



Article

Symbolic Interactionism and Communication Patterns: Insights from Army Wives Union Organizations (Persit-KCK), Indonesia

Ana Fitriana Poerana ^{1,2,*}, Jenny Ratna Suminar ¹, Purwanti Hadisiwi ¹ and Edwin Rizal ¹

¹ Department of Communication Science, Universitas Padjadjaran, Kabupaten Sumedang 45363, Jawa Barat, Indonesia

² Department of Communication Science, Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang, Kabupaten Sumedang 41361, Jawa Barat, Indonesia

* Correspondence: ana20003@mail.unpad.ac.id

Abstract: This study aims to determine the interaction and communication patterns of the Persit-KCK (Army Wives Association) organization that have an impact on harmony and cohesiveness among members of the Persit-KCK organization and that build a strong commitment to providing benefits to the wider community in Indonesia. This commitment also increases the loyalty of every soldier of the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI-AD) and their responsibility for upholding state sovereignty, maintaining the territorial integrity of the country, and protecting the whole nation and all of Indonesia from bloodshed from threats and disturbances. The research method used by researchers is a qualitative research method. Researchers used qualitative research in this study to obtain more detailed and in-depth findings and to describe the reality that cannot be measured numerically; however, to obtain the best findings from qualitative data analysis, this research was assisted by *Nvivo 12 Pro* tools. The study assessed an organization for “soldiers’ wives” and “military wives” by focusing on activities carried out by the Persit-KCK organization (the Army Wives Union, “TNI”, in Indonesia). This activity reveals the use of symbols in a social communication that helps each Persit-KCK member to build an understanding of their duties and roles as soldiers’ wives (TNI-AD), and to contribute positively to the wider community. The study also reveals that institutional communication patterns of Persit-KCK prioritize integrative communication among members (activities that strengthen communication among TNI-AD wives) in all regions in Indonesia. Volunteer and non-profit activities of Persit-KCK have made it a driving actor for the growth of social capital during the COVID-19 pandemic in various regions in Indonesia.

Keywords: social identity; symbolic interactionism; army wives; organizational communication



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1. Introduction

Identity is conceptualized as a structure of rules and resources for defining oneself and interacting with others, and organizational communication is highly intersected with social identity (McNamee 2011; Scott 2007; Postmes 2003). Together, identity and organizational communication are seen as a duality of mutual influences that are constructed and transformed in tightly knit social interactions (McNamee 2011; Bennett 2003; Bennett and Iyengar 2008; Fatmawati et al. 2022; Abdillah et al. 2022). Communication has been called the “lifeblood of organizations”, the “glue” that holds everything together, “the power that permeates organizations” or better yet “the fluid of organizational embalming” (Postmes 2003; McNamee 2011; Scott 2007; Schniederjans et al. 2013; Citroen 2011). McNamee (2011) states that identities are regionally bound and vary in size, ownership, position, and agreement with one another. Although individuals have a preferred and somewhat stable identity structure, the ongoing formation of our identity through organizational communication is influenced by situational activities such as group member meetings. Scott (2007) also mentioned that changes in social identity in organizations are

increasingly established in creating symbols of interaction of communication of individual and community management in an organization.

For an organization, communication has an important meaning because communication is also known as the gateway to organizational life. The birth of an organization must be preceded by communication between its members. This allows the organization to be built and maintained by the communication and management practices of its members. Communication can be seen as an array of practices that drives administrators, members, and work partners to exchange information, and make decisions. These communication practices enable the human resources within the organization to work together to achieve common goals. Radovic Markovic and Salamzadeh (2018) stated that in order to achieve success in organizations, both organizations engaged in the business and social fields have the required suite of skills needed to effectively engage with people inside and outside the organization.

The importance of the role of such information and engagement on a broader scale suggests the need for a change in mindset that places information and communication infrastructure only as a complement and support for organizations (Peeraer and Petegem 2015; Parker and Grote 2020; Prianto et al. 2022). The ability to communicate in an organization is a very important ability, both for a leader and its members. This happens because everyone has a role in an organization, as the leaders and members of Persit-KCK are responsible for building good and harmonious relationships within the organization (Wikaningrum and Yuniawan 2018). They need to work together, communicate and coordinate to achieve these goals (Gallant 2014; Fletcher 2016; Fatmawati et al. 2022).

The theory of symbolic interactionism is the social interaction that occurs due to the use of symbols that have meaning (Mead 2012). The theory of symbolic interactionism is also understood as how natural interactions occur between individuals and society, and vice versa. The interactions that appear develop through the symbols created, including gestures, sounds, physical movements, and expressions, until they are carried out consciously (Blumer 1986; Elbadiansyah 2014). In this study, these elements are important because we chose to focus on how Persit-KCK identity in the sphere of organizational communication shapes organizational social identity.

Figure 1 (overlay visualization) below explains the results of the identification and analysis of previous research issues that are most appropriate to this research topic. Thus, based on this identification, this becomes one of the foundations for the development of this research topic. These issues are similar to what Vosviewer described (Vosviewer was used to identify previous research topics regarding social identity and organizational communication so that this research finds the right place to play a role, complement and perfect the problem in the case of the TNI soldier's wife union organization in Indonesia) with the keywords "Symbolic Interactionism and Organizational Communication". In 700 previous research articles indexed on Google Scholar in 2010–2022, we found some of the most popular issues. Then, we researched the keywords "Symbolic Interaction and Organizational Communication" from 2012 to 2015, and the results of the year were obtained through identification on Vosviewer by looking at the previous publications that are most relevant to the keywords entered: (1) interest factors, behavior, and communication strategies are still popular topics for research; (2) situation, cognition, and social structure factors related to organizational communication are topics that are rarely studied; (3) the factor of the emergence of communication symbols in the position of developing organizational communication still needs to be studied more in relation to the issue of symbolic interactionism and organizational communication; (4) the form of argumentation on the mediation process and the risks that will appear in organizational communication are also not intensively researched and still need to be researched. Thus, the findings from the identification and analysis of previous research problems were taken from 700 relevant research documents from the Google Scholar database for 2010–2022, making this research build on this new trend by highlighting how the symbolic interaction of the Persit-KCK organization (warrior's wives union organization) in the realm of interaction patterns, and

organizational communication form social identity and good relations among members in their organizational environment.

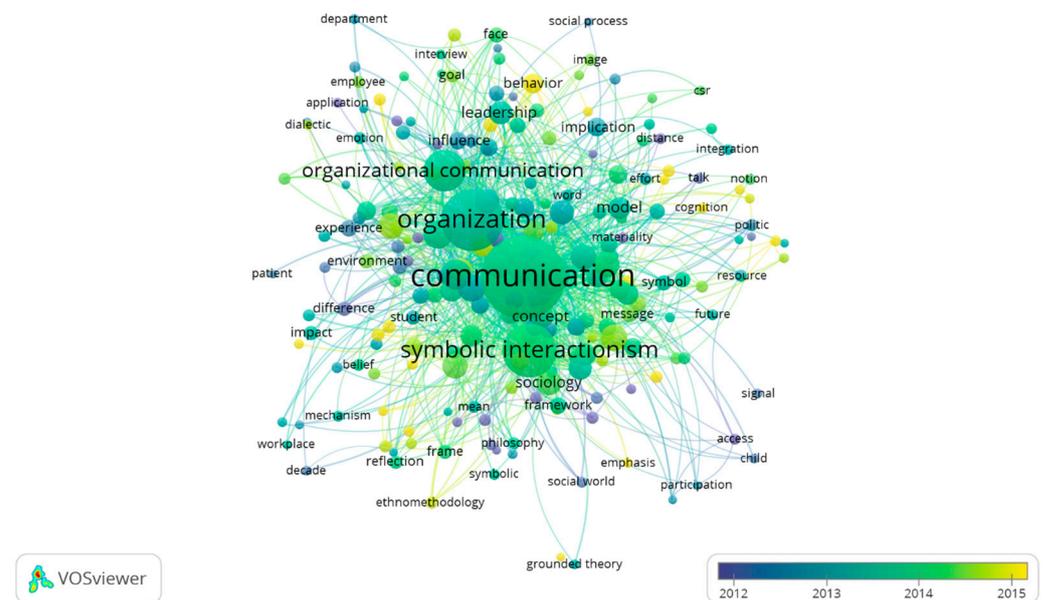


Figure 1. Identification and analysis of research problems related to social identity in an organization framed in relation to symbolic interactionism. Source: processed by researchers from Vosviewer 2022.

