
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Empowerment of the Poor in Non-Cash Food Assistance Program in Tanjung Pinang City, Indonesia

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| ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to determine how the empowerment of the poor in the non-cash food assistance program and the factors that can hinder the empowerment and efforts to overcome the obstacles. The method used in this study is a descriptive method with a qualitative approach. Data collection and information in this study was done using interview techniques, observation, and documentation. The data that has been collected is analyzed using data reduction techniques, data presentation, and decision making/verification. Based on the results of the research that has been done by the researcher, the conclusion obtained is empowerment through the approach of basic needs, namely non-cash food assistance in its implementation successfully meets three aspects in maintaining household strength, namely: a) social aspects, b) political aspects, and c) psychological aspects. With the fulfillment of the indicators of these three aspects, the community, in this case, the family of beneficiaries, can be said to be empowered through the Non-Cash Food Assistance program.

| KEYWORDS

Empowerment, Poverty, Social Assistance, Social Service.

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1. Introduction

Poverty is a problem that has not been completely resolved until now. Cases of poverty can even be found in all countries in general. The problem of poverty is even more prevalent in developing countries (Dhrifi et al., 2020; Holmberg & Sandbrook, 2019; Mamun & Ullah, 2020; Omar & Inaba, 2020). This can lead to disparities between countries in the world. Various causes of poverty can be found, starting from human nature itself, which is not able to meet the needs of life, to the existence of deliberate efforts.

Poverty is not only seen from an economic point of view but also from all human aspects, such as education, health, and morals (Acharya & Sadath, 2019; Agenjo-Calderón & Gálvez-Muñoz, 2019; Schröder et al., 2020). According to Walker (2019), poverty is generally defined from an economic perspective, especially income in the form of money plus non-material benefits received by a person. It can be seen that poverty is marked by whether or not a person has a lot of money to meet his standard of living. Poverty is seen as a low standard of living, which means that there is a deficiency that points to some people or groups of people compared to the standard of living of others. Measuring a person's level of poverty is very difficult because humans tend to have different needs met (Ravallion, 2020). Therefore, poverty is one of the main problems and the focus of the government in several countries.

Poverty is one of the problems faced by Indonesia. This is partly due to the fact that Indonesia is a developing country with a population that continues to grow every year; therefore, the level of people's welfare remains much lower than that of developed countries. The problem of poverty is experienced not only by rural communities but also by urban communities (Taruno, 2019).

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The poverty rate in Indonesia is increasing every year. The number of poor people in Indonesia in September 2020 was 27.55 million people, an increase of 1.13 million people from March 2020 and an increase of 2.76 million people in September 2019. Based on these data, the increasing number of poor people is still difficult for the government to overcome. The difficulty of the government in overcoming the high poverty rate is because poverty is only a concern of the state but cannot be resolved as soon as possible, and at the same time, steps are prepared to solve it. The poor have not fully felt the policies implemented by the government related to meeting their needs in life, especially for food needs such as rice and other foodstuffs.

In the Presidential Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 15 of 2010 concerning the Acceleration of Poverty Reduction, it is stated that poverty reduction refers to government and local government policies and programs that are carried out in a planned, systematic manner and in collaboration with the business sector and the community in order to reduce the number of poor people and thereby increase the number of poor people in public welfare. Thus, the government is obliged to manage the poor in accordance with the values of empowerment, welfare, non-discrimination, social justice, and humanity in order to safeguard the rights of the poor.

Food is a basic human need that must be met for survival (Fenster et al., 2019; Geng et al., 2022; Paulson et al., 2021). Food needs can be met if the state or society creates availability, distribution and easy access to food (Adiatmika & Nain, 2022). Food is a basic need; when population growth and quality of life increase, the demand continues to increase (Gasco et al., 2019; R. V. George et al., 2019; Millward-Hopkins et al., 2020; Sá et al., 2020). Indonesia has sufficient resources to meet the food needs of its population. The right to obtain food is included in one of the human rights, as stated in Article 27, paragraph 2 of the 1945 Constitution, which states that every citizen has the right to work and a decent living for humanity.

