

Mediating International Crises

CROSS-NATIONAL AND EXPERIMENTAL PERSPECTIVES

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This study focuses on mediation as a means for mitigating or at least minimizing the potentially turbulent and violent consequences of international crises. Two main research questions are explored: (1) Does mediation in general affect the dynamics and outcomes of crisis negotiations? and (2) Does the impact of mediation vary in accordance with mediator style? Data are drawn from the International Crisis Behavior data set and from ongoing experimental work with human subjects. The historical data reveal that mediated crises are more typically characterized by compromise among crisis actors, are more likely to end in agreements, and show a tendency toward long-term tension reduction. The experimental research confirmed the relationship between mediation and the achievement of agreement and also revealed that mediation leads to crises of shorter duration and to greater satisfaction by the parties with the outcome. A manipulative mediation style is more likely to yield favorable crisis management outcomes than is a more restrictive facilitative style.

Keywords: international crisis; crisis management; negotiation; mediation; experiments; simulation

International crises are dangerous episodes that can be destabilizing not only to the actors directly involved but also to the entire international system. Crises can present overwhelming challenges to established institutions and belief systems and change forever the distribution of power within the international system or in a regional subsystem. Recognizing the primacy of crises, scholars and policy makers have been increasingly concerned with developing mechanisms for crisis prevention, management, and resolution. In this study, we investigate one such mechanism—mediation by

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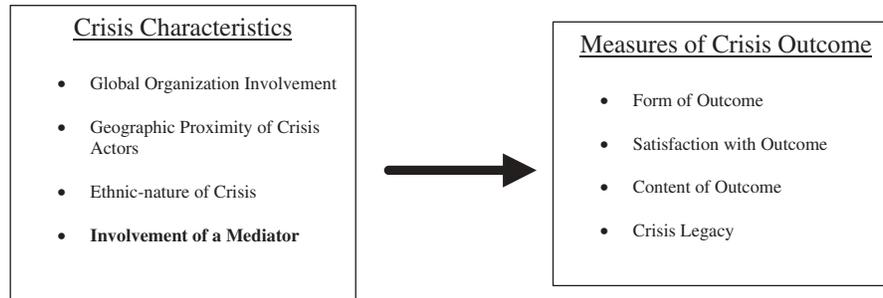


Figure 1: Potential Determinants of Crisis Outcome

a third party—to determine whether it is an effective means of mitigating, or at least managing, the all too often turbulent and violent consequences of crises.

Toward this goal of determining the impact of mediation on the dynamics and outcomes of crises, we explore two main research questions: First, does mediation in general affect the nature of the outcome of crisis negotiations? Second, does the impact of mediation vary in accordance with the style of mediator involvement?

Developing insights into the first of these research questions will entail comparison of data on outcomes of mediated and unmediated 20th-century crises. But analysis of these data alone cannot provide a sufficient understanding of how mediation might change the progress of crisis negotiations. To better understand the nature of the relationship between mediation and crisis dynamics, we report on a series of experiments conducted in a simulated crisis negotiation environment. These experiments provide direct feedback about negotiators' perceptions of mediation and data on the impact of varying styles of mediation.

Mediation is not the sole determinant of crisis outcomes. Figures 1 and 2 provide an overview of how the factors we explore here fall into a broader understanding of crisis dynamics. Figure 1 presents a general framework for the analysis of crisis outcomes, in which four outcome characteristics are considered.

Figure 2 presents a framework for the analysis of crisis mediation, in which this relationship between mediation and outcome is examined in terms of three main process attributes: style of mediation, power discrepancy among adversaries, and zones of agreement. This study focuses only on style of mediation, leaving power discrepancy and zones of agreement for subsequent analyses (see Young et al. 2002; Asal et al. 2002).

We turn first to a brief examination of key studies that focus on the effect of mediation on international conflict and crises as well as to a review of work on the relationship between the procedural element of mediation style and crisis outcomes. This will be followed by an overview of patterns of crisis mediation in the 20th century, setting the stage for the examination of hypotheses derived from the two frameworks outlined in Figures 1 and 2.

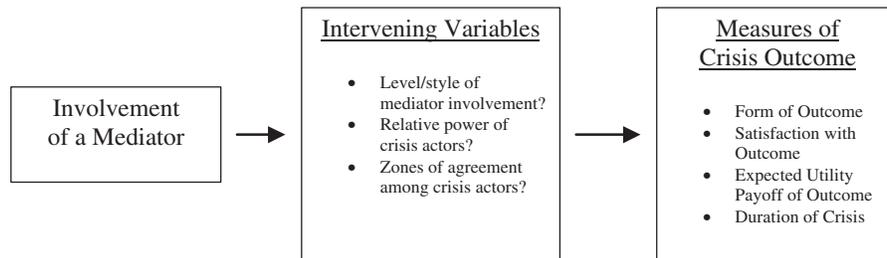


Figure 2: Mediation and Crisis Negotiation Processes

MEDIATION IN INTERNATIONAL CONFLICTS AND CRISES

Bercovitch, Anagnoson, and Wille (1991) define mediation as

a process of conflict management where disputants seek the assistance of, or accept an offer of help from, an individual, group, state, or organization to settle their conflict or resolve their differences without resorting to physical force or invoking the authority of the law. (p. 8)

Bercovitch and Langley (1993) note that this behavioral definition is most useful because of its emphasis on the key components of mediation—the disputants, the third party, and the specific conflict resolution context.

Two other definitional issues need to be addressed at the outset. First, it is important to be clear on what we mean by international and foreign policy crises. In this study, we employ the definitions developed by the International Crisis Behavior (ICB) Project. An international crisis is identified when it meets two criteria: (1) A change has occurred in the type, and/or an increase in the intensity, of disruptive (hostile verbal or physical) interactions between two or more states, with a heightened probability of military hostilities. (2) These changes, in turn, destabilize the states' relationship and challenge the structure of an international system. When an international crisis is triggered at the system level, at least one state is experiencing a foreign policy crisis. A state is considered a crisis actor if three conditions are present: decision makers perceive a threat to basic national values, leaders believe that they must make a decision within a finite period of time, and leaders consider the chances of involvement in military hostilities to be heightened (Brecher and Wilkenfeld 2000).

