



ATTITUDE TOWARDS CONFLICT AND PERFORMANCE IN VALUES EDUCATION AMONG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Aubrill Faye M. Cayat

ABSTRACT

Conflict is an unavoidable aspect of life, but how students manage it makes all the difference. A vital life skill for students is learning how to resolve conflicts in a positive way. This study was conducted to determine the relationship between attitude towards conflict and performance in Values Education among peer mediators. The researcher made use of descriptive research design, specifically descriptive-correlational research, to objectively analyze the relationship that exists between the attitude towards conflict and performance in Values Education among peer mediators at the University of Baguio High School. This study also utilized the descriptive-comparative research design to find out the difference in attitudes towards conflict among students. Based on the analysis of the data gathered, it was found that the attitudes towards conflict among peer mediators and non-peer mediators vary along the five modes of conflict that were used in the study. Students trained in peer mediation primary utilized accommodating and compromising when faced with conflict situations. There is a significant difference in the attitude towards conflict among peer mediators when compared to non-peer mediators across the five modes of conflict. The performance of peer mediators in Values Education is very satisfactory. Also, there is a moderate positive correlation between the attitude towards conflict and performance in Values Education among peer mediators. The findings provide a contextual perspective on peer mediators' conflict resolution skills, which lead to increased social and academic achievement. This further indicates that improved social skills and attitudes towards conflict helped students achieve academic success.

Keywords: *Conflict Modes, Values Education, Peer Mediation, Peer Mediators, Non-Peer Mediators*

INTRODUCTION

High school is a time of significant developmental progress for students. During this period, students not only mature physically but also emotionally and academically. A key element of maturing into a healthy adult is learning how to handle conflicts that inevitably happen. Teenagers engage in serious violence all too frequently as a result of minor mishaps and quarrels (Lockwood, 1997). If students want to be responsible members of the school and community, they must learn how to handle and resolve conflicts.

Studies have shown time and time again that almost all young people have engaged in criminal behavior, with fist fighting being especially prevalent (Empey & Stafford, 1991). Conflict between students can occur everywhere they are engaging with others, such as in the cafeteria, classroom, or hallways. Even an internal disagreement that begins with oneself might cause strife. Conflicts result from miscommunication, divergent interests, and a lack of resources or services. Conflict is thus a normal and inevitable aspect of existence. Conflict itself is not the cause of one's behavior; rather, the problem is in how one correctly handles conflict.

Both aggressive and passive behaviors, such as ignoring the argument, walking away, refusing to listen, or caving down, are common responses to disagreement. Aggressive actions include fights, insults, threats, and lawsuits. Demanding or expecting the solution to come from a parent, teacher, or principal is another typical strategy. Despite the fact that each of these approaches is suitable in some situations, a collaborative approach to conflict resolution is frequently the best and, in some cases, the only way to achieve satisfactory, win-win, and long-term results.

Given that conflict occurs naturally and has the potential to be both beneficial and harmful. Nevertheless, resolving a dispute amicably can be a rewarding experience because it gives students the chance to discover more about themselves and others, to change the way things are the way they need to be, to question stale ideas, and to foster new ways of relating and cooperating with one another.

In order to teach students to be for one another rather than against one another, to equip them with the skills to resolve their conflicts constructively rather than destructively, and to give them an orientation to problems and the skills necessary to meet their needs without using violence, it is now clear that schools must change fundamentally. The prevention of violence and the establishment of a culture of peace and compassion in schools give students experiences of safety, inclusion, fairness, and hope (Coleman & Deutsch, 2000).

A change in the competitive culture of schools can be facilitated through a comprehensive approach to conflict resolution. At the interpersonal level, systemic methods to conceptualizing conflict processes and intervention techniques are garnering more and more attention. A systems approach for schools makes a conflict management program an essential part of the institution's overall operation. It integrates different violence prevention tactics and aims to change school cultures (Coleman & Deutsch, 2000).

The researcher considered using peer mediation to see if it might be used as one potential answer to the rising incidence of violence among high school students in light of the growing concern to manage and offer solutions to limit violence inside school campuses. Programs for peer mediation are built on the principles of applied conflict resolution. Through such initiatives, students are given the opportunity to contribute to the development of a secure learning environment. Mediators assist their peers in outlining the key elements of a disagreement and stumbling upon potential resolutions. Essential skills like conflict resolution and intervention are taught to schoolchildren.

In order to address the rising student violence in schools, peer mediation programs have gained widespread acceptance (Turnuklu, 2010). It is helpful to turn to third parties like mediators for complex disputes that the conflicting parties are unable to resolve on their own. Peer mediation programs are regarded as a first-level intervention since they are frequently the most desired by schools and are typically the simplest and least expensive program to implement; in fact, school mediation programs have been widely established.

According to research, student mediators' self-confidence, self-esteem, assertiveness, and general attitudes toward school are all positively impacted (Crawford & Bodine, 1997). At the school level, mediation programs lead to a considerable decrease in disciplinary referrals, detentions, and suspensions as well as more favorable assessments of the school atmosphere (less reported aggression and harmful behavior among students) by staff members and students. But even while they are helpful, mediation programs alone cannot bring about the paradigm shift in education required to prepare children to live in a peaceful world.

Cooperative learning and conflict resolution training had a range of good benefits on at-risk pupils at an alternative urban high school, according to a two-year research (Deutsch et al., 1992). According to research, students who received peer mediation training were better at handling their own problems, had more social support, and felt less victimized by others. Improved interpersonal connections were associated with higher self-esteem, more frequently occurring good sensations, and a reduction in anxiety and despair. Students' good feelings of wellbeing resulted in stronger academic achievement as well as better work-readiness and performance, and increased self-esteem in turn provided a larger sense of personal control.

