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The Phenomenon of Congregational Graduation of PKH Recipients After the Labelling Policy

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Abstract: This study delves into the repercussions of labelling policies on the targeted delivery of benefits in the Bener Meriah Regency, Aceh, specifically within the Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) framework. Additionally, it aims to elucidate the factors influencing the voluntary exclusion of specific PKH recipients in Bener Meriah following the implementation of central government labelling policies. Employing a quantitative methodology, the researchers administered questionnaires to 76 respondents using snowball sampling and conducted a simple linear regression analysis using SPSS version 25. The findings of this analysis unveil a substantial correlation between labelling policies and the successful targeting of PKH implementation in Bener Meriah Regency, substantiated by a robust correlation coefficient of 0.954. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination, standing at 0.910, underscores that 91% of the variability can be ascribed to the influence of labelling policies. Despite these promising outcomes, the study accentuates challenges, particularly regarding the autonomous graduation of PKH recipients who have yet to transition into financially stable households. Given these insights, the researchers advocate for timely interventions by policymakers, facilitators, and social welfare workers involved in PKH. They propose the expedited attachment of follow-up labels or stickers to enhance monitoring and tracking. Moreover, the study recommends exercising discernment in granting independent graduation permissions and identifying potential PKH beneficiaries. These suggestions are poised to augment the precision and effectiveness of PKH targeting in Bener Meriah Regency, thereby amplifying the overall positive impact of the program on its intended recipients.

Keywords: Bener Meriah, Labeling Policy, Poverty Alleviation, Program Keluarga Harapan.

Introduction

The problem of poverty is a complex socio-economic situation because it covers various aspects of people's lives; thus, its handling requires a complete, integrated, and comprehensive overcoming strategy. Poverty has become a challenge that the Indonesian government must face occasionally. Sofianto et al. (2014) said that poverty in Indonesia is a complex problem that requires handling through special basic programs. To overcome the problem of poverty in Indonesia, the government has various programs that become a stimulus to overcome these problems. One of the programs used by the government is the Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) in the form of Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT), which has been implemented since 2007.

CCT is one of the most popular social policies of the twenty-first century, and for some countries, it has become a significant instrument for fighting poverty (Velázquez Leyer, 2020). Moreover, between 1994 and 2016, 75 conditional cash transfer programs were adopted with varying variations by countries in Africa, America and Asia (Silva, 2017). This evidence shows that governments globally depend on CCT or similar programs to reduce poverty in their regions. Several poverty alleviation programs in Indonesia before PKH were deemed to have failed to meet expectations (Rizkillah & Simanjuntak, 2018; Suleman & Resnawaty, 2017). Meanwhile, Maulana et al. (2019) considered PKH to be a good governing poverty alleviation program in Indonesia, and

there were more who consider and hope that PKH will become a program that can break the chain of poverty in Indonesia (Arafat & Hidayat, 2020; Faulana et al., 2021; Pratama & Chandra, 2022).

The implementation of PKH recently is regulated in the Regulation of the Minister of Social Affairs Number 1 of 2018 concerning the Program Keluarga Harapan. The purpose of PKH, in particular, is to reduce poverty in the short term where poverty reduction at this stage is carried out by providing cash assistance to low-income families to increase consumption of beneficiary families as well as to improve the community's quality of life, especially the ease of accessing health and education services. Even so, long-term projections can be achieved by breaking the poverty chain and the birth of quality human resources by improving the quality of education and health (Waluyo & Khoirunurrofik, 2021). PKH has been running for at least 15 years, from 2007 to 2022; however, its output has not been as expected. One of the problems that often occurs is the inaccuracy of data on the eligibility of PKH participants (Kamalussin et al., 2021; Sofianto, 2020), as indicated by the existence of families who deserve to receive but do not receive assistance on the contrary, families who do not deserve to receive social assistance. In this way, it can be concluded that data collection and prioritisation of PKH are often not well-targeted.