A second definitional issue pertains to the differing goals of conflict resolution versus crisis management. As Stern and Druckman (2000) point out, there is no single definition of "successful" conflict resolution. Whereas general conflict resolution focuses on seeking long-term remedies that address the root causes of conflict and all

underlying issues, interventions in crises have a distinct mission. The primary mission of crisis management is to terminate the immediate crisis before it escalates or spreads. Securing a cease fire or other form of de-escalation would be considered a successful instance of crisis management but is not always considered a successful conflict resolution outcome (see, for instance, Burton 1972, 1990; Fisher 1972; Kelman 1992; Rothman 1992; Bercovitch and Regan 1997; Jones 2000). Dixon (1996, 656) provides a useful definition of what we term crisis management (versus conflict resolution): successful crisis management occurs when “any written or unwritten mutually agreeable arrangements between parties that at least temporarily resolve or remove from contention one or more, but not necessarily all, of the issues underlying the dispute” are secured. Conflict resolution and crisis management are, of course, related but are distinct pursuits.

The theoretical literature on the topic of mediation in international relations and international conflict is robust (see Bercovitch 1997 for a review of the work in this field). Research that focuses on crisis mediation, however, is quite sparse. Analysts have generated a substantial number of case studies examining mediator involvement in individual crises (see especially Ott 1972; Crocker, Hampson, and Aall 1999; Mooradian and Druckman 1999; Greenberg, Barton, and McGuinness 2000; Gerner and Schrodt 2001). Although these analyses have generated a breadth of findings about specific situations, they have not provided as much progress toward general theories of crisis mediation. This study hopes to make a contribution toward the development of such a theory in this area.

The dearth of systematic research on the topic of crisis mediation is especially problematic given Dixon’s (1996, 678) observation that “mediation efforts occur between two and three times more often during crisis and hostility phases (of conflicts) than during periods of lower intensity.” In addition, Zartman and Touval (1996) argue that a crisis, with its perceived deadline, is most conducive to acceptance of mediation. Despite the likelihood that mediation will take place during international crises, both the mediation literature and the crisis literature have failed to offer systematic analyses of crisis mediation.

EXPECTED EFFECTS OF MEDIATION

All conflicting parties must consent to the involvement of a mediator as a third party in the dispute. But what motivates parties to agree to a mediator? In general, it is the individual expectations of those involved in the conflict that mediation will be effective in helping each secure a more favorable outcome than would otherwise be possible (Touval and Zartman 1985). Princen (1992, 61) concurs that individual interests, rather than “shared values” or “a convergence of interests,” are the driving force behind acceptance of mediation.

Mediation can bolster the benefit an actor accrues from a conflict or crisis in a number of ways. First, mediators can help each side “get its way” in a negotiation; that is, they can lead one (or many) parties to victory in a conflict. In addition, Bercovitch (1992, 1997) notes that a disputing party may seek mediation in expectation that it would help bring an end more quickly to a conflict or crisis that would otherwise per-

sist. A disputant may also agree to mediation to foster better relations with that third party for the future (Zartman and Touval 1996); conversely, a negotiating party may try to protect its reputation and image by using the mediator as the scapegoat for any unpopular concessions made as part of the final agreement. Parties may also seek mediation out of the belief that a mediator will act as a guarantor of an agreement, reducing the chances of future costly conflicts. Actors would view any of these effects of mediation as value added to the overall outcome of a conflict or crisis.

Writing more specifically about the effect of mediators on the processes and evolution of crises, Morgan (1994) and Dixon (1996) both find that mediation benefits the relevant parties by effectively helping to defuse these dangerous situations. Morgan's framework on crisis escalation posits that the probability of an international crisis escalating to war decreases when third-party intervention takes the form of mediation. Similarly, Dixon finds that crisis mediation provides "the most consistently effective conflict management technique for both preventing escalation and promoting peaceful settlement" (p. 671). Dixon's definition of mediation, however, is somewhat unique within the conflict management literature. According to his categorization, efforts by third parties to facilitate communication between disputants do not qualify as mediation, but binding arbitration does qualify as mediation.¹ This definition stands in contrast to the one adopted here and by many in the field of mediation studies (see Bercovitch and Langley 1993). As such, further analysis is needed, along the lines presented below, to help determine how effective mediation is as a crisis management tool.

A CLASSIFICATION OF MEDIATION STYLES

The literature on mediation has converged on three basic styles that mediators can adopt in their efforts to resolve a conflict (Touval and Zartman 1985; Princen 1992; Bercovitch and Houston 1996)—the facilitator, the formulator, and the manipulator. Some offer alternative classification schemes, somewhat more detailed than that of Touval and Zartman (1985) (see Skjelsbaek 1986; Mitchell 1993; Hopmann 1996; Keashly and Fisher 1996). We agree with Bercovitch (1997), however, that the facilitator-formulator-manipulator schema sufficiently distinguishes general mediator behavior. The crisis actors, the mediator, or both may decide which style is most appropriate for a given crisis, and each requires a different level of involvement and dictates the parameters of appropriate behavior by the mediator.

The *mediator as facilitator* serves as a channel of communication among disputing parties (Burton 1984; Touval and Zartman 1985; Hopmann 1996). This type of mediation is also referred to as third-party consultation (Fisher 1972; Kelman 1992; Keashly and Fisher 1996), good offices, or process facilitation (Hopmann 1996). The mediator as facilitator can organize the logistics of the negotiation process, collect information, set the agenda regarding which issues will be discussed and in what order, and/or deliver messages between parties if face-to-face communication is not possible or

1. Dixon (1996) argues that facilitation is distinct from both mediation and arbitration because of its focus on procedural matters, versus the substantive focus of other forms of third-party intervention (see esp. p. 654).

desired. The mediator as facilitator makes no substantive contribution to the negotiation process but, rather, is restrained to ensuring continued, and hopefully constructive, discussion and dialogue among disputants.

