

Public Health Education: Improving Public Understanding and Awareness in Maintaining Health

Muhammad Eko Atmojo^{1*}, Mahendro Prasetyo Kusumo², and Vicky Alfitra Perdana¹

¹Department of Government Science, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, Indonesia

²Master of Hospital Administration Program, Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, Indonesia

*muhammadekoatmojo05@gmail.com

Article Info	Abstract
Article history: Received: March 13, 2025 Accepted: July 18, 2025 Published: December 20, 2025 Keywords: PCA Pajangan Public health Public health education This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License © 2025 Bubungan Tinggi: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat To cite this article: Atmojo, M. E., Kusumo, M. P., & Perdana, V. A. (2025). Public health education: improving public understanding and awareness in maintaining health. <i>Bubungan Tinggi: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat</i>, 7(4), 830-837.	Health is very important to humans because good health enables a better, more sustainable life. It is important to stay healthy to ensure life runs smoothly. Various health problems in the community are considered threats that can disrupt activities and the sustainability of life in the future. Through this problem, the community development team assists the Aisyiah Pajangan Sub-District Branch to increase community understanding of maintaining health and preventing disease. This empowerment is carried out through the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) method, which prioritizes the formulation of results based on program implementation needs. In this activity, two main activities serve as solutions to problems: socialization of awareness about the spread and prevention of disease, and mass health checks. This activity aims to build a community in Pajangan Sub-District that is better prepared to prevent disease and to increase public understanding of ongoing health maintenance.

INTRODUCTION

Health is an essential aspect of human life, as good health conditions certainly provide a more secure and sustainable life. Maintaining health is an obligation to ensure life is not disturbed and that life patterns run optimally. Pajangan Sub-district is one of the sub-districts in Bantul Regency that has accompanying health threats. This is indicated by several cases of diseases that have emerged in this sub-district, such as dengue fever. This dengue fever case emerged in the period January-May 2024, with 5 cases, whereas in 2023, there was only 1 case ([Prihatin, 2024](#)). In detail, dengue fever cases in Pajangan sub-district involved individuals aged 11 months to 51 years, with the most cases in Guwosari Village (3) and Sendangsari (2). In addition, Kapanewon Pajangan is recorded as the area with the highest stunting case rate in Bantul Regency, with 300 stunted babies in this kapanewon in 2018 ([Punjastuti et al., 2023](#)). This stunting case is caused by the low awareness of the culture of exclusive breastfeeding and hereditary/genetic factors ([Rahayu, 2019](#)).

A disease arises from a lack of understanding of the nutrients the body needs. The community is still considered to have minimal understanding and awareness of how to maintain the environment to keep it protected from disease. A lack of awareness and

knowledge about the importance of health, along with a minimal desire to check health regularly at health services, contributes to a high risk of contracting a disease ([Marsanti et al., 2023](#)). Meanwhile, giving full attention to the growth and development of the younger generation also needs improvement. This considers the broader risk of stunting, which will have a serious impact on children's long-term quality of life ([Fauzi, 2024](#)). The role of the family in monitoring child development is considered very important, as it can later produce a strong and healthy generation.

Given the increasingly looming health threats, preventive measures are needed to minimize them. The involvement of all elements of society is needed to support the achievement of health control, thereby creating a conducive atmosphere; one way to encourage this is to involve women actively. One of the community organizations based on women's participation is 'Aisyiyah. As a women's organization, 'Aisyiyah understands the important role of women in the family, especially in terms of maintaining family health. Health education by the 'Aisyiyah Assembly aims to empower women so that they have sufficient knowledge to care for their own health, their children's health, and the health of other family members. By involving women in educational activities, we expect them to become agents of change in promoting healthy lifestyles within the family and the surrounding environment.

METHODS

This community service activity will be carried out using Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), an approach that invites community participation in the development and implementation of the activity ([Yudha, 2019](#)). The PRA empowerment method generally prioritizes the formulation results based on the needs for implementing the field program ([Ridwan et al., 2019](#)). The data analysis method used in this study was qualitative analysis, in which, according to Miles and Huberman ([Nasution & Kushandajani, 2019](#)). The data obtained were analyzed through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. In this activity, the community is actively involved through program formulations that include ideas, creativity, and constructive cooperation. For this reason, the results of this community service can increase community understanding of disease prevention, thereby reducing the number of cases of disease in Triwidadi Village, Pajangan District. This community service was attended by members of the PCA Pajangan and the Kapanewon Pajangan community, totaling approximately 30 people. In general, each community service activity has the following objectives (see Table 1).

