

Group Communication Strategies for Resolving Conflicts in KKN (Community Service Program) Activities

Wildan Nurbayan, Sri Wulandari, Dian Andriany*

Universitas Swadaya Gunung Jati, Indonesia

Email: nurbayanw@gmail.com, sri.wulandari@ugj.ac.id, dian.andriany@ugj.ac.id*

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ABSTRACT

KKN (Community Service Program) places students in temporary work groups with diverse backgrounds and personalities, making potential conflicts inevitable. This study aims to identify the process of group communication, identify conflicts that arise in group communication, and analyze group communication strategies in resolving conflicts in KKN activities in Ciledug District, Cirebon Regency, specifically Group 62 Jatiseeng Village and Group 63 Ciledug Kulon Village. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method with data collection techniques through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation. The results of the study show that the strategies used to manage conflict in KKN activities include deliberation, discussion, and interpersonal communication. The implementation of effective strategies that prioritize openness, empathy, and participation in resolving conflicts can ensure smooth cooperation and the sustainability of KKN activities. This study confirms that conflicts need not be avoided, but can be resolved effectively using appropriate group communication strategies.

INTRODUCTION

Communication is an essential element of the way in which humans interact within society. Communication enables individuals to understand one another, cooperate, and accomplish their common objectives. In a team setting, communication does not merely function to facilitate the transfer of information; it also facilitates relationship management, consensus formation, and conflict resolution. When effective communication is practiced, groups are able to collaborate in a more productive manner. However, poor communication management can result in confusion and conflict.

Groups, particularly temporary work groups, have complicated dynamics. Differences in personal backgrounds, personalities, working styles, and preferences may cause conflicts. Conflicts within a group are inevitable and frequent when there is urgency to complete tasks, high standards for performance, and an uneven distribution of task assignments. Hence, conflicts do not necessarily indicate a lack of success. Conflicts are inherent in group activities and should be handled using effective communication strategies.

KKN (Community Service Program) is an academic program organized by universities in Indonesia that focuses on community service activities based on direct experience. Formally,

students are placed in groups in specific locations for a certain period of time to design and evaluate work programs appropriate to the needs of the local community. Conceptually, KKN is not only understood as a community service activity, but also as an arena for complex social interactions, as it brings together individuals with diverse backgrounds and interests within one group. This dynamic makes KKN a social laboratory — a place where communication processes are realized, conflicts emerge from differences, and communication strategies for their resolution are developed. Thus, KKN is not only a tool for applying knowledge, but also a place to develop students' communication, leadership, management, and social adaptation skills through direct interaction with the community. This condition makes KKN a situation that has the potential to generate conflict between members of a group or between groups.

The implementation of the Community Service Program (KKN) in Cirebon Regency, particularly in Ciledug District, at Swadaya Gunung Jati University involves quite complex communication dynamics. In some groups, such as Group 62 in Jatiseeng Village and Group 63 in Ciledug Kulon Village, there were differences among members concerning the allocation of tasks, the decision-making process, and communication patterns. These differences generated tensions that could threaten effective teamwork if not addressed with suitable communication strategies.

From existing research studies, such as Putri Fadilah Nuraini and Isnawijayani (2022), it can be observed that the group communication process plays a crucial role in maintaining harmony and resolving problems within KKN activities. However, many scholarly studies have focused more on examining the efficiency of communication strategies in executing KKN activities without considering the role of group communication strategies in conflict management. This issue has become the main basis for conducting this research study, with the goal of filling the existing research gap regarding the effective use of communication strategies in managing KKN group conflicts.

The significance of this research lies in two main aspects. First, theoretically, this research broadens the understanding of group communication by connecting it to the phenomenon of social conflict, and can serve as a reference in the development of communication theories and strategies in academia. Second, practically, this research benefits universities and students as a means of evaluating and reflecting on group communication in community service activities. Through the application of appropriate communication strategies, students can improve their interpersonal, empathy, and problem-solving skills within the community. Based on the discussions above, the objectives of this research include discovering the group communication process in KKN activities, recognizing the conflicts occurring in group communication in KKN activities, and analyzing group communication strategies in handling KKN conflicts in Ciledug Subdistrict, particularly in Group 62 in Jatiseeng Village and Group 63 in Ciledug Kulon Village. Hence, this research is hoped to provide substantial contributions to the field of communication science.

