

# Training and Internship in Japan by The Job Training Institution (Disnakertrans NTB) to Improve the Competency of Human Resources in NTB Province

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## Abstract

The gap between workforce competencies and the needs of the business and industrial world remains a fundamental issue. Many formal education graduates lack the technical and soft skills required by the current job market. Therefore, the NTB Manpower and Transmigration Office continues to promote the strengthening of vocational training, competency certification, and collaboration with the business sector to ensure that human resource development programs are more relevant and targeted. This scientific paper uses descriptive qualitative research. It is designed to provide a detailed and in-depth description of a phenomenon or situation as it occurs in a given environment. Data were collected directly through interviews, observation, and documentation. The Training and Internship Program to Japan, conducted by the NTB Manpower and Transmigration Office (LPK), plays a crucial role as a facilitator and liaison between prospective workers, training institutions (LPK), the central government, and Japanese partners such as IM JAPAN. The Manpower and Transmigration Office (Disnakertrans) is responsible for ensuring a transparent and selective recruitment process, ensuring that selected candidates are truly prepared and meet the criteria. The Disnakertrans Office begins the process with a rigorous selection process, including administration, physical tests, psychological tests, interviews, and a basic Japanese language test. The goal is to select candidates who possess not only physical and mental abilities but also the motivation and readiness to face the challenges of working abroad. This program is expected to significantly impact human resource competency in the province of West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) and create a superior and competitive workforce.

**Keywords:** Training; Apprenticeship; Human Resource Competency.

## INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly competitive global economy, both developed and developing countries place human resource competency development as a key factor in national competitiveness. Human Capital Theory states that investments in training and education have a direct impact on productivity and economic growth (Becker, 1993). International organizations such as the OECD emphasize that apprenticeship-based training programs are one of the most effective strategies for equipping the workforce with technical skills, discipline, and a work ethic that meet global industry standards (OECD, 2020). The Japanese apprenticeship model is known as one of the most successful because it systematically combines on-the-job training, work discipline, and character building (work ethics).

West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) Province is one of the regions in Indonesia that is striving to improve the quality of human development as the main foundation for achieving inclusive and sustainable economic growth. One crucial aspect of this development is improving the quality of human resources (HR). Without competent, productive, and adaptive human resources, it is difficult for a region to compete amidst the rapid dynamics of globalization and industrial transformation. The employment situation in NTB presents quite complex challenges. According to data from the NTB Manpower and Transmigration Office (Disnakertrans), approximately 150,000 to 200,000 new workers enter the job market each year. Meanwhile, most of them lack the competencies to compete in the workforce, particularly in the formal sector. As a result, approximately 70% of NTB's workforce still relies on the informal sector, which generally does not guarantee job protection, income security, or social security (Antara NTB, 2024).

Although the open unemployment rate in West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) is relatively low—recorded at around 2.73% in August 2024—this does not fully reflect ideal employment conditions. The low unemployment rate is more due to high participation in the informal sector and the subsistence economy, rather than the absorption of labor in decent and productive jobs (NTB Manpower and Transmigration Office, 2024). This is the main reason why human resource development is a priority: not only to reduce unemployment, but also to increase the quality of work and productivity of the workforce in West Nusa Tenggara. Furthermore, the gap between workforce competencies and the needs of the business and industrial world remains a fundamental problem. Many formal education graduates lack the technical and soft skills required by the current job market. Therefore, the NTB Manpower and Transmigration Office continues to encourage the strengthening of vocational training, competency certification, and collaboration with the business world to ensure that human resource development programs are more relevant and targeted (Antara Mataram, 2024).

In the long term, human resource development is also closely linked to an increase in the Human Development Index (HDI), reduction of extreme poverty, and increased regional competitiveness. NTB requires not only a large workforce, but also one that is trained, healthy, and capable of innovation. Without this, the region's vast potential, both in terms of natural resources and opportunities in the tourism and halal industries, will be difficult to maximize. Therefore, human resource development in NTB is not merely a technical necessity, but a long-term development strategy that addresses the social, economic, and sustainability aspects of the region.

Japan's apprenticeship program, through the Technical Intern Training Program (TITP), has been extensively researched internationally. Yamada (2019) and Kawamura (2021) found that Japanese apprenticeships not only improve technical skills but also strengthen non-technical competencies such as precision, discipline, responsibility, and teamwork. For regions needing to improve human resource quality, such as West Nusa Tenggara Province, this type of training model provides an opportunity to prepare a workforce that is able to compete in the global market and the national job market.

## The Role of LPK and the Japanese Internship Program

One of the main requirements for employment and internships in Japan is mastery of the Japanese language. The role of the Japanese Language Training Institute (LPK) is to teach students basic Japanese, sufficient for everyday communication in the workplace. In addition to language instruction, it's also crucial to understand and introduce them to the Japanese work culture, which is renowned for its discipline and punctuality. This is crucial for quickly adjusting to life in Japan.

