

OBSTACLES TO INDEPENDENT GRADUATION OF THE FAMILY HOPE PROGRAM (PKH) IN CIMANCAK VILLAGE

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Abstract

This research is motivated by the low achievement of independent graduation of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Cimanca Village, Bayah District, Lebak Regency, even though the village has been a PKH participant since 2010. To date, not a single Beneficiary Family (KPM) has successfully achieved independent graduation, so a comprehensive identification of inhibiting factors is needed. This study aims to analyze the causes of graduation obstacles originating from internal aspects of KPM, mentoring, institutions, and the economic conditions of the community. The study used a qualitative approach through observation, in-depth interviews with 17 informants, Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) involving 36 participants, and thematic analysis to process the data. The results show that the main obstacles include low levels of education, dependency, minimal capacity for productive aid management, and weak motivation for independence. In terms of mentoring, P2K2 activities have not been running since 2022, and mentors are rarely present, so the relationship between mentors and KPMs is not formed. Institutional obstacles include weak coordination between facilitators and village governments, outdated KPM data, and the failure to socialize independence.

Keywords: Family Hope Program, Independent Graduation, Social Empowerment

Abstrak

Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi rendahnya pencapaian graduasi mandiri Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) di Desa Cimanca, Kecamatan Bayah, Kabupaten Lebak, meskipun desa tersebut telah menjadi peserta PKH sejak tahun 2010. Hingga saat ini tidak terdapat satu pun Keluarga Penerima Manfaat (KPM) yang berhasil mencapai graduasi mandiri, sehingga diperlukan identifikasi komprehensif terhadap faktor-faktor penghambat. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis penyebab hambatan graduasi yang bersumber dari aspek internal KPM, pendampingan, kelembagaan, serta kondisi ekonomi masyarakat. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif melalui observasi, wawancara mendalam dengan 17 informan, Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) yang melibatkan 36 peserta, serta analisis tematik untuk mengolah data. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa hambatan utama meliputi rendahnya tingkat pendidikan, ketergantungan, minimnya kapasitas pengelolaan bantuan secara produktif, serta lemahnya motivasi kemandirian. Dari sisi pendampingan, kegiatan P2K2 tidak berjalan sejak tahun 2022, dan pendamping jarang hadir sehingga hubungan pendamping dengan KPM tidak terbentuk. Hambatan kelembagaan mencakup lemahnya koordinasi antara pendamping dan pemerintah desa, data KPM yang tidak mutakhir, serta tidak berjalannya sosialisasi kemandirian.

Kata kunci: Program Keluarga Harapan, Graduasi Mandiri, Pemberdayaan Sosial



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INTRODUCTION

Poverty is a complex issue involving various aspects, making it a major challenge to national development in Indonesia. According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), as of March 2022, the number of poor people in Indonesia still reached 26.16 million.¹ One effort to achieve social welfare is through social protection policies, namely the Family Hope Program (PKH). PKH is expected to reduce poverty and inequality through a series of activities, leading to positive behavioral changes among beneficiary families (KPM) and fostering independence in meeting their living needs and sustainability.²

The Family Hope Program (PKH) is a conditional social assistance program launched by the government in 2007 to improve the welfare of poor families by providing access to education, health care, and social welfare. PKH has clear rules and mechanisms, including a six-year participation period, recertification in the fifth year, and the determination of a final status in the form of transition or graduation. Independent graduation is a key indicator of PKH's success because it demonstrates the achievement of the program's primary goal, namely independence and reduced community dependence on government assistance.³ The low independent graduation rate indicates that PKH still faces obstacles in carrying out its role as a poverty alleviation program.

Graduation remains a major challenge for the success of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in poverty alleviation. Various studies have shown that independent graduation rates in many regions in Indonesia remain low. For example, Tugusari Village, Bangsalsari District, Jember Regency, has a high poverty rate and the largest number of beneficiary families (KPM) in Bangsalsari District, yet no beneficiary families (KPM) in the village have successfully graduated independently.⁴ In Sukaluyu Village, Bandung Regency, over the past year, only 2 out of 706 KPM showed that the percentage of independent graduation is still far from the target.⁵ A similar situation also occurred in Tanjungpinang Timur District, Tanjung Pinang City, where only 48 of

¹ Badan Pusat Statistik BPS, *Persentase Penduduk Miskin Maret 2022 turun menjadi 9,54 persen* (Jakarta: Badan Pusat Statistik, 2022), <https://www.bps.go.id/en/pressrelease/2022/07/15/1930/persentase-penduduk-miskin-maret-2022-turun-menjadi-9-54-persen>.

² Dewi Komalasari dan Fentiny Nugroho, "Peran Pendamping Sosial Program Keluarga Harapan dalam Mencapai Graduasi Sejahtera Mandiri (Studi pada Pendamping Sosial dengan Latar Belakang Kesejahteraan Sosial dan Nonkesejahteraan Sosial)," *Al Qalam: Jurnal Ilmiah Keagamaan dan Kemasyarakatan* 17, no. 5 (2023): 3182–204, <https://doi.org/10.35931/aq.v17i5.2632>.

³ Guidelines for Implementing the 2021 Family Hope Program (2021).

