

## GENDER ASPECTS OF COMMUNICATION BEHAVIOR IN SOCIAL SERVICES

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### Abstract

Men and women in many literatures have different styles of communication, which then also has an impact on their communication competence, not least in the field of social services. This study aims to determine the perspective of gender in social service communication. The respondents of the study were Sarjana Pendamping Desa Sejahtera (SPDS) as social workers at the Government of Hulu Sungai Selatan Regency, South Kalimantan Province, Indonesia, consisting of 90 women and 58 men. An evaluation of performance was carried out, and then 11 men and 11 women were selected in 11 sub-districts with the highest scores. The description of the answers to communication carried out in social services was analyzed for the number of words, and then 1 man and 1 woman who had the answers with the highest number of words carried out a substantive analysis of the answers to the description of communication in social services, which was carried out so that the program recipients understood so as to achieve their goals. Observations on the communication of 148 SPDS were carried out when communicating in social services to program recipients. Data processing uses descriptive statistic to describe words or combinations of words that are generally used to describe communication in social services. The results of the study found that in social services, both women and men use simple language that is easy to understand, polite, friendly, empathetic, open, and has good self-control skills so that social service programs provide awareness to program recipients to empower themselves.

**Keywords:** Communication Style, Gender, Social Service.

### INTRODUCTION

Communication, in social work practice, is an active element that plays an important role in promoting, improving, and ensuring social welfare services for individual clients, groups, and communities with diverse problems throughout society. (Farukuzzaman and Rahman 2019). In order for communication to be built effectively, it requires certain communication competencies, which require motivation, mastery of knowledge, and abilities implemented in communication behavior in appropriate and appropriate social services (Spitzberg 2013). A person is indicated as a competent communicator if he meets two main standards of communication competence, namely appropriateness and effectiveness. Effectiveness is related to the ability to achieve or infer the meaning of the speaker, which, in the view of Spitzberg and Cupach, is the successful achievement of goals, while conformity or appropriateness is related to discretion or politeness, Effectiveness is related to the ability to achieve or infer the meaning of the speaker, which, in the view of Spitzberg and Cupach, is the successful achievement of goals, while conformity or appropriateness is related to discretion or politeness, avoiding violations of norms, rules, and social expectations (Rickheit and Strohner 2008). Politeness itself is one of the main principles in social work in order to

successfully achieve its goals (Koprowska 2008). In short, effectiveness relates to a measure of the extent to which relatively preferred results are achieved through communication, whereas conformity refers to a measure of the extent to which communication is considered legitimate in a given context. Most scholars recognize the importance of both criteria, arguing that communication that achieves better results through the right interactions simultaneously allows optimal results (Spitzberg 2015). Considering that a community worker interacts more and relates more with residents, it is very important for a community worker to have good communication skills (Ife and Tesoriero 2006). Good communication skills, in the context of social communication, are certainly part of an effort to build effective communication (Saifuddin 2014). Successful communication, from an interpersonal perspective, is influenced by gender, which has two functions, namely hindering or improving the quality of communication (Bach and Grant 2009). Meanwhile, communication competence itself is not considered gender-neutral (Kirton 2006). This provides an important affirmation that gender contributes to achieving successful communication.

In social services, for a social worker, men and women in interaction and creating relationships with clients certainly have different communication styles. The difference in communication style is then termed genderlect (Tannen 1990). Men focus on status, and independence, while women focus on intimacy as the key to building connections, negotiating friendships, minimizing differences, reaching consensus, and avoiding superiority. Therefore, when communication between the two (men and women) is cross-cultural communication, there is a clash of conversation styles, so that when both speak precisely with different genderlects, which may cause misunderstandings, b) men and women speak cross-sectionally. Men are problem solvers (advise); women want to be listened to (not advised), so they get different responses, c) men (report talk) and women (report talk). Speaking for men is a means of maintaining independence, negotiating, and maintaining hierarchical status and social order so that men are more comfortable speaking in public. It is done as a form of status exhibition, being the center of attention and an expression of having knowledge and abilities, while women speak privately. Speaking for women is an effort to build connections and negotiate relationships, with an emphasis on similarities and suitable experiences. For women, the essence of friendship is talking, telling, and feeling each other, d) conflict for men is a medium for negotiating status, so it must be created, accepted, and enjoyed, while for women it is a threat to relationships and should be avoided at all cost, e) for men, dominance and control, for example, are achieved through intrusion, which is done not to support the other person's speech but to direct the conversation in another direction as an effort to be the center of attention and an exhibition of knowledge and abilities, while for women, intrusion is considered a distraction and is a form of violation of the rules in the game.

