

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN THE CATTLE VILLAGE SYSTEMS IN BANTUL – YOGYAKARTA

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted primarily to determine the conflict management of the Cattle Village System (CVS) in Bantul, Yogyakarta. The objectives were to: 1) describe the processes involved in group conflict and its management; 2) determine and analyze the nature/type of conflict among members and within the group; 3) identify the consequences of conflict on the management of the CVS. The CVS groups are composed of Sidomaju, Sidorukun, Andinimulyo, and Empatlima. A total of 157 respondents selected by simple random sampling comprised the sample size. Data were gathered through individual and focused interviews, and secondary sources of information. Descriptive statistic was used in the data analysis. Results showed that generally, conflict in CVS was not intensive. Except in activities, such as payment of dues/fee, source of grass, and legume which conflict were moderate. Causes of conflict were due to conflicts of interest among members. Types of conflict observed were interpersonal conflict, conflict within the group, role conflict, and combination of role and task conflict. Management/strategies/ resolution of conflict in the CVS included problem solving, use of training and information campaign, compromise and exercise of authority. Conflict in some activities still existed, and others had already been resolved. Consequences of conflict in a CVS were functional and dysfunctional. Conflict becomes functional when its effect meaningful in the context of was CVS management system particularly in the group's relationship, participation in mutual help, and attainment of the group's objectives. On the one hand, conflict becomes dysfunctional to the group when it demoralized the members to continue their support to the group, to the point of discouraging other cattle farmers, and to join the group.

(Key Words: Conflict Management, Cattle village system).

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MANAJEMEN KONFLIK PADA SISTEM PERKAMPUNGAN TERNAK SAPI POTONG DI KABUPATEN BANTUL - YOGYAKARTA

INTISARI

Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk mengetahui manajemen konflik pada perkampungan ternak sapi potong di Kabupaten Bantul, Yogyakarta, khususnya bertujuan untuk menggambarkan proses konflik di dalam kelompok dan manajemennya, menentukan dan menganalisis tipe konflik diantara anggota kelompok, dan mengidentifikasi konsekuensi konflik. Sampel terdiri dari empat kelompok tani-ternak yaitu Sidorukun, Sidomaju, Andinimulyo, dan Empatlima. Sebanyak 157 responden dipilih secara *proportionate-stratified random sampling*. Metode pencarian data menggunakan wawancara mendalam secara individu dan data sekunder sebagai informasi tambahan, selanjutnya dianalisis secara deskripsi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pada umumnya konflik di dalam kelompok tani-ternak menunjukkan pada tingkat tidak intensif, hanya beberapa aktivitas saja yang menunjukkan konflik pada taraf sedang. Penyebab konflik umumnya dari kepentingan yang sama dari anggota. Tipe konflik adalah konflik antar anggota, konflik dalam kelompok, konflik peranan, dan konflik kombinasi dari peranan dan tugas. Manajemen/strategi/penyelesaian konflik adalah dengan pemecahan bersama, memberikan informasi dan latihan, serta kompromi dan menggunakan kekuasaan. Konflik sebagian masih ada dan sebagian telah terselesaikan di beberapa aktivitas, sedangkan konsekuensi dari konflik adalah secara fungsional meningkatkan hubungan kerjasama dan partisipasi diantara anggota kelompok, sedangkan yang disfungsional adalah menghilangkan semangat anggota dalam berorganisasi di dalam kelompok.

(Kata Kunci: Manajemen konflik, Perkampungan ternak sapi potong).

Introduction

No two members of any group think totally alike and different attitudes toward and perceptions of the same idea may create some conflict. Conflict is not really harmful to the group as long as it fosters creative discussions about the task to be accomplished. However, when conflict goes beyond creativity, it becomes detrimental to the group (Seaman, 1981). Furthermore, he mentions some ways in which conflict was usually expressed 1) members were impatient with each other; 2) ideas were attacked before they were completely expressed; 3) members sides and refuse to compromise; 4) members disagreed on plans or suggestions; 5) comments and suggestions were made with a great deal of vehemence; 6) members attack each other on a personal level in subtle ways; 7) members insisted that the group did have the knowledge or experience to get anywhere; 8) members fet

the group could not get ahead because it is too large or too small; 9) members disagree with the leader's suggestions; 10) members accused each other of not understanding the real point; and 11) members heard distorted fragments of other members' contributions.

