



The Hong Kong–Mainland China conflict: From research to mediation

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ABSTRACT

The Chinese government has established an extradition bill and proposed it to the Hong Kong government. This bill was issued in February 2019 in order to establish a mechanism that can transfer Chinese criminals from Hong Kong back to China for investigations. However, Hongkongers have launched several protests and demonstrations against this bill and have raised other democracy concerns. The purpose of this research is to synthesize the theory of offensive realism, the theory of cultural hegemony, and social identity theory with a mediation method to help find the root causes of the Hong Kong-mainland conflict, as well as to illustrate potential solutions for resolving the conflict. Additionally, this paper will reveal how human nature and interest competition could have accelerated protests and conflicts. The author will choose the interest-based mediation method to provide alternative approaches for conflicting parties.

Keywords: Theory of offensive realism, The theory of cultural hegemony, Social identity theory, Interest-based mediation

INTRODUCTION

The Hong Kong–Mainland China Conflict: From Research to Mediation Background of the 2019 Hong Kong Protests

In 1898, Britain signed a 99-year lease with mainland China (Lam, 2019). Britain began a major land expansion of the Hong Kong colony (History, 1984). The lease had ended in 1997, and Britain returned Hong Kong to China as the Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China (Vine, 1997). China agreed to govern Hong Kong by complying with the “one country, two systems” policy (Johny, 2019). However, in recent years, the Hong Kong people have become more fearful of being controlled under a Chinese system and have accused China of wanting to expand its social and economic ties with Hong Kong (Lock, 2019).

This extradition bill has caused widespread criticism in Hong Kong from legal professionals, journalists, organizations, business corporations, and foreign governments who fear the expansion of China's power toward Hong Kong's legal systems (Lam, 2019). The extradition bill would allow local Hong Kong authorities to detain and extradite criminals to China (Lam, 2019). The protests against the bill began in 2019, with a march toward the Chinese government's office in Hong Kong (Master and Pomfret, 2019). The protests turned into continuing mass movements beginning in June 2019 (Master and Pomfret, 2019).

Hundreds of thousands of Hongkongers have marched on the street against this bill (Kleefeld, 2019). In 2019, during the second reading in the Legislative Council, the Hong Kong protestors showed a sharp escalation in violent protests (DW News, 2019). Local Hong Kong police deployed tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse the demonstration groups (DW News, 2019). On Au-

gust 5th, about 2 million individuals attended a rally and formed a human chain about 50 kilometers long in Hong Kong (Kwong and Cheng, 2019).

The Chinese government might have hoped the violence could have been stopped for the benefit of Hong Kong. However, the protestors expressed that they were waiting for the official response from the Chinese government to allow the Hong Kong government to withdraw the bill (DW News, 2019). The three-month-long street demonstrations launched by local Hongkongers became increasingly violent; when the police dispersed the crowd; many young protestors were accidentally injured. Some over 80-years-old people came and used their bodies as shields to protect the young protestors (BBC News, 2019). After the Hong Kong Baptist University Student Union president, Fong Chung-yin, was arrested in Sham Shui Po for an accusation of "offensive weapons," protestors gathered outside the Hong Kong Space Museum to aim laser pointers at the wall of the museum (Hong Kong Watch, 2022; Human Rights in China, 2022).

The protestors have wanted the Chinese government to have a clear response to their "five demands" (Wong, 2019). The demands include: "(a) The bill must be withdrawn, (b) the chief executive of Hong Kong must resign, (c) the government must repeal the accusation of 'riots' to describe the demonstration (d) Hong Kong must set up a full independent inquiry into the actions of the police (because some officers failed to display their police identification numbers), and (e) everyone who was arrested in the demonstration must be unconditionally freed" (Wong, 2015).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Major Parties Involved in the Conflict

The protests have presented the most severe challenges to the Chinese authority. Major parties involved in the conflict included the Hong Kong protestors, the Chinese government, and the Hong Kong law enforcement departments (Vine, 2019). Also, the Hong Kong protestors might have included students, professionals, human rights associations, and journalists (Wong, 2015). Additionally, international communities, such as the United States and Britain, have played an essential role in this conflict (Lieberthal, 1997). Their decision-making could have critically switched the situation and determined the destiny of Hongkongers (Lieberthal, 1997).

