



DETERMINING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AVOIDING STRATEGY IN CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND RESOLUTION TOWARDS HUMAN RELATIONSHIP IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN SOUTH EAST, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The work on determining the effectiveness of avoiding/withdrawal strategy of conflict management and resolution in promoting human relations in colleges of education used 264 administrators of state colleges of education in south east Nigeria. Questionnaire was used to elicit information from respondents. The data collected was analysed using mean, standard deviation and ANOVA. The variables showed mean range from 3.04 to 3.53. The grand mean of 3.24 indicates that the strategy is classified as moderately effective. The analysis of variance test showed F-ratio of 36.966 with probability value less than 0.05 degree of freedom showing probability value less than 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. Implying that there is significant difference in the effectiveness of avoiding/ withdrawal strategy of conflict resolution based on age. Implication of the study was drawn, and conclusion made. Recommendations were made.

Keywords: Conflict Management; Conflict Resolution; Human Relations.

INTRODUCTION

Conflict situation has become a challenge to men's existence and as such have penetrated into all activities of man including the education sector. According to Manual (2020) conflict is a reality of social life and exists at all levels of society. Manual noted that conflict is as old as the world itself, and that the existence of conflict in a relationship poses a challenge that the relationship cannot continue as it was. Article, Dispute Resolution (2021) asserted that conflict is a part of life, and noted that certain conflicts can inspire positive change, while other types of conflict can be hurting depending on the time spent before resolution. According to Nnadi (2012) conflict is inbuilt in man. The way breathing is part of life so is conflict also part of life Fragapane (2018). According to Anku-Tsedde and Adjadogo (2016) conflicts is generally inevitable and are in almost all the daily human interactions, and in relationship as marriages, families, Churches, ethnic groups, nations and in workplaces and organizations. Reynolds

(2015) asserted that conflict is inevitable because human beings can come from different backgrounds especially in colleges of education.

Conflicts are caused by variables which can be seen or unseen, tangible or intangible.

Purwoko (2019) portrayed conflict as a difference in objectives, interest, needs, and antagonism shown concerning irreconcilable goals, hostile emotional attitude, and different value structure. Abba (2018) defined conflict as a clash of interest or goal over values and claims to status, power and resources with the opponent's aim to neutralize injure or eliminate the rival. In the context of this study, conflict is an unavoidable outcome of incompatible interests and desire giving rise to active disagreement between people with opposing opinions or principles, fighting between two or more group of people.

Conflicts occur in different magnitude. Skipper (2020) observed that while some conflicts can be minor, useful and even move things forward and effect change, many other conflict situations are pervasive, multifaceted, complex and damaging.

The workplace can never be free from disagreements as the workers (employees) are made up of different personalities, opinions and goals. Keller (2021) upholds that conflict is inevitable due to differences in personality and communication styles of work personnel. Keller claims that conflict is not new.

Conflict in colleges of education can arise from several sources starting with personality formation to other variables like conditions of work discharge. The differences in understanding, perception, view points, desire for a position or status, unequal treatment of equals in promotion and assigning of status among other issues can cause conflict. When such conflict arise, it disrupts peaceful co-existence, results to keeping of malice, creating of sectionalism among employees, back biting, strained relationship, and of course the situation interrupt smooth flow of work resulting in ineffectiveness and in efficiency in work operations. Shanka and Thuo (2017) and Adhiambo and Enose (2011) held that conflict situation affects the smooth operation of activities in organizations (colleges inclusive) which only careful management can restore peaceful coexistence between work personnel. The climax effect of the conflict situation is an unbalanced or shallow rooted relationship, thus demanding an approach for the resolve of such conflict situation to promote relationship.

