

# GROUP ACTIVITIES AND COMMUNICATION PATTERNS ON EMPOWERMENT OF THE SANTRI TANI MILLENNIAL GROUP (KSTM) IN INDONESIA: A CASE IN SUKABUMI AND PURWAKARTA WEST JAVA

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## ABSTRACT

*The growth and development of the young generation workforce in agriculture is a priority in agricultural development programs. Youth are expected to be the next generation in the agriculture business. The KSTM program aims to empower and foster the interest of the young generation in the agriculture business. The purpose of this study was to identify group activities and communication patterns for KSTM. This study was quantitative research with a descriptive survey method. The population of this study was santri and development agents in Sukabumi and Purwakarta. The samples were determined purposively from 32 Islamic boarding schools and development agents. The selected respondents were 36 santri and 17 development agents. Research Results: a) The majority of these santri groups are relatively new, but the santri respond positively to the empowerment program and are active in the empowerment program. b) All respondents know that group activities originating from the KSTM program are empowerment activities carried out by "government" development agencies. c) There are differences in the frequency of communication for both Santri and agents due to different communication materials in each stage of the KSTM program and not all agents are involved in all KSTM activities. d) Convergent and linear communication patterns.*

**Keywords:** Agriculture Business, Communication Pattern, Young Generation

## INTRODUCTION

The agricultural sector in Indonesia has a strategic role in national development. The agricultural sector is the largest employer of labor and has a function as a buffer for national resilience in the fields of economy, politics, and security (Ministry of Agriculture, 2013). The problem that occurs in the agricultural sector is that the absorption of labor in the agricultural sector is lower than the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) contributed when compared to other sectors such as the industrial and service sectors. The agricultural sector absorbs 38.35% of the workforce but only contributes to GDP of 14.04%; while the industrial sector which only absorbs 12.78% of the workforce can contribute 25.39% of GDP, and the service sector which absorbs 14.75% of labor can contribute to GDP of 9.24% (Central Statistics Agency, 2010). The figure above illustrates that labor productivity in agriculture is low.

The low productivity of labor in agriculture is influenced by many factors, including the level of education, mastery of technology, availability of facilities and infrastructure, market access, and capital (Ministry of Agriculture, 2013). One of the government's efforts to increase labor productivity in agriculture is through growing and developing the young

generation of agriculture. The growth and development of the young generation of agriculture is a priority in planning agricultural development programs. Youth are expected to be the next generation in innovative, creative, professional, independent and able to compete, and have a global perspective (Ministry of Agriculture, 2013). Educational changes in pesantren combine religiosity with social and economy in providing knowledge, skills, and independence for santri. Santri, as youths after graduating from the pesantren, are expected to have skills in entrepreneurship so that they can play a role in the development process both spiritually, morally, socially, and economically (Sulaiman, 2020).

The Millennial Farmer Santri Group (KSTM) growth in the Agriculture Sector is one of the Ministry of Agriculture's programs in empowering the pesantren community. The KSTM program aims to empower and foster the young generation of santri' interest in doing business in agriculture. Increasing santri' interest in the agricultural sector is carried out through Competency Enhancement activities and providing facilitation in the agricultural sector. Santri who are members of the KSTM are expected to be able to take advantage of the KSTM program as a medium for learning organizations in the field of agriculture. They are also expected to be able to implement the results of technical guidance that is followed in the form of raising chickens in Islamic boarding schools (BPPSDMP, 2019; Ministry of Agriculture, 2013). The implementation of the KSTM program was carried out in 2019 in 16 Provinces in Indonesia. One of the provinces receiving the KSTM program in West Java. The KSTM program includes several stages, namely: Coordination and Outreach; Identification of KSTM Potential Farmer Location Candidates (CPCL); Verification, Validation, and Determination of KSTM; Implementation of Technical Guidance and assistance with learning facilities.

