

Justice midwestern style

Law



The current Interactionist View of Conflict believes that conflict is not only a positive force in a group but that it is absolutely necessary for a group to perform effectively.

An example of a criminal justice agency in the midst of functional conflict would be underscored by a number of factors including increased group performance, improved quality of decisions, stimulation of creativity and innovation, encouragement of interest and curiosity, provision of a medium for problem-solving, creation of an environment for self-evaluation and change. From data collected from 159 presentence reports, a Midwestern county's felony cases were grouped according to certain variables including race, socioeconomic status, age, criminal record, and marital status of the offender (Douglass 1979). Results showed the severity of bond and plea bargain correlated highly to race. Clearly, vice operations in criminal justice agencies are in the midst of dysfunctional conflict where the development of discontent, reduction of group effectiveness, retarded communication, reduced group cohesiveness and infighting among group members overcomes group goals.

We have discussed the differing interpretations of organizational conflict through three viewpoints: the Traditional View, the Human Relations View, and the Interactionist View of organizational conflict. As organizations, criminal justice agencies exist within a paradigm varying conflicting effectiveness. An understanding of differing viewpoints enhances our overall understanding of the challenges criminal justice faces.