

Enhancing Communication Competence Capacity to Achieve Harmonious Families in Jalancagak District, Subang Regency

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ABSTRACT

Communication competence encompasses the skills to effectively speak, listen, behave, and act within interpersonal interactions. This competence is particularly vital for mothers, who play a central role in family dynamics. This study aims to enhance the communication skills of family members, focusing on mothers, through training, mentoring, and simulations organized by the Family Welfare Empowerment (PKK) organization in Jalancagak District, Subang Regency. The Community Partnership Program (PKM) facilitated these activities, resulting in a better understanding of the importance of good communication, the crucial role of women in the family, and effective verbal and non-verbal communication. The program notably improved participants' communication skills, fostering more open and coordinated interactions within families and between the PKK group and local government officials. The successful implementation of this program underscores its significance in empowering families and promoting family welfare through enhanced communication competence.



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1. Introduction

At its essence, humans cannot live alone. As Allah SWT has decreed in Surah Ar-Rum verse 21: "And of His signs is that He created for you from yourselves mates that you may find tranquility in them; and He placed between you affection and mercy. Indeed, in that are signs for a people who give thought."

In this regard, one of the life goals carried out by humans is to get married to another person. The purpose of marriage itself is to have legitimate and harmonious offspring and family. This is also stated in Surah An-Nur verse 32: "And marry the unmarried among you and the righteous among your male slaves and female slaves. If they should be poor, Allah will enrich them from His bounty, and Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing."

Marriage is one of the traditions recommended by Prophet Muhammad SAW and a human who marries has completed half of their religion. Marriage aims to build a Sakinah Mawaddah Warahmah family where a family is adorned with warmth, love, blessing, and harmony in the dynamics of a family.

A harmonious family is a household adorned with calmness, tranquility, affection, offspring, love, sacrifice, complementarity, perfection, mutual assistance, and cooperation. One of the steps in building family harmony, as proposed by Rosidah and Nafsiah, as cited by (Sainul, 2018), is: "Preserving the religious life within the family, allocating sufficient time to be together as a family, interaction among family members to create good relationships between family members such as communication, democracy, and reciprocal relationships, creating good relationships among family

members by mutual respect, family unity that strengthens the structure of the household, being oriented towards the priority of household integrity, especially when facing household crises."

From the explanation above, it is very clear that one of the things to achieve family harmony is through communication, specifically regarding communication skills in creating more meaningful relationships between family members. Communication skills are the abilities possessed and used by a person to interact correctly with others. Interpersonal communication skills include everything from communication and listening skills, attitudes and behaviors, and the ability to project a positive attitude and find solutions to problems (Suryani, 2019).

Communication skills are the abilities of communication in speaking, listening, behaving, and acting carried out by an individual to other individuals or humans. The ability of communication skills is important to be carried out by all family members, especially a mother, whose role in the family is fundamental and crucial. The mother in a family is the heart of every family. As stated by Sobur (1986), as quoted by (Surahman, 2019), "The mother is the first parent chased by the child, because of attention, hope, and affection. The mother is also the first person known by the child, and the mother who dresses and changes the child's clothes." Building a harmonious family is not an easy matter but it is also not a difficult one. When a pair of humans have committed to each other and solemnized their marriage, one of the goals to be achieved is to become a harmonious family.

The importance of the role of a woman in a family makes the ability to educate through communication a very important thing. The need for information related to this is also facilitated by a community under the auspices of the government organization closest to the family, namely the Family Welfare Empowerment organization or better known as PKK.

In the Regulation of the Minister of Home Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia Number 1 of 2013 concerning the Family Welfare Empowerment Movement (PKK), it is a National Movement in community development that grows from the bottom up, managed by, for, and by the community towards the realization of families who believe in and fear God Almighty, have noble character and good morals, are healthy and prosperous, advanced and independent, have gender equality and justice, as well as legal and environmental awareness. The Family Welfare Empowerment is a forum facilitated by a village/sub-district/urban village with the aim of empowering women to participate in the development of Indonesia.

The Family Welfare Empowerment (PKK) is a grassroots movement to build prosperous families as the smallest unit or group in society. Family welfare is the main goal of PKK. This is because the family is the smallest unit of society that will have a major influence on the performance of development. From this prosperous family, the life order of the nation and state will be able to give birth to tranquility, security, harmony, and peace (Miftahuljannah, 2022).

