

HOW TO USE BODY LANGUAGE FOR BETTER OUTCOMES IN MEDIATIONS

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“HOW TO USE BODY LANGUAGE FOR BETTER OUTCOMES IN MEDIATIONS”

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Abstract

This thesis defines and characterizes the use of body language and tries to explain its significant role in the mediation room and the whole process of mediation. According to Albert Mehrabian, who is one of the best researchers in the use of body language, only 7 per cent of our language is taken up by words, with 38 per cent accounting for voice signals such as tone and modulation, with the remaining 55 per cent reserved for non-verbal communication. Body language cannot be turned off; that is, non-verbal cues are always continuous among people. Mediation proceedings are a process of providing information through the use of non-language. However, despite this, training mediators has always focused on verbal communication and rarely mentions nonverbal communication. Body language communication plays a significant role in how we communicate, and trained and expert mediators should pay close attention to the body language signals of disputing parties. Body language signals are always used to convey feelings, moods, provide support for the spoken word, and provide immediate feedback to the messages received. The ability to correctly understand body language can be the most powerful tool for mediators in assisting them in connecting with disputing parties, and they can perfectly express what they mean and navigate through challenging situations during mediation. This also enhances understanding and avoids stalemate situations. As such, trained mediators should improve body language skills for effective mediation.

Keywords: Body language, Mediator, Mediation process, Nonverbal communication, Body signals.

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.0 Introduction

This chapter introduces the topic under study. It highlights the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the research questions, the aims and objectives, along with the dissertation roadmap. The last section of the chapter then highlights the scope and limitations of the research.

1.1 Background of the Study

Mediation training focuses mostly on verbal communication, with little attention paid to teaching about body language, even though body language plays a more significant part in the way people communicate. Hence why it is essential to pay more attention to the body language of the parties during mediation in order to get better outcomes. Most people usually communicate more messages via body language than verbal communication, with Barbour (2013) stating that 7% of communication is oral, 38% concerns volume, tone and pitch, with 55% of the communication made through body language and facial expressions (p.78). This means a large percentage (93%) is non-verbal.

Body language also relays the feelings, mood, emotion, attitude, and the state of mind. It supports verbal communication to a great extent and helps give immediate feedback to the received messages. Thus, during mediation, a variety of non-verbal expressions and body language may signal more than verbal communication (Borg, 2015, p.78), hence why a mediator requires understanding of the non-verbal communication. Understanding body language can be a powerful tool for mediators, and it helps them to understand the parties involved and what they want, and it also helps them connect with others. With this, the mediator can accurately solve the

dispute at hand and make informed and wise decisions that are fair to both parties. It is therefore vital for a professional mediator to foster their mediation skills in relation to non-verbal behaviours.

As noted above, body language or non-verbal communication is as important as verbal communication, and how we communicate a message is somewhat more important than what we say (Leathers and Eaves, 2015, p.55). People tend to believe non-verbal behaviours more, especially when our face shows one emotion but our words say another; for example, a person could say they are okay through words, but non-verbally portray a different kind of message.

1.2 Problem Statement

The problem to be addressed in this study is that using body language in mediations leads to better outcomes. Disputes are inevitable as people have different ideologies and mediation talks have increasingly become relevant, as most parties will seek the help of a mediator to solve such disputes. Mediation requires attentively listening to the disagreeing parties and judging the body language of the parties to come to a clear judgment for both parties to agree on.

Mediators are the custodians of communication in any mediation process. As such, there is a need for them to be well versed in communication skills and the subtle and not so subtle communicative changes of the parties involved in the conflict. They need to work towards a clear communication that allows collaborative action and need to understand body language so that they can manage the conversation in a way that ensures focus and which supports better outcomes or resolutions (Frenkel & Stark, 2018, p.44).

1.3 Research Questions

The following research questions will guide this study:

1. How can body language training support mediators?
2. How important is body language training for meditation practice?
3. How can body language be used to give better outcomes in mediation?
4. What are some of the challenges in understanding and interpreting body language in mediation?

1.4 Significance of the Study

The study will explore the use of body language for better outcomes in mediations. It will help those in the mediation practice and those who are in training so that they can learn to understand and interpret non-verbal expressions. This study will help tutors in the communication industry to further instruct their communication students. It will give more information on how different people use body language to signal different messages and will show mediators how to use their body language skills and interpret both parties' unspoken words. Precise and accurate interpretation will give the mediators know-how on how to manage the conflicts under discussion and come up with better resolutions.

1.5 Scope and Limitations of the Study

Primary research was conducted in Dublin among fifty-eight mediation companies, and also among LinkedIn group called 'Mediator Network', to explore the use of body language and how it can be used for better outcomes in mediation. This study took place over a period of two months. It had fifty-four respondents, and hence the results of this study cannot be generalized, as different cultures may interpret body language differently.

1.6 Dissertation Roadmap

Chapter one of this study provides the introduction to the study, the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the research questions, the scope and limitations of the research, and lastly the thesis roadmap. Chapter two will provide the aims and objectives of the study. Chapter three will contain a review of literature, theoretical literature review, and conceptual framework. Chapter four discusses the research methodology used in the study; the methods that will help achieve the aims and objectives. It contains the following sections: research design, sample design, sample size and sample design, methods of data collection, and ethical considerations. Chapter five details the data analysis and findings, while Chapter six will discuss these findings. Lastly, chapter seven will provide a conclusion and recommendations.

Chapter Two: Aims and Objectives

2.0 Aims and Objectives of the Study

The principal objective of this study is to explore how mediators can learn and understand body language or non-verbal behaviours so that they can get better outcomes.

The objectives include:

- 1) To find out how body language can be used for better outcomes in mediation
- 2) To find out how body language can support mediators in their work
- 3) To find out the importance of body language in mediation practice
- 4) To find out the challenges in understanding and interpreting body language in mediation

Chapter Three: Literature Review

3.0 Introduction

Mediation is a method of dispute resolution, whereby two parties who are in disagreement seek the help of a mediator to help them solve their dispute. The mediator can use a specific approach to solve the crises, depending on the type of conflict. There are various types of mediation that disputants can use to resolve their conflict and it is the role of the disputants to check which type is best suited for them, depending on the cost, and other factors. Mediation is chosen when the parties in conflict want to solve their conflict outside the courts and a trained mediator helps the conflicting parties find common ground through the use of principles such as mutual gain negotiation, and collaborative (Menkel-Meadow et al., 2018, p.45).

3.1 An Overview of Mediation

As disputes are common in any society, the need for dispute settlement is always needed. There is a range of ways to solve conflicts, often using a third party who comes in to help solve differences. In the past, people used various methods to resolve their issues, such as community elders. Today, many problems are solved in courts, though more informal dispute settlements exist, whereby people use mediation to resolve their social conflicts (Aiyedun and Ordor, 2016, p.163). Mediators go through training just like any other professional would and today, there are several mediation services all over the world.

Two ideologies govern the mediation discourse: individualistic and relational. The individualistic perceives the world to be made up of different separate human beings whose worth is equal, but with different needs, and that the nature of human beings is to satisfy their needs and desires. The relational views the world to be made up of people who have diverse

requirements and attractions, with a common form of consciousness that connects them (Saxon, 2018, p.77). All other transformative mediation models are usually based on this ideology.

3.2 Types of Mediation

There are various types or styles of mediation:

3.2.1 Facilitative Mediation

Also called traditional mediation, in this type of mediation, a mediator facilitates the negotiation between the conflicting parties; rather than recommending the way forward or imposing a decision. The facilitator encourages the parties to come to their own solution voluntarily by discussing the issues of each side. Therefore, here, mediators do not give their views on the subject but keep their opinions out of the conflict (Stitt, 2016, p.113).

3.2.2 Court Mandated Mediation

Mediation is a voluntary process, but with this type, it can be directed by the court to promote a faster and cost-effective settlement. When the conflicting parties are reluctant to start the mediation process, their chances of settling their dispute in court is low, as they may just be spending time going through motions (Rahim, Hood, and Coyle, 2019, p.12). Hence, this type of mediation is useful when both parties see the benefits of engaging in the entire process.

3.2.3 Evaluative Mediation

In contrast to facilitative mediation, here mediators recommend and suggest their opinions regarding the conflict. Evaluative mediators not only focus on the underlying interests of the conflicting parties but also help the parties see the legal merits of their disagreements and come up with a fair determination. Mostly, this type is court-mandated, and the evaluative

mediators are often attorneys who are knowledgeable in legal matters in the area of conflict (Hörner, Morelli, and Squintani, 2015, p.1485).

3.2.4 Transformative Mediation

In this type, the mediator's primary focus is to empower the parties in conflict and encourage them to recognize the other party's interests and needs. This process aims to transform the conflicting parties and their relationship following the process of getting the skills that are needed to make constructive change (Alrø, and Dahl, 2015, p. 70).

3.2.5 Med-Arb

In the mediation-arbitration hybrid, the conflicting parties first agree on the terms of the process of mediation. They do this in writing, whereby the results of the mediation process are binding. They then try to negotiate the conflict with the assistance of the mediator. In cases where the mediation remains unresolved, the mediation process is not over and a mediator can play the role of arbitrator, giving his/her decision on the issue (Pappas, 2015, p.157).

3.2.6 Arb-Med

In arbitration mediation, a trained mediator listens to the evidence and testimony of the disputing parties; he/she then writes an award but does not show it to the parties. He tries to mediate the dispute, and if it fails, they reveal their binding award that resolves the issue. The mediator cannot change the first award in case they get other insights/information during the mediation process (Pal, 2018, p. 90).

3.2.7 E-mediation

In this type of mediation, a mediator mediates the conflicting parties from a distance. This distance could be because the conflict is so strong that the parties cannot stay in the same

room and resolve their issue. With the development of technology, the parties can use video conferencing (e.g. Skype) to resolve their dispute in real-time. The parties also benefit from seeing visual and vocal cues, as shown through the use of video conferencing (Conforti, 2017, p.61).

