THE INFLUENCE OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT ON
THE PERFORMANCE OF FAMILY PLANNING
PROGRAM DURING PANDEMIC COVID 19
(Longitudinal Prospective Time Series Study)

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: Some of the problems during the COVID-19 pandemic identified include delay in the distribution of contraception to the clients, and poor monitoring and evaluation of activities for the family planning program. These problems which occurred from task conflict would need to be managed so that the objectives of the family planning program could be achieved. The purpose of this study was to analyze the influence of conflict management on performance of family planning program Lamongan Indonesia.

Methods: This was an observation study with a longitudinal prospective time series design. Thirty randomly selected teams from a total of 33 family planning program teams from both studied organizations in Lamongan were interviewed and observed. Structured questionnaires had been used while some data were obtained from the management. Data were then analyzed using liner regression.

Results: There were few issues identified that had led to conflicts among the family planning program teams. The scored conflicts are in the unfavorable category with an average of 12.70 (t1), 13.13 (t2) and 13.73 (t3). Levene’s test showed that the data variants of conflict management for three periods were homogeneous (Sig. > 0.05). The beta coefficient value indicates that conflict management has a strong influence on inter-team family planning program performance of 0.581 (p = 0.001).

Conclusions: Conflicts between two organizations with the same goal should be managed as it can help to achieve the required performance. Policy on conflict identification and management should be developed in any health program.
Introduction

In an organization, conflicts may occur especially when workers from two different organizations are expected to work together towards the common goal. Managing conflict is an important task and is a challenge for the management. Conflict management can change a destructive conflict situation into a constructive one [1]. It can enhance the organizational effectiveness and encourage collaborations [2]. Currently, most studies on conflict management focus on a single project or within an organization only. There is a need to study conflict management across organizations especially when the same goals are made for them.

In Indonesia, the execution of the strategic plan for family planning program is by two different organizations or agencies, namely the Population Control and Family Planning Service and the Community Health Center. The Population Control and Family Planning Service is responsible for creating demand for family planning services (demand creation), providing counseling about family planning programs, finding new family planning acceptors and providing contraceptive drugs for the Community Health Center. While the Community Health Center is responsible to supply and distribute the contraception to the users or clients. They are responsible for providing family planning services for prospective acceptors. Both agencies have different roles but with same goal which is to prevent population explosion by suppressing the population growth rate, regulating pregnancy, and provide marriage counseling towards achieving happy, quality life, and prosperous small family norms [3]. The family planning program workers from both organizations at Lamongan Regency are made up of 33 teams comprise by the family planning program coordinator from the community health center, and village midwives, coordinators, extension workers from the family planning agency.

From a pre study interview with a health worker who provides family planning services during Covid-19 pandemic, there are two type of conflicts that are prevalent. They include issues of delayed issuance of contraception, and poor monitoring and evaluation activity on the implementation of the family planning program. The conflicts that occur were mostly due to task conflicts. Reasons that were thought to derive the conflicts include differences in work policies, culture, and leadership style in both organizations. Workers from each organization were ego-sectoral in their mindset so much so that they work in a fragmented manner and not communicating with other as should. These conflicts had caused hindrance for the health workers to collaborate in meeting the goal of family planning program in Indonesia, whereas as is known the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) in Indonesia in 2017 decreased by 2.4. This means that the 2015-2019 RPJMN target has not been achieved, namely the TFR of 2.3%[4].

One of the performance indicator for a
success family program is based on the participation rate in the family planning program and it was observed that the performance of family planning in Lamongan regency (70.93%) had fell to bottom 10th in East Java and the rate was below the East Java Province (75.56%) [4]. It was also reported that Covid-19 pandemic had significantly reduced the uptake of contraception compared to before the pandemic [5]. Many studies had discussed the problem of contraception usage from the community perspectives [6–8], facilities [9], cost [10] perceptions and attitudes of healthcare workers [11]. But no publication is found on the role of management in handling the conflicts within and across organizations and on the effect of conflict to performance if not managed accordingly.

**Objectives**

This publication aims to describe conflict management among the family planning program workers from two different organizations that have the same goal. Subsequently, the influence of conflict management on the performance of family planning program will be determined.

