













Categoría: Arts and Humanities

ORIGINAL

## Utilising mediation for conflict resolution: Insights and future directions

### Utilización de la mediación para la resolución de conflictos: Perspectivas y orientaciones futuras

Olha Melnychuk<sup>1</sup>  , Natalia Opolska<sup>1</sup>  , Oleksandr Ostapenko<sup>1</sup>  , Serhii Lapshyn<sup>1</sup>  , Andrii Ishchuk<sup>1</sup>  

<sup>1</sup>Vinnitsia Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi State Pedagogical University, Vinnitsia, Ukraine.

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#### ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** in a world increasingly burdened by conflicts, mediation emerges as a vital alternative for resolving disputes. Mediation, involving a neutral mediator aiding parties to reach a mutual agreement, is gaining recognition across various fields such as family, labor, and international disputes. This article explores the application of mediation, the challenges it faces in gaining wider acceptance, and its potential for future expansion.

**Objectives:** to reveal the advantages of mediation over traditional judicial procedures; to identify the obstacles that hinder its widespread implementation; to propose specific measures and recommendations for improving the mediation system; to consider the potential future development of mediation as a crucial element of the modern conflict resolution system and its role in future society.

**Method:** the study employs analytical methods, comparative analysis, case studies, and a dialectical approach. Data was sourced from academic publications, legislative documents, and specific mediation cases.

**Results:** mediation offers numerous advantages, including faster resolution times, economic benefits, relationship preservation, and confidentiality. Despite these benefits, its adoption is limited by a lack of public awareness, inadequate legal frameworks, and a shortage of trained mediators. Addressing these issues through education, legal reforms, and professional development is crucial.

**Conclusions:** mediation is a crucial tool for conflict resolution, promoting peaceful and constructive solutions. Future developments should focus on expanding its scope, leveraging technology, and strengthening the legislative and professional frameworks. By enhancing public awareness and trust in mediation, it can become a cornerstone of modern conflict resolution practices, contributing to a more harmonious society.

**Keywords:** Mediation; Conflict Resolution; Family Relations; Labour Conflicts; Legal Reforms; Qualification of Mediators.

#### RESUMEN

**Introducción:** en un mundo cada vez más afectado por los conflictos, la mediación surge como una alternativa vital para la resolución de disputas. La mediación, en la que un mediador neutral ayuda a las partes a alcanzar un acuerdo mutuo, está ganando reconocimiento en diversos campos, como el familiar, el laboral y las disputas internacionales. Este artículo explora la aplicación de la mediación, los desafíos que enfrenta para ganar una mayor aceptación y su potencial para una expansión futura.

**Objetivos:** revelar las ventajas de la mediación sobre los procedimientos judiciales tradicionales; identificar los obstáculos que dificultan su implementación generalizada; proponer medidas y recomendaciones

específicas para mejorar el sistema de mediación; considerar el potencial desarrollo futuro de la mediación como un elemento crucial del sistema moderno de resolución de conflictos y su papel en la sociedad futura. **Método:** el estudio emplea métodos analíticos, análisis comparativo, estudios de casos y un enfoque dialéctico. Los datos se obtuvieron de publicaciones académicas, documentos legislativos y casos específicos de mediación.

**Resultados:** la mediación ofrece numerosas ventajas, incluidos tiempos de resolución más rápidos, beneficios económicos, preservación de la relación y confidencialidad. A pesar de estos beneficios, su adopción se ve limitada por la falta de concienciación pública, marcos jurídicos inadecuados y escasez de mediadores capacitados. Es fundamental abordar estas cuestiones mediante la educación, las reformas jurídicas y el desarrollo profesional.

**Conclusiones:** la mediación es una herramienta crucial para la resolución de conflictos, que promueve soluciones pacíficas y constructivas. Los avances futuros deben centrarse en ampliar su alcance, aprovechar la tecnología y fortalecer los marcos legislativos y profesionales. Al mejorar la concienciación pública y la confianza en la mediación, puede convertirse en una piedra angular de las prácticas modernas de resolución de conflictos, contribuyendo a una sociedad más armoniosa.

