests (expressing autonomous, specific, and different characters (Mukti, 2015). Based on these purposes, provinces across Indonesia begin to view more possibilities for cooperation with regions and cities worldwide. One of them is West Nusa Tenggara or Nusa Tenggara Barat (NTB).

The focus of paradiplomacy of West Nusa Tenggara province profoundly depends on the two main factors: the maximum utilization of natural and social advantages

of NTB (Herbawati, 2018) and the influence of ruling governor at the time which the society continuously expects to be the “agents of change” (Fitriani, 2016). the course of six years displays the rise of NTB as a new powerhouse of tourism as the government of NTB initiated the “halal tourism” project to boost NTB’s economy further. It is through the reforming of tourism aspects in NTB fitting to the concept of Sharia law and other elements belonging to Islamic faith (Subarkah, 2018) under the leadership of Tuan Guru Bajang as the governor of NTB. He popularizes the new NTB in the image of “Muslim tourists-friendly tourism sites.” the government of NTB also continuously welcomes foreign governments and companies to invest in various construction projects supporting NTB’s initial halal tourism project and other projects with excellent results. the local government of NTB receives awards worldwide for its achievements, the massive increase of domestic and foreign tourist visits per year. A slight difference happened in mid-2018 as the paradiplomacy focus of NTB adding education to be a new sector along with the change in the government: a new governor named Dr. Zulkieflimansyah elected.

This paper investigates the factors driving both governors, Tuan Guru Bajang and Dr. Zulkieflimansyah, to direct the trend of paradiplomacy as it is and the problems and critics each other face during the implementation. the underlying assumption the author adopts is that each governor belongs to different backgrounds and experiences, and each period presents its challenges, later with various criticism from the public over their rather unorthodox policies. This paper also attempts to take a neutral stance regarding the view of paradiplomacy trends between the governor and the people of NTB by comparing both governors' paradiplomacy policies and how the public views them.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

This paper is the first to study paradiplomacy practices in West Nusa Tenggara (Nusa Tenggara Barat- NTB) province is an overstatement as studies on this topic in forms of journal articles and thesis from Indonesian scholars and foreign researchers collaborating with Indonesian ones. Despite not directly mentioning "paradiplomacy" in the titles, terms "foreign investment," "tourism," and "sister cities/provinces" by the

articles mentioned above and thesis already indicate that scholars have studied paradiplomacy practices in NTB. This article explores the problems the governor's face that drives their paradiplomacy policy trends and the issues during the implementation, which becomes the novelty of this paper.

Paradiplomacy projects of West Nusa Tenggara government are to enhance regional economic conditions through building relations with foreign institutions and the government conduct so by reaching several provinces in foreign countries, such as Zhejiang province of the People's Republic of China, and other countries. Paradiplomacy practices are mainly in forms of sister cities of sister provinces and foreign investment agreements, as stated by Sibawaihi (2016) and Utami (2017). Those options are the most applicable for the region and arguably the simplest despite the process not being as simple as it seems. the power of city and province branding should be into vital account as without proper objects to be promoted to the international community (Subarkah, 2018), the attempt to attract collaborators and investors will be more difficult.

Aside from the challenge to create the desired image through the branding, the existing social, cultural, political, and geographical conditions, West Nusa Tenggara province shall be for the success of every project initiated by the local government. the geographical situation of NTB province alone is already challenging, with the existence of two main islands (Lombok and Sumbawa) along with a wide variety of landscapes (Laplaza, Tanaya, & Suwardji, 2017). Three major ethnic groups are dominating the province (Sasak, Samawa, Mbojo) inhabiting the islands complete with their traditions. the differences between one another can sometimes conflict due to different understanding on an issue and the tendency to promote ethnic superiority over provincial unity (Zulkieflimansyah, 2019), something the government is continuously fighting against through time. Further, Laplaza, Tanaya, and Suwardji (2017) indicate the long-living, rigid, and top-centered development pattern of West Nusa Tenggara province frequently causes poor coordination and uncertainty. It becomes a bitter pill for the local government as, despite the leader promoting decentralization on some sectors

from the central government, the lower-level officials have yet to adapt to the demand.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This paper intends to describe paradiplomacy trends belonging to each governor, Tuan Guru Bajang, and Dr. Zulkieflimansyah, and create a trend comparison on the trends along with the problems during implementations, doing this paper qualitative-descriptive research with inductive analysis. the data collecting methods of this paper utilized both primary and secondary sources as the information required in either official publications and autobiographies or the talks with government officials, which could only be through interviews to maintain eligibility.

