



# The Role of Civil Perceptions of Peace, Value and Interest in Conflict Resolution in the Southern Border Provinces of Thailand: A multi – group Analysis

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# ABSTRACT

This study explores the relationships between the perceptions of peace, value and interest and the conception of conflict resolution for the conflict in the southern border provinces of Thailand focusing on the outcome and the process of the conflict resolution program for the two civil population groups – adult and youth. It used structural equation modelling (SEM) and Chi square statistics for the empirical analysis of data and a focus group method in collecting expert opinions on the subjects for a qualitative analysis in which both results are compared. The data were collected by questionnaires during the period of October 2017 to January 2018 in the three border provinces of Thailand, Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat for 200 adults and 300 youths. The study finds that adult and youth groups are significantly different in terms of self-advocacy regarding power distribution, peace, value and interest. In addition, for both groups, the perception of interest and the effect of conflict environment were significant while the perception of peace and the perception of value was not. As the perception of interest was oriented towards the national interest and having a negative relationship with the conception of conflict resolution as a one whole program, or as a composing components of output and process of the conflict resolution program; it suggests that the civil populations perceive the ‘national interest centric’ approach to conflict resolution as having the negative effects on the conflict resolution program. Lastly, the adult and youth groups are significantly different in regard of the strength of the effect of the perception of interest on the conflict resolution program; that is the youth group is more strongly against the ‘national centric’ approach than the adult group. The expert opinions suggest that adults adopt a more conservative and moderate position with gradual change towards a local empowerment and governance while youths are impatient and adopt a more radical position of social and political changes. In general, it agrees with the empirical results that the adult and youth groups differ in many respects in the perceptions of peace, value and interest and the conceptions of conflict resolution.

**Key words:** civil perception of peace, civil perception of value, civil perception of interest, conflict resolution program, conflict resolution process, conflict resolution outcome, Southern Border Provinces of Thailand conflict

1. Why civil perception matters in conflict resolution?

Civil societies play an important role in conflict resolution because of their being a direct party to a conflict or being affected by a conflict or both. The way they play the roles are strongly influenced by the perceptions of their positions in a conflict which can have a significant impact on the outcome of the conflict resolution program in the end.

Conflict is a complex and dynamic process driven by both physical and psychological forces. Resolving conflict requires a balanced transformation of involved conflicting parties at the physical and psychological dimensions, (Galtung, 2000). Conflict has two sides, the physical and psychological sides, in the same way as the 'two sides' of a coin and the two sides cannot be separated. Scholars who have contributed to a comprehensive study of conflict, i.e. emphasised the study of both physical and psychological dimensions, there are not many; among them are Seymour (2003), Kandell (2014), Galtung (1969), Ndumbe III (2001) and Mitchell (1981, 2005). Successful conflict resolution has to take into account the importance and the interactive nature of the physical and psychological dimensions of conflict. Many conflict resolutions failed because the psychological side was neglected.

Civil perceptions and conceptions in conflict constitute a psychological domain of conflict study. Perceptions of a civil population can affect a conflict resolution program in many aspects; the most important effect is on the

outcome of the conflict resolution itself, (Ayo, 2009; Rummel, 1975). Civil perceptions can be thought of as the collective perceptions of the individual members of a civil group and thus, is influenced by individuals' internal and external perceptual conditions, (Hentschel, Smith, & Draguns, 1986). Though civil population in most conflicts, is not a direct party to conflict; rather, it is a stakeholder in a conflict; but is a politically important stakeholder because a successful conflict resolution depends on strong support of the civil population.

Over the last two decades researches on the conflict in the southern border provinces of Thailand (SBP) had placed high significance on the physical dimensions, i.e. ethnicity, religion, economy, governance, political power, etc. Thus far, the government's policy on the SBP conflict has been dominated by the three-pronged policy concepts of peace and security, development and governance ; setting an aspiring vision for the SBP as a 'secured society, free from causes of violence, ways of life of all being protected, multi-cultural development basis and civil participation in the sustainable peace construction program', but still lacking a clear and concrete program of the psychological domain.