Conflict resolution has to involve social emotional learning, according to Sandy (2001), who looked at conflict resolution teaching in schools. She suggested that a lack of social emotional competence is related to poor academic achievement. "Self-identity, self-efficacy, self-control, appreciation of diversity and diverse values, empathy, perspective taking, cooperation, communication, creativity, problem-solving, and evaluation" were listed as the core social emotional skills (Jensen, 1998, referenced by Sandy, 2001). If these abilities are to be retained, they must be practiced everywhere—at school, at home, and in the community. A best practice model of conflict resolution should be included in the curriculum, not offered as a separate course, according to Sandy (2001). Due to their already heavy workloads, teachers are one of the biggest barriers to having something outside of the curriculum. The fact that instructors are already overworked and have less motivation to pursue further training is one of the major barriers to having this outside of the curriculum.

Numerous studies were conducted regarding the benefits of conflict resolution programs. However, a limited amount of research has been done to see the advantages of participation in a

peer mediation program on the attitude and performance of students in the Philippines. Thus, this study sought to determine how students trained in peer mediation program incorporate the skills taught to them in every conflict situation and in their daily lives and to examine the relationship between the attitude towards conflict and performance in Values Education among Peer Mediators.

This research can contribute to the continued evaluation of school-based programs. Findings from this study may have implications for guidance and counseling program planning and curriculum development. Moreover, the results of this study would benefit the field of school counseling and provide researchers and practitioners with more knowledge on how peer mediation affects attitude towards conflict and academic performance of students.

The major purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between attitude towards conflict and performance in Values Education among Peer Mediators.

Specifically, the study addressed the following questions:

1. What is the attitude towards conflict among Peer Mediators and non-Peer Mediators along the following modes:
 - a. Competing;
 - b. Collaborating;
 - c. Compromising;
 - d. Avoiding; and
 - e. Accommodating?
2. What is the difference in attitude towards conflict among Peer Mediators and non-Peer Mediators along the identified modes?
3. What is the performance among Peer Mediators and non-Peer Mediators in the subject, Values Education?
4. What is the correlation between the attitude towards conflict and performance in the subject, Values Education among Peer Mediators and non-Peer Mediators?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The researcher made use of descriptive research design, specifically descriptive-correlational research, to objectively analyze the relationship that exists between the attitude towards conflict and performance in Values Education among Peer Mediators at the University of Baguio High School. This study also utilized the descriptive-comparative research design to find out the difference in attitudes towards conflict among peer mediators and non-peer mediators.

Population and Locale of the Study

This study was undertaken in the city of Baguio, specifically at the University of Baguio High School. The respondents in this study were thirty-six (36) students enrolled in the University of Baguio High School. Purposive sampling was used, wherein the school committee selected students who met the criteria for being peer mediators. Criteria used for selection by the committee include good communication skills, leadership potential, respect amongst peers, commitments to other organizations and activities, initiative, willingness to learn new things, and the ability to balance school work with extracurricular activities. Students selected for training by the committee composed the peer mediators for this study. The remaining students from the recommended population made up the non-peer mediators. The non-peer mediators had not participated in peer mediation training prior to this study.

Data Gathering Tools

The tool that was used in this study includes the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974). The data on students' performance in Values Education was obtained from the report cards (F-138) on file in the principal's office. Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974) This instrument is designed to measure the behavior of an individual when handling interpersonal conflict situations. The authors identified two basic dimensions of behavior in situations of conflict: 1) assertiveness, the extent to which one attempts to satisfy his or her own concerns, and 2) cooperativeness, the extent to which one attempts to satisfy the concerns of others (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974). Five methods

or modes of dealing with interpersonal conflict were developed and defined by the authors to measure the basic dimensions identified.

This instrument is a forced-choice questionnaire consisting of 30 pairs of statements. Average test-retest reliability is 0.64 (Thomas & Kilmann, 1977). Respondents answer 30 items on the TKI tool; the chosen items are scored using the TKI self-scoring sheet, and respondents see which of the five conflict-handling modes they tend to use often and which modes they use less frequently. Their percentile scores compare how frequently they use a certain mode. Scores are grouped in three categories: high (scores that fit in the top 25% of the norm group's scores on a conflict-handling mode), medium (scores that fit in the middle 50%), and low (scores that fit in the bottom 25%).

Data Gathering Procedure

In the data gathering procedures, the researcher followed the proper protocol for the study. With the primary approval of the department heads through a communication letter, the researcher gave the target participants written informed consent and parental consent forms. Once the respondents had submitted their consent forms, they immediately answered the Google Form questionnaire. The researcher assured the participants that participation in the research was voluntary and that they would be free to discontinue participation at any time. The researcher personally administered the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument to the respondents. This was to ensure that the respondents fully understood the nature and purpose of the study. The respondents were assured of the confidentiality of the survey, and they were asked to read the instructions stated before answering. In cases where the respondents were not able to understand some of the items, the researcher was available to explain them. The non-peer mediators were randomly selected.

Treatment of Data

To obtain quantitative information on the results of the study, the following statistical tools were utilized. Problem number 1, the attitude towards conflict among peer mediators and non-peer mediators, was determined using the median to determine the percentile scores used in each mode of conflict. A weighted mean was used to analyze the performance in Values Education among peer mediators and non-peer mediators. The percentile score on the attitude towards conflict among peer mediators and non-peer mediators was measured and interpreted based on the responses from the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument. In interpreting the results on the attitude towards conflict, the following scale values and descriptive level equivalents were used.

PERCENTILE SCORE	LEVEL	INTERPRETATION
76 – 100	HIGH	Highly Utilized Mode of Conflict
26 – 75	MEDIUM	Utilized Mode of Conflict
0 – 25	LOW	Not Utilized Mode of Conflict

In determining the performance in Values Education among peer mediators and non-peer mediators, the following scales were utilized with their corresponding statistical limits and interpretations.

GRADE	PERFORMANCE IN VALUES EDUCATION
90+	OUTSTANDING
85 - 89	VERY SATISFACTORY
80 - 84	SATISFACTORY
75 - 79	FAIR
74 - BELOW	POOR

A t-test for independent samples was used to compare the attitude towards conflict among peer mediators and non-peer mediators, while the Pearson Product-Moment Coefficient of Correlation (Pearson's r) was used to verify the relationship that exists between attitude towards conflict and performance in Values Education among peer mediators and non-peer mediators.