According to Michael Burgoon (in Nurdin, 2014), group communication is a form of direct interaction between three or more people who have specific goals, such as exchanging information, maintaining self-interest, or solving problems, with the ability of members to recognize each other's characters. Effendy (2009), on the other hand, views group communication as a process of

reciprocal exchange of messages between individuals who are bound by a common goal within an organized structure. Understanding of group communication is further enriched through the studies of Nurdin (2014), which outlines various elements of communication such as interaction, group goals, norms, roles, and group dynamics.

In the context of group communication, conflict is an inseparable part of the process of interaction among members. Conflict arises as a result of differences in perceptions, interests, values, or individual backgrounds within the group. According to W. T. Kenneth (1992), conflict is a process that occurs when one party feels that another party has negatively impacted something in its interest. From the perspective of group dynamics, Lewin (1947) further explains that conflict is a natural part of group interaction that can drive change and group development. Thus, conflict is not always negative; rather, it can serve as a means to clarify differences, improve decision-making, and strengthen relationships among members when managed effectively.

Based on this foundation, the researcher adapted and compiled several aspects of group communication relevant to the context of this study, namely interaction among members, shared goals, open communication, empathy and understanding, coordination and collaboration, active participation, and group cohesion. These aspects were used to understand the communication processes employed, identify emerging conflicts, and examine the communication strategies used, particularly within KKN activities.

The study on group interactions also emphasizes participants' personal experiences during the message exchange process. Banunaek et al. (2021) examined group interaction experiences using a descriptive qualitative method through in-depth interviews. The results indicated that participants interpreted group interactions in different ways, depending on emotional issues, differing points of view, and the degree of interpersonal relationships formed within the group. Interaction experiences did not always proceed smoothly; rather, they could lead to friction if not supported by transparency and mutual understanding among participants. Nevertheless, this study focuses more on the interpretation of group interaction experiences and has not specifically examined the interaction strategies used to resolve friction within the group, thereby providing an opportunity for further research on conflict resolution in student settings, particularly within the KKN program.

Studies have been conducted on group communication within student organizations, though with different emphases. Nofrima Eka (2017) analyzed the importance of group communication practices in creating solidarity among members using a descriptive qualitative research design involving observation and in-depth interviews. The results showed that interpersonal relationships and interaction are the most important aspects in increasing solidarity among students. Nonetheless, the focus was not on conflict management through group communication.

A research carried out by Heluka and Halim (2023) examined conflict resolution strategies for the Yahukimo Papua student group in Makassar using a descriptive qualitative approach. The study identified various interaction strategies, including meetings, dialogue, information dissemination, and the use of online platforms as tools for resolving disputes. The study draws on

a student organization with ethnic and hierarchical characteristics, in contrast to the KKN setting, which is temporary, multidisciplinary, and community-oriented.

A study conducted by Dodi May and Nur (2020) analyzed conflicts among students at the Parang Tambung Campus of Makassar State University using descriptive qualitative methods. This study focuses on the triggers of conflict as well as the systematic measures taken by the institution to address them, such as the enforcement of campus regulations and the cessation of conflictual relationships between seniors and juniors. The study emphasizes conflicts as symptoms of hierarchical social structures and group aggression, and consequently does not address group interaction strategies as a means of resolving internal tensions among students.

A study by Vientianty et al. (2024) examines conflict management within organizations using conceptual and descriptive methods. This study highlights that tensions within organizations are often caused by inefficient interactions, and that well-managed interactions can transform these tensions into opportunities for learning and organizational development. As this study uses qualitative descriptive techniques based on a literature review, the implementation of interaction strategies in the context of practical student organizations such as KKN has not been directly examined.

In the realm of practical communication, research conducted by Bachruddin et al. (2022) analyzed the marketing communications strategy of the Cirebon City Youth, Sports, Culture, and Tourism Office. The results showed that message formulation, media selection, and audience understanding are key factors in conveying information effectively. This descriptive qualitative study confirms that communication strategies are not merely about message delivery but also about adapting to the characteristics of the community. Despite this study being focused on tourism promotion, the findings on message crafting and audience engagement are applicable to the KKN context as well.

In relation to the concept of KKN, the research by Imam Afandi et al. (2022) identified communication barriers among students conducting KKN at Muhammadiyah University of Bandung and the community of Gajahmekar Village. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach, the study revealed that such communication barriers resulted from differences in perception, differences in language and terminology, a lack of community understanding of the goals of the KKN activity, and the absence of bidirectional communication. These results suggest that communication conflicts do not necessarily occur due to resistance from the community, but because of inappropriate approaches used by students in delivering their message. Hence, this study offers a clear illustration of communication problems in the field, which is highly significant for conflict resolution studies.

