Bubungan Tinggi: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat
http://ppjp.ulm.ac.id/journals/index.php/btj/index
e-ISSN: 2722-3043 p-ISSN: 2722-2934
Vol 7 No 4 2025
DOI: https://doi.org/10.20527/btjpm.v7i4.16690

Sekolah Perempuan RAKAT as an Effort to Enhance Women's Communication Capacity

Amelia Rahma*, Sarah Noor Hafizah, Isma Azizah, Fitriani, Nurhalisa Ramadhiani, Dhiya Alfi Azizah, and Muhammad Andrian Agusetiawan
Public Health Study Program, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Universitas Lambung Mangkurat, Kota Banjarbaru, Indonesia
*amelia.rahma004@gmail.com

Article Info

Article history:
Received: September 1, 2025
Accepted: December 11, 2025
Published: December 31, 2025

Keywords:
Community empowerment
Effective communication
Women's education

This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

© 2025 Bubungan Tinggi: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat

Abstract

This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of communication skills training through the Sekolah Perempuan RAKAT program in Banjar Regency, South Kalimantan. Many women in rural areas face challenges in public speaking, including limited mastery of effective communication techniques and low self-confidence. To address this issue, the program implemented a series of activities comprising registration, a pre-test, delivery of materials on effective communication, focus group discussions (FGDs), ice-breaking activities, experience-sharing sessions, a post-test, and closing activities. A total of 15 participants took part in the program. Data were collected through pre-test and post-test questionnaires and analyzed using the Shapiro–Wilk test for normality and the Wilcoxon signed-rank test to examine paired differences. The results showed that the data were not normally distributed ($p < 0.05$); therefore, the Wilcoxon test was applied. Statistical analysis indicated a significant increase in participants' communication skills after the intervention ($p<0.05$). Qualitative findings also revealed improvements in participants' understanding of communication strategies, active listening, empathetic responses, gender perspectives in communication, and the management of miscommunication. Furthermore, the experience-sharing sessions fostered mutual support and enhanced self-efficacy, contributing to increased confidence in public speaking. In conclusion, the Sekolah Perempuan RAKAT program effectively improved participants' communication capacity and self-confidence. These findings highlight the importance of participatory and context-based approaches, such as FGDs, in empowering women to communicate more effectively in public spheres.

To cite this article: Rahma, A., Hafizah, S. N., Azizah, I., Fitriani, F., Ramadhiani, N., Azizah, D. A., & Agusetiawan, M. A. (2025). Sekolah perempuan rakat as an effort to enhance women's communication capacity. *Bubungan Tinggi: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat*, 7(4), 1052-1060.

INTRODUCTION

Communication is a crucial element of human life that functions as a means of interaction, information sharing, and the expression of desires and experiences, both directly and through various media. Effective communication can bring about attitudinal

change and facilitate mutual understanding between message senders and receivers. This is achieved through clear, balanced language, supported by appropriate feedback and nonverbal cues (Mahadi, 2021). Thus, effective communication can be understood as the process of delivering clear and accurate messages to achieve communication goals while building sound understanding between senders and receivers (Hidayat et al., 2024).

Essentially, communication is a process of interaction between individuals through various intermediaries or channels that results in shared understanding. Communication is not merely the transmission of messages but also contributes directly or indirectly to changes in attitudes and opinions (Zahra & Yuliana, 2023). As an important means of fostering harmonious relationships among individuals, communication requires skills beyond simply speaking. For women, effective communication skills encompass listening, understanding, and responding with empathy. These skills are key to fulfilling women's roles as mothers, wives, friends, and coworkers (Cyrious & Adriana, 2023).

In communication studies, various theories explain the processes and dynamics of interpersonal interaction. One important theory is interpersonal communication theory, which emphasizes direct relationships between message senders and receivers. This theory is relevant for understanding how women can build better relationships within social environments (Simorangkir, 2019). On the other hand, mass communication theory provides insight into how media influence public perceptions of women. This highlights the importance of strong communication skills not only in personal interactions but also in confronting social constructions shaped by the media (Kustiawan et al., 2022).

