

THE EFFECT OF STUDENT-GENERATED CASE STUDIES
ON CONFLICT RESOLUTION STYLE DEVELOPMENT

by

David D. Nemitz

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

Liberty University

2015

THE EFFECT OF STUDENT-GENERATED CASE STUDIES
ON CONFLICT RESOLUTION STYLE DEVELOPMENT

by David D. Nemitz

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA

2015

APPROVED BY:

Jeffrey Ritchey, Ph.D., Committee Chair

Gary Kuhne, D. Ed., Committee Member

Vance Pickard, Ed.D., Committee Member

Scott Watson, Ph.D., Associate Dean of Advanced Programs

ABSTRACT

With recent technological advances, which not only impact the manner in which we deliver higher education but also the essential outcomes pertaining to the disciplines, curriculum design must also advance. Designing pathways to engage students with activities that allow them to deepen their understanding of concepts but more importantly equip them to apply the concept is of high value. The following research outlines a quantitative study of the effect student-generated case studies have on the conflict resolution style development using a quasi-experimental design. This study examined experiential learning theory as it relates to developing conflict resolution styles by comparing conflict resolution styles of graduate counseling and ministry students (helping professionals) whose studies in an online program included a student-generated case study to those whose studies did not include the case study activity. A nonequivalent control group design analysis found only one statistical significant difference in conflict style development of the students who engaged the case study and those who did not engaged with the case study. The results did yield some patterns that will assist those who utilize student-generated case studies as they seek to equip students to meet the necessary outcomes of their chosen studies and ultimately their profession. The most effective pattern surrounds the inclusion of a pretest that enables students to frame the importance of establishing a conflict resolution style in their interactions.

Keywords: conflict resolution, student-generated case studies, helping professionals

Acknowledgements

Over the past two years I have received the support and encouragement of a number of individuals that have allowed this dissertation journey to be a memorable one. I am blessed to know that it was the grace of my Lord, Jesus Christ which guided my steps and had my path intersect with those listed here.

To my loving wife, Debbie, for your unconditional love, prayer, notes of encouragement, and sacrifice as I spent time working on this project. You are a wonderful example of how important it is to handle conflict in a manner that benefits everyone involved.

To my children, Lydia, Luke, and Naomi, I appreciated your words of support and concern along the journey; they made my heart lighter and brought a smile to my face.

To my committee members, Dr. Jeff Ritchey, thank you for sharing your great reflective listening skills and positive approach to potential dilemmas. In addition, Dr. Gary Kuhne and Dr. Vance Pickard, thank you for sharing your keen insights that drove me to communicate better and think deeper.

To my research consultant, Dr. Scott Watson, I so appreciate you sharing your comprehensive expertise in regards to statistical design and pushing me to think critically through all of the options associated with this study.

To my Liberty University colleague, Dr. David Barton, I appreciate your support, wise counsel and conversations in regards to processing and evaluating the data.

To Rachel McCormick, thank you for applying your editing expertise to allow this manuscript to meet all of the presentation standards.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	3
Acknowledgements	4
List of Tables	8
List of Figures	9
List of Abbreviations	10
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	11
Background	12
Problem Statement	14
Purpose Statement	14
Significance of the Study	15
Research Questions	15
Null Hypotheses	16
Identification of Variables	19
Definitions	19
Research Summary	20
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	22
Scope of the Issue	22
Theoretical Framework	38
Key Concepts	40
Case-based Learning	40
Active Learning	41
Conflict Resolution	42

Patterns Associated with the Use of Case Studies	43
Case Study Learning Impacts Skill Based Professions.....	43
The Source of the Case Study Impacts the Effectiveness of Learning	45
The Detail of the Case Study Impacts the Effectiveness of Learning	46
The Mediation of the Case Study Impacts the Effectiveness of Learning.....	47
The Use of Collaboration in Case Studies Impacts the Effectiveness of Learning	48
Summary	49
CHAPTER THREE: METHODS.....	51
Design	51
Research Questions	53
Null Hypotheses.....	53
Participants and Setting.....	56
Instrumentation	57
Procedures.....	59
Data Analysis	59
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS.....	61
Data Analysis	62
Levene's Test of Equality.....	62
Results.....	63
Null Hypothesis 1-1	63
Null Hypothesis 1-2	63
Null Hypothesis 1-3	64
Null Hypothesis 1-4.....	65

Null Hypothesis 1-5	65
Null Hypothesis 2-1	66
Null Hypothesis 2-2	67
Null Hypothesis 2-3	68
Null Hypothesis 2-4	68
Null Hypothesis 2-5	69
Null Hypothesis 3-1	70
Null Hypothesis 3-2	71
Null Hypothesis 3-3	71
Null Hypothesis 3-4	72
Null Hypothesis 3-5	73
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	74
Conclusions.....	74
Null Hypotheses – Helping Professionals.....	74
Null Hypotheses – Graduate Counseling Students	76
Null Hypotheses – Graduate Ministry Students.....	78
Implications.....	80
Limitation.....	86
Recommendations for Future Research	86
REFERENCES	90
APPENDICES	103

List of Tables

Table 1: Labels Associated with Conflict Style Instruments.....	58
Table 2: Nonequivalent Control Group Design	61
Table 3: Spectrum of Concern	61
Table 4: Student Engagement with Treatment.....	62
Table 5: Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances.....	62
Table 6: Treatment Effect-Directing Style	63
Table 7: Treatment Effect-Cooperating Style	64
Table 8: Treatment Effect-Compromising Style	64
Table 9: Treatment Effect-Avoiding Style	65
Table 10: Treatment Effect-Harmonizing Style	66
Table 11: Treatment Effect-Directing Style (Counseling).....	67
Table 12: Treatment Effect-Cooperating Style (Counseling).....	67
Table 13: Treatment Effect-Compromising Style (Counseling).....	68
Table 14: Treatment Effect-Avoiding Style (Counseling).....	69
Table 15: Treatment Effect-Harmonizing Style (Counseling).....	69
Table 16: Treatment Effect-Directing Style (Ministry)	70
Table 17: Treatment Effect-Cooperating Style (Ministry)	71
Table 18: Treatment Effect-Compromising Style (Ministry)	72
Table 19: Treatment Effect-Avoiding Style (Ministry)	72
Table 20: Treatment Effect-Harmonizing Style (Ministry)	73

List of Figures

Figure 1 - Treatment / Pretest Interaction Effect- Cooperating Style	75
Figure 2 - Treatment / Pretest Interaction Effect- Compromising Style	75
Figure 3 - Treatment / Pretest Interaction Effect- Avoiding Style	76
Figure 4 - Treatment Effect (Counseling) – Harmonizing Style	77
Figure 5 - Treatment / Pretest Interaction Effect (Counseling) - Cooperating Style	77
Figure 6 - Pretest Effect (Ministry) - Directing Style	78
Figure 7 - Pretest Effect (Ministry) - Cooperating Style	79
Figure 8 - Treatment / Pretest Interaction Effect (Ministry) - Cooperating Style	79
Figure 9 - Characteristics of the Harmonizing Style	84
Figure 10 - Characteristics of the Avoiding Style	85

List of Abbreviations

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)

Forgiveness Reconciliation Inventory (FRI)

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Over the past ten years there have been several articles written that explore the impact case studies have on student achievement in skill based courses. In general, case studies are a preferred pattern of transferring essential skills in many disciplines as indicated by those who research such trends:

While the curricula at business, law and medical schools have for many years been based on the analysis of real world cases, professors in a variety of disciplines have been finding that an occasional case study can help them assess students' ability to synthesize, evaluate and apply information and concepts learned in the lectures and texts (Center for Teaching and Learning, 1994, p. 1).

The introduction of technology and innovation in many of the traditional disciplines, have educators seeking alternative educational strategies (Edelson, 1996). Although overall the use of case studies are seen as making a positive impact, the uncertainty of how students engage in this learning path online may be problematic in having this strategy fulfill its potential. It appears that there are two overarching attractions for educators to place case studies into the curriculum. First, the variety of ways they can be used, and secondarily the multiple higher level outcomes that can be achieved. This chapter of the manuscript, surrounding the impact of case study usage in an online conflict resolution course, will seek to: offer background information, describe the problem, provide the purpose, state the potential significance, frame the research questions and hypotheses, categorize the variables, define core terms, identify the research design, and present assumptions and identify limitations of the study.

Background

From the beginning of recorded history, unresolved conflict has led to consequences, as is shown in the story of Cain and his brother Able (Genesis 4:1-16, New International Version). Even though not all consequences are as severe as death, the quest to live at peace with others is a goal that is beneficial for all people (Psalm 133:1) and is reflective of God's intent and desire (Romans 12:18). Conflict resolution is becoming recognized in more recent years as one of the most foundational and personal aspects of any education (Coy & Hancock, 2010). There are very few professions where people work alone. There are many professions whose success is tied to the ability of its participants to collaborate. Higher education is not only the gateway for people to qualify themselves for work professions but also the breeding ground for how people perform their profession. It is not only the content, but the context of learning that allows education to meet its outcomes. It is the combination of theory and praxis that produces educated and productive professionals whatever field they choose to earn a living.

The adult learner population in higher education continues to grow (Bash, 2003). Colleges and universities across America are experiencing a change in demographics in students. Researchers, Berker, Horn, and Carroll (2003), reported an increase in nontraditional students from "28% in 1970 to 43% in 1999" (p. 15). With the introduction of online learning, as a form of easily assessable distance higher education, that percentage continues to increase. Yearly studies by Allen and Seaman indicate that online education grew from "1.98 million students in 2003" (2005) to "6.1 million students in 2010" (2011). Numerous learning institutions offer educational programs for adult learners and design these programs online to meet the unique characteristics of adult learners. These characteristics include: 1). adult learners return to higher education because of their needs and key life roles; 2). college for adults is not

the only commitment in their lives; and 3). adults have multiple work, family, and social commitments (Chao, DeRocco, & Flynn, 2007). As higher educational institutions expand their offerings from a face to face physical classroom delivery mode engaging students with an average age of 20 to an online asynchronous delivery mode engaging students with an average age of 37-40 years old; an adoption of experiential learning theory becomes more applicable to engaging both theory and practice. To recognize and maximize the previous learning (whether formal or informal) these students bring along with them to the learning context is an important dynamic to consider. To engage and develop conflict resolution styles, which will enable them to perform at their highest capability in their professions, students will need to be able to grasp and transform previous experiences.

Incorporating Kolb's Experiential Learning model (1984) into the curricular structure can allow students to grapple with the personal nature of the elements of conflict resolution so they might develop a conflict resolution style transferrable to their workplace.

Allowing a student to capture the complexities involved with engaging and resolving personal conflict situations within a safe environment of learning provides a platform of confidence as he/she faces the multiple levels of real life conflict. Kolb and Kolb's (2005) continued research provides an enhanced framework describing how a person holistically processes information rather than just going through the decision process on a mental level. Because of a multitude of life experiences, learning for adults in an online environment should be characterized by: "Interactive Learning, Collaborative Learning, Facilitated Learning, Authentic Learning, Learner-Centered Learning and High Quality Learning" (Huang, 2002, p. 37).

Problem Statement

Online courses are often created for the convenience of the student, with one major component being the ability to complete training without leaving an established vocation and/or location. However, the course design elements may not be conducive to transferring the skills and techniques essential for mastering the elements associated with the subject matter as it relates to their profession. In designing educational experiences for the adult learner, the goal is to create significant learning experiences (Fink, 2003). Fink (2003) defines a significant learning experience as one in which “students will be engaged in their own learning, there will be high energy level associated with it, and the whole process will have important outcomes or results” (pp. 6-7).

Case studies have been used widely in many disciplines to allow residentially based students to capture skill sets applicable for future use in their profession. The problem is determining whether a student-generated case study activity enables online students to successfully develop a conflict resolution style congruent with their desire to serve as helping professionals. Disciplines such as counseling, human services, and Christian ministry studies are defined in the scope of this study as helping professionals.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quasi-experimental nonequivalent control group design study is to determine if conflict resolution style development is impacted by a student-generated case study activity imbedded in an online course designed for helping professional students. The research participants are graduate students at an accredited University in helping profession degrees (Counseling and Christian Ministries) enrolled in a required online course in conflict resolution. The University is located in Southeastern portion of the United States.

Significance of the Study

Reading, lecture, and tests are the most widely used instructional strategy in higher education today (Svinicki & McKeachie, 2010). Traditionally higher education courses are characterized as content-heavy. The emphasis on content represents the concept that instruction is gathering and repeating information. This strategy also assumes all students have the capability to gather the information in the same manner. Lectures and simple reading fail to promote critical thinking or deep learning (Greenop, 2007). This method of transmitting information to the student is mostly a passive activity that provides disappointing results or rewards those who have mastered the ability to memorize and answer questions on a test. If courses are to meet the educational needs of today's learners, they must be transformed from relying on simply content-centered instructional strategies to implementing learner-engagement instructional strategies. Case studies have been found successful in providing active learning in many disciplines (Center for Teaching and Learning, 1994). Thus this research study will add to the ongoing research of the impact of case studies, focused on a niche discipline and skill set that is essential for vocations that involve negotiating conflict. This research will also add to the ongoing focus of developing online courses that are comparable in nature to those taught face to face.

Research Questions

People engaged in helping professions will constantly be dealing with people. When individuals in the helping professions engage in problem solving and mentoring there is strong possibility for conflict to occur. A healthy conflict resolution style is essential for success as a helping professional. Therefore, the identification of the most effective pattern for preparing for eventual conflict drives the three research questions surrounding this study:

RQ1: Is there a difference in conflict resolution style development as measured by the Style Matters Inventory, of helping professionals participating in an online course which includes a student-generated case study activity as opposed to participating in one that does not include a student-generated case study activity?

RQ2: Is there a difference in conflict resolution style development as measured by the Style Matters Inventory, of graduate counseling students participating in an online course which includes a student-generated case study activity as opposed to participating in one that does not include a student-generated case study activity?

RQ3: Is there a difference in conflict resolution style development as measured by the Style Matters Inventory, of graduate ministry students participating in an online course which includes a student-generated case study activity as opposed to participating in one that does not include a student-generated case study activity?

Null Hypotheses

H₀1-1: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Directing Style scores of helping professionals who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀1-2: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Cooperating Style scores of helping professionals who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀1-3: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Compromising Style scores of helping professionals who did engage a student-generated case

study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀1-4: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Avoiding Style scores of helping professionals who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀1-5: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Harmonizing Style scores of helping professionals who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀2-1: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Directing Style scores of graduate counseling students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀2-2: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Cooperating Style scores of graduate counseling students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀2-3: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Compromising Style scores of graduate counseling students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀2-4: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Avoiding Style scores of graduate counseling students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀2-5: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Harmonizing Style scores of graduate counseling students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀3-1: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Directing Style scores of Graduate Ministry students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀3-2: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Cooperating Style scores of Graduate Ministry students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀3-3: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Compromising Style scores of Graduate Ministry students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀3-4: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Avoiding Style scores of Graduate Ministry students who did engage a student-generated case study

activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀3-5: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Harmonizing Style scores of Graduate Ministry students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

Identification of Variables

The independent variable in this experiment will be case studies used in instruction. The dependent variable is the result of the Style Matters Conflict Style Inventory (Kraybill, 2005). One set of classes will engage a student-generated case study activity and the other set of classes will not participate in a student-generated case study activity. The case study activity involves the student identifying and addressing a personal conflict. This personal case study becomes the basis for a final integrative paper in which the student presents a conflict resolution plan, implements it, and correlates the results to the patterns and theories presented in the book.

Reliability is also maintained with integrity; since each section of the online courses being used is populated by a master course and faculty do not have permission to alter the curriculum.

Definitions

All terms are defined in relation to this specific study. All terms are defined by the author unless otherwise noted.

1. *Case Based Learning* - “Case based instruction is often defined as a teaching method which requires students to actively participate in real or hypothetical problem situations,

reflecting the kinds of experiences naturally encountered in the discipline under study” (Choi, Lee, & Kang, 2009, p. 936).

2. *Active Learning* – is “taking ownership of knowledge and learn how to apply it” (Rivenbark, 2007, p. 452).
3. *Conflict Resolution* – “the range of processes aimed at alleviating or eliminating sources of conflict” (Medical University of South Carolina, 2013). “Conflict is most often defined as a situation where the concerns of two people appear to be incompatible” (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974).

