

Integration of Local Wisdom into Participatory Communication for Bullying Prevention in North Sumatra

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Abstract	Bullying is still a problem in youth organizations because it is often considered part of the joke, seniority, and group adaptation process. On the other hand, Mandailing customs have local wisdom values that have the potential to be the basis for the formation of inclusive and preventive communication. This study aims to analyze the integration of local wisdom in the participatory communication model as a bullying prevention strategy in the Naposo Nauli Bulung Organization. The research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design in several sub-districts in Mandailing Natal Regency, North Sumatra. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and documentation studies, then analyzed using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana interactive models. The results of the study show that the values of <i>marshaholongan</i>, <i>marharoan bolon</i>, and deliberation form a participatory communication model that encourages care, solidarity, dialogue, and collective conflict resolution. The integration of these three values results in early detection, social control, and culture-based conflict resolution mechanisms that are able to minimize the potential for bullying in the organization. This study concludes that local wisdom integrated into participatory communication can be an effective model for building safe, inclusive, and sustainable youth organizations and enrich the study of culture-based organizational communication.	
Keywords	Participatory Communication; Local Wisdom; A Return to the Drawing Board; Bullying	
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1. INTRODUCTION

The Naposo Nauli Bulung (NNB) is a community-based youth organization that plays an important role in building social cohesion, transmitting cultural values, and shaping the character of the younger generation (Harahap et al., 2026). As a space for social interaction, this organization brings together members with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and personalities, which can lead to interpersonal conflicts. If not managed constructively, these conflicts can develop into bullying behaviors, such as verbal bullying, social exclusion, psychological harassment, and symbolic violence



through digital media (Dahmani & Belhadj, 2025). This phenomenon is of important concern because *bullying* not only impacts the psychological health of individuals but also weakens social cohesion, member participation, and organizational sustainability (Walker, 2025). Therefore, a communication model is needed that not only prevents *bullying* but also strengthens inclusive social relationships in youth organizations.

In Indonesia, bullying is one of the main issues that negatively impacts the welfare of children. According to the latest data, 2 out of 3 girls and boys aged 13-17 have experienced at least one type of violence in their lives. 41 percent of 15-year-old students have experienced bullying more than several times a month. 45 percent of the 2,777 young people aged 14-24 surveyed through UNICEF's youth engagement platform U-Report said they had experienced cyberbullying (Indonesia, 2021). In response to these conditions, the government and UNICEF developed the ROOTS Program, which has been implemented in about 41% of Indonesia's secondary schools through a youth participation approach (Yosep et al., 2026). The data show that bullying prevention is not enough through a repressive approach, but requires strengthening communication, social participation, and organizational culture that supports the creation of a safe environment.

In the context of the Naposo Nauli Bulung organization, the Mandailing community has strong social capital rooted in the philosophy of *Dalihan Na Tolu*, which emphasizes respect, deliberation, collective responsibility, and the maintenance of human dignity (Samosir & Pandian, 2023). These values have the potential to form the foundation of a dialogical, participatory, and conflict-resolution-oriented dialogue. However, in organizational practice, local wisdom is still more widely understood as cultural identity and moral guidelines, rather than being systematically internalized into organizational communication patterns and *bullying prevention* mechanisms (Rahiem, 2024). This condition indicates a gap between the potential of local wisdom and its implementation in building a safe and inclusive organizational environment.

Research on bullying prevention, participatory communication, and local wisdom has developed significantly in recent years. However, the existing literature shows differences in focus, context, and methodological orientation, leaving important gaps regarding the role of community-based youth organizations. Juliyanto and Emperador-Garnace (2025) examine the integration of language literacy and local wisdom in strengthening anti-bullying communication. Their research shows that culturally relevant communication can contribute to bullying prevention. However, the research still focuses mainly on the educational context and has not examined how such communication functions as an organizational mechanism in community-based youth groups (Juliyanto & Emperador-Garnace, 2025). Similarly, Fardlillah and Saida (2025) show that internalizing local wisdom through storytelling can effectively develop anti-bullying character traits in early childhood. Although this study affirms the pedagogical potential of local wisdom, the focus remains on the formation of children's character and has not addressed communication among young people within community-based organizations (Fardlillah & Saida, 2025). A different approach is demonstrated by Naderbagi et al., who developed a multicultural counseling model grounded in local wisdom to prevent bullying in vocational high schools. This research is important because it shows that local cultural values can be integrated into structured intervention models (Naderbagi et al., 2024). However, the institutional context remains within the school environment, with counseling as the primary intervention mechanism. Therefore, the research has not explained how local wisdom can be transformed into a communication system that operates sustainably and is managed and practiced collectively by youth organizations outside formal educational institutions (Saleh et al., 2025). Meanwhile, Murtiningsih et al. (2025) emphasized the

importance of local cultural values in strengthening bullying prevention efforts and developing culturally responsive approaches (Murtiningsih et al., 2024). However, the study has not specifically outlined how these cultural values are communicated, negotiated, and operationalized through participatory communication in community-based youth organizations.

