

Resolution Strategies Of Work-Related Conflicts Among Middle Level Administrators In HEIS

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Abstract: *Work –related conflicts are prevalent in most higher education institutions. This study looked into the resolution strategies of work-related conflicts employed by middle level administrators in the higher education institutions. Specifically, it dealt on the following questions: (1.) What resolution strategies do the middle level administrators use in dealing with work-related conflicts? (2.) Was the respondent able to resolve the conflict? Why or Why not? (3.) Is there a significant difference of the resolution strategies of the middle level administrators when data are grouped according to sex, age, type of school? The study employed a descriptive quantitative and qualitative research design. It utilized survey-questionnaire for the quantitative data and interview guide questions for the focus grouped discussions for the qualitative data. A recorder was used to back up the data. Thirty six (36) respondent middle level administrators from the three (3) private (sectarian and non-sectarian) tertiary schools and three (3) public state, colleges and universities served as respondents of the study. Frequency and Ranking, T-test, and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), were the statistical tools used. As to the findings, majority of them applied or utilized CONFRONTATION as their resolution strategy in resolving the conflict encountered in their job. There was a significant difference in the resolution strategies of the respondent when data are classified according to sex, age, and type of schools. In the light of the above findings, it can be concluded that the respondent administrators were acting and practicing their respective professional ethics, as it came out that they manage to resolve the conflict by dealing with the problem with the concerned subordinates and talked it out in a professional confrontation. This was arrived at by the middle level administrators since they wanted the conflict settled immediately and professionally, then after that “professional talk with the concerned” everything was forgotten as if nothing has happened. This must be so, because they belonged to the same organization and for the organization to move on conflict must be resolved. This found again support in the excerpts of the responses they made during the interview. To have better organization that functions effectively and efficiently, the following recommendations were formulated: For the top academic managers to provide more regular trainings on conflict management, and resolution strategies to middle level administrators, such as deans, associate deans and department chairmen or program advisers. Also, for them to value the “culture of professionalism” in all dealings with subordinates and among themselves.*

Keywords: *Confrontive Coping, Middle Level Administrators, Positive Reappraisal, Resolution Strategies, Work-Related Conflicts.*

I. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The educational organizations or institutions, by its composition and by its function is one that has been regarded as competent in dealing with its own conflict. And yet it has been seen that this is one organization beset with conflicts

and in dire needs of constructive management and resolution. (Espinosa, 1999).

Conflict is a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power, and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure, or eliminate the rivals (Coser, 1976). Conflict is definitely viewed as a win-lose situation. (Wilmot, et al, 2001). Conflicts can never be avoided

because “ to be alive is to be in conflict” (Tjosvold- Johnson , 1989 as cited in Cruz, 2002).

It is good to note how educational managers make decisions to resolve the conflicts in their workplaces. Hence, the researcher wants to look into this issue and determine the coping mechanisms or the resolution strategies of the 21st educational administrators , in order to address these concerns related to their respective assigned job, and ultimately, use the results of the study for future innovations in the higher educational institutions, for better educational planning and management. As stated by Coronel (2007) , educational managers simply do not assume their positions and continue to be efficient and effective without undergoing professional development. In reality, it takes much hard work to learn, to develop, and master the art and science of educational administration. (Coronel, 2007). Hence this study.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study sought to determine and identify the resolution strategies of the middle level administrators in Higher Education Institutions.

Specifically, this study sought answers to the following queries:

- ✓ What resolution strategies do the middle level administrators use in dealing with work-related sources of conflicts ?
- ✓ Was the respondent able to resolve the conflict? Why or Why not?
- ✓ Is there a significant difference of the resolution strategies of the middle level administrators when data are grouped according to age and type of respondents?

II. METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the reseach design, locale of the study, population and sampling, research instrument, data gathering procedure, data analysis procedure and statistical treatment.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study employed descriptive quantitative and qualitative research design . It described the sources of conflicts in the workplace, and resolution strategies of the respondents and their significant differences when data were grouped according to the following variables: age, and type of schoos. Finally, it identified the resolution strategies of these administrators.

The respondents of the study were the middle level administrators in three (3) private tertiary schools and three (3) public SUC's. These tertiary schools were chosen by the researcher based on their population. Purposive Random Sampling Technique using Total Enumeration was used to get the target respondents. Resolution Strategies Instruments were standardized and adopted from authorities, Interview Guide questions referred to the interview questions which elicit answers to the problems stated in chapter I of this study. The answers may be open-ended discussions of the respondents

resolution strategies/coping mechanisms of the conflicts encountered in their respective workplaces. This instrument provided the qualitative data for this study. *Video Recorder*-this instrument was used to support the data gathered in the interview for clarity and accuracy.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESEARCH PROBLEM NO. 1. WHAT RESOLUTION STRATEGIES DO THE MIDDLE LEVEL ADMINISTRATORS USE IN DEALING WITH THESE CONFLICTS AND STRESS STIMULI?