The colleges of education employee relationship are characterized by unpleasant behaviour towards one another or among selves. There is an attitude of keeping to self or selected persons, feeling of antagonism, and squabble over issues and ideas, tussle for power/status. Employees are not free with one another, all these hampers good relationship among employees. To achieve good co existence, positive relationship is needed, human relations encourage and

enhances development and growth. White (2022) and Robert (2021) posited human relation as the process of training employees, addressing their needs, fostering a workplace culture and resolving conflicts between employees or between employees and management. Chand, (2021) and Sagepub (2011) described human relations as concerned about the way people relate to each other in group situations, especially work, exhibiting strength and suppressing weakness, and how communication skills and sensitivity to other people's feelings can be improved. Gordon (2022) gave elements of human relation to include: management, communication, leadership and decision making, motivation, conflict resolution, unity of command, collaboration, self-esteem, empathy, mutual organization, group dynamics and self-confidence. The author added that human relations are an important part to career and workplace success. (1) According to Wentzel and Nooru Dee (2021) there may be conflicts in human relationships which is also possible to overcome, pointing out that a good social environment is not where there is no conflict, but where not minding the divergences the individual employee manages to cope. Effort to develop the individual so that he/she can achieve a better quality of life is the aim of human relation. Lytle (2015) held that the most effective teams are the teams whose members feel safe to disagree with one another. Lytle encourages a culture where different opinions are allowed, or even encouraged, as it can spur innovation, diversity of thought and better decision making.

Care should be taken to ensure that the differences does not cause a wider apart condition, thus need for management of such differences. In the transition of conflict management and resolution thoughts, Robbins, judge and Vohra (2012) explained the classical/traditional views which holds the thoughts that conflict is a fight, quarrel, and clash, emotional disturbance which must be avoided based on its malfunctioning and detrimental outcome within the group. Neo-classical/human relations view considers conflict as natural phenomena which is inevitable and also healthy, and held that it is more important to resolve naturally occurring conflicts productively, instead of arguing over good or bad conflict and to avoid conflict becoming a threat or tension when manhandled. The modern or interactionist view posited conflict as legitimate and inevitable and encourages conflicts in organizations claiming that conflict creates room for innovation and changes, and discourages organization being static or unresponsive to the needs of its members, thereby encouraging successful organizational administration.

Management of conflict situation to achieve resolution are in different forms or strategies thus, Olukoyode (2015) and Zhao and Chen (2014) enumerated conflict management strategies as avoidance, accommodation, competition, compromise, and collaboration. Conflict resolution according to Doyle (2022) and Zapf Beitler, Machowski and Johnson (2016) is the process by

which two or more conflicting parties reach a peaceful settlement to a dispute. Osabiya (2015) described conflict resolution as the reduction, elimination, or termination of all forms and types of disagreement. Yejide (2018) made it clear that since the cost of conflict is higher than the cost of peace building probably through withdrawal. It becomes imperative, to attract partners to give oversight and quality control for peace building. In the context of the study, resolution in conflict matters has to do with bringing to a successful end the issue of misunderstanding existing between parties or individuals through an acceptable point of understanding between the parties or individuals in conflict. Resolution is therefore described as an act of solving an existing issue, or the state of an existing matter being resolved with a determination or a fixed intention; the dispelling of a discord by a following concord.

The resolution attainment must be pursued sequentially and critically. Anioke, (2024) advised that the attempt and commitment to attain conflict resolution status should be done through a systematic approach. The author pointed out avoiding as one of such approach. In the context of this write up, avoiding will be used interchangeably with withdrawal. (2) ...Anioke (2024), Daisy (2020), ije (2015), and (Zhao and Chen) (2014) described avoiding strategy as an approach where either or both sides to the conflict withdraw, such action suspends the conflict issue till the future, the suspension action can become compromising or accommodating or can cause more damages. an action to putting off clash uncertainty through postponing or overlooking the contention, with the believe that the issue in conflict settles itself without an encounter. The strategy is associated more with individuals or people with low power or low regard for the issue in contest and people naturally endowed with inherent peace indices. Yeung et al (2021) described avoiding strategies as a situation where one keeps the disagreement issue to oneself so as to avoid hard feelings. Regarding the use of avoiding, Lazier (2017) advised that avoiding can be appropriate when more time is needed for decision making. The approach can be used to resolve conflict in short term goals.