**Palabras clave:** Mediación; Resolución de Conflictos; Relaciones Familiares; Conflictos Laborales; Reformas Legales; Cualificación de los Mediadores.

## INTRODUCTION

In today's world, saturated with various conflicts and disputes, the search for effective resolution methods becomes increasingly relevant. In this context, mediation as an alternative mechanism for resolving differences attracts growing attention from professionals and the public. Mediation is when a neutral mediator helps the parties reach a mutually acceptable resolution to their conflict. Its principles, methods, and practices have proven effective in various fields, from family and labour disputes to international diplomatic disagreements. This article examines the experience of using mediation as a conflict resolution tool and discusses the prospects for its development and expansion in society.

While mediation is recognised as an effective method of conflict resolution, it still needs to gain proper dissemination and recognition in many societies. One of the main issues is the demand for more awareness about its benefits and possibilities among the general audience. Many people and organisations prefer traditional judicial dispute resolution methods due to mistrust in mediation or misunderstanding its principles. Moreover, in some cases, there is a lack of the necessary legal framework and infrastructure to develop mediation as a universal tool for conflict resolution. There are also frequent problems with providing quality training and certification for mediators, which lowers trust in the process. This article will examine these and other problems hindering the spread of mediation and propose ways to resolve them, as well as the prospects for developing this vital tool.

This study aims to examine mediation as an effective tool for conflict resolution, identify the obstacles that hinder its spread, and suggest ways to overcome them.

The following tasks are set to achieve this goal:

1. Study of the basic principles and methods of mediation.
2. Analyse mediation experience in various areas, such as family relations, business, labour conflicts and diplomatic disputes.
3. Identification of the advantages of mediation over traditional court procedures.
4. Problems that hinder the widespread implementation of mediation include a lack of public awareness, a lack of legal framework, and a lack of qualified mediators.
5. Proposal of specific measures and recommendations for improving the mediation system, including educational programmes, legal reforms and professional development of mediators.
6. Consideration of the prospects for the development of mediation as an essential element of the modern conflict resolution system and prediction of its role in the future.

Recent research and publication analysis:

*Educational and family mediation:* Usmanova et al.<sup>(1)</sup> explore mediation and communication practices in the educational environment. Karaszewska et al.<sup>(2)</sup> examine the role of mediation in resolving family conflicts.

*Legal aspects of mediation:* Borshchevska<sup>(3)</sup>, Kovač and Krišto<sup>(4)</sup>, and Golovko and Druz<sup>(5)</sup> discuss the legal aspects of mediation and arbitration. Bohatyuk and Baz<sup>(6)</sup> analyse mediation as an alternative to resolving legal conflicts.

*International and cultural aspects of mediation:* Brandão Bárrios,<sup>(7)</sup> Yulin and Jialin,<sup>(8)</sup> and Malacka<sup>(9)</sup> explore

the international and cultural aspects of mediation. Todorova<sup>(10)</sup> examines conflict mediation in Kosovo and Macedonia. Samsudin and Pirard<sup>(11)</sup> analyse mediation in industrial plantations in Indonesia.

*Mediation in business and conflict management:* Vieira<sup>(12)</sup> and Fahrioglu Akin<sup>(13)</sup> discuss the role of mediation in business governance and micro-conflicts. Chuol<sup>(14)</sup> and Gžibovskis<sup>(15)</sup> examine the impact of mediation on conflict resolution in Sudan and the basic principles of mediation. Parkhomenko et al.<sup>(16)</sup> consider mediation a component of conflict management in the European Union.

*Specialised topics and research:* Allport<sup>(17)</sup> and Hollon<sup>(18)</sup> discuss moderation and mediation in the context of psychology and law. Rajkova<sup>(19)</sup> and Mihalescu<sup>(20)</sup> explore mediation's historical and educational aspects. Shakirov and Amangeldiyev<sup>(21)</sup> examine conflictology and mediation legislation.

