



Significance of Independent Graduation for Beneficiary Families in Conditional Cash Transfers (CCT) Program in Indonesia

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Abstract. This study aims to determine the meaning of Beneficiary Families (BF) Conditional Cash Transfers (CCT) choosing Independent Graduation. The subjects of this study were independent-graduation BF from the CCT program in 2019–2021 who came from underdeveloped areas in the Pagar Dewa sub-district. Independent graduation is the end of CCT participation based on awareness and the feeling that you have become a prosperous family. This is interesting because most families find it difficult to escape the cycle of poverty. This research uses a qualitative method with a case study approach through observation and in-depth interviews. Max Weber's Social Action Theory is used to explore the meaning of action subjectively by independent graduation. The findings of research into the meaning of families can't be separated from work and social position. The significance of independent graduation for beneficiary families is divided into three; first, efforts to provide opportunities for people who cannot afford CCT assistance; second, efforts to get peace of life and not become a byword for the public; and third, the attempt to be an example and to knock the hearts of people who are better able to feel ashamed of getting CCT assistance so that they want to graduation CCT program.

Keywords: Independent Graduation · family · CCT program

1 Introduction

Poverty is a multidimensional problem in a country that doesn't only cover the economic aspect but also includes various other aspects such as education, health, social, and politics which have an important role in human survival. In Indonesia, poverty is a serious problem, in September 2020 as many as 27.55 million or 10.19% of Indonesian people live in poverty [1]. Poverty causes economic difficulties that create anxiety and anxiety about family finances which results in decreased performance [2]. In addition, economic hardship can be interpreted as a lack of money needed to meet the family's needs for food, clothing, shelter, and medical care [3]. Sustained economic hardship leads to poorer physical, psychological and cognitive functioning [4].

In 2007 the Conditional Cash Transfers (CCT) program was launched in Indonesia to overcome economic difficulties and alleviate poverty by improving people's living

standards by providing stimulus for social assistance. Apart from Indonesia, this program has been implemented in several developing countries such as Brazil, Kenya, Nigeria, Mexico, and other countries. The PKH program is a conditional cash transfer program given to poor and vulnerable families with the condition that it has one component such as health, education, and social welfare components [5].

The CCT program has five main objectives including (1) Improving the living standards of beneficiary families through access to education, health, and social welfare services; (2) reducing the burden of expenditure and increasing the income of poor and vulnerable families; (3) creating behavioral changes and independence of beneficiary families in accessing health and education services as well as social welfare; (4) reducing poverty and inequality; (5) introduce the benefits of formal financial products and services to beneficiary families [6]. That is, the CCT program is expected to pave the way for the poor to improve the standard of living of program recipients to break the intergenerational poverty chain by improving health, education, and the economy [5].

Independent graduation is one of the indicators of the success of the program which is marked by an increase in the standard of living and socio-economic welfare of the beneficiary families. Independent graduation is the end of CCT membership due to improved socio-economic conditions and being categorized as a wealthy family. Independent graduation can occur either from the beneficiary's family initiative, or encouragement from Social Facilitators or other parties. The reasons for independent graduation include; First, beneficiary families refuse assistance because they feel they can afford it, do not want to depend on CCT social assistance, and want to provide opportunities to other families; Second, beneficiary families experience a change in economic status to become prosperous because they get jobs with better incomes (including as State Civil Apparatus) [7].

According to Maslow, in addition to fulfilling the economic status of the family, the beneficiaries of self-graduation must be able to fulfill the five hierarchies of basic human needs from the most basic to the most complex, including physiological needs, security and safety needs, love and belonging needs, esteem needs and self-actualization needs [8].

Independent graduation is attractive because when many families feel poor they want to get CCT assistance and most of the beneficiary families maintain their membership to continue to receive assistance. In addition, in Indonesia, there is no regulation for the income of the beneficiary family of independent graduation and the maximum length of CCT membership which makes beneficiary families reluctant to leave the CCT. However, some families have the awareness of choosing the independent graduation path because they feel they are capable and do not need assistance from the government. The transition from a poor family to a prosperous family is an interesting object of research related to the significance of independent graduation.