In order to meet people's food needs, it is necessary to diversify food consumption. This is done to control or manage people's consumption patterns in order to meet food needs. The government must also be able to realize food security for the sake of sustainable community welfare (Kokkodis et al., 2020; Prabowo et al., 2020; Putri et al., 2019; Siring & Buana, 2022). In order to achieve food security, the needs of all people must be fulfilled, and food must be sufficient, affordable, and well distributed. In terms of authority, there is a relationship between the central and regional governments in managing food services. In dealing with local government affairs in the food sector, local governments need to prioritize interests in order to share authority with the central government. The division of authority in the food sector is designed to ensure that all services in the food sector can reach all parts of the need for services, as well as to realize an ideal organization that is effective and efficient. To realize stable and sustainable food security it is stated in Law Number 18 of 2012 concerning Food. In the Law, there are 3 (three) main components that must be considered in implementing food security development, namely: (1) adequate and distributed food availability; (2) effective and efficient food affordability; and (3) diverse food intake and balanced nutrition. The government's role is needed to realize the three main components.

The government is an organization with administrative power of government, which aims to accelerate the realization of public welfare. In realizing community welfare, according to Kokkodis et al.(2020), there are 4 (four) functions of government, namely public service, development, empowerment and regulation. Empowerment is meant for the welfare of the people.

The government is not held to serve itself but to empower and serve the community, creating conditions that enable every member of the community to develop their abilities and creativity to achieve mutual progress (Davis & Rhodes, 2020; Pangbourne et al., 2020). The purpose of empowerment is so that people who face social problems can use existing resources to improve their standard of living in order to meet their basic needs; the main goal of community empowerment is the poor.

According to Saleh & Mujahiddin (2020), community empowerment can be defined as a social action in which residents of a community organize themselves in planning and collective action to solve social problems or meet social needs according to their abilities and resources. With empowerment, it is hoped that it can increase the potential of the community to face the factors that cause poverty. Basically, empowerment is a social change plan that aims to solve problems or meet community needs. In the empowerment process, the community learns so that they can work independently to improve their quality of life. Therefore, this process must be carried out gradually, continuously and continuously with the full participation of the community itself.

Although empowerment is not an economic concept, it is often associated with the goals of poverty and community welfare. Solutions or ways to overcome poverty are not only about increasing income but can also affect all aspects of human life so as to improve the quality of life. Empowerment does not occur in a short time but is carried out gradually through a process to make people's lives better. Poverty alleviation, a change in behavior that begins with a change in the mindset of individuals and communities, can only be achieved through community empowerment efforts (Bateman, 2019; Braber, 2018; Li, 2019; M. Liu, 2020; Y. Liu, 2019; Naminse, 2018; Suryadarma et al., 2011). Through empowerment activities, the community is supported in acquiring skills according to their potential and needs so that they are competitive and independent. Thus, their quality of life and well-being can be gradually improved.

In poverty reduction based on empowerment, in 2017, the government issued a new program to address existing problems through Presidential Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 63 of 2017 concerning the Distribution of Non-Cash Social

Assistance. The Non-Cash Food Assistance Program is food assistance from the government intended for monthly Beneficiary Families through an electronic card system that is used only at E-Warong and food stalls that collaborate with Himbara Bank to purchase food needs. The goal of the Non-Cash Food Assistance program is to minimize the burden of expenditure while providing appropriate food needs to beneficiary families. The central government established the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program with the aim of increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the open distribution of social assistance. According to the Presidential Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 95 of 2018 concerning the Electronic-Based Government System. It is necessary to realize a clean, effective, transparent, accountable, quality, and reliable government. Therefore, several factors are needed to realize the Electronic-Based Government System's goals.