One of the mechanisms that are part of the PKH program is the graduation stage, where PKH beneficiaries at this time must be able to escape from the social assistance programs that the government has provided. The implementation of this graduation should have been able to be carried out seven years after the end of the contract agreement for the provision of social security assistance, where this step is under the CCT method. However, since 2014, the number included in the graduation category has been insignificant; however, data on recipients who are not on target are increasing (Buchory, 2019). Unfortunately, PKH beneficiaries already have better economic conditions but do not want to withdraw from PKH beneficiaries. Conversely, those with low economic conditions are not identified as PKH beneficiaries.

In line with efforts to overcome these problems to realise targeted PKH recipients, the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia issued Circular Letter Number 1902/4/SHK.05.02/05/2019 on May 9, 2019, regarding the policy of labelling PKH beneficiary families to instruct the installation of labelling. PKH beneficiaries' homes. This labelling aims to form transparency for the recipients of the PKH program so that it can become information and social control that the family in question is classified as poor or pre-prosperous (Asbut, 2020). In this way, it is hoped that PKH recipients who are already economically capable can voluntarily graduate independently so that other underprivileged families can receive social assistance from the government.

Meanwhile, in response to the labelling policy, the local government instructed to place labelling stickers in the homes of PKH beneficiary families, including Bener Meriah Regency, located in Aceh Province, also installed labels/stickers at the homes of PKH beneficiary families. Surprisingly, after the stickers/labels were installed, several heads of families across several sub-districts in Bener Meriah Regency decided to withdraw from PKH participation, an unprecedented phenomenon. The withdrawal of PKH recipients after the labelling policy certainly illustrates the realisation of the government's efforts in determining more targeted PKH recipients. The big question is whether this

step of resignation was due to the awareness that they already belonged to the category of an affluent family or because they were embarrassed by the poor label printed on the sticker in front of the house. From this phenomenon, researchers want to examine the impact of installing stickers/labels in realising PKH recipients who are right on target.

PKH topics have been raised quite a lot by several researchers, especially concerning poverty alleviation (Hadna & Kartika, 2017; Maulana et al., 2019; Nugroho et al., 2021; Syukri et al., 2010), as well as health improvement (Aizawa, 2020; Kusuma et al., 2017; Lenel et al., 2022; Triyana & Shankar, 2017). Almost all research on PKH often focuses on its effectiveness or impact on improving the welfare and health of beneficiary families; however, this research tries to look at a different side that previous researchers have rarely seen. Moreover, there have been some studies that have examined the problem of well-targeted PKH in reaching beneficiary families (Fitriani, 2020; Muttakin et al., 2021; Sofianto, 2020); however, no one has studied the effectiveness of the labelling policy in PKH, so this paper will be the first to address this issue.

Research Problem

The main research problem addressed in this study is the effectiveness of the labelling policy on Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) recipients in ensuring that social assistance reaches the intended beneficiaries. Despite PKH's long-term implementation, data inaccuracy and misidentification of eligible recipients persist. This study investigates whether the labelling policy prompts recipients with improved economic conditions to voluntarily withdraw from the program, thus allowing more accurately targeted aid distribution.

Research Focus

The research focuses on the phenomenon of PKH recipients' voluntary graduation following the implementation of the labelling policy in Bener Meriah Regency, Aceh Province. It examines the social and psychological impacts of labelling on PKH beneficiaries and explores the reasons behind recipients' voluntary withdrawal. Additionally, the research assesses whether the labelling policy effectively ensures that the social assistance program reaches families in genuine need.

Research Aim and Questions

This research aims to evaluate the impact of the labelling policy on the voluntary graduation of PKH recipients and to determine whether the policy improves the targeting accuracy of social assistance distribution. The study seeks to understand the motivations behind the recipients' decisions to withdraw from the program and assess the labelling strategy's overall effectiveness in achieving its intended goals. Therefore, the research question is: Does the labelling policy lead to more accurate targeting of social assistance to needy families?

