

Improving Public Speaking Of Pawnshop Employees' Wives Through Optialization Of Product Knowledge And Creative Marketing

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ABSTRACT

Public speaking is an essential skill in many sectors, including business and financial services. Effective public speaking involves not only speaking ability, but also clarity of information delivery and the ability to motivate the audience. Members of the Pawnshop Employees Wives Association (IIKP) have a strategic role in disseminating information related to pawnshop products and services. However, there is a gap in public speaking skills and product understanding among IIKP members. Therefore, a training program was held that focused on improving public speaking skills, understanding product knowledge, and applying creative marketing strategies. The training used the service learning (SL) method, involved 30 participants with various educational backgrounds, and focused on hands-on practice and application of innovative marketing strategies. The results showed significant improvement in public speaking skills and pawnshop product understanding with higher post-test scores than pre-test. The main challenges encountered included different levels of understanding among participants and limited technological knowledge. The positive impacts of this activity include increased competence of IIKP members in delivering product information with more confidence, as well as the potential to implement more creative and effective marketing strategies. This activity made a significant contribution to women's empowerment and sustainable communication and marketing capacity building

1. Introduction

With the rapid development of information technology and globalization, effective communication skills have become one of the keys to success in various sectors, including in the world of business and financial services. One important aspect of effective communication is public speaking. (Novita, 2020). Public speaking is not only related to the ability to speak in front of an audience, but also includes the ability to convey information clearly, persuasively, and motivate the audience to act according to the message conveyed (Kilag et al., 2023).

The Pawnshop Employees Wives Association (IIKP) has a strategic role in supporting the company's efforts to achieve its business goals. Through the mastery of good public speaking skills, IIKP members can contribute significantly in disseminating relevant information related to Pegadaian products and services to the wider community. However, the challenge faced today is that there is still a gap in public speaking skills among IIKP members, especially in relation to a deep understanding of product knowledge and the application of creative marketing strategies.

A literature review shows that public speaking skills and mastery of product knowledge are key elements in the successful marketing of products and services, both in the context of large businesses and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) (Achmad et al., 2023; Hamdan & Ratnasari, 2016; Ye et al., 2017). Several studies mention that an innovative and creative approach to marketing, supported by strong communication skills, can increase customer loyalty, expand market share, and ultimately increase company revenue (Damayanti et al., 2024; Ijomah et al., 2024). On the other hand, reports from previous community service activities show that improving communication and marketing skills among women's groups can have a significant positive impact on economic and social empowerment (Mutaqin et al., 2023; Nugraha et al., 2023; Wijayanto et al., 2023). Based on other research, there is a gap between the theory delivered and the practice in the field, so that training activities are important to do (Halim et al., 2024; Halim et al., 2023; Halim et al., 2023; Riyaldi et al., 2024; Umuri et al., 2023).

It is clear that the problem of lack of public speaking skills and understanding of product knowledge must be addressed immediately, including among IIKP members. This is important not only to increase the effectiveness of Pawnshop marketing campaigns, but also to strengthen IIKP's role as an agent of change in women's empowerment and family economic improvement. To address this issue, a comprehensive training program is planned that combines the improvement of public speaking skills with the optimization of product knowledge understanding and the application of creative marketing strategies. The program is expected to not only provide a short-term solution in addressing the skills shortage, but also offer an innovative new approach in improving the communication and marketing capacity of IIKP members. This approach will prioritize the use of modern technology and participatory learning methods to ensure effective and sustainable knowledge transfer.

The main objective of this community service activity is to improve public speaking skills and understanding of product knowledge among IIKP members through the application of creative marketing strategies. After this activity, it is expected that IIKP members can be more confident in conveying information related to Pegadaian products and services to the public, and be able to become effective ambassadors in promoting a positive image of the company. The purpose of this article is to document the process and results of the training program, and to disseminate knowledge about the importance of mastering public speaking skills and product knowledge in the context of creative marketing. This article also aims to contribute to the development of science and technology, especially in the field of communication and marketing, and to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) mentioned earlier.

Overall, the contribution of this article is expected to benefit not only Pegadaian and IIKP, but also the wider community in an effort to raise awareness of the importance of effective and innovative communication in the world of business and financial services. Through increased public speaking capacity and a deeper understanding of creative marketing strategies, IIKP members are expected to play an active role in supporting inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

2. Methods

The target community in this activity is the Pawnshop Employee Wives Association with various educational backgrounds and experiences. The number of activity participants was 30 people spread across several branches of Pegadaian Banda Aceh. This service activity involves several parties with different roles and contributions. The service team consists of four people with backgrounds as academics in the fields of marketing, communication, human resource development, and Islamic economics. Each team member has specific relevant expertise to develop training materials and provide technical guidance to community members. In addition, this activity also involves several staff from Pegadaian who play a role in providing data and information related to products, as well as facilitators who will assist in organizing activities.