*Mediation processes in specific contexts:* Anam<sup>(22)</sup> explores the principles of neutrality in mediation, which are particularly important in contexts where objective and impartial mediation is required.

*Theoretical studies of mediation:* Nalyvaiko et al.<sup>(23)</sup> examine the institution of mediation as an effective way to resolve conflicts in Ukraine. Kuziv<sup>(24)</sup> discusses the theoretical aspects of mediation in the context of conflict resolution. Portere and Morevs<sup>(25)</sup> consider dialogue a sign of constructiveness in mediation. Tsursumia<sup>(26)</sup> analyses the use of mediation in administrative disputes. Arana-Catania et al.<sup>(27)</sup> examine the use of machine learning for mediation in armed conflict.

## METHOD

This article is an analytical study aimed at examining mediation as a method of conflict resolution. The main objective of the study is to identify the main trends, problems, and prospects for the development of mediation, as well as to propose recommendations for its improvement. The following methods were used to achieve this goal:

*Analytical method:* it allowed analysis of existing scientific articles, publications and legislative documents on mediation to identify the main trends, problems and prospects for the development of this method of conflict resolution.

*Comparative analysis:* this method provided an opportunity to compare the experience of using mediation in different countries and regions, identify differences in legislation, practices and cultural characteristics, and study effective methods and approaches to mediation.

*Case studies:* a detailed analysis of specific mediation cases in various situations (e.g., family disputes, corporate conflicts, international diplomatic disputes) allowed for identifying successful practices and problems and their solutions in the mediation process.

*Dialectical approach:* applying the dialectical analysis method revealed the internal contradictions and dynamics of mediation development and their relationship with social and cultural changes.

*Research type:* analytical study.

*Sample and scope:* the study used data from academic articles, publications, legislative documents and specific mediation cases. The sample included a variety of sources from different countries and regions.

Data were collected from academic publications, legislative acts, and through the analysis of specific mediation cases. Bibliographic and legal databases were used for data collection.

*Data collection tools:* the main tools used for data collection were bibliographic databases, legal databases and archives of mediation cases.

*Statistical processing:* the data were systematised and analysed using comparative analysis and a dialectical approach. Content analysis methods were used to identify trends and patterns.

This methodology allows for replication of the study and verification of the results based on similar data and analysis methods.

## RESULTS

In the contemporary world, where conflicts and disputes frequently impede the establishment of harmony and consensus, it is paramount to concentrate on efficacious methodologies for resolving such issues. One such method is mediation, whereby a neutral party assists conflicting parties in reaching a mutually acceptable decision. Mediation is founded on principles and methods, which collectively serve as a powerful tool capable of smoothing over rough edges and ensuring fair resolution of differences. The core principles of mediation - neutrality, parties' consent, confidentiality, active listening, empathy, joint problem-solving, and process transparency - serve as the foundation for effective conflict resolution. The establishment of a trusting environment and the active involvement of the parties in the search for solutions are critical elements of mediation, as they not only facilitate the resolution of disputes but also preserve essential relationships.

It is crucial to examine each of these principles in more detail, elucidating their significance and demonstrating how their application renders mediation an effective instrument for resolving conflicts:

- *Neutrality and impartiality.* A mediator should be a neutral party who is not biased towards any

of the conflicting parties. It helps to create a trusting atmosphere and ensure a fair resolution of the conflict.

- *Consent of the parties.* All parties should be free to participate in the mediation process. The absence of coercion contributes to more effective interaction and the search for a mutually acceptable solution.
- *Confidentiality.* All discussions and information received during mediation should remain confidential. It allows the parties to express their interests and points of view.
- *Active listening and empathy.* The mediator should actively listen to the parties, showing understanding and empathy for their positions and interests. It helps to create a trusting environment and find a mutually acceptable solution.
- *Joint problem-solving.* An essential principle of mediation is to find a standard, mutually acceptable solution to a problem. The mediator helps the parties to find solutions based on their interests and needs.
- *Transparency of the process.* The mediator ensures transparency by explaining its stages, rules, and objectives to the parties. This helps build understanding and trust in the process.