NO.	1. Positive Reappraisal	Frequency				mode Description	
		0	1	2	3		
20	I was inspired to do something creative about the problem.	0	3	17	16	2	sometimes
23	I was transformed to a new person.	0	2	16	18	3	Almost always
30	I came out from the experience better than when I came in.	0	3	21	12	2	sometimes
36	I found new faith.	3	7	17	8	2	sometimes
38	I rediscovered what is important in life.	0	4	18	14	2	sometimes
56	I changed something about myself.	0	6	20	10	2	sometimes
60	I prayed.	1	0	11	24	3	Almost always
	Over –all mode					2	sometimes
	2. Planful Problem Solving						
1	I just concentrated on what I do next.	2	2	16	16	3	Almost always
26	I made a plan of action and followed it.	1	1	12	22	3	Almost always
39	I changed something so things would turn out all right.	0	4	20	12	2	sometimes
48	I drew on my past experiences ; I was in a similar situation	2	3	19	12	2	sometimes
49	I knew what had to be done,so I doubled my effort to make things work.	0	5	20	11	2	sometimes
52	I came up with a couple of different solutions to the problems.	2	4	22	8	2	sometimes
	Over –all mode					2	sometimes
	3. Confrontive Coping						
6	I did something that i did not think would work,but at least I did something.	1	8	17	10	2	sometimes
7	I tried to get the person responsible to change his or her mind.	1	10	18	7	2	sometimes
17	I expressed anger to the persons who caused the problem.	2	8	17	9	2	sometimes
28	I let my feelings out somehow.	2	3	18	13	2	sometimes
34	I took a big chance or did something very risky to solve the problem.	1	5	21	9	2	sometimes
46	I stood my ground and fought for what I wanted.	1	5	23	7	2	sometimes
	Over –all mode					2	sometimes
	4. Seeking Social Support						
8	I talked to someone to find out more of the situation.	0	3	17	16	2	sometimes
18	I accepted sympathy and understanding from someone.	0	9	13	14	3	Almost Always
22	I got professional help.	0	4	17	15	2	sometimes
31	I talked to someone who could do something concrete about the problem.	0	3	18	15	2	sometimes
42	I asked advice from a relative or friend I respected.	0	9	14	13	2	sometimes

45	I talked to someone about how bad things were.	1	1	23	11	2	sometimes
						2	sometimes
	Over –all mode						
	5. Self-Controlling						
10	I tried not to burn my bridges, but leave things open somewhat.	0	36	0	0	1	occasionally
14	I tried to keep my feelings to myself.	0	11	15	10	2	sometimes
35	I tried not to act hastily or follow my first hunch.	0	5	18	13	2	sometimes
43	I kept others from knowing how bad things were.	1	8	18	13	2	sometimes
54	I did not allow my feelings about the problem to interfere with other things.	1	6	19	10	2	sometimes
62	I went over in my mind what I would say or do.	0	2	16	18	3	Almost always
63	I thought about how a person I admire would handle this situation and used that as a model.	0	2	17	17	2	sometimes
	Over –all mode					2	sometimes
	6. Accepting Responsibility						
9	I criticized or lectured myself.	5	9	12	10	2	sometimes
25	I apologize or did something to make up.	0	1	19	16	2	sometimes
29	I realized that I had brought the problem on myself.	0	7	16	13	2	sometimes
51	I promised to myself that things would be different next time.	0	4	21	11	2	sometimes
	Over –all mode					2	sometimes
	7. Distancing						
12	I went along with fate; sometimes I just had bad luck.	8	11	9	8	1	occasionally
13	I went on nothing had happened.	3	9	18	6	2	sometimes
15	I looked for the silver lining, so to speak; I tried to look on the bright side of things.	1	8	17	10	2	sometimes
21	I tried to forget the whole thing.	3	7	16	10	2	sometimes
41	I did not let it get to me; I refused to think it too much about it.	2	8	21	5	2	sometimes
44	I made light of the situation; I refused to get too serious about it.	0	6	17	13	2	sometimes
	Over –all mode					2	sometimes
	8. Escape Avoidance						
11	I hope for a miracle.	8	7	16	5	2	sometimes
16	I slept more than usual.	1	11	16	8	2	sometimes
33	I tried myself to feel better by eating, drinking, smoking, using drugs, medications.	2	5	17	12	2	sometimes
40	I generally avoided being with people.	3	11	17	5	2	sometimes
47	I took it out on other people.	5	8	19	4	2	sometimes
50	I refused to believe that it had happened.	4	11	15	6	2	sometimes
58	I wished that the situation would go away or somehow be over with.	2	9	22	3	2	sometimes
59	I had fantasies or wishes about how things might turn –out.	0	8	20	8	2	sometimes
	Over –all mode					2	sometimes