The southern border province conflict is the top priority of the country's national security. Since the new round of conflict erupted in 2004, in the span of the 13 years more than 6,600 were killed and more than 12,000 were injured as a direct cause of the conflict. The economic and human costs as well as the effects on national

security of the conflict have increased every year. All governments since 2004 have placed the problem at the top priority to be resolved. The government conflict resolution policies have adopted the three-pronged approach – security, development and governance.

Gaining insights of the perceptions of stakeholders in the conflict, especially of the civil population, enhances understanding of the conflict dynamics and increases efficiency in policy formulation and implementation, especially in enhancing civil empowerment in the conflict resolution program. Civil empowerment will contribute to strengthen the development and governance in the conflict resolution program of the government. In particular, perception transformation can have a significant effect on conflict resolution; if integrated properly into the SBP policy, it will positively support the advancement of conflict resolution process.

2. Does civil perception – conception relationships exist in the southern border province conflict resolution?

The question above states the conceptual framework of the research: does civil perception – conception relationships exist in the southern border province conflict resolution? The null hypothesis is that the relationship does not exist or is insignificant while the alternative hypothesis is that the relationship exists and is significant. In reality, not all civil perceptions can have significant affects or direct effects on the conceptions of the outcome and process of the SBP conflict resolution. For example, from a

mere intuition, the perceptions of beauty, honesty, sacrifice, etc. may not have a significant link with the outcome and process of conflict resolution in the SBP conflict. On the other hand, the civil perceptions of peace, value and interest might have linkages with the outcome and process of the SBP conflict resolution. Indeed the latter intuition was adopted as the conceptual framework for the research.

Specifically, two civil population groups of the southern border provinces of Thailand are studied, the adult and youth groups. The principal research questions are stated as followed: (1) Do adult and youth perceptions of peace, value and interest have significant relations with civil conceptions of conflict resolution? In what manner and how does conflict environment affect such relations? (2) Do adults and youths conceive the conflict resolution as an integrated program in which the process and the outcome of the program are not separable or as a two-component program composing of the process and the outcome? (3) Do adults and youths exhibit significant levels of difference in the perception – conception relationship model of the proposed conceptual framework? (4) Does the conflict environment affect the perception – conception relationship model, how? And (5) Do the findings suggest any important policy implications?

Indeed, the questions investigate the adult and youth groups' differences in the perception – conception relationship model in conflict resolution of the southern border

province conflict.

### 3. The perception – conception of conflict resolution model

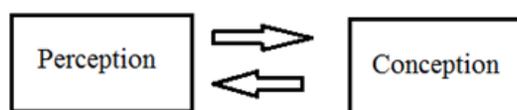
A perception of individuals is a representation of their interactions with the environment, therefore is a kind of information which has both content and form at the perceptual level. When the perceptual information is interpreted a concept about the subject is formed with a utilisation of previous knowledge as well as other factors such as culture and belief (Bueno, 2013; Wexler, 2008). Bueno (2013) distinguished perception from conception, explained the relations and accounted for the development of the kind of information that was involved in perceiving and conceiving and why we humans have the minds as we do.

In addition, human beings acquire a skill called constructive perception in inferring conceptual ideas from perception; for example in design, creativity and expertise, in which two processes are involved in constructive perception – reorganising perceptions and associating ideas. This consists of two components, (1) the perception component which involves reconstruction of new perceptions and (2) the conception component which involves linking a new perception to new ideas, functions or uses; the perceptual components requires mental ability to link things and transformation while conception component entails connection to knowledge (Suwa & Tversky, 2003).

Perceptions are formed though social interactions between and within groups and tend

to become more rigid over time. Values, power distribution and resource control contributes to these perceptions. The realist school of thought describes conflict as a result of a shift in power and the display of relative strength. In social-psychological terms, it is the perception of power, rather than the actual possession of power which is important. This allows at least theoretically, for conflicts over power to be settled on the level of perception, when material or resource based resolutions are impossible. Perceptions however, are not perfect images of reality as they can change through social experience. New perspectives can be learned and values and interests can be shared. Not only is the act of perception a vital act, but the consequences of how we perceive affect and dictate every aspect of our lives. Every time we perceive something we are engaging in an act of receiving or more properly, an act of conception. We are responsible for creating our own realities (Mitchley, 2015). The relationship between perception and conception thus can be interpreted as a feedback loop in which perception is firstly formed based on the previous conception and then the new conception is created as depicted in Figure 1.

