

# Analysis of Decent and Fair Work for Precarious Workers in the Lombok Industrial Area

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## ABSTRACT

Precarious employment is a critical issue in modern employment, including in the industrial areas of Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara (NTB). These workers, generally contract or outsourced workers, face job instability, low wages, and limited access to social security and health protection. This situation poses serious challenges to the implementation of decent work and fair work principles. This research employed a qualitative approach with a case study method. Informants were purposively selected, consisting of seven workers in the industrial areas of Lombok, including contract workers, outsourced workers, teachers, and company management. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, direct observation of work activities, and documentation in the form of notes, photographs, and recordings. The results show that precarious workers face significant limitations in terms of job stability, adequate wages, health and safety protection, and participation in decision-making. Short-term contract practices, the risk of termination of employment, and minimal union representation exacerbate their vulnerability. Structural factors such as high worker numbers and limited skills weaken their bargaining position. In conclusion, vulnerable workers in Lombok require more inclusive labor regulations, adequate social protection, and collective worker empowerment to create more stable, decent, and equitable working conditions. This research provides empirical insights and information for sustainable industrial development policies.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Phenomenon worker precariat has become an important issue in dynamics of employment in the era of globalization. The term precariat refers to a group of workers who are in a condition of work that is not stable, risky, and open to exploitation, and often with minimal social guarantees [1]. They generally have short contract terms, their status does not remain, and their access to decent employment is limited. This concept was introduced by Guy Standing as class living workers in an uncertain economic and social environment that changes the dynamic labor market structure. Workers in the precariat face risks of uncertain income, minimum social protection, and limited career development opportunities, which directly influence their quality of life and well-being. In Indonesia, changes in economic structure and increasing investment in industry, especially in developing regions, also expand the number of workers in the precariat, one of them in the Lombok [2] industry, West Nusa Tenggara. This area is developing rapidly through development in industry, tourism projects, and sub-sectors absorbing services in a big way. This growth creates work opportunities, but also poses challenges related to work quality, including contract status, minimum social protection, and wages that are not worthy. Most of them are absorbed through contract, outsourcing, or daily freelance (casual employment), which makes it easier for companies to have flexibility. However, this causes economic uncertainty for workers [3]. This condition is exacerbated by fluctuations in production or efficiency of work without fair compensation. As a result, workers often experience economic pressure, stress, and limitations in planning for the future in a financial and social [4]. Perspective on decent work and fair work (fair

employment) becomes important For evaluate condition worker precariat in Lombok and similar areas [5]. According to Organization International Labour Organization (ILO), work worthy covers adequate wages For fulfil need basic and family, access guarantee social , protection health, as well as stability enough work. Meanwhile Work fair emphasize treatment equal, respect to right workers, as well as chance development career and well-being term long [6]. A study that combines second this perspective is very necessary For evaluate balance between need flexibility companies and rights base workers, especially in the sector growing industry rapidly [7]. Based on review study previously, there were a number of gap research (research gap) which becomes base importance this research. First, some big studies focus on the global context or urban big, while study empirical in the region Lombok industry still limited [8]. Second, analysis about protection social, welfare and safety Work worker precariat Still less, so that understanding about factors that influence quality jobs at the level local Not yet adequate [9]. Third, study previously seldom integrate flexibility power Work company with right worker in One framework analysis holistic, even though interaction second This aspect determines condition Work in a way overall [10]. Fourth , the impact casual work and outsourcing of stability , satisfaction , and risk economy worker Not yet Lots studied , even though this practice is increasingly general implemented in the area Lombok [11]industry [12]This research aims to For fill in emptiness the with a more approach comprehensive , providing contribution theoretical about dynamics worker precariat , as well as contribution practical for formulation management policies and strategies power more work fair and sustainable in the region Lombok industry and similar areas in Indonesia.

