



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Implementation of the Village Cash Intensive Program (PKTD) in Community Empowerment: A Case Study of Ampel Village, Wuluhan District, Jember Regency

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: July 1 2026 Accepted: July 12, 2026 Keywords: Village Cash Labor; Community Empowerment; Village Fund; policy implementation; Jember Regency *Corresponding Author: fatmaaelok@gmail.com	Abstract: The Village Cash Intensive Program (PKTD) serves as a governmental strategy aimed at tackling two challenges simultaneously: seasonal joblessness in rural regions and the necessity for fundamental infrastructure development, by directly engaging impoverished individuals as paid laborers (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, 2021). This article seeks to analyze how PKTD is implemented in Ampel Village, located in Wuluhan District, Jember Regency, pinpoint factors that promote and obstruct its effectiveness, and evaluate how much the program aids in fostering sustainable empowerment within the community. A qualitative methodology is utilized, focusing on a single case study design. Data gathering involved conducting detailed interviews with 23 carefully chosen informants, making field observations, and reviewing official village records. Data analysis adhered to an interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014). Findings reveal that, procedurally, PKTD's execution in Ampel Village has adhered to the regulatory phases, yet its enactment is hampered by limited administrative abilities of village leaders, inadequate oversight from the Village Consultative Body (BPD), and inconsistency in Village Fund disbursement schedules. Regarding empowerment, the program successfully aids in providing temporary financial support for low-income families and enhancing community bonds, but it falls short of catalyzing long-lasting economic change. The study concludes that the success of PKTD is significantly affected by the

village's institutional strength and the caliber of local leadership, indicating a need for improved citizen capacity development in future program designs.

INTRODUCTION

Poverty in rural areas remains one of the most fundamental challenges in Indonesia's development, despite the fact that various poverty alleviation programs have been implemented continuously for more than two decades. The latest data from the Central Statistics Agency shows that the percentage of poor people in rural areas is still in the range of 12 percent, far above the urban poverty rate which is in the range of 7 percent (Central Statistics Agency [BPS], 2023). This gap is not only an income issue, but also includes limited access to education, health services, and basic infrastructure which ultimately affects the quality of life of rural communities as a whole (Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Indonesia, 2022). In a situation like this, village development policies that are able to respond to the structural vulnerability of the community are a non-negotiable need.

As an answer to these challenges, the government has strengthened the Village Fund policy by including the Village Cash Intensive (PKTD) mechanism as one of its main instruments. Based on the Regulation of the Minister of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration Number 7 of 2021, each village is required to allocate a minimum of 30 percent of the development activity budget for the local labor wage component, with the main priority given to the poor, unemployed, and vulnerable groups (Kemendes PDTT, 2021). In 2022, the total Village Fund disbursed nationally will reach around IDR 70 trillion, so PKTD can also be categorized as one of the largest-scale community-based empowerment interventions ever implemented in Indonesia (Kemendes PDTT, 2023). The basic idea of this program is quite simple but ambitious, which is to unite the two major agendas of village development, infrastructure improvement and poverty reduction in one policy mechanism.

Jember Regency is one of the areas in East Java Province whose poverty rate is still relatively high, which is around 9.5 percent or equivalent to approximately 253 thousand people in 2022 (BPS Jember Regency, 2023). In the midst of these conditions, Ampel Village, which is located in Wuluhan District, is an interesting location to study further. This village has distinctive socio-economic characteristics, namely a combination of agrarian and maritime profiles, with most of the population relying on the agricultural sector of food crops as well as small-scale capture fisheries. This combination makes residents' income patterns very vulnerable to seasonal fluctuations, both due to crop failure and plummeting marine catches. PKTD itself has been running in this village since 2019, so there is a long enough implementation trail to be observed and evaluated empirically.

