

Conflict Management Skills Development in Education Transformation for Teachers of SMA Negeri 13 Ambon

Pengembangan Kemampuan Manajemen Konflik dalam Transformasi Pendidikan bagi Guru SMA Negeri 13 Ambon

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Abstract

SMA Negeri 13 Ambon, as one of the driving schools in Ambon City, is currently sustaining to carry out transformation efforts comprehensively. This effort certainly raises many sources of conflicts, which, if managed properly, will actually become constructive conflicts that encourage the transformation process. Unfortunately, conflict that happened internally in the school is regarded negative by most of the teachers at the school and actually eventually hinder the transformation process at school. This has a great impact on the teacher's lack of ability to manage conflict in the school. Through the program of Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran (MGMP), teachers are equipped with the correct understanding of conflict and how to manage conflict appropriately so that it is beneficial for the transformation process at SMA Negeri 13 Ambon.

Keywords: transformation, conflict, conflict management.

Abstrak

SMA Negeri 13 Ambon sebagai salah satu sekolah penggerak di Kota Ambon saat ini terus melakukan upaya transformasi secara menyeluruh dalam satuan pendidikan. Upaya ini tentu memunculkan banyak potensi konflik yang bila dikelola dengan baik justru akan menjadi konflik konstruktif yang mendorong proses transformasi. Sayangnya sebagian besar guru di SMA Negeri 13 Ambon memandang konflik sebagai hal yang negatif dan justru menghambat proses transformasi di sekolah. Hal ini sangat berdampak pada rendahnya kemampuan manajemen konflik guru di sekolah tersebut. Melalui kegiatan Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran (MGMP), para guru dibekali dengan pemahaman yang benar mengenai konflik dan bagaimana mengelola konflik agar bermanfaat bagi proses transformasi di SMA Negeri 13 Ambon.

Kata Kunci : transformasi, konflik, manajemen konflik.

1. PENDAHULUAN

SMA Negeri 13 Ambon, one of the second-year mover schools (*Sekolah Penggerak*) in Ambon City, is highly regarded and rapidly gaining recognition within the community. The school's strategic location in close proximity to downtown, Mobile Brigade Headquarters, a shopping center, and public spaces may impact the situation. It has come to our attention that the performance of SMA Negeri 13 Ambon has been rapidly gaining recognition within the community, a testament to the school's potential and the efforts of its staff.

SMA Negeri 13 Ambon, as a mover school, has implemented transformation programs as recommended by national education regulations. The commonly held notion of transformation is

typically regarded as a form of alteration. However, it is more than an ordinary change. It is a radical, complete change (Fisher, 2006). The transition represents a shift from an antiquated state to a contemporary one. Transformation, therefore, utilizes skills and modern tools to produce different new things. Thus, transformation refers to innovation and creation.

The transformation within mover schools encompasses five interrelated interventions: consultative asymmetric assistance, reinforcement of school human resources, new paradigm learning, data-based planning, and school digitalization (Zamjani et al., 2020). Ideally, it is an effort to change to be more advanced. The core requirement of mover school programs is the implementation of a new teaching paradigm, such as the Merdeka Curriculum or Independence Curriculum. Additionally, teachers must implement interactive learning by integrating a digitalization system into teaching-learning.

Given that a profound shift in perspective and worldview initiates the process of transformation (Anderson, 2016, p. 82) which means that transformation becomes a demand for an organization to survive. However, transformation is not an ordinary change. It is a fast, radical, comprehensive change (Fisher, 2006), a sharp and simultaneous process (McNulty & Ferlie, 2004). From a modern perspective, an organization is a dynamic relationship involving members with various characteristics that should be adjustable in reacting to any changes, particularly transformation. Organizations, including schools, will survive and be well-developed only if they adapt. When school components – teachers, administrators, and all the related components cannot adjust, the transformation work will be hindered. Consequently, conflict may arise among the teachers or between the teachers and the leader.

