



The Dynamics of Territorial Boundary Conflict between Bedengung and Nyelanding Villages in Southern Bangka Regency

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Abstract

This study examines the conflict dynamics and resolution efforts at the boundary between Bedengung Village and Nyelanding Village in South Bangka triggered by the construction of a palm oil mill in the border area of the two villages in 2023. This conflict demonstrates the complexity of the relationship between village governments in managing resources of directly adjacent areas, especially in the context of economic development that affects the interests of the people in both villages. This study aims to determine the efforts taken by the village government in resolving boundary conflicts to realize a fair and sustainable resolution for all parties involved. Galtung conflict triangle theory is used as a conceptual framework to look the dynamics of the conflict, as well as the resolution approach applied. The methodology used is descriptive qualitative, with data collection techniques through in-depth interviews, field observations, and analysis of relevant documentation. The results of research showed that there is CSR interest in the boundary conflict between Bedengung Village and Nyelanding Village. There are attitudes in the conflict including elite, community, offensive and defensive attitudes. Destructive behavior in the conflict is manifested in debates and riots during mediation at the Regional Secretariat of South Bangka. There are contradiction due to CSR interests and the unclear boundaries between Bedengung Village and Nyelanding Village. The settlement efforts, through a peacebuilding approach at the deliberation held on April 22, 2024, successfully reached an agreement as stated in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and approved by all parties involved.

Keywords: Conflict · Dynamics · Territorial boundaries

BACKGROUND

Conflicts can arise in various ways (Nisa et al., 2024), such as through program distribution in districts, inter-provincial and international borders, and village boundaries, all of which can be sources of dispute.

With its rich diversity, Indonesia often experiences conflicts as part of its social dynamics. Typically, conflicts emerge due to differences in views between two or more groups within a community (Zabidi, 2020; Wagoner, 2020). Soekanto defines conflict as a social process where individuals or groups strive to achieve their goals through opposition or dispute, often involving resistance against a party accompanied by threats and violence (ASy'ari, 2021).

According to Mahrudin (in Sormin, 2019), potential conflicts between companies and local communities tend to arise and escalate during the

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exploitation stage rather than at the beginning of exploration. Conflicts that are left unchecked can develop into communal conflicts that threaten national unity. Therefore, effective conflict management is crucial and should be implemented promptly. One example of an inter-village boundary conflict is the dispute between Bedengung Village and Nyelanding Village in the South Bangka Regency. This conflict originated from mutual territorial claims related to the construction of an oil palm plantation, where land was purchased by a company from both villages. The unclear boundaries between the two villages, along with the involvement of the oil palm company (PT Banka Agro Plantari), triggered the inter-village conflict. These boundary issues have led many villages to neglect or overlook regulations, and the resulting ambiguities have caused the conflict to remain unresolved.

The conflict that occurred in the two villages was motivated by unfair CSR interests because the licenses did not match the facts on the ground and had an impact on the boundaries between Bedengung Village and Nyelanding Village, which made this conflict protracted in its efforts to resolve it. The author wants to look at the conflict through the negotiation efforts made by the elites and the village government to resolve the boundary conflict between Bedengung Village and Nyelanding Village in the South Bangka Regency. The role of the local government as the competent authority is very important in managing this boundary conflict.

The boundary issue between Bedengung Village and Nyelanding Village can be seen in three parts: political, economic, and social. Politics is a boundary issue that has political elements in which there are interests, so the settlement has not found a way out. In addition, from an economic point of view, the conflicting boundaries have an economic element that can be a factor in fighting over the area. Meanwhile, when viewed from a social perspective, the result of this boundary issue has caused conflict between the two villages whose land is in conflict in the border area. One of the previous studies on land ownership conflict dynamics is titled *The Conflict Dynamics of Wuni Hamlet and Gabug Hamlet in Giricahyo Village. The study found that the conflict between the residents of Wuni and Gabug Hamlets was open and often escalated into violence. Several factors contributed to the prolonged conflict, including the lack of space for expressing differing

opinions, weak social control within the community, and the absence of intervention to resolve the conflict.

