Does peer-mediation really work? effects of conflict resolution and peer-mediation training on high school students’ conflicts

Abbas Turnuklu* a, Tarkan Kacmaz a, Dilara Sunbul a, Hatice Ergul a

aDokuz Eylul University Conflict Resolution Research Centre, Izmir, Turkey

Received October 17, 2008; revised December 23, 2008; January 5, 2009

Abstract

The purpose of the research was to examine the effectiveness of Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation (CRPM) training on high school students’ interpersonal conflicts. The study was conducted in a high school located in a low SES part of Izmir, Turkey. During the two-year study, a total of 830 students from 28 classrooms received training. Data were collected through peer mediation forms filled by the mediator students following the mediation sessions. Majority of the conflicts referred to mediation were physical, verbal and non-verbal violence, relationship and communication conflicts, and conflicts of interest. Of the 253 mediation sessions; 94.9% resulted in resolution and 5.1% in no-resolution. This result indicates that the peer mediation had been effective in constructive and peaceful resolution of high school student conflicts.

© 2009 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved

Keywords: Effects; high school; peer-mediation; student; work.

1. Introduction

Interpersonal violence in schools continues to jeopardize the safety and quality of education in the schools today. Woody (2001) argues that school violence has received greater attention in society and in the professional literature in the past decade, primarily because of the recent occurrence of increased acts of violence in schools throughout the world. However, these acts of violence are often chronic and less extreme in the form of verbal threats, cursing, name calling, insults, racial slurs, pushing, grabbing, shoving, punching, kicking, and fighting which are commonplace in many schools, and which ultimately cause disruption of the educational process, fear and absenteeism among students, and staff burnout (Hart & Gunty, 1997). Traditionally, as a response to the problems of

1 The research is financed by Dokuz Eylul University as “Examining The Negotiation (Problem Solving) And Mediation Programs’ Effects On High School Studentns’ Conflicts”, No: “200655”

* Abbas Turnuklu. Tel.: 0090-232-4204882/1633; fax: 0090-2324204895.
E-mail address: abbas.turnuklu@deu.edu.tr.