

# Decrease in the Gini Coefficient as a Result of the Distribution of BPNT during the Covid-19 Pandemic in the Province of Bangka Belitung Islands, Indonesia

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**Abstract:** *The government issued a stimulus policy to reduce the impact of COVID-19, namely the Staple Food program or extended BPNT program. One of the goals of implementing the BPNT program is to reduce the level of income inequality of the Indonesian people. Thus, this study aims to calculate and obtain the decrease in the Gini Coefficient as a result of the implementation of the BPNT program in the Province of Bangka Belitung Islands. This study uses the Counter Factual Analysis (CFA) method and the March 2020 Susenas data. This study concludes that the implementation of the BPNT program in 2020 is able to reduce the level of income inequality in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province, Indonesia, which is able to reduce the Gini Coefficient of the Bangka Belitung Islands Province by -0.43%. This study recommends that the provincial government of Bangka Belitung Islands as the implementer of the Staple Food/BPNT program needs to improve the implementation of the BPNT program in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province by ensuring Beneficiary Families/KPM (Keluarga Penerima Manfaat) can buy food needs at the average price that applies in the market, ensuring KPM are able to choose good food ingredients from quality, price and quantity, improving the quality of goods purchased by KPM and keeping the price more affordable, ensuring the availability of staple foodstuffs which are the main components of the program, ensuring that realization in the field is according to a predetermined schedule, and ensuring the Covid-19 prevention protocol can be running in the process of realization of the Staple Food/BPNT program.*

**Keywords:** Non-cash food assistance; income inequality; gini coefficient; counter factual analysis.

**JEL:** H23, H53, R13, D63.

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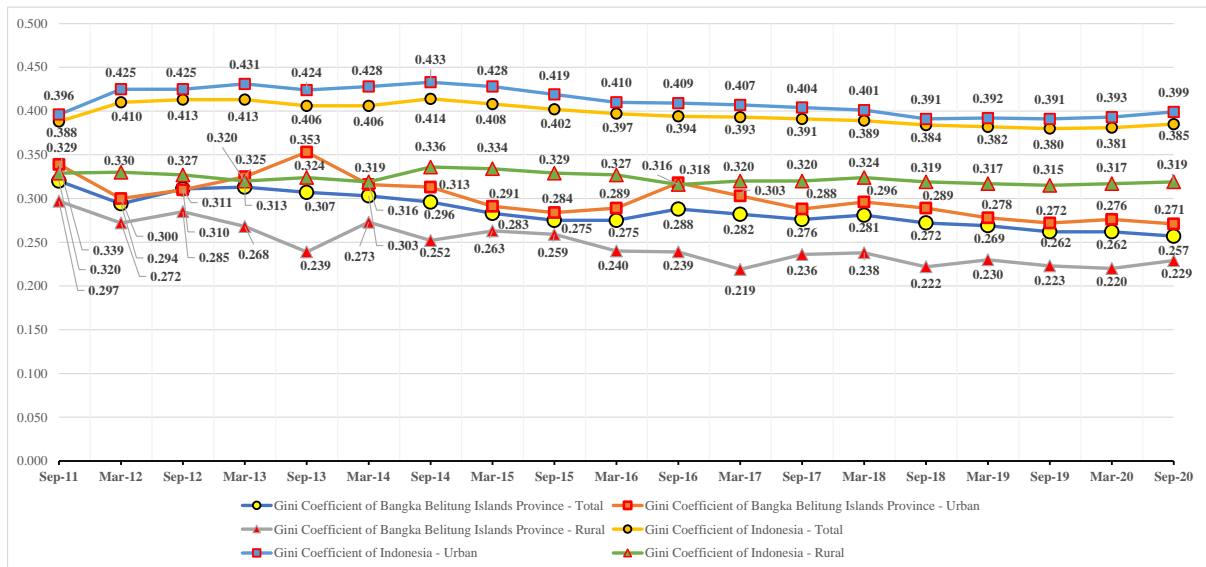
## 1. INTRODUCTION