⁴ Silviana, Dyan and Nur Wahdatul Chilmy, "The Role of Family Hope Program (PKH) Companions in Achieving Independent Graduation in Tugusari Village, Bangsalsari District, Jember Regency," *FORMULA Journal of Public Administration* 1, no. 2 (2024): 133–143.

⁵ Khoiriyah et al., "Evaluation of the Implementation of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Increasing the Independent Graduation of Beneficiary Families," *Arus Jurnal Sosial dan Humaniora (AJSH)* 5, no. 2 (2025): 946–54.

the 2,177 KPM (Family Beneficiary Families) successfully graduated independently in 2022, or around 2.2 percent.⁶

Various studies have shown that the PKH program's failure to build self-reliance among beneficiaries is influenced by a variety of internal and external factors. Internal factors include low levels of education, a lack of awareness of the importance of independence, a dependent mindset, a low capacity to manage aid productively, and a lack of shame as recipients.^{7,8,9,10,11} Meanwhile, external factors such as mentor support are also crucial in fostering successful independence. However, Firmansyah's research found that mentor support remains low and tends to focus on administrative tasks, thus hindering the empowerment process.¹² In addition, from an institutional perspective, poor coordination between program implementers, inaccurate KPM data, and suboptimal socialization of independence also hamper the achievement of independent graduation.^{13,14,15,16} These obstacles are also reinforced by minimal social support from local governments and limited training provided to KPM.^{17,18}

⁶Ferizone et al., "Independent Graduation of Beneficiary Families of the Family Hope Program in East Tanjungpinang District," TRIAS POLITIKA JOURNAL 7, no. 2 (2023): 244–261.

⁷Khoiriyah et al., "Evaluation of the Implementation of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Increasing the Independent Graduation of Beneficiary Families." Arus Jurnal Sosial dan Humaniora (AJSH) 5, no. 2 (2025): 946-954

⁸Hartadi, M. Irfan et al., "Uncovering Barriers to Graduation: Dynamics of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Beneficiary Families (PKM)," Scientific Journal of Social Protection and Empowerment (Lindayasos) 6, no. 1 (2024): 1–9.

⁹Firmansyah, Dinata "Implementation of the Family Hope Program in Sawah Baru Subdistrict, South Tangerang City," Social Culture 20, no. 2 (2023).

¹⁰Rachma, Maulida et al., "Obstacles to the Implementation of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Improving the Social Welfare of the Community in Pelambuan Village, Banjarmasin City," PADARINGAN (Journal of Sociology and Anthropology Education) 4, no. 2 (2022).

¹¹Suryati, Lilis et al., "Factors Driving and Inhibiting Independent Prosperous Graduation of Beneficiary Families of the Family Hope Program in Central Lampung Regency," Suluh Pembangunan: Journal of Extension and Development 5, no. 2 (2023): 112–122.

¹²Firmansyah, Dinata "Implementation of the Family Hope Program in Sawah Baru Subdistrict, South Tangerang City," Social Culture 20, no. 2 (2023).

¹³Hartadi, M. Irfan et al., "Uncovering Barriers to Graduation: Dynamics of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Beneficiary Families (PKM)," Scientific Journal of Social Protection and Empowerment (Lindayasos) 6, no. 1 (2024): 1–9.

¹⁴Yulianti, Tiana et al., "Forms of Deviation in the Implementation of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Indonesia," Journal of Science and Social Research 4307, no. 4 (2024): 1854–1858.

¹⁵Khoiriyah et al., "Evaluation of the Implementation of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Increasing Independent Graduation of Beneficiary Families." *Social and Humanities Journal Stream (AJSH)* 5, no. 2 (2025): 946-954

¹⁶Mardiah, Annisa Ainun et al., "Implementation of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Balaroa Village, West Palu District, Palu City," JOURNAL OF SYNTAX IMPERATIVES: Journal of Social Sciences and Education 6, no. 3 (2025): 705–710.

¹⁷Salmah, Hanifa et al., "The Role of Family Hope Program (PKH) Companions in Community Empowerment through Family Capacity Building Meetings (P2K2) in Dramaga District, Bogor Regency," Arus Jurnal Sosial dan Humaniora 5, no. 2 (2025): 2485–2494.

Cimancak Village, Bayah District, Lebak Regency. This village has been a PKH (Family Hope Program) participant since 2010 and has 83 beneficiaries (KPM), or 231 active recipients. However, to date, not a single beneficiary has graduated independently; instead, they are terminated or removed from the recipient list due to no longer meeting the requirements. Those who leave the program generally do so not because of improved welfare, but due to factors such as death, debts from paylater programs, online gambling, or other administrative reasons. The average monthly income of the community is around two million rupiah, and the predominance of farm laborers further reinforces the dependency on aid. Furthermore, there is only one PKH facilitator working in this village, and the last P2K2 activity was held in 2022, thus hindering the optimal and sustainable mentoring process.