Withdrawal or avoiding strategy encourages one or both party to the conflict to step aside from the conflicting activities. Ignoring the conflict issue as well as the opponent to the conflict is unavoidable under the strategy.

The main problem focuses on the effectiveness of the conflict addressing strategy adopted which is aimed at achieving the suitable condition for positive relationship of work personnel. Bansa (2020) posited that effectiveness is concerned with understanding why something is being done; doing the right thing; align with objectives and goals; future looking with the desire for a better future; not easy to measure; requires external view outside organization; and requires subjective viewing.

The effort to determine effectiveness of avoiding/withdrawal strategy of conflict management and resolution in promoting human relationship is quite timely considering the need for harmonious and peaceful coexistence amidst the nations level of stability. The call for determining effectiveness of avoiding/withdrawal as conflict resolution approaches is timely in Nigeria. Determining the effectiveness of avoiding/withdrawal approach of resolution of conflict is a good pedestal for national unity, harmonious relationship and peace through the response of the college administrators respecting the age of respondents. Age is conventionally considered both in the local and work place setting while settling conflicts. Therefore, the specific purpose of the study is finding out the effectiveness of avoiding or withdrawal strategy in conflict resolution in promoting human relations in the colleges of education in south East Nigeria.

JUSTIFICATION FOR THE STUDY

The condition of an organization living in strife, squabbles, discord, incompatibility, uncompromising behavior and complexity of work personnel acts as an interference to smooth flow of activities through divergence in acceptance and lack of corporation as a team.

The resultant low moral for co-existence through back biting, gap in communication, resistance to mentorship causing wide gap in relationship. The inability of most administrators of colleges to sense the springing up of unfavorable conditions at work indicating lack of unity early enough and most often cannot sort out such undesirable occurrences early enough by choosing a mitigating strategy for handling the conflicting issues towards maintaining good human relation.

More severe is the erroneous act of choosing a mitigating action that does not match the issues of conflict simply because it favors the stand or view point of the administrator negating the real issues of discord. The desire to focus the administrators of conflict better on the obvious about choosing or preferring a mitigating strategy towards forestalling a balanced relationship in achieving this genuine condition, It serves better for either of the aggrieved party or both to recoil from the situation.

Conflict when not managed or resolved, encourages grievance compilation and probable escalation which may become more devastating giving rise to the avoiding act in agreement with the general comment of the elder and the wise “where truth will be not be told count me out” hence avoiding or withdrawal act.

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Because the general notion of hearing from each party to the conflict is most often not respected in practice. It encourages grievances compilation and probable escalation which may become more devastating giving rise to the avoiding act. It is always a general comment of the elder and the rise 'where truth will not be told count me out' hence, avoiding or withdrawal act. Therefore, the work on determining the effectiveness of avoiding/withdrawal strategy in resolution of conflict towards promoting human relations in the colleges of education.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to determine the effectiveness of avoiding/withdrawal strategy of conflict management and resolution in promoting human relations in colleges of education in south east Nigeria. The study will determine the;

- a. The avoidance practice in conflict management and resolution towards promoting human relations in colleges of Education in south East.

Research Question

1. What is the level of effectiveness of avoiding/withdrawal strategy of conflict resolution in promoting human relations in colleges of education in south east, Nigeria?

Null Hypothesis

H₀ There is no significant difference in the mean responses of administrators based on age on the level of effectiveness of avoiding/withdrawal strategy of conflict resolution in promoting human relation in colleges of education in South East Nigeria.

Scope Of Study

The study was restricted to the public colleges of education in the four States in South East, Nigeria on the effectiveness of conflict management and resolution approaches in promoting human relations in colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria. There are several approaches to the resolution of conflicts but this study was delimited to avoiding/withdrawal strategy.