Seeing the Tanjungpinang City's mission, which is to create professional, authoritative, trustworthy, transparent, and accountable governance supported by an integrated and competent bureaucratic structure related to the Presidential Regulation, the Tanjungpinang City government is expected to carry out its duties as a state apparatus in accordance with the vision and mission region and in solving the problem of poverty in an effort to empower the community. Thus, the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program was also implemented in Tanjungpinang City in an effort to provide assistance to the poor and empower their lives. Prior to using the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program, the Tanjungpinang City Social Service carried out the Rastra or Prosperous Rice Program, which was replaced based on the Raskin Program (Free Rice for Poor Family) meeting in July 2016, the distribution of Raskin was replaced by using an electronic card that would be given directly to target households, so that social assistance and subsidies would be distributed non-discriminatory cash using the banking system.

Table 1. Percentage of Households by Type of Social Protection Program Received, 2018-2020

Types of Social Protection Programs	Year	Percentage of Houses Accepting Ladders
Non-Cash Food Assistance	2020	12,26
Non-Cash Food Assistance	2019	12,55
Non-Cash Food Assistance	2018	15,06

Source: Statistics on The Welfare of the People of Tanjungpinang City, 2018-2020

Table 2. Poverty Line, Number, and Percentage of Poor People in Tanjungpinang City, 2018-2020

Year	Poverty Line (rupiah/capita/month)	Population Poor (thousand)	Percentage of Poor Population
2020	691 738	19,98	9,37
2019	659 170	19,05	9,03
2018	625 473	19,29	9,24

Source: Tanjungpinang City in Numbers, Year 2021

Based on the description above, the people of Tanjungpinang City should have fulfilled their food needs through the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program. However, in reality, it is still not fully fulfilled. In the implementation of the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program, it can be seen in Table 1.1 that fewer households receive assistance from year to year. Meanwhile, the poverty rate in Tanjungpinang City, as shown in Table 1.2, is still fluctuating or sinking, and in general, the poverty rate is still high. The author sees that poverty in Tanjungpinang City is considered a problem that needs to be studied. Therefore, the author wants to examine carefully according to the study program, namely economic development and community empowerment.

2. Methods

Descriptive research is used to find and get data that is in accordance with existing data, which is called real data. Creswell & Creswell (2017) also explained that descriptive research was conducted to determine the value of each variable. Either one or more variables are independent without making any relationship or comparison with other variables. So, the researcher uses this research to achieve accurate data from a variable.

This is also supported by an approach used by researchers, namely a qualitative approach. A qualitative approach is used to find a meaning in a problem. Qualitative research is certainly different from quantitative research.

According to Creswell & Clark (2017), qualitative research is one of the research procedures that produces descriptive data in the form of speech or writing and the behavior of the people being observed.

It can be concluded that the descriptive method with a qualitative approach in the study of Empowerment of the Poor in the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program in Tanjungpinang City aims to obtain results and findings that are in accordance with field facts related to empowerment of the poor in Tanjungpinang City in the form of a description or series of words with see meaning in phenomena that are found or are happening.

In this study, informants are selected using a purposive sampling technique. The purposive sampling technique was carried out with the consideration that the informants were people who knew about the Empowerment of the Poor in the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program in Tanjungpinang City so that the data obtained was more valid and accountable. The informants in this study were the State Civil Apparatus of the Tanjungpinang City Social Service, which consisted of (a) the Head of Social Protection and Security Division, as many as 1 person, (b) the Regional Coordinator of Non-Cash Food Assistance as many as 1 person; (c) District Social Welfare Personnel as many as 1 person; (d) District Social Welfare Personnel as many as 5 people.

