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Describing the Literature That Assesses
the United States Postal Service Redress
Program

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**DESCRIBING THE LITERATURE THAT ASSESSES THE UNITED
STATES POSTAL SERVICE REDRESS PROGRAM**

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Abstract

Purpose

The purpose of this Applied Research Project is to describe the literature utilized to assess the United States Postal Service REDRESS program. The scholarly literature that assesses the REDRESS program is described from both a content and method perspective. This study examines how 15 articles discuss and identify the content and method criteria. While explaining the assessment criteria, the transformative model of mediation that is the basis of the REDRESS program is explained.

Method

The study used content analysis to describe the content of studies that analyze the REDRESS program. Ten descriptive categories formed the basis of the coding sheet. They are 1) REDRESS components; 2) process index; 3) mediator index; 4) transformative index; 5) outcome index; 6) evaluation types; 7) research purpose; 8) conceptual framework; 9) research methods; 10) statistical techniques.

Results

After reviewing the literature utilized to describe the REDRESS program, results show that the content had several similarities. The REDRESS assessment components in category one were significantly discussed. For example, the process index, mediator index, transformative index, and outcome index were significantly discussed. When it comes to the subcategories in each index, some are discussed more than others. Overall, most variables are either partially discussed or not

discussed at all. On the other hand, when identifying the techniques that make up the methodology section, majority of the articles utilized evaluation types, research purposes, conceptual frameworks, research methods, & statistical techniques.

Chapter I

Introduction

With over 800,000 employees, the United States Postal Service™ is one of the world's largest civilian employees (Bingham & Napoli, 2001, p. 508). Established under the Executive Branch of Government, the Postal Service operates under a business model. Because it was created under the Postal Reorganization Act of 1970, it generates revenue by selling postal products and rendering services to the public rather than existing solely on federal tax revenue. The primary goal of the United States Postal Service™ is to process high quantities of mail and distribute it in a cost-effective manner (Bingham & Napoli, 2001, p. 510). Mandated by the Reorganization Act, the postal service goal is to collect and deliver millions of messages each day to more than 11 million homes and businesses (USPS Postal History, 2005).

In order to maintain a competitive edge, meet the increasing expectations from Congress, and satisfy customer's demands, the postal service began to place strict guidelines on its employees (Rendon & Dougherty, 2000, p. 1). Bingham & Napoli (2001, p. 510) state "the pressures led to a period of intense focus on internal organization and management both of work and administration." In 1982, the National Academy of Public Administration reported that the USPS successfully became economically self-sustaining by tackling its problems through new methods, mechanization, training programs, and stringent performance monitoring (Bingham & Napoli, 2001, p. 510). For example, the principles of scientific management and the incorporation of machine technology combined, enhanced the mechanization of mail

processing which perpetuated a strict and formalized culture (Bingham et al, p. 510). Since management had the most power and employee's had a limited voice, the "autocratic management style" created a confrontation between the two.

According to Baxter (1994 p. 6), "the combination of an authoritarian management tradition, the intense pressures to increase productivity, and the top-down nature of reorganization, produced conflict within the postal culture." First, the culture of mechanization and automation led to low levels of satisfaction with one's work and job (Bingham& Napoli, p. 510). Second, it led to a simplification of work task. Third, it led to limitations of freedom and movement on the machines. Fourth, it led to a lack of control with the speed of the machines. Finally, rigid job requirements associated with repetitive mechanistic task yielded low levels of satisfaction from postal employees (Bingham et al, 2001, p. 511).

In the early 1990's, to add to the pre-existing pressures, the United States Postal Service™ received some bad press coverage (Rendon & Dougherty, 2000, p. 1). Workplace shootings made headlines and the phrase "going postal" was added to the American vocabulary of violence (Meece, 2001, p. 1). The media constantly criticized the Postal Service for operating under the corrective theory principle. A theory that suggests that standards of conduct and productivity can be achieved and maintained through a system of ever increasing degrees of punishment (U. S. General Accounting Office, 1989, p. 12). Unfortunately, the corrective theory philosophy demoralized postal employee's mental state and another employee crisis was at hand.

In spite of it's below workplace violence record, the media continued to report work-related acts of violence at the Post Office. Because of the corrective theory

system, the mental state of postal employees had become an emotional subject in the country and stereotypes were tossed around with abandon. For example, red lights around the country, motorists laughed at the dark humor of a bumper sticker that says, “guns don’t kill people, postal workers do (Thomas, 1997, p. 1). Regardless of the truth, misconceptions and perceptions easily dominated reality. Due to unresolved conflict in the workplace, “going postal” became a widely misused term to describe an explosion of violence (Rendon & Dougherty, 2000, p. 1).

An avalanche of complaints by angry frustrated employees to the Federal Equal Employment Commission potentially threatened the agency’s productivity and morale. According to Meece (2000, p. 1) charges of racial discrimination, sexual harassment, and other abuses poured into the Inspector General’s Office against the Postal Service. In 1993, the General Accounting Office (GAO) reported that one in every twelve postal union member filed a grievance or complaint. Resolving these disputes cost the agency over \$200 million a year (Rendon & Dougherty, 2000, p. 1).

In fiscal year 1997, the United States Postal Service filed approximately 29,000 requests for pre-complaint counseling under equal employment opportunity laws (Bingham & Napoli, 2001, p. 508). The postal service informal complaint process outnumbered any single employer (Bingham, 2003, p. 4). Some argued that 50 percent of all federal equal employment opportunity complaints came from postal employees and the volume had reached a crisis portion (Drucker, 2004, p. 4). The postal service was unable to handle equal employment opportunity complaints in a timely fashion, leading to a charge that “just delayed was justice denied” (Rendon & Dougherty, 2000, p.1).

To address this problem, the United States Postal Service effectively implemented an experimental employment mediation program known as Resolving Equitable Disputes Reaching Equitable Solutions Swiftly (REDRESS) (Bingham & Nabatachi, 2001, p. 403). REDRESS gives equal employment opportunity complaints a new option. The REDRESS program aim is to short - circuit the process by offering disgruntled workers mediation (Meece, 2000, p. 6). Based upon the transformative model of mediation, REDRESS mediation is designed to do the following:

- Assist people in conflict
- Improve workplace climate
- Improve communications between supervisors and employees
- And resolve equal employment opportunity complaints more swiftly

(Drucker, 2004, p. 4)

The program utilizes an outside neutral mediator to influence the flow of communication between parties. The outside neutral mediator's primary goal is to promote the two transformative mediation concepts of "empowerment" and "recognition" (Bingham & Nabatachi, 2001, p. 403).

Purpose

The purpose of this Applied Research Project is to describe the literature utilized to assess the United States Postal Service REDRESS program. While describing the framework (contents and methods) utilized to evaluate the program, the transformative model of mediation is explained.

Chapter Summaries

Chapter 2 reviews the literature and develops the conceptual framework utilized to assess the REDRESS program. While explaining the assessment criteria, the transformative model of mediation that is the basis of the REDRESS program is explained. For example, in the literature, scholars, researchers, and professors discuss the implementation process, describe the impact of the program, and examine the evaluation results between inside and outside neutral mediators, and clarify the disputant's perception about the overall procedural justice model.

Chapter 3 develops a framework to analyze the scholarly literature that assesses the REDRESS program. One should note that the framework is ten descriptive categories and sets the foundation for the conceptual framework table. For example, categories in "Section A" describe the REDRESS components utilized to measure the transformative model of mediation. On the other hand, categories in "Section B" describe the methodologies utilized in each article. The ten descriptive categories are influenced by the contents and method identified in the literature.

Chapter 4 describes the technique selected to describe the REDRESS program. This chapter explains the methodology section. The methodology utilizes content analysis in order to conduct a meta-analysis about the literature describing the United States Postal REDRESS program. For example, content analysis is used to assess the 15 articles that describe the REDRESS program. By creating a coding sheet from the ten descriptive categories listed in the conceptual framework table, the articles will be coded appropriately.

Chapter 5 discusses the results of the statistical analysis, frequency distribution.

Finally, Chapter 6 summarizes and concludes the applied research findings.

Chapter II

Review of the Literature

Chapter Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is twofold. First, the transformative model of mediation that is the basis of the REDRESS program is explained. Second, it describes the literature utilized to assess the REDRESS program.

Transformative Model of Mediation

As stated previously, the United States Postal Service implemented a mediation program based upon the transformative model of mediation to resolve equal employment opportunity complaints. The transformative theory views conflict as a crisis in a relationship, where conflict often develops because one or both parties believe that they have not been treated well by the other party (Drucker, 2004, p. 6). According to Bingham, Kim, and Raines (2002, p. 356), the premise of the transformative model of mediation process transforms people-engendering moral growth –by helping them wrestle with difficult circumstances and bridge human differences, in the midst of conflict. Bingham et al (2002, p. 357) suggests that neutrals practicing the transformative model of mediation seek to promote opportunities for empowerment and recognition in a positive mediating setting. Bush and Folger (1994, p.84) note that recognition means enabling the parties to see and understand the other’s point of view – to understand how they define the problem and why they seek the solution that they do. When mediators apply empowerment and recognition to a destructive atmosphere, constructive changes can occur to allow parties to explore their dispute (Bush, 2001, p. 369).

