



## Actor Network Study on the Implementation of Poverty Alleviation Policy in Central Kalimantan, Indonesia

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### ABSTRACT

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Inclusive policy interventions and involvement of state institutions are essential for combating poverty. However, the implementation of poverty alleviation policies has generated mixed results. Additionally, existing research paid more attention to conventional analyses, which are commonly limited to structural or institutional aspects. The study question concerns who the actors involved are and how the actor-network configuration operates in the implementation of poverty alleviation policy. Using the actor-network theory (ANT) framework, this study evaluated the interaction patterns between human and non-human actors in poverty alleviation policies. The data derived from regulatory documents, government reports, and interviews. The results demonstrated that human actors comprise organizations and individuals, while non-human actors comprise regulatory, financial, and technical categories. These regulations legitimise the central government as a key actor with full authority to establish a robust network of relationships between human actors. Moreover, the central government is a key actor that translates its interests to other stakeholders to realise this goal. Regulations strongly legitimise the central government's authority and power to strengthen its position in network relations. This study contributes to the policy implementation literature by demonstrating how policy implementation shapes interactions, relationships, and configurations among actors, policy instruments, and material elements within a complex policy network.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In 2024, approximately 692 million people lived below the poverty line. The United Nations had included "ending poverty in all its forms everywhere" as one of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Therefore, poverty eradication is the focus of global development governance [1]. In development studies, poverty is believed to be the antithesis of welfare. A low ability to meet basic needs reflects a systemic failure to achieve minimum welfare standards.

Poverty can also be understood from different perspectives. In political science, it refers to the consequence of unstable political conditions and poor governance due to political corruption. Political corruption is a structural factor that significantly exacerbates national poverty [2, 3]. It begins with the distortion of public policy, ideally designed for the benefit of citizens, which is directed toward the benefit of certain groups. This condition creates opportunities for certain groups of people within the government to initiate corruption. Defects in governance in countries with high economic conditions are highly vulnerable to exploitation [4], particularly the suboptimal distribution of state resources and social injustice

among groups [5, 6]. Social inequalities limit citizens' access to vital public services, hamper poverty alleviation programmes, and marginalise certain groups [7]. More simply, political corruption creates a disproportionate relationship between the well-connected and the marginalised [8-10]. Thus, inclusive policy interventions and anti-corruption initiatives are essential [11].

The implementation of poverty alleviation policies is a highly complex political process that involves the use of political power, the exercise of authority, resource mobilisation, institutional management, and efforts to gain political legitimacy [12, 13]. In practice, the government continues to play a leading role through top-down policies, leveraging its political advantages in theory, institutions, and practice. The poverty alleviation programmes have been implemented, yet the results have not been optimal. This condition shows the multidimensional and complex nature of poverty, which involves interactions among human, natural, and ecological factors [14, 15]. It confirms that the determinants driving the temporal dynamics of poverty remain an area of incomplete research.

The existing literature shows that political factors are a key

determinant of the successful implementation of poverty alleviation policies. Some studies have made valuable contributions to this field. Asadullah et al. [16] suggested that politics plays a crucial role in the enforcement of poverty alleviation policies in Malaysia. Meanwhile, empowering key actors and political institutions can improve the bargaining power and performance of poverty alleviation policies in China [17]. Furthermore, Ghana's experience demonstrates that social protection policies can generate policy feedback that influences state-citizen relations, particularly for marginalised groups [18]. Experience from Indonesia shows that differences in policy characteristics between the central government, which tends to be universal, and local governments, which are more micro-specific, can be a significant structural barrier to CBE development [19]. Thus, political stability is a fundamental prerequisite for implementing targeted poverty alleviation (TPA) and socioeconomic revitalisation [20]. Appropriate political organisational direction and policies influence the success of poverty alleviation policy interventions [21].