When one party solely focused on a desire to win, its actions and desires could have turned the case into the action of hurting another party's benefits; the unbalanced power and interest competitions might have allowed the conflict to turn into a cycle of action and reaction (Peter, 2005). Promoting Chinese national

identity in Hong Kong might have been a major concern for the Chinese government to achieve hegemony goals (Chung, 2018). Many mainland Chinese might have believed that the mainland is the original motherland of Hongkongers. The mainland Chinese people might have the ambitions of joining their Hong Kong brothers and sisters together to build a stronger and united nation. In the escalating conflict, the more complex the conflict of interests, the higher chance the conflict parties might take actions against each other to protect the maximum interests. In-group interests and motives could have determined the extent of actions. The Chinese government might want to maximize its power and reputation by increasing the territory and its international influences in Hong Kong. However, Hong Kong nationalists have reacted actively against the will of China (Ma, 2019). There is a significant difference between mainland China and Hong Kong; Even though Hong Kong has a limited democracy, its people believe that they have more opportunities to access democracy in Hong Kong (Bajpai, 2019). When the stronger party tries hard to persuade or threaten another party, the weaker party might use its limited force to defend itself. The weaker party could also look for help from a third party, such as the United States. Also, the weaker party could have reacted in a combative way to protest because of people's long-term depression and helplessness (Bajpai, 2019). Hong Kong has a unique and separate legal and judicial system from China, which is based on British common law (Wong, 2015). In 2019, Hongkongers' pro-democracy protestors wanted to protect Hong Kong's judicial system and the rule of law from being interrupted by mainland rulers (Bajpai, 2019). Both Hong Kong and the Chinese might have a goal of creating changes; however, no party has shown to accept the changes (Vogt, 2012).

The Theory of Offensive Realism

The goal of China might include gaining high power and hegemony. The theory of offensive realism can explain why China wants to gain hegemony and how the ruling class has competed for power and interests (Lobell, 2010). Offensive realism describes the intention of seeking power and influence to help the dominant group achieve security and hegemony (Lobell, 2010). This theory explains that when security is scarce, the stronger region will maximize power to seek superiority (Lobell, 2010). Offensive realism illustrates that a powerful region can achieve its regional hegemony through territorial control and political influence (Lobell, 2010). The state's actor can take an offensive position and act aggressively to grow its power, as well as weaken the opponents (Lobell, 2010). China might want to ensure regional stability and territorial integrity for both mainland and Hong Kong. However, some Hongkongers fear China, and they have carefully used the self-help mechanism for gaining independence (Tong, 2019). Also, Hongkongers have tried to maximize their

relative power in the international community (Lobell, 2010).

Economic Factors

China has been preparing for the improvement of its economic power through nation-building. Hong Kong is China's semi-autonomous region and abides by the "one country, two systems" agreement (Hayes and Boyle, 2021). As a result, there have been many distinct social discrepancies between China and Hong Kong (Gao, 2019). According to the Hong Kong Trade and Industry Department (2021), Hong Kong is the mainland's second-largest export market, with 10.5% (\$273 billion) of its total exports in 2020; also, the mainland has been Hong Kong's largest supplier in goods since 1982. The value of Hong Kong's total imports from the mainland reached around \$250 billion, accounting for about 45% of Hong Kong's total imports in 2020 (Hong Kong Trade and Industry Department, 2021). The value of goods that were re-exported from China to Hong Kong was worth more than \$500 billion (Bajpai, 2019). The theory of offensive realism explains that when regions want to gain economic and political powers, they can be prudent territorial expanders (Peter, 2005). China and Hong Kong both depend on each other economically. The government of Hong Kong might have to obey specific Chinese rules for gaining mutual benefits (Bajpai, 2019). The Hong Kong government might not want to initiate a more significant conflict with China and not want to give the Chinese government any excuses to occupy Hong Kong politically or economically. The U.S. government and organizations might have actively participated in supporting the Hong Kong protests and provided specific funding to the protestors (Lo, 2020). The United States showed that it did not give up its interests in Hong Kong (Lo, 2020). The United States has maintained substantial economic and political interests in Hong Kong (U.S. Department of State, 2018). It supported Hong Kong's autonomy by implementing bilateral agreements and promoting trade and investments in Hong Kong (U.S. Department of State, 2003). The United States has more than 1,300 firms in Hong Kong, including 726 regional operations and 85,000 American residents (U.S. Department of State, 2018). The United States could have wanted to make sure that the conflicts and protests between China and Hong Kong would not impact American economic interests in Hong Kong. Furthermore, non-governmental organizations, such as the U.S. National Endowment for Democracy (NED), have bankrolled the protestors, playing a critical role in the Hong Kong protests (National Endowment for Democracy, 2022). It also cooperated with the Hong Kong Journalists Association, the Civic Party, the Labor Party, and the Democratic Party to support protestors (Flounders, 2019). Encouraging the vitality and independence of Hong Kong is essential for some Western countries, such as the United States. The United States clearly stated that its role is to maintain the status of Hong Kong's independent