The Jalancagak District, Subang Regency, has several problems such as demands from parents to get married, early marriage, pregnancy outside of marriage, economic factors, which cause families to be less harmonious. In practice, this harmonious family requires communication skills. Therefore, the PKK organization in Jalancagak District, Subang Regency, requires the socialization of communication skills in order to have a harmonious family. Communication skills are divided into two factors, namely non-verbal and verbal communication.

Verbal communication is communication that uses words, whether spoken or written in the form of words and language. Meanwhile, non-verbal communication is a form of communication that does not use words, such as hand gestures, head movements, body posture and leg position, facial expressions, eye contact, touch, paralanguage, physical appearance, spatial orientation and personal distance, time concepts and silence.

Although this becomes an obstacle in communication, the components of communication, namely the role of the communicator, audience, channel types, effects and feedback, still need to be considered, especially in this case the PKK group who become a group of communicators who are not only organizers, but can also act as resource persons, MCs, or moderators in meeting activities.

Based on the situation analysis, it can be seen that communication skills in realizing a harmonious family are fundamental to carrying out community service activities due to the high divorce rate in the Subang area, and that the PKK group in Jalancagak District, Subang Regency, shows a lack of knowledge about communication skills, especially in realizing a harmonious family.

In fact, communication skills are important to realize the harmonious family of the members of the PKK group in Jalancagak District, Subang Regency.

2. Method

The method of implementing this community service uses three methods, namely the training method, mentoring, and simulation. The training method is aimed at transferring science and technology (IPTEKS) in overcoming problems through increasing insight and understanding for both partners. The training will be carried out in one room in the multipurpose room of the Jalancagak District, Subang Regency. This approach method is determined by the team to overcome problems, and achieve the targets and outputs that have been set, namely the development of communication skills for both partners and problem solving in communication, especially family communication.

The mentoring method is carried out with guidance from the lecturers and assistance from the appointed students to help the PKK (Family Welfare Empowerment) members of Jalancagak District, Subang Regency. The implementation team facilitates training using game simulation where participants are required to be able to communicate with the interlocutor on certain topics that have been prepared by the team.

a. Training Method

Effective training programs leverage a variety of methods to engage learners and maximize knowledge retention. The selection of appropriate training techniques should be guided by factors such as the learning objectives, the characteristics of the target audience, and the available resources. One of the foundational training approaches is instructor-led sessions, where a subject matter expert delivers presentations, facilitates discussions, and guides hands-on activities. This format allows for real-time feedback and interaction, making it well-suited for complex or nuanced topics, which are:

- 1) The training sessions will be held in the multipurpose room of the Jalancagak District office.
- 2) The goal is to transfer knowledge and skills related to effective communication, especially for building harmonious families.
- 3) The training curriculum will cover topics like principles of verbal and non-verbal communication, active listening techniques, conflict resolution strategies for families, improving emotional intelligence and empathy.
- 4) The training will utilize a variety of interactive learning methods, such as lectures, group discussions, role-playing exercises, and audio-visual materials.
- 5) Experts in the field of family counseling and communication skills will be invited as trainers.

b. Mentoring Method

There are several established mentoring methods that organizations and individuals can utilize to foster meaningful connections and facilitate impactful learning, as follow:

- 1) After the initial training sessions, the project team comprising lecturers and assigned students will provide ongoing mentoring support to the PKK members.
- 2) The mentors will work closely with the PKK members, observing their communication practices and providing feedback and guidance.
- 3) The mentoring sessions will focus on helping the PKK members apply the communication skills learned during the training in their real-life family situations.
- 4) The mentors will also facilitate peer-to-peer learning and problem-solving among the PKK members.

c. Simulation Method

Simulation methods involve recreating realistic scenarios and environments, allowing learners to practice applying their knowledge and skills in a risk-free setting. One of the primary benefits of simulation-based learning is the ability to expose participants to situations that may be

too dangerous, costly, or impractical to experience in the real world. The team uses simulation method to PKK members, which are:

- 1) The team will organize interactive simulation exercises during the training and mentoring sessions.
- 2) In these simulations, the PKK members will be given specific scenarios and asked to role-play effective communication strategies.
- 3) The simulations will cover a range of family communication challenges, such as resolving conflicts, communicating sensitive topics, and supporting each other emotionally.
- 4) Feedback and debriefing sessions will follow the simulations to help the participants reflect on their communication behaviors and identify areas for improvement.

The combination of these three methods - training, mentoring, and simulation - is intended to provide a comprehensive approach to enhancing the communication skills of the PKK members in Jalancagak District. The goal is to equip them with the necessary.

3. Results and Discussion

The results of the first training session were about communication skills for creating harmonious families. It explained the importance of maintaining communication with others, especially within a household. This is what the PKK members needed, as communication skills are the basic and crucial element in building a harmonious family. Communication is the primary aspect that every human being must possess - how to communicate with oneself and with the family. Good communication is the key to achieving harmony.

The second training was about the role of parents in educating children on the use of digital devices. This training was conducted to explain the role of parents in setting boundaries for children in using digital devices or social media. The training covered topics such as what makes children addicted to using digital devices, what should be avoided, and how to address these issues.

The goal was to equip the PKK members with the necessary skills and knowledge to guide their children in the healthy and appropriate use of digital technology, thereby fostering stronger family connections and communication.

The Family Welfare and Empowerment (PKK) organization plays a role in assisting the village/sub-district government with the aim of improving the well-being, both physically and spiritually, to create a cultured, independent, happy, prosperous, and harmonious family. PKK also has a role in developing the potential of individuals and the role of women in the family to increase family income.

One of the PKK's program activities is about household management, which aims to share knowledge to improve understanding of household management in order to create a harmonious and prosperous family. The empowerment of women in the PKK group also occurs in the PKK group in the Jalancagak sub-district of Subang Regency. Many activities and core programs have been carried out, one of which is about household management.

The family empowerment in household management is very necessary to be carried out by the PKK in the Jalancagak sub-district because based on data from the Subang Regency government and the Jalancagak sub-district, the divorce rate in this area is quite high. According to data from the Subang Regency Religious Court, there are recorded 12 divorce cases per day, and Subang Regency is ranked 9th out of the ten highest regencies/cities in terms of divorce cases in West Java.

Therefore, the PKK's program on household management is crucial in empowering families and reducing the high divorce rate in the Jalancagak sub-district and Subang Regency as a whole.

The communication techniques covered in the first training session for the PKK members, as listed below:

a. Effective Listening Skills

- 1) Active listening techniques, such as making eye contact, paraphrasing, and asking clarifying questions,

- 2) Strategies to avoid interrupting the speaker and staying focused on the conversation,
- 3) Developing empathy and understanding the speaker's perspective.
- b. Assertive Communication
 - 1) Expressing one's thoughts, feelings, and needs in a clear and confident manner,
 - 2) Techniques to stand up for oneself without being aggressive or passive,
 - 3) Practicing "I" statements to convey messages effectively.
- c. Conflict Resolution Strategies
 - 1) Steps to manage conflicts constructively, such as identifying the root cause, active listening, and finding win-win solutions,
 - 2) Techniques to de-escalate tense situations and have productive discussions,
 - 3) Importance of compromise, negotiation, and finding common ground.
- d. Emotional Intelligence and Empathy
 - 1) Understanding and managing one's own emotions,
 - 2) Developing the ability to recognize and respond to the emotions of family members,
 - 3) Strategies to build trust, show compassion, and strengthen family bonds.
- e. Non-Verbal Communication
 - 1) Interpreting body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice,
 - 2) Aligning verbal and non-verbal cues to convey congruent messages,
 - 3) Techniques to enhance non-verbal communication for better understanding.

The training sessions provided the PKK members with a comprehensive set of communication skills and strategies to foster more harmonious and fulfilling family relationships. The focus was on equipping them with practical tools to improve their day-to-day interactions and problem-solving within the family context.

4. Conclusion

Community service through the Community Partnership Program (PKM) on Improving Communication Skill Capacity to Achieve Harmonious Families in Jalancagak District, Subang Regency, has had a positive impact on the program implementation, as seen from the achievement of the program objectives, namely: understanding the importance of establishing good communication; partners are able to understand the important role of women in the family; increased partner understanding of effective verbal and non-verbal communication; and increased communication skills, especially on how to create a harmonious family.

The most important aspect is that the communication process within the family welfare empowerment group has become more open, and the coordination process between the PKK group and the Jalancagak District apparatus in Subang Regency has been running well. The community service program on improving communication skills has successfully helped the target community in the Jalancagak District to better understand the importance of effective communication in building harmonious family relationships. The increased knowledge and skills of the partners have led to more open and coordinated communication within the PKK group and with the local government, contributing to the overall goal of empowering families and promoting family welfare in the region.

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