Bingham and Novac (2001, p. 308) explain that the transformative model of mediation does not permit mediator evaluation of the merits of the dispute or impose a solution on the parties. Instead, all choices regarding the process, ideas for settlement, and the outcome of the mediation are in the hands of the parties (Bingham & Pitts, 2002, p. 137). The United States Postal Service goal for this system is to afford the maximum participation or self-determination at the case level.

The Literature that Assesses the REDRESS Program

The REDRESS program has been investigated through a series of published works. From 1994 until present, researchers, scholars, and professors have conducted several studies about the REDRESS program. The studies are primarily based upon the scholarly works of Lisa Bingham and the Indiana Conflict Resolution Center. The complete list is found in Appendix A.

The literature first describes the transformative model of mediation and applies it in an employment mediation setting. Second, the studies discuss the implementation process; explain the experimental research conducted when choosing between outside and neutral mediators, and identify the standards required to negotiate disputes. Third, the studies clarify the disputant's perceptions about fairness of the procedural justice model. Fourth, the literature explains the exit survey and it identifies the key components participants have to measure when rating the program's success. For example, the process indicator, the mediator's index, and the transformative index are key indicators used to evaluate the overall impact of the REDRESS program. Finally, because the literature is written from different points of view, each scholar, researcher, and author provided feedback or statistical data to support the REDRESS program.

REDRESS Ground Rules

According to Meece (2000, p. 3) the REDRESS program is intended to make mediation available at any stage of the grievance process. For example, anytime a employee files an internal equal employment opportunity complaint, he or she is given the opportunity to participate in the mediation setting. After mediation is requested, mediation is generally scheduled 14- 21 days or two to three weeks later. Because the REDRESS program is voluntary, free, and user friendly, many complainants utilize the process (Begler, 2001, p. 61). Since mediation is informal, no witnesses are called to testify under oath, and no complicated procedures or technicalities are involved (Publication 94, 2003). As required by EEOC regulations, complainants are allowed to bring any representative that they choose to the table. Similar to traditional EEOC system, a representative from each party may include a lawyer, union representative, family member, or a co-worker. Respondents, who are generally managers, supervisors, and postal officials, are required to participate in “good faith” in the mediating setting. Because REDRESS mediators are selected, trained, scheduled and paid for by the Postal Service, line employers need assurance that the mediators are going to be evenhanded (Drucker, 2004, p. 6).

Mediating Postal Disputes

From 1995 to 1998, the United States Postal Service experimented with an inside neutral mediation model. The purpose of this experiment was to utilize federal postal employees to conduct mediation between coworkers and their supervisors (Bingham, Chesmore, & Naopoli, 2000, p. 5). For example, the USPS

district in Upstate New York implemented an inside neutral model of mediation, a model using USPS employees professionally trained as mediators for disputes involving co-workers. Other areas continued to use the outside neutral model. With impressive results, evidence demonstrated that the outside model of mediation was more effective than the inside neutral model of mediation when generating participant satisfaction and in resolving disputes (Bingham et al, 2000, p. 11). Under contract with the United States Postal Service since 1994, the Justice center of Atlanta selected and supplied the postal service with a list of 30 qualified, experienced neutral mediators (Bingham, 1997, p. 20). In 1998, due to a massive outreach effort, the Task Force created a national roster of 3000 experienced mediators nationwide (Bingham, 2003, p. 16).

According to Gann and Hallberlin (2001), the outreach produced the most diverse roster available. The roster included teachers, human resource professional, retirees, lawyers, and others who had experience in family and domestic relations (Bingham, 2003, p. 16). To ensure that the integrity of the alternative dispute resolution is met, supervisors, managers, union representatives, and additional stakeholders received 4 to 40 hours of training. The mediators were required to have subject expertise training prior to mediating disputes. For example, subject area courses for mediators consist of role playing, co-mediating, and evaluating measures.

Mediator's Criteria

USPS Publication 102 also state “mediators are required to be knowledgeable of the standards of practice.” First, the standards require mediators to know their role

during the mediation session such as remaining neutral. Second, the mediator should not encourage parties to participate or accept a settlement offer. Third, the mediator shall make reasonable efforts to ensure that all parties understand the mediation process. Fourth, the mediator shall encourage respect between the parties. Finally, the mediator shall respect and encourage self-determination requires a mediator to leave parties fully responsible when settling their dispute (Publication 102, 2001).

Since USPS Publication 102 clearly specify the mediator's requirements, it also outlines how an individual mediator and organization may be disqualified from mediating postal cases. First, if a mediator serves as an arbitrator on any Postal Service arbitration panel, he or she may be disqualified. Second, a mediator may be disqualified if he or she accepts careers, contracts, temporary or casual employment with the Postal Service. Third, if a mediator plans to appear as a witness or has appeared as a witness in the last two years in any EEO discrimination against the Postal Service, he or she may be disqualified. Fourth, mediators may be disqualified if they misrepresent personal qualifications or backgrounds. Finally, if a mediator fails to comply with REDRESS program requirements, procedures, or Postal Standards of Practice for Postal Service mediation, he or she may be disqualified (Publication 102, 2001).

Transformative Setting

Because training and understanding postal standards are very important in the transformative model of mediation, one should recognize that the flow of communication used by the mediator can support a clear understanding of the

issues at hand (Begler, 2002, p. 66). For example, in order to implement “empowerment” and “recognition”, the mediator applies interest-based techniques to the mediation setting. The mediator helps both parties identify their interest, engage in brainstorming options for settlement, and engage in problem solving techniques to settle the dispute (Bingham & Novac, 2001, p. 310). According to Drucker (2004, p. 5) the information explained and exchanged considers all possibilities, regardless of their simplicity or magnitude. By sharing information relevant to their interest, Drucker insists that the mediator’s will encourage parties to identify articulate interest by seeking alternative solutions that are satisfying to both parties.

Procedural Justice

By creating a positive atmosphere where people can work through their alleged crisis, the transformative model of mediation takes an essential social view of human conflict (Bush, 2001, p. 369). Since efforts are made for parties to be heard and understood, how participant’s respond to the theoretical framework on procedural justice is very important in the mediation setting (Begler 2001, p. 6). Procedural justice theorist argue that organizational decisions will be more readily accepted, if the processes by which they achieve are perceived to be fair (Bingham, Kim, & Raines, 2002, p. 346). The key principles behind procedural justice theory are rules, regulations, impartiality, voice, opportunity, and decision-making responsibilities. Nesbit, Nabatachi, & Bingham (2004, p. 2) believe that “it is evident that participant’s role in the mediation impacts his or her interaction with the other participant, therefore; the participant’s role in mediation is definitely related to the quality of the mediated

outcome.” Bingham (2003, p. 30) maintains, “If procedural justice is present in the process, the positive results should be recognized and employees will be eager to participate in the process.”

National REDRESS Evaluation Project

Instead of utilizing settlement rates to measure the program’s success; the Postal Service used participation rate as a goal (Bingham, 2003, p. 18). By tracking and publishing participation rates from the exit survey, the USPS communicates that this process is not window dressing but real. Hallberlin (2001, p. 379) clarifies that the USPS set participation rate- the percentage of all employees offered mediation who agreed to participate in the process –as the key indicator of each districts success. With a 70% participation rate as its primary goal, the goal was to get people to talk each other in a safe environment (Bingham, 2003, p. 18). The process provided the participants with opportunities to take control of their conflict (empowerment) and reach a better understanding of the other participant’s perspective (recognition) (Bingham, 2003, p. 13).

Exit Survey

To determine if the transformative model is being applied in the mediation process, each participant is allowed to complete an exit survey at the end of each session. Statistically speaking, 87% of REDRESS complainants are craft employees and 97% of REDRESS respondents are supervisors or other management officials who evaluate the overall program (Nesbit et al, 2004, p. 13). Bingham (2003, p. 31) suggests that feedback from the exit survey has several effects. First, it helps assure that a program is being used, balanced, and fair. Second, it ensures accountability among program

administrators. For example, mediators and program administrators know that the participants will report their experiences. Based upon the participant's knowledge of the process, the details are documented and analyzed accordingly. Third, program's result per district and geographic region is compared. If the results are significantly different in performance, one needs to ask why and pursue an answer. Fourth, periodic reports on the program provide them with evidence that it is a useful alternative to the traditional complaint processes (Bingham, 2003, p. 31).