The focus of this research is Persit-KCK, an organization of the wives of soldiers of the Indonesian National Armed Forces Army (TNI-AD). It was originally named the Association of Soldiers' Mothers (PKIT), born in the midst of the struggle of the Indonesian nation for independence. In the early days, the organization was imbued with enthusiasm and noble aspirations to win independence from the Netherlands. The struggle for independence is very important to understand the organization in relation to social identity in modern Indonesia because these nationalist social movements gave birth to symbols of identity and formed patterns of interaction in the form of inter-organizational communication in the early history of Indonesia. Initially, Indonesian youth groups pushed to awaken the spirit of nationalism to be free from colonialism through organized socio-cultural movements. Socio-cultural organizations such as the Islamic trade union organization (SI), the Budi Utoma association as a Javanese ethnic group, the socio-religious Islamic reformist movement (Muhammadiyah), the Chinese businessmen's organization and the Indonesian People's Security Agency (BKR) were the forerunners of the National Army Indonesia (TNI) with the intent to obtain independence in Indonesia. This organization focuses on developing political awareness (nationalism) to be free from colonialism and maintain independence in Indonesia (Juniawandahlan 2017; Setya 2022).

Even though the Pesit-KCK did not have an organizational structure at that time, the soldiers' wives succeeded in providing encouragement to soldiers during the fight for independence. The birth of the soldier's wife organization was driven by the awareness that arose among soldiers' wives as companions to their husbands who were struggling to uphold and defend the proclamation of independence for their nation (Persitpusat 2020; Dewantara et al. 2018).

In carrying out its various activities, the Persit-KCK indirectly follows the rules in the structure of the Indonesian National Armed Forces Army (TNI-AD). The position or formal position of a member in the Persit-KCK organization follows the husband's rank in the Indonesian National Armed Forces-Army (TNI-AD) (Persitpusat 2020; Dewantara et al. 2018). Therefore, Persit-KCK members whose husbands have an important position are required to carry out their obligations at Persit-KCK in accordance with the status of their husbands. Ranks and positions in the Indonesian National Armed Forces Army (TNI-AD)

are seen as important and very influential in daily life, especially in terms of behavior and daily communication. The many tasks that must be carried out by an Indonesian National Armed Forces Army's (TNI-AD) wife can be considered role demands. Role is defined as an individual's position in the social structure; it can provide individuals with a sense of identity in a particular society, which ultimately results in meaningful behavior. The military is an organization that values the service of each member (Disque 2016). Military organizational culture influences the behavior of TNI wives, as seen from the many main characteristics and responsibilities that military wives must carry (Sigelman et al. 2019; Pye and Simpson 2017; Puspitosari and Purwandi 2021).

There have been many studies conducted on the study of organizational communication (from the quality of organizational communication to the level of frequency of communication at the member level in organizations) in various countries, as well as research on military wives from various views and various perspectives. One study that focuses on military wives is entitled *Communication, Context, and Well-Being Among Military Couples* (Sigelman et al. 2019). The research findings indicate that the quality of communication is determined by the husband's welfare and assignment location, which has consequences for the support of military families (Pye and Simpson 2017). In the case of this research, we will look at the dynamics of communication between military families who face challenges as military personnel who are bound by various military responsibilities in Indonesia. This is important because it does not only involve military wives but also children of spouses of military members in Indonesia. For a mother (military wife) whose husband is on assignment and cannot bring her family along, this has a negative impact on the family's communication process, making it uncomfortable when her husband returns home to meet his wife and children.

Interactions carried out by Persit-KCK members both internally and externally will show patterns of activities that involve formal and informal speech events. Formal communication patterns occur when the Persit-KCK management is carrying out routine activities (monthly formal meetings or organizational meetings). Then, informal communication patterns occur when there are activities that are not taking place or are part of official activities, for example, during social gatherings, sports, recreation, and others (Erica and Triganitri 2018).

How the Persit-KCK organization carries out activities was the focus of the ethnography of communication research reported here. All types of responses shown by Persit-KCK members in capturing language, message content, and speech content structure the opening ceremony. This type of study of symbolism, which encompasses elements such as clothes, music, and behavior of subculture members, as well as how these symbols are interpreted by the originating society, is common in subculture research (Kristina et al. 2021; Persitpusat 2020; Suminar et al. 2021).

This study aims to characterize Persit-KCK organizational interaction and communication patterns that shape the organizational values and culture experienced by members so that they have a positive impact on the realization of the organization's vision and mission in society, namely fostering and empowering each member and the Indonesian society, as well as being a support system for the needs of each member of the TNI (Indonesian National Armed Forces) in carrying out their duties as soldiers in the Indonesian Army.

This research position complements the existing research on the Persit-KCK organization. That is because the previous research did not explore patterns of interaction and communication from an organizational perspective. In addition, no one has researched how symbols shape interaction patterns and organizational communication of the Persit-KCK between members of the Soldier's Wives organization (TNI-AD), be it the Army, Navy, Air Force, or Polri wives in Indonesia.

The contribution to this research can form an excellent organizational communication model for Persit-KCK in realizing the unity of struggle of the wives of the Indonesian National Armed Forces Army (TNI-AD) members based on a sense of shared destiny, responsibility, and struggle.

2. Materials and Methods

The research interviews were interactive to allow participants to tell their stories in depth and inclusively. An ethnography of communication approach (Creswell and Poth 2016; Reeves et al. 2008) was employed to explain phenomena such as how a dialectic of communication between the Persit-KCK Center administrators forms and the organization's members form the latter's social identities. The research explores the extent to which the symbolic behavior of Persit-KCK administration and members supports the duties of the Indonesian National Armed Forces Army (TNI-AD) soldiers and helps the wider community in Indonesia. In other words, does symbolic behavior of the organization and its members support Persit-KCK's organizational goals?

2.1. Determination of Informants

The subjects in this study were the Persit-KCK organization and five army wives (who automatically became Persit-KCK members) as central administrators of the Persit-KCK organization, where they had an important role as members in carrying out the organizational order. They always participate in all activities within their membership in Persit-KCK, both formal and informal activities, both within the organization and outside the organization.

The informants for this research were determined by following the qualitative tradition, namely up to five informants whom the researchers identified, according to Creswell: "in qualitative research, . . . they must be individuals who have experienced the phenomenon being explored and articulate their conscious experience . . . One can interview up to 10 people" (Creswell 2013). However, according to Kuswarno (2011), the number of informants in communication ethnography research is not determined. The most important factor in choosing informants is that they are expected to be able to comprehensively describe the reality to be studied. Usually, the number of informants in phenomenological research reaches 10 people, which is considered sufficient (Kuswarno 2011). In the case of this study, five key informants were considered sufficient because: (1) they were physically and mentally healthy; (2) they had the most knowledge related to the object of research; (3) they had direct experience at the research site; and (4) they were willing to become informants in this study.

