

Network Governance Strategies in Agrarian Conflict Resolution: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

Agrarian conflict is a complex issue that frequently occurs in various countries, including Indonesia. One approach that can be used to resolve agrarian conflicts is the strategy of network governance, which involves multiple stakeholders in a collaborative decision-making process. This article aims to systematically review the literature on the application of network governance strategies in resolving agrarian conflicts. The research method used is a systematic literature review, identifying and analyzing previous studies related to this topic. The review results indicate that network governance can enhance the effectiveness of agrarian conflict resolution by facilitating better communication among stakeholders, increasing transparency in decision-making processes, and strengthening accountability among involved parties. Moreover, this strategy also allows for innovations in seeking more sustainable and equitable solutions for all parties. However, the implementation of network governance faces challenges such as differing interests and power among stakeholders and resource limitations. Therefore, a clear framework and policy support are necessary to optimize the application of this strategy. This research contributes to the literature by providing a deeper understanding of the role of network governance in resolving agrarian conflicts and its implications for policies and practices in the field.

Keywords: Agrarian Conflict; Conflict Resolution; Network Governance; Network Management; Systematic Literature.

INTRODUCTION

Agrarian conflicts are complex and widespread issues that arise in many countries, including Indonesia (Brottem, 2021). These conflicts typically involve disputes over land ownership, resource allocation, and land use, often pitting various stakeholders, such as farmers, indigenous communities, private companies, and government authorities, against one another. The complexity of agrarian conflicts is compounded by the diversity of interests and power imbalances among the parties involved. These disputes can escalate into prolonged conflicts, sometimes resulting in social unrest, economic instability, and environmental degradation. Given the multifaceted nature of agrarian conflicts, effective resolution strategies are essential to address the diverse concerns of stakeholders and to achieve sustainable and equitable outcomes.

The study proposes the use of network governance as a potential approach for resolving agrarian conflicts (Kenis, & Provan, 2009). Network governance refers to the collaborative management of public issues involving various stakeholders through horizontal coordination, mutual communication, and shared decision-making processes. By facilitating stakeholder involvement and promoting inclusive dialogue, network governance can address the root causes of agrarian disputes and build consensus around mutually acceptable solutions. This research aims to systematically review the existing literature on the application of network governance strategies in the context of

agrarian conflict resolution. Through this systematic literature review, the study seeks to assess how network governance can improve communication, enhance transparency, and foster accountability in resolving land-related disputes.

The research seeks to answer a fundamental question: How can network governance contribute to more effective resolution of agrarian conflicts? The study aims to examine the various mechanisms through which network governance facilitates stakeholder engagement and addresses power asymmetries in conflict situations. It will also explore the challenges and limitations associated with implementing this approach, particularly in contexts where stakeholders have conflicting interests or limited resources. By addressing these questions, the research intends to contribute to a deeper understanding of network governance's role in agrarian conflict resolution, filling a gap in the literature and offering insights for practitioners and policymakers.

In addition to addressing theoretical questions, this research contributes to practical discussions on agrarian conflict resolution by offering recommendations for optimizing network governance strategies. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights for developing frameworks that can be applied in various contexts to mediate land disputes effectively. The study's outcomes could potentially guide policymakers in crafting legislation and policies that support collaborative conflict resolution processes while also ensuring the protection of vulnerable communities' rights and access to resources.

Moreover, the research is significant in light of the growing urgency to resolve agrarian conflicts in a manner that promotes social justice, economic development, and environmental sustainability. As land resources become increasingly scarce and contested due to factors such as population growth, urban expansion, and climate change, the need for innovative governance strategies becomes more pronounced. The adoption of network governance as a conflict resolution strategy not only aligns with contemporary calls for participatory governance but also addresses the unique challenges posed by agrarian disputes.

Ultimately, this study aims to bridge the gap between theory and practice by providing a comprehensive review of network governance applications in agrarian conflict resolution. The research is expected to lay the groundwork for future studies and to serve as a reference for developing policies that promote collaborative and sustainable conflict management practices in land-related disputes.

METHODS

The research employs a systematic literature review (SLR) method to identify and analyze previous studies regarding the application of network governance strategies in agrarian conflict resolution (Bukari, & Schareika, 2015). This approach enables a comprehensive and structured evaluation of existing literature, ensuring that the analysis captures a broad range of perspectives and findings. The SLR method involves systematically searching, selecting, and synthesizing relevant academic sources to provide a clear understanding of how network governance has been used in different contexts to address land disputes. By employing this method, the research seeks to highlight patterns, gaps, and potential areas for further exploration in the field.

The data collection process is guided by inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure the selection of relevant and high-quality literature. The inclusion criteria focus on peer-reviewed journal articles and reputable conference proceedings that discuss network governance in the context of agrarian conflict resolution. The search covers databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, and Google

Scholar, using keywords like "network governance," "agrarian conflict," and "conflict resolution." The review is limited to studies published within the last two decades to ensure the relevance of the findings to contemporary issues. Once the literature is selected, a detailed analysis is conducted, including assessing the quality of the studies using established frameworks to ensure the credibility and validity of the conclusions drawn from the review. This process allows for a thorough synthesis of the information, drawing out key themes and insights from the collected literature.

RESULTS

The literature review reveals that network governance strategies significantly enhance the effectiveness of agrarian conflict resolution by improving various aspects of stakeholder engagement. One of the key findings is the role of network governance in fostering better communication among involved parties, which helps to clarify the interests and concerns of each stakeholder. This improved dialogue facilitates collaborative decision-making processes, enabling stakeholders to reach mutually beneficial agreements more efficiently. Additionally, the review highlights the importance of transparency in decision-making, as network governance encourages open sharing of information, which reduces misunderstandings and builds trust among stakeholders. The strategy also strengthens accountability mechanisms, ensuring that all parties are held responsible for their actions and commitments throughout the resolution process.