Several previous studies have discussed the implementation of PKTD from various perspectives, but each leaves room for unanswered questions. Maulana and Handayani (2021), for example, found that in Banyuwangi Regency, PKTD succeeded in increasing the temporary income of poor families, but failed to grow productive capacity that could be maintained after the program ended. Meanwhile, Wahyuni et al. (2022) who conducted a comparative study in six villages in Central Java showed that the variation in the quality of implementation between villages is greatly influenced by the extent to which the Village Consultative Body (BPD) carries out its supervisory function. On the other hand, Nuraini and Prasetyo (2022) use the Grindle framework to show that the context of implementation, especially the capacity and legitimacy of village heads, is much more determinative of the success of the program than the content of the policy itself. Meanwhile, Putri and Slamet (2023) in their meta-analysis of dozens of PKTD studies emphasized that the integration of the program into the Village Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMDes) and the managerial competence of village apparatus are the two strongest predictors of program effectiveness.

However, studies that specifically highlight the dynamics of PKTD implementation in coastal villages of Jember Regency with all the peculiarities of their socio-economic context are still very limited in the available literature. Furthermore, much of the previous research has tended to stop at the analysis of program outputs, without really exploring whether PKTD is really driving a transformative empowerment process, or simply creating a new form of dependence on government assistance. This research gap is what we want to answer through this article. More specifically, this study is directed to: (1) analyze how the PKTD implementation process takes place in Ampel Village; (2) identify factors that support or hinder the effectiveness of its implementation; and (3) assess the extent to which the program contributes to sustainable community empowerment, both from economic, social, and political dimensions.

The novelty of this study lies in the selection of loci that combines agrarian and maritime characters at the same time, a combination that has been relatively rarely raised in previous PKTD studies that generally focus on agrarian villages in the interior. In addition, this study does not stop at the assessment of procedural compliance, but rather uses a three-dimensional framework of empowerment to critically examine whether compliance with the regulation is truly correlated with substantive changes in the lives of the beneficiary communities. Thus, this article is expected to contribute both theoretically by enriching the understanding of the interaction between national policy design and local implementation contexts and practically, by providing an evidence base for the refinement of CCP design in future periods.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Public Policy Implementation Theory

The implementation of public policy has long been one of the most complex objects of study in the science of public administration, because it is at this point that the good intentions of a policy are tested through the reality in the field. The model developed by Van Meter and Van Horn (in Purwanti & Kismartini, 2022) is one of the classic references that highlights six variables that determine the success of implementation, namely policy standards and objectives, available resources, characteristics of implementing organizations, local socio-economic conditions, attitudes or dispositions of implementers, and communication patterns between the institutions involved. This framework is quite relevant to be used as an entrance to PKTD analysis, considering that the program involves a long chain of actors, ranging from the central government, local governments, to apparatus at the village level.

However, the Van Meter and Van Horn frameworks are still seen as overemphasizing structural-administrative aspects, making them inadequate to explain the dynamics of implementation that are heavily influenced by local contexts. This is where Grindle's approach (1980, as cited in Nuraini & Prasetyo, 2022) becomes an important complement. Grindle argues that the success of implementation is determined not only by the content of the policy, namely the formulation of the objectives, the type of benefits offered, and the degree of change desired but also by the context of the implementation, which includes the strengths, interests, and strategies of the actors involved, the characteristics of the institutions and regimes in power, and the level of compliance and responsiveness of the implementers on the ground. In the context of PKTD, this framework opens up space to analyze how local factors such as village head leadership, internal village political dynamics, and community social capital interact with technical provisions formulated from the center.

Another dimension that is no less important comes from the concept of street-level bureaucracy popularized by Lipsky (2010). According to Lipsky, field officers in the context of PKTD can be represented by village officials, RT/RW chairs, and members of the Activity Implementation Team (TPK) have very real discretion in translating policies into daily practice. This kind of discretion can indeed be an adaptive force that makes a program more

sensitive to specific local needs, but at the same time it can also be an entrance for deviations if it is not balanced with adequate accountability mechanisms (Wahyuni et al., 2022). These three theoretical frameworks are structural-administrative, contextual, and street-level complementary and will be used in an integrated manner in analyzing research findings in the Results and Discussion sections.

