

The Lunch Box Sharing Program to Demonstrate Social Awareness in the Panjang Jiwo Area of Surabaya City

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Abstract : *Economic development in urban areas such as Surabaya can create challenges for informal workers, including daily laborers, motorcycle taxi drivers, and waste collectors, particularly in accessing adequate food amid unstable incomes and increasing living costs. This community service program was conducted in the Panjang Jiwo area of Surabaya to promote social awareness through a community-based lunch box sharing initiative. The program aimed to increase community participation in food-sharing activities, reduce the daily food expenditure of beneficiaries, and strengthen solidarity among community members from different socioeconomic backgrounds. The program employed an Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach by identifying and mobilizing local assets, including food vendors, youth groups, volunteers, and community donations. The activities consisted of coordination, local asset mapping, donation mobilization, preparation of lunch boxes, and regular distribution to priority groups, particularly informal workers and other vulnerable residents. The results indicate that the program facilitated access to at least one meal per day for beneficiaries and encouraged greater community participation in donations and volunteer activities. The program also contributed to an estimated 15–20% reduction in beneficiaries' daily food expenditure and strengthened interactions and trust between donors, volunteers, local food vendors, and beneficiaries. These findings suggest that a locally organized lunch box sharing program can function not only as a form of food assistance but also as a mechanism for strengthening bridging social capital and community solidarity. The program provides a potential community-based model for developing sustainable philanthropic initiatives in urban areas.*

Introduction

The dynamics of economic development in large cities like Surabaya often leave social residue in the form of marginalization of informal sector workers. Amidst modernization, access to adequate food for vulnerable groups remains a serious challenge due to income instability and rising living costs (PUSPAS UNAIR, 2022). This situation has given rise to the urgency of social movement initiatives that serve as a connecting mechanism between groups with adequate resources and those with limited resources. This effort is crucial for maintaining social balance and strengthening harmony within the structure of urban society.

The Panjang Jiwo area of Surabaya City was chosen as the primary location for this community service activity due to its strategic location and densely populated residential areas. This area is inhabited by people from diverse professional backgrounds, ranging from students and office workers to daily laborers and online motorcycle taxi drivers who rely on activities in public spaces for their income. This heterogeneity of socio-economic conditions makes Panjang Jiwo a representative empirical space for examining the integration of locally based philanthropic programs into the dynamics of urban life.

Demonstrating social awareness is a key foundation for building a civil and religious society. Social awareness is not merely a feeling of compassion, but rather an active action born from the internalization of ethics and moral responsibility towards others (Akbar et al., 2024). Through strengthening collective empathy, communities have the potential to build an independent social security system that does not solely rely on government intervention. This system is based on the values of mutual cooperation as a social force that enables citizens to collectively face and overcome various humanitarian problems.

The Boxed Rice Sharing Program was implemented as an applicable solution that targets basic human needs, namely nutritional fulfillment. The provision of ready-to-eat meals in this program represents an effective form of social communication to emphasize support for marginalized groups (Tadale et al., 2025). By serving hygienic and high-quality food, this program not only serves to fulfill nutritional needs but also serves as a means of conveying values of respect and dignity to beneficiaries, thus fostering humanistic and humanitarian-oriented social interactions.

The goal of this community service activity is to optimize community participation in concrete food sharing initiatives while simultaneously helping reduce the daily economic burden on informal workers in the Panjang Jiwo area. Furthermore, this program aims to evaluate the effectiveness of utilizing local assets to support the implementation of social movements. Through this activity, it is hoped that a structured, measurable, and replicable model of social care will be established, inspiring other areas in Surabaya to strengthen community social resilience.

Research Methods

This community service research uses the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach as a methodological framework that emphasizes the identification and utilization of assets, potential, and strengths already possessed by the community (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Akbar & Sari, 2022). This approach differs from deficit-oriented models because it focuses on physical assets (e.g., local food stalls), social assets (youth communities), and human assets (residents' cooking and distribution skills) as the main drivers of the program (Sudaryono, 2021; Emzir, 2022). Based on these considerations, the type of research used is community service research with a qualitative descriptive method, which is in accordance with the characteristics of field studies based on community participation and empowerment (Sugiyono, 2021; Creswell & Creswell, 2022).

