

Community Perceptions of BPJS Employment Socialization Conducted by Student Community Service Program in Semurut Village, Berau Regency

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates community perceptions of BPJS Employment socialization conducted by community service students in Semurut Village, Berau Regency. Using a qualitative approach, data were collected through observations and in-depth interviews with 23 informants representing informal workers. The findings show that the community generally perceived the socialization positively due to the use of simple language, approachable communication, and the relevance of BPJS Employment to their daily work risks. However, participants noted challenges in understanding technical terms and expressed the need for repeated explanations and practical demonstrations. Factors influencing perceptions included limited prior knowledge, the communicative style of the facilitators, and the perceived usefulness of the program. Participants recommended follow-up sessions, printed materials, visual examples, and involvement of BPJS officers. These results align with previous studies highlighting the importance of contextualized, continuous, and trust-based communication in social protection outreach.

Keywords: Rural community; BPJS Employment; Informal workers; Socialization

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji persepsi masyarakat terhadap kegiatan sosialisasi BPJS Ketenagakerjaan yang dilakukan oleh mahasiswa pengabdian masyarakat di Desa Semurut, Kabupaten Berau. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui observasi dan wawancara mendalam dengan 23 informan yang mewakili pekerja informal. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa masyarakat umumnya memberikan respons positif terhadap kegiatan sosialisasi karena penggunaan bahasa yang sederhana, komunikasi yang mudah didekati, serta relevansi manfaat BPJS Ketenagakerjaan dengan risiko kerja sehari-hari. Namun, para peserta melaporkan kendala dalam memahami beberapa istilah teknis dan menyatakan perlunya penjelasan berulang serta demonstrasi praktis. Faktor-faktor yang memengaruhi persepsi masyarakat meliputi keterbatasan pengetahuan sebelumnya, kemampuan komunikatif fasilitator, dan persepsi masyarakat mengenai kegunaan program. Peserta juga merekomendasikan adanya sesi lanjutan, penyediaan materi cetak, contoh visual, serta keterlibatan langsung petugas BPJS. Hasil ini sejalan dengan penelitian sebelumnya yang menekankan pentingnya komunikasi yang kontekstual, berkelanjutan, dan berbasis kepercayaan dalam kegiatan sosialisasi perlindungan sosial.

Kata kunci: Masyarakat desa; BPJS Ketenagakerjaan; Pekerja informal; Sosialisasi

INTRODUCTION

Social protection programs play an essential role in enhancing welfare and reducing socioeconomic vulnerability, especially among informal workers who are highly exposed to employment-related risks (Meilarovasari et al., 2025; Septiani et al., 2025). In Indonesia, the national social security institution—BPJS Employment (BPJS Ketenagakerjaan)—provides coverage for work accidents, death benefits, old-age savings, and pension schemes (Meilarovasari

et al., 2025; Septiani et al., 2025). Despite the government's continuous efforts to expand coverage, awareness and understanding of BPJS Employment programs remain relatively low in rural areas, with only about 7.61% of informal workers registered as active participants (Septiani et al., 2025). Limited access to information, low literacy levels, and the dominance of informal labor sectors often contribute to the community's lack of knowledge about the benefits and procedures of enrollment (Septiani et al., 2025).

In this context, universities have the potential to contribute to public education through community engagement programs. The Student Community Service Program (KKN – Kuliah Kerja Nyata) conducted by Universitas Muhammadiyah Berau (UM Berau) is one such initiative aimed at empowering local communities through education, outreach, and applied service activities. During their placement, Student Community Service Program often conduct awareness campaigns, including socialization of public service programs such as BPJS Employment. However, the effectiveness of such activities depends not only on the accuracy of the material delivered but also on how the community receives, interprets, and values the information.

Studies on community perceptions of social protection programs in rural Indonesia have been growing, yet most focus on policy evaluation, participation barriers, or the socioeconomic impact of such programs (Septiani et al., 2025). Research exploring how local communities perceive student-led socialization activities remains limited, particularly in remote areas such as Semurut Village in Berau Regency, where informal employment is dominant and access to public information is relatively constrained. Understanding community perceptions is crucial because community acceptance and comprehension influence whether social protection initiatives achieve sustainable uptake (Septiani et al., 2025).