3.3 Communication

According to Genç (2017), communication is the process of passing meaningful messages from the sender to a receiver through a transmitter (Genç, 2017, p. 515). López-Viera, (2016) argue that people understand, not only each other by verbally speaking, but also through body language. The communication contains elements that require a more comprehensive view that is key in understanding the discourse of “us” and “them” (López-Viera, 2016, p. 78). Apart from speaking, people transmit and show emotions through body gestures. Even when people are silent, they are communicating; as body language is observed. Sending messages through body language is an unconscious process. hence mediators need to know how it works so that they can perfect and also take control of it to avoid giving off wrong messages to the parties. Thus, mediators need to create a relaxed room by using body language where the conflict can be resolved more easily and in a relaxed mood.

When mediators know and understand body language, they can manage and resolve issues, as body language reveals feelings and codes. Thus, the way we walk, move our hands, or even look can determine whether we generate trust for the conflicting parties.

3.4 Importance of Body Language

Body language is a significant force in our day to day lives. During communication, 93% of our meaning and intent is shown through body language, with people relying more on non-verbal cues to show what they are saying and to also interpret other people's messages. In a

situation where the non-verbal signals contradict the spoken words, people tend to believe the non-verbals (Bonvillain, 2019, p.56). There are several reasons why communication experts regard body language as being influential, which are outlined below.

3.4.1 Body Language is Omnipresent

People tend to use non-verbal cues in everyday communication. While people are speaking face to face, all non-verbal cues come into place through the use of facial expressions, voice, timing, distancing, touch, gestures, all of which helps in communication. In situations where a conversation is taking place through some of media, some non-linguistic features are lost. For instance, if one is communicating over the phone, the visual cues are lost, but the vocalic features remain. The choice of the medium to use to talk to someone also signals something; for example, if someone decides to use the phone over face to face, it shows a possible detachment between the individuals (Burgoon et al., 2016, p. 83).

In written communication, deciding to write a nasty letter to someone instead of confronting them in person is a delaying tactic. In emails and text messages, there are features to show some non-verbal cues. One could also use different colours, emoticons, or even use of capital letters to yell at a person. One can never not communicate, meaning that all behaviours do communicate something. Even silence is communication and any encounter with a person or persons is a potential body language communication, regardless of whether anything vocal has taken place (Döring and Pöschl, 2017, p.111).

3.4.2 Body Language is Multifunctional

Body language is part of all communication, from first impressions in interviews, a show of happiness after winning something, and in showing confusion. Sometimes, body language can be used to display several feelings and attitudes at once. Several diverse nonverbal

channels may be used to send messages simultaneously, to handle many responsibilities together with or as a substitute for oral communication.

3.4.3 Body Language may form a Language System that is Universally Accepted

Some non-verbal behaviours are widely accepted, such as smiling, staring, caressing, pointing, and crying. Even when people do not understand the language of one another, they can communicate using body language and get some form of understanding. This means that some nonverbal cues can transcend culture and language, globally; for instance, someone who has travelled abroad can clearly understand the uniformity of body language and its importance.

3.4.4 Body Language can result in Misunderstanding as well as Understanding

Although non-verbal behaviours are essential, they can also bring about misunderstandings and can even lead to severe consequences. For successful communication, it is good then to keep in mind that not all body language behaviours convey the same message, as it can differ among cultures, as well as professions.

3.4.5 Body Language has Phylogenetic Primacy

Before people learned the ability to speak, they communicated non-verbally. This means that expressions preceded the spoken word. This is why human beings trust body language more than verbal language (Burgoon, 2016, p.120).

3.4.6 Body Language has Ontogenetic Primacy

Infants learn non-verbal forms before verbal language. In the uterus, a foetus is aware of its mother using the senses of touch and hearing. When the baby is born, they become connected to the surroundings, and their caregivers, through contact.

3.5 Relationship of Non-Verbal Communication to Mediation

Non-verbal behaviours convey the attitude, emotions, mood, state of mind, and they support the words of mouth, they can show immediate feedback to the messages sent (Mavridis, 2015, 33).

3.5.1 Paralinguistic

The non-verbal vocal expressions of a person are called paralinguistics (Alghowinem et al., 2016, p. 480). Experts say that the two dimensions of a voice are vocalization and voice set. A voice set is the idea that a person can determine from sound, maturity, gender, and even mindset. Vocalizations are the sounds that often reveal emotions like laughing, crying, or yawning. Speed, pitch, rhythm, quality, inflection, and volume are factors that contribute to paralinguistics. Speed is the speech rate and a quick pace shows self assurance and composure (Mehrabian, 2017, p. 67). Hence anyone who speaks very fast is always deemed confident and gains dominance. Unfortunately, fast talkers are perceived to be poor listeners. This is clearly shown when the response is off-target and irrelevant to the question asked. In such cases, mediators need to talk at a similar speed to that of the disputant in order to create a connection.

Another factor of paralinguistics is volume; the loudness or softness of sound. A low volume is mostly associated with timidity and hesitancy. In contrast, a loud voice can show confidence, control, and boldness. In mediation, the mediator is in charge and it is, therefore, necessary for him/her to speak in an audible volume that is heard by everyone, to show authority. Rhythm is another crucial factor in paralinguistics and it is a sound pattern. It demonstrates the dialect, or accent, and language (Dellwo, Leemann and Kolly, 2015, p. 1516). Each language has a particular rhythm that is specific to that language; for instance, a Filipino and a Malaysian speak at different speed and rhythm. When speaking an international language like English, a

person tends to talk with a rhythmical pace that is similar to their original language. A China native can speak English at a faster speed than the other nationalities because the native Chinese language is rhythmically very fast. With this knowledge, a mediator needs to talk at a rate and rhythm that is similar to the slowest speaking party regardless of the mediator's original language. With this in mind, there will be a more natural connection between the mediator and the disputing parties.

The frequency or level of a sound is known as pitch. High pitched voices are often associated with children and immaturity, while a lower pitch shows maturity, credibility, and authority (Manik, 2015, p.129). Therefore, mediators need to speak in lower tones to appear calmer, credible, and authoritative. Despite this, mediators should talk in pitch that is closer to that of their natural voice. If a mediator forces his/her voice to speak at a low pitch than is natural, it can result in loss of vocal power and focus.

Inflection is also known as vocal variety; it is the variations found in pitch or voice quality. Inflection is often seen in sing-song variations of a pitch that a person telling a story to children depicts. In a mediation context, one must be cautious not to use too much inflection, as it can undermine the credibility of the mediator. To maintain the interest of the conflicting parties, a mediator needs to have some degree of inflection, with a slight inflection making the mediator appear credible and charismatic.

In paralinguistic communication, quality is the character of the vowel sound. It is the unique tone that people make while talking and it is this peculiar characteristic of the voice that helps to differentiate one voice from that of another person. In mediation, the quality of the mediators' voices plays an essential role in the general handling of the mediation process; a conflicting party may fail to listen to a mediator whose voice is small, throaty, or loud, for

example. It is easier to listen to a good quality voice, hence a mediator needs to know the quality of their voice, which they can do by recording their speech and receiving feedback from trusted sources on their vocal quality (Wood, 2015, p. 83).

Voice Intensity is another crucial aspect of paralanguage. It is the strength, force, or power of the speech. Intensity shows the passion, and the commitment level of the mediator or speaker. Intensity reveals the emotions that are behind the spoken words. Thus, when a mediator quickly establishes a rapport with the conflicting parties and connects with them in a genuine intention, it results in a greater understanding and can resolve issues more efficiently. A mediator needs to be aware of his/her paralinguistic vocal strengths and weaknesses so that he can know how to use them to be an effective mediator (De Bono, 2018, p.65).

During the mediation process, a mediator needs to use a clear, calm, and steady voice and avoid sudden changes in rate and pitch. He/she needs to depict maturity, professionalism, calmness, credibility, and confidence to the disputing parties. In cases where the parties are emotional and where voices could be raised, it is the role of the mediator to maintain calmness by using a steady, clear, and calm voice. In response, the disputants will follow the tone, as set by the mediator.

3.5.2 Proxemics

The space or the distance between two persons is known as proxemics. Proxemic communication is the process of communicating with others regarding the virtue of relative positioning of the bodies (Hans and Hans, 2015, p.52). While talking, people keep different distances depending on the relationship they have with the other person. In addition, it has been seen that extroverts keep shorter distances to introverts who like having their own space.

During mediation, people need to understand the application of proxemics. The mediator who controls the discussion, needs to sit equidistant from both conflicting parties. If a mediator sits closer to one of the parties, it can be seen that the mediator is biased or impartial. The mediator also needs to sit closer to the conflicting persons than to their counsellors or their supporters. With this kind of seating arrangement, the mediator can talk with the conflicting persons directly without being cut off by counsellors or the supporters of the parties.

Maintaining a vertical space between people indicates dominance and it is the role of the mediators to create a calm atmosphere that is safe and open; mediators can achieve this by sitting at the same eye level as those of the parties. The disputants also need to sit in identical chairs; no party should sit higher than the other. Sitting at equal levels shows that the parties are equal, and no party is more dominant than the other (Barsky, 2016, p.70). In some countries like the Philippines, the distance between the disagreeing parties is a good sign of the progress of the mediation. At the start of the mediation, the parties sit far from each other, but as the process progresses well and there is some kind of understanding is made, the parties start moving closer to each other. Sometimes, the disputants can sit beside each other and talk directly with each other, ignoring the mediator. At this juncture, it signals that the mediator has done their job well and has restored direct communication between the parties.

3.5.3 Kinesics

Kinesics is the moving of the body to accompany what is said through word of mouth (Dael, Bianchi-Berthouze, Kleinsmith and Mohr, 2016, p.563). In everyday communication, people use kinesics to support their speech. The main components of kinesics include; facial expressions, use of gestures, posture, and eye behaviour. There are five main kinesics used widely: emblems, regulators, adaptors, affect displays, and illustrators.