WORKPLACE CONFLICT; ITS MANAGEMENT AND RESOLUTION

Conflict occurs when two or more people engage in a struggle over values and claims to status, power, and resources. Since conflict situation is unavoidable, it becomes clear to seek a coping action which involves a management action and its subsequent resolution of the conflict.

Conflict management involves a process of cushioning the devastating arising from a misunderstanding aimed at ensuring continuity in work flow in the midst of such disagreement, which ultimately result in a resolve of the conflict without further resurfacing or re-occurring. American Management Association (2015) and Onyechere (2008) gave three orientations to

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conflict management as lose-lose, win-lose and win-win. Lose-lose ends negatively for all parties win-lose results in one party being victorious, and win-win results to optimal satisfaction for both parties. The win-win option is seen as one of the essential concepts in conflict resolution. The approach adopts cooperative practices rather than competitive. Conflict management is therefore the careful and articulate actions to cushion the adverse effect of conflict, aimed at maintaining relationship and work flow in the midst of a discord.

According to Wentzel and Nooru Dee (2021) there may be conflicts in human relationships which is also possible to overcome, pointing out that a good social environment is not where there is no conflict, but where not minding the divergences the individual employee manages to cope. Effort to develop the individual so that he/she can achieve a better quality of life is the aim of human relation. Lytle (2015) held that the most effective teams are the teams whose members feel safe to disagree with one another. Lytle encourages a culture where different opinions are allowed, or even encouraged, as it can spur innovation, diversity of thought and better decision making. Tergema (2020) asserted that the chief responsibility in conflict management is to facilitate communication that will help to reach an acceptable settlement. Anioke 2024 warned that personality and status interference in conflict handling will lead to avoiding attitude.

In the opinion of Anioke 2024, there is need for administrators of colleges to maintain good working climate for all classes of workers so as to achieve positive growth.

The author noted that the practice of conflict management is geared towards assuring effectiveness in the organization. Conflict management is also of benefit to organizations depending on the level of the conflict. Uike and Gupta (2017) explained conflict management as the ability to identify and handle conflict sensibly, fairly and efficiently.

Article Dispute Resolution (2021) disclosed that not all conflicts can be resolved even with the best dispute resolution practitioners thereby resulting to avoiding, and because there is need to establish a new coexistence within the period of conflict, conflict management ensures to sustain the organization. It should be noted that there are challenges in the course of management.

Conflict resolution is concerned about reduction, elimination, or termination of conflict situation. While conflict management is aimed at minimizing the negative outcomes of conflict and promotes the positive outcome. Lundy and Njonguo (2019) portrayed conflict management and resolution as processes for dealing with discord or facilitating peaceful and satisfactory cessations to conflict, and even its potential transformation. In an attempt to achieve conflict resolution, the issue of conflict must be established. Conflict resolution demands not just

sensitizing people to the issue of disagreement, but addressing the issue/problem effectively to challenge the injustice and reduce the inequity involved therein.

Conflict resolution follows a pattern or strategy depending on the nature and probably stage of the conflict situation. Such strategy includes avoiding/withdrawal practices. Avoiding style shows one party to the conflict keeping away from the conflict situation. Manual (2020) gave models of conflict management approaches as: lose-lose model involving avoidance, accommodation/smoothing, and compromise; win-lose model involving competition, and authoritative command; and win-win model involving collaboration and problem solving.

Commenting on variables that can influence the choice of resolution approach, Zhao and Chen (2014) advised that elements like personality, demographic variables of age, sex, education, and race should be considered while choosing resolution approach, but should not be allowed to become a definite variable for decision without addressing the core issue of conflict.

Theoretical framework is based on Karl Marx theory of (1867) which states that “society is in a state of perpetual conflict because of competition for limited resources”. The theory held that social order is maintained by domination and power rather than consensus and conformity and noted that conflict is an unavoidable aspect of human nature which helps explain why things are the way they are.

