Cooperative Approach for Conflict Analysis and Peaceful Coexistence in Resource Rivalry among Communities

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ABSTRACT

Resource rivalry is a phenomenon that occurs within communities and presents great problems to social peace and economic growth (Hayden, 2019). Disputes on who has right over those basic resources, including land, water and minerals, may arise and may be aggravated to the extent that violence and long-term hostility may be perpetuated. Thus, the study aimed to assess the applicability of a cooperative approach to conflict analysis in resource rivalry among communities; To evaluate the key actors in the cooperative approach for conflict analysis and Peaceful coexistence in resource rivalry among communities and To recommend the utilization of the cooperative approach for conflict analysis outcomes in peaceful coexistence in resource rivalry among communities. Understanding the phases of conflict analysis can prove valuable in gaining an appreciation of how conflicts emerge and how they might be controlled or addressed. Conflict phases are identified as latent conflict, perceived conflict, manifest conflict and escalation. The cooperative approach to conflict analysis involves several key principles, which including inclusivity, dialogue and communication, joint problem-solving, and sustainability. The research paper found that the key actors in conflict analysis include the government, leaders of the communities, Non-governmental organizations and international organizations are the main players in the above process. Utilization of cooperative conflicts analysis is evident in environmental peacebuilding as well as in Peace Parks initiatives.

Key words: Coexistence, Communities, Conflict Analysis, Cooperative Approach, Resource Rivalry

INTRODUCTION

Resource rivalry is a phenomenon that occurs within communities and presents great problems to social peace and economic growth (Hayden, 2019). Disputes on who has right over those basic resources, including land, water and minerals, may arise and may be aggravated to the extent that violence and long-term hostility may be perpetuated. There are inherent problems with traditional conflict styles because, generally, they take a superficial approach to conflict and deal only with the presentation of conflict, not with the cause. This inadequacy has pointed to the need to employ better and integrated forms and models in conflict analysis and resolution processes.

Another potentially useful option is the analysis of the conflict cooperation model. This methodology majors in building relationships between conflicting people, learning from each other and looking for consensus. Besides, it integrates dialogical and cooperative strategies to turn conflicting relationships into cooperative ones by fostering sustainable peace and cooperative use of resources (Hayden, 2019). The concept of the cooperative approach is based on the interaction of many participants, including community leaders, governmental and non-governmental organizations, and divisions of the United Nations involved in the facilitation of the parties' conflicts and the use of measures that make the parties abandon the war.

The strength of the decision-making cooperative style is in its compliance with the principles of togetherness and sharing of responsibilities. This ensures that a number of steps are taken to consider all the aspects of the conflict and embrace all the actors in the conflict resolution process (Hayden, 2019). The above framework of cooperation not only serves to solve current conflicts but also seeks to establish the framework for lasting peace and order. This approach has been used numerous times as analyses of different communities show that they were able to amicably solve internal conflicts and continue to live harmoniously despite their struggle for scarce resources. Therefore, there is a prospect of a cooperative approach for progress toward cooperation and

sustainable development in areas where conflicts over resources are possible. The current paper, therefore, aims to explore the applicability of this approach while following the following research questions.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the applicability of a cooperative approach to conflict analysis in resource rivalry among communities.
2. To evaluate the key actors in the cooperative approach for conflict analysis and Peaceful coexistence in resource rivalry among communities
3. To recommend the utilization of the cooperative approach for conflict analysis outcomes in peaceful coexistence in resource rivalry among communities

Phases of Conflict

Conflict is a process that is generally divided into stages, which in terms of aggressiveness and publicity are fundamentally different (Bosch, 2017). Understanding these phases can prove valuable in gaining an appreciation of how conflicts emerge and how they might be controlled or addressed. Conflict phases are identified as latent conflict, perceived conflict, manifest conflict and escalation. All these stages depict the progression of the conflict and can be intervened to help in the resolution process.

