

Conflict Resolution Among Children with Mild and Moderate Disabilities in Mainstream Classroom

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Abstract:

This study is an attempt to investigate the conflict resolution among the disabled children in mainstream classroom. A sample of 404 children with special needs as identified by S.S.A (H.P) was selected from districts Shimla and Solan of Himachal Pradesh. The Conflict Resolution Scale constructed by the investigator herself was used for the data collection. The results of the study show that the female and male disabled children having different disabilities studying in mainstream classroom do not differ significantly in their conflict resolution style. The female and male disabled children having different disabilities exhibit near about equal conflict resolution style in dealing with various conflicting situations in mainstream classroom.

Keywords: Conflict, Conflict Resolution, Children with Special Needs, Mainstream.

I. INTRODUCTION

Whenever two individuals opine in different ways, a conflict arises. In a layman's language conflict is nothing but a fight either between two individuals or among group members. No two individuals can think alike and there is definitely a difference in their thought process as well as their understanding. Disagreements among individuals lead to conflict and fights. Conflict arises whenever individuals have different values, opinions, needs, interests and are unable to find a middle way.

Conflict is defined as a clash between individuals arising out of a difference in thought process, attitudes, understanding, interests, requirements and even sometimes perceptions. If war begins in the minds of men it is because of conflict. A conflict results in heated arguments, physical abuses and definitely loss of peace and harmony. A conflict can actually change relationships.

Conflict is a daily reality of everyone. Whether at home or at work, an individual's needs and values constantly and invariably come into opposition with those of other people. Some conflicts are relatively minor, easy to handle, or capable of being overlooked. Others of greater magnitude, however, require a strategy for successful resolution if they are not to create constant tension or lasting enmity in home, school or society. The ability to resolve conflict successfully is probably one of the most important social skills that an individual can possess. Yet there are few formal opportunities in the society to learn it. Like any other human skill, conflict resolution can be taught, like other skills. It consists of a number of important sub skills, each separate and yet interdependent. These skills need to be assimilated at both the cognitive and the behavioural levels.

Conflict resolution is conceptualized as the methods and processes involved in facilitating the peaceful ending of some social conflict. Often, committed group members attempt to resolve group conflict by actively communicating information about their conflicting motives or ideologies to

the rest of the group (e.g. intentions, reasons for holding certain beliefs), and by engaging in collective negotiations. Ultimately, a wide range of methods and procedures for addressing conflict exist, including but not limited to, negotiation, mediation, diplomacy and creative peace building.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Arcaro-McPhee, et al. (2002) conducted a documentary study on a child's development of conflict resolution skills when a peer problem-solving model was used in a constructivist-designed classroom. At a preschool laboratory in an upper middle-class community, a 4-year 11-month-old male, Stephen, was observed through audio- and videotaping 3 times weekly for 9 months by his preschool teacher. The findings revealed that Stephen progressed from a power assertion style of conflict resolution to a more sophisticated form of negotiation. Although only suggestive, this research supports current thinking that young children engage in more developmentally advanced conflict resolution strategies when provided with opportunities to practice these skills.

Mura, et al. (2010) conducted a study on conflict management among secondary school students. The study was conducted on a sample of 485 secondary school students involved in conflict management training. The proposed educational intervention intended to promote an increased awareness on the cognitive, emotional and social dynamics that characterize the conflict and allowed a better understanding of the environment. The intervention facilitated a positive reading of the episodes of conflict, providing advanced instruments for their resolution and stronger motivation to apply them. The results of the research showed that the students with the most positive perception of their schoolmates are also those more willing to adopt constructive conflict management strategies.

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Ramani and Liu (2010) undertook a survey on conflict resolution mechanisms in public secondary schools of Nairobi province, Kenya and found that the concept of “conflict management” refers to an act and also a process of resolving disputes between two or more parties with the view of coming to a resolution. The study showed that when the students are faced with a conflict of personal nature, majority of them deal with the conflict through constructive approaches.

Kiprono (2014) studied the conflict resolution among secondary school students in terms of gender, age and class and concluded that there were statistically significant differences in levels of conflict resolution among students of different genders where females are found to have more resolution strategies than their male counterparts. Conflict resolution levels also differ significantly among students of different age with the older students believing that there is low level of conflict resolution. However no significant relationship existed between age and conflict resolution among secondary school students.

Dhillon and Babu (2015) conducted a qualitative study on Indian Children’s perspectives on peer conflicts. Children in two age groups (6 and 10 years) were observed as they engaged in a variety of social activities and the issues over which conflicts erupted, strategies to deal with them and teachers’ roles were explored. It was found that the amount of conflict was similar across both age groups, with boy-boy conflicts being most frequent. Cross-gender conflicts were significantly greater among the older children. Also, they had larger number of conflicts over facts and opinions than their younger counterparts. Physical aggression as an issue for conflict as well as a strategy to deal with conflict was more common among younger children. The children of both the age groups tended to involve teachers in handling their conflicts. The most common response of teachers toward conflict was to ignore or scold the children.

III. NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The review of related literature shows that a few research studies have been conducted on the conflict resolution among Children with Special Needs in mainstream classroom. The present study is an attempt in this direction as this aspect is very significant and therefore it needs to be studied so that their conflicts may be resolved and their integration in the mainstream could be made successful.

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Following were the objectives for the study:

1. To find the significant difference between female and male children with disabilities in their conflict resolution style.
2. To find the significant difference among children with disabilities in their conflict resolution style.

V. DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was delimited to children with mild and moderate

disabilities studying in mainstream classrooms in the schools of the districts of Shimla and Solan of Himachal Pradesh.

VI. METHOD

Descriptive method of research had been used.

VII. SAMPLE

Out of the twelve districts of Himachal Pradesh, two districts namely Shimla and Solan were selected randomly. From these two districts, the secondary schools having CWSN studying in them as per DISE, 2013-14 were selected for the study. There are 263 and 136 such schools in the district of Shimla and Solan respectively. Out of these 30 and 12 school were selected randomly from the district of Shimla and Solan respectively. All the 404 children with different types of mild and moderate disabilities were taken for the study.

VIII. RESEARCH TOOL

The investigator herself constructed and standardized the Conflict Resolution Scale. The reliability of the scale was found to be 0.96 and it was taken to be a reliable instrument. For the validity of the questionnaire the experts assessed the content validity in terms of the content of the items and the intelligibility of the scale.

IX. ANALYSIS OF DATA

Comparison of the Children with Different Mild and Moderate Disabilities on Conflict Resolution Styles in relation to Gender and Disability

For comparing the children with different mild and moderate disabilities on collaborating, competing, avoiding, accommodating and compromising style of conflict resolution, the computed mean scores gender and disability wise are given in Table 1 as under

Table 1: Gender and Disability wise Mean scores on Conflict Resolution Styles

Disability	Gender		Combined Mean
	Female	Male	
Speech Impairment (SI)	104.44	102.56	103.54
Hearing Impairment (HI)	104.78	98.40	100.79
Physically Disabled (PD)	100.10	100.35	100.23
Mentally Retarded (MR)	92.87	97.50	95.44
Multiple Disabled (MD)	104.25	102.25	103.25
Visual Impairment (VI)	100.72	100.32	100.52
Learning Disability (LD)	107.13	100.69	102.67
Combined Mean	102.04	100.30	

The complete summary of Analysis of Variance is given in Table 2 as under:

Table 2: Complete Summary of Analysis of Variance for Conflict Resolution Styles with respect to Gender and Disability

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square Variance	F
Gender	161.83	1	161.83	1.31
Disability	1550.25	6	258.37	2.10
Gender * Disability	773.78	6	128.96	1.05
Error	47993.85	390	123.06	
Total	50479.44	403		

Gender

It can be seen from Table 2 that F-value for the comparison of female and male children with mild and moderate disabilities on conflict resolution styles has come out to be 1.31 which is not significant at 0.05 level of significance for 1/390 df. This indicates that there is no significant difference between female and male children with different mild and moderate disabilities on collaborating, competing, avoiding, accommodating and compromising style of conflict resolution in mainstream classroom. This is further established by the computed mean scores (102.04 and 100.30) as given in Table 1 which are near about the same and equal for both the groups of female and male children with mild and moderate disabilities.

Disability

Table 2 reveals that the obtained value of F for the comparison of children with different mild and moderate disabilities has come out to be 2.10 which is not significant at 0.05 level of significance for 6/390 df. This means that all the groups of the children with mild and moderate disabilities do not differ from each other on collaborating, competing, avoiding, accommodating and compromising style of conflict resolution in mainstream classroom. The trend of the mean scores (103.54, 100.79, 100.23, 95.44, 103.25, 100.52, 102.67 of SI, HI, PD, MR, MD, VI, LD respectively) as shown in Table 1 are also indicative of the fact that these groups of children do not differ from each other on conflict resolution styles as the means of all groups are near about the same.

Gender X Disability

Table 2 is indicative of the fact that he obtained value of F for gender X disability has been found as 1.05 which is not significant at 0.05 level of significance for 6/390 df. This means that gender and disability taken together do not have any significant interactional effect on the collaborating, competing, avoiding, accommodating and compromising style of conflict resolution among the children with mild and moderate disabilities.

From the above analysis it may be inferred that:

- i) Both the female and male students with mild and moderate disabilities do not differ from each other on collaborating, competing, avoiding, accommodating and compromising style of conflict resolution in mainstream classroom.
- ii) The children with mild and moderate disabilities irrespective of their gender do not differ from each other

on collaborating, competing, avoiding, accommodating and compromising style of conflict resolution in mainstream classroom.

- iii) The gender and disability taken together do not have any significant interactional effect on collaborating, competing, avoiding, accommodating and compromising style of conflict resolution in mainstream classroom.

X. CONCLUSION

From the above research findings it may be concluded that the female and male disabled children having different disabilities studying in mainstream classroom do not differ significantly in collaborating, competing, avoiding, accommodating and compromising style of conflict resolution. The female and male disabled children having different disabilities exhibit near about equal conflict resolution style in dealing with various conflicting situations in mainstream classroom.

XI. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

On the basis of the obtained results, following implications are laid down:

1. The teachers and the peer group should make efforts to create conducive environment in the class in which the children with special needs may feel elevated.
2. The children with mild and moderate disabilities should be taught the constructive ways of dealing with the difficult situations and conflicts inside as well as outside the class.
3. The emphasis should be laid on the group work so that the disabled and non-disabled student may develop the sense of belongingness.
4. The normal students must be educated and trained on how to live in peace, harmony and solidarity with the children with mild and moderate disabilities in mainstream classrooms.

XII. REFERENCES

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