# The Role of Communication in Building Group Cohesiveness (Case Study of Persaudaraan Setia Hati Terate Ranting Dlingo, Bantul Regency 2023)

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**Abstract**

*Purpose: Productive activities of PSHT Ranting Dlingo members include social and humanitarian activities jointly to build group cohesion. Brotherhood is closely linked to group cohesion, and mutual assistance is a factor that affects group coherence. In building cohesion among the group members, the group is often engaged in various social activities for the sake of humanity and helping each other members who need help.*

*Methodology: The research uses descriptive qualitative methods to describe a phenomenon in detail with a case study approach data collection through interviews and documentation. Data validity testing is done using the technique of source triangulation; data is analyzed through three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion.*

*Results: Members who have joined for a long time have a high cohesiveness. Group communication is a forum for discussion, and supportive communication affects group cohesion. Interpersonal relationships between its members in control and orientation of problems effectively build a cohesive member. The positive activity of PSHT Ranting Dlingo is a form of productivity in building group cohesion.*

## Introduction

Group communication is defined as exchanging information by group members, adding knowledge, consolidating or changing attitudes and behaviors, developing mental health, and raising awareness (Mukarom, 2021). Bugin (in Wahyono, 2018) Group communication is defined as communication in which a group member can see and hear other members and organize verbal and non-verbal feedback from each member. Group communication is awakening communication between several people who have a common purpose and intention to share which in some ways members of the group are usually bound by norms, values, roles, duties, interests and even ideologies (Mukarom, 2021). Group communication is a form of direct interaction between three or more people, having a clear purpose such as sharing information, nurturing, and solving problems. In this context, group members can quickly recognize the personal characteristics of other members (Laksana, 2015).

A group, according to Mulyana (in Tatang, 2016), is a group of people with common goals who interact with each other to share goals, know each other, and see each other as part of the group. To be an influential group, there needs to be interaction within it. Effective communication and active membership foster the cohesiveness of group members. Cohesiveness is the factor that makes a group members remain members so that they form a group (Purwaningtyastuti & Savitri, 2020). The ability to communicate and interact is crucial in a group or organizational life. Communication within the group and organization is a focal point in creating a conducive situation and environment (Sari et al., 2017). A highly cohesive group consists of individuals motivated to foster unity and engage in practical group activities. It comprises cooperative members who mutually respect one another to achieve common goals (Purwaningtyastuti & Savitri, 2020). According to Rahmat (in Suciati, 2015) It states that group cohesion means group solidarity, group coherence or solidarity is characterized by the presence of the force of association that connects the members of the group into a unity, a sense of interest among the members, and each member strives to the goals of the group.

PSHT (Persaudaraan Setia Hati Terate) Ranting Dlingo It is an organization that is located at the level of the Dlingo Ranting district of Bantul, Yogyakarta. Ki Hajar Harjo Oetomo founded PSHT since 1922 in the city of Madiun, East Java. The development of PSHT continues to increase in various regions in Indonesia, including Yogyakarta and other Java

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regions (Sutoyo, 2020). PSHT Ranting Dlingo has about 200 members, and its purpose is to educate men who possess martial arts and use their skills to defend the truth and enforce justice.

Every organization has its characteristics, yet all organizations have one purpose, structure, and process to coordinate activities and human resources that perform different roles and actions (Yuliana, 2012). The positive activities of the organization PSHT Ranting Dlingo build cohesion amongst social virtues, helping each other and collecting donations for humanitarian aid. The number of positive activities carried out by group members indicates a high level of cohesion within the group (Arifuddin & Yazid, 2016). Group communication can be understood as a message delivered by one member to one or more other members to influence the behavior of the person receiving the message (Johnson & Johnson, 2012). The group's cohesiveness on the PSHT Ranting Dlingo is increasing because its members have the same purpose and spirit to create a high sense of brotherhood and give birth to the Developers, especially in the Dlingo region. Group cohesiveness will be high when members are committed and interested in their group (Suciati, 2015). According to Carron and Brawley (in Setiawati & Riyono, 2018) It states that group cohesiveness plays a decisive role in the success of a group's performance and effectiveness.