## RATIONAL CHOICE THEORY

The definition of “rational” or “rationality” may vary between one scholar and another along with their disciplines and despite being initially a term commonly used in economic studies, “rational” or “rationality” finds its position in the studies of social and political science and policymaking process in various levels. Warsito (2017) suggests that rational analysis is logical, valid, and efficient

assessment tested empirically and, most importantly, based on fact; further explanation also recommends that rationality may differ in the condition of different contexts and situations. Despite the difference of interpretations between scholars and disciplines, they find one common ground on one aspect: it is indeed the ideal nature of the human mind (Tillyer, 2011) when concluding a decision based on intentional considerations.

Rationality in political science is “rational choice theory,” which focuses on the condition of human minds “wanting more” out of something; this term is as the attempt to gain maximum benefits out of a decision without in-depth good-bad consideration. In considering an option based on rational choice theory, three aspects should be the consideration. They are completeness (all alternatives/options listed based on priorities), transitivity (all options can be compared, such as A is better than B, while B is better than C.

Thus, A is better than C, and on), and independency from relevant alternatives (when option A is to be better than B, despite later emergence of option X, B will never be better than A) (Warsito, 2017). Warsito suggests that rational

choice does not necessarily involve one person only (single charismatic individual) in the policymaking process or the decision-making process (DMP) with some occasions of rational decisions made by bureaucratic organizations along with a specific set of characteristics.

In the case of the charismatic individual entity of DMP, the leader possesses certain “charisma” influencing his/her followers to voluntarily follow the lead of the leader and support any of his/her decisions. Past examples indicate the existence of charismatic individuals often related closely to theological (religious) figures such as prophets, messengers, saints, priests. Other religiously influencing characters may have closer ties with God and possess features normal humans are unable to maintain as God gave those features. Further development indicates that charismatic leaders may also have links to genetic backgrounds, educations, social contributions, and more as what modern charismatic figures display when leading his/her people. Weber, in Warsito (2017), considers that becoming overestimated frequently, bureaucratic organizations are “the more efficient, systematic, and predictable” option available to a longer extent of time compared to

the single counterpart. It is often full of secrecy, personal and family-tied, and short-term execution. However, bureaucracy is not flawless; in fact, Tocqueville in Elster (1986) described these flaws as follows: inability to coordinate specific details of a plan, the lack of secrecy, and the lack of courage during execution in time of crisis.

In answering the debate of individual and bureaucratic effectiveness in deciding a policy rationally, scholars suggest the combination of both entities in one system.

The author considers a useful practice in many democratic countries by eliminating any “we often do this” or “it is often done this way” mentality. This strategy seeks further reach of available options in experiments to find suitable alternatives to policies for solving specific issues without creating broader issues or crippling each other’s credibility. In this situation, Weber, in Warsito (2017), mentions five importances of the rule of law specified. They are standard norms formed by agreement. The law is a consistent system consciously constituted from basically abstract rules, obedience to law obligated for all entities, decision making based on the *rule of law*, and obedience to

the leader is virtually an impersonal order. Bureaucracy is the definitive form of law domination.

On many occasions, studies regarding rational choice theory in international relations discipline often carefully refer to how national-level entities (central governments) decide a foreign policy to be imposed towards other objects at the same level. In this article, the local government-level approach of rational choice theory by Merrilee S. Grindle (2009) is presumably the most suitable in answering the research question provided previously. The application of rational choice theory in local government-level stresses on the influence of decentralization of power by the central government for the local governments in affecting the entrepreneurship capabilities and capacities of local elected rulers (governors, regents) to manage and utilize available resources and range of connection in competing against other regions within the state and beyond. Grindle in Wibawa (1994) later continued with the explanation. The final decision from the decision-making process shall focus on five aspects. They are types of benefits, desired degree of change, the position of decision-makers,

programs' executors, and resulted in resources.