The Concept of Community Empowerment

Community empowerment, as an academic as well as a practical concept, has developed far beyond a narrow definition that emphasizes only the enhancement of individual capacity. Ite (2002, in Anwas, 2020) proposes three dimensions of empowerment that are interrelated, namely the economic dimension related to access and control of productive resources, the social dimension related to strengthening social capital and community solidarity, and the political dimension related to the ability of citizens to influence decisions that have a direct impact on their lives. This three-dimensional framework emphasizes that a program that only touches one dimension, for example, only provides additional income without strengthening the political voice of the citizens, tends to produce changes that are superficial and easily lost once the program ends.

Suharto (2021) expands on this thinking by underlining the importance of shifting the orientation from the charity approach to the enabling approach. In the charity approach, the beneficiary tends to be positioned as a passive object receiving assistance, while in the enabling approach, the community is facilitated to be able to become active subjects who can recognize their own problems, formulate solutions, and then evaluate the results independently. With this lens, PKTD should ideally not only function as a wage distribution mechanism, but as a collective learning process that slowly builds community independence. The extent to which these ideals are realized in practice in the field is one of the central questions that this study tries to answer.

In addition, the concept of social capital developed by Putnam (in Purwanti & Kismartini, 2022) is also relevant to consider. Social capital, which includes trust between citizens, reciprocal norms, and social networks that allow collective action to run efficiently, not only facilitates the implementation of government programs, but also determines whether the benefits of these programs can be sustained and continue to grow after formal programs end. Villages with strong social capital tend to be better able to convert a temporary intervention into a more permanent communal capacity, while villages with weak social capital are at risk of losing the benefits of the programme once external support is stopped.

PKTD Policy in the Framework of Village Funds

Normatively, PKTD relies on Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages, which gives broad authority to villages to manage Village Funds in accordance with local needs and priorities, but remains within the national policy corridor (Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 6 of 2014). Based on its derivative provisions, namely the Regulation of the Minister of Villages and Rural Development Number 7 of 2021, labor-intensive activities are required to prioritize workers from the Integrated Social Welfare Data (DTKS) and other vulnerable groups (Kemendes PDTT, 2021). The provision of a minimum of 30 percent for this wage component is basically an effort by the state to "force" the redistribution of infrastructure development benefits to community groups that have been most often excluded from the development process.

A policy evaluation conducted by the Ministry of Rural Development (2021) shows that in aggregate, this program has succeeded in absorbing millions of village workers throughout Indonesia. However, the quality of implementation varies greatly between regions, influenced by differences in the capacity of village officials, the quality of assistance from professional assistants, and the geographical conditions of each village. These findings confirm that contextual and in-depth studies at the village level such as those conducted in this study are

still needed to understand why a uniformly designed policy at the central level can produce very different outcomes when applied in the field.

Relevant Previous Research

A number of previous studies provide an important comparative foothold for this research. Maulana and Handayani (2021), in their study in Banyuwangi Regency, found that PKTD was quite successful in stabilizing poor household consumption during difficult times, especially during the famine season. However, they also criticized the absence of a skills enhancement component in program design, so that once the program ended, the impact disappeared. These findings reinforce the argument that current PKTD designs tend to be more oriented towards short-term outcomes rather than long-term structural changes.

Research by Wahyuni et al. (2022) comparing the implementation of PKTD in six villages in Central Java shows an interesting pattern: the activeness of BPD as an internal supervisor turns out to be the strongest predictor for the overall quality of implementation. Villages with proactive BPD showed lower levels of administrative irregularities and higher levels of beneficiary satisfaction, while villages with passive BPD were prone to problems in terms of transparency in setting targets and timeliness of wage payments.

Meanwhile, Hermawan (2021) who conducted a study in South Kalimantan highlighted the problem of ambiguity in the criteria for selecting beneficiaries, which according to him is often a source of social conflict that can damage community cohesion. He recommended a more open selection mechanism based on a citizens' forum as a more democratic alternative to closed selection by village officials alone. This recommendation is in line with the principles of participation-based empowerment developed by Ite and Suharto.