This situation indicates that the process of independence to build economic capacity and behavioral change has not been achieved. This is interesting to study because Cimancak Village shows problems similar to the findings of previous research, but has local characteristics that have not been revealed and are different, particularly related to the weak coordination between facilitators and the village, and the distance between the assistance and the actual needs of KPM. Therefore, this study does not only focus on internal and external factors, but also combines aspects of assistance, institutional coordination, and the socio-economic reality of KPM in a complete framework to explain why villages that have long received PKH such as Cimancak have not been able to produce independent KPM.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research was conducted in Cimancak Village, Bayah District, Lebak Regency, Banten Province. In Cimancak Village, there has never been a graduation despite having been a PKH participant for quite some time.

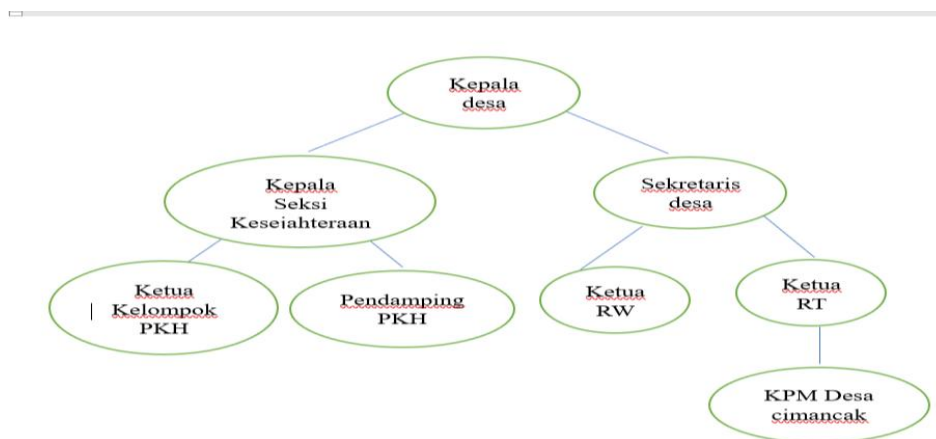
Data collection in this study used a qualitative approach that included primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through three methods, namely observation, in-depth interviews, and Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA): a. Observations were conducted directly at the research location to understand the social conditions and community activities in facing obstacles in the implementation and achievement of the Family Hope Program (PKH) graduation; b. In-depth interviews were conducted involving 17 informants through structured questions to determine the reasons, attitudes, and level of community awareness of various obstacles that emerged in the Family Hope Program (PKH) graduation process; c. Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA)

¹⁸Suryati, Lilis et al., "Factors Driving and Inhibiting Independent Prosperous Graduation of Beneficiary Families of the Family Hope Program in Central Lampung Regency," *Suluh Pembangunan: Journal of Extension and Development* 5, no. 2 (2023): 112–122.

was used by involving 36 participants through a ranking matrix activity as a form of rapid evaluation in the field. This approach emphasizes active community participation in conveying information so that the results obtained reflect the real conditions at the research location. This study also uses secondary data obtained from various supporting sources, such as documents, literature, and other references relevant to the research topic.

The technique of determining informants using purposive sampling and Snowball sampling, namely there are stages by selecting informants based on certain criteria that are relevant to the research topic. Several informants were selected using stages because they have knowledge of field conditions such as: (1) The Village Head acts as a policy maker in the implementation of the Family Hope Program (PKH) at the village level, (2) The Welfare Section & Village Secretary As a village apparatus directly involved in supporting the implementation and success of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Cimancak Village, (3) PKH Companions as those who accompany beneficiary families (KPM) through data collection, verification, socialization, and monitoring of family development activities, (4) The Head of the PKH Group to coordinate routine meeting activities, convey information from the companion to members, and help monitor the attendance and participation of members in program activities; 5. KPM Cimancak Village as residents who are members of the Family Hope Program (PKH) and are the main targets of the program.

Figure 1. Informant Determination Flow



(Source: Processed by the author, 2025)

The informant recruitment process begins with the Village Head as the primary informant who understands the social conditions of the community. The Village Head then recommends the Head of the Welfare Section and the Village Secretary to provide information according to their respective areas of responsibility. The Head of the Welfare Section then passes the information on to the Head of the Family Welfare Program (PKH) Group and PKH Facilitators, and the Village

Secretary recommends the Head of the Neighborhood Association (RW) and the Head of the Neighborhood Association (RT). From the RT Head, the information is passed on to the KPM (Family Beneficiary Families) of Cimancak Village, who act as field informants with direct knowledge of the community's conditions.

Data analysis was conducted using a thematic analysis approach, the process includes the following stages: (1) open coding: The researcher marked important statements from the interview and observation results, (2) axial coding: grouping and connecting the open coding results into categories that form patterns and structures, and (3) selective coding: the stage of unifying and focusing the analysis results to find the main theme that is the core meaning of all research data. The analysis results are then presented narratively to describe the social dynamics in waste management in Cimancak Village.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of PKH Beneficiary Families in Cimancak Village

Cimancak Village is one of the villages in Bayah District, Banten, which has participated in the Family Hope Program (PKH) since 2010. In terms of education, the people of Cimancak Village only have an elementary school education level with a total of 1,674 people out of a total population of 3,777 people. Meanwhile, in terms of livelihood, most of the people of Cimancak Village work as casual farm laborers with a total of 250 people divided into 210 men and 40 women, and with an income of around 600,000-1,500,000 per month. Currently, there are around 83 families or 231 KPM registered as active recipients of PKH assistance, with the categories of pregnant/breastfeeding mothers, students, the elderly, and disabilities. The number of each category is as follows:

Table 1. Categories and Number of PKH Beneficiary Families in Cimancak Village in 2025

No	Criteria	Amount
1.	Pregnant women/toddlers	20
2.	Students (elementary, middle, high school)	102
3.	Elderly	102
4.	Disability	7

(source: Cimancak Village PKH Data, 2025)

When viewed based on the number per category, PKH recipients are dominated by the elderly and school-age children, with 690 people aged 7-15 still in school. Furthermore, the average number

of children per Beneficiary Family (KPM) is 2-4, indicating a relatively high level of family dependency.