Strong communication skills have a significant impact on women's lives. Research shows that women with strong communication abilities tend to be more confident, better able to express their opinions, and more actively engaged in public discussions. These abilities are essential to women's empowerment, as they enable them to speak up, be heard, and access new opportunities in both their careers and daily lives (Rumahorbo et al., 2021). Effective communication is also crucial for women's success in a competitive workforce. The ability to convey ideas clearly, negotiate confidently, and build strong networks can increase women's opportunities to attain leadership positions and make greater contributions within organizations (Qowimah et al., 2021). Beyond professional contexts, effective communication is equally vital in interpersonal relationships. Women often serve as primary caregivers within families; therefore, empathetic and assertive communication skills play a major role in building healthy relationships with partners, children, and other family members (Lamak & Nagi, 2023).

Nevertheless, women continue to face various communication challenges, particularly in societies influenced by traditional norms. Gender stereotypes that portray women as good listeners but not effective speakers often limit their opportunities to engage in important discussions (Linome et al., 2025). Research conducted by the European Institute for Gender Equality shows that, globally, there is little difference in communication abilities between men and women; both genders possess equal communication potential (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2020). However, at the national level, research by the Indonesian Ministry of Women's Empowerment in the field of technology—particularly information and communication technology (ICT)—indicates that ICT remains closely associated with male identities, while women are often positioned merely as objects. Very few women are found to have strong communication skills, although women constitute nearly half of Indonesia's population, representing significant potential if properly empowered (Putri, 2018). In Banjar Regency, gender disparities remain relatively high, and women's educational attainment is still low. This condition may contribute to limitations in women's communication abilities.

Sungai Pinang Lama Village is located in Sungai Tabuk Subdistrict, Banjar Regency, South Kalimantan Province. The village has a population of 3,347 residents, consisting of 1,707 men and 1,640 women. To date, stigmas regarding women's roles related to employment and marriage continue to influence community life in Sungai Pinang Lama

Village strongly. In terms of educational facilities, the village has one PAUD (early childhood education center), one kindergarten, and one elementary school; however, there are no junior or senior high schools. As a result, students must continue their education outside the village.

Based on these issues, many women have not yet been able to realize their aspirations to contribute to national development. Therefore, the "Sekolah Perempuan RAKAT (Diligent, Creative, Active, Skilled)" program was established as a community empowerment initiative to enhance women's capacity and value in Sungai Pinang Lama Village. This program aims to provide nonformal education for women on the importance of education, career development, and achieving aspirations through an approach that is close, harmonious, and friendly, without neglecting moral values.

The "Sekolah Perempuan RAKAT (Diligent, Creative, Active, Skilled)" program is a community empowerment initiative designed to enhance women's capacity and value in Sungai Pinang Lama Village. The program provides nonformal education for women on the importance of education, career development, and the pursuit of aspirations through an inclusive, harmonious, and approachable method while upholding ethical values. In addition, the program focuses on developing women's vocational skills across various fields, enhancing their personal capacity, and encouraging them to become outstanding, high-quality, high-value individuals. Through the implementation of this program, women's roles in national development are expected to be further strengthened.

The "Sekolah Perempuan RAKAT (Diligent, Creative, Active, Skilled)" program is a community empowerment initiative rather than a formal educational institution. Although it is referred to as a "school," the term is used because the program delivers structured learning materials to enhance women's knowledge and skills in Sungai Pinang Lama Village, particularly in education, career development, and the pursuit of aspirations. In practice, participants engage in a series of nonformal learning activities, including pre-tests and post-tests, providing an evaluation mechanism that allows participants to be ranked based on improvements in their knowledge and skills. Thus, the term "school" is metaphorical, emphasizing the learning process and the development of women's capacities rather than denoting a formal educational institution.