Previous studies on independent graduation include: First, the dynamics of household graduation from the empowerment of the Cash For Assets (CFA) program in Kenya which is influenced by the skills and knowledge of families supported by food security will become program graduates [9]. Second, graduation from the Bolsa Familia Program (BFP) is influenced by an income above the poverty line and the initiative to resign. In addition, graduation will increase the prestige and ease of accessing financial assistance

for microcredit subsidies [10]. Third, graduation from the Progresa Oportunidades Prospera (POP) program in Mexico. POP has a graduation standard of 3.7 years for urban and 5.1 years for rural areas. However, only a third of the output of graduates has the possibility of becoming poor again in the future [11]. Fourth, the motivation for graduation from the CCT program in Indonesia is motivated by Because of motive (interfering with work, little help, and gossip from neighbors) and In order motivation (embarrassed to be labeled poor, or capable, so as not to get gossip, and so that other poor families can get CCT assistance [12]. Lastly, the rationality of graduation from the CCT program in Indonesia is influenced by socio-economic status and values that exist in society [13].

Based on the previous research above, the update in this study where previous research refers to the causes, effects, and reasons for beneficiary families choosing independent graduation in several countries such as Kenya, Mexico, Brazil, and Indonesia. Meanwhile, this study attempts to examine the meaning of the beneficiary family's action in choosing CCT independent graduation in Pagar Dewa District using Max Weber's theory of social action.

According to Weber, social action is based on subjective interpretation in understanding and interpreting which is rational or emotional, depending on the situation and conditions when taking action. Interest is also one of the influential actors in producing meaning. Then, the background, values, knowledge, and experience possessed can create meaning [14]. This study wants to explore the meaning of the beneficiary family's actions in choosing independent graduation from the CCT program. The purpose of this study is to describe and describe the subjective significance of beneficiary families regarding independent graduation in the CCT program.

2 Research Method

This study uses a qualitative method because it wants to explore and understand the meaning of independent graduation for families who are beneficiaries of the CCT program [15]. Then, this research uses a case study research approach from Robert K Yin. The case study approach was chosen because the object of research is related to the meaning of independent graduation for CCT beneficiary families [16]. The informants of this study were thirteen independent graduated families from Pagar Dewa sub-district, West Lampung Regency.

Data collection methods in this study used primary and secondary data sources. Primary data was obtained by conducting in-depth interviews, direct observation, and participant observation. In-depth interviews are of the open-ended type which gives researchers the freedom to ask questions about the facts of an event in addition to their opinions about the events. Secondary data was obtained through documentation and archival records to strengthen research results and for data analysis purposes [17].

The data analysis technique of this research comes from observation, interview, and documentation data which is analyzed through three activity lines. First, data reduction is an analysis that sharpens, categorizes, directs, discards unnecessary, and organizes data in such a way that conclusions can be drawn and verified. Second, triangulation is a technique of checking the validity of data that utilizes something else in comparing the results of interviews with the object of research. Finally, concluding is to note regularities,

patterns, explanations, possible configurations, causal paths, and propositions [18]. The data analysis process is a cyclical and interaction process before, during, and after data collection in the parallel form that builds general insight.

3 Result and Discussion

The significance of independent graduation for the beneficiary families of the CCT program is something that is in the subjective thoughts of the beneficiary families. Then, subjective thinking will be processed in making decisions for independent graduation based on the meanings that arise. The meaning that arises will vary according to the awareness, experience, and knowledge of the subject towards the independent graduation from the CCT program. This study found that there were three meanings of independent graduation for families who were beneficiaries of the CCT program, including being a good example, giving other people opportunities, and seeking peace in life.

3.1 Be an Example of a Good Family

Being a good example will create a positive stigma in society. This will improve the social structure of families from poor families who receive assistance to become prosperous families. In addition, the status of work as chairman of the Village Association Institute (VAI) affects the meaning of independent graduation. The following is a statement from an EH informant regarding the meaning of independent graduation.