These studies show an important difference. Previous research has generally examined local wisdom as a source of education, an instrument of character formation, a foundation for counseling, or a set of cultural values, whereas this study positions local wisdom as a communication resource within community-based youth organizations. In other words, the existing literature has shown why local wisdom is important for bullying prevention, but it still pays little attention to how these values are communicated, collectively interpreted, and transformed into organizational practices by young people outside of the formal educational environment. This difference is important because community-based youth organizations have different communication structures, social relationships, leadership patterns, and participation mechanisms compared to schools.

Based on these gaps, this study aims to analyze the integration of the values of Dalihan Na Tolu local wisdom into a participatory communication model as a bullying prevention strategy within the Naposo Nauli Bulung Organization in Mandailing Natal Regency. This research is significant because it offers a new perspective that connects organizational communication, member participation, and local wisdom within a single conceptual framework. The novelty of this research lies in the development of a participatory communication model based on local wisdom, Dalihan Na Tolu, which integrates the values of *marsihaholongan*, *marharoan bolon*, and deliberation as communication mechanisms, social control, and conflict resolution to prevent *bullying*. This study specifically examines three values of local wisdom, namely *marsihaholongan*, *marharoan bolon*, and deliberation, to understand how these values are integrated in the participatory communication model as an effort to prevent bullying in the Naposo Nauli Bulung organization. This model is expected to enrich the study of culture-based organizational communication and serve as a relevant alternative for developing safe, inclusive, and sustainable youth organizations.

2. METHODS

This study employs a qualitative case study design (Chand, 2025). This approach was chosen because the research aims to gain a deep understanding of the communication process, members' experiences, and the internalization of local wisdom values to build a participatory communication model for *bullying prevention* in the Naposo Nauli Bulung Organization (NNB). The design of the case study allows the researcher to gain a comprehensive understanding of communication phenomena within specific social and cultural contexts, ensuring that the resulting model is rooted in the organization's empirical reality. The research was carried out in Panyabungan, Mandailing Natal Regency, North Sumatra Province, with a focus on the Naposo Nauli Bulung Organization. The research location was purposively chosen because NNB is still carrying out the Mandailing's social, religious, and traditional preservation functions, making it a relevant context for examining organizational communication grounded in local wisdom. The research subjects were selected through purposive sampling, which involves selecting informants based on their knowledge, experience, and involvement in organizational activities. The research informants consist of organizational administrators, active members, traditional leaders, community leaders, and youth with experience or knowledge of patterns of social interaction, conflict, and communication within organizations. Furthermore, the snowball sampling technique was used to recruit additional informants through recommendations from the

initial informants considered to have experience relevant to the research focus. Overall, this study involved 9 informants with diverse backgrounds and positions to gain a more comprehensive perspective.

Table 1. Characteristics of Research Informants

Category Information	Role/Position	Estimated Age	Lama Keterlibatan
Manager	Chairman of NNB	35–40 years	>10 years
Manager	Organizational Secretary	30–35 years	8 years
Active Members	Senior Members	25–30 years	6 years
Active Members	Youth Members	20–25 years	4 years
Active Members	Youth Members	20–25 years	3 years
Active Members	Youth Members	18–24 years	2 years
Leader	Youth Members	50–60 years	>20 years
Leader	Religious Figures	45–55 years	>20 years
Leader	Community Leaders	45–55 years	>15 years

The age and length of involvement are presented in the form of estimates to maintain the confidentiality and comfort of the informant.

The composition of the informant group is designed to gather perspectives from various positions within the organization. Informants from the management element provide information on communication structures, organizational policies, decision-making mechanisms, and conflict prevention strategies. Active members and youth provide information on daily communication practices, peer relationships, social interaction experiences, and forms of *bullying* that may arise within the organization. Meanwhile, traditional leaders offered perspectives on the meaning and application of the *Dalihan Na Tolu* values in the Mandailing community. Community leaders and religious leaders provide a broader perspective on social norms, religious values, and collective responsibility in building harmonious social relationships. The research data consists of primary data and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews and participatory observation. The interview was conducted to explore the informant's experience regarding communication patterns, forms of *bullying*, relationships between youth, conflict resolution mechanisms, and the meaning of *Dalihan Na Tolu* values in organizational life. Participatory observation is carried out during organizational activities, such as meetings, mutual cooperation, religious activities, youth meetings, and traditional activities. The observation was conducted to understand the patterns of communication and social interaction that occur naturally. Observations were conducted in stages during the data collection process across two sessions, with each session lasting about 2–3 hours. Observations were conducted on May 15, 2025, and May 28, 2025, with a focus on interaction patterns among members, communication processes in organizational activities, and the application of local wisdom values in the life of the Naposo Nauli Bulung organization. The secondary data were obtained from organizational documents, such as the Articles of Association and Bylaws (AD/ART), organizational guidelines, activity documentation, and literature on organizational communication, *bullying*, participatory communication, and Mandailing local wisdom (Bowen, 2009).