WORKPLACE CONFLICT: MANAGEMENT AND RESOLUTION TOWARDS HUMAN RELATIONS

Anioke (2024) noted that human relations are concerned with the treatment of people in a professional context, showing relations with or between people. It is the social and interpersonal relations between human beings, which help in promoting interpersonal and intergroup adjustments. Roberts (2021) asserts that relationship between employees and management are of substantial value in any workplace. Peak (2020) described human relations as the act of integrating workers within a work environment through genuine appreciation, care, understanding, good habit of mind, awareness of personality, promoting individual, group and organizational goals. The practice of human relations extends to visitors to the organization. Reacting to the issue of human relations, Perry (2021) gave the main goal of human relations as to help people relate better to others, and also to help us understand how our actions affect other people we interact with.

Wentzel and Nooru Dee (2021) posited that human relationships is characterized by its complexity, the inter relation between the individual and the social environment of history, culture, politics, language and others. Valente, Lourenco and Nemeth (2020) observed that

constructive and destructive consequences of conflict depends on the management skills applied. The authors noted that effective conflict management strategies minimizes conflicts is negative impacts and enhance the positive impacts for improved relationships.

Describing conflict in work relations (olukoyode, 2015) and (Osad and Osas 2013) noted that conflict is not an aberration, because it provides an opportunity for corrections and reconciliation for the benefit or betterment of the organization as well as the employees. Olukoyode (2015) and Kazimoto (2013) described workplace conflict as the presence of discord that occur when goals, interests or values of individuals or groups are incompatible and frustrate each other's effort to achieve set objectives. Olukoyode (2015) opined that work place conflict is endemic despite management's best practices to circumvent the situation, it manifest in various forms as an intrinsic and unavoidable feature of employment relationship. Longe noted that, it is a natural process ever present and likely to occur in hierarchical organization due to people's divergent view, opinion and backgrounds. According to Lytle (2015) workplace conflict happen everywhere, Lytle warned that ignoring such situation can be costly. Lytle further remarked that unaddressed conflict wastes organizations work hour in gossip and other unproductive activities.

Thus, Valente, Lourenco and Nemeth (2020) asserted that conflict is a part of school life which demands that teachers should develop the skills to manage conflict.

Josh and Allison (2021) and Weihrich, Cannice and Koontz (2008) pointed out that in workplace several personalities, background, and work styles exist, which are all prone to conflict issues.

Manual (2020), Shanka and Thuo (2017), classified types of conflict into: interpersonal conflict; intra group conflicts; and inter-group conflicts. olukoyode (2015) found out the following types of conflict as existing in organization; procedural conflict; job task related conflict; interpersonnel conflict; and personal conflict. Ugwuagboke (2019) emphasized on the acquisition of values, knowledge, develop the attitudes, skills and behaviour to live in harmony with oneself, with others, and even the natural environment.

Conflict situation most of the times are not overt for early detection. Effort is needed to put in place to detect in the earliest possible time the traces of conflict. Skipper (2020) observed that while some conflict can be minor and may be useful for moving things forward and affecting change, the author remarked that most conflict may result otherwise. In order that lasting agreement should be reached workers should be allowed to take part in reaching a decision. Osabiya (2015) recommended that workers should be more involved in decision making process devoid of power play syndrome so as to reduce the rate of conflict. Zhao and Chan

(2014) opined that power is the ability of one party to influence the other party without recourse to the truth, and maintained that power is core in intergroup relationship. Extending this condition of conflict management and resolution to school will aid school performance.

Daisy (2020), ije (2015), and (Zhao and Chen) (2014) described avoiding strategy as an approach where either or both sides to the conflict withdraw, such action suspends the conflict issue till the future, the suspension action can become compromising or accommodating or can cause more damages. an action to putting off clash uncertainty through postponing or overlooking the contention, with the believe that the issue in conflict settles itself without an encounter. The strategy is associated more with individuals or people with low power or low regard for the issue in contest and people naturally endowed with inherent peace indices. Yeung et al (2021) described avoiding strategies as a situation where one keeps the disagreement issue to oneself so as to avoid hard feelings. Regarding the use of avoiding, Lazier (2017) advised that avoiding can be appropriate when more time is needed for decision making. The approach can be used to resolve conflict in short term goals.