REDRESS Achievements

Since its nationwide implementation, the United States Postal Service REDRESS program has achieved impressive results (Antes, Folger, & Noce, 2001, p. 429). Contrary to critic's suggestion that mediation is a fad or disputant's satisfaction is the product of the product of honeymoon or Hawthorne effects, the national USPS program has produced consistently high participant satisfaction for over five years. Bingham (2003, p. 19) explained that 93% of both complainants and respondents reported satisfaction with how their views and how they were allowed to resolve their disputes. Also, she confirms that 94% were satisfied with how they were treated in mediation. Drucker (2004, p. 7) verified Bingham results by stating "that on post exit surveys, employers and managers express satisfaction with the process over 90% of the time participants express satisfaction with the mediator over 95% of the time. On measures of respectfulness, impartiality, fairness, and performance showed that between 96% and 97% of complainants,

respondents, and their representatives were either highly satisfied or satisfied with the mediator (Bingham, 2003, p. 23).

REDRESS Results

Bingham's (2004, p. 12) research showed that the majority of both employees and supervisors were satisfied with the process, mediator, and the outcome of the REDRESS mediation. Bingham & Nabatachi (2003, p. 12) preliminary research suggests that mediation has a positive transformative effect at the workplace. Bingham & Novac (2001) found that the number of actual EEOC complaints dropped significantly after implementation. Nesbit, Nabatachi, & Bingham (2004, p.21) found that the quality of participant's interaction in mediation is related to the quality of mediated outcome. Nabatachi & Bingham (2002, p. 20) demonstrated that participants were satisfied with the procedural justice model.

Conclusion

According to Bingham, (1997, p. 29). Interest based mediation shows strong potential to provide a positive alternative to the traditional adversarial Equal Employment Opportunity Complaints. Satisfaction with the outcome of mediation is largely a product outcome of mediation with the opportunities to control the process, present one's views and participate in the process, and receive respect and fair treatment from the mediator. This suggests that the dispute system design has successfully addressed any latent concerns regarding mediator bias (Bingham, 2003, p. 23).

The next chapter describes and identifies the content and method influenced by the literature. The ten descriptive categories set the foundation for the conceptual framework table.

Chapter III

Assessment Criteria

Chapter Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to develop a framework to analyze the scholarly literature that assesses the REDRESS program. One should note that the framework is ten descriptive categories and sets the foundation for the conceptual framework table. For example, categories in “Section A” describe the REDRESS Procedural Model of Justice Assessment components utilized to measure the transformative model of mediation. On the other hand, categories in “Section B” describe the methodologies utilized in each article. The ten descriptive categories are influenced by the contents and method identified in the literature.

REDRESS Components

The scholarly literature that assesses the REDRESS program is described from both a content and method perspective. The types of criteria include:

- **REDRESS Assessment Components**
- **Process Assessment Index**
- **Mediator Assessment Index**
- **Transformative Model Index**
- **Mediation/Outcome Assessment Index**

The types of methods criteria include:

- **Types of Evaluations**
- **Research Purpose**

- **Conceptual Framework**
- **Research Method (or technology)**
- **Statistical Techniques**

REDRESS Assessment Component Indicators

Some articles are concerned with large mediation process issues. According to Bingham (2001, p.7), the literature that examines the REDRESS program generally uses one of three assessment components. Hence these studies use process, mediator/quality assurance, and the transformative components as key indexes. Each subcategory is listed in category one. Since the REDRESS program is based upon the transformative model of mediation, researchers explicitly designed the exit survey, taken at the end of each session to reflect this. Bingham, Kim, Raines (2002, p. 367) confirm that the exit survey ask both respondents and the complainant their perception of the overall process.

Process Index

As stated previously, the second category of the content criteria is the process assessment index. The process assessment listed in category two consist of seven questions pertaining to the procedural justice model. The index consists of seven key elements utilized to measure the overall satisfaction rate with the mediation process. The elements are treatment, understanding, participation, fairness, control, and information (Bingham, 2003, p. 23) Each individual element forms a question that measures the participant's satisfaction with the amount of information received; the amount of control and participation granted to the participants; the opportunity to present one's side of the dispute; the fairness of the mediation process, and how satisfied were you with the treatment received in the process (Nabatachi & Bingham, 2002, p. 11).

The process assessment index consist of the following questions listed below:

1. How satisfied are you with the amount of information you received about mediation?
2. How satisfied are you with the amount of control you had over the process?
3. How satisfied are you with the opportunity to present your side of the dispute?
4. How satisfied are you with the fairness of mediation?
5. How satisfied are you with how much you got to participate in the mediation process?
6. How satisfied are you with how well you understand with what was going on during the mediation process?
7. How satisfied are you with the way you were treated in the mediation process?

Mediator Index

The third content criterion is the mediator's index. The mediator's assessment index asks respondents and claimants to evaluate the procedural justice utilized within the process. The key components developed to assess satisfaction with the individual mediator include preparation, respect, skill, impartiality, and overall performance (Bingham, 2003, p.23). The key components are used to weigh how well the mediator performed his or her overall task. The questions ask participants to rate their satisfaction with the amount given by the mediator, the impartiality of the mediator, the fairness of the mediator, and the performance of the mediator (Nabatashi & Bingham, 2002, p. 11).

The mediator's assessment index consist of the following questions listed below:

1. How satisfied are you with the amount of respect the mediator gave you?
2. How satisfied are you with the impartiality of the mediator?
3. How satisfied are you with the fairness of the mediator?

4. How satisfied are you with the mediator's overall performance?

Transformative Index

The fourth type of content criteria is the transformative mediation assessment index. Transformative mediation emphasizes fostering opportunities for disputants to experience empowerment and to recognition each other's perspective (Bingham, 2003, p. 25). In order to collect data about how empowerment and recognition are encouraged, participants are asked to gauge their perception of procedural justice (Nabatachi et al, 2004. p. 13). The survey questions ask the parties several questions pertaining to listening, apologizing, and acknowledging the other's viewpoints.

Outcome of Mediation Index

The final and the fifth category listed in "Section A" is outcome assessment index. Here, outcome, speed, control, long-term effects, and expectations are the five terms participants use to explain their satisfaction with mediation (Bingham, 2003, p. 23). The five terms create the outcome assessment. For example, the five questions asks participants to rate their satisfaction with the overall outcome; the speed in which the dispute as brought to the table; the outcome of the dispute; and the control participants had over the outcome (Nabatachi & Bingham, 2002, p. 11).

The outcome of mediation index consist of the following questions:

1. How satisfied are you with the overall outcome of mediation?
2. How satisfied are you with the speed with which the dispute was brought to the table?
3. How satisfied are you with the outcome of the mediation compared with what you expected before the mediation took place?

4. How satisfied are you with the control you had over the outcome of mediation?
5. How satisfied were you with the outcome of mediation compared with what you expected before the mediation took place?

Methodologies

Aside from the content, the studies that assess the REDRESS program employed empirical research methods. The framework to describe the methodologies is derived from two sources. First, the studies are all a type of program evaluation (evaluation of the REDRESS program). Second, a framework to classify empirical research developed by Shields (1999 and 2003) is used to describe the methodologies of the REDRESS literature.

Babbie (2004, p. 343) notes that evaluation research is used for the purpose of determining the impact of social intervention such as a program aimed at solving problems. This purpose is to determine whether a social intervention has produced the intended results. Bingham and Felbinger (1989, p. 4) believe that evaluations often involve inspections of the fundamental goals and the objectives of the program. For example, from 1994 until present, the Indiana Conflict Institute has been involved with a comprehensive evaluation of the United States Postal Service employment mediation program.

Type of Evaluation

Process, impact and performance are three different types of evaluation techniques utilized when designing research. Each component creates the seventh method criteria.

According to Wise & Bingham (1996, p. 338), impact evaluation is used to measure program outcomes and process evaluations verify what the program is and whether or not

it is delivered as intended to the target recipients. Shields (2003, p. 532) states that performance evaluations use input from individuals, peers, and supervisors to address a problematic situation. Bingham and Felbinger (1989, p. 4) indicate that process evaluation has three goals. Primarily, it focuses on the way a program is implemented. It focuses on the means by which a program or policy is delivered to clients. When assessing a program's activity, it focuses on the clients' satisfaction with services rendered.

Research Purpose

The sixth method criterion is research purpose. According to Shields (1998, p. 203), research purposes include exploration, description, understanding, and explanation. Exploratory research rarely yields definite answers (Neuman, 2003, p.30). Description research presents a descriptive detail of a situation, social setting, or relationship. Gauging or understanding evaluates whether the processes of the program are close to the practical ideal type criteria. The results easily translate into recommendations an organization can use to improve the program (Shields, 1998, p. 203). Decision-making research attempts to find out what is the best decision (Shields, 1998, 2003). Finally, explanatory focuses on the cause and effect relationships (Shields, 1998, p. 203).