As for final implementation, four aspects shall also become a consideration: power, interests, strategies of involved actors, and obedience and response capability.

### Research Findings

Each leader in all systems ideally believes that every decision he/she makes must serve the betterment of the public based on his/her vision, thus making the policy "different" to his/her predecessor. This situation regularly happens in the policymaking process of West Nusa Tenggara or NTB. It considers the rate of congeniality between each governor's background, vision, and policy. It is safe to assume that the role of charismatic individual influence significantly in the policymaking process of NTB government, but the statement does not necessarily discard the part of the representative council (*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah/DPRD*) entirely in the process (Mahdi, 2019).

### Halal Tourism as the Foundation of TGB's Paradiplomacy

Between 2013 and 2018, a governor named Muhammad Zainul Majdi ruled the province of West Nusa Tenggara. He was also

the previous governor of NTB in the 2008-2013 period. Muhammad Zainul Majdi, who is famously known as Tuan Guru Bajang or often abbreviated as TGB, ruled NTB for ten years. He is also the grandson of *Nahdlatul Wathan* founder, Muhammad Zainudin Abdulmajid. It is the most significant Islamic movement in West Nusa Tenggara based in Pancor, East Lombok regency, and an alumnus of Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt.

He becomes a significant influence on how Tuan Guru Bajang formed his policies. He primarily mobilized the support of the people by utilizing the three fundamental identities of the people of NTB (Indonesia-ism or Pancasila, NTB-ism, or the harmony of people of NTB despite the ethnic and religious diversity, and Islam-ism or the belief in Allah and Muhammad. Mentioning TGB's success in improving West Nusa Tenggara's economic problems, most of his achievements (TGB. id, n.d.) focused on the sector of halal tourism, infrastructure, and relations with the Islamic world.

Furthermore, his vision for the 2013 governor election of NTB, *Religious and Cultured, Prosperous, and Competitive NTB* (Maga, 2013), already announced the

influence of Islamic value in his programs and created a distinction to prior governors' plans and other governors in Indonesia. Neneng Herbawati (2018) went as far as putting TGB's development principle side-to-side with Obamanomics by US President Barrack Obama, Widjojonomics by Prof. Dr. Widjojo Nitisastro, Habibienomics by Prof. Dr. BJ. Habibie, and other economic experts and leaders, by naming TGB's principle "TGBNomics" in her autobiography book entitled *TGBNomics: Ikhtiar NTB Untuk Indonesia*. Through TGBNomics (Herbawati, 2018), Tuan Guru Bajang attempted to create a system of politics and economy in NTB friendly to lower-class community, investors, tourists, and supporting the national development program based on Islamic values as well as nourishing the pride and confidence of NTB people from the negative image *Nanti Tuhan Bantu* (roughly translated into May God Helps) caused by prolonged high poverty rate. Furthermore, the role of the Indonesian government should be accounted for as the *10 Bali Baru* (10 New Bali) project by the central government transformed into an excellent opportunity for NTB's policy options.

In terms of paradiplomacy, the focus of Tuan Guru Bajang administration in developing NTB's economic condition through foreign relations is the promotion of halal tourism brand. Halal tourism in the definition is an attempt to create a tourism system based on the Islamic Sharia law in which the food and drink consumption, accommodation, and other facilities are standardized based on the need of Muslim tourists (Hariani, 2016). Still, it does not necessarily designate to Muslim tourists only as non-Muslim tourists are also guaranteed to enjoy the leisure provided by the halal tourism system. the positive impact of the development of halal tourism in NTB aside of the increasing number of tourist visits and the amount of national and international awards is the increase of working field in the tourism sector for the people of NTB and the nourishment of friendship between NTB with Islamic countries across the world (Busaini, 2017). Attempting to unleash NTB from the "shadow" of Bali as Indonesia's iconic tourist destination of Indonesia, the halal tourism project instigated by Tuan Guru Bajang served not merely as one of the policies promoted by his governance but also the *flagship*

leading almost all his strategies by focusing regional development through infrastructures supporting halal tourism. Further observation indicates the building of relations with local and foreign governments and institutions such as the Australian government and the states included as “Muslim-majority states” in assisting the realization of NTB’s goals through various training of foreign languages and tourism management, constructions projects, and fairs. the result is arguably fruitful as NTB received multiple awards from national and international communities successfully applying halal tourism to such extent that it becomes a continuous program for the following periods.

