

## STUDY ABOUT THE MAIN TYPES OF CONFLICTS WHICH APPEAR ON THE RURAL COMMUNITIES IN THE SOUTH MUNTENIA DEVELOPMENT REGION AND THE INFLUENCE OF THE RESIDENTS EDUCATION LEVEL ON THEIR SOLUTION

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### Abstract

*Among the inhabitants of rural communities in the South-Muntenia Development Region, the occurrence of conflicts is an inherent reality of life... The main purpose of this scientific research is to identify the main types of conflicts faced by the inhabitants of the study area and the causes of their occurrence, as well as to determine the influence of the level of education of the population on conflict management. The following sociological methods were used to collect the working information and research them: questionnaire method, comparative analysis method and Hi-square test method. The research revealed that the most common types of conflicts in the population of the study area are family and work conflicts. Thus, it is revealed that family conflicts, by their degree of complexity due to the strong subjective specificity that characterizes them, do not spare individuals regardless of their level of schooling. Also, in the rural communities of the study area there is a discrete relationship of direct proportionality between the number of the most frequent types of conflicts in which the respondents are involved and their level of education, in the sense that people who have a maximum level of professional education of secondary/vocational level are more likely to become party to a conflict - regardless of its type.*

**Key words:** conflict, rural community, education

### INTRODUCTION

At the level of the population of rural communities in the South-Muntenia Development Region, similarly to the situation of the populations of other human communities, the emergence and management of conflict relations is an inevitable aspect in the development of everyday social relations [4].

The social, economic or personal relations between the inhabitants of these settlements are not infrequently vitiated by conflicts between different people [1].

The causes of conflicts are many and varied, and they are caused by material shortcomings, differences in the educational level of members of rural communities, a permanent imbalance between the interests and needs of the inhabitants of the areas concerned, pressure from administrative factors, ethnocentric attitudes of members of rural communities, etc. [9].

In essence, these communities are characterized by an important conservative vocation, their life being guided by the need to respect local traditions and customs, to consider and respect the precepts of Christian morality and the need to maintain a community spirit among the inhabitants [8].

A new aspect that influences the life and habits of rural people is the new intensive technologies for growing fruits and vegetables that involve the use of plant protection products that have a high potential for pollution [15]. The use of insecticides can sometimes cause conflicts between neighbors, especially between beekeepers and fruit and vegetable growers [12].

It is precisely these characteristics, which differentiate rural communities from urban ones, that have ensured the continuity of these human communities' existence over time, while they remain sheltered from the influences of multiculturalism, modernism and, more recently, globalism. Instead, these

influences have been and are rapidly being assimilated by urban communities [8].

Conflicts, through their destructive capacity, can lead to the alteration of the particularities that distinguish rural communities from other human entities [2].

The most serious effect of increased conflict among rural communities would be to weaken their social cohesion [3]. For example, the conflicts related with land limits, inheritance and succession have a negative effect on the concentration of agricultural land in Romania [11].

In view of the need to protect the characteristics that give uniqueness to rural communities, the study and analysis of the causes of the most common types of disputes and the influence of the level of education of individuals on the way they are managed becomes a topic of interest for researches taking place in these human communities [13].

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

In order to achieve the objectives of this study, quantitative and qualitative methods of sociological analysis were used, such as the questionnaire (survey) method, the comparative analysis method, and the identification of measurable frequencies using the Hi-Square Test. [5].

In order to identify the most common types of conflicts in rural communities in the South-Muntenia Development Region and to determine the influence of the level of education of individuals on the way they manage conflicts, it was necessary to conduct a sociological survey on a representative sample of 700 respondents belonging to rural communities in each county of the South-Muntenia Development Region. The questionnaire involved a diverse target audience, made up of farmers, villagers and village intellectuals.

Sociological research aims to identify and analyze the real situation in the territory under analysis [5].

The questionnaire was systematized and constructed in such a way that the data collected through it could provide information

that would give an overview of the most common types of conflict among the rural communities under analysis, as well as sufficiently conclusive data on the influence that the level of education of the members of these communities has on the way they manage conflict [10]. An important factor that negatively affects the level of education of the rural population is the depopulation of villages, which leads to the closure of rural schools and the increase in the distance that young people have to travel to school [7].