Latent conflict

The concept of latent conflict refers to the fact that there are conditions that may lead to conflict, yet the conflict is not actively taking place. This phase is marked by the presence of differences or conflicts that are not necessarily manifest. These may be resource competition, dominance or subordination relationships, or varying cultural premises (Bosch, 2017). For instance, two communities with a latent conflict regarding water resource sharing may never engage in a direct conflict because the resource is still sufficient to meet the needs of the conflicting groups.

n the latent conflict phase, there is always conflict potential, but the conflict is not manifest. It is also possible that the parties involved do not know the conflict is brewing subconsciously or intentionally decide to ignore it. This is the best time to address issues and prevent the conflict from escalating since the sources of all conflicts are tackled during this phase. Dialogue, negotiation, and constructive cooperation can be employed in this phase in order to prevent potential conflict. In the latent conflict phase, practices should be aimed at preventing conflict, including solving key conflicts, increasing cooperation, and developing organizations for handling potential conflict. It is thus important to contain the conflict before it escalates and takes an overt form.

Perceived conflict

This is the stage of conflict that is seen once the involved parties develop consciousness of the potential disagreement or rivalry (Bosch, 2017). Often, in this phase, the potential conflict emerges but may not be actually manifested between or among the parties. Understanding also becomes critical in this phase, in the sense that what the conflicting parties perceive or the meaning they give to the conflict influences its progress. For instance, if one sub-group of users feels that another sub-group is using water in an unfair proportion, this causes jealous and envious reactions.

This phase consists of the identification of claims or objectives that are opposed, which can set the stage for conflict and the opening of the communication process. But these communications may be those that involve a lot of misunderstandings and even misinterpretations (Bosch, 2017). This is also the best time and place for an intervention to ensure that misunderstandings, misinterpretations, coercion and threats are avoided. Mediation and other forms of facilitated dialogue that are used in the course of negotiating conflict situations may be most effective during the perceived conflict phase since they are designed to ensure that misinterpretations that may have arisen among the parties are corrected (Bosch, 2017). For the situation in the perceived conflict phase, it is possible to conclude that there is a necessity to enhance the quality of communication skills and

mutual comprehension. Decentralized communication and the ability to sit down together and talk can be effective in conflict-solving, as misinterpretation of events is the root of the manifest conflict. Exploiting the outcome means that the perceptions and interpretations of the parties involved can be resolved to ensure that the conflict does not escalate.

Manifest conflict

This involves the stage where parties in a conflict make their grievances known, and the supposed sources of conflict become evident. This phase is more easily distinguishable by tangible and observable behaviour, such as verbal aggression, writing threats, or even using force (Bosch, 2017). The last one is the real stage of the conflict, where the individuals engage in a war path to prosecute the conflict. For instance, water-related conflict between the two teams leads to public demonstrations, litigation or even acts of vandalism in water sources.

In the manifest conflict stage, there is a marked escalation of hostilities as the actors throw caution to the winds. This phase is usually sensitive since it tends to attract external interest from certain authorities like the government, media and NGOs (Bosch, 2017). The interventions in this phase are generally a bit more strenuous and may even need stricter adherence to process like arbitration, legal system involvement or rigorous negotiation processes. During this phase, the aim is to seek ways of reducing the extent of the conflict so that it does not extend to a higher level of hostility. Once the conflict gets to the manifest stage, more structured conflict solution processes may be required. What one can do is negotiate the conflict, arbitrate it, and seek legal assistance to contain the open manifestations of the conflict so as to solve the problem. The idea is to come to a resolution concerning the problem while steering clear of the issue that has sparked the conflict.

Escalation

Escalation is the process whereby conflict becomes worse in relation to the level of damage, expansiveness, and destructiveness (Bosch, 2017). Compared to the first phase, this phase is characterized by a revision in terms of the frequency and severity of the conflict, the inclusion of other parties and drastic measures. There are different reasons for the escalation, including the desire of the participants based on emotional reactions, dominating-submissive aspects, and external circumstances. For example, if peaceful negotiations about water sharing are not effective, they can lead to conflict and involve violent actions that require the attention of local or central authorities.