Emblems refer to the movements of the body that substitute words, so instead of a person saying that word or phrase verbally, they show with body language (Beattie, 2016, p. 55). For instance, the index finger put in front of the mouth in an upright manner means quiet. Different cultures have a different meaning of gestures/symbols, so they can vary, and this is why a mediator needs to know the culture of the parties in order to avoid using symbols that can be misinterpreted.

Illustrators are usually for reinforcing and accompanying verbal messages. They are more universal in their meaning than the other kinds of kinesics; they are rarely misinterpreted (Trần, 2018, p. 80). For instance, people nod their heads while saying yes or showing agreement with what is being said. In mediation, a person can use his/her finger to point to emphasize her argument. However, in Philippine culture, pointing a finger to another party during mediation means an insult or a challenge. Thus, it is the role of the mediator to be aware of such body language differences and take precaution against such unintended threatening behaviour. Thus, mediators shouldn't point when handling a mediation session, as it can look offensive to the parties. Instead, the mediator can use open palms when illustrating a point, as this shows openness.

Affect displays are nonverbal displays of the body that holds emotional meanings or shows affective states. They are used to show the current mood of a person. People show attitudes differently through the use of body language like facial expressions. In mediation, a party can show anger by slamming their hand on the table, for example (Burgoon, Guerrero, and Floyd, 2016, p.88).

The fourth category of kinesics is regulators. These are the body language behaviours that influence, regulate, or control the flow and pace when people are communicating (Żywicznyński,

Orzechowski, and Wacewicz, 2017, p.87). For instance, a person can nod to indicate understanding or to signal to the other party to move on with the communication. A party can move away to show their desire to end a conversation. In mediation, parties use regulators when taking turns in discussions. While using the regulators, a mediator easily controls the flow and pace of the communication between the disputing parties. Most mediators use nodding as a sign of encouraging a disputant to continue speaking. A mediator should not use the regulator of looking or moving away to show his desire to want to end the communication however, as it seen as negative behaviour and counteracts the objective of creating a safe and calm atmosphere for negotiation.

Adaptors are kinesics that is used to meet a personal need as a person adapts to a situation; people use its low level of awareness. At times, adaptors relieve tension and make a person comfortable in particular situation (Burgoon, Schuetzler and Wilson, 2015, p.12). For instance, people pull their ears, twist their hair, tap pens, scratch their nose or head, to try to adjust frequently. People use adapters unconsciously. The behaviours are more notable to another person than the one doing it. Hence, adaptors can give clues about the feelings that a person does not intend to tell the other party. Mediators should not make inferences from a single adapter but should seek out other adapters or behaviours.

Different body language can mean different things. For instance, during mediation, a disputant may cross his arms, meaning they are being defensive or it could equally mean they feel cold. Another disputant may lean back in his chair, which can be misinterpreted as disinterest, but the disputant could equally just be far-sighted. In these cases, the mediator needs to seek for other cues before making any judgment. Posture is a critical element of kinesics, as it is used to show the degree of involvement in the discussion. A person may lean forward to show

that he is paying more attention and is interested in the conversation. The mediator must know how to interpret different kinesics.

3.5.4 Appearance

Appearance is another non-verbal communication factor. Presence gives a lot of information about a person. A listener forms impressions of a speaker about the economic status, occupation, or even competence through what the speaker has worn, that is, the clothing, makeup, hairstyle, neatness, and stature. Appearance encompasses adornments, dress, and personal grooming. People tend to judge a person depending on their garments (Cenere et al., 2015, p. 99). Clothing also shows the profession of someone; for instance, doctors wear white lab coats, business people wear suits, robes are for judges. People also know what one intends to do with the clothes they are wearing; for example, a person planning to go for exercise or to the gym will wear rubber shoes and gym attire.

Adornments also say more about a person. These are the accessories that are worn to complement clothing. They enhance beauty. Furthermore, personal grooming like being clean, neat, wearing makeup communicate the attitudes of oneself. Mediators are advised to be well-groomed, like wearing a suit to create an atmosphere of professionalism, confidence, and competence. To avoid distracting the parties, adornments need to be kept to a minimum. Moreover, for women, makeup should not be overly done. If a mediator is ungroomed, it can negatively influence the perception of the parties, and they may not respect the mediator, and see them as unprofessional.

3.5.5 Oculesics

In non-verbal communication, oculusics is the study of eye contact (Glaeser and Paulus, 2015, p.77). People achieve eye contact when they look at each other at the same time. In contrast, eye aversion is avoiding eye contact. People show interest by using their eyes. In mediation, eye contact can provide a negative or positive mood to the observer. The interpretation, the frequency, and the appropriateness of eye contact may differ from one culture to another. In the west, two second eye contact is preferred. Anyone avoiding eye contact is seen as incompetent, insecure, untrustworthy, and timid. On the other hand, eye contact lasting for more than two seconds is regarded as staring and can be seen as rude. Additionally, prolonged eye contact between women and men shows interest and can be interpreted as sexually suggestive.

In Asian culture, people prefer having indirect eye contact, as having prolonged eye contact signals aggression, bad manners, and hostility. Japanese direct their eyes around the throat, and they also lower their eyes to show respect. In Islamic culture, males are allowed to have eye contact. However, eye contact between members of the opposite sex is not allowed; only for persons who are married. After having direct eye contact for a few seconds, men lower their eyes while speaking to women. Having prolonged eye contact with the opposite sex is inappropriate and disrespectful (Manik, 2015, p.129).

During the mediation of parties involving Asians, mediators should make appropriate eye contact to avoid misinterpretation. In addition, mediators are advised to avoid eye contact when resolving issues with people of the Islamic faith of the opposite sex. If the parties are from a western culture, then it is advisable to maintain eye contact. When dealing with many parties, it is good to look at every one.

The application of body language plays a crucial role in mediation. Proper use of kinesics, paralinguistics, proxemics, oculesics, and appearance can help the mediator create a greater understanding of the conflicting parties. It can also make them move closer to conflict settlement. Non-verbal communication techniques may improve the mediation in the provision of a calm, professional atmosphere for the disputants to talk and ensure the mediation is not biased and professional. By employing body language to reinforce verbal communication, the mediator makes a more significant impact on the disputants in mediation. Therefore, a mediator needs to familiarize him/herself with the various body language elements and their meanings. The secret to successful use of non-verbal communication in mediation is observation. The body language of a speaker needs to be complemented with the spoken word, and any variance in the spoken words to the non-verbal cues may be a sign that one is hiding something (Joel and Shien, 2018, p.112).

Nonverbal Behaviour Interpretation

Body Language	Interpretation
Standing while hands are on the hips	Hostility, readiness
Fast and upright walk	Confidence and active
Sitting while legs are open	Comfortable and relaxed
Staying with arms that are crossed on the chest	Shieldness
One hand on the cheek	Thoughtfulness
Sitting while the legs are crossed and also one leg slightly kicking	Weariness or boredom
Hands rubbing eyes	Unbelief

Biting nails	Insecurity, nervousness
Hands put behind back	Frustration
Hands rubbing	Expectancy, suspense
Palms open	Innocence, sincere, not hiding something
Sitting when the hands are behind the head, and legs crossed Fondling chin	Superiority, authority, braveness Decision making, thoughtfulness

Table 1: Nonverbal Behavior Interpretation (Kuhnke, 2016, p. 22)

A mediator's training should focus on both non-verbal and verbal communication. This will help determine a complete message.

The main aim of this thesis is to help argue why body language or non-oral language is essential for the mediation process. Body language is reflected by the different parts of our bodies like eyes, hands, facial expressions, posture, pace, the tone, among others.

3.6 Body Language and Personality

In mediation, visual aspects mostly determine our image, our being, and the also how the parties perceive us. Apart from facial expression and body language, another factor used to judge our personality is an aspect of cleanliness. Four seconds are usually enough for parties to create an impression about the mediator. Hence, the character and non-verbal language need to be in harmony. Mediators need to protect be mindful of the first impressions, as it may affect the objectivity. For example, people associate thinness to disease, fatness to helplessness, and muscles to vitality (Viera, 2015, p. 2356).

Chapter Four: Research Methodology

4.0 Introduction

The main purpose of this chapter is to provide relevant and detailed explanations of the research methods and the methodology applied for this research study. This chapter provides concrete explanation of the research approach, research design, and also the limitations and advantages of the study tools that have been chosen. Research is defined as something that individuals embark on to find out things in a logical and orderly manner, hence increasing their knowledge (Silverman, 2016, p.22). That ‘something’ is the main reason why this research on how to use body language for better outcomes in mediation was carried out; to have a better understanding of the study area.

4.1 Research Purpose and Approach

There must be an objective for any research that is being conducted and the reason for carrying out the research analysis. The main purpose for conducting this research is to have a clear understanding of how body language is significant in giving a better outcome during mediation. This research dissertation will make use of a quantitative research strategy, which uses deductive logic, whereby we begin with a hypothesis and later collect data to prove or disprove that hypothesis (Cohen et al., 2013, p.52).

4.2 Quantitative Research Approach

Quantitative research analysis uses relevant numeric information that is placed in terms of variables. A variable is a form of measurement that carries or has more than two values. In this research approach, most of the characteristics are numeric in nature and have variables that

are numeric. The numbers used to measure the characteristics are significant because they measure the amount of all characteristics that might be present in the research (Albert & Tullis, 2013, p.23).

Most of the researchers are always fascinated in the characteristics that are not numeric in nature, for instance gender, race and then the variables are apportioned numeric values that are used in quantitative research analysis. These numbers do not measure the amount of characteristics that are present. The variables may be coded as male=1 and female=2, and does not mean that females have twice the sum of gender characteristics equal to their male counterparts. The variables will then be divided into numeric variables.