Entering 2020 the whole world was shocked by the presence of a virus, namely a new type of Corona Virus (SARSCoV-2) and a disease called Corona Virus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) which quickly spread throughout the world to become the Covid-19 pandemic. This health crisis had an impact on economic and social aspects and forced several countries to carry out regional quarantine (lockdown). Handling efforts have been made by the government to prevent the expansion of the pandemic and reduce the socio-economic impacts that occur. In dealing with this situation, one of the policies taken by the Indonesian government in the context of National Economic Recovery included providing a stimulus for small business groups and residents affected by Covid-19 through the social safety net program (Jaring Pengaman Sosial/JPS) (Control Team for the Implementation of Non-Cash Social Assistance Distribution/Tim Pengendali Pelaksanaan Penyaluran Bantuan Sosial Secara Nontunai, 2020).

One of the JPS instruments prepared by the Indonesian government as a stimulus policy to reduce the impact of COVID-19 is through the Staple Food program or the extended BPNT program,

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which is a national program and has been intended to target the poor and vulnerable (Tim Pengendali Pelaksanaan Penyaluran Bantuan Sosial Secara Nontunai, 2020). One of the socio-economic impacts that the BPNT program or the Staple Food program is trying to overcome is the increase in the level of income inequality. So, one of the goals of implementing the BPNT program is to reduce the level of income inequality of the Indonesian people. The instrument commonly used to measure the level of income inequality is the Gini Coefficient.



**Figure 1. Development of Gini Coefficient of Indonesia and Province of Bangka Belitung Islands September 2011 - September 2020**

Source: BPS Statistics Indonesia (2018), BPS Statistics Indonesia (2019), BPS Statistics Indonesia (2021), BPS Statistics Province of Bangka Belitung Islands (2018), BPS Statistics Province of Bangka Belitung Islands (2019a), BPS Statistics Province of Bangka Belitung Islands (2019b), BPS Statistics Province of Bangka Belitung Islands (2020a), BPS Statistics Province of Bangka Belitung Islands (2020b), and BPS Statistics Province of Bangka Belitung Islands (2021).

Based on the data in Figure 1, it can be seen that in the period September 2011 to September 2020, the Gini Coefficient of Bangka Belitung Islands Province, both in total, urban and rural, is always lower than Indonesia's Gini Coefficient nationally. Thus it can be stated that the Province of Bangka Belitung Islands has a positive role in reducing Indonesia's Gini Coefficient or in reducing the level of inequality in Indonesia.

Based on a report by the BPS Statistics Province of Bangka Belitung Islands (2020b), the level of income inequality in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province in March 2020 was the lowest in Indonesia. This is represented by the Gini Coefficient of the Province of Bangka Belitung Islands in March 2020 which is the lowest of 34 provinces in Indonesia. So it is very interesting to examine how the impact of the implementation of the BPNT program on the reduction of the Gini Coefficient in the Province of Bangka Belitung Islands.

Thus, this study aims to determine how much the Gini Coefficient has decreased as a result of the implementation of the BPNT program or the Staple Food program in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province in 2020, when the Covid-19 pandemic occurred.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Taufiqo (2018) succeeded in calculating the impact of BPNT distribution on reducing the level of inequality, namely the distribution of BPNT resulting in a more even distribution of household income

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with the Gini Coefficient value falling by 0.2208. However, research by Taufiqo (2018) has limitations, namely measuring the decline in the 2018 Gini Coefficient as a result of the BPNT program distributed in 2018 using the 2008 Socio-Economic Balance System (SNSE) data where the distribution pattern of household income and expenditure between 2008 with 2018 was much different.