Legend: 0-hardly ever; 1- occasionally; 2- sometimes; 3- almost always

Table 1.0 presents the administrators' resolution strategies

As shown in table 1.0, all items under positive reappraisal got a mode of 2, which means *sometimes* except item no. 23(*I was transformed to a new person*) and item no. 60(*I prayed*) which got a mode of 3, which means *almost always*, but the over all mode is 2 which is *sometimes*, which implies that the administrators used this resolution strategy of positive reappraisal *sometimes* This further implies that *items no. 23(I was transformed to do a new person) and item no.60 (I prayed)* were used by the respondents *almost always*.

In planful problem solving, items nos. 1 (*I just concentrated on what I do next*) 26 (*I made a plan of action and followed it*) 39 (*I changed something so things would turn out all right*) 48 (*I drew on my past experiences; I was in a similar situation*) and 52 (*I came up with a couple of different solutions to the problems*) have been almost always employed by the respondents. However, items nos. 49 (*I knew what had to be done ,so I doubled my efforts to make things work*) was *sometimes* employed by the respondents.

In *confrontive coping*, *self-controlling* and *escape avoidance*, all items got a mode of 2, which yielded to an over-all mode of 2, which means *sometimes*. But in *seeking social support*, item no. 18 (*I accepted sympathy and understanding from someone*) was almost always used by the respondents, while all other items got a mode of 2, which brings to an over all mode of 2, which means *sometimes*. And also in, *accepting responsibility*, item no.9 (*I criticized and lectured myself*), got 3, which was almost always used by respondents and all other items got 2, which yielded to an over all mode of 2, which means *sometimes*. Finally, in *distacing*, item no.21 (*I tried to forget the whole thing*), got a mode of 3, which was almost always used, while other items got 2, which yielded to an over all mode of 2, which means *sometimes*.

As can be gleaned from the data in table 1.0, administrators used any of the resolution strategies *sometimes*. This means that they did not stick to one strategy. Research indicates that individuals in different occupations may rely upon different types of coping strategies to deal with stress. One study, which explored occupational stress and coping strategies among certified older registered nurses, reported that these individuals most often utilized emotion-focused coping mechanisms, including intentionally calming themselves down. Internalization of the stress, verbalizing stressors with friends and coworkers, joking, and distracting themselves from stress with hobbies outside of work were other emotion-focused strategies identified in the study (Perry, 2005). Like the nurses in this study, IT managers in another study indicated that social support was an important and effective coping mechanism. However, these individuals also relied upon problem-focused coping mechanisms, such as adding resources, problem-solving, and planning to cope with occupational stress.

This manner of resolving conflict is basically rooted in the organizational conflict theory of Feigenbaum, which states that according to modern theories on organizational conflict, organizations are left with a fairly limited set of choices: avoidance, smoothing, dominance or power intervention, confrontation and compromise.

In the study of Orilla, (2010), few mentioned coping strategies among senior citizens were also apparently used by some administrators in the academe today, such as, acceptance, suppression/avoidance, planning for resolution, seeking emotional support from affiliated groups, focus on and venting emotion, and mental and behavioral disengagement or in other words, "deadma attitude" (don't mind attitude).

		Table 1.1 Summary Table of Administrators' Resolution Strategies Over all Mode							
		Positive reapprais al	Planful problem solving	Confron t- ive Coping	Seekin g Social Suppo rt	Self- contr ol- ling	Accept ing respo nsibil ity	distan cing	Escape avoidanc e
N	Valid	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Mode	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00

Table 1.1: presents the summary of over all mode of administrators' resolution strategies

Table 1.1 shows the over all mode of administrators' resolution strategies. In all resolution strategies, such as positive reappraisal, planful problem solving, confrontive coping, seeking social support, self-controlling, accepting responsibility, escape avoidance, and distancing, all of them got an over all modes of 2, with a description of sometimes. This implies that the respondent administrators employed these resolution strategies in dealing with conflicts in the workplace sometimes.