On the other hand, Nuraini and Prasetyo (2022) who used the Grindle framework in their analysis in East Lombok found that the content of the PKTD policy is actually quite adequate in terms of design. However, the context of implementation, especially the legitimacy and competence of the village head, is much more decisive for the success of the program in the field. Village heads who have high trust from their citizens tend to be better able to mobilize broader participation and manage potential conflicts more effectively.

Putri and Slamet (2023), through a meta-analysis of dozens of PKTD studies in the 2019-2022 period, identified three conditions that are consistently positively correlated with program effectiveness, namely: the integration of PKTD into the RPJMDs as part of the village's medium-term development strategy (not just an annual ad hoc activity), managerial competence as well as the integrity of village apparatus, and the existence of an accountability mechanism involving the active participation of residents. These three conditions provide a comprehensive evaluative framework to assess the implementation of PKTD in Ampel Village.

In a global context, the International Labour Organization (2021) documented that successful labor-intensive programs in various developing countries generally have one fundamental similarity, namely the existence of an integrated skills training component, so that participants not only earn wages but also increase their employability for the next jobs. Similar findings were also put forward by the World Bank (2022) in a study of dozens of public works programs in various countries, which concluded that programs with longer implementation durations and explicit capacity-building components tend to produce much more significant and more lasting empowerment impacts.

Based on the above series of studies, it can be concluded that the literature on PKTD has been quite rich in identifying the factors that determine the success of implementation at the macro and comparative levels between villages. However, as mentioned in the introduction, there is still a gap in studies that specifically explore how these dynamics occur in one village with unique socio-economic characteristics, in this case a combination of agrarian and maritime while assessing its impact on empowerment in a multidimensional manner. This research is positioned to fill this gap.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Approach and Design

This study uses a qualitative approach with a single case study design as developed by Yin (2018). The selection of this approach is based on the consideration that the process of implementing policies at the village level is a phenomenon that is highly bound to the context, so it cannot be adequately understood only through a quantitative approach that relies on numbers and statistics. The depth, complexity, and nuances inherent in the interaction between various actors, institutions, and local norms can only be captured through methods that are interpretive and based on contextual understanding (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The case study design was chosen because it allows researchers to conduct an in-depth exploration of a single case by considering all relevant contextual factors, rather than artificially isolating certain variables as is commonly done in quantitative research.

Location, Time, and Research Informant

This research was carried out in Ampel Village, Wuluhan District, Jember Regency, East Java Province, with a data collection period from January to June 2024. The selection of this location is based on three main considerations. First, Ampel Village has implemented PKTD continuously since 2019, so there is a long enough implementation track record to be analyzed. Second, the socio-economic characteristics of these villages that combine agrarian and maritime profiles offer a relatively distinctive context compared to previous PKTD research sites which generally focused on agrarian villages in the interior. Third, there is a willingness and openness from the village government to actively participate in the research process.

Informants were selected using purposive sampling techniques, with the main criteria being direct involvement in the implementation of PKTD or direct influence by the program. The total number of informants in this study was 23 people, with the following details: Village Head (1 person), Village Secretary (1 person), Hamlet Head of the four hamlets (4 people), members of the Activity Implementation Team or TPK (3 people), Professional Village Companions (2 people), BPD members (3 people), direct beneficiaries (8 people, consisting of 5 men and 3 women), and community leaders (1 person). This variation in the composition of informants is deliberately designed to obtain a multi-stakeholder perspective that complements each other, while allowing for more effective triangulation of data sources.

Data Collection Techniques

The primary data in this study were collected through three techniques that complement each other. First, semi-structured in-depth interviews are conducted based on interview guidelines compiled from the theoretical framework of the research. Each interview session lasts between 45 minutes to two hours, is recorded with the informant's consent, and then transcribed verbatim to ensure no important information is missed. Second, field observations were carried out seven times by directly observing the implementation of PKTD activities at the work site, village deliberation forums, and the process of paying wages to workers. Third, a document review was carried out on the APBDes for the 2020-2023 period, RKPDes, TPK accountability reports, beneficiary lists, and minutes of various relevant village deliberations.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis in this study follows an interactive model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which consists of three stages that reinforce each other and take place cyclically. The data condensation stage is carried out by sorting and focusing raw data, both from interview transcripts and field notes, into units of meaning that are relevant to the research question. The data presentation stage is carried out through an analytical matrix, conceptual maps, and descriptive narratives that allow researchers to identify patterns and relationships between phenomena more clearly. The conclusion stage is carried out progressively and is continuously verified through a triangulation process. The validity of

the data in this study is maintained through a combination of source triangulation, triangulation of data collection techniques, member checking of some key informants, and peer debriefing with supervisors to minimize the biases of the researcher's interpretation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview of Ampel Village and Its Socio-Economic Context