Other researchers generally examined the effectiveness of the implementation of the BPNT program in terms of distribution, not in terms of how much the Gini coefficient decreased as a result of implementing the BPNT program. These researchers are Wiwit, Sulistyaningsih, and Kamil (2020) who found that the implementation of monitoring and evaluation of the BPNT program in City of Batu, East Java Province has implemented the principles of monitoring and evaluation and has been running quite well by the Food Social Assistance (Bantuan Sosial Pangan/BSP) companion. The BPNT program is considered to have been right on target so that it can accelerate the implementation of poverty reduction. This finding was corroborated by research from Anwar, Ati, and Pindahanto (2020) which concluded that in terms of problem characteristics, the implementation of the BPNT program through e-warong in Sisir Village, Sub-district of Batu, City of Batu, East Java Province, was still zero problems, in terms of program characteristics. The implementation of the BPNT program is considered to have been right on target because the human resources in Sisir Village are deemed to have fulfilled their duties and functions as regulated, and in terms of environmental variables, the socio-economic conditions of the community in the BPNT program have supported its implementation.

The same thing was produced from research by Rosaliana and Hardjati (2019) which explained that the implementation of the BPNT program in Sub-district of Wonocolo, City of Surabaya, East Java Province was carried out in a timely manner, both the distribution of food aid funds from the government to Beneficiary Families (KPM) and the distribution of operational aid e-warong from the government to e-warong managers.

Then research by Fadlurrohim, Nulhaqim, and Sulastri (2019) shows that the distribution of Non-Cash Food Aid (BPNT) using the banking system can support the productive behavior of aid recipients and increase program transparency and accountability for ease of controlling, monitoring and reducing irregularities. Increased productivity of BPNT recipients will in turn increase income so that income inequality decreases. Similar findings were found by Wiyaka and Murti (2019) through their research which proved that the social assistance provided by the government through BPNT provides new business opportunities for micro and medium entrepreneurs so that it can encourage the growth of KUBE e-warong managed by BPNT recipients in Sub-district of Gerih and Sub-district of Geneng, District of Ngawi, East Java Province, which in turn increases the independence of the underprivileged in rural areas. An economically independent society will find it easier to increase income so that the level of inequality will decrease.

### **3. METHOD**

This study uses the Counter Factual Analysis (CFA) method which is also used by the World Bank in calculating Commitment to Equity (CEQ). Counter Factual Analysis calculates the impact of programs (social assistance and subsidies) on income inequality and poverty. Counter Factual Analysis is to compare the actual conditions (with government intervention) with conditions without government intervention (Darinda and Moechtar, 2019).

This study uses the Counter Factual Analysis method to calculate the impact of the BPNT program during the Covid-19 pandemic, namely in 2020 on reducing the level of income inequality or the Gini Coefficient in March 2020 in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province, Indonesia. The software used is Stata 15. The data used is the March 2020 Susenas data (BPS Statistics Indonesia, 2020).

First, this study calculates the 2020 Gini Coefficient of the Bangka Belitung Islands Province of Indonesia as if the BPNT program is not implemented. Second, this study calculates the Gini Coefficient in 2020 from the Province of the Bangka Belitung Islands, Indonesia, in the current

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condition which there is the implementation of the BPNT program. Finally, this study calculates the decrease in the Gini Coefficient of the Bangka Belitung Islands Province of Indonesia as a result of the implementation of the BPNT program in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province.

### **3.1. Data Type and Source**

This research uses Susenas March 2020 data obtained from the Indonesian Central Statistics Agency/Badan Pusat Statistik Indonesia (BPS Statistics Indonesia, 2020).

### **3.2. Research Object**

This study aims to determine how much the Gini Coefficient has decreased as a result of the implementation of the BPNT program or the Staple Food program in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province during the Covid-19 pandemic, namely in 2020.

## **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This study found that the implementation of the BPNT program during the Covid-19 pandemic, namely in 2020, was able to reduce the Gini Coefficient of the Bangka Belitung Islands Province by -0.43%. Without the implementation of BPNT program, the Gini Coefficient of the Bangka Belitung Islands Province in March 2020 was 0.2634. With the implementation of BPNT program, the Gini Coefficient decreased to 0.2623 or there was a decrease in the Gini coefficient of -0.43% or -0.0011 points as a result of the implementation of the BPNT program, *ceteris paribus*, namely by assuming that the factors affecting the Gini Coefficient other than the BPNT program are fixed or unchanged.