economic and customs territory and has emphasized political and economic interests in Hong Kong (Xi Ri Dong Fang, 2019). The United States emphasized Basic Law in Hong Kong: "The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region should enact laws to prohibit any act of treason, secession, sedition, subversion against the Central People's Government, or theft of state secrets, and prohibit foreign political organizations from conducting political activities in the region to establish ties with Hong Kong." It believes that Hong Kong has a responsibility to protect its democracy and national security (Giorgi 2003). However, China might see U.S. economic and cultural influence in Hong Kong as a threat to China's ultimate control in Hong Kong. The Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region stated that "The Hong Kong issue is an issue with a long history. Hong Kong (including Hong Kong Island, Kowloon, and the New Territories) has been Chinese territory since ancient times. In 1840, Britain launched the Opium War. It forced the Qing government to sign the Treaty of Nanking in 1842, which permanently ceded the Hong Kong Island from China. After the establishment of the People's Republic of China, the Chinese government's consistent position has been that Hong Kong is China's territory, and China does not recognize the unequal treaties" (The State Council Information Office Issued a White Paper Titled "Democratic Development of Hong Kong under 'One Country, Two Systems', 2021). Promoting the extradition bill would help the mainland gain a chance to investigate activities in the trade and business fields to enforce its power, as well as to decrease U.S. influence in the region.

Political Factors

The Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region is a unicameral legislature of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China (GovHK, n.d.). Also, Hong Kong has a multi-party system in which no party often has a chance of gaining power by controlling the Legislative Council (GovHK, n.d.). The Chief Executive was chosen by an indirectly elected Election Committee as restricted by the Chief Executive Election Ordinance, and the Chief Executive has to rely on political parties in the legislature for support (GovHK, n.d.). In Hong Kong, there are several main political and ideological groups; they are the pro-democracy camp, the pro-China camp, and the local protest groups (Chan, 2021). These parties need to observe the fundamental laws and the constitution of Hong Kong (Chan, 2021). The legislature is comprised of 70 seats (Legislative Council of the Hong Kong, n.d.). The pro-democracy party occupies less than half of the seats in the Legislative Council of Hong Kong because Hongkongers are only allowed to vote for around 40 of the 70 seats (Legislative Council of the Hong Kong, n.d.). Additionally, business community representatives of Hong Kong can choose the other

30 seats (Legislative Council of the Hong Kong, n.d.). These specialized 30 seats, which the public cannot vote on, consist of the financing industry, medical industry, and insurance industry (Legislative Council of the Hong Kong, n.d.). Many of the 30 seats were elected by corporations, those corporations and industries are the beneficiaries of China and might have been dominated by the pro-China political parties (Legislative Council of the Hong Kong, n.d.). Because of this unique political structure, pro-democracy politicians could have paid more attention to the extradition bill (Legislative Council of the Hong Kong, n.d.). Pro-democracy politicians could have potentially supported the demonstrations that led millions of individuals to protest on the street (LegCo, n.d.). The theory of offensive realism explains that the state wants to maximize diplomatic and foreign influences for the competition of power and territorial expansion (Peter, 2005). The extradition bill might remove the firewall between the legal system of Hong Kong and the rule of law; this type of worry might have stimulated the conflict between Hong Kong and mainland China (BBC News, 2019). The U.S. might feel worried about its interests in Hong Kong if Hong Kong becomes fully autonomous from China. The U.S. government wants the flexibility to take substantive actions (Patterson, 2019). The U.S. Congress has played an active role in the U.S. involvement in Hong Kong issues (U.S. Government Publishing Office, 2014). China might be worried about many foreign powers that could threaten its hegemony, and China has made severe statements to refute the condemnation of the U.S (Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United States of America, 2021). In response, China insisted that the Hong Kong issue can only be resolved between China and Hong Kong instead of through foreign interventions (Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United States of America, 2021).