There are various ways of collecting quantitative data, for instance the use of a questionnaire, where the interviewer collects quantitative data by asking questions of the respondents, who in turn report attitudes and experiences used in body language. Quantitative data can also be collected through direct observation which has been collected and recorded for research purposes (Bernard, 2017, p.42). Secondary data analysis is the most common quantitative research approach, where the researcher will analyse data gathered by other researchers. Quantitative analysis hypotheses are always highly specific, providing a clear relationship between dependent and independent variables. Hypotheses for categorical variables provide a specification of the category of independent variables. Quantitative research is always used for the testing of hypotheses, for example a research analyst might wish to find out why most people prefer using body language during the mediation process (Silverman, 2016, p.14).

To get a proper answer for this issue, the analyst will be required to make questionnaires and conduct interviews by asking preferences and the choice of using body language. The data collected from the field whether numerical or categorical will be analysed statistically using

SPSS for windows. A survey is the technique used in conducting quantitative research. This involves constructing a series of questions, each providing an alternative answer that a respondent can choose from.

The results of quantitative research analysis are often described in the form of numerical graphs or tables. Results demonstration starts with descriptive statistics that describes who and what is in the sample collected. This description might take the form of univariate statistics like mean, frequency distribution, median and standard deviation or it can take simple graphs such as bar charts, pie charts and histograms (Roever & Phakiti, 2017, p.3). The results of statistical models that involve inclusion of control variables are presented and then interpreted. Such models allow the researcher to have the power to rule out marginal descriptions and stipulate situations for upholding hypotheses.

4.3 Research Design and Analysis

A quantitative design strategy is applicable for this research because there are connections between different variables that are established through the questionnaire. The analyst should make use of triangulation that enables the researcher to approach objectives of the research from a different angle. The analyst obtains a nuanced view of connections among various diverse variables used in the research. The use of triangulation necessitated the construction of a questionnaire with several people.

Research design refers to data gathering, measurement, and data analysis. Research design is the plan and the structure of study used to get the answers to research questions. The strategy comprises what the researcher will do from the point of writing hypotheses to final analysis of data and their implications. The design provides expression for both structure of research problem and an investigation plan used to get empirical data (Roever & Phakiti, 2017,

p.5). In conclusion, research design is the blueprint for fulfilling objectives and responding to queries asked during the research. Research design is important to avoid confusion due to a large variety of data options that are available.

4.4 Research Methods

The research decided to use questionnaire that was sent to the respondents via online survey. The questions are distributed among the participants who have used or consider to use body language during mediation.

4.5 Questionnaire

This method is used because it is appropriate and the quickest method for gathering information from multiple respondents in an effective and suitable manner. The questionnaire was the perfect method for this research study because it enabled the researcher to collect and gather information from multiple respondents within a short time. The disadvantage of using the questionnaire is that it has a strict format and it is fixed, which limits in-depth observation (Williamson, 2018, p.5).

4.6 Sampling Strategy

For the purpose of this research study, the author examined various participants. Sampling is a method that provides several ways a scientist can condense the amount of data required for gathering by considering data from a small group of respondents rather than a large number of elements. The use of this technique helps save time and gives a high level of accuracy as one collects more detailed data (Creswell, 2013, p.3). Researchers have to consider some relevant questions before choosing a sampling method:

- What are the constraints of interest?
- What is the sample frame?
- What is the size of the sample needed?
- How much will it cost the researcher?

In the case of this study, a small sample was required to provide the researcher with proper and relevant information that explores, in depth, the research questions. The researcher used SPSS software because of the small number of respondents and the diverse design of the sets of answers to the questions.

In summary, this chapter has justified and outlined the research methodology applied in this study. A quantitative strategy was used due to the nature of the research project. The respondents were carefully targeted through a sampling method. The results were then examined using SPSS due to small number of respondents.

The results are explored in the next chapter.

Chapter Five: Presentation of Data

5.1. Nature of Body Language during Mediation

Body language is the use of various parts of the human body to communicate significant thoughts, ideas, feelings, and attitudes. Through body language, an individual moves different body parts, for instance, hands, face, or even the head to transmit a particular message. For example, if a person nods his head up and down, it signifies agreement, while shaking the head from side to side signifies disagreement (Furnham & Petrova, 2010, p.54). Some of the examples of body language include clapping hands, circular movement of fingers, shoulders being moved up and down, touching eyes, as well as rubbing the nose in tension.

Words consist of about 10.5 per cent of human communication, and nonverbal behaviour comprises the rest. In the world today, over 85 per cent of information involves the use of body language. People communicate using body language and nonverbal behaviours, whether cooperating or even battling irrespective of gender, colour, or even race. In that context, Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) provides a frame via which they observe body language used during the mediation process (Nixon, 2017, p.43). They share information about the use of body language in mediation. Rudolf Laban states that a series of body movements are like the sentences of speech, the actual message carriers that emerge from the world of silence (Maletic, 2011, p.56).

Laban's theory comprises various features like body, shape, space, and effort. The combinations of these elements lead to the creation of feeling-tones and the texture of the body language (Furnham & Petrova, 2010, p.4). Body language consists of the following relevant elements that help in the mediation process:

5. Body: This refers to the body approach, posture, kinesphere, and gesture and how the whole body is structured and interconnected in body movement.
6. Pose: This is an act of the whole body.
7. Gesticulation: an expressive gesture made in showing strong feeling or in enforcing an argument.
8. Body attitude: This reflects the character and attitude of an individual when they hold and move their body in reaction to the situation that they are in (Vartanian et al., 2016, p.90).
Body attitude is used to gain an all-over picture of an individual's tendencies of body movement.

Laban formulated the term kinesphere from Greek, where kinesis means effort and sphaira means sphere, which is the movement of joints according to rotary nature. Kinesphere is how an individual can use their personal reach space. The personal space needed can be close to the body, medium, or even small. It can also refer to a private space from a psychological point of view.

The movement of the body is highly structured, and is a customarily coded form of emblematic mediation communication. With the many variables in the intervention process, it is very important for intermediaries to observe body language cues at all times strictly, as proper observation of body language gives the mediator more relevant information (Hall & Knapp, 2013, p. 2).

The observation of the body language of the parties involved in the mediation is important as they enter the negotiation room and how they respond to each other by noting voice tone and the choice of words they make. The mediator should observe if the body attitude of the

parties has changed as they leave the room and ask themselves what happened in the shift of the negotiation process.

When suitable, adjust body posture and use some of the effort qualities to communicate appropriately and effectively during mediation. The mediator should know when to offer an extension of the kinesphere in relational responsiveness, as the mediator did in negotiation.

There should be observation of the predominant emotions that are portrayed in posture, made by the parties and their gestures in their mediation. For instance, during the introduction, opening statements, the agenda, negotiation, caucus, and the agreement (Vartanian et al., 2016, p.5). A mediator should be able to observe if the parties are defending themselves. For instance, if they are advancing or retreating or whether the parties are attacking each other. Observations are very significant, especially in power discrepancies and in deciding the entry points for a proper balancing of power.

During mediation, when the parties are stuck in their effort that holds them to issues or even particular positions, the mediator should choose some of the quality efforts to give a reframe potential shift in mediation perspective, for example, light-weight or free flow. If a conflict is intensifying, they should briefly come up with a quick body language strategy model to curb rising tension.

5.2 Characteristics of Body Language

It is a natural process that is self-acquired. Nobody teaches it, and it is self-absorbed. There is no formal training needed. The learning process of body language begins from birth, and the child cries when hungry or wet. Nevertheless, some of the personality programs that have been developed teach about body language nowadays. The mastering of body language

requires experience. Body language has a considerable impact and goes unnoticed most of the time, with women having a better understanding of body language than men do. In addition, social norms control body language. For instance, even if you were happy over the death of someone you disliked, you would not smile at their funeral.

5.3 Decoding Body Language during Mediation

In the grand scheme of mediation, body language and gestures are incredibly significant. Albert Mehrabian founded a famous 7-38-55 rule that breaks down various factors of communication that assist in expressing feelings and opinions. The scholar theorized nonverbal body language takes a more significant percentage of overall communication during mediation with 55 per cent, and 38 per cent is based on the voice comprising of beats and intonations of the parties. The remaining 7 per cent is for verbal body language. Therefore, if a mediator ignores nonverbal communication and focuses only on what is being said, then the mediator stands a chance of losing 94 per cent of total negotiation information (Vartanian et al., 2016, p. 7). When the mediation is based on excellent quality communication of opinions and outlooks, then missing information will not happen.

From experience, the use of facial expression and gesture is the most influential and the dominant form of communication during the mediation process. Cuddy's research reinforces these ideas, and she argues that having a better understanding of the body language is significant for mediators in facilitation roles. Mediators must be aware of the parties' body language all the time, as it plays a vital role in how mediators present themselves. This enables them to reinforce their reliability, compassion, and neutrality, proving they can be trusted to handle and solve sensitive information and represent everyone's interests. This assists in improving the disputants' experience during the negotiation process.

During data collection on how the body language is used for better mediation outcomes, there are simple ideas that mediators should keep in mind on understanding body language to conduct a productive mediation process. These are listed below.

5.3.1. Identifying Signs of Apprehension during Negotiation

Most arbitration is intrinsically stressful. The disputants arrive at the negotiation table because all other conflict resolutions have failed without the help of a third party, and the court process seems a last resort. The primary and most significant objectives of the mediator are to diffuse all current uncertainty and anxiety so that the partakers can get to an agreement and find a communally valuable resolution to their issues (Vartanian et al., 2016, p. 9). The first thing to do to achieve this goal is to recognize the most anxious individuals, given that most involved in dispute always try to hide signs of distress or fear.

The mediators should check out for cues of body language that always show a client is struggling to hide anxiety more so when gauging the emotional atmosphere of the negotiation sessions. For instance: being unable to stay still during negotiation sessions (frequent crossing and uncrossing of legs, fidgeting with clothes, and constant adjustment of positions on the chair); looking towards the exit or even pointing the body towards the door; clearing throats frequently; frowning repeatedly and raising of eyebrows, and sweating and having a pale face.