The main instrument of the research is the researcher himself, serving as the *human instrument*, while the supporting instruments include semi-structured interview guidelines, observation sheets, documentation tools, and field notes. Researchers, as the main instrument, enable data collection to be carried out flexibly in response to field dynamics (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). That flexibility allows researchers to develop follow-up questions when new information relevant to the research focus is discovered. Given that the researcher is the main instrument in qualitative research, the researcher's *positionality* is an important aspect to explain. The researcher has an academic interest in Islamic Studies and has a close relationship with the social and cultural context of the Mandailing community. Knowledge of the cultural context helps researchers understand the terms, symbols, social relations, and cultural values associated with *Dalihan Na Tolu* and the life of the Naposo Nauli Bulung organization.

The researcher's proximity to the Mandailing community and the NNB organizational environment provides an advantage in building communication with informants and gaining access to relevant information. Informants also find it relatively easy to explain their experiences because researchers understand the social and cultural context behind them. However, the researcher realized that this proximity could affect the interpretation of the data. Therefore, the researcher applies the principle of reflexivity by clearly distinguishing between the informant's statement and the researcher's interpretation, comparing information across different categories of informants, systematically recording field findings, and discussing interpretations through *peer debriefing*. The researcher's position is thus balanced between cultural proximity and analytical distance. Cultural proximity is necessary to understand local meaning in context, while analytical distance is necessary to ensure that interpretation is not solely based on the researcher's assumptions. This approach is expected to increase methodological transparency and credibility of research results.

The validity of the data is maintained through source, technique, and time triangulation. Source triangulation is carried out by comparing information from administrators, active members, youth, traditional leaders, and community leaders. The triangulation technique was carried out by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation. Meanwhile, time triangulation is achieved by comparing information obtained at different organizational times or activities to assess its consistency. The researcher also applies member checking to ensure that the interpretation of the interview results aligns with the informant's experience. In addition, *peer debriefing* is conducted with other researchers to test and refine the data interpretation process. Data analysis uses the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which includes four stages: data collection, data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification (Miles et al., 2020). The analysis was carried out simultaneously from the start of data collection. The data were categorized into key themes, including communication patterns, forms of *bullying*, member participation, *Dalihan Na Tolu* values, conflict-resolution mechanisms, and bullying-prevention strategies. Furthermore, interthematic relationships are analyzed to understand how *the values of Dalihan Na Tolu* are communicated, internalized, and translated into organizational practices.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Local Wisdom as a Basis for Participatory Communication in Bullying Prevention in the Naposo Nauli Bulung Organization

Local wisdom is an integral part of a community's social life, encompassing values, norms, habits, and interaction patterns passed down through generations. In the context of youth organizations, local

wisdom not only serves as a cultural identity but also serves as a guideline in building social relationships and managing conflicts. In the *Naposo Nauli Bulung* Organization (NNB), these values are reflected in the practice of *marsihaholongan*, *marharoan bolon*, deliberation, and the principle of kinship rooted in the values of *Dalihan Na Tolu*. These values provide a framework for members to interact, maintain each other's feelings, solve problems through conversation, and avoid actions that can damage social relationships.

These values are not only evident in cultural understanding but also in the organization's communication practices. Observations indicated that NNB members interacted openly and worked collectively. In this activity, when an excessive joke was directed at one of the young members about how to speak and his appearance in front of other members, some members responded by reminding others that the joke should not be continued because it could make the person concerned feel embarrassed. The management then directs communication toward more constructive conversations and asks the members involved to respect one another. The response shows that the principle of maintaining family relationships is not only an abstract norm but also used as a basis for controlling interactions when potentially degrading behavior arises (Observation of Session 1 on May 15, 2025, during the routine meeting of NNB youth).

On this occasion, the researcher observed a member who was not originally involved in the division of tasks because he was considered to be inexperienced. The situation is then addressed by more senior members, who invite the member to participate in activities and assign tasks that suit their abilities. The settlement process is carried out through direct communication and a family approach so that problems do not lead to exclusion within groups. This data shows that open communication spaces allow members to express their discomfort and allow administrators or other members to intervene early (Observation Session 2 on May 28, 2025, in organizational mutual cooperation activities). In organizational mutual cooperation activities. In line with the results of the interview with the management. One of the managers explained:

"We always consider Naposo Nauli Bulung members as part of the family. If any member has a problem, we discuss it together whenever possible. Don't let problems be left because later they can lead to a bad relationship." (Interview with AK, personal communication, 2025).