National Security Factors

China has a central government with one party and ultimate sovereign power. The Department of Chinese Foreign Affairs indicated that any temptation to endanger China's security and sovereignty, or to challenge the power of the Chinese government, or use the Hong Kong issue against mainland China, is an act that will cross the red line (Global Times, 2019). According to offensive realism, a country will maximize its security by maximizing its relative power by expanding foreign policies and military force (Lobell, 2010). Compared to Hong Kong, China has stronger military power due to its enormous population and financial resources (Bajpai, 2019). Beijing has sent the People's Liberation Army to Hong Kong to "stabilize the situation," Hongkongers might worry that it would pose a significant impact for Hong Kong's regional security (Shao, 2019). Offensive realism emphasizes that if any region becomes too powerful, balancing will occur (Mearsheimer, 2006). Specifically, when the great

power plans to build up militaries and form a balancing coalition, conflicts might occur between the dominant region and the weaker region (Mearsheimer, 2006). Lobell (2010) stated that "States will quickly understand that the best way to ensure their survival is to become the most powerful one in the system." Hong Kong might want to have more international support in order to defend itself and become stronger. China could aim at achieving hegemony and military capacities in Hong Kong, Hong Kong might have wanted to develop a partnership with a stronger country, such as the United States, to protect its sovereignty. Hong Kong protestors were waving U.S. flags and calling for the United States to liberate their territory (DW News, 2019). Hongkongers have wanted to let the United States and other world leaders know that they share the responsibility for protecting Hong Kong's independence (DW News, 2019).

DISCUSSION

Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory helps explain the causes of inter-group behaviors and group identifications (Turner and Tajfel, 1986). Three components of social identity include self-conceptualization, group self-esteem, and commitment of the group (Hogg and Abrams, 1988). Group members will have a group identity, which leads a member of the group to feel connected to their in-group and distinguish themselves from another group (Turner and Tajfel, 1986). Hong Kong's culture was mixed in a sophisticated fusion of the East and the West (Hall, 2017). Individuals who grew up in Hong Kong might have a different view of democracy compared with people who grew up in mainland China. The ideological differences might have made the Chinese and Hongkongers disagree with which system is better than the other (Chu, 2013).

Self-Recognition

Social identity theory explains that different groups will have different motivations for fighting over interests and marginalizing another group (Turner and Tajfel, 1986). Different groups can increase their self-image by discriminating and holding prejudiced views against the out-group (Turner and Tajfel, 1986). In recent years, more young Hongkongers have disagreed when identified as Chinese from the mainland (RFA, 2019). According to a survey, 15% of Hong Kong people recognized themselves as Chinese (RFA, 2019). However, over 40% of Hongkongers claimed that they have a Hong Kong identity (RFA, 2019). Additionally, 43.2% of Hong Kong's people mentioned that they have mixed identities (RFA, 2019).