Conceptual Framework

The eighth type of methods criteria is conceptual framework. Shields (1998, p. 202) "argues that the mystery surrounding conceptual frameworks in empirical research can be partially lifted by classifying conceptual frameworks using research purpose and clustering them with particular research questions and methods/techniques." Although

difficult to define, Shields (2005, p. 8) explains that micro-conceptual frameworks are given names and classified into five categories. For example, exploratory research is matched with working hypothesis, description is paired with categories, gauging is linked with a practical ideal type, and explanatory is coupled with formal hypothesis (Shields, 1998, p. 202).

Research Methods

The ninth category is research methods. Surveys, content analysis, case studies, existing focus groups, field research, structured interviews, and archival data are the several forms of research methods utilized to analyze the experimental pilot program. When the United States Postal Service decided to roll out the program nationally, it made a policy decision to implement national data collection (Bingham, 2002, p. 19). For example, the primary sources of data collection includes participant's exit surveys, mediator data tracking reports, periodic interviews, and archival data. Each method listed above may be utilized for a specific purpose.

Content analysis is defined as "a technique for gathering data and analyzing the content of text. The content refers to words, meanings, pictures, symbols, ideas, themes, or any message that can be communicated" (Neuman, 2003, p. 310). According to Babbie (2004, p. 324), it permits the study of a process occurring over a long time. For example, from 1994 until present, the USPS examined how the transformative theory influenced the flow of communication between parties.

Fields research enables researchers to observe social life in its natural habitat. It enables the researcher to go where the action is and watch (Babbie, 2004, p. 281).

Babbie (2004, p. 281) contends, “This type of research can produce a richer understanding of many social phenomena that can be achieved through other observational methods, provided that the researcher observes in a deliberate, well-planned, and active way.” For example, Bingham & Novac (2001, p. 308) conducted a experiment about the use of employment dispute resolution. They examined a natural experiment in mediation of discrimination complaints at the USPS to ascertain whether there was evidence of the efficiency benefits longed touted as products of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR).

Case study is defined as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident (Yin, 2003, p. 13). Yin (2004, p. 1) continues to explain a case study “as a research strategy used in many situations to contribute to the knowledge of individual, group, organizational, social, political, and related phenomenon.” For example, Antes, Folger, & Della Noce (2001) described how conflict and the flow of information was transformed through the mediation process. Audiotapes of all focused group discussions were transcribed. The three researchers then read the transcripts and case studies were drawn from the actual transcripts. The goal of the rewriting was to produce coherent stories that were drawn from the interviews’ case description and remained true to the facts and tenor of these case studies. The themes portrayed the positive impacts of mediation that were consistently evident in the data (Antes, Folger, & Della Noce, 2001, p.434).

Survey research may be defined as the administration of questionnaires to a sample of respondents selected from some population (Babbie, 2004, 277).

Babbie (2004, 277) believes that the “questionnaires provide a method of collecting data by (1) asking people questions or (2) asking them to agree or disagree with statements representing different points of view.” For example, the REDRESS literature often uses the exit survey of participants as a primary source of data. All participants are required to fill out a confidential exit survey and mail it directly to Indiana University (Bingham, 2003, p. 20). The overarching goal is to collect information about participant satisfaction with the process, the mediator and outcome (Nesbit et al, 2004, p. 13).

Another source of data discussed in the literature is data tracking reports. Data tracking reports are one page forms that solicit information on the number of complainants, respondents, and representatives present at mediation. It also collects information on the mediation duration and the outcome session (Bingham & Pitts, 2002, p. 140). When analyzed correctly, data tracking reports reveal representation in some form of impact on settlement and duration (Bingham et al, 2002, p. 359).

Finally, in order to describe the mediation setting, focus group interviews were conducted at several postal locations (Antes, Folger, & Dolce, 2001. p. 431). According to Babbie (2004, p. 309) to create a focus group, researchers bring subjects together and observe their interactions as they explore a specific topic. In this case, researchers conducted interviews to determine the impact of REDRESS (Anderson & Bingham, 1997, p. 601). For example, participants were probed and asked questions about what actually occurred during the mediation setting.

Statistical Techniques

The final category focuses on statistical techniques. Different statistical techniques are utilized to analyze the results of this study. Descriptive statistics, chi squared,

multiple regression, t-statistics, and f-statistics are examples listed in the fifth category. According to Babbie (2004, p. 442), descriptive statistics summarize a set of sample or the relationship among variables in a sample. It presents quantitative descriptions in a manageable form. Babbie (2004, p. 464) contends that chi squared is based upon the null hypothesis, the assumption that there is no relationship between two variables in the total population. Babbie (2004, p. 450) defines multiple regression as a form of statistical analysis that seeks the equation representing impact of one or more independent variables on a single dependent variable. F- statistics is defined as a test used to test various statistical hypotheses about the mean (or means) of the distribution from which a sample or a set of samples have been drawn. T-test employs the statistic (t) to test a given statistical hypothesis about the mean(s) of a population. (www.industryforum.co.uk/glossary.htm)

The conceptual framework used to describe the characteristics of the literature that evaluates the REDRESS program is summarized in Table 3.1. In addition, the literature used to justify the choice of category is linked to each category.

The next chapter focuses on the content analysis and the research methods used to carry out the empirical portion of the applied research project.

Table 3. 1: Summary of Conceptual Framework Linked to Literature

Section A: Contents	Source
<p>1) REDRESS Procedural Model of Justice Components</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Process Assessment Index 2. Mediator Assessment Index 3. Transformative Index 4. Outcome of Mediation Index 	<p>Anderson & Bingham1997; Antes, Folger, & Noce 2001; Begler 2001; Bingham 1997, 2003, 2004; Bingham, Chesmore, & Moon 2000; Bingham, Kim, & Raines 2002; Bingham & Nabatachi 2003;Bingham & Napoli 2001; Bingham & Novac 2001; Bingham & Pitts 2002; Bush & Folger 2005; Drucker 2004; Hallberlin 2001; Nabatachi & Bingham 2001; Nabatachi & Bingham 2002; Nesbit, Nabatachi & Bingham 2004</p>
<p>2) Process Assessment Index</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Treatment 2. Understanding 3. Participation 4. Fairness 5. Control 6. Information 	<p>Anderson & Bingham1997; Antes, Folger, & Noce 2001; Begler 2001; Bingham 1997, 2003, 2004; Bingham, Chesmore, & Moon 2000; Bingham, Kim, & Raines 2002; Bingham & Nabatachi 2003;Bingham & Napoli 2001; Bingham & Novac 2001; Bingham & Pitts 2002; Bush & Folger 2005; Drucker 2004; Hallberlin 2001; Nabatachi & Bingham 2001; Nabatachi & Bingham 2002; Nesbit, Nabatachi & Bingham 2004</p>
<p>3) Mediator’s Assessment Index</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Skill 2. Fairness 3. Respect 4. Impartiality 5. Overall Performance 	<p>Anderson & Bingham1997; Antes, Folger, & Noce 2001; Begler 2001; Bingham 1997, 2003, 2004; Bingham, Chesmore, & Moon 2000; Bingham, Kim, & Raines 2002; Bingham & Nabatachi 2003;Bingham & Napoli 2001; Bingham & Novac 2001; Bingham & Pitts 2002; Bush & Folger 2005; Drucker 2004; Hallberlin 2001; Nabatachi & Bingham 2001; Nabatachi & Bingham 2002; Nesbit, Nabatachi & Bingham 2004</p>
<p>4) Transformative Index</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Empowerment 2. Recognition 	<p>Anderson & Bingham1997; Antes, Folger, & Noce 2001; Begler 2001; Bingham 1997, 2003, 2004; Bingham, Chesmore, & Moon 2000; Bingham, Kim, & Raines 2002; Bingham & Nabatachi 2003;Bingham & Napoli 2001; Bingham & Novac 2001; Bingham & Pitts 2002; Bush & Folger 2005; Drucker 2004; Hallberlin 2001; Nabatachi & Bingham 2001; Nabatachi & Bingham 2002; Nesbit, Nabatachi & Bingham 2004</p>