The impact of this conflict included increased solidarity within each hamlet, the growth of negative prejudices that prolonged tensions, unhealthy competition between the two communities, and a negative perception from outsiders toward the residents of Wuni and Gabug Hamlets (Wulandari, 2017). The dynamics of the conflict in this study can be analyzed through several stages. The pre-conflict stage is marked by feelings of dislike and hostility toward the opposing group. The confrontation stage involves verbal disputes and Bleyer actions (revving vehicle engines aggressively to provoke opponents). In the crisis stage, the conflict reaches its peak, often resulting in violent actions. Finally, the post-conflict stage includes various resolution efforts, such as deliberation, police intervention, and approaches to prevent further conflicts.

The key difference between this study and previous research lies in the focus of the analysis. Earlier studies emphasized conflict resolution, its root causes, and the role of the government in addressing the issue. In contrast, my research not only examines the stages of conflict dynamics and resolution efforts but also differs in terms of research location, theoretical approach, and the nature of the case, which was known only to the elites involved in the conflict. Negotiation is an interpersonal decision-making process between two or more individuals to agree on allocating limited resources (Steinel & Harinck, 2020; Prassa & Stalikas, 2020). Negotiation, particularly in specific problems, aims to influence and convince other parties with authority to achieve specific goals (Pureklolon, 2016). In the context of the border conflict between Bedengung Village and Nyelanding Village, the negotiation process is used as a problem-solving method. This process involves various parties that play a crucial role in the determining the outcome of the negotiation.

The primary focus of this negotiation is to reach an agreement on administrative resolve and cross-border and the distribution of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs. The success of this negotiation depends on the ability of the parties to communicate effectively and reach a compromise on a particular problem, the resolution of border conflicts between Bedengung Village and Nyelanding Village in South Bangka Regency, focusing on the negotiation process involving local elites and village governments. In this regard, the role

of local government in the situation is crucial in managing the conflict. This research is conducted with two main objectives: to analyze the border conflict and behavior efforts made to resolve specific border disputes.

METHODS

The research methodology used in this study is qualitative. The main objective of this method is to understand the efforts to resolve the boundary conflict between Bedengung Village and Nyelanding Village in South Bangka Regency. According to Bogdan and Taylor (Moleong Lexy J, 2017), qualitative methodology is a research approach that produces data in words or observed behavior from informants, whether through interviews or observations. The subjects in this study include individuals specialising in boundary issues, particularly Mr Amrullah, the Head of Bedengung Village, and Mr Nurdin, the Head of Nyelanding Village. The data analysis process includes data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions (Huberman & Miles, 2012).

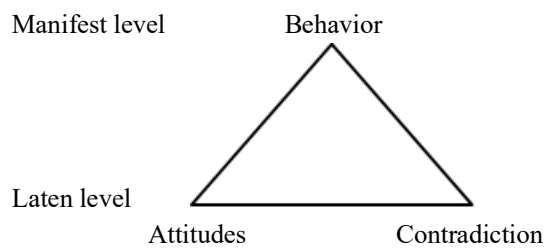
The data used in this study were obtained through active participation by the researcher, observation techniques, interviews, and documentation. After data collection was completed, the researcher analyzed the data using Galtung's (1996) theory of the Conflict Triangle Approach, which includes Attitudes, Behavior, and Contradictions (ABC). The aim is to understand the efforts to resolve the boundary conflict between Bedengung Village and Nyelanding Village in the South Bangka Regency. This framework includes several strategies, including the stages of conflict, which cover pre-conflict, confrontation, peak, consequences, post-conflict, conflict barriers, and conflict resolution.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The section is divided into four sub-discussions, namely the analysis of the conflict triangle theory in border disputes and efforts to resolve the border conflict between Bedengung village and Nyelanding village in south Bangka Regency. Maulana (in Utomo, 2022) points out that understanding conflicts in society isn't always easy, even with existing conflict models and analysis (see also Syahrir, 2024) As an alternative, Galtung introduced the Conflict Triangle model to provide a more comprehensive way of analysing conflicts. In this model, conflict is seen

as a whole system made up of three key elements: contradiction [C], attitude [A], and behavior [B].

