



International Journal of Research in Academic World

Received: 17/March/2024

IJRAW: 2024; 3(4):202-205

Accepted: 25/April/2024

Conflicts Arising from Different Situation between Communities and Its Management

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Abstract

Communities, by definition, are groups of people who share something in common, such as a location, interests, are social background. However, even within these shared spaces, disagreements can arise. Community conflicts refer to the clashes then occurs within or between communities. These conflicts can stem from a variety of factors, such as competition for resources, differing values, or historical grievances. Understanding community conflicts is important because they can have a significant impact on the lives of those involved. They can disrupt social cohesion, damage relationships and even lead to violence. However, community conflicts can also be opportunities for growth and change. By working to resolve these conflicts peacefully, communities can build stronger relationships and create a more just and equitable society.

Keywords: Community, conflict, management

Introduction

Meaning of Community

Literally the word “community” is derived from two Latin words “Com” and “Munis”.

Com means together and muni means serving. Hence, the meaning of community is to serve together. In other words, the meaning of community is a group of people who live together in a definite geographical area, and they live together not for a particular purpose, but for common goals. Their entire life is usually lived within it.

Definition of Community

According to Bogardus, Community is a social group in which ‘we feeling’ is found which lives in a particular locality.

Definition of Conflicts

According to Cos (1956), Conflict is a struggle between. Opponents over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources.

Conflict can be defined as a clash between individuals arising out of a difference in thought process, attitudes, understanding, interests, and requirements.

Meaning of Conflicts

Conflict comes from the Latin word for striking, but it isn't always violent. Conflict can arise from opposing ideas. If you want to turn your empty lot in to a community garden but your wife envisions a shooting range, you have a conflict.

A Conflict is a struggle or an opposition. If you and your best friend both fall in love with the same person, you will have to find some way to resolve the conflict.

Community Conflict

Communal conflict is defined as a conflict between non-state groups that are organized along a shared communal identity. They are products of social relations. It involves threat or action of one party directed at a community's rights, interests or privileges or of another party, because of differences over economic issues, power or authority, cultural values and beliefs.

Social scientists have given little attention to the study of conflict between local, geographically based communities of the modern world. Is this because there is little conflict of this kind? Or is this a subject who has been unduly neglected by social scientists? In an exploration of these questions, evidence is presented that severe conflicts sometimes do occur between local communities. Systematic analysis of rivalries over county seat location in the Midwestern region of the United States is given special Conflicts in communities can arise due to various reasons, including:

- i). **Miscommunication:** Lack of clear communication or misunderstandings can lead to conflicts.
- ii). **Competition for Resources:** Limited resources such as land, water, or jobs can lead to tensions and conflicts.
- iii). **Differences in Values and Beliefs:** Divergent cultural, religious, or ideological beliefs can result in conflicts.

- iv). **Power Struggles:** Disputes over leadership, authority, or control can lead to conflicts.
- v). **Historical Grievances:** Past injustices or historical tensions can contribute to ongoing conflicts.

Conflict Theory, first developed by Karl Marx, is a theory that society is in a state of perpetual conflict because of competition for limited resources.

- Conflict theory holds that social order is maintained by domination and power, rather than by consensus and conformity. According to conflict theory, those with wealth and power try to hold on to it by any means possible, chiefly by suppressing the poor and powerless. A basic premise of conflict theory is that individuals and groups within society will work to try to maximize their own wealth and power.
- Conflict theory focuses on the competition among groups within society over limited resources.
- Conflict theory views social and economic institutions as tools of the struggle among groups or classes, used to maintain inequality and the dominance of the ruling class.
- Marxist conflict theory sees society as divided along lines of economic class between the proletarian working class and the bourgeois ruling class.
- Later versions of conflict theory look at other dimensions of conflict among capitalist factions and among various social, religious, and other types of groups.

Resolving Community Conflicts Strategies, Such as

- i). **Open Dialogue and Mediation:** Encouraging open and respectful communication among conflicting parties and involving neutral mediators.
- ii). **Conflict Resolution Workshops:** Providing training and workshops on conflict resolution and communication skills.
- iii). **Promotion of Understanding and Empathy:** Encouraging empathy and understanding of diverse perspectives and experiences.
- iv). **Community Engagement and Collaboration:** Involving community members in decision-making processes and collaborative problem-solving.
- v). **Addressing Structural Issues:** Addressing underlying structural issues such as inequality, discrimination, and resource allocation.

These approaches can help in fostering understanding, empathy, and cooperation, leading to the resolution of conflicts within communities.

Generally, conflict will arise either out of conflicting personalities amongst your community's membership, be related to common difficulties associated with the usage of online communication tools, how your membership go about achieving their goals, or the members' perception of you as a community manager, your company or the online space you've provided them.

