

The Implementation of The Family Hope Program to Enhance Community Welfare in Benjeng Subdistrict, Gresik Regency

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to examine the policy's impact and provide evidence on the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Indonesia, which reduces poverty and social inequality and promotes financial inclusion for low-income families. Because Indonesian society has not yet developed significantly, the results of government initiatives need to be demonstrated. This article's research uses qualitative methods combined with a descriptive approach. Social welfare is an institution or field of activity involving organized activities carried out by both government and private institutions aimed at preventing, addressing, or contributing to the resolution of social problems and improving the quality of life of individuals, groups, and communities. The results of the study indicate that the implementation of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Benjeng District, Gresik Regency, East Java, remains poorly targeted and has not achieved its intended goals. PKH assistance is provided to residents who should not receive it. This helps the local government improve the process.

Keywords: *Poverty, Social Welfare, Family Hope Program (PKH).*

INTRODUCTION

Poverty stands as one of the significant barriers to achieving national development and remains a persistent global challenge. Like many other nations, Indonesia also faces this issue, stemming from individuals' inability to meet their basic needs for food, clothing, and housing. The problem became more evident during the 1998 economic crisis, when the rupiah declined sharply against foreign currencies. Since that period, poverty levels in Indonesia have continued to rise, turning it into a central concern in the country's development agenda (Fajri, 2022). Poverty represents a significant challenge for communities that struggle to meet basic needs due to limited human resource capacity, insufficient minimum wages, and rapid population growth that reduces competitiveness, especially in the labor market. Tackling poverty requires a comprehensive, integrated approach, as it is closely linked to other socio-economic issues. This process should involve cross-sectoral coordination and collaboration among different actors. Efforts to alleviate poverty aim to facilitate economic transformation and progress, while expanding opportunities to address broader social concerns. Poverty reduction strategies must be tailored to regional priorities and needs and aligned with both short- and long-term national development objectives. Consequently, a key indicator of successful national development is the measurable decline in the poverty rate (Sari, 2021).

Economic development refers to the process of enhancing public welfare by promoting the overall prosperity of a nation or region. A significant factor contributing to economic stagnation in a country is its relatively low labor efficiency or productivity compared to that of developed countries. This inefficiency often stems from widespread poverty, characterized by inadequate nutrition, poor health, high illiteracy rates, and limited mobility in both employment and education (Huda, 2015). Hence, the government's role is vital in stimulating economic growth to ensure a higher quality of life for its citizens. This can be accomplished through the implementation of various social welfare policies, including social assistance programs. Such assistance may take the form of direct financial

support, goods, or essential services. Additionally, continuous or long-term aid is often provided to permanently vulnerable populations such as individuals with disabilities, the elderly, and homeless children, as highlighted by Supriyanto (2014).

Indonesia's population continues to grow steadily each year, making it essential to align this growth with improvements in public welfare, particularly in education, health, and economic well-being. A nation's welfare can primarily be assessed through its level of economic welfare, which constitutes a core element of overall social welfare. According to Law No. 11 of 2009 on Social Welfare, social welfare is a state in which citizens' material, spiritual, and social needs are adequately met, enabling them to live decently, achieve self-development, and fulfill their social roles. Economic welfare is a subset of social welfare that may be evaluated directly or indirectly in monetary terms, yet it remains inseparable from broader social welfare. Social welfare encompasses organized, structured activities conducted by governmental and non-governmental institutions to prevent, address, and resolve social problems, while simultaneously enhancing the quality of life for individuals, groups, and communities. Friedlander posits that the primary goal of social welfare is to secure adequate economic conditions, health standards, and living quality for individuals. Additionally, it aims to ensure equal opportunities among citizens, promote human dignity, support mental well-being, and enable people to participate in social and economic life without constraint consistent with the fundamental rights shared by all members of society (Aeda dan Jannah, 2022).

The Family Hope Program (PKH) serves as one of the government's strategic efforts to enhance household welfare through targeted social assistance. Its primary goal is to expand impoverished families' access to essential services in education, healthcare, and nutrition (Beni et al., 2023), thereby improving their standard of living. PKH is designed not only to provide immediate financial relief for poor households but also to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty in the long run. By promoting improvements in health, education, and overall well-being, the program aims to empower families with greater opportunities to elevate their living conditions independently. According to Article 2 of the Regulation of the Minister of Social Affairs (Permensos) No. 1 of 2018, the overarching goal of the Family Hope Program (PKH) is to enhance human resource quality and transform the attitudes, behaviors, and mindsets of very poor or vulnerable households, enabling them to access education and healthcare services better. This initiative is also aligned with the broader agenda of accelerating the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Setiawan dan Hasan, 2023).

