

It's not a conflict, it's differences of opinion: An in-depth examination of conflict in non-profit sport boards

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In order to properly manage conflict, the mechanisms of the complex conflict process must be understood. The purpose of this study was to uncover board member perceptions of different types of conflict, identify latent conditions that influence the likelihood of conflict, and examine the impact of conflict within provincial sport organization (PSO) boards. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 PSO board members. The findings indicated that participants perceived task, relationship, and process conflict within their boards, and that the antecedent conditions and impact of conflict differed by conflict type. Both functional and dysfunctional impacts of conflict on decision quality and individual outcomes were revealed, thus demonstrating the complex nature of intragroup conflict in this setting. Implications for research and practice are also presented.