Increased group cohesiveness is associated with members' adherence to group norms, members' ability to point out equality as part of a group, improved internal communication, and increased tendency of members to feel optimistic about other group members (Purwaningtyastuti & Savitri, 2020). Group members must engage more frequently in gathering and joint activities to form more intense communication, be open to each other, have emotional bonds, and be solid and familiar to grow interest among members and a sense of mutual possession, also called group cohesiveness (Nababan, 2022). Group cohesion has three meanings: first, interest and loyalty to the group; second, morality and motivation; and third, cooperation and coordination of group members (Purwaningtyastuti & Savitri, 2020). Group cohesiveness makes its members more enthusiastic about what they do and willing to sacrifice their interests for the group's interests—accepting the responsibility assigned to the activities carried out to fulfill their duties. It signifies unity, turning, and attraction among its members. (Arifuddin & Yazid, 2016).

This research examines the role of communication in building group cohesion within the PSHT Ranting Dlingo. The study aims to describe how communication is employed to foster cohesion in the PSHT Ranting Dlingo group. It explores the communication utilized within the group to support the cohesion of PSHT Ranting Dlingo members. The research seeks to uncover factors contributing to group cohesion, such as interpersonal interest among members, members' interest in group activities and functions, and the extent to which members engage with the group to satisfy personal needs (Laksana, 2015).

A study relevant to the title "Group Communication in the 234 Solidarity Community Pekanbaru in Building Cohesiveness" shows that this community employs an all-channel pattern in conducting face-to-face communication among its members. Despite having a leader in the all-channel design, members are free to participate. This research reveals how members interact through various communication patterns and networks utilized within the 234 Solidarity Community Pekanbaru in building cohesion (Arifuddin & Yazid, 2016). The research does not explain the factors that influence group cohesion.

Another study that investigated group cohesion conducted by Joni Iskandar & Sudono Syueb (2018) with the title "The Influence of Interpersonal Communication and Group Communication on Group Cohesiveness among Supporters of Persebaya in the Suramadu Region" states that interpersonal communication within a group significantly influences openness in communication. Group communication also serves a function in the social relationships among group members; the results indicate that group communication can influence tolerance of opinions among its members. This research does not specify the cohesive attitudes that occur due to the influence of interpersonal communication and group communication.

Research on the role of communication in building group cohesion within an organization or group is expected to serve as a reference for other researchers. Effective communication assists the group in enhancing relationships among its members, thereby improving group cohesion. Communication that supports interaction among group members encourages a conforming attitude. In contrast to previous research, the focus of this study is to describe how communication is used to build group cohesion within the PSHT Ranting Dlingo organization. Research addressing communication in building group cohesion in the current era is necessary as a theoretical and practical contribution to groups with less cohesive members.


## Method

Qualitative descriptive research is a study that utilizes a natural setting to interpret a phenomenon that occurs and collects data in the form of text descriptions from written or oral sources (Fadli, 2021). This research prioritizes understanding the overall context and individuals, focusing on how communication plays a role in building group cohesion in the PSHT Ranting Dlingo.

The Case Study Approach assists researchers in exploring a particular phenomenon (case) within a specific timeframe and activity (program, event, process, institution, or social group). Information can be collected in depth using various data collection procedures over specific periods (Abduh et al., 2023). In this research, the author employs a case study approach to obtain in-depth information based on facts and data collected directly from the field, including interview methods and other documents.

This study utilizes interview methods to gather subjective data, such as respondents' opinions, attitudes, and behaviors regarding a phenomenon, to collect data from participants such as the leader and fellow members of the organization. (Hansen, 2020). Data collection through in-depth interviews with informants about the communication used by PSHT Ranting Dlingo in building group cohesion. Data analysis is conducted to systematically search and organize interview notes and other documents to enhance the researcher's understanding of the researched case and present findings to others. (Rijali, 2019).

In this research, the researcher employs a data triangulation approach. The essence of triangulation is a multi-method approach conducted by researchers during both the data collection and analysis phases (Alfansyur & Mariyani, 2020). This approach utilizes data from various sources, including interviews and documents, to validate data by comparing information from diverse sources. Triangulation is used in data collection, reduction, presentation, and final research findings to ensure data validity.