The escalation stage is a particularly risky phase because it opens up the possibility that the conflict might spiral, creating a downward cycle leading to further acts of aggression and counter-aggression. In this stage, it is time to begin actions to reduce the conflict rather than advocating for a specific course of action. This could be through declaring a cease-fire, through peacemaking, or even through ceaseless negotiations (Bosch, 2017). The other factors that need to be solved for any given conflict are the power base and the demarcation of issues that may have led to the conflict escalation. When the whole environment becomes hostile, steps need to be taken to prevent the deterioration of the conflict. It is imperative that there be cease-fire therefore formations, peacemaking processes and very intense diplomacy to stop further fighting and set a stage for the much-needed dialogue. There is always a great emphasis on the root causes, the main grievances that have not been resolved, and the conflicts that have been left unresolved, which are key factors that hamper the search for sustainable solutions.

Applicability of a cooperative approach to conflict analysis in resource rivalry among communities

There has always been competition over which community should be given access to which resources and this has, at times, led to some of the worst scenarios, like war and many years of enmity. In most of these conflicts, traditional approaches that are used by leaders, advocates, or arbitrators, such as top-down approaches or an adversarial legal approach, have been helpful in tackling the problems to a very low level. However, a cooperative approach to conflict analysis is a more effective and efficacious strategy that focuses on cooperation, empathy, and communal consultation. It would be able to make adversaries turn into partners in various situations to foster sustainable peace and fair access to resources.

The cooperative approach to conflict analysis involves several key principles, which include the following. The first key principle is the principle of inclusivity, where the approach to conflict resolution must involve all the relevant stakeholders, including the stakeholders directly affected by the conflict and the external mediators or facilitators (Hayden, 2019). The next principle is the principle of dialogue and communication, which encourages open and honest communication to understand the perspectives and interests of all parties. Thereafter, the cooperative approach has the principle of joint problem-solving, which means that all the players collaboratively develop solutions that address the needs and concerns of all parties. Lastly is the principle of sustainability, which contends that the focus of conflict resolution should be on long-term solutions that prevent future conflicts and promote cooperation.

This approach has been used in real life, and there are several examples of real-life situations where the cooperative approach was applied. For example, there exists a cooperative resolution on the Pangani River Basin, where the two countries involved are Tanzania and Kenya. The Pangani River Basin, which touches the borders of Tanzania and Kenya, has been an area of resource conflict with regard to water (Mbonile, 2005). Millions of people in the basin use the water resource for agricultural practices, fishing, and domestic water consumption. Traditionally, tensions emerged between the two groups because water usage was more of a localized concern, and downstream users often complained of severe water shortage during the dry season. To address these conflicting issues, the collaborative effort was initiated by establishing the Pangani Basin Water Board (PBWB) and Water Resources Users Associations (WRUAs) (Mbonile, 2005). These bodies include the community, agricultural and industrial consumers, and the government so as to have a well-rounded decision-making process regarding the available water resources. The cooperative approach was used where necessary, where it involved the following: stakeholder involvement in decision-making, such as through consultation, being open and sharing information. Hence, everyone reached an agreement on the following solutions: rationing water during the dry season, investing in water conservation, and coming up with more ways of fairly distributing water. Hence, the cooperation meant that many people had reduced the possibility of fighting over water sources. Through the participation of all stakeholders and the cultivation of the understanding of shared responsibility, the PBWBs and the WRUAs were able to effectively regulate the conflict over the resource and, therefore, ensure sustainable water use.

The Mbororo pastoralists and Hausa farmers in Nigeria have a long history of clashes as they both compete for pastures and water sources. These conflicts were magnified by a changing environment, increasing population density, and rival land management systems. Earlier, such conflicts were more prone to lead to resolutions involving bloodshed and counter-aggression (Adebajo, 2022). To respond to these challenges, a cooperative security model was adopted, and regional peace committees were formed. Such committees included members from both the source and recipient communities and local government entities as well as CSOs (Adebajo, 2022). The action plan of this cooperative process entailed the following: Regular meetings were held where the Mbororo and Hausa groups could express themselves and air their grievances. Besides that, many conflict analysis workshops were conducted. These activities ensured that the two parties learned about the causes of the tension, which included environmental issues and poor resource management. Finally, they pursued cooperation through collaboration activities that included the development of grazing corridors for the pastoralists with the establishment of water points that are accessible to both the pastoralists and the farmers. The conflict between the Mbororo and Hausa pastoralists in Nigeria was a complex one that could not be solved by force. However, establishing the source of the conflict and encouraging the parties to work together to foster proper management of the available resources led to the provision of sustainable solutions for the two communities.