METHODS

The Sekolah Perempuan RAKAT (Diligent, Creative, Active, Skilled) program was conducted at the Sungai Pinang Lama Village Hall, Sungai Tabuk District, Banjar Regency, South Kalimantan, on September 21, 2024, from 08:00 WITA until completion. The participants consisted of 15 women from diverse backgrounds, including students, university students, and housewives, aged 15–45 years.

The implementation method employed the ABGK approach (Advocacy, Supportive Environment Development, Community Empowerment Movement, and Partnership) to ensure that the program not only enhanced individual skills but also strengthened environmental support and the sustainability of activities.

The stages of the program included registration, an opening prayer, a pre-test, the delivery of material entitled *"Successful Interaction through Mastery of Effective Communication Techniques"* by the resource person, interactive discussions and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), ice-breaking activities, a post-test, and closing. The FGDs focused on four main themes: effective communication strategies, responses to social and emotional environments, gender roles in communication, and strategies for overcoming miscommunication.

To measure program effectiveness, pre- and post-test questionnaires on knowledge and public communication skills were administered. Data analysis was conducted using the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test in SPSS, as the Shapiro–Wilk test indicated that the data were not normally distributed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Sekolah Perempuan RAKAT activities were held at the Sungai Pinang Lama Village Hall in Sungai Tabuk District, Banjar Regency. The sequence of activities began with participant registration, an opening prayer, and a pre-test, followed by material presentation, FGDs, ice-breaking sessions, a post-test, and closing. The atmosphere of the activities is illustrated in Figure 1, which shows the material delivery process, ice-breaking sessions, and the post-test implementation.

Figure 1 Atmosphere of the Sekolah Perempuan RAKAT activities, including material presentation, ice-breaking sessions, and the post-test

The activity stages began with participant registration as part of data collection and initial conditioning before the program commenced. This was followed by an opening prayer to create an orderly, solemn, and collaborative atmosphere. Participants then completed a pre-test to assess their initial level of knowledge regarding communication before receiving the material. The program continued with the presentation, "Successful Interaction through Mastery of Effective Communication Techniques," by the resource person, which focused on enhancing participants' understanding of the importance of effective communication in daily life. After the presentation, interactive discussions and FGDs were conducted as a forum for participants to share their experiences, opinions, and communication challenges. To maintain participants' enthusiasm and concentration, ice-breaking activities were interspersed to create a more relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere. Subsequently, participants completed a post-test to assess improvements in understanding following the entire series of activities. The program concluded with a closing session to reflect on and appreciate all participants' involvement. The FGDs focused on four main themes—effective communication strategies, responses to social and emotional environments, gender roles in communication, and strategies for overcoming miscommunication—to deepen participants' understanding of communication dynamics in social life. Respondent characteristics are listed in Table 1.

Table 1 Respondent characteristics (N = 15)

Characteristics	**n (%)**
Age (years) (Median [*min-max*])	30 (15 - 45)
Occupation	Students (6.7%) University students (20%) Housewives (73.3%)

This diversity of backgrounds provided a dynamic and enriched discussion, as each participant brought different perspectives and experiences. Knowledge assessment was conducted through pre- and post-tests. The results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Mean test results

		Pre-test	***Post-test***
N	Valid	15	15
	Missing	0	0
Mean		82.00	94.67

A total of 15 participants took part in the activity, consisting of students (6.7%), university students (20%), and housewives (73.3%). Participants' ages ranged from 15 to

45 years, with a median age of 30 years. This diversity of backgrounds enriched the discussions, as each participant contributed different perspectives and experiences. Knowledge evaluation was conducted through pre-tests and post-tests. The results of the normality test are shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Normality test results

	Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	**df**	**Sig.**
Pre-test	0.828	15	0.009
Post-test	0.649	15	<0.001

The Shapiro–Wilk normality test showed significance values of 0.009 for the pre-test data and < 0.001 for the post-test data. Both values were below the 0.05 significance threshold, indicating that neither the pre-test nor post-test data were normally distributed. Consequently, the assumption of normality required for parametric tests was not met. Therefore, differences between pre-test and post-test scores were analyzed using the non-parametric Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test, which does not require normal distribution and is suitable for paired data (Widiana et al., 2025). The results of the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test are shown in Table 4.