These principles make mediation an effective tool for conflict resolution, helping to resolve disputes and preserve relationships between parties.

Analysing the experience of using mediation in different areas reveals an impressive range of possibilities and advantages. *In family relations*, mediation is often used to resolve differences between spouses during divorce, determine rights and obligations about children, or resolve inheritance disputes. This method allows families to avoid lengthy and emotionally draining litigation while maintaining a more trusting and cooperative relationship. *In business*, mediation is widely used to resolve corporate conflicts, negotiate the terms of agreements and contracts, and settle disputes between business partners or employees. This approach provides more flexible and quicker solutions, helping to preserve business relationships and minimise financial losses. In labour relations, mediation is used to resolve conflicts between employers and employees, such as dismissal, discrimination or non-compliance with labour rights. This approach helps to preserve the working atmosphere by preventing possible litigation and maintaining professional relationships. Mediation is vital in resolving diplomatic disputes and conflicts between states, even in international relations. Examples of such use include peaceful negotiations to resolve territorial disputes, conflicts based on religious or ethnic differences, and disputes over trade or economic issues.

These examples confirm that mediation is an effective and versatile conflict resolution tool that can adapt to different situations and provide fair and sustainable solutions.

Identifying the advantages of mediation over traditional court procedures provides a better understanding of the value of this conflict resolution. table 1 shows the key advantages of mediation.

**Table 1. Advantages of Mediation over Traditional Court Procedures**

Advantages	Description
Faster dispute resolution	Unlike litigation, which can take years, mediation can quickly resolve a conflict. This allows the parties to save time, resources, and emotional costs.
Economic benefits	Mediation is usually less expensive than litigation, which requires significant expenditure on lawyers, court fees and other court costs.
Preserving relationships	In mediation, the parties can maintain a more positive and productive relationship than in litigation, which often leads to deteriorating relations.
Flexibility and individual approach	Mediation allows the parties to find individual, mutually acceptable solutions based on their unique interests and needs. It is much more flexible than formal court-imposed solutions.
Confidentiality	The mediation process is usually confidential, which means that information disclosed during mediation cannot be used in court proceedings. It allows the parties to be more open and honest in discussing their problems.
A higher degree of satisfaction from parties	Since the parties actively participate in reaching a solution, the degree of satisfaction with the outcome of mediation is usually higher than with a compulsory court decision.

These advantages make mediation an attractive choice for conflict resolution in many areas of life, from family and business relations to labour disputes and diplomatic disputes.

Identifying the challenges to the widespread adoption of mediation helps to develop strategies and measures to address them. Here are some of the main challenges:

1. *Lack of public awareness.* Many people require a sufficient understanding of what mediation is, how it works and what benefits it offers. It can lead to a lack of trust in this method of conflict resolution and a preference for traditional litigation.



2. *Lack of legal framework.* Some countries have no or an underdeveloped legal framework governing mediation. This creates uncertainty for both the parties involved in the conflict and mediators and complicates the conduct of mediation procedures and the recognition of their results.

3. *Lack of qualified mediators.* Mediation requires specific skills and qualifications on the part of the mediator. The lack of qualified professionals can be a severe obstacle to expanding the practice of mediation, especially in sparsely populated or regional areas.

4. *Lack of a mediation culture.* In several societies, a culture of mediation is not established or is poorly developed. It may lead to a preference for more traditional methods of conflict resolution, even though mediation may be more efficient and effective.

5. *Financial and resource constraints.* Some people or organisations may face financial or resource constraints that make mediation unaffordable, even if they are interested in using it.

Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach, including awareness campaigns, the development of an appropriate legal framework, the training and certification of mediators, and creating conditions for developing a mediation culture in society.

The following measures and recommendations should be considered to improve the mediation system and overcome obstacles (figure 1).