Illustration 1. Conflict triangle analysis theory in regional boundary



Source : Johan Galtung (1996)

In the illustration above, the next step is to identify the key indicators for each party involved in the conflict and negotiate based on the researcher's observations of the conflict process. The Bedengung Village Government and the Nyelanding Village Government, acting as negotiators in this case, need to analyze and understand each party's interests to come up with an agreement that is acceptable to everyone. In line with Galtung's perspective, there are several observations regarding the interests of the parties involved in the border dispute between Bedengung Village and Nyelanding Village in Southern Bangka Regency.

The attitudes that arise are not only related to territorial boundaries but are also driven by specific interests. This reflects the coloured assumption that the other party may have hitches or beyond the visible tech conflict during or caution often appears in conflicts, especially when the parties involved perceive add specifically that may influence the resolution of the problem. With such an attitude, the boundary resolution process can become more complicated because any step or decision from the other party can be viewed negatively, or with the sun reflected, the actual conflicts are often coloured by negative attitudes and prejudices towards the opposite community's attitude change and develop as the conflict escalates, so it cannot be behavior static. According to Yakter & Harsgor (2023) attitudes in social conflicts are a dynamic process shaped more by non-violent events than violence levels and the community's attitude toward conflict impacts the course of dialogue or negotiations between the disputing villages. When each party believes its specific "interests" behind the resolution process, it can't behaviour prejudice or negative perception behavior to weaken mediations.

The attitudes that occur in boundary conflicts are: a). The attitude of the village elite reflects the position and views of the leaders of the two disputing villages regarding their boundaries. b). The attitude of the community in reporting the problem illustrates how residents respond and communicate border issues to the village government. c). Offensive attitudes are shown through the refusal of one of the parties to accept the solution offered, indicating inflexibility in the conflict resolution process. d). The palm oil company's defensive stance is evident in its efforts to maintain its reputation and image in the face of this border conflict.

According to Galtung (1996), behavior refers to the actions taken by individuals or groups in response to a conflict situation. In the context of creating a conducive dialogue atmosphere that arises as a response, either verbally or physically, direct behavior is induced by the perceptions and attitudes of the parties involved. Unlike attitudes, behavior is external and tends to be more visible in conflicts. Certain behaviors can either prevent conflict escalation or worsen misunderstandings between conflicting parties. This behavior is not only the result of the conflict but can also worsen the situation, creating a self-perpetuating cycle in the dynamics of the conflict.

This section describes the chaos during the first mediation, indicating that the mediation efforts failed to create a conducive atmosphere for dialogue and to reach an effective solution. This demonstrates destructive behavior in the boundary conflict. According to De Dreu and Gelfand (2008), destructive behavior in conflict is aggressive, defensive, or passive-aggressive behavior that can escalate and hinder conflict resolution (see also Monk et al., 2021).

Confrontation marks the stage when conflict becomes overt. When only one side perceives a problem, its supporters may initiate demonstrations or other confrontational actions, which can trigger clashes or minor violence between the two sides (Shahrier, 2024). In this context, the confrontation occurs between two villages disputing territorial claims, where they have differing and conflicting interests regarding the resources within the area. These valuable assets are perceived as providing economic benefits in the form of employment opportunities for residents, additional income for the villages, and advantages from annual CSR programs, such as livestock assistance.

These conflicting interests create a fundamental contradiction, with both villages seeking the right to control and benefit from the area and the company's CSR programs. This reflects a mismatch of goals and needs, creating potential for conflict, as the resources are limited, and it is impossible to satisfy both parties' demands simultaneously. Furthermore, contradictions can escalate into open conflict if not managed appropriately. When the two villages fail to find common ground or a solution to these contradictions, tensions may rise, triggering competitive or confrontational behavior between the parties involved. CSR interests are prioritized by each village elite, with both villages seeking a fair share of CSR in their respective administrative areas. This dispute highlights the importance of effective coordination and communication between the villages and the company to ensure that CSR distribution is equitable and in line with applicable regulations. Failure to achieve this can result in prolonged conflicts, as some parties may reject the proposed resolutions.