A study by Herdiani et al. (2023) highlighted the dynamics of conflict and interaction patterns that developed among KKN students in Benda Village, Brebes Regency. The findings showed that conflicts could result from the diversity of perspectives arising from students' different disciplinary backgrounds. Nevertheless, the students were capable of resolving their conflicts by showing mutual respect, maintaining effective communication, and managing their emotions. The

communication among students over the two-month period proved to be consistent and democratic in character.

Another related study is that conducted by Andriany et al. (2023), which explores the significance of communication psychology in the communication practices of adolescents. The findings, based on a qualitative research approach, highlight the impact of perceptions, emotions, and message processing in interpersonal communication processes. While this study does not directly address KKN, the concepts of communication psychology play an essential role in understanding why misunderstandings may occur between students and the community due to differing perceptions or sensitivities.

In conclusion, group communication and communication strategies are closely related to conflict management. Previous research has examined the dynamics of group communication, organizational communication, and barriers to communication in the implementation of KKN activities, but none has directly identified the utilization of communication strategies in resolving conflicts that arise during KKN activities. Some studies only describe the communication process or identify barriers without providing clear resolution patterns, while others are set in different contexts and thus have not explained the mechanisms for resolving conflicts in interactions among KKN student groups. Furthermore, no research has compared communication strategies between KKN groups in the same area, even though inter-group interaction in the field is often a source of conflict. Therefore, this study is crucial in addressing this gap through an in-depth analysis of the communication strategies employed to resolve conflicts during KKN activities in Ciledug Subdistrict.

Based on the background and research gaps described above, this study aims to describe the group communication process in KKN activities, identify the types of conflicts that arise during group communication, and analyze the group communication strategies used to resolve conflicts in Group 62 (Jatiseeng Village) and Group 63 (Ciledug Kulon Village) in Ciledug Subdistrict, Cirebon Regency. This research is expected to provide theoretical benefits by enriching the study of group communication and conflict resolution, particularly in the context of temporary student work groups such as KKN, as well as practical benefits for universities and KKN organizers as input for pre-departure training on communication and conflict management, for students as insights into effective communication strategies to maintain group cohesion, and for future researchers as a reference for examining group dynamics in similar community service programs.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach using descriptive methods. This approach was chosen because the study focuses on gaining an in-depth understanding of the processes and dynamics of group communication strategies in resolving conflicts that arise during KKN (Community Service Program) activities. According to (Creswell, 2014) Qualitative research aims to understand the meanings individuals construct from their social experiences. Therefore, this approach is considered the most relevant for contextually describing how communication strategies are implemented by groups of KKN students in the field. A descriptive method was used

to present the research findings in the form of a systematic and factual narrative consistent with the observed phenomena (Sugiyono, 2013). The choice of this method was also based on the research objectives, which did not focus on numerical data or statistical measurements, but rather on gaining a deep understanding of group communication processes and the conflict resolution strategies that naturally arise within the social environment of college students (Creswell, 2014).

This research will look into the students of KKN 2025 of Universitas Swadaya Gunung Jati (UGJ) whose target was assigned to be Sub-district Ciledug, Cirebon. This paper aims to analyze the communication phenomena experienced by the two groups; namely group 62 located in Desa Jatiseeng and group 63 located in Desa Ciledug Kulon in the course of executing the KKN program. The object in this study is the communication strategies used by the group in dealing with the conflict within their members and groups. The emphasis of this research is on the types of communication and interactions of members, the reasons of the conflicts and the conflict solving strategy used.

The research was carried out in Ciledug Subdistrict, Cirebon Regency. The observations took place at two villages where the KKN program was held, which are Desa Jatiseeng and Desa Ciledug Kulon. The research was done during the period of the KKN program and the follow-up interview was conducted after the completion of the KKN program, particularly from August to September 2025. The reason why these villages were chosen is that they are the places where there are two different KKN groups.

The instrument used in this research is the researcher himself (human instrument). In qualitative research, the researcher is a planner, implementer, data collector, analyzer, and reporter of research results (Sugiyono, 2013). Furthermore the researcher also used interview guidelines, observation sheets and documentation as supporting instrument to strengthen the validity of the data. The researcher used the role of the participant, namely as a member of KKN Group 63. It means that the researcher was directly involved in the group's activities, observed the communication process, and directly felt the dynamics of the conflicts that arose. This allowed the researcher to understand the phenomenon more deeply on the basis of personal experience in the field.