## Result and Discussion

PSHT Ranting Dlingo is classified as a primary group where its members have close, personal, and heartfelt relationships in association and cooperation. In a highly cohesive group, members are firmly bound to the group, making it easier to conform (Laksana, 2015). PSHT Ranting Dlingo aims to cultivate (Warriors) who possess martial arts skills and use their expertise to defend truth, protect the weak, and advocate for the oppressed. And to become a solid organization within the community of Dlingo Sub-district. According to (Laksana, 2015) Members feel secure and protected in a cohesive group, leading to more free, open, and frequent communication.

**Cohesion**
Cohesion is a force that strengthens a group. In a group with high cohesion, there is a sense of interest among its members, acceptance of group goals, and mutual assistance in their group tasks. (Suciati, 2015). Group cohesion is the attractive force among group members to mutually restrain each other from leaving and remain cohesive. The behavior of group members significantly influences cohesion; the higher the intensity of communication within the group, the higher the group cohesion (Iskandar & Syueb, 2018). (Johnson & Johnson, 2012) explains that positive social interdependence results in supportive interactions. Supportive interactions are characterized by individuals providing practical assistance to each other. The supportive attitude of PSHT Ranting Dlingo members is evident when a fellow member faces adversity. Other members provide material assistance, and there are collaboration and charitable activities, including taking to the streets, showcasing a form of supportive interaction among members with high cohesion. Demonstrating trust and reliability, each member who needs assistance trusts other members to seek material and non-material help. Cohesion creates a sense of comfort for the members, fostering a strong bond and preventing them from leaving the group to pursue new ones (Arifuddin & Yazid, 2016). A group with cohesive members must go through a supportive communication process to build group cohesion.

Munandar, 2001 (in Yuasinda & Nurul, 2014) Explaining several factors that influence cohesion include:

The length of time spent together in the group. The longer individuals stay together, the better they get to know each other, and the more likely tolerance towards others may arise. In this process, shared interests may be discovered or even developed. Interview results with members of PSHT Ranting Dlingo indicate that "members who joined since the establishment of PSHT Ranting Dlingo in 2012 are still actively participating in the organization's activities and training younger members who are still students. Even senior members often collaborate outside organizational activities." This is relevant to group cohesion, the length of time spent in the group, fostering a sense of cohesion among members.

Early acceptance. The more challenging it is for someone to be accepted into the group as a member, the more cohesive the group becomes. Typically, during the initial entry, existing members test new members in ways unique to their group. Data obtained from an interview with the Chairman of PSHT Ranting Dlingo states, "The process of becoming a member or resident of PSHT Ranting Dlingo involves becoming a student with a plain belt, then a pink belt, a green belt, a white belt, until a special belt given during the Member Confirmation event. This process takes about a year." This aligns with factors influencing group cohesion as proposed by Munandar (in Yuasinda & Nurul, 2014).

Group size, the larger the group size, the more challenging it is to have intensive interactions among its members, making the group less cohesive. Conversely, a smaller group size facilitates higher interaction. PSHT Ranting Dlingo falls into a larger group compared to other organizations in Dlingo Sub-district, with 250 members and 100 students. However, interactions among group members are considered intensive. Communication among members occurs through face-to-face interpersonal interactions outside routine activities, such as meetings during religious study events in the village, vacations among members communicated through face-to-face (dialogue) and online through WhatsApp groups. This aligns with the statement by Liliweri (in Tatang, 2016) that interpersonal communication serves a social function because the communication process operates in a social context where individuals interact.

Group productivity. A group with solid relationships tends to be more productive than a group with weaker connections. The productivity of the PSHT Ranting Dlingo group can be observed through humanitarian activities such as social service activities for Palestine. As stated by the chairman of PSHT Ranting Dlingo, "Positive activities of PSHT Ranting Dlingo members outside routine activities include humanitarian activities, social service in the community,

fundraising activities conducted by hitting the streets to collect funds, and each member of PSHT Ranting Dlingo also contributes personally." This aligns with the positive effects of cohesion, marked by increased group productivity (Suciati, 2015).

Coherent members are built on the foundation of good interpersonal relationships among themselves. Interpersonal relationships among members of PSHT Ranting Dlingo are influenced by members who have a supportive attitude. Supportive attitudes within PSHT members are characterized by control and problem-solving orientation. Through the education of PSHT students and joint deliberations in every activity carried out by PSHT Ranting Dlingo, the goal is to educate members in communicating their desires for collaboration, problem-solving, and determining ways to achieve goals. This aligns with factors influencing interpersonal communication, according to (Tatang, 2016) Which states that good interpersonal relationships among members must have a supportive attitude.