The second role defined by Touval and Zartman (1985) is *mediator as formulator*. Unlike facilitation, formulation involves a substantive contribution to the negotiations—including developing and proposing new solutions to the disputants—to assist the disputants when the parties reach an impasse in the negotiation process (Touval and Zartman 1985; Hopmann 1996; Zartman and Touval 1996). However, the mediator as formulator is not empowered to pressure the crisis actors to endorse or advocate any particular outcome—a capability associated with manipulation, as described below.²

The *manipulative mediator* also provides a substantive contribution to negotiations. In addition to formulating potential solutions, this mediator uses its position and its leverage—“resources of power, influence, and persuasion”—to “manipulate the parties into agreement” (Touval and Zartman 1985, 12). The mediator augments the appeal of its solutions by adding and subtracting benefits to/from the proposed solution (Zartman and Touval 1996). Hopmann (1996) indicates that only a powerful mediator can play this role and notes that mediators can influence the direction of negotiations not only through carrot-and-stick measures but also by manipulating the international environment.

A number of authors (Young 1967; Touval and Zartman 1985; Bercovitch 1992, 1997; Princen 1992; Mitchell 1993; Hopmann 1996; Zartman and Touval 1996) argue that mediators should not adopt one style in a situation but should adapt throughout the course of a conflict or crisis. Nonetheless, others believe that one or the other of these styles will be a more effective means of conflict resolution or crisis management. Advocates of the mediator-as-facilitator style contend that disputing parties should arrive at their own solutions (Fisher 1972; Carnevale and Peggnetter 1985; Burton 1990; Kelman 1992; Rothman 1992; Keashly and Fisher 1996) and that styles that allow mediators to suggest solutions—that is, formulation and manipulation—would “prejudice his (the mediator’s) position” (Burton 1972, 7). Proponents of facilitation maintain that this approach is best suited to securing long-lasting, mutually reinforcing outcomes and to resolving fundamental causes of conflicts (Jabri 1996); whereas manipulative, directive strategies can damage the “atmosphere of good will, trust, and joint problem solving” between the parties (Princen 1992, 58). Consistent with this perspective and specific to the question of mediation styles in crisis, Dixon (1996) concludes that facilitation effectively promotes peaceful settlement during crises more consistently than do manipulative moves.

Although many support limiting a mediator’s role to facilitation, Terris and Maoz (2001) find that mediators are more likely to employ an intrusive style such as manipulation. Mediation analysts who encourage the adoption of such a manipulative style argue that the manipulative mediator’s ability to apply leverage will allow him or her to be more effective than the facilitator in bringing disputants to agreement (Bercovitch 1986, 1997; Bercovitch and Houston 1996). Touval and Zartman (1985) contend that

2. To date, we do not include an analysis of formulation. In future research, we will examine whether its effects are similar to facilitation, to manipulation, or are unique.

only a mediator with leverage is likely to generate an agreement between the parties or assist them in getting out of a quandary.

Morgan's (1994) analysis of crises is more favorable than Dixon's (1996) regarding the potential of manipulative strategies in times of crisis. Morgan notes that manipulative mediators' ability to provide side payments to conflicting parties makes them especially effective. Many authors have also found that intense settings, such as crises, are more receptive to the substantive contributions and pressuring moves of a manipulative mediator than are less intense situations (Rubin 1980; Hiltrop 1985, 1989; Lim and Carnevale 1990; Bercovitch 1997).

This disagreement over what path a mediator should follow during an international crisis serves as the motivation for our second research question: how do different mediation styles affect crises and crisis negotiations? First, however, we explore the occurrence, impact, and effects of crisis mediation in general.

CRISIS MEDIATION IN THE 20TH CENTURY: CROSS-NATIONAL FINDINGS

In fall 2000, we oversaw an evaluation of the role of mediation in the 419 cases coded as international crises in the ICB data set for the period from 1918 to 1996. Utilizing ICB case summaries, coders explored two new variables for each crisis: (1) Did mediation occur? and, if so, (2) To what degree did mediation affect the way the crisis ended?

WHEN ARE CRISES MEDIATED?

The ICB data on instances of mediation revealed that mediation efforts were present in 125, or 30%, of all crises between 1918 and 1996.³ Although some crisis characteristics—number of actors involved, type of trigger, or whether the crisis was part of a larger protracted conflict—revealed little relationship to mediation, the analysis did reveal certain trends regarding the likelihood of mediation. Mediation occurs with greatest frequency in crises involving territorial threat—in 30% of cases overall but in 41% when territorial issues are involved. In addition, as the number of relevant issues in a crisis increases, so too does the chance that the crisis will be mediated: 52% of crises with three or more core issues were mediated.

The data also reveal that mediation rates have changed as the distribution of power in the international system has shifted. Mediation occurred in only 20% of crises during the bipolar era between 1945 and 1962. During the polycentric period (1963-1989), 34% of crises were mediated. And in the post-cold war unipolar era (1990-1996), 64% of international crises involved mediation efforts. The data support the contention that mediation is an increasingly common tool of crisis management and one that we need to better understand.

3. See: <http://www.icbnet.org>. This total excludes cases in which crisis actors requested mediation but it was not forthcoming (2 cases) as well as those in which disputants rejected an offer of mediation (16 cases).

Crises linked to ethnic conflicts have been prominent in the post-cold war era and are more likely to feature mediation than are those without ethnic ties. Twenty-three percent of nonethnic crises were mediated, whereas 34% of secessionist crises and 52% of irredentist crises prompted mediation efforts. This phenomenon is no doubt related to our finding that territorial crises are the most likely to be mediated, but there may also exist an independent relationship between the ethnic roots of a crisis and whether mediation will be invoked.

Mediation is more likely to occur the more geographically proximate the crisis adversaries are to one another. Crises between contiguous actors exhibit a 35% rate of mediation, compared with a 23% rate for near neighbors and only a 14% rate for actors that are geographically distant. This phenomenon is related to our findings on crisis mediation rates at different levels within the international system. Three-fourths of all crises between neighboring states are subsystem-level crises (involving nonmajor powers), and 36% of these subsystem crises involved mediation efforts. This contrasts with the paucity of mediation efforts in dominant system crises. Only 8% of these crises were subject to mediation.

Finally, the level of violence associated with a crisis influences the likelihood that that crisis will be mediated. All crises involve an increased chance of violence erupting, but in 26% of ICB cases, no violence occurs among the crisis adversaries. Our data reveal that mediation is less likely to occur in these nonviolent crises. Only 19% of these crises were mediated, whereas mediation was attempted in 39% of crises characterized by violence at the level of a war.