The procedure applied in selecting the informants for this study is known as purposive sampling. As mentioned by Dana P. Turner (2020) in (Ksanjaya & Rahayu, 2022) purposive sampling is a type of sampling that involves people who fit into the researcher's requirements in relation to the goals of the study. In the current study, the major informants included the leaders of KKN Groups 62 and 63, along with some of their members. The selection of the informants was influenced by their participation in the interaction within the group and their experience in handling conflicts.

Data was collected through three major sources, including in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation, as per Sugiyono, (2016) cited by (Nurfajriani et al., 2024). n-depth interviews were done to gain information on the communication patterns and conflict resolution mechanisms based on the informant's viewpoint. Participatory observation was done during KKN to observe the communication behavior, member interaction, and problem-

solving process taking place in the field. Documentation, on the other hand, was used to obtain supplementary data in the form of activity reports, photographs, video footage, and discussion notes from the group meetings.

Data analysis was performed using an interactive model (Miles et al., 2014) which comprises three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions and verification. Data reduction is carried out by selecting and simplifying raw data from interviews and observations. The data presentation stage involves organizing the information in narrative or tabular form to facilitate understanding. The last step involves drawing conclusions and verifying results, where the researcher interprets the data using the theories related to group communication and communication techniques to discern patterns, meaning, and implication in the research data.

This study used source triangulation to guarantee the validity of the data. Source triangulation, according to (Sugiyono, 2013) is a data comparison and validation process of data from various sources to obtain more accurate results. Triangulation in this study was carried out by comparing the results of interviews with several informants, the results of field observations, and the documentation of KKN activities.

This study follows the principles of research ethics by guaranteeing the maintenance of confidentiality regarding the identity of informants, as well as ensuring that permission is sought from them before the process of interviewing and gathering documents takes place (Moleong 2018). Reliability of research findings is also guaranteed by proper documentation, systematic data collection, and the researcher's reflection on his/her own role in the process. With the use of this descriptive qualitative approach, it is expected that research findings would offer a deeper and reliable insight into how the group managed its conflict resolution process within the KKN program participants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

KKN (Community Service Program) is one example of group work, which is implemented by putting students in a position where there will be many interactions among group members themselves and also with the community. These interactions happen only over a brief amount of time, and given the different backgrounds and different perceptions of every single group member, conflict becomes a natural occurrence in the process of implementing the KKN. According to some previous studies, the causes for conflicts to occur within student groups include the differences in perception, imbalance of task division, and lack of coordination between communications within the group (Wasiyem et al., 2025). The implication from this is that the conflict happening in KKN is not something that is caused by individual factors, but also communication ones.

KKN group communication is not only a channel of information dissemination but also the principal means for establishing shared understanding, managing divergences and preserving group cohesion. Group communication can also be understood as a dynamic process involving the exchange of messages, the negotiation of meaning, and collective decision-making to achieve shared goals (Sulistiana et al., 2024). One of the important foundations of this program is group communication. This is because almost all activities such as program planning, activity

implementation, and evaluation are based on the ability of group members to communicate with and understand each other (Juwati et al., 2023)

In this group communication process, communication strategies assume a critical position. These are the deliberate or involuntary attempts by members of a group to manage the way they communicate with each other, share their views, and resolve any divergences. Communication strategies within the group will involve selecting appropriate styles of speaking, use of discussion boards, assignment of communication roles, and message adjustments (Hajar et al., 2024). It is confirmed that a communication strategy is not just a technique for delivering messages, but a member of the process of managing relationships within a group (Ngurah Agung & Gunawan Astajaya, 2025).

As revealed by the findings of this study, group communication patterns are used as the main strategies in dealing with any possible conflict situations in KKN activities (Faizah et al., 2024). This does not mean that all conflicts will be resolved in confrontational manner, but rather in line with specific communication patterns, including group discussion, open conversation, and informal communication. It is worth noting that similar communication patterns have also been identified in previous studies, where conflict resolution in this group was found to be more successful under open participation rather than authoritarian and individualized approaches (Puspita Tutiasri, 2016).