Other factors influencing group cohesion include communication/interaction among group members. PSHT Ranting Dlingo has an annual major event called the Member Confirmation to symbolize new members or students officially becoming PSHT citizens. Before conducting the Member Confirmation event, the committee formation process is needed. Interaction among members often occurs through committee meetings. In an interview with one of the PSHT Ranting Dlingo members in November 2023, they stated, "The committee meeting for the Member Confirmation is attended by 10-20 people who discuss the task distribution to secure and ensure the success of the Member Confirmation event. Additionally, they discuss decisions regarding the venue and timing for the Member Confirmation event, led by the chairman of PSHT Ranting Dlingo." This aligns with the dynamics of group communication and falls within the small group communication model. (Tatang, 2016) Stating that the small group communication process takes place face-to-face and involves 5-25 participants, each member interacts with one another. Each individual in the small group can communicate easily; common goals link information sources and reception, and each member has similar reasons to interact with others.

To shape new members to have a warrior spirit and conformist attitude, there is a need for an education process involving belt promotions trained using specific techniques of the martial art Pencak Silat. PSHT Ranting Dlingo aims to produce warriors in the community, especially in Kapanewon Dlingo; the education is mandatory for new members and spans one year until the Membership Confirmation.



**Figure 1**. New members (students) undergoing belt promotion education.
Source: Researcher's Documentation

The acceptance process at the beginning of becoming a member of PSHT Ranting Dlingo requires a challenging period and approach. Before becoming a member, individuals need to be tested by existing members through belt promotions using the distinctive PSHT martial arts methods. This aligns with Cota's assumption (in Yuasinda & Nurul, 2014) regarding the effort needed to enter a larger group, influencing the high group cohesiveness.

PSHT Ranting Dlingo utilizes discussion forums for communication before organizing organizational agendas. An interview with the head of PSHT Ranting Dlingo, mentioned, "Whenever we have events such as fundraising, working together, and member confirmation, we gather our members for a discussion to make decisions together for the best outcomes. The purpose of these meetings is to allow members to exchange information and opinions so that agreements are not one-sided." Regarding group communication methods, this aligns with the dynamic group communication model proposed by (Tatang, 2016) regarding the form of group communication known as Brainstorming Forum. This involves a group communication method to gather as many ideas as possible from participants involved in the shortest amount of time.

## Conclusion

The research analysis results indicate that the cohesion within the PSHT Ranting Dlingo group is created due to supportive interactions among its members, such as providing practical assistance, mutual help, and cooperation in achieving group goals. Factors influencing the cohesion of the PSHT Ranting Dlingo group include the membership duration; members who have been part of PSHT Ranting Dlingo since its establishment tend to have a more cohesive attitude. Early acceptance is another factor influencing group cohesion, as becoming a member (resident) of PSHT requires a challenging and lengthy process, fostering high cohesion among its members. Group size affects group cohesion, and although PSHT Ranting Dlingo is a large group in Dlingo Sub-district, in practice, they form smaller groups for interaction among members.

Productive activities indicate the close relationships among PSHT Ranting Dlingo members, impacting group cohesion. Group communication in forums is used for decision-making and exchanging opinions, such as brainstorming, which can influence communication openness among members. Openness and freedom of communication are factors influencing group cohesion. Supportive interpersonal communication among members affects interpersonal interactions and relationships, contributing to the cohesive nature of PSHT Ranting Dlingo members. Through collaborative work, fundraising, and engaging in activities outside of routine PSHT Ranting Dlingo events, the bond among members tightens, leading to more intense communication due to frequent meetings and dialogues. Due to status factors, communication between new and existing members remains limited, resulting in restricted communication between these groups.

Suggestions for PSHT Ranting to implement interpersonal communication when addressing personal issues among its members include encouraging seniors to position themselves as equals during discussions with juniors and providing opportunities for every member to express new ideas or opinions, fostering increased cohesion and conformity among all members. Additionally, it is advisable to incorporate more productive activities outside routine events involving all members, enhancing communication among them.

For future researchers, it is recommended to utilize the findings of this study as a reference for further research focusing on communication and group cohesion.

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