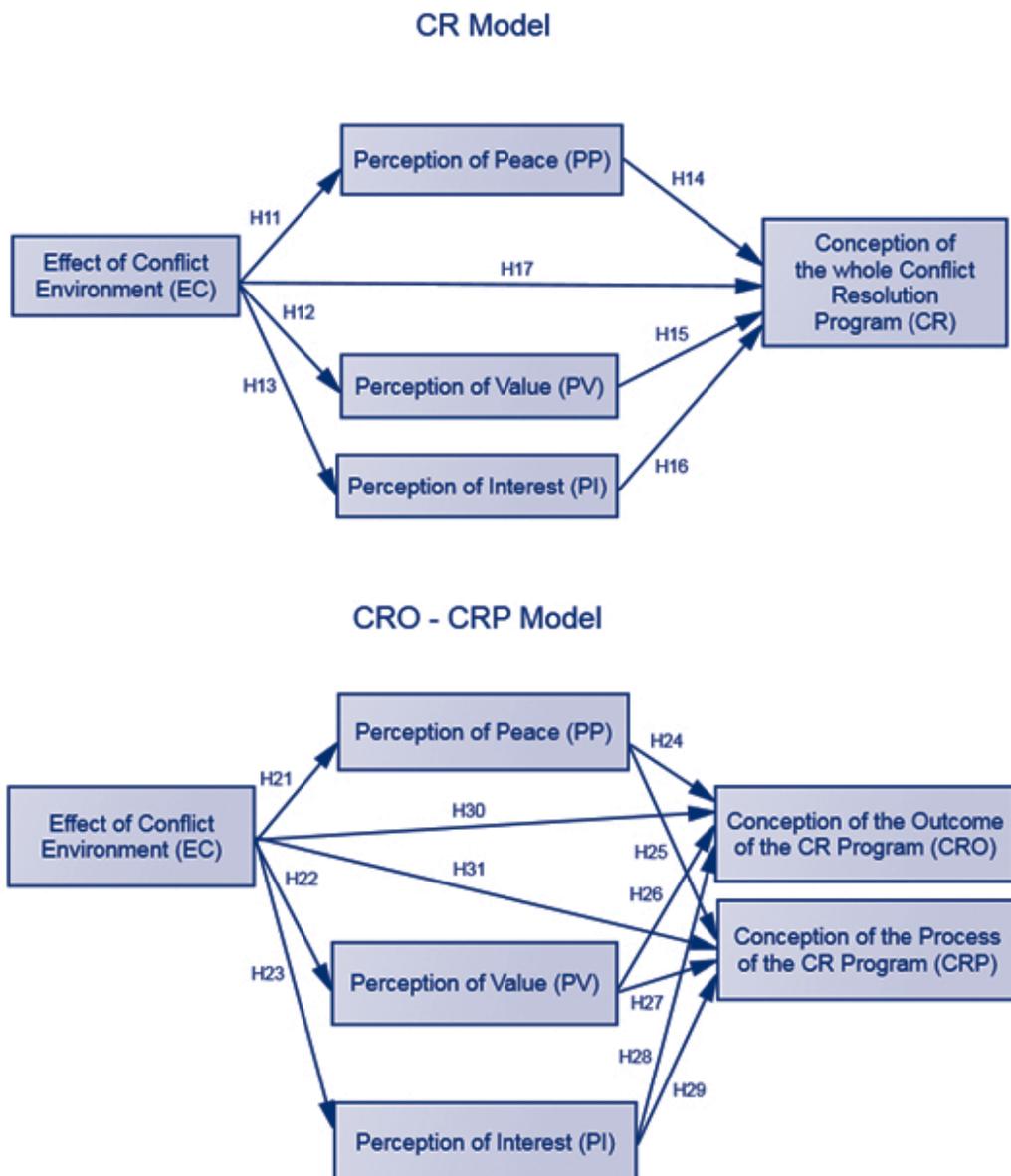
Figure 1: Perception – Conception feedback loop



3.1 The Perception – Conception Relationship in Conflict Resolution Model: The perception – conception relationship in conflict resolution model for this research was posited in two features, (1) the integrated conflict

resolution model (CR Model) and (2) the disintegrated conflict resolution into the outcome and process model (CRO-CRP Model) as depicted in Figure 2.