The decline in the Gini Coefficient of the Province of Bangka Belitung Islands by -0.43% needs to be increased because it is under the decline in the Gini Coefficient nationally of -0.75%. Of the 34 provinces in Indonesia, the decline in the Gini Coefficient of the Bangka Belitung Islands Province by -0.43% as a result of the implementation of the BPNT program in 2020 is in 24th place out of 34 provinces. For information, the five provinces with the largest reduction in Gini Coefficients as a result of the implementation of the BPNT program in 2020 are West Nusa Tenggara Province (-1.50%), DI Yogyakarta Province (-1.30%), East Nusa Tenggara Province (-1.19%), Province of Central Java (-1.19%), and East Java Province (-1.10%).

However, the low decline in the Gini Coefficient as a result of the implementation of the BPNT program in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province in 2020 is understandable considering the Gini Coefficient of the Bangka Belitung Islands Province is already in the lowest position of 34 provinces in Indonesia. Both without the implementation of the BPNT program and with the implementation of the BPNT program, the Gini Coefficient of the Bangka Belitung Islands Province was the lowest of 34 provinces in Indonesia, namely 0.2634 (without the implementation of the BPNT program) and 0.2623 (with the implementation of the BPNT program).

For information, the five provinces that had the lowest Gini Coefficient without and with the implementation of the BPNT program in March 2020 were the Bangka Belitung Islands Province (without BPNT was 0.2634 and with BPNT was 0.2623), North Kalimantan Province (without BPNT was 0.2936 and with BPNT was 0.2924), West Sumatra Province (without BPNT was 0.3067 and with BPNT was 0.3047), North Maluku Province (without BPNT was 0.3083 and with BPNT was 0.3080), and North Sumatra Province (without BPNT was 0.3183 and with BPNT was 0.3161).

Meanwhile, the five provinces that had the highest Gini Coefficient without and with the implementation of the BPNT program in March 2020 were DI Yogyakarta Province (without BPNT was 0.4395 and with BPNT was 0.4338), Gorontalo Province (without BPNT was 0.4121 and with BPNT was 0.4080), West Java Province (without BPNT was 0.4059 and with BPNT was 0.4031), DKI Jakarta Province (without BPNT was 0.4000 and with BPNT was 0.3994), and Papua Province (without BPNT was 0.3917 and with BPNT was 0.3916).

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**Table 1. The Decrease in Gini Coefficient as A Result of Implementation of BPNT Program in 7 Districts/Cities of the Province of Bangka Belitung Islands March 2020**

No	District/City	Gini Coefficient		Decrease in Gini Coefficient	
		Without BPNT	With BPNT	Percentage	Point
1	District of Bangka	0.2554	0.2543	-0.45%	-0.0012
2	District of Belitung	0.2579	0.2565	-0.57%	-0.0015
3	District of West Bangka	0.2351	0.2337	-0.60%	-0.0014
4	District of Central Bangka	0.2426	0.2417	-0.36%	-0.0009
5	District of South Bangka	0.2190	0.2183	-0.36%	-0.0008
6	District of East Belitung	0.2527	0.2515	-0.46%	-0.0012
7	City of Pangkal Pinang	0.2782	0.2767	-0.55%	-0.0015
	Province of Bangka Belitung Islands	0.2634	0.2623	-0.43%	-0.0011

Source: BPS Statistics Indonesia (2020), calculated

Changes in the level of population inequality are strongly influenced by the large variation in expenditure changes between population groups. If the change in expenditure of the lower group of population is faster than the upper and middle class population, the expenditure inequality or income inequality will decrease (BPS Statistics Indonesia, 2019). The implementation of the BPNT program in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province succeeded in reducing the Gini Coefficient of the Bangka Belitung Islands Province so that it could be stated that the implementation of the BPNT program in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province was able to make the expenditures of the lower class population increase faster than the expenditures of the upper and middle class population.