Group Identification

Social identity theory implies in-group favoritism and

in-group bias, promoting these ideas might be the causes of the intergroup conflict (Turner and Tajfel, 1986). Individuals will protect the interests of the in-group and discriminate against the out-group (Turner and Tajfel, 1986). It could be a challenge for China to implement its police force in Hong Kong if Hongkongers do not trust China and do not think they belong to China. Many Chinese from the mainland can be the ultimate beneficiaries from unifying Hong Kong with China, they might have most likely supported the Chinese government's actions to make Hong Kong part of China (Ma, 2019). (Turner and Tajfel 1986) explained that developing shared cultural perspectives and values for intergroup members is an essential tool to promote benefits. In-group members would feel self-pride and self-esteem after enhancing group values along with specific identity (Turner and Tajfel, 1986). Hongkongers might feel proud to be Hong Kong citizens and refuse to cooperate with mainland China. People in the protests might have shared values and interests, which might have given them a sense of belonging within their groups. Some Hongkongers might have different cultural self-identifications compared to individuals in mainland China. However, other Hongkongers might carry on Chinese traditions while experiencing a baptism of Western culture; Hongkongers who have different religious and ethnic backgrounds might hold different views toward China (Chu, 2013). Additionally, Hongkongers who have families in mainland China might show more empathy toward the Chinese Communist Party's policies because their ideologies might have been influenced by the mainland's traditional culture when they communicated with their family members. Also, some Hongkongers might have grown up in mainland China. They have been educated there and might show understanding toward mainland China and they could be Chinese nationalists. However, when a Hongkonger rarely has family or educational connection with mainland China, they might be more supportive of the political views and social values that are in compliance with Western promulgation; and these people might have been a major influential group for supporting the pro-democracy protests along with individuals who strongly believe that the Western countries have a better social, economic, and legal system. When individuals feel a sense of connection to the disadvantaged people, their senses of self-recognition and self-protection awareness with the disadvantaged could have promoted an intention to intervene as part of a collective (Hogg and Abrams, 1988). Also, hatred and dislike feelings among Hongkongers towards the Chinese region might have caused suffering to group members. The leaders of the Hong Kong protests stated that the proposed amendments to the Fugitive Offenders Ordinance would pose severe risks to the national security of Hong Kong's political interests (The Central News Agency, 2019).

Theory of Cultural Hegemony

China might expect to come up with its own version of the doctrine, and it likes to share a cultural ideology with Hong Kong. The dominant state can achieve regional hegemony through cultural and political influence (Gramsci, 1971). The theory of cultural hegemony can help in analyzing the conflict from an angle that the dominant political party or social groups can promulgate their cultures and beliefs through media and education (Cole, 2020). The theory of cultural hegemony illustrates that mass audiences' attitudes can be affected by the media (Cole, 2020). (Gramsci, 1971) indicated that the power of enforcing ideology is to reproduce the social structure through spreading propaganda (Hong Kong Timeline 2019-2022: Anti-Extradition Protests and National Security Law, 2022).

Media Influence

Media could have played a significant role in publications and news for the benefit of the ruling class in both Hong Kong and mainland China (Hong Kong and Mainland of China: Some Important Facts, 2022). Authority groups that controlled their media could have used the media to deliver messages in their ways in order to form certain standards to allow people to believe in a particular worldview (Cole, 2020). Also, different regional authorities and groups could have used media to explain certain values and norms, aiming to influence citizens' ideas to support the interests of their own regions (Cheng, 2011). Media has become an essential tool for capturing ideological leadership (Adamson, 2014). The media have helped parties to manipulate and promulgate the mainstream ideas toward the conflicts (Ma, 2019). The Chinese Communist Party has used media to accuse Hongkongers who tried to overthrow the Chinese ruling class by labeling them as rioters and national separatists, as well as who impeded the development of peace (Souhu, 2021). However, individuals in Hong Kong have used media to express their goals to uphold social justice, individual rights, and religious beliefs, as well as to ensure the long-term well-being of their future generations (Wu'er, 2019).

Institutional Influence

Educational institutions in both regions could have promulgated the ideas that comply with the mainstream political views and social values through teaching history, economics, politics, and cultures. In Hong Kong, institutions that have been funded or established by the United States or the United Kingdom might have urged Hongkongers to protect the independence of Hong Kong and taught students how to understand democracy (Wong and Jiangtao, 2019). There are some foreign boarding schools and universities in Hong Kong.

These institutions might have educated Hong Kong students in a more western way. Also, many international schools have been run by the English Schools Association in Hong Kong (International Schools Database, n.d.). The Chinese government might have worried about the education that might direct the Hong-kongers to uphold a western political and legal system instead of supporting the “one country, two systems” policy in Hong Kong. However, institutions in mainland China might have taught students the knowledge that can be accepted by the mainstream group in China. Mainland Chinese institutions might have cultivated students to understand and believe that implementing the “one country, two systems” policy in Hong Kong is appropriate (As Hong Kong protests face mainland pushback, here’s what Chinese nationalists misunderstand, 2019). Mainland institutions could have cultivated individuals to improve their sense of nationalism and national unity to defend their motherland’s sovereignty and interests (Master, Pomfret).