RESEARCH PROBLEM NO. 2. DID THE RESPONDENT ADMINISTRATORS RESOLVE THE CONFLICT ENCOUNTERED ? WHY AND WHY NOT?

Most of the respondents answered in the affirmative. They believed that conflicts are expected, and if left unresolved might cause bigger problems in the organization in the long run. As the saying goes, "big problems begin from smaller ones". Hence, the whole concept of conflict resolution boils down to the dictum that in all aspects in life, family, relationship, and work, conflict is natural.

CONFLICT IS NATURAL

Conflict is normal in the workplace as supported in the succeeding responses of the respondents. Henceforth, most of them were able to resolve the conflicts they encountered in the workplace.

As one respondent said: "Si, debe gayot resolver el conflicto por causa y si hinde, que pasa na organizacion". (Yes, Conflict should be resolved because if not, what will happen to the organization.)

Another respondent said, "Si, el conflicto ya resuelva por causa todo ya accepta el situacion y todo yan ayudahan busca manera para resolta. (Yes, conflict was resolved due to the acceptance of the situation, and making things possible to resolve it).

Respondent A: Oo, kay ako, I do all possible means na pwede jud masolve and conflict. (Yes, because for me, I do all possible ways to resolve it.)

Respondent B: Tieneves, olvida lang y yo acaba kami man kwento por causa na problema na trabaho. Un rato lang komigo se kay inde yo ta tener rabio na de mio corazon. (Yes, because after we talked, I forget everything. I don't nurture grudges in my heart.) El conflicto debe resolta kasi pag hindi, na aalis nalang sila sa puesto. (Yes, because if things can't be resolved then you go... Leave your post)

Researcher : You said madam that the issue was resolved, why ? How was it settled...?

Respondent: As for me, Yes, it should be resolved whether we like it or not. We worked in the same department and organization. How can we move if conflict will not be resolved. If nothing happens to the problem, it will be a cause of another problem, at diyan na din magsimula ang iba pang problema. Kaya, ako, action kaagad para, makamove on ang organization." (and there, another problem will start, that is why we need to act immediately so that the organization can move on).

Also, one of the respondents in the private school replied during the interview saying:

Researcher: So, Sir, after the confrontation, was the issue settled ?

Respondent: "Si, yan dialogue kami and yan pray tamen, kasi lahat naman gusto maresolva ang issues and ma clarify, kaya, in the end of the confrontation, ya resolta ang problem in a very objective and impartial way. (Yes, through dialogue, openness and prayer because everyone is willing and open to solve the conflict).

However, in this particular respondent, the administrator finds no forcing of the issue.

Researcher: You mean sir, wala talaga kayong problema kaya walang issues? (You mean sir, there was really no problem in the organization ?)

Respondent : tiene ta mien, minor lang, pati, hinde yo ta man porsique el conflicto si diutay lang. (There is, but only minor and I don't force the issue.)

This particular respondent continued saying: "There was no conflict, because everybody is not "pasaway". (trouble-maker). If there is a little conflict, don't force the issue, because its just a trivial matter. Sa akin lang, pag hindi naman talaga problema ang issue, hwag na gawing komplikado. Wala naman ako problema masyado sa subordinates ko, medyo mas nagkaproblema pa ako sa superiors ko." (As for me, If the issue is a minor one, I don't make it complicated. I don't have much problems with my subordinates, instead, I do have little problem with my superiors).

All these responses are supported in the principle elaborated by Wadsworth (2004), that Conflict is a Natural Process in all Relationships – Conflict is a normal, inevitable part of all interpersonal relationships. When people matter to each other and affect each other, disagreements are unavoidable. You like meat and your friend is a strict vegetarian. You like to work alone and your co-workers like to interact in teams. Most of the responses of the respondents during the interview were supported by the quantitative results based on the data gathered. Majority of the respondents used the resolution strategies found in table 5.0 such as, confrontive coping, planful problem solving, escape avoidance, positive reappraisal, and self control.

Based on the responses, the respondents were able to settle the conflicts they met in the workplace. The degree of conflict was not that heavy that they were not really stressed as supported by the stress level result of doing fine or least stress in table 4.0, 4.1., and 4.1.1.

RESEARCH PROBLEM NO. 3. IS THERE A SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE OF THE RESOLUTION STRATEGIES OF THE MIDDLE LEVEL ADMINISTRATORS WHEN DATA ARE GROUPