

Communication skills of rural adolescent girls of Jorhat district of Assam

■ JURI BARUAH, BINAPANI DEKA, KRISHNA BARUAH AND PANKAJ DEKA

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■ **ABSTRACT** : Communication is a two-way process. It is the meaningful exchange of information between two or a group of living creatures. The use of effective communication skills is an important social competency. An adolescent's level of maturity is closely related to levels of communication. Well-developed communication skills are essential skills for academic pursuits and for future life. Communication stands so deeply rooted in human behaviours and the structures of society. Communication skill is very much essential for village girls, because they are deprived part of population. One study was carried out on one hundred and fifty (150) girls within the age group of 10- 18 years from five (5) villages of Jorhat district of Assam. Villages were selected randomly from all the Developmental Blocks of Jorhat district of Assam. After collection of information, intervention programmes were arranged for these girls. Intervention programme included trainings in different areas, stories, lectures accompanied by charts, posters and other teaching aids were used for intervention. Slide shows were also arranged to impart information on different topics to improve their knowledge as well as communication skills. Their knowledge was assessed both before and after intervention. Significance difference was found between knowledge at pre and post-test in all the aspects.

■ **KEY WORDS** : Communication, Skills, Adolescent girls

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See end of the paper for authors' affiliations

Correspondence to :

BINAPANI DEKA

Krshi Vigyan Kendra,
JORHAT (ASSAM) INDIA
Email: dbinapani@ymail.com

The processes by which people navigate and assign meaning. Communication is understood as the exchanging of understanding. We might say that communication consists of transmitting information from one person to another. A simple communication model with a sender transferring a message containing information to a receiver.

Since communication is the basis of all interpersonal relationships, the use of communication skills to resolve conflict will improve interpersonal relationships and reduce experiences such as depression. Such intervention strategies should include the development of active listening skills, which can be applied to identify and clarify underlying worries of the adolescent. Open communication will facilitate better self-expression and understanding concerning the behaviour and feelings of family members.

Through active or responsive listening parents can detect signs of depression in their daughters and can provide them with a meaningful support structure. The ability to listen with empathy, interest and understanding should also be instilled in the young adolescent girls. Short courses on improving communication skills could be adapted for classroom use. Communication skills would also be helpful to the girls as they interact with their peers and would be a great asset outside the school environment.

■ RESEARCH METHODS

The study was carried out on one hundred and fifty (150) girls within the age group of 10- 18 years from five (5) villages of Jorhat district of Assam. These five villages were selected randomly from all villages from two developmental blocks which were selected purposively from all the

Developmental Blocks of Jorhat district of Assam.

Selection of tool:

Questionnaire was used for collection of data from the respondents.

Procedure for data collection:

Rapport has been established with the girls to facilitate uninhibited expression. Girls were requested to provide a convenient place and time for collection of data. Questionnaires were distributed among the older girls while the non school going and younger girls’ answers were noted down. After collection of information, intervention programmes were arranged for these girls. Intervention programme included trainings in different areas, stories. Lectures accompanied by charts, posters and other teaching aids were used for intervention. Slide shows were also arranged to impart information of different topics to improve their knowledge as well as communication skills. Their knowledge was assessed both before and after intervention.

Procedure for analysis of data:

Data were coded, scored, tabulated. Z- Test was carried out to see the differences in knowledge between pre and post-test. Knowledge of the girls was also assessed separately on various components of communication such as at home, in

neighbourhood and with authority. Z- test has been done separately for two age groups *i.e.*, for 10- 14 years and 15- 18 years. Means and standard deviations were calculated to find out frequency and percentage of cases under good, average and poor category.

■ RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 showed that increasing percentage of respondents in the ‘Good’ category during post test, which showed positive impact of intervention in regards of communication skill. Periodic intervention programmes for these girls facilitated interaction with friends, neighbours and peer group which helps to increase their confidence level which make them ready to talk with authority.

Table 2 showed that mean scores were increased in all 3 aspects during the post-test. The lowest mean scores showed in the area with authority due to lack of communication, lack of confidence they scored low in that matter.

Results showed (Table 3) that mean score (6.13) of the post was higher in case of the girls aged 10- 14 years than score (5.87) of the girls of aged 15- 18 years. It may be indicative of the fact that girls with lower age group, they learn and adopt new things easily. They take part in the conversation, answers questions easily without any hesitation.

Table 1 : Frequency distribution the respondents in view of their communication skill levels

Classification	Pre-test		Post-test	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Low	21	14	38	25.33
Average	104	69.33	78	52
High	25	16.67	34	22.67

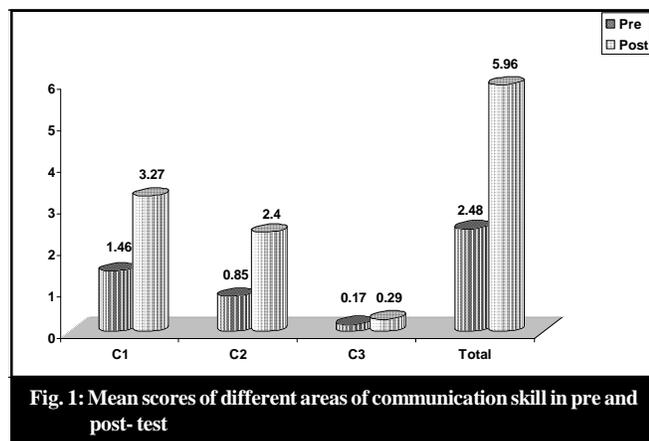
Table 2: Communication skills scores of rural adolescent girls

Aspect	At home (C1)		In neighbourhood (C2)		With authority (C3)		Overall	
	Pre test	Post test	Pre test	Post test	Pre test	Post test	Pre test	Post test
Range	1- 3	2- 6	0- 2	1- 4	0-1	0-2	1-5	3-10
Mean	1.46	3.27	0.85	2.4	0.17	0.29	2.48	5.96
S.D.	0.65	0.99	0.37	0.71	0.37	0.57	1.08	1.48

Table 3 : Mean differences of respondents with two age groups in the pre and post-test

Area	Age group	Pre-test	Post-test
C1	10- 14	1.46	3.44
	15- 18	1.47	3.18
C2	10- 14	0.83	2.33
	15- 18	0.86	2.42
C3	10- 14	0.15	0.35
	15- 18	0.19	0.27
Total	10- 14	2.44	6.13
	15- 18	2.52	5.87

But, the girls of older age group, they hesitate to answers the questions. Mostly, they are involved in income generating activities so, they can not manage to attend the training programmes regularly.



When Z- test was carried out to find the significance of difference between knowledge at pre and post-test, it was found to be significant difference in all the aspects. Generally rural girls are found to be hesitant to discuss matters openly. Due to poor educational level of parents and lack of communication at home, discussions among family members

get least importance in rural families. During the intervention period they start conversation with researchers and could openly discuss various problems related to them. During the intervention period they arrange meeting, participate in the training programme which helps them to increase their confidence level.

Authors' affiliations:

JURI BARUAH, KRISHNA BARUAH AND PANKAJ DEKA, Krshi Vigyan Kendra, JORHAT (ASSAM) INDIA

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