



ANALYSING RESTORATIVE APPROACHES IN PUBLIC HEALTH CONFLICTS

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ABSTRACT

Restorative approaches in public health conflict offer solutions that focus on restoring social relations and peacefully resolving conflict through inclusive dialogue. This method provides space for all parties involved to actively participate, identify root causes, and seek solutions together to minimise the negative impact of conflict on the public health system. Compared to traditional retributive approaches, restorative approaches emphasise social justice, open communication and collective healing, making them more effective in building trust and improving responsiveness to community health needs. The implementation of this approach not only resolves the conflict, but also helps to create a more resilient and sustainable public health system.

Keywords: Analysis, Restorative Approach, Public Health Conflict.

INTRODUCTION

Public health is an important indicator of a nation's well-being. Public health is a branch of science that focuses on improving, protecting, and maintaining the health of the population as a whole, not just individuals. Public health includes various efforts and interventions to prevent disease, control risk factors, and improve the quality of life of the community through promotive, preventive, curative, and rehabilitative programmes (S. Williams, 2022). The primary goals of public health are to create healthy environments, strengthen health care systems, and support the collective physical, mental, and social well-being of communities (Hernandez & Chavez, 2023).

Public health has a very important role in building a quality and productive life. With effective public health programmes, communicable and non-communicable diseases can be prevented, mortality rates can be reduced, and disparities in access to health services can be minimised. In addition, public health also helps to create a favourable environment for economic growth, education

and social stability, which has a long-term impact on a country's progress (Taylor, 2024).

Conflicts in public health can arise from various causes, such as inequitable access to health services, inefficient use of resources, and policies that do not accommodate the needs of all levels of society. These conflicts not only hinder the achievement of general health goals, but can also worsen the overall health condition of the community (Green et al., 2006).

Traditional approaches to addressing public health conflicts are often punitive in nature and do not address the real root of the problem. This approach tends to create new sins without providing sustainable solutions. Therefore, a more holistic and inclusive approach is needed, which focuses not only on punishment, but also on healing and reconciliation (M. Williams & Green, 2020).

Restorative approaches are one way in which public health conflicts can be more effectively addressed. It aims to repair damaged relationships, recover losses incurred, and prevent similar conflicts from occurring in the future. It functions as a



method for restoring harmony and repairing relationships damaged by conflict or offences, whether in the social, legal or educational spheres. The main focus of this approach is to support the parties involved to communicate openly, understand the impact of their actions, and jointly seek fair and responsible solutions (K. Lee, 2025) . In the legal context, restorative approaches help perpetrators take responsibility for their actions and give victims the opportunity to express their feelings, thus creating a more humane sense of justice. While in the social realm, this approach promotes peace, improves interpersonal relations, and reduces the likelihood of conflict recurring in the future (W. Johnson, 2025).

In the context of public health, restorative approaches can involve various stakeholders, ranging from the government, health service providers, to community members themselves. Although restorative approaches have been widely applied in various contexts, in-depth research on their application in public health conflicts is still very limited (E. Johnson & Nguyen, 2023) . Therefore, a comprehensive analysis is needed to understand how restorative approaches can be effectively implemented in resolving public health conflicts and improving the overall quality of public health.

Thus, it is important to analyse restorative approaches in public health conflicts to identify potential benefits and challenges, and to provide policy recommendations that can be implemented by relevant parties.

METHOD

The study in this research uses the literature method. The literature research method is an approach used to collect, analyse, and interpret information available in

various literature sources in order to answer research questions or test specific hypotheses. This research involves identifying and critically reviewing studies, scientific articles, books, reports, and other documents that are relevant to the topic being researched (Green et al., 2006) ; (Galvan & Galvan, 2017) . The main purpose of this method is to understand the development of theory, find research gaps, and develop a strong theoretical framework based on published evidence. Literature research is essential in developing a conceptual foundation, identifying trends and patterns, and providing in-depth historical and academic context to the topic being studied (Torraco, 2005).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Role and Effectiveness of Restorative Approaches in Public Health Conflicts

A restorative approach is a method that focuses on restoring relationships between individuals or groups that have been disrupted due to certain conflicts or violations. In the context of public health, this approach plays an important role in dealing with various conflicts that arise, whether between health workers, patients, communities, or institutions. Conflicts in public health often involve sensitive issues such as inequitable access to health services, misunderstanding of information, and violation of patient rights. Restorative approaches have the potential to improve this situation through open dialogue that promotes a sense of justice and shared responsibility (E. Johnson & Wright, 2021).