5.3.2. The Anticipation of Anger and Conflict

Escalation of angry outbursts is caused by unconstrained stress and anxiety. Mediators are challenged by clients having high conflicts, whose unchecked rage and anger can disrupt meetings and even destabilize the competence of the negotiator. Some of the body languages that a mediator can watch for to anticipate meltdown and to mediate before anger increases include:

- Having a red face,
- Clenched fists and jaw,
- Rapid breathing,
- Arms that are crossed,
- Jabbing fingers,
- Shaking and sticking out the face.

If the mediator notices combinations of all these body languages, then it is time to reaffirm the mediation's goals to reach a proper solution that enables the involved parties to feel comfortable with the outcome and without blame or retaliation.

5.3.3. Communicating Non-Judgement and Empathy

For the mediator to establish reliability, both sides' needs should not be judged but be trusted to represent the interest of everyone (Beattie, 2016, p.43). Body language has a very significant role in strengthening the prediction of neutrality, commitment, and empathy toward a free and fair mediation process. The following nonverbal body language should be used to create a safe negotiation space where both disputing parties feel supported and respected:

- Maintain stable eye contact when speaking to each individual, as shifting of the eyes is connected with disinterest and being untrustworthy.
- Mirror all the expressions of everyone you are speaking to in the room; for instance, if they are smiling, then smile back to them, and when they show

seriousness, ensure your countenance replicates their emotions, thus validating their feelings too.

- Slanting head and body towards the speaker; looking at the computer, phone, or note pad may interfere with having proper eye contact.
- To show the speakers that you care and understand, nod your head; there are many body language signals to watch and control during the mediation process. Notice all the body language gestures that are helpful and relevant to your work.

5.3.4 The use of Body Language during Mediation

Body language communication plays a vital role in how individuals converse. Trained intermediaries should pay close attention to the non-verbal body language of the conflicting parties. Using body language helps convey feelings, moods, and mental state, thus giving support and feedback to the received messages. The capability to comprehend and use various body languages can be a powerful tool for the mediators because it helps them to connect with others, express what they mean correctly, and navigate through challenging situations. This significantly improves the negotiator's skills for significant relations, increases empathy, and avoids stalemate situations. Therefore, it is substantial for trained mediators to improve their negotiation skills in interpreting body language communication to be useful as a mediator. The distance of communication can vary from one person to another. Extroverts have small distances of conversation, compared to introverts who want to keep distance.

There are four critical zones of personal space around an individual's body that were discovered by Hall (1966) and are classified as:

- Intimate: Touching to 10 inches.

- Social-consultative: four to twelve bases for official dealings.
- Public: Addressing a group of people.
- Casual-personal: 18 inches up to four feet, it is used for informal communication with friends.

Understanding and applying body language by the mediator during mediation is very significant. The mediator sits in an equidistant position from both disputing parties. Sitting closer to one of the parties generates awareness of partiality or bias. The negotiator sits near the disputants than the support persons, hence enabling the mediator to converse with the disputing parties directly without having the risk of being cut off by the support counsels. The level of dominance is indicated by the vertical space between persons. During mediation, the mediators make a safe and open condition for both disputing parties (Beattie, 2016, p.54). Mediators sit at the same eye level as those of the parties, enabling them to develop a friendly atmosphere.

The disputing parties also sit in identical chairs so that one of the disputing parties does not sit higher than the other party during the mediation proceedings. The negotiator must be aware of the relative heights of the disputants, to make a taller disputant sit at a lower chair, and a shorter disputant sit on a higher chair. The aim is to enable the parties to sit at the same eye level to circumvent the situation of supremacy. In the United States of America, observation distance between the parties is a perfect indication of the progress of the arbitration process. When the mediations begin, the disputing parties sit some distance away from each other, but as the arbitration process continues, they start to lean towards each other. This shows that there is an understanding that has been created by the mediator. The parties end up talking to each other

directly, ignoring the mediator, and therefore, this is an indication that the mediator has accomplished his job and has reinstated excellent communication between the disputing parties.

5.4: Mastering the Body language for Better Mediation Outcomes

Nonverbal body language communication is the process of sending and receiving relevant messages between two or more disputing parties. Communication is through various nonverbal cues that comprise gestures, posture, eye contact, and intonation of the voice. According to the data analysed, communication through body language makes up over 68 per cent of all communications used during mediation. The traditional description of body language comprises the idea that reflexive and reflexive body movement are used by the mediator to communicate a message to disputing parties (Borg, 2015, p. 22). In the traditional description of the body language, it assumes intentional body movement used by the mediator to communicate a relevant message during mediation. As the intervention is carried in the room, the parties involved in a dispute intentionally use specific body language to convey a particular word. Most of the nonverbal body language communiqué is unconscious and is not intentionally envisioned by the negotiator to be expansive. The disputing parties' manifest body language communication has communicative potential, which is realized when the mediator receives and interprets these nonverbal communications.

According to the analysis conducted through the interviews and questionnaires, it concludes that body language has both receptive and affective traits. The responsive characteristic refers to how the mediator receives the piece of nonverbal body language communication. It can be either conscious or unconscious, attributing to the specific meaning of that body language communication with the disputing parties. The striking characteristic refers to how the senders, like disputing parties involved in the mediation of any piece of nonverbal

communication, consciously intends it to affect the receiver. There are three stages of body language communication, which are listed below.

5.4.1. Physiological Movement

Physiological movements have been summarized into overlapping sub-categories of posture, body movements, facial expression, gestures, and spatial behaviour. The evolution of the body comprises hand, head, arm, and legs movements and some of the positions that are used alone or in cooperation with other body movements (Borg, 2015, p.14). Posture refers to how a person is standing or sitting, and it comprises many positions that the body can take. The use of facial appearance plays a significant part in body language communiqué because most of the time, speakers and mediators look at each other's face while speaking. Facial expression comprises eyes, mouth, brow movements, which may occur with each other or singly. Gesture deals with the intensity and direction of looking at someone across the mediation room, and it includes the perception of the eye pupil dilation. Spatial behaviour comprises the proximity of one's body with the other.

The physiological movement has a significant role in the interpretative function of nonverbal communication. The underlying assumption is that everybody's language movement has meaning, and mediators need to ascertain this meaning during the mediation proceedings. Most of the interviewees questioned the assumption that body movement has particular specific purposes. Some people's body languages have the same meanings, for instance, some gestures. These body language movements may be hard-wired; mediators speak in a systematic function rather than interpretative one. Specific purposes are attached to particular body language movement providing a more extensive generalization to be drawn the parties involved in the mediation process.

To minimize this difficulty of body movement, conventional literature on body language suggests various deliberations that should be taken into account. The first suggestion is about the effect of culture; different cultures always have mixed signals. For instance, nodding of the head is taken to mean "yes" in many western and eastern cultures (Lee, 2018, p.2). The mediator needs to interpret the cluster of gestures rather than an individual gesture because one body movement might be out of sync with other movements of the body. All these body language considerations during mediation proceedings point to an examination that incorporates an anti-assumption controller that one needs to check before acting on it. This is significant, as human beings are known to be meaning-making persons.

5.4.2. Environment

The environment exists in the background, and it always bypasses the mediator's conscious attention. It affects us in elusive ways, which affects the feeling of power and the desire to cooperate in mediation. The environment is a significant factor in mediation proceedings. The environmental category consists of the room, sounds, lighting, temperature, decoration, the shape of the table, and the seating positions. In the context of mediation, for a square or a rectangular table and seating position directly opposite one another, it creates a sense of hatred. Sitting next to one another on one side of the table fosters a lot of cooperation. A round table is also perfect for encouraging a sense of equality and cooperation in the mediation room. An oval, as well as a rectangular table, has a power position at the table head, while there is no discernible power in a round table (Lee, 2018, p.5). Nevertheless, for a round or a square table, the dynamics of power are affected by the presence of a potent mediator with high status due to the location of the seat in the most secure position in the mediation room.

5.4.3. Vocal Behaviour

It constitutes 39 per cent of the communication package and consists of pitch, volume, speed, pauses, and inflections. Vocal behaviour involves both systematic and interpretative functions of body language. The mediator can use vocal behaviour to achieve rapport during negotiation. All the components of volume, timbre, pauses, pitch, and speed are always matched when speaking to disputing parties during resolution. The easiest and quickest match is usually the speed and volume. Matching timbre and pitch requires some amount of voice control and subtlety. During mediation, it is not advisable to mimic other parties but to convey the proper impression that you are similar to the other parties to get an appropriate resolution to the problems on the table. Pacing the elements of the voice is useful because most people are not aware of voice shifts, thus making mediation more successful.

The mediator should be able to match the vocal behaviour of a particular party if upset, for instance, revealing a loud voice, faster speed, and high pitch (Lee, 2018, p.7). This may appear counter-intuitive as it may aggravate the other party. The most automatic response by the mediator will be to maintain calm and measured vocal behaviour to calm the disputing parties during negotiation proceedings. The subtlety is used by mediators because it matches the vocal behaviour when using reconciliatory words and gives calmness. This then sends subliminal and conscious messages to the minds of the parties involved in the resolution process. After vocal behaviour is appropriately managed, then one of the parties should lead the other by lowering the intensity on the pacing of all the vocal behaviours; hence anger is de-escalated.

Inflection is described as rising and the fall of voice pitch, which is used or expressed during the mediation process. The modulation occurs at the end of an utterance between the disputing parties, and it can go upwards or even downwards. Inflection plays a vital role in the

interpretative function of communication. An upward inflection indicates doubt in the content of verbal communication is structured as a statement. The mediator can use upward inflection when reflecting on parties to loosen their hold on stiff positions or get them to rethink their resolution position. A downward inflection is used to subconsciously communicate to the mediator to consider what the disputing parties said (Lee, 2018, p.8). Intonation is used in collaboration with physiological body movement to provide support for the meaning of modulation.