Research Summary

The research approach that best fits the objectives of the research is a non-equivalent control group design. The experimental group engages a pretest and the treatment as well as a posttest. Rockinson-Szapkiw (n.d.) indicates that

“Quasi-experimental designs allow the researcher to control the treatment, but they do not include the random assignment of participants. Quasi-experimental designs use existing groups; thus, they are often more convenient and less disruptive than a true experimental design. Researchers often choose to conduct this design when it is impossible to conduct a true experimental design” (p.6)

As indicated by research evaluators:

The nonequivalent control group design is the most widely used quasi-experimental design reported in educational journals. In this quasi-experimental design, the subjects in both groups are given a pretest. The treatment/intervention is then given to the experimental group, and then both groups are compared on posttest (Liberty University, 2011, p. 6).

The research would encompass two online courses, one with and one without case study components.

The rationale for the design choice centers on its ability to measure the treatment by mitigating the pre-existing variables. Since curriculum can and is often influenced by many variables already, the choice of a design that simplifies the approach is vital to eliminate threats to its validity. The individuals to be analyzed in the study are students pursuing degrees in helping professions. When people try to help people, it is usually surrounding elements caused by conflict. Thus the skills associated with conflict resolution are essential to professions these students will be or are already engaged in professionally. Conflict Resolution skills are typically something one learns from watching others (parents, teachers, etc.). Knowing common patterns and theories associated with conflict resolution only provides a portion of what students need to actually be totally prepared for the real world. The need for a solid, proven teaching technique to instill conflict resolution skills becomes even more essential because there is no “face to face” time where the student can physically demonstrate skills gained in the course.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Scope of the Issue

The proposed study examines the effect of a student generated case study assignment on helping profession graduate students' ability to successfully learn and practice an effective conflict resolution style. The need for practicing an effective conflict resolution style is essential in many vocations (Barsky, 2007). This is evidence by a recent article in the medical field focusing on how to address the negative impact conflict between nurses has on patient care. The Iglesias and Vallejo (2012) study reveals that "unsuccessful conflict management is a prime cause of stressful work environments, power games, patient and employee dissatisfaction, poor quality of care and increased costs" (p. 74). In fact one of the conclusions of the Iglesias and Vallejo (2012) study pinpointed the most frequent conflict resolution style used by nurses, compromising (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974), added to the lack of respect by other health care professionals and the general public that they serve. The consequence of the overuse of the compromising style, as per Iglesias and Vallejo (2012) is that it perpetuates "marginalizing basic nursing- a prejudice that will unintentionally ensure that nurses remain subservient with the biomedical model" (p. 78).

The connection between quality of care and the conflict resolution styles used by nurses (Iglesias & Vallejo, 2012) is an essential topic of discussion since those involved in the medical professions depend more and more on collaboration to serve its clients. This relationship between quality of care and how the use of various conflict management styles negatively or positively affect the outcomes of patient care is documented in a supporting qualitative study (Leever et al., 2010). Leever et al. (2010) identify three key factors leading to the increased need for collaboration; "a growth in the number of specialisms, patients have more complex and time-

consuming problems, and the rise of health-care costs” (p. 612). The ultimate goal is “improving communication and collaboration between nurses and physicians” (Leever et al., 2010, p. 613) because of the potential benefits on “morale, patient satisfaction and quality of care” (Leever et al., 2010, p. 613). In this study the choice of how the participants dealt with situations was identified to be “determined by five factors: the influence of oneself, the influence of the other, the nature of the conflict, the context of the conflict and personal motives” (Leever et al., 2010, p. 612). The study also identified that effective collaboration was hinged on the perception of the nurses and other medical personnel in regards to “communication, mutual respect, professionalism, climate of collaboration and quality of care” (Leever et al., 2010, p. 620). The multiple variables presented by the five expectations and the five determinants not only confirm the complexity inherent in developing conflict resolution skills within this discipline but also opens the door to look beyond just personality and context as the main variables affecting the choice of conflict management styles (Leever et al., 2010). The most intriguing and yet elusive variable to pinpoint in this particular study were the “personal motives” (Leever et al., 2010, p. 621) which drove medical personnel to engage in the collaboration and eventual conflict. The researchers identified examples as “clarification, avoidance of escalation, improvement of collaboration and care, modification of existing structure and creation of a learning opportunity” (Leever et al., 2010, p. 621).

The need for practicing an effective conflict resolution style for those involved with church ministry is signaled by the writings of Haugk (1988) and Sande (1999). A study conducted to support a seven phase model of conflict resolution applicable for church leaders indicates that, “Unresolved and escalating conflict in a congregational setting can cause great disruption and deterioration to the life of the church” (Kimsey et al., 2006, p. 487). Although

churches are built on the foundation of forgiveness and reconciliation, the people who attend often bring in emotional baggage from other situations that spill over in church activities and ministries (Sande, 1997). “Antagonism is *unhealthy* conflict” (Haugk, 1988, p. 21) and elevates the common problems and disagreements into “fights, contests, and intractable situations” (Haugk, 1988, p. 35). Research would pinpoint that when the common worldview that originally attracted members of a church body together is challenged or questioned by one of more people, a protection of the existing worldview “deflects reasonable inquiry” (Kimsey et al., 2006, p. 488) and sets a platform for conflict. Having and knowing how to implement conflict resolution skills within the context of a church or ministry community not only allows leaders to live out the biblical mandates surrounding reconciliation but also helps organizations avoid legal liability (Sande, 1999). Leas (1997) developed the booklet entitled *Discover Your Conflict Management Style* “primarily for use in churches and synagogues to help members gain insight and skill in dealing with conflicts before they become overly difficult” (p. 2). Likewise, the Seven-Phase Model of Conflict (Kimsey et al., 2006) provides a continuum for church members and leaders to use in assessing conflict situations. The identification and understanding of factors can assist in determining whether the level of conflict needs to be resolved via “leadership, mediation and or arbitration” (Kimsey et al., 2006, p. 497). This type of analysis construct is also presented as a key component Sande’s (1997) Slippery Slope conflict response scale. When faced with conflict situations, Sande (1997) submits that individuals respond by “escaping, attacking or conciliation” (p. 17).

The church has often been seen as a safe haven or an escape from the ills of the world, but as reflected in the words of a recent article by Sortor and Gaffney (2007),

One of the most common refrains we hear as we intervene in church conflicts is, I thought people would behave differently here; I thought it would be better than my job in the business world. There is no place that is free from conflict this side of heaven, since there is no place free of human weakness (p. 24).

The whole idea that you cannot avoid conflict in ministry situations but need to prepare to handle them biblically is a concept also highlighted by popular Christian literature by Pegues (2009). As Pegues (2009) recognizes and defines for her readers the difference between confronting a person and offending a person is the understanding of common confrontation styles and the implementation of effective strategies.

In addition to the impact that practicing effective conflict resolution skills has on a personal level with those within the church, it also has an impact on the organizational mission of the church. In some circles of organized religious practice, a renewed interest in promoting reconciliation is attached to an established sacrament (Wuerl, 2011). This renewed appeal is tied directly with the overarching call for “New Evangelization” (Wuerl, 2011, p. 4). The organizational impact that effective reconciliation practices has on the mission of the church is also reflective in the research of Langmead (2008) and Valiente (2013). The foundation of Christian mission, or in other words, the mission of God carried out by humans, is clearly reflected in Langmead’s (2008) thesis statement which says: “in a world full of conflict and broken relationships at every level, it’s natural that the Good News of Jesus Christ should be lived out in terms of working for transformed relationships” (p. 5). The church’s theology and practice can and should not be inconsistent. Valiente (2013) reminds us that “The Christian faith, stripped to its core, rests on the conviction that in Christ, God has reconciled the world to

Himself” (p. 655). The very fact that one’s relationship with God can be restored is the foundation for relationship restoration between humans.

The need for practicing an effective conflict resolution style in business professions is captured by the respected Harvard Business Review by Eisenhardt, Kahwajy, and Bourgeois (1997). The authors state very clearly that even in a good business situation that “conflict can turn unproductive...A comment meant as a substantive remark can be interpreted as a personal attack” (Eisenhardt et al., 1997, p. 78). More recently Lencioni (2005) expanded on the idea that conflict resolution skills actually enhance business’s ability to thrive within their context by defining five dysfunctions that undercut the benefits of personal interactions surrounding business ideas. By “mastering conflict along with building trust, achieving commitment, embracing accountability and focusing on results” (Lencioni, 2005, p. 6), business leaders use the very thing that could undercut their business plans to enhance them.

The need for practicing an effective conflict resolution style in counseling professions is substantiated by journal articles from all over the world (Caton, Field, & Kolbert, 2010; Karahan, 2009; Karatas, 2011). The development of tools and approaches to deal with the impact of infidelity, obesity, addiction and provide avenues of forgiveness and reconciliation is an increasing trend (Balkin, Harris, Freeman, & Huntington, 2013). Assessment instruments to measure feelings of rage, shame, control (or lack thereof) and chaos have led to the connection and subsequent development of a Forgiveness Reconciliation Inventory (FRI) (Balkin et al., 2013). The Forgiveness Reconciliation Inventory (FRI) allows the counselor to determine whether the client “is moving toward interpersonal forgiveness, intrapersonal forgiveness, or is conflicted” (Balkin et al., 2013, p. 11). The research is grounded in the connection that forgiveness, or the lack thereof, does impact the client’s ability to “make choices that may

influence their health and well-being” (Balkin et al., 2013, p. 11). It should be noted that recent studies surrounding forgiveness and reconciliation identify emotions (Zuccarini, Johnson, Dagleish, & Makinen, 2013), worldview development (Ashy, Mercurio, & Malley-Morrison, 2010) and definition differences (Frise & McMinn, 2010) as significant variables in the interpretation and subsequent treatment approaches when unresolved conflict is identified as a part of the client’s issue.

Caton et al. (2010) conclude that to effectively address relational aggression and conflict in the lives of middle school females, break-away experiences, such as week-long camp, allows for some intervention but positive treatment for this common issue is regular training for the participants. The study suggests collaboration between K-12 counselors and university counselors would provide an incredible opportunity to counteract the variables contributing to inadequate conflict resolution skills in this age group as they prepare for future challenges in educational and professional contexts (Caton et al., 2010).

The technique of teaching conflict resolution skills to high school students via the use of psychodrama is the focus of another counseling research study (Karatas, 2011). This study conducted in the country of Turkey, demonstrates the human (not societal) nature of the issue. The study also represents the need for those in various fields to use creative means to positively impact the common issue of developing healthy conflict resolution styles (Karatas, 2011).

A final article, in the realm of counseling, focuses on university age students and the impact developing healthy conflict resolution styles have on the student’s issues with being overly shy, dependent, perfectionistic, and/or lonely (Karahana, 2009). Within this study students participating in the ten sessions devoted to communication and conflict resolution skills revealed

a positive effect on combating the sociotropic tendencies that hindered them from conquering the anxiety and depression stemming from an unhealthy view of relationships (Karahan, 2009).

Whether you are a teacher or an administrator in a K-12 or university setting, the need for practicing an effective conflict resolution style in one's teaching environment is confirmed by recent studies involving the importance of the topic in the classroom and professional development. One study submits that the very act of learning is a foundation for reconciliation (Gormas, Koole, & Vryhof, 2006). The researchers, Gormas et al. (2006) submit the larger purpose of education is three-fold: "First, schooling assists in reconciling the relationship between self and God, second, schooling assists in reconciling the relationship between the true self and a manufactured or contrived self, and third, schooling assists in reconciling the relationship between self and others" (pp. 11-12). In essence, the tie between educational growth and transformation cannot exist outside an understanding and practice of reconciliation (Gormas et al., 2006).

Since the current awareness of how dealing with conflict impacts so many aspects of our lives is growing, the intentional dedication to teaching and learning strategies to address it has increased as well. An article by Jones (2002) reflects an appeal, despite the financial woes and curriculum changes in our schools, to continue to strive after strategic and intentional integration of conflict education in our K-12 schools and colleges/Universities. Traditionally education in the United States has focused on the "*three R's*", reading, writing and arithmetic [emphasis mine]. Recent research indicates "there is a growing recognition that schools have the added responsibility of helping students master the fourth "'R' of relationships" (Goldsworthy, Schwartz, Barab, & Landa, 2007, p. 598). Purposeful integration will be driven by creative and technological innovations on shaping and delivering this content for students, teachers, and

administrators. One such innovative approach uses modern day communication forums to engage and equip students to master this fourth “R”. A review of this experimental approach, called STARstream (Goldsworthy et al., 2007) identified some potentially positive results in the areas of participation levels, demonstration of problem solving abilities, and confidence levels.

Duncan, Range and Scherz (2011) highlight the essential role conflict resolution training plays in the preparation and success of new principals. Conflict resolution skills were counted with communication and relationship building as the top three skills in which internships and professional development were lacking in the study (Duncan et al., 2011). The training and professional development principals typically receive is focused on school law, budgeting, and instructional design and was considered very effective (Duncan et al., 2011). The most glaring hole in the training related to interpersonal situations which were inherently riddled with conflict that not only included teachers and students but parents and school board members as well (Duncan et al., 2011). The main conclusion from the study, “provide opportunities to practice relational skills that underpin the structural components” (Duncan et al., 2011, p. 16), points directly to the impact that having conflict resolution skills provide in the context of the educational system. From a teacher’s perspective, Gibbons (2010) expresses the core foundation of why having effective conflict resolution skills and strategies is important when she says, “the need for conflict resolution education is apparent in the amount of time teachers spend on disciplinary issues” (p. 84). Her discourse on how to use creative arts to teach and practice healthy conflict resolution skills acknowledges in the conclusion that the environment that both students and teachers reside in demand intentional and creative approaches to teaching and practicing healthy conflict resolution skills in our schools (Gibbons, 2010). This approach of using the creative arts as a platform to engage students and decrease aggression has been

documented (Graves, Frabutt, & Vigliano, 2007). The use of interactive drama and role play to supplement traditional educational constructs have a positive impact on developing and maintaining a safe learning environment in middle and high school settings (Graves et al., 2007).

Overall a renewed interest and value of importance of conflict resolution skills has developed in recent years, at all levels of education. Conflict resolution education is viewed as an essential component of the holistic framework influencing core curriculum (Jones, 2004). Built on the elective curriculum espoused in the 1980's and 1990's (Johnson & Johnson, 1995), the increase of conflicts of all types has elevated the concern to establish it as a core curricular component. Adults, who did not gain this education in their K-12 or college experience, are just as needy for the conflict resolution skills in their personal and professional lives. There are attempts to place courses in conflict management in the core educational liberal arts requirements (Coy & Hancock, 2010). As higher education is being mediated more and more in online settings with students who are well past the typical 18-22 year old time frame, the question begs itself: "Can conflict resolution skills be effectively taught online?"

One of the more successful teaching techniques, in some disciplines, is the use of case studies. For years, professional schools of business, law, and medicine have engaged students with case studies (Edelson, 1996). Edelson (1996) cites that "many situations are too complex for people to deal with by reasoning from first principles" (p. 360). Case studies provide instruction to the learner which then can be applied to more specific situations at a later date (Edelson, 1996). In more recent years, schools and businesses are developing and employing teams of instructional designers for face to face and online training sessions. The use of case studies have been found to yield a higher level of engagement due to the emotional reactions to the characters in the case, the credibility that the case was or could be true, increased awareness

that the case related to their own experiences, and that the case prompted some immediate action in their own practice (Paulus, Horvitz, & Shi, 2006).

The most documented use of case studies and its positive impact on teaching and learning stems from the case study use by the Harvard Business School. The combination of gathering student generated cases and mediating them with computerized technology dates as early as the 1980's. Some of the foundational strengths of using case studies were founded in the framework and positive results on multiple levels when case studies were utilized in teaching business management. The involvement in not only engaging case studies but having an opportunity to be part of the process of developing them "exposed the students to a wealth of learning experiences (Fuhs, 1980, p. 100). Students' learned skills of interviewing, critical thinking (separating facts from opinions), analysis, organization, pin-pointing problems, identifying possible solutions and clear communication while engaging in the development process (Fuhs, 1980). Thus having the student collaborate with the faculty member in creating the case study not only provided a product to engage learning, but also provided the student pedagogical value in the process (Fuhs, 1980). Although beneficial, the process is not without its inherent problems as recognized by Fuhs (1980). Problems in developing a case after it has been identified included: Defining the scope of the system study as necessary, capturing and collecting answers to questions must be consistent, eliminating redundant questions, screening of questions before engaging the participants, establishing pre-set categories so cases have a consistent structure (Fuhs, 1980).