The efficiency of group communication in terms of KKN can be observed in the effectiveness of group conflict resolution, team spirit, and continuity of work plans. Efficient group communication has several features including open communication, clearness of messages, and readiness on the part of the participants to hear others out and accept opposing opinions (Afandi et al., 2024). The results of previous studies have proved that efficient communication within a group positively impacts teamwork especially in highly coordinated activities such as fieldwork (Harilama et al., 2022). In terms of KKN, the efficiency of group communication in the form of the ability of a group to continue their collective activity in spite of any differences and disagreements.

The findings of this study underscore the importance of group communication strategies in resolving conflict during the implementation of Community Service Programs (KKN). Formal and informal communication patterns provide space for members to constructively express differences, foster interpersonal understanding, and maintain the continuity of teamwork. Furthermore, these results confirm that conflict in KKN is not something to be avoided but can be utilized productively through the application of appropriate group communication (Herdiani et al., 2023).

This study organizes the discussion into three main aspects in accordance with the research objectives: examining the group communication process in KKN activities, identifying conflicts that arise during communication, and analyzing group communication strategies for resolving conflict. This approach allows for a more in-depth and structured understanding of the phenomena studied. The following is a description of the research findings and discussion.

The Process of Group Communication in Resolving Conflicts During KKN (Community Service Program)

The process of group communication in the current study was reviewed based on a theoretical frame of reference for group communication, wherein communication processes are viewed as dynamic processes that have the potential to impact the stability of the group and the ability of its members to handle arising conflicts. Such knowledge is supported by theories related to group communication available in existing literature, as well as (Nurdin, 2014) whose theories provide insight into the components of communication in groups including interactions among members, common goals, communication, understanding and empathy, coordination and cooperation, participation, and group solidarity. Within the context of KKN, the current theoretical perspective will be used to examine how communication processes occur, the emergence of conflicts as a result of interactions, and how communication processes determine the stability of the group.

In group communication study, the **interaction of group member** is considered as the factor associated with the intensity and patterns of group communication. These aspects serve as the foundation for the development of cooperation and group solidarity. One key parameter in this regard is the frequency of communication among members, referring to how often they interact, whether in formal or informal contexts. In addition, communication patterns among members include one-way or two-way communication as well as the use of formal and informal communication. Thus, this indicates that intense, two-way communication can encourage openness, strengthen relationships, and minimize the potential for conflict within the group.

The interview results revealed that the frequency of interaction among members during KKN was very high, as participants lived in the same location and interacted daily through formal meetings, field activities, as well as casual conversations and shared meals. This level of intensity helped members who initially did not know each other to build closeness and facilitate cooperation within the group. Furthermore, the dominant pattern of information exchange was two-way, particularly in discussions of work programs, so that every member had the opportunity to express their opinions. Informal communication also played an important role in fostering a friendly and open atmosphere, which was effective in preventing miscommunication from escalating into conflict. This finding aligns with Nurdin's (2014) perspective, who states that high communication frequency and participatory communication patterns are effective strategies for maintaining harmony and resolving potential conflicts within a group.

In group communication studies, shared goals are viewed as a collective agreement that unifies the perceptions of individuals within a group to achieve the same direction and outcomes. Communication is a fundamental mechanism in building shared perceptions, as it involves the exchange of messages and meanings that are mutually understood among members, thereby fostering unity in achieving the group's goals (Puspita Tutiasri, 2016). Effective group communication demonstrates that members are engaged with one another in relationships that foster a sense of unity and shared goals within the group (Damanik, 2018) . In the context of collaboration and organizational settings, group members need to share a common understanding

of the goals in order to maximize teamwork and minimize internal conflicts (Winarto et al., 2022). Therefore, this demonstrates that shared goals are a key factor in determining the effectiveness and stability of relationships within a group.

The interview results indicate that a shared understanding of the group's common goals in KKN was established from the outset through meetings and joint deliberations, both through open discussions and voting mechanisms when differences of opinion arose. This process made members feel involved and helped them understand the group's direction; consequently, when differences of opinion or friction arose during the implementation of activities, the group tended to revisit their shared goals as a common ground for resolving issues. Furthermore, member commitment is evident in collective efforts to maintain shared responsibilities, despite variations in contributions and work ethic. When a member lacks commitment or the division of tasks is perceived as unfair, the group prefers a communicative and persuasive approach, both personally and in evaluation forums, rather than direct reprimands. These findings align with Nurdin, (2014) which emphasizes that commitment to shared goals, supported by open communication and mutual respect, is an effective strategy for mitigating conflict and maintaining group stability.