Figure 2: The Perception – conception relationship in conflict resolution positing in two features – CR Model and CRO –CRP Model



The reasons why the relationship between perception and conception in conflict resolution for the analysis of the proposed conceptual framework has two features, the CR Model and the CRO-CRP Model, where the stakeholders in conflict might agree on the outcome of the conflict resolution program but might not agree on the process towards the achievement of the stated outcomes. This two-component structure of conflict resolution was proposed by Mitchell (2005) that conflict resolution structurally comprises two parts – the outcome and the process.

The model structure as depicted in Figure 2 comprises the following latent constructs: (1) the conception of the integrated conflict resolution program (CR), (2) the conception of the outcome of the conflict resolution program (CRO), (3) the conception of the process of the conflict resolution program (CRP), (4) the perception of peace (PP), (5) the perception of value (PV), (6) the perception of interest (PI) and (7) the effect of conflict environment (EC).

The conception of integrated conflict resolution program (CR) is a combined outcome and process in one construct and defined as a conceptual conflict resolution as the end state and the method to achieve it. Parties to conflict have the goals and a plan for achieving such goals of their own. The conflict resolution provides a platform in which these goals and methods are negotiated and settled (Jeong 2008). In general, the CR program comprises power distribution, peace and security, demo-

cratic representation, transparency, governance, sustainable development, civil participation and free flow of information resulting from the interaction of the strategies of the conflicting parties (Thomas & Kilmann 2001, 2007). CR measures the level of democratisation, transparency, civil participation, social security and development. The questionnaires opted for five measurable indicators as the components of CR as (1) agreement to the principle that people have their representatives in the SBP local government (REP\_IN\_GOV), (2) agreement to the principle that the ultimate goal of the conflict resolution is sustainable peace, justice, non-violence, equity, strong community, development, human dignity, respect of human rights, being conformed to standard practices, rule of law, both at national and international levels (CR\_ULT\_GOAL), (3) agreement to the neutral party involvement in the conflict resolution process (NEU\_PRTY\_INV), (4) agreement to the free flow of information in the conflict resolution process (INFORMATION) and (5) agreement to the principle that the people should decide the outcome and process of conflict resolution (P\_DECIDE). Increase in CR is assumed to lead to the increases in the component indicators' values.

The concept of the CR program above can be disintegrated into two components: (1) the conception of the outcome of the CR program (CRO) comprising REP\_IN\_GOV and CR\_ULT\_GOAL above and (2) the conception of the process of the CR program (CRP) comprising NEU\_PRTY\_INV, INFORMATION and P\_DECIDE above.

The perception of peace (PP) is a latent construct based on the concept of peace deliberated by Galtung (1964, 1967), Webel & Galtung (2007) and Lyotard (1984). PP is defined as a peace that is perceived by an individual in terms of how it is founded. If the work to get peace is to remove the causes of conflict, it will lead to achieve a positive peace; on the other hand, if only violence is curbed and peace enforced, it is only a negative peace. However, there is a mid-point practice in which peace is enforced and at the same time the root causes have been addressing to achieve the end result projected in a longer term which can be referred to as a 'normative' peace (UN DPKO, Integrated and Comprehensive Peacekeeping, 2008). In the research, the perception of peace (PP) was constraint to be composed of three measurable indicators: (1) agreement to the principle that civil participation in the conflict resolution program would lead to a successful conflict resolution (CR\_PARTI) , (2) agreement to the principle that when root causes are addressed, conflict would be resolved (VIO\_CAUSE) and (3) agreement to the idea that peace education would help in changing perception of peace and lead to conflict resolution at the end (PEACE\_ED) . PP is positive peace oriented; increase in the value of PP is assumed to lead to the increase in the values of the component indicators.