The LPK also provides technical training tailored to the fields that participants will pursue in Japan, including agriculture and manufacturing. In addition to technical skills, participants are also trained in physical fitness, discipline, and mental work. This is crucial because the work pace in Japan is quite high and requires strong physical and mental readiness. The LPK serves as a liaison between local governments, prospective participants, and recipient institutions in Japan. The LPK assists with the process from selection and administration to participant departure. It is officially registered and licensed as a Sending Organization, a legitimate institution authorized to send interns to Japan. To maintain the quality and legality of the LPK program, it is required to comply with national training standards and obtain government accreditation. To ensure the program's long-term implementation, the LPK in NTB has also begun establishing a networking forum to strengthen inter-institutional collaboration. The goal is to facilitate the exchange of information and experience between LPKs, complementing each other. This forum also serves as a forum for discussion to ensure a more professional internship program.

Over the past few years, the training and internship program to Japan, facilitated by the NTB Manpower and Transmigration Office, has become one of the local government's efforts to improve the quality of human resources, particularly among young people seeking international work experience. This program not only promises job opportunities abroad but is also considered capable of developing participants' discipline, skills, and work ethic. However, from my initial research, I found that there is little local research specifically examining the extent to which this program is truly able to improve participants' competencies. Most available information is general or consists of annual activity reports that only present administrative data, such as the number of participants or departures to Japan. Substantial aspects such as improving technical capabilities, soft skills, or the long-term impact on participants' work readiness are still rarely studied in depth, especially in the NTB context.

This indicates a gap in the literature that needs to be filled. Without a more critical, data-driven evaluation of the program's effectiveness, it will be difficult to determine whether the training provided is truly relevant to job market needs and capable of improving the competitiveness of the NTB workforce. Therefore, through this research, I want to further explore how training and internship programs in Japan contribute to improving the competency of local human resources, with the hope that the results can inform improvements to job training policies in the region.

## METHOD

### Research Type

The type of research used in this scientific paper is descriptive qualitative research. Descriptive qualitative research is used because it provides a detailed and in-depth description of a phenomenon or situation as it occurs in a given environment. Data was collected directly through interviews, observation, and documentation. This method aims to obtain clearer information about what is happening in the research location, which the researcher uses as material for the scientific paper. This allows the scientific paper to reveal the true phenomenon in detail at the research location.

### Data collection technique

#### Observation

The researcher collected data through direct observation at the research location, recording all information to obtain more detailed insights. In this case, the researcher learned about the process of the Training and Internship Program to Japan conducted by the NTB Manpower and Transmigration Office (LPK) to Improve the Competence of Human Resources in NTB Province.

#### Interviews

The researcher used the interview method to obtain more in-depth information from the informants. The interview method involved meeting directly and asking targeted questions. The interviews were conducted through two-way conversations between the researcher and the informant. In this study, the researcher interviewed members of the LPK (Learning and Training Institution) responsible for implementing the Japan Training and Internship Program. The research involved five informants: two alumni or interns, two instructors or trainers, and one program manager. The interviews were conducted by preparing a list of questions and then asking the informants. The interview technique used was in-depth, allowing the researcher to extract information relevant to the focus and objectives of the research.

#### Data Coding

After the interviews are collected, the next step is to analyze the data into specific themes and patterns so that the main meaning of the research can be used. Coding is done in three stages: Open coding is reading the entire interview transcript and marking statements that are considered important. This stage breaks the data into small, meaningful parts. 1. Axis Coding is codes that have similarities then grouped into larger categories, at this stage the relationship between the data begins to appear. 2. Selective coding is the final stage where this stage selects the most important categories and organizes them into main themes that explain the research findings. This theme will later answer the problem formulation and become the basis for presenting the research results.

#### Documentation

Documentation is a data or information collection technique that involves attaching data or documents in the form of archives, images, and writings related to the problem being researched. Documents are records of past events. In this case, the researcher documented several pieces of data regarding the LPK program as a source of supplementary data for the research and as evidence of the validity of the research.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

In order to expand employment opportunities for the people of West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) to the Japanese job market through a targeted internship program, the NTB Provincial Manpower and

Transmigration Office (Disnakertrans) held a Coordination Meeting for the Establishment of the Japanese Internship Network Communication Forum (FKJP) at the Disnakertrans Hall on Friday (1/11/2024). Through this forum, it is hoped that training institutions that already have Sending Organization (SO) permits can assist other institutions that do not yet have permits to improve quality and comply with applicable regulations. This collaborative approach is considered important to prevent sending interns through unofficial channels, which can be detrimental and endanger prospective workers. The activity was attended by 34 Job Training Institutions (LPK) throughout NTB, with 14 of them having official SO permits from the Ministry of Manpower to send interns to Japan. The Head of the NTB Manpower and Transmigration Office, I Gede Putu Aryadi, S.Sos., M.H., emphasized that the placement of workers to Japan has strict regulations and can only be done through official channels, namely Government to Government (G to G) or independent placement when vacancies are opened directly by companies in Japan.