In group communication, open communication means that there is an opportunity for group members to freely share their ideas, opinions, suggestions, and criticisms without fear of being rejected and socially sanctioned. Open communication is essential for the formation of healthy communication processes in groups (Puspita Tutiasri, 2016). In this context, one of the essential factors is the readiness of group members to express their opinions and criticisms—i.e., the readiness of group members to positively share their different views without violating communication ethics (Wibowo & Nurhadi, 2020). The other factor concerns the reactions towards other members' opinions, indicating mutual respect, good listening skills, and readiness to be criticized in the process of making collective decisions (Andriany et al., 2023). Moreover, open communication coupled with mutual respect contributes significantly to the prevention of small-scale conflicts turning into larger ones.

The results of this interview indicate that open communication within the KKN group is reflected in the existence of a forum that allows members to voice criticism and suggestions, both during formal meetings and informal routine discussions. Group members generally feel comfortable enough to express their opinions, while still being mindful of their tone to avoid offending others. Though the reactions towards criticism may cause some tension in the first place, there will be no major problems, since the group can handle them through discussion. The reluctance of some people to freely express themselves is often a result of purely individual reasons, like shyness, a fear of being wrong, or having an opinion that is contrary to the rest of the people's view. Consequently, it becomes clear that mutual respect and the ability to accommodate everyone's opinion is very important for receiving criticism positively, making it a basis for an assessment and avoiding the development of further complications.

Under this definition, **empathy and understanding** of the group members' communication involve the capacity of the members of the group to understand how the other group members feel and perceive things when communicating. This aspect ensures that there is

empathy among the members and hence a humane way of dealing with disagreements (Nasution et al., 2024). Another important factor in this scenario is the ability to empathize with other people's emotions, which is evident from their readiness to listen carefully, consider the personal situations of other members of the organization (Afriyadi, 2015). Moreover, empathy may also be shown by tolerating differences in opinion, meaning that it is the ability to accept different views held by members of the group without letting them cause disagreements among them (Lilik Nugroho, 2021). It can be concluded that empathy and understanding are the bedrock of interpersonal relations and conflict resolution.

The interview results reveal that the KKN group has empathy and understanding, demonstrated by the members' practice of listening to each other before making decisions and their efforts to calm the atmosphere when differences of opinion arise. Informants said that each member was given the opportunity to express their views and other members tried to understand the reasons and emotional circumstances for the views expressed. Empathy was also shown in the mutual support given to a member who was experiencing difficulties, tiredness or who had not completed their tasks; the workload was not left to an individual. However, tolerance for different viewpoints was manifested through the ability to put aside individual egoism, recognition of different cultures and points of view, and the mediating efforts of the chairperson and public relations officer in times of disagreement. Empathy and tolerance contribute to the harmony of interpersonal relationships within the group and avoid disputes leading to factions while executing the project.

Coordination and collaboration in a group are the processes involved in organizing collective actions where there is a need for role assignment and coordination between group members in order to achieve the objectives of the group (Feriandy & Wahyu, 2023). A clear division of roles and responsibilities is in this context an important indicator of the clarity and understanding of the tasks of members and therefore the prevention of overlapping duties. Furthermore, the degree of cooperation and support among the members is a sign of their preparedness to help each other, divide the workload, and conform to the variations in the individual personalities and abilities in the group (Levia, 2025). The group needs to have flexible coordination mechanisms to adapt to the on-the-ground dynamics and obstacles, but also clear roles and strong cooperation. Adaptive coordination and collaboration are important elements in the group's communication strategy to sustain the group's effectiveness and to mitigate possible internal conflicts.

From the result of interviews, it can be found that the collaboration and coordination between members in KKN group happen situationally and there is no rigid rule about it. In case there is any problem due to confusion or task overlapping, then the chairman and some specific members will actively participate in re-dividing the task based on the situation and their capabilities. Here, mediation is not limited to the chairman himself, as other members who can ease tensions and prevent any conflict through humorous method can also do mediation. Collaboration occurs when members actively help each other either in doing some administrative task or even physically, so that the load of work will not be carried alone by everyone. Personality

differences of members are not becoming the barrier since right at the beginning of the activity, there is a strong bond of communication created among members.

Active participation in a group can be defined as the involvement of its members in the communication process of the group consciously and voluntarily, especially in discussions and decisions made together (Safrida et al., 2017). An important criterion in this respect can be considered the activity of participants in the discussion when members have enough freedom to voice their opinion and do not feel any hierarchical or psychological pressure. Besides, the ideas and solutions suggested during the meeting indicate the level of members' participation in the process; for example, it shows that the participants are able to suggest solutions, discuss other people's ideas and take part in the solution search concerning the interests of the group. The more active participation in the process members have, the better group communication becomes as everyone can feel involved in achieving common goals. Active participation is an important condition for successful deliberations and conflict prevention.