Another difference is that male language is more assertive, mature, blatant, with the right vocabulary; female language is speaking indecisively, not overtly, being careful when expressing something, and using more subtle and polite words through gestures (Lakoff 2003). Men listen less to women than women listen to men. The reason, Tannen said, is that listening puts people in an inferior position, whereas talking puts people in a superior position (Tannen 1990). Women spend more words than men, are interested in expressions, and take meaning

about themselves from the sights, touches, and reactions of the people they come into contact with in an attempt to judge themselves as pleasing or vice versa; that is, women are emotionally connected in a way that men do not (Brizendine 2006). Women in communication use language: a) more detailed or detailed, tend to use more adjectives, in answering questions using high intonation (because they are not sure of their own statements), use indirect speech or avoid rude speech or negative politeness, contain emotional sides, tend to use standard language (more polite), very polite, ask for approval or ensure information, and are empathic (Lakoff 2003). The linguistic aspect of women seems to be not owned by men, who in communicating tend to be dominant, maintain status, influence, competition, and power-oriented. Men have a lower tendency to empathize than women (Harlak et al. 2008), So that men have a tendency to provide services, they actually seem to be less than women. (Guilcher et al. 2016). This is because women have a more positive attitude towards communication skills (Harlak et al. 2008). Men and women are different; communication is associated with a sense of self-awareness, which men translate through their ability to receive results while women do so through feelings and relationship quality. (Gray 2004). Based on this communication style, in general, women tend to have better communication behavior in creating relationships, interactions, and services for clients than men. In the field of social welfare studies, especially social services, communication becomes the basis of client-centered care and healing. Until now, research related to this has been rarely found. Based on these conditions, it piques the interest of researchers to study it in a study. The fundamental question to be revealed in this study is: how do gender aspects of social service communication relate? So the purpose of this study is to analyze gender in social service communication.

## METHODS

This research is quantitative and descriptive using the text analysis method (Oslo, 2008). The data source uses answers to the performance evaluation of 148 Sarjana Pendamping Desa Sejahtera (SPDS) as social workers in carrying out social services, consisting of 58 men and 90 women. Based on the performance evaluation, 11 men and 11 women were selected in 11 sub-districts and 11 villages that had a tendency to have the highest number of answers containing words to communication questions carried out in social services. Of the 22 respondents, 1 man and 1 woman were selected who had a tendency to use the most words to be substantively analyzed for communication carried out in social services. Questions asked of these respondents include: 1) communication as a social worker (communicator) in social services to program recipients (communicants), and 2) the choice of dominant communication behavior chosen in conducting social service communication. Observation of communication behavior was added to find the dominant behavior in social services from a gender perspective. The research location is in South Hulu Sungai Regency, an autonomous region in Indonesia that has local social workers and is the only one that succeeded in reducing poverty during the COVID-19 pandemic. The analysis uses descriptive statistics to determine communication differences in social services from a gender perspective and then analyzes word or phrase trends and communication behaviors that contribute to communication effectiveness in social services.

## RESULT

(a) Evaluation of performance appraisals from a gender perspective.

Based on the evaluation of performance appraisal from a gender perspective, social service communication from 148 SPDS, 120 of them (81.08%) in carrying out social services always builds harmonious relationships (avoids conflicts), both with village heads /lurah as partners in the village and with candidates or recipients of programs. Furthermore, 67 SPDS (45.27%) admitted that in doing social services, they are always polite, empathetic, friendly, open, and try to control emotions; the rest use one or a combination of the four behaviors.