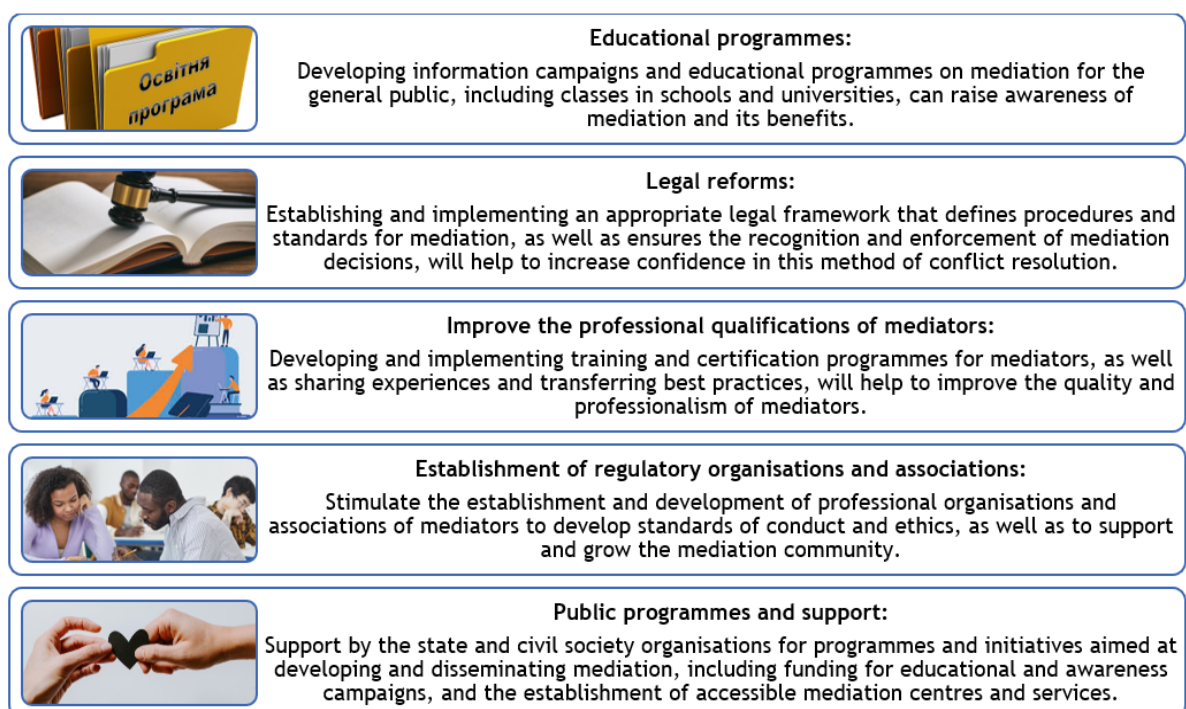


Figure 1. Improving the mediation system

Implementing these measures will enhance the mediation system, increase accessibility and effectiveness, and boost public trust in this critical conflict resolution tool.

It is of the utmost importance to recognise that improving the mediation system necessitates the collective efforts of the state, civic organisations, professional communities, and the general public. The support and development of mediation facilitate effective conflict resolution and simultaneously establish the foundation for fostering a culture of peaceful dispute resolution within society. The promotion and popularisation of mediation should foster a new way of thinking, recognising the importance of dialogue and cooperation in resolving conflicts. Implementing novel approaches, such as online mediation, can also enhance the accessibility and effectiveness of this conflict resolution method in the contemporary information society. Ultimately, promoting mediation as a primary instrument for conflict resolution contributes to advancing a more just, humane, and peaceful society, which remains a significant objective for all of us.

An investigation into mediation's potential future applications offers insights into its suitability as a tool for modern conflict resolution and its anticipated role.

1. *Expanding the scope of application:* in the future, mediation may become an integral part of resolving a wide range of conflicts, including family disputes, business conflicts, labour disputes, international diplomatic disputes and cyber conflicts.