More specifically, PKH aims for the following matters based on the Minister of Social Affairs Regulation Number 1 of 2018, Article 2:

1. Improve the living conditions of beneficiary households by expanding access to educational, health, and social welfare services.
2. Decrease household expenditures while increasing the income levels of poor and vulnerable families.
3. Foster positive behavioral changes and encourage the self-sufficiency of beneficiary families in utilizing health services.
4. Alleviate poverty and reduce social and economic inequality.
5. Introduce beneficiary families to the benefits of formal financial products and services, promoting financial inclusion and empowerment.

The most recent Gresik Regent Regulation concerning the Family Hope Program (PKH) is Regent Regulation No. 5 of 2024. This regulation governs the Inclusive Family Hope Program for the elderly and persons with disabilities in Gresik Regency. The program aims to provide social assistance in the form of cash transfers and mentoring to improve the beneficiaries' standard of living, reduce household expenses, foster positive behavioral changes, and alleviate poverty and social inequality. Beneficiaries of the Inclusive PKH are elderly individuals and persons with disabilities who are listed in the Integrated Social Welfare Data (DTKS) and reside within Gresik Regency. According to the Regulation of the Minister of Social Affairs No. 1 of 2018, the Family Hope

Program (PKH) is a conditional cash transfer program for poor and vulnerable families and/or individuals registered in the Integrated Database for Poverty Alleviation Programs, managed by the Center for Social Welfare Data and Information, and designated as PKH beneficiary households (Zevira dan Pertiwi, 2025).

As part of its commitment to the welfare of its citizens, the government has introduced various social assistance initiatives, including the Family Hope Program (PKH). The program's scope has been expanded to include vulnerable groups, such as persons with disabilities and the elderly, to uphold their social well-being, in line with the Constitution and the President of the Republic of Indonesia's Nawacita vision. To address persistent poverty, the government has recognized the importance of implementing PKH as a key poverty alleviation strategy. This initiative specifically targets the most impoverished households, providing essential support to improve their living conditions. Accordingly, the number of poor households in Indonesia serves as the foundation for determining the beneficiaries of the Family Hope Program.

METHOD

The descriptive qualitative method is particularly appropriate for a study titled "Implementation of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Enhancing Community Welfare", as it enables an in-depth exploration of how the program is carried out in real-world settings. This approach combines literature review and interview techniques, emphasizing data collection through verbal expressions and observed behaviors. Such a method effectively captures the lived experiences, perceptions, and challenges faced by program beneficiaries and implementers in the field (Fiantika et al, 2022)

The primary aim of this research is to gain first-hand insights into the program's operational processes, the obstacles encountered during implementation, and public perceptions of PKH's impact on family welfare. Supporting data are also derived from relevant prior studies most notably, an evaluation of PKH implementation in Lundo Village, Benjeng Subdistrict, which highlights progress in health and education indicators and the beneficiaries' access to PKH-provided services. Lundo Village records 147 beneficiary households, the highest among surrounding villages. However, the local economy remains weak, with average monthly household income ranging between IDR 500,000 and 1,000,000. Moreover, 80–90% of PKH participants also benefit from other social aid programs, including Raskin, Jamkesmas, BLT, and BSM (Putri, 2016).

To strengthen the analytical foundation, the study applies Daniel Mazmanian and Paul Sabatier's policy implementation theory to identify factors influencing the program's effectiveness. These include the competence of implementers, encountered challenges, and the degree of support from relevant stakeholders. Through this framework, the study seeks to provide a holistic understanding of PKH's acceptance and implementation within the community, as well as its overall contribution to improving residents' welfare in Benjeng Subdistrict, Gresik Regency.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Implementation of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Benjeng Subdistrict, Gresik Regency

The Family Hope Program (PKH) represents a key government strategy to alleviate poverty by providing conditional cash transfers to the poorest households. The program has been implemented in Benjeng Subdistrict, Gresik Regency, since 2007, involving multiple stakeholders, including the Department of Social Affairs, local governments at the subdistrict and village levels, and PKH facilitators, who play an essential role in its execution and monitoring. The identification of potential PKH beneficiaries begins with data collection managed by the Gresik Social Affairs Office under the Integrated Social Welfare Data (DTKS). Village authorities actively propose eligible candidates based on criteria that include economic condition, pregnancy status, the presence of toddlers or school-aged children, and elderly or disabled family members. Following this, PKH

facilitators conduct on-site verification visits to ensure that the proposed households genuinely meet the program's eligibility requirements. The verified data are later reviewed and approved by the Social Affairs Office before being formalized through an Official Beneficiary Decree (SK) (Efendi et al, 2021).