#### **Dr. Zul, Education & Investment, and Paradiplomacy**

The rise of Dr. Zulkieflimansyah as the new governor of West Nusa Tenggara province since mid-2018 is a further step in the politics of West Nusa Tenggara. Dr. Zulkieflimansyah or famously known as Dr. Zul or Bang Zul becomes one of few Sumbawanese (one of three majority ethnic groups in NTB aside from Sasak and Mbojo) becoming a governor after a few decades. Another matter deserving attention is that how Dr. Zul, with his

vice governor, Sitti Rohmi Djalilah, the sister of Tuan Guru Bajang, muster public support throughout the province by harnessing both educational background and public contribution before the election period. Among the most perceivable feat by Dr. Zul reasonably boosting his reputation is by being the founder of *Universitas Teknologi Sumbawa* (UTS), one of the most recently established universities in Sumbawa regency (*Universitas Teknologi Sumbawa, n.d.*).

Dr. Zul is an alumnus of the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow, United Kingdom (UK) graduating from Doctoral Program of International Marketing and Business of Department of Economics in 2001, along with several non-degree programs attained in various universities across Australia, Japan, the Netherlands, UK, and the United States. He eventually delivers a significant influence on how issues of his administration’s policies: focusing on the regional economic development by enhancing the quality of human resources through education. the situation presumably goes as far as his entire plan generally guided by his experience as an Indonesian student studying abroad and various reputations

as a lecturer and a member of the national representative council (DPR), and all of them achieved within a period less than fifteen years. Dr. Zul (2019) frequently admits that his policies receives an influence from his experience and his vice governor's desire to build NTB on their vision, becoming the driving force of the formation of NTB Gemilang five-year development plan which consists of six fundamental pillars (Pemerintah Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Barat, 2019): *NTB Tangguh dan Mantap* (reinforcing disaster mitigation and development of infrastructure and regional connectivity), *NTB Bersih dan Melayani* (transformation for integrated, high-performance, corruption-collusion-nepotism-free, and dedicating bureaucracy), *NTB Sehat dan Cerdas* (enhancement of quality of human resources as the foundation of regional competitiveness), *NTB Asri dan Lestari* (management of natural resources and environment), *NTB Sejahtera dan Mandiri* (poverty eradication, reduction of economic discrepancy, and inclusive economic development relying on agriculture, tourism, and industrialization), and *NTB Aman dan Berkah* (realization of religious and characterized

civil society and law and justice enforcement).

Several findings suggest that Dr. Zulkieflimansyah has developed a set of a rather unorthodox form of paradiplomacy for fulfilling the goal of enhancing the quality of human resources through education. It is utilizing a local-established non-governmental organization in providing support for the regime and its goals. Such policy is visible through the establishment of a sister province plan between NTB and Kujawsko-Pomorskie *voivodeship* (province) in Poland. Appearing like other typical forms of inter-regional paradiplomacy, *Lembaga Pengembangan Pendidikan* (LPP) NTB serves a supporting role by establishing relations with universities in Kujawsko-Pomorskie before the exploratory phase of the official sister province plan's establishment started in October 2018 (Imansyah, 2018). Based on the Letter of Intent (LoI) signed by the governors of both provinces in April 2019, both regions intend to cooperate in sectors such as economy, art and culture, science and education, tourism, and sports (Aulia, 2019).