Conflicts in schools can be attributed to a multitude of factors. According to Ohaka, school conflict is mainly led by disagreements between individuals that produce inadequate work distribution, chaos, and dissatisfaction (Adams & Plaatjes, 2021). Moreover, various opinions, thoughts, and views contribute to conflict construction (Hamdi et al., 2021). At first glance, this appears to be potentially harmful. However, this does not mean that conflict always harms schools. Differences are static passive conditions of an entity where conflict impacts people's response toward differences rather than the differences. In other words, differences are not the scapegoat of a conflict (McCannon & McCannon, 2008, p. 42). Conflict is more about manner than matter. The trigger for conflicts is not differences but responses toward those differences. Conflict should not always be perceived as a negative occurrence.

The impact of conflict, whether positive or negative, largely depends on how it is handled. A high-quality school is characterized by its ability to effectively handle conflicts when they occur, using them to improve its overall effectiveness rather than avoiding or ignoring them (Larasati & Raharja, 2020). In this respect, managing conflict can significantly impact the success of transformation programs. Conflict can catalyze progress when handled adeptly but can become a substantial obstacle when mismanaged. This shows that conflict management is as important as other competencies that school components, particularly principals, should possess.

Theoretically, three concepts of conflict affect the management. First, a traditional view believes that conflict is a misfortune that must be avoided. Second, the human-relation belief assumes that conflict is a typical circumstance that can benefit the organization. The last theory, which not only views conflict as a helpful condition but those who follow this theory promotes conflict to preserve and energize the organization, is called the interactionist concept (Robbins et al., 2002, p. 164 - 165). The three concepts suggest that those who regard conflict as significant for schools will encourage it constructively.

A widespread recent fact is that countless educational actors—teachers and school leaders—still perform traditional conflict management. Parties with different opinions or views are avoided and even eliminated. For worse, the leader ends the conflict by transferring the conflicted parties to another school or department. Sometimes, the conflicting parties are not handed any assignments. The adverse reactions as a condition of unsolved conflict often appear in the form of teaching strikes, demonstrations, or even leads to protests against the authorities.

This differs from the interactionist theory, which enriches organizations with opposing ideas and varied backgrounds. This indicates effective conflict management for fostering constructive conflict and promoting a productive work environment in the context of the transformative efforts at the driving school. Andersen posited that conflict management is oriented toward guiding an existing conflict in a constructive direction rather than eradicating it (Patton, 2018). In conflict management, the convergence of diverse ideas and backgrounds is effectively harnessed to foster the advancement of the educational institution.

Even though it is crucial, understanding the conflict management field resulting from the transformation program has received less concern. More studies focused on the effectiveness of the transformation work in mover school programs, including its five interventions mentioned above. Another piece of evidence suggests the lack of conflict management-based training for both intended teachers and school principal candidates. As a result, their understanding of conflict and its management is inadequate.

SMA Negeri 13 Ambon, the mover school in Ambon City, ever experienced a conflict between teachers and administrators with the prior principal in 2022 while attempting to implement the transformation of the driving school program (www.siwalimanews.com, 2022). Consequently, the principal was reassigned in early 2024. The recent leadership transition has brought about substantial changes in the school, including restructuring the staff, revising the school's financial system, and placing PPPK teachers.

Considering the suggested background above has been a Community Service Program at the driving school, namely Conflict Management Skills Coaching for SMA Negeri 13 Ambon Teachers through MGMP Program, which aims to provide teachers with:

1. Proper comprehension of conflict management including the advantages and disadvantages of conflicts.
2. Skills in conflict management properly

The mover school program is not the initial or ultimate transformation program that might be subject to replacement based on evaluation results. As long as educational transformation is the central theme of the educational movement in Indonesia, the potential for conflict will always accompany it. By understanding conflict and how to manage it, all the educational actors will readily adjust to the changes. It is wonderful to learn that the program has given the school teachers and principal new insights into managing conflicts, especially during times of change. It is crucial for educators to have the skills required to handle conflicts constructively, especially when educational institutions are undergoing transformation. These insights could ultimately contribute to a more positive and effective transformation process at SMA Negeri 13 Ambon. This service was implemented at the MGMP (Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran) or Teachers Working Group, a school teachers' capacity development forum.