The results of the interview show that the active participation in the KKN group was built by creating a relaxed, informal discussion atmosphere with low formal pressure so that members who were usually passive could feel more comfortable participating. The group made sure that everyone had equal room to express their opinions, and at times made sure that all members gave feedback so that no voice went unheard. Solutions to group challenges usually emerged together as the group built on ideas, not dismissed them, even those from the usually quiet members. Ideas are chosen for their appropriateness to village conditions, as the product of group discussions and group consensus. The results show that a complete active participation enhances the quality of group decisions and prevents the conflicts caused by unilateral control or by discrimination of some members.

Group cohesion is defined as the strength of the emotional bond, sense of affiliation, and willingness of group members to stay in the group while building good relationships among themselves (Hanum et al., 2022). As for one of the core elements in the area under discussion, this is the feeling of familiarity and belonging on the part of the members, which is shown by emotional intimacy, intense informal contacts, and mutual care of the members while being in the group. Moreover, the motivation to maintain positive relations shows the readiness of individuals to maintain harmony within the group regardless of possible conflicts. Group cohesion is one of the significant elements of social glue that makes groups less conflict-sensitive. In the context of a group communication strategy, these results reveal that cohesion can be an effective means of overcoming conflict tension.

According to the results obtained, the cohesion of the group during the KKN program was developed due to the number of informal activities such as having meals together, going to the movies together, and holding informal meetings, which helped to relieve tension and develop emotional connections between the members. As a result, the members were more sensitive to each other's conditions, making it possible to solve arising conflicts quickly by simply discussing them and not making the situation worse. In addition, the wish to preserve harmonious relations in the group is reflected in providing an opportunity to vent emotions, forgive each other, and find

compromises using the family model. The main reasons for maintaining group cohesion throughout the entire period of the KKN program are constant communication, participation in joint activities, and a comfortable atmosphere in the group. Therefore, group cohesion plays an important role in reducing conflicts and creating strong ties among members.

Conflicts That Arise During KKN (Community Service Program) Activities

From the results obtained from the interviews, conflicts that happened in the KKN group were caused by communication process both in formal and informal contexts. Conflicts do not erupt out of the blue. There is always something that causes the outbreak, which includes a difference in perceptions concerning the distribution of task, responsibility, and how to voice out opinions in the group. Dissatisfaction is usually not voiced out at first but seen as feeling of injustice, use of sarcasm, or silence from those people who think that they are the ones who have been treated unfairly. Besides, in regard to task distribution, there is an eruption of conflict if there is a mismatch between what is expected from the members and their performance. It is only natural that if someone thinks that they have been doing more than others, there will be an element of feeling that it is not fair and thus causing conflict. This conflict will remain buried until it erupts into a heated discussion in forums because of its mention during evaluations. However, these conflicts are primarily task-related to the core program of the KKN activities, not personal conflicts that could be destructive. The high intensity of communication resulting from living in a single location also accelerates the emergence of conflicts. Continuous interaction increases the likelihood of misunderstandings, differences in communication styles, and friction stemming from personal habits.

Conflicts within KKN (Community Service Program) groups in this study arose in several aspects of group communication, particularly inter-member interactions, coordination and collaboration, active participation, and open communication. With regard to member interactions, the intensity of communication that comes from being in the same locality can lead to misunderstandings and differences in communication style, which can make conflicts more likely to arise in formal and informal situations. However, coordination and collaboration may generate conflicts of ambiguity and imbalance of the distribution of the tasks, where the assignment of the tasks between members is perceived as disproportionate, creating perceptions of unfairness. On the other hand, active participation and open communication can lead to covert conflicts when dissatisfaction is not expressed directly but rather suppressed through silence or sarcasm. The intensity of such conflicts then escalates in discussion forums when differing viewpoints are expressed with a high level of emotionality.

Based on the above discussion, conflicts within the KKN group arise as a consequence of intense interactions within a heterogeneous group that is adapting to a limited social space, where conflicts in KKN group communication manifest through differences in perception, the emergence of pent-up dissatisfaction, tension in interactions, and discussions within group forums. Thus, conflict in KKN group communication arises as a result of disruptions in the group communication process, particularly regarding interaction, coordination, participation, and openness.