The attempt to settle an existing difference among people should be done systematically and reasonably. Otite and Ogionwo (2014) pointed out that conflicts are usually resolved in one way or the other. Continuing, the authors noted that, abscondment or it's like action of keeping away from opponent or rival giving rise to avoiding strategies is one of such ways. The authors advices that conflict issues should be resolved as soon as it surfaces to restore sanity within the shortest possible time but lamented that the resolve is not always done as expected thereby giving rise to conflict escalation and the subsequent demand of a more elaborate and advanced approach to its resolve. Josh and Allison (2015) opined that people handle conflict in their own way, but noted that, since conflict has become part of life it becomes cumbersome to handle issues soonest in all instance causing conflict issues to grow above local handling.

Acting in the understanding of the assertion of Arger (2019) who holds that conflict issues cut across distinct disciplines and as such should be treated in such a way to cover the scope of existence to help sustain the unique capacity of each discipline. According to Valente, Lourence and Nemeth (2020) conflicts cannot cease to exist as it is intrinsic to human beings and forms an integral part of human's moral and emotional growth.

Daisy (2020), explained conflict as endemic to all social life, and inevitable part of living because of its relatedness to situations of need, interest, scarce resources, division of functions, power relations, and role differentiations. Daisy pointed out that in all situations involving more than one person conflict occur. It is notable that the workplace is made up of different classes of individuals hence prone to conflict issues.

Anioke 2024 noted that Employee's perception of outcome of conflict depends on the successful resolution resulting to tolerant and creative behaviour which forms a base for useful source of motivation and strength for improving relationships and performance. The author however advised that it should be noted that no relationship is without their difficulties, since there is always scope for mistakes and misunderstandings.

IMPACT; CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND RESOLUTION

Challenges associated with conflict management may not be avoided when exposed to conflict issue. Kelley (2021) is of the view that the longer the conflict goes unresolved, the longer the resolution process. Kelly warned that managing an unresolved conflict can impact on the human resource in the long run. Adhiambo and Enose (2011) emphasizes that conflict exposes people (conflicting parties to stress and discomfort based on the fear of the unknown, showing its depressing and frustrating tendencies on the parties to a conflict. Conflict may produce several consequences which may not be favourable.

Conflict can bring about positive or negative impact. A conflict situation when not addressed properly have some improvement or deteriorating effect as purported by authorities Valente, Lourenco and Nemeth (2020) and Goksoy and Argon (2016) argued that school conflicts have positive and negative impacts on psychological, social and organisational results. The authors argue that conflict arising can inspire innovations, creative strategies, improve work result, attain higher level of quality and achievement. Anioke (2024), Valente, et al (2020) and Goksoy, and Argou (2016) also pointed out negative impact as discomfort, insecurity, insignificance feelings, sadness, resentment, frustration and stress, hostility, intolerance, violence, unhappy environment, weakened cooperation, communication failure, poor performance, and an undisciplined environment, and decreased education quality and poor human relations.

Skipper (2020) held that conflicts not dealt with swiftly or properly resolved and managed can lead to problems like lack of team morale, lack of job satisfaction and motivation, taking unnecessary job time off days, feel stressed and emotionally drained affecting mental health causing absenteeism, skipper added long term impact as high turnover of staff and the subsequent hiring. Bansa (2020) added that adverse outcome of unresolved conflict in the workplace to include: employee stress, frustration, anxiety, and loss of sleep; strained relationships; high employee turnover; loss of productivity; increased client complaints; increased absenteeism.

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It is believed that experiencing conflict in workplace is not always a bad thing, but noted that the act of ignoring such situation can become bad, conflict resolution activity is almost delayed in organizations due to the practice of most individual's desire not be openly involved in addressing the conflict. Valente & Lourenco & Nemeth (2020), and Dana & Craig (2015) and Treslan (1993) was vehement about school administrators developing the ability to successfully minimize and resolve conflict.