The effectiveness of case studies have been found to even increase in the dynamic of the learning situation when it is written from a personal point of view as documented by Svinicki (1990):

A good case study presents an *interest-provoking issue* and promotes *empathy with the central characters*. It delineates their individual perspectives and personal circumstances well enough to enable students to understand the characters' experience with the issue. The importance of the compelling issue and the empathetic character reflects the fact that cases typically focus on the intersection between organizational or situational dynamics and individual perception, judgment, and action (p. 45).

The use of case studies is found to be a stimulating aspect of any learning situation because it helps “students take much more responsibility for their own learning” (Center for Teaching and Learning, 1994, p. 3). Adding the component of having the case study stem from the participants own experience, the content tends to be more focused and specific to the student's setting (Clamp & Alhamis, 2005). A learner-generated case study “has the advantage of contextualizing the learning in terms meaningful to the participants” (Clamp & Alhamis, 2005, p. 6).

Yucco (2014) applied this concept to an upper division science course to help alleviate the frustration and underachievement by his students. “Providing the students more ownership” (Yucco, 2014, p. 54) yielded increased confidence and responsibility needed to find success in this challenging field of study.

McDonald (2013) applied the concept of utilizing student-constructed cases to investigate crisis in business management and concluded that, while achieving the standard outcomes of problem solving, critical thinking, and conceptual thinking skills, the use of the student-constructed cases avoids learners from being led to “predetermined solutions” (p. 7). The use of student-constructed cases provided a platform for “application of the requisite skill set which

may not be measurable except in a crisis one experiences while working inside an organization” (McDonald, 2013, p. 20). A study conducted by Riordan, Sullivan and Fink (2003) noted that the use of student-constructed case studies promotes “creativity” (p. 21). The introduction of Web 2.0 technology tools into traditional and online classroom settings allows for students to be more creative in conveying and utilizing student generated content (O’Reilly, 2005).

As a pattern, modern educational systems tend to cast students as “content consumers” (Sener, 2007, p. 1). The limitations of the work generated by students is generally rarely seen by anyone other than the teacher for assessment purposes, so generally speaking student-generated work is not valued and most often “marginalized” (Sener, 2007, p. 2).

With the onset of online education and the booming population of adult learners engaged in gaining degrees, the perceived and real value of student-generated content is on the rise. Web 2.0 tools incorporated into online learning platforms have changed the pattern of how students and faculty engage materials (Perez-Mateo, Maina, Romero, & Guitert, 2013). Open educational resources, which are built for the specific purpose of engaging students in personalizing their academic journey, are increasingly being incorporated into the design of online education (Greaves, 2012). One example of a Web 2.0 tool specifically designed to incorporate student generated case studies is called CasePublisher (Wu, 2008). The tool was developed and incorporated into a business management course to test the concept of the effectiveness of student-researched and documented case study inclusion. Evaluations from students and faculty alike demonstrated that the tool did provide the students with flexibility in choosing the most up to date topic, allowed passive learning to turn into active researching, and increased the quality of discussion in the class (Wu, 2008).

Organizations dedicated to the best practices of online learning have begun to collect examples of student-generated materials as evidence that it “increases engagement, improves learning, and can result in products of lasting value” (Sener, 2007, p. 2). Increased student engagement has been one of the benchmarks for educational quality (Sener, 2007). Increased learning or better said, “higher order thinking skills” (Sener, 2007, p. 3) have been seen to stem from the use of student-generated materials as opposed to using pre-fabricated or general problems from textbooks. The most significant benefit from the use of student-generated materials is connected to the immediate and real applications of the material. Companies in which the students draw the case study or even the student’s ability to create journal articles or add the material to their portfolio/vitae makes this learning path very valuable (Sener, 2007). The inherent ownership or emotional/tangible connection to student-generated content allows the online higher educational system to maximize its ability to shift from teacher-centered pedagogy to learner-centered andragogy which will increase student satisfaction and societal impact of the education experiences (Sener, 2007).

A good illustration of this increase of student satisfaction and effectiveness of learning by the use of student-generated case studies is provided by previous research pertaining to student-generated case studies addressing ethical leadership within school systems & administration (Derrington & Larsen, 2009). The focus of ethical behavior of school administrators in the complex and unpredictable settings involving students, parents, and the community cannot be fully measured in most curriculums (Derrington & Larsen, 2009). Behavioral measurements of elements like “self-awareness, reflective practice and transparency” (Derrington & Larsen, 2009, p. 1) became more concrete with the use of student generated case studies.

The basic and most common objectives stemming from the use of case study learning in this field of study are “ (1)Think critically, (2) Solve problems, (3) Filter many sources of information, (4) Use a decision-making process, (5) Analyze complex concepts and, (6) Develop inquiry skills” (Derrington & Larsen, 2009, p. 2). This correlates to the Kunselman and Johnson (2004) study where the case studies engagement encouraged critical thinking by connecting theoretical principles to real life situations. Willower and Licata (1997), referring to the use of case studies in higher educational classrooms, indicate that this teaching approach heightens and leverages student inquisitiveness. This approach has been a common practice in the arena of professional development settings (Niemeyer, 1995) and as noted by Greek (1995) “active learning can be defined as a philosophy of education based on the premise that students best internalize information when they are directly involved in their own learning.” (p. 153).

A final illustration where student-generated case studies assist in allowing learning to flourish is demonstrated in a study completed by Cournoyer (2010) in regards to teacher education in-service dynamics. In her study, Cournoyer (2010) submits that preparing teachers to deal with the ever growing complexities of teaching in “a growing ethnic, cultural, racial, linguistic and religious diversity” (p. 51) demands that the approach to in-service training include student generated case studies. She appeals to the idea that the training is more effective because it is “associated with the emotion of the teachers and learners and thereby enable students to more readily retrieve and combine, in detail, teacher knowledge of context, the profession and of the self” (Cournoyer, 2010, p. 54). This approach allows the learners to integrate new information in a context that is less theoretical and more congruent with real life.

As has been found and promoted in the business world, conflict does not always lead to negative results, but conflict may indeed lead to a broadening of perspective that yields better

results (Lencioni, 2005). Establishing an approach and style to conflict is thus directly tied to establishing skills that allow the student to see the potential benefits, even if on an emotional level he/she is avoiding conflict (Braman, 1999; Iglesias & Vallejo, 2012). This idea is emphasized by Tjosvold (1993), and those concerned about teaching adults sound conflict resolution skills, by reminding one and all that “conflict itself does not destroy; it is the avoidance and other destructive ways of handling important conflicts that undermine our wellbeing, confidence and effectiveness” (Braman, 1999, p. 3).

So to narrow the topic even more, the question then becomes: “Can conflict resolution skills be effectively taught online, via the use of case studies, to students seeking to serve in helping professions” (helping professions such as religious ministries, human services, and/or counseling)? Having an effective conflict resolution style is essential for vocations that intentionally deal with people in one on one or group settings (Sande, 1997). Those involved in ministry, law, counseling, and human services vocations have recognized how conflict can be destructive or constructive depending on the approach that is taken during the conflict (Boulter, Von Bergen, Miller, & Wells, 2001). The inherent need reflected and promoted in ministry, human services, and counseling contexts is the emphasis on relationships. Whether it is the lack of a common skill of listening (Petersen, 2007) or the more complex ideas and actions stemming from one’s spiritual worldview (Goldberg, 2009), adults cannot live life successfully without knowing and establishing a healthy conflict resolution style. A typical online conflict resolution course at the college and/or graduate level deals mainly with theories which help students understand the dynamics which lead to and escalate conflict (Liberty University, 2012). The overall motivation for individuals seeking to serve in vocations such as ministry, counseling, and/or human services is to “solve problems, do justice and make the world a better place”

(Menkel-Meadow, 1993, p. 1995). This motivation is not unique to these vocations alone; in fact several studies focusing on the impact of conflict on performance in business and management disciplines reveal several complexities (Williams, 2011). Complexity in “skills such as conflict resolution and communication strategies are challenging to teach” (Paulus et al., 2006, p. 355). The use of case studies in online curriculum pertaining to the successful transference of specific skills relating to other vocations has been researched (Crofts, 2004; Hyde, 2005; Laditka & Houck, 2006; Leonard, Mitchell, Meyers, & Love, 2002; Mondejar-Jimenez, Cordente-Rodriguez, Gómez-Borja, Andrés-Martínez, & Gázquez-Abad, 2010; Tarnvik, 2007).

In general, the literature indicates that case studies are becoming a preferred pattern of transferring essential skills in many disciplines, both in residential and online educational settings (Kunselman & Johnson, 2004). Using case study research to connect theory to practice in regards to conflict resolution is looked by some as an ideal pathway (Kressel, 2009). Callanan and Perri (2006) recognize the main benefit of teaching conflict management, both in colleges and in businesses, using a scenario based case study approach is that it “allows the students and employees to see the complex factors that frame the conflict, as well as the potential efficacy of the varying responses” (p. 135). The introduction of technology and the desire for innovation in many of the traditional disciplines challenges educators to incorporate educational strategies that match the variables of new teaching and learning patterns. Although the use of case studies are seen as making a positive impact, the uncertainty of how students engage in this learning path online may be problematical in having this strategy fulfill its potential. The motivation for educators to place case studies into the curriculum is twofold; 1) the variety of ways they can be used and 2) the multiple higher level outcomes that can be achieved (Kunselman & Johnson, 2004). This prompts various questions that drive research in this area. The questions revolve

around transferability and persistence. How can the conflict resolution skills learned in an academic setting persist in the student's life after the course of study is over, to avoid the natural tendency to revert back to conflict resolution style and patterns established prior to the course? A study identifying the use of a case study approach for online curriculum that results in transferring conflict resolution skills would be beneficial in expanding the research. Therefore, how does the literature frame the use of case studies as an effective curricular strategy? More specifically, how does it view the use of student generated case study in relationship to the teaching and learning process?

Theoretical Framework

From an educational methods perspective, as higher educational institutions expand their curriculum offerings from, a face to face physical classroom delivery mode engaging students with an average age of 20, to an online asynchronous delivery mode engaging students with an average age of 37-40 years old, an adoption of experiential learning theory becomes more applicable (Huang, 2002). Recognizing and maximizing previous learning, whether formal or informal, that students bring along with them to the learning context, is an important dynamic to consider. The basis of experiential learning theory described by Kolb (1984) highlights a pattern of how students grasp and transform information in learning environments. In ongoing research, Kolb and Kolb (2005) have expanded this theory to be more precise on how learners process information. Instead of using only four preferred styles of interacting with information, the expanded theory creates a grid of nine identifiable processes that adult learners use to grasp and transform information.

As online learning and the curriculum design, that provides the path for students to interact with information, adapts to the increasing complex variables introduced by technology,

faculty, and students alike, understanding this learning theory is essential. Kolb's model, along with other andragogy proponents such as Knowles (1980) and Brookfield (1986) bring the value of prior experience to curricular design. Because of a multitude of life experiences, learning for adults in an online environment has the potential of being enhanced when the curricular design is characterized by interactive learning. Helping students learn new facts is directly proportionate to the ability of the curriculum design to help them relate those facts to concepts learned in their previous experiences (Kolb, 1984; Kolb & Kolb, 2005). Depending on the preferred way of interrelating the new facts to previously garnered information students will either excel or struggle with the outcomes of the curriculum (Kolb, 1984; Kolb & Kolb, 2005).

As an example: if the student's preferred manner of learning is reflective observation and yet the curriculum path presents a series of new actions with no outlet or time of reflection, the student may successfully complete the actions without learning. In essence the curriculum can be characterized as meaningless actions. By allowing intentional reflection time, either personal or within a group, about the actions, it helps that particular student create a bridge from a previous learning experience to this new learning construct (Sheckley, 1987). Case studies have been used widely in many disciplines to allow even the residentially based student to interact in all four quadrants of the learning theory (Crofts, 2004; Hyde, 2005; Laditka & Houck, 2006; Leonard et al., 2002; Mondejar-Jimenez et al., 2010; Tarnvik, 2007).

Another corresponding theoretical framework that intersects this research study has its foundation in the Temperament Theory espoused by Hippocrates. In a modern day context, the Managerial Grid Model, introduced by Blake and Mouton (1964), provides a matrix by which leadership styles and the subset of an assessment that determines conflict resolution styles are grounded. In its simplest form, the theory and models focus on the common human interactions

as it relates to the measure of one's focus. Is the focus on people or on task? The interplay of focus between people and tasks and the value the person gives to each informs the external style adopted in resolving conflict. The two major conflict resolution style instruments in use today, the Thomas-Kilmann (1974) Conflict Mode Instrument and the Kraybill (2005) Conflict Style Inventory have their roots in the Mouton-Blake model.

The final theoretical concept that must be considered when engaging this study is the application of the Field Theory (Lewin, 1931; Schellenberg, 1996) as it pertains to the area of conflict resolution (Deutsch, 1949). As Deutsch, Coleman, and Marcus (2006) explain in their latest handbook, the application of the field theory provided the platform for "ways of characterizing and explaining group processes and group functioning" (p. 15).

Key Concepts

There are three key concepts which the researcher and reader must capture which are repeated in the research that tie back to the theoretical framework. The three concepts are: Case-based Learning, Active Learning, and Conflict Resolution.

Case-based Learning

Case-based learning is defined by those engaged in the learning process as "a teaching method which requires students to actively participate in real or hypothetical problem situations, reflecting the kinds of experiences naturally encountered in the discipline under study" (Choi et al., 2009, p. 936). Diamantes (1996) describes it in the following way: "a case study, unlike the lived experience, can be held still for repeated examination... approximate the immediacy of actual experience while providing a sample of the complexity of the subject in question or dilemma" (pp. 3-4). Thus cases provide a pseudo concrete experience which can be reflected upon, analyzed, and transformed by the learner. In the area of marketing, where case studies

have been developed and used for years, the sheer complexity of the cases has led educators to include student designed “mini-cases” (Nordhielm & Dapena-Baron, 2007). These mini-cases not only give variety and relevancy to the curriculum but also increase participation and engagement of the student in directing their own learning path.

Active Learning

Active learning is an essential element when researchers tie together adult learning theory with practice as illustrated by the following research. “Cases help students take ownership of knowledge and learn how to apply it” (Rivenbark, 2007, p. 452). Mondejar-Jimenez and his team of researchers (2010) relate that case studies allow students to move from a “passive role to awaken in them a proactivity...to break with traditional models of teaching where the teachers set a master class for students to perform and memorize” (p. 36). Case studies also help students “internalize information” (Kunselman & Johnson, 2004, p. 87). In the social work discipline, case studies stemming from “situated learning” (Edmonds-Cady & Sosulski, 2012) constructs have shown to yield transformation on several levels.

Active learning has been defined in three specific ways across the literature. Swanson and Morrison (2010) describe it as, “deep structure learning” (p. 93). Students’ abilities to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate; representing higher order cognitive learning as defined per Bloom’s (1956) taxonomy. Kunselman & Johnson (2004) explain active learning as students being able to “identify the core problem, brainstorm possible solutions and agree on the best solution” (p. 87). In some fields of study, such as engineering, studies have shown an avoidance of deep learning approaches to curricular development and teaching practice negatively affects its students from maintaining standards set by its accrediting bodies (Zhang, 2012). Interpersonal communication, conflict management, and teamwork are grouped together as essential soft skills that are just as

crucial as the hard skills inherent in engineering (Clayson, 2011). The introduction of interactive multi-media case based instructional materials show engineering students the 360 degree perspective of how they will use the concepts learned in the curriculum (Clayson, 2011). The case studies allow the engineering student to capture those “professional competencies” (Clayson, 2011, p. 15) that were often lacking in regards to accrediting board standards.