The ways of minimizing excessive organizational conflict were as varied as its causes, sources, and contexts. Conflict could not be entirely eliminated, but episodes of conflict that threaten the welfare of the organization or its members can be minimized. Much could be prevented. Continuous undercurrents of conflict that cannot be avoided must be accepted, but with an awareness of their costs as well as benefits.

According to Kinard (1988) there were various approaches that could be used in conflict resolution, such as avoid differences, repressing or delaying differences, bringing differences into conflict, and problem solving. Organizational conflict is often settled by a

coordinating manager who exercises a leadership or coordinating function. The need for containing or reducing such conflict met by various was integrating and coordinating devices, such as committees, councils, boards, or, as in the case of many firms, a central corporate office. A further source of conflict reduction the was assignment of managers to integrating, decision-making roles (McFarland 1979).

Responses to organizational conflict could take many forms. Thomas (1978) suggested that all of these responses involved degree of assertiveness (trying to satisfy one's own concerns) and degree of cooperativeness (trying to satisfy another concerns). Five common methods of responding to perceived conflict are: First, one may ignore or avoid the conflict. By avoiding it, one may hope that it will go away or resolve itself without any action being taken. An alternative-response to this conflict is accommodation. Accommodation involves high levels of cooperative behavior and little if any assertive behavior. At the other extreme is competition. Here, there is an emphasis on assertive behavior and little or no cooperative behavior. This is a win-lose approach based on the use of power. As another alternative, the parties might take a compromise or bargaining approach to the problem. Here, both groups are somewhat assertive and somewhat cooperative. A final alternative is collaboration. With this approach there is maximum emphasis on both cooperative and assertive behavior. Ideally, a solution is generated that fully satisfies both sides' concerns (Hicks and Gullett, 1981).

People join a group for a variety of reasons. Sometimes they merely want to satisfy their social needs. Other times, they feel that their economic interests can be served best by being part of a group. Although reasons for joining a group vary from person to person, most people consciously affiliate because they want either friendship or security and also because they realize the worth of group acceptance.

However, problems could occur, which could be dysfunctional to the attainment of group or organization objectives. Although each member has the same roles to undertake, conflict is inevitable because certain conditions could bring about conflict before and during the implementation of the Cattle Village system. These could be scarcity and control of resources, misperceptions, incompatibility of working relationships or networking processes. The interactions of these elements could negate the desired organizational output and outcomes.

In reality, conflict in a group does not necessarily mean there is a problem in effective management or a breakdown in organizational efficiency. Whenever individuals with varying needs, values, and personalities come together within an organizational structure, conflict is inevitable. Conflict, however, is not necessarily destructive; some conflict may be desirable for promoting change and growth. Depending on a leader's response to conflict, the outcome may help or stifle group and individual growth (Kinard, 1988).

Farmers in Indonesia including those in CVS usually do not like having conflict with other farmers in a group, particularly, people in the rural areas generally obey their leader. This happens even if people have the same position in an organization or the same status to avoid conflict. People tend to cover up the conflict by not talking about it. They just cooperate among themselves, for the group to be successful.

Literature and studies on farm group conflict in Indonesia is very limited. Generally this study endeavors to uncover the conflict group in the cattle village system, the nature/type of conflict within the group and its consequences. Specifically this study sought to answer the following questions: How are conflicts manifested? How conflicts were managed/resolved? and What are the consequences?

In general, this research focused on the study of the conflict management of the

CVS, with respect to conflict among its members. Specifically, the objectives of this study aimed to determine and analyze the nature of conflict among members and within the group and identify the conflict resolution and consequences of conflicts on the CVS.

Research Methodology

The population of the study was the cattle farmer groups which had a CVS in Bantul Regency. They were supervised by the Livestock Services of the Ministry of Agriculture. The unit of analysis of the study was the members of cattle farmer groups. Four groups were selected purposively and individual respondents were sampled randomly from among the cattle farmer groups which started the CVS 1990. Sample from each group was selected by simple random sampling. The total number of farmer samples was determined with the use of the formula of Slovin (Sevilla, 1993). The total number of members of the four CVS groups sampled was 258. Using a margin of error of 5 percent, the sample size was computed to be 157 respondents. Samples for each group was determined using proportionate stratified random sampling technique (Table 1). A structured interview schedule was used and designed to elicit appropriate responses.

Data were gathered from September to October 1999. Rapport before and during the interview was established by the researcher and the interviewers to avoid apprehension from the respondents. An in-depth interview was also conducted with key respondents about the historical antecedents and the processes involved in the organization and management of the CVS. Descriptive analysis

such as frequencies, percentages, means, intervals and standard deviations were carried out to describe the characteristics of each group.