Table 4 Wilcoxon signed-rank test results

	Post-test – Pre-test
Z	-2.724[b]
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.006

The Wilcoxon test results showed a Z value of -2.724 with a significance value (Asymp. Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.006. This value is less than 0.05, indicating a statistically significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores. Thus, the intervention was effective in improving participants' abilities.

Initially, participants demonstrated limited mastery of communication techniques and low self-confidence when speaking in public. After completing the program, they began to understand effective communication strategies, including active listening techniques, providing constructive feedback, and conveying information clearly using appropriate body language and tone of voice. Discussions also enriched participants' understanding of responses to social environments, gender roles in communication, and strategies for overcoming miscommunication. Through experience-sharing sessions, participants became more confident in expressing opinions, more active in asking questions, and better able to present ideas coherently and systematically, indicating a significant improvement in communication capacity.

These changes can be explained through Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory, which emphasizes observation, modeling, and reinforcement (Fazli et al., 2025). During material presentations, participants gained conceptual understanding while observing how the resource person modeled effective communication. In FGDs, participants observed real examples from peers and were encouraged to imitate and practice themselves. Reinforcement occurred through appreciation and support from facilitators and fellow participants, further strengthening their confidence to practice.

Community service conducted by Rizki et al. (2025) showed that small-group discussions such as FGDs create a sense of safety and encourage active participation. This was evident when initially passive participants became more willing to express their opinions. Furthermore, Darmawan & Sa'i (2019) emphasized that public speaking skills cannot be developed through theory alone but require repeated practice. The experience-sharing sessions in this program provided direct practice opportunities, enabling participants not only to listen but also to actively perform.

This aligns with findings by Ari et al. (2024), who stated that FGDs are an effective method for collecting information on specific issues through directed group interaction. FGDs also function as a learning medium, allowing participants to identify experiences, obstacles, and effective communication strategies. The findings of Setyowati & Sulistyowati (2023) further support this, demonstrating that empowerment-based communication models developed through FGDs effectively increase women's courage to express opinions and expand their social capacity. In this context, FGDs proved relevant not only for exploring participants' perspectives but also as an intervention to build public communication skills.

From a psychological perspective, the increase in participants' self-confidence can be understood through Bandura's concept of self-efficacy, defined as an individual's belief in their ability to successfully perform actions or achieve goals (Istikakimi & Kurniawati, 2024). Each successful experience of expressing opinions enhanced participants' confidence to perform better in future opportunities. Additionally, Setiawati et al. (2025) found that community-based development communication strengthens women's awareness of their rights and encourages active participation in social forums, aligning with the outcomes of the Sekolah Perempuan RAKAT program. Thus, this activity not only increased knowledge but also strengthened internal motivation and courage to continuously develop public communication skills.

Overall, the Sekolah Perempuan RAKAT program had a positive impact on increasing participants' knowledge, public communication skills, and self-confidence. The expected long-term impact is the formation of village women who actively participate in social forums and community decision-making. This demonstrates that participatory-based interventions such as FGDs are effective not only as educational media but also as sustainable social empowerment strategies.

The effectiveness of the Sekolah Perempuan RAKAT program was evident from participants' tangible responses during the community empowerment activities. Participants did not passively receive material but actively engaged in discussions, FGDs, and communication practice sessions, creating experiential learning. Observations showed that participants who were initially passive and hesitant gradually demonstrated increased courage and initiative to speak in front of the group. Furthermore, improved post-test scores indicated quantitative gains in communication understanding and skills, while facilitator reports documented behavioral changes such as the ability to provide constructive feedback, awareness of body language, and the capacity to adapt communication to social contexts. These findings confirm that participatory empowerment approaches combining education, hands-on practice, and social support are effective in holistically enhancing women's capacities in terms of knowledge, skills, and confidence to actively engage in social and community life.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) proved effective in helping participants improve public communication skills and self-confidence. Through a participatory discussion environment, participants were given opportunities to learn, practice, and receive constructive feedback. Recommended follow-up actions include: (1) Conducting advanced FGDs with more specific communication themes (e.g., persuasion, negotiation, or academic presentation), (2) Integrating communication training into routine school or community programs, and (3) Providing broader communication practice opportunities, such as speech competitions, debates, or public discussion forums. With these follow-up actions, participants' public communication skills are expected to develop not only temporarily but also sustainably, positively impacting the quality of their social interactions.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