Conflict Resolution

Deutsch et al.’s (2006) work in the area of cooperation-competition in its most basic explanation has two ideas that help people capture the idea of conflict resolution. One is the independent goals of the people involved in any given situation and two, the actions taken by the people to achieve those goals. In short, skills of conflict resolution are founded in developing norms of cooperation which is centered in the ability to “reframe” (Deutsch et al., 2006, p. 34) the situation as a mutual problem that can be reconciled while holding the values of “reciprocity, equality, community, fallibility and nonviolence” (Deutsch et al., 2006, pp. 36-37). In this framework the process can either lead to a destructive or productive result (Schellenberg, 1996). Destructive conflicts typically have three characteristics: “1) competitive processes lead to the idea that the conflict might be “won”, 2) misperception and selective information accentuate the contrast of oneself with the other side, and 3) pressures toward cognitive and societal consistency heighten one’s commitment to engage in the conflict” (Schellenberg, 1996, p. 71). In contrast, productive conflict has factors such as: “a) creative thinking about their problem(s), b) searching for possibilities for mutual problem solving, c) giving one’s opponent the benefit of the doubt in regard to the interpretation of motives, and d) seeking to negotiate cooperative commitments” (Schellenberg, 1996, p. 71).

More recent studies build on these concepts and breakdown the research components to the task and relationship aspects of the group process and functioning (Iglesias & Vallejo, 2012). This is consistent with the idea that “conflict is consistently viewed as a sequential, dynamic process” (Williams, 2011, p. 148). The dynamics of the various perceptions and interplay of the interpretations of tasks and behaviors add to the complexities involved with this theoretical construct. The most common conflict process (Pondy, 1967) reveals a five stage model in which the complexities multiply with every type of variable. One such variable, gender, has prompted studies to discount cultural stereotypes in relationship to approaching and processing conflict at the task and behavior levels (Neff & Harter, 2002). These studies have prompted an additional theoretical perspective of studying conflict beyond just style (Kilmann & Thomas, 1975) but drilling down to behavioral measures activated by core motivations. This has led to the creation and research of a new psychological measure, (Davis, Capobianco, & Kraus, 2004) which in recent studies confirmed gender differences in relation to engaging conflict (Davis, Capobianco, & Kraus, 2010).

Patterns Associated with the Use of Case Studies

Case Study Learning Impacts Skill Based Professions

For many years Harvard Business School (2012) has used the case study method in the area of business management to teach concepts. A review of the literature on case studies and how they are incorporated in various disciplines demonstrates several common and divergent themes. Studies on the inclusion of case studies have been conducted on disciplines ranging from medicine, psychology, criminal justice, marketing, public policy, and educational administration. There are common themes that emerge from the current literature on the impact

of the use of case studies in skill based education (Crofts, 2004; Hyde, 2005; Laditka & Houck, 2006; Leonard et al., 2002; Mondejar-Jimenez et al., 2010; Tarnvik, 2007).

One of the most significant patterns in the literature is the overall success that students have in increasing their skills by using case studies, as compared to other forms or previous forms of skill based instruction (Crofts, 2004; Hyde, 2005; Laditka & Houck, 2006; Leonard et al., 2002; Mondejar-Jimenez et al., 2010; Tarnvik, 2007). Teaching subjects in a classroom in a way that mirrors “real life” is important in many vocational training circles (Styer, 2009). The majority of the studies found that students did significantly better with the case studies, which more than likely correlates with the results of a smaller amount of studies finding that students had positive perceptions towards the use of case studies (Kunselman & Johnson, 2004). The common themes in the articles that supported the contribution of case studies to increased student achievement revolves around the ideas of interactivity, collaboration, and maximizing divergent learning styles in engaging students (Choi et al., 2009). One of the most successful dynamics of case study based education, is the inclusion of student based cases (Laditka & Houck, 2006). Another successful dynamic of case study based education involves the innovative component of film (Hyde, 2005). Student developed case studies stemming from media portrayal provides a multi-dimensional engagement point enhancing the transfer of essential outcomes to future life situations that mirror those in the film (Hyde, 2005). Whether it is teacher dependent or student based, the collaboration and interactivity variables with the case studies lead to better student achievement (Tarnvik, 2007).

In the area of Human Resources, the world's largest Chartered HR and development professional body, The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) has developed

a subscription based online service to provide its members and institutions of higher education easily assessable examples (Case Studies Club) for training (Crofts, 2004).

One of the divergent themes that surfaced in the literature was the impact of video (visual) verses plain written (words only) case studies, and how this dynamic intermixes with the learning styles of the participants (Balslev, de Grave, Muijtjens, & Scherpbier, 2005). The overarching element clear in all of the articles was that case studies helped students improve their critical thinking skills. Another element permeating the articles was the need for clear outcomes to be attached to the case study inclusion (Leonard et al., 2002). Without clear outcomes, case studies, whether individual, student, group, or teacher based, can lead to confusion and miss the intended purpose (Ellis, Marcus, & Taylor, 2005).

The Source of the Case Study Impacts the Effectiveness of Learning

Researchers debate whether fictional cases can produce the same results as case studies based in reality. On one hand, it can be said that, “the benefit of working with real cases is to help to develop the ability to search all the facts surrounding the case” (Mondejar-Jimenez et al., 2010, p. 34). If a specific outcome or aspect of one’s discipline needs special attention in the scope and sequence of the course, then a real case may be too complex and a fictional case study can be manipulated to focus the study on the item needing to be captured by the student (Kunselman & Johnson, 2004). The best description of how case studies (fictional or real) make an educational impact comes from the field of law where a practicing lawyer is quoted to say, “too much professional education is abstract thinking on a cliff overlooking the valley of problems on the ground, we must provide a setting where abstract theory can be applied to solving the problems of the human ’swamp’” (Menkel-Meadow, 1993, p. 1996).

A secondary consideration regarding the sources that deepen the complexity of the question of source is the variable of faculty or student based case studies. Allowing the student to contribute to the course by sharing a personal case study heightens the awareness of the need for the skill since it is connected to a personal situation (Laditka & Houck, 2006). For teachers working in an online environment, a personal case study can be used to sustain student participation in the case study. In an active case study, students become involved in the situation and they propose and implement their own courses of action. They also develop key products as the case evolves (Pengitore, 2008). An example of where a student developed case study enhanced the quality of learning stems from instructional design of a Pharmaceutical assessment. The assignment was deemed an effective learning activity (Nykamp, Marshall, & Ashworth, 2008) in allowing students to apply previously disclosed information to a real life situation.

The Detail of the Case Study Impacts the Effectiveness of Learning

Whether the case study is sourced in real life or fiction and/or it is faculty or student based, another variable common in the research is the amount of detail needed to make it effective. The common theme, no matter the discipline, was that an effective case “contains important details so that the student can engage substantively with the problem. It should be multi-layered, with both obvious and subtle parts. It should be challengingnot overly complex” (Leonard et al., 2002, p. 143). Matching these elements to the corresponding level of the course is also a key to engaging students. In some studies the pattern of how the case is mediated to the students has a unique consequence in the effectiveness. Some disciplines would naturally lean to multi-media cases as a preferred manner to engage the student where as some multi-media case studies would lack details that would need to be filled in via print information (Balslev et al., 2005).

The Mediation of the Case Study Impacts the Effectiveness of Learning

Even if the inclusion in the course was focused on the student developing and resolving a case study, it is assumed in a majority of the studies that faculty are engaged at some point in the process. One example of engagement is at the beginning the faculty “provides students with a framework to promote thorough analysis” (Laditka & Houck, 2006, p. 159). Holistically a faculty member may introduce the case, provide lecture and technical support surrounding the case, and then moderate the possible student solutions to the case (Rivenbark, 2007). Some studies emphasized the need for faculty to help guide the collaborative process of students teaming up to engage the case study (Balslev et al., 2005). Whether the faculty serves as a “facilitator, coach, quarterback or demonstrator” (Mondejar-Jimenez et al., 2010, p. 35), case studies that are teacher-dependent in some aspect are “less susceptible to group dysfunction” (Tarnvik, 2007, p. 35). Although group dysfunction is avoided, it must be noted that case study inclusion is, as one researcher states, “deceptively difficult” (Diamantes, 1996, p. 12).

Reviewing the previous citations, the literature supports this strong tie between the use of case study training and experienced faculty who can harness the power of these personal stories. Conflict resolution, reconciliation, or mediation (all terms associated with the subject) are emotionally charged subjects. Faculty in these situations need to be like a coach. Recent studies relating the importance of coaching emphasize this construct in allowing the lessons from the case study to be placed in its proper parameters (Brinkert, 2011; Hedeem, Raines, & Barton, 2010). In maximizing conflict resolution training of nurses, the essential component of the inclusion of coaching, establishes a need for this concept on the part of those involved with teaching (Brinkert, 2011). Learning to resolve conflict requires learning new cognitive and behavioral skills (Hedeem et al., 2010). Feedback and direction allows the student to hone their

abilities to successfully navigate and engage the principles of conflict resolution so that in turn they may be able to coach others in the future. In the discipline of science and engineering, case studies are often used in capturing and transferring the ideas of ethics through the use of online cases. A clear warning is provided in the literature that just because case study learning is readily available, it does not automatically assure the use of the strategy leads to maximizing student learning. If the faculty member who includes it in the curriculum lacks the understanding to properly integrate and guide the students, it may even negatively affect the outcomes of the course of study (Keefer, 2005). Even the discipline of theological studies supports this concept. When integrating biblical and theological information into a practical study of conflict resolution skills for those entering ministry, studies show that the overbearing influence of a teacher to control all aspects of the process undercuts the engagement of the learner (Shapiro, 2009).

The Use of Collaboration in Case Studies Impacts the Effectiveness of Learning

Across the board, the literature reveals that case study inclusion best serves the students when case studies are processed in a group. One researcher developed a pattern of “discussion starters” (Diamantes, 1996, p. 13) to facilitate the proper use of case studies in the area of educational administration. The discussion starters were assigned to small groups and then allowed for faculty/subject matter expert review after the group grappled with and presented their best solution. This is a crucial approach within the online curricular approach. It is noted by one researcher that,

Often through inappropriate design of the curricula, the learning activities and forms of assessment mean that students develop inert knowledge, rather than transferrable skills attuned to the complexities of professional life. In real life contexts, experts work in

teams, share knowledge and apply it, revise and transform it through discussion, application and analysis (McLoughlin & Luca, 2002, p. 572).

Another researcher identifies the case study method to be superior over the alternate problem based learning method (microbiology) because it can be mediated in a large group setting (Tarnvik, 2007). Marketing courses using case studies settled on groups of five students as optimal for mediating case studies (Mondejar-Jimenez et al., 2010) which is typical for disciplines where job duties have a collaborative nature in the workplace. Medicine, criminal justice, and other social sciences also fall into this category. The skill set of being able to work with others is just as important in these professions as understanding and applying theoretical information to the case.

Summary

As demonstrated by an article in *College Teaching* from the late 1980's, even before the onset of online education, faculty members teaching in non-traditional settings with adult learners were looking for educational strategies to help students maximize their learning capabilities. Case studies "drawn from the student's working experiences" (Webster, 1988, p. 25), carefully packaged in a specific pre-designed format were interwoven with content from textbooks and set a platform for classroom engagement and learning. Although the mediation has changed from a face to face, four-hour, one night a week setting to an asynchronous, online, engage 24/7 motif, the power of case studies to allow adult learners to integrate experiences, to maximize their abilities, to achieve the outcomes of most any subject is evident in the literature. As was the challenge in face to face settings with adult learners before online learning, the benefit of using student developed case studies can only be as strong as the framework it is

allowed to intersect and the feedback the faculty provide in guiding the student to match real life to the theories that encompass the subject matter.

In a broken world, filled with strife, confusion, and disappointment, many turn to those in ministry, counseling, and human services areas for assistance. Many would love to have these people “fix” their problems. In concert with the old Chinese Proverb, “give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime”, those teaching ministry, counseling, and human services students should guide them on how to reconcile their own conflicts in preparation for them to equip others to do the same. One variable that may negatively impact the effectiveness of using student developed case studies is the effect the student’s lifestyle has on his/her conflict resolution approach. Recent studies again emphasize the complexity conflict brings as it reflects not only the context and content of the current situation but the construct of the personal background of the participants. “Incorrect use of terms and oversimplified applications of principles demonstrated that some may have lacked the necessary experience and understanding of how to relate the conflict construct to individual differences and personality structure” (Morris-Conley & Kern, 2003, p. 475). Case studies make it applicable, student directed case studies make it memorable. The manner in which they are mediated in the course with the guidance of the faculty is the key. The case studies may be self-generated by the student but they cannot be self-interpreted due to the lack of perspective.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Romans 14:19 exhorts its readers to: “make every effort to do what leads to peace and mutual edification.” This is just one of many biblical admonitions that highlight the importance of peace in human relationships. The increased awareness of the impact that unresolved conflict has in one’s life elevates the concern to establish it as a part of the core curriculum for K-12 and college studies. Some disciplines such as counseling, human services, and religious ministry studies (defined in the scope of this study as “helping professionals”) have made it an essential skill to be studied and mastered. In order for helping professionals to provide the much needed assistance to those who face troubles in their lives, not only do they need educational theory but practical experience in dealing with conflict and the consequences (good and bad) that come along with dealing with it. As was stated previously, helping professionals are not in the business of fixing personal problems but equipping others to effectively address them. For many years, disciplines such as business and nursing have used case studies as an effective learning strategy to embed essential skills needed for their students to be successful in future practice. The correlation and repetition of bridging theory and praxis allow for students to gain confidence and discernment in areas such as marketing and pharmacology. The need for practicing good conflict resolution skills is essential in many vocations (Barsky, 2007) and in life in general.

Design

The research approach that seems to best fit the objectives of the research is a quasi-experimental, nonequivalent control group design. This design is very similar to the randomized subjects, pretest-posttest control group experimental design. The difference being that the educational setting where the courses are being conducted have pre-existing groups, thus making the randomization of subjects unachievable.

The rationale for the design choice centers on its ability to measure the treatment by mitigating the pre-existing variables. Since curriculum can and is often influenced by many variables already, the choice of a design that simplifies the approach is vital to eliminate threats to its validity.

Other considerations that narrow the choice to this design include that the study comprises a large sample which addresses the differences between the experimental and control group populations. Within the study there are two unique sub groups represented, graduate counseling students and graduate ministry students. There is also a low withdrawal rate associated with the specific course that is being used for the study. This design allows for the maximum control over external and internal threats to validity.

The approach simply revolves around the designation of participants to either the experimental or control groups. The treatment, (participation in a student generated case study assignment) is applied to Group A (experimental). An alternate activity (participation in a research paper) is given to the Group B (control). Group A will receive a pretest and the treatment. Group B receives the pretest, but not the treatment. Both groups then complete the posttest. The objective of this design is to find evidence of treatment effectiveness.

The independent variables in this experiment are the pretest and the student generated case study (treatment) prompted by the instruction. The dependent variable is Style Matters Conflict Style Inventory score. One set of classes will engage a student-generated case study activity and the other set of classes will not participate in a student-generated case study activity. The case study activity involves the student identifying and addressing a personal conflict. This personal case study becomes the basis for a final integrative paper in which the student presents a

conflict resolution plan, implements it, and correlates the results to the patterns and theories presented in the book.

Average enrollment per semester is approximately 140 students, thus between 25 and 35 students will be assigned to each of the four groups.

Research Questions

People engaged in helping professions will constantly be dealing with people. When you work with people there is strong possibility for conflict to occur. Therefore, a healthy conflict resolution style is essential for successful helping professionals. Therefore the following are the three research questions driving this study:

RQ1: Is there a difference in conflict resolution style development as measured by the Style Matters Inventory, of helping professionals participating in an online course which includes a student-generated case study activity as opposed to participating in one that does not include a student-generated case study activity?

RQ2: Is there a difference in conflict resolution style development as measured by the Style Matters Inventory, of graduate counseling students participating in an online course which includes a student-generated case study activity as opposed to participating in one that does not include a student-generated case study activity?

RQ3: Is there a difference in conflict resolution style development as measured by the Style Matters Inventory, of graduate ministry students participating in an online course which includes a student-generated case study activity as opposed to participating in one that does not include a student-generated case study activity?