The research instrument used is an interview guide, which includes household, economic, and resource dimensions. As contained in Appendix I, the location of this research was the Social Service of Tanjungpinang City, Riau Islands Province. In addition to taking data from the Tanjungpinang City Social Service, this research is also focused on being carried out in several sub-districts that have E-Warong so that data on the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program can be obtained in more detail.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Empowerment of the Poor in the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program

In order to reduce poverty in Indonesia, the government, as the Ministry of Social Affairs, issues and manages a program called Non-Cash Food Assistance. The Tanjungpinang City Social Service participated in the success of this program in order to reduce the poverty rate in Tanjungpinang City. The working system of the Non-Cash Food Assistance program is banking, which means that the assistance provided is not in the form of cash but in the form of a card called the Prosperous Family Card containing the balance to be exchanged for limited food assistance according to the implementation instructions for the provision of Non-Cash Food Assistance. The banking system used by the Tanjungpinang City Social Service is the State-Owned Bank Association Bank (Himbara), in this case, Bank Negara Indonesia (BNI). This is done so that the provision of assistance is more efficient and on target, which means that the provision of assistance is more transparent and easier to control. The Non-Cash Food Assistance Program is supervised by the Tanjungpinang City Social Service, which is a central government program. In carrying out this supervision, the Tanjungpinang City Social Service is also assisted by the regional coordinator of the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program, who has the task of coordinating each District's Social Welfare Personnel. District Social Welfare Personnel are E-Warong assistants for each sub-district in Tanjungpinang City. The regional coordinator for the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program and the District Social Welfare Personnel was fostered by the Tanjungpinang City Social Service and was chosen not to be a Civil Servant. This is done so that the tasks assigned as assistants do not interfere with their duties and obligations as Civil servants. Non-Cash Food Assistance Program regional coordinators and District Social Welfare Personnel have another task, namely assisting recipients of assistance, and they are expected to participate in the success of the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program.

The people who are selected as beneficiaries are called Beneficiary Families through household recommendations to the subdistrict office. Beneficiary Families are then registered in the Integrated Social Welfare Data. Each Beneficiary Family is given assistance worth IDR 200,000 (Two Hundred Thousand Rupiah), which is entered into the Prosperous Family Card. Through the assistance provided, beneficiary families cannot withdraw the money from the card; they can only exchange it for food items available at E-Warong. The assistance that can be exchanged is also limited, namely only food items such as rice, eggs, beans, chicken, meat, and others, according to the guidelines by the Ministry of Social Affairs. Beneficiary families are not permanent, which means they can be replaced every month, so the number of beneficiaries varies each month. The nature of the Non-Cash Food Assistance budget cannot be seen every year, but every month, according to the number of beneficiaries in this case, are the Expected Beneficiary Families. Through an interview with Alifah, the Regional Coordinator of Non-Cash Food Assistance Program, on January 4, 2022, the largest number of Beneficiary Families was in October 2021, which amounted to 7,531 Beneficiary Families.

Table 1. Number of Beneficiary Families October 2021

NO.	DISTRICT	SUM
1.	East Tanjungpinang	2.816
2.	Bestari Hill	1.721
3.	Tanjungpinang City	1.337
4.	West Tanjungpinang	1.657
	Sum	7.531

Source: Tanjungpinang City Social Service, 2021

Beneficiary Families who receive Non-Cash Food Assistance can make transactions or take assistance at E-Warong in Tanjungpinang City. E-Warong is an agent stall appointed by the government that has an EDC (Electronic Data Capture) machine to retrieve Prosperous Family Card data containing the balance of Non-Cash Food Assistance. Himbara Bank plays a role in the program transaction system.

Non-Cash Food Assistance in Tanjungpinang City is Bank Negara Indonesia (BNI) as the payee. There are 37 E-Warongs available in Tanjungpinang City, consisting of 12 KUBE E-Warongs or Gotong Royong and 25 BNI E-Warongs or 46 E-Warong Agents. The

difference between E-Warong KUBE and E-Warong Agents BNI is the manager of the E-Warong KUBE is the Beneficiary Families itself, which consists of one owner and four other managers, while the E-Warong Agent 46 formed by BNI has only one manager and is the owner of the E-Warong. In addition, the purpose of managing KUBE E-Warong is to help the economy of the owner of the KUBE E-Warong, in this case, the Beneficiary Families.