2.2. Qualitative Data Collection Techniques

Data were obtained from field observations, literature studies, documentation, and interviews. Informants in this study were selected based on the principle of subjects who mastered the problem, had data, and were willing to provide complete and accurate information about the interaction and communication patterns of the Persit-KCK organization (Organization of Unity of Soldiers' Wives in Indonesia).

The study employed five key informants, namely: (1) Mrs. "HAP" as the former Chairperson of Persit-KCK for the 2018–2021 period; (2) Mrs. "RDA" as the current Chairperson; (3) Mrs. "Mr" as Head of Persit-KCK PG Kostrad; (4) Mrs. "SR" as Head of Persit-KCK PG Mabesad; and (5) Mrs. "Nv" as Chair of the Persit-KCK Branch.

The analytical frame of reference in this study is the theory of symbolic interactionism (Mead 2012). It enables one to explore the phenomenon of how an individual or organization behaves, interacts, and makes decisions based on the environment the individual occupies (in this case, the Persit-KCK organization).

2.3. Qualitative Data Analysis

The data obtained were analyzed through interactive data analysis techniques described by Miles et al. (2018). Steps involved the standard data collection, data reduction, data verification, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. This process was aided by the use of *Nvivo 12 Pro* qualitative tools.

Steps in the data collection and analysis are shown in Figure 2 below:

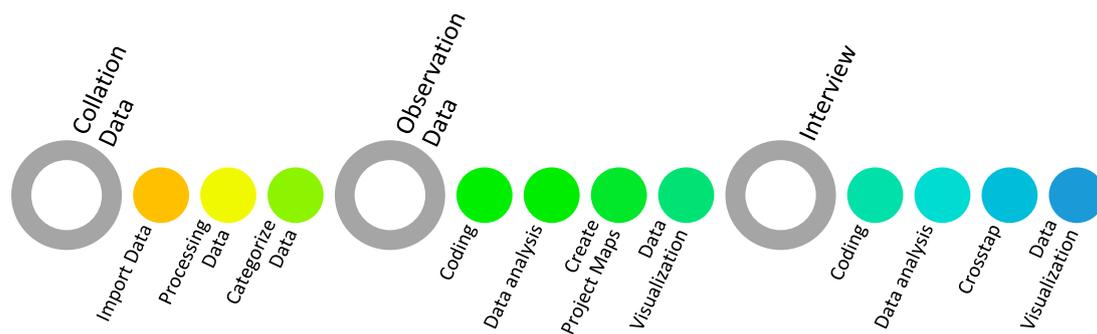


Figure 2. Data collection and analysis techniques with *NVivo 12 Pro*. Source: processed from Woolf and Silver (2017), 2022.

This sequence of steps yields 25 concepts that appear to be important as common procedures in the *Nvivo 12 Pro* qualitative analysis tool. We decided to categorize these concepts from three areas (collation of data (a), data observation (b), and interview (c)) A concept that seemed to be discussed together in category A was assessed in relation to observation data (e.g., document analyzed from category B), and how often this concept came up was also assessed (category C). This combination of factors enabled the identification of problems, cases, and phenomena studied to obtain the best findings and conclusions.

3. Results

First, our analysis explores human thought (to understand the description of human mental ideas that can be formed from the experience of the Persit-KCK organization in Indonesia) and Persit-KCK's mission related to member behavior and organizational symbols. Specifically, we describe patterns of interaction between Persit-KCK members and the behavior of soldiers' wives as a symbol of the Persit-KCK organization. Second, we explain social interaction, communication, and organization in the Persit-KCK, describing, for example, how the vision and mission of Persit-KCK influence the behavior and understanding of each Persit-KCK member as regards the decision making of each Persit-KCK member. Third, we explain the results of identification and analysis, describing, for example, how the Persit-KCK organizations show symbolic modality of various codes in symbolic interactions and social identity created from various activities of members of the Persit-KCK organization.

3.1. Human Thought and Persit-KCK Mission: Member Behavior and Organizational Symbols

The Persit-KCK organization is considered a very strict and rigid organization where the way of dressing, the way of behaving and speaking of its members must comply with the applicable rules. The rules governing Persit-KCK members in behaving and speaking are not written in written regulations. These rules were passed down by seniors (old Persit-KCK members) to juniors (new Persit-KCK members) before they became the wives of TNI-AD soldiers. The way of speaking for Persit-KCK members is adjusted to the husband's rank and when talking to Persit-KCK members with higher positions, officers use polite language (Prutami and Dwiningtyas 2016). Apart from that, what also influences the thoughts, mentality, and behavior of Persit-KCK members is the background of each of the members, who come from various multi-cultural groups in Indonesia.

Indonesia is a multicultural country, which has a fairly complex diversity of people. In this one country, there are many differences. Indonesia has 742 languages/dialects consisting of various tribes and sub-ethnicities, which account for no less than 478 ethnic groups (Kominfo 2013). This greatly influences the behavior, thoughts, and responsibilities of the Indonesian people. It affects every individual and organizational communication in Indonesia. For example, Indonesia needs one unified language, namely Indonesian, which is widely used in every region in Indonesia. This language helps to integrate national identity in Indonesia as that of a nation with a high multicultural level. The high

multicultural background in Indonesia makes each member appreciate harmony in the organization and cohesiveness/unity in the organization.

The life of Persit-KCK members cannot be separated from the figure of a husband who uses his position influentially in the Persit-KCK organization and his daily life as a Persit-KCK member. The atmosphere in the military environment has a style of speech that is known to be firm (brief communication and intimidating subordinates), using instructional and hierarchical communication to bring big/small influence to the soldiers' wives because a wife who is a member of the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI-AD) is carried away by the habits of her husband who incidentally is always disciplined, straightforward and firm (Prautami and Dwiningtyas 2016; Herawati et al. 2019).

The requirement for a woman to become a Persit-KCK member is to marry a member of the Indonesian National Armed Forces Army (TNI-AD). To be able to marry an Indonesian National Armed Forces Army (TNI-AD), several special requirements must be met by both parties, both prospective brides and grooms who are members of the Indonesian National Armed Forces Army (TNI-AD). Among the requirements that must be met besides a marriage license, a neighborhood/hamlet cover letter for the prospective wife/husband, as well as a certificate of being unmarried, is also required to fulfill other requirements, namely a letter of intent for the prospective wife/husband, envelope form D, document N1, document N2, document N4, certificate of police records (SKCK) for both parties, coupled photograph using daily service clothes (PDH) and Persit-KCK with a blue background, photograph of the future wife wearing Persit-KCK clothing, and ordinary passport photos from both parties.

The requirements for marriage for members of the Indonesian National Armed Forces Army (TNI-AD) are in accordance with the TNI Commander Regulation Number Per-pang/11/VII/2007 concerning Procedures for Marriage, Divorce, and Soldier Referrals. A guidebook for military wives is also available for prospective soldiers' wives who have been officially proposed as potential wives of these soldiers. The book contains information about Persit-KCK and a description of the wife's administrative duties as a Persit-KCK member (Prautami and Dwiningtyas 2016; Istiyanto and Novianti 2018), as Figure 3 below exemplifies.