Null Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses guided this study:

H₀1-1: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Directing Style scores of helping professionals who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀1-2: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Cooperating Style scores of helping professionals who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀1-3: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Compromising Style scores of helping professionals who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀1-4: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Avoiding Style scores of helping professionals who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀1-5: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Harmonizing Style scores of helping professionals who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀2-1: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Directing Style scores of graduate counseling students who did engage a student-generated case study

activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀2-2: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Cooperating Style scores of graduate counseling students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀2-3: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Compromising Style scores of graduate counseling students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀2-4: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Avoiding Style scores of graduate counseling students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀2-5: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Harmonizing Style scores of graduate counseling students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀3-1: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Directing Style scores of Graduate Ministry students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀3-2: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Cooperating Style scores of Graduate Ministry students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀3-3: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Compromising Style scores of Graduate Ministry students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀3-4: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Avoiding Style scores of Graduate Ministry students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

H₀3-5: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory Harmonizing Style scores of Graduate Ministry students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

Participants and Setting

The participants are graduate students enrolled in a required online course of a leadership cognate whose degrees target helping professionals. The course enrolls approximately 140 students per semester. The course description and corresponding outcomes focus on allowing its participants to “focus on building and sustaining decision-making teams, mentoring, delegating, resolving conflict, and handling and overcoming opposition. Extensive time will also be devoted to improving the individual’s and the group’s repertoire of styles of communication skills with a

view to functioning more effectively and efficiently as a team leader in handling routine and crisis situations” (Liberty University, 2012). The intention of the course is to demonstrate and lead students on a path of discovery of the following concepts:

- Leadership requires a clear understanding of teamwork.
- Today many leaders fail because of a lack of understanding of how to initiate, develop, and guide a team in accomplishing their God given purpose.
- Leaders who multiply themselves through others get the best results.
- Leadership is not about the individual, but about the group (Liberty University, 2012).

Working with others in a manner that will produce successful results demands cultivating a successful approach to handling differences among the group and therefore one of the major outcomes focuses on applying conflict resolution principles to common situations.

The research site will be an accredited University. The University resides in the Southeastern United States. The general demographics of the University are that it serves over 12,000 students on campus and over 95,000 students online. It offers degrees ranging from certificates to PhD degrees. The University holds to a Christian Worldview perspective.

Instrumentation

The pre-test and posttest instrument that will be used to measure conflict styles of the helping professionals in the online course is the Style Matters Conflict Style Inventory. The Style Matters Conflict Style Inventory is a forty-item inventory built off the Mouton-Blake grid. The Mouton-Blake grid has its foundations in the Temperament Theory espoused by Hippocrates. The Mouton-Blake grid is a two-dimensional construct which allows an understanding of how decisions on made based on one’s concern for self and one’s concern for others (Appendix A).

The Mouton-Blake grid is the basis for several conflict resolution surveys and evaluation instruments (see Table 1).

The Style Matters Conflict Style Inventory is similar to the Thomas Killman Inventory, Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory, and the Hall Management Survey insomuch as they all result in segmenting its participants in five categories as it pertains to concern for self and concern for others (Braz, Lawton, Kraybill, & Daly, 2010).

Table 1

Labels Associated with Conflict Style Instruments

Instruments	High/Low*	High/High*	NA/NA*	Low/Low*	Low/High*
Blake & Mouton	Forcing	Confronting	Compromising	Withdrawing	Smoothing
Thomas Killman	Competing	Collaborating	Compromising	Avoiding	Accommodating
Rahim Organizational	Dominating	Integrating	Compromising	Avoiding	Obliging
Hall Conflict Survey	Win-Lose	Synergistic	Compromising	Lose-Leave	Yield-Lose
Kraybill Conflict	Directing	Cooperating	Compromising	Avoiding	Harmonizing

Note. *Concern for Self/Concern for Others

The items of the Style Matters Conflict Style Inventory was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha and revealed a reliability score of .75 or greater on all scales (Braz et al., 2010). A factor analysis was also run on the items to test internal consistency and parallelism or external consistency. The results revealed a less than .05 error rate on internal consistency and a less than .09 error rate on external consistency (Braz et al., 2010).

Procedures

In order to assure ethical standards of research were met, the researcher provided a full description of the study, including what and how the study would be conducted to the necessary approvers. This step provides the foundation that the study would be valid, accurate, and measurable. The study was submitted to the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) to gain full approval to collect the data needed for the research study. Once IRB approval was granted (Appendix B), the researcher began to gather the results of the Style Matters Inventories. Upon the completion of the data collection, analysis of the data was applied by utilizing the tools in the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS). The results of the study will be of primary interest to three groups. The first group would be comprised of the University Online Administration members who oversee the program for which this conflict resolution course serves to satisfy specific outcomes. The second group would be potentially any other online program administrators whose programs include a conflict resolution component. The third and final individuals, to whom the results of the study have value, would be the organization which designed and created the materials which help guide the student in creating and completing the case study.

Data Analysis

“A *t* test or Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) is often used to analyze data from experiments, but these tests are also used to compare means between naturally occurring groups in non-experimental studies” (Warner, 2013, p.19). Because of the complexity of the multiple groups generated by the instrument, the ANOVA approach yields a far more direct result for all null hypotheses than the *t*-test approach. The ANOVA approach assumes population distributions are normal. Normality is checked by conducting a Shapiro-Wilk and/or Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (Szapkiw, 2012). A $p < .05$ level of significance indicating that

normality is assumed (Szapkiw, 2012). Evaluation of the variances was conducted by use of a Levine's Test for Equality of Variance with a $p \geq .05$ indicating equal variance can be assumed (Szapkiw, 2012).

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

This chapter provides a summary of the results for the research question as it pertains to the fifteen hypotheses using the nonequivalent control group design (Table 2). Using the SPSS data, the fifteen null hypotheses addressed by the findings below determines whether the treatment has no effect on scores (a comparison of the posttest scores identifies the effectiveness of the treatment). The findings also provide a delineation of the information as it pertains to the whole population (helping professionals) as well as unique sub sets of populations of Graduate Counseling students and Graduate Ministry students participating in the study. The results presented correlate with the spectrum of concern (see Table 3) representing how actions during conflict are framed.

Table 2

Nonequivalent Control Group Design

<u>Group</u>	<u>Pre-test</u>	<u>Intervention</u>	<u>Post-test</u>
Group A	Style Matters Inventory	Case Study Activity	Style Matters Inventory
Group B	Style Matters Inventory	No Case Study	Style Matters Inventory

Table 3

Spectrum of Concern

	High/Low*	High/High*	NA/NA*	Low/Low*	Low/High*
Style Matters Conflict Scores	Directing	Cooperating	Compromising	Avoiding	Harmonizing

**Concern for Self/Concern for Others*

Data Analysis

Levene's Test of Equality

The study was set up with, a balance in the number of students and whether or not they were involved in the treatment (Table 4). There were no measures that violated the Homogeneity of Variance (Table 5).

Table 4

Student Engagement with Treatment

Factor	Engagement	# of Students
Treatment	No	65
	Yes	65

Table 5

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances^a

Stages of Engagement	F	df1	df2	Sig.
Compromise-POST	1.007	3	126	.392
Cooperating-POST	2.375	3	126	.073
Harmonizing-POST	2.007	3	126	.116
Directing-POST	1.147	3	126	.333
Avoiding-POST	1.402	3	126	.245

Note. Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

^aDesign: Intercept + TX + PreTest + TX * PreTest

Results

The first research question leads one to discover results, surrounding the first five null hypotheses, pertaining to the overall results of all the helping professional participants. The first five null hypothesis for this study focuses on whether the treatment had an effect on specific style scores (a comparison of the posttest scores identifies the effectiveness of the treatment).

Null Hypothesis 1-1

H₀1-1: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory **Directing Style** scores of helping professionals who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

Helping professionals (Table 6) showed no statistically significant difference in conflict resolution style comparing students receiving the treatment and those not receiving the treatment when using the directing style. Thus the research fails to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 6

Treatment Effect- Directing Style

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Style-Directing-POST	.073	1	.073	.011	.917

Null Hypothesis 1-2

H₀1-2: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory **Cooperating Style** scores of helping professionals who did engage a student-generated case

study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

Helping professionals (Table 7) showed no statistically significant difference in conflict resolution style comparing students receiving the treatment and those not receiving the treatment when using the cooperating style. Thus the research fails to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 7

Treatment Effect- Cooperating Style

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Style-Cooperating-POST	8.945	1	8.945	1.792	.183

Null Hypothesis 1-3

H₀1-3: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory

Compromising Style scores of helping professionals who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

Helping professionals (Table 8) showed no statistically significant difference in conflict resolution style comparing students receiving the treatment and those not receiving the treatment when using the compromising style. Thus the research fails to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 8

Treatment Effect- Compromising Style

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Style-Compromising-POST	4.287	1	4.287	.799	.373

Null Hypothesis 1-4

H₀1-4: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory **Avoiding Style** scores of helping professionals who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

Helping professionals (Table 9) showed no statistically significant difference in conflict resolution style comparing students receiving the treatment and those not receiving the treatment when using the avoiding style. Thus the research fails to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 9

Treatment Effect- Avoiding Style

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Style-Avoiding-POST	9.773	1	9.773	1.334	.250

Null Hypothesis 1-5

H₀1-5: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory **Harmonizing Style** scores of helping professionals who did engage a student-generated case

study activity (treatment) in an online course and helping professionals who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

Helping professionals (Table 10) showed no statistically significant difference in conflict resolution style comparing students receiving the treatment and those not receiving the treatment when using the harmonizing style. Thus the research fails to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 10

Treatment Effect- Harmonizing Style

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Style-Harmonizing-POST	28.144	1	28.144	3.388	.068

The second research question leads one to discover results, surrounding the second five null hypotheses, pertaining to the particular results of Graduate Counseling students. The second five null hypothesis for this study focuses on whether the treatment had an effect on specific style scores (a comparison of the posttest scores identifies the effectiveness of the treatment).

Null Hypothesis 2-1

H₀2-1: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory **Directing Style** scores of Graduate Counseling students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and Graduate Counseling students who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

Graduate Counseling students (Table 11) showed no statistically significant difference in conflict resolution style comparing students receiving the treatment and those not receiving the treatment when using the directing style. Thus the research fails to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 11

Treatment Effect- Graduate Counseling Students-Directing Style

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Style-Directing-POST	2.382	1	2.382	.342	.560

Null Hypothesis 2-2

H₀2-2: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory

Cooperating Style scores of Graduate Counseling students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and Graduate Counseling students who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

Graduate Counseling students (Table 12) showed no statistically significant difference in conflict resolution style comparing students receiving the treatment and those not receiving the treatment when using the cooperating style. Thus the research fails to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 12

Treatment Effect- Graduate Counseling Students-Cooperating Style

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
--------	-------------------------	----	-------------	---	------

Style-Cooperating-POST	19.269	1	19.269	3.146	.080
------------------------	--------	---	--------	-------	------

Null Hypothesis 2-3

H₀2-3: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory **Compromising Style** scores of Graduate Counseling students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and Graduate Counseling students who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

Graduate Counseling students (Table 13) showed no statistically significant difference in conflict resolution style comparing students receiving the treatment and those not receiving the treatment when using the compromising style. Thus the research fails to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 13

Treatment Effect- Graduate Counseling Students-Compromising Style

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Style-Compromising-POST	5.155	1	5.155	.823	.367

Null Hypothesis 2-4

H₀2-4: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory **Avoiding Style** scores of Graduate Counseling students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and Graduate Counseling students who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

Graduate Counseling students (Table 14) showed no statistically significant difference in conflict resolution style comparing students receiving the treatment and those not receiving the treatment when using the avoiding style. Thus the research fails to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 14

Treatment Effect- Graduate Counseling Students- Avoiding Style

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Style-Avoiding-POST	2.422	1	2.422	.282	.597

Null Hypothesis 2-5

H₀2-5: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory

Harmonizing Style scores of Graduate Counseling students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and Graduate Counseling students who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

Graduate Counseling students (Table 15) did show a statistically significant difference in conflict resolution style comparing students receiving the treatment and those not receiving the treatment when using the harmonizing style. Thus the research rejects the null hypothesis.

Table 15

Treatment Effect- Graduate Counseling Students- Harmonizing Style

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
--------	-------------------------	----	-------------	---	------

Style-Harmonizing-POST	43.703	1	43.703	4.853	.030
------------------------	--------	---	--------	-------	-------------

The third research question leads to discover results, surrounding the last five null hypotheses, pertaining to the particular results of Graduate Ministry students. The last five null hypothesis for this study focuses on whether the treatment had an effect on specific style scores (a comparison of the posttest scores identifies the effectiveness of the treatment).

Null Hypothesis 3-1

H₀3-1: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory **Directing Style** scores of Graduate Ministry students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and Graduate Ministry students who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

Graduate Ministry students (Table 16) showed no statistically significant difference in conflict resolution style comparing students receiving the treatment and those not receiving the treatment when using the directing style. Thus the research fails to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 16

Treatment Effect- Graduate Ministry Students- Directing Style

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Style-Directing-POST	3.771	1	3.771	.610	.439

Null Hypothesis 3-2

H₀3-2: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory

Cooperating Style scores of Graduate Ministry students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and Graduate Ministry students who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

Graduate Ministry students (Table 17) showed no statistically significant difference in conflict resolution style comparing students receiving the treatment and those not receiving the treatment when using the cooperating style. Thus the research fails to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 17

Treatment Effect- Graduate Ministry Students- Cooperating Style

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Style-Cooperating-POST	.419	1	.419	.151	.700

Null Hypothesis 3-3

H₀1-3: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory

Compromising Style scores of Graduate Ministry students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and Graduate Ministry students who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

Graduate Ministry students (Table 18) showed no statistically significant difference in conflict resolution style comparing students receiving the treatment and those not receiving the

treatment when using the compromising style. Thus the research fails to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 18

Treatment Effect- Graduate Ministry Students- Compromising Style

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Style-Compromising-POST	.660	1	.660	.167	.685

Null Hypothesis 3-4

H₀1-4: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory **Avoiding Style** scores of Graduate Ministry students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and Graduate Ministry students who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

Graduate Ministry students (Table 19) showed no statistically significant difference in conflict resolution style comparing students receiving the treatment and those not receiving the treatment when using the avoiding style. Thus the research fails to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 19

Treatment Effect- Graduate Ministry Students- Avoiding Style

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Style-Avoiding-POST	11.567	1	11.567	2.234	.142

Null Hypothesis 3-5

H₀1-5: There will be no significant difference in the Style Matters Inventory

Harmonizing Style scores of Graduate Ministry students who did engage a student-generated case study activity (treatment) in an online course and Graduate Ministry students who did not engage a student-generated case study activity in an online course.

Graduate Ministry students (Table 20) showed no statistically significant difference in conflict resolution style comparing students receiving the treatment and those not receiving the treatment when using the harmonizing style. Thus the research fails to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 20

Treatment Effect- Graduate Ministry Students -Harmonizing Style

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Style-Harmonizing-POST	.056	1	.056	.008	.930

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was conducted to study the effect of a student-generated case study on conflict resolution style development. The students who created a case study in an online course pertaining to conflict resolution were compared with individuals whose online conflict resolution course did not contain the student-generated case study component. The research questions were addressed by looking at the whole population and then pinpointing specific sub groups of individuals within the study, in this case, graduate counseling students and graduate ministry students, to understand the level of impact the student-generated case study made on their conflict resolution style. A summary and discussion of the findings are given to lay the groundwork for the implications delineated to correlate to the theoretical framework in chapter two. Limitations are outlined to demonstrate how the research design may have impacted the study. Finally, this chapter will provide recommendations for future research in the area of developing conflict resolution skills but more specifically, how online course design can facilitate that outcome in various disciplines.