2. *Technological progress:* advances in information technology are opening up new opportunities for

mediation, such as online platforms and virtual communication tools, which can overcome geographical and time constraints and increase access to mediation.

3. *Strengthening the legislative framework*: continued efforts to create and improve the legal framework supporting mediation will strengthen the credibility of this method of conflict resolution and ensure that mediated solutions are recognised.

4. *Professionalism and training*: developing mediators' professionalism and qualifications through educational programmes and certification improves the quality of services and trust in mediation as an effective tool for conflict resolution.

5. *Socio-cultural changes*: over time, mediation may become a recognised and preferred method of conflict resolution, reflecting a shift in society's culture away from using force and resolving disputes through dialogue and cooperation.

These factors indicate a promising development of mediation as a critical element in the modern conflict resolution system. It can potentially contribute to creating a more harmonious and peaceful society.

As a result of its ongoing evolution and adaptation to new challenges, mediation has become an indispensable tool that facilitates the creation of constructive and long-term solutions for the most complex conflicts. Mediation may be essential in preventing conflicts, diplomatically settling international disputes, and creating conditions for sustainable societal development. Mediation is founded upon the principles of fairness, respect, and cooperation, and it fosters a culture of peaceful conflict resolution, which is foundational for sustainable social progress. It is of the utmost importance to continue promoting public awareness of mediation and its benefits to ensure the broad acceptance of this method and its active use. Despite the challenges and obstacles that may be encountered, the prospects for developing mediation are promising. Its role in future society will continue strengthening, facilitating conflict resolution and promoting peace and harmony.

## DISCUSSION

The research by Nalyvaiko et al.<sup>(23)</sup> emphasises the significance of mediation as an effective tool for conflict resolution in Ukraine. It prompts a discussion on the role of mediation in promoting social stability and resolving complex disputes in various societies. The work by Usmanova et al.<sup>(1)</sup> discusses the role of mediation in educational settings, prompting a discussion on how mediation can enhance communication and resolve conflicts among students, teachers, and administrators. It leads to discussing the psychological factors that should be considered when developing mediation strategies for family disputes.

Allport's work<sup>(17)</sup> examines mediation in various contexts, facilitating an exploration of common principles and methods that can be applied to mediation in different areas of life. Kuziv's article<sup>(24)</sup> analyses the role of mediation in conflict resolution, provoking a discussion on the relative merits of mediation compared to other alternative conflict resolution methods and in which situations it might be most effective.

The research by Yulin and Jialin<sup>(8)</sup> demonstrates differences in mediation approaches in China. It is paramount to examine how mediation can be tailored to accommodate the nuances of diverse cultural contexts to achieve effectiveness on an international scale. What are the key competencies that a mediator should possess in order to be effective?

References to the works of Rajkova<sup>(19)</sup> and Mihalescu<sup>(20)</sup> emphasise the necessity for the training and certification of mediators. Considering which specific skills are most important for mediators in different conflict areas is interesting. A review of data from Arana-Catania and others<sup>(27)</sup> suggests that online mediation may offer a means of improving access to and the effectiveness of mediation services, particularly in the context of a global pandemic.

In light of the findings of Usmanova and colleagues<sup>(1)</sup>, it is recommended that educators consider the most effective strategies and programmes for fostering mediation and conflict resolution skills in students. Considering the works of Brandão Bárrios<sup>(7)</sup> and Malacka,<sup>(9)</sup> the discussion should address the adaptation of mediation practices to social and cultural changes in different countries.

The works of authors such as Nalyvaiko et al.<sup>(23)</sup> emphasise the importance of mediation in Ukraine, where it can contribute to social stability and resolve complex disputes. However, there are contradictions in the studies of different authors on the effectiveness of mediation. Brandão Bárrios<sup>(7)</sup> points out the importance of considering cultural peculiarities in mediation, while Golovko and Druz<sup>(5)</sup> emphasise the legal aspects and problems of recognising mediation results in court. Todorova<sup>(10)</sup> and Samsudin and Pirard<sup>(11)</sup> emphasise the need to address specific contexts when conducting mediation in different countries and cultures, which confirms the importance of adapting mediation methods to local conditions.