Ampel Village has an area of about 1,247 hectares and is inhabited by 8,743 people spread across 2,187 families in four hamlets. Based on data from the Village Information System (SID) in 2023, around 38.4 percent of the total heads of families are recorded as underprivileged families, while another 21.7 percent are in the vulnerable poor category. The majority of the population depends on the agriculture, food crops and plantation sectors, while some residents who live in coastal areas work as small-scale capture fishermen. This reliance on these seasonal sectors creates unstable income patterns, and in turn puts many families at a particularly vulnerable position to various forms of economic shocks, from crop failures to falling prices of seafood.

This kind of context is an important starting point to understand why PKTD is so in demand by the residents of Ampel Village. The economic vulnerability that is layered in agrarian and maritime at the same time makes this program feel very relevant to the real needs of the community. Field findings show that residents' interest in participating in PKTD far exceeds the available quota, especially in the period from August to October which is a planting pause period. This high demand actually contains two opposite meanings. On the one hand, it confirms how relevant this program is to the real needs of the community. However, on the other hand, the limited quota of available participants has the potential to trigger social tension if the selection process is not managed in a transparent and accountable manner.

PKTD Implementation Process: from Deliberation to Accountability

The results of the analysis of documents and interviews revealed that the PKTD implementation process in Ampel Village took place through four main stages that were procedurally in line with the provisions of the regulations, although at each stage there was a significant variation in quality.

The first stage is participatory planning through the Village Conference (Musdes), which is held annually from October to November to determine the RKPDes and identify activities that will be carried out with the PKTD scheme. In this forum, residents' proposals related to infrastructure needs are accommodated and then selected based on priority levels and budget availability. The Head of Ampel Village explained that every time a development planning deliberation (musrenbang) is held, the village government always opens the widest space for residents' proposals, and decisions on which activities will be carried out through the PKTD scheme are taken together, taking into account the level of need and the ability of the residents themselves to do it (Head of Ampel Village, interview, February 2024).

This statement actually reflects the intention of good governance from the village government. However, field observations show a slightly different picture: participation in musdes forums still tends to be dominated by male figures who already have a certain social position in the village. The voices of women, the elderly, and the poorest who are actually the main targets of the program are disproportionately less heard in the forum. This kind of condition is in line with what Cornwall (2008, in Suharto, 2021) calls invited spaces, which are spaces of participation that are facilitated by the state but are not yet truly inclusive of the most marginalized groups.

The second stage is the determination of beneficiary targets. The list of PKTD participants is compiled by the Chairman of RT/RW in each hamlet based on direct introduction to the real condition of the residents, which is then validated in the hamlet forum before being brought to the musdes for ratification. This kind of community-based mechanism is actually considered more accurate in capturing factual conditions than if it only relies on DTKS data

exclusively, considering that DTKS data is not always updated in real-time (Wahyuni et al., 2022). Even so, this study also found potential bias in the selection process: three out of eight beneficiary informants admitted to knowing the registration information through informal channels, namely from acquaintances or relatives who are RT administrators. These findings are in line with the concerns expressed by Hermawan (2021), that community-based selection mechanisms that are not equipped with clear complaint channels have the potential to open up space for patronage practices that can ultimately erode the legitimacy of the program in the eyes of citizens.