The KSTM program is one of the community empowerment programs. The empowerment of communities is often seen to be linked to their capacities for example, organizational, infrastructural and personal capacity and the types of capital e.g., social, physical, human and financial that the community can access (Fischer & McKee, 2017). Empowerment is a productive and dialogical learning process. A productive learning process, namely being able to utilize self-potential and the environment, cooperation to obtain material and immaterial benefits for the community (Mardikanto, 2010; Sajogyo et al., 1999) and a concept of economic development that reflects a new paradigm of development which is "participatory, empowering and sustainable" (Chambers, 1995). Empowerment is a dialogical process, namely the existence of good communication between one another involved in the empowerment process to obtain the same meaning of development messages among those who empower and are empowered (Jamil, 2003). Empowerment as a development model should use a directed approach to the needy, including the target community, and use a group approach (Noor, 2011) to bring people to empowerment and independence (Setyowati, 2019).

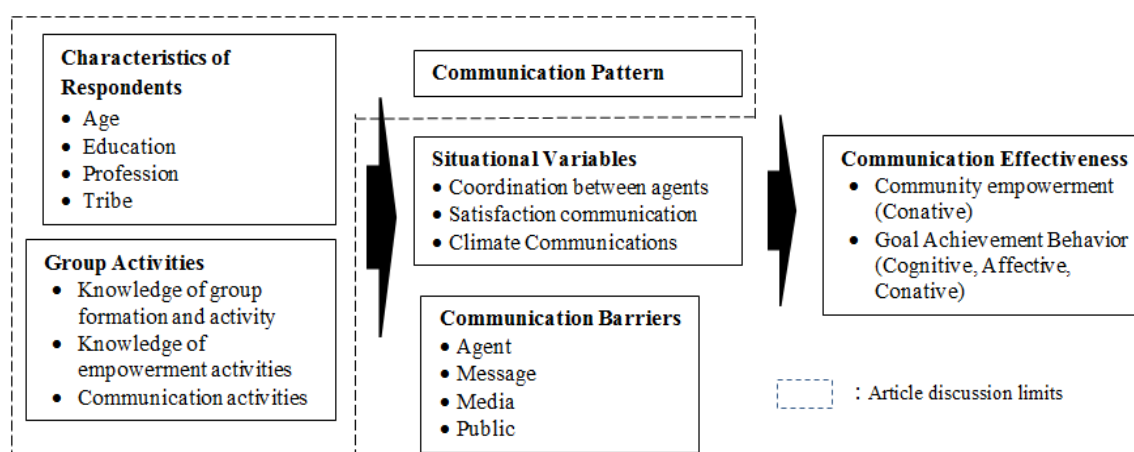
Empowerment communication is a study that can show and reveal scientifically one side of the overall empowerment activity, namely the communication process that occurs in these activities. This study of the communication process can be used as learning material for development agents to achieve independence as an empowerment goal (Jamil, 2003). Empowerment communication is a new perspective in development communication with the spirit of voicing the voiceless (Setyowati, 2019); there is a dialogue between parties who have developed ideas and development subjects (Dilla, 2007). Empowerment communication is carried out in a convergent manner; communication interactions are carried out in a more democratic and participatory manner (Luisi & Hämel, 2021; Setyowati, 2019). This study aimed to identify group activities and communication patterns of KSTM empowerment in Sukabumi City and Purwakarta Regency, West Java, Indonesia.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Community empowerment study refers to focusing on society, participatory, empowerment, and sustainability Chambers (1995); Rogers & Kincaid Convergence Communication (1981). Thus, the results of the study can theoretically be used to analyze KSTM empowerment. Empowerment should be the ultimate goal of any community development projects. While development often interpreted as the flow of resources from outside into community, empowerment push and-pull full participation of all community members to change their world by themselves, from inside to outside (Ferguson, 2010 in Sianipar et al., 2013). According to Chambers (1995), community empowerment is an effort to formulate the concept and implementation of development programs that focus on society, participation, empowerment, and sustainability. Community empowerment is characterized as building community capacity, allocation of collective resources, developing new roles and community resources, collaboration and taking action (Luisi & Hämel, 2021). Community empowerment is oriented towards increasing the quality and quantity of resource productivity. It also focuses on equitable distribution of income, utilizing local resources, and opening up new jobs for the community. The other orientations are also for meeting basic needs, fulfilling the present generation but continuing into future generations oriented towards economic growth and human life quality (Dwijiwino, 2007 in Sulaiman 2020; Mardikanto, 2010).