Meanwhile, the E-Warong formed by BNI is not owned by Beneficiary Families, which means that the income from the E-Warong is only obtained for the owner. So, in this study, the researcher only conducted interviews and observations with E-Warong KUBE because they were relevant to this research.

E-Warong KUBE has beneficiary families as managers, so the beneficiary families themselves carry out the service. All kinds of activities in the KUBE E-Warong are carried out by Beneficiary Families, such as serving other Beneficiary families, ensuring the availability of food, coordinating with assistants or District Social Welfare Personnel, and others related to the management of KUBE E-Warongs.

My target in this research is E-Warong KUBE, which is available in Tanjungpinang Timur and Bestari Hill sub-districts because these two sub-districts are districts with a large population and the highest number of recipients of Non-Cash Food Assistance.

The availability of food ingredients at E-Warong KUBE is guaranteed because the owner, as the chairman of E-Warong KUBE, always gets food distributors who are actively providing these foodstuffs every month. So, in the availability of food that will be prepared for Beneficiary Families in the Program,

Non-Cash Food Assistance has no significant obstacles. This food supply distributor is also not fixated on certain distributors, so the Tanjungpinang City Social Service, as the supervisor, gives E-Warong KUBE the freedom to find the best and appropriate distributor.

All responsibilities for the distribution of food aid are handed over to the E-Warong manager, which is carried out according to the guidelines (Engkus et al., 2022; Sakti & Kristian, 2023; Sariningsih et al., 2021). In practice, there are also changes related to the policy, especially during a pandemic like this. There were changes related to distribution which resulted in certain policies, such as Non-Cash Food Assistance during Restrictions on Community Activities, namely additional assistance provided to Beneficiary Families during the COVID-19 pandemic and changes in food exchange from Non-Cash Food Assistance Program assistance, which should be in accordance with the guidelines from the Ministry. Social change to Beneficiary Families can buy whatever is available at the E-Warong. It has both positive and negative values with Help.

Non-Cash Food programs during Restrictions on Community Activities, the community, especially the Beneficiary Families, can be helped by the current situation, namely the Covid-19 pandemic, in which middle and lower class people find it difficult to meet their daily needs due to certain circumstances. Meanwhile, the change in the exchange of food assistance provided gives freedom to the Beneficiary Families to spend anything, so the impact that occurs is that the agent's E-Warong becomes the center of this aid exchange because, in terms of availability, the agent's E-Warong is more efficient superior because there are more choices of food ingredients and also other additional needs, so E-Warong KUBE can't feel this because the goods provided are only limited food ingredients, such as rice and eggs. This actually cannot help KUBE E-Warong, especially the management, namely Beneficiary Families, in terms of the economy to help improve their lives. So, at a time like this, a companion role is needed in this program, which means the District Social Welfare Personnel. The interview that the researcher conducted with Marwan as the Personnel.

In this Non-Cash Food Assistance Program, the government, especially the Social Service and supporting devices, helped, in this case, directing Beneficiary families to shop at KUBE E-Warongs to be able to improve and assist KUBE E-Warong owners and managers who are also part of Beneficiary Families from the economic aspect. It can also be seen that there is an effort to empower the Beneficiary Families the government so that Beneficiary Families, in this case, the E-Warong KUBE manager, continue to manage the KUBE E-Warong in order to get a turnover of the stall sales which are jointly owned. This is one of the efforts to reduce poverty, especially in Tanjungpinang City.

Beneficiary families in Tanjungpinang City belong to a low economic community with low income levels, so it is difficult for them to prosper in their own lives and those of their families. From the results of the interviews I did, the majority of the jobs of the beneficiary families are if the husbands are the majority, and the majority have jobs such as laborers, fishermen, motorcycle taxis, food traders, and odd jobs if the wife is not working or, being a housewife or helping her husband.