Based on the classification by Oshima, the Gini Coefficient of Bangka Belitung Islands Province in March 2020 without the implementation of BPNT program which was 0.2634 indicating a low level of inequality. According to Oshima, the value of the Gini Coefficient is divided into three levels. The Gini Coefficient value less than 0.3 is included in the low inequality category, the Gini coefficient value between 0.3 to 0.5 is included in the moderate category, and a Gini coefficient value greater than 0.5 is said to be in high inequality (BPS Statistics City of Yogyakarta, 2017). With the implementation of BPNT program, the Gini Coefficient of the Bangka Belitung Islands Province in March 2020 was 0.2623 which was included in the low category. Thus, it can be stated that the implementation of the BPNT program in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province does not change the category of income inequality in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province, which is still in the low category.

Without the implementation of BPNT program, the Gini Coefficient of the Bangka Belitung Islands Province in March 2020 was 0.2634. Only City of Pangkal Pinang had a Gini Coefficient above 0.2634 without the implementation of the BPNT program, which was 0.2782. With the implementation of BPNT program, the Gini Coefficient of the Bangka Belitung Islands Province in March 2020 was 0.2623. Again, only City of Pangkal Pinang has a Gini Coefficient above 0.2623 with the implementation of the BPNT program, which is 0.2767. So, both without the implementation of the BPNT program and with the implementation of the BPNT program, only City of Pangkal Pinang had a Gini Coefficient above the Gini Coefficient of the Bangka Belitung Islands Province. Thus, it can be stated that the implementation of the BPNT program does not change the map of the level of income inequality of 7 districts/cities in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province, Indonesia in March 2020.

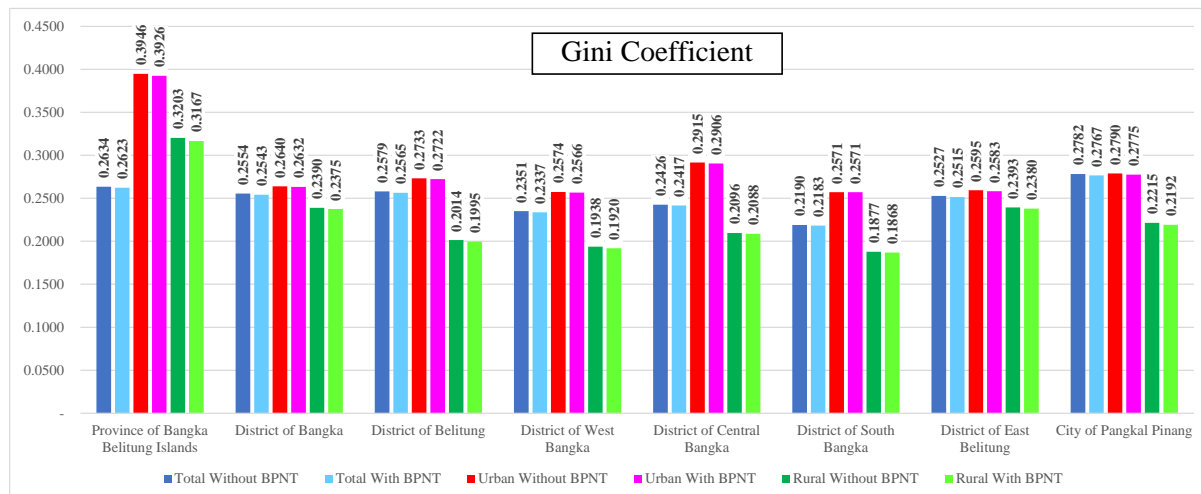
Without the implementation of BPNT program, the urban Gini Coefficient in Bangka Belitung Islands Province (0.3946) was greater than the rural Gini Coefficient in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province (0.3203). With the implementation of BPNT program, the urban Gini Coefficient in Bangka



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Belitung Islands Province (0.3926) was still greater than the rural Gini Coefficient in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province (0.3167). Thus, the implementation of the BPNT program does not change the map of the level of income inequality between urban and rural areas in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province.