The sociological research also sought to observe the degree of conflict in the rural communities under study, with respondents being asked about the number and type of conflicts they had, as well as how they were resolved. Thus, the questions outlined in the questionnaire were designed to verify the research hypotheses, so respondents were asked to provide answers on the types of conflicts listed in the survey form, as well as on the level of schooling they had [6].

By interviewing different groups of rural inhabitants in the study area, differences of opinion and choice were crystallized in relation to the different socio-economic categories from which they come. The questions used are constructed to obtain point responses, which were technically used in the comparative analysis, as well as in the application with statistical value, through which measurable frequencies are examined (Hi-square test) [14].

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Respondents were asked to answer the question *What types of conflicts do you most often face?* With this important indicator of analysis of the study theme, the aim was to identify the main types of conflicts faced by the rural population in the South-Muntenia Development Region. To this end, all 700 respondents were questioned on this topic, and they were given the opportunity to choose one of the five types of conflict pre-defined in the questionnaire. Thus, 324 people indicated that they are most often involved in family conflicts, representing 46% of the total number of respondents; 154 respondents

indicated that they are most often involved in labour conflicts, representing 22% of the total number of respondents; 48 respondents opted for administrative and fiscal conflicts, representing 7%, and 14 people indicated that they are most often involved in criminal conflicts, representing a very low percentage of 2%. An important percentage is also represented by those who said that they most often become party to other types of civil disputes, 160 of them, representing 23% of the total number of respondents (Fig. 1).

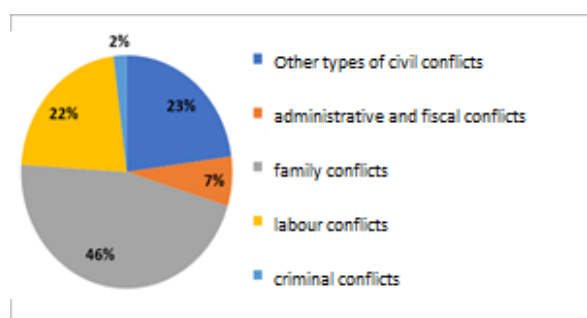


Fig. 1. Situation of the most common types of conflicts in the study area  
 Source: Own determination.

Comparing the data on the most common types of conflict among rural communities in the South-Muntenia Development Region to the gender of the respondents, it appears that out of the 324 reported family conflicts, 198 are female and 126 male. In other words, 61% of family conflicts are reported by women and only 39% by men. These results are not surprising, as it is well known that women are more sensitive and interested in family relationships. Also, of the 154 cases of labour disputes reported by the questionnaire, 99 belong to male respondents and only 55 to female respondents. Percentage-wise, 64% of the respondents who said that they most often face work conflicts are men and only 36% of those respondents are women. This indicates a greater propensity for males to develop conflictual relationships at work. With regard to administrative and fiscal conflicts, of the 48 such conflicts, 34 were among male respondents (71%) and 14 among female respondents (29%) (Table 1).

This substantial difference in numbers can be explained by the patriarchal nature of the relationship between rural dwellers and the

state authorities, with men being the ones most often responsible for taking the necessary steps to ensure that the rights and interests of the family/people are protected in their relations with the public authorities.

Table 1. Ratio of the most common types of conflict to the sex of respondents

Main types of conflicts respondents most often face	Female	Male	Total
other types of civil conflict	53	107	160
administrative and fiscal conflicts	14	34	48
family conflicts	198	126	324
labour disputes	55	99	154
criminal conflicts	14		14
Total	334	366	700

Source: Own calculation.

In terms of the level of education of the respondents who made this sociological research possible, in relation to the total number of 700 individuals, 328 of them are high school/vocational school graduates, representing 47% of those surveyed; 153 individuals are secondary school graduates, representing 22%; 113 respondents are primary school graduates, representing 16%; 93 individuals are university graduates, representing 13%, and 13 individuals are postgraduate graduates, representing only 2% of the total number of respondents (Fig. 2).