A job can determine the state of one's life later, which means the income of a job is very influential in meeting one's needs. The income level of Beneficiary Families in Tanjungpinang City tends to be low. A person who has a job within certain limitations is categorized as a food insecure community group. So, this group, especially the Beneficiary Families, are given Non-Cash Food Assistance to meet their food needs so that they can feel free from food shortages due to their low income levels. Likewise, the expenditure of beneficiary families is not balanced with their income level. People who receive Non-Cash Food Assistance have quite a lot of expenses for their lives because of several dependents, while, for example, from Beneficiary Families, judging from

the type of work their husbands are casual laborers and wives who are housewives, their family income is low. The presence of non-cash food assistance is an effort that can empower people in several aspects of their lives.

In addition, Beneficiary Families who have varied jobs also use this assistance to support their work (Autin et al., 2020; T. J. George et al., 2022; Titonell et al., 2021). The assistance provided is used for various economic activities. From the results of the research conducted, beneficiary families, such as fried rice traders, snack traders, and cake traders, use assistance to meet the needs of the food trade. This is done to reduce their selling capital to get additional profits from their sales. However, taking advantage of the assistance does not reduce their daily needs or even keep their food needs fulfilled.

Economic activities that run from the results of assistance solely for Beneficiary Families can carry out their lives as they should. Behind that, non-cash food assistance can provide an element of empowerment for beneficiary families. Empowerment is the goal and process of increasing the empowerment of individuals and groups through poverty alleviation efforts. Empowerment refers to the state or outcome to be achieved through social change for the better. The empowerment approach aims to lift the poor out of obstacles and powerlessness and support the poor in a better quality of life through the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program in Tanjungpinang City. In this case, the researcher discusses how empowerment is carried out in the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program. Through the Non-Cash Food Assistance program, researchers saw an element of empowerment in the beneficiary households, namely the Beneficiary Families. Empowerment is flexible, there is no method that regulates empowerment (Boone, 2019a; Hewagama et al., 2019; Luthfiana, 2022; Ritter et al., 2014; Rohman & Widayati, 2021). The existence of an empowerment approach refers to a context; in this case, the empowerment that researchers observe is empowerment based on the basic needs of a beneficiary family household. This is also supported by Friedmann's statement (Boone, 2019b) that the household is the main source of empowerment. With this, the success of empowerment is seen by the strength of the household, which consists of three kinds of indicators, namely:

3.2 Social Aspect

The social aspect assesses a household, in this case, is the Beneficiary Families can fulfill access to certain production basics in the household or in the sense that can meet food needs, especially eating and drinking in the household and also participation in social organizations in the household. The neighborhood where the Beneficiary Families live.

The need for food is one of the main human needs and must be achieved by carrying out a business in order to maintain and fulfill its survival. The Tanjungpinang City Government, especially the Social Service, has implemented the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program as one of the assistance programs for the poor or marginalized in Tanjungpinang City to eradicate poverty. From the research results, the assistance received from the Non-Cash Food Assistance is for food needs, namely rice, eggs, vegetables, fruits, chicken, meat, and fish. E-Warong is a provider as well as a place.

Beneficiary Families provide what Beneficiary families need; generally, in Tanjungpinang City, the main item that the Beneficiary Family needs is rice. Other things to complete the household side dish production are very rare, so the E-Warong manager always provides lots of rice in each stall. The main food needs of Beneficiary Families in Tanjungpinang City are rice. Interviews that I did with Ramila as Beneficiary Families as well as the manager of E-Warong KUBE in East Tanjungpinang District on January 14, 2022, and with Sri as Beneficiary Families, as well as manager of E-Warong KUBE in Bestari Hill District on January 5, 2022 which is a sub-district with a total number of Beneficiary Families The high level with the results of the interviews that I conducted, was that Beneficiary Families, both the managers of E-Warong KUBE and others, felt helped by the assistance they received from Non-Cash Food Assistance Program, especially from their expenses and sometimes they were unable to meet their rice needs until the end of the month. So, it can be said that one aspect of household strength, which is the goal of empowerment, can be said to be fulfilled.