Conceptualization: SNH; Methodology: SNH & AR; Data collection and tabulation: IA, F, NR, DAA & MAA; Data analysis: AR; Writing and original draft preparation: AR, SNH, IA, F, NR, DAA & MAA; Review and editing: AR.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Universitas Lambung Mangkurat gratefully acknowledges the financial support for this community service activity through the Student Organization Capacity Strengthening Program (PPK Ormawa) and the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences DIPA Fund for the 2024 fiscal year. The community of Sungai Pinang Lama Village is also sincerely appreciated as partners in this community service program.

REFERENCES

Ari, A. K. S., Muhida, R., Aprilinda, Y., Ariani, F., Endra, R. Y., & Erlangga. (2024). Focus group discussion konsolidasi dan pembuatan aplikasi pemutakhiran data di kabupaten lampung selatan. *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat Tapis Berseri (JPMTB)*, *3*(1), 1–9. https://doi.org/10.36448/jpmtb.v3i1.84.

Cyrious, C., & Adriana, E. (2023). Faktor komunikasi efektif dalam meningkatkan kinerja pegawai. *GEMILANG: Jurnal Manajemen Dan Akuntansi*, *3*(3), 194–206. https://doi.org/10.56910/gemilang.v3i3.630.

Darmawan, D., & Sa'i, M. (2025). Penerapan teknik public speaking untuk membangun komunikasi meyakinkan melalu ekspresi dan gestur. *Jejak Digital: Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisiplin*, *1*(4), 1229–1239. https://doi.org/10.63822/8ba1yn02.

European Institute for Gender Equality. (2020). *Gender Equality Index*. https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2020.

Fazli, M., Nirwana, H., & Neviryani. (2025). Membangun disiplin siswa melalui keteladanan dan pembelajaran sosial: pendekatan teori sosial kognitif di sekolah. *Socius: Jurnal Penelitian Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial*, *02*(12), 175–180. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15642552.

Heni Setiawati, Firmansyah, I., Salsabila, R. M., & Purwanto, E. (2025). Komunikasi pembangunan berbasis komunitas dalam upaya pemberdayaan perempuan. *Interaction Communication Studies Journal*, *1*(4), 1-20. https://doi.org/10.47134/interaction.v1i4.3586.

Hidayat, R., Saputra, A., & Muji, A. (2024). Strategi komunikasi efektif dalam organisasi. *Merdeka Indonesia Jurnal International*, *4*(1), 222–228. https://doi.org/10.5555/miji.v4i1.146.

Istikakimi, & Kurniawati, V. (2024). Upaya meningkatkan kepercayaan diri siswa dalam berbicara di depan umum dengan media modul dan tugas tantangan. *Jurnal Studi Pendidikan Dasar*, *2*(1), 45–59. https://doi.org/10.54180/jsped.v2i1.503.

Kustiawan, W., Siregar, F. K., Alwiyah, S., Lubis, R. A., Gaja, F. Z., Pakpahan, N. S., & Nurhayati. (2022). Komunikasi massa. *Journal Analytica Islamica*, *11*(1), 1–9.

Lamak, & Nagi, Y. (2023). Urgensi komunikasi efektif di dalam keluarga bagi perkembangan remaja. *Doctoral Dissertation, IFTK Ledalero*. http://repository.iftkledalero.ac.id/id/eprint/1581.