Overall, the profile of beneficiary families (KPM) of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Cimancak Village shows that the majority of beneficiaries are families with school children and elderly dependents, work in the agricultural sector, and have low and irregular incomes. This condition illustrates that many beneficiaries still depend on the Family Hope Program (PKH) assistance for their living needs, where recipients usually allocate assistance for basic household needs, paying for children's education, caring for toddlers or the elderly, and paying off small debts. Based on the results of the Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA), this makes it difficult for beneficiaries to save.

Barriers to Graduation in Cimancak Village

The graduation process for beneficiary families (KPM) under the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Cimancak Village, Bayah District, Banten, still faces many complex and interconnected issues. These obstacles are influenced not only by the internal conditions of recipient families but also by aspects of mentoring, program institutions, and the social and cultural situation of the community. Therefore, the obstacles to independent graduation in Cimancak Village can be categorized into four main factors: internal, technical, structural, and socio-cultural.

1. KPM Internal Factors

a. Low Level of Education

The majority of Family Hope Program (PKH) beneficiary families in Cimancak Village have only completed elementary school. This condition results in their limited ability to understand the guidance from social workers and the empowerment materials provided through the Family Hope Program. This limited educational background means that PKH assistance has not been optimally utilized as a means of strengthening family finances, but rather remains focused on meeting short-term needs.

Furthermore, low levels of education also impact the ability of beneficiaries to make rational financial decisions. The majority of Cimancak Village residents work as casual farm laborers with uncertain incomes, so Family Hope Program (PKH) assistance is seen as a relatively secure source of supplemental income. This dependency ultimately hinders the independent graduation process and strengthens the beneficiary's position as a long-term beneficiary.

This is in line with the findings of Khoiriyah et al., who stated that the low level of education of KPM impacts on a weak understanding of the objectives of PKH and the productive management of assistance.¹⁹ These findings are also supported by Hartadi et al., who explain that limited education impacts family mindsets, comprehension, and financial management skills, leading to families with low incomes tending to remain dependent on social assistance.²⁰

b. Lack of Self-Awareness for Independence

Field findings indicate that some PKH beneficiaries in Cimancak Village lack the self-awareness to independently improve their standard of living. PKH assistance is still perceived as a recurring income, thus discouraging motivation for sustainable economic change. Even among beneficiaries whose socioeconomic conditions have objectively improved, the desire to leave PKH remains relatively low.

This lack of self-awareness creates a psychological barrier to fostering a transformation toward independence, as beneficiaries feel they are in a safe zone as recipients of assistance. This mental unpreparedness to let go of assistance reflects the fact that the PKH's purpose as an empowerment tool has not yet been fully internalized by beneficiaries.

This is in line with Firmansyah's findings which emphasized that low self-awareness of KPM is one of the main inhibiting factors in the independent graduation process in the implementation of PKH.²¹ Similar findings were also revealed by Gultom et al., who stated that psychological aspects, such as internal motivation and the belief in independence, are crucial for the success of KPM in escaping dependence on social assistance.²²

c. Dependent Mindset

In Cimancak Village, PKH beneficiary families (KPM PKH) still maintain a dependent mindset on social assistance. PKH assistance is perceived as the primary

¹⁹ Khoiriyah et al., "Evaluation of the Implementation of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Increasing the Independent Graduation of Beneficiary Families." *Arus Jurnal Sosial dan Humaniora (AJSH)* 5, no. 2 (2025): 946-954

²⁰ Muhammad Irfan Hartadi, Arif Arif, dan Sari Dewi Poerwanti, "Menguak Hambatan Graduasi: Dinamika Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) pada Keluarga Penerima Manfaat (PKM)," *Jurnal Ilmiah Perlindungan dan Pemberdayaan Sosial (Lindayasos)* 6, no. 1 (2024): 1–9, <https://doi.org/10.31595/lindayasos.v6i1.1132>.

²¹ Dinata Firmansyah, "Implementasi Program Keluarga Harapan di Kelurahan Sawah Baru Kota Tangerang Selatan," *Sosial Budaya* 20, no. 2 (2023): 125, <https://doi.org/10.24014/sb.v20i2.27583>.

²² Helvine Gultom, Paulus Kindangen, dan George M. V. Kawung, "Analisis Pengaruh Program Bantuan Pangan Non Tunai (BPNT) Dan Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) Terhadap Kemiskinan Di Kabupaten Minahasa Tenggara," *Jurnal Pembangunan Ekonomi dan Keuangan Daerah* 21, no. 1 (2020): 39–53.

source of family needs, rather than a temporary stimulus to boost economic capacity. As a result, some beneficiaries exhibit a passive attitude, preferring to wait for the aid to be disbursed rather than seeking opportunities to increase their income independently.