Ethical Considerations

The research underwent an ethics review by the research committee to protect the participants. The researcher presented the questionnaires and informed consent forms to the participants. These forms presented the objectives and purpose of the study for the participants, as well as the forms for the participants and their guardians' written consent. Within the email sent to the respondents, the researchers highlighted that their participation was completely voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw at any time. Additionally, the researchers explained that the respondents' personal information would be protected and not revealed. The method of distribution of the findings will include sending an email directly to the respondents or beneficiaries of the study, publishing project findings, and presenting program results to community groups and stakeholders at local and national conferences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

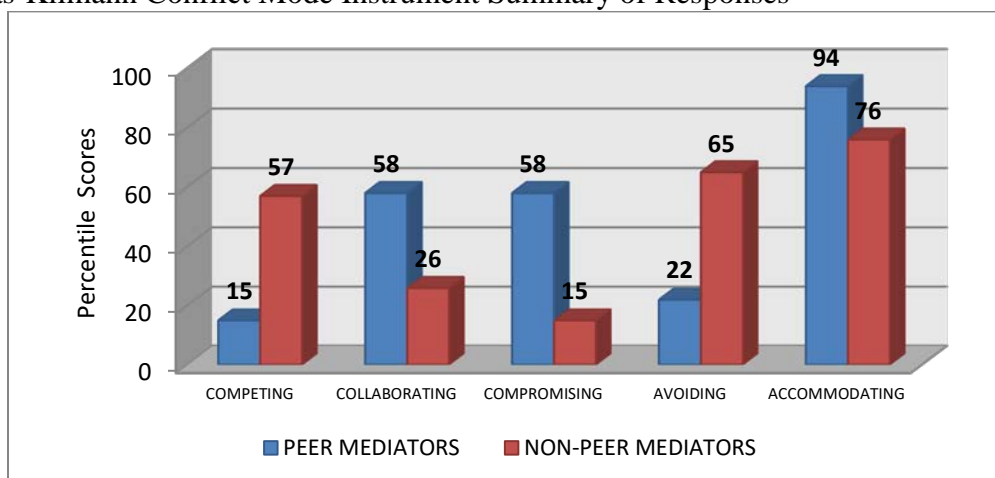
The succeeding tables show the following: (a) Attitude towards Conflict among Peer Mediators and non-Peer Mediators; (b) Comparison of the Attitude towards Conflict among Peer Mediators and non-Peer Mediators; (c) Performance in Value Education among Peer Mediators and non-Peer Mediators; (d) Correlation between the Attitude towards Conflict and Performance in Values Education among Peer Mediators; (e) Correlation between the Attitude towards Conflict and Performance in Values Education among non-Peer Mediators.

Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument Summary of Responses

Figure 3 presents the median percentile scores of each conflict mode used among peer mediators and non-peer mediators. The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument was administered to both groups. This instrument has been intended to identify the attitude and approach used by individuals when faced with situations of conflict. As discussed in the earlier chapters, choices are placed on a two-dimensional scale of assertiveness, the extent to which an individual attempts to satisfy personal concerns, and cooperativeness, the extent to which an individual attempts to satisfy the concerns of others. Modes include competing, avoiding, accommodating, collaborating, and compromising. For the purpose of this study, the term mode is used to refer to a style or method of dealing with a conflict situation.

Median percentile scores in each mode were determined and displayed in Figure 3. Accommodating (94), collaborating (58), and compromising (58) were the most frequently selected conflict modes among peer mediators, while accommodating (76), avoiding (65), and competing (57) were the most commonly chosen modes among non-peer mediators. The least chosen modes of conflict among peer mediators fall under avoiding (22) and competing (15), while non-peer mediators hardly select collaborating (26) and compromising (15) as their approaches in conflict situations.

Figure 3
 Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument Summary of Responses



Based on the findings of the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument, it can be concluded that training in peer mediation and the experience of serving as a peer mediator have a positive effect on the attitude a student has towards conflict. Rather than being limited to fighting or giving up, students trained in peer mediation have learned alternate and appropriate actions for dealing with conflict. Using force or attempting to dominate, as well as staying away from conflict situations, were the least chosen approaches among peer mediators.

Some factors that can impact how peer mediators respond to conflict are attributed to their experiences as peer mediators; given that they habitually practice conflict resolution skills during mediation, they were able to adapt the techniques to their own conflict styles. Their life experiences, both personal and as peer mediators, have taught them to frame conflict as either something positive that can be worked through or something negative to be avoided and ignored at all costs. Another factor is credited to the enrichment of their communication skills that they learned as peer mediators. The essence of conflict resolution is the ability to communicate effectively. Peer mediators who possess and use effective communication skills resolve conflicts with greater ease and success.

The result corroborates the study of Berge and Karan (2004), where the peer mediators follow a process in which they are taught to follow a step-by-step model to assist others and to peacefully negotiate solutions to their interpersonal conflicts. Moreover, this finding supports the finding of Johnson (1986), who stressed that students do not come to school with all the social skills they need to collaborate effectively with others. Therefore, teachers need to teach the appropriate communication, leadership, trust, decision making, and conflict management skills to students and provide the motivation to use these skills in order for groups to function effectively.

This further implies that students who have undergone peer mediation programs have put into practice what they think is appropriate, guided by the lessons and teachings in the peer mediation program, as compared to non-peer mediators, who have insufficient knowledge on how to handle conflict situations constructively.

Attitude towards Conflict among Peer Mediators

The median percentile scores of each conflict mode among peer mediators are presented in Table 1. As presented, the highest percentile score obtained among peer mediators falls under accommodating, with a percentile score of 94. The least utilized mode of conflict is competing, the complete opposite of accommodating, with a percentile score of 15.

Among the 30 pairs of statements in the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument, it revealed that peer mediators generally preferred most statements under the accommodating mode of conflict. The following statements under accommodating mode, which total the highest inclinations, are as follows, along with their corresponding raw scores: "I might try to soothe the other's feelings and preserve our relationship" (RS: 18); "Rather than negotiate the things on which we disagree, I try to stress the things upon which we both agree" (RS: 17); "I try not to hurt the other's feelings" (RS: 17). Of the five conflict styles, accommodating is viewed as the "peacekeeper" mode as it focuses more on preserving relationships than on achieving a personal goal or result. The finding implies that among peer mediators, reconciliation is more valuable than winning in conflict situations.