The study of poverty alleviation implementation requires further investigation [22]. To date, the implementation of poverty alleviation has produced mixed results due to some crucial factors, such as the politicisation of social assistance [23], poor households [1], top-down or bottom-up implementation models [24], local socio-cultural characteristics [25], and even the behaviour of street-level bureaucrats [26]. Existing studies also show that poverty alleviation has received considerable attention from scholars. Asadullah et al. [16] and Bekele [27] focused on the political economy analysis of poverty alleviation implementation, and Li and Wu [17], Gao [28], and Kaewhanam et al. [29] analysed the structural factors that significantly influence poverty alleviation. Additionally, some studies utilised an institutional perspective [30-32]. These studies analyse the impact of TPA policies on poverty in China. To our knowledge, there is a tendency for the scientific perspectives used to differ among structural, institutional, and political economy. These insights promote the role of political actors and formal institutions. The study question:

RQ1: Who are the actors involved in the implementation of the poverty alleviation policy?

RQ2. How is the actor-network configured in the implementation of the poverty alleviation policy?

This study used the actor-network theory (ANT) framework, which allowed for a comprehensive analysis of the interaction patterns between human and non-human actors in complex and multidimensional social phenomena, such as poverty. The implementation of poverty alleviation policies is not merely understood as a top-down or bottom-up process but rather as a networked process that is dynamic, symmetrical, and inclusive of the role of nonhuman actors. The analysis in this study goes beyond conventional analyses, which are commonly limited to structural or institutional aspects, towards a new understanding of how the configuration of actor networks influences the effectiveness of poverty alleviation policy implementation. Theoretically, this study contributes to the policy implementation literature by demonstrating how policy implementation shapes interactions, relationships, and configurations among human and non-human actors within a complex policy network. By applying an ANT perspective to the implementation of Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH), this study offers a more relational understanding of how actors, policy instruments, and material elements collectively

influence the implementation of poverty-alleviation policy.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Actor-network theory

In life, social relationships are formed through network interaction patterns involving various elements. Humans are social beings who interact with other humans to form social networks, identities, and structures. In sociological studies, social relationships can be explained using two main approaches: social and technological determinism. However, both approaches often fail to fully reflect the empirical practice. Social relationships are formed because of the interconnectedness between humans and technology, which interact and influence each other.

Bridging these perspectives, the ANT is a framework that explains social phenomena as the result of network interactions involving various elements, including human and non-human actors, as introduced by Bruno Latour. ANT views that all social entities continuously interact and connect with one another to reshape their identities within a network [33]. The stability of the network of human and non-human actors is built on the basis of positive knowledge and power relations [34]. Correspondingly, Blok and Jensen [35] argued that this framework is based on fluctuating networks based on reciprocal relationships between human and nonhuman actors. Therefore, the sociology of association approach in ANT suggests that social relations are dependent [36]. Over its development, ANT has been widely used to predict patterns and relationships in social interactions, including in the field of energy transitions [37].

The four elements that constitute the construction of ANT include actors, the translation process, tracing the network, and sui generis explanatory power [38]. Actors connected in a network are heterogeneous, with each actor simultaneously having agency [33]. A network is defined as an ecosystem consisting of diverse relationships. Yao and Liu [33] found that networks are dynamic and inseparable, as part of the interaction between human and non-human actors. Thus, network connections affirm that one actor is connected to more than one connection, creating relational materiality to participate in the network construction. Translation is the process of building relationships through equality or creating similarities between contexts that are distinct in reality [38]. Obligatory passage points serve as reference points that actors should negotiate to achieve mutual agreement and shared goals. Key actors translate their interests to other connected actors. The ANT Framework also implicitly mentions that translating the interests of different actors and connecting them to network partners generates sui generis explanatory power. Unfortunately, the power generated is non-accumulated and fragile.

### 2.2 Examining the connection between actor networks and policy implementation

Initially, policy implementation studies focused on structural and institutional perspectives. The institutional perspective suggests that the primary factors for successful policy implementation are inter-institutional coordination and well-institutionalised rules [39-41]. Existing literature suggests that policy implementation is the intersection of

politics, policy, and the public, which involves institutional environments, structures, and organisations to allocate power for decision-making [42]. For example, political decisions influence policy implementation design, particularly in determining the goals and objectives that need to be translated into action [43, 44]. Implementation challenges arise when institutions are highly dependent on diverse situations and conditions, and the institutional perspective does not offer easily applicable analytical procedures.