Addressing this gap, the present study seeks to explore how the residents of Semurut Village perceive the BPJS Employment socialization conducted by The Student Community Service Program Specifically, the

study examines: (1) how the community perceives the overall socialization activity, (2) how they assess the clarity of the materials, the communication methods used, and the relevance of the information presented, (3) what factors shape and influence these perceptions, and (4) what expectations the community has for future BPJS Employment socialization efforts. By investigating these questions through a qualitative descriptive approach, the study aims to provide a contextual understanding of the dynamics of community engagement and the effectiveness of student-led social protection awareness initiatives in rural Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design aimed at exploring the perceptions of Semurut Village community members regarding the BPJS Employment socialization conducted by the UM Berau Student Community Service Program. The research population consisted of residents of Semurut Village who participated in, attended, or were exposed to the socialization activities. Using purposive sampling, the study selected 10 key informants, including community members from various socioeconomic backgrounds, village officials, and students involved in the socialization process. These informants were chosen based on their relevance and direct engagement with the program.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, non-participant observations, and document analysis. Interview guidelines were semi-structured to ensure flexibility while maintaining focus on key themes related to perception, clarity of information,

communication methods, and relevance of the socialization. All interviews were recorded with permission and transcribed verbatim.

The data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles and Huberman (1994), consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. To ensure data validity, the study employed triangulation of sources and techniques, as well as member checking.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Data analysis generated four major themes describing community perceptions of the BPJS Employment socialization conducted by students in Semurut Village: (1) general perceptions of the socialization activity, (2) assessments of material clarity and delivery methods, (3) factors influencing community perceptions, and (4) community expectations for future socialization efforts. These themes emerged through triangulation of interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentation.

1. General Perceptions of the Socialization Activity

Overall, the community expressed positive perceptions of the BPJS Employment socialization. Many respondents described the activity as useful and informative, particularly because BPJS Employment was often considered a complicated program prior to the socialization. Informants stated that the presence of students made the session feel more friendly, informal, and easier to follow.

“Jujur saja dek, sebelum anak-anak KKN datang, saya ini nda tau apa itu BPJS Ketenagakerjaan. Pikir saya cuma BPJS kesehatan itu. Pas dijelaskan, oh... ternyata lain, ada

gunanya juga untuk pekerja.”
(Informan 3)

Observations indicated that participants showed active engagement, frequently asking questions and requesting clarification about benefit categories and registration procedures. However, some community members noted that the concepts still felt abstract. A male resident stated:

“Bagus sih penjelasannya, cuma kita ini kan mau lihat contoh nyata juga... kalau ada contoh orang sudah dapat manfaatnya, mungkin lebih paham lagi.” (Informan 7)

Several other residents reinforced these positive perceptions, particularly because the students were considered easy to interact and blend with within the community. A middle-aged woman explained:

“Anak-anak KKN ini ramah-ramah, jadi kita nyaman dengar penjelasannya. Ndak sungkan mau tanya. Biasanya kalau pegawai resmi datang, kita suka kaku... ini lebih santai.” (Informan 9)

A young villager also added that this activity opened new insights for informal workers:

“Kami yang kerja harian begini jarang dapat info soal jaminan-jaminan begini dek. Waktu mereka jelaskan itu, baru sadar ternyata penting juga kalau ada apa-apa di tempat kerja.” (Informan 10)

Overall, these additional interviews indicate that the community views the socialization activity positively, particularly because the students’

approach was perceived as more approachable, simpler, and easier to understand across different age groups and occupations.

2. Assessments of Material Clarity and Delivery Methods

Participants generally felt that The Student of Community Service Program explained the materials clearly and used simple language. Visual aids and real-life scenarios were especially appreciated. A housewife stated::

“Anak-anak KKN ini kalau jelasin pelan-pelan, gampang dicerna. Ndak pakai bahasa susah. Jadi kita cepat tangkap.” (Informan 2)

However, some respondents stated that certain terms such as “jaminan hari tua” and “jaminan kecelakaan kerja” still required repeated explanation.