(b) The composition of the number of words in the answers of respondents from a gender perspective.

From 148 SPDS people in 11 sub-districts, as a sample, 2 (two) people representing gender in their respective sub-districts were selected and then asked for comments or answers to the question: how to communicate so that social service programs are understood by program recipients and achieve their goals. By looking at the composition of the answer and describing it per word, the calculation results are shown in the table below:

**Table 1: Compares the composition of the number of words by gender from written answers to communication in social services**

No	SPDS	Gender	Village	Sub-District	Word Count
1	F	Woman	Taniran Selatan	Angkinang	36
2	MEA	Man	Telaga Sili-Sili	Angkinang	16
3	R	Woman	Lokbinuang	Telaga Langsat	30
4	AG	Man	Hamak	Telaga Langsat	23
5	NH	Woman	Durian Rabung	Padang Batung	98
6	SN	Man	Pandulangan	Padang Batung	29
7	N	Woman	Balanti	Kalumpang	33
8	MR	Man	Karang Paci	Kalumpang	35
9	R	Woman	Baru	Daha Barat	74
10	AHA	Man	Bajayau Lama	Daha Barat	30
11	RH	Woman	Banjarbaru	Daha Selatan	57
12	MH	Man	Parigi	Daha Selatan	50
13	DDW	Woman	Balah Paikat	Daha Utara	19
14	KA	Man	Pakan Dalam	Daha Utara	56
15	NA	Woman	Wasah Hulu	Simpur	43
16	RR	Man	Wasah Hilir	Simpur	20
17	P	Woman	Panggungan	Loksado	43
18	ASH	Man	Lumpangi	Loksado	21
19	S	Woman	Baru	Sungai Raya	45
20	P	Man	Sungai Kali	Sungai Raya	11
21	IMK	Woman	Amawang Kanan	Kandangan	47
22	SH	Man	Amawang Kiri Muka	Kandangan	20

(Source: data processing, 2023).

By looking at Table 1 above, it can be seen that in SPDS communication in social services, presumably, women spend more words than men in communication in social services. Based on the sample of 11 women and 11 men in the table above, it can be seen that: a) the total number of words put forward by 11 women in the sample above was 525 words, while the total number of words put forward by 11 men in the sample above was 293 words, b) the number of words uttered by 11 women in the sample above was between the interval of 19 words and 98 words, while the number of words uttered by 11 men in the sample above was between the interval of 11 words and 56 words, and c) the average words issued by 11 men in the sample above were  $525/11 = 47.72$  (rounded 47 words), whereas the average number of words issued by 11 men in the sample above was  $311/11 = 28.27$  words (rounded to 28 words). This indicates that the dominance of feminine communication behavior seems to prove dominant and influence SPDS communication behavior in social services.

(c) Substantive content of respondents' answers, gender perspective.

To find out the substance of the content of the words expressed by women and men, samples were then taken from 1 woman and 1 man from the 11 women and 11 men, with the provision that SPDS expressed the most words in social service communication, then selected NH, SPDS Durian Rabung, Padang Batung Sub-District = 98 words, and KA, SPDS Pakan Dalam, Daha Utara Sub-District = 56 words. The results are as below:

NH (female), SPDS Durian Rabung, Padang Batung Sub-District, said: "I involve village officials in conveying opinions and suggestions to KPM, invite KPM to use social assistance according to their needs, always be open to listen to input and suggestions, both from village heads, village officials, and potential colleagues, serving well various community complaints, both in the field and at home, In fact, it is not uncommon for KPM to come until night complaining because of zero balance, no fees for schoolchildren's tuition fees, leaky houses, and so on. I welcome their arrival and explain in easy-to-understand language so that when they return home, there is no more uneg-uneg in their hearts" (smiling memes) (see figure 1).