In practice, government bureaucracies often lack the capacity to implement policies effectively. The weaknesses of the institutional structural approach have led to the development of a new perspective. Policy implementation is viewed as an act of bargaining, exchange, and negotiation between actors [45]. This approach explains that public policy is not limited to the outcomes of hierarchical orders but rather the result of bargaining and negotiation between interests. Policy implementation is often influenced by interest group actors [46], each of whom has different understandings, goals, and interests [47]. In this process, each actor contributes information, campaign support, and electoral support to political parties, which may require adjustments to the policy agenda [48]. This situation creates tension and encourages policy actors to negotiate a mutual agreement. The direct participation of interest groups can influence policy outcomes. The result is a policy design that promotes the collaboration and compromise of various actors involved. As the intensity of interactions between institutions and actors increases, policy implementation develops into an increasingly complex network [49]. This process shows that institutions do not work in isolation but are realised with other actors who are mutually involved and interact with the resulting policy designs [50]. Therefore, studies on policy implementation have begun to shift toward a dynamic understanding of the interactions between actors in shaping policy outcomes. Furthermore, it is important to consider the application of policy conditions within the context in which the policy is developed, such as policy design, policy content, the nature of the policy process, and the actors involved.

ANT provides a strong theoretical foundation for understanding how policy implementation is viewed as a network of interactions between human and nonhuman actors. This theoretical framework focuses on the sociomaterial aspects and translation processes that shape policy implementation. Within the ANT framework, the translation process, which involves four main stages-problematisation, interessement, enrolment, and mobilization-explains how the differing goals and interests of all actors are negotiated. By highlighting the network of relationships between actors, ANT explains how policy implementation is not simply the result of hierarchical orders but of bargaining and negotiation. Thus, the ANT framework helps transcend the limitations of existing knowledge on policy implementation and examines the relationships among actors behind the policy.

### 3. METHOD

#### 3.1 Study approach

This is a case study with an interpretive qualitative approach. A qualitative approach is used because it offers a deep understanding of complex social phenomena [51] and allows researchers to enrich their understanding of the context

that shapes human behaviour [52]. A case study method facilitates a systematic and detailed examination of a special unit of analysis to understand the empirical context [53]. In this study, the implementation of PKH in Central Kalimantan is a micro-case. It explains how individuals behave in the field of poverty alleviation, including their roles, negotiation of interests, and relationships with other individuals that build a network foundation. This study explores the relationships among actors involved in the implementation of poverty alleviation policies in Central Kalimantan, Indonesia.