Literature Review

This literature review aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the existing Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) research, focusing on its effectiveness in poverty alleviation, health

improvement, and the implementation of labelling policies. By examining previous studies, this review seeks to identify gaps in the literature and to contextualise the current research on the impact of labelling policies on PKH recipients. Research on the Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) has been the subject of significant attention for many researchers over the past few years. PKH is a social assistance program introduced by the Indonesian government to alleviate poverty and improve the welfare of beneficiary families. This program has been widely discussed in the academic literature, with many researchers interested in uncovering its various aspects.

Several leading studies in this field have been conducted by researchers such as Hadna and Kartika (2017), Maulana et al. (2019), Nugroho et al. (2021), and Syukri et al. (2010). They have investigated various aspects of PKH, especially poverty alleviation. To measure the impact of this program on improving the welfare and health of beneficiary families, these studies have provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of PKH as a social policy instrument. Apart from that, several other studies, such as research by Aizawa (2020), Kusuma et al. (2017), Lenel et al. (2022), and Triyana and Shankar (2017), have focused on the health aspects of PKH. They have investigated how the program can contribute to improving the health of beneficiary families, including access to health services and improved nutritional status. The results of this research provide a deeper understanding of the impact of PKH on public health.

Although many studies have revealed the benefits of PKH in alleviating poverty and improving the health of beneficiary families, this research has a different approach. We try to see a different side of PKH that previous researchers rarely considered. Rather than just focusing on effectiveness and impact, this research will try to understand the role of labelling policies in PKH implementation. Apart from that, there are also issues related to the targets of the PKH program. Although this program is designed to target the most vulnerable families, there is still research showing that some families would otherwise not be eligible to receive benefits from this program. Research by Fitriani (2020), Muttakin et al. (2021), and Sofianto (2020) have tried to study this problem. They have investigated to what extent PKH can reach the suitable targeted families and whether there are problems in identifying beneficiaries. This issue is also the focus of our research because a better understanding of the accuracy of PKH's targets can help the government improve the implementation of this program. In this way, we hope to significantly contribute to developing more effective and efficient policies to alleviate poverty and improve the welfare of society in Indonesia.

It is hoped that the results of this research will provide a better understanding of the effectiveness of labelling policies in implementing PKH in Indonesia. We also hope to provide policy recommendations that can help the government improve this program, including increasing the accuracy of program targets and optimising the use of aid funds. In addition, this research will also contribute to the academic literature on PKH and social policy in general.

Research Methodology

The research approach used in this study is quantitative analysis techniques. This approach analyses cause and effect, relationship, influence, or correlation (Sugiyono, 2013). The samples in this study were several people who resigned independently as recipients of the Program Keluarga

Harapan (PKH) in Bener Meriah Regency after the labelling policy was implemented. The number of participants was taken evenly in all sub-districts in Bener Meriah Regency, with as many as 76 people obtained by snowball sampling. The following (Table 1) explains the two variables used in this study.

Table 1

Definition of Operational Variables

Variable	Definition	Indicator	Scale
Labeling Policy (X)	The labelling policy is a policy from the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia Number 1902/4/SHK.05.ON2/05/2019 on May 9, 2019, regarding the labelling of Beneficiary Families (KPM) for the Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) to instruct the installation of a list of KPM names for social assistance in place and labelling at KPM PKH and BPNT houses.	1. There is a list of names in public places. 2. Labels/stickers are installed at the KPM house. 3. PKH recipients' perceptions of labelling 4. Labeling is the reason for the resignation of PKH recipients. 5. There is verification and updating of data	Likert
The Well-Targeted Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) (Y)	The well-targeted Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) is a conditional cash transfer program with accurate data on the eligibility of PKH recipients from underprivileged families that fall within the criteria the Ministry of Social Affairs set.	1. Meets one of the PKH membership criteria. 2. This includes the category of very low-income families or impoverished households. 3. Improve access to essential services. 4. There is an independent resignation. 5. There is further verification after resigning.	Likert

Source: Processed by authors (2022).