Saya melibatkan Aparat Desa dalam menyampaikan pendapat dan saran kepada KPM, mengajak KPM untuk mempergunakan bantuan sosial sesuai kebutuhannya. selalu bersikap terbuka untuk mendengarkan masukan dan saran baik dari Kepala Desa, Aparat Desa maupun Rekan-rekan Poksi, melayani dengan baik berbagai keluhan masyarakat baik saat ditanyakan maupun di rumah bahkan tidak jarang KPM datang sampai malam hari mengeluh karena saldo nol, tidak ada gaji untuk GPP anak sekolah, rumah bocor dan lain sebagainya. Saya menyambut kedatangan mereka dan menjelaskan dengan bahasa yg mudah dipahami sehingga ketika mereka sudah pulang ke rumah sudah tidak ada lagi uneg-uneg di hati :)

**Figure 1: Description of writing on how to communicate with NH, SPDS Durian Rabung, Padang Batung Sub-District in social services**

KA (male), SPDS Pakan Dalam, Daha Utara Sub-District, said: "First, we must understand the character of program recipients, then speak or communicate politely and gently, ask various problems faced by program recipients by showing empathy and care for them, and then try to find solutions to the problems faced. In finding solutions, sometimes they can be coordinated with other social potentials, village governments, or directly with social services." (See figure 2).

*Segera dicarikan solusi untuk...  
Pertama harus memahami karakter penerima program.  
Kemudian berbicara/berkomunikasi dengan sopan dan  
lemah lembut. Menanyakan berbagai permasalahan yang  
dihadapi penerima program dengan menunjukkan sikap  
empati dan peduli terhadap mereka. Selanjutnya mencoba  
mencarikan solusi atas permasalahan yang dihadapi.  
Dalam mencarikan solusi kadang bisa ~~dit~~ di koordinasi  
kan dengan potensi sosial lainnya, pemerintah Desa  
atau langsung koordinasi dengan Dinas Sosial*

**Figure 2: Description of the writing on how to communicate KA, SPDS Pakan Dalam, Daha Utara Sub-District in social services.**

Both selected samples of NH (women) and KA (men) both admit that in communicating social services using easy-to-understand language, building relationship interactions, being good listeners, and even explicitly speaking, men (KA) seem more feminine than NH (women) because they use communication politely, gently, empathically and care for the beneficiary families (KPM). The objective is certainly an effort to build mutual understanding so as to contribute to the achievement of social service goals, namely, independence, empowerment, and the welfare of program recipients and their families.

(d) Observation of respondents' communication behavior in social services.

The results of observations of communication behavior in social services, especially at the intervention stage in the distribution of social assistance for the welfare house program, Observations in the intervention phase appear to be the most complete in describing communication behavior between male SPDS and female SPDS towards program recipients (users).

Differences in communication behavior between men and women from a gender perspective in social services, namely: men tend to try to lower their egos and do not show domination behavior, even though they communicate with male program recipients (users), can be seen from their communication behavior looking down (figure 3, picture top left), positioning equally (figure 3, 2 pictures, middle left), both male and female program recipients, and even degrading the position of male program recipients (figure 3, picture bottom left) on

communication behavior in social services, while women tend to show trying communication behavior not intimidated with program recipients, especially towards male program recipients, even with a posture higher than SPDS (figure 3, picture top right), positioning equally, both towards male and female program recipients, even with male program recipients who try to dominate even (figure 3, 2 pictures, middle right) and intimidating communication behavior towards recipients Program (Users) men, with a large posture, by trying to stand upright, trying to stare sharply at the program recipients, as part of an effort to influence the realization of mutual understanding in achieving the success of the Rumah Sejahtera program (figure 3, picture bottom right).

The three models of behavior in the gender perspective are commonly seen in SPDS communication activities in social services between communicators (SPDS) and communicants (program recipients/users), but of the three communication behaviors in the gender perspective, generally communication behavior is equal to a common communication behavior in a gender perspective, as part of SPDS to try to build relationships and interactions with program recipients to build mutual understanding.