At first, AK's statement showed more family principles and conflict-resolution mechanisms. However, when considered alongside observational findings from Sessions 1 and 2, the principle can be understood more concretely as a communication mechanism for addressing behaviors that may lead to bullying. In other words, the principle of kinship cannot automatically be regarded as a bullying-prevention mechanism based solely on the informant's statement. Its preventive function becomes clearer when the value is observed being used in response to ridicule and exclusionary tendencies in organizational interactions. The same is seen in interviews with members. One of the members explained:

"Here, there are actually unwritten rules. We have to take care of other people's feelings, don't embarrass friends in public, don't make fun of them, and if there is a problem, it's best to talk about it." (Interview with AS, personal communication, 2025).

The AS statement shows that social norms regulate behavioral boundaries in interactions among youth. Prohibiting shaming friends, limiting ridicule, and encouraging problem-solving through conversation are norms that can potentially prevent bullying behavior from developing. This function can be seen in the case observed during Observation Session 1, when jokes about a member's speech and appearance begin to make the person in question feel uncomfortable. In this situation, other

members reminded the perpetrator to stop joking, while management directed the issue toward more open communication and emphasized the importance of respecting fellow members' feelings. In these cases, family values serve as the basis for members to make social corrections directly, without embarrassing the person who makes the joke.

In addition, participatory communication in the NNB organization has two interrelated dimensions. First, the dimension of participation is the availability of space for members to speak, share experiences, and be involved in problem-solving. Second, the ethical dimension of interaction, namely the awareness of the need to use the communication space without degrading, humiliating, intimidating, or ostracizing other members. Both dimensions are important because bullying is not only related to individual actions but also to patterns of relationships and communication that enable domination, exclusion, or positional inequality within the group. This information indicates the existence of a social control mechanism rooted in common awareness. The prohibition of shaming members in front of others, restrictions on ridicule, and encouragement to discuss problems are forms of interpersonal norms that help limit behavior that could become *bullying* (Yu & Reiss, 2025). These norms gain strength through daily interactions and the shared recognition of behaviors considered appropriate in the community (Lois-Mosquera et al., 2025). In the context of participatory communication, these norms also form ethical boundaries in the communication process. Freedom of speech is not understood as the freedom to demean the other party, but rather as an opportunity to convey ideas and experiences while still considering the dignity of the interlocutor. Thus, participatory communication in organizations has two dimensions: expanding the space for participation and strengthening the ethics of interaction. These two dimensions are important foundations in creating a safe communication environment for all members.

***Marsihaholongan* as the Value of Participatory Communication**

Marsihaholongan is one of the values of local wisdom that is highly relevant to the formation of participatory communication within the Naposo Nauli Bulung Organization. These values are oriented towards affection, care, respect for others, and the willingness to maintain harmonious social relationships. In the context of youth organizations, *marsihaholongan* can be understood as an ethical orientation that directs members to treat other individuals as members of the community, with dignity and the right to receive attention. This value is important in *bullying* prevention because caring social relationships enable members to recognize their colleagues' circumstances, respond more quickly, and create space for dialogue when interpersonal tensions arise.

The practice of *marsihaholongan* can be seen in various forms of interaction between members. When carrying out organizational activities, members show concern for other members who have difficulty completing tasks, provide spontaneous assistance, and communicate personally when they find behavioral changes in their colleagues. In some situations, members are also seen approaching friends who tend to be passive in activities and inviting them to join conversations or activities. This pattern shows that caring in an organization occurs through interpersonal, informal communication. The findings of these observations show that *marsihaholongan* has a participatory communication dimension. Concern does not stop at practical acts of help but is manifested in a willingness to listen to and understand the condition of other members. In this kind of relationship, communication becomes a means of understanding personal experiences that may not be evident in organizational activities. The existence of such communication spaces plays an important role in preventing *bullying*, especially since ridicule, ostracism, humiliation, or intimidation often arise when interpersonal issues go unaddressed.

The results of these observations were reinforced by interviews with members of the organization. One of the members explained,

If a friend seems to have a problem, they are usually asked what it is. We tried to make sure he didn't feel alone. If the problem involves other members, it is usually discussed to prevent it from becoming a bigger problem (Interview with SR, personal communication, 2025).

The statement shows that attention to members' condition is the gateway to interpersonal communication. Members do not directly assess their partner's behavioral changes but instead try to identify the problem through conversation. From the perspective of participatory communication, these actions indicate a process of listening, understanding, and responding that enables members to participate in solving social problems within the organization.