“Kadang masih bingung juga dek, soalnya istilah-istilahnya baru dengar. Tapi kalau ditanya ulang, mereka sabar jelaskan.” (Informan 5)

Respondents also appreciated group discussions and the Q&A session, which allowed them to address personal concerns. Nonetheless, a few villagers suggested that demonstrating the registration process directly on a phone would have improved their understanding. Four additional informants reinforced these findings

A farmer said:

“Bagus sebenarnya cara mereka jelasin, cuma kami ini lebih paham kalau langsung ditunjukkan cara daftar di HP. Kalau lihat contoh langsung, lebih cepat nyambung.” (Informan 11)

ECO-BUILD JOURNAL

A small shop owner added::
“Bahasanya sederhana, nda mutar-mutar. Cuma ada bagian tentang iuran bulanan itu yang saya masih bingung, mau tau lebih detail lagi.” (Informan 12)

A young mother working as a casual laborer also expressed her view:

“Saya suka waktu mereka kasih contoh kejadian nyata. Jadi kita bisa bayangkan manfaatnya. Kalau cuma teori, kadang lewat saja di kepala.” (Informan 13)

A village youth leader stated:

“Kalau ada video pendek atau gambar lebih banyak, mungkin lebih menarik lagi. Soalnya banyak anak muda cepat paham kalau ada visual.” (Informan 14)

Overall, the data indicate that the community perceived the material delivery as fairly clear and communicative, but they still required visual examples, direct demonstrations, and repeated explanations for technical terms that were unfamiliar to most residents.

3. Factors Influencing Community Perceptions (Expanded)

Three key factors were identified as shaping community perceptions: (1) prior knowledge and exposure, (2) communication style of The Student of Community Service Program, and (3) relevance of the topic to daily economic activities.

Many villagers admitted that their limited prior knowledge made them rely heavily on the socialization.

“Kita ini banyak kerja serabutan, jarang dapat informasi resmi. Jadi waktu ada sosialisasi begini, kita baru tahu manfaatnya.” (Informan 6)

Another factor was the approachable communication style of the KKN students:

“Enak kalau anak-anak KKN yang jelasin, soalnya mereka dekat sama kita, ndak kaku.” (Informan 1)

Relevance also played a major role. Respondents who worked in agriculture, tambak, dan pekerjaan harian lepas felt that the program could directly benefit them in case of accidents or old age. A pond fisherman stated that information like this rarely reaches the villagers:

“Biasanya kami di tambak ini jarang dengar info begini. Kalau ndak ada anak KKN yang datang, mungkin sampai sekarang saya masih ndak tau soal jaminan tenaga kerja itu.” (Informan 15)

A daily construction worker admitted that the topic was relevant to the conditions of informal workers:

“Kami ini kerja harian, resikonya besar. Jadi pas mereka jelasin soal jaminan kecelakaan kerja, saya langsung rasa itu penting sekali buat kami.” (Informan 16)

A woman who sells traditional cakes felt that the students’ communication style made it easier for the community to understand the information:

“Anak-anak KKN santai jelaskannya, jadi kita nyaman dengar. Kalau petugas kantor yang jelasin, biasanya tegang” (Informan 17)

A village cultural leader also added that the community’s acceptance was influenced by their emotional closeness to the students:

“Masyarakat sini cepat cocok sama mereka, karena anak-anak KKN ikut berbaur di kegiatan kampung. Jadi waktu mereka sosialisasi itu, orang-orang percaya dan mau dengar.” (Informan 18)

4. Community Expectations for Future Socialization

Participants expressed several expectations and recommendations to enhance future BPJS Employment socialization activities. First, many respondents emphasized the need for more practical demonstrations, particularly step-by-step guidance on registration procedures, accessing services, and filing claims. Second, participants highlighted the importance of follow-up sessions, suggesting that regular or repeated meetings—ideally involving BPJS Employment officers—would help provide more detailed and authoritative information. Third, several informants recommended the inclusion of more community groups, such as fishermen associations, farmer groups, and youth organizations, to ensure broader outreach and participation. Fourth, participants suggested the provision of printed reference materials, such as brochures or simple booklets, that villagers could take home and revisit as needed.