In addition, there are differences in the movement of changes in communication behavior between SPDS men and SPDS women towards program recipients in communication in social services, namely: SPDS men's communication behavior tends to move from a decrease in ego (decrease in dominance or masculinity) towards equality to feminine behavior in maintaining interaction and communication relationships with program recipients (users), while SPDS women tend to move from feminine behavior with try not to be intimidated towards communication equality by trying to dominate or influence program recipients (users) on communication in social services.

Meanwhile, the similarity of communication behavior between men and women from a gender perspective in social services, based on observations, shows that: a) Men and women both try to build close relationships and interactions between SPDS and program recipients (users), as seen from the close communication distance between SPDS and program recipients, b) Men and women both try to build concern and empathy for program recipients (users).

It can be seen that SPDS is very serious and earnest in serving program recipients to get the social assistance to which they are entitled, especially in developing and facilitating documents that should be filled out and completed by program recipients, and c) men and women both try to build communication to achieve mutual understanding in equality of dialogical communication behavior in an effort to build constructive relationships for the smooth implementation of PRS in achieving its goals.

The results of observations of communication behavior in social services at the intervention stage can be seen in the picture sequentially from top to bottom, as in Figure 3 below:



**Figure 3: Some communication behaviors of SPDS (wearing uniforms) in social services from gender perspectives, men (left) and women (right) (research observations, 2022–2023).**

## DISCUSSION

### (a) Gender aspects of communication behavior in social services

The results of this study affirm that both men and women from 148 SPDS who act as social workers, or 81.08%, in carrying out social services always build harmonious relationships (avoid conflicts), both with village heads /lurah as partners in the village and with candidates or recipients of the program. This clearly refutes the genderlect theory. (Tannen 1990), which confirms the differences in communication styles between men and women and affirms that it

is women who are best at building relationships, friendships, and connections because of their emotional nature and intimacy abilities. Furthermore, 67 SPDS (45.27%) admitted that in carrying out social services, they are always polite, empathetic, friendly, open, and try to control emotions; the rest use one or a combination of the four behaviors. It also breaks the view, as mentioned in genderlect theory (Tannen 1990), Because men can also be as good as women in being polite, empathetic, friendly, open, and controlling emotions. The results of this study also proved that: 1) Women spend more words than men (Brizendine, 2006) and express something in writing as an expression of speaking in more detail (Lakoff 2003). It is proven that compositionally, women use more words than men (table 1), with a ratio of 2:1. That is, in general, women express words in social service communication two times more than men. 2) Women are considered indecisive, careful when conveying something, use soft words, polite, sometimes even dissertation gestures, avoid rude speech or negative politeness, are very polite, and are empathetic (Lakoff 2003), and connect emotionally (Brizendine 2006), communication in social services is associated with a sense of self-awareness, which is affirmed by women through feelings and relationship quality (Gray 2004), so that the communication behavior in social services is in context. This can be seen from the substantive content of SPDS women's answers in social services: being open, listening to input and suggestions, both from village heads, village officials, and fellow social potentials, serving complaints well even at home and with various other social problems, welcoming the arrival of the community, explaining in easy-to-understand language, and when returning home, there are no more complaints (NH, female, SPDS Durian Rabung, Padang Batung Sub-District, figure 1). But an interesting finding of this study is that, in social services, men develop feminine communication styles to fit the context. This is evidenced by polite, gentle communication behavior: asking about problems faced by program recipients by showing empathy and concern, then finding alternative solutions through coordination with other social potentials, village governments, or social services (KA, men, SPDS Pakan Dalam, Daha Utara Sub-District, figure 2). This indicates that men who achieve context-appropriate communication behavior in social services actually reduce their egos. This is clearly contrary to the theory that has developed so far, as outlined in the genderlect theory (Tannen 1990).