Convergent communication theory becomes a relevant theory in empowerment. Communication exchanges information and meanings that aim to create mutual understanding and understanding and move towards convergence (Rogers & Kincaid, 1981). In convergence theory, communication is a process of sharing information between two or more participants in a social network that leads to social outcomes such as mutual understanding, collective agreement, and collective action, as well as psychological outcomes such as perceptions, interpretations, understandings, beliefs, and actions (Rogers & Kincaid, 1981). A team with face-to-face communication is required in the context of the tasks required in convergent communication (Kerr & Murthy, 2009). In addition, computer communication (for example mobile phones, smartphones) is needed in converged communication (Chen et al., 2010). Collaborative communications [including information sharing, interaction, discussion and joint decision making] play an important role in creating convergent communication (Schoenthaler et al., 2018).

The communication process analysis framework refers to the analysis carried out by Jamil (2003), namely from the community empowerment process and communication patterns, situational variables, communication barriers, and communication effectiveness. The discussion in this article is limited to group activities and empowerment communication patterns. Communication framework on KSTM Empowerment in Indonesia: A case in Sukabumi City and Purwakarta Regency, West Java can be seen in Figure 1.



## FIGURE 1 KSTM EMPOWERMENT COMMUNICATION FRAMEWORK

### METHODOLOGY/MATERIALS

The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire. Interviews using a questionnaire were conducted by asking questions about respondents' characteristics, group activities, and communication patterns. The research analysis unit is santri in Islamic boarding schools who receive the KSTM program and development agents in districts/cities where KSTM is located. These two units of analysis are used to determine communication patterns between development agents and development subjects. Determination of respondents in this study using a descriptive survey method. This study's population were santri in Islamic boarding schools and development agents (extension agents/service officers/PKL students from Polbangtan) in Sukabumi City and Purwakarta Regency. The samples were determined purposively from 32 Islamic boarding schools and extension officers/students in Sukabumi City and Purwakarta Regency. The selected respondents were 36 Santri and 17 development agents. The research was conducted from June 2019 until February 2020.

<b>Table 1</b>				
<b>KSTM EMPOWERMENT COMMUNICATION RESPONDENTS</b>				
<b>Number</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Islamic Boarding School</b>	<b>Number of KSTM</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>Santri</b>			
1	Sukabumi City	11	13	12
2	Purwakarta regency	21	27	24
<b>B</b>	<b>Development Agent</b>			
1	Animal Husbandry Service			9
2	PKL Student			8
	Respondent Total			53

### RESULTS AND FINDINGS

#### Characteristics of Respondents

The number of respondents (santri) was 36 people taken from santri in Islamic boarding schools receiving the KSTM program, and development agent respondents as many as 17 people from the Animal Husbandry Service, extension agents, and PKL students in Sukabumi City, and Purwakarta Regency. Based on the number and percentage of santri according to age 23 people (64%) were in the early adulthood category (64%) and 13-21 years olds (36%). The majority of santri have high school graduates with the equivalent of 28 people (78%), 3 people (8%) have graduated from S1, 2 people graduated from elementary school (6%), 2 people graduated S2 (6%) and 1 people graduated junior high school (2%). Based on the type of work of the respondent (santri) as students, 13 people (36%), 11 teachers (31%), 3 boarding school administrators (8%), entrepreneur 3 people (8%), 3 workers (8%), 2 private employees (6%) and 1 farmer (3%). The majority of respondents are Sundanese so that the language of daily social interactions used by Santri is Sundanese 33 people (91%), Indonesian only 1 person (3%), and the second language 2 people (6%). The majority of the languages used by the Santri in the family are Sundanese for 35 people (97%) and two languages for 1 person (3%).

Based on the number and percentage of development agents according to age, 9 people were in the early adulthood category 21-40 years (53%) and 8 people in the middle age 41-60 years (47%). The majority of development agents have 10 high school graduates (58%), 4 S1 graduates (24%), 1 D3 graduate (6%), and 2 S2 graduates (12%), based on the

agent's job type as a student 8 persons (47%), instructor 7 people (41%), veterinarian 1 person (6%) and official staff 1 person (6%). Although most respondents are Sundanese, the agent uses 14 people (82%) in everyday social terms, and only 3 people (8%) speak Sundanese. The majority of the Agent languages in the family are Sundanese 11 people (97%) and Indonesian 6 people (3%).