Interest-Based Mediation

Interest-based mediation is an effective method for preventing, managing, and resolving conflicts (Moore, 2014). Mediation is a dynamic, structured, and interactive process where a third party is invited to assist disputing parties in resolving conflicts (United Nations, n.d.). The mediator in the interest-based mediation can facilitate conversations and act as a guardian of the process (Moore, 2014). In this Hong Kong-mainland China conflict case, using interest-based mediation could be an effective way to assist the Hong Kong protestors and mainland Chinese authorities to resolve disputes through the exploration of their interests (Morley, 2017). Understanding the above theories might help in choosing strategies of meditation to resolve the Hongkong-mainland conflict (Tong, 2019). It would help the mediator to get familiar with this case and be aware of how to make plans in mediation (Noce, 2002). Theories could provide helpful explanations of how parties are bargaining and competing, as well as allow individuals to understand parties’ behaviors and interests in the conflict (Hall, 2017). For example, the theory of offensive realism implies parties’ hidden interests when they compete for resources, reputation, and territory (Lobell, 2010). This theory also helps give people insight into how to distinguish parties’ needs and interests (Lobell, 2010). It also provides the mediator with a better understanding of how conflicting parties think and act (Lobell, 2010). Interest-based mediation can help competing parties find flexible approaches to seek common interests (Della, 2002). Parties from different cultures might communicate and mediate differently. Understanding cultural and historical differences is essential in the mediation process. For example, the theory of cultural hegemony helps people understand cultural differences and find approaches that can be understood and accepted by each party (Gramsci,

1971). The mediator could help identify parties’ nationalities, ethnicities, religions, ages, professions, political roles, and interests during the mediation process. The theoretical knowledge would help assist parties and the mediator to effectively find flexible ways to meet their needs and solve problems through cooperation.

Mediation Parties

In the mediation process, conflicting parties can invite their representatives to join the mediation (Moore, 2014). Major conflicting parties involved in the conflict included the Hong Kong protestors and the Chinese government representatives. The Hong Kong protestors might invite their representatives, such as community leaders, local human rights associations, non-governmental organizations, regional leaders, and journalists, to participate or join the mediation. Also, the Chinese government could invite party representatives, such as Chinese local law enforcement, local NGOs, Chinese regional leaders, Chinese media and journalists, and government policy agencies. Additionally, the United Nations (UN) could be invited as a third-party mediator since the UN might have a significant responsibility in mediation initiatives and plays a critical role in peacemaking. The mediator and the UN could improve communications and erase misunderstandings for the conflicting parties (Moore, 2014). The mediator should assist parties in evaluating risks and preferences (Moore, 2014).

Advantages of Interest-Based Mediation

Interest-based mediation can facilitate communications and help parties build trust. The mediator can encourage parties to make their options and produce something in common (Moore, 2014). Interest-based mediation could be helpful in handling the relationship between China and Hong Kong protestors (Moore, 2014). Historically, these two regions depend on each other, and China has left many cultural and social roots in Hong Kong (Hall, 2017). Mediation could provide parties an open environment to foster communication and erase misunderstanding, as well as to improve their understanding of another party’s history and culture (Moore, 2014). In order to avoid conflict escalation, initiating mediation could offer an opportunity for the conflicting parties to fulfill their responsibilities in reaching a deal (Moore, 2014). The mediation would encourage protestors and mainland China to find solutions and common ground, as well as assist them in building a long-term relationship (Moore, 2014). The goal of applying interest-based mediation is to help parties understand their needs and concerns (Moore, 2014). The mediator and the UN need to retain the option and keep in good faith; the mediator should listen to parties’ stories and help them understand each other’s concerns and beliefs (Moore, 2014).

Steps of Undertaking the Implementation

Promoting mutual understanding among conflicting parties is essential in mediation implementation (Moore, 2014). The mediator should ensure that both parties can understand their demands and limitations (Moore, 2014). Parties could be encouraged to learn their historical backgrounds, cultural differences, and diplomatic considerations (United Nations, n.d.).