2. METHOD

The program was carried out as an interactive talk, starting with a case study regarding conflicts that have been viral in some schools in Indonesia, including in the mover schools. The participants were SMA Negeri 13 Ambon teachers and the principal. As mentioned previously, the core aims of the program were to provide the teachers and principals with the proper comprehension of conflict management including the advantages and disadvantages of conflict, and to provide them with skills in conflict management properly.

To achieve the aims, the program was completed in some stages as the following:

1. Problem Analysis

First, we discussed the significance of this program with the school principal. After reflecting on the school's recent state and activity, we found a conflict potential as the impact of the transformation program, namely dissatisfaction with several policies taken by the school principal. We then handed out a questionnaire to describe the conflict in depth. The questionnaire concerned the school's principal and teachers' perceptions of the conflict. The results indicate that teachers and principals misunderstand school conflict and conflict management.

Table 1. A Questionnaire to analyze teachers' concepts of conflict and conflict management.

Teachers' Understanding of Conflict	Teachers' Understanding of Conflict Management
Conflicting within schools does not have any significance in the transformation process. ◇Agree ◇Disagree	It is better to avoid conflicts in schools ◇Agree ◇Disagree
The absence of conflicts in schools is indicative of positive dynamics. ◇Agree ◇Disagree	Those who are conflicting with us should be avoided ◇Agree ◇Disagree
All forms of conflict tend to result in discord and division. ◇Agree ◇Disagree	A third person in a conflict always makes it worse ◇Agree ◇Disagree
Conflicts often serve as catalysts for effective problem-solving. ◇Agree ◇Disagree	People who are in opposition to the decisions made by the leadership should be waived. ◇Agree ◇Disagree
It is advisable to adhere to the decisions made by the leader rather than engaging in arguments. ◇Agree ◇Disagree	Managing conflict in schools is fully the principal's responsibility. ◇Agree ◇Disagree

2. Planning

The results of the problem analysis were used to design the MGMP program's planning, one of the main contents being conflict management. The planning was enclosed in a proposal that included program purposes and time schedule, participant and speaker, and funding.

3. Implementation

The MGMP program was conducted over three days from 3 – 5 July 2024. The allocated time for this session was on the second day from 11 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. and included a case study, presentation, and question-and-answer session.



Figure 1. Opening ceremony of MGMP program

This program employs the andragogy pattern, prioritizing discussion while remaining rooted in conflict and transformation theories. Of the 109 school teachers, 86 participated actively in this program. To make the session active and all involved, the participants were divided into ten groups of eight. The grouping was aimed to encourage the participants to work together and make them realize that various ideas and opinions are inevitable in the group. This was also for time efficiency. Each team was directed to find any conflict case from any source and discuss it with the group. The discussion should be about the causes, the impacts, the existing given solution, the effectiveness of the existing given solution, and the suggested solution of the group. In the presentation session, the participants were concerned and critical in expressing their ideas about the cases.

The second session was the speaker's material presentation. The speaker was a doctor candidate from Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia—Bandung. In the session, the speaker expounded on conflict and transformation, how to manage conflicts, several common styles in handling conflicts, and the benefits of conflicts for schools.

The last session was the questioning-answering activity, during which the participants became more active. Some even considered it emotional as they expressed their ideas and feelings.

4. Evaluation

The evaluation as the post-activity was conducted by handing out a questionnaire that aimed at identifying the participants' understanding of conflict and conflict management after the program. The points of the questionnaire are the same, with a slightly different language formulation as the pre-activity questionnaire.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Transformation is likely to generate conflict as an effort requiring many ideas and innovations. Well-managed conflict will be constructive and encourage educational transformation. This must begin with a proper understanding of conflict and its management. This statement provides the foundation for the implementation of this program.

The program was implemented in two major sessions: group discussion and presentation. The first session involved giving the participants 30 minutes to study any school conflict case in Indonesia. The participants were allowed to find conflict cases on the Internet to identify the causes, impacts, the existing solution, and the effectiveness of the solution. Several links were also provided regarding news containing conflict cases in schools. They were required to offer their groups' solutions to the case. Each group was asked to present their work through a slide presentation by attaching news containing the case that occurred. Each group was given 20 minutes to present their results, including responses to any questions or responses from other groups.