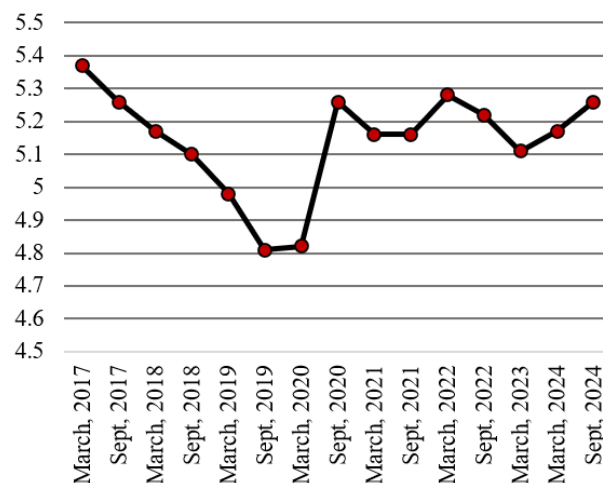


Figure 1. Poverty ratio in Indonesia

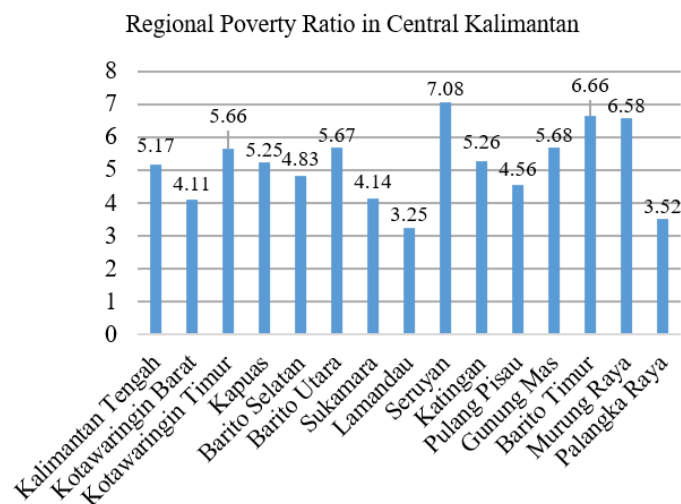


Figure 2. Regional poverty ratio in Central Kalimantan

#### 3.2 Study area

This study was conducted in Central Kalimantan, Indonesia. Indonesia is a developing country with abundant natural resources, yet the majority of its citizens live below the poverty line. Poverty alleviation policy initiatives have been implemented through different strategies; however, the number of poor people remains high [54]. This condition reflects the paradox of plenty phenomenon, in which countries rich in natural resources tend to perform worse in economic development and governance than other countries. Orlando and Suffian [13] noted that Central Kalimantan is an autonomous region with abundant natural resources but is one of the poorest autonomous regions in Indonesia (see Figures 1 and 2). Although Central Kalimantan contributes significantly

to Indonesia's GDP, the region experiences serious economic and social degradation [55]. This damage is caused by the overexploitation of natural resources, destruction of biodiverse ecosystems, and threat to the sustainability of local cultures [56]. Consequently, the marginalisation of these groups has become increasingly widespread. Therefore, Central Kalimantan is a strategic area for studying the dynamics of poverty alleviation policies to achieve the SDGs.

### 3.3 Data collection and analysis

This study conducted data from regulatory documents, governments reports and interviews with beneficiaries of the PKH programme in Central Kalimantan. Table 1 summarizes these sources and their analytical functions. To guide the interview process, a semi-structured framework was developed, consisting of introductory, transitional, key, and

concluding questions. The introductory questions were designed to help the participants adapt to the interview environment. The transitional questions aimed to lead a smooth flow to the main questions. Meanwhile, the closing questions were formulated to summarise the interviews and ensure that the interviewees had no further comments. After the interview data were collected, they were analysed thematically. In the initial stage of the process, we input the interview data. In the next stage, we conducted open coding and categorised each actor involved in the poverty alleviation policy network in Kalimantan into human and non-human actors. The open coding process within the thematic analysis framework was conducted for each emerging code, serving as the basis for the formation of initial themes. The codes generated from the initial coding process were arranged as a centralised organising concept for the theme.

**Table 1.** Data inventory and analytical roles

| Data Sources                      | Selection Criteria                                                                                                                                  | Role in Analysis                                                                                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Regulatory documents              | Laws and regulations directly related to PKH, social assistance, poverty reduction, and program implementation in Central Kalimantan.               | Identifying the formal institutional framework, actor mandates, responsibilities, implementation rules, and regulatory mechanisms shaping the PKH actor network.   |
| Government reports                | Official reports issued by relevant government institutions containing information on PKH implementation in Central Kalimantan.                     | Examining the operational implementation of PKH and interactions among implementing actors.                                                                        |
| Interviews with PKH beneficiaries | Twenty individuals registered as PKH beneficiaries in the study area who had direct experience with the implementation and delivery of the program. | Capturing beneficiaries' experiences, perceptions, interactions with implementing actors, and the practical operation of the actor network at the community level. |

Note: Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH).

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Actors mapping into Program Keluarga Harapan implementation

The main body of the poverty alleviation network system in Central Kalimantan contains many actors, as presented in

Table 2 and Table 3. The actor groups were divided into human and non-human actors according to the first-level classification. Then, we specified the second-level classification: the human actors were divided into organisations and individuals, and the non-human actors were divided into material and consciousness categories.

**Table 2.** Actor classification in Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) implementation

| Actor           | Classification                 | Representative                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Human actor     | Organisation                   | The Central Government, Local Government, the office of Social Services, the office of Local Development and Planning, the Ministry of Social Affairs, Post Office. |
|                 | Individual                     | Government officials, social facilitators, community volunteers, and PKH beneficiaries.                                                                             |
| Non-human actor | Regulation category            | Constitutional laws, technical regulations, PKH implementation guidelines, and eligibility criteria.                                                                |
|                 | Finance and technical category | Integrated social welfare data, administrative forms, PKH funds, Bank account, Payment mechanism.                                                                   |

Sources: Processed by authors.