Acquiring Information

The mediator should assess the conflict and analyze the history and causes of the conflict to understand what this conflict is all about. The mediator then needs to acquire information and get more information to gain a broad understanding of this conflict case to develop mediation strategies (Golann, 2021). More importantly, parties will have to be sincere and willing to work with each other effectively (Moore, 2014). If one party prefers conflict and refuses to listen to another party, it might prevent another party from communicating effectively. Parties should be open to sharing information when they feel comfortable. The mediator should talk with different parties separately in advance and encourage them to carefully examine their interests to see if their interests are mutually incompatible or overlapped with another party (Moore, 2014).

Establishing Ground Rules

After acquiring the information from the parties and gaining a thorough understanding of the conflict, the mediator can introduce ground rules to the parties (Moore, 1987). All parties could be asked to take a shared responsibility to ensure that ground rules must be fulfilled (Moore, 2014). Parties must understand the ground rules of keeping neutral, listening carefully to each other, staying hopeful, and maintaining confidentiality (Moore, 2014). The mediator has a role in encouraging communications between disputing parties (Steven 2006, 2010). Additionally, parties should have time for a break; they should respect the speaker; they cannot threaten each other in the process; and should conduct moderate table behaviors (Moore, 2014). Additionally, cell phones during the meeting process should not be allowed and transparent diagnoses should be encouraged (United Nations, n.d.). During the mediation process, each party should prepare an opening statement to indicate what their needs and interests are, why they come to the mediation, and how the mediation can help them achieve their goals of meeting their needs (Moore, 2014). The mediator should maintain neutrality to ensure the mediation process that will produce a settlement, which must be fair, transparent, and reasonable (Moore, 2014).

Developing the List of Needs

After setting up the ground rules, parties could develop

a list of their demands (Moore, 2014). They could write down the things they would be majorly focusing on to be discussed in the mediation (United Nations, n.d.). Additionally, the mediator could write a description of the significant problems and design questions for each party to discuss (Moore, 2014). All issues should be clarified in public so that all parties would have a better understanding of the problems (Moore, 2014).

Interest-Based Bargaining

After the mediator and parties understand their needs and interests, building trust will be essential during the bargaining process (Moore, 2014). The bargaining process will help enhance the relationships between the parties and can provide them with an open room to develop alternatives (Moore, 2014). The parties could be encouraged to share information openly when bargaining (Moore, 2014). The mediator should help different parties to understand their concerns, interests, and needs in order to select the best alternatives (Moore, 2014).

Generating Options

Parties should evaluate different options (Moore, 1987). Also, the mediator should appropriately choose words and languages to guide parties to distinguish the advantages and disadvantages of various options (Moore, 2014). The mediator can encourage them to generate more ideas to reach an agreement that can be accepted by both parties (Moore, 2014). Parties can work together to explore interests and options before making the final decisions (Moore, 2014). During the session of generating options, the mediator could write each idea down and summarize different options in front of parties, as well as discuss each problem in order to assist parties in selecting the options that might give the least harm but the most benefits (John, 2006). Additionally, the mediator could motivate the conflicting parties to address their common interests to avoid conflict acceleration (Moore, 2014). Both parties might have to face the challenges of accepting different ideas from each other (Long, 2019). They should work together to conquer the challenges, as well as keep good faith in finding appropriate approaches to reach an agreement (Hong Kong: A broken promise, 2019).

Organizational Intervention

The mediator should be committed to promoting the individual and collective rights of parties (Moore, 1987). The mediator could encourage parties to address the problems of injustice, historical truths, and compensation for victims (Higgins, 2010). Additionally, regional organizations could cooperate with the mediator and their representatives in the mediation to recommend financial and political leverages Timeline of arrests, prosecution and sentencing, 2019). Local organizations could cooperate with protestors and the Chinese

government to discuss how to satisfy their needs.

Legislative Agency Intervention

Policymakers and lawmakers in both regions can consider developing practical plans for promoting citizens' needs and interests for social development. They should cooperate to create a fair and comfortable environment to allow citizens from both regions to share ideas and participate in the rule-making process. They should also make an effort to enhance the sustainable development of the social and legal systems peacefully (United Nations, n.d.). Parties should listen to and respect each other's needs and improve legislation. The legislative agencies can improve the law to protect the rights of individuals and help promote equal communications.