Table 1 List of names and purposes of activities

No	Activity	Objective	Program Achievement Indicator
1	Socialization of Awareness of the Spread and Prevention of Disease	Providing understanding to the public about maintaining health and preventive measures against disease	Increased public understanding of disease prevention
2	Mass Health Check Activities	Provide public health monitoring to determine the physical condition of everyone.	Public health checks are carried out properly
3	Activity Evaluation	Seeing the achievement of each program in terms of the impacts and goals that have been agreed upon together	The evaluation was carried out properly with comprehensive monitoring of activities

This community service activity consists of a series of steps, starting with observation. The community service team conducts direct observations of partners. Observations are important for conducting systematic, measurable, in-depth investigations of social symptoms ([Dewi et al., 2021](#)). After learning about the problems partners face, the community service team maps out, compiles, and implements programs to address them. Meanwhile, this community service activity is carried out through 3 stages: socialization of awareness about the spread and prevention of disease in the community, in collaboration with the Pajangan Health Center; mass health checks for the community, in collaboration with the PKU Muhammadiyah Bantul Hospital; and activity evaluation. These activities are arranged in the order of the problems partners face, so when carried out sequentially, they will help partners solve them. Then, in detail, the purpose of the activities carried out is

1. Socialization of awareness of disease spread and prevention in the community, aimed at providing understanding to the community, specifically members of the Pajangan PCA, of the mechanisms for disease prevention that can be carried out. This activity is based on the community's condition, including a threat of disease such as diabetes. With this socialization activity, it is hoped that the community will understand the preventive steps as a means to reduce the risk of disease.
2. Mass health checks for the community are conducted to monitor community health and provide early warning, enabling action if potential disease threats are identified. In this session, the community receives a basic health check to obtain results that serve as a reference for assessing individuals' health conditions.
3. Evaluation: This activity assesses the program's progress, as evidenced by the community's understanding and well-documented health check results. As part of this activity, a post-test is administered to the community to assess the program's achievement.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This community empowerment activity is carried out directly by involving partner members, including members of the Pajangan PCA, who are also part of the Pajangan Kapanewon community. The partners in question are the Griya Lansia group, most of whom are aged 45-60. Disease prevention should be carried out to foster a clean, healthy community lifestyle to support the realization of an environment free of disease risk in a sustainable manner. The initial effort to achieve this is to instill a collective understanding of the community's health education. A community that understands how to maintain health can certainly reduce the risk of contracting the disease. In addition, health education is one preventive measure that can remind the community of the importance of maintaining health [in 2023](#). It is believed that if the community has a strong understanding of and awareness of disease prevention, promoting environmental cleanliness, and personal health, it can gradually have a positive influence on the surrounding area. To create a healthy community that is free from the threat of disease, the community service team carries out several stages, including the following:

a) Socialization of Awareness of the Spread and Prevention of Disease

In general, socialization is an activity aimed at providing the community with an understanding of the growth of awareness and disease prevention. In addition, according to [Alamsyah et al. \(2021\)](#), socialization as counseling can also increase public knowledge in the health sector. This activity is based on conditions in Kapanewon Pajangan, namely the many potential disease threats in the community, such as diabetes, dengue fever, and others. This socialization activity was attended directly by the community, especially members of the Pajangan PCA. The material presented in this activity concerns mechanisms for preventing disease in the community, with stages aligned with clinical health guidelines.

Socialization activities are carried out to foster community awareness and concern about preventing the emergence of diseases through various alternative actions, such as maintaining environmental cleanliness, promoting healthy lifestyles, and emphasizing the importance of maintaining a healthy body to stay fit. This is because health is a lifestyle that aims to achieve physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, and environmental well-being. This material is essential, given that many people still do not understand how to carry out effective disease prevention. Through this activity, the community can also develop a new culture that is more sensitive to maintaining the cleanliness and health of individuals and the environment, thereby realizing a sustainable life. Socialization of awareness about the spread and prevention of disease is shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1 Socialization of awareness of the spread and prevention of disease

A socialization on the spread and prevention of disease in the community was held at the Baitul Muslimin Mosque in Pajangan Sub-district, attended by members of the Pajangan PCA. The socialization material was delivered directly with the assistance of health practitioners so that the delivery could be more easily understood and in accordance with health prevention provisions. In addition, with assistance from health practitioners, it is hoped that it will provide views in accordance with the procedure, given that health is a fairly important issue that requires specialized expertise to ensure there are no mistakes in its delivery. In this socialization, case examples were also provided to describe community-specific conditions, enabling the process to be carried out interactively and engagingly. In addition to material on disease prevention through maintaining cleanliness and health, this socialization also provides recommendations for maintaining a diet, which is essential considering that many partner members are elderly. This condition is due to the need to improve clean, healthy living behaviors to prevent and control disease risk, thereby reducing the likelihood of disease ([Khariri et al., 2023](#)). For this reason, attention needs to be paid to maintaining a healthy diet to control blood sugar levels, as the elderly are particularly susceptible to disease.