This mindset has implications for the slow process of social and economic change within families. When assistance is understood as a right to be received continuously, the orientation of empowerment and independence is marginalized. This situation highlights the gap between the PKH policy design and the understanding of beneficiaries at the implementation level.

This situation aligns with the research findings of Hartadi et al., which stated that a dependency mindset is a significant factor hindering the PKH graduation process.²³ Furthermore, Domri et al. also found that low levels of active participation among PKH recipients and a consumerist orientation toward assistance were the main causes of the suboptimal achievement of economic independence.²⁴

d. Low Capacity for Productive Aid Management

The low capacity of beneficiary families (KPM) to manage assistance productively remains a challenge in the implementation of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Cimancak Village. The assistance received is generally used to meet basic needs and children's education, but has not been directed toward productive activities that could potentially increase family income. As a result, PKH assistance has not had a significant impact on increasing economic assets or developing independent businesses.

This situation indicates that KPM's understanding and skills in utilizing aid as capital for empowerment are still limited. Minimal participation in Family Capacity Building Meetings (P2K2) also weakens this capacity-building process.

This is in line with research by Rachma et al., who found that most KPM are still oriented towards disbursement of aid and do not yet understand the purpose of PKH as a long-term welfare instrument.²⁵ This finding is supported by Khoiriyah et al.,

²³ Hartadi, Arif, dan Poerwanti, "Menguak Hambatan Graduasi."

²⁴ Domri, Ridwan, dan Mulia Jaya, "Efektivitas program keluarga harapan dalam meningkatkan kesejahteraan masyarakat," *Jurnal Politik dan Pemerintahan Daerah* 1, no. 1 (2019): 1–16.

²⁵ Maulida Rachma, Yusuf Hidayat, dan Laila Azkia, "Hambatan Pelaksanaan Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) Dalam Peningkatan Kesejahteraan Sosial Masyarakat Di Kelurahan Pelambuan Kota Banjarmasin," *PADARINGAN (Jurnal Pendidikan Sosiologi Antropologi)* 4, no. 2 (2022): 93, <https://doi.org/10.20527/padaringan.v4i2.5457>.

who stated that low participation of KPM in empowerment activities is one of the main factors in the low rate of independent graduation.²⁶

e. The Shame of Being a Low-Income Assistance Recipient

In Cimancak Village, PKH beneficiaries tend to feel no shame in continuing to accept assistance, even though some have established employment opportunities or are self-employed. Social assistance is perceived as a legitimate and reasonable right, especially since they come from families that were, or still are, poor. This social norm creates a collective legitimacy that discourages beneficiaries from seeking to renounce their status as beneficiaries.

This lack of shame indirectly fosters a culture of continued dependency and weakens the internal drive for independence. When there's no social pressure or personal motivation to leave support, the process of independent graduation becomes difficult to achieve.

This is in line with Suryati's findings, which explain that a low sense of shame in receiving social assistance can strengthen a culture of dependency and hinder family economic independence.²⁷ These findings were also supported by Saidi et al., who stated that the implementation of PKH showed indications of recipient dependence on social assistance and weak community economic empowerment due to the suboptimal socialization function and empowerment approach in program implementation.²⁸

2. Low Capacity of Companions

The Family Hope Program (PKH) in Cimancak Village has not run well in recent years due to minimal monitoring and support from PKH facilitators. Interviews revealed that the capacity of PKH facilitators is relatively low and has not been able to optimally meet the assistance needs of beneficiary families (KPM). Several beneficiaries stated that facilitators are only present at specific moments, such as during aid disbursement, data validation, or administrative document collection. The limited presence of facilitators

²⁶ Khoiriyah et al., "Evaluation of the Implementation of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Increasing the Independent Graduation of Beneficiary Families." *Arus Jurnal Sosial dan Humaniora (AJSH)* 5, no. 2 (2025): 946-954

²⁷ Lilis Suryati dkk., "Faktor-faktor Pendorong dan Penghambat Graduasi Sejahtera Mandiri Keluarga Penerima Manfaat Program Keluarga Harapan di Kabupaten Lampung Tengah," *Suluh Pembangunan: Journal of Extension and Development* 5, no. 2 (2023): 112-22, <https://doi.org/10.23960/jsp.Vol5.No2.2023.216>.

²⁸ Mifta Khulzannah Saidi, Zuchri Abdussamad, dan Romy Tantu, "Dampak Sosial Masyarakat pada Program PKH di Desa Dulupi Kecamatan Dulupi Kabupaten Boalemo," *Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisiplin* 4, no. 1 (2025): 586-91.

means that some beneficiaries do not know their facilitators personally, preventing close relationships (engagement) from forming. This situation has resulted in poor understanding of program obligations and a weak readiness for independent graduation.

Furthermore, group activities such as P2K2 (P2K2) have stalled, the last of which was in 2022 with the previous mentor. Families with disabilities reported that mentoring materials were not delivered. Household economic mentoring was also barely provided, leaving families without business plans or income-increasing strategies. Lack of communication, engagement, and continuity of mentoring has resulted in facilitators losing their role as facilitators, motivators, and advocates for poor families. This situation reinforces families' dependence on aid and hinders the process of family independence.