Overall, the results of this aggregate analysis of mediation in 20th-century international crises reveal that mediation became an increasingly prominent means of attempting to manage international crises as the system moved from bipolarity through polycentrism to post-cold war unipolarity. Mediation was most prevalent in crises involving territorial disputes, ethnic conflicts, and multiple issues; when contiguous adversaries were involved; in crises at the subsystem level; and in more violent crises. With these general findings in mind, we turn now to a more focused analysis of the effectiveness of crisis mediation.

EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF CRISIS MEDIATION

In the previous section, we examined major research orientations and findings that pertain to aspects of the frameworks presented in Figures 1 and 2. We concluded the section by examining ICB data on crises in the 20th century to identify some of the major crisis characteristics that are likely to be closely associated with attempts at third-party mediation. We now turn to the examination of two sets of hypotheses that will be tested in ensuing sections, the first derived from Figure 1 and pertaining to crisis outcomes and the second derived from Figure 2 and pertaining to crisis negotiation processes.

MEDIATION AND CRISIS OUTCOMES

From Figure 1 and the discussion of the effect of mediation on crisis outcomes, we derive the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1a: Crises in which third-party mediation occurs terminate in agreement more frequently than do unmediated crises.

Hypothesis 1b: Crises in which third-party mediation occurs terminate in compromise and stalemate (ambiguous outcomes) more frequently than do unmediated crises.

Hypothesis 1c: Crises in which third-party mediation occurs are more likely to lead to tension reduction than are unmediated crises.

Hypothesis 1d: Crises in which third-party mediation occurs terminate in more satisfying outcomes for the parties than do unmediated crises.

In an effort to better understand the complex relationship between mediation and crisis outcome characteristics, we report findings based on cross-tabulation and logit analyses of the four outcome variables—form, content, tension escalation/reduction, and satisfaction—and several independent variables including mediation. The additional independent variables considered here are often pointed to in the literature as factors associated with conflict and crisis outcomes: global organization involvement (Bercovitch and Rubin 1992; Princen 1992; Brecher and Wilkenfeld 2000), ethnic conflict (Midlarsky 1992; Carment 1993; Carment and James 1997; Brecher and Wilkenfeld 2000), and geographic contiguity (Diehl 1991; Vasquez 1993, 1995; Huth 1998; Brecher and Wilkenfeld 2000). The results of the logit analyses of the models associated with these four outcome variables are presented in Table 1.

We turn first to an examination of hypothesis 1a and the question of how mediation impacts on form of outcome. Here we group all types of agreement outcomes—formal, semiformal, and tacit—into a single category, with all other forms of outcome—unilateral acts, imposed agreement, and crisis faded—in a nonagreement category. We find that 38% of all ICB cases ended with an agreement. However, when crises are mediated, agreement occurs in 62% of the cases, compared with only 27% in unmediated crises ($\chi^2 = 48.24, p < .000$).

Turning to the logit analyses, we find that model 1 reports a strong positive relationship between the introduction of mediation into a crisis and whether the crisis culminated in an agreement. None of the other independent variables are statistically significant. As is indicated by the likelihood ratio chi-square value, the overall model is statistically significant at $\alpha = .000$. The baseline probability reveals that in the absence of mediation, there is a 31% probability of crises ending in agreement. When mediation occurs, the probability of crises ending in agreement more than doubles to 67%. With none of the other independent variables significant, we have identified a critical impact for mediation on whether agreement is achieved in international crises.

That almost two out of every three mediated crises terminate in agreement contrasts rather starkly with findings about the effect of mediation efforts in international disputes in general. Bercovitch, Anagnoson, and Wille's (1991) analysis of the outcomes of more than 90 international disputes found that mediated conflicts resulted in agree-

TABLE 1
Logit Analysis of the Determinants of Crisis Outcome

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables			
	Model 1: Form of Outcome	Model 2: Content of Outcome	Model 3: Escalation or Reduction in Tensions	Model 4: Satisfaction with Outcome
Global organization involvement	-0.249 (0.221)	-0.313 (0.204)	-0.111 (0.202)	0.209 (0.268)
Geographic proximity	-0.270 (0.249)	0.578* (0.229)	0.226 (0.227)	0.448 (0.313)
Ethnic conflict	0.061 (0.243)	0.616** (0.233)	0.367 (0.230)	0.280 (0.286)
Mediation	1.524*** (0.241)	-0.530* (0.231)	0.355 (0.231)	-0.013 (0.275)
Constant	-0.803*** (0.193)	-0.054 (0.180)	-0.080 (0.181)	-0.324 (0.237)
<i>n</i>	419	419	413	250
LR χ^2 (<i>df</i> = 4)	50.59	18.91	6.17	3.85
<i>p</i>	< .000	< .001	< .187	< .426

NOTE: Standard errors appear in parentheses. The variables were dichotomized as follows: Independent variables: global organization activity (0 = no activity, 1 = activity), geographic proximity (0 = contiguous, 1 = distant actors), ethnic conflict (0 = nonethnic conflict, 1 = ethnic conflict), mediation (0 = no mediation, 1 = mediation); dependent variables: form of outcome (0 = no agreement, 1 = agreement), content of outcome (0 = ambiguous, 1 = definitive), long-term tensions between parties (0 = escalation, 1 = reduction), satisfaction with outcome (0 = parties not satisfied, 1 = parties satisfied).

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .000$.

ments only 22% of the time. These contending findings support the assertion that just as crises are different from general conflicts, the effects and dynamics of crisis mediation differ from those of general international mediation, writ large, and need to be studied as a distinct class of events.

Hypothesis 1b focuses on the impact of mediation on the content or substance of crisis outcomes. The ICB crises were classified according to whether the outcome was ambiguous (involving compromises and/or stalemates among crisis actors) or definitive (with some or all crisis actors perceiving overall victory or defeat). Overall, half of all crises terminated in ambiguous outcomes. Mediated crises lead to ambiguous outcomes 59% of the time, compared with 46% for unmediated crises. The outcome of a cross-tabulation indicates that these results are statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 6.19$, $p < .013$).