5. 5 How Body Language Influences Mediation Success

One of the most significant research studies is how often body language affects the success of mediation. When the mediators meet the disputing parties and discuss the value of resolutions, they notice that confidence, open disposition, and posture set the tone during the mediation meeting (Hörner et al., 2015, p.1498). Body language influences perception and leads to a successful outcome. During the mediation process, the presentation of testimonials through facial expression, hand gestures, and postures allows them to reach to a new point. At this point, happiness and bright eyes of the parties become contagious, and the parties shift from polite interest to having a genuine appreciation.

One of the takeaways from mediators' experiences is how to portray themselves during mediation proceedings, which often hinder or contribute to success. When solving disputes, the way parties see the mediators affects their attitude towards resolution. Having the ability to interpret nonverbal body language improves a mediator's ability to listen and comprehend what is being conveyed carefully (Borg, 2015, p. 16). This helps mediators determine if a person is reliable or if there is understanding, which is always an essential factor when finding a concrete resolution during the mediation process.

Without getting a proper understanding of both the spoken and unspoken nonverbal body language signals, the mediator might not get the perfect mediation deal and might leave something on the negotiation table. The mediator is required to be proficient at listening, observing, and understanding the entire body language message completely. Skilled communicators are not always good at reading signals from other parties' eyes, their expression and body gestures, but they are proficient at making sure that their verbal and nonverbal body language messages match (Beattie, 2016, p.56). The mediators may also be adept at masking their own nonverbal body language messages.

During the data collection, the conclusion is that the mediators should not depend on one element of the body language. Several signals are not reliable, and there is no universality in the meaning of various nonverbal body movements because there might be some cultural differences when interpreting body language messages (Borg, 2015, p.8).

5.6. The Role of Body Language in Mediation

Having a better understanding of body language advances communication with others during mediation proceedings, with parties coming together to find an amicable solution to their crises (Barsky, 2016, p.73). What is expressed through words during mediation sessions, one may observe various body movements such as facial expression, patterns in breathing, and gestures, all of which make up body language. Body language is either positive or negative. People always throw different signals around during mediation, either loud ones or silent ones using body language. It is, therefore, significant for the parties in the negotiation room and for all professionals to assist conflicting parties to resolve their problems. They should be tuned to signals that are emitted from the body that are observed rather than heard.

It might be challenging to pick apart body signals one at a time. Still, it is relevant to have a close look at the nonverbal movements concerning verbal communication and other situations. Body language is an essential part of the mediation process and it is part of the mediator's role to be very vigilant and observant to notice all the body movements. The mediators should also assist the parties in identifying the importance of the nonverbal cues (Kelly, Zuroff & Shapira, 2009, p.67). During mediation proceedings, one person may say yes, but something about their body language says 'no'. This may be an indication of discomfort and confusion on how to express their disagreement. When the mediator notices this kind of body language, they should reflect and say: 'You said yes, but I think that you are not entirely in agreement with what you are trying to say. Can you expand a little on why you are not sure about what you are saying?'

The parties acknowledge and explain why they don't feel comfortable during mediation. This leads to a dialogue with the other party to explore all the alternatives with which both can live with. There might be a compromise, which should be accepted by both parties. No party should feel that a decision made has been forced or imposed on them because that agreement may fall apart (Hörner et al., 2015, p. 1489). Mediators have also worked with parties that are not willing to acknowledge the presence of the other party during the mediation session, either by not looking at them directly or talking to them.

At some point during dialogue, one party might say something negative or positive. That comment can trigger a reaction in that the other party who may turn towards them and roll their eyes or just give a look or just look surprised. This is body language that has shifted (Kelly, Zuroff & Shapira, 2009, p. 300). As the dialogue begins between the disputing parties, the role of the mediator tends to change. The mediation process becomes more productive as the parties can address one another and body language speaks a lot about what might be at stake.

Chapter Six: Data Analysis and Findings

If reading body language is not taken into account by the mediators, we will lose probably 93 per cent of total body language facts conveyed by one of the disputing parties. For this reason, it is significant to understand the most frequent gestures in order to foster negotiators' communication skills and develop disputants discourse and mutual understanding (LópezViera, 2018, p.12).

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
@1HowlonghaveyoubeenworkingwithinMediationpractice	2.41	1.206	54
@3Doyouthinkbodylanguagegettingimportantwithinmediation	2.74	1.231	54

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

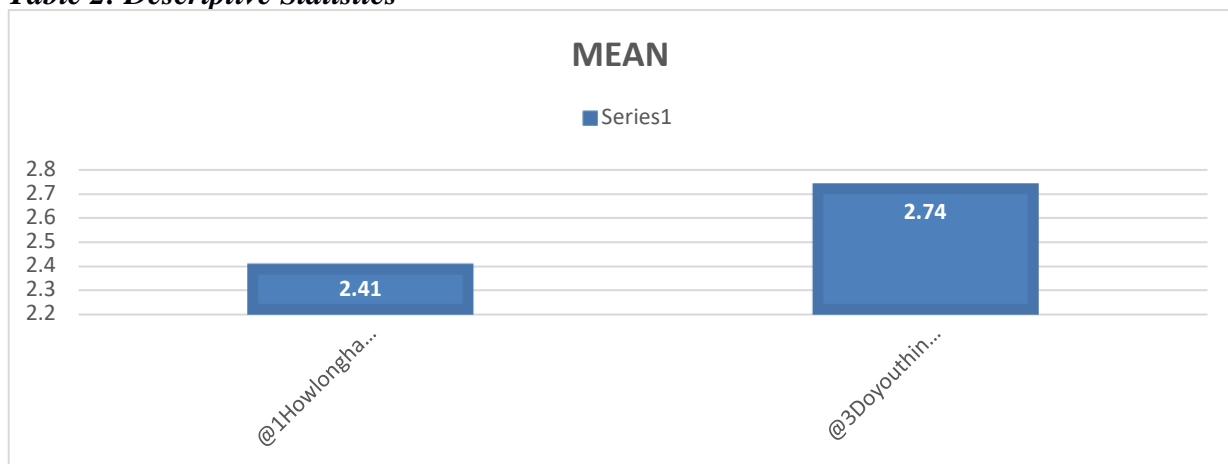


Table 3: Mean

Model Summary				
odel	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
	.136 ^a	.019	.000	1.206
a. Predictors: (Constant), @3Doyouthinkbodylanguagetrainingisimportantwithinmediation				

Table 4: Linear Regression Model Summary

The model summary is for regression analysis on the variable of ‘how long have you been working within mediation practice and do you think body language training is important within meditation’. It is a test for how body language training can support mediators. The R-value is 13.6%, which is a small correlation between the two variables. The R-square, which is the proportion of variance between the two variables, is 1.9%. Hence, only 1.9% of the dependent variable can be predicted from the independent variables.

Body language communication should be taken into account so as not to lose 93% of the total information that is transferred by a disputing party. It is, therefore, essential for the mediators to know the most relevant gestures in order to foster mediators’ skills to expand their discourse significantly. Quality and good communication might be the necessary tool to find out the root cause of conflict (LópezViera, 2018, p.88). The training of mediators and information should be based on both words and gestures to determine and understand the complete message and put it in the right content, provided the gestures isolated do not express significant pieces of information.

		Coefficients					
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			95.0% Confidence Interval for B
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	Lower Bound Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	2.042	.404		5.061	.000	1.233 2.852
	@3Doyouthinkbodylanguage training is important within mediation	.133	.135	.136	.990	.327	-.137 .403

a. Dependent Variable: @1HowlonghaveyoubeenworkingwithinMediationpractice

Table 5: Linear regression: Coefficients

The predictor variable is: ‘do you think body language training is important within mediation’. The coefficient score for the variable is 0.133, which is higher than 0.05. Hence, the relationship between the two variables is statistically significant.

Therefore, analysis of how to use the body language for better mediation outcomes was carried out, studying the variables used, and they can influence good communication, focusing on the skills that the intermediaries should have and consequences on relevant instances in the process of mediation such as welcoming, escalation of conflict, and moments of emotional dampening. These body language signals generate nonverbal skills that mediators resort to and use them when they are faced with situations in order to comprehend the origin of emotions that are expressed by the body. Visual aspect regulates our image, our way of being, and the form in which the disputants create an image during mediation. Body language consists of facial expressions and cleanliness. It is very significant to understand the somatotype and the image conveyed by the disputing party with a different physique. According to the analysis of the

results found, disputants use the shortest time to create their impression about the mediator. Therefore, body language, nonverbal language, and personality should be in harmony.

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
@1Howlonghaveyoubeenworkingwithi nMediationpractice	2.41	1.206	54
@3Doyouthinkbodylanguagetrainingis importantwithinmediation	2.74	1.231	54
@Duringthemediationprocessdoyoujud gesomeoneâsbodyla	2.61	.787	54

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.137 ^a	.019	-.020	1.217

a. Predictors: (Constant),

b. @Duringthemediationprocessdoyoujudgesomeoneâsbodyla,
@3Doyouthinkbodylanguagetrainingisimportantwithinmediation

Table 7: Model Summary

The R-value is 13.7%, which indicates a slight correlation between the dependent variable and the independent variables. The R-Square, which is the variance in the dependent

variable, which can be predicted by the independent variables, is 1.9%. Hence, the strength of the association is 0.019. The value of R-square and adjusted R square are close due to a large number of observations in comparison to the predictors.

During mediation sessions, gestures can be detected. Gestures are part of the body language signal, and it is related to universal emotions among people. It has a design for its identification that is valuable in the negotiation process through communicative expression that can recognize gestures slips. Nonverbal language prevails when the mediator is facing a conflict contradiction situation (Boulle et al., 2008, p.56). It is essential to record mediation sessions to view them and be able to analyse the emotions that are expressed, which enables the mediators to categorize all the body language used, such as facial expressions that are based on muscle movements. Nonverbal language communication is relevant here and reveals verbal language as reliable and transparent. These are significant in the intervention process, to not only know gestural signs of disputants but also improve the skills of the mediator.