The effect of the policy of labelling Beneficiary Families (X) on efforts to realise the Right Targeted Family Program (Y) can be determined by using regression techniques. The regression technique used in this study is a simple linear regression analysis technique using the SPSS 25 application. The dependent variable is the Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH), which is right on target (Y); then, simple linear regression will be carried out cumulatively based on the same weight and proportion of the independent variables. The independent variable in this study is the labelling policy (X), which is obtained from the average value of indicators such as the installation of a list of names in public places and the installation of paint labels or stickers in the homes of PKH recipients.

Results

Data processing is based on data analysis from questionnaires that 76 respondents have filled out. The values in the questionnaire will be added for each respondent to show the results obtained from these results. For analysis, the results of the questionnaire policy on labelling as a variable (X) and the Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) were used as a variable (Y). This is then related to the

formula to express the relationship between these variables. The researcher used a simple linear regression formula using the SPSS 25 for Windows application to determine the correlation coefficient between the labelling policy and the targeted family program.

Table 2

T-Table Hypothesis (Coefficients)

	Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-4.813	1.593		-3.022	.003
	LABELING POLICY	1,128	.041	.954	27,364	.000

a. Dependent Variable: KPM PKH

Based on the results of the coefficient table above, it can be seen that there is a Sig value. $0.000 < 0.05$ and a value of $27,364 > 1.99254$, it can be described that H_a or the alternative hypothesis in this research is accepted. So, there is a significant influence between labelling policies on PKH that is right on target.

Table 3

F-Table Hypothesis (ANOVA^a)

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1633,518	1	1633,518	748,813	.000b
	Residual	161.429	74	2.181		
	Total	1794,947	75			

a. Dependent Variable: KPM PKH

b. Predictors: (Constant), LABELING POLICY

Based on the results of the coefficient table above, it can be seen that there is a Sig value. $0.000 < 0.05$ and a value of $748,813 > 1.99254$, it can be described that H_a or the alternative hypothesis in this research is accepted. Thus, there is a significant influence on the labelling policy on PKH that is right on target.

The simple linear regression technique used to test the independent variables in this study is the policy of labelling beneficiary families. This study's dependent variable is PKH, which is right on target. The simple linear regression test requires that the questionnaire pass the validity and reliability test, normality test, and linearity test.

Table 4

First Output of Simple Linear Regression (Variables Entered/Removed)

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	LABELING POLICY ^b	.	Enter

a. Dependent Variable: The Right Targeted PKH

b. All requested variables were entered.

The table above describes the variables entered and the methods used. In this case, the labelling policy variables are entered as independent variables, the PKH variable as the dependent variable, and the method used is the central method.

Table 5

Second Output of Simple Linear Regression (Model Summary)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.954 ^a	.910	.909	1,477

a. Predictors: (Constant), LABELING POLICY

The table above explains the magnitude of the correlation/relationship (R) value, which is 0.954. Based on the output, the coefficient of determination R Square is 0.910, which means that the influence of the independent variable (labelling policy) on the dependent variable (the Program Keluarga Harapan that is right on target) is 91%.

Table 6

The Third Output of Simple Linear Regression (ANOVA^a)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	1633,518	1	1633,518	748,813	.000 ^b
Residual	161.429	74	2.181		
Total	1794,947	75			

a. Dependent Variable: The Right Targeted PKH

b. Predictors: (Constant), Labeling Policy

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the calculated f value is 748,813 with a significance of $0.000 < 0.05$, which means that this regression model can be used to predict the participation variable, or in other words, there is an influence between the labelling policy variable (X) on the PKH variable that is on target (Y).