A trustee also explained that caring for members is part of the organization's way of maintaining relationships between youth,

If we see that some members are starting to stay away or participate less in activities, we usually ask carefully. We did not immediately assume that he did not want to join. There could be a problem that he is facing. Therefore, we prefer to talk first (Interview with AM, personal communication, 2025).

The information indicates that participatory communication is used to understand members' conditions before providing assessments. This attitude has an important meaning in *bullying* prevention because social exclusion can occur when a person is perceived as different, inactive, or unable to join a group. By opening up personal communication, the organization creates opportunities for members to explain their situation while also gaining social support. In this context, *marshaholongan* can function as an early detection mechanism for potential *bullying*. Members who experience behavior changes, withdraw from the group, show discomfort, or have difficulty interacting may gain attention from other members. This kind of detection allows problems to be addressed before they develop into more serious forms of social pressure. In other words, the value of care contained in *marshaholongan* is translated into responsive communication actions.

The results of interviews with other members show that interpersonal communication is also used when jokes or treatment are considered excessive.

Sometimes young people joke, but if it makes friends uncomfortable, there are usually reminders. Don't let joking become an insult. If a friend has been offended, we usually tell him to talk carefully so that the problem is clear (Interview with ZN, personal communication, 2025).

The data show an awareness of the boundary between recreative social interaction and communication behavior that can be degrading. In the context of *bullying* prevention, awareness of these boundaries is important because mocking is often disguised as a joke. Participatory communication allows members to convey discomfort and allows the social environment to respond to potentially detrimental behavior. A manager added,

If someone feels offended by a friend's words, we usually don't immediately blame either party. We first listened to what really happened. Sometimes the person who jokes doesn't feel that his words hurt, but for those who do, it can be different. Because it has to be talked about (Interview with SG, personal communication, 2025).

The statement indicates that efforts are underway to establish two-way communication in addressing interpersonal issues. Differences in perceptions about an action or speech are resolved through clarification, not through unilateral judgment. This mechanism aligns with the principle of participatory communication because each party has the opportunity to convey their perspective. At the same time,

the process can help members understand the social consequences of their behavior.

This pattern shows that *marasihaholongan* works through three main mechanisms. First, the mechanism of concern, namely, attention to the social and emotional conditions of members. Second, communication mechanisms, namely, the availability of space for members to express their experiences and discomforts. Third, the social response mechanism, namely the involvement of members and administrators in providing support and resolving problems that arise. These three mechanisms form a communication environment that allows potentially *bullying actions* to be recognized and addressed from the early stages. Furthermore, *marasihaholongan* strengthens members' position as subjects in the organizational communication process (Samsudin, 2021). Members have the opportunity to share their experiences, gain attention, and participate in solving problems related to them. This position differs from a communication pattern that treats members as passive decision-makers. In participatory communication, individual experiences are an important source of information to understand the dynamics of social relations in organizations. The value of care functions as informal social control. When members witness actions that could humiliate or degrade another individual, they have the social legitimacy to issue a reprimand or invite the parties involved to dialogue. The control is not solely through sanctions but also through reminders, advice, personal conversations, and family resolutions. This mechanism shows that *bullying prevention is supported by* the organization's cultural norms.

Marharoan Bolon and the Formation of Intergroup Solidarity

Marharoan bolon is one of the values of local wisdom of Mandailing which emphasizes joint work, division *Marharoan bolon* is one of the values of Mandailing local wisdom, which emphasizes joint work, division of responsibilities, solidarity, and the involvement of all members in the collective interest. In the Naposo Nauli Bulung Organization (NNB), these values are realized through organizational, social, customary, and community activities. Based on field findings, the function of *marharoan bolon* in bullying prevention is evident when collective work is used to respond to exclusion and ridicule that occur in interactions among its members. Based on Observation Session 2, May 28, 2025, at NNB's gotong royong activity in Panyabungan, a situation was observed in which a young member was ridiculed by several other members for being considered incapable of carrying out one of the assigned tasks. The ridicule caused the member in question to withdraw from the activity and chose to be at the back of the group. The situation then received the attention of more senior members. One of the members asked that the ridicule stop and proposed that the member be given a task suited to his abilities. The other members then help explain the work that needs to be done. After obtaining such support, the members who previously withdrew re-engage in joint activities.

This incident shows that *marharoan bolon* has a concrete mechanism in responding to behavior that has the potential to develop into bullying. Interventions are carried out through stopping ridicule, a more inclusive division of duties, and providing assistance to members who are targeted by ridicule. Thus, collective work serves as a space to restore the standing of members experiencing social pressure within the group. This is reinforced by an interview with MR:

"There have been members who have been ridiculed for not being able to do their duties properly. We remind them not to mock, because if they continue, they may feel embarrassed and not want to participate in activities. After that, we divided the task again, and friends who were already able to help him." (Interview with Mr., personal communication, 2025).