Model	Coefficients ^a						
	Unstandardized		Standardized	Sig.		95.0% Confidence	
	Coefficients		Coefficients			Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	1.992	.654		.046	.004	.679	3.305
@3Doyouthinkbodylanguagetraingingisimportantwithinmediation	.131	.137	.134	.960	.342	-.143	.406

@Duringthe mediationprocessdoyouju dgesomeoneâsbodyla	. 021	. 214	.0 14	.099	.922	- .409	.4 51
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a. Dependent Variable: @1HowlonghaveyoubeenworkingwithinMediationpractice

Table 8: Multiple Regressions: Coefficients

The variable, ‘Do you think body language training is important within mediation, and how long have you been working within mediation practice’ has statistical significance, since there was a unit increase in every 0.13. The variable during the mediation process ‘do you judge someone’s body language’ is not statistically significance. The constant figure is significant since it has a p-value of 0.04, which is lower than 0.05.

Mediators should understand that these body language signals in order to identify them and read what kind of reactions the disputants express during mediation and the flaws revealed through their verbal communication. Understanding these elements enables mediators to identify what kind of feelings are involved in the conflict and might assist in legitimizing the disputants. The mediators can identify body language signals through analysing the proximity of the disputants, studying gestural cues and aspects associated with submission or dominance; for instance, who is the first one to come in the intercession room, who chooses a seat first, and who talks first (Boulle et al., 2008, p. 34).

Group Statistics					
	@1Howlonghaveyoubeenworki ngwithinMediationpractice	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
@Beforeyoustartthemediationpr ocessdoyouconsidee	Between 0 to 3 years	18	2.78	.548	.129
	Between 4 to 7 year	10	2.80	.422	.133

Table 9: Descriptive statistics

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances						95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
t-test for Equality of Means		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
@Before you start the mediation process do you consider that	Equal variances assumed	.132	.720	-.111	26	.913	-.022	.200	-.434	.390
	Equal variances not assumed			-.120	23.073	.906	-.022	.186	-.406	.362

Table 10: Independent sample test

The independent t-test shows that the p-value is 0.720, which is larger than 0.05. Hence, there is no significant difference. The Null hypothesis will not be rejected. There is no relationship between the variable, 'before you start the mediation process do you consider body language' and the variable 'how long have you been working in the mediation processes'.

Another dominance or submission includes whether the disputants are looking at each other as they talk, if they are seeking approval of their partners, and if they are relaxed or disturbed during the mediation process. Mediators should also be aware of the cultural biases that the disputants might be having.

Communication is also essential during the mediation process between the mediator and disputants. During mediation, communication is essential because it has elements that need a broader view to understand the body language signals being expressed in order to understand the discourse of another party. The parties always convey and manifest sentiments with body gestures because it is a silent process and understanding how it works can assist in perfecting and controlling body language, helping to create a relaxed environment at the mediation table.

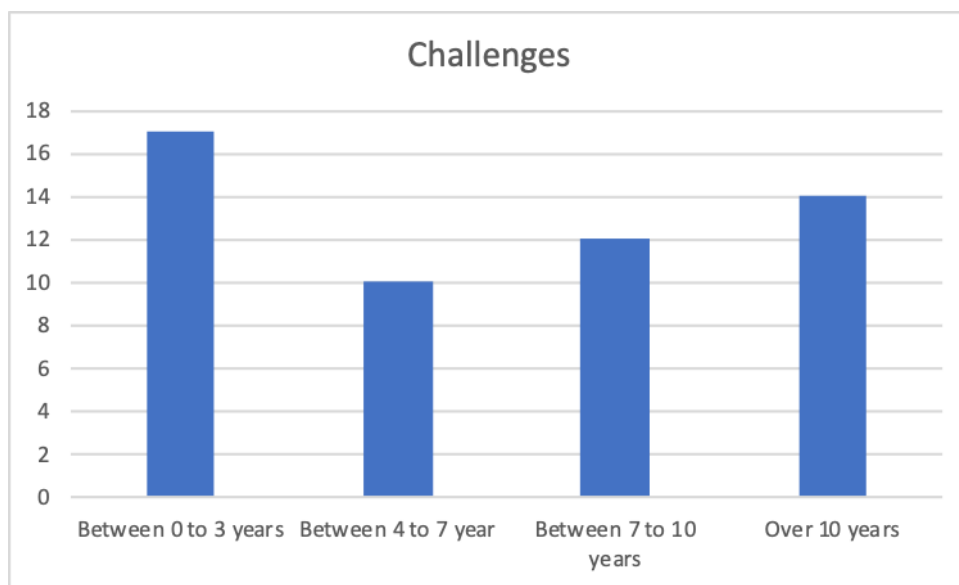
Research shows that most of the disputing parties tend to trust the mediator automatically. This enables them to adjust their perceptions when there is enough evidence provided. When evaluating the trustworthiness of the mediator, one should remember that it is essential to notice all the necessary nonverbal cues when using body language in the mediation. If one of the disputing parties is lying, it might be difficult to coordinate their body language; for instance, saying no while nodding yes is unacceptable. Liars also tend to forget to add gestures and facial expressions while talking, things that happen naturally while talking (Laura LópezViera, 2018).

Descriptives										
				Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
N							Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
@ If yes do you encounter challenges in understanding and interpreting	Between 0 to 3 years	0	17	4.24	1.300	.315	3.57	4.90	2	5
	Between 4 to 7 year	4	10	3.40	1.350	.427	2.43	4.37	2	5
	Between 7 to 10 years	7	12	5.00	.000	.000	5.00	5.00	5	5
	Over 10 years	10	14	3.36	1.598	.427	2.43	4.28	1	5
	Total		53	4.02	1.380	.190	3.64	4.40	1	5
@ During the mediation process	Between 0 to 3 years	0	18	2.56	.856	.202	2.13	2.98	1	3

cessdoyoujud gesomeoneâs bodyla	Between 4	10	2.80	.632	.200	2.35	3.25	1	3
	to 7 year								
	Between 7	12	2.42	.900	.260	1.84	2.99	1	3
	to 10 years								
	Over 10	14	2.71	.726	.194	2.29	3.13	1	3
	years								
	Total	54	2.61	.787	.107	2.40	2.83	1	3

Table 11: Descriptive Statistics

If yes, do you encounter challenges in understanding body language?



Graph 1: Challenges in Understanding Body Language

ANOVA

		Sum	of		Mean Square	F	Sig.
@Ifyesdoyouencounter challengesinunderstandi ngandint	Between Groups	22.308	3		7.436	4.752	.005
	Within Groups	76.673	49		1.565		
	Total	98.981	52				
@Duringthemediationpr ocesdoyoujudgesomeo neâsbodyla	Between Groups	1.015	3		.338	.532	.663
	Within Groups	31.818	50		.636		
	Total	32.833	53				

Table 12: ANOVA

From the ANOVA analysis, it is evident that the length of the mediation process is significantly different from at least one of the groups of variables. This is because the p-value is 0.005, which is less than 0.05.

This analysis allows the mediators to identify and train themselves on the skills required for full, proficient, and understandable communication. For example, where the mediator should look at, what part of the body to raise, like hands, to express themselves, the appropriate position, and how to introduce themselves to the disputants in the first meeting, either by shaking hands or kissing (LópezViera, 2018, p.12). The mediators should train their voices to lead and calm the disputants sitting across from each other in the mediation table in case confrontation erupts. If the table used during the mediation process is a glass table, it allows the mediator to analyse the body language signals of the disputants' lower body, which is sometimes missed.

Chapter Seven: Discussion

7.0 Introduction

The mediation process involves human interactions at all times. There are various and several ways in which mediator can use the previous chapter's analysis of body language.

7.1 How Body Language Reveals Emotions and Thoughts during Mediation

Body language is an outward replication of a participant's emotive circumstance. Each movement and gesture is a significant key to an emotion an individual might be feeling at the time of mediation. The key to interpreting body language by the mediator is the ability to comprehend participants in the mediation process while listening to what they are saying and noting all the circumstances under which they are saying it. This enables the mediator to separate fact from fiction and also reality from fantasy (Pease & Pease, 2008, p.12). Humans always have a fascination with the spoken word and the ability to be communicators. Some people are unaware of body language signals and their influence though, despite having proper knowledge that most messages in face to face dialogue are revealed via body language signals.

The most obvious way that body language can be used in the mediation process is in building and maintaining trust and empathy. The main challenge of having a rapport with the disputing parties through matching and mirroring is that the intermediary must appear neutral and impartial at all times. There will be no proper mediation outcome if the mediator adopts the same posture or body language of only one party (Pease & Pease, 2008, p.13). During mediation, the mediator uses physiological movements and vocal behaviour to build a strong rapport, one that requires subtlety. Building rapport is achieved through pacing in three following ways:

1. The first is the mediator can pace one of the disputing parties by matching gestures and the rate of breathing of the parties. Matching these elements of body

language is temporary and not obvious than matching the body posture of the parties.

2. Secondly, the participants can be paced via vocal behaviour (Pease & Pease, 2008, p.21). The easiest way is to match the pace of speaking. Since the mediation always involves direct communication between the mediator and the disputing parties, the mediator takes that opportunity to utilize the gestures and the pace of speech when summarizing, reflecting, reframing and paraphrasing of statements during the mediation process.
3. Lastly, the mediator should make liberal use of cross-over mirroring. This involves matching the other party's movement of body language with a pattern similar to their body movements.