As one village elder explained :

“Kalau ada bahan tertulisnya, kita bisa baca-baca lagi kapan saja. Biar lebih ingat juga.” (Informant 1).

Additional perspectives reinforced these expectations. A youth committee member underscored the usefulness of visual demonstrations, noting :

“Kalau ada video pendek atau contoh langsung cara daftar, pasti lebih cepat kami paham.” (Informant 19).

A farmer stressed the necessity of repeated visits, stating :

“Kalau bisa jangan sekali saja dek, datang lagi beberapa kali supaya kami makin paham. Kadang penjelasan pertama belum cukup.” (Informant 20).

Similarly, a local fisherman expressed a desire for the direct involvement of BPJS representatives:

“Lebih bagus kalau nanti ada orang BPJS sendiri yang datang, biar kita bisa tanya yang lebih dalam.” (Informant 21).

A home-based worker requested printed guides, explaining :

“Kalau ada brosur kecil itu bagus dek. Biar kita bisa lihat-lihat lagi kalau lupa.” (Informant 22).

Finally, a youth leader suggested tailoring sessions to specific job sectors to increase relevance:

“Mungkin bisa dibikin sosialisasi khusus untuk kelompok tertentu, misalnya nelayan atau pekerja bangunan, biar materinya lebih cocok.” (Informant 23).

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal multi-layered community perceptions regarding the BPJS Employment socialization conducted by The Student of Community Service Program in

Semurut Village. Four major themes emerged from the analysis: (1) general perceptions of the socialization activity, (2) assessments of material clarity and delivery methods, (3) factors shaping community perceptions, and (4) expectations for future socialization efforts. These insights deepen the understanding of how rural communities interpret, engage with, and respond to social protection programs delivered through community-based outreach.

The first theme, general perceptions of the activity, illustrates that the community viewed the socialization positively and considered it a valuable source of new information. Prior to the program, many participants held misconceptions about BPJS Employment, often perceiving it as identical to BPJS Health. The approachable presence of The Student of Community Service Program played an important role in shaping these perceptions, as their informal and friendly demeanor reduced communication barriers and encouraged active participation. Observational data also revealed high engagement, with community members asking questions and seeking clarification. However, some respondents still felt that the content remained abstract in the absence of concrete examples or testimonies from individuals who had personally received BPJS Employment benefits. This suggests that while awareness increased, deeper comprehension requires contextualized and relatable illustrations.

The second theme concerns clarity of the materials and delivery methods. Participants generally viewed the explanations as clear, with students using simple, accessible language, relatable analogies, and visual aids that facilitated understanding. Real-life scenarios were particularly effective in helping

villagers grasp the relevance of the program. Despite this, several technical terms such as *jaminan hari tua* and *jaminan kecelakaan kerja* remained challenging for some participants, highlighting the need for repeated and multimodal explanations. Respondents also expressed a strong preference for hands-on demonstrations, especially for mobile-based registration processes. These findings indicate that while verbal communication is useful for initial understanding, meaningful uptake requires practical, visual, and experiential learning.

The third theme identifies factors influencing community perceptions, including prior knowledge, communication style, and perceived relevance to daily work. Participants' limited previous exposure to employment protection systems increased their reliance on the socialization activities as a primary source of understanding. The approachable communication style of the The Student of Community Service Program further enhanced trust and willingness to engage. Importantly, the topic's relevance to informal workers—such as fishermen, farmers, vendors, and construction laborers—strengthened positive perceptions, as these groups recognized the potential benefits of BPJS Employment in mitigating occupational risks. A sense of emotional closeness between students and villagers also contributed to community acceptance, demonstrating that relational dynamics play a significant role in public reception of social protection messages.