**Materials and Methods**

This study employed a longitudinal time series study design. The studied population was workers within the 33 groups or teams from two organizations that are responsible to implement the family planning program in Lamongan regency: the Community Health Centre, and Population Control and Family Planning Service.

Several selection criteria were made for the workers to be invited into the study; the workers should not be from an area that has a lockdown status, they however can be either a civil servant or an honorary employee, have worked at least 3 years in the same job, the coordinating midwife and the family planning field extension have served since for at least for a duration of 1 year and volunteer to participate.

Based on the above criteria, there were 240 volunteered (from 30 teams). One group consist of 8 respondents were randomly selected and they consisted of 1 coordinator midwife in charge of the family planning program at the Community Health Center, 3 member midwives, 1 coordinator and 3 members from the family planning service team (field extension unit). The researcher chose 8 respondents because we only needed 2 coordinators and 6 implementers in each work area as representatives by taking into account the time of the study.

The sampling technique in this study was used a simple random sampling technique. The number of samples after being calculated were 30 teams. The questionnaires on conflict management were measured by the theory of Wang Wu [12]. In this analysis, management conflict is the independent variable while the outcome variable is the performance in terms of participation rate of clients for the family planning services program. The collection of data for conflict management was via self-administered questionnaires while data on performance were obtained from the organizations. Both the conflict management and performance variables were measured at 3 intervals: at 3, 4 and 5 months consecutively, namely in November, December 2021 and January 2022. During these months, the situation of Covid-19
pandemic in the country was still bad, with the health system engine had focused on cubing the infection.

From the questionnaires, the total scores of conflict management were grouped into 4 categories, namely very poor (if the score is 6-10), not good (if the score is 11-15), good enough (if the score is 16-20) and good (if the score is 21-24). Presented in the form of three categories (based on program performance scores), namely Low (if the percentage of Program performance 80% and below), Enough (if the program performance percentage is 81-90%) and Good (if Program performance percentage 91%). Linear regression from SPSS program had been applied for data analysis to show the relationships between conflict management scores and performance of family planning services.

**Result**

The results showed that from the 30 samples, there were still 23.33% of the Midwife Coordinator for the Family Planning Program who were not located at the Community health center. As much as 26.67% Midwives Coordinator of the Family Planning Program concurrently holds positions with other role at the Community health center. Likewise, with the Family Planning Program Extension, 64% of workers are concurrently coordinators of the sub-district family planning extension workers in their respective working areas. In addition to the framework of positions, the high number of couples of childbearing age is not proportional to the number of existing family planning instructors.

The list of conflict management strategies in the inter team family planning program and the scores on its implementation is shown in Table 1.

### Table 1 Results of Conflict Management Strategies on Inter-team Family Planning Program for 3 Months

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator of Conflict Management</th>
<th>T1</th>
<th>T2</th>
<th>T3</th>
<th>Sig. (Levene’s test)</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify the type of conflict</td>
<td>2,70</td>
<td>2,80</td>
<td>2,87</td>
<td>0,749</td>
<td>Homogen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify the source of conflict</td>
<td>2,20</td>
<td>2,20</td>
<td>2,23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify conflict resolution strategies</td>
<td>2,37</td>
<td>2,47</td>
<td>2,50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify conflict resolution principles</td>
<td>1,83</td>
<td>1,87</td>
<td>1,87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify the impact of the conflict that has occurred</td>
<td>1,47</td>
<td>1,63</td>
<td>1,67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification of conflict prevention that has been carried out</td>
<td>2,13</td>
<td>2,17</td>
<td>2,33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum</td>
<td>12,70</td>
<td>13,13</td>
<td>13,73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Not good</td>
<td>Not good</td>
<td>Not good</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total scores of the strategies/identifications of conflict management in the family planning program team are in the unfavorable category with an average of 12.70 (t₁), 13.13 (t₂) and 13.73 (t₃). However, it can be observed that there was...
increasing trend in the score of the average conflict management every month. An indicator of conflict management that really needs to be improved is the family planning program team's efforts to identify the impact of conflicts that have already occurred. Levene's test showed that the data variants of the three periods were homogeneous (Sig. > 0.05). Therefore, the data used for the next analysis was based on t3. Furthermore, data t3 was used since it was the latest feedback of the family planning program team in carrying out conflict management.