Regarding the relation between Dr. Zulkieflimansyah's administration and LPP NTB, the information retrieved from

the Bureau of Cooperation Administration of Governor Office of NTB and LPP NTB suggests that LPP NTB is established by Dr. Zulkieflimansyah himself outside the administrative system of the Governor’s office (Aulia, 2019). It serves as a means to accomplish one of the administration’s mission: the *1000 Cendikia* (Rahadi, 2019), a continuation of one of Dr. Zulkieflimansyah’s campaign promises to send 1000 NTB students to study abroad. A non-governmental organization means that LPP NTB’s funding undoubtedly sources from funding outside the official budget (APBD). It relies on corporate social responsibility

(CSR) of companies operating in NTB, donors of the sympathizers, and scholarships from universities agreeing to cooperate in succeeding in the program (Rahadi, 2019), particularly those outside Indonesia. In many negotiations conducted between the Governor’s office with regions outside Indonesia, negotiators from LPP NTB are also present in the meeting along with Dr. Zulkieflimansyah himself, thus revealing the pivotal role of LPP NTB in the process. As per 2019, as this article was in the making, the awardees of the LPP NTB’s scholarship ranging around 250 with details provided below:

No.	Type(s) of Scholarship	Host Countries	Program Batch	Grade	Awardee	Study Intake
1	Category A (Fully Funded)	Poland	Batch 1	S2	20	October 2018
			Batch 2	S2	26	February 2019
			Batch 3	S2	26	October 2019
		Malaysia		S2	141	September 2019
2	Category B (Partially Funded)	China		S1	21	October 2019
				S3	16	October 2019

**Table 1**

Awardee of *Beasiswa NTB* Year 2018-2019  
(<https://lppntb.com/>)

Another purpose of the establishment of LPP NTB is to outmaneuver the “complicated”

bureaucracy required for the establishment of formal paradiplomacy cooperation

with regions (Aulia, 2019). Dr. Zulkieflimansyah (2019) argued during an interview that education-based cooperation through LPP NTB serves as a “stepping stone” for more structured and formal cooperation between the Governor’s office of NTB and other regions potentially welcoming NTB as their partner. With twelve procedures, the Governor’s office has to accomplish to establish formal cooperation based on Regulation of Foreign Minister (Permenlu) Number 3 the Year 2019 regarding the General Guideline on Foreign Relations by Local Governments. the considerable amount of time expended on coordination with DPRD, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and External Affairs included in the twelve procedures respectively has driven Dr. Zulkieflimansyah for another alternative requiring less bureaucratic procedures and time to establish. Tasking a non-governmental organization, creates an early start for the Governor’s office of NTB.

Such a form of cooperation received immediate approval from the central government (Liptan6.com, 2018), particularly Indonesia, for the central governments of both Indonesia and Poland attempt to fulfill their interests in NTB. As

NTB’s local government attempts to benefit from the sending of students to Poland, Polish corporations invest in various sectors, including tourism and construction, by cooperating with national companies with one recent example being the construction of Sambelia Power Plant (Suara NTB, 2019). Under President Joko Widodo’s administration, foreign investment has become a priority for the government to enhance national and regional economy and, with regional leaders authorized to de-bureaucratize investment-related regulations (Badan Koordinasi Penanaman Modal, n.d.). the Governor’s office of NTB adapts with the system by promoting cooperation with governments and organizations on education with an opportunity for investment in return.

## DISCUSSION

Based on discoveries related to paradiplomacy practiced by Tuan Guru Bajang and Dr. Zulkieflimansyah, several points are taken into account, particularly the reasoning behind the focused sectors of paradiplomacy in each period and how the public of NTB views the policies of each governor. in the case of paradiplomacy policies issued by the two governors of

NTB between 2013 and 2018, both legislative and executive may have different reasonings on enlisting halal tourism in TGB's era and education and investment in Dr. Zul's era as an option for paradiplomacy aside with the afore-existing tourism and investment options. Further investigation reveals that the factors why the two governors alongside the representative council decide to select the two options: external and internal.