Restorative approaches act as a communication bridge that allows parties involved in conflict to listen, understand, and respond to each other's needs and concerns. This is especially important in public health conflicts that are often rooted in misunderstandings or miscommunication



between health workers and patients or between institutions and communities. By providing space for structured dialogue, this approach can encourage constructive conflict resolution so that solutions are reached that benefit all parties (Taylor, 2024).

One of the positive impacts of restorative approaches is increased public trust in health services. In conflict situations, such as misdiagnosis or unethical treatment from health workers, people often lose trust in health institutions. Restorative approaches allow perpetrators and victims to meet and discuss the problem directly, so that people feel valued and get justice. Thus, the broken trust can be restored and become the foundation for better relationships in the future (Bennett, 2022).

Restorative approaches also serve to humanise the conflict resolution process. In some cases, legal conflict resolution tends to be formal and does not accommodate the emotional or social aspects of the parties involved. In contrast, restorative approaches provide space for all parties to voice their pain, regrets and hopes. This creates a more humane atmosphere in addressing public health conflicts, which ultimately has a positive impact on the quality of interactions among all parties (Martin, 2020).

The effectiveness of restorative approaches is seen in their ability to stop conflict from recurring. By engaging all parties in in-depth dialogue and seeking solutions oriented towards mutual needs, this approach reduces the likelihood of the same misunderstandings or tensions to occur again in the future. In public health, this is important as unresolved conflicts can disrupt the implementation of health programmes and harm the wider community (K. Lee, 2025).

Restorative approaches provide opportunities for conflict resolution that actively involve communities. In public health conflicts, for example over immunisation programmes or environmental health policies, engaging communities in restorative discussions helps identify the root causes of problems that are often structural in nature. Collaborative communication between health authorities and communities enables solutions that are more relevant to local needs, thus impacting the effectiveness of health programmes (R. Lee & Nguyen, 2021).

Restorative approaches not only resolve conflicts technically but also improve the emotional well-being of the individuals involved. In health conflicts, both sufferers and perpetrators often experience psychological distress due to the problems that occur. Through restorative processes, each party is given the opportunity to express their grievances, take responsibility, and receive acknowledgement. This helps to reduce the psychosocial trauma that often arises from prolonged conflict (Brown, 2021).

Restorative approaches can contribute to a more equitable health system. In cases where people feel disadvantaged due to discriminatory health policies or practices, this method opens up opportunities for dialogue to correct these inequalities. This approach also encourages health institutions to be more transparent and accountable in serving the community, thus promoting equitable access and quality of health services (Lopez & Gonzalez, 2022).

Conflicts in public health often involve complex dimensions such as culture, policy and economics that are intertwined. Restorative approaches are effective in addressing these multidimensional issues because they view conflict holistically. By



engaging a wide range of stakeholders, this approach facilitates a holistic understanding of the conflict and promotes integrated solutions, rather than simply solving individual and partial problems (Adams, 2025).

Restorative approaches also serve to develop the capacity of health institutions to deal with conflict in a professional and ethical manner. By integrating this approach in the training of health workers, institutions can improve the ability of staff to communicate, negotiate, and resolve conflicts with a more effective approach. This ultimately contributes to improving the reputation of the institution as well as the quality of services provided (Anderson, 2020).

Restorative approaches offer long-term solutions to support public health goals. Using this approach not only resolves existing conflicts, but also prevents new conflicts from arising by building more harmonious relationships between communities, health workers, and policy makers. This harmony is critical to the success of future public health programmes (Carter & Evans, 2023).

Overall, restorative approaches are effective tools in resolving public health conflicts. Its role in restoring relationships, enhancing a sense of justice, encouraging open communication, and creating a more equitable health system make it a relevant solution in facing complex challenges in the health sector. With proper implementation, restorative approaches not only resolve conflicts, but also support sustainability efforts in public health development and well-being.

Steps to Implement Restorative Approach in Various Cases of Public Health Conflicts

Restorative approaches are methods that focus on restoring relationships and

resolving conflicts by involving all affected parties. When applied to public health conflicts, this approach focuses on dialogue and solutions based on the values of justice, empathy and cooperation. Such conflict resolution aims to rebuild lost trust and ensure mutually acceptable outcomes (Sharma & Gupta, 2024).