Water resource competition in the Mekong River that stretches through China, Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam has been most conspicuous as countries stake claims to water resources for agriculture, fishing, and energy production. A lot of tension was inherent because different countries had rather different aims and interests. The Mekong River Commission was established as a regional basin cooperation mechanism aimed at addressing the management of the river's resources (Junlin et al., 2021). The approach used by the MRC incorporated making everyone a riparian and ensuring that all the countries are in the commission so they have their say in what is to be done. It also provided cooperation on research projects and data exchange of flow and sediment characteristics as well as ecological status. The last type of regulation

involved in the study was policies and agreements that acted as arrangements that could be made to jointly regulate the use of water, the conservation of the environment, and the handling of any possible disagreements. In its efforts to work cooperatively on managing the Mekong River resources, the MRC has been able to avoid most conflicts (Junlin et al., 2021). Moreover, as a result of the commission's strengthening of regional cooperation and collaborative approach to addressing challenges, the region has witnessed sustainable development and peace.

Yoffe et al. (2003) conducted a study to assess the feasibility of cooperation in the management of water resources in the Middle East, particularly in the Jordan River basin. The experience of researchers has shown that the cooperation between Israel, Jordan, and Palestine significantly enhances the usage and regulation of water resources and reduces conflicts. The study noted the following as some of the factors that accounted for the success of the cooperative strategy: First, there was the formation of joint water committees comprised of all riparian states that provided for clear and collective approaches to decision-making. This means that the principle of participation was well addressed as a central imperative. Cooperation also involved the exchange of hydrological information and joint undertakings, which fostered trust and served as the basis for fair water allocation. Finally, the participation of outside actors that are not politically aligned with the two countries, the United States and the World Bank, assisted in offering technical support and escalating conflicts. Drawing from the research findings of the study, it was ascertained that the cooperative approach not only eased misunderstandings and rivalry concerning water resources but also facilitated sustainable cooperation and peace in a region that has been characterized by such vices in the past. Based on this research, it becomes clear that institutional structures, data openness and third-party involvement are key enablers of successful collaboration.

Key actors in cooperative approach for conflict analysis and Peaceful coexistence in resource rivalry among communities

A study by Kim.(2009) examines the communities competing for resources. The study shows that these communities experiences conflicts within themselves. This makes cooperative conflict analysis and peaceful coexistence to be necessary. The government, leaders of the communities, Non-governmental organizations and international organizations are the main players in the above process. Their contribution is to reduce the conflict and foster peace.

Governments play a pivotal role in conflict analysis and resolution by establishing policies and legal frameworks that address resource distribution and use. According to Kising'u (2017), strategic leadership and effective policy implementation by governmental bodies are essential for sustainable conflict resolution and maintaining competitive advantages within communities. Governments can facilitate dialogue and negotiation processes, create inclusive platforms for community participation, and ensure fair resource allocation.

NGOs are instrumental in conflict resolution by providing a neutral platform for dialogue and offering technical expertise in conflict analysis. Baba (2015) emphasizes the importance of learning orientation within NGOs to enhance their performance in conflict resolution activities. NGOs can mobilize resources, advocate for marginalized communities, and implement grassroots programs that foster cooperation and peaceful coexistence.

Community leaders and elders hold significant influence within their communities, making them essential actors in conflict resolution. Githige (2010) highlights that community participation in project design and decision-making processes is crucial for the success of conflict resolution strategies.

International organizations, such as the United Nations and World Bank, provide support for conflict analysis and resolution through funding, expertise, and policy guidance. Netanda et al. (2017) discuss the role of international bodies in enhancing institutional support systems to reduce conflict and promote sustainable development. These organizations can facilitate international cooperation and provide frameworks for conflict resolution that are informed by global best practices.