The operational definition of conflict is the direct and open antagonistic struggle of individual farmers or groups for the same objective or end. It is also the expression of disagreement on CVS. It was measured on the basis of the frequency of occurrence of conflict using a four point scale to responses: not intensive = 1, moderate = 2, intensive = 3, very intensive = 4.

Result and Discussion

As sociological theory suggests, the dynamic nature of the group ensures continual change, but along with change come stresses and strains that surface in the form of conflict. Although in rare instances group members may avoid all conflict because their actions are perfectly coordinated, in most groups the push and pull of interpersonal forces inevitably exert its influence (Balano, 1998).

Conflict in the CVS was only simple, unlike in cases wherein a group sometimes followed the course of conflict, which was initiated by disagreement, confrontation, escalation, de-escalation, resolution, and routine group interaction.

Level of conflict

Conflict cases were evident in the CVS activities. However, it occurred in some activities and not in all the groups. Level of conflict among members of the CVS group were typical of the activities undertaken in the operation of the group which involved the following:

Table 1. Population and sample size of CVS groups

	Name of group (Cattle Village System)				Total
	Sidomaju	Sidorukun	Andinimulyo	Empatlima	
Population	56	40	74	88	258
Sample	34	24	45	54	157

- a) **Distribution of land for cattle house.** The conflict in distribution of land for cattle house in the three groups of Sidomaju, Sidorukun, and Andinimulyo was not intensive. In contrast, there were respondents in Empatlima who perceived that the conflict in this activity was moderate (9.26%). They reported that the area for cattle house was still enough, hence it was not a problem on the members.
- b) **Between new and old members on services from group committee or extension worker.** The conflict in services from group committee and extension between the new and old members in Sidomaju and Sidorukun was not intensive, but in Andinimulyo and Empatlima, few cases were considered to be moderate in degree. The respondents reported that sometimes the leader or extension worker treated the new member differently from the old members. They gave special treatment to the new member to encourage them to join the group. However, this kind of treatment created a negative reaction from other members who felt it was not fair.
- c) **Selecting/accepting a new member.** In this activity, conflict was not intensive. Even though there was discussion on deciding whether to accept a new member, conflict was not evident.
- d) **Duties and obligations of members.** Three groups, Sidomaju, Sidorukun, and Empatlima felt there was no intensive conflict in the performance of their duties and obligation in their work, such as cleaning their own cattle housing, and keeping the surrounding environment clean. In Andinimulyo, only 4.44 percent of the respondents perceived conflict as moderate. They felt that some members did not join in that activity. However, the group remained tolerant because almost all of them joined in that activity.
- e) **Selling of cattle.** Conflict was not intensive in the selling of cattle in all groups. Members sell their cattle on their own. It was not a problem to most of the members.
- f) **Marketing operation for cattle.** Conflict cases in this activity was also not intensive in the CVS groups. In Andinimulyo and Empatlima, the level of conflict was only moderate and very minimal. The cattle were directly sold to middlemen by CVS group member without involving other members.
- g) **Scheduling of night watch man.** From the four groups, only in Empatlima group did conflict exist with moderate level (7.41%). Almost all group members reported that the scheduling of night watching depended on the time free from any member.
- h) **Operation/activities of night watch man.** Conflict only occurred among CVS members of Andinimulyo and Empatlima. In Andinimulyo, 8.89 percent of the respondents reported it as intensive and 46.67 percent, as moderate. While in Empatlima, there were 22.22 percent who perceived that operation or an activity of the nightwatchman was intensive and 62.96 percent was moderate. They revealed that several members did not obey or follow the schedule, which was agreed during the scheduling of night watch man. Nobody was assigned to monitor the activity that results in nightwatchers among Empatlima group.
- i) **Use of group's finances.** Conflict existed in moderate level in Andinimulyo and Empatlima, but was only 4.44 percent and 3.70 percent, respectively. All members agreed in using the budget as long as it is for the better of their group. Respondents in the moderate level reported that the group seldom presented the financial status report to its members.
- j) **Distribution of group's benefit.** The level of conflict in terms of distribution of group's benefit in the four groups was not intensive. Some members in Empatlima group perceived the level of conflict in this activity as moderate (24.07%). However,

the members stressed that they could not figure out the amount of benefit they will receive.