## II. METHODS

This research was conducted using a qualitative approach to provide details or uncover the underlying underlying phenomena. Qualitative research utilizes interviews to gain insight into the attitudes, views, or preferences of individuals or groups [13]. Fundamentally, this research utilizes a case study method, which aims to intensively explore the background, current situation, and the given interactions within a particular social unit . [14]. The determination of informants was carried out by *purposive sampling* on PKWT (Fixed Term Employment Agreement) workers or popularly known as contracts or outsourcing who have worked for at least a year as well as several active actors in the employment system, especially PKWT. Informants in the study were 7 people consisting of 2 outsourcing workers, 3 contract workers, academics and outsourcing management. For workers who became informants, this study targeted workers in the Lombok Industrial Area in Dasan Cermen, Mataram City as the research location considering that the place is the center of industrial activity. In addition, this study also refers to several secondary data obtained from institutions or agencies that focus on employment issues such as the Central Statistics Agency, the Ministry of Manpower, and the Legal Aid Institute, as well as journals or articles about precariat workers. Data collection methods were carried out in three ways. First, in-depth interviews were used as the primary method in this study [15]. Interviews were conducted face-to-face between the researcher and the informant. Interviews were often conducted at the informant's workplace during their breaks. The instrument used in this study was an interview guideline that had been prepared by the researcher in advance. The interview guideline was made differently according to the informant's background. In addition, the researcher also used a recording device to facilitate the researcher in listening to the results of the conversation with the informant. Second, observations were conducted to directly observe the activities and behavior of the informant. Third, documentation, which is defined as the collection of written materials, photos, or

videos to help the researcher enrich the data [15]. The data obtained were analyzed using Miles and Hubberman analysis. First, the researcher conducted data reduction by sorting relevant data to answer the problem formulation in this study. After that, the data was grouped based on the problem formulation and presented systematically in the form of a narrative description. Finally, the researcher drew conclusions with verification through source triangulation and techniques to validate the data.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The International Labor Organization, the largest labor organization, once launched the concept of decent work *and* encouraged its implementation in formal employment. To assess whether a job is decent, several aspects are considered, ranging from employment opportunities to adequate social security for workers [16]. The concept of decent work is used to assess the extent to which working conditions contribute to the well-being of workers and their families. Meanwhile, fair work *is* a concept developed by the FairWork Foundation, consisting of five indicators and used to certify companies regarding the fairness of the work they receive [7]. This section will attempt to outline the concept of decent and fair work and the benefits received by worker informants during their employment. Certain indicators will, of course, be adjusted based on the context of this research. The analysis of decent and fair work for precarious workers in this study can be seen as follows:

Decent Work Points	Decent Work Indicators	Informant Working Conditions
Employment Opportunity	Opportunities and certainty of getting a job	Informants' sources of information for finding jobs are still conventional, relying solely on information from friends/family or by "casting the net" (sending application letters to numerous companies without any clear guarantee).
Sufficient income	Components of a decent living (minimum wage) + costs of production facilities which are borne by workers	Outsourced informants receive wages equal to the minimum wage (UMP). Contract informants receive weekly wages, which, when combined, amount to far less than the UMP. There have been no significant wage increases in the past three years, and wages have tended to decrease with each company change.
Working hours	40 hours per week	Working hours are based on the volume of goods/production activity. Overtime is more common but not paid.
Combining work, family and personal life	Right to leave	Informants are entitled to 2 days off, but these are often used for work when production activity is high.
Jobs that are not permitted	There is no forced labor and child labor	One informant chose to drop out of school after graduating from junior high school. He helped his family earn a living. However, this choice was made based on his own volition, without any pressure from his parents.

Job stability and security	Guarantee not to be fired or dismissed at any time	Contract employment status leaves informants with no guarantee of avoiding layoffs. Most informants have been laid off for various reasons, such as company efficiency measures resulting in downsizing or factories having to relocate to other cities. They are also vulnerable to having their employment status and tenure amended.
Equal opportunity and treatment in employment	There is no discrimination based on SARA, political views, or gender.	There is no discrimination in the work process.
Safe working environment	A safe and healthy working environment free from work accidents	For informants working in light steel factories, the potential for workplace accidents is quite high. They are not equipped with proper safety equipment.
Social Security	There is a guarantee of occupational health and safety	The informants only received social security benefits deducted from their monthly wages. There was no health insurance.
Social dialogue	Involved in the decision-making process and have the right to organize and express aspirations	Unequal positions made informants afraid to voice their concerns due to the lack of job security. The company's demanding hours and workload prevented informants from forming a union.