These field findings align with Firmansyah's research, which emphasized that many PKH (Family Hope Program) facilitators in the field tend to focus on administrative tasks, resulting in social assistance not being implemented in accordance with PKH guidelines. The paper explains that facilitators are often unable to carry out all stages of family-based assistance. Low engagement among facilitators leads to ineffective professional relationships between facilitators and beneficiary families, resulting in families not feeling supported in the change process.²⁹ This condition is very similar to the situation in Cimancak, where KPM did not know their companions and felt they did not receive support or understanding of their problems.

3. Institutional

a. Low Coordination between Program Implementers

Coordination and communication between PKH facilitators and the village and community in Cimancak showed significant weaknesses. The new PKH facilitators had only met directly with residents once. This situation was exacerbated by the lack of communication between the facilitators and the village. The village never received any information, and the facilitators never established a working relationship with the village. This lack of presence and interaction with the new facilitators made it difficult for residents and others to obtain accurate information and guidance. This situation indicated a lack of role for facilitators as primary facilitators at the village level.

The results of this study align with findings in Mardiah et al.'s journal, which emphasized the crucial role of facilitators as street-level bureaucrats and

²⁹Firmansyah, Dinata "Implementation of the Family Hope Program in Sawah Baru Subdistrict, South Tangerang City," *Social Culture* 20, no. 2 (2023).

mediators.³⁰If coordination between facilitators and village officials is ineffective, as observed in the field, it can hinder program synergy, trigger information asymmetry, and ultimately lead to inequitable aid distribution and social conflict within beneficiary communities. This lack of formal coordination directly delegitimizes the village's role as an extension of the program at the grassroots level.

This finding is in line with the research results of Djafar et al. published in the Scientific Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies, which shows that the effectiveness of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Yosonegoro Village still faces obstacles in the form of weak communication between organizations and limited implementing resources at the lower level.³¹Both in the field and in journal studies, data synchronization has been found to be a weak point in coordination; village officials often struggle to update data due to technical barriers and a lack of synergy with the central system. Therefore, poor coordination not only hinders the prompt resolution of beneficiary household issues but also leads to inaccurate recipient identification due to a lack of regular meetings and intensive cross-sectoral collaboration.

b. Inaccuracy of KPM Data

In Cimancak Village, data issues are a significant obstacle to the implementation of the Family Hope Program (PKH). The data updating process is suboptimal, resulting in some beneficiaries who no longer qualify as poor but remain listed as beneficiaries. Furthermore, data on the socioeconomic conditions of beneficiaries is poorly managed and lacks transparency at the village level. This lack of clarity results in some beneficiaries being misdirected and delays the process of graduating beneficiaries toward independence.

This condition is in line with the findings of Hartadi et al., who revealed that weak data updating and validation caused obstacles in the process of determining KPM graduation status.³²When data does not reflect current conditions, the Family Hope Program (PKH) becomes less effective in targeting families in genuine need and in pushing well-off families out of the program. This finding echoes Kartini and Susniwati's findings, which assert that the government provides assistance based on

³⁰ Mardiah, Annisa Ainun et al., "Implementation of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Balaroa Village, West Palu District, Palu City," JOURNAL OF SYNTAX IMPERATIVES: Journal of Social Sciences and Education 6, no. 3 (2025): 705–710.

³¹ Nurul Anggraini Djafar, Sri Yulianty Mozin, dan Rosman Ilato, "Implementasi Kebijakan Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) Di Desa Yosonegoro Kabupaten Gorontalo," *Jurnal Ilmiah Kajian Multidisipliner* 8, no. 3 (2024): 283–302.

³² Hartadi, M. Irfan et al., "Uncovering Barriers to Graduation: Dynamics of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Beneficiary Families (PKM)," Scientific Journal of Social Protection and Empowerment (Lindayasos) 6, no. 1 (2024): 1–9.

often inaccurate community databases, resulting in ineligible individuals remaining in the central database. Consequently, inaccurate data from the Integrated Social Welfare Data (DTKS) not only results in misdirected aid but also fuels social jealousy within the community due to the gap between field validation and the central government's decision to determine recipients.³³

c. Socialization of KPM Independence

Efforts to promote the independence of beneficiary families (KPM) are carried out through Family Capacity Building (P2K2) meetings. P2K2 provides education and materials related to financial management, business planning, education, and health. Implementation of this independence program faces challenges. Due to the ineffectiveness of P2K2 training in recent years, villages have reported numerous cases of beneficiaries failing to properly manage aid funds. Their ATM cards are often misused or held by others, including family members.

This condition is in line with the findings in Yulianti's journal which explains that when socialization does not take place, KPM tends to view assistance as a permanent right that can be received continuously.³⁴ This not only strengthens dependency, but also reduces the family's awareness of utilizing assistance as a means of transition to independence.