The dynamics of territorial boundary between Bedengung and Nyelanding Villages in Southern Bangka Regency

This conflict stems from a territorial dispute between Bedengung Village and Nyelanding Village, triggered by the construction of a CPO factory by PT Banka Agro Plantari on the border of the area. The lack of clear boundary lines between the two villages only made things worse, leading to disagreements over land ownership and unclear responsibilities in resolving the issue. Over time, this dispute escalated into a full-blown conflict as both villages felt their lands were being encroached upon by the palm oil company.

The conflict over the border area between Bedengung Village and Nyelanding Village in South Bangka Regency began when PT BAP purchased land in 2022. The company bought land from residents of both villages, but the border area in Air Limau became a major point of contention. In mid-2023, the company expanded its land purchases, and Bedengung Village claimed that the entire acquired area belonged to them. This, of course, triggered tensions with Nyelanding Village, which argued that part of the land was rightfully theirs—especially since the 2-kilometer access road to PT BAP ran through Nyelanding's territory.

Efforts to resolve this border dispute have faced roadblocks, mainly due to the unwillingness of one of the village heads to compromise. Each side is standing firm on its claims, making it difficult to find a solution that satisfies everyone. The local government, unfortunately, has not been firm enough in handling this dispute. Ideally, they should step in decisively to ensure a fair resolution for both villages. One possible step is for the regional government to summon the sub-district head and both village leaders to discuss their demands and possible solutions. Ultimately, the regent should make a final decision and establish an official border to end the dispute once and for all. Strong leadership from the local government is essential in resolving this issue fairly and wisely.

The government has made efforts to mediate between the two villages, with the first mediation session held at the regional secretary level. However, no clear legal resolution has been reached. The core issue here is the absence of a definitive border between the villages, leading to conflicting historical claims and differing territorial narratives. Even though PT BAP has obtained official permits from the relevant authorities, including the National Land Agency (BPN), the differing views from both villages have further complicated the situation.

This conflict is also tied to economic benefits from PT BAP's presence. Both villages are competing for advantages from the company's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs, which include job opportunities and annual assistance. Currently, the workforce distribution is set at 40% for Nyelanding Village and 60% for Bedengung Village, but dissatisfaction remains among some parties. Additionally, village revenues from the company's presence have become another point of contention. To resolve this issue, the local government must take a firmer stance and officially establish the border. If left unresolved, tensions could continue to rise, potentially leading to an even bigger conflict in the future. A fair resolution requires open communication between both villages, transparency in decision-making, and neutral policies to ensure a peaceful solution for all parties involved.

Efforts to resolve the boundary conflict between Bedengung and Nyelanding Villages in Southern Bangka Regency

The effort to resolve the boundary conflict between Bedengung Village and Nyelanding Village in South

Bangka Regency is an important step that involves the role of negotiators in creating peace and finding a fair solution. A meeting was held in Pangkal Pinang, and all village heads were present. During this session, the heads of Nyelanding and Bedengung Villages discussed the boundary issues, resulting in an agreement. This mutual agreement was the outcome of negotiations during the CSR distribution process and resolving the boundary issue, with points presented based on the interests of all parties. The resolution included a signed agreement in the form of a Memorandum of

Understanding (MoU). The deliberation resulted in key points agreed upon by the Bedengung, Nyelanding, and PT BAP communities on April 22, 2024. These points include the Air Limau area being administratively part of Bedengung Village and CSR distribution by the company to ease the boundary conflict between the two villages, with a 60% share for Bedengung Village and 40% for Nyelanding Village. The land of residents was purchased by PT BAP at an agreed-upon price during the deliberation. Both villages will have employment opportunities and access to the same TBS (Fresh Fruit Bunch) transportation at the palm oil company. This deliberation aims to provide a middle ground that does not disadvantage any party. The goal is to reach an agreement that benefits both sides. This strategy can also be an effective communication model for all parties involved. Thus, through cooperation, both parties can achieve mutually beneficial outcomes (Picasso & Kriyantono, 2024).