<p>5) Outcome of Mediation Index</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Outcome 2. Speed 3. Control 4. Expectation 5. Long-term 	<p>Anderson & Bingham 1997; Antes, Folger, & Noce 2001; Begler 2001; Bingham 1997, 2003, 2004; Bingham, Chesmore, & Moon 2000; Bingham, Kim, & Raines 2002; Bingham & Nabatachi 2003; Bingham & Napoli 2001; Bingham & Novac 2001; Bingham & Pitts 2002; Bush & Folger 2005; Drucker 2004; Hallberlin 2001; Nabatachi & Bingham 2001; Nabatachi & Bingham 2002; Nesbit, Nabatachi & Bingham 2004</p>
<p>Section B: Methods</p>	<p>Sources</p>
<p>6) Types of Evaluation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Process 2. Impact 3. Performance 	<p>Babbie 2004 Bingham & Felbinger 1989 Neuman 2003 Shields 1998 Shields 2003</p>
<p>7) Research Purpose</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Exploratory 2. Descriptive 3. Gauging 4. Decision-Making 5. Explanatory 	<p>Babbie 2004 Bingham & Felbinger 1989 Neuman 2003 Shields 1998 Shields 2003</p>
<p>8) Conceptual Framework</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Working Hypothesis 2. Descriptive Categories 3. Practical Ideal Type 4. Models of Research Operation 5. Formal Hypothesis 	<p>Babbie 2004 Bingham & Felbinger 1989 Neuman 2003 Shields 1998 Shields 2003</p>
<p>9) Research Methods</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Content Analysis 2. Case Study 3. Surveys 4. Field Research 5. Focus Groups 6. Structured Interviews 7. Archival Data 	<p>Babbie 2004 Bingham & Felbinger 1989 Neuman 2003 Shields 1998 Shields 2003</p>
<p>10) Statistical Techniques</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Descriptive Categories 2. Chi-square 3. Regression (Single or Multiple) 4. F-Statistics 5. T-Statistics 6. Other 	<p>Babbie 2004 Bingham & Felbinger 1989 Neuman 2003 Shields 1998 Shields 2003</p>

Chapter Four

Methodology

Chapter Purpose

This chapter explains the methodology used to describe the REDRESS literature. The methodology utilizes content analysis in order to conduct a meta-analysis about the literature that describes the United States Postal REDRESS program. Content analysis is used to assess the fifteen articles that describe the REDRESS program.

III. Methodology

Content analysis is utilized to describe the REDRESS™ studies. Content analysis (meta-analysis) is appropriate for two reasons. First, it involves a direct examination of the contents described in the literature. Second, it identifies the methods utilized to assess the REDRESS™ program. The coding sheet is derived from the 10 descriptive categories outlined in the framework categories listed below (See Table 4.1). Per article discussion, the categories listed in sections A and B are coded accordingly.

Linking the descriptive categories to elements of the coding sheet operationalizes the conceptual framework. Section A consists of: 1) evaluation components 2) process assessment 3) mediator assessment 4) transformative index 5) outcome assessment. Section B consists of: 6) evaluation types 7) research purpose 8) conceptual framework 9) research methods 10) statistical techniques. Babbie (2004, p. 318) declares, “content analysis is essentially a coding operation that involves the logic of conceptualization and operationalization...it allows an individual to refine his or her conceptual framework and

develop specific methods for observing in relation to that framework” (Babbie, 2004, p. 318).

Table 4.1 shows the operationalization of the conceptual framework table. The operationalization table provides a list of the ten descriptive categories that make up of the content analysis coding sheet. As stated earlier, the coding sheet is derived from literature that evaluates the REDRESS.

**Table 4.1: Operationalization of the Conceptual Framework:
REDRESS Assessment Criteria Coding Sheet**

Section A: Contents Assessment Criteria Coding Sheet				
Variables	Assessment Category	Significantly Discussed	Partially Discussed	No Discussion
Variable 1	REDRESS Components			
	1. Process	SD	PD	ND
	2. Mediator	SD	PD	ND
	3. Transformative	SD	PD	ND
	4. Outcome of Mediation	SD	PD	ND
Variable 2	Process Index	SD	PD	ND
	1. Treatment	SD	PD	ND
	2. Understanding	SD	PD	ND
	3. Opportunity	SD	PD	ND
	4. Participation	SD	PD	ND
	5. Fairness	SD	PD	ND
	6. Control	SD	PD	ND
	7. Information			
Variable 3	Mediator's Index			
	1. Skill	SD	PD	ND
	2. Fairness	SD	PD	ND
	3. Respect	SD	PD	ND
	4. Impartiality	SD	PD	ND
	5. Overall Performance	SD	PD	ND
Variable 4	Transformative Index			
	1. Empowerment	SD	PD	ND
	2. Recognition	SD	PD	ND
Variable 5	Outcome Mediation Index			
	1. Outcome			
	2. Speed	SD	PD	ND
	3. Control	SD	PD	ND
	4. Expectations	SD	PD	ND
	5. Long -term	SD	PD	ND

**Table 4. 1: Continuation of Operationalization of the Conceptual Framework
REDRESS Assessment Criteria Coding Sheet**

Section B: Methodology Assessment Criteria Coding Sheet			
Variables	Methods	Y = YES	N= No
Variable 6	Types of Evaluation		
	1. Process	Y	N
	2. Impact	Y	N
	3. Performance	Y	N
Variable 7	Research Purpose		
	1. Exploratory	Y	N
	2. Descriptive	Y	N
	3. Guaging	Y	N
	4. Decision-Making	Y	N
5. Explanatory	Y	N	
Variable 8	Conceptual Framework		
	1. Working Hypothesis	Y	N
	2. Descriptive Categories	Y	N
	3. Practical Ideal Type	Y	N
	4. Models of Research Operation	Y	N
5. Formal Hypothesis	Y	N	
Variable 9	Research Methods		
	1. Content Analysis	Y	N
	2. Case Study	Y	N
	3. Surveys	Y	N
	4. Field Research	Y	N
	5. Focus Group	Y	N
	6. Structured Interview	Y	N
	7. Archival Data	Y	N
	8. Data-Tracking	Y	N
9. Cost-Benefit	Y	N	
Variable 10	Statistical Techniques		
	1. Descriptive Statistics	Y	N
	2. Chi-Square	Y	N
	3. Multiple Regression	Y	N
	4. T-Statistics	Y	N
	5. F-Statistics	Y	N
6. Other	Y	N	

Section A

Process, mediator, transformative, and outcome of mediation are the four index categories that create the REDRESS components. The content categories in Section A are coded in the operationalization table (Table 4.1) by the degree they are discussed in the literature. Table 4.1 lists the scale for the coding sheet assessment. The scale consists of: SD= Significantly Discussed, LD= Limited Discussion, and N= No Discussion. When an article discusses empowerment and recognition in five or more paragraphs, the variables are rated as “SD”. When an article briefly describes speed in two or three paragraphs, the variable is rated “LD”. On the other hand, if an article does not discuss a variable such as fairness, it is rated as “ND”.

Section B

The methodology categories in Section B are coded in the operationalization table by whether or not a source identifies certain methods/techniques listed in each article. The variables consisted of: evaluation type, research purpose, conceptual framework, research method, and statistical techniques. The coding sheet listed for variables six through nine in section B were basic. As stated earlier, if an article identifies several methods or techniques listed above, it was coded as “yes”. On the other hand if an article did not discuss a method or technique, it will be coded as “no”.

Content Analysis

According to Babbie (2004, p. 314) content analysis is the study of recorded human communication. It answers the classic questions: “Who says what, to whom, why, how, and with what effect?” (Babbie, 2004, p. 314). Examples of communication that can be used to analyze content analysis are books, magazines, Web pages, poems, newspapers,

songs, paintings, speeches, letters, e-mails messages, bulletin board postings on the Internet, laws, and other components (Babbie, 204, p. 314).

Contrary to Babbie, Neuman (2003, p. 310) defines content analysis as “a technique for gathering data and analyzing the content of text. The content refers to words, meanings, pictures, symbols, ideas, themes, or any message that can be communicated” (Neuman, 2003, p. 310). For example, the text is anything written, visual, or spoken that serves as a medium for communication. It includes books, newspapers or magazine articles, advertisements, speeches, official documents, films or videotapes, musical lyrics, photographs, articles of clothing, or works of art (Neuman, 2003, p. 310).

Strengths of Content Analysis

According to Babbie (2004, p. 324) content analysis has four major strengths. First, it is economical in terms of time and money (Babbie, 2004, p. 323). Second, it is safe. Third, it permits the study of a process occurring over a long time (Babbie, 2004, p. 324). For example, from 1994 until present, the USPS examined how the transformative theory influenced the flow of communication between parties. Fourth, the content analyzed seldom has an effect on the subject studied (Babbie, 2004)

According Neuman (2003, p. 311) researchers have used content analysis for many purposes. First, it allows researchers to compare content across many texts and analyze it with quantitative techniques (charts and tables). Second, it lets a researcher reveal the content (message or meaning) in a source of communication (Neuman, 2003 p. 311). Third, it can yield repeatable, precise about a text (Neuman, 2003, p. 311). Although Neuman believes it has many purposes, he also confirms how useful it is for three types

of research problems. A researcher can measure large amounts of text with sampling and multiple coders. Content analysis can be studied “at a distance.” For example, content analysis can be used to study historical documents, the writing of someone who has died, or broadcasts in a hostile foreign country (Neuman, 2003, p. 312). Content analysis can reveal messages in a text that are difficult to see with a casual observation (Neuman, 2003, p. 312).