- k) **Payment of dues/fees.** Conflict in the payment of dues/fees occurred only in Empatlima group. Only 3.70 percent of the respondents from this group perceived it as intensive and 5.56 percent as moderate. Some respondents disclosed that late payment of dues by some members was unfair for those who payed their dues on time. Other members felt jealously towards members who payed their dues late.
- l) **Distribution of fund/government assistance.** In the distribution of fund or assistance from the government, conflict occurred moderately (5.56%) only in Empatlima group. They reported that there was no fair distribution of assistance given by the government, only active members known to group leader received more of the financial assistance.
- m) **Medicine/vaccine services.** Conflict in medicine/vaccine services by the extension worker in Sidomaju and Sidorukun was generally not intensive. Conflict cases in this activity occurred in Andinimulyo and Empatlima groups in moderate level and minimal number (11.11% and 9.26%, respectively). The members perceived that vaccines were distributed fairly to every one. Medicines were given free whenever their cattle get sick. If not, they had to pay for whatever medicine they used.
- n) **Use of shepherding area for cattle.** In using the shepherding area for cattle, all the respondents in the four groups perceived that conflict in this activity was not intensive. All group members perceived that their cattle are safe if they put it in the cattle house.
- o) **Mutual help activity.** Conflict in mutual help activity was not visible among the members in Sidomaju, Sidorukun, and Andinimulyo group. It was only felt as moderate (5.56%) in Empatlima group. The members who reported that it was at moderate level noted that every member

has the responsibility toward their own cattle and cattle house. They added that mutual help should be employed more on other activities such as building construction and digging well.

- p) **Water sources.** In Sidomaju, conflict on water source was in moderate level (47.06%). Similarly, in Empatlima, conflict in this activity was moderately felt at 14.81 percent of the member-respondents. In Sidomaju and Empatlima, there was only one well for all members of the groups. They stressed the need for additional well for its use.
- q) **Source of grass and legume.** Conflict in the source of grass and legume for feeding the cattle occurred in the three groups, Sidomaju, Andinimulyo, and Empatlima. In Sidomaju, 12.50 percent of the respondents perceived the level of conflict as intensive and 41.67 percent as moderate. In Andinimulyo, very few conflict was in intensive level (6.67%) and 31.11 percent, moderate. While in Empatlima, the level of conflict reported was intensive (35.19%) and some in the moderate level (33.33%). In Sidomaju, the area for planting grasses and legumes was very limited, while in Andinimulyo and Empatlima had a wider area to plant but had the problem on soil type – sandy soil, in which it was difficult to grow grasses and legumes.
- r) **Development/extension of farm area.** From the four groups, only Andinimulyo group did not see any intensive conflict in the development/extension of farm area. In contrast, moderate to intensive conflicts occurred in Sidomaju. While in Sidorukun and Empatlima, conflict in this activity was only moderate (58.33% and 3.70%, respectively). In Sidomaju and Sidorukun, there was no available area for extension of project site because they were laid in sub-urban places and development of the settler's residence was considered that

somehow limits possible expansion of the farm area.

- s) **Operation of group meeting.** Conflicts in operation of group meeting occurred in Andanimulyo and Empatlima. In Sidomaju and Sidorukun, conflict was not intensive. In Andanimulyo, conflict in this activity was at the intensive (6.67%) and moderate level (31.11%) while in Empatlima, 46.30 percent of the respondents reported the level of conflict in the such activity as moderate. In Andanimulyo and Empatlima, the meeting venue for members was far from the settlement of the members and eventually makes them lazy to attend any call up whose agenda was not so important for them. They preferred to stay and work in their farm than attending the meeting.
- t) **Selecting group leader.** All the respondents in the CVS groups perceived that the conflict in selecting group leader was not intensive.

Causes of conflict

The result showed that the causes of conflict in the CVS activities were due to conflict of interest within the group, conflict due to partiality of treatment of the extension worker and leader toward the old members, limitation on the size of the area for cattle house, weakness of sanction, lack of information, conflict of interest among the members, non-payment of dues/fees of some members, inequitable distribution of medicine or vaccine to all the members, restriction on the water source, limitation of the area for planting grass and legume, and the non-democratic process of selecting the leader.

Nature/type of conflict

The nature/types of conflict in the CVS activities were classified as interpersonal conflict, conflict within the group, role conflict, and combination of role and task conflict.