Currently, the NTB Manpower and Transmigration Office is also conducting Regional Training (Pelatda) for prospective Japanese interns, which is a collaborative program between the Indonesian Ministry of Manpower, IM Japan, the NTB Manpower and Transmigration Office, and the NTB Regional Leadership Council (DPD Ikapeksi). The selection process is carried out in stages, starting from physical tests, academic tests, psychological tests, and interviews by the IM Japan team. Successful participants will undergo intensive training at the BLK and the NTB Vocational Training Center. In 2025, 28 participants from NTB were declared successful in completing Pelatda Phase I of the Japanese internship program, batch 2025-10/382. Of the total 175 applicants, only 36 people qualified for the training, and after continuous evaluation of language, physical, mental, and discipline abilities, the remaining 28 participants were declared ready to continue to the next stage. In this program, the Manpower and Transmigration Office acts as a facilitator connecting participants, LPK, the central government, and Japanese partners. The Manpower and Transmigration Office (Disnakertrans) ensures a transparent recruitment process and prepares participants through pre-departure training, which includes Japanese language instruction, work culture, work ethic, and discipline. Furthermore, mentoring is provided throughout the training period, including internships in Japan. Synergy between these agencies is strengthened through the establishment of a communication forum for information exchange and ongoing coordination.

## Discussion

The research results show that the training and internship program in Japan organized by the NTB Manpower and Transmigration Office (LPK) significantly improved participants' competency, including technical skills, discipline, work ethic, and overall job readiness. These findings align with various previous studies, both internationally and nationally.

First, the improvement in participants' technical competence and work habits found in this study aligns with the findings of Yamada (2019) and Kanamura (2021). Both studies confirm that the Japanese apprenticeship system is known for developing practical skills tailored to industry needs through intensive on-the-job training and structured work discipline. These findings reinforce the view that apprentices from West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) experienced similar development after participating in the program.

Furthermore, international research from the OECD (2020) shows that overseas internship programs significantly contribute to improving workforce competitiveness, especially when they are built on global industry standards. The results of this study strongly align with these findings, as participants from West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) who participated in internships in Japan demonstrated higher job readiness and greater adaptability to modern work environments. This demonstrates that the program managed by the NTB Manpower and Transmigration Agency (LPK) is aligned with global best practices.

Previous research findings from Halim (2021) stated that Japanese work culture, which emphasizes punctuality, responsibility, teamwork, and quality, is able to significantly shape the character of the Indonesian workforce, which shows that training and internship participants from NTB bring home new discipline and work ethics that they did not previously have.

This internship program has a significant impact on improving human resource competency, both in terms of hard skills and soft skills. Mastery of technical skills is necessary to meet the precise and high standards of Japanese industry. Meanwhile, soft skills such as communication, cultural

adaptation, and work ethic are crucial aspects so that participants can adjust to the Japanese work environment and return with strong professional experience. However, challenges remain, particularly in terms of mastering Japanese language and adjusting to the culture of indirect communication. Furthermore, participants also need to adapt to the work patterns, technology, and high discipline applied in Japanese companies. Nevertheless, the training provided by the LPK and mentoring from the Manpower and Transmigration Office is believed to be able to equip participants to be ready to face these challenges. And overall, the research results show strong consistency with previous theories and findings, both nationally and internationally.

## CONCLUSION

The Japanese Internship and Training Program, organized by the Manpower and Transmigration Office of West Nusa Tenggara Province, has significantly contributed to improving the quality of human resources, particularly in NTB Province. This program not only serves as a means of sending workers abroad but also serves as a structured and internationally standardized competency development strategy. One of the program's tangible contributions is seen in the aspects of Hard Skills, Soft Skills, International Work Experience, and LPK Support. Training participants are equipped with basic industrial skills such as industrial engineering, assembly, and other technical skills required in the Japanese industry, which is known for its high standards (IM Japan, 2022). Although only 28 participants graduated, this demonstrates that, despite their small number, they are selected human resources who have passed a rigorous technical competency screening.

So overall, the Training and Internship Program to Japan in NTB can be said to have succeeded in achieving its main objectives, namely increasing the accent of NTB's workforce to Japan, conducting training that equips participants with technical competencies and noble results in the form of participants who are ready to intern and ready to depart.

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