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UBGTB Balasooriya

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A Sociological Study on Mediation in Conflict Resolution in Sri Lanka

It is a common scenario for conflicts to occur between groups of people and in relationships in every society. These are harmful behaviour. The study is based on the research question “whether the mediation can offer solutions to satisfy/achieve goals of both parties involved in a conflict?” The objective of this research is to investigate whether the mediation offers an effective solution to conflicts. The other objectives are to identify whether the solutions arrived at are lasting, and to identify the obstacles for this process, new tendencies and create an awareness amongst the public about mediation. Since this is a common issue, the descriptive questionnaire method was used. The sociological and functional approach was used here. The questionnaire helped to increase the quality of the research. The sample was collected from the mediation board of Kegalle. 50 conflicts were selected representing 1/3 of the 152 issues out of the 965 conflicts presented to the board till June 2014. 100 people/parties were selected representing both parties of the conflict. The data collected via the questionnaire and interviews were subjected to quantitative analysis. It was revealed that negotiation leads to achieve goals of both parties and such solutions are long lasting, the use of creative solutions caused the rebuilding of relationships by discouraging anger and that could help to solve conflicts in less time. Moreover, as new tendencies, increasing women representation, easily accessible confidential places to be used in conflict mediation can be cited. The limitations are: giving authorities to summon parties to the mediation board, the continuous observation of the Mediation Commission and the Ministry of Justice can be cited. It was revealed that the mediation board contributes a lot to conflict resolution.

Keywords: Conflict, Conflict Resolution, Mediation, Mediation Board, Negotiation