Table 1
 Attitude towards Conflict among Peer Mediators

CONFLICT MODES	MEDIAN PERCENTILES	INTERPRETATION
a. COMPETING	15	Not Utilized Mode of Conflict
b. COLLABORATING	58	Utilized Mode of Conflict
c. COMPROMISING	58	Highly Utilized Mode of Conflict
d. AVOIDING	22	Not Mode of Conflict
e. ACCOMMODATING	94	Highly Utilized Mode of Conflict

n=18

This indicates that, as compared with all the students who have taken the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument, the Peer Mediators scored higher than 94% in the accommodating mode. Accommodating conflict style as the primary choice in handling conflict

situations among peer mediators reflects a high degree of cooperativeness, which is the complete opposite of competing. This suggests that in dealing with conflict, peer mediators prefer to be of service to others. This mode of conflict is often used by peer mediators in mediation to find ways to help students who are in conflict situations.

Accommodators tend to see conflicts as social or emotional issues to be settled with support and sensitivity. They often believe in the Golden Rule ("Do unto others . . .") and believe that generosity will eventually be rewarded in kind. They regard coworkers as friends—people to be supported and looked after—and value support, generosity, goodwill, and team cohesiveness. They often see compassion and friendship as more important than the minor issues involved in most conflicts. Accommodators help coworkers meet their concerns—for the sake of the coworker and to help build cohesiveness and goodwill (Thomas & Kilmann, 2001).

Thomas & Kilmann's (1974) statements have bearing on the finding of the study when they mention that accommodating is an appropriate form of dealing with conflict when used in the following situations: When preserving or building the relationship is more important than winning the issue at hand; when supporting the needs of the other party is feasible, appropriate, and does not come at significant personal cost; when a person realizes that they are wrong and that the alternate position is better; when competing will produce a negative outcome, such as when the other person is in a position of authority or power, to help someone learn from the outcome of their decision, even though it may differ from their own; to restore harmony during a tense moment or after a disagreement; when a positive outcome is unlikely and it is better to end the dispute and move on; to satisfy a complaint when in the process of providing customer service.

Conversely, compared with the other group who took the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument, the peer mediators scored lower than 85% in the competing mode. Thomas & Kilmann (1974) portray competing as a power-driven mode that is high in assertiveness and low in cooperativeness. It puts parties in a win-lose relationship where one attempts to achieve his or her goals at the expense of another. The statements under the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument show that peer mediators seldom use the competing mode of conflict. The following are the statements under competing mode that were uncommonly selected among peer mediators: "I am usually firm in pursuing my goals" (RS: 0), "I try to win my position" (RS: 0), "I press to get my points made" (RS: 1). The finding denotes that peer mediators, knowing that they are leaders in the school, do not operate from a position of power despite the fact that they have authority and persuasive ability.

A look at the collectivistic culture of Filipinos provides a probable explanation as to why peer mediators prefer accommodating rather than competing mode of conflict. Collectivism describes societies in which people are integrated into strong, cohesive, and loyal groups. Further, collectivist cultures value goals and outcomes over those of the individual and define themselves in terms of their group membership. Since they highly value social relations and social perception, people in collectivist cultures tend to avoid activities that would compromise their identity in a group or even the approval of the group's members' towards them. Consequently, people who belong to individualistic cultures are willing to make sacrifices for their group (Fletcher and Olekains, 2011).

Moreover, they would rather keep things cooperative and mutual, for they may be misconstrued by the group and regarded as uncooperative. This behavior is the opposite of what is exhibited by people who belong to an individualistic culture, where personal gain is prioritized over group approval or independence, and assertiveness is given higher value than simply conforming to preserve group cohesion and maintain the group's unanimous perception.

Not the least, this observation corroborates the findings of Gabrielidis et al. (1997) in their research entitled Preferred Styles of Conflict Resolution in Mexico and the United States. In the said study, the researchers examined cultural differences in preference for conflict resolution styles using the dual-concern model. The researchers found that those students in a collectivistic culture like Mexico preferred conflict resolution styles that emphasized concern for the outcomes of others (accommodation and collaboration) more than students from an individualistic culture.

This further implies that peer mediators agree that conflict is a natural part of relationships and that the best strategy to resolve conflicts is by talking things through; they have an understanding born of experience of the give-and-take nature of conflict. Because they can recognize the nuances of communication during conflict, they can see how heavily the outcome depends on the process. They frequently changed their own patterns of behavior in conflict situations. They were influenced not only by their experience, but also by their self-identification

as mediators or peacemakers. Significantly, their attitudes about conflict differ considerably from the general population; they see conflict as necessary and natural, not as frightening or something out of their control.

Attitude towards Conflict among non-Peer Mediators

The median percentiles of each mode of conflict utilized among non-peer mediators were determined and presented in Table 2. The table reflects that the highly utilized mode of conflict among non-peer mediators falls under the accommodating mode with a percentile score of 76. Other than that, the modes of conflict utilized among non-peer mediators fall under avoiding, competing, and collaborating, with percentile scores of 65, 57, and 26, respectively. Whereas the least used mode of conflict among non-peer mediators is compromising, with a percentile score of 15.

Table 2
 Attitude towards Conflict among non-Peer Mediators

CONFLICT MODES	MEDIAN PERCENTILES	INTERPRETATION
a. COMPETING	57	Utilized Mode of Conflict
a. COLLABORATING	26	Utilized Mode of Conflict
b. COMPROMISING	15	Not Utilized Mode of Conflict
c. AVOIDING	65	Utilized Mode of Conflict
d. ACCOMMODATING	76	Highly Utilized Mode of Conflict

n=18

The result indicates that, as compared with their counterparts who have taken the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument, the non-peer mediators scored higher than 76% in the accommodating mode. This suggests that in dealing with conflict, non-peer mediators, like their peer mediator counterparts, also tend to preserve and build relationships.