4. Lack of Social Support

a. Lack of training

The research findings revealed the perceived lack of hands-on training or skills training integrated with the Family Hope Program (PKH). PKH group meetings (P2K2) cover topics such as education, economics, and financial management, but to date, there has been no hands-on training in Cimancak village. The specific impact of the lack of skills training is evident in the dominance of farm laborers and the sale of raw commodities in Cimancak village. The majority of workers are farm laborers working on other people's gardens, not as owners. Furthermore, agricultural products there, such as peanuts, bananas, and other secondary crops, are sold as raw materials and none are processed into value-added products, unlike in other villages such as Bayah. This indicates untapped economic potential because KPM lacks the capacity

³³ Entin Kartini dan Susniwati Susniwati, "Implementasi Kebijakan Program Keluarga Harapan di Kecamatan Rancasari Kota Bandung," *PANDITA: Interdisciplinary Journal of Public Affairs* 8, no. 2 (2025): 360–80, <https://doi.org/10.61332/ijpa.v8i2.320>.

³⁴ Yulianti, Tiana et al., "Forms of Deviation in the Implementation of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Indonesia," *Journal of Science and Social Research* 4307, no. 4 (2024): 1854–1858.

and knowledge to manage their agricultural products into processing businesses or MSMEs.

In the journal by Salmah et al., a key focus discussed in this paper is the lack of training. The paper emphasizes that the role of the facilitator is as an empowerment agent, using P2K2 as the primary medium.³⁵ However, research in Cimancak village revealed a significant disparity between the ideal goal of P2K2 as a means of empowerment and the reality on the ground, where P2K2 was only educational or theoretical in nature, without the transfer of technical skills (hard skills) needed by beneficiaries to become independent. This lack of practical training directly hampers the goal of economic empowerment, which is the primary focus of the Family Hope Program (PKH). The paper, which discusses the role of facilitators in P2K2, underscores its importance in motivating beneficiaries to graduate. However, the transcripts reveal that the lack of practical training has resulted in beneficiaries in Cimancak remaining in low-risk occupations such as farm laborers and selling only raw produce (peanuts, bananas, etc.), without creating added value through processing. This situation indicates that beneficiaries do not yet have the adequate skill set to innovate and compete, thus failing to transform from aid recipients to independent economic actors, which is the core of the empowerment program's success.

b. Low Government Support

Research in Cimancak village revealed low government support due to the lack of active participation from program implementers at the village level. This gap in support was evident in village officials' statements stating that PKH Facilitators rarely coordinated directly with village officials. This lack of presence and communication created a void in the role of facilitators as primary facilitators. As a result, villages were often instructed to refer residents' questions about the PKH program to their long-standing facilitators. This situation resulted in villages receiving only global reports without detailed operational data, hampering village collaboration efforts to implement programs supporting KPM independence, such as economic training or financial management. This indicated that technical support and facilitation from the program at the grassroots level were not optimal.

³⁵Salmah, Hanifa et al., "The Role of Family Hope Program (PKH) Companions in Community Empowerment through Family Capacity Building Meetings (P2K2) in Dramaga District, Bogor Regency," *Arus Jurnal Sosial dan Humaniora* 5, no. 2 (2025): 2485–2494.

The issue of outdated data, which has resulted in many eligible Beneficiary Families (KPM) still receiving assistance, reflects weaknesses in the accountability system and administrative capacity of village bureaucracies. In their journals, Suryati et al. frequently emphasize that sustainable development requires good governance, where accurate data and efficient aid distribution are key prerequisites for ensuring programs are targeted and equitable.³⁶ The limited number of PKH facilitators responsible for large areas and the difficulty of communicating with them demonstrates the government's failure to allocate human resources effectively at the implementation level. From a development perspective, facilitators are the spearhead, acting as agents of change and connecting central policies with realities on the ground.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the absence of independent graduation among Family Hope Program (PKH) beneficiary families in Cimancak Village cannot be explained by a single factor. Rather, it results from the interaction of internal beneficiary conditions, limited facilitator capacity, institutional weaknesses, and insufficient social support. Although Cimancak Village has participated in PKH since 2010, long-term program participation has not automatically produced economic independence among beneficiaries. The findings indicate that the effectiveness of PKH should therefore be assessed not merely through the continuity and accuracy of assistance distribution, but also through its capacity to transform beneficiaries from aid recipients into families capable of sustaining their welfare independently.

At the beneficiary level, low educational attainment, limited awareness of self-reliance, dependency-oriented mindsets, weak capacity to manage assistance productively, and the normalization of long-term assistance collectively hinder the graduation process. PKH assistance is predominantly used to meet immediate household, educational, and dependent-care needs rather than to develop productive economic activities. This condition is closely related to the socioeconomic characteristics of Cimancak Village, where many beneficiaries depend on irregular agricultural labor and have limited opportunities to accumulate savings or productive assets. Consequently, the transition from social protection toward economic independence remains difficult to achieve without additional empowerment interventions.

³⁶Suryati, Lilis et al., "Factors Driving and Inhibiting Independent Prosperous Graduation of Beneficiary Families of the Family Hope Program in Central Lampung Regency," *Suluh Pembangunan: Journal of Extension and Development* 5, no. 2 (2023): 112–122.