As the logit analysis of model 2 shows, the introduction of a mediator into a crisis significantly decreases the chances that a crisis will result in a definitive outcome. The overall model is statistically significant at $\alpha = .001$. Again holding all of the dichotomous independent variables at their modal values (zero, in this model), the baseline probability of observing a definitive agreement is 49%. When mediation does occur, the probability of crises ending in definitive agreements decreases to 36%. Model 2 also demonstrates that unlike mediation, geographic distance among crisis actors and the involvement of an ethnic dimension in a crisis both increase the likelihood that a

crisis will result in an outcome with clear winners and losers rather than in an ambiguous outcome with concessions by all parties.⁴

Ambiguous outcomes leave few actors feeling as if they are the “loser” in a crisis. But in the long run, ambiguous outcomes are associated with an escalation of tensions among crisis actors, whereas definitive outcomes are associated with long-term reductions in tensions ($\chi^2 = 5.78, p < .056$). As such, the desirability of ambiguous outcomes associated with mediation efforts is not clear. We will return to this point in the Conclusion.

Overall, the results obtained from the cross-tabulation of mediation and tension escalation/reduction ($\chi^2 = 2.98, p < .084$) and the logit analysis of model 3 do not support hypothesis 1c. However, there is a positive relationship between tension reduction and both the presence of ethnic conflict and mediation that approaches statistical significance. Finally, the results of both the cross-tabulation of mediation and actors' satisfaction with the crisis outcome ($\chi^2 = 0.02, p < .897$) and the logit analysis of model 4 do not support the contention in hypothesis 1d that mediation leads to satisfaction with the outcome. Model 4 as a whole is not statistically significant, nor is the mediation variable within this model.

A review of the cross-national findings on crisis mediation and outcomes reveals some clear trends regarding the types of crises in which mediation is most likely to occur and regarding some of the effects of this mediation. Mediated crises are more likely to involve concessions from actors (rather than having clear winners and losers), are more likely to end in agreements, and show a tendency toward a positive relationship between mediation and long-term tension reductions. However, an observed relationship between ambiguous crisis outcomes and long-term escalations in tensions raises questions about the potential costs of crisis mediation, especially the postcrisis costs.

MEDIATION AND CRISIS NEGOTIATION PROCESSES

This review of aggregate findings on crisis outcomes forces us to consider what these data do not reveal about the effect of crisis mediation as well as the dynamics associated with such mediation. As noted earlier, disagreement exists among conflict resolution scholars as to whether passive, facilitative mediation or aggressive, manipulative mediation is a more effective means of conflict resolution in general, and there is little research on the question of which mediation style might be more effective during a crisis, in particular. Consistent with the framework presented in Figure 2, we believe this issue must be explored before we can offer general conclusions about the effectiveness of crisis mediation.

Returning to Figure 2 and its focus on mediation and crisis processes, we propose to examine the following hypotheses in this section:

4. Geographic distance between crisis actors increases the likelihood of definitive crisis outcomes to 63%, and the inclusion of ethnic issues raises the probability of a definitive outcome to 64%.

Hypothesis 2a: Crises in which third-party mediation occurs terminate in agreement more frequently than do unmediated crises. This trend is accentuated under manipulative as opposed to facilitative mediation.

Hypothesis 2b: Crises in which third-party mediation occurs terminate in more satisfying outcomes for the parties than do unmediated crises. This trend is accentuated under manipulative as opposed to facilitative mediation.

Hypothesis 2c: Crises in which third-party mediation occurs result in higher overall utility point payoffs than do unmediated crises. This trend is accentuated under manipulative as opposed to facilitative mediation.

Hypothesis 2d: Crises in which third-party mediation occurs terminate more rapidly than do unmediated crises. This trend is accentuated under manipulative as opposed to facilitative mediation.

ICB does not currently contain data on the style of mediation employed in specific crises; thus, systematic research on the hypotheses above requires a different approach. We developed a simulation-based experimental research design to explore issues of mediation style as well as to allow a closer look at key relationships identified by the ICB-based analyses. Before presenting our findings, we offer an overview of the nature of the experimental research design we employed in examining these hypotheses.

EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH DESIGN: A CRISIS OVER TERRITORIAL CLAIMS

The experiments reported on in this study utilize a scenario loosely based on the Ecuador/Peru border dispute of 1981—one of the 419 ICB cases. This crisis shares characteristics with many ICB cases, including its territorial nature, the level of violence reached, and its occurrence within an ongoing protracted conflict.⁵ (For a more complete discussion of this crisis, see Simmons 1999; Brecher and Wilkenfeld 2000.) The 1981 crisis, simulated in our experiments, involved a historical instance of successful mediation after military clashes along the borders of these two states triggered an international crisis.⁶

Two hundred twelve students enrolled in international relations courses at the University of Maryland during 2000 and 2001 participated in simulations of a one-on-one crisis negotiation between Ecuador and Peru. Half of the students negotiated on behalf of Peru, and the others represented Ecuador.

Some issues pertaining to external validity are raised by the use of college students as subjects (Mintz and Geva 1993; Mintz et al. 1997; Kanazawa 1999; Green and Gerber 2002). Many point out that it is problematic for political scientists to draw

5. The protracted conflict between Ecuador and Peru lasted from 1935 until 1998 and included five international crises. The negotiation scenario, developed by Kathleen Young, David Quinn, and Chris Frain, is available at <http://www.icons.umd.edu/jcr/>

6. Historically, states involved in crises over competing territorial claims have a higher propensity to terminate through agreements. Sixty-one percent of the International Crisis Behavior (ICB) Project's border-related crises ended in agreement, whereas only 33% of crises based on other issues, such as threats to influence or of grave damage, terminated in agreement ($\chi^2 = 17.28, p < .000$). Regardless of mediation effects, we would expect that simulations of a border crisis would have a high tendency to end in agreement. We hypothesize, however, that the introduction of mediation into this simulated border crisis will further increase the likelihood of agreements being reached.

inferences about the activities of different kinds of decision makers from a population of undergraduates (Beer 1993), and other fields recognize the shortcomings of this type of research as well. Sears (1986) has found that the reliance on students in psychology research does produce a bias in understanding of human behaviors, yet a vast majority of social psychology research still relies on student-based experiments (Stevens and Ash 2001). Kanazawa (1999) asserts that student-as-subject research is not problematic as long as the generalizations that researchers draw from such experiments are about theories and not the empirical findings. We adopt a more cautious attitude and agree with Druckman (1994, 447), who argues that simulations are a useful tool for “arbitrating between competing hypotheses”—especially “as part of a multimethod research strategy” (Stern and Druckman 2000, 51). We contend that in the context of a “careful experimental design” (Stern and Druckman 2000, 49), the experimental approach we adopt here is appropriate.