**Table 3.** Human actors in Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) implementation

| Government Structure | Job Titles             | Total |
|----------------------|------------------------|-------|
| Central government   | Program coordinator    | 23    |
|                      | Database administrator | 31    |
|                      | Regional coordinator   | 79    |
| Regional government  | Database administrator | 94    |
|                      | Local coordinator      | 646   |
| Local government     | Area supervisor        | 357   |
|                      | Database administrator | 1876  |
|                      | Social facilitator     | 36816 |

Sources: The ministry of social affairs.

Tables 2 and 3 show that the actor network involved in PKH programme implementation is highly complex. This programme involves support from diverse organisational and individual actors, as well as non-human actors. The PKH programme is a forum for human and nonhuman actors to collaborate and interact in poverty alleviation. Therefore, the PKH program is neither a priority nor a key status to the power of one party. Human and non-human actors collaborate and transform in actions, encouraging the formation and development of poverty alleviation as the primary goal.

Table 4 shows that a multilayered regulatory system supports Indonesia's poverty alleviation policy. Each regulation is closely interconnected, forming an integrated

institutional system that governs central-regional coordination and the involvement of various actors. The regulatory framework structures poverty alleviation practices by determining actor participation, resource allocation, and patterns of interaction among them. However, regulations tend to be positioned as static end products, not dynamic actors within policy networks. The ANT perspective emphasises that regulations are non-human actors that shape the network of relationships between human actors in the policy implementation process. Therefore, the existing regulatory framework is crucial for assessing the success of poverty alleviation initiatives in Indonesia's villages.

**Table 4.** Poverty alleviation policies

| No. | Regulations                                        | the Relevance                                                                                                                                              |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | The 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia | The constitutional basis is that poverty alleviation programmes are a state obligation.                                                                    |
| 2   | Law Number 11 of 2009                              | Regulating the social welfare programmes is the government's effort to meet the basic needs of marginalised groups.                                        |
| 3   | Law Number 13 of 2011                              | Regulating the social protection and community empowerment programmes is part of social policy for poverty alleviation.                                    |
| 4   | Law Number 40 of 2004                              | Regulating the social protection programmes is a strategy to increase the economic resilience of the community.                                            |
| 5   | Law Number 23 of 2014                              | Regulating the role of local government in poverty alleviation according to local characteristics.                                                         |
| 6   | The Government Regulation No. 39 of 2012           | Regulating the roles of central government, local government, and society as part of systematic coordination in implementing poverty alleviation policies. |
| 7   | The Presidential Regulation No. 15 of 2010         | Regulating institutional structures and cross-sectoral cooperation to accelerate poverty alleviation.                                                      |
| 8   | The Presidential Regulation No. 82 of 2016         | Regulating support for the economic empowerment of poor communities through inclusive finance.                                                             |

Sources: Processed by authors.

#### 4.2 Translation process in the Program Keluarga Harapan implementation

The mechanism for PKH implementation is explained by the linear, procedural flow of the Ministry of Social Affairs' program mechanisms, as presented in Figure 3. Meanwhile, the translation process in PKH implementation is a series of negotiations, reinterpretations, and adjustments that occur when central government policies interact with local realities. In contrast to the linear and simple flow of PKH implementation mechanisms, field practice demonstrates a complex, contested, and often deviant translation process from the program's initial design. Interview evidence reveals the actual dynamics, including points where actor interactions, program requirements, and practices diverge from the expected pathway. The translation process often deviates from a smooth, linear flow due to practical constraints, negotiations, actor responses, and alignment challenges. For example, determining potential beneficiaries based on the Integrated Social Welfare Data managed by the Ministry of Social Affairs is actually the starting point for distortions. The translation process occurs when this data interacts with the community.

The first translation process occurs through social facilitators' practice of simplifying complex social realities. Simple indicators, such as asset ownership, often fail to capture the full nuances of household well-being. The initial translation process fails when the data recorded in the Integrated Social Welfare Data cannot be accurately "translated" into the local reality of poverty.

*"What's worse, people who own luxury homes and cars and use air conditioning can still receive PKH assistance.*

*Meanwhile, my elderly parents have never received assistance, even though they have been registered. Other residents and I have filed complaints with the local government's social services office. We received no response when we contacted the social facilitator again. We feel the administrative process is complicated."* (Beneficiary)

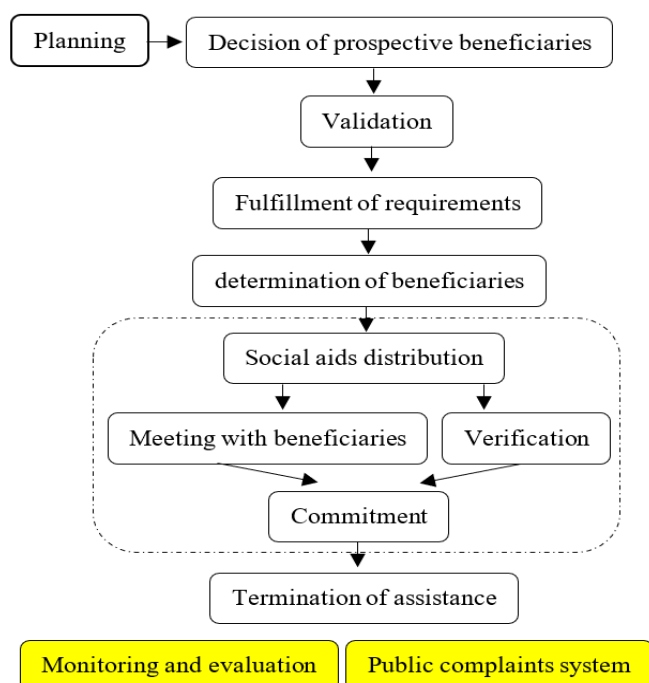
The validation and beneficiary determination stage in the PKH implementation process is a straightforward administrative step. However, the translation process at this stage is highly complex and fraught with negotiation. Some beneficiaries initially failed to receive PKH assistance for years, even though their data had been recorded by social facilitators.

*"Social facilitators have repeatedly registered my elderly parents. The announcements always list the same beneficiaries. Even the names of deceased parents keep appearing."* (Beneficiary)

The translation process also faces contestation at the data verification and beneficiary determination stages. The centralized verification system implemented by the central government results in unilateral decisions that do not adequately reflect the socioeconomic realities at the village level. The translation process is carried out technically and bureaucratically at the central level, while local communities simply experience the impacts, with little room for negotiation, clarification, or raising objections. This suggests that each actor maintains its own database, rendering the distribution of social assistance less effective. Enrollment failures also occur when actors in the street-level bureaucracy have limited capacity. Social facilitators, the actors closest to the community, have not fully accessed data updates. To date,

beneficiary determination has been based on data recorded in the Integrated Social Welfare Data, which has not been fully updated. In the ANT (National Integrated Social Welfare Data), this reflects the tension between standardized data from the central government and local realities that cannot be reduced to standard indicators.

*“I was very surprised, sir, when I was about to disburse the second phase of PKH assistance. My name was no longer listed as a recipient. I never opened the application, let alone resigned as a recipient. I'm so technologically illiterate. I asked the PKH assistant and was told that the written records stated I had resigned. I never did that! I suspected someone had changed my data without my knowledge. Then I asked for my rights to be restored, but was asked to submit a new proposal again. The process is difficult, sir. It takes a long time. I didn't accept it, so I reported it to the police so they can investigate who had access and dared to play around with my data.”* (Beneficiary)



**Figure 3.** Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) mechanism

### 4.3 Applying actor-network theory in the Program Keluarga Harapan implementation

ANT focuses its philosophical attention on three entities: social, natural, and technological, which have relational characteristics that can explain the relationships between actors [57]. This network is known as the concept of heterogeneity in the literature. Heterogeneous networks emerge when actors engage with other actors to form partnerships and create networks of aligned interests [58]. These networks consist of human and non-human, social, and technical actors who work in association to understand the complexity of social situations [58] and are united through translation. Translation is defined as the process of transferring interests, roles, and actions, as well as projects to be implemented, from the main actor to other actors within a heterogeneous entity [59]. In the translation process, mandatory share points are essential elements that mediate interactions between actors in the network to achieve shared interests [60]. This process involves intentional and

unintentional negotiations among the actors [61]. Thus, translation is a method for expanding and stabilising networks by involving other actors/objects in achieving their respective goals.