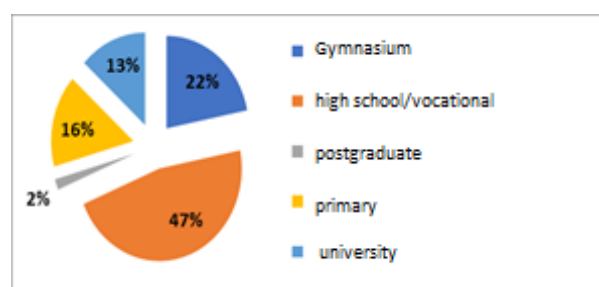


Fig. 2. Ratio of respondents by level of education  
 Source: Own determination.

In order to be able to obtain data and thus to be able to generate conclusions regarding the existence or non-existence of a link (influence) between the respondents' level of education and the causes of the most common conflicts among the rural communities in the

study area, based on the results obtained by questioning the 700 respondents, we will report the number of types of conflicts declared as most common among the respondents at their level of education.

Thus, out of the 324 conflicts in the field of family relations declared as the most common among respondents, 66 conflicts were involving respondents with only primary education, which represents 20% of the number of conflicts in the field of family relations; 73 conflicts involved people with secondary education, which represents 23%; 152 conflicts were developed by high school/vocational school graduates, representing 47%; 26 conflicts involved university graduates, representing 8%; and only 7 conflicts involved postgraduates, representing only 2%.

Of the 154 work conflicts, 7 conflicts were developed by respondents with only primary school education, representing 5% of the number of work conflicts; 25 conflicts involved secondary school graduates, representing 16%; 88 conflicts were

developed by respondents with secondary school/vocational school education, representing 57%, and 34 conflicts were developed by respondents with university education, representing 22%.

Of the 48 administrative and tax law conflicts, 14 conflicts involved secondary school graduates, accounting for 29%, and 34 conflicts involved high school/vocational school graduates, accounting for 71%.

Of the 160 other conflicts of a civil nature, 40 conflicts involved respondents with only primary education, representing 25% of the number of conflicts; 41 conflicts involved respondents with only secondary education, representing 25%; 40 conflicts were developed by respondents with a high school/vocational school education, accounting for 25%; 33 conflicts involved respondents with a university education, accounting for 21%, and respondents with a postgraduate education were involved in only 6 conflicts, accounting for only 4% of the total number of other types of civil conflicts (Table 2).

Table 2. Structure of respondents' opinions on the types of conflicts they encountered according to their educational background

What types of conflicts do you face?								
By level of education								
Level of education	U.M.	gymnasium	high school /vocational	postgraduate	primary	univ.	Total	
		No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	%
other types of civil conflict	No.	41	40	6	40	33	<b>160</b>	<b>23</b>
administrative and fiscal conflicts	No.	14	34				<b>48</b>	<b>7</b>
family conflicts	No.	73	152	7	66	26	<b>324</b>	<b>46</b>
labour disputes	No.	25	88		7	34	<b>154</b>	<b>22</b>
criminal conflicts			14				<b>14</b>	<b>2</b>
TOTAL	No.	<b>153</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>700</b>	-
	%	<b>22%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>13%</b>	-	<b>100</b>

Source: Own calculation.

By statistically testing the sample structure (Chi-Square = 113.58\*\*\*; Critical Value = 32.00 at a probability of  $p > 0.01$ ), it is observed that there is a significant association between the aspects analyzed, and from the

analysis of R (standardized residual) very significant differences are observed, allowing us to conclude that, in most cases, the types of conflicts in which the respondents were involved are influenced by the level of their

studies. We observe that there is an association between the type of conflicts and the respondents' level of education (Pearson's  $C = 0.37$ ; Cramer's  $V = 0.23$ ), so that the legal

nature of the processes in which the respondents were involved was influenced by their level of education.