The findings further indicate that network governance supports innovation in developing more sustainable and equitable solutions to agrarian conflicts. By involving a diverse array of stakeholders with varying perspectives and expertise, the approach encourages creative problem-solving and the exploration of alternative strategies that might not emerge in traditional, top-down governance structures. This collaborative environment allows for the adaptation of solutions to local conditions and cultural contexts, promoting long-term sustainability. For instance, innovative land-sharing agreements or resource management practices may arise from inclusive dialogue, accommodating both economic development and social justice goals.

Despite its advantages, the implementation of network governance faces several challenges that can hinder its effectiveness. The literature points out that the differing interests and power dynamics among stakeholders often pose significant barriers to reaching consensus. Powerful actors may dominate discussions or manipulate the process to serve their own interests, undermining the inclusivity and fairness of the governance framework. Additionally, resource limitations, such as financial constraints or the lack of technical expertise, can impede the successful execution of network governance strategies. These challenges highlight the need for a clear framework and strong policy support to address power imbalances and ensure adequate resources are available for effective stakeholder participation.

DISCUSSION

The findings from the literature review suggest that network governance can be optimized to address agrarian conflicts effectively in various contexts by leveraging its strengths in fostering collaboration and stakeholder engagement. To achieve optimal results, it is crucial to implement strategies that promote inclusivity and equal participation among all stakeholders, regardless of their power or resources. Ensuring balanced representation can help to mitigate power imbalances that often arise in agrarian conflicts and ensure that the concerns of marginalized groups are adequately addressed. Additionally, efforts should be made to tailor network governance practices

to the specific cultural and socio-political context of the conflict, as this can enhance the relevance and effectiveness of the governance framework.

However, the study also recognizes several limitations in the current body of literature. One of the significant constraints is the limited availability of empirical studies that focus specifically on the application of network governance in agrarian conflict resolution. While there is substantial research on network governance in other fields, the findings may not always be directly applicable to agrarian contexts, which involve unique complexities and power dynamics. Moreover, the generalization of the results is challenging due to variations in local conditions, such as cultural differences, legal frameworks, and economic circumstances, which influence how network governance strategies can be implemented. These limitations indicate the need for more context-specific studies that examine the nuances of applying network governance in different agrarian settings.

The implications of these findings for policy and practice are significant, suggesting that a clear and supportive policy framework is essential for the successful implementation of network governance strategies. Policymakers should prioritize the development of guidelines that define the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders in the governance process, as well as mechanisms for conflict resolution and accountability. Additionally, there should be legal provisions that empower marginalized communities and protect their rights in land-related disputes. Support for capacity-building initiatives, such as training programs on collaborative governance practices, can also help stakeholders engage more effectively in the governance process.

Moreover, practical recommendations should emphasize the importance of flexibility in the application of network governance strategies. Given the diverse nature of agrarian conflicts, it is essential to allow for adaptive approaches that can be modified in response to changing circumstances and stakeholder needs. This adaptability can help to maintain the relevance of the governance framework over time and address emerging challenges as they arise. For instance, policies should enable continuous monitoring and evaluation of governance practices to identify areas that require improvement and facilitate adjustments based on lessons learned from previous experiences.

The findings also underscore the need for adequate resource allocation to support the implementation of network governance. Resources are required not only to facilitate stakeholder engagement but also to provide the technical expertise and financial support needed to sustain long-term governance initiatives. Inadequate funding or limited access to necessary resources can hinder the effectiveness of network governance, making it difficult to achieve the desired outcomes. Policymakers and practitioners should therefore prioritize securing sufficient funding and mobilizing resources to ensure the sustainability of governance efforts.

In conclusion, while network governance presents a promising approach for resolving agrarian conflicts, its implementation must be carefully planned and supported by robust policy frameworks and adequate resources. Addressing the identified limitations and incorporating flexible, context-specific strategies can significantly enhance the effectiveness of network governance in achieving sustainable and equitable solutions to land disputes. Further research is necessary to explore these strategies in diverse settings, providing more empirical evidence on the best practices for optimizing network governance in agrarian conflict resolution.

CONCLUSION

The main findings of this study indicate that network governance can significantly enhance the resolution of agrarian conflicts by improving stakeholder communication, increasing transparency in decision-making processes, and strengthening accountability mechanisms. The research shows that involving multiple stakeholders through collaborative governance facilitates the sharing of information and the building of trust, which are essential for resolving disputes over land use and ownership. Moreover, network governance enables the development of innovative and context-specific solutions that address the diverse needs of affected parties. This study contributes to the existing literature by providing a comprehensive review of how network governance strategies have been applied in various cases, identifying both the benefits and challenges associated with this approach. It also offers practical insights for policymakers and practitioners on how to optimize the use of network governance in agrarian conflict settings.

For future research, several areas warrant further investigation to deepen the understanding of network governance in agrarian conflict resolution. One area of focus could be the development of frameworks that measure the effectiveness of network governance strategies across different socio-political contexts. Additionally, more empirical studies are needed to explore the specific mechanisms that facilitate or hinder stakeholder collaboration in land dispute resolutions. Research could also examine how network governance interacts with legal and institutional frameworks in different regions to identify best practices and potential pitfalls. Finally, investigating the long-term sustainability of solutions derived from network governance, including their social, economic, and environmental impacts, would provide valuable insights for refining these strategies and improving their application in diverse conflict scenarios.

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