Table 7

The Output of the Four Simple Linear Regression (Coefficients^a)

	Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-4.813	1.593		-3.022	.003
	KPM LABELING POLICY	1,128	.041	.954	27,364	.000

a. Dependent Variable: The Right Targeted KPM PKH

It is known that the constant value (a) is -4.813, while the value of the labelling policy (b/regression coefficient) is 1.128, so the regression equation can be written as follows:

$$Y = a + bX$$

$$Y = -4.813 + 1.128X$$

Based on the above equation, it can be translated: The constant of -4.813 means that the consistent value of the PKH variable that is right on target is -4.813. The regression coefficient of X is 1.128, which states that for every 1% addition of the value of the labelling policy, the value of PKH on target increases by 1.128. The regression coefficient is positive, so the direction of the influence of the X variable on the Y variable is positive. Decision-making in the simple linear regression test in this study provides two conclusions, namely:

- 1) Based on the significance value, the coefficient table obtained a significance value of 0.000 < 0.05, so it can be concluded that the labelling policy variable (X) has an effect on PKH that is right on target (Y).
- 2) Based on the value of T, it is known that the value is 27.363 > 1.99254, so it can be concluded that the labelling policy variable (X) has an effect on PKH that is right on target (Y).

Discussion

The community's Keluarga Harapan (PKH) program has helped them meet their basic needs, especially in accessing essential services such as education and health. Dulkiah et al. (2018) stated that PKH has at least assisted several communities in meeting essential household needs for a certain period but has not been able to guarantee the lives of the beneficiaries after graduation. This is because the current scheme of PKH is more appropriate to be called a social protection program than a poverty alleviation program (Suleman & Resnawaty, 2017). Even so, the community still needs PKH so that they do not fall into a more extreme cycle of poverty.

Social assistance schemes resembling PKH have also been adopted by many other countries, globally known as Conditional Cash Transfers (CCT). Velázquez Leyer (2020) reported that since implementing CCT, some social indicators in Latin American countries have shown positive trends, such as increased school enrollment rates, decreased child labour, and other positive impacts.

However, comprehensive poverty reduction efforts seem to require additional economic, social and political reforms, meaning that the CCT cannot be used as the sole instrument for poverty alleviation. Over the past few decades, CCT has also become an increasingly important tool in India to generate desired social impacts, especially regarding household human resource development. Banerjee and Klasen (2022) evaluated the impact of CCT on poor households, and the results mostly show a positive impact. However, they argue that these results are inseparable from the quality of human resources; without the support of proper household understanding of this policy, the objectives to be achieved by the program are likely to fail.

CCT has been adopted globally for quite a long time and has received praise from various parties as an innovative practice due to the success of its initial implementation in many countries; however, CCT cannot yet be fully recognised as a viable and sustainable social protection product (Ladhani & Sitter, 2020). Therefore, its effectiveness in achieving the goals still needs to be thoroughly evaluated so that the projections implemented not only fulfil promises to reduce poverty in the short and long term. Even though the positive impact is more significant, CCT also has a negative side. The most obvious thing is that when this social assistance can make people tend to depend on government assistance, only a few try to be free from dependence on social assistance. In order to generate community efforts to break away from CCT, a graduation system has been implemented for this social assistance.

Each country certainly has its graduation system. In Mexico, the government conducts annual evaluations to assess beneficiary families' eligibility to be economically independent. However, due to the uncertain dynamics of poverty, families who have graduated can rejoin the beneficiaries if they experience economic instability again (Villa & Niño-Zarazúa, 2019). However, not all countries can create a sustainable graduation scheme. Daidone et al. (2015) have discussed graduation issues in four countries in sub-Saharan Africa (Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, and Zambia). They mentioned that there are at least three aspects that the government must consider in realising a sustainable graduation system: (i) there are still specific segments of the household population that have limited labour capacity; (ii) certain cash transfer design features or facilities are still required for families who have graduated; (iii) the government needs to ensure and create conducive market conditions. Therefore, apart from creating a social protection program, the government must also support the program by developing an explicit graduation strategy to achieve the desired output.