The third stage is the implementation of physical work in the field. Since 2019, PKTD activities that have been carried out in Ampel Village include the pavement of a 4.7-kilometer village road, the repair of tertiary irrigation canals, the rehabilitation of Posyandu buildings in three hamlets, and the construction of simple boat moorings in coastal areas. Each activity is managed by the Activity Implementation Team (TPK) which is formed through musdes. The wage system refers to the Jember Regency Regional Daily Minimum Wage, in the range of Rp80,000 to Rp100,000 per day for general workers, and payments are made once or twice a week directly to workers, witnessed by the TPK treasurer and the head of the RT as witnesses.

Observations at this stage reveal two critical notes that deserve attention. First, it was found that several cases were found where the attendance sheet was not strictly verified before being signed by the officer, thus opening up the possibility of the practice of "attendance keeping" by participants who were not actually present in the field. Second, in terms of technical quality, some of the work results, especially on roads with paving block pavement, showed signs of early degradation, which indicated a discrepancy in material specifications or weak construction supervision in the field. These two findings actually boil down to the same root of the problem, namely the absence of adequate technical supervision from experts. In the Wuluhan District area, there is only one Village Infrastructure Expert (TAID) who must accompany more than four villages at the same time, a ratio that is clearly disproportionate.

The fourth stage is reporting and accountability. TPK is required to prepare a complete accountability report, including proof of wage transactions, documentation of work photos, and minutes of activity completion. Based on a review of the documents, these reports are generally quite well compiled, although they are often delayed from the established schedule, with an average delay of three to four weeks. This delay was confirmed by the village secretary as a consequence of the administrative burden that was too large to be borne by the village apparatus with a limited number and capacity, a finding that is in line with the results of the evaluation of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (2021) at the national level.

Supporting and Inhibiting Implementation Factors

From all the field findings, this study identified four main factors that support the successful implementation of PKTD in Ampel Village. The first, and perhaps the most decisive, factor is the participatory and communicative leadership of the village head. Almost all informants from residents, both beneficiaries and non-residents, consistently gave a positive assessment of the openness of the village head in communicating information about this program. These findings are closely aligned with Grindle's proposition (in Nuraini & Prasetyo, 2022) that the legitimacy and competence of local leaders are the most determinant implementation context factors.

The second factor is the social capital of the community which is still relatively strong. The still living tradition of mutual cooperation, coupled with a high level of trust between residents in one hamlet, greatly facilitates the labor mobilization process while creating an informal supervision mechanism for the course of activities. In Putnam's terminology (in Purwanti & Kismartini, 2022), this condition is a manifestation of social capital bonding that strengthens the community's internal solidarity. The third factor is the existence of the

Village Information System (SID) which has been functioning since 2020, which provides a relatively more reliable database for the purpose of verification of target beneficiaries, although it still requires regular updates. The fourth factor is the coordinating support from the sub-district government through regular forums that bring together all village heads in the region, so as to create space to share best practices and solve common problems that are not available in the daily formal bureaucratic mechanism.

On the other hand, there are also a number of significant inhibiting factors. The most basic obstacle is the limited capacity of human resources at the village level. Most of the village apparatus that are directly involved in the management of PKTD have relatively limited educational backgrounds and administrative experience, thus creating a high dependence on village assistants. Ironically, the existing village assistants also bear the burden of excessive workload, resulting in a kind of interlocking circle of limitations: village officials who lack capacity need intensive assistance, but the available assistants do not have enough time to provide it adequately.

The second obstacle is the weak supervisory function of the BPD. The BPD members interviewed in this study honestly admitted their limitations in accessing TPK documents in a timely manner, as well as their limited understanding of the technical aspects of construction work that are the object of supervision. As stated by Wahyuni et al. (2022), BPDs that are weak in capacity tend to function only as a "seal" of formal legitimacy, not as a real substantive supervisor. This condition creates what can be called a governance gap, because it eliminates the internal check and balance mechanism that should be the first line of defense against various forms of irregularities.

The third obstacle is the inconsistency in the schedule for disbursing Village Funds from the district government to the village. In 2022, the average disbursement delay reached six to eight weeks from the expected schedule. This delay forced the village to postpone the start of PKTD activities, which in turn meant delayed income for residents who had been designated as participants and had prepared themselves for work. More than just an administrative technical issue, these kinds of delays are slowly eroding citizens' confidence in the program's reliability, and ultimately diminishing its appeal as a reliable alternative source of income.