This is also supported by community participation in social organizations. The conditions of a settlement in Tanjungpinang City are diverse. In general, the neighborly life and social relations of the people of Tanjungpinang City are still maintained. The residences of the poor who receive Non-Cash Food Assistance are not separated from those of the wealthy or the upper middle class. Even so, there was no gap between them. There is no difference between them being poor or rich in their neighborly life. Community organizations in Tanjungpinang City are generally located in each sub-district of Tanjungpinang City. Beneficiary Families in Tanjungpinang City are not discriminated against in neighborly life, so their social relations are maintained, and they can actively participate in community organizations. The community, especially Beneficiary Families in Tanjungpinang City, are also active in community organizations, and there is no gap or distinction between them in their participation in the organization. Thus, the social aspect of empowering the poor includes success in realizing household strength.

3.3 Political Aspect

The political aspect of assessing each family member in this case is the Beneficiary Families can process in making decisions, especially decisions that affect their own future. Decision making is not solely decided by the head of the family but by each individual in the household. The future leads to the direction of the household life of the Beneficiary Families.

In my research, I found that the government, through the Non-Cash Food Assistance program, provides college scholarships for Beneficiary Families who have children to continue their undergraduate education. Beneficiary Families who received assistance in the form of free tuition for their children in Tanjungpinang City were Iddha, Non-Cash Food Assistance Program recipient and manager of E-Warong Bestari Sejahtera located in Bestari Hill District. By having a Prosperous Family Card, beneficiary families are entitled to a scholarship for their child's college, which will consist of several stages of online registration and selection. This is a useful policy for them in making further decisions about their future, and of course, this policy can also help Beneficiary Families in managing the amount of expenditure in continuing their life.

Besides that, with the fulfillment of food needs, Beneficiary Families can make decisions on household financial management. As can be understood, Beneficiary Families is a poor community that receives social assistance in the form of Non-Cash Food Assistance in the form of rice, eggs, vegetables, and other food needs. Beneficiary Families do not always receive this assistance, as the development of households, their circumstances, and some obstacles from the government can make them unable to receive assistance. Thus, the decision on their financial expenditure after not receiving assistance must be determined. Some Beneficiary Families in Tanjungpinang City who no longer receive assistance for some reason have made the decision to live their lives as usual. Beneficiary Families must be ready and able to make the right decisions in the future when they cannot receive Non-Cash Food Assistance anymore. The strength of the Beneficiary Families household in Tanjungpinang City in making decisions for their lives, in general, has been able to be carried out in a positive direction. Thus, from the political aspect of empowering the poor, it is said that Beneficiary Families are able to make the right long-term decisions.

3.4 Psychological Aspect

The psychological aspect relies on the individual's potential, namely the Beneficiary Families, to be able to show behavior and self-confidence. Self-confidence arises when a person does not feel inferior in his environment. The purpose of food assistance provided by the government to Beneficiary Families is to reduce poverty in Tanjungpinang City. The freedom of Beneficiary Families from poverty creates a sense of self-confidence so that they can adapt to their lives from social and political aspects. In the process, Beneficiary Families received Non-Cash Food Assistance Program protection from all forms of discrimination so as not to be oppressed.

Protection means protecting society, especially vulnerable groups, from oppression by the strong, avoiding unfair (especially unhealthy) competition between the strong and the weak, and preventing exploitation of the weak by the strong. Empowerment should aim to eliminate all forms of discrimination and domination against disadvantaged groups so that Beneficiary Families are more confident. The Social Security and Protection Sector has the task of implementing an empowerment approach to protect the poor from being oppressed by a stronger group (Boone, 2019a, 2019b; Ratnawati & Sutopo, 2014). This effort is made so that the psychological aspect of household strength can be realized.