Conclusions

Null Hypotheses – Helping Professionals

The findings displayed in chapter four for research question one, pertaining to all helping professionals in the study, show that there was no significant statistical difference of conflict resolution styles between those participating in online courses engaging a student-generated case study and others whose online course work did not include a student-generated case study. Further examination of the SPSS results failed to reject the first five null hypotheses associated with the total group of helping professionals. Digging deeper in the SPSS results does show that the pretest's interaction with the treatment was evident in 30% of the styles (Appendix C) as the

following charts indicate (Figures 1, 2, and 3). In two of the conflict resolution styles, the pretest interaction with the treatment was in a positive direction. Case in point, the analyses revealed the pretest influenced the participants to engage more cooperatively and with more compromise when facing conflict. Conversely, the pretest interaction with the treatment also influenced the participants to be less likely to avoid conflict.

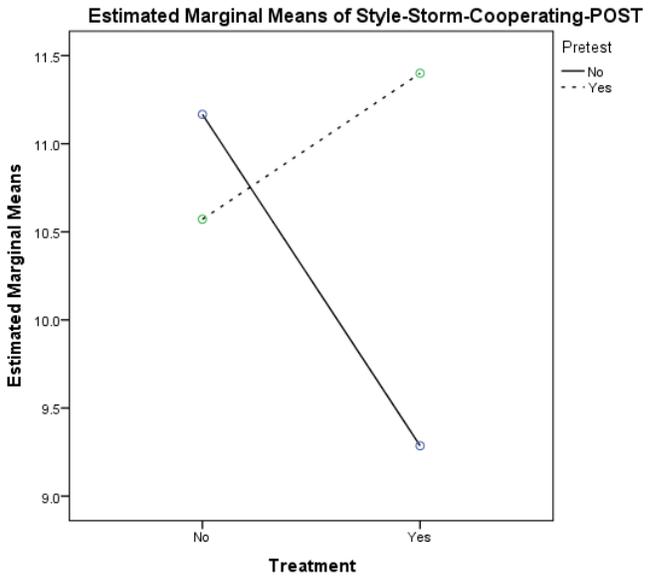


Figure 1. Treatment / Pretest Interaction Effect- Cooperating Style

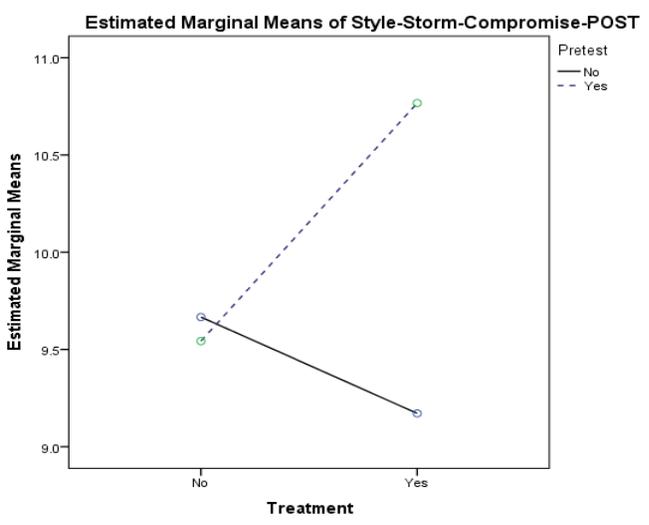


Figure 2. Treatment / Pretest Interaction Effect - Compromising Style

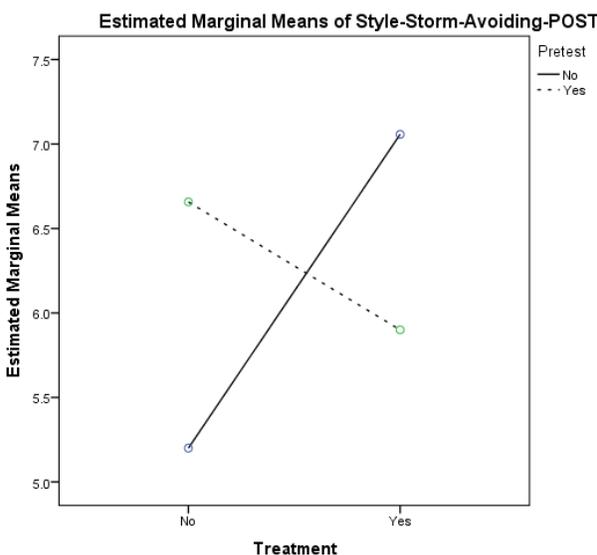


Figure 3. Treatment / Pretest Interaction Effect - Avoiding Style

Null Hypotheses – Graduate Counseling Students

The findings displayed in chapter four for research question two, pertaining to Graduate Counseling students in the study, show that there was a significant statistical difference between those participating in online courses engaging a student-generated case study and others whose online course work did not include a student-generated case study when it came to using the Harmonizing style. Further examination of the SPSS results failed to reject the other four null hypotheses associated with the Graduate Counseling Students. The unique feature to this discovery is that the use of the harmonizing approach increased dramatically when the student engaged the student-generated case study with no regard to whether he/she participated in the pretest (Figure 4).

Digging deeper in the SPSS results does show that the pretest's interaction with the treatment was evident in Graduate Counseling students choosing the cooperating approach

(Figure 5). Directionally, this is one of the more vivid illustrations of the interaction between the pretest and the treatment. Those counseling students who took the pretest were far more likely to use this style when they also engaged the treatment. For counseling students who did not participate in the pretest it was a steep fall off in choosing this style when engaging the student-generated case study (Appendix C).

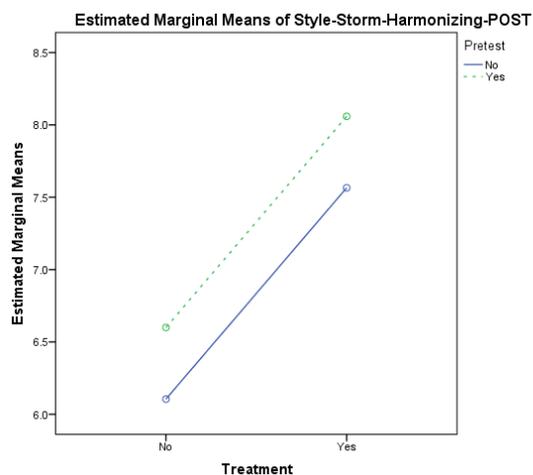


Figure 4. Treatment Effect-Graduate Counseling Students - Harmonizing Style

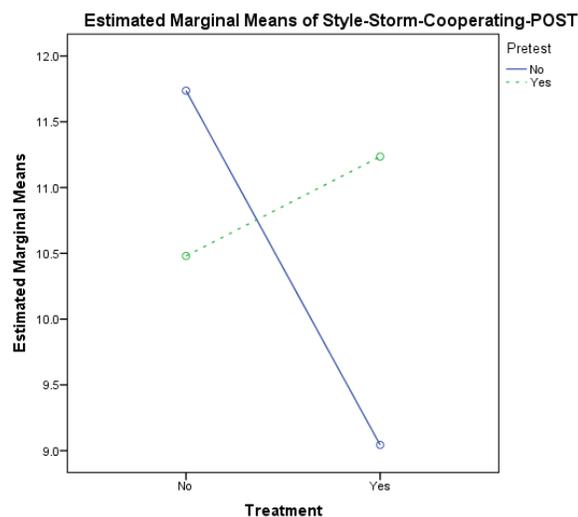


Figure 5. Treatment/Pretest Interaction Effect- Graduate Counseling Students - Cooperating Style

Null Hypotheses – Graduate Ministry Students

The findings displayed in chapter four for research question three, pertaining to Graduate Ministry students in the study, show that there was no significant statistical difference of conflict resolution styles between those participating in online courses engaging a student-generated case study and others whose online course work did not include a student-generated case study. Further examination of the SPSS results failed to reject the last five null hypotheses associated with the Graduate Ministry students.

Similar to Graduate Counseling students, Graduate Ministry students were also influenced by the pretest and the interaction of the pretest with the treatment. The influence of the pretest was evident when using the directing or cooperating approaches (Figures 6 & 7). Both, those receiving the treatment and those not engaging the treatment, were significantly less likely to use a directive approach when engaging the pretest. The pretest made the ministry students more aware of how this type of approach impacts conflict situations (Appendix C).

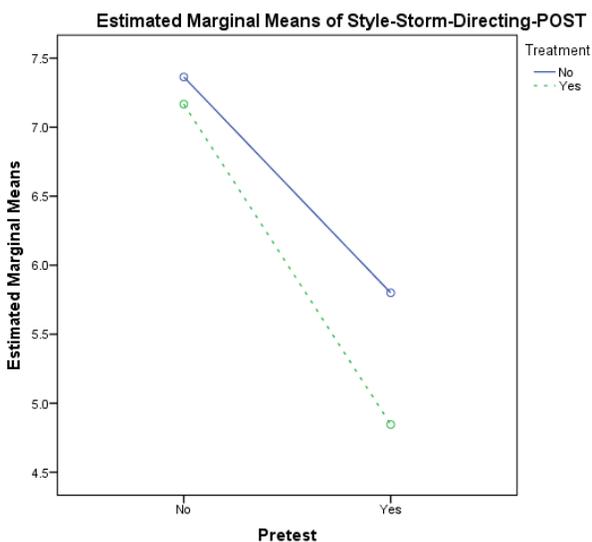


Figure 6. Pretest Effect-Graduate Ministry Students- Directing Style

Figure 7 exhibits the impact the pretest had on ministry students choosing the cooperating style during conflict. Contrariwise to Figure 6, in this case it was significantly more likely students would use this style when they took the pretest (Appendix C).

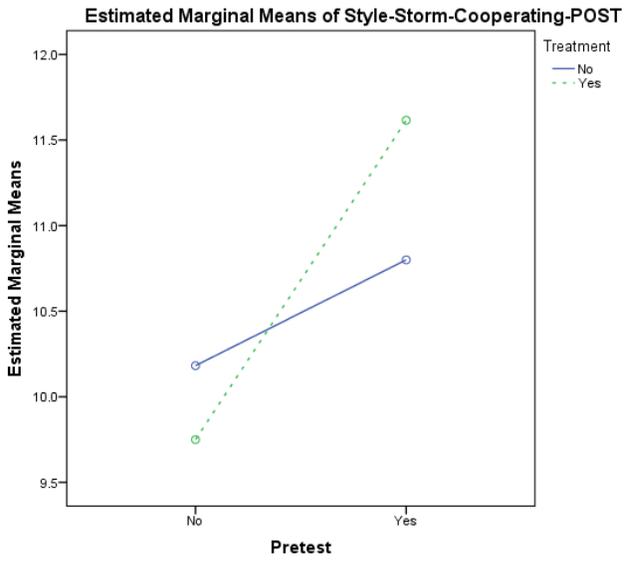


Figure 7. Pretest Effect-Graduate Ministry Students- Cooperating Style

Digging deeper in the SPSS results (Appendix C) does show that the pretest’s interaction with the treatment was evident in Graduate Ministry students using the avoiding approach (Figure 8).

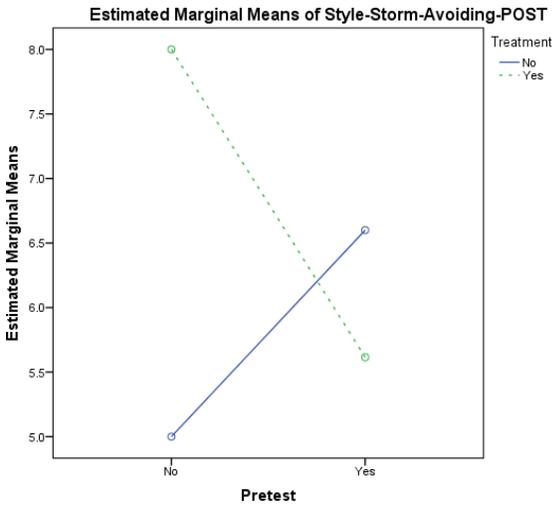


Figure 8. Treatment/Pretest Interaction Effect- Graduate Ministry Students- Avoiding Style

Implications

In correlation with the theoretical framework laid out in chapter two, the scope of the issue involved with this study revolved around the impact of a student-generated case study on helping profession graduate students' ability to learn and practice an effective conflict resolution style. Since the results failed to reject all but one of the null hypotheses, the implications of this study provide the field of online education with practical research to assist institutions of higher education and purveyors of professional development with instructional design patterns to increase the effectiveness of conflict resolution training.

The review of the literature in chapter two clearly delineates that the patterns of conflict resolution styles currently practiced by helping professionals lead to stress, dissatisfaction of the help giver and receiver, lack of professionalism, all of which leads to poor quality of services rendered and received (Iglesias & Vallejo, 2012; Leever et al., 2010). In essence, the very people who are hurting and seeking help are exposed to professionals in organizational systems that are undermined by unresolved conflict (Kimsey et al., 2006; Sortor & Gaffney, 2007). Expanding outside of the helping professions in vocations such as business, law, criminal justice, government, and education, ineffective conflict resolution skills can lead to unproductivity and decisions that are counterproductive to the goals the individuals are seeking to fulfill (Crofts, 2004; Hyde, 2005; Laditka & Houck, 2006; Lencioni, 2005; Leonard et al., 2002; Mondejar-Jimenez et al., 2010; Tarnvik, 2007; Williams, 2011). Thus following the construct of Gormas et al. (2006), if the very act of learning is the foundation of reconciliation, the need for intentional and effective methods of teaching and learning in this area is vital to equip people to successfully carry out their given professions. As suggested by researchers, a purposeful and persistent effort to expand the traditional reading, writing, and arithmetic to include relationships (fourth "R") in

primary, secondary, and professional education settings will provide the needed framework for essential skills needed to be successful in many professions (Goldsworthy et al., 2007; Jones, 2002). The structural components of any education can be strengthened at its core and produce more effective outcomes when undergirded by the addition of a relational component (Duncan et al., 2011). The rise in awareness and integration of developing relational skills sets the groundwork for many of the implications of this current study. As those involved in intentionally incorporating conflict resolution skill education into their program learning outcomes and professional development training, the results of this current study implies the following insights on how to potentially improve its effectiveness.

The literature review in chapter two establishes the use and effectiveness of case studies to allow students to engage and capture the specific outcomes connected to several different disciplines and various topics (Clamp & Alhamis, 2005; Edelson, 1996; Fuhs, 1980; MacDonald, 2012; Paulus et al., 2006; Svinicki, 1990). The results of this current research do not negate the effectiveness of the use of student-generated case studies as an effective teaching tool (Choi et al., 2009; Kunselman & Johnson, 2004; Laditka & Houck, 2006), whether in face-to face settings or online. The result of this current research rather exposes the idea that the one-time use of a student-generated case study significantly impacts the conflict resolution style employed by students. This researcher would submit, based on the results of the study, that not only does the source of the case study, the detail of the case study, and the manner in which the case study is mediated impact the effectiveness of the conflict resolution skills training but in addition, the repetition of the case study elements within the course or professional development setting has a bearing on the results. This is supported by recent research pertaining to technology-enhanced learning where the importance repetition plays in the learning continuum is framed. Weibell

(2011) reminds the readers that the role of repetition in learning is essential by framing two Aristotle constructs: 1) “it is frequent repetition that produces a natural tendency” and 2) “the more frequently two things are experienced together, the more likely it will be that the experience or recall of one will stimulate the recall of the other” (p. 1).

The results of the design revealed that the pretest and the interaction of the pretest with the treatment impacted the results for 80% of the styles (Directing, Cooperating, Compromising and Avoiding). The only style not influence by the pretest or the interaction of the pretest with the treatment was the Harmonizing style, and it was the one style that the treatment made a statistical difference. The implication of this pattern leads this researcher to reflect on the desired outcome pertaining to the use of the student-generated case study and suggest four methods to positively maximize this interaction within the structure of the program and curriculum.

As stated in the syllabus of the course, the desired outcome of the student-generated case study is to “apply conflict resolution principles to common conflict situations” (Liberty University, 2014, p. 1). The engagement of the pretest, in this case the Style Matters Inventory, provided a framework that significantly influenced 80% of the styles to change their approach to common conflict resolution situations. In light of these results and to better equip students in future iterations of this course, one method would be the permanent inclusion of the pretest which would allow the student to gain a framework to integrate with the conflict resolution principles taught in the course.