## Group Activities

### Knowledge of Group Formation and Activity

The general understanding of the implementation of a program that involves the group as implementing the activity is not a newly formed group (Jamil, 2003). However, empowering santri through the KSTM program is for the growth or regeneration of farmers. So as shown in Table 2, 27 groups were newly formed in 2019. However, there were 6 groups formed in 2015, in 2018 there were as many as 6 groups. The groups that were formed before 2019 exist because of the initiative of the community itself. This means that the community already has experience in groups and doing business.

<b>Group Formation Time (Year)</b>	<b>N (Group)</b>	<b>%</b>
2015	6	17
2018	3	8
2019	27	75

Although most of the santri group is relatively new, the santri respond positively to the empowerment program and are active in the empowerment program (Table 3). The results of the study proved that the distribution of the activeness of the santri was 100%. This means that all respondents (santri) as many as 36 people are active in KSTM activities to date, namely actively participating in meetings and participating in their livestock business management. Activities carried out by respondents include production, sales, chicken business development, and cooperation. This is in line with the findings of Setyowati (2019), through empowerment communication; the community can achieve aspirations and goals and is responsive to change. The development agents, namely extension agents and 9 service officers, have started to be active in the KSTM program starting from the early 2019 process, namely the CPCL process, Technical Guidance (Bimtek), distribution of chickens, feed and medicines, and making cages to mentoring. Meanwhile, PKL students began to be active in KSTM assistance from June to August 2019. CPCL activities included identification of pesantren, location, and group readiness. Bimtek includes technical guidance activities on biosecurity, chicken cultivation and maintenance, and livestock management. Infrastructure activities, namely activities in the distribution of infrastructure, preparation of cages, guidance in dosages, and application methods for using drugs and feed. Assistance activities include recording, procedures for raising native chickens, management of maintenance, and handling of pests. Development agents are active in providing outreach and training, teaching, and mentoring needed for empowerment.

<b>Activity in Groups in the Empowerment Program</b>	<b>N (Respondent)</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Santri</b>		
Active	36	100

Not Active	0	0
Total	36	100
<b>Agent</b>		
Active	17	100
Not Active	0	0
Total	17	100

### Knowledge of Empowerment Activities

Knowledge about empowerment activities is to see the extent to which the community and agents know that the activities carried out are empowerment activities (Jamil, 2003). With the knowledge possessed by the development agents and the development subjects involved, a common view and awareness will be formed by each of the parties involved to mutually support the implementation of empowerment programs (Jamil, 2003). Knowledge of equal empowerment activities will encourage better communication activities and lead to effective communication. This means that the same meaning will be created in the context of understanding the empowerment program between the community and the community, between agents and communities, and between agents and agents (Jamil, 2003). The study results in Table 4 show that the respondents know that the activities carried out are empowerment activities. All respondents (santri), namely 100% (36 people) and 100% (17 people) development agents involved in the empowerment program knew that group activities originating from the KSTM program were empowerment activities carried out by "government" development agencies.

<b>Table 4</b>		
<b>THE KNOWLEDGE DISTRIBUTION OF SANTRI AND DEVELOPMENT AGENTS ABOUT THE PROGRAM BEING IMPLEMENTED IS AN EMPOWERMENT ACTIVITY</b>		
<b>Respondents' Knowledge of Group Empowerment Activities</b>	<b>N (Respondent)</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Santri</b>		
Know	36	100
Do not know	0	0
Total	36	100
<b>Agent</b>		
Know	17	100
Do not know	0	0
Total	17	100

All respondents, both santri and development agents, are aware that KSTM activities are activities to build community capacity as socialize at the beginning of the program. The KSTM program is equipped with clear technical rules and instructions in the phasing of activities so that from the start to the program implementation process, there is sufficient mutual understanding of the program, marked by the support provided for KSTM activities.

The high level of understanding of respondents about empowerment programs shows that in the initial socialization process until the implementation of the program, there is a common meaning that the activities carried out are aimed at developing community capacity and community independence. Empowerment activities carried out through the KSTM program are actually for poverty alleviation (welfare/economic improvement), improving the quality and quantity of Human Resources (HR) through creating regeneration of farmers (youth who love agriculture), Development Management (Ability to plan, implement and

manage development) and community independence. The distribution of Santri and agents' knowledge about empowerment activities carried out can be seen in Table 5.