Informants who work under contract and outsourcing systems are classified as precarious or vulnerable workers because they lack job security and do not meet the decent work criteria as conceptualized by the ILO (*International Labor Organization*). Although the concept of decent work is generally used to examine working conditions in formal employment, in practice, it is difficult to categorize precarious workers as formal or informal [17]. Informants who work under contract and outsourcing systems are categorized as precariat workers because they lack job security and do not meet the decent work criteria as conceptualized by the ILO (17). According to Guy Standing, the precariat is a group of workers who are vulnerable to economic uncertainty, minimal social security, and temporary work. From this perspective, the implementation of decent work standards is important, but it needs to be equipped with additional mechanisms that guarantee basic rights, job security, and the welfare of the precariat in a sustainable manner. Meanwhile, if analyzed using the fair work concept as conceptualized by the FairWork Foundation, the working conditions of the informants are as follows:

Fair Work Principle	Informant Working Conditions
Fair payment (minimum minimum wage + production costs incurred by workers).	The wages workers receive are only the minimum wage, with some informants receiving significantly less. While they receive food and attendance allowances, these amounts are small. Their limited skills and the pressure to find work quickly lead workers to accept low pay.
Fair conditions (protection of health and safety at work).	Employment social security is deducted from monthly wages. There is no health insurance.
Fair employment contracts (clear and transparent employment relationships, which are enforced).	They are vulnerable to unilateral layoffs due to one-way company policies. Furthermore, they are

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Fair management (equality, negotiation, and complaints regarding work processes).	vulnerable to status changes (from permanent to contract) and employment changes (working for more than three years but remaining on contract). Employers and workers face unequal positions. This is compounded by low levels of education and knowledge, coupled with the absence of supportive labor unions. Certain matters, such as wages, are often determined by the company. Despite the opportunity for dialogue, workers fear the potential for job loss.
Fair representation (freedom of association, representation in collective bargaining).	The busy workload led informants to choose not to join a union. Furthermore, they felt afraid to become active in a union due to the high potential for layoffs.

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Source: Primary Data (Processed)

Two forms of classification, namely decent work and fair work, can be benchmarks regarding the minimum prerequisites for the rights of precarious workers, however, these two classifications will be problematic when placed as the final goal regarding future work. The decent work classification, for example, has limitations because it places waged work as the final category. The implication is that the work process outside of waged work is positioned as unworthy or in a negative space that is deemed to need to be improved by commodifying work [18]. Meanwhile, the fair work concept has limitations that also exist in the decent work concept, namely viewing the minimum wage in a region as a representation of a fair and decent income for workers. In general, this claim is incorrect, because, reflecting on the case in Indonesia, the determination of the minimum wage does not fully align with the components of a decent life in each region [19]. The limitations of decent and fair work are also related to the concept of work that is still within the framework of capitalism, so it remains linked to various forms of exploitation and alienation. Despite these limitations, both conceptions of work still have the benefit of being the minimum prerequisites for workers' rights that need to be achieved in the short term. Informants who work under contract and outsourcing systems are categorized as precariat workers because they lack job security and do not meet the decent work criteria as conceptualized by the ILO (17). According to Guy Standing, the precariat is a group of workers who face economic uncertainty, temporary work, minimal social security, and difficulty in obtaining a stable class identity. This condition makes them vulnerable to exploitation and psychological pressure in their daily lives. From Karl Marx's perspective, precariat workers experience work alienation, a disconnection between workers and the products they produce, the work process, their coworkers, and even themselves, because their work is commodified and oriented solely to capitalist profit. Contracting and outsourcing systems reinforce this alienation, as workers lack control over the work process and their incomes are uncertain. By combining the ideas of Guy Standing and Marx, the precariat's condition can be understood as a combination of structural uncertainty and alienation resulting from modern capitalism. This suggests that decent work standards and fair work mechanisms are crucial, not merely as minimum norms, but as instruments for reducing vulnerability, ensuring workers' rights, and providing protection against exploitation and economic pressure for precariat groups. Apart from criticism of the concept of fairness and justice, it is equally important to examine the vulnerabilities experienced by informants based on this concept of work. Regarding work, there are important aspects to consider beyond the analysis of wages, employment contracts, access to unions, and unequal positions. These aspects include occupational health and safety guarantees, including workplace accidents. During the research process, the researcher observed that workers were not equipped with any occupational safety protection. However, according to regulations, every worker has the right to occupational safety and health guarantees. Every company must have an occupational safety and health management system to prevent adverse

events resulting from work activities from occurring. This is especially true for workers who are directly involved in production activities on a daily basis, such as operating heavy equipment to process raw materials, such as the informants who work in a light steel factory. FA (25 years old) experienced a work accident, explaining that: "In 2021, I had an accident at work. A coil fell and hit my leg. I was immediately taken to the hospital. My boss (the company) covered the entire medical expenses, and there were no deductions from my salary while I was on leave."