Academic institutions contribute to conflict resolution by conducting research and providing evidence-based recommendations. Lee and Gopinathan (2018) emphasize the role of educational reforms in promoting social equity and reducing conflicts related to resource distribution. The universities were advised to introduce programs on peace building and conflict resolution and also conduct community base research.

Women and youth are often key actors in conflict resolution due to their unique perspectives and roles within communities. Smits (2014) suggests that involving women and youth in conflict resolution processes leads to more sustainable and inclusive outcomes. Their participation can enhance community cohesion and ensure that solutions are representative of all demographics.

The media is essential to spreading the information and also to take public opinion. Li and Toppinen (2011) note that responsible media coverage can reduce tensions and promote understanding between conflicting parties. Effective communication strategies can help in spreading awareness about conflict resolution efforts and encouraging community participation.

The private sector can contribute to conflict resolution by investing in community development and promoting corporate social responsibility. Mungai et al. (2020) highlight the positive impact of corporate engagement in environmental management and conflict mitigation. Businesses are also important in supporting local economies, creating job opportunities, and also to fund initiatives that promote peace and stability.

A study carried out by Ojiambo(2009), pinpoints the effectiveness of integrating traditional mechanisms to conflict resolution. They included customary laws and practices. He also discusses the effectiveness of integrating both modern and traditional conflict mechanisms to achieve peace. The mechanisms are often accepted by the local community.

According to a study by Dawson et al. (2006), peacebuilding and conflict resolution ought to be taught at educational institutions. Education is crucial because it may increase people's knowledge of the value of peaceful coexistence and provide them the tools they need to overcome disagreements.

Effective environmental management practices can reduce resource rivalry and associated conflicts. Amoako et al. (2013) stress the need for sustainable resource management to prevent conflicts over scarce resources. Environmental conservation programs can promote equitable resource distribution and reduce the likelihood of conflicts.

The cooperative approach to conflict analysis and peaceful coexistence in resource rivalry among communities requires the active involvement of multiple key actors. Governments, NGOs, community leaders, international organizations, academic institutions, women and youth, media, the private sector, traditional mechanisms, and education all play crucial roles. Their collaborative efforts can lead to sustainable conflict resolution and promote long-term peace and stability in resource-rich regions.

Utilization of the cooperative approach for conflict analysis outcomes in peaceful coexistence in resource rivalry among communities

Lederach (1997) states that cooperative conflict resolution solutions lay a major emphasis on building connections and trust between disputing parties. Reciprocal knowledge and interactive dialogue which were to address resources-related concerns were encouraged by the above approaches. The widespread application in community conflicts involving contested natural resources such as land and water was demonstrated by the effectiveness of Lederach's notion.

According to Fabricius et al. (2001), the community-based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) framework is defined as the strategy by local people in managing and reaping the benefits of natural resources. In South Africa, Community-based Natural Resource Management(CBNRM) has made success in lowering conflict and fostering sustainable use and fair resource allocation.

The Global Water Partnership (2000) has done research on the cooperative strategy of Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) and has encouraged the sustainable development and management of water, land, and related resources in a coordinated manner to optimize economic well-being while maintaining the viability of ecosystems. According to case studies from the Nile Basin, IWRM can lessen conflict by promoting cooperation and communication among riparian states, which can lead to collective decision-making and conflict resolution.

Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms play a significant role in the cooperative approach to conflict analysis. Boege (2006) discusses how traditional authorities and customary laws can complement modern conflict resolution techniques. In many African communities, elders and local leaders mediate disputes using culturally accepted practices, which can be integrated into formal conflict resolution frameworks to enhance legitimacy and acceptance among community members.

Peace committees, as examined by Odendaal (2013), are grassroots structures that facilitate dialogue and negotiation among conflicting parties. These committees, often composed of community leaders, women, and youth representatives, have been effective in resolving resource-related conflicts in Kenya and Uganda. They provide a platform for continuous dialogue, monitoring conflict dynamics, and implementing agreed-upon solutions, contributing to sustained peace.

According to Chamers(1994) The Participatory Rural Appraisal(PRA)which is also known as the Methodological approach incorporates the local people in development and also helps in analyses of the initiatives that would impact their lives. PRA technique was used to gather different viewpoints, establish cooperative ways for resource management, and comprehend underlying concerns. This was done by making sure that underrepresented group's voices were heard. The strategy also promoted inclusive and unsuccessful dispute resolution.