### **Factors and Rational Considerations**

External factors of such paradiplomacy options mainly refer to situations occurring outside the national jurisdiction and border of NTB's government and Indonesian government entirely, thus leaving NTB's government, particularly both governors, with the option to adapt to the situation. Two of the most prominent and repeatedly discussed factors is the emergence of ASEAN Community as a new integration platform of Southeast Asian countries included in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations or ASEAN consisting of economic, socio-cultural, and politics-security integration agreements signed by presidents and legal representatives of each member state. the integration plan for both governors and the local

representative council (DPRD) serves as both an opportunity and threat to NTB's economy as the loosening of regulations on the flow of people, goods, services, and technology between member states. At the same time, it benefits NTB as the trade road becomes wider and more flexible, are also vulnerable to domination as the free market model of ASEAN is a competition. Those unable to compete will experience an unintended overflow of such goods, services, and more, thus leading both governors to be creative in handling such issues. the second issue is the fulfillment task of United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which Indonesia signed in 2015 and, along with the other 189 UN member states, plan to gratify in the year 2030. the SDGs' fulfillment aims for global mutual prosperity consisting of 17 goals and 169 targets.

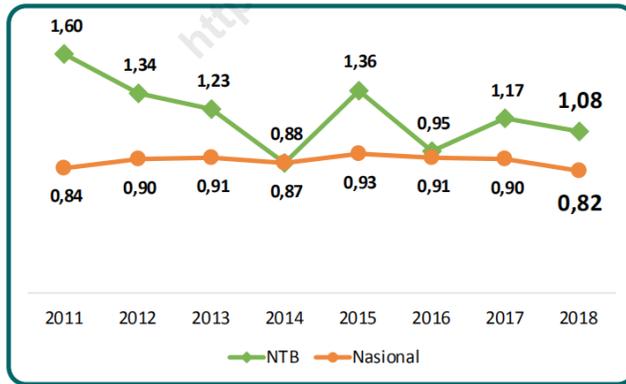
The third factor emerges from the demands of cooperation initiated by foreign governments and other institutions, which undeniably intend to fulfill their own previously mentioned three goals (purely economic, multipurpose, and regional identity/political interests). in the practice of paradiplomacy agreements between NTB and foreign institutions (governments,

companies, and universities), the agreement regularly involves two paradiplomacy sectors or more with the expectation that when one side does not receive a direct benefit from one sector, the other included sectors may assist. For instance, the agreement between NTB and Kujawsko-Pomorskie, Poland, involves the Polish government's and companies' investment in Special Economic Zone (*Kawasan Ekonomi Khusus* or KEK) Mandalika, Lombok in exchange of NTB students studying in Toruń and other cities across the Kujawsko-Pomorskie. However, foreign direct investment (FDI) in Indonesia is a national-level issue, and the sustainable energy facilities investment is a continuation of the Indonesia-Polish central government agreement.

Internally, the first factor to consider is the demand of people and the governors' vision to moderate a "change" in the system, demanding it to improve on sectors previous governments missed continuously. In other words, while the governors insist on creating a distinct vision, missions, and policies to their predecessors, the people simultaneously request "better government" than before, based on the desired conditions

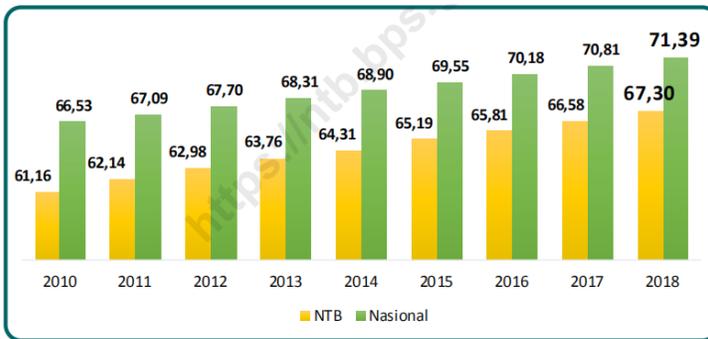
backed by experiences. As TGB intended to build NTB through a religious-based tourism concept, Dr. Zulkieflimansyah intended to build NTB through developing human resources and economy through education (Zulkieflimansyah, 2019) and investment.

