

# Coping With Recreation Conflict: How User Group and Value Conflicts Predict Recreation Coping and Satisfaction

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## Introduction

Previous research has examined recreation conflict, coping and satisfaction (Manning 1999). Our research goals were to: (a) examine conflicts experienced by Minnesota anglers, (b) explore coping actions used by Minnesota anglers, and (c) test how conflict and adoption of coping mechanisms related to angler satisfaction.

Recreation research has documented substantial conflict in outdoor recreation (Manning, 1999). The research has generally focused on explicit conflict by comparing normative beliefs about acceptable and unacceptable behaviors. Most research on recreation conflict has examined interpersonal conflict, but some has explored social values conflict (Manning 1999). Much conflict in outdoor recreation arises between participants in different activities, and often it is asymmetric (i.e. cross-country skiers object to snowmobilers but not vice versa) (Manning 1999). However, intra-group conflict has also been documented (Manning 1999).

Coping is described as “an adaptive reaction to a perceived is-ought discrepancy” (Greve & Strobl 2004, p 194). Psychology researchers have described three types of coping: (a) problem-centered, which is the modification of the is-state that causes the problem, (b) reaction-centered, which is the modification of the ought-state or the internal perception of the problem, and (c) avoidance of the problem (Greve & Strobl 2004). Recreation researchers have identified behavioral and cognitive coping strategies, which parallel the problem-centered and reaction-centered types of coping (Man-

ning 1999): Displacement, rationalization, and product shift are the three primary coping strategies employed by recreationists who maintain participation in an activity (Manning & Valliere 2001).

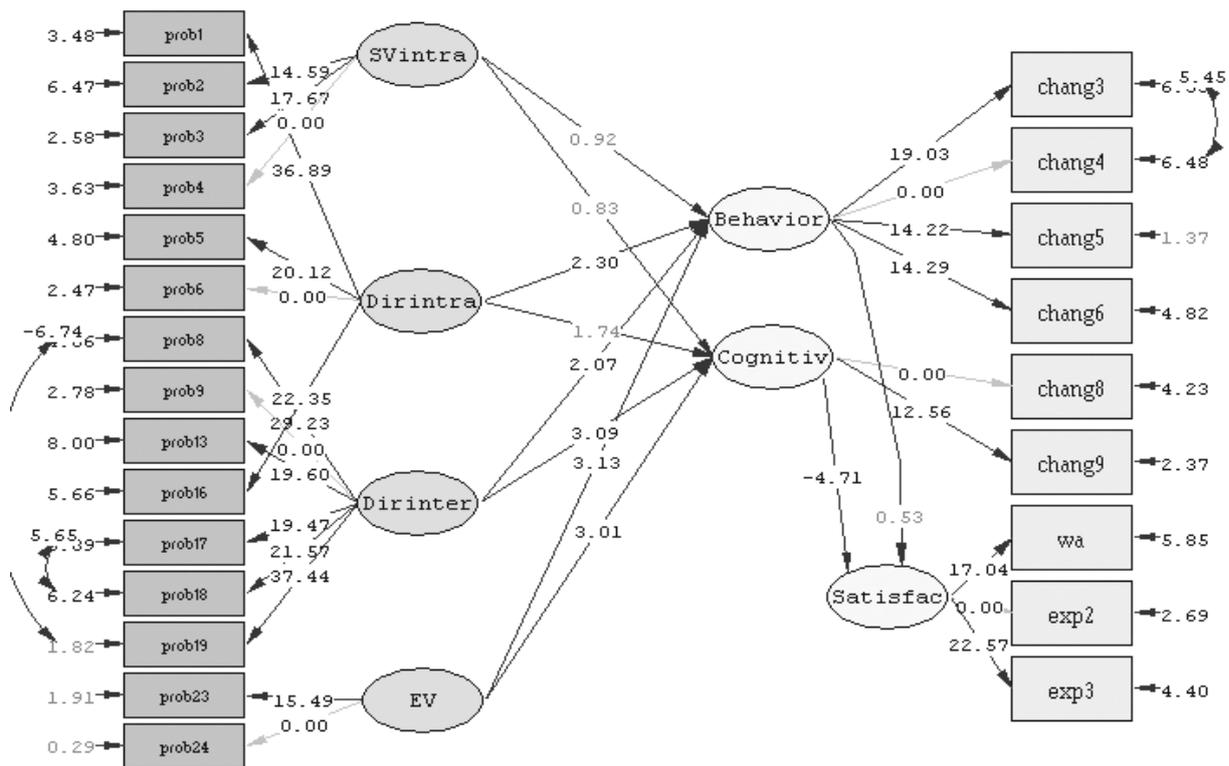
Recent research has examined the relationship between coping and satisfaction (Johnson & Dawson 2004) and the relationship between recreation conflicts and outcomes (Schuster, Hammitt & Moore 2006). Much work is left to be done to improve measures of user outcomes and to examine how conflict and coping influence user satisfaction.

## Methods

Results were derived from a 2003 study of anglers in Minnesota, U.S.A. We used structural equation modeling to examine how (a) intergroup conflict, (b) intragroup conflict, (c) social values conflict, and (d) environmental values conflict predicted behavioral and cognitive coping. We tested three models to examine (a) the direct effects of conflict on recreation satisfaction, (b) the effects of conflict on satisfaction fully mediated by coping, and (c) the effects of conflict on satisfaction partially mediated by coping.

## Results

In our conflict and coping only model, we found that direct intergroup conflict and environmental values conflicts were related to both behavioral and cognitive coping. Direct intragroup conflict and social values were not related to either behavioral or cognitive coping.



Chi-Square=557.53, df=233, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.060

Figure 1: Path diagram showing t-values for best-fit conflict-coping-satisfaction model.

Table 1: Structural equation modeling goodness of fit indices for conflict-coping model and three conflict-coping-satisfaction models.

Model	$\chi^2$	Df	$\chi^2/df$	$\Delta\chi^2$	RMSEA (90% CI)	CFI	NFI	GFI	AGFI	AIC	$\Delta AIC_0$	ECVI (90%CI)
Conflict-coping model	417.38	172	2.43		.060 (.053; .067)	0.99	0.98	0.77	0.70	535.38		1.34 (1.20; 1.50)
1. Conflict-coping-satisfaction, direct-effects model	507.72 <sup>a</sup>	228	2.23		.056 (.050; .063)	0.98	0.97	0.78	0.71	651.72	0	1.68 (1.52; 1.85)
2. Conflict-coping-satisfaction, full mediation model	557.53 <sup>a</sup>	233	2.39		.060 (.053; .066)	0.98	0.97	0.76	0.70	691.53	39.81	1.78 (1.61; 1.97)
3. Conflict-coping-satisfaction, partial mediation model	552.88 <sup>a</sup>	229	2.41		.060 (.054; .067)	0.98	0.97	0.76	0.69	694.88	43.16	1.79 (1.62; 1.97)
- Model 1 vs. 3		1		45.16								
- Model 1 vs. 2		5		49.81								
- Model 2 vs. 3		4		4.65								

Among our three conflict, coping and satisfaction models, the direct effects model of conflict and coping on satisfaction was our best fit model. (see table 1.). In this model, cognitive coping was negatively related to satisfaction. (see figure 1).

Results suggest that conflicts between user groups and environmental degradation may lead to coping among anglers, while conflicts between anglers and social values conflicts may not. Results also suggest that cognitive coping may not lead to greater satisfaction with the recreation experience.

## References

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