Social protection programmes are state objectives enshrined in constitutional law. To achieve this, the government carries out its mandate by involving government bodies, including the Ministry of Social Affairs, regional governments, local government, and apparatus as human actors. Technical regulations is also included in their network as non-human actors. Although the constitutional law and technical regulations provide a robust regulatory framework, their misapplication can perpetuate inequality [62]. Multi-actor coordination is crucial to achieve the success of policy implementation [63]. However, multi-actor coordination is highly susceptible to the influence of other factors, including policy design, interaction frequency, interdependence, credibility, leadership, and the actor characters [63]. The active involvement of the actors leads to the transformation of relational spaces and improved poverty alleviation outcomes [64]. Therefore, a comprehensive regulatory framework must be accompanied by sound multi-actor coordination to increase the effectiveness of poverty alleviation. The synergy between a strong legal framework and multi-actor collaboration is the key to successfully overcoming poverty sustainably. It can be used to strengthen the government's position as a legislative body with full authority and power [65].

The expansion and stabilisation of the social protection programme policy network, where one actor draws others into the network, can be analysed using the concept of "translation", as expressed by ANT. The government, particularly the Ministry of Social Affairs, must continue to assert its position as the state agency with authority over poverty issues, both nationally and locally. Poverty management should be delegated to other agencies, allowing them to reach beneficiaries more broadly through their channels. Poverty eradication efforts strengthen the government's position as the primary operator. Meanwhile, citizens act as beneficiaries, and other actors, including the central government, the Ministry of Social Affairs, regional governments, regional apparatus organisations, and the post office, manage and implement social issues according to the technical requirements. The PKH implementation is a translation carried out by the central government to the Ministry of Social Affairs and regional governments, which leads to the translation of associations to citizens. Although the PKH programme is not the sole social protection programme, its large number of beneficiaries creates a need for the government to control poverty levels to an understandable extent.

PKH is an Indonesian government programme that distributes social assistance to marginalised groups. This programme implements a system known as conditional cash transfer, where beneficiaries are required to register in the Integrated Social Welfare Data. In the implementation of the programme, constitutional law is outlined at a more practical level. These regulations represent the translator's interpretation of the issue of poverty and establish it as an "obligatory passage point" in the established network of relationships. The translation process by the government as a national priority programme has severe socio-economic implications. The Ministry of Social Affairs defines itself as having the task and function of determining the policy direction on social issues, particularly poverty. Therefore, the

Ministry of Social Affairs is the organisation of choice because it has the capacity, authority, and tools required to address this issue.

The national poverty rate (see Figure 1) and the poverty rate in Kalimantan Province (Figure 2) are part of the problematisation. Social protection programmes, as efforts to strengthen social security and welfare, are arenas for contestation, controversy, and interaction among actors within the network. Meanwhile, PKH is controlled by the Ministry of Social Affairs. Actors are constantly reminded that they are the ones who know what the problem is and how best to address it—through the distribution of social assistance. Throughout policy implementation, actors are reminded of poverty control efforts to a level understandable to them. These control actions are translated into poverty control policies, strategies, programmes, and practices at the national and regional levels. Thus, other actors involved are guided to define their practices and actions based on the identification and characterisation of problems and anticipated solutions.

The status and meaning of actors in network interactions are continuously reshaped by their relationship and connections. However, some barriers hinder the effective implementation of social assistance policy design in changing the status of marginalised groups. Although social assistance policy design is often simple, implementation requires negotiation, reinterpretation, and adjustment to real-world conditions. The gap between policies formulated bureaucratically at the central level and those implemented by street-level bureaucrats in local communities leads to ineffective policy translation. This gap indicates that top-down policy design excludes street-level bureaucrats and beneficiaries, resulting in their lack of participation in the policy process [66]. Salendab et al. [67] highlighted that successful implementation depends not only on well-designed policies but also on translating them into institutional practice. A top-down approach can limit the role of translators and local actors, while bottom-up adaptations may better address local needs and contexts. This study recommends expanding the capacity of street-level bureaucrats to ensure successful translation. Using ANT, this study reexamines the status of marginalised groups in the design of social assistance policies and examines whether they enable active participation in the decision-making process.