Table 3. Structure of respondents' opinions on the types of conflicts they have encountered according to their educational background

Percentage deviations				
gymnasium	high school /vocational	Post-graduate	primary	Univ.
17.24%	-46.65%	101.92%	54.87%	55.24%
33.44%	51.17%	-100.00%	-100.00%	-100.00%
3.08%	0.12%	16.33%	26.19%	-39.60%
-25.73%	21.95%	-100.00%	-71.84%	66.18%
-100.00%	113.41%	-100.00%	-100.00%	-100.00%

Source: Own calculation.

Table 4. Structure of respondents' opinions on the types of conflicts they have encountered according to their educational background

Standardized Residue					
Type of conflict	gymnasium	high school /vocational	postgraduate	primary	univ.
civil	1.02	-4.04	1.76	2.79	2.55
Admin./fiscal	1.08	2.43	-0.94	-2.78	-2.53
family	0.26	0.01	0.40	1.89	-2.60
work	-1.49	1.86	-1.69	-3.58	2.99
criminal	-1.75	2.90	-0.51	-1.50	-1.36
<b>Calculated Chi-Square =</b>	<b>113.58***</b>	<b>Critical Value (Theoretical) =</b>	5.81	<p><math>p &gt; 0.1(*)</math>  <math>p &gt; 0.05(**)</math>  <math>p &gt; 0.01(***)</math></p>	
			26.30		
Degree of freedom (df) =	16		<b>32.00</b>		
Cramer's V =	0.23	Pearson's C =	0.37		

Source: Own calculation.

## CONCLUSIONS

From the statistical data highlighted in the previous chapter, the following working conclusions can be drawn:

- Respondents who have completed university and postgraduate studies are less likely to become party to conflicts of a criminal nature, labour conflicts, as well as administrative and fiscal conflicts (conflicts with various state authorities);
- family conflicts, by their degree of complexity due to the strong subjective specificity that characterizes them, do not exempt individuals regardless of their level of schooling. In other words, problems of a family nature can occur in any family, irrespective of its members' level of education, even in rural societies - which are

still characterized by a strong conservative spirit, which manifests itself at all levels, including family life;

c) however, it is found that in the rural communities of the study area there is a discrete relationship of direct proportionality between the number of the most frequent types of conflict in which respondents are involved and their level of education, in the sense that people who have a maximum level of secondary/vocational education are more likely to become party to a conflict - regardless of its type. One possible reason for this could also be due to the environment in which these people live/work, whose individuals often have only a basic level of school/vocational training or no school education at all.

Interesting to note are also the responses regarding the variant of criminal conflicts, with all 14 of these responses coming from female respondents. This raises the question of the causes that lead female residents of rural communities to experience such conflicts.

However, the level of education of the rural population is not in itself a determining factor in the development of a pacifist or conflictual attitude at the individual level, but it can be a differentiating factor between different categories of populations. Since the needs, rights and interests of individuals are very diverse and of varying importance to people, their fulfilment and protection often transcend the social level conferred by education, sometimes even taking the place of good skills.

The level of education is an indicator that has implications on the quality of life of a community and is particularly important for the social differentiation of its members. The results of the sociological survey conducted in rural communities in the South-Muntenia Development Region reinforce the statistical data known so far on the level of education of the inhabitants of rural communities, which in general provide an overview of the current level of schooling of the inhabitants of these areas.

The data collected and analyzed above are of particular importance for the social perspectives that could be implemented through coherent public policies at the level of the rural communities under research, since the absolute majority of these types of conflicts can also be resolved through alternative dispute resolution procedures, among which the mediation procedure stands out. Thus, family disputes (with the strict exception of divorce/marriage breakdown), labour disputes, most other types of civil disputes, criminal disputes that can be subject to reconciliation of the parties or to the procedure for withdrawal of the preliminary complaint, as well as the settlement of the civil side of all criminal disputes - can be subject to mediation. In addition, some administrative and fiscal disputes may also be subject to mediation. According to the results

of the sociological survey presented above, all types of disputes that can be settled by mediation account for at least 90% of the total volume of disputes with which respondents in the study area stated that they are most frequently confronted.

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