The second factor is the condition of NTB's Human Development Index (HDI) being "lower than the national average rate." The latest calculation of HDI issued by *Badan Pusat Statistik* (BPS) indicated that the HDI of NTB experienced a gradual increase for eight years by starting at 61,16 in 2010 and ending at 67,30 in 2018. Despite the increase, such numbers are still below the national means ranging from 66,53 per 2010 to 71,39 per 2018. The HDI Growth per year for the province is also relatively inconsistent, with the lowest laying at 0,88 percent in 2014 and 0,95 percent in 2016. Still, the numbers indicated signs of improvement with average growth being higher compared with the national mean every year with graphics designated below:



**Graphic 1**

HDI Growth Percentage of NTB Province Year 2011-2018  
(Badan Pusat Statistik Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Barat (2019))



**Graphic 2: HDI of NTB Year 2010-2018**

(Badan Pusat Statistik Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Barat (2019))

Lastly, the desire of each governor to “globalize” NTB in their plan is influencing the paradiplomacy trend. If Tuan Guru Bajang “globalized” NTB through the introduction and massive promotion of the “halal tourism” brand to the global Muslim community, Dr. Zul focuses on granting a chance for NTB students to promote their country

and province through diaspora for the same purpose. Furthermore, both governors fulfill the goal by increasing the reach of their policy and flexibility of the application. One example is the determination of Dr. Zul to exclude “obligatory dedication” to a governmental institution for the scholarship awardees and allow them to “seek their career” while building the

image of NTB in the international community. Another example is the continuous deregulation of NTB's bureaucratic and licensing system in TGB's era, responding President's Joko Widodo's mandate to create an investor-friendly ecosystem, particularly in the newly established KEK Mandalika (Herbawati, 2018).

### Public Opinion and Critics

A dubbed good and applicable policy is not completely perfect nor necessarily pleasing everyone within the society, either those belonging to the civilian or government officials. At some moments, critics are inevitable as a systemized policy is regardless prone to flaws at some points, particularly executions. The same rule frequently happens in the last two periods of government within the scope of West Nusa Tenggara province, where, despite various innovative policies issued with such deemed-perfect planning, they still display flaws, thus triggering critics from the society.

Responding to Tuan Guru Bajang's "halal tourism" paradiplomacy policy, the author admits that executing such a publicly unfamiliar policy, arguably the first in Indonesia at the time, requires lots of courage and systematic planning thus enabling the policy

to extract the desired output. However, the development of "halal tourism" in NTB almost entirely focuses on Lombok island with considerably little-to-no attention to potentials Sumbawa island might provide (PSnews, 2016). For people residing in Sumbawa, this condition frequently leads to the "jealous sentiment" of Sumbawanese, which ironically has been a long-living sentiment even before the period Tuan Guru Bajang became the governor of NTB firstly in 2008. The author realizes TGB's plan to exploit the *Pulau 1000 Masjid* (1000 Mosques Island) identity of Lombok island, indicating the majority of the Lombok population being Muslim (Badan Pusat Statistik Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Barat, 2019) in building "halal tourism." Despite so, such a situation may lead to other sectors receiving less attention, and the Sumbawanese are considerably anxious that such a condition possibly turns into a reality. Another issue that often emerges and purposively aimed towards the "halal tourism" paradiplomacy is the fear that TGB systematically ignores the economic role of other religious groups residing in NTB, particularly Lombok island as the center of "halal tourism" policy. Maintaining harmonious relations

between ethnoreligious groups and having Balinese ethnic embracing Hinduism as the second-largest community in NTB serve as both a unique trait a challenge to NTB regardless of the time and place. Fortunately, research by Setiawati (2019) indicated that the Hindu community involved in the halal tourism project is generally pleased and positive with the economic prospects potentially emerging from halal tourism. However, lack of proper socialization and training to the society, particularly the workers at various tourism facilities (hotels, restaurants), and the tourist often led to misunderstandings, thus reducing the effectiveness of such a perfectly-planned policy.