Among the 30 pairs of statements in the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument, it was revealed that non-peer mediators preferred most statements under the accommodating mode of conflict. The following statements under accommodating mode, which total the highest inclinations, are as follows, along with their corresponding raw scores: "I try not to hurt the other's feelings" (RS: 15); "In approaching negotiations, I try to be considerate of the other person's wishes" (RS: 14); "If the other's position seems very important to him, I would try to meet his wishes" (RS: 13).

Aside from the culture of Filipinos being collectivistic, a possible explanation for why the non-peer mediators also chose accommodating as their mode of conflict can be attributed to their age. It is common knowledge that the necessity to get along with their peers is a characteristic associated with being a teenager. Simply put, in their desire to get along with other people, the non-peer mediators prefer to serve others before themselves to get things accomplished while preserving harmony. People who are accommodating are often described as being nice and find satisfaction in helping others get their needs met. They tend to be sensitive to the feelings of others and try to be supportive, kind, and nurturing.

In general, both peer mediators and non-peer mediators prefer an accommodating mode in their approach to conflict. However, non-peer mediators compared to their counterparts, who at the same time scored high in the accommodating mode, show that peer mediators hardly use the competing mode of conflict. On the other hand, as it is presented in the finding, it is noticeable that non-peer mediators likewise utilize competing modes in conflict situations. The finding for non-peer mediators negates the concept of Thomas and Kilmann (1974), who defined accommodating as the complete opposite of competing.

Contrariwise, compromising and collaborating modes of conflict are the least utilized modes of conflict among non-peer mediators. This implies that in dealing with conflict situations, the non-peer mediators are not bent on identifying solutions that satisfy the concerns of the parties involved. Moreover, they are also not favorable towards giving up something in order to develop a mutually acceptable solution (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974). It is shown that non-peer mediators rated the lowest on the following statements: "I will let him have some of

his positions if he lets me have some of mine" (RS: 4); "I try to get him to settle for a compromise" (RS: 5); "I always lean toward a direct discussion of the problem" (RS: 4).

Compromising and collaborating may be perceived as too highly technical terms to characterize their attitude towards conflict. Although these two modes are mainstays in the training program for peer mediators, non-peer mediators may have inadequate knowledge as to how they can be carried out, because they have not been involved in any peer mediation training in the past. Hence, the tendency is for them to use what they may perceive as common approaches to conflict, such as the following modes: avoiding, competing, or accommodating.

Comparison of the Attitude towards Conflict among Peer Mediators and non-Peer Mediators

Table 3 discloses the difference in the respondents' attitudes towards conflict. A t-test was conducted in each mode to identify significant differences. The results of this study show how peer mediators differ from their counterparts in their level of attitude towards conflict given the different modes. The results indicate statistically significant differences in each mode of conflict utilized among peer mediators and non-peer mediators, which led to the acceptance of the hypothesis stating that there is a significant difference in the attitude towards conflict among peer mediators along the identified modes of conflict when compared to non-peer mediators.

Table 3
 Comparison of the Attitude towards Conflict among Peer Mediators and non-Peer Mediators

CONFLICT MODES	PEER MEDIATORS		NON-PEER MEDIATORS		t	df	p
	MEAN PS	SD	MEAN PS	SD			
a. COMPETING	15.67	9.37	59.61	21.07	8.09	34	.0001*
b. COLLABORATING	57.22	23.88	34.61	18.45	3.18	34	.0031*
c. COMPROMISING	65.56	18.81	21.89	17.96	7.12	34	.0001*
d. AVOIDING	28.11	18.27	60.83	24.77	4.51	34	.0001*
e. ACCOMMODATING	89.28	9.41	70.28	19.82	3.67	34	.0008*

N=36 *p < .05

The conflict style profile developed by Thomas and Kilmann (1974) describes competing as a power-driven mode that is high in assertiveness and low in cooperativeness. It puts parties in a win-lose relationship where one attempts to achieve his goals at the expense of another. The result of this study indicates that there was a significant difference in competing mode between the two groups ($t(34) = 8.09, p < .05$). The result indicates that non-peer mediators prefer using the competing mode of conflict more frequently as compared to peer mediators. This can be seen as an indication that peer mediators have much more consideration for the feelings, views, or goals of the other party than their counterparts, whose goal is to achieve their own desires.

Among the statements under competing modes of conflict, non-peer mediators generally preferred the following statements compared to peer mediators: "I am usually firm in pursuing my goals" (non-peer mediators, RS: 11; peer mediators, RS: 0); "I make some effort to get my way" (non-peer mediators, RS: 11; peer mediators, RS: 3); "I press to get my points made" (non-peer mediators, RS: 12; peer mediators, RS: 1).

The result conforms to the concept of Thomas and Kilmann (1974) that a person using competing mode pursues his or her own concerns at the expense of others. The result implies that students without training in peer mediation or any similar teaching usually focus on winning in

conflict situations. On the other hand, since the other group of students has undergone training on peer mediation, they already have knowledge on how to handle situations during conflict. Thus, the training program conducted by the school has a positive impact on the students who participated in the peer mediation training.

A significant difference was present in the collaborative mode between the two groups $t(34) = 3.18, p < .05$. Collaborating is both assertive and cooperative—the complete opposite of avoiding. The result implies that the training of peer mediators has a positive influence on the peer mediators more than on their non-peer mediator counterparts in the collaborative mode of conflict.

Among the 12 statements under collaborating mode of conflict revealed that peer mediators generally preferred the following statements under collaborating mode of conflict compared to non-peer mediators: "I consistently seek the other's help in working out a solution" (peer mediators, RS: 14; non-peer mediators, RS: 7); "I attempt to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open" (peer mediators, RS: 16; non-peer mediators, RS: 8); "I usually seek the other's help in working out a solution" (peer mediators, RS: 14; non-peer mediators, RS: 8).

The result confirms that collaborating, according to Thomas and Kilmann (1974), involves working with others to identify a solution that satisfies the concerns of all parties involved. The result implies that the peer mediators with a higher mean percentile of 57.22 seek to find a solution that would satisfy both concerned parties during conflict situations. Unlike the non-peer mediator, with a lower mean percentile of 34.61, these results suggest that the peer mediation program at UBHS is useful to students because it involves working with other parties to find a win-win solution.