The study further reveals that these internal constraints are reinforced by weaknesses in the implementation environment. Limited interaction between facilitators and beneficiaries, the discontinuation of Family Capacity Building Meetings (P2K2), weak communication between facilitators and village authorities, inaccurate beneficiary data, and insufficient socialization of graduation have reduced the program's empowerment function. Facilitators have not been able to perform their roles optimally as motivators, educators, facilitators, and agents of behavioral change. As a result, PKH implementation tends to remain concentrated on administrative and distributive functions rather than on sustained processes of family capacity development and preparation for graduation.

Another critical finding concerns the mismatch between existing empowerment activities and the actual socioeconomic potential of beneficiaries. The lack of practical skills training prevents KPM from developing alternative sources of income or adding value to local agricultural commodities. Although Cimancak possesses agricultural resources that could potentially be processed into higher-value products, beneficiaries remain predominantly engaged as casual farm laborers or sellers of raw commodities. These findings indicate that independent graduation requires a shift from generalized socialization toward locally responsive empowerment that combines financial literacy, practical vocational training, business development, institutional coordination, and continuous mentoring according to the specific capacities and economic opportunities of beneficiary families.

Overall, the study concludes that strengthening PKH graduation requires an integrated strategy that simultaneously addresses individual capacity, mentoring quality, institutional governance, data accuracy, and local economic empowerment. Graduation should be treated as a gradual process of preparing beneficiary families for sustainable independence rather than merely terminating their eligibility for assistance. Nevertheless, this study is limited to a single village and relies primarily on qualitative evidence, thereby restricting the broader generalization of its findings. Future research should involve comparative studies across villages or regions and incorporate longitudinal or mixed-method approaches to assess changes in beneficiary behavior, economic capacity, mentoring effectiveness, and graduation outcomes over time.

Research Novelty

The novelty of this study lies in its multidimensional explanation of independent graduation failure within the Family Hope Program. Previous studies have commonly examined beneficiary characteristics, facilitator performance, institutional implementation, or empowerment constraints as separate determinants of PKH outcomes. This study integrates these dimensions into a single analytical framework consisting of internal beneficiary factors, facilitator capacity,

institutional conditions, and social support. Such an approach demonstrates that persistent dependency cannot be attributed solely to beneficiaries' attitudes or economic limitations, but emerges through the interaction between individual vulnerabilities and weaknesses within the program implementation environment.

A further contribution is the identification of a gap between the formal objective of PKH as a transitional social protection instrument and its implementation as predominantly distributive assistance in Cimancak Village. The findings show that long-term participation since 2010 has not resulted in independent graduation because assistance has not been consistently accompanied by intensive mentoring, sustainable P2K2 activities, accurate socioeconomic data, practical skills development, and coordinated local empowerment. This provides a more contextual understanding of graduation by shifting the analytical focus from the question of whether beneficiaries remain eligible for assistance toward the extent to which the program actually develops their capacity to become economically and behaviorally independent.

The study also highlights the importance of linking PKH empowerment with local economic potential. In Cimancak, the dominance of casual agricultural labor and the sale of unprocessed agricultural commodities indicate that graduation strategies have not yet been sufficiently connected to local livelihoods and productive opportunities. The research therefore advances a contextual perspective in which independent graduation is understood as an ecosystem-based process requiring the integration of beneficiary motivation, facilitator engagement, institutional coordination, accurate data, practical capacity building, and locally relevant economic opportunities. This perspective extends the discussion of PKH graduation beyond administrative exit mechanisms toward sustainable empowerment as the substantive indicator of program success.

Research Implications

Theoretically, the findings imply that independent graduation from social assistance should be understood as a multidimensional process rather than as an individual decision made by beneficiaries. Dependence on PKH is shaped by interactions between human capital, behavioral orientation, household socioeconomic vulnerability, facilitator performance, institutional governance, and access to productive opportunities. Accordingly, studies of social protection effectiveness should move beyond approaches that predominantly attribute graduation failure to beneficiary mentality and instead examine the broader institutional and socioeconomic ecosystem that enables or constrains household independence. This perspective strengthens the conceptual position of graduation as an outcome of both individual transformation and program capacity.

At the policy and institutional levels, the findings indicate the need to reposition PKH facilitators from predominantly administrative actors toward active agents of empowerment. Regular P2K2 activities need to be restored and accompanied by measurable family development plans, periodic evaluation of graduation readiness, intensive communication with village governments, and continuous updating of beneficiary socioeconomic data. Coordination between facilitators, village authorities, and relevant local government agencies is particularly important to ensure that KPM requiring economic intervention can be connected with complementary empowerment, vocational training, entrepreneurship, or local economic development programs. Graduation targets should therefore be accompanied by institutional mechanisms that ensure families are genuinely prepared to maintain their welfare after leaving the program.

Practically, empowerment interventions in Cimancak Village should be designed around the actual characteristics and economic potential of beneficiary families. Practical skills training, household financial management, business mentoring, and the processing of local agricultural commodities into higher-value products can provide more realistic pathways toward income diversification than theoretical socialization alone. Beneficiaries should also receive gradual preparation for graduation through strengthened self-reliance awareness, productive planning, and continuous mentoring rather than abrupt termination of assistance. Through this approach, PKH can function not only as a protective mechanism against poverty but also as a structured pathway that enables beneficiary families to develop productive capacities, reduce long-term dependency, and achieve sustainable economic independence.

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