The final theme relates to expectations for future socialization efforts. Participants emphasized the need for practical, step-by-step demonstrations of registration and claims procedures, as well as the importance of

follow-up sessions that could reinforce understanding. Many respondents also expressed a desire for involvement from formal BPJS Employment officers to provide more detailed and authoritative information. The inclusion of broader community groups—such as fishermen's associations, farmer groups, and youth organizations—was considered essential to ensure wider reach and participation. In addition, participants requested printed materials such as brochures or simple booklets to support reinforcement of learning after the sessions. Several informants also recommended the use of short videos, increased visual content, and occupationally tailored sessions to further enhance relevance and comprehension.

These findings are consistent with previous studies examining social protection outreach in rural and informal contexts. Research by Handayani and Suryani (2023) similarly found that informal workers in rural Indonesia responded positively to outreach led by trusted local figures, which helped reduce skepticism and improve awareness. Rahmawati et al. (2024) reported that clear, relatable communication—supported by practical examples and visual aids—was crucial for improving understanding of employment insurance schemes. Their study also noted that low prior knowledge and the need for repeated, hands-on engagement remain major challenges in enhancing comprehension and trust. Additionally, Santoso and Wulandari (2023) emphasized the importance of culturally sensitive communication and the involvement of community groups to broaden participation in social protection programs. Collectively, these findings align with the present study,

reinforcing the conclusion that tailored, continuous, and multidimensional socialization strategies are essential for improving the effectiveness of programs like BPJS Employment in rural communities.

CONCLUSION

This study examined community perceptions of the BPJS Employment socialization conducted by The Student of Community Service Program in Semurut Village. The findings demonstrate that the community generally viewed the socialization positively, appreciating the approachable communication style, simple language, and relevance of the topic to their daily work contexts. While participants gained new awareness of BPJS Employment benefits, many still required repeated explanations, practical demonstrations, and concrete examples to fully understand the program's mechanisms. Factors such as limited prior knowledge, the relational dynamics between students and villagers, and the perceived relevance of employment protection to informal work strongly shaped community perceptions. Furthermore, participants expressed clear expectations for more practical, continuous, and inclusive socialization efforts in the future. These insights underscore the importance of community-based outreach that is participatory, contextualized, and responsive to the learning needs of rural and informal workers.

The results of this study present several practical and theoretical implications:

1. Implications for Community Outreach Programs

The findings highlight the need for socialization strategies that incorporate practical demonstrations, visual aids, and step-by-step guidance to enhance comprehension among rural communities. Socialization initiatives should be designed as continuous, rather than one-time activities, allowing for repeated engagement and reinforcement of complex concepts. The involvement of formal BPJS Employment officers may further strengthen the credibility and depth of the information delivered.

2. Implications for Universities and The Student of Community Service Program Design

The positive reception of the The Student of Community Service Program indicates that university-led community service can play a meaningful role in expanding public awareness of social protection programs. Universities may consider integrating structured training on communication strategies, community engagement, and social protection literacy into Community Service Program preparation modules to improve the effectiveness of students' outreach efforts.

3. Implications for BPJS Employment Policy and Practice

The findings suggest that BPJS Employment could benefit from tailoring socialization materials for different occupational groups, particularly those in the informal sector. The development of simplified brochures, visual-based guides, and mobile-friendly demonstration tools may help broaden accessibility and understanding. Collaboration with community groups, local leaders, and

youth organizations can further extend the program's reach.

4. Theoretical Implications

This study reinforces existing literature indicating that culturally sensitive, trust-based, and participatory communication strategies are essential for effective social protection outreach in rural settings. It also provides empirical evidence that relational proximity—such as the emotional closeness felt toward The Student of Community Service Program—can significantly influence the acceptance and perceived credibility of socialization programs.

5. Implications for Future Research

Future studies may explore the long-term impact of socialization activities on actual BPJS Employment enrollment rates, compare the effectiveness of student-led versus officer-led sessions, or examine the role of digital tools in enhancing outreach in remote communities. Exploring gender-specific or occupation-specific perceptions may also provide more nuanced insights.

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