MR's testimony showed a direct relationship between ridicule, the potential for exclusion, and the mechanism of *bolon's marharoan*. Teasing is understood as behavior that can make members feel

embarrassed and cause them to withdraw from the group. The organization's response is implemented through social reminders and joint efforts. The division of tasks again becomes an instrument to return the member to collective activity. MS provides a similar experience:

"There are members who have been ridiculed because they are considered slow to work. At first, he chose to remain silent and did not want to join the others. We then invited him to work together. Friends help him with his work so that he doesn't feel excluded. After that, he returned to the activity." (Interview with MS, personal communication, 2025).

The statement shows a more concrete process regarding bullying prevention. Mocking behavior elicits a withdrawal response from the group. These conditions are then addressed by involving members in joint work. Thus, *marharoan bolon* functions as a mechanism of social reintegration through collective activities. NS explains:

"If someone is ridiculed for not being able to do their job, we usually reprimand. Don't let joking become bullying. After that, we usually invite people who are ridiculed to work together and are given the opportunity to learn from members who already can." (Interview with NS, personal communication, 2025).

The quote shows that members are aware of the boundaries between jokes and bullying. Ridicule related to work ability is considered potentially degrading behavior when repeated. The response to these conditions is carried out through reprimands and re-involvement of members in collective work. The PH management explained the mechanism more emphatically:

"If there are members who start to be ostracized or ridiculed by their friends, we as administrators must immediately take a stance. We usually stop the ridicule and then invite them to work together. We assign problematic members tasks so that they still feel part of the group. If there is a problem, we discuss it together." (Interview with PH, personal communication, 2025).

PH's statement shows that the response to bullying has two stages. The first stage is to stop potentially degrading behavior, while the second stage is to return the targeted member to the collective participation space. The mechanism shows the character of *marharoan bolon* as a value that works through joint action. Bullying prevention occurs by strengthening members' social involvement in organizational activities.

Marsihaholongan and *marharoan bolon* share a common aim of building solidarity, but they pursue it through different empirical mechanisms. *Marsihaholongan* is oriented towards recognizing members' interpersonal conditions, especially when a person experiences changes in behavior, discomfort, or personal problems. The response manifests through personal communication, listening, attention, and dialogue. On the other hand, *marharoan bolon* is oriented towards regulating participation in collective activities. When a member is disengaged or potentially experiencing exclusion, a response is provided through assignment, mentoring, responsibility sharing, and re-engagement in joint work. Thus, the difference in mechanisms can be formulated empirically as follows: If *marsihaholongan* prevents *bullying* through interpersonal concern and early detection of individual conditions, then *marharoan bolon* prevents it through participatory inclusion and reorganization of members' involvement in collective activities.

Table 2.

Comparative Mechanisms of Marsihaholongan and Marharoan Bolon in Bullying Prevention

Dimensions	<i>Marsihaholongan</i>	<i>Marharoan bolon</i>
Main orientation	Interpersonal care	Collective solidarity
Unit of analysis	Individuals and interpersonal relationships	Groups and collective activities
Mechanism	Attention, listening, personal dialogue	Task sharing, teamwork, reintegration
Forms of intervention	A personal approach to members	Involvement of members in joint activities
Forms of intervention	Early detection of discomfort and interpersonal problems	Preventing exclusion and marginalization through participation
Bukti empiris	Members who experience behavior changes are approached and talked to	Members who do not obtain roles are assigned tasks and re-engaged
Communication level	Interpersonal	Collective-Organizational

These differences show that the two values do not have identical analytical functions. *Marsihaholongan* can be placed as a relational mechanism, while *marharoan bolon* is a structural-participatory mechanism in the life of the organization. *Marsihaholongan* works by attending to individual experiences and conditions, while *marharoan bolon* works by reconfiguring members' opportunities to participate in collective spaces. The case of exclusion observed shows that the mechanism of *marharoan bolon* has a direct consequence for the pattern of group interaction. Members who originally did not get a role were given responsibilities, received assistance, and then engaged in joint activities. The process changes the member's position from a potential object of exclusion to a subject of participation.

Deliberation as a Channel for Participation and Problem Solving

Deliberation is an important element in the formation of participatory communication in the Naposo Nauli Bulung environment. Based on observations, before the organization's activities began, a member told management that he felt uncomfortable because, in several previous meetings, he was repeatedly the target of ridicule from other members regarding his way of speaking. The ridicule was initially conveyed as a joke, but it was repeated in front of other members. As a result, the member began to choose to remain silent and no longer actively expressed his opinion in the organization's activities. After receiving the information, the management did not immediately sanction the members involved. On the same occasion, the management convened the concerned members and facilitated the deliberations. Members who felt aggrieved were first given the opportunity to explain their experiences and feelings. He said that the joke made him feel embarrassed and uncomfortable participating in the activity. Furthermore, the member who made the mockery was given the opportunity to explain. They stated that the action was originally intended as a joke and did not realize that the behavior had made other members feel depressed.