The next administration also appears to be struggling with the same issue (Baihaqi, 2019) despite the routine visits and monitoring conducted by the governor. the desired executions are considerably patchy and hasty (Talika News, 2019), thus triggering critics from the public and government officials. Officials and political parties often become one of the first to respond and criticize the policies of the local government in NTB. For the Chief of *Fraksi Bintang Perjuangankan Nurani Rakyat* (FBPNR) for DPRD NTB, L. Budi Suriyata (Talika

News, 2019), the policies of Dr. Zulkieflimansyah's administration, including the education and investment-based paradiplomacy, are prone to mal-administration due to the hurried implementations but able to be tackled through proper planning and information system. Another issue commonly discussed is the unequal treat the government laid on the revitalization of Lombok island following the earthquake in mid-2018, stated by *Koalisi Masyarakat Sipil NTB* and *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia – Perjuangan* (PDI-P) NTB (Hidayat & Zulfikar, 2019).

For the public, the critics on Dr. Zulkieflimansyah's policies, education, and investment-based paradiplomacy, in particular, mostly aim at how the lack of proper information and contact system of the Governor's office on the scholarship during first months of application. Due to this issue, applicants often found themselves ignored by LPP NTB as the committee with uncertain requirements and the inability of the committee to respond immediately and later refrained their intentions to enlist (Fahriza, 2018). For worse, the inability for proper information and communication system also causes suspicion among society. the

awardees are “close” to the governor, causing what the author describes as “a waste of potential talent.” Another issue is as stated by the Secretary of Education and Cultural Department of NTB (Disdikbud NTB). Sukran (2019), mentions the necessity of improvement of the capability of all students of NTB, especially those participating in LPP NTB’s scholarship, namely *Beasiswa NTB*, to speak, write, and read in foreign languages (i.e., English, Mandarin) to improve their study abroad. the author suggests that the improvement of the capability of students of NTB in communicating with foreign languages may also elevate NTB’s reputation towards the host countries.

The last issue appearing during the implementation is the presence of unnecessary fear of the NTB society that is known to be religious, particularly the parents, that studying abroad may lead their children into ideologies contradicting religious teachings (Fahriza, 2018). While appearing trivial, such issue shall be the attention for fear of communicating with the outside world will hinder the progress of the government and the society to improve. in tackling the issue, the task of the government mainly centers on educating the

society that ideologies adopted in any states are not necessarily affecting the ideologies of the students, and character-building at home is the primary task of the parents to guide and strengthen their children’s principles. With such effort, the knowledge and experience retrieved by the students can open the minds of people fearing to face the outside world.

## CONCLUSION

NTB’s paradiplomacy trends for the last five years rely on the initiative of the governors as the leader of the movement and their capability to exploit available resources and connection to improve the regional competitiveness in the middle of competition between regions within the same state and outside. With various available options, the governors should experiment and expand the region’s capability in challenging the continuously changing and demanding global economy. Frequently relying on regional identity, personal experience, and the current trend, the two governors ruling between 2013 and 2018 exactly committed so by introducing halal tourism paradiplomacy initiated by Tuan Guru Bajang and education and investment-based paradiplomacy by

Dr. Zulkieflimansyah. the reasonings may vary depending on the situation at the time, but the mutual line is drawable, thus dividing the influential factors into external and internal. Externally, the influence of ASEAN Community, United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the demands for cooperation expressed by foreign institutions, being governments, companies, and organizations, play significant roles in driving the trend of paradiplomacy in NTB these years. Internally, an attempt to increase the province's HDI, realization of creating a "different" policy from the predecessors, and "globalizing" NTB considerably play the role to a certain degree.

However, such policies are not invulnerable to flaws, particularly in the implementation. For instance, Tuan Guru Bajang's halal tourism plan lacks full-scale socialization to the locals and tourists, thus frequently causing misinterpretation of the whole halal tourism idea. Another issue is that while Lombok island is prosperous for the halal tourism paradiplomacy, Sumbawa island is not exactly benefited from it, thus further prolonging the economic "jealous sentiment" between people of Sumbawa and Lombok island. Dr.

Zulkieflimansyah's paradiplomacy plan is as brilliant in many ways as there have been reports of mal-administration, poor information system management in its early days, and parents' fear of their children "contaminated" by foreign ideologies.

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