Weaknesses of Content Analysis

Babbie (2004, p. 324) contends, “content analysis has several disadvantages as well. First, content analysis is limited to the examination of recorded communication.” For example, such communication must be oral, written, or graphic, but they must be recorded in some fashion to permit analysis (Babbie, 2004, p. 324). Second, in terms of validity and reliability, content analysis has advantages and disadvantages (Babbie, 2004, p. 324). Validity refers to the extent to which an empirical measure adequately reflects the concept it is intended to measure (Babbie, 2004, p. 143). On the other hand, reliability refers to the quality of a measurement method that suggests that the same data would have been collected each time in a repeated observation (Babbie, 2004, p. 141). However, the advantage of reliability is that “you can always code or recode to make certain that coding is consistent” (Babbie, 2004, p. 324).

Neuman (2003, p. 311) argues that one the primary disadvantage of content analysis is that “it can not determine the truthfulness of an assertion or evaluate the aesthetic

qualities of literature.” It reveals the content in the text but cannot interpret the content’s significance (Neuman, 2003, p. 311).

Research Questions Strengths & Weaknesses

Because reliability is considered as either positive or negative, one will be able to recode the data to make sure it is consistent. Recoding may be a problem because the assessment results can vary based upon the context. Since the written documentation on the REDRESS™ program is limited, a researcher is forced to conduct a “meta-analysis” of the literature. On the other hand, the strengths of the research consist of being able to analyze the components of the REDRESS™ program over a long period of time. For example, written documents from 1997 – 2004 are examined. Also, it is effective and safe, therefore; the articles are easily accessible. If lost, stolen, or destroyed, one is able to locate scholarly articles on the web or by emailing the author, Lisa Bingham at Lbingham@indiana.edu.

Population

Babbie (2004, p. 190) defines a population as “the theoretically specified aggregation of the elements in a study.” In easier terms, it means the group or collection that we are interested in generalizing about (Babbie, 2004, p. 190). Neuman (2003, p. 541) defines a population as “the name for the large general group of many cases from which a researcher draws a sample and which is usually stated in theoretical terms.” The population for this study is fifteen articles. The researcher examines articles from 1997 until 2004. (The complete list is found in Appendix A or on page 47)

Unit of Analysis

Babbie (2004, p. 94) defines the unit of analysis as the “what” or “who is being studied.” Neuman (2003, p. 312) defines unit of analysis as a word, phrase, a theme, a plot, a newspaper article, a character, and so forth. The unit of analysis is the individual article describing the contents and methods utilized to evaluate the REDRESS™ program. The fifteen articles selected address the following: the history of the Postal Services problematic situation; the implementation of the transformative mediation model known as the REDRESS™; the program’s overarching goal of resolving overwhelming Equal Employment Opportunity complaints; and the results form participants involved in the mediation session. The articles identify the REDRESS™ methods and techniques utilized in the assessment process. Depending on the article’s topic, some information listed above may or may not be discussed in full detail.

Statistics

In order to summarize the results, descriptive statistics was utilized. The results from the descriptive statistics were derived from the coding sheet listed in the operationalization table. Neuman (2003, p. 312) explains that a coding system helps operationalize content analysis as well as provide a set of instructions or rules on how to systematically observe and record content from the text. For example, the rules explain how to classify and categorize observations (Neuman, 2003, p. 312). Per article discussion, frequency distribution was aggregated from the information received. Frequency simply means counting whether or not something occurs and, if it occurs, how often (Neuman, 2003, p.312). Since, the applied research project is descriptive in nature, descriptive statistics is sufficient.

Summary

Chapter 4 discussed the population of the fifteen articles utilized to assess the REDRESS program. The articles identify the REDRESS™ methods and techniques utilized in the assessment process. The method utilized for the project is (meta-analysis) content analysis or a direct observation of the contents described in the literature.

As stated earlier, the fifteen articles selected address the following:

- History of the Postal Services problematic situation
- Implementation of the transformative mediation model known as the REDRESS™
- Programs overarching goal of resolving overwhelming Equal Employment Opportunity complaints
- And the results form participants involved in the mediation session.

The sample and population utilized for this applied research project is listed in Table 4.2 below. The articles are listed in chronological order by year. Beginning in 1997 and ending in 2004, the articles were utilized to assess the REDRESS program

Table 4.2: List of Articles (Population & Sample)

No.	Year	Name of Author(s)	Title of Individual Articles
01	1997	Jonathan Anderson & Lisa Bingham	Upstream Effects from Mediation of Workplace Disputes: Preliminary Research of the USPS.
02	1997	Lisa Bingham	Mediating Employment Disputes: Perception of REDRESS™ at the United States Postal Service.
03	2001	James Antes, Joseph Folger, & Dorothy Della Noce	Transforming Conflict Interactions In the Workplace: Documented Effects of the REDRESS™ Program.
04	2001	Lisa Bingham & Mikela C. Novac	Mediation's Impact on Formal Discrimination Complaint Filing: Before & After the REDRESS™ Program at the U. S. P. S.
05	2001	Robert Bush	Handling Workplace Conflict: Why Transformative Mediation?
06	2001	Cynthia Hallberlin	Transforming Workplace Culture Through Mediation: Lessons Learned From Swimming Upstream.
07	2001	Lisa Bingham & Lisa Napoli	Employment Dispute Resolution & Workplace Culture: The REDRESS™ Program at the United States Postal Service.
08	2002	Lisa Bingham	Why Suppose? Let's Find Out A Public Policy Research Program on Dispute Resolution.
09	2002	Lisa Bingham	REDRESS™ at the United States Postal Service: A Breakthrough Mediation Program.
10	2002	Lisa Bingham & David Pitts	Research Reports: Highlights of Mediation at Work: Studies of the National REDRESS™ Evaluation Project.
11	2002	Lisa Bingham, Kiwhan Kim, & Susan Raines	Exploring the Role of Representation in Employment Mediation at the United States Postal Service.
12	2002	Tina Nabatachi & Lisa Bingham	Expanding Our Models of Justice In Dispute Resolution: A Field Test of the Contribution of Interactional Justice.
13	2003	Lisa Bingham	Mediation at Work: Transforming Workplace Conflict at the United States Postal Service.
14	2004	Geoffrey Drucker	The Postal Service Decision To Use Transformative Mediation.
15	2004	Betty Nesbit, Tina Nabatachi, & Lisa Bingham	Disputant's Perceptions of Interactional Justice: Comparing How Employees & Supervisors Interact in Mediation.

Chapter 5

Results

Chapter Purpose

Chapter 5 presents a description of the content and methods used in the literature that addresses the REDRESS program. The purpose of this chapter is to summarize the results of the contents & methods discussed and identified in the literature. By utilizing simple descriptive statistics, the findings are revealed in Tables 5.1 thru 5.10.

REDRESS Assessment Components

In Table 5.1, the findings showed that all of the articles either included a substantial or partial discussion on all four components (process, mediator, transformative, & outcome) of the REDRESS program. Eight of the ten articles significantly discussed the process index. Eight of the 15 articles articulated significantly discussed mediator, transformative, and outcome while 7 of the 15 articles partially discussed the three variables. For example, Bingham (2003) discussed the process index, mediator index, transformative index, and the outcome index significantly. On the other hand, in an article by Anderson & Bingham (1997), the process, mediator, and the mediation outcome was partially discussed, therefore; 3 of the 4 subcategories contents were identified in the literature.

Table 5.1 REDRESS Assessment: Levels of Discussion

REDRESS Components	Significantly Discussed	Partially Discussed	No Discussion	Total N=15
1. Process	10	5		15
2. Mediator	8	7		15
3. Transformative	8	7		15
4. Outcome	8	7		15

Process Index

The process index has seven subcategories that were measured as variables. The results showed that **participation**, the subcategory of process index was discussed the most. Seven of the articles substantially discussed participation. Eight of the articles partially discussed **opportunity** and **understanding**. (See Table 5.2) For example, in an article by Bingham & Napoli (2001), 5 of the 7 subcategories (treatment, understanding, opportunity, fairness, and control) were partially discussed in the articles. There was no discussion in 2 articles. **Treatment** and **fairness** was discussed in 7 of the articles. Bingham (2002) did not discuss the REDRESS process subcategories. Instead, she presented a one page brief overview about the pilot program process.