In the discussion process, the management then asked all parties to respond to the problem and to

direct the conversation toward the impact of the behavior committed, rather than toward finding the most guilty party. After listening to the explanations from each party, the members involved agreed to stop jokes that could embarrass or degrade other members. The member who had previously been the target of ridicule also said he was willing to return to active involvement in the organization's activities. This incident shows that deliberation serves as a concrete mechanism to prevent interpersonal problems from developing into repeated patterns of bullying. Through this process, actions that were initially considered as jokes can be clarified together, their impact on the target party can be understood, and agreements on behavior change can be formed collectively. In this context, the management acts as a facilitator, providing a proportionate space for discussion for all parties involved. One of the managers explained.

If a decision concerns many members, we usually discuss it first. The management provides opportunities for members to express their opinions. If there are differences of opinion, a middle ground is sought so that the decision can be accepted together (Interview with HT, personal communication, 2025).

This mechanism is also seen in the resolution of interpersonal conflicts. A member who has been involved in resolving internal problems said:

"If there is a problem between members, they are usually not immediately scolded or punished. The management usually calls the party concerned and then asks each party about the problem. After that, a solution will be sought (Interview with MM, personal communication, 2025).

The information indicates that the problem is resolved through a communication process among the relevant parties. Each individual has the opportunity to explain their experience, clarify points, and respond to the other party's views. This process avoids conflict resolution through unilateral judging practices that can increase interpersonal tensions.

Such a dialogical mechanism can serve as an initial intervention channel. When ridicule, humiliation, ostracism, or intimidation begins to appear, the problem can be brought into the communication space before it becomes a recurring pattern of behavior. The management serves as a facilitator, ensuring that the parties involved have the opportunity to speak in proportion to their contributions. At the same time, members are directed to understand the impact of their behavior on others and find mutually acceptable forms of settlement. The preventive function is evident in the availability of space for members to raise concerns before they escalate into more serious conflicts, while the corrective function is evident in the process of clarification and resolution when actions that have the potential to become *bullying* occur. Both functions demonstrate that participatory communication can serve as a social control mechanism grounded in dialogue, engagement, and shared responsibility.

Integration of Local Wisdom and Participatory Communication in Bullying Prevention

The integration of local wisdom and participatory communication in bullying prevention highlights the relationship among cultural values, interaction patterns, and social relationship management mechanisms within the Naposo Nauli Bulung Organization. Marsihaholongan serves as an ethical foundation that emphasizes care, compassion, and appreciation for others. *Marharoan* bolon strengthens solidarity through collective involvement in various organizational and community activities. Meanwhile, deliberation provides a mechanism for dialogue to express opinions, identify problems, build agreements, and resolve differences in a familial manner (Bailly, 2025). These three elements form a communication environment that treats respect for members' dignity as part of the organization's social norms.

These values have a function on several levels. First, *Marsihaholongan* fosters an interpersonal orientation that encourages members to treat others with dignity. This value is the basis for communication that avoids humiliation, exclusion, or treatment that can damage social relationships. Second, *marharoon bolon* expands members' involvement in the organization's life so that social relationships are not limited to certain groups. Such collective interaction contributes to the formation of solidarity and a sense of belonging that can reduce the tendency to group exclusivity. Third, *deliberation* provides a communication channel for discussing differences, discomforts, and conflicts before they escalate into intimidating or repetitive actions. The relationship among the three values shows that bullying prevention occurs through interrelated social mechanisms. Cultural values provide guidelines for acceptable behavior in everyday life; participatory communication provides a space for members to share their views and experiences; solidarity creates social support. Meanwhile, *deliberation* provides social procedures for managing differences and solving problems (Qasmi & Ahmed, 2019). Thus, bullying prevention has a preventive dimension that works before problematic behavior develops into a pattern of violence or domination against certain members.

Participatory communication is an important element in the process because it positions members as subjects with the capacity to communicate, share experiences, provide feedback, and participate in decision-making (Syamsiyah et al., 2025). This kind of communication pattern reduces the communication inequality that can arise when authority is only concentrated on a specific management or group (Sorrells, 2016). The opportunity to participate also allows members to gain social recognition and build a sense of security within the organization's environment. In the context of bullying prevention, this condition is important because demeaning, intimidating, or ostracizing can develop when there is inequality in relationships and limited channels for the person who is under pressure to express their problems. The integration of local wisdom with participatory communication also forms an internal social control mechanism (Srirejeki & Khairurriszqo, 2025). Such control does not depend solely on the existence of written regulations or the imposition of sanctions, but develops through the internalization of values that are understood and applied in the relationships between its members. When respect, care, solidarity, and deliberation become part of the common norm, behaviors contrary to those values receive social correction from the community. This mechanism allows organizations to develop a communication culture that is responsive to actions that could potentially lead to bullying.