Environmental peacebuilding, as explored by Conca and Wallace (2009), links environmental management with peacebuilding efforts. This approach recognizes that environmental cooperation can serve as a catalyst for peace in conflict-affected regions. Successful examples from Central America show how joint environmental projects can build trust, improve inter-community relations, and create a foundation for sustainable peace.

NGOs play a pivotal role in facilitating cooperative approaches to conflict resolution. Anderson (1999) highlights how NGOs can act as neutral facilitators, providing mediation services, capacity building, and resources for conflict analysis and resolution. Their involvement is particularly crucial in regions where state capacity is limited, ensuring that communities have access to the necessary tools and support to resolve their conflicts peacefully.

Several case studies illustrate the success of cooperative approaches in managing resource conflicts. For instance, the Peace Parks initiative in Southern Africa, described by Hanks (2003), involves transboundary conservation areas that promote biodiversity while fostering cooperation between neighboring countries. These parks have not only enhanced conservation efforts but also reduced tensions and promoted economic development through ecotourism.

Despite the successes, cooperative approaches face challenges and limitations. According to Bercovitch and Jackson (2009), issues such as power imbalances, lack of trust, and insufficient resources can hinder the effectiveness of cooperative strategies. Additionally, external factors like political instability and economic pressures can exacerbate conflicts, making it difficult to achieve and sustain peaceful coexistence.

For cooperative approaches to be effective, several recommendations are proposed. First, there must be genuine commitment from all stakeholders to the process. Second, capacity building and continuous support are essential to empower local communities. Third, integrating traditional conflict resolution methods with modern practices can enhance the legitimacy and acceptance of conflict resolution efforts. Lastly, continuous monitoring and evaluation are crucial to adapt strategies as needed and ensure long-term success.

Research shows that collaborative methods for analyzing and resolving conflicts can greatly enhance peaceful cohabitation in resource-rivalry groups. These tactics can lessen conflict and advance enduring peace by incorporating traditional practices, involving all relevant parties, and guaranteeing ongoing support and adaptation. Future studies should concentrate on creating more reliable frameworks and resolving the issues found in order to improve the efficiency of cooperative approaches to dispute resolution.

CONCLUSION

Understanding the phases of conflict analysis can prove valuable in gaining an appreciation of how conflicts emerge and how they might be controlled or addressed. Conflict phases are identified as latent conflict, perceived conflict, manifest conflict and escalation. The cooperative approach to conflict analysis involves several key principles, which including inclusivity, dialogue and communication, joint problem-solving, and sustainability. The cooperative approach has been used in real life, and there are several examples of real-life situations where the cooperative approach was applied. The experience of researchers has shown that the cooperation between conflicting parties significantly enhances the usage and regulation of water resources and reduces conflicts.

The research paper found that the key actors in conflict analysis include the government, leaders of the communities, Non-governmental organizations and international organizations are the main players in the above process. It reveals that NGOs are instrumental in conflict resolution by providing a neutral platform for dialogue and offering technical expertise in conflict analysis. Others like international organizations, such as the United Nations and World Bank, provide support for conflict analysis and resolution through funding and expertise. Academic institutions, Women and youth, the media, the private actors are also key actors in conflict resolution due to their unique perspectives and roles within communities.

Cooperative conflict analysis have been utilized in building connections and trust between disputing parties. Cases of success include the community-based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) framework, cooperative strategy of Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) where IWRM can lessen conflict by promoting cooperation and communication among riparian states. Utilization also calls on peace committees which are grassroots structures that facilitate dialogue and negotiation among conflicting parties. The Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). Utilization of cooperative conflicts analysis is evident in environmental peacebuilding as well as in Peace Parks initiatives. However, cooperative approaches face challenges and limitations such as power imbalances, lack of trust, and insufficient resources can hinder the effectiveness of cooperative strategies. Hence collaborative methods for analyzing and resolving conflicts can greatly enhance peaceful cohabitation in resource-rivalry groups.

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