Additionally, an ineffective translation process can cause conflict between street bureaucrats and beneficiaries. Conflicts between actors in collaborative networks are a possible approach to assess tensions in power dynamics. Conflicts can lead to the formation of dynamic control groups. These groups are characterised by their ability to manage internal and external conflicts, adapt to changing circumstances, and strive to balance the distribution of power and resources. Such conflicts can also be incorporated into the feedforward section to present risk points and design thresholds.

ANT encompasses adaptive governance; governance is viewed as social coordination. It asserts that human and nonhuman actors are integrated into a socioecological governance network to achieve pluralistic shared governance. Therefore, the existence of various actors at the central and regional levels constitutes nodes in the network and participates in governance. In the implementation of the PKH programme in Central Kalimantan, various actors (government bodies, apparatuses, social facilitators, and beneficiary groups) play their respective roles at different levels. First, the government leads the implementation. After

public consultation, expert assessment, and democratic deliberation, the central government formulates social protection policies, allocates state resources for social programmes, and organises aid distribution activities for beneficiaries, which has promoted socioeconomic recovery and protection. Second, as policy subjects, beneficiaries can learn about the programme and its components. Third, funds from PKH improve public welfare, enabling beneficiaries to maintain their health and send their children to school. Finally, social facilitators regularly socialise the programme to beneficiary groups, effectively raising community awareness of the rights and obligations that must be fulfilled to ensure continued assistance. Additionally, social facilitator could gather community aspirations and challenges and convey these to the authorities for appropriate solutions.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

Poverty is a macroeconomic and sociopolitical problem that hinders the achievement of SDGs worldwide. Although each country has different situations, they are all actively adopting policies to address this issue. Unfortunately, the existing literature focuses largely on specific analyses, including structural, institutional, and political economies. Based on ANT, this study provides a comprehensive analysis of the interaction patterns between human and non-human actors in the problem of poverty. This study contributes to an in-depth exploration of the formation mechanisms and operational processes from the perspectives of actors, actor networks, obligatory passage points, and translation. Using a poor district in Central Kalimantan as an example, this study analyses the PKH implementation.

The process of translating poverty alleviation policies includes problematisation, interest, enrolment, and mobilisation. Poverty alleviation policies are mandated by constitutional law and are translated into technical regulations. These regulations legitimise the central government as a key actor with full authority to establish a robust network of relationships between human actors. We emphasise the importance of a regulatory foundation coupled with sound multi-actor coordination to increase the effectiveness of poverty alleviation programmes. Synergy between a strong legal framework and multi-actor collaboration is key to sustainably addressing poverty. The process of eliminating absolute poverty demonstrates that the PKH programme is a complex social programme. Once a network of alliances of interests among poverty alleviation actors is established, it can organise and develop itself to help more beneficiaries in poor areas escape poverty and contribute to poverty alleviation. Therefore, the utilisation of the PKH has significant implications for economic development in developing countries and plays a crucial role in poverty alleviation efforts in poor areas.

This study demonstrates how poverty alleviation policies in developing countries and ANT can be applied. Our study has several limitations. We used poverty alleviation policies in Central Kalimantan, Indonesia as a case study. It limited our understanding of the context in which these policies were developed. Therefore, future research can further enrich our understanding and refine the analysis of poverty alleviation policy implementation based on ANT. Furthermore, policy implementation challenges arise in consolidating the achievement of policy objectives, ensuring the breakage of the

poverty cycles, and improving the quality of life for the community.

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# NOMENCLATURE

|      |                                                                                         |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ANT  | Actor-network theory                                                                    |
| GDP  | Grow domestic product                                                                   |
| PKH  | Indonesian government program that distributes social assistance to marginalized groups |
| SDGs | Sustainable development goals                                                           |
| TPA  | Targeted poverty alleviation                                                            |