Negotiators communicated with one another through a specially developed computer-based communication system somewhat analogous to a private chat room. Each student received identical background material on the nature of this crisis as well as a relevant history of relations between the states. The mutually exclusive outcomes of these crisis negotiations were acceptance of the status quo, an agreement to a cease fire, an agreement on a cease fire and a land division, acceptance of binding arbitration, or the launching of a military operation.

Each negotiator in the 106 simulations had access to a computer-based decision support system (DSS) that displayed the utility-point values associated with each of the possible outcomes of the negotiation.⁷ The DSS is intended to assist each negotiator in working toward the best possible outcome for his or her country. (For more on the role of DSS in general, see Wilkenfeld et al. 1995; Kersten and Noronha 1999.) The DSS allows negotiators to see how the utilities of these possible outcomes change as the context of the negotiation changes. During the negotiations, either Ecuador or Peru can shut its borders to people and goods from the other, and each state can decide whether to mobilize troops in the disputed territory. In addition, Peru has the option of granting to Ecuador much-desired access to the Amazon River. Changes in any of these conditions, as well as the passage of time, will affect the expected utility of each possible outcome, and these changes are noted in the DSS.

One-third of the simulated negotiations were unmediated. The remaining two-thirds involved a mediator—one-half with a facilitator, one-half with a manipulator. The mediator in this situation worked on behalf of the United States, Argentina, Brazil, and Chile—the four countries that serve as guarantor states of the border designation between Ecuador and Peru. Graduate and undergraduate political science research assistants at the University of Maryland served as the mediators in these simulations. Each mediator underwent extensive training in one specific style of mediation (either facilitative or manipulative), with checks to ensure reliability within mediation style prior to and during the actual experiments.

Negotiators in this scenario did not request mediation. The leaders of Ecuador and Peru had previously agreed (in the 1942 Rio Protocol) that should any disagreement

7. The decision support system (DSS) for this simulation is available at www.icons.umd.edu/jcr/

arise between the two states regarding the border designation, the Organization of American States (OAS) could call on the guarantor states to mediate between the disputants. The OAS took this action in 1981, and participants involved in mediated simulations were informed that the same had happened in the experimental setting.

Each mediator was given the task of preventing an escalation of this crisis by attempting to secure an agreement between the two states. The range of actions and tools available to each type of mediator differed distinctly, consistent with the descriptions of these styles of mediation explored above. Facilitators encouraged the negotiators to work toward compromise and to think about the needs of the opposing state but could not recommend any specific outcomes or options to either negotiator. Manipulative mediators, on the other hand, subjected negotiators to a much more aggressive and active intervention. Manipulators proposed and advocated those options and solutions that they thought most likely to lead to a rapid but peaceful termination of the crisis. In addition, manipulative mediators had “carrots and sticks” at their disposal—including the ability to impose trade sanctions, cut off foreign aid, and/or allow arms sales—to entice the negotiators to agree to a proposed outcome. The DSS revealed to the negotiators (but not to the mediators) the effect of actions taken by the manipulative mediator in terms of each state’s utility points, so that the extent of the mediator’s leverage was clear to the negotiators.

Mediators communicated with negotiators using the same communication software that the representatives of Peru and Ecuador used and could direct their comments or questions to either or both negotiators. Because all communication was done via computer, we were able to monitor the statements of all of the mediators to determine whether each remained true to the role assigned the mediator. Although mediators were provided with ample background material on the crisis, they did not have access to a DSS and did not know the precise utility values associated with any particular agreement. Their efforts at resolving the crisis were primarily informed by what negotiators were willing to share with individual mediators—a condition consistent with the situation often faced by mediators in “real-world” negotiations.

THE EFFECTS OF CRISIS MEDIATION STYLE

To examine the second set of hypotheses, we turn now to a review of experimental findings on the impact of mediation style on four aspects of crisis termination.

Reaching an agreement. The results of the analysis of ICB data revealed that mediated crises were more likely to terminate in agreement than were unmediated crises; the experimental findings provide further support for that conclusion. As Table 2 reveals, 70% of those simulations that did not include a mediator ended in an agreement, whereas 93.5% of mediated negotiations concluded with an agreement between the crisis actors (combining impact of facilitation and mediation).⁸ Conversely, 30% of

8. It should be noted that all negotiations ended in either an agreement (either to a division of land, to a cease fire, or to acceptance of binding arbitration) or a declaration of war. No negotiations ended in a stalemate.

TABLE 2
Types of Crisis Outcome

	<i>Unmediated</i>		<i>Facilitative Mediation</i>		<i>Manipulative Mediation</i>	
Agreement reached	21	(70.0%)	33	(91.7%)	39	(95.1%)
War launched	9	(30.0%)	3	(8.3%)	2	(4.9%)
Totals	30		36		41	

$\chi^2 = 10.691$
 $p < .0025$ (one-sided)
 $n = 107$ simulations

unmediated crises ended with a declaration of war by either Ecuador or Peru. War was declared in only 6.5% of mediated cases.

If the purpose of crisis management is to prevent an outbreak of war, then—based on this statistically significant finding—mediation does seem to be an effective tool toward this end.

These findings partially support hypothesis 2a, which contends that agreements are more likely in mediated crises. The experimental data do not support the second condition of this hypothesis, however—that manipulative mediation will intensify this trend. The impact of manipulative mediation is virtually indistinguishable from that of facilitative mediation.

Negotiator satisfaction. As reported above, ICB data provided no support for the hypothesis that mediated crises are more likely to conclude in outcomes considered satisfactory to the crisis actors (hypothesis 1d). We reexamine this issue using experimental data because we believe the data on satisfaction generated from the simulations provide a more accurate measure of satisfaction with the outcome of the crisis.