This research is classified as community-based service research with a qualitative approach, as it prioritizes an in-depth understanding of the processes, social dynamics, and meanings constructed during the implementation of the activities (Sugiyono, 2021). The qualitative approach was chosen to fully explore how the ABCD approach was implemented, starting from coordination meetings with the youth of Jogosatru Village, asset mapping, and implementing the distribution of boxed meals in the Panjang Jiwo area (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). This method allows researchers to capture the perspectives of various stakeholders, such as the committee, volunteers, food stall vendors, and beneficiaries in an empathetic and contextual manner (Emzir, 2022; Prasetya, 2023).

The main research instruments included interview guides, observation sheets, and field notes, systematically designed to gather information about the program's pre-implementation and

implementation processes (Sugiyono, 2021). The interview guides were used to explore the perceptions of Jogosatru Village youth, micro-entrepreneurs, and volunteers regarding the utilization of local assets, distribution patterns, and the socio-psychological impacts of activities. The observation sheets and field notes served to document volunteer interactions, donation mobilization strategies, and beneficiary responses (Sudaryono, 2021). The data analysis technique used was interpretive qualitative analysis with data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing based on the Miles & Huberman model framework, widely adopted in qualitative research and community service (Emzir, 2022; Dewi & Prasetya, 2024). This approach enabled researchers to connect field findings with ABCD theory and the principles of asset-based empowerment (Akbar & Sari, 2022).

The study population comprised all elements directly involved in the August 17th competition and the boxed rice distribution program, including youth from Jogosatru Village, micro-entrepreneurs (local food stalls), volunteers, and beneficiaries such as informal workers, scavengers, and residents of densely populated settlements in the Panjang Jiwo area (Kesosi Team, 2026). The research sample was selected purposively, with the criteria being direct involvement in the planning, implementation, or being the primary beneficiary of the program (Sugiyono, 2021). The number of respondents consisted of a number of youth leaders, partner food stall owners, and representatives of volunteers and beneficiaries who were deemed capable of providing in-depth information regarding asset mobility strategies and the program's socioeconomic impact (Sudaryono, 2021). This approach ensured that the data obtained was relevant to the focus of the analysis and represented various social positions within the community (Creswell & Creswell, 2022).

Systematically, the research procedure begins with a pre-implementation stage, which includes planning activities with the youth of Jogosatru Village through coordination meetings at the village hall, asset mapping of food stalls, youth communities, and community skills, and the development of a donation structure and priority distribution points (Kesosi Team, 2026; Dewi & Prasetya, 2024). Next, the implementation stage is carried out by periodically distributing boxed meals at mapped points, while applying the principles of nutritional quality, accountability, and a humanistic approach to beneficiaries (Sudaryono, 2021). In the post-implementation stage, researchers conducted interviews and subsequent observations to explore perceptions and impacts of the program, then conducted qualitative data analysis so that the research results not only describe technical success but also reveal the program's contribution to meeting basic needs, empowering the local economy, and strengthening social cohesion (Creswell & Creswell, 2022; Prasetya, 2023).

Results and Discussion

Overall, the Community Service Program (PKM) program successfully integrated various elements of the Panjang Jiwo community into a coordinated social care network. The program went beyond food distribution, evolving into a social movement involving diverse actors, from market vendors and food stall owners to youth communities. Distribution took place at strategic times, such as lunchtime and early afternoon, crucial periods for daily workers to obtain energy through the provision of nutritionally balanced lunch boxes.

The main objective achieved through this program was to build a bridge of solidarity between middle- to upper-income communities and marginalized communities in the Panjang Jiwo area. Evaluations revealed an increase in community participation in donations, driven by transparency in management and tangible evidence of aid distribution on the ground. Furthermore, the program facilitated the daily nutritional needs of informal workers, such as online motorcycle taxi drivers and scavengers, at least once a day. This has had a direct impact on improving their physical well-being during their work activities.

In the short term, this program is expected to not rely solely on individual initiatives or formal institutions, but can be independently adopted by neighborhood associations (RT) and residents' associations (RW) in the Panjang Jiwo area as a routine activity. In the future, it is hoped that a "Sharing Stall" model, or local food barn, will be established, managed independently by the community. With the realization of this initiative, Panjang Jiwo's vision of a socially friendly and inclusive area can be achieved, so that poverty is no longer seen as a hidden issue, but rather as a collective responsibility of all elements of society.

The results showed a significant improvement in the community's social resilience. When analyzed using Robert Putnam's Social Capital Theory, this activity was proven to strengthen bridging social capital, characterized by productive interactions between community groups with different economic backgrounds. The trust formed between donors, program managers, and beneficiaries developed into a social asset with a value greater than the mere material value of the assistance provided.

Furthermore, the application of Social Exchange Theory explains that even though beneficiaries do not provide material reciprocation, responses in the form of prayers and expressions of gratitude can increase the inner (subjective) satisfaction of the giver. According to Akbar et al. (2024), this condition represents a social ethical practice that contributes to strengthening the community structure. Empirical impacts felt in the Panjang Jiwo area include increased enthusiasm for MSMEs who receive financial support through collective orders from the program. Meanwhile, for beneficiaries, this program has implications for reducing daily expenses by around 15–20%, allowing for the allocation of resources to other needs, such as children's education costs or small business development. This condition ultimately creates a positive multiplier effect on improving family welfare.



Figure 1. Activity of Sharing City Rice with a Garbage Collector

The image above shows a volunteer handing over a lunch box to a waste collector at one of the priority distribution points in the Panjang Jiwo area. This activity is part of a program that meets the daily nutritional needs of informal workers, conducted humanely through dialogue for motivation. Distribution at strategic times, such as lunchtime, provides energy for recipients and strengthens social solidarity among residents.



Figure 2. Activity of Sharing Boxed Rice with a Garbage Collector

The image above demonstrates the distribution of hygienic, nutritionally balanced food

packages using a friendly approach, accompanied by brief motivational messages for psychosocial empowerment, as a means of providing basic needs and empowering the local economy through orders from MSME food stalls. The goal has been achieved: Yes, as evidenced by increased donation participation, providing one meal a day, reducing recipients' daily expenses by 15-20%, and establishing a bridge of solidarity that bridges social capital between different economic groups.



Figure 3. Activity of Sharing Boxed Rice with a Street Sweeper

The image above visualizes the distribution of boxed meals to a street sweeper, effectively targeting daily workers who depend on public space activities in Panjang Jiwo. This activity involved mobilizing local assets such as youth communities and food stalls, with transparent distribution to maintain accountability for donations. Its impacts include strengthening social cohesion and positive multiplier effects, such as reallocating recipient resources to children's education.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Based on the research results, the Sharing Boxed Rice Program successfully realized structured social care through the utilization of local assets, such as food stalls, youth communities, and community donations, thus creating a solidarity network between the middle to upper class community groups and informal workers in Panjang Jiwo. This program was able to increase donation participation, meet nutritional needs at least once a day, and reduce recipient expenses by around 15–20% of the daily allocation, so that recipients could utilize other resources for children's education and small business development. Theoretically, this activity also strengthens bridging social capital between different economic groups and strengthens social capital, which is characterized by the formation of mutual trust, mutual cooperation, and a sense of shared ownership of the local food movement at the RT/RW level.

However, this study has several limitations, including the limited coverage of the location in the Panjang Jiwo area, the relatively short duration of the program, and the limited longitudinal specimen to measure the sustainability of the sharing habit in the long term. For further research, it is recommended to develop a sustainability measurement model, expand the location to several sub-districts in Surabaya, and integrate institutional indicators such as RT/RW and local MSMEs as managers of the Sharing Shop. The practical implication of this study is the formation of a prototype of an asset-based philanthropic movement that can be adopted by the city government, Zakat Institutions, and higher education institutions to realize inclusive and local wisdom-based social policies in urban areas, while strengthening the social resilience of marginalized communities amidst the economic dynamics of Surabaya.

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