Table 5.2: Process Index: Process Index Levels of Discussion

Process Index	Significantly Discussed	Partially Discussed	No Discussion	Total N=15
1. Treatment	3	5	7	15
2. Understanding	4	8	3	15
3. Opportunity	5	8	2	15
4. Participation	7	6	2	15
5. Fairness	4	4	7	15
6. Control	3	7	5	15
7. Information	5	4	6	15

Mediator Index

The mediator index has five components. According to scale of significant discussion, **skill** had the highest level. While every articles included a discussion of skill, **fairness** was discussed the least in this category. There was no discussion in almost half of the articles. When reviewing the Although Bingham (1997) substantially discussed five of the five subcategories outlined in the mediator index, several articles partially

discuss skill, fairness, respect, partiality, or overall performance. For example, in an article by Bingham & Novac (2001) three of the five subcategories (skill, partiality, and overall performance) were discussed. In the Table 5.3 listed below, 10 of the articles partially discussed **overall performance**, 8 of the articles partially discussed **skill**, 7 of the articles partially discussed **impartiality** and 6 of the articles partially discuss **fairness**. The findings also showed that 7 of the articles did not discuss **fairness** or **respect**.

Table 5.3: Mediator Index: Levels of Discussion

Mediator Index	Significantly Discussed	Partially Discussed	No Discussion	Total N=15
1. Skill	7	8		15
2. Fairness	2	6	7	15
3. Respect	4	4	7	15
4. Partiality	5	7	3	15
5. Overall Performance	4	10	1	15

Transformative Index

Because the transformative model of REDRESS is based upon empowerment and recognition, this category is very important. One should note that the levels of discussion are tied across the scale. (See Table 5.4) Seven of the 15 articles either significantly or partially discussed **empowerment** and **recognition**. On the other hand, 1 of the 15 articles did not discuss either **recognition** or **empowerment**.

Table 5.4: Transformative Index: Index Levels of Discussion

Transformative Index	Significantly Discussed	Partially Discussed	No Discussion	Total N=15
1. Empowerment	7	7	1	15
2. Recognition	7	7	1	15

Mediation Outcome Index

Outcome, speed, control, expectations, and long-term effects are the components of the outcome index and the final content subcategories mentioned in Section A. In short, the outcome of mediation measured participant satisfaction with the outcome of the case (Nabatachi & Bingham, 2002, p. 128). As revealed by the statistical analysis, 8 of the articles substantially discussed **outcome**. Although 7 of the articles partially discussed **outcome, control, and long-term effects**, 9 of the articles partially discussed **speed**. (See Table 5.5) With respect to **expectation and control**, 8 of the articles did not discuss **expectations** and 6 of the articles did not discuss **control**. For example, Hallberlin (2002) did not touch base on the topic of **control** or **expectations** during the mediation session; however, she did discuss outcome, speed, and long-term effects.

Table 5.5: Mediation Outcome Index: Levels of Discussion

Outcome Index	Significantly Discussed	Partially Discussed	No Discussion	Total N=15
1. Outcome	8	7		15
2. Speed	2	9	4	15
3. Control	2	7	6	15
4. Expectation	2	5	8	15
5. Long-Term	3	7	5	15

Evaluation Techniques

Determining the evaluation techniques was straightforward. If used, each researcher gave clear-cut techniques. For example, in 2001, Bingham & Nabatachi conducted a process evaluation study. The qualitative study focused on how well the employment mediation practice at the United States Postal Service reflected the transformative model of mediation? Reviewing the results in Table 5.6, 15 of the articles discussed process

evaluation, 12 of the articles discussed impact, and 10 of the articles discussed performance.

Table 5.6: E: Identifiable Evaluation Techniques

Types of Evaluation	Yes	No	Total
1. Process	15		15
2. Impact	12	3	15
3. Performance	10	5	15

Research Purpose

Trying to determine the research purposes specified in the literature was somewhat confusing at times. In all honesty, one can only assume that the research purposes were coded correctly. Several of the articles clearly specified their research purposes while others had to be assumed, by reviewing at the statistical data. Key terms such as explore, describe, gauge, examine, predict, and explain helped identify a research purpose, if it was not clarified in the abstract or the introduction. For example, when reviewing the literature describing the REDRESS program, several different research purposes were specified or combined.

First, several articles gauge how well the employment mediation practice in the USPS reflects the transformative model of mediation (Nabatashi & Bingham, 2001, p. 399). Second, by examining the employees experience with the Equal Opportunity Complaints, several articles describe the history of mediation (Bingham, 1997, p. 20). Third, other articles explore the roles of representation in mediation (Bingham & Pitts, 2002, p. 135). Fourth, researchers explained and predicted that if a mediation program was well designed, it would be able to

resolve disputes at an earlier stage in the administrative process and save on litigation cost, if settled early (Bingham & Novac, 2001, p. 310).

Six of the articles used exploratory research. According to Table 5.7, it was the most used purpose. Five of the articles used descriptive statistics. There was a tie between explanatory and gauging with 3 research purposes each. Decision-making was utilized the least in only 1 article.

Table 5.7: Research Purposes

Research Purpose	Yes	No	Total
1. Exploratory	6	9	15
2. Descriptive	5	10	15
3. Gauging	3	12	15
4. Decision-Making	1	14	15
5. Explanatory	3	12	15

Conceptual Framework Table

Determining whether or not an article stated or utilized a conceptual framework to conduct their research was somewhat challenging as well. Some of literature either explicitly or implicitly identified a conceptual framework. Depending on the research purpose of the article, some literature used more than one framework. One key advantage of identifying conceptual frameworks for this analysis is that the 5 variables listed below were utilized. (See Table 5.8 below) For this applied research project “working hypothesis” and “descriptive categories” are utilized to describe a conceptual framework. Each were tied at 6 a piece for the most identifiable. However, 3 of the articles used formal hypothesis, 2 of the articles used practical ideal type and 1 of the articles used models of operation. The most utilized methods were working hypothesis and descriptive categories while models of operation was used less.

Table 5.8: Types of Conceptual Framework

Conceptual Framework	Yes	No	Total
1. Working Hypothesis	6	9	15
2. Descriptive Categories	6	9	15
3. Practical Ideal Types	2	13	15
4. Models of Operation	1	14	15
5. Formal Hypothesis	3	12	15

Research Methods

Most of the articles used exit surveys (10) as their methodology of choice followed by data tracking (4), and archival data (4). When reflecting back, content analysis was not specified. Although several articles used more than one research method, content analysis was not listed. Cost benefit analysis and focus groups were identified in at least 1 of the article's each. (See Table 5.9)

Table 5.9 Identifiable Research Methods

Research Methods	Yes	No	Total
1. Content Analysis	0	15	15
2. Case Study	2	13	15
3. Exit Surveys	10	5	15
4. Field Research	2	13	15
5. Focus Groups	1	14	15
6. Data-Tracking	4	11	15
7. Archival Data	4	11	15
8. Structured Interviews	3	12	15
9. Cost Benefit	1	14	15

Statistical Technique

The majority of the authors used descriptive statistics in their articles (14) followed by Chi-square (4) and multiple regression (3).

Table 5:10: Identifiable Statistical Techniques

Statistical Techniques	Yes	No	Total
1. Descriptive Statistics	14	1	15
2. Chi-Square	4	11	15
3. Multiple Regression	3	12	15
4. T-Statistics	1	14	15
5. F-Statistics	0	15	15
6. Other	1	14	15

This chapter summarized the data collected from the contents and methods utilized to describe the REDRESS program. From 1997 until 2004, articles were analyzed. 15 articles created the population for this study and each individual article formed the unit of analysis.

Chapter 6 concludes this research project and provides a summary table of the major results.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

Chapter Purpose

This chapter concludes the applied research project methodology results as described in the conceptual framework table.

Summary of Findings

The purpose of this Applied Research Project was to describe the literature utilized to assess the United States Postal Service REDRESS program. Hence, this study tried to describe the scholarly literature that assessed the REDRESS program. Also, this study tried to explain the literature from both a content and method perspective. The results of the research showed that majority of the articles included a substantial discussion on all four REDRESS assessment components. However, the subcategories in the process index were partially discussed or not discussed in a typical article. Overall, 2 of the 5 subcategories were not discussed when describing the mediator index. A typical article significantly and partially discussed the transformative index. For example, empowerment & recognition had the same level of discussion. Also, this is an important to remember because the United States Postal Service replicated the transformative model setting to resolve workplace conflict. Overall, the subcategories in the outcome index were partially discussed in a typical article.

Methodology

As stated earlier, identifying the evaluation techniques was straightforward. The most frequently used technique was process but impact and process were widely used in the articles as well. After reviewing the 15 articles, the results showed that the literature identified a research purpose and used conceptual framework table as a tool. For example, exploratory research and description were the two research purposes of choice. Because exploratory is paired with working hypothesis and description is compared with descriptive categories, the two micro-conceptual frameworks were highly used in the literature. Survey research was the research method of choice. Descriptive statistics were the most commonly used statistical technique.