General Strategies for Managing Conflict

As a group member or facilitator, it's useful to have some strategies to guide the group through conflict:

- People often talk about what's annoying them outside of the group, rather than at meetings. Providing a time for people to speak when the group is together can be helpful. Try introducing this as 'time to discuss how we are going.'

- When people are in conflict and not dealing with it, the energy of the group will often be sluggish. Check out what's happening if you sense an energy loss.
- Set some ground rules – things like 'no put-downs' or 'using I statements.'
- Revisit the group's purpose. Have people temporarily forgotten what they are there for or are people working towards different goals?
- If the conflict has become too big, it's sometimes best to stop the meeting. Conflict might be better dealt with just between the people concerned or using an outside facilitator.

1. Identify the Sources of Conflict

Before you can resolve a community conflict, you need to understand what is causing it. Is it a misunderstanding, a lack of communication, a clash of values, a power struggle, or something else? By identifying the sources of conflict, you can tailor your approach to address them. You can also avoid making assumptions or judgments that might worsen the situation. To identify the sources of conflict, you can use tools such as surveys, interviews, focus groups, or observation.

2. Listen Actively and Empathetically

One of the most important skills for handling community conflict is listening. Listening actively and empathetically means paying attention to what the other person is saying, feeling, and meaning, without interrupting, criticizing, or dismissing them. It also means acknowledging their point of view, expressing interest and curiosity, and asking open-ended questions. By listening actively and empathetically, you can show respect, build trust, and gain insight into the other person's perspective.

3. Find Common Ground and Shared Goals

Another key skill for handling community conflict is finding common ground and shared goals. Finding common ground and shared goals means looking for areas of agreement, similarity, or mutual benefit, rather than focusing on differences or opposition. It also means recognizing the interdependence and diversity of the community, and how each person contributes to the collective well-being. By finding common ground and shared goals, you can foster collaboration, cooperation, and compromise.

4. Use Constructive Feedback and Assertive Communication

When you need to address a community conflict, you should use constructive feedback and assertive communication. Constructive feedback and assertive communication means expressing your thoughts, feelings, and needs in a clear, respectful, and honest way, without blaming, attacking, or avoiding the issue. It also means using "I" statements, positive language, and specific examples. By using constructive feedback and assertive communication, you can avoid escalation, resentment, and defensiveness.

5. Seek Support and Mediation

Sometimes, you might need to seek support and mediation to handle a community conflict. Seeking support and mediation means reaching out to others who can help you resolve the conflict, such as mentors, peers, leaders, or professionals. It also means being open to the involvement of a third party who can facilitate the dialogue, clarify the issues, and suggest

solutions. By seeking support and mediation, you can benefit from different perspectives, experiences, and skills.

Learn and Grow from the Experience

Finally, you should learn and grow from the experience of handling a community conflict. Learning and growing from the experience means reflecting on what happened, what

worked, what didn't, and what you can do better next time. It also means celebrating the achievements, acknowledging the challenges, and thanking the participants. By learning and growing from the experience, you can improve your community outreach skills, strengthen your relationships, and enhance your community.