PKTD's Contribution to Community Empowerment: A Three-Dimensional Analysis

Using the three-dimensional framework of empowerment developed by Ife (2002, in Anwas, 2020) as an analysis lens, this study found a fairly nuanced and non-uniform picture between the three dimensions.

In the economic dimension, PKTD has proven to be quite successful in increasing the temporary income of the beneficiaries during the period of implementation of the activity. On average, participants earned an additional income of between IDR 1.2 million and IDR 1.8 million per month during the activity, a significant figure in helping to stabilize household consumption during times of famine. One of the female beneficiaries who works as a seasonal farm worker revealed that without PKTD, in August she didn't even know what her family could eat. According to her, at least with the daily wage from this program, basic needs such as rice and household bills can be met, and her child does not need to miss school due to the lack of pocket money (Beneficiary, female, 41 years old, interview, March 2024).

However, the economic impact needs to be read more critically. The increase in income that occurred was temporary and was not accompanied by any change in the productive capacity of the beneficiaries. No mechanism was found that systematically encouraged participants to set aside part of their wages as savings or business capital. This program has also not been connected to local Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes), which can actually be a channel for PKTD participants to access business capital or further economic opportunities after the program ends. This condition confirms the criticism previously put forward by Maulana and Handayani (2021), that without a component that explicitly builds long-term

economic capacity, the CCP risks becoming what Suharto (2021) calls poverty maintenance, which is maintaining the poverty level at a "bearable" level, without actually transforming it.

On the social dimension, the findings of this study actually show a much more positive picture. The process of working together regularly for several weeks, in teams whose members come from across hamlets, has been proven to strengthen social bonds and mutual trust between residents. Several informants explicitly mentioned that the experience of participating in PKTD was a moment that revived the spirit of mutual cooperation which had weakened due to changes in the lifestyle of modern society. Furthermore, the direct involvement of residents in building infrastructure in their own villages fosters a sense of ownership which in turn encourages better maintenance and maintenance of facilities, compared to infrastructure built by contractors from outside the village. These findings are in line with Putnam's argument (in Purwanti & Kismartini, 2022) regarding the role of collective action in producing and reproducing social capital at the community level.

On the other hand, in the political dimension of empowerment, namely the ability of citizens to influence decisions that affect their own lives, the findings of this study actually show the picture that is furthest from ideal. Although the musdes forum is formally available as a participation arena, an analysis of the interaction patterns in the forum shows that the poor and marginalized groups still have a very limited influence on substantive decisions, such as the selection of the type of activity, the determination of the location of work, and the determination of participant selection criteria. The dominance of established public figures in musdes discussions reflects what Fraser (in Suharto, 2021) refers to as the inequality of participation: formally everyone is invited to attend, but substantially not everyone has an equal ability to speak up and be truly heard.

If these three dimensions are synthesized, it can be said that PKTD in Ampel Village has been quite successful as a work-based social assistance program, but it has not been successful enough as an empowerment program in a transformative sense. This gap does not appear to be solely a failure of implementation at the local level, but also reflects the limitations of program design at the national level, which has not explicitly incorporated structural empowerment components into the CCPD framework. These findings are consistent with the conclusions of the meta-analysis of Putri and Slamet (2023), who found that as long as the capacity building component is not an integral part of the program design, the impact of PKTD on community empowerment will always be marginal and unsustainable.

Discussion: The Gap between Regulation and Field Reality

Overall, the findings of this study reveal that there is a fairly substantial implementation gap between the normative design of PKTD as stated in various regulations and the reality of its implementation in the field. This gap cannot be explained solely through the framework of good or bad intentions of the actors involved, because in general, all parties from village heads to TPK members show a sincere commitment to the sustainability of the program. The more fundamental source of the gap lies precisely in the mismatch between the complexity of regulatory demands and the institutional capacity available at the village level.