Linome, O., Nuhan, Y., Mengga, M., Unang, M., Sasa, L., Tmaneak, Y., & Koten, G. J. L. (2025). Analisis stereotip gender dalam kehidupan sehari-hari. *Edukreatif: Jurnal Kreativitas dalam Pendidikan*, *6*(1), 370-380.

Mahadi, U. (2021). Komunikasi pendidikan (urgensi komunikasi efektif dalam proses pembelajaran). *JOPPAS: Journal of Public Policy and Administration Silampari*, *2*(2), 80–90.

Putri, A. (2018). *Perempuan dan perkembangan teknologi DP3ACSKB*. https://dp3acskb.babelprov.go.id/content/perempuan-dan-perkembangan-teknologi

Qowimah, S. N., Almahira, K. J., Rahma, D. A., Satrio, A. B., Nuzul, H. M., Puteri, S. N. Y., Lusiana, N., & Andyarini, E. N. (2021). Hubungan self confidence dan self awareness dengan komunikasi efektif pada mahasiswa. *Indonesian Psychological Research*, *03*(02), 109–120. https://doi.org/10.29080/ipr.v3i2.565.

Rizki, S. G., Hurriyati, D., & Jemakmun. (2025). Focus group discussion untuk meningkatkan motivasi terhadap kelelahan pada pelaku umkm di desa tanjung tambak. *BERNAS: Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat*, *6*(2), 1187–1193.

Rumahorbo, L., Kathryn, S., & Rajagukguk, J. S. P. (2021). Pengaruh keterampilan interpersonal terhadap efektivitas kepemimpinan perempuan. *Matheo: Jurnal Teologi/Kependetaan*, *11*(2), 208–220. https://doi.org/10.47562/matheo.v11i2.407.

Setyowati, Y., & Sulistyowati, F. (2023). Model komunikasi pemberdayaan dalam penanggulangan kekerasan anak dan perempuan. *Islamic Management and Empowerment Journal*, *5*(1), 35–50. https://doi.org/10.18326/imej.v5i1.35-50.

Simorangkir, M. R. R. (2019). Peran kemampuan komunikasi interpersonal pendidik dalam menumbuhkan self-efficacy. *Jurnal Dinamika Pendidikan*, *12*(3). http://repository.uki.ac.id/id/eprint/1306.

Widiana, D. R., Syafiuddin, Sriwijayasih, I., Aju, I. R., Praharsi, Y., & Novianarenty, E. (2025). Penerapan uji wilcoxon signed rank test untuk menganalisis perbedaan nilai test sebelum dan setelah pelatihan digital marketing. *Jurnal Teknologi Maritim*, *8*(2), 23–32. https://doi.org/10.35991/jtm.v8i2.73.

Zahra, R. N., & Yuliana, N. (2023). Peran komunikasi yang efektif sebagai kunci menuju kesuksesan seorang putri juniawan. *Socius: Jurnal Penelitian Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial*, *1*(5), 169–174. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10285888.

PROFIL PENULIS

Amelia Rahma is a student of the Public Health Study Program, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Universitas Lambung Mangkurat
Email: 2310912220028@mhs.ulm.ac.id

Sarah Noor Hafizah is a student of the Public Health Study Program, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Universitas Lambung Mangkurat
Email: 2210912220026@mhs.ulm.ac.id

Isma Azizah adalah is a student of the Public Health Study Program, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Universitas Lambung Mangkurat
Email: 2310912120012@mhs.ulm.ac.id

Fitriani adalah is a student of the Public Health Study Program, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Universitas Lambung Mangkurat
Email: 2310912120002@mhs.ulm.ac.id

Nurhalisa Ramadhiani adalah is a student of the Public Health Study Program, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Universitas Lambung Mangkurat
Email: 2310912220004@mhs.ulm.ac.id

Dhiya Alfi Azizah is a student of the Public Health Study Program, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Universitas Lambung Mangkurat
Email: 2310912320012@mhs.ulm.ac.id

Muhammad Andrian Agusetiawan is a student of the Public Health Study Program, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Universitas Lambung Mangkurat
Email: 2310912310003@mhs.ulm.ac.id