The easiest and quickest way is to nod at the pace that a party is speaking during the resolution. Most people always talk to internal rhythm and therefore it is natural to nod one's head to show acknowledgement. During private mediation sessions, the mediator can have access to all the elements of the pacing of the parties such as pacing of body posture to create a rapport with the parties during mediation (Bercovitch, 2019, p. 11). Body language can also be used to enhance various meanings of communication. Nonverbal cues of body language can be used to enhance effective communication by acknowledging all the assumptions that inevitably build a mechanism to deal with communication failures during the resolution process. It is also significant for the mediators to look for incidences of incongruence and transition, apart from sorting for cognitive contents of mediation such as facts, positions, and interests from the perspective of nonverbal communication.

Checking for occurrences of incongruence involves recognizing incongruence within any form of body language, especially nonverbal cues. The idea is that whether the sender is not comfortable with what is being said, there will be body language signals that are contradictory (Hall & Knapp, 2013, p.45). Transition is also significant because it helps the mediator to look for body language signals during the mediation proceedings. For example, when the mediator is addressing one party, he or she may shift from one body language signal to another. The parties will check at the clusters of body language signals that are shifted in the room and what they mean. If the signals comprise negative body language, then the assumptions are that the mediator is responding negatively to what is being said in the meeting.

Inflections can also be used to enhance effective communication during mediation. As discussed earlier in the thesis, upward inflection means having some doubt or questioning over what is being said. Downward inflection means giving emphasis or command, and the intonations are used naturally in mediation meetings for excellent conflict resolution. Mediators are therefore encouraged to be careful in using inflections in mediation meetings when communicating. For example, when a mediator is making an opening declaration where he or she institutes power, integrity and sets a nice tone for mediation, using neutral and downward inflections is recommended. When asking relevant questions or even trying to encourage a party to open up and share their information and feelings, an upward inflection is recommended.

Mediators can enrich their communication with proper body language to convey specific messages subconsciously to the parties. At the end of the mediation process, the mediator makes a mutual decision using downward inflection and will communicate a command that all parties will listen and follow (Hall & Knapp, 2013, p. 56). A good mediator needs to be a perfect communicator that guides them toward a good mediation outcome. This thesis has established

the best elements of body language that a mediator can use during the mediation process to perfect mediation outcomes and to reach an understanding between the disputing parties.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

In summary, this thesis provides guidance regarding the skills of the mediator during the mediation process in the use of body language. The study provides an approach to the analysis of body language, its theories and beliefs, and, most importantly, its importance during mediation proceedings. Various advances have occurred in the field of mediation using body language discourse, which includes facial expressions and gestures.

Relatively, our body and our energy in the space around us create a symbiotic relationship, which is then transferred out among the disputing parties and to the mediation environment (Madonik, 2001, p.38). The mediators are encouraged to engage the whole body using visual, audio, and kinaesthetic senses during mediation proceedings. They should also consider engaging the entire brain using the non-verbal right hemisphere, encouraging the practice of holistic and integrated mediation. This way, the disputing parties in the mediation room and the mediator can have perfect and relevant communication. Mediation proceedings are usually in the form of linguistic expressions, but some arenas of mediation relate to the use of body language.

It is incredibly significant for the mediators to be mindful of their body language communication actions and also non-verbal cues used by the present disputing parties. Mediators should take an interest in learning different body language actions and what they mean (Reiman, 2007, p.71). Some of the body language actions and signals have a specific general meaning, which might raise awareness in the mediator and the mediator might want to ask more relevant questions or even ask for detailed clarification during such occurrences in mediation.

The mediator should be an expert in using body language and should be able to break down specific body movements to ascertain their meaning by asking questions. Being an expert

in body language, a mediator should be mindful of these actions during proceedings so that they can notice if a person says one thing but their body does something different. Some actions of body language are easy to see, for instance, shaking the head to show an agreement or a disagreement, smiling and sighing.

A proper mediation outcome is a product of the culture of body language that gives a basis to check it from the non-verbal communication point of view. This is because it increases understanding of mediation proceedings and increases resolution efficiency. The mediation room is a place or an environment where meaningful discourse is frequently held, along with interpersonal communication, which is also very significant for building a perfect understanding between conflicting parties in the mediation proceeding (Madonik, 2001, p.32). Body language has a critical impact on how others perceive us, and the domain of how they see you, and the way they describe you as a mediator during mediation proceeding has a significant meaning. Each participant in the mediation proceeding must be well versed with body language. The participant must consciously and continuously send meaningful non-verbal messages to the others.

The use of body language is a proper reflection of our internal beliefs than our words can convey. Conflicting parties always read the body language of the mediators quite carefully and keenly before, during, and after the mediation process. Thus, the mediators should be aware of their body language as an effort to reduce the heat between the conflicting parties.

The study allows us to know and understand the theories, values, and beliefs about the use of body language and to be able to learn through different and various researchers concerning the advances that emerge from the use of body language in the field of mediation (Reiman, 2007, p.70). Mediators thus need to consider the importance of body language in providing excellent communication.

Personal Reflection

Background

Writing my master's thesis was the most difficult thing I have ever done in terms of academic activities, which is not an exaggeration. It is a long and in-depth research work and, as much as I love the topic, it was often very stressful and tiring, especially when I had to manage work and study at the same time. Obviously researching Body language and Mediation process made me more knowledgeable but also I have learned some other important lessons to my personal life and future career.

When I moved to Ireland, I wanted to learn English and move forward into my career and since I arrived, language was always the biggest barrier. To help, I decided to enrol in Dispute Resolution at Independent College Dublin.

Some years ago, I read a book called "Lie to me" from Paul Ekman and since then I became fascinated by Body language and micro expressions. That was when I was doing some of the play roles that we had during some classes and I realized that the small knowledge that I had about Nonverbal language was useful for the outcomes that made me think: What if we had more options for Body Language training specialized for Mediators? Would people be interested in that? That is how the idea came to me for my thesis.

Expectations

Once the topic was chosen and I started to realise my expectations were too high and that I would not have much material to work with. This tends to happen with me in different areas of my life. So I decided to stick with the important points and the objectives that should be covered and keep it simple in a way that I would be able to manage.

Objective

To do my thesis, I needed to have a well-defined objective. The objective may be very big, but this had to fit with the time given. In life, the ideal is to dream big, because big dreams move us to accomplish great things. During the research, a lot of times I ended up searching a book that made me go to another book and suddenly I was reading Greek philosophers and/or criminal psychology again. Therefore, having a well-defined objective and writing it in a paper beside my desk helped me not deviate from the route I had envisioned and to keep it simple.

Focus

Staying focused is necessary in order to have a defined goal. Without a defined objective, we have no focus and, therefore, only with the clarity of where we want to get to, can we create the step-by-step process and conclude it.

Discipline

Keeping focused helped me to get closer to the next step and then to the next. And this is a good definition for discipline: doing what has to be done today and leaving what has to be done tomorrow for tomorrow. And that is how I have done chapter by chapter following the steps from the student handbook.

Getting help

No one can do a big project on their own. When we have a project like that it will consume time and effort, and we will often need help. It can be the help of friends who are close; family or qualified people that are specialized in the area you are writing; people that can help you reading your work and correcting your English if it is not your first language; a supervisor that can answer some of your questions and debate with you; participants that can answer your questions so you can analyse the data finding, and so on. It is thus necessary to have humility to recognize the need to ask for help to continue, to give more motivation or to guide even in what may be

wrong.

Throughout my masters, I counted on the help of my best friend and boyfriend that helped me on the emotional side when everything seemed to be difficult. In addition, a friend that is specialized in body language told me the most useful items that could be used in a mediation process so I could narrow my studies. My supervisor also pushed me to make sure I was following the steps that had to be followed so I would not fail. Another friend that works in a library also helped me download different materials. In addition, friends read my thesis and made me see aspects that I had not noticed.

Survey

A lot of things that we do not expect to happen they just happen along the way of writing your thesis. What I did not expect was that the survey would be so difficult for many reasons and would take me much more time than I thought. Firstly was the fact that my questionnaire was getting too specific, with too much jargon. Also some of mediators offices are very strict, for example one of them are a Government Department and their offices have strict firewalls and consequently the survey link was not available to them, so in some cases I had to contact the Head of their Service including supporting documents about confidentiality, supervisor details, etc. so they could make a decision to forward the link for their mediators. This took me more time than I was expecting and because of that I had to close the survey with 54 participants which is not an ideal number for a quantitative research.

Knowing all this, I had to put more time and effort into the data collection to try to get a larger number of participants and more accurate results.

Criticism and Compassion

Perhaps one of the most difficult aspects of writing my thesis was the reminder that I will be

evaluated by different people. So, there was a tendency to anticipate criticism and, during the course, criticize myself because I could do better; even comparing myself to other colleagues that had a positive result.

During this thesis time, it was interesting to note how I deal with problems, difficulties, and criticism. Realizing that I was criticizing myself, perhaps because I am too anxious, meant I kept a daily journal. Every day I started to write all the tasks I have completed and tick them and suddenly I started to pay more attention on what was already done and to be proud of myself because I came so far when 4 years ago I could not even speak English.

Criticism can be useful to improve, but when you stay in criticism, it will paralyze you. This principle, of course, is also valid for life beyond the walls of the university or thesis.

Conclusion

Last but not least I could recognize how much I have learned and I am still learning with these masters in Dispute Resolution and my thesis. Not only has it provided me the knowledge necessary to be a Mediator, but also the negotiation skills were genuinely beneficial to both areas of my life, personal and professional, and I can say that I also learned how to see situations in a different way.

Since I have started my classes I started to see both sides and how to be softer with people, more open to listening and less rigid to negotiations in general. I have learned that when you already define something rigid, nothing can be said by the other party that can change that decision. By taking this position, you can protect yourself from accepting a bad deal, but you can also you can limit some even better solutions, which is a problem.

The Thesis made me change the way I see people in all aspects of my life. Learning and researching body language made me understand and be more conscious not just about people and

scenarios around me but also about myself, my posture and gestures.

I am looking forward to the next steps in my professional career to develop myself as a mediator.

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