

Evaluating Effects of Public Speaking Training on Developing Communication Competence among Youths: A Field Study of Panauti Municipality-12, Kavrepalanchok

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Abstract

This study evaluates effects of public speaking training program conducted by Panauti Municipality ward no. 12. The training focused on empowering youths through building an effective communicative skill who are interested in future leadership and better professionalism. The study used quantitative approach and evaluation research method. Required data are collected from 25 youths (17 female and 8 male) who were thoughtfully participated in four days training program. The training participants were selected from four major settlements (Kalati, Bhumidanda, Chindu and Simpani) of the ward. For the evaluation, the study used Kirkpatrick's Four-Level Training Evaluation Model. The study found noticeable and significant improvements in how participants rated their own communication skills, public speaking, and confidence levels. Besides, the training stressed ethical and respectful ways to communicate during public speaking. The higher level of participants' satisfaction made the program more relevant. However, the satisfaction levels were differ due to sex group, marital status and occupational status of the participants. Females and unmarried ones reported bigger gains and more engagement compared to males or married people. That variation signifies because of social roles or what stage of life they are in. The training program becoming effective for school-going youths who were the dominant participants. The study concludes that locally designed participatory models of training resulted significant communication competencies among the youths. For wider impact of such training in the community, local government authorities need to organize such skill development training regularly and inclusively.

Keywords: Youth empowerment; public speaking; training evaluation, communication skills, Panauti

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1. Introduction

Effective communicative skills becoming foundation for empowering youths (Allen-Handy et al., 2021). Communication skills not only empower youths but it makes them thoughtful citizen and motivates to speak in public places. Public speaking talking across cultures, and even using digital tools really helps youths handle different environments and get involved in community and society (Yonezawa & Shimmi, 2017).

Public speaking training really helps build up skills for young people, like speaking out for important causes or leading groups in a way that is empathetic, especially across different cultures (Jarkiewicz & Leek, 2016). Then there is youth led programs that focus on justice issues, and those seem to show how communication skills push forward global leadership for kids in urban areas, giving them a stronger sense of agency (Allen Handy et al., 2021).

Intergovernmental exchanges come into play too, linking intercultural communication directly with developing a broader global view, maybe even a sense of citizenship overall. It feels like state led initiatives in education and life skills programs treat communication as this core social and interpersonal tool. Communication skills ties into larger relationships between youth and the state and ensuring general empowerment of the youths (Jiwon, 2017; Ingriani, 2010).

Modaber (2016) stresses how public speaking is seen as important on a global scale. But the public speaking has to be in face to face situations, not just the smartphone stuff that is everywhere now, leading to addiction or whatever (Celikkalp et al., 2020). Training in public speaking and communication for young people must get them involved physically and put it in real contexts so they feel like they can actually change things in their lives later on (Jarkiewicz & Leek, 2016).

Nepal has this thing with youth needing good communication skills. It helps with school stuff and getting into jobs (Chakravarty et al., 2016). Training locals and young people builds up their abilities, and that connects to making the environment better and communities stronger (KC, 2017). Effective communication just boosts self-confidence and ways to talk to others (2018; Karki et al., 2025).

Youth in Nepal are pretty much taking charge of their own communication skills. They go after jobs and learn on their own what works in the market, especially better talking skills (Ghimire et al., 2023). It makes sense they are proactive like that. School quality

overall affects students core abilities that probably ties into things like public speaking (Thapa, 2018).

College students in cities use social media to share thoughts. Sharma (2012) pointed out how that helps with casual communication, which fits with any formal training. Gautam (2024) also covered how interpersonal skills develop just through daily life, in formal spots or not. These skills show up in real situations, the practical ones especially. In post disaster times, young people step up with different abilities. That shows how important clear talking and teaming up in communities (Maharjan, 2022). Communication seems to link a lot of it together. It feels like that part is key, but not always easy to pin down.

Tourism sees youth as big players. They have to use current education to grab relevant skills, with communication pushing the sector ahead (Nepali & Prajapati, 2025).