Regulations require villages to manage a program that actually requires competence in construction technical planning, public financial management, personnel administration, monitoring and evaluation systems, and public communication. At the same time, available village officials often only have a small part of that set of competencies. Without adequate investment in the capacity development of village apparatus, this kind of gap risks continuing to reproduce itself from one program cycle to the next. A similar argument was also put forward by the International Labour Organization (2021) in its study of various labor-intensive programs in Southeast Asia, which emphasized that the sustainability of a program's impact ultimately depends on the sustainability of institutional capacity that supports it.

These findings also provide important lessons for the theoretical debate on policy implementation more broadly. Using the framework of Van Meter and Van Horn (in Purwanti &

Kismartini, 2022), it is clear that the variables of resources and characteristics of the implementing organization are the main weak points in the case of Ampel Village, while the variables of standards and policy objectives are relatively clear and understood by the implementers in the field. On the other hand, if viewed through the lens of Grindle (in Nuraini & Prasetyo, 2022), it can be said that the content of the PKTD policy is actually quite adequate, but the context of implementation, especially the availability of competent human resources at the village and sub-district levels, is the most decisive limiting factor. Thus, the two theoretical frameworks are actually complementary in explaining the same phenomenon from different perspectives.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This research resulted in three main conclusions that are interrelated. First, procedurally, the implementation of PKTD in Ampel Village has been carried out in accordance with the provisions of applicable regulations, starting from the participatory planning process, setting community-based goals, implementing work by TPK, to relatively orderly accountability reporting. However, compliance with these procedures does not automatically result in optimal implementation quality, as the limited capacity of village officials and weak internal monitoring systems create loopholes that have the potential to reduce the overall effectiveness and accountability of the program.

Second, the factors that most determine the quality of PKTD implementation are contextual-local, more than just technical-procedural. Participatory and legitimate village head leadership, strong community social capital, and coordinating support from the sub-district government proved to be the main supporting factors. On the other hand, the limited capacity of village apparatus, the weak supervisory function of the BPD, the inadequate ratio of village assistants, and the inconsistency of the disbursement of Village Funds are structural obstacles that need to be addressed systemically, not only in each village.

Third, PKTD's contribution to the empowerment of the Ampel Village community is still partial and has not reached the transformative level aspired to in its policy design. In the economic dimension, this program is quite effective as a temporary income buffer, but it has not been able to drive structural changes in the economic conditions of the beneficiaries in a sustainable manner. In the social dimension, this program has succeeded in strengthening community cohesion and fostering a sense of ownership of the village's infrastructure. Meanwhile, in the political dimension of empowerment, the inclusivity of community participation in decision-making is still an unfinished homework. These three findings together indicate that PKTD needs to be gradually redesigned, so that it not only functions as a work-based assistance program, but explicitly becomes a more comprehensive empowerment instrument.

This research certainly has a number of limitations that need to be honestly acknowledged. First, as a single case study, the findings in this study are not intended to be statistically generalized to all PKTD recipient villages in Indonesia, but rather are aimed at providing an in-depth understanding of one particular context that can be an analytical reference for other contexts that have similar characteristics. Second, the relatively limited data collection period (January-June 2024) has not allowed researchers to observe the long-term impact of the program directly, so some analyses of the sustainability of the impact are still inferential based on informant perceptions.

Based on these findings and limitations, this study proposes several recommendations. First, there is a need to integrate the technical skills and basic financial literacy training components into the PKTD policy package at the national level, so that this program not only provides wages, but also equips participants with capacities that can be utilized after the program ends. Second, the ratio of village assistants to infrastructure technical specialization needs to be increased, considering that one expert who must accompany more than four villages is clearly inadequate to ensure the quality of construction supervision. Third, the capacity of BPD needs to be strengthened through structured financial and technical

supervision training, so that the check and balance function at the village level can run substantively, not just a formality. Fourth, it is necessary to build a user-friendly complaint mechanism at the village level as a form of safeguard against the risk of exclusivity in the participant selection process. Fifth, follow-up studies that compare the implementation of PKTD across villages, using comparative methodologies, will be very useful to strengthen the generalization of the findings that have been produced by this study and previous studies.

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