A statistically significant difference between the peer mediators and non-peer mediators was indicated on the compromising mode, $t(34) = 7.12, p < .05$. The third mode, which is compromising, indicates that the peer mediators prefer the compromising mode of conflict more than the non-peer mediators. Again, the results above can be seen as an indication that the peer mediators may have been positively influenced by their training, for they chose the compromising mode of conflict more than their non-peer mediator counterparts.

Among the 12 statements under compromising mode of conflict, peer mediators highly preferred the following statements compared to non-peer mediators, "I will let him have some of his positions if he lets me have some of mine" (peer mediators, RS: 16; non-peer mediators, RS: 4); "I propose a middle ground" (peer mediators, RS: 17; non-peer mediators, RS: 6); "I try to get him to settle for a compromise" (peer mediators, RS: 11; non-peer mediators, RS: 5).

Compromising involves sharing with both parties and giving up something to develop a mutually acceptable solution (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974). The peer mediators have a higher percentile mean of 65.56 as compared to the score of the non-peer mediators, which is 21.89. The percentile mean difference between the two groups implies that there is a significant difference between these groups, which is the absence or presence of the peer mediation program. The students who have undergone the peer mediation program have learned that they need to give up something to develop a mutually acceptable solution during conflict.

A statistically significant difference between the peer mediators and non-peer mediators was indicated on the avoiding mode, $t(34) = 4.51, p < .05$. The result indicates that non-peer mediators prefer using the avoidance mode in conflict situations compared to their counterparts. Avoiding conflict situations might take the form of diplomatically sidestepping an issue, postponing an issue until a better time, or simply withdrawing from a threatening situation.

The 12 statements under avoiding mode of conflict, as presented in Appendix E and Appendix F, revealed that non-peer mediators highly preferred the following statements under avoiding mode of conflict compared to their counterparts, "There are times when I let others take responsibility for solving the problem" (non-peer mediators, RS: 9; peer mediators, RS: 1); "I try to do what is necessary to avoid useless tensions" (non-peer mediators, RS: 11; peer mediators, RS: 4); "I sometimes avoid taking positions which would create controversy" (non-peer mediators, RS: 14; 0

conflict. But certain people use some modes better than others and, therefore, tend to rely on those modes more heavily than others—whether because of temperament or practice. Your conflict behavior is therefore a result of both your personal predispositions and the requirements of the situation in which you find yourself".

Performance in Values Education among Peer Mediators and non-Peer Mediators

Table 4 reveals the performance of peer mediators and non-peer mediators in the subject, Values Education. As shown, the peer mediators obtained a mean of 85.67, which is equivalent to Very Satisfactory in terms of their performance in Values Education. The non-peer mediators, on the other hand, obtained a mean of 80.67, which is equivalent to Satisfactory in terms of their Performance in Values Education. Therefore, the hypothesis stating that the performance of Peer Mediators in Values Education is Very Satisfactory is accepted.

The rationale of the subject, Values Education, in the University of Baguio High School is to enhance the value system for adult citizens in this millennium. This subject particularly helps students to enhance the adolescent’s moral and spiritual growth, which would make them responsible and caring citizens who can be great assets in the task of nation-building. The course allows the students to realize their value systems and goals, to develop the social skills necessary for interaction with the environment, and to firm up their positive outlook towards work in order to be productive individuals.

The following were the lessons in Values Education for the fourth-year students during the School Year 2012-2013. The lessons during the first quarter were focused on moral and spiritual dimensions and consisted of the following lessons: Greatness and Power of God; Man: Moral and Spiritual; Responsible Freedom; Man and God; The True Meaning of Life. Lessons during the second quarter were concentrated on the Standard of Correct Behavior with the following topics: What are Core Moral Values?; How to Act?; Which Road to Take?; Who To Turn To?; Where Do We Go?. The focus of lessons for the third quarter was on moral values, with succeeding topics on making fortitude work, recognizing prudence, living in simplicity, doing the right thing, and respecting the dignity and rights of others. The final quarter addressed the Position in Moral Values, which was directed to the following lessons: Good Government: Our Concern; The Sanctity of Life; The Rights and Dignity of Man; Material Gifts; and Harmony with Nature.

Table 4
 Performance in Values Education among Peer Mediators and non-Peer Mediators

VALUES EDUCATION GRADE		
STUDENT	PEER MEDIATORS	NON-PEER MEDIATORS
MEAN GRADE	86.22	80.67
INTERPRETATION	VERY SATISFACTORY	SATISFACTORY

N=36

Several lessons in the subject, Values Education, were similar to the topics delivered during the peer mediation training. This was the start of the peer mediation program at the University of Baguio High School, the trainings for the chosen students were held in the month of July and lasted for three days. Afterward, supplementary training was also executed for the duration of the school year. The topics covered during the first training session are as follows: Common Courtesies; What is Peer Mediation?; Conflict at school; The Steps in the Mediation Process; The Role of the Peer Mediator and; Limitations of a Peer Mediator. Second training session is focused on communication skills with the following topics: Listening with my Body; Listening with Feelings; Three-way Listening; I Messages and; Designing I Messages. The last training session is composed of the following topics: How do I see conflict?; My Conflict Style; Conflict Role Play; What Lies Beneath each Conflict and; Mediation Role Play. The supplementary peer mediation training covered the following topics: Managing anger; Handling difficult situations; Power issues; Assertive vs. Aggressive and Passive Behaviors; Identifying Differences and Diversities; Review and reinforcement of skills taught during the peer mediation training; Multi-party disputes or group facilitation.

Having similar topics and lessons conducted during the peer mediation training and on the subject, Values Education made it easier for the peer mediators to either maintain or improve their performance in the subject. The skills that were taught to them not only helped to improve their attitude towards conflict but also their academics. Stevahn, Johnson, Johnson, Laginski, and O’Coin (1996) support this finding when they found significant differences between groups, notably that the conflict resolution training group experienced greater positive benefits in terms

of "academic learning, knowledge, and retention of the conflict resolution procedure in a conflict situation, and attitudes toward conflict" (Stevahn et al., 1996).