Law Enforcement Intervention

Violence should be prohibited both in protests and in the police force. Law enforcement could make an effort to mediate interactions between different parties. The law department of both parties could promise to establish an investigation team to bring an appropriate response to the protestors. They could work with different regions or areas to protect the safety of individuals in the protests and to ensure that the public facilities will not be damaged during any movements and activities. Additionally, law enforcement should ensure that they must follow the search and seizure process according to both regions' laws and protect people from unreasonable searches and seizures.

Community Intervention

The mediator could encourage the leaders of the communities to address violence and other issues resulting from the protests. If one party refuses to listen to another party's suggestions because it does not want to lose the dominant power or when one party believes that they might face accepting unreasonable options and results, the community leaders could help them address concerns and needs. Social groups and community leaders could cooperate to find ways to avoid conflicts. Community leaders should listen to the needs and concerns of the protestors and determine how to assist them in expressing their emotions and thoughts in a way that can be recognized legally and ethically. Community leaders should also work with local law enforcement agencies, government agencies, and NGOs to find alternatives for the protestors to ensure that their interests and needs will be met. Moreover, communities that supported mainland China should understand the statutes and the law of mainland China. According to mainland China's Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence: "Parties should mutually respect for their territorial sovereignty, not act aggressively, not intervene each other's internal affairs, and ensure equality and reciprocity" (Ministry of Justice of the People's Repub-

lic of China, 2021). China should abide by its law to maintain and develop friendly relationships with another party. China also has an obligation to build a reasonable, mutually beneficial, and fair international political and economic order. Parties should seek practical and constructive ways to maintain peace. Negotiation and mediation would be effective ways for parties to understand the needs, interests, preferences, and emotions of each other, as well as comprehend the nature and causes of the conflict.

Ethical Considerations

Parties should take necessary measures to maintain international peace and ensure human dignity (United Nations, n.d.). Initiating dialogues in mediation for the conflicting parties would be advantageous. Wars, conflicts, disputes can be developed and escalated through long-standing misunderstanding, bias, hatred, and exclusion. Both parties should understand that protesting is a way for individuals to express their emotions when they reached an extreme level, such as anger, hatred, passion, or when people want to show empathy and compassion toward certain group members through participating in the protests. To maintain international peace and security, parties should not push to remove the threats for themselves but focus on upholding the principles of equal rights and self-determination of peoples to strengthen universal peace (United Nations, n.d.). Promoting and encouraging respect for individuals' rights is essential, regardless of their national origin, race, religion, language, or political views (United Nations, n.d.). No discrimination and biased accusations should be allowed during the mediation (Moore, 1987). Parties should be treated equally, and their needs should be taken into consideration seriously. More importantly, individuals' well-being and information security must be ensured. Specifically, the needs of vulnerable groups, such as the disabled, women, and children, should be respected and be discussed thoroughly in the mediation process.

CONCLUSION

The people are the basis of democracy. Individuals worldwide must understand how to engage and deal with the conflict, as well as find ways to promote democracy and human rights appropriately by respecting countries' history, cultures, values, beliefs, and the will of their civilians. The analysis of the Hong Kong-mainland China conflict might help in understanding the importance of coexistence and promoting justice among various groups. When one party tries to break the balance, it could have caused public anger and escalated the conflict. The author provided feasible suggestions for parties to create mediation strategies, as well as encouraged them to focus on respecting different cultures and individuals' will to reduce cross-cultural clashes. Moreover, this study used different theories to illustrate the conflict from various perspectives; the

analyses might help people understand the dynamics of this conflict. Therefore, the development of mediation strategies might assist conflicting parties in understanding each party's interests and needs, building mutual trust, creating a fair and equitable environment to negotiate, seeking appropriate alternatives, as well as ensuring the welfare and safety needs of the public from both regions. Furthermore, this study encourages the conflicting parties to find win-win solutions by embracing universal values, respecting human dignity, and implementing righteous diplomatic methods to develop sustainable international relationships.

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