Galtung's conflict triangle theory explains that conflict is not just about differing opinions or claims but rather the result of interactions between three fundamental components: attitudes, behavior, and contradiction. In the context of this territorial boundary conflict, attitudes refer to prejudices or negative perceptions held by the people in both villages, which may be influenced by historical relations or land ownership claims. Behavior is reflected in the actions taken by both parties, such as open disputes or securing their respective territories. Contradiction arises from conflicting territorial claims, leading to a sense of injustice and tension over land rights and resource access.

In his analysis of social conflict, Johan Galtung explains that every entity whether individuals, groups, or organizations has different interests, particularly in economic and political aspects. These differing interests can lead to opposing

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behaviors and create a tense situation. This is evident in the boundary dispute between Bedengung Village and Nyelanding Village, where the involvement of village governments has been one of the conflict's driving factors.

This analysis has significant implications for conflict resolution. Understanding the conflict triangle allows for a more comprehensive resolution approach, addressing not just surface-level disputes but also the deeper root causes. The focus is on resolving contradictions through negotiations that consider the interests of both parties. Additionally, fostering more constructive attitudes and behaviors built on mutual respect can help reduce emotional tensions and prevent future escalations. By applying this theory, the goal is not only to resolve the boundary conflict but also build long-term harmonious relationships between the two village communities.

Based on the findings, the researcher aligns them with Johan Galtung's conflict triangle theory, as outlined in his book *Peace by Peaceful Means*. This theory illustrates how the three elements Attitudes, behavior, and contradiction interact in conflict. The study confirms that this framework is relevant for explaining the territorial boundary conflict between Bedengung Village and Nyelanding Village. Lastly, the conflict resolution efforts carried out by the village governments align with Galtung's peacebuilding approach, emphasizing sustainable and peaceful conflict resolution.

CONCLUSION

Based on Galtung's conflict triangle concept applied in the boundary conflict between Bedengung Village and Nyelanding Village using attitude, behavior, and contradiction analysis, the researcher concludes the findings, showing that conflict dynamics over the conflict interests influence conflict dynamics over the boundary disputes from overlapping territorial claims between the two villages. This situation is triggered by the construction of a CPO factory in the border area, where the access road to the company enters Nyelanding Village's territory. This occurred due to lacking socialization or confirmation of socialization community. The lack of clarity in administrative boundaries caused disputes over responsibility and hostility between Bedengung and Nyelanding Villages. This shows an attitude towards the conflict, which then developed because of the lack of adequate resolution from the initial mediation efforts by the

local government, leading to behaviors within the conflict that hindered conflict resolution efforts.

Furthermore, the failed mediation efforts have created an unfavorable atmosphere for resolving the issue. This shows destructive behavior within the boundary conflict. Destructive behavior refers to actions or statements that can cause harm, create disadvantages, or negatively impact oneself or others. Finally, the contradiction is that both villages mainly focus on obtaining Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) from the company. This adds complexity to the conflict resolution and highlights the contradiction between the two villages, underscoring the importance of effective coordination between the villages and the company to ensure fair and proper distribution of CSR by applicable regulations.

The resolution effort occurred through a negotiation process, culminating in a solution through deliberation, which produced a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with several key points. These include the designation of the Air Limau area as part of Bedengung Village, CSR distribution with a 60% share for Bedengung Village and 40% for Nyelanding Village, confirmation of land purchases from residents by PT BAP at an agreed price, and the provision of employment opportunities for residents of both villages at the palm oil company. This agreement reflects efforts to find a mutually beneficial middle ground, aligning with Galtung's principles and contributing to peacebuilding between the two villages.

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