Conflict Resolution Strategies in KKN (Community Service Program) Activities

Based on interviews with the leaders of KKN 62 and KKN 63, it was found that conflicts within the group were addressed through several stages of one- or two-way communication involving the participation of all members. The group did not allow tensions to develop privately but immediately raised the issues in discussion or evaluation forums to be addressed and discussed collectively. The primary strategy employed was discussion through regular forums. In these forums, each member is given ample opportunity to express opinions, provide clarifications, or raise objections regarding the problems or issues under discussion. The importance of the group leader's role as a facilitator of discussion, to ensure that discussions are conducted in a conducive atmosphere and do not degenerate into emotional debates. This mechanism enables conflicts to be resolved through open, two-way communication, aimed at finding solutions that benefit both sides.

Moreover, another technique that the group utilizes is that of personal contact. Where the member appears to be inactive or problematic, the chair normally opts for communicating personally with him in order not to make him feel embarrassed before all the members of the group. The above process is done with utmost care in regard to language use in order to maintain mutual respect, thus solving the conflict without affecting the interpersonal relationships within the group. In addition, in cases where the opposing views make it hard for an agreement to be reached, one group applies voting as a method to make decisions, whereby voting follows an intense discussion process as a compromise where there is no way to reach a consensus view among all members of the group. By adopting the method above, the group is able to stay productive and does not become idle because of different views. Moreover, informal communication is applied by the group to heal damaged relations between its members. Engaging in activities such as eating together, discussing informally, playing jokes, among others, helps in easing strained relationships.

The conflict resolution strategy in KKN (Community Service Program) group is related to some aspects of group communication, especially open communication and active participation. Conflict resolution is achieved through regular discussions that allow all members to express their views, request clarification, and express objections directly. Openness to opinion and openness to criticism is reflected in the deliberation mechanism facilitated by the group leader to ensure discussions remain conducive and oriented toward collective problem-solving. Furthermore, empathy is demonstrated through a personal approach to members who trigger conflict, paying attention to communication methods to maintain relationships and prevent escalating conflicts. Voting mechanisms are employed as a way of democratic decision making, when consensus cannot be reached, as for coordination and collaboration, so that the group can continue to operate effectively. Group cohesion is expressed in the use of informal communication, such as shared meals and casual conversation, to repair relationships among members and relieve emotional tension.

Therefore, it may be said that conflict management through communication strategies in KKN programs includes the following four major strategies: deliberation, personal strategy, democratic process of decision making, and reinforcing informal communication. The four

strategies show that transparency and respecting the viewpoint of everyone and maintaining harmony are the core bases of conflict resolution within the group. Based on these findings, it may be concluded that different dimensions of group communication collectively contribute to maintaining the stability of the group in KKN programs.

CONCLUSION

The implementation process of KKN using the group communication process is highly intensive and involves participation on various levels, as evidenced by group communication characteristics which are identified from research as follows: interaction among the group members, common goal, communication openness, empathy and understanding, coordination and collaboration, active participation, and group cohesion. The interaction process characterized by living together in the same location brings about the intensiveness in communication that creates a perception of common goal and facilitates active participation. Communication openness in voicing one's opinion, empathy in understanding others' problems, adaptive coordination, and group cohesion formed from both formal and informal interaction make up the basis of stability in group communication.

Conflict in KKN group communication is caused by the intensity of interaction dynamics in a heterogeneous group adapts under time constraints. These conflicts are especially related to certain elements of group communication, such as member interaction, coordination and collaboration, active participation, and openness of communication. Differences in understanding regarding task distribution, imbalances in contributions, and differences in how opinions are expressed lead to dissatisfaction that is initially hidden before developing into tension in discussion forums. Therefore, the conflicts that arise tend to be task-related rather than relational, so they do not turn into personal rifts that undermine group cohesion.

Conflict resolution strategies within the KKN group demonstrate the practical application of group communication aspects, particularly open communication, active participation, empathy and understanding, coordination and collaboration, and group cohesion. Conflict resolution is carried out through deliberation in open forums that provide equal opportunities for participation, a personal approach to maintaining relationships among members, democratic decision-making mechanisms through voting when consensus cannot be reached, and the use of informal communication to restore emotional well-being. This strategy underscores that conflict management within the KKN group is adaptive and relational, grounded in the quality of communicative interactions and a shared commitment to maintaining the stability and effectiveness of group work.

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