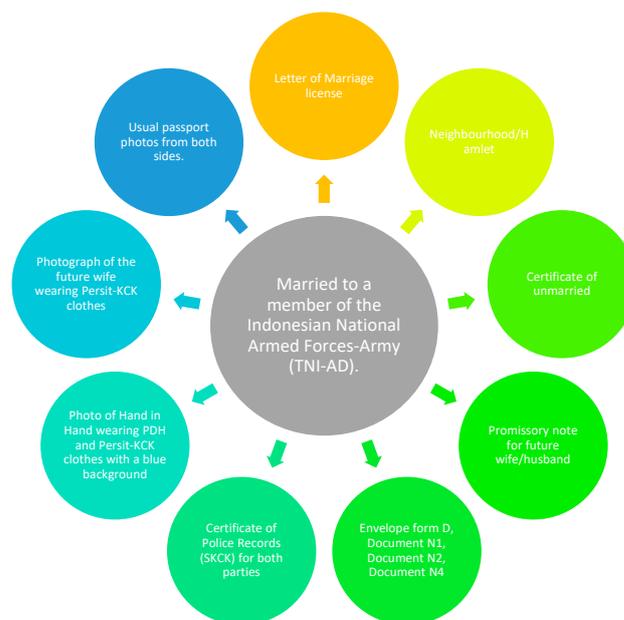


Figure 3. Requirements to become Persit-KCK members. Source: processed from various sources, 2022.

Women who have military husbands are not only positioned as wives and mothers but also Persit-KCK members who must represent their husbands in an organization, in

addition to having a social identity attached to them as Persit-KCK members. A woman who is married will experience more or fewer changes related to her identity. A woman also loses all her inherent characteristics, such as who she is, whose child she is, and where she comes from. For example, if a child of a regional government head becomes the wife of a soldier, then she has lost her status as a child of a high-ranking regional official. She is obliged to submit and obey the norms of being a soldier's wife. In another example, there are quite a number of Persit-KCK members who are willing to sacrifice their careers and give up the attributes of their position in order to accompany their husband wherever their husband is on duty. This can be said to express loyalty to the Persit-KCK family and the organization itself.

In Indonesia, the duty of a soldier's wife is basically an absolute commitment to family, organization, and society. Therefore, if a woman becomes a soldier's wife, she automatically fulfills five responsibilities, namely as a woman, soldier's wife, member of an organization, mother and child, and member of the community.

Likewise, in the household life of a soldier's wife, the obligation to raise children, serve her husband, and become a member of Persit-KCK cannot be avoided (Wieringa 2003; Dewantara et al. 2018). The life of Persit-KCK members shows the importance of carrying out all obligations as a soldier's wife in a balanced manner, both within the family, organization, and society itself (Wieringa 2003; Dewantara et al. 2018). The main function and mission of the Persit-KCK organization are to increase harmony among all wives because they fulfill many responsibilities, including as companions for husbands, housewives, members of the organization, and members of the community (Persitpusat 2020). A soldier's wife who is able to complete her responsibilities at home and at work then remains responsible as a Persit-KCK member.

Thus, the woman is considered a symbol of pride in the Persit-KCK environment, which has created a harmony of responsibility between women, soldiers' wives, housewives, and members of the organization. In adopting these roles together and following the cultural beliefs and practices of the Persit-KCK organization, she can be considered, in her own eyes and through those of others, capable of helping her husband to concentrate on his work as a soldier in the army (TNI) defending the country. She also becomes an exemplary symbol of the organization.

Women who are married to members of the military are more appropriately called "military wives" rather than "soldiers' wives" (Muthia and Hadiwirawan 2021). This shows that women who are married to members of the military not only have legal status as husband and wife but are also considered part of the military institution. The view held by the majority of military institutions also reflects the position of the wife in that institution, whose presence is seen as important in assisting her husband in serving and running the country effectively. This then results in some characteristics or obligations being extended to soldiers' wives (Muthia and Hadiwirawan 2021). In Persit-KCK organizations in Indonesia, the scope of program activities directed at community empowerment extends to the areas of economic organization, business affairs, and cooperatives (community-owned businesses), as well as the development of community cultural issues and education, which is indicated by the existence of this field in the organizational structure of the central Persit-KCK in Indonesia. The tendency of the Persit-KCK program to be involved in social interaction and communication as a social service is indicated by the existence of the social sector and scholarships, health affairs, and Warakuri affairs.

Several previous studies have shown that being a military wife is difficult because according to the applicable army rules, a soldier's wife has duties and roles, including helping other soldiers' wives develop their mental, physical, and moral abilities, as well as being a supporter of the duties of the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI) through instilling a sense of brotherhood and kinship (Puspitosari and Purwandi 2021; Kristina et al. 2021). Another study describes the difficulties faced by a military wife during deployment: "communicating that produces positive emotions and less emotional after communicate, even when communication is infrequent, has the potential to improve the well-being of

both partners" (Heavey et al. 2017; Sigelman et al. 2019). This study contains interesting characteristics to study in relation to organizational speech acts. Previous studies on organizational speech acts illustrate how language is used in culturally diverse societies (Beta et al. 2020).

The communication patterns of each Persit-KCK member are also influenced by the position of their husband. The Persit-KCK organization has a strict structure, is organized, and prioritizes the degree and position of the husband. The higher the husband's position, the more known and formed his identity will be. The communication patterns of each Persit-KCK member are also influenced by the position of their husband. When the husband's position determines the wife's position in the Persit-KCK organization, the wife must understand how to position herself both when speaking and acting in relation to her husband's rank and position in various official and unofficial activities. This self-positioning is an integral part of identity for Persit-KCK members (Prutami and Dwiningtyas 2016; Rahayu et al. 2019).

Maintaining the continuity and harmony of the Persit-KCK organization requires unity/cohesiveness in an organization that is built on good communication with each Persit-KCK member. Therefore, members of the Persit-KCK organization must show high commitment in order to be able to devote their energy to providing the best service, in accordance with their responsibilities and functions, to the community, organization, and country.

Persit-KCK social interaction and communication sometimes lead to multiple role conflicts that are negatively related to the goals and organizational commitment of Persit-KCK members. An example is when a Persit-KCK member is talking to their boss. Their tendency is observed to be to listen more. Thus, Persit-KCK members are encouraged to increase organizational commitment by overcoming the dual role conflict (between responsibilities at work and responsibility at home) that they experience (Eman 2018). For example, a conflict can emerge when attempting to implement time management to be able to optimize the role of housewife, wife, and member of the organization, while instilling understanding in older children to be able to help manage daily household tasks. This array of potentially conflicting demands can inhibit the ability of Persit-KCK members to feel calm when organizing and to organize well. Due to the cultural tendency in Indonesia, a wife is not advised to be negligent in her duties as a housewife at home; therefore, arrangements and scheduling need to be made by a soldier's wife to minimize deficiencies arising from role conflict.

These cases are not much different from what has been examined by various previous studies, such as that of Eman (2018), which suggests that the Persit-KCK organization needs to increase attention to the problem of dual role conflict among family members. Prutami and Dwiningtyas (2016) states that Persit-KCK organizations are advised to provide facilities and policies that support the performance of a dual role, such as alternative activity schedules, daycare, kindergarten, family consent policy, and job sharing. In line with the Persit (Army Wives Association)-KCK vision and mission in Indonesia, Sartore and Cunningham (2007), and Gallant (2014) explain that an organization in a society must provide a lot of good and bring a solution to social problems that occur, while providing a mechanism for the formation of ideological meaning, identity formation, and social behavior to better understand the research discussion on this sub-language regarding the picture of human thought and mentality formed from the experiences of Persit-KCK organizational members. Specifically, we describe the pattern of interaction between Persit-KCK members and the behavior of the soldiers' wives as a symbol of the Persit-KCK organization through information networks from research facts (obtained through coding data sources that researchers possess) mapped from several nodes, as shown in the following figure.