This community service activity uses the Service Learning (SL) method which consists of several main stages to achieve the goal of improving public speaking skills and understanding product knowledge and creative marketing (Afandi et al., 2022). The stages are: The first stage of needs analysis, surveys and initial interviews were conducted to identify the level of understanding of community members about product knowledge and their needs in improving public speaking and creative marketing skills. In the second stage of material development, the team developed training materials that included public speaking techniques, in-depth understanding of Pegadaian products, and creative marketing strategies. These materials are tailored to the characteristics and needs of community members. The third stage was training and mentoring. Training is conducted through interactive sessions involving simulations, role plays, and group discussions. Community members will be given the opportunity to practice public speaking and apply creative marketing strategies in realistic scenarios. The fourth stage is evaluation and follow-up. This evaluation includes an assessment of the improvement of public speaking skills, understanding of product knowledge, and ability to apply creative marketing.

The instruments used in this activity include training modules, presentation tools, and evaluation tools such as questionnaires and observation sheets. The materials provided included printed and digital materials containing information on public speaking techniques, product knowledge, and creative marketing. In addition, audio-visual devices were also used to enrich the participants' learning experience. Data collection was conducted through several methods, including observation during the training, pre- and post-training questionnaires to measure improvements in understanding and skills, and in-depth interviews with several community members selected as a sample to gain deeper insights.

The data collected were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics to see the change in scores before and after the training. Meanwhile, qualitative analysis was conducted by analyzing interview transcripts and observations to identify key themes that reflect the impact of this activity.

3. Result and Discussion

Community service activities that focus on improving public speaking skills for members of the Pegadaian Employee Wives Association through optimizing product knowledge and creative marketing

have been successfully implemented. This activity took place in the Hall of the Aceh Branch Pawnshop Office. A total of 30 participants participated in this activity with great enthusiasm, reflecting their need and interest to improve their public speaking skills, as well as their understanding of Pegadaian products and innovative marketing techniques.

Participants' Prior Understanding

In the early stages of the activity, an evaluation of the participants' understanding of public speaking skills, product knowledge, and marketing techniques was conducted. From the observation, it was found that most participants had a basic understanding of Pegadaian products, but still lacked confidence in delivering information effectively to the audience. In addition, creative marketing techniques are still not fully understood by participants, who mostly rely on conventional methods in promoting products.

The following table shows the comparison of Pre-Test and Post-Test results:

Table 1. Pre-Test and Post-Test Results

Indicator	Before Activity (%)	After Activity (%)
Basic Understanding	70	95
Practical Skills	60	85
Satisfaction with the material	70	90

Source: Primary Data (processed), 2024



Figure 1: Material Delivery

Material Implementation

The training material delivered through the Service Learning method allows participants to directly practice the skills learned during the training. The public speaking material focused on effective speaking techniques, including body language management, voice intonation, and how to attract the attention of the audience. While the product knowledge material includes an in-depth explanation of Pegadaian products, such as gold savings, sharia pawning, and multipurpose loans.

Regarding creative marketing, participants were trained on innovative ways to market their products, such as the use of social media, the creation of attractive visual content, and storytelling-based marketing strategies. The use of videos and interactive simulations was also carried out to provide a real picture of how these techniques can be applied in real situations. The following is the focus of the material delivery in the service of improving the public speaking of the pawnshop employee's wife bond through product knowledge optimization and creative marketing, namely:

1. Improved Public Speaking Skills

The training provided to members of the Pawnshop Employees Wives Association showed very satisfactory results in terms of improving public speaking skills. Before the training, many participants felt awkward and lacked confidence to speak in public. This is understandable given that most of the participants have no formal experience in public speaking, and they are generally more accustomed to interpersonal communication that does not require structured speaking skills.

The materials presented, such as body language management techniques, voice intonation control, and the use of visual aids, have helped participants to understand the importance of these elements in delivering messages effectively. For example, participants learned that good eye contact can build a connection with the audience, while the use of appropriate gestures can reinforce points. The intensive exercises during the session, where participants were given the opportunity to practice live in front of their peers, also played a big role in boosting their confidence.

Based on the results of the post-test evaluation, the improvement in these skills was evident, with 85% of participants showing significant progress in their abilities. Participants who previously tended to be nervous and speak with monotonous intonation are now able to speak more dynamically and attract the attention of the audience. This progress is important not only for the internal needs of the PGAs, but also for their role in the wider community, where they can serve as examples for other women in utilizing their speaking skills to communicate effectively.

2. Understanding Pawnshop Products and Creative Marketing Techniques

In-depth understanding of Pegadaian products was one of the main focuses of this training. Although the participants had a general knowledge of Pegadaian products, they did not understand the details of each product. Likewise, they have not been able to explain the advantages of these products to others. This is potentially an obstacle when they have to promote the products to their friends, family, or community.

After the training, participants' understanding of Pegadaian products improved significantly. They are not only able to identify key products such as gold savings, sharia pawning, and multipurpose financing, but also able to explain their features and benefits in detail. For example, participants can now explain well how gold savings can be a stable and safe investment alternative, and how sharia pawn products offer financial solutions in accordance with sharia principles.

Training on creative marketing techniques can open new insights for participants on innovative ways to promote products (Jatmiko, 2022). The marketing done by most of the participants previously was still very conventional, as it was limited to oral dissemination of information and the use of brochures. Through the training they were introduced to the use of social media and visual content creation as effective marketing tools. Techniques such as storytelling and simple video content creation became an important part of the material presented.

Participants also learned about the importance of market segmentation and how marketing messages can be customized for different audiences. For example, participants were taught how to

create compelling narratives for young target audiences who are more responsive to engaging and interactive visual content on social media. The training was an eye-opener for participants that marketing strategies do not have to be complicated or expensive, but can be done in a creative and targeted way.

3. Challenges in Implementation

While many positive results were achieved, the training process also encountered a number of challenges. One of the biggest challenges was the different levels of understanding and skills among participants. Some participants had different educational backgrounds, which affected the speed at which they absorbed the material. Participants with higher educational backgrounds or previous experience in marketing had an easier time grasping the concepts presented, while others needed more time and explanation to truly understand the material.

In addition, the application of creative marketing techniques that involve the use of digital technology such as social media is also a challenge for some participants who are less familiar with technology (Rizqi et al., 2024). Although they understand the importance of innovation in marketing, limited technological knowledge becomes an obstacle in implementing the creative ideas that have been learned.

To overcome this challenge, future trainings need to be tailored to the needs and ability levels of participants. A more personalized approach and ongoing mentoring sessions could be a solution to help participants who are experiencing difficulties (Wardani et al., 2024). In addition, more in-depth training on the use of digital technology in marketing is also needed so that all participants can take advantage of the opportunities offered by the digital era (Sukmasetya et al., 2020).

4. Long-term Impacts and Implications

The long-term impact of this service activity can be felt both by the participants and the Pegadaian organization itself. Through the improvement of public speaking skills and product understanding, participants are expected to be able to play an active role as Pegadaian product ambassadors in their environment. The ability to speak confidently and communicate product information clearly will help improve Pegadaian's image and attract more customers (Binrany et al., 2024).

On the other hand, the application of creative marketing techniques that have been learned also has great potential to improve the competitiveness of Pawnshops. In an increasingly digitally connected world, the use of creative and innovative marketing strategies is key to attracting the attention of a wider market (Aksoy, 2017). The participants who have been trained are expected to bring positive changes in the way Pegadaian markets its products, by utilizing the power of social media and digital content.

Overall, this service activity made a significant contribution in improving the competence of members of the Pawnshop Employees Wives Association. The success of this training also shows that with the right approach, women can be empowered to become effective communicators and innovators in marketing. This is not only beneficial for their personal development, but also has a positive impact on their organization and community as a whole. This activity is expected to serve as a model for similar empowerment programs in the future, which continue to encourage the improvement of women's skills and capacities in various aspects of life.

4. Conclusion

The activity of improving public speaking skills through optimizing product knowledge and creative marketing aimed at members of the Pawnshop Employees Wives Association (IIKP) has successfully achieved its objectives. This activity not only improved participants' public speaking skills, but also deepened their understanding of Pegadaian products and creative marketing strategies. Based on the evaluation results, there was a significant improvement in public speaking skills and product knowledge after the training. Participants who previously lacked confidence and only had a basic understanding of the products are now able to speak more convincingly and have a good grasp of product details. The training also successfully introduced innovative marketing techniques, such as the use of social media and storytelling, which are expected to be applied by participants in effectively promoting Pegadaian products.

The implementation of the activities experienced some challenges, such as different levels of understanding and technological skills among participants, but overall the activities had a positive long-term impact on IIKP and Pegadaian. The success of this program is proof that with the right approach, employees' wives can become effective and innovative communicators in the field of marketing, and can act as agents of change that have a positive impact on their communities. Furthermore, similar programs need to be developed and tailored to the needs of the participants to ensure the sustainability of the positive impact that has been achieved. Support in the form of further training and ongoing mentoring is also important to help participants who still face obstacles, so that capacity building can continue to occur to the fullest.

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