This suggests that there is a positive effect of the peer mediation program on the cooperative learning of the students who were trained in the program, which confirms the study of Deutsch et al. (1992) that conflict resolution training and cooperative learning have a variety of positive effects.

Correlation between the Attitude towards Conflict and Performance in Values Education among Peer Mediators

Reflected in Table 5 is the relationship between the attitude towards conflict and performance in Values Education among peer mediators at the University of Baguio High School. A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between attitude towards conflict and performance in Values Education.

Table 5
Correlation between the Attitude towards Conflict and Performance in Values Education among Peer Mediators

	<i>r</i>	<i>P</i>	Degree of Correlation
Attitude towards Conflict and Performance in Values Education among Peer Mediators	0.36	0.1423 NS	Moderate Positive Correlation

$n=18$ $p > .05$

As shown, the relationship between attitude towards conflict and performance in Values Education among peer mediators resulted in a coefficient of correlation of $r(16) = 0.36$, $p > .05$ indicating a positive and substantial relationship. However, the hypothesis stating that there is a significant relationship between the attitude towards conflict and the subject, Values Education is rejected. While the correlation between attitude towards conflict and performance in Values Education is not significant, these variables appear to be related.

A scatter plot presented in Appendix G summarizes the results and provides a general finding of the correlation between the two sets of variables. Overall, there was a moderate correlation between attitude towards conflict and performance in the subject Values Education. Further, the table reveals that the relationship between the attitude towards conflict and performance in the subject, Values Education, has a positive computed correlation, which indicates a direct relationship. The direction of the relationship signifies that as the influence of attitude towards conflict strengthens, the more likely it is that performance in Values Education will increase as well.

The coefficient of determination, r^2 , tells us how much of the variance in one of the variables is accounted for by the variance in the other variable. With regards to the variation in the relationship using the coefficient of determination, the result implies that only 12.96% of the variations in the attitude towards conflict can be explained by the students' grade in Values Education. But that also means that the remaining variance of 87.04% in achievement scores cannot be accounted for by the attitude towards conflict but is attributable to many other factors, such as study time, intelligence, motivation, and quality of instructions.

Nonetheless, the results presented can be attributed to the fact that one criterion in the selection of peer mediators is their ability to balance academics and extracurricular activities. Thus, it is possible that even before their training; the peer mediators already possessed good study habits, which may have influenced their grade in Values Education. Hence, it is conceivable that one's reactions to conflict may also be related to his or her performance in Values Education. Their acquired knowledge and training in conflict resolution put them at an advantage over non-peer mediators.

Based on the data, compromising and avoiding modes of conflict have positive relationships with the final grades among peer mediators in Values Education. The result implies that as their scores on both modes increase, so does their performance in Values Education.

However, competing, avoiding, and accommodating modes of conflict have a low negative correlation to their grades in the subject, Values Education. It is assumed that these modes of conflict had little to do with their grades in Values Education.

The statements of Van Slyck and Stern (1992) have bearing on the overall result of the study when he mentions that educators believe competence in conflict resolution skills can lead to increased social and academic achievement in the short run and a more harmonious world in the long run. Many educators believe student behavior affects academic achievement; therefore, negative behavior has always been a concern for educators. In the last decade, concern about student behavior has escalated to alarm (Boothe et al., 1993). Negative interactions may lead to learning problems since students who spend time arguing and fighting have little to no time or energy for academic pursuits. Since compromising and avoiding modes of conflict have a positive relationship with the performance in Values Education among peer mediators, it denotes that peer mediators know how to set their priorities when it comes to their academics focusing more on important things such as listening inside the classroom rather than spending time arguing, which leads to having more time for concentrating and learning.

While many instructional strategies have significant, positive effects on student academic outcomes (Joyce & Weil, 1996; Johnson & Johnson, 1989), none will equip students with the capacity to manage their own interpersonal conflicts constructively without extensive practice of procedures and skills. Integrating conflict resolution training into the curriculum, therefore, must go beyond thinking and talking about conflicts, causes, and solutions, solely at an intellectual level. Systematic and cumulative practice of resolving conflicts must take place not only in the peer mediation program but in all subject areas.

Correlation between the Attitude towards Conflict and Performance in Values Education among non-Peer Mediators

The relationship between the attitude towards conflict and performance in Values Education among non-peer mediators is presented in Table 6. As shown, the relationship between the conflict modes and level of performance resulted in a coefficient of correlation of $r(16) = .09$, $p > 0.05$ indicating a negligible relationship between the modes of conflict and performance in Values Education. A scatter plot presented in Appendix H summarizes the results and provides a general finding of the correlation between the two sets of variables.

Table 6
 Correlation between the Attitude towards Conflict and Performance in Values Education among non-Peer Mediators

	r	P	Degree of Correlation
Attitude towards Conflict and Performance in Values Education among non-Peer Mediators	0.09	0.7225 NS	No Correlation

$n=18$ $p > .05$

With regards to the variation in the relationship using the coefficient of determination (r^2), the result implies that only 0.81% of the variations in their attitude towards conflict can be explained by their grades in Values Education. The remaining 99.19% is attributed to other factors like study habits, time management, family background, level of maturity, or gender.

Based on the data, the majority of the modes of conflict have no to low relationships to the final grades of the non-peer mediators in the subject, Values Education. The result implies that the attitudes toward conflict of non-peer mediators have insignificant influence on their performance in Values Education.

The statements of Boothe et al. (1993) have bearing on the findings of the study when they mention that negative social behaviors seem related to low academic achievement. Seventy-six percent of school administrators who responded to a survey on school violence reported that low-achieving students are the most likely perpetrators of school violence. It seems logical that if the negative social behaviors of students were reduced and replaced by positive ones, academic achievement would be enhanced. Hence, the peer mediation program at the University of Baguio High School, which has been found to have a significant impact on the attitude a student has

towards conflict, may at the same time improve the attitude of a student towards school in general compared to non-peer mediators.