In terms of implementation, PKH assistance in Benjeng is distributed in several phases throughout the year, through official channels such as Bank Jatim or the post office, in accordance with national regulations. Beneficiaries are required to attend designated distribution points, accompanied by PKH facilitators who ensure funds are received appropriately. For those unable to participate, facilitators arrange home delivery. In addition to disbursing funds, facilitators provide ongoing guidance and supervision through periodic group meetings focused on health education, school participation, and household financial management. Continuous monitoring ensures that beneficiaries comply with program requirements, such as visiting health posts (posyandu) and maintaining their children's school attendance. Despite its success, several implementation challenges remain, including outdated beneficiary data and limited understanding among elderly recipients regarding fund utilization. Nonetheless, PKH has produced notable social benefits, including enhanced access to education and healthcare services for low-income families and a decline in school dropout rates and malnutrition within the region.

The Extent to Which the Family Hope Program (PKH) Improves the Welfare of Beneficiaries in Benjeng Subdistrict

So far, the Family Hope Program (PKH) has demonstrated a significant role in improving community welfare, as reflected through the adequacy indicator, which measures how effectively a policy meets needs, values, or opportunities related to a specific issue. This indicator also reflects the extent to which the achieved outcomes can address the identified problems. The relationship between these criteria emphasizes the connection between the actions taken and the expected results. When a policy is proven to have effectively resolved prior issues, it can be deemed to have met the adequacy criterion. PKH can thus be considered adequate when it enhances the economic and social well-being of communities, particularly in the education and health sectors. Based on this understanding, it can be concluded that the implementation of PKH in Sirnobojo Village, Benjeng Subdistrict, Gresik Regency, has met the adequacy requirements. This conclusion is supported by research findings showing that the program has successfully alleviated poverty and that many PKH participants have exited the program due to improved household economic conditions. The Family Hope Program (PKH) provides conditional cash transfers to improve the living standards of Beneficiary Families (KPM), with a strong focus on supporting access to education. The amount of assistance varies according to the level of education attended by the beneficiary's children: IDR 250,000 for elementary school (SD) students, IDR 325,000 for junior high school (SMP) students, and IDR 500,000 for senior high school (SMA) students.

Sirnobojo Village consists of seven hamlets, each with a PKH coordinator responsible for local program facilitation. The cash assistance is distributed once every three months via ATM transfers. Although some beneficiaries initially struggled to understand the withdrawal and usage procedures, PKH facilitators and hamlet coordinators provided thorough explanations and hands-on guidance. An evaluation of PKH implementation in Sirnobojo Village revealed that program distribution has not yet achieved full equity. While most assistance has been appropriately targeted, a small portion of beneficiaries still experience discrepancies. Nevertheless, the overall community response has been highly positive. The PKH program in Sirnobojo Village, Gresik Regency, has proven effective in poverty alleviation, with recipients expressing gratitude and satisfaction for the financial support provided. Through PKH, poor households in Sirnobojo have experienced notable economic relief, as the assistance has helped reduce household expenses and provided additional income for daily needs. Consequently, the program has contributed to improving social welfare and economic resilience among underprivileged communities (Arundinasari et al, 2023)

Furthermore, the Family Hope Program (PKH) has helped to reduce the economic burden on poor households by providing conditional cash assistance that can be used to meet basic daily needs. This financial support enables beneficiary families to avoid sacrificing essential needs, such as children's education and health, to meet other primary needs. Consequently, household income can be allocated more effectively to necessities such as food, clothing, and housing. These outcomes indicate that PKH has been instrumental in helping poor families cope with economic pressures and achieve a minimum level of welfare stability.

However, despite these positive impacts, several challenges continue to hinder improvements in beneficiaries' welfare in Benjeng Subdistrict. Empirical studies have shown that PKH's influence on welfare outcomes ranges from 19.6% to 38.4%, suggesting that complementary programs, such as microenterprise support schemes, additional health assistance, and social intervention initiatives, drive a significant portion of welfare improvement. This finding highlights the importance of integrating PKH with supporting programs to achieve more comprehensive, sustainable poverty-reduction outcomes.

Although PKH alone may not fully eradicate poverty, the assistance provided has been sufficient to meet the essential needs of beneficiary households, including food, education, and healthcare. Under the PKH framework, various forms of assistance are distributed, including the Non-Cash Food Assistance (BPNT) program, which provides staple goods such as rice, cooking oil, and other basic food items; direct cash transfers available through ATMs, and special assistance for the elderly and persons with disabilities. Based on these indicators, it can be concluded that the implementation of PKH in Sironoboyo Village, Benjeng Subdistrict, Gresik Regency, has been practical and well-managed, achieving its objectives.