Meanwhile, Puteri (2021) argued that many people are still too dependent on CCT in Indonesia due to the not-yet-optimal graduation mechanism. Thus, a PKH labelling policy is expected to provide a new face in self-graduation, which previously had not been carried out optimally. As is known before the labelling policy, graduation was carried out naturally, which means that participation ended because the KPM condition did not meet the membership criteria. However, with the installation of this label/sticker, it is hoped that it will encourage the beneficiaries to be able to submit their resignation from the recipients of social assistance. At the implementation stage of the labelling policy, the policy's resources are PKH assistants, supervisors, regional coordinators, social services, government, and related elements. The implementation of this policy is critical and determines the outcome of the policy; as Hasyem et al. (2022) argued, policy implementation seeks

to manage inputs to produce tangible outputs for the community. This policy is implemented by posting lists of names in public places and affixing labels to the homes of PKH beneficiaries. Since enacting this rule, the Bener Meriah regency government has attached stickers/labels to many PKH recipients. After this labelling policy, it turned out that some PKH participants in several sub-districts in Bener Meriah Regency volunteered to withdraw from PKH membership.

At first glance, the labelling policy seems to have succeeded in encouraging recipients to graduate independently. So, the next step is to determine whether the main reason for the beneficiaries' withdrawal is that they are no longer eligible to receive assistance or that there are other reasons. So that later, this labelling policy can be evaluated for improvement. In general, policy evaluation can be regarded as an activity involving the estimation or assessment of a policy, including substance, implementation, and impact. In this case, evaluation is seen as a functional activity. Khan and Rahman (2017) said that public policy evaluation is a tool to measure a program's feasibility and efficacy so that policy evaluation can be carried out before, during, and until after program implementation. This means that policy evaluation is carried out at the final stage and throughout the policy process. In this process, an assessment is carried out, including the labelling policy's substance, implementation, and impact.

So far, there has been no specific evaluation from parties related to this labelling policy to see whether this policy is effective. This is because, after the labelling, there was a COVID-19 pandemic that required special handling, so in the end, it became the main focus of every policy issue. This emergency is not only happening in Indonesia; governments in every country have shifted their focus to COVID-19 (Eck & Hatz, 2020; Venkatesan, 2020). In addition, COVID-19 has also had a major impact on society, where the pandemic has given birth to new poverty (Pereira & Oliveira, 2020). Therefore, it is difficult to evaluate this labelling policy amid uncertainty. Several things can be analysed regarding the effectiveness of the Keluarga Harapan Program (PKH), including the income of PKH beneficiary families who resigned after the labelling policy. Most respondents stated that they had entered the prosperous category and had an average income above Rp.700,000 to Rp. 1,500,000. The steps taken by this group should be appreciated, considering that they are no longer eligible to receive PKH assistance. However, some respondents have income below Rp. 600,000 and are not included in the category of prosperous families.

On the one hand, the labelling policy has built recipients' awareness of the importance of graduating independently. However, the labelling policy made some groups feel inferior, so they decided to leave even though the economic conditions were not promising. Furthermore, let us look at the condition of the houses of PKH recipients who resigned after the labelling policy. It can be seen that the majority of respondents already have habitable houses, which can be seen from the building area, types of floors and walls, and proper sanitation services. Almost all PKH recipients who are respondents have also used electricity and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) daily. Meanwhile, the recipients who did not use electricity because they could not afford the installation of electricity were still forcing themselves to do independent graduation.

Based on the information above, it can be seen that most of these graduations can be categorised as independent, prosperous graduates. The end of PKH membership is due to improved socio-economic conditions, and they are categorised as capable, so they are no longer eligible to receive social assistance. The independent welfare graduation carried out by PKH participants is inseparable from the aftermath of the labelling policy. On the other hand, it is also known that some of the graduations carried out by PKH participants are not entirely carried out by independent, prosperous families, meaning that some PKH participants still need social assistance but still resign. Moreover, based on the information above, it can be seen that the PKH program labelling policy did not seem to run as expected. The initial goal of this independent, successful graduation has not been fully realised because of the eligibility of PKH participants to resign after improving their standard of living. Even if there is a small number of beneficiary families, PKH in Bener Meriah Regency, which are not yet prosperous independently, have resigned. Still, in the concept of empowerment and social protection, they must first be physically and mentally independent so they can later lead a life toward a prosperous family.