The mapping using *Nvivo 12 pro* in Figure 4 above shows that the Persit-KCK case as an army wife unit (TNI) organization is very closely related to social identity factors, being part of a military institution, and having a task structure in serving the public. This

is because the data mapping was carried out by *Nvivo 12 Pro* based on all qualitative data owned by the researchers.

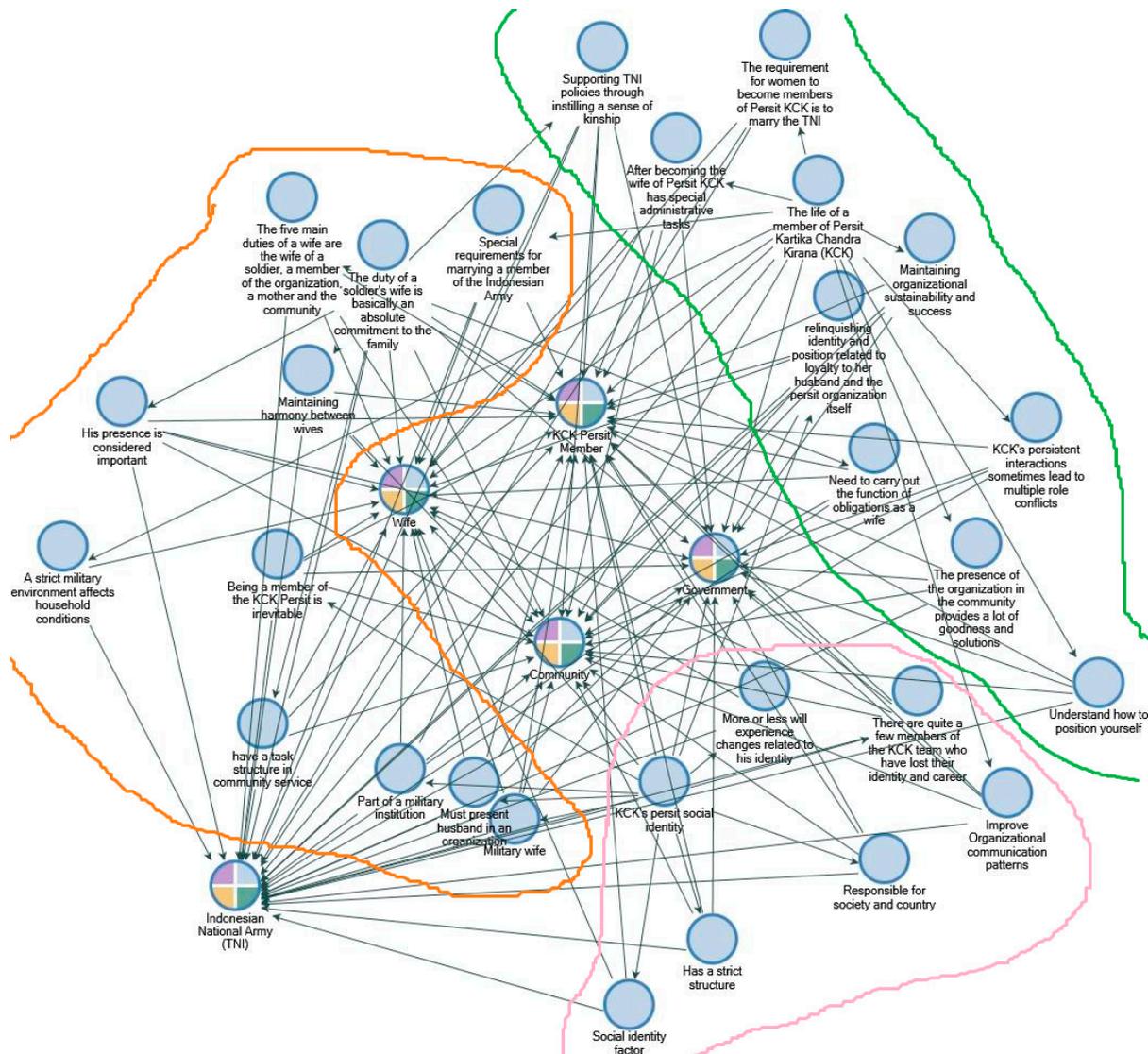


Figure 4. Information network analysis of interaction patterns and communication processes in the Persit-KCK organization. Source: processed by the author via *Nvivo 12 Pro*, 2022.

The activities of TNI wives in dealing with the wider community, as well as their relationship with their husbands and superiors in the organization, are assessed. As in the determination of positions in the organizational structure, Persit-KCK members are based on the rank and position of their husbands, which indirectly makes each member a formal organization whose position depends on the position and rank of their husband (see orange circle). The formation of patterns of interaction and social identity in Persit-KCK membership occurs when the wives of the Indonesian Army are able to adapt to the environment in which they live, establish good relationships with fellow soldiers' wives and can improve their quality as soldiers' wives. In the next case, Persit-KCK members have a mission to maintain harmony between members (see pink circle).

When a wife can carry out responsibilities at work and at home, her presence is considered important in Persit-KCK (see green circle).

As a simple conclusion in this sub-discussion, which is visualized in Figure 4, the interrelationship of all these indicators helps each individual carry out his individual,

family, military and social duties and roles properly. Communication to enable coordination among these various roles can be interpreted as a gateway to organizational life. Based on this analysis, it can be said that Persit-KCK organizational interactions are determined by good communication patterns established for each member according to the organizational behavior and social identity within them. For example, members should not talk too much to their superiors, and the husband's position in the military determines their position in the Persit-KCK organization.

These factors can be seen to have emerged following the birth of this organization, which occurred through communication among its founders. This organization was then built and maintained through a process of communication between the board and its members, addressing an increasing array of such factors.

3.2. Social Interaction, Communication and Organization Persit-KCK

The research of [Torchia et al. \(2018\)](#), who analyzed relations among women's, organizational innovation, and decision making, showed that women made a positive and significant contribution to the development of organizational innovation and decision making in the dynamics of organizational conflict ([Malik et al. 2021](#)). In addition, [Sartore and Cunningham \(2007\)](#) argue that stereotypes of women's roles are shaped and influenced by the actions of social ideology and the capacity of women to solve social problems around them. That is how the vision and mission of the organization and the ability (communication and positive ideas) of women play a role in overcoming the problems they face. Thus, the social actions of women's organizations, such as Persit-KCK in Indonesia, in a symbolic interactionist perspective form stereotypes of the wives of TNI soldiers who are smart and play a positive role in social interaction in Indonesia. This is not much different from the Persit-KCK organizational guidelines which encourage each member to benefit their environment/social surroundings.

Persit-KCK organizational guidelines for the behavior of Persit-KCK members are directed towards the following natures and characters: (1) Pure, loyal, selfless, busy; (2) Sincere, willing, wise, and intelligent; (3) Courageous and responsible ([Persitpusat 2022](#)). Organizational communication in the formation of a social identity in Persit-KCK can be observed by considering the behavior of Persit-KCK members and organizational decisions (see [Table 1](#)). The most common reason driving the revolution of the soldiers' wives union organization in Indonesia is the Persit-KCK Organizational Vision and Mission and Eastern Culture in Indonesia, which shapes the social identity of Persit-KCK members. Every member of Persit-KCK (Society Organization of TNI-AD Soldier's Wives) is required to always appear reasonable and polite in attitude and speech, as well as appearance, and can be an example based on high concern for oneself and the environment ([Kominfo.Jatimprov 2010](#)). The General Chairperson of the Persit-KCK Indonesia organization center expressed the following in an interview:

"My experience between the Persit (Army Wives Association) in Indonesia and Malaysia is quite unique, in Malaysia, all the motives are the same, the army, sea, and air forces all have the same Persit (Army Wives Association). The uniform for Persit (Army Wives Association) members is the only difference in the headscarf. The Army's hood color is red and gray and the Navy's is blue. Cows for their uniforms are the same as floral motifs containing elements of these three colors."