Conceptually, the relationship between these components can be seen in the following figure,

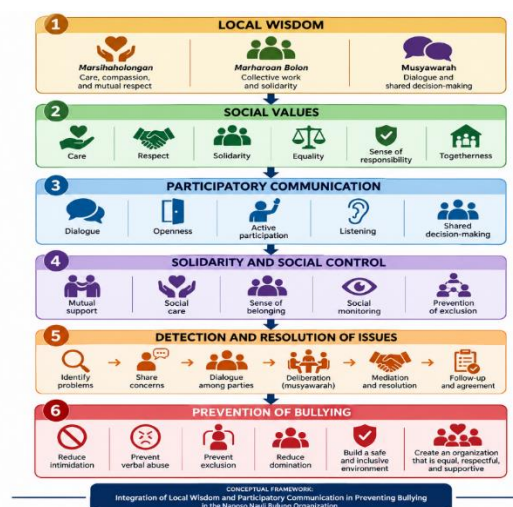


Figure 1. Relationships between components

The series shows that local wisdom serves as a normative basis, participatory communication as an interaction mechanism, solidarity as social capital, and bullying prevention as an organizational social goal (Gede Agung et al., 2024). This interconnectedness enables cultural values to be translated into concrete communication behaviors. In the first stage, local wisdom establishes standards for how members should treat others. In the next stage, participatory communication translates these standards through dialogue, openness, involvement in decision-making, and opportunities to raise issues. Solidarity, in turn, strengthens the relationship among its members by fostering a sense of belonging and shared responsibility (L. Servaes & Servaes, 2021). If differences or interpersonal problems arise, deliberation provides a space for resolution, allowing the parties involved to express their views and seek agreement. The whole process creates social conditions that support sustainable prevention of bullying.

The model also shows a shift in approach from repressive prevention to culture- and participation-based prevention. Repressive prevention tends to rely on rules and sanctions as the primary instruments after violations have occurred (Alam et al., 2022). Instead, a local wisdom-based approach builds a social environment that, from the outset, directs members to respect, engage with, and treat other members equally. Participatory communication strengthens the process by providing a space for dialogue and member involvement in maintaining the quality of social relationships (Senecah, 2024). Thus, the participatory communication model based on local wisdom in the Naposo Nauli Bulung Organization can be understood as a bullying prevention mechanism that integrates cultural values into communication patterns, participation, solidarity, social control, and conflict resolution. The model positions members as communication subjects and actors in building a safe and inclusive organizational environment. The strength of the model lies in the interconnectedness between the cultural values that live in the community and the communication mechanisms that allow those values to be applied in everyday interactions.

4. CONCLUSION

This research shows that bullying prevention in the Naposo Nauli Bulung Organization relies on the internalization of local wisdom values within the organizational communication process, rather than solely on the application of formal rules. The value of *marsihaholongan* builds concern and respect for fellow members, *marharoan bolon* strengthens solidarity and collective involvement, while deliberation provides a space for dialogue to identify, clarify, and resolve conflicts peacefully. These three values form a participatory communication pattern that encourages openness, active participation, shared responsibility, and community-based social control.

This research develops a participatory communication model grounded in local wisdom, positioning *Dalihan Na Tolu* as a normative foundation for building an organizational culture that is safe, inclusive, and free from bullying. In this model, local wisdom is translated into communication mechanisms that enable early detection of potential bullying, conflict resolution through dialogue, and the strengthening of solidarity among members. Thus, bullying prevention shifts from an approach oriented towards sanctioning after a violation has occurred to a preventive approach that emphasizes strengthening a culture of communication, respect for individual dignity, and active participation of all members of the organization. Theoretically, this study advances the study of organizational communication by demonstrating that local wisdom can be integrated into participatory communication models as a bullying-prevention strategy in community-based youth organizations. In practical terms, the resulting model can serve as a reference for youth organizations and culture-based

communities in developing a more participatory, adaptive, and sustainable communication system to foster a harmonious, inclusive, and bullying-free social environment.

This study has limited empirical evidence on the incidence level, based on observation sessions conducted during data collection, so the dynamics of the long-term application of local wisdom values cannot be fully observed. Therefore, further research can be carried out through comparative studies of youth organizations from other Batak sub-ethnicities to identify similarities and differences in the application of local wisdom in bullying prevention. Longitudinal research is also needed to examine the sustainability of the internalization of the values of *marshaholongan*, *marharoran bolon*, and *deliberation*, especially amid changes in leadership and membership regeneration within the organization. In addition, further research can develop and test participatory communication models grounded in local wisdom across diverse youth communities in different regions and social contexts.

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