Overall, the literature utilized to describe the REDRESS program was consistent with the goals and expectations from mediation practiced within a transformative framework. Although the evaluation of the REDRESS program is based upon the exit survey, one should question if complainants and respondents honestly tell the truth. Future research needs to examine whether mediation is effective in terms of promoting more creative resolutions to conflict and improving relationships between management and employees.

Table 6.1 shows the summary of REDRESS contents and methods as discussed in the literature.

Table 6.1 Summarized Table: REDRESS contents and methods per discussion

Content Category	Mode Levels of Discussion SD, PD, ND	Overall Highest Level Of Discussion In Subcategory
REDRESS Components		
1. Process 2. Mediator 3. Transformative 4. Outcome	Significantly Discussed Significantly Discussed Significantly Discussed Significantly Discussed	Significantly Discussed
Process Index		
1. Treatment 2. Understanding 3. Opportunity 4. Participation 5. Fairness 6. Control 7. Information	No Discussion Partially Discussed Partially Discussed Significantly Discussed No Discussion Partially Discussed No Discussion	Tied Partially & No Discussion
Mediator Index		
1. Skill 2. Fairness 3. Respect 4. Impartiality 5. Overall Performance	Partially Discussed No Discussion No Discussion Partially Discussed Partially Discussed	Partially Discussion
Transformative Index		
1. Empowerment 2. Recognition	Significantly & Partially Discussed	Tied
Outcome Index		
1. Outcome 2. Speed 3. Control 4. Expectation 5. Long-term	Significantly Discussed Partially Discussed Partially Discussed No Discussion Partially Discussed	Partially Discussed
Method Category	Identifiable Methods Yes/No	Highest & Lowest Utilized Methods
Types of Evaluation		
1. Process 2. Impact 3. Performance	Yes (15) Yes (12) Yes (10)	Process Evaluation Performance Evaluation
Research Purpose		
1. Exploratory 2. Descriptive 3. Gauging 4. Decision-Making 5. Explanatory	Yes (6) Yes (5) Yes (3) Yes (1) Yes (3)	Exploratory Decision-Making

Conceptual Framework	Identifiable Methods Yes/No	Highest & Lowest Utilized Methods
1. Working Hypothesis 2. Descriptive Categories 3. Practical Ideal 4. Models of Operation 5. Formal Hypothesis	Yes (6) Yes (6) Yes (2) Yes (1) Yes (3)	Working Hypothesis Descriptive Categories Models of Operation
Research Methods		
1. Contents 2. Case Study 3. Exit Survey 4. Field Research 5. Focus Groups 6. Data-Tracking 7. Archival Data 8. Structured Interviews 9. Cost Benefit	No (0) Yes (2) Yes (10) Yes (2) Yes (1) Yes (4) Yes (4) Ye (3) Yes (1)	Exit Surveys Content analysis
Statistical Techniques		
1. Descriptive Statistics 2. Chi-Square 3. Multiple regression 4. T-Statistics 5. F-Statistics 6. Other	Yes (14) Yes (4) Yes (3) Yes (1) No (0) Yes (1)	Descriptive Statistics F-Statistics

Appendix A
Individual Articles used in Applied Research Project

01. Anderson, J. F. & L. B. Bingham. 1997. Upstream effects from mediation of workplace disputes: Some preliminary evidence from the USPS. *Labor Law Journal*, 48: 601- 615
02. Antes, J. R., J. P. Folger, & D. J. Noce (2001). Transforming conflict interactions in the workplace: documented effects of the USPS REDRESS Program. *Hostra Labor Law & Employment Journal*, 18(2): 429-467
03. Bingham, Lisa. 1997. Mediating employment disputes: Perception of REDRESS at the United States Postal Service. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, XVII (2): 20-30.
04. Bingham, Lisa. 2003. *Mediation at work: Transforming workplace conflict at the United States Postal Service*. Washington, D. C. IBM Center for the Business of Government:1-46.
05. Bingham, Lisa. 2002. REDRESS™ at the USPS –A breakthrough mediation program. *Alternative Conflict Resolution*, 1(3): 34.
06. Bingham, L., G. Chesmore, & L. M. Napoli. 2000. Mediating employment disputes at the United States Postal Service: a comparison on in-house and outside neutral mediator models. *Review of Public Administration*, 20, (1): 5-19.
07. Bingham, L. B., K. Kim, & S. S. Raines. 2002. Employment Mediation: Exploring the role of representation at the USPS. *Ohio State Journal of Dispute Resolution*, 17(2): 341-378.
08. Bingham, L.B. & L. M. Napoli. 2001. *Employment dispute resolution and workplace Culture: The REDRESS program at the United States Postal Service*. Washington, DC: American Bar Association.
09. Bingham, L. B. & M. C. Novac. 2001. Mediation’s impact on formal complaint filing: Before & after the REDRESS Program at the United States Postal Service. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 21 (4): 308-331.
10. Bingham, L. B. & D. W. Pitts. 2002. Highlights of mediation at work: Studies of the National REDRESS Evaluation Project. *Negotiation Journal*, 2002, 18, 135- 146.
11. Drucker, Geoffrey. 2004. *The Postal Service’s Decision to Use Transformative Mediation*. Resource Book for Managing Employment Disputes.

12. Hallberlin, Cynthia. Transforming workplace culture through mediation: Lessons learned swimming upstream. *Hostra Labor & Employment Law Journal*, 18(2): 469-477.
13. Nabatachi, T. & L.B. Bingham. 2001. Transformative mediation in the USPS REDRESS Program: Observations of ADR specialist. *Hostra Journal of Labor & Employment Law*, 18(2), 399-327.
14. Nabatachi, T. & L. B. Bingham. 2002. Expanding our models justice in dispute resolution: A field test of the contribution of interactional justice. *Paper presented at the International Association for Conflict Management Conference*, Parke City, Utah.
15. Nesbit, B., T. Nabatachi, & L. Bingham. 2004. Disputants 'perceptions of Interactional Justice: Comparing how employees and supervisors interact in mediation.

Appendix B: Empirical Data Coding Scheme

Section A: Contents Assessment Criteria Coding Sheet				
Variables	Assessment Category	Significantly Discussed	Partially Discussed	No Discussion
Variable 1	REDRESS Components			
	1. Process	SD	PD	ND
	2. Mediator	SD	PD	ND
	3. Transformative	SD	PD	ND
	4. Outcome of Mediation	SD	PD	ND
Variable 2	Process Index	SD	PD	ND
	1. Treatment	SD	PD	ND
	2. Understanding	SD	PD	ND
	3. Opportunity	SD	PD	ND
	4. Participation	SD	PD	ND
	5. Fairness	SD	PD	ND
	6. Control	SD	PD	ND
	7. Information			
Variable 3	Mediator's Index	SD	PD	ND
	1. Skill	SD	PD	ND
	2. Fairness	SD	PD	ND
	3. Respect	SD	PD	ND
	4. Impartiality	SD	PD	ND
	5. Overall Performance			
Variable 4	Transformative Index			
	1. Empowerment	SD	PD	ND
	2. Recognition	SD	PD	ND
Variable 5	Outcome of Mediation Index			
	1. Outcome	SD	PD	ND
	2. Speed	SD	PD	ND
	3. Control	SD	PD	ND
	4. Expectations	SD	PD	ND
	5. Long –term effect	SD	PD	ND

Continuation of REDRESS Assessment Criteria Coding Sheet

Section B: Methodology Assessment Criteria Coding Sheet			
Variables	Methods	Y = Y	N= No
Variable 6	Types of Evaluation		
	1. Process	Y	N
	2. Impact	Y	N
	3. Performance	Y	N
Variable 7	Research Purpose		
	1. Exploratory	Y	N
	2. Descriptive	Y	N
	3. Guaging	Y	N
	4. Decision-Making	Y	N
5. Explanatory	Y	N	
Variable 8	Conceptual Framework		
	1. Working Hypothesis	Y	N
	2. Descriptive Categories	Y	N
	3. Practical Ideal Type	Y	N
	4. Models of Research Operation	Y	N
5. Formal Hypothesis	Y	N	
Variable 9	Research Methods		
	1. Content Analysis	Y	N
	2. Case Study	Y	N
	3. Surveys	Y	N
	4. Field Research	Y	N
	5. Focus Group	Y	N
	6. Structured Interview	Y	N
7. Archival Data			
Variable 10	Statistical Techniques		
	1. Descriptive Statistics	Y	N
	2. Chi-Square	Y	N
	3. Multiple Regression	Y	N
	4. T-Statistics	Y	N
	5. F-Statistics	Y	N
6. Other	Y	N	

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