"The use of uniforms for different organizations, if you move to the Headquarters of the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI Headquarters) you have to change, even though our husbands don't change uniforms, just change their Berets. Why don't we just go with it like that, the clothes don't need to change, maybe the headscarves change, so we don't have to make too many clothes. we can imitate the one in simple Malaysia which is important to be polite and still beautiful."

Table 1. Organizational symbols and member behavior.

The Army Wives Association (Persit-KCK) in Indonesia	The Army Wives Association (Persit-KCK) in Malaysia	The Army Wives Association (Persit-KCK) in Singapore	The Army Wives Association (Persit-KCK) in the United States
The motif of the Army Wife's uniform is not much different from that of the Indonesian National Armed Forces.	The identity of the members is simple but still polite and beautiful (not too many clothing motifs and when used in outdoor activities, it still looks appropriate). The motif for the uniform of the Army's wife's head scarf is red and gray, and for the Navy, it is blue. Guidelines for their uniforms are the same as floral motifs, containing elements of these three colors. Not much different from members of the Soldier's Wives Association (Persit-KCK) in Indonesia.	There is no special dress for the wife	There is no special dress for the wife
Active in social activities as the wife of the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI).	Active in accompanying military banquets.	The behavior of soldiers' wives in Singapore is not very active in social activities, and military service.	The behavior of soldiers' wives in The United State is not very active in social activities and military service.

Source: processed from interview data with the Chairperson of the Persit-KCK Center (Processed through primary data), 2022.

The General Chair of Persit-KCK placed emphasis on the fact that every Persit-KCK citizen is required to always increase faith and piety to God Almighty, and always maintain self-respect, family honor and the image of Persit-KCK residents. Every Persit-KCK citizen must have the same vision, perception and interpretation as the Indonesian Army National Army (TNI-AD) in serving the nation and state. In order to enter the life of an advanced and independent society, in addition to carrying out other important activities, in its work program, Persit-KCK prioritizes family development and education for the sons and daughters of soldiers' families, as well as civil servants from the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI-AD) as the next generation of future leaders of the nation. Thus, it is fundamental to play an active and voluntary role, contributing the ability to build an image that is in line with the vision of the Indonesian Army National Army (TNI-AD) which rests on specific values, namely solid, tough, professional, nationalism-minded, and loved by the people (Kominfo.Jatimprov 2010; Persitpusat 2020).

The Persit-KCK organization is considered a very strict and rigid organization where the way of dressing, the ways of behaving and speaking of its members must comply with the applicable rules. The rules governing Persit-KCK members in behaving and speaking are not written in written regulations. These rules were passed down by seniors (old Persit-KCK members) to juniors (new Persit-KCK members) before they became the wives of soldiers of the Indonesian Army National Army (TNI-AD). Several previous research findings suggest that the way Persit-KCK members speak/communicate is adjusted to the husband's rank and when talking to Persit-KCK members with higher positions, officers use polite language (Prautami and Dwiningtyas 2016; Rahayu et al. 2019).

In addition to the husband's rank, the position of Persit-KCK members in the management of Persit-KCK also influences the behavior and way of communicating between Persit-KCK members and other members. Matters taken into consideration used to appoint Persit members to become Persit-KCK administrators include loyalty to leaders, educational background, previous work and others (Prautami and Dwiningtyas 2016; Rahayu et al. 2019). Most of the Persit-KCK members who are Persit-KCK administrators are Persit-

KCK members who do not work because they are considered members of Persit-KCK who do not work to be more responsible and have more time than working Persit-KCK members (Suryomenggolo 2021; Weatherbee 2016).

The position of Persit-KCK members based on the husband's rank and its reflection in the management of Persit-KCK affects the communication, sitting position, offers, gestures, the language used, and the interaction model that occurs within the Indonesian National Armed Forces' (TNI-AD) wife organization (Suryomenggolo 2021; Weatherbee 2016). Persit-KCK members who are officers have a higher position compared to Persit-KCK members whose husbands hold the rank of "non-commissioned officer" or "Tamtama". When speaking at meetings or sports activities, Persit Perwira members (Chief and Vice Chairperson of Persit-KCK) will dominate the conversation and give more assignments to Persit-KCK Bintara or Tamtama members. The raised tone of voice of Persit-KCK officers when giving advice to Persit-KCK members who have the rank of "Bintara" or "Tamtama" shows their position and influence over Persit-KCK members whose positions are lower (Proutami and Dwiningtyas 2016; Rahayu et al. 2019).

When in the same place, Persit-KCK con-commissioned officers and enlisted members will tend to stay away from and separate themselves from Persit-KCK Perwira members. The language used by Persit-KCK members during formal and informal activities does not have a significant difference, but for formal activities, Persit-KCK members will use standard Indonesian; when in informal activities, they will use a mixed language, namely Indonesian and Javanese. In addition to that, the position of Persit-KCK members also influences the use of the language used to speak with other Persit-KCK members. When speaking with Persit Perwira members or higher-ranking husbands, Persit-KCK Bintara/Tamtama members use the language Java krama (local language) (Proutami and Dwiningtyas 2016; Rahayu et al. 2019).

Persit-KCK members whose positions are lower do not dare to criticize Persit-KCK members whose positions are higher. Criticizing Persit-KCK members who have a higher position is considered unethical and impolite. Social position is referred to as a person's position in a particular community group. A person's social position is obtained from which things are valued in that community group such as education, wealth, work or one's economic ability (Proutami and Dwiningtyas 2016; Rahayu et al. 2019). Based on observational data from researchers on the phenomenon of member behavior, Persit-KCK organizational decisions are influenced by several factors such as the social capital of Persit KCK members, where one's husband's position leads Persit-KCK members to use social capital when interacting with other Persit-KCK members. This social capital is used to maintain good relations with Persit-KCK members who are either in a higher or equal position. Persit-KCK members who use this social capital tend to avoid providing criticism or suggestions to Persit-KCK members whose positions are higher than themselves. In addition, the position of Persit-KCK members can also be seen when they are members of the Persit-KCK management. Persit-KCK members can use their abilities in arts/sports and work experience to be appointed Persit-KCK administrators. According to Yuan (2022), a symbolic interactionist model of interpreter-facilitated communication is needed with a focus on exploring an interpreter's identification with self-meaning and role management in the organization, which is key to their intrapersonal processes, so that it impacts decisions and behavior in interpreting Persit-KCK in the community. Below, Figure 5 shows how the vision and mission of the Persit-KCK organization influence the social behavior of military wives who join Persit-KCK.