The findings are also reinforced by observations. In social services, in general, there are three forms of communication behavior that occur, namely: men use communication behavior: a) lower ego (characterized by a bent position) when communicating with program recipients, even with similar gender positions (figure 3, picture top left); b) equal communication behavior as an expression of similarity in communication (figure 3, 2 pictures, middle left); and c) servant communication behavior, as an expression of respect and plenary service to program recipients (figure 3, picture bottom left), While women use communication behaviors: a) try not to be intimidated, especially with male program recipients, even with higher, large, or dominant postures (figure 3, picture top right); b) communication behavior is equal in communication, both towards female or male program recipients, even towards the communication style that wants to dominate the program recipients (figure 3, 2 pictures, middle right); and c) intimidating communication behavior, even with male program recipients, as an effort to ensure the implementation of social services achieves its objectives (figure 3, picture

bottom right). The communication styles displayed by the SPDS in social services seem to be a form of communication adaptation that is appropriate to the context in an effort to implement social services that are very situational and conditional, depending on the communicant, who is the interlocutor, the topic of conversation, and the socio-cultural conditions that surround communication in social services.

Why do men and women, in social service communication, try to achieve "harmonization" instead of trying to be themselves, who bear masculine and feminine traits? SPDS in social services tries to competently communicate so that social services achieve their goals. Harmonization as an adaptation in communication is used by SPDS to promote, improve, and ensure social welfare services for individual clients, groups, and communities with diverse problems throughout society can be accepted and achieve their goals (Farukuzzaman & Rahman, 2019). Harmonization as an adaptation of SPDS is an effort to build effective communication and is an indicator of communication competence possessed by SPDS, both motivation and mastery of knowledge and abilities implemented in communication behavior in appropriate and appropriate social services (Spitzberg, 2013). In the context of social communication, of course, SPDS is an effort to build effective communication (Saifuddin, 2014). Communication behaviors that seek to establish proper interaction are only achieved because SPDS has good communication skills (Ife & Tesoriero, 2006), which is an indicator of SPDS's communication competence in social services.

(b) The collapse of genderlect theory in social services

Theoretically, women and men have different communication styles. Genderlect has given women and men different views on communication styles (Tannen, 1990). Women seem to be ideal as social workers because they are theoretically able to carry out social service communication by building interactions and relationships with clients (Tannen, 1990). But overall, the results of this study prove the "collapse" of genderlect theory and the opening of a new view that the "context aspect" becomes very decisive in social service communication. The "context aspect" is the main guideline for both men and women for: 1) adapt and build harmonization in interactions and build relationships in communication in social services; 2) efforts to build effective communication so as to achieve the impression of competence as needed. Here are some findings that "undermine" the view in genderlect theory, which has been developing: a) Men are not shown to focus on status, independence, and independence, but men and women are equally good at trying to build intimacy as key to building connections, negotiating friendships, minimizing differences, reaching consensus, and avoiding superiority. Differences in communication styles between men and women are used as needed, and the context of communication becomes a guideline for how communication built into social services should be carried out, avoiding misunderstandings so that communication achieves success, b) Males and females do not always cross each other. Men and women both try to be problem solvers and try to listen to program recipients' complaints, so getting responses that can be the same can also be different, c) Men and women use the Report Talk and Rapport Talk models interchangeably according to context. Not always speaking for men is a means of maintaining independence, negotiating, status, and a hierarchical social order, something that

women can also do so that men and women are both equally good when speaking in public. This is done as a form of exhibition of status as a social worker, being the center of attention, and an expression of having knowledge and abilities. This clearly rejects the notion that women speak in private. Men and women are equally good at building connections and negotiating relationships, with an emphasis on similarities and matching experiences (with program recipients as an effort to build adaptation, connection, and acceptance). For SPDS, men and women, the essence of friendship in social service Communication is talking, telling, and feeling each other so as to build mutual understanding, d) Conflict is something that has been attached to men as an attempt to negotiate status, so it must be made, accepted, and enjoyed, but in social services, for SPDS, both men and women agree to avoid conflict in any way because it is a threat to relationships and detrimental to long-term goals in building communication in social services, especially in an effort to achieve predetermined goals. e) For men and women, dominance and control are carried out to ensure the implementation of social services in accordance with the provisions so as to achieve their goals.

