

Chapter 9

CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND MEDIATION TRAINING FOR TEACHER CANDIDATES: THE CASE OF MANİSA CELAL BAYAR UNIVERSITY¹

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INTRODUCTION

Conflict is described as diversion, incompatibility, dispute, controversy, dichotomy or quarrel between two or more parties' thoughts or goals (Turkish Language Association, 2019). According to Deutsch (1973 as cited in Johnson and Johnson, 1995), conflicts emerge as a result of disharmony or in contradicting situations where one activity restrains or impinges upon another activity. As a concept, it is used similarly with disagreement, divergence, incoherence, contradiction, having different ideas, quarrelling and disharmony (Lesseho, 2001 as cited in Korkut, 2004). Within all descriptions presented in the related literature, the most emphasized reality is the fact that conflicts are natural and inevitable parts of everyday life (Cohen, 1995; Türnüklü, 2006). According to Türnüklü (2006), the impetus that makes interpersonal conflicts natural and inevitable is divergence among individuals' personalities, goals, interests, needs, pleasures and etc. In other words, as long as there are discrepancies among interacting individuals' values, desires, beliefs and interests, conflicts are going to show continuity (Karip, 1999).

Schrumpf, Crawford and Bodine (1997: 39) summarize conflict in four items which are:

1. Conflict is a natural and inevitable part of life,
2. When properly approached, conflict presents opportunity to learn and create,
3. The positive energy emerging through the process of conflict resolution offers new resolutions which previously could not be viewed possible,
4. Managing conflict positively strengthens both parties identity. Based on this assumption, what really matters is how conflicts are perceived and managed in interpersonal relationships.

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nary problems (Göğebakan-Yıldız, 2016; Yıldız, Çetin, Türnüklü, Tercan, Çetin, & Kaçmaz, 2016).

The fourth question posed to teacher candidates in interviews was “What difficulties may be experienced in implementation of CRM Training at schools?” The most frequent answers given to this question were “Teachers and school administrators may resist to change or may not embrace mediation process”; “Implementation of mediation may not be adequately controlled by school counselors or teachers”; “Insufficiencies in physical conditions of schools (lack of mediation room etc)”; “Inability to implement mediation processes properly may decrease support for it”. Çetin, Türnüklü and Turan (2014) carried out interviews with high school mediator students in their study. Researchers stated that the most common problems mediator students experienced were disapproval by their friends, not being taken seriously, obstructing lessons, jealousy and etc. On the other hand, mediator students expressed their enthusiasm and happiness for being chosen as mediators by their friends. Additionally, they expressed that their duty as a mediator made them feel responsibility, confidence and competence to solve problems.

To conclude, the findings of this study revealed that CRM Training Program significantly decreased participants’ points in approaching problems negatively, lack of self-confidence and unwilling to take responsibility. However, participants’ points in constructive problem solving and insistent-preserving approach increased significantly. Also, interviews with teacher candidates showed that they believed implementation of conflict resolution and mediation training in their own lives and schools can contribute social skills, preventing violence and establishing a positive atmosphere. In the light of this information, Conflict Resolution and Mediation Training can be regarded as a beneficial program to use in training of teacher candidates.

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