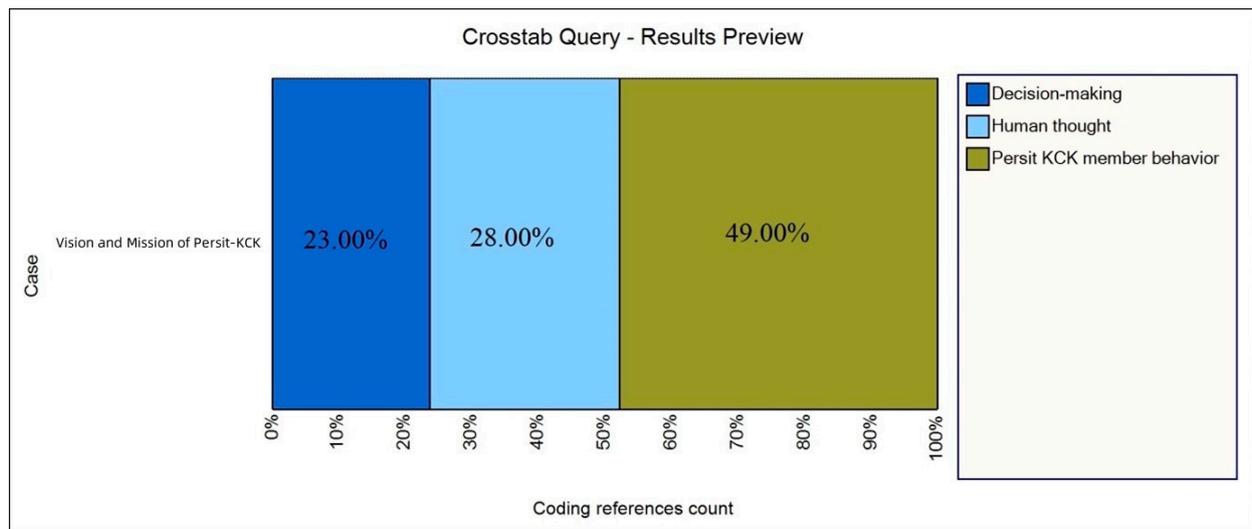


Figure 5. Analysis of the influence of Persit-KCK’s vision and mission on three indicators of social behavior. Source: processed from *Nvivo 12 Pro*, 2022.

Based on the *Nvivo 12 Pro* analysis above, it can be seen that the level of influence of Persit-KCK organization’s vision and mission on the behavioral indicators of Persit-KCK members is 49.00%, and on members’ thoughts it is as much as 28.00%, although this influence on decision-making indicators is not as big as the previous indicator, which is equal to 23.00%. These percentages are obtained from information and factual results in interview transcripts and documentation which show how the Persit-KCK organization’s vision and mission influence member behavior, member thinking, and member decision making. Based on this analysis, it can be seen that the influence of Persit-KCK’s vision and mission has a very large role in the behavior and understanding of each Persit-KCK member; thus, this influences the decision making of each Persit-KCK member. This finding is in line with other findings which state that the soldier’s wife is tasked with ensuring the sustainability of the Persit-KCK organization, as well as being seen as a stronghold, playing a role in the success of the war and being ready to provide support to her husband (Afriani et al. 2022; Erowati et al. 2020).

4. Discussion

A community group has a distinctive and unique code that is used in communicating with members of the group. The group’s distinctive codes are called “speech codes”. Speech codes can be observed from the analysis of the conversations that occur in the community (Prautami and Dwiningtyas 2016; Dewantara et al. 2018). In order to understand speech codes in Persit-KCK members, it is necessary to pay attention to several factors, such as the background of Persit-KCK members, social position and communication processes of Persit-KCK members, regarding topics of conversation discussed and avoided by Persit-KCK members (Prautami and Dwiningtyas 2016; Dewantara et al. 2018). The key elements of communication are the language used, the terms that appear, the calls used to address other members, visible gestures, including the courage to express opinions, tone of voice used, sitting position, interaction models, communication channels and rules that apply in the Persit-KCK organization (Prautami and Dwiningtyas 2016; Rahayu et al. 2019).

A wife of the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI-AD) must follow and accompany her husband wherever his husband is assigned. Not infrequently, a Persit-KCK member has to move several times because she follows her husband on duty (Prautami and Dwiningtyas 2016; Rahayu et al. 2019; Dewantara et al. 2018). Therefore, a Persit-KCK member must have high adaptability in order to socialize with other members. Living in a dormitory can be boring; thus, Persit-KCK members can participate in activities such as mandatory activities, namely branch meetings, branch meetings and routine activities,

namely sports, recitation and branch/branch gatherings. In order to be able to show their participation in Persit-KCK, Persit-KCK members need to use the capital they have, such as their previous job and their ability in the field of sports.

There are three codes that are very visible as symbols that are created in the conditions and activities of Persit-KCK; these results are obtained from the results of the research data analysis, namely the code of dignity, the code of loyalty, and the code of power. In addition, the Persit-KCK organization shows the modalities of Persit-KCK members, namely symbolic social and social identity (Prautami and Dwiningtyas 2016; Bulandari 2018), which can be seen in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Social identity and symbols that create Persit-KCK.

No.	Created Symbols	Identification and Analysis
1	Code of Dignity	<p>The symbols created form a symbolic model and social capital in a code of dignity. The position of Persit members can be seen through the use of language, calls or certain terms used by Persit members when communicating with other members, as well as the position of Persit members in Persit management. In choosing the language used to communicate with other Persit members, Persit members use symbolic capital and social capital.</p> <p>The visible symbolic capital is the husband's rank in the military world. A person will be respected when he has a high rank and position in his unit, for example, TNI soldiers who have the rank of officers compared with TNI soldiers who have the rank of non-commissioned officer or enlisted. TNI soldiers who hold the rank of non-commissioned officer or enlisted must respect and obey TNI soldiers who have the rank of officer. Another visible capital is social capital. Persit members use social capital when interacting with higher-position Persit members. This social capital is used to maintain relationships with Persit members whose positions are higher than theirs.</p>
2	Code of Loyalty	<p>The symbols created form a social model in the code of obedience. It can be interpreted that social capital in the compliance code can be seen in how Persit members maintain their relationship with the Chairwoman. When facing members with a higher position, Persit members must be prepared in advance, such as when informant I wanted to discuss food issues during a visit by the commander in chief.</p>
3	Code of Power	<p>The symbols created form a social model in the code of power. It can be observed that Persit-KCK (KCK) is in a military environment; therefore, in its implementation, there are rules that also apply in the husband's organization. As an organization, Persit has a binding force towards its members. Membership of this organization is mandatory, as every woman who has been officially married to a soldier of the Indonesian Armed Forces (TNI-AD) will automatically become a member of Persit-KCK.</p> <p>The Persit organization has written and unwritten rules that regulate its members in speaking with and behaving in relation to other members, including how to dress, speaking according to the husband's rank, and others. A Persit member who dares to give advice or criticism to a Persit member with a higher position will be considered impolite and not act according to existing ethics. Persit members who are in lower positions have a bad taste and are reluctant towards members who are in higher positions, both when talking and when sitting. Persit-KCK members with low positions speak more standard language and tend to avoid talking about Persit members with higher positions.</p>

Source: Processed from member guidebooks, interviews, other authors, 2022.

The Persit-KCK organizations show symbolic modality of various codes in symbolic interactions and social identity created from various activities of members of the Persit-KCK organization. Based on that, there are three very visible codes, namely codes of dignity, codes of loyalty and codes of power. Codes of dignity are used to indicate the highest position of a person in the group, which can be seen through their choice of language, as well as the nicknames used by Persit members when communicating with other members.