b) Mass Health Check-up

To support a healthy community, the community service team provides healthy socialization and conducts mass health checks. This activity is intended to assess everyone's health condition as a preventive measure, to protect them from the risk of illness, especially diabetes, given that the partner members include many older adults. Health checks for the elderly are considered quite important, as elderly people's health problems are often due to a lack of awareness of the importance of these checks ([Widiany, 2019](#)). This health check is also conducted with the assistance of health practitioners to ensure the community's health is monitored correctly. This is because regular health checks are an important effort in maintaining public health ([Prabowo et al., 2024](#)). In addition, with the assistance of health practitioners' checks, supporting tools for checks can be properly available. Mass health check activities are shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2 Mass health check activities

Health monitoring for partners in this activity is certainly important, as the results can serve as a reference for providing recommendations if there are findings regarding individual health, enabling appropriate action. This examination is only performed to check cholesterol levels. Blood sugar, uric acid, and blood pressure are measured to allow a comprehensive examination. Based on existing data, 18 people had quite high blood pressure; therefore, the health team and the 'Aisyiyah Branch Leadership provided treatment so that participants could maintain their health. Even so, based on the general examination results, partner members have quite good health outcomes. This condition certainly needs to be maintained by implementing the results of previous socialization, so that it is hoped that partner members can maintain their health well on an ongoing basis.

c) Evaluation

A program basically requires implementation measurement to determine its achievement and effectiveness, and to record implementation results. The evaluation was carried out by the service team, which provided a post-test form to obtain more specific results on the program's achievement. This is in accordance with the post-test's purpose, namely to determine the progress in individual understanding of teaching materials after a learning activity (Siregar et al., 2023). So that the service team measures success by evaluating the activities carried out. In addition, the results of this monitoring can be used by partners to follow up through alternative programs (see Figure 3).

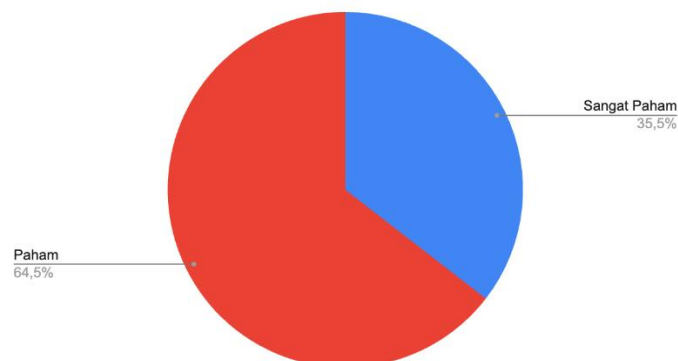


Figure 3 Monitoring of community understanding achievement

As seen in Figure 3, of the 30 respondents who completed this post-test, 35.5% stated they understood very well, and 64.5% understood the socialization material. The evaluation results showed that most partner members had gained a good understanding, and the checks indicated that their health conditions were generally good. The condition of partner

members with a good understanding can be applied in everyday life by maintaining a healthy lifestyle, thereby preventing the spread of diseases in Kapanewon Pajangan.

CONCLUSION

This community empowerment activity aims to increase awareness and understanding of the Kapanewon Pajangan community about disease prevention through a clean and healthy lifestyle. The socialization involved members of the PCA Pajangan, especially the elderly, with a focus on disease awareness, particularly diabetes. In addition to health socialization, the community service team also conducted mass health checks for the community, especially the elderly. The examination results showed that, in general, the participants' health condition was quite good. To maintain this good health, the community is expected to continue practicing a healthy lifestyle in accordance with the provided socialization materials. In addition, instilling understanding through socialization is hoped to reduce the risk of disease and create a healthier environment. The follow-up plan is to empower the community to use natural resources to produce traditional herbal medicine, thereby strengthening disease prevention measures. This will enable the community to create specific herbal medicines that can improve public health and sustainably enhance the local economy.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest in either carrying out the empowerment program or writing this article.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

In this statement, we declare that each author contributed fully to both implementing community empowerment activities and compiling this article.

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AUTHOR PROFILES



Muhammad Eko Atmojo, S.IP., M.IP.

muhammadekoatmojo@fisipol.umy.ac.id

Affiliation: Department of Government Science, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta

Expertise: Urban Governance Policy

<https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=MNbzniQAAAAJ&hl=id>

<https://sinta.kemdikbud.go.id/authors/profile/5973871>

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7266-7072>

Scopus: 57222902285



Dr. dr. Mahendro Prasetyo Kusumo, MMR

mahendro_prasetyo@umy.ac.id

Master of Hospital Administration Program, Postgraduate
Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Google Scholar:

<https://scholar.google.co.id/citations?user=kZUP4vEAAAAJ&hl=id>



Vicky Alfitra Perdana, S.IP.

Vicky.alfitra.isip18@mail.umy.ac.id

Department of Government Science, Faculty of Social and Political
Sciences, Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta

<https://scholar.google.com/citations?hl=id&user=JwfhxqIAAAJ>

<https://orcid.org/0009-0003-9414-6317>

Scopus: 58715378700