This study evaluates the outcomes of four day public speaking training program conducted by Panauti Municipality Ward No. 12. It came about because people wanted it, aimed at helping local youths and students get better at communicating. The whole thing was pretty interactive with hands on activities, so they could practice in a way that felt real and useful. The training program has boosted their confidence a lot, made them feel more hopeful about speaking up. It was good for presenting themselves in public situations or even professional ones, you know. The focus stayed on expressing yourself effectively, which seems key for things like civic duties and moving forward in a career. For those interested in journalism or community reporting, it might have been especially handy. Clear communication matters there, structured stuff especially. Not sure if everyone got everything out of it the same way, though. Finally, there are limited research on evaluating outcomes of public speaking training specifically for young people in Nepalese context. Therefore, this study evaluates effect of public speaking training on empowering youths that could lead to personal growth and more involvement in local development.

2. Objectives and Methodology

The objectives of the study were to assess public speaking experience, training effect, and future willingness of the participants; to analyze statistical significance of pre- and post-training outcome measures and to explore participant perceptions of public speaking essentials. In doing so, the study used quantitative approach (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) and evaluation research design (McLeod, 2013). Data are collected from 25 training participants which was conducted on October 23-26, 2024. The study used descriptive (frequency and cross tabulation) and inferential (Wilcoxon Signed-

Rank Test) statistical tools for data analysis. Besides, the study used Kirkpatrick's Four-Level Training Evaluation Model to understand overall effect of training program (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2016; Alsalamah & Callinan, 2021). More precisely, it evaluates reaction of the participant (first level), learning of the participants (second level), changing behavior of the participants (third level) and finally community effect of training (level four) as well.

3. Result and Discussions

3.1 Characteristics of the Respondents

This section presents demographics of the participants that provides a crucial foundation for interpreting effect of training program (Table 1). The variables such as age distribution, gender composition, educational attainment, marital status, occupational background, and geographical settlement patterns are highlighted.

Table 1. Demographics of the participants (n=25)

Category	Response	Frequency	Percent
Sex group	Female	17	68.0
	Male	8	32.0
Age group	10-14	9	36
	15-19	11	44
	20-24	1	4.0
	25-29	2	8.0
	30-34	2	8.0
Education grade	5-8	11	44
	9-12	12	48
	BA	2	8.0
Marital status	Unmarried	20	80.0
	Married	5	20.0
Occupation	Student	21	84.0
	Agriculture	2	8.0
	House wife	1	4.0
	Private job	1	4.0
Settlements	Kalati	16	64.0
	Bhumedanda	4	16.0
	Chindu	3	12.0
	Simpani	2	8.0
Total		25	100.00

The most of the participants are young and female. Over two thirds are girls and about 80 percent are between 10 and 19 years old. That makes the whole thing feel really focused on teens who are interested in public speaking. Majority, 84 percent are students studying in grades 5 to 12. It means educated youths and children are attracting in this training. They are mostly not married, and belong to four settlements of the ward.

3.2 Public Speaking Experience, Training effect, and Future Willingness

This section highlights on public speaking experience, how the local youths are growing personally and feel confident speaking in public (Table 2). The focus was given to measure experience with public speaking, how much they join in formal events compared to others, if they had training before, and how they feel their skills improved after that training.

Table 2. Personal experience of the participants by gender and marital status (n=25)

Indicator	Gender		Marital status	
	Male (n=8)	Female (n=17)	Unmarried (n=20)	Married (n=5)
Spoke in stage program (yes)	4	9	12	1
Spoke in stage program (no)	4	8	8	4
Delivered speech in formal program (yes)	3	5	8	0
Delivered speech in formal program (no)	5	12	12	5
Conducted any formal program (yes)	1	2	3	0
Conducted any formal program (no)	7	15	17	5
Participated in pst earlier (yes)	1	3	3	1
Participated in pst earlier (no)	7	14	17	4
Capacity increased (yes/increased)	2	5	7	0
Capacity increased (little bit)	0	4	3	1
No clear increase reported	6	8	10	4
Willing to attend again (yes/definitely)	8	17	20	5

Looking at the participation, it was same for both groups, around half of them got into those stage programs. But when it comes to what they got out of it, females seemed to benefit more. Over half said their skills improved a little, while only about a quarter of the males felt that way. That part kind of stands out, does it not. For marital status,

things were different, with bigger differences overall. Unmarried people were way more active, like 40 percent of them actually gave a formal speech. None of the married ones did that at all. And on the gains side, 35 percent of the unmarried felt their abilities went up, compared to zero for the married group. Maybe married people just have too much family stuff or work. Anyway, the surprising thing is that everyone, 100 percent no matter what group, said they would do similar training again in the future. That is interesting, since the other parts varied so much.

