

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**INVESTIGATION ON EFFECTIVE
COMMUNICATION AND GROUP
COHESIVENESS IN THE OUTDOOR
RECREATION PROGRAM
CURRICULUM AT THE FACULTY
OF SPORTS SCIENCE AND
RECREATION, UITM**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to compare the difference between level of education on effective communication and group cohesiveness through outdoor recreation program curriculum at the faculty of sports science and recreation, UiTM. The study investigate two key components of effective communication: external perception, which includes clarity and information distribution, and internal disservice, which focusses on solving conflicts. The lack of effective communication and group cohesiveness among students in the Outdoor Recreation Program at UiTM appears to adversely affect their academic engagement, collaborative performance, and overall learning experience. Furthermore, the analysis of group cohesiveness includes an examination of four dimensions: individual attraction to the group in social contexts (ATG-S), individual attraction to the group in task-oriented settings (ATG-T), group integration-social (GI-S), and group integration-task (GI-T). A set of questionnaires based on Interpersonal Communication Skills (ICS) and Group Environment Questionnaire (GEQ) was completed by 233 students who took an outdoor recreation program. The findings underscore the complex interplay between external factors (such as perception) and internal group dynamics (such as conflict management) in shaping overall group cohesiveness and member engagement. These findings may provide valuable insights for both students and academics regarding the components of group cohesiveness, potentially leading to enhanced group collaboration and enriched learning experiences that foster improved educational outcomes.

Keywords: *Effective communication, Group cohesiveness, Outdoor recreation program, Curriculum development*

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Effective communication and group cohesiveness are critical components of successful experiential learning environments, particularly within outdoor recreation programs curriculum. These elements not only facilitate interpersonal understanding but also enhance group functionality, leadership development, and problem-solving skills in dynamic and often unpredictable outdoor settings (Owen, Priest & Kotze, 2022). The curriculum of outdoor recreation programs can be classified as outdoor education. Outdoor education is an innovative approach to education that emphasises experiential learning outside of regular classroom settings. It includes a range of activities, such as hiking, camping, and team-building exercises, primarily aimed at promoting personal growth, social skills, and a stronger connection to nature. This educational paradigm encourages active participation, allowing students to learn through direct interactions with their surroundings, which may help them comprehend both themselves and the world around them (Torkos & Egerau, 2020). This teaching approach seeks to provide students with practical knowledge and skills in natural surroundings, typically applying outdoor leisure activities to achieve academic goals (Fang, Hassan & LePage, 2023).

The Outdoor Recreation Program Curriculum offered by the Faculty of Sports Science and Recreation at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) exemplified this educational approach. The curriculum included practical course such as Outdoor Recreational Skills and Management module which include basic of recreational outdoor pursuit, risk management in outdoor recreation, outdoor skill and technique in knotting, camp craft, introduction to first aid, EAR and CPR, orienteering, kayaking, trekking, survival skills and rope activities. Students were expected to apply theoretical knowledge in real world outdoor environments, which enhanced their capacity to lead, collaborate, and communicate effectively. The program integrated physical activity with educational objectives, focusing on skill building, decision making, and group collaboration in natural environments. Despite these objectives, limited empirical