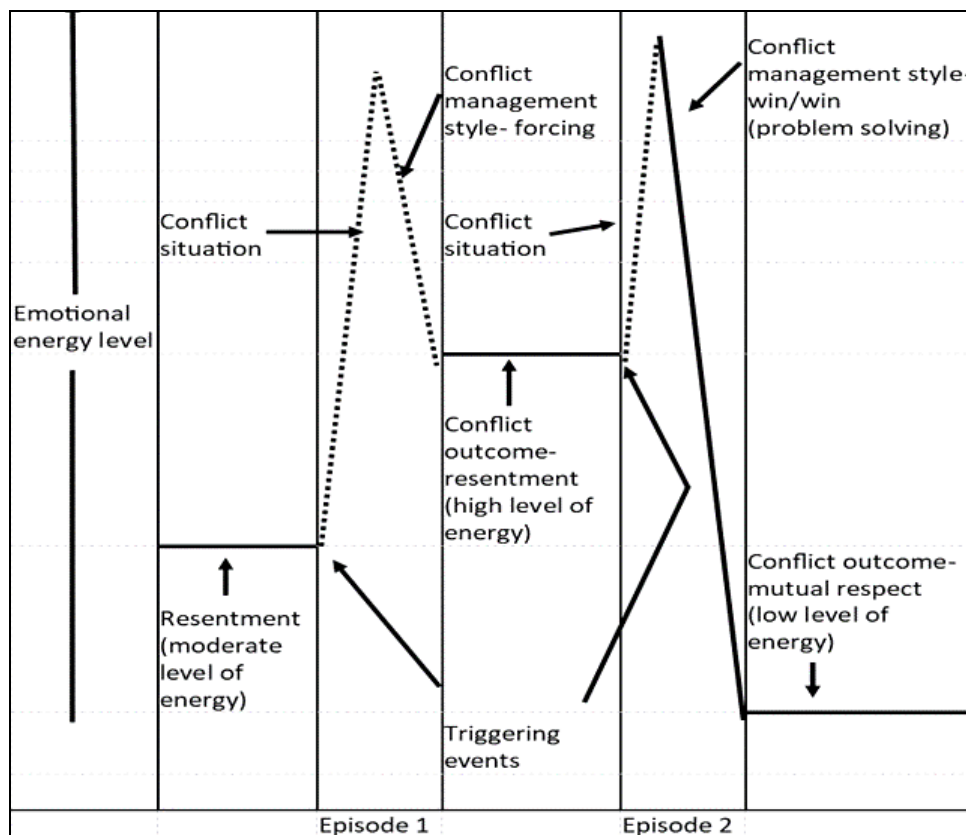


Fig 1: The first conflict episode is handled using a forcing approach, which suppresses the open conflict but result in a considerably higher level of emotional energy. The second conflict episode, in contrast is handled using a win-win problem solving approach, which results in lowering the level of emotional energy in the relationship.

Conflict Resolution Model Conflict Resolution Why do conflicts arise?

What can we do to maximize the positive outcomes of conflict?

And what can we do to minimize the negative outcomes of conflict?

These are some of the important questions that conflict management theory seeks to answer. To understand conflict management, you have to start with the obvious fact that humans are always trying to meet their needs and reach their goals.

Sometimes it so happens that other people come in the way of meeting their needs and reaching their goals. Probably because other people are also trying to meet their own needs and reach their own goals.

So conflict arises when there is a clash of interests between the two parties, be it two colleagues, employer and an employee, husband and wife, and two groups of people like two neighboring countries.

Interpersonal Conflict and Power

So how do the two parties that are in conflict go about resolving the conflict?

It depends on how much power the two parties wield in a given situation. Generally speaking, parties that are mutually

dependent with nearly equal levels of power more often engage in conflict than parties having a large power gap between them.

If you know that the other person is much more powerful than you, there's no point in engaging in a conflict with them. It's too risky. They'll most likely exert their power on you and crush you.

This is the reason conflicts are more common between colleagues who are at the same level in an organization, between husband and wife, between siblings, and between friends.

Since both parties wield nearly equal levels of power, there can be a continuous power struggle where one party tries to become more powerful than the other. The more powerful you are the more you're able to meet your interests.

Since the other party also wields nearly the same power, they can easily fight back and become more powerful too. The result is often a constant power struggle leading to never-ending conflicts.

Then there are conflicts that occur between parties where there exists a large power gap. Think employer and employee, parents, and children. In these dominant/submissive conflicts, the dominant party is often easily able to impose their will on the submissive party

Children do this by crying, throwing tantrums, emotionally blackmailing their parents, or refusing to eat. All these things significantly decrease the power gap and the children are able to have their say.

Weaker countries may collaborate and gang up on an aggressor because collaboration gives them more power and reduces the power gap between them and the aggressor.

The same dynamics operated when people revolted to topple kings and despots. Together, they had equal or slightly more power than the despots than what they could ever hope to have individually.

That conflict is strongly tied to power is made glaringly evident when parties fail to resolve conflicts amicably. Failure to resolve conflict often leads to violence-an act purely meant to exert power over the other.

If violence is too costly, the parties may cut ties with each other completely. Think upset spouse or friend who won't talk to you and countries that cut trading ties with their rivals.

In this way, conflicts, particularly dominant/submissive conflicts, are likely to lead drastic win-lose (one wins other loses) or lose-lose (both lose) consequences.

In situations where the two parties are equally powerful and mutually dependent, the ideal conflict management strategy is to arrive at a win-win (both win) resolution.

Win-win Resolution

This conflict management strategy is also known as problem-solving. Organizational theorists have devised several models to explain how parties approach and seek to resolve conflicts in the workplace.

Some of them are applicable to relationships too. One such useful model was given by Thomas¹ and Pruitt² who identified conflict management strategies based on the traits of assertiveness and cooperativeness.

Assertiveness is communicating your interests and needs to the other party while cooperativeness is the willingness to take into consideration their needs and interests.

Conclusion

Conflicts is inevitable in the community work place. It is a reality in every work environment by bringing people from diverse background together. While people continue to work in communities while caring about the manner their community members treat them, disagreements will always arise to create conflicts in the community area.

Conflicts refer to the various issues emerging in the community that create emotions such as anger, discontent, and frustration. Such emotions produce either positive impacts or negative impacts on a society. For instance, positive impacts may encompass the provision of an opportunity for community (society) growth. Negative impacts reduce community member, thoughts, behavior, relationship, beliefs in each other.

Community Conflicts arise when disagreements between groups within a community escalate. These disagreement can stem from various sources, such as differing beliefs, economic disparities, or competition for resources. If left unchecked, community conflicts can disrupt social harmony and lead to violence. However, through open communication compromise, and a focus on shared values, communities can resolve conflicts and build stronger relationships.

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