The second method that would enhance the capabilities of the students to apply conflict resolution principles is a suggested program adjustment. Both the counseling and ministry programs have overarching goals pertaining to skills essential to the carrying out of jobs related

to correlating professions. Each program is tied to the overarching mission of the University which is “to develop Christ-centered men and women with the values, knowledge, and skills essential to impact tomorrow’s world” (Liberty University, 2014). Course specific outcomes are directly connected and expanded in detail to these program goals. At the master’s degree level, each program is designed to introduce its students to the values, knowledge, and essential skills associated with each profession in a required introductory course (it is a pre-requisite to any further course the student takes within the program). Course specific outcomes are directly connected and expanded in detail to these program goals.

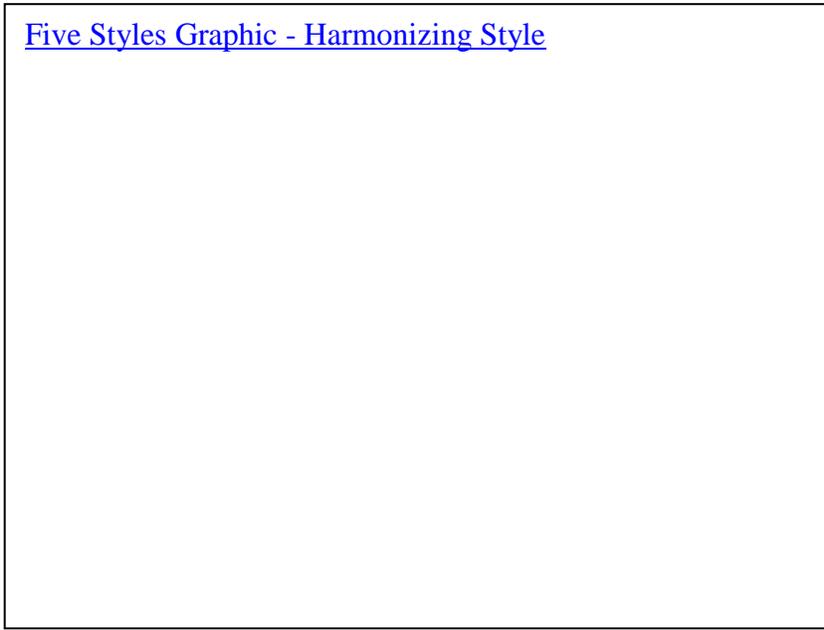
To better equip the counseling and ministry students to gain the requisite skill associated with conflict resolution, a third suggested method would be to include the initial pretest in the first required course. By including the pretest, the student would begin to evaluate his/her conflict resolution style and be more prepared to engage the more specific course work later in their program.

The final and fourth method, which stems from the increased level of significance the pretest demonstrated in the study and the benefit that repetition of the conflict resolution content would have on helping students to gain mastery in this essential area, would be to have the Style Matters Inventory repeated in a course subsequent to taking the Team Leadership and Conflict Management course. Each program, at the University where the research was conducted, has courses in which the outcome of enhanced interpersonal relationships is established. Therefore, to capitalize, underscore, and provide the best opportunity for counseling and ministry students to be equipped with the skill of effective conflict resolution in their professions and personal lives, the three step method of introducing (introductory course), teaching (main course) and emphasizing (subsequent course) should be considered.

Along those same considerations, other graduate programs in the university, such as nursing, business, law, criminal justice and government, which contain similar programmatic and course level outcomes in regards to the skill of conflict resolution would benefit from the intentional use of this curriculum design pattern to achieve its educational goals.

The second implication drawn from the study focuses on the patterns exhibited by the various sub groups. As a backdrop, as seen in Figures 9 and 10 (Kraybill, 2005), the specific definitions and scope of how harmonizing and avoiding styles respond to conflict situations are quite different. The increased use of harmonizing overall when Graduate Counseling students engaged the student-generated case study signaled that not only was the treatment effective in impacting the learning of the students but also reflected the realization that in counseling settings there needs to be a high focus on relationships.

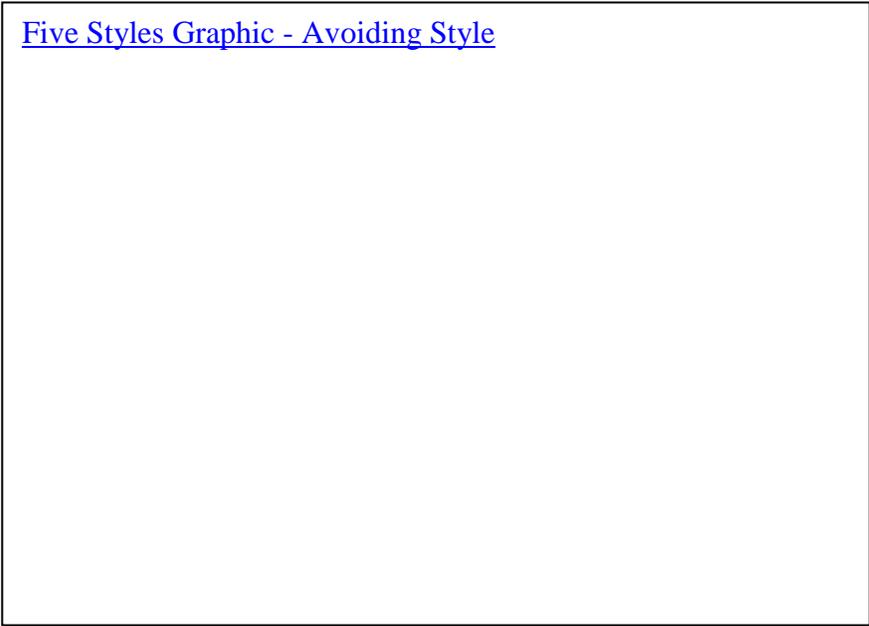
[Five Styles Graphic - Harmonizing Style](#)



(Kraybill, 2005)

Figure 9. Characteristics of the Harmonizing Style

[Five Styles Graphic - Avoiding Style](#)



(Kraybill, 2005)

Figure 10. Characteristics of the Avoiding Style

The ministry student data showed the tendency to gravitate to using the avoiding style in conflict situations. Those involved in the student-generated case study were significantly less likely to use avoidance to resolve conflict situations. The implication stemming from these patterns dovetails with the previous implication. Once the students were engaged with reflecting on conflict situations more personal in nature, the move away from avoidance (ministry students) and the increased level of harmonizing (counseling students) reflected the values inherent with their values and training up to that point in the program. This discovery, similar to the previous implication calls for an intentional integration of other ministry and counseling content with the student's interaction skills.

In ministry, the context for conflict situations may occur in one on one settings, small group settings, or even large congregational settings. The identification, the purposeful integration of conflict resolution styles, and how they fit the unique nature of each situation

would be essential in allowing the ministry student to adapt and use the appropriate style within ministry. In counseling, where the context is typically more one-on-one or a small group setting, the purposeful integration of dealing with conflict situations on an individual level would be more effective. Therefore, the curricular structure of each program needs to focus on executing the specific integration of assignments which would naturally lead to capturing the essential skill training the school's mission espouses and the students will need to be successful in their chosen vocations.

Limitation

The one dynamic of the study which could be classified as a limitation, which could skew or effect the results, are the variations in the type of feedback students received from the various faculty involved. Although the content of the lectures, readings, and assignments are consistent (one source) within the scope of the online programs used in the study, the variable of how individual faculty feedback impacts student responses and engagement with the course content may be a limitation.

Recommendations for Future Research

From the results and implications listed in this study, future research is recommended to help further the findings of this and other studies pertaining to the use of student-generated case studies in addressing the development of skills in various disciplines. Although the literature revealed the use of student-generated case studies prevalent in some disciplines for skill development, most of these cases were residential or face-to-face settings. The literature also revealed the need for specifically addressing and developing conflict resolution skills in several disciplines, but again, these were mainly confined to residential settings which entailed face-to-face interaction. With the continual rise of online education as a preferred or highly

recommended ancillary component to higher education and professional development in most educational and professional disciplines, the opportunity for future study is very wide indeed.

The first recommendation would be to conduct a similar study online with graduate students in programs such as nursing, business, government, criminal justice, and law. Due to the high relational construct of how each of these disciplines work and the multitude of vocations stemming from each individual discipline, the study would assist all those who create curricular paths to satisfy not only individual course outcomes pertaining to resolving conflict but to achieve overall program outcomes. In recent days there is a renewed emphasis that calls for higher education to prepare its graduates with work readiness and skills (Ewing, 2014). As universities address this concern and consider more intently the demands of jobs pertaining to various disciplines, these individual studies could earmark schools that are both intentional and successful at equipping graduates with knowledge, values, and skills that make their graduates in high demand in the workplace.

A secondary recommendation would tag along with the idea of using the same construct to engage and evaluate various professional development curriculums. The motivation to earn professional development credit is required in some of the vocations mentioned previously, but the actual value related to the credit is sometimes in question. Although the logistics related to the study are more complicated due to multiple variables associated with professional development (types, providers, standards, etc.), the benefit for the disciplines and the professions stemming from each discipline would be useful in recalibrating what the university does in training individuals entering the workforce.

Another recommendation would be to study the comparison of online students with residential students within the same University surrounding the inclusion of student generated

case studies and the development of conflict resolution styles. Comparability is a standard hallmark accrediting bodies are looking for in their evaluations of higher educational institutions. Having data to demonstrate the results on this outcome, which spans so many disciplines and intersects with the satisfaction rate of employers of such graduates, would be beneficial for the University under accreditation review.

A future recommendation could also include taking the current study and repeating it delineating students in regards to ethnicity, social economic status, age, or gender as it pertains to the impact of student-generated case studies involving conflict resolution styles.

A final recommendation which could intersect with the study of university students and professional development participants would be a longevity study that would track conflict resolution style development of students through the first five years of employment. With many universities having a platform to engage vocations with professional development opportunities, this would not only be a way for universities to stay connected with alumni but also gain insight into this essential skill development in order to hone the curriculum delivered in the classroom.

On a macro-level, the world in general is never without the complication and most times destruction (emotional and physical) that is associated with conflict. On a micro-level, people who are studying and committed to serving in counseling and ministry vocations are not excluded from the difficulties conflict brings. A survey of literature postulates that student-generated case study activities are an effective manner to allow students to enhance learning in the development of various skills. The purpose of this quasi-experimental study was to determine the impact student-generated case study activities had on conflict resolution style development. With the rejection of only one of the fifteen null hypotheses, the researcher was able to provide practical outcomes for those involved with curricular design, especially when it

comes to skill based training. Additional research recommendations demonstrate the need and benefits of the same type of curricular design in other disciplines to maximize their educational goals of preparing students for success in their chosen professions. Other research recommendations recognize the need for continuing education in most vocations that would provide an ongoing stream of evaluation as to the effectiveness of the foundational training in the university and are a source of continuous improvement in the area of conflict resolution skills.

REFERENCES

- Allen, I. E., & Seaman, J. (2005). Growing by degrees: Online education in the United States, 2005. *The Sloan Consortium*. Retrieved from <http://www.onlinelearningsurvey.com/reports/growing-by-degrees.pdf>
- Allen, I.E., & Seaman, J. (2011). Going the distance. Online education in the United States, 2011. *The Sloan Consortium*. Retrieved from <http://www.onlinelearningsurvey.com/reports/goingthedistance.pdf>
- Ashy, M., Mercurio, A. E., Malley-Morrison, K. (2010). Apology, forgiveness, and reconciliation: An ecological worldview framework. *Individual Differences Research*, 8(1), 17-26.
- Balkin, R. S., Harris, N. A., Freeman, S. J., & Huntington, S. (2013). The forgiveness reconciliation inventory: An instrument to process through issues of forgiveness and conflict. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*, 47(3), 3-13.
- Balslev, T., de Grave, W. S., Muijtjens, A. M., & Scherpbier, A. J. (2005). Comparison of text and video cases in a postgraduate problem learning format. *Medical Education*, 39(11), 1086-1092.
- Barsky, A. E. (2007). *Conflict resolution of the helping professions*. Belmont, CA: Thompson Brooks/Cole.
- Bash, L. (Ed.). (2003). *Adult learners in the academy*. Boston, MA: Anker.
- Berker, A., Horn, L., & Carroll, C. D. (2003). *Work first, study second: Adult undergraduates who combine employment and postsecondary enrollment*. Washington, DC: US Department of Education, Institute of Educational Sciences.

- Blake, R., & Mouton, J. (1964). *The managerial grid: The key to leadership excellence*. Houston, TX: Gulf Publishing.
- Bloom, B. S. (1956). Taxonomy of educational objectives, handbook I: The cognitive domain. New York, NY: David McKay Co Inc.
- Boulter, A, Von Bergen, C. W., Miller, M., & Wells, D. (2001). Conflict resolution: An abbreviated review of current literature with suggestions for counselors. *Education, 116*(1), 93-97.
- Braman, R. O. (1999). Teaching peace to adults: Using critical thinking to improve conflict resolution. *Adult Learning, 10*(2), 1-5.
- Braz, M. E., Lawton, B., Kraybill, R. S., & Daly, K. (2010). *Validation of the Kraybill conflict style inventory*. San Fransisco, CA: National Communication Association.
- Brinkert, R. (2011). Conflict coaching training for nurse managers: A case study of a two-hospital health system. *Journal of Nursing Management, 19*, 80-91.
- Brookfield, S. D. (1986). *Understanding and facilitating adult learning: A comprehensive analysis of principles and effective practices*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Callanan, G. A., & Perri, D. F. (2006). Teaching conflict management using a scenario-based approach. *Journal of Education for Business, 81*(3), 131-139.
- Caton, M., Field, J. E., & Kolbert, J. B. (2010). Fostering healthy development among middle school females: A summer program. *Journal of School Counseling, 8*(39), 1-33
- Center for Teaching and Learning (1994). Teaching with case studies. *Speaking of Teaching, 5*(2), 1-4.

- Chao, E. L., DeRocco, E. S., & Flynn, M. K. (2007). *Adult learners in higher education: Barriers to success and strategies to improve results*. Washington, DC: US Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration.
- Choi, I., Lee, S. J., & Kang, J. (2009). Implementing a case-based e-learning environment in a lecture-oriented anesthesiology class: Do learning styles matter in complex problem solving over time? *British Journal of Educational Technology*, *40*(5), 933-947.
- Clamp, C. A., & Alhamis, I. (2005). *Making the most out of case studies*. Manchester, NH: Southern New Hampshire University.
- Clayson, A. (2011). Effectiveness of LITEE case studies in engineering education: A perspective from genre studies. *Journal of STEM Education*, *12*(8), 15-30.
- Corder, G. W., & Foreman, D. I. (2009). *Nonparametric Statistics for Non-Statisticians*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Cournoyer, A. (2010). Case-based pedagogy using student-generated vignettes: A pre-service intercultural awareness tool. *Proceedings of Intercultural Competence Conference*, *1*, 51-77.
- Coy, P. G., & Hancock, L. E. (2010). Mainstreaming peace and conflict studies: Designing introductory courses to fit liberal arts education requirements. *Journal of Peace*, *7*(2), 205-219.
- Crofts, P. (2004). *People Management*. London, England: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.
- Davis, M. H., Capobianco, S., & Kraus, L. A. (2004). Measuring conflict-related behaviors: Reliability and validity evidence regarding the Conflict Dynamics Profile. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, *64*, 707-731.

- Davis, M. H., Capobianco, S., & Kraus, L. A. (2010). Gender differences in responding to conflict in the workplace: Evidence from a large sample of working adults. *Sex Roles, 63*(7/8), 500-514.
- Derrington, M. L., & Larsen, D. (2009). Student generated case studies: Addressing the standard of ethical leadership. *International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation, 4*(2), 1-6.
- Deutsch, M. (1949). A theory of cooperation and competition. *Human Relations, 2*, 129-152.
- Deutsch, M., Coleman, P. T., & Marcus, E. C. (Eds.). (2006). *The handbook of conflict resolution theory and practice*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Diamantes, T. (1996). Proceedings from National Council of Professors in Educational Administration '96: *A case for cases: Using the case method in the preparation of administrators*. Corpus Christi, TX: Retrieved from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED399624.pdf>
- Duncan, H., Range, B., & Scherz, S. (2011). From professional preparation to on-the-job development: What do beginning principals need? *International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation, 6*(3), 1-20.
- Edelson, D. C. (1996). Learning from cases and questions: The Socratic case-based teaching architecture. *The Journal of the Learning Sciences, 5*(4), 357-410.
- Edmonds-Cady, C., & Sosulski, M. R. (2012). Applications of situated learning to foster communities of practice. *Journal of Social Work Education, 48*(1), 45-64.
- Eisenhardt, K. M., Kahwajy, J. L., & Bourgeois, L. J. (1997). How management teams can have a good fight. *Harvard Business Review, 77-85*.