The perception of value (PV) is a latent construct composing of universal values such as human rights, peace, freedom, social progress, equal rights and human dignity (Annan 2013);

national and localised values such as gratitude, respect of seniority, politeness and kindness, etc. (Schwartz 2012, Kouzakova et al 2012, Weziak-Bialowolska & Magdalena 2009). This research took two universal values that are measurable and have a direct link to conflict resolution for the analysis: (1) agreement to the idea that communication among faiths or interfaith would lead to peace and help resolving the conflict in the SBP (INTERFAITH) and (2) agreement to the idea that respect of diversity is important to resolve the conflict in the SBP (DIVERSITY) . PV is universal value oriented; increase in the value of PV is assumed to lead to the increase in the values of its component indicators.

The perception of interest (PI) is a latent construct referring to what people regard as important to their survival, sustainability and prosperity. From this perspective, human security and development are the central issues of human interest (Habermas 1971, Alkire 2003, Hastings 2011, UNDP 2010). In this paper, the perception of interest is framed by two types of interest - national and individual/community interests. PI is composed of five measurable components: (1) the frequency of voting in the past elections (VOTE\_FREQ) , (2) being members of any sorts of organisation (ORG\_MEMBER) , (3) agreement to the idea that national unity would lead to successful resolution of the SBP conflict (NAT\_UNITY) , (4) agreement to the idea that sovereign state has the rights to protect its territory and interests under the international

laws (RIGHT\_OF\_ST) and (5) agreement to the idea that religion and government be separated (REL\_POL\_SEP). PI is national interest oriented; increase in the value of PI is assumed to lead to the increases in the values of its component indicators.

The effect of conflict environment (EC) measures the level of the conflict environment on the well-beings of the individuals and the level of heightened security in the environment. Individuals extract information from the environment from the perception of its safety and security (Hentschel, Smith, & Draguns, 1986). EC is framed by four measurable component indicators: (1) the effects of conflict on the safety and security of cousins and relatives (COUSINS\_FAM), (2) the effects of conflict on oneself (SELF\_EC), (3) the presence of security forces in the residential areas (F\_PRESENCE) and (4) the occurrence of clashes of forces in the residential areas (CLASH). EC is personal safety and security degradation oriented, increase in the value of EC is assumed to lead to the increases in the values of its component indicators.

**3.2 Self-advocacy variables:** There are five categorical variables asking in the questionnaires referring to the respondent's self-advocacy in regard of peace (PEACE\_IDEN), value (VALUE\_IDEN), interest (INTEREST\_ADV), power distribution (POWER\_DIST) and differences among peace, value and interest (PVI\_DIFFS). The adult and youth groups were analysed whether they are different in regard to these advocacies. If the two groups are different

in the self-advocacy test, they are likely to be different in the perception – conception relationship model too.

The PEACE\_IDEN variable requested the respondents to identify themselves the type of peace category they advocate among the given choices: positive peace, negative peace, and normative or comprehensive peace. The VALUE\_IDEN variable requested the respondents to identify themselves the type of value they advocate among the given choices: universal value, national value, cultural value and community value. The INTEREST\_ADV variable provided the following choices: national interest, regional/local interest, community interest and individual interest. The POWER\_DIST variable asking what type of power distribution would resolve the conflict by offering the following choices: strong centralization, strong decentralisation and balanced power distribution. Lastly, the PVI\_DIFFS variable sought the respondent's opinions whether peace, value and interest differ in relation to the SBP context.

#### 4. Methodological approach

The structural equation modelling (SEM) was used to analyse the perception – conception relationship in conflict resolution for the adult and youth groups as explained in 3.1. Three stages were involved in the SEM analysis: (1) the pooled confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was tested for the measurement model for the five latent variables – CR, CRO, CRP, PP, PV, PI and EC. This is the technique recommended by

Zainudin (2012), (2) the two structural models, the CR model and the CRO-CRP model, as depicted in Figure 2 were tested for best fits and (3) the multi group analysis tests using the best fit models.

