

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS TRAINING FOR YSS-TRANSGENDER ORGANIZATION

Fit YANUAR^{1*}, Titi WIDANINGSIH² and Daesy EKAYANTHI³

¹ *Faculty of Communication Science – University Sahid, Jakarta, Indonesia*

^{2,3} *Faculty of Communication Science - University Sahid, Jakarta, Indonesia*

Correspondence author: fit_yanuar@usahid.ac.id

ABSTRACT

For some segments of society, transgender individuals are considered a social ailment. Subtly, the community shuns transgender individuals; crudely, they ostracize and intimidate them. The issue becomes complex as transgender individuals exist and live within society. The design and implementation team of the Community Engagement Program (PKM) endeavors to address the aforementioned issue by providing public communication training to a group of transgender individuals who are members of YSS (Yayasan Srikandi Sejati), a community organization that facilitates discussions leading to solutions for transgender society. A brief analysis reveals that the partners can leverage knowledge related to public communication to enhance their competency when interacting with the community. The intended knowledge encompasses an understanding of public communication practices, comprehension of the necessary components of communication to be employed during public communication practices, suitable communication solutions for transgender individuals during their interactions in society, and more. The objective of this team's PKM is in line with the purpose stated in the second paragraph of this Abstract.

Keywords: Transgender Society, YSS (Yayasan Srikandi Sejati), Public Communication, Problem Solutions.

1. INTRODUCTION

Transgender women (waria, transpuan) are a distinct group. Physically, they are male. They possess all the physical attributes that align with what is commonly referred to as male, from head to toe, including their vocal contours. However, mentally and emotionally, they identify as female. They exhibit inherent characteristics associated with femininity, displaying gentle tendencies often termed as 'kemayu' (womanly, feminine) in Indonesian culture. Some transgender women show these differences from a young age, while others come to terms with their identity at a later point in life, such as during adulthood. Before embracing their true selves, they conform to the societal expectations around them, yielding to the strong social pressures that control their inherent character and nature.

Researchers of transgender society, (Prof. Dr. Yus Darusman and Wiwin Herwina, 2016), indicate that within the family and during childhood, the characteristics of 'waria' are already present in an individual who will later be recognized as a transgender woman. Another researcher, (Koeswinarno, 2014), uses the term "distinct signs." These signs may be consciously or unconsciously realized by the parents of a transgender person. Parents who are aware will promptly correct their child's differences, while those who are unaware might continue to fulfill the differing requests of their child, assuming it's a normal thing given the child's young age. An unreasonable request might involve asking for tools/toys typically desired by girls, or imitating male figures other than the father present in the household in a feminine manner.

In Koeswinarno's research, as well as in Carrol (Davison et al., 2014), it's stated that becoming a transgender woman is not a sudden process. Being a transgender woman occurs because from birth, there are inherent differences in the identity of these transgender individuals, as conveyed in the two paragraphs above.

Davison, Neale & Kring in "Abnormal Psychology" (2014) assert that transgender individuals are part of a psychological condition related to transsexuality. Transsexuality is a condition where an individual experiences gender dysphoria from a young age, feeling that their personal identity, desires, and emotions differ and do not align with their assigned gender. The first and second paragraphs of this text have clarified this condition.

Psychological studies indicate that from a young age, a transgender individual already possesses an internal drive that contradicts the general perception of their expected identity (Barmawi & Silmi, 2016). Transgender individuals attempt to present a self-appearance that is neither male nor female if the social environment restricts them. This undoubtedly

generates psychological issues within transgender individuals, while on the other hand, it also creates sociological problems as society and the social environment struggle to readily accept their true nature (Alfaris,2018).

Such is the essence of 'waria' that forms the foundation of thought in this study. They carry psychological challenges within themselves and must face societal pressures due to their differences. Based on this premise, the Community Engagement Program (PKM) team from Sahid University Jakarta seeks to empower transgender individuals through a partnership with YSS (Yayasan Srikandi Sejati), an organization experienced in addressing transgender social issues. YSS, established in 1998 by some transgender and non-transgender individuals concerned with transgender issues, comprises transgender members whose roles drive transgender awareness and self-care, particularly concerning health. YSS deems this necessary as a portion of transgender individuals opt for commercial sex work as a means of earning income.

Empowerment is carried out with a principle of caution. On one hand, the right to be a 'waria' is guaranteed and protected by the constitution. Article 28 A-E of the Indonesia 1945-Constitution declares the right to life for every person based on principles of human rights. Article 28-E (2) constitutionally affirms the right of citizens to act in accordance with their conscience. In this context, being a 'waria' is a citizen's right. However, people, broadly referred to as a nation, live by social norms (Ritzer & Goodman, 2020). These social norms hold their own perspectives, which may not necessarily align with existing legal regulations, including constitutional laws. This is what transgender individuals in Indonesia face, where rejection of the existence and dynamics of transgender individuals remains strong within society (Yanuar, 2020;Reczek & Bosley-Smith, 2021). As a result, transgender individuals become "others," "queer," marginalized and marginalized individuals (Aisner et al., 2020). They exist within stigma (Noorwidayanti & Wibowo, 2016).Their living space and freedom of movement are hindered (Rodino-Colocino, 2018).

Considering the aforementioned social issues, the PKM team chose to empower through the context of public communication training. The PKM team aims to provide empowerment so that transgender individuals can practice relevant planning, execution, and evaluation in their public communication. Through YSS, the PKM team hopes to facilitate a better transfer of knowledge related to public communication between transgender individuals and their audience.

2. METHOD

In accordance with the aforementioned partner's issues, this PKM team offers solutions to YSS in the form of:

- Providing training and guidance in public communication.

The solution entails offering brief instruction on public communication, which includes motivating individuals to communicate more confidently, teaching lobbying and persuasion techniques to introduce variety in public communication. The essence of public communication is taught through training.

In specific terms, the goals are for participants of the training to become capable of the following:

1. Communicating more effectively within their community.
2. Understanding what the community expects from them.
3. Enhancing their communication skills.
4. Reducing friction between training participants and the community.

The approach methods utilized are as follows:

1. Process of nurturing public communication knowledge among partners.
2. Process of building partner motivation.
3. Process of transferring effective communication skills in public spaces.

To support the realization of the offered methods, the working procedure can be outlined as follows:

1. Conducting orientation with partners on the necessity of communication knowledge and skills.
2. Delivering effective communication training activities to partners.
3. Providing training/guidance for practicing public communication with partners.

The following is an overview of the activities in this PKM project:

1. Gathering partner data.
2. Developing a focused plan with the partner (YSS leadership).
3. Implementing the action plan.
4. Monitoring and evaluating progress, and producing reports.
5. Creating publications (videos and scholarly articles).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The partner's issue revolves around how to facilitate their communication with the public. Therefore, the PKM team has designed training materials that are relevant to this partner's concern. The training took place on June 23, 2023, at the YSS office located in East Matraman Subdistrict, East Jakarta. The participants from the partner organization (YSS members) amounted to 13 individuals. The speakers consisted of three faculty members from the Faculty of Communication Sciences at Sahid University Jakarta, namely Fit Yanuar, M.Si (PKM Team Leader), Dr. Titi Widaningsih (PKM Team Member), and Daesy Ekayanthi, M.Si (PKM Team Member).

The taught materials were as follows:

1. Understanding the concept of public communication
2. The importance of public communication
3. Objectives of public communication
4. Components of public communication:
 - a. Communication message
 - b. Communication media
 - c. Audience
 - d. Feedback
5. Challenges in public communication and ways to address these challenges
6. Special content: Challenges in public communication for transgender individuals:
 - a. Stigma
 - b. Discrimination
 - c. Lack of adequate representation
 - d. Mental health and well-being issues
7. Tips for practicing public communication for transgender individuals:
 - a. Confidence
 - b. Avoiding exaggeration
 - c. Better audience understanding
 - d. Using language appropriate for the audience
 - e. Being transparent and honest
 - f. Utilizing storytelling for message delivery.

The delivered content was evidently well-received by the participants. Enthusiasm was clearly visible among them, showing their seriousness and motivation to actively engage in the training. The training had a balance of serious and light-hearted tones, given that transgender individuals tend to enjoy playful banter. They never hold back from engaging in witty conversations. There's always something they can banter about.

After providing training with the aforementioned materials, the PKM team requested training participants to engage in discussions. Given that the number of participants was 13, the discussions were conducted in 3 groups, consisting of 5 and 4 individuals each. They were asked to discuss the issues transgender individuals face in public communication and were requested to come up with solutions.

The results of their discussions were relatively astonishing, as they were able to systematically outline the problems faced by transgender individuals in public communication practices. What's even more remarkable is that they were able to

generate solutions that were relatively brilliant and aligned with educated thinking, understanding the freedoms available to them in a democratic society.

Here is an overview of the results from these PKM group discussions:

Table 1. Group Discussion Results

Group Number	Transgender Issues in Public Communication	Solution
Group 1 (5 individuals)	Frequent occurrences of violence, stigma, and discrimination against transgender individuals in the community	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Providing transgender individuals with an understanding of proper behavior within the community. 2. Working alongside supporting organizations to approach community leaders in their residential areas.
Group 2 (4 individuals)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Waria often blame themselves (nature) 2. Waria are still considered as society's outcasts 3. Waria have limited education 4. Waria are still seen as sources of disease (HIV due to deviant sexual orientation) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Providing education about self-acceptance/self-peace 2. Educating the community that waria can be empowered 3. Partnering with NGOs/stakeholders to provide education package A, B, C 4. Providing the community with basic understanding of HIV
Group 3 (4 individuals)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transgender friends view themselves as wrong 2. Transgender confidence is lost 3. Lack of self-acceptance 4. Limited job opportunities for transgender 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supporting organizing training on SOGIEB (sexual orientation, gender, identity, expression, bodily) 2. Supporting organizing providing support to transgender friends 3. Educating transgender friends about gender/health 4. Organizing training (make-up, culinary skills, etc.)

The results, referred to by the PKM team as relatively astonishing, were indeed supported by the participants' cognitive, affective, and behavioral capacities, showing their support for the program's success. This was ascertained as the PKM team devised a pre-test and post-test method to gauge participants' understanding of public communication. The post-test results showed a 78% improvement in material comprehension and a demonstrated commitment to engaging in better activities to enhance their public communication skills.

Here's a sketch of the activity in the form of a configuration image:





Figure 1. Outline of PKM Activity Configuration

4. CONCLUSION

The issue of transgender society in this study is both psychological and sociological in nature. The psychological issue stems from the fact that transgender individuals often lack confidence in their different identities and frequently experience harassment and marginalization in social interactions. The sociological issue arises because society labels them as wrong, and there are aspirations within society that reject their presence. Effective public communication skills are hoped to serve as a potential solution. If transgender individuals can communicate effectively with the public, they can take at least one positive step towards addressing their issues. Jurgen Habermas, a prominent sociologist, stated in his theory of communicative society that a communicative society is one where individuals can engage in free dialogue and discussion, resulting in agreements based on strong argumentation. The public communication training provided by the PKM team to transgender individuals from YSS is expected to guide them towards better discussions in their public communication endeavors.

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