Protecting the weak community, namely the Tanjungpinang City Beneficiary Families, which are assisted by the Tanjungpinang City Social Service, is important to protect the poor, especially Beneficiary Families, in order to get the needed protection. This empowerment protection approach is important because protection must be given to the poor who are experiencing economic problems, and this can be overcome with the Non-Cash Food Assistance program. The implementation of the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program program through a protection approach protects the weak in question, which is the beneficiary families. To be able to protect through the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program program and providing advice in order to eradicate poverty and be empowered is not effective because protecting the poor is not only providing understanding but also providing more action to eradicate poverty. In seeing whether the poor or what is meant by Beneficiary Families have received protection, the researchers collected information from the District Social Welfare Personnel who are the assistants to Beneficiary Families in the Non-Cash Food Assistance program in Tanjungpinang City. According to Marwan, District Social Welfare Personnel Bestari Hill district on January 5, 2022, if Beneficiary Families feel a loss, both material and mental, then Beneficiary Families can report directly to District Social Welfare Personnel or the Social Service directly, and so far no Beneficiary Families has felt anything like that. Protection for Beneficiary Families is given so that there is no gap between those who are beneficiaries of assistance and those who do not receive assistance.

Discrimination does not only arise from the stronger group but also from the jealousy of the weaker community members, so the role of facilitators and the government in supervision needs to be present. Jealousy can have a negative effect on their environment. The role of the government, namely the Tanjungpinang City Social Service, has succeeded in providing an understanding of the protection approach so that poor people who are fellow Beneficiary families in Tanjungpinang City can take action to protect one another so that there is no discrimination that can attack a person's mentality and affect his level of confidence. That way, the confident behavior of Beneficiary Families can be seen because, so far, there has been no discrimination against Beneficiary Families. Beneficiary Families in Tanjungpinang City have tried to alleviate poverty and try not to rely on the assistance they receive in the form of rice every month due to weak economic conditions. They are also trying to improve their quality of life so as not to be further marginalized. This is a benchmark that allows people to be empowered even without relying on help and remain confident in themselves and their household conditions.

From the description above, the three indicators, namely aspects of household strength, which are the goals of empowering the poor, can be said to be successful in implementing empowerment through the Non-Cash Food Assistance program. The poor can be said to be empowered by looking at the strength of their household that fulfils social, political, and psychological aspects. In its implementation, it is possible that the empowerment of the poor through the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program program can run smoothly. Barriers also arise that affect the process and its implementation.

4. Conclusion

Based on the descriptions and observations made by the authors in the implementation of research on the Empowerment of the Poor in the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program in Tanjungpinang City, the authors conclude several conclusions as follows: Household power, which is the main source of empowerment, through the Non-Cash Food Assistance program can be said to have succeeded in empowering the community, namely the Beneficiary Families. Where this can be seen from three aspects of household strength, namely: (1) Social Aspect: Fulfilment of access to certain production, namely the food needs of Beneficiary Families, which are predominantly rice, and they feel helped by the Non-Cash Food Assistance program so that the results of the assistance can meet their food needs for up to a month. With them getting this assistance, until now, there is no difference between Beneficiary Families and other people who tend to be able so that there are no gaps and their social relations are maintained. Thus, Beneficiary Families can also actively participate in social organizations in the community, such as youth organizations. (2) Political Aspect: Beneficiary Families are able to make the right decisions for the future of the individual and their household, such as taking scholarships for their children by Beneficiary Families so that they do not have to pay for their children's higher education. In addition, Beneficiary Families are also able to make decisions on expenditures and household financial management, such as when they do not receive assistance anymore. Beneficiary Families are able to make decisions on expenditures for their household and continue to live their lives as they should; (3) Psychological Aspect: The government, especially the Social Service Office of Tanjungpinang City together with the District Social Welfare Personnel, has succeeded in implementing protection for Beneficiary Families and understanding the protection approach to the community, namely Beneficiary Families so that there is no discrimination and inequality between Beneficiary Families or the other community so that Beneficiary Families can show behavior and self-confidence.

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