<b>Respondents' Knowledge of Group Empowerment Activities</b>	<b>Santri</b>		<b>Development Agent</b>	
	<b>N (Respondent)</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N (Respondent)</b>	<b>%</b>
Poverty alleviation	6	17	0	0
HR improvement	4	11	0	0
Development management	0	0	0	0
Make the community independent	0	0	0	0
Poverty alleviation; HR improvement	4	11	2	12
Development management; Community independence	0	0	1	6
Poverty alleviation; Human Resource Improvement; Make the community independent	2	5	3	18
Human Resource Improvement; Development management; Community independence	1	3	2	12
Poverty alleviation; Human Resource Improvement; Development management; Make the community independent	19	53	9	52
	36	100	17	100

The findings in Table 5 indicate that the majority of respondents stated that empowerment was to create poverty alleviation (welfare/economic improvement); increasing human resources through farmer regeneration (youth who love agriculture); the ability to plan, implement and manage businesses for development; and in the end, to make the community independent through sustainable endeavors. There were only 10 respondents who stated that empowerment was only for 1 (one) goal, namely poverty alleviation or human resource improvement. Meanwhile, other respondents chose 2 or more achievable goals.

### **Communication Activities**

Communication activities show community communication intensity and development agents communicate in empowerment programs (Jamil, 2003). The intensity of communication provides an overview of the frequency or level of frequency of interacting, sharing feelings, ideas, or ways (communication) that are directly or indirectly desired together or there is a mutual need, including both "society and development agents" (Jamil, 2003). The higher the intensity of program delivery, the higher the community will respond, and the easier it will be for the community to understand the empowerment material provided (Jamil, 2003).

<b>Frequency of Communication</b>	<b>N (Respondent)</b>	<b>%</b>
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Santri with Service Officers/Extension Officers		
1 time/week	0	0
1-2 times/week	2	6
1 time/month	8	22
1-2 times/month	0	0
Uncertain	26	72
Total	36	100
Santri with PKL Polbangtan Students		
1 time/week	11	31
1-2 times/week	7	19
1 time/month	9	25
1-2 times/month	1	3
Uncertain	8	22
Total	36	100
Agent with Santri at the time of CPCL		
1 time/week	4	29
1-2 times/week	2	14
1 time/month	8	57
1-2 times/month	0	0
Uncertain	0	0
Total	14	100
Agent with Santri at BIMTEK		
1 time/week	2	18
1-2 times/week	0	0
1 time/month	4	36
1-2 times/month	0	0
Uncertain	5	46
Total	11	100
Agent with Santri at the time of distribution of Chicken/Feed/Medicine		
1 time/week	0	0
1-2 times/week	0	0
1 time/month	3	33
1-2 times/month	0	0
Uncertain	6	67
Total	9	100
Agent with Santri at the time of field Guidance		
1 time/week	7	44
1-2 times/week	3	19
1 time/month	1	6
1-2 times/month	1	6
Uncertain	4	25
Total	16	100

Communication activities with santri are based on the KSTM activity program stages starting from the early 2019 process, namely the CPCL process, Technical Guidance (Bimtek), distribution of chickens, feed, and medicine building cages to mentoring. The



difference in the frequency of communication for both Santri and agents is due to different communication materials in each stage of the KSTM program, and not all agents are involved in all KSTM activities. Agents from the Ministry of Agriculture and the Animal Husbandry Service were involved in coordination and outreach; Identification of KSTM Potential Farmer Location Candidates (CPCL); Implementation of Technical Guidance, assistance with learning facilities, and field guidance. PKL student agents guide the field for 2 months and make regular visits 1 week once and if needed.

In the KSTM program, the agents involved are the central government, local government, and universities. The involvement of various development agencies such as the central government, local governments, and universities is needed in empowerment (Jurmrana & Tawulo, 2015; Nindatu, 2019). The more people involved in the empowerment process, the more successful the empowerment activity will be (Anwas, 2013).

The KSTM program, which includes coordination and outreach, technical guidance, and guidance in the field, describes activities not only socializing but also providing training and introducing the program to the community. This is in line with Safitri & Musyafak (2019) statement that socialization and training and teaching are needed for empowerment. Knowledge is power. Therefore, the transfer of knowledge from one to another is by definition the essence of empowerment (Hannon, 2019).