3.3 Statistical Significance of Pre- and Post-Training Outcome Measures

This section highlighted significance of training program that did something difference. The study analyzed at pre and post training with these Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Tests. It breaks down stuff like communication skills and public speaking skills, plus confidence in leading things at the institution or handling the program details. That analysis shows which way the changes went from the training (Table 3). It also analyzed how many people felt like nothing happened for them at all. That seems kind of key for whether the stats hold up or not fully significant though.

Table 3. Summary of Wilcoxon signed-rank test results (n=25)

Training outcome	Improved (positive ranks)	Declined (negative ranks)	No change	Z- statistic	p-value (2- tailed)	Sig. ($\alpha=0.05$)
Communication skills	22	0	3	-4.69	< .00	Sig.
Public speaking skills	21	0	4	-4.58	< .00	Sig.
Institutional leadership confidence	22	0	3	-4.69	< .00	Sig.
Program conduct confidence	21	0	4	-4.58	< .00	Sig.

The training program was tested in four areas, like communication skills and public speaking, plus confidence in things like institutional leadership and how the program itself went. The null hypothesis, that H_0 thing, just assumed no real change in the median scores from before to after for each area. Then the alternative, H_1 , was about there being some positive difference that actually counts. All the tests showed

significance, with p-values way under .001, so we could reject those null hypotheses at the 0.05 level pretty easily. That suggests the training really made a difference, at least noticeably. Communication skills had this big improvement, Z equals minus 4.690, p less than .001, and out of the 25 people, 22 reported getting better, with none saying they got worse. It feels like that area jumped out the most, kind of. For institutional leadership confidence, it went up a lot too, same Z score of minus 4.690 and p under .001, and 22 participants felt more confident after. Public speaking skills got better significantly, Z minus 4.583, p less than .001. Program conduct confidence was similar, same Z and p, with 21 people noting gains there. No one saw negative changes in any of it, which is interesting, everyone who changed just improved. There were only a few ties, maybe 3 or 4 for each outcome, so the training seemed to help almost everyone involved. Overall, it boosted skills and confidence across communication and leadership areas.

3.4 Participant Perceptions of Public Speaking Essentials

This section presents basic ideas that the trainees came up with during the training sessions. They got these understandings from what happened in the program. The main focus here is on how well public speaking works, or at least how effective it seemed to them. The participants shared their own views on five key elements of public speaking. That stands out because it is coming straight from what they perceived. It feels like those elements are really important based on their experiences. Then there are insights into five big things they learned from the training overall. Some of it might overlap with the speaking parts, but it is worth noting separately. And they had some suggestions for the trainer moving forward for the future.

Table 4. Participant perceptions, learned skills, and suggestions

Theme: Skill and suggestion	Male [n=8]	Female [n=17]	Total [n=25]
Five essentials skills for public speaking			
Respect and non-humiliation	3	7	10
Ethical and sensitive communication	2	6	8
Content preparation and knowledge	1	2	3
Language and delivery style	1	1	2
Audience engagement and time management	1	1	2
Five skills learned from the training			

Theme: Skill and suggestion	Male [n=8]	Female [n=17]	Total [n=25]
Confidence building	6	7	13
Speech delivery skills	6	7	13
Program related content knowledge	5	5	10
Language use	5	5	10
Time and audience management	2	2	4
Suggestion provided by participant to the trainer			
Appreciation/gratitude of the participant to the trainer	10	7	17
Suggested to offer extra activities during training	2	2	4
Suggested to conduct learning centered program again	2	2	4

Participants really pointed out ethical and respectful communication when it comes to public speaking essentials. Respect and avoiding humiliation came up in 10 out of 25 responses, while ethical and sensitive stuff got 8. Adding those together makes about 72 percent of what people thought were the main things. It feels like those stood out the most anyway. The training seemed to help a ton with building confidence and figuring out how to deliver speeches properly. Confidence building got mentioned 13 times, and speech delivery skills also 13, so those were definitely the top skills picked up. On average, each participant said they learned around 3 skills from it all. Feedback about the trainer was pretty positive overall. Satisfaction and appreciation, plus gratitude, accounted for 34 out of 50 mentions, which is 68 percent. There was no much criticism of the program itself. Just a handful of suggestions, like 4 trainee demanding extra activities during the sessions, and another 4 hoping to repeat the whole training thing sometime.