- Ellis, R. A., Marcus, G., & Taylor, R. (2005). Learning through inquiry: Student difficulties with online course-based material. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning, 21*(4), 239-252.
- Ewing, T. (2014, October 10). Forum to address disconnect between businesses and work readiness and skills of today's workers. Message posted to https://www.ets.org/research/news/forum_address_disconnect
- Fink, L. D. (2003). *Creating significant learning experiences: An integrated approach to designing college courses*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Frise, N. R., & McMinn, M. R. (2010). Forgiveness and reconciliation: The differing perspectives of psychologists and Christian theologians. *Journal of Psychology and Theology, 38*(2), 83-90.
- Fuhs, F. P. (1980). Development of student generated cases using computerized text editing and database technology. *Experimental Learning Enters the Eighties, 7*, 100-104.
- Gibbons, K. (2010). Art therapy. *Journal of the American Art Therapy Association, 27*(2), 84-89.
- Goldberg, R. M. (2009). How our worldviews shape our practice. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly, 26*(4), 405-431.
- Goldsworthy, R., Schwartz, N., Barab, S., & Landa, A. (2007). Evaluation of a collaborative multimedia conflict resolution curriculum. *Educational Technology Research and Development, 55*(6), 597-625.
- Gormas, J., Koole, R., & Vryhof, S. (2006). Learning as reconciliation, learning for reconciliation: New dimensions for Christian secondary schools. *Journal for Education and Christian Belief, 10*(1), 9-31.

- Graves, K. N., Frabutt, J. M., & Vigliano, D. (2007). Teaching conflict resolution skills to middle and high school students through interactive drama and role play. *Journal of School Violence, 6*(4), 57-79.
- Greaves, L. (2012). Feed-forward for Informed Learning (FfIL): Learner-generated materials for personalised learning. *Enhancing Learning in the Social Sciences, 4*(3), 1-7.
- Greek, C. (1995). Using active learning strategies in teaching criminology: A personal account. *Journal of Criminal Justice Education, 6*(1), 153-164.
- Greenop, K. (2007). Students' perceptions of efficacy and preference for two lecture formats. *South African Journal of Psychology, 37*(20), 361-367.
- Harvard Business School (2012). The HBS case method in action. Retrieved from <http://www.hbs.edu/mba/academics/casemethod.html>
- Haugk, K. C. (1988). *Antagonists in the church*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Press.
- Hedeen T., Raines, S. S., & Barton, A. B. (2010). Foundations of mediation training: A literature review of adult education and training design. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly, 28*(2), 157-182.
- Huang, H. (2002). Toward constructivism for adult learners in online learning environments. *British Journal of Educational Technology, 33*(1), 27-37.
- Hyde, N. B. (2005). Innovative instructional strategy using cinema films in an undergraduate nursing course. *Association of Black Nursing Faculty Journal, 16*(5), 95-97.
- Iglesias, M. E., & Vallejo, R. B. (2012). Conflict resolution styles in the nursing profession. *Contemporary Nurse, 43* (1), 73-80.
- Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (1995). Teaching students to be peacemakers: Results of five years of research. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology, 1*(4), 417-438.

- Jones, T. S. (2002). Attending to our future: Why we should support conflict resolution education. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, 19(4), 383-388.
- Jones, T. S. (2004). Conflict resolution education: The field, the findings, and the future. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, 22(1), 233-267.
- Karahan, T. F. (2009). The effects of a communication and conflict resolution skill training program on Sociotropy levels of university students. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice*, 9(2), 787-797.
- Karatas, Z. (2011). Investigating the effects of group practice performed using psychodrama techniques on adolescents' conflict resolution skills. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice*, 11(2), 609-614.
- Keefer, M. W. (2005). Making good use of online case study materials. *Science and Engineering Ethics*, 11(3), 413-429.
- Kilmann, R. H., & Thomas, K. W. (1975). Interpersonal conflict-handling behavior as reflections of Jungian personality dimensions. *Psychological Reports*, 37(3), 971-980.
- Kimsey, W. D., Trobaugh, S. S., McKinney, B. C., Hoole, E. R., Thelk, A. D., & Davis, S. L. (2006). Seven-phrase model of conflict: Practical applications for conflict mediators and leaders. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, 23(4), 487-499.
- Knowles, M. S. (1980). *The modern practice of adult education: From pedagogy to andragogy*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Cambridge Adult Education, Prentice Hall Regents.
- Kolb, D. (1984). *Experiential learning*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Kolb, D., & Kolb, A. (2005). Learning styles and learning spaces: Enhancing experiential learning in higher education. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 4(2), 193-212.

- Kraybill, D. S. (2005). *Style matters: The Kraybill conflict style inventory (KCSI)*. Harrisonburg, VA: [Riverhouse e-Press](#).
- Kressel, K. (2009). Lurching toward theory: The case for case study research in conflict mediation. *Pragmatic Case Studies in Psychotherapy*, 5(3), 23-27.
- Kunselman, J. C., & Johnson, K. A. (2004). Using the case method to facilitate learning. *College Teacher*, 52(3), 87-92.
- Laditka, S. B., & Houck, M. M. (2006). Student-developed case studies: An experiential approach for teaching ethics in management. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 64, 157-167.
- Langmead, R. (2008). Transformed relationships: Reconciliation as a central model for mission. *Mission Studies*, 25(8), 5-20.
- Leas, S. B. (1997). *Discover your conflict management style*. Herndon, VA: Alban Institute, Inc.
- Leever, A. M., Hulst, M. V. D., Berendsen, A. J., Boendemaker, P. M., Roodenberg, J. L. N., & Pols, J. (2010). Conflicts and conflict management in the collaboration between nurses and physicians – a qualitative study. *Journal of Interprofessional Care*, 24(6), 612-624.
- Lencioni, P. (2005). *Overcoming the five dysfunctions of a team: A field guide for leaders, managers and facilitators*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Leonard, J. A., Mitchell, K. L., Meyers, S. A., & Love, J. D. (2002). Using case studies in introductory Psychology. *Teaching of Psychology*, 29(2), 142-144.
- Lewin, K. (1931). *A dynamic theory of personality*. New York, NY: McGraw Hill.
- Liberty University (2011). Research design master list. *EDUC 715: Quantitative Research Designs*. Lynchburg, VA: Liberty University Online.

- Liberty University (2012). EDUC 746: Conflict resolution. *Liberty University School of Education [Course Syllabus]*. Lynchburg, VA: Liberty University Online. Retrieved from http://www.liberty.edu/media/3415/courseguides/EDUC746_Syllabus.pdf
- Liberty University (2014). LEAD 610: Team Leadership and Conflict Resolution. *Liberty University Baptist Theological Seminary [Course Syllabus]*. Lynchburg, VA: Liberty University Online. Retrieved from http://www.liberty.edu/media/3415/courseguides/LEAD610_Syllabus.pdf
- McDonald, L. M. (2013). Using student-constructed cases to investigate crises. *Journal of Management Education, 37*(1), 115-134.
- McLoughlin, C., & Luca, J. (2002). A learner-centered approach to developing team skills through web-based learning and assessment. *British Journal of Educational Technology, 33*(5), 571-582.
- Medical University of South Carolina (2013). Conflict resolution. *MUSC Wellness Center*. Retrieved from http://academicdepartments.musc.edu/hsc/students/Conflict_Resolution.html
- Menkel-Meadow, C. (1993). To solve problems, not make them: Integrating ADR in law school curriculum. *Southern Methodist Law Review, 46*, 1995-2004.
- Mondéjar-Jiménez, J. A., Cordente-Rodríguez, M., Gómez-Borja, M. A., Andrés-Martínez, M. E., & Gázquez-Abad, J. C. (2010). Case studies as practical teaching in the new marketing courses. *American Journal of Business Education, 3*(13), 33-38.
- Morris-Conley, C. M., & Kern, R. M. (2003). The relationship between lifestyle and conflict resolution strategy. *Journal of Individual Psychology, 59*(4), 475-487.

- Neff, K. D., & Harter, S. (2002). The authenticity of conflict resolutions among adult couples: Does women's other-oriented behavior reflect their true selves? *Sex Roles, 47*(9-10), 403-417.
- Niemeyer, E. S. (1995). The case for case studies. *Training & Development, 49*(1), 50.
- Nordhielm, C., & Dapena-Baron, M. (2007). Enhancing teaching and learning in the marketing core: Leveraging practice in the classroom. *American Marketing Association, 343-351*.
- Nykamp, D., Marshall, L., & Ashworth, L. (2008). Instructional design and assessment: An active learning assignment using nonprescription medicines. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education, 72*(1), 1-6.
- O'Reilly, T. (2005). What is Web 2.0: Design patterns and business models for the next generation of software. Retrieved from <http://radar.oreilly.com/2005/09/what-is-web-20.html>
- Paulus, T. M., Horvitz, B., & Shi, M. (2006). Isn't it just like our situation? Engagement and learning in an online based environment. *Educational Technology Research & Development, 54*(4), 355-385.
- Pegues, D. S. (2009). *Confronting without offending*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House.
- Pengitore, F. C. (2008). Active case studies to assess student learning. *Online Classroom, 2-3*.
- Perez-Mateo, M., Maina, M. R., Romero, M., & Guitert, M. (2013). Learner generated content: Quality from student's point of view. *European Journal of Open, Distance & E-Learning, 2520-2529*.
- Petersen, J. C. (2007). *Why don't we listen better?* Tigard, OR: Peterson Publications.
- Pondy, L. R. (1967). Organizational conflict: Concepts and models. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 12*, 296-320.

- Riordan, D. A., Sullivan, M. C., & Fink, D. (2003). Promoting creativity in international business education: A protocol for student-constructed cases. *Journal of Teaching in International Business, 15*(1), 21-35.
- Rivenbark, W. C. (2007). Using cases to teach financial management skills in MPA programs. *Journal of Public Affairs Education, 13*(2), 451-459.
- Rockinson-Szapkiw, A. J. (n.d.) Selecting and justifying your research design. Retrieved @ amandaszapkiw.com
- Sande, K. (1997). *The peacemaker: A biblical guide to resolving personal conflict*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.
- Sande, K. (1999). *Managing conflict in your church: A seminar for Pastors and leaders*. Billings, MT: Peacemakers Ministries.
- Schellenberg, J. A. (1996). *Conflict resolution: Theory, research, and practice*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Sener, J. (2007). In search of student-generated content in online education. *E-mentor, 4*(21), 1-8.
- Shapiro, E. (2009). Ye shall be as gods knowing good and evil: Using the Bible to teach conflict. *Religious Education, 104*(5), 527-538.
- Sheckley, B. G. (1987). Adult experiential learning: A grasping and transforming process. *Lifelong Learning Research Conference, 173-177*.
- Sortor, T., & Gaffney, E. (2007). Bringing peace to the world- one relationship at a time. *Human Development, 28*(1), 23-31.
- Styer, S. C. (2009). Constructing & using case studies in genetics to engage students in active learning. *American Biology Teacher, 71*(3), 142-143.

- Svinicki, M. (Ed.). (1990). *The changing face of college teaching*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Svinicki, M., & McKeachie, W. J. (2010). *McKeachie's teaching tips: Strategies, research, and theory for college and university teachers*. Belmont, CA: Cengage.
- Swanson, D., & Morrison, P. (2010). Teaching business demography using case studies. *Population Research & Policy Review*, 29(1), 93-104.
- Szapkiw, A. (2012). *Statistics guide*. Lynchburg, VA: Liberty University.
- Tarnvik, A. (2007). Revival of the case method: A way to retain student-centered learning in a post-PBL era. *Medical Teacher*, 29(1), 32-36.
- Thomas, K. W., & Kilmann, R. H. (1974). *Thomas-Kilmann conflict mode instrument*. Tuxedo, NY: Xicom.
- Tjosvold, D. (1993). *Learning to manage conflict*. New York, NY: Lexington Books.
- Valiente, O. E. (2013). From conflict to reconciliation: Discipleship in the theology of John Sobrino. *Theological Studies*, 74, 655-682.
- Warner, R. M. (2013). *Applied statistics: From bivariate through multivariate techniques*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.
- Webster, W. E. (1988). Student-developed case studies. *College Teaching*, 36(1), 25-27.
- Weibell, C. J. (2011). *Principles of learning: 7 principles to guide personalized, student-centered learning in the technology-enhanced, blended learning environment*. Retrieved from <https://principlesoflearning.wordpress.com/dissertation/chapter-4-results/themes-identified/repetition/>
- Williams, F. (2011). Interpersonal conflict: The importance of clarifying manifest conflict behavior. *International Journal of Business, Humanities and Technology*,

I(3), 148-160.

Willower, D. J., & Licata, J. W. (1997). *Values and valuation in the practice of educational administration*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

Wu, C. (2008). *CasePublisher: Experiments on student-generated case study*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University.

Wuerl, D. (2011). Renewing and promoting the sacrament of reconciliation. *Seminary Journal*, *17*(3), 4-11.

Yucco, P. (2014). Student-generated cases: Giving students more ownership in the learning process. *Journal of College Science Teaching*, *43*(3), 54-58.

Zhang, A. (2012). Peer assessment of soft skills and hard skills. *Journal of Information Technology Education & Research*, *11*, 155-167.

Zuccarini, D., Johnson, S. M., Dagleish, T. L., & Makinen, J. A. (2013). Forgiveness and reconciliation in emotionally focused therapy for couples: The client change process and therapist interventions. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, *39*(2), 148-162.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

[Five Styles of Responding to Conflict](#)

(Kraybill, 2005)

Appendix B

April 10, 2014

David Nemitz

IRB Exemption 1847.041014: The Effect of Student-Generated Case Studies on Conflict Resolution Style Development

Dear David,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and that no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under exemption category 46.101 (b)(4), which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:(4) Research involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens, if these sources are publicly available or if the information is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and that any changes to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by submitting a change in protocol form or a new application to the IRB and referencing the above IRB Exemption number.

If you have any questions about this exemption, or need assistance in determining whether possible changes to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,

Fernando Garzon, Psy.D.

Professor, IRB Chair

Counseling

Liberty University | Training Champions for Christ since 1971

Appendix C

Helping Professionals Results- Pretest Interaction with Treatment

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Compromise-POST	23.868	1	23.868	4.451	.037
Cooperating-POST	59.297	1	59.297	11.877	.001
Harmonizing-POST	3.590	1	3.590	.432	.512
Directing-POST	14.565	1	14.565	2.166	.144
Avoiding-POST	55.202	1	55.202	7.533	.007

Statistical Significant results in **bold**

Graduate Counseling Students - Pretest Interaction with Treatment

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Compromise-POST	14.396	1	14.396	2.297	.134
Cooperating-POST	61.012	1	61.012	9.962	.002
Harmonizing-POST	6.559	1	6.559	.000	.999
Directing-POST	12.357	1	12.357	1.776	.186
Avoiding-POST	16.839	1	16.839	1.961	.165

Statistical Significant results in **bold**

Graduate Ministry Students - Pretest Effect

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Style-Storm-Compromise-POST	2.933	1	2.933	.741	.394
Style-Storm-Cooperating-POST	17.565	1	17.565	6.329	.016
Style-Storm-Harmonizing-POST	.936	1	.936	.129	.721
Style-Storm-Directing-POST	42.962	1	42.962	6.953	.012
Style-Storm-Avoiding-POST	1.753	1	1.753	.339	.564

Statistical Significant results in **bold**

Graduate Ministry Students - Pretest Interaction with Treatment

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Compromise-POST	12.411	1	12.411	3.137	.084
Cooperating-POST	4.430	1	4.430	1.596	.213
Harmonizing-POST	7.876	1	7.876	1.089	.303
Directing-POST	1.631	1	1.631	.264	.610
Avoiding-POST	45.213	1	45.213	8.732	.005

Statistical Significant results in **bold**