“ya bukannya ngerasa terlalu mampu atau ini... ibaratnya, saya mencontohkan untuk masyarakat yang lain. Ya kalau di omongin saya belum mampu betul. Saya yang posisi nya gini mau mundur... biar nggak terlalu banyak gejolak di masyarakat... kedua pengen mengetuk hati ibaratnya yang lebih diatas saya kan gitu lo.....untuk mengundurkan diri”.

The meaning of independent graduation in subjective interpretation is rational, depending on the situation and conditions when taking action. The situation and conditions of working as the head of VAI and being active in community activities placed this family in a higher social status. Then, the informant felt bad when he was active in the village receiving assistance from the poor while there were poor people who had not received CCT assistance. In addition, the informant rationally considered the negative impact of continuing to be a CCT participant, namely the fear of causing turmoil in the community. Independent graduation is used as a momentum to set a good example for other CCT participants whose economy is good for independent graduation and to increase their credibility in the community.

3.2 Giving Other People a Chance

Six families interpret independent graduation as an effort to provide opportunities to others including SA, RW, NN, SH, O, and J families. The six informants have a fairly good economic background. The six informants, including families who are prosperous, seen from the income they have are sufficient to meet basic needs, education and

health. In addition, these six families voluntarily chose independent graduation without any coercion and binding norms/regulations. The following is one of the informants' statements regarding the meaning of independent graduation:

“Karena ada yang lebih membutuhkan... karena kita udah bisa usaha...bukan karna kita udah kaya atau mau dibilang kaya... kalau disebut kaya belum...kalau orang itu kan sifatnya kurang. Kalau kita liatnya keatas terus dan yang dibawah tidak kan kasian...yang ditakutin istri saya ada hak orang trus kita udah bisa masih tetap kita ambil ke barokahnya itu kurang di kita”

The meaning of independent graduation is supported by the economic situation and conditions that are sufficient to meet daily needs. In addition, the informant saw that there were families with lower economic status who had not received CCT assistance. Rationally, this family feels they have a moral responsibility if they enjoy help while there are people who can't afford to get help. Graduation is interpreted as a momentum to live independently without government assistance and an effort to provide opportunities for other people who are more in need to get CCT assistance.

3.3 Loking for Serenity in Life

There are six who interpret independent graduation as an effort to find peace in life including HR, KR, O, S, J, and RDJ. This meaning is inseparable from the issuance of regulations regarding village officials who are not eligible for social assistance. Informants are worried about losing their jobs and becoming a byword in the community. Therefore, independent graduation is interpreted as an effort to find peace in life. The following is an informant's statement regarding the meaning of independent graduation:

“keluar dari PKH ya supaya nggak jadi gejala di masyarakat... sama nggak jadi masalah dengan orang desa nantinya. Terus.... Saya liat masih banyak orang lain yang lebih layak mendapatkan bantuan dan ketika di suruh mundur ya mereka bersedia untuk mundur”

The meaning of independent graduation as an effort to find peace in life is to avoid being a byword in society and social jealousy in society. The independent graduation path was chosen to get out of the turmoil in society and live a calmer life. The work situation and income are considered as families who do not deserve PKH assistance. Rationally, independent graduation was chosen to avoid turmoil in the community because the informant already had income from the government and this gave the impression of being unfair/favoritism.

4 Conclusion

The meaning of the independent graduation of CCT beneficiary families is strongly influenced by the socio-economic conditions of the beneficiaries, their occupations, and their position in society. Good economic conditions raise awareness of beneficiary families other people need it more so graduation is interpreted as giving other people

the opportunity to get assistance. Working as village officials makes beneficiary families and positions in the community cause turmoil in the community so that independent graduates are chosen to seek peace in life. Furthermore, the combination of awareness and position in society gives rise to the meaning of independent graduation as an effort to be a good example and inspire families who can afford to resign.

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