Data on crisis actor satisfaction included in the ICB data set were derived from coders' interpretations of actors' reactions to the conclusion of a crisis. The ICB satisfaction coding relates to perceptions of whether a state "won" or "lost" the crisis, whereas the measure of satisfaction in the experiments provides information on the immediate reactions of the negotiators themselves to the outcome of the crisis and to the process that got them to that point. As such, the experimental satisfaction score, collected via a postsimulation participant questionnaire, is a more direct indicator of how negotiators feel about the outcome of the crisis.

Table 3 displays data on the levels of satisfaction with outcomes reported by the respondents. Unlike the ICB measure of satisfaction, this more nuanced experimental measure of the level of negotiator satisfaction reveals that mediation does have a significant impact on negotiator satisfaction.

Seventy-six percent of negotiators involved in mediated simulations indicated that they were satisfied with the outcome of the crisis, whereas only 58% of unmediated respondents indicated that the outcome was satisfactory to them. If one goal of crisis

TABLE 3
Levels of Negotiator Satisfaction

	<i>Unmediated</i>	<i>Facilitative Mediation</i>	<i>Manipulative Mediation</i>
Satisfied with outcome	25 (58.1%)	50 (75.8%)	56 (76.7%)
Not satisfied with outcome	18 (41.9%)	16 (24.2%)	17 (23.3%)
Totals	43	66	73

$\chi^2 = 5.361$
 $p < .035$ (one-sided)
 $n = 182$ negotiators^a

a. Due to a software problem, the responses of some negotiators to this question were not recorded. There is no reason to believe that the excluded cases were not randomly distributed.

management is to try to ensure that crisis actors do not resent the outcome of the crisis, then this finding would indicate that mediated processes are a desirable means of management.

These findings do not, however, support the hypothesis that a more aggressive mediation style would lead to outcomes considered to be more satisfactory. As Table 3 indicates, facilitation and manipulation were almost equally likely to generate satisfactory outcomes for the Ecuadorian and Peruvian negotiators.

The absence of significant differences between facilitative and manipulative styles in generating agreement or greater satisfaction with outcomes sheds some light on the findings in the existing literature on mediation style, in general, and on crisis mediation more specifically. As noted earlier, some scholars argue that facilitation is more likely to be effective in ending a crisis, whereas others think that manipulation is more likely to be successful. Although we are unable to differentiate between the effects of the two styles, our findings demonstrate that in crisis, both methods are likely to be effective in generating agreements and producing satisfaction with outcomes, as compared with unmediated crises.

Expected utility of outcome. Our research design allows us to look beyond the limited question of whether negotiators were satisfied with the outcome of a crisis. We can also explore the objective “worth” of an outcome to each party by determining the expected utility value of each outcome for both Ecuador and Peru.⁹ As noted in hypothesis 2c, we contend that mediated crises will lead to outcomes with greater utility-point

9. Some of the outcome options in our experimental scenario—arbitration and military actions—are “risky outcomes.” Selection of these outcome options does not guarantee negotiators a specific outcome. Arbitration can result in an ultimate decision in favor of Peru or Ecuador. Similarly, military actions can result in either victory or failure for the state launching the military action. It is not until after the simulated negotiation terminates that negotiators learn which particular result—and utility payoff—they have achieved. What is known to the negotiators at the time that they choose these risky outcomes are the associated *expected utilities*, which reflect the probability of each final payoff. Thus, we consider the expected utility score (rather than the actual final payoff amount) to be the most accurate measure of the outcome that each negotiator found acceptable, and we use this score in the following analyses.

TABLE 4
Effects of Mediation on Expected Utility Payoff

	B	SE	p Value
Constant ^a	564.117	18.980	.000
No mediation	-48.030	30.125	.112
Facilitative mediation	-54.332	27.587	.050

$r = .150$
Adjusted $R^2 = .013$
 $p < .000$
 $n = 201$ negotiators

a. The constant in this model is the expected utility payoff under conditions of manipulative mediation.

payoffs (that is, outcomes that are more beneficial) than will unmediated crises and that manipulative mediation will generate the greatest payoffs for the crisis actors. As the data in Table 4 demonstrate, the relationship between mediation and payoffs is not so straightforward.

The results of a linear regression, with expected utility as the dependent variable, show a significant relationship between the type of mediation (if any) present in a crisis and the payoffs associated with the outcome of that crisis. Consistent with the hypothesis, negotiators working with a manipulative mediator were able to secure the most beneficial outcomes for their respective countries; the mean expected utility of the outcome under such a condition was 564 (out of a possible score of 1,000), whereas the mean payoff in unmediated crises was 516. Interestingly, however, the significant difference in payoffs was not between unmediated and manipulated crises but, rather, between manipulated and facilitated crises. Negotiators working with a facilitative mediator garnered the lowest expected utility payoffs, with a mean of 510.

We cannot conclude, then, that all styles of mediation offer negotiators the best chances for an outcome that will be considered beneficial to their country. Negotiators were, in fact, no better off with facilitative mediation than they were with no mediation. It was only with manipulative mediation that expected utility payoffs were bolstered significantly. This finding supports the premise that the impact of mediation cannot be assessed without looking more closely at the style of mediation employed.

Duration of negotiations. Although the ICB data set provided no information on whether mediation impacted the duration of a crisis, the controlled setting of the experimental environment allowed us to pursue this question in some detail. Here, we must keep in mind that elapsed time in a simulation can only approximate this phenomenon in an actual crisis setting. What can take weeks or months in the real world is condensed into minutes and hours in the laboratory. Nevertheless, some broad trends can be identified.

The experimental design specified that negotiations could go on for no more than 2 hours. (If the negotiators did not reach an agreement—or did not launch a military

TABLE 5
Duration of Crisis (in minutes)

	B	SE	p Value
Constant (unmediated)	53.792	2.38	.000
Dummy variable, facilitative mediation	-2.687	4.297	.533
Dummy variable, manipulative mediation	-12.618	4.189	.003

$r = .321$
Adjusted $R^2 = .085$
 $p < .005$
 $n = 101$ simulations

attack—after 2 hours, the simulation would default to a “maintenance of the status quo” outcome.) The 120-minute period was divided into twelve 10-minute negotiating rounds. At the end of each round, the utility values associated with outcomes would change to reflect the effects of the passage of time. In a real-world situation, payoffs would rarely change so quickly. Rather, such changes would occur after a more prolonged negotiating round (a day or a week, for instance).