The results of this study also show that women reject in part the view that men's language is more assertive, mature, and blatant, with the right vocabulary, while women, speaking indecisively, not overtly, and cautiously when expressing things, use more subtle and polite words through gestures (Lakoff, 2003) Because the results showed that men and women communicate in social services by actually using smooth, polite, and friendly words, both try to build interaction and relationships to reach mutual understanding. The results of this study also reject the view that men listen less to women than women listen to men. Therefore, the fact is that men and women are equally good at listening to the complaints of program participants, both men and women. That is, the results of this study also reject Tannen's assumption that listening puts people in an inferior position while talking puts people in a superior position (Tannen, 1990), because it is the "context" that makes SPDS communication take a position as superior or inferior. Although the results of the study found that women spend more words than men, the results also show that men and women are equally interested in expression, taking meaning about themselves from the views, touches, and every reaction of program recipients or related stakeholders related to them, in an effort to judge themselves as someone who is pleasant or vice versa, that is, The results also reject the view that women are emotionally connected in ways that men don't (Brizendine, 2006), Because the two can be equally good when connected emotionally. Although the results showed that women in communication use language more detailed than men, it is possible because of differences in structure in the human brain, but both avoid rude speech or negative politeness, contain emotional side, tend to use standard language (more polite), very polite, ask for approval or ensure information, and empathic, something that has been considered only owned by women (Lakoff, 2003). The results of this study also reject the view that the linguistic aspects of women are presumably not owned by men, who, in communicating, tend to be dominant, maintain status, influence, competition, and be power-oriented. Because, in fact, men achieve such communication by lowering their masculine egos. The results of this study also reject the view that men have a lower tendency to feel empathy than women (Harlak et al., 2008). So that men have a tendency to provide services, they actually seem to be less than women (Guilcher et al.,

2016). This is because women have a more positive attitude towards communication skills (Harlak et al., 2008), Due to the fact that men show the same empathy as women when communicating in social services, At the end of this discussion, there are at least some important concepts about why genderlect theory exists (Tannen, 1990). It does not seem to apply to communication in social services between social workers (SPDS) and program recipients (users) or related parties. Although communication is interpersonal, what needs to be underlined is: 1) communication in social services is social communication; 2) social communication is attached to communication to build interaction and relationships and achieve mutual understanding to achieve social goals. 3) Successful social communication is effective communication; 4) Effective communication gives affirmation, which can only be done by competent communicators, and 5) Communicators are called competent to communicate if they meet two main standards of communication competence, namely: effectiveness, namely the ability to achieve or conclude the meaning of the speaker, namely a successful achievement of goals, and appropriateness, related to appropriateness, tact, or politeness, avoiding violations of norms and rules, and according to social expectations (Rickheit and Strohner 2008). To achieve the goals of social service, the aspect of politeness becomes one of the main principles in social work (Koprowska 2008). This aspect must be owned by every social worker in order to be able to carry out communication in social services, including male and female social workers. This further confirms that communication competence is ultimately not gender-neutral (Kirton 2006). Gender is recognized as being able to influence successful communication (Mazzatenta, 1987), and competent communication behavior based on gender according to the context of communication in social services is ensured to be able to achieve the best quality of communication, thus contributing to the achievement of social service goals, namely welfare for clients (recipients of social service programs).

## CONCLUSION

Gender aspects in communication behavior in social services, both men and women: a) always build harmonious relationships (avoid conflicts), both with the village head or lurah as partners in the village and with candidates or program recipients; b) always be polite, empathetic, friendly, open, and try to control emotions; the rest use one or a combination of the four behaviors, c) compositionally, women use more words than men when communicating in social services; d) men develop feminine communication styles in social services to fit the context, Meanwhile, women increasingly affirm their ability to build interactions and relationships with program recipients. In short, communication in social services, both men and women use language that is easy to understand, build relationship interactions, be good listeners, polite, gentle, be empathetic, care for communicants, be able to control emotions, and avoid conflicts so that social empowerment occurs, both for individual program recipients and their families, so as to contribute to the independence, empowerment, and welfare of program recipients. The results of this study theoretically confirm that gender aspects in social service behavior that are appropriate to "context" have undermined the genderlect theory that has been developing.

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### Statement of Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest in this research.

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