This is supported by the urban and rural Gini Coefficients of 7 districts/cities in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province. Both without the implementation of BPNT program, and with the implementation of BPNT program, the urban Gini Coefficient in 7 districts/cities in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province was always greater than the rural Gini Coefficient in 7 districts/cities in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province.



**Figure 1. Development of Gini Coefficient of Indonesia and Province of Bangka Belitung Islands September 2011 - September 2020**

Source: BPS Statistics Indonesia (2020), calculated

From the explanation above, it can be stated that the implementation of the BPNT program is able to reduce the Gini Coefficient in the Province of Bangka Belitung Islands. The district/city with the highest Gini Coefficient decrease as a result of the implementation of the BPNT program is District of West Bangka with a decrease in the Gini Coefficient of -0.60% or -0.0014 points. Then respectively is District of Belitung with a decrease in the Gini Coefficient of -0.57% or -0.0015 points, City of Pangkal Pinang with a decrease in the Gini Coefficient of -0.55% or -0.0015 points, District of East Belitung with a decrease in the Gini Coefficient of -0.46% or -0.0012 points, District of Bangka with a decrease in the Gini Coefficient of -0.45% or -0.0012 points, District of Central Bangka with a decrease in the Gini Coefficient of -0.363% or -0.0009 points, and finally District of South Bangka with a decrease in the Gini Coefficient of -0.356% or -0.0008 points.

The ability of BPNT program in reducing Gini Coefficient of the Province of Bangka Belitung Islands and its districts/city is due to the implementation of the BPNT program in accordance with the general guidelines for the BPNT program issued by the Indonesian Ministry of Social Affairs. Locally, the implementation of the BPNT program in City of Pangkal Pinang was in accordance with the general guidelines for the BPNT program issued by the Ministry of Social Affairs. Using 6T analysis, there are three effective indicators of BPNT implementation in City of Pangkal Pinang, namely the right amount, right time, and right quality (Andrian, 2019). According to Sabarisman & Suradi (2020), food assistance in the District of East Belitung, Province of Bangka Belitung Islands is able to reduce the burden of spending on food needs from BPNT Beneficiary Families (KPM).

The explanation above which state that the implementation of the BPNT program in Province of Bangka Belitung Islands is able to reduce the level of income inequality of Province of Bangka

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Belitung Islands as evidenced by the decrease in the Gini Coefficient of Province of Bangka Belitung Islands is in line with the explanation from the Minister of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. The Minister of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia stated that BPNT was effective in reducing the level of income inequality due to four factors: first, BPNT is based on an Integrated Database (Basis Data Terpadu/BDT) which is regularly updated in coordination with the regions. Second, BPNT realizes financial inclusion by encouraging changes in the behavior of Beneficiary Families (KPM) to recognize non-cash transactions. Third, BPNT actively involves the community for social work where there are tens of thousands of workers for BPNT, including Kelurahan Social Welfare Workers (Tenaga Kesejahteraan Sosial Kelurahan/TKSK) and other social assistants and there are productive businesses such as e-warong where KPM takes BPNT. Fourth, because BPNT has a wide reach and every year the number of recipients increases, where in 2018 BPNT recipients have more than 10 million KPM and according to the direction of the President of the Republic of Indonesia that in 2019 all 15.6 million KPM are entitled to receive BPNT. In addition, the Director General of Social Protection and Security of the Indonesian Ministry of Social Affairs stated that the trend of graduated KPM (i.e. no longer accepting BPNT because the level of income and welfare was already high) had increased from 230,000 KPM in 2018 to 640,000 KPM which had achieved independent prosperous graduation (graduasi sejahtera mandiri) in 2019 (Jayaputra, et al., 2019).

Although the implementation of the BPNT program in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province succeeded in reducing income inequality during the Covid-19 pandemic as evidenced by the decrease in the Gini Coefficient, this achievement can still be improved. These improvements are improving the data quality of BPNT recipients, increasing the types of food that BPNT recipients can choose, and increasing the number of e-warongs so that BPNT recipients can choose the closest e-warong (Sabarisman & Suradi, 2020). Andrian (2019) suggested the City of Pangkal Pinang government to increase the effectiveness of 3 indicators, namely right target, right price and right administration so that the implementation of BPNT in City of Pangkal Pinang is getting stronger in improving people's welfare in City of Pangkal Pinang and income inequality will be reduced.