Figure 2. Teachers' group work preparing for presentation and discussing the case

During the second session, a presentation delved into the concept of conflict and its management. This presentation entailed extensive participant interaction, interspersed with their narratives detailing school-based conflict experiences. During the 60-minute session, encompassing a question-and-answer segment, time was optimally utilized to ensure that all participants comprehensively attained the program's objectives. In this Q&A session, several recommendations related to developing activities and schools were obtained. Participants hoped that the department and schools would work together to anticipate conflict conditions in schools, one of which is through this activity.



Figure 3. A teacher emotionally involved in the Q&A session

After the activity, a questionnaire was distributed to assess the achievement of the objectives, specifically about the teachers and the school principal's accurate understanding of conflict and conflict management. The achievement of activity objectives is indicated by changes in understanding, as seen in the table below:

Table 2. Data of Questionnaire (Before and After the Program)

Pre-program					Post-program				
Number of respondents	Presentation (%)		Presentation (%)		Number of respondents	Presentation (%)		Presentation (%)	
	Understanding of conflict		Understanding of conflict management			Understanding of conflict		Understanding of conflict management	
	Positive response	Negative response	Positive response	Negative response		Positive response	Negative response	Positive response	Negative response
85	5.88 %	94.12%	10.59%	89.41%	80	100 %	0%	97.5%	2.5%

From the table, it can be inferred that a questionnaire was distributed to 85 school teachers, including the school principal of SMA Negeri 13 Ambon, before the program. The result is that 80 respondents or 94.12%, assumed that conflicts are negative, while 5.88%, meaning five respondents believed that conflict is positive. This has implications for the way they manage the conflicts where 76 of the respondents, or 89.41%, claimed that conflicts should be prevented, those who are involved in conflict should be split, and those who have different thoughts should be alerted or avoided, whereas 9 respondents or 10.59% of the respondents revealed that conflict is necessary for the school to sustain.

After receiving the program, respondents' concepts significantly changed. None of the 80 who responded to the questionnaire believed that conflicts are harmful while in conflict management, 78 respondents (97.5%) still preferred negative management. Conflicts can be positive and constructive in encouraging and advancing educational transformation. Therefore, conflicts and conflict management should be comprehended and carried out in the appropriate scientific steps, such as in other administration studies.

This coaching program aims to offer school educators, including teachers and the school principal, a renewed perspective on conflict understanding and management. Based on our monitoring activities, it is evident that there is a lack of conflict management training in schools, particularly concerning the implementation of educational reforms. This deficiency is notable despite the substantial impact that effective conflict management can have on educational institutions encompassing individuals from varied backgrounds. Based on feedback from several teachers, it is recommended to integrate this activity into ASN training activities or Principal Training, as it effectively addresses and conveys conflict experiences. The principal shared their optimism that the conflict which occurred some time ago would not reoccur.

4. CONCLUSION

The transformation of education in Indonesia may change patterns, but the heart still carries the theme of change to improve the quality of education. If there are still efforts for transformation, the conflict will have a negative impact if not managed properly or become a stimulus for transformation efforts if appropriately managed.

The process of educational transformation is inherently linked to the school community, which encompasses individuals from diverse backgrounds. Introducing diverse ideas within a given context can precipitate conflicts that may result in advantageous or disadvantageous consequences. Effective conflict management is essential for fostering constructive conflicts and driving transformation programs. The effective management of conflict in schools is contingent upon a sound understanding of its nature. If educators continue to perceive conflict as perilous, the methods employed for its resolution are likely to be detrimental.

The conflict arising from the transformation program at the mover school within SMA Negeri 13 Ambon is a significant experience underlining the need for a briefing activity. This activity aims to provide teachers and principals with a comprehensive understanding of conflict and practical conflict management strategies. As a result of this activity, educators acquire fresh perspectives. These insights have the potential to significantly enhance the positive and efficacious nature of the transformation process at SMA Negeri 13 Ambon. This is also to inform recommendations for the education office regarding the significance of activities with comparable content. The role of conflict in this context is not damaging; instead, it is advantageous for the school if it is constructively handled.

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