A work accident is an accident that occurs within the framework of an employment relationship, including accidents during the journey from home to work or vice versa. A case is considered a work accident if there is an element of injury to the human body as a result of an event, such as falling, being hit, being hit, and so on. Based on this definition, the disaster that befell FA (25 years old) is considered a work accident. During the interview, FA (25 years old) admitted that he was not provided with personal protective equipment such as a helmet, clothing, or safe shoes. This is despite his work in the production department, which involves direct contact with raw materials and heavy equipment that have the potential to cause work accidents. Meanwhile, he also explained that the company does not provide health insurance for workers, only social security for which he pays monthly through salary deductions. This applies to all areas in the factory, such as the production department and the delivery department. When an accident like the informant's occurs, treatment until the worker recovers depends solely on the generosity of the factory. The work agreement they both agreed to does not specifically regulate cases of work accidents because the factory is considered a small factory. The same applies to informants who work as sorters in a logistics warehouse. Although their work is considered low-risk, the company should provide them with personal protective equipment and occupational accident insurance or health insurance. In addition to occupational accidents, occupational accident insurance not only covers accidents during work but also illnesses suffered by workers as a result of the work environment. The absence of guaranteed health and safety protection within a company reflects unfair and inadequate working conditions. This does not include working conditions that place workers in vulnerable positions, such as minimum wages, lack of guaranteed job continuity, and the lack of collective power representing workers in confronting the company. There are several things that prevent the informants from experiencing decent and fair work, both due to structural issues and the lack of agency power of precarious workers. In a critical industrial relations approach, employers will not grant workers' rights without external encouragement [20]. In other words, entrepreneurs in capitalism are faced with the coercive laws of market competition, so their goal is to accumulate maximum profits, while eliminating their competitors or conducting an oligopoly [21]. This condition requires good intentions (*political will*) from entrepreneurs to become something utopian, so there needs to be encouragement to force them to fulfill workers' rights. One way is through regulations issued by the government. [22]. To create fair regulations for workers, a political struggle is required from the working class. However, the increasingly widespread flexible work systems currently in place are actually making workers increasingly apolitical and individualized. Workers are becoming accustomed to the absence of labor unions [23]. The sources of worker power, using Wright (2000) and Silver's approach, (2003) are structural *power* and associational power. Structural power refers to power derived from the labor market and workplace [25]. Working classes in certain sectors will have a strong bargaining position in the labor market when there are few workers in that sector, or when those workers possess special skills that are so crucial to production activities that they are difficult to replace [26]. The problem with precarious workers is that their numbers in the labor market are overwhelming. This situation benefits employers because, in the context of precarious workers, the more people competing for a single job, the greater the likelihood of their position being vulnerable [27]. This is possible because their bargaining power decreases along with their large numbers [28]. The second problem is that in a capitalist system, the control mechanisms implemented alienate workers from their jobs. The detailed

division of labor is deepened by machines and the reduction of skills makes work so boring, even brain-numbing. Ben almost [29] explains worker alienation through his experience visiting a factory. For forty minutes standing watching the workers, they only do the same things, and the pattern never changes. "Car, windshield, car, windshield." This means that precarious workers do not have special skills that have high bargaining power [30]. They are hampered by low education and job security orientation, conditions that actually make them vulnerable. The source of strength from weak structural conditions is also exacerbated by the fact that they do not have a strong collective base [31]. For the context of this research, workers choose not to join a union because the work is dense, causing energy to be drained so they only choose to rest when not working. In addition, there is an impression that the potential for conflict is actually higher when they choose to be active in a labor union [5].

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Based on research in the Lombok industrial area, precarious workers face highly vulnerable working conditions. They are mostly contract or outsourced, receive wages often below a living wage, lack adequate health insurance, and are vulnerable to termination at any time. This situation indicates that the principles of decent and fair work have not been fully implemented in daily practice. precarious workers experience limitations in job stability, social protection, occupational safety, and opportunities to participate in decision-making. Structural factors such as a high number of workers competing for limited jobs and a lack of specialized skills weaken their bargaining position. Furthermore, minimal union involvement makes it difficult for workers to obtain collective protection. Cases of work accidents and the lack of safety facilities highlight the need for serious attention to workplace health and safety. Companies tend to prioritize workforce efficiency and flexibility, while workers remain vulnerable. The COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted the inherent uncertainty of precarious work, resulting in a higher risk of income and job loss. This reflects the urgent need for more inclusive labor policies and regulations that guarantee basic workers' rights. Adequate protection, decent wages, and strengthening workers' collective power are prerequisites for creating fairer and more stable working conditions for precarious workers in Lombok, while also supporting sustainable industrial development.

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