A properly managed conflict yields good outcome that favours relationship. According to Daisy (2020), advantages of conflict management include: to provide quick resolution; builds sense of commitment in the working environment; increases productivity immensely. Removes stress and anxiety, classifies doubts and queries, develops managers and employees, helps to learn how to become productive, and helps in the evolution of positive conflict. However, conflict not carefully resolved can be damaging.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The study was carried out in five state colleges of education in south east Nigeria. The population for the study is 264 Academic. Board members who are the college administrators. The entire population for the study was covered. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire. The level of effectiveness are structured on a five point rating scale with response options of Very Highly Effective (VHE), Highly Effective (HE), Moderately Effective (ME), Lowly Effective (LE), Very Lowly Effective (VLE). The numerical value assigned to the response options are 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The instrument was validated by eight experts from the department of Business Education, University of Nigeria Nsukka. The reliability of the instrument was determined and yielded reliability coefficient index of .90.

The researcher administered the questionnaire to respondents with the help of five research assistants after briefing them.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected was analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research question. ANOVA was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 significant level. The data was analyzed using SPSS 25.0

Range of Mean	Value	Decision
4.50 – 5.00	5	Very Highly Effective (VHE)
4.00 – 4.49	4	Highly Effective (VHE)
3.00 – 3.49	3	Moderately Effective (ME)

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2.50 – 2.49	2	Lowly Effective (LE)
0.50 – 1.49	1	Very Lowly Effective (VLE)

Any item with mean value of 3.50 and above is considered as effective strategy. The hypotheses are accepted when the significant value provided by the computer is equal or greater than the criterion value of 0.05 level of significance, but otherwise, the hypotheses were rejected.

RESULTS

Research Question

What are the levels of effectiveness of avoiding practices of conflict resolution in promoting human relations in colleges of education in South East, Nigeria?

Table 1

Mean and Standard Deviation of the Responses of the Respondents on the Effectiveness of Avoiding Practices of Conflict Resolution in Promoting Human Relations in Colleges of Education in South East, Nigeria N = 264

S/N	Avoiding Practices:	\bar{X}	Std. Dev.	Remark
1	There are times when I let others take responsibility for solving the problem	3.44	1.26	ME
2	Try to do what is necessary to avoid useless tension	3.53	1.14	ME
3	Try to avoid creating unpleasantness for myself	3.40	1.16	ME
4	Try to postpone the issue until I have had some time to think it over	3.21	1.12	ME
5	Feel that differences are not always worth worrying about	3.11	1.10	ME
6	Sometimes avoid taking positions which would create controversy	3.39	1.21	ME
7	If people don't respect my opinion I keep it to my self	3.14	1.20	ME
8	Back out from conflict situation and do something else	3.09	1.22	ME
9	Dodge differences in opinions and its worry	3.06	1.27	ME
10	Keep away from people who have deviant opinions	3.04	1.21	ME
Cluster Mean		3.24	1.19	ME

Key: \bar{X} = Mean; Std. Dev. = Standard Deviation; SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree

The result in Table 1 show that items 1-10 have mean ranging from 3.04 – 3.53 were considered moderately effective avoiding practices in conflict resolution that can promote human relations in colleges of education in South East Nigeria. The corresponding standard deviations range from 1.10 to 1.27 thus, indicating that the respondents are very close to one another in their opinions about the items. Since the cluster mean shows 3.24, it is therefore inferred that the

respondents agree that the 10 items are avoiding practices that can moderately resolve conflict towards promoting human relations in colleges of education in South East Nigeria.