### Communication Patterns

The communication pattern in this study is based on Rogers and Kincaid's convergent communication. Communication convergence seen from the agent's point of view includes a discussion of the suitability of messages conveyed by development agents with what the community expects (Jamil, 2003). The message encourages independence and several respondents' assessments of agents which include: the language used, attitudes (empathy, sympathy, propaganda), community activeness, and the opportunity to respond directly to the delivery of messages by development agents and equality between society and development agents in the communication process (Jamil, 2003). Communication patterns are described in the form of percentage distribution of respondents' assessments of communication patterns in the community empowerment communication process in Table 7.

Communication Patterns	Santri		Agent	
	N (Respondent)	%	N (Respondent)	%
Very Unconvergent	0	0	0	0
Not Converging	0	0	0	0
Sometimes	15	42	0	0
Convergent	21	58	17	100
Very Convergent	0	0	0	0
Total	36	100	17	100

The research results in Table 7 show that the messages conveyed according to all development agents encourage independence. According to some Santri, it is still not following with the needs of the santri in the content of the message, the process of delivering the message, the language, and the attitude shown. The message conveyed was still inadequate in encouraging motivation and arousing community needs. Some Santri response as a society is that there are still psychological barriers (encouragement/motivation) in the communication process and inadequate feedback.

The pattern of communication that took place according to the majority of Santri was 58%, and all development agents 100% indicated an assessment towards a convergent communication pattern. However, 42% of the Santri considered that communication in the KSTM program was still linear.

The difference in assessment between santri and agents is because the target achievement of development agents exceeds the expectations of the santri as an empowered society. Different understandings also cause differences in assessment due to different levels of knowledge about the material being communicated. Although most santri have high school education level with the equivalent of 28 people (78%), 14 people (33%) have never raised chickens before, so technical material in chicken management needs to be served more.

Although some Santri and all development agents gave an assessment that led to a convergent communication pattern, some Santri stated that the communication pattern was linear. This means that there are still differences in the meaning of some of the santri' information conveyed by development agents.

The response of some santri as a community is still a lack of encouragement/motivation in the communication process and inadequate feedback shows that continuous assistance and dialogical communication processes are needed, namely the existence of good communication between one another who is involved in the empowerment process to obtain the same meaning of messages. the message of development among the empowered and empowered.

Collaborative communication including information sharing, interaction, discussion, and joint decision making (Schoenthaler et al., 2018) must be continued to create convergent communication. Face-to-face communication in the context of tasks (Kerr & Murthy, 2009) needs to be improved and computer communication (Chen et al., 2010) such as what's application group remains activated because the two channels are needed in convergent communication.

Empowerment of communication is carried out by building dialogue between parties who have developed ideas and development subjects (Dilla, 2007). Empowerment communication is carried out in a convergent manner; communication interactions are carried out in a more democratic and participatory manner (Luisi & Hämel, 2021; Setyowati, 2019).

Development initiatives often focus on technical interventions without considering the social context in which they are introduced. In fact, social relations and social capital are very important (Edwards, 2019). Recognizing this, Woolcock (2001) states that it is important to "get the right social relationships". Although social capital is an important capacity in community managed programs (such as social skills, or the capacity to negotiate solutions to common problems), bonding, bridging and linking capital complement the systems perspective (Edwards, 2019). By adding a dimension of social relations within and across communities and other levels of government, this dimension is seen as useful.

## CONCLUSION

The results showed that: a) the respondents responded positively to the empowerment program and were active in the empowerment program. b) All respondents (santri and development agents) know that group activities originating from the KSTM program are empowerment activities carried out by "government" development agencies. c) There are differences in the frequency of communication KSTM for both Santri and agents due to different communication materials in each stage of the KSTM program and not all agents are involved in all KSTM activities. d) Convergent and linear communication patterns.

In conclusion, the contribution of this research to communication science is the study of convergence communication which is useful in describing the phenomena that occur in the communication process in the KSTM program. For social science, this research useful in describing the activities in community empowerment during the program.

This article is limited to discussing communication activities and patterns, so it is still necessary to explore the barriers, climate, satisfaction, and effectiveness of communication in KSTM empowerment and further research on the evaluation and sustainability of KSTM.

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