Another improvement, for example, was related to the accuracy of the BPNT KPM target and the timeliness of BPNT distribution. Also, important factors to be improved are public knowledge about the BPNT program and supervision by the government of BPNT program implementor officers. This is as explained by Siregar (2019) who examined the effectiveness of the implementation of the BPNT program in Sub-District of North Rantau, District of Labuhanbatu, North Sumatra Province. Although the research by Siregar (2019) was conducted in North Sumatra Province at the time when the Covid-19 pandemic had not yet occurred, the findings from this study could be an input for the Bangka Belitung Islands Province in improving the implementation of the BPNT program during the Covid-19 pandemic, namely 2020 and beyond.

Another effort that can be made to improve the implementation of the BPNT program in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province during the Covid-19 pandemic is that the Bangka Belitung Islands Provincial government as the implementer of the BPNT program needs to ensure that food prices are affordable, the quality of staples is better, implementation is on schedule that has been planned, and the availability of foodstuffs which are the main components of the BPNT program. This is as explained by the National Team for the Acceleration of Poverty Reduction (Tim Nasional Percepatan Penanggulangan Kemiskinan/TNP2K) (2020) in its study of maximizing the role of the Staple Food program or BPNT during the Covid-19 pandemic. In detail, to maximize the role of the Staple Food program or BPNT during the Covid-19 pandemic, the government as program implementer needs to: (a) ensure KPM can buy food at the average price prevailing in the market, (b) ensure KPM are able to choose ingredients food both in terms of quality, price and quantity, (c) improving the quality of goods purchased by KPM and keeping the price more affordable, (d) ensuring the availability of staple foodstuffs which are the main components of the program, (e) ensuring the realization in the field is on schedule that has been determined, and (f) ensure that the Covid-19 prevention protocol can run in the process of realizing the Staple Food/BPNT program.

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## 5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

### CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of the BPNT program in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province during the Covid-19 pandemic, namely in 2020, is able to reduce the level of income inequality in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province, which is able to reduce the Gini Coefficient of the Bangka Belitung Islands Province by -0.43%. The implementation of the BPNT program was able to make the expenditure of the lower class population increase faster than the expenditure of the upper and middle class population. The implementation of the BPNT program does not change the map of the income inequality level of the 7 districts/cities in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province and also does not change the map of the level of income inequality between urban and rural areas in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province. In addition, the implementation of the BPNT program in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province does not change the category of income inequality in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province, which is still in the low category.

### SUGGESTION

Although the implementation of the BPNT program in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province during the Covid-19 pandemic, namely in 2020, was able to reduce the level of income inequality in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province, the decline was quite low, namely -0.43% compared to the decrease in the level of Indonesian national income inequality which was -0.75%. Therefore this study recommends that the provincial government of Bangka Belitung Islands as the implementer of the Staple Food/BPNT program needs to improve the implementation of the BPNT program in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province by: (a) ensuring KPM can buy food at the average price prevailing in the market, (b) ensuring KPM are able to choose foodstuffs from quality, price and quantity, (c) improving the quality of goods purchased by KPM and keeping the price more affordable, (d) ensuring the availability of staple foodstuffs which are the main components of the program, (e) ensure the realization in the field is in accordance with the predetermined schedule, and (f) ensure that the Covid-19 prevention protocol can run in the process of realizing the Staple Food/BPNT program.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to thank Allah SWT because of His gift the author was able to complete this paper. Author also thanks the family for always supporting the writer's activities. Author also thank colleagues in the Fiscal Policy Agency of the Ministry of Finance for discussions and guidance so that the author can complete this paper.

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## **Decrease in the Gini Coefficient as a Result of the Distribution of BPNT during the Covid-19 Pandemic in the Province of Bangka Belitung Islands, Indonesia**

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