Table 2

Summary of Analysis of Variance of the Mean on the Responses of the Administrators Based on Age on the Level of Effectiveness of Avoidance strategy of Conflict Resolution in Promoting Human Relation in Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria

Source of diff	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F-ratio	P-Value (Sig)	Remark
Between groups	52.355	2	26.178	36.966	0.000	
Within groups	184.830	262	0.708			NS
Total	237.185	264				

* NS = Not Significant

Table 2 presents the summary of Analysis of Variance test of the respondents on the effectiveness of avoiding strategy of conflict resolution approaches in promoting human relation in colleges of education in South East, Nigeria based on age. Table showed an F-ratio of 36.966 with a –value of 0.000 at 0.05 degree of freedom. Since probability value is less than the 0.05 set level of significance for testing the hypotheses, the null hypotheses is rejected. Hence, there is significant difference in the effectiveness of avoiding strategy of conflict resolution based on age (Administrators with respect to their age differ in the consideration of avoiding strategy for conflict resolution).

Discussion of Findings

The result of the research question showed all ten practices 1-10 of avoiding strategy of conflict management and resolution practices in promoting human relations in colleges of education in south east Nigeria rated moderately effective. The cluster mean and standard deviation showed (3.24 + 1.19).

The hypotheses tested showed that there is no significant difference in the mean response of administrators based on age in the level of effectiveness of avoiding/withdrawal strategy approaches of conflict resolution in promoting human relation in colleges of education in South East Nigeria. The ANOVA result of the hypotheses tested on table 2 shows that the null-hypotheses which stated that there is no significant difference in the mean response of administrator based on age in the level of effectiveness of avoiding/withdrawal approaches of conflict resolution in promoting human relation in colleges of education in South East Nigeria is rejected. This implies that age affects the adoption, and level of acceptance of effectiveness of avoiding/withdrawal conflict withdrawal strategy of conflict resolution approach in promoting human relations in colleges of education in south east Nigeria. The result tilts to the

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assertion of Jaffer and Shafiq (2017) who found out that people prefer different conflict management strategies at the workplace depending upon their demographic characteristics. Also supporting the idea Yeung and Ho (2020) mentioned that there is an age difference in conflict strategies. Yeung and Ho, also found that older workers adopt destructive practices in lesser measure than the younger individuals. Furthering opinion Davis (2009), Yeung, Isaacowiz, Lam, Ye and Leung (2021), Yeung and Ho (2020) and Yeung, Fung and Chan (2015) noted older worker utilize avoidance to a great extent than Younger workers.

Considering further opinions Yeung, Isaacowwite, Lam and Leung (2021) pointed out that older workers utilizes avoiding and dominating strategy, while younger workers uses more dominating and less avoiding. Yeung and Ho (2020) found significant negative indirect effect of age on integrating, compromising, and dominating, and significant positive indirect effect of age on obliging, dominating and avoiding. The authors noted that older employees showed fewer use of integrating, and compromise strategies while younger workers use obliging and avoiding.

According to Yeung et al (2021), Yeung et al (2020) and Fingerman, Miller and Charles (2008) younger adults generally show a higher level of negative emotional responses to conflict than older adults. Studies of (Davis et al 2009, Yeung et al, 2020) showed that older workers tend to utilize avoidance to a greater extent than younger workers. Study of (Uike and Gupta, 2017) revealed that older workers avoid negative interactions with younger coworkers.

The study of Havenger (2020) showed that age affects the style of conflict handling in workplace, and stated that age variable is significantly associated with integrating and avoiding style.

IMPLICATION FOR CONFLICT ADMINISTRATORS

The general notions that it pays better to keep off from is conflict scenario as an attempt to allow peaceful co-existence should be looked at with a new reasoning. This is a because, the administrators need to under the nature of escalation level of the conflict nneed bew determined before choosing a strategy for management and its following resolution.

CONCLUSION

The avoiding/withdrawal strategy of conflict management and resolution was showcased by the work of an effective strategy for promoting human relation in colleges of education. The effectiveness level falls within moderate level. The result of the work shows that age of the parties in conflict plays a role in choosing avoiding/withdrawal strategy.

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In conclusion, avoiding/withdrawal strategy should be adopted as a management and resolution strategy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Further study can be carried out in similar institution of learning or in another part of the country outside south East Nigeria.
- Administrators of conflict situation should take advantage of the knowledge from this study

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