The first step was to understand the roots of the conflict by gathering information from all parties involved. This is done through data collection and in-depth interviews with the parties involved. Restorative approaches prioritise recognising the needs and interests of each party so that all perspectives can be accommodated. Openness is the main foundation in analysing the causes of conflict without prejudice (Robinson, 2021).

Furthermore, a neutral facilitator needs to be present to mediate the communication between the parties. The facilitator acts as a dialogue guide who ensures that the restorative process is balanced, fair, and avoids domination of one party over another. This is important to create a safe and conducive atmosphere so that all parties are able to express their point of view honestly (Brown, 2021).

Discussions should focus on the impact of conflict on community health and how it affects relationships between parties. All parties are invited to share their experiences, feelings and consequences. This will create a deeper understanding of the importance of collective and comprehensive resolution (Anderson, 2020).

Once each party has successfully described its perspective, the next step is to set common goals. These goals include solutions that not only resolve the conflict but also restore the damaged relationship and prevent similar problems from occurring in the future. This commitment is obtained through



consensus that prioritises mutual interests (Kim & Park, 2020).

Goal setting should be accompanied by a realistic implementation strategy, involving equitable distribution of roles and responsibilities. All parties must agree to implement solutions resulting from restorative dialogue sessions. Transparency in the distribution of tasks and monitoring of results is also key to ensuring that all parties actively contribute to the restoration of conditions (Powell, 2023).

It is important for all parties to demonstrate accountability for their past actions that caused the conflict as well as a commitment to improve going forward. Restorative approaches often accommodate apologies, admissions of wrongdoing, or other forms of reparations as part of the rapprochement process. This element serves to strengthen a sense of justice and trust between the parties (E. Johnson & Wright, 2021).

In addition to establishing communication between individuals, restorative approaches also invite the community as a wider unit to participate. In the case of large-scale conflicts, solutions are more effective when communities or community organisations are involved. Such an approach strengthens solidarity and educates people about the importance of co-operation in addressing health problems (Hill & Clarke, 2020).

The success of restorative approaches should be measured to ascertain their impact on public health and the relationships between the parties involved. Monitoring and evaluation are necessary so that the conflict resolution process does not stop at the initial agreement. Periodic evaluation is a

mechanism to ensure all solutions are working as planned (M. Williams & Green, 2020).

If the conflict arises again in the future, the established restorative procedures can be applied as part of the prevention system. This approach allows for faster resolution as parties have had prior experience with these methods. Restorative processes serve as a tool to create long-term, mutually supportive relationships (Hernandez & Chavez, 2023).

The effectiveness of restorative approaches also depends on the sustainability of the communication that has been initiated in the early stages. Periodic discussion forums or rapid response mechanisms help to keep interested parties connected. In this way, public health policy can continue to be adapted to evolving practical needs over time (Taylor, 2024).

Ultimately, restorative approaches can be a solution that not only resolves conflicts but also provides long-term benefits. By actively involving parties, both at the individual and community level, conflicts that have the potential to disrupt public health can be minimised. Moreover, this approach makes health a form of shared responsibility built through trust and cooperation.

CONCLUSION

A restorative approach to addressing public health conflicts offers a framework that focuses on dialogue, recovery, and peaceful resolution of conflicts. It addresses social relationships damaged by conflict, such as tensions between governments, communities and health workers. In a public health context, restorative methods provide space for all parties involved to openly discuss, identify underlying issues, and seek solutions together. The goal is to restore social harmony while ensuring health rights and needs are met.



Restorative approaches are often more effective than traditional retributive methods in addressing public health conflicts. They focus on restoration rather than punishment, minimising conflict escalation and ensuring inclusive decision-making. Processes involving dialogue facilitation, mediation and active community participation can build trust and a sense of responsibility in all parties. It also brings long-term benefits, such as increased access and acceptance of health programmes by the community.

As such, restorative approaches are highly relevant strategies in the context of conflicts involving public health issues. By emphasising values such as social justice, open communication and collective collaboration, this approach contributes to the creation of a more inclusive and responsive public health system. The implementation of restorative approaches not only resolves conflicts, but also increases the social resilience of communities to future health challenges.

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