At the present time, the job market has become more competitive, and high school graduation has become a minimum requirement for all students. Academic skills are judged as important, but the ability to work cooperatively and constructively with peers and supervisors has become essential. A growing body of research suggests that although many students do not possess the social skills necessary to interact cooperatively and constructively, these skills can be taught. Educators searching for a way to reduce negative interactions and increase positive ones are finding that school-based conflict management and mediation programs can provide a structure for students to acquire positive interaction skills (Van Slyck & Stern, 1991). In general, it is vital to teach students the skills they need, which will prepare them for their future. Improved social skills and attitude towards conflict help students achieve success not only in school but even in the world of work.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Training conflict resolution strategies through peer mediation has positive effects on the attitudes of peer mediators toward conflict as compared to their non-peer mediator counterparts, who have inadequate knowledge on how to handle conflict situations constructively.
2. Training in peer mediation and the experience of serving as peer mediators helped students acquire the skills of constructive conflict resolution as compared to their non-peer mediator counterparts.
3. Topics conducted during the peer mediation training complemented the lessons in the subject, Values Education. This suggests that the peer mediation training was beneficial for peer mediators to enhance their performance in the subject.
4. Peer mediators' conflict resolution skills lead to increased social and academic achievement. This further indicates that improved social skills and attitudes towards conflict helped students achieve academic success.

Recommendations

In light of the findings and conclusions, the following are recommended:

1. Peer mediation is a developing program at the University of Baguio High School. To further discover the influence of peer mediation on the attitude a student has towards conflict, similar studies should be conducted in a variety of settings, urban and rural, with varied populations at the basic education level to verify and extend the findings of this study.
2. It is essential to conduct follow-up, testing, and interview sessions with students who participated in the program. This is to validate if the students who were trained as peer mediators retained the knowledge and skills needed to resolve conflict over time.
3. Integration of related lessons in the subject, Values Education, in the succeeding peer mediation and supplementary training sessions. Further, the effects of instruction in conflict resolution skills on students' behavior and on teachers' perceptions of student behavior need to be examined.
4. Integration of conflict resolution skills into the curriculum will have a better impact on the students' academic performance. Systematic and cumulative practices for resolving conflicts have to take place not only in peer mediation programs but in all subject areas.

REFERENCES

- Boothe, J.W., Bradley, L. H., Flick, T.M. Keough, K.E., & Kirk, S.P.(1993). *The violence at your door*. The Executive Educator, 15(1), 22-25.
- Crawford, D., & Bodine, R. (1997). *Conflict resolution in schools*. Washington, DC: National Institute for Dispute Resolution.
- Coleman P., and Deutsch, M. (2000). *Cooperation, conflict resolution, and school violence: a systems approach*. Columbia University Teachers College. New York, NY.

- Deutsch, M. (1973). *The resolution of conflict: constructive and destructive processes*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Deutsch, M., Mitchell, V., Zhang, Q., Khattri, N., Tepavac, L., Weitzman, E.A., & Lynch, R. (1992). *The effects of training in cooperative learning and conflict resolution in an alternative high school*. New York: Teachers College, International Center for Cooperation and Conflict Resolution.
- Empey, L. & Stafford, M. (1991). *American delinquency* (1991, 3rd Ed.) pg. 95-97. http://futureofchildren.org/futureofchildren/publications/docs/06_03_FullJournal.pdf
- Fletcher, L., Olekains, M., & Cieri De, H. (1996). *Cultural differences in conflict resolution: individualism and collectivism in the asia-pacific region*. Department of Management Working Paper in Organizational Studies. Parkville, VIC, The University of Melbourne.
- Johnson, D.W., Johnson, R.T., & Holubec, E.J. (1986). *Circles of learning: cooperation in the classroom*. Edina, MN: Interaction Book Co.
- Johnson, D., Johnson, R., Mitchell, J., Cotton, B., Harris, D., & Louison, S. (1996). *Effectiveness of conflict managers in an inner-city elementary school*. *Journal of educational research*, 89(5), 280-285.
- Johnson, D.W., & Johnson, R.T. (1989). *Cooperation and competition: theory and research*. Edina, MN: Interaction Book Company.
- Joyce, B., & Weil, M. (1996). *Models of teaching (5th ed.)*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Lockwood, D. (1997). *Violence among middle school and high school students: analysis and implications for prevention*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice.
- Sandy, S. V. (2001). *Conflict resolution education in the schools: Getting there*. *Conflict resolution quarterly*, 19(2), 237-50.
- Stevahn, L., Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R. T., & Real, D. (1996). The impact of a cooperative or individualistic context on the effectiveness of conflict resolution training. *American Educational Research Journal*, 33(2), 801-823. <http://aer.sagepub.com/content/33/4/801.short>
- Stevahn, L., Johnson, D., Johnson, R., & Schultz, R. (2002). Effects of conflict resolution training integrated into a high school social studies curriculum. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 142(3), 305-331. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00224540209603902#.UyJ1CD-Sw5g>
- Thomas, D. (1971). *Decentralization as a management tool*. Paper presented to the American Management Association Annual Conference and Exposition, New York City, New York.
- Thomas, K. W. & Kilmann, R. H. (1974). *Thomas-Kilmann conflict*. Tuxedo, NY: Xicom.
- Thomas, K. W. & Kilmann, R. H. (1977). *Developing a forced-choice measure of conflict-handling behavior: the mode instrument*. Tuxedo, NY: Xicom.
- Thomas, K. W. & Kilmann, R. H. (2001). *Thomas-Kilmann conflict mode instrument profile and interpretive report*. <https://www.cpp.com/pdfs/smp248248.pdf>
- Turnuklu, A., Kacmaz, T., Sunbul., D, & Ergul, H. (2010). Effects of conflict resolution and peer mediation training in a turkish high school. *Australian Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 20 (1). <http://journals.cambridge.org/>
- Van Slyck, M., & Stern, M. (1991). *Conflict resolution in educational settings*. In G. Duffy, J. Grosch, & P. Olczak (Eds.), *Community mediation: A handbook for practitioners and researchers* (pp. 257-274). New York, NY: The Guilford Press.