Studies show that the success of mediation depends on several key factors, including the qualifications of the mediator, the legal framework for mediation and public awareness of this method. Another important aspect is the cultural context, which can significantly affect the perception and effectiveness of mediation in different countries and regions.

Finally, based on current research, forecasts for the development of mediation should focus on strengthening the legislative framework and improving educational programmes for mediators. It will promote the further spread and recognition of this method of conflict resolution in society.

## CONCLUSION

Mediation represents a pivotal component of the contemporary conflict resolution system, enabling parties to independently identify mutually acceptable solutions without litigation. The research examined the principal tenets and methodologies of mediation and its application in various contexts, including family relationships and diplomatic disputes. An analysis of the advantages of mediation over traditional judicial procedures revealed its economic benefits, preservation of relationships, and a higher level of satisfaction among the parties. Nevertheless, there are several obstacles to the widespread implementation of mediation, including a need for more public awareness, the absence of a legislative framework, and a shortage of qualified mediators. In order to improve the mediation system, specific measures have been proposed, including educational programmes, legal reforms, and enhancing the professional qualifications of mediators. The prospects for the development of mediation include expanding its scope of application, using new technologies, strengthening the legislative base, developing professionalism, and socio-cultural changes. Mediation is an essential tool for building peaceful and harmonious relationships in society, and as such, it is an indispensable element of modern social progress. In order to achieve peace and justice in society, it is necessary to continue strengthening the role of mediation, promoting its development and dissemination at all levels of society. The hope for further improvement of the mediation system and expansion of its application remains a crucial aspect of work in the field of conflict resolution in the future.

The study of the impact of cultural and social contexts on the effectiveness of mediation in different regions and areas of application would significantly enhance further research in mediation. The development of more sophisticated methodologies for assessing the results of mediation, which consider psychological, economic and social aspects, would facilitate a more accurate determination of its effectiveness. The relationship between the mediation process and long-term conflict resolution outcomes, as well as identifying factors that facilitate or hinder the successful completion of mediation processes, would also be significantly improved by further research.

To further improve mediation, it is important to study the impact of cultural and social contexts on its effectiveness in different regions and applications. The development of more sophisticated methodologies for evaluating mediation outcomes that consider psychological, economic and social aspects would allow for a more accurate assessment of its effectiveness. Research on the relationship between the mediation process and long-term conflict resolution outcomes, as well as the identification of factors that facilitate or impede the successful completion of mediation processes, would also significantly improve the understanding and practice of mediation.

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*Conceptualization:* O. Melnychuk, N. Opolska, O. Ostapenko, S. Lapshyn, A. Ishchuk

*Data curation:* O. Melnychuk, N. Opolska, O. Ostapenko

*Formal analysis:* O. Melnychuk, N. Opolska, O. Ostapenko, S. Lapshyn, A. Ishchuk

*Research:* O. Melnychuk, N. Opolska, O. Ostapenko, S. Lapshyn, A. Ishchuk

*Methodology:* O. Melnychuk, N. Opolska, O. Ostapenko, S. Lapshyn, A. Ishchuk

*Project management:* S. Lapshyn, A. Ishchuk

*Resources:* O. Melnychuk, N. Opolska, O. Ostapenko, S. Lapshyn, A. Ishchuk

*Software:* O. Melnychuk, N. Opolska, O. Ostapenko

*Supervision:* N. Opolska

*Validation:* S. Lapshyn

*Display:* A. Ishchuk

*Drafting - original draft:* O. Melnychuk, N. Opolska, O. Ostapenko, S. Lapshyn, A. Ishchuk

*Writing - proofreading and editing:* O. Melnychuk, N. Opolska, O. Ostapenko, S. Lapshyn, A. Ishchuk