The Chi square test was used to analyse the self- advocacy difference of the two groups. There were five Chi square test for difference in self-advocacy in regard of peace (PEACE\_IDEN), value (VALUE\_IDEN), interest (INTEREST\_ADV), power distribution (POWER\_DIST) and differences among peace, value and interest (PVI\_DIFFS) for the two groups.

5. Adult and youth perceptions in the SBP are different in terms of self-advocacy and the perception – conception relationship analysis

For the perception – conception relationship model, the SEM analysis has resulted as follow:

(1) the measurement model tests using the pooled CFA method, revealed that the perception of peace (PP) and the perception of value (PV) had correlation values greater than 1.00 with CR, CRO and CRP reflecting a negative variance of both variables in the equation structure (a Heywood case). Therefore, both variables were deleted from the equation structure;

(2) the structural model tests of the CR model and CRO-CRP model with the remaining two latent variables, the perception of interest (PI) and the effect of conflict environment (EC),

revealed good fits with all indicators significant and good model fit indices. Therefore, the two models were used for the multi group analysis in the next step;

(3) the multi group analysis using the two models, CR model and CRO-CRP model, was done as the final step of SEM analysis. The tests revealed that the CRO-CRP model had resulted in a negative variance for the latent variable CRO which is the outcome of the conflict resolution program suggesting that it does not explain the data well. Therefore, the multi group analysis test provided a good result with the CR model with two exogenous variables, the perception of interest (PI) and the effect of conflict environment (EC). The results of the multi group analysis that determines the difference between the adult and youth groups are displayed in Figures 3 and 4 and in Table 1.

In summary, the results of the multi group analysis (MGA) test reveal a significant difference between the adult group and youth group in the relationship between the perception of interest (PI) and the integrated conflict resolution program (CR).

Figure 3: Multi group analysis test result for adult group using CR model with standardised regression weights

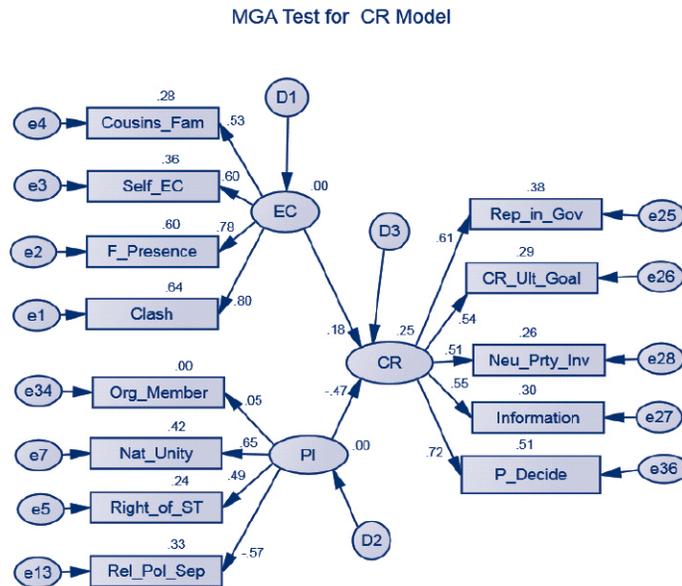


Figure 4: Multi group analysis test result for youth group using CR model with standardized regression weights