Inter team performance is the result of the achievement of the two teams as measured by the coverage of new and active family planning participants. Table 2 shows the identification of the inter team performance of the Family Planning Program for 3 months.

**Table 2** The Identification of the Inter-team Performance of the Family Planning Program for 3 Months

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Indicator of Inter-team Performance</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Sig. (Levene's test)</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coverage of new family planning participants</td>
<td>64.71</td>
<td>61.27</td>
<td>77.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coverage of active family planning participants</td>
<td>93.43</td>
<td>93.70</td>
<td>93.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average percentage</td>
<td>79.07</td>
<td>77.48</td>
<td>85.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Enough</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The inter-team performance of the family planning program in the two initial measurement periods was in the low category, while the last condition showed sufficient results. The percentage of coverage of new family planning participants fluctuated. The percentage of coverage of active family planning participants had showed increasing trend over the period of 3 months. The indicator with the lowest percentage was the coverage of new family planning participants. Based on the results of Levene's test, it was proven that the third variant of the measurement data were homogeneous (sig. = 0.476).

Table 3 shows that low inter-team performance was observed when there was very poor conflict management. Sufficient inter-team performance had less conflict management. Likewise, with good inter-team performance, most of them had good conflict management. This means that conflict management can increase inter-team performance. The better the conflict management, the better the inter-team performance of the family planning program.

**Table 3** The Influence Conflict Management on Inter-team Performance of Family Planning Program in Lamongan District January 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conflict management</th>
<th>Inter-team performance indicator</th>
<th>Sum</th>
<th>Beta coeff.</th>
<th>p-value</th>
<th>t-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Enough</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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The beta coefficient value indicates that conflict management has a strong influence on inter-team family planning program performance; 0.581 with a p-value = 0.001. It can be deducted that inter-team family planning program performance is influenced by conflict management.

**Discussion**

Conflict management is required for effective conflict resolution, conflict mode analysis, and conflict communication by placing the necessary mechanisms for conflict management within an environment [13]. The strategies for conflict management at the team level can be of several forms. A study on socio-influence factors had stated that that the formation of groups can be a powerful instrument of social influence [14] and have a substantial effect on individual behavior [15], with subsequent direct impact on group outcomes [16]. Therefore, it is important to manage conflict since a destructive conflict situation can be turnover into a constructive one [1]. By doing so, it will increase the organizational effectiveness besides improving collaborations between parties [2].

In this study, the findings had showed that there existed conflicts between the workers/teams from the two organizations given the responsibility to ensure good uptake of contraception among the women in the community of Lamongan regency. The study had also revealed the importance of identifying and managing the conflicts whereby it was observed that when management of conflict was poor, the performance of the program in terms of participation of new contraceptive receivers and coverage of the family planning program were low. There was improvement on the performances as the conflicts were managed over the three observation intervals.

The above findings are supported by previous studies which reported that organizational effectiveness and performance can be improved if conflict is managed accordingly [17]. In addition, it had been proven that conflict management strategies can influence to sustain employee performance [18]. Team is said to have a superior performance compared to individual performance [19], and teams whose members had used cooperative conflict management approach had significantly higher team effectiveness and managers’ ratings of team effectiveness[20]. Therefore, it is important to identify and manage conflicts among the stakeholders of the family planning service providers in Lamongan for the enhancement and sustainability of the required performances.

**Study Limitation**

This research was only conducted in one regency of the country. The study should to be extended to review the necessary policies, rules, guidelines for better cooperation between organizations,
especially on the guidelines for cooperation to deal with conflicts of implementation of family planning programs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Conclusion**

There was conflicts among the family planning program teams from the two different organizations that are responsible to execute the activities and meet the goal of the family planning program in Lamongan regency, especially during the era of Covid-19 pandemic. Identification and management of the conflicts had proven to improve the performance as to meet the goals of the family planning program. Thus, it is important to have a policy on identifying and manage conflicts in any health program.

**Reference**

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