The implementation process of the PKH in Benjeng Subdistrict represents one of the government's significant efforts to reduce economic inequality and improve social welfare. The program provides conditional cash transfers to destitute families, requiring compliance with specific criteria to ensure proper utilization of the funds. PKH has been implemented in Benjeng since 2007 and continues to evolve through the collaboration of multiple stakeholders, including the Department of Social Affairs, subdistrict and village governments, and PKH facilitators. The process of identifying potential beneficiaries begins at the village level, where data are collected to determine households eligible for inclusion in the program.

Accuracy of PKH Beneficiary Targeting in Benjeng Subdistrict and the Issue of Ineligible Recipients

The Family Hope Program (PKH) in Gresik Regency has not yet fully met the required targeting standards. In total, the program has reached 42,244 beneficiary households across the regency. Among the 18 subdistricts, Dukun Subdistrict recorded the highest number of beneficiaries, totaling 3,142 households, followed closely by Benjeng Subdistrict with 3,020 households. This distribution reflects that poverty levels in Gresik Regency remain relatively high and have not been entirely alleviated. Nevertheless, the majority of recipient families reported that the program had significantly helped reduce their financial burden, particularly in covering children's educational expenses.

The inaccuracy in beneficiary targeting can be attributed to several factors, including limited human resources among program facilitators, insufficient periodic data updates, and communication barriers between village officials, facilitators, and potential beneficiary families. Moreover, the lack of comprehensive socialization about eligibility criteria has led to cases in which ineligible families have applied for, or even received, assistance. Therefore, enhancing data verification systems and improving the quality of field facilitation are essential to ensure more accurate targeting of PKH beneficiaries in Benjeng Subdistrict.

The equity indicator measures how fairly each target group benefits from policy implementation and whether they have equal access and rights. Based on research findings, the

Family Hope Program in Gresik Regency has not yet achieved full equity, as it has not reached all families in genuine need. To be eligible for PKH, households must meet specific criteria and be registered through the Social Welfare Information System–Next Generation (SIKS-NG), which forms part of the Integrated Social Welfare Data (DTKS) system. However, in practice, data inconsistencies still occur particularly between data from the Civil Registration Office (Dispendukcapil), Education Data (Dapodik), and relevant ministries (Hadirianto, 2023).

As a result, this indicator shows that the PKH in Gresik Regency still falls short of equitable distribution standards within the framework of policy implementation. The leading cause of this issue is outdated or inaccurate data submissions by village administrations, resulting in households that are no longer poor continuing to receive assistance. At the same time, those in genuine poverty and vulnerability remain excluded from the program.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the findings and analysis of the implementation of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Benjeng Subdistrict, Gresik Regency, it can be concluded that although the program has been running for quite some time and involves multiple stakeholders such as the Department of Social Affairs, subdistrict and village governments, as well as PKH facilitators its implementation in the field continues to face several challenges. The main obstacles include inaccurate and outdated beneficiary data, leading to misdirected aid distribution: some eligible families have not received adequate support, while others who no longer meet the criteria continue to benefit. Although PKH has contributed to improving welfare and reducing the economic burden on poor households, the region's overall poverty rate remains relatively high. Generally, the program has shown positive impacts, particularly in improving education and health outcomes among low-income families. However, to achieve greater effectiveness, there is a pressing need to improve distribution processes and regularly update beneficiary data, ensuring the program reaches the most deserving households.

During its implementation, several operational barriers have also emerged, such as insufficient socialization and communication from program implementers and facilitators to beneficiary families, inconsistencies in targeting criteria, and limited commitment among facilitators to deliver optimal service. Despite these challenges, beneficiaries in Benjeng Subdistrict still acknowledge the tangible benefits of PKH, especially in reducing educational and healthcare expenses, which directly improve family welfare.

From respondents' feedback and research findings, it can be inferred that while PKH has been in place for a considerable period and has brought measurable benefits to poor families, its implementation remains hindered by data inaccuracy and limited updates. Consequently, some families who are genuinely in need are excluded from receiving assistance, while others who have achieved economic improvement continue to benefit. This highlights the necessity for systematic program evaluation and data refinement to enhance targeting accuracy and program impact.

Through this assistance program, access to education has become more attainable for many low-income families. Nonetheless, as PKH continues to evolve, it is essential to conduct periodic evaluations to assess how effectively the program contributes to the education sector, particularly in promoting the nine-year compulsory education goal. Such evaluations are crucial to ensure that the program's objectives improving access to education and supporting sustainable welfare are fully realized.

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