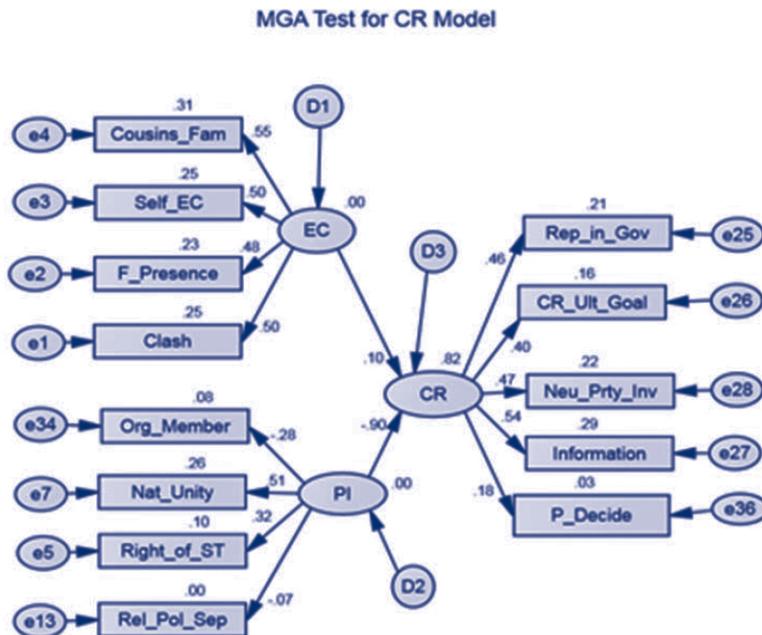


Table 1: Multi group analysis test summary using CR model

<b>Model: CR model</b>				
	Std Regression Weight			
<b>Structural Model:</b>	Adults	P-value	Youths	P-value
EC → CR	.176	.052	.100	.304
PI → CR	-.471	**	-.898	**
<b>Measurement Model:</b>				
EC				
→ Cousins_Fam	.525	***	.553	***
→ Self_EC	.596	***	.498	***
→ F_Presence	.777	***	.485	***
→ Clash	.800	Ref	.499	Ref
PI				
→ Org_Member	.053	.557	-.275	**
→ Nat_Unity	.649	***	.510	***
→ Right_of_ST	.493	Ref	.319	Ref
→ Rel_Pol_Sep	-.573	***	-.068	.392
CR				
→ Rep_in_Gov	.614	***	.457	***
→ CR_Ult_Goal	.540	***	.399	***
→ Neu_Prty_Inv	.505	Ref	.467	Ref
→ Information	.545	***	.538	***
→ P_Decide	.716	***	.182	*

**Critical ratios (CR) for differences:**

A1:Y1 = .416; not affected since EC→CR was not significant.

A2:Y2 = -2.024. This is the critical ratio between PI and CR.

H<sub>0</sub>: The two groups are not different in the relation between PI and CR in the CR model.

H<sub>0</sub> is rejected as the critical ratio is outside the range (-1.96 < Critical Ratio < 1.96).

**Model fit indices:**

CMIN/DF = 2.376

CFI = .785

PCFI = .543

FMIN = .610

RMSEA = .053

PCLOSE = .257

**Note:** \*\*\* = p < .001; \*\* = .001 < p < .01; \* = .01 < p < .05

Ref = reference regression weight set to 1.00

The result of the Chi square test for difference in the two groups' self-advocacy on peace (PEACE\_IDEN), value (VALUE\_IDEN), interest (INTEREST\_ADV), power distribution

(POWER\_DIST) and differences among peace, value and interest (PVI\_DIFFS) are displayed in Table 2.

Table 2: The Chi square test for difference in the Adult and Youth groups' self-advocacy

<b>Chi Square Test for Differences</b>	<b>Adults vs. Youths</b>
1. Peace Advocacy: <b>PEACE_IDEN</b>	$X^2 = 104.545$ ; $df = 2$ Threshold: $X^2 = 5.991$ at $\alpha = .05$ $H_{0(1)}$ : <b>Rejected.</b>
$H_{0(1)}$ : Adults and Youths are <b>indifferences</b> with regard to their self-identifications towards the three types of peace.	
2. Value Advocacy: <b>VALUE_IDEN</b>	$X^2 = 12.671$ ; $df = 1$ Threshold $X^2 = 3.841$ at $\alpha = .05$ $H_{0(2)}$ : <b>Rejected.</b>
$H_{0(2)}$ : Adults and Youths have no differences with regard to their self-identifications towards the two types of value.	
3. Interest Advocacy: <b>INTEREST_ADV</b>	$X^2 = 102.130$ ; $df = 1$ Threshold $X^2 = 3.841$ at $\alpha = .05$ $H_{0(3)}$ : <b>Rejected.</b>
$H_{0(3)}$ : Adults and Youths have no differences with regard to their self-advocacies towards the four types of interest.	
4. Power Distribution Advocacy: <b>POWER_DIST</b>	$X^2 = 9.302$ ; $df = 2$ Threshold $X^2 = 5.991$ at $\alpha = .05$ $H_{0(4)}$ : <b>Rejected.</b>
$H_{0(4)}$ : Adults and Youths have no differences with regard to their views on the three types of power distribution.	
5. Differences in Peace, Value, and Interest : <b>PVI_DIFFS</b>	$X^2 = 25.829$ ; $df = 1$ Threshold $X^2 = 3.841$ at $\alpha = .05$ $H_{0(5)}$ : <b>Rejected.</b>
$H_{0(5)}$ : Adults and Youths have no differences with regard to their views on differences of peace, value and interest.	