The phenomenon of graduation by PKH beneficiaries who are not yet prosperous due to the labelling policy does not only occur in Bener Meriah Regency. Syamsulhakim and Khadijah (2021) reported that the labelling process had created stigma and pressure on PKH beneficiary families who still qualify as government social assistance recipients. Their study found that 16.5 per cent of PKH participants from much lower deciles decided to graduate independently because they worried the officer would label their house. However, it should be emphasised that PKH recipients carried out self-graduation after the labelling policy was implemented without any coercion from any party. Although the surrounding community has a negative stigma, the resignation of the PKH recipient is voluntary. Syamsulhakim and Khadijah (2021), in their other findings, stated that the two main reasons for the graduation of PKH recipients based on their initiative after the labelling policy were the economic condition had improved (39%) and because they felt that other parties needed it more (33.1%). This certainly gives an idea that the labelling policy is effectively implemented to realise the PKH program that is right on target. That way, the future direction of PKH policies is no longer to ensure that aid is right on target and help smooth the distribution of social assistance. Still, the main thing is how to eradicate poverty by producing PKH recipients who graduate not only do not meet the membership requirements but are also empowered and capable.

The labelling policy above encourages the creation of PKH that is right on target. This is because the independent graduation carried out by KPM has a significant impact. After graduation, it will open space for other low-income families who can become PKH recipients. In addition, the labelling policy also seeks to reduce the poverty index.

Conclusions and Implications

This study's findings underscore the labelling policy's significance in enhancing the precision of Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) beneficiaries in Bener Meriah Regency. The empirical evidence, derived from the application of SPSS 25 and simple linear regression, substantiates a discernible influence of the labelling policy on the accurate targeting of PKH beneficiaries, as indicated by a

significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$ and a T-count of $27.363 > T\text{-table } 1.99254$. However, despite the positive impact reflected in a commendable 91% success rate, challenges persist in implementing labelling and graduation policies for PKH recipients. While respondents generally acknowledge the efficiency of the labelling policy, critical issues persist, such as independent graduations not aligned with improved economic conditions.

The PKH has significantly helped communities meet basic needs, particularly in education and health, but its labelling policy has shown mixed results. While the policy has successfully encouraged some beneficiaries to graduate and improve their socio-economic status independently, it has also led to premature resignations due to stigma and pressure. These findings suggest that while the labelling policy can target assistance more effectively, it may also inadvertently harm those in need. In light of these observations, it is recommended that policymakers undertake a comprehensive review of the labelling and graduation processes within the PKH program. To mitigate the identified challenges, there is a need for a nuanced approach that ensures graduations are based on genuine economic empowerment rather than merely escaping the stigma associated with the “poor” label. Policymakers should consider implementing measures to monitor and address instances of independent graduations that may not accurately reflect improved economic capabilities. Finally, a holistic and refined approach to PKH policies, coupled with continued research efforts, will contribute to this crucial program's sustained success and positive socio-economic impact.

Suggestions for Future Research

Future research should focus on long-term outcomes, alternative graduation mechanisms, and the broader social impacts of such policies to create a more supportive and sustainable approach to poverty alleviation. However, the study's limitations suggest caution in generalising the findings, including a geographical focus on the Bener Meriah Regency and reliance on self-reported data. Addressing these limitations through more rigorous, wide-ranging, and longitudinal studies will enhance the understanding and effectiveness of PKH and similar programs, ensuring they not only reduce poverty in the short term but also foster long-term economic independence and empowerment—another limitation of this study, notably the relatively modest sample size. Future research endeavours should prioritise expanding the pool of respondents to enhance the study's robustness and generalizability. A more extensive investigation could provide deeper insights into the dynamics of the labelling policy's impact and its implications for the PKH program.

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