4. Discussions of Findings

The effect of training program seems productive and fruitful to the participants including elected representatives and staffs. They improved in things like communication and public speaking, and they felt more confident about leading or organizing stage program and events. That matches up with the Kirkpatrick model at the

reaction level and the learning level of communication skills (Ingriani, 2010). It mostly helped young students and unmarried girls in the area. Those groups did great with it, but it shows the program reached people who were already linked to school or child clubs. Gautam (2024) says participation is higher for those in formal education in Nepal. The gap between unmarried and married youth is pretty noticeable, though. Married ones hardly joined, and even when they did, they did not get as much out of it (Chakravarty et al., 2016). When it comes to cultural values, everyone seemed to pick up on ethical and respectful ways of talking as the main part of public speaking. That might be why they liked the trainer and the content so much, which ties into the reaction level in Kirkpatrick (Alsalamah & Callinan, 2021). Effective communication and public speaking skills help young people feel empowered and get involved as citizens in the community and society (Allen-Handy et al., 2021; Jarkiewicz & Leek, 2016). It is not really about being flashy or just convincing people, but more about keeping harmony in the community.

The program covered practical stuff too, like basics of reporting for the community or journalism, how to structure arguments, deliver them confidently, and deal with nerves. Even though they did not look at long-term changes, it feels like it could lead to some behavior shifts or actual results down the line. That part gets a bit messy to predict. In Nepal, communication helps youth in disaster response (Maharjan, 2022), or environment stuff (KC, 2017), tourism (Nepali & Prajapati, 2025) and health campaigns (Karki et al., 2025). By involving in community level leadership, trained and skillful youths are becoming active citizenship (Glanville & Pun, 2018). Interestingly, gender wise, girls reported more gains from the training. The training used digital platform, camera and visual posters to gain attentions of the participant. The communicative tolls are regarded as major drivers for effective trainings (Modaber, 2016; Celikkalp, 2020). It shows the training boosted reaction and learning in a right away and really helped to improve confidence level and communicative skills of the participants. Future research should track participants over time to see if skills are applied in work place behavior (Level 3). It might be good to look at outcomes too, like how more young people get involved in local decisions or if community reports get better overall, that is the Level 4 stuff. Running the same kind of training for different kinds of groups could help see if the model applies wider.

5. Conclusion and Implications

Public speaking training program conducted in Panauti Municipality-12, helped to improve communication skills and build confidence among the local youths. The pre

and post tests showed significant differences, between pre and post-performance variables. However, it was not the same significant for everyone. Females and the unmarried younger people felt like they got more benefited from training program compared to married. That shows how things like social roles or what stage of life really affect communication skills. Most of the participants agreed that contents of public speaking training program must be linked with local culture and language. Participants liked the focus on being ethical and respectful when speaking, which matches norms around there, and that led to them being pretty satisfied. The outcomes of the training program was becoming effective to the dominant group of participants from school going children. Finally, based on empirical findings, the study highlighted both theoretical and practical implications (Table 5) for the effective implementation of public speaking training program in Nepal and beyond.

Table 5. Theoretical and practical implications

Findings	Theoretical and contextual comparison	Possible implication
Significant pre-posttest gains	Supports Kirkpatrick's Level 2 (Learning): Communication as a core for youth competency and empowerment	Provides empirical evidence for short-term public speaking and other training models
Homogeneous, student-heavy sample	Reflects common engagement patterns of child and unmarried youths in community level program	For more success in reaching a target group, need for strategies to include out-of-school or working youths
Emphasis on ethical, respectful communication	Deeply aligns with Nepalese religious and cultural values	Argues for indigenizing training content to ensure cultural relevance and adoption.
Provided positive feedbacks to the trainer	Strongly supports Kirkpatrick's Level 1 (Reaction): Positive reaction of the participants	High engagement is a foundation for learning and potential future program advocacy.
Participants improved their communication skills and leadership skills	Supports Kirkpatrick's Levels (3 & 4): Seeking leadership role of the participants in the community	Suggests training has high potential for real-world application and community impact.

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