In general, those simulations that involved a mediator ended sooner than unmediated simulations did, consistent with our expectations in hypothesis 2d, as noted in Table 5. The average length of an unmediated simulation was about 54 minutes (standard deviation = 2.38), with the longest unmediated negotiation going on for 108 minutes. Mediated negotiations ended an average of 7.97 minutes earlier than did unmediated simulations.

Furthermore, manipulated crises ended more quickly than did facilitated crises. Simulations involving the more active and aggressive type of mediator (which, on average, lasted 41 minutes) ended 9.93 minutes faster than did those in which the mediator could not suggest or formulate potential outcomes. Facilitated crises lasted, on average, 51 minutes—an average duration not statistically different from that of unmediated crises. Whereas manipulative mediation does have a significant effect on when crisis actors accept a given outcome, facilitative mediation does not, further supporting the proposition that analyses of mediation and its effectiveness must take into consideration the type of mediation employed in a crisis.

Consideration of how long a crisis persists is an especially crucial question, because crises are volatile situations that, more often than not, lead to outbreaks of violence or war. The less these crises are allowed to linger, the less likely it is that the tensions inherent in crisis situations will escalate to the point of violence or war. In fact, analysis of the experimental data reveals a significant and negative relationship between the likelihood of a crisis ending in agreement and the duration of the negotiation. There was a difference of about 11 minutes between negotiations that ended in agreement (46.2 minutes) and those that ended in war (57.0 minutes), significant at the .05 level. Earlier resolution of the crisis is an important achievement for those interested in managing the crisis, and it is more likely under conditions of manipulative mediation.

CONCLUSION

Our analysis of international crises based on the ICB data indicates that historically, mediated crises are characterized by compromise among crisis actors, are more likely to end in agreements, and show a tendency toward long-term tension reduction. Although outcomes involving compromise or stalemate are the more likely result of mediation, those crises characterized by such nondefinitive outcomes have a heightened tendency to recur. That is, although tensions are temporarily reduced through mediated crisis management, full conflict resolution—or a long-term reduction of tensions—is apparently more elusive. The experimental research confirmed the relationship between mediation and the achievement of agreement while also revealing that mediation leads to greater satisfaction with the crisis outcome. Although we consider these effects of mediation to be consistent with the goals of crisis management and with the negotiators' expectations of the effect of mediation, our subsequent analyses of mediation style demonstrate that it is necessary to attach some caveats to a general endorsement of mediation in crisis management.

Although both facilitative and manipulative mediation are conducive to generating agreements, and agreements that are considered satisfactory to negotiators, only manipulative mediation has a positive effect on the level of benefits associated with crisis termination and on the duration of a crisis. Data from the Ecuador/Peru simulations indicate that only manipulative mediation meets the negotiators' expectations of leading them to a more beneficial outcome than they could have otherwise secured. On the other hand, facilitation may actually lower average benefits—a situation that could lead to discontent among disputants and, possibly, recurrent crises. In addition, the more rapid conclusion of a crisis—brought about only by manipulation—is an essential component of crisis management, given the relationship between prolonged crisis negotiations and the likelihood of escalating violence and war. Given our historical and experimental findings, then, we conclude that manipulative mediation—as compared with facilitation or no mediation—is an effective means of crisis management.

Our endorsement of manipulation must be tempered, though, by at least two factors that need to be explored more rigorously in the future. First, our analysis has looked only at the two extreme styles of mediation—facilitation and manipulation. It may be the case that formulative mediation, which falls between these two extreme styles, is an even more effective management tool under certain circumstances. We intend to explore a broader range of mediation styles in future work using expanded versions of both ICB and our experimental research design.

A second concern with manipulative mediation is one that is well developed in the literature on mediation. Scholars raise concerns about both the short- and long-term implications of solutions developed and forced on parties by an outsider, fearing that these situations can lead to feelings of alienation and resentment of the mediator, the process of negotiation, and even the other parties involved in the negotiation (Princen 1992; Kelman 1992; Keashly and Fisher 1996). Although our findings on negotiator satisfaction do not reveal resentment of manipulation vis-à-vis facilitation, greater consideration of the unintended consequences that could accompany the adoption of manipulative mediation as a crisis-management tool is necessary before we can con-

clude that manipulation is an appropriate—or perhaps the most appropriate—means of managing international crises. Our findings, however, do indicate that manipulation shows potential as a key approach to mitigating the violence and instability associated with international crises.

It bears repeating that our findings pertain only to international crises and not to the broader phenomenon of international conflict in general. Our conclusions about the greater effectiveness of manipulative mediation in high-stress crisis situations are not likely to be applicable as one attempts to move from crisis management to conflict resolution. Thus, the research reported here reinforces the need to specify the goals of a specific intervention, as a review of one recent case demonstrates.

Henry Kissinger's famous shuttle-diplomacy mediation in 1974 between Israel and Syria was aimed exclusively at reaching a stable cease fire. These efforts, resulting in the attainment of a separation-of-forces agreement, were an example of successful crisis management through manipulative mediation. Analysis of Israeli/Syrian relations shows the limits of this tool, however. Kissinger's efforts ended the crisis, but the conflict between the states persisted, and the two states faced off against each other in three subsequent crises (Al-Biqa Missiles I in 1981, War in Lebanon in 1982, and Al-Biqa Missiles II in 1985). According to Hopmann and Druckman (1981), Kissinger did not secure a lasting resolution of the conflict because his use of a manipulative mediation style—especially threats—prevented a basis for lasting communication and long-term cooperation from being procured, thus demonstrating a potential limit of manipulation. Similarly, 25 years after Kissinger's mission, Bill Clinton invited the leaders of Syria and Israel to Shepherdstown, West Virginia, to work through the core issues in contention between the states. Clinton used the same tool as Kissinger—manipulative mediation—but the president had a very different goal (conflict resolution) than did his predecessor, and here, that tool was ineffective. No agreement could be reached between the parties, and the conflict persists.

Although we have just begun to uncover the complex interactions between crisis management and conflict resolution and how different styles of mediation may be more appropriate for one than for the other, we must add additional variables to both the historical and experimental analyses. As we examine further the additional issues of power discrepancy and zones of agreement, we hope to come closer to completing this picture and offering a general theory of mediation as a means of crisis management.

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