All the null hypotheses for the Chi square tests are rejected. The results suggest that the Adult and Youth groups are significantly different in self-advocacy in regard of peace, value, interest, power distribution and differences among peace,

value and interest. This is the complementary information supporting the differences between the two civil groups to the perception – conception relationship in conflict resolution model.

## 6. Conclusion : perception differences and policy implications

The following points are a summary of the paper:

(1) In the perception – conception relationship in conflict resolution model, the perception of peace (PP) and the perception of value (PV) do not statistically fit in the CR model and CRO-CRP model when structured in the equation with the perception of interest (PI) and the effect of conflict environment (EC). Specifically, it renders that the components of PP and PV are not significantly related or linked to CR, CRO and CRP. That is the following indicators are not significant in the SBP conflict resolution program when compared to the components of the perception of interest (PI): (1) agreement to the principle that civil participation in the conflict resolution program would lead to a successful conflict resolution (CR\_PARTI), (2) agreement to the principle that when root causes are addressed, conflict would be resolved (VIO\_CAUSE), (3) agreement to the idea that peace education would help in changing perception of peace and lead to conflict resolution at the end (PEACE\_ED), (4) agreement to the idea that communication among faiths or interfaith would lead to peace and help resolving the conflict in the SBP (INTERFAITH) and (5) agreement to the idea that respect of diversity is important to resolve the conflict in the SBP (DIVERSITY).

(2) The significance of the perception of interest (PI) and its component indicators - (1)

the frequency of voting in the past elections (VOTE\_FREQ), (2) being members of any sorts of organisation (ORG\_MEMBER), (3) agreement to the idea that national unity would lead to successful resolution of the SBP conflict (NAT\_UNITY), (4) agreement to the idea that sovereign state has the rights to protect its territory and interests under the international laws (RIGHT\_OF\_ST) and (5) agreement to the idea that religion and government be separated (REL\_POL\_SEP) override other factors in terms of the influence over the conceptions of CR, CRO and CRP.

(3) The effect of conflict environment (EC) as well as its indicator components is also insignificant in relation to the conception of the conflict resolution program (CR) which means that PI and its components override the effects of EC.

(4) The perception of interest (PI) is a 'national interest centric' construct and it has a negative relationship with CR; it means that the civil population are against the 'national interest centric' approach in resolving the conflict in the southern border provinces of Thailand. In their perceptions, the more 'national centric' the approach is, the more they view the conflict resolution outcome and process as less democratic, transparent and inclusive participatory.

(5) The youths are stronger against the 'national interest centric' approach than the adults as the multi group analysis results revealed.

(6) The divergence between adults and youths are clearer with the results of Chi square test of self-advocacy difference between adults and youths. That is all five categories of self-advocacy – peace, value, interest, power distribution and perceived differences in peace, value and interest are significantly different between the two groups.

As the youths are the force of the future, the results of this study suggest that policy makers should accommodate more of the youths' perceptions and conceptions in resolving the southern border province conflict. Adults are more or less on the national interest support; thus they should be constructively integrated in the conflict resolution movement. Without the support of the youths, the conflict resolution program would face a big difficulty in achieving its ultimate goal of security, prosperity and development vision. In 2004, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej advised the government of the strategy 'understanding, outreaching and development' as the strategy for resolving the conflict in the SBP. King Bhumibol underlined the importance of 'understanding' which underlines the psychological aspect of the conflict. Understanding comes first before outreaching and development can take place. Understanding what is in the minds of the people is the first thing to happen.

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