Interpersonal conflict. This type of conflict was characterized by conflict between

two members, or among members. This type of conflict was commonly evident in most of the CVS activities such as in the distribution of land for cattle house, selecting/accepting a new member, determination of selling price of cattle, marketing operation for cattle, scheduling of night watch man, payment of due/fees, use of shepherding area, mutual help, on water source, source of grass and legume, operation of group meeting and selection of group leader.

Conflict within the group. This occurred between individual members or some members with the group leader or committee and the extension worker such as in the rendering of services of the leader and extension worker to new and old members, distribution of fund/government assistance, medicine/vaccine services, and in development/extension of the farm area.

Role conflict. This type of conflict was manifested in the use of group's funds.

Combination of role and task conflict. This type of conflict was apparent in operation/activity of the night watch man and distribution of group's benefit.

Management strategies/resolution of conflict

In resolving conflict, the following strategies/resolution methods were adopted by members in the group:

- a) **Problem solving.** This kind of conflict resolution was done in the form of dialogues and group meetings/discussions. Conflict resolution of this nature was done among members of the CVS group (which involved more than two members) and was employed more on general issues which are easily solved during group meeting.
- b) **Reorientation.** This involves training and information campaign about CVS to promote cooperation among members in all activities in CVS under the leadership of an extension worker or an educational institution.
- c) **Compromise.** Compromise agreement was used to resolve conflict among

members of the CVS depending on the degree of offense committed by the conflicting person. A third person served as mediator in settling conflict, such as the group leader, the extension worker, or by another member.

- d) **Use of authoritative command.** This methods of resolution of conflict was done on conflicts resulting in non-conformity to their rules or obligation such as payment of dues/fees.

Status of conflict

Conflict cases related to activities such as distribution of land for cattle house, selecting/accepting a new member, duties and obligations of members, marketing operation for cattle, scheduling of nightwatchman, operation/activity of nightwatchman, use of group finance, distribution of group benefit, payment of dues/fees, on water source, source of grass and legume, development/extension of farm area, and operation of group's meeting were still existing. On the other hand, cases related to conflicts between new and old members on the services of the group leader and extension worker, determination of selling price of cattle, distribution of fund/government assistance, medicine/vaccine services, use of shepherding area for cattle, mutual help activities, and selecting group leader have already been resolved.

Consequences of conflict

Conflict was both functional and dysfunctional to the overall management of a project (Robbins, 1976). It was functional because after conflict existed, it could change and improve the attitude of the members and the leader towards the management of the CVS and improve the group's enforcement of the rules or regulations. Consequences of conflict also became meaningful in the context of the CVS management particularly in the relationships and member's mutual participation in the attainment of the group's objectives. On another hand, conflict could be

also dysfunctional, in the sense that it could demoralize the members to join in the group.

Conflict in the CVS groups were generally not so serious, so that it did not become destructive to the group. Stoner and Winkel (1987) concluded that moderate levels of conflict had far greater potential for desirable outcomes than higher levels. With moderate conflict, the rival person or group, were more likely to learn to interact in constructive problem solving. Of the four groups, lowest incidence and level of conflict was in Sidorukun group, followed by Sidomaju, Andinimulyo, and the last was Empatlima group.

Conflicts observed in the CVS were generally more of emotional than physical struggle among the members in vying for the same resources, activities, or goal (Kinard, 1988).

Conclusion

Dynamics of conflict is important in the CVS for group stability to attain sustainable resource management for rural development. The study docked into the process of conflict in four CVS groups and identified the level of conflict. Based on the objectives of the study, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- a) Conflict in the group such as CVS, was inevitable. Conflict occurred in every activity, it depended on what level or degree of conflict a group had.
- b) Nature/type of conflict in CVS group is more of an interpersonal type and reflects emotional struggle. Interpersonal conflict did not necessarily imply a personality conflict between individuals but it was directly observable through sequences of communicative behavior performed by members of the group (Fisher, 1981).
- c) Consequences of conflict could be both functional and dysfunctional. It could help improve the management/operation of the group or could demoralize the members, thereby leading to group paralysis and eventual failure of the group to attain its

objective and continue its existence. It requires the presence of strong leadership in the group, greater number of members who were committed to uphold and support the groups' objectives.

- d) The leaders and committees were important elements in a group such as the CVS. Their ability to exercise restraint, use of authority, and understanding of the conflict prevented escalation of conflict into greater scale. Not all conflicts could be resolved in a short period of time, particularly when it was interpersonal in nature. Appropriate resolution methods were required and continuing dialogue and interaction among the members were critical in the early resolution of conflicts.

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