Codes of loyalty are used to show Persit members' compliance by looking at topics of conversation that tend to be avoided when talking to other members, feelings when not participating in Persit activities, and courage in expressing opinions. Codes of power show the power of the Persit organization in encouraging its members to participate in Persit activities and speak according to the position and rank of their husband. In these three codes, Persit members use symbolic capital, namely the rank of husband. This symbolic capital is very strong in the Persit organization where, even though Persit members use other capital they have, the position of Persit members is still associated with the husband's rank. The husbands' positions make Persit members use social capital when interacting with other Persit members, namely social capital. This social capital is used to maintain good relations with Persit members who are either in a higher or equal position. Persit members who use this social capital tend to avoid providing criticism or suggestions to Persit members whose position is higher than theirs. In addition, the position of Persit members can also be seen when they are members of the Persit management. Persit members can use their abilities in sports and work experience to be appointed Persit-KCK administrators.

This study provides evidence that symbol skills, including gestures and words, describe the social purpose of the existence of the Persit-KCK Women's Group for the unity of the Indonesian Army soldiers in carrying out the task of defending the state. The findings in this study suggest that early designation facilitates the development of social-emotional concepts and reveals early symbol skills as mental tools that help children construct their understanding of the social world. In the case of the Persit-KCK institutional communication pattern, prioritizing member integrative communication strengthens communication between the wives of the Indonesian National Armed Forces in the internal Persit-KCK organization in all regions in Indonesia. Persit-KCK is active in voluntary and non-profit activities that show themselves as one of the driving actors for the growth of social capital in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic that occurred in various regions in Indonesia, especially those built through networks that are owned structurally and non-structurally. During COVID-19 in Indonesia, Persit-KCK was active in activities to maintain food security in Indonesia, such as creating gardening activities, planting vegetables, and also performing vaccinations in the community (Matalensa 2021; Kodam I/BB 2021). These activities form a social identity as symbols of an organization that seeks to bring benefits to the surrounding environment.

Based on the Nvivo analysis in Figure 6, it can be seen that the influence of Persit-KCK organizational symbols (husband's rank, organizational position, the language used, and uniform) on social identity and organizational communication registers percentages of members' condition of 26.67%, organizational communication indicator of 26.67%, and in the indicator that has the greatest influence, social identity, of 46.67%. Based on this analysis, it was found that a wife of the Indonesian Army National Army (TNI-AD) must obey and accompany her husband wherever he is sent. It is not uncommon for Persit-KCK members to take several trips to keep up with their husbands' work. Therefore, Persit-KCK members must have high adaptability to interact with other members. This activity facilitates the development of socio-cultural concepts and reveals early symbol skills as a social communication tool that helps each Persit-KCK member build their understanding of their duties and roles as soldiers' wives (TNI-AD) and contribute positively to the wider community. This finding is in line with other findings, which state that Persit-KCK is an organization whose members are the wives of Indonesian National Armed Forces soldiers (TNI-AD). When married to a soldier of the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI-AD), the soldier's wife automatically becomes a member of Persit-KCK; thus, membership in this organization is indirectly mandatory for the wives of TNI soldiers, and the interpersonal communication carried out by the wives of Indonesian National Armed Forces soldiers (TNI-AD) is quite good and successful. (Prautami and Dwiningtyas 2016; Afriani et al. 2022; Mufidah 2019; Herawat et al. 2021).

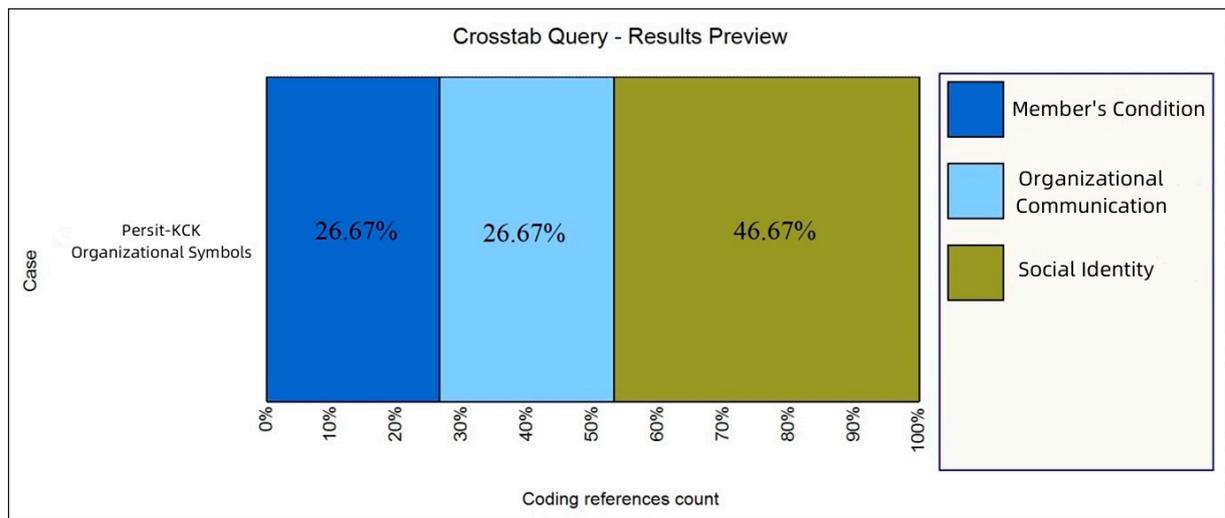


Figure 6. Analysis of the influence of Persit-KCK organizational symbols on social identity and organizational communication. Source: processed from *Nvivo 12 Pro*, 2022.

5. Conclusions

The Persit-KCK organization is an organization whose members are the wives of Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI-AD) soldiers. When married to Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI-AD) soldiers, the soldier's wife automatically becomes a member of Persit-KCK; thus, membership in this organization is indirectly mandatory for the wives of TNI soldiers, and interpersonal communication is carried out by the wives of soldiers of the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI AD). Persit-KCK is also known as "soldier's wife". In terms of terminology, there is a difference: if the mention of a soldier's wife refers to the wife of an Indonesian Army soldier, then a military wife refers to activities carried out by Persit-KCK members who have military elements. This makes Persit-KCK have an identity in the realm of organizational culture, and is also unique because many countries do not apply "military wife", being only limited to "army wife". Persit-KCK institutional communication prioritizes integrative member communication (strengthening communication between TNI wives within the internal organization of Kartika Candra Kirana (KCK) in all regions in Indonesia). In each of its branches, Persit-KCK carries out voluntary and non-profit activities as a community-friendly organization as one of the actors driving the growth of social capital amid the COVID-19 pandemic, creating an agricultural program to help food security during COVID-19, while also vaccinating the community, especially in various regions in Indonesia. The main insight provided by this research is the social identity possessed by Persit-KCK; the creation of social identity involves the categorization of "inside groups" relative to "outside groups" and the tendency to see one's own group positively, as well as being positive towards outside groups. The most significant thing that influences the values and culture of the Persit-KCK organization is the organizational symbol and vision mission of the Persit-KCK organization in the symbolic interactionism approach, which encourages its members to behave and communicate as a soldier's wife (TNI). The result is identification with a depersonalized collective identity based on group membership, imbued as a positive aspect of all Persit-KCK members.

The limitation of this research is that it only explores the patterns of interaction and institutional communication of the soldier's wives association (Persit-KCK) in Indonesia. However, it lacks consideration of the dominance of two-way communication that occurs between institutions, members, and other subjects. Therefore, it is limited in understanding the pattern of communication of every existing army wife union and even in the world. Future studies could investigate the initial intersection of the domains further in order to elucidate the two-way influence of symbols and social skills within individual members and their institutional and social contexts. The limitations of this research as regards

interpretation are too subjective; to reduce the subjective interpretation of researchers when analyzing qualitative research data regarding the phenomenon of communication patterns of Kartika Candra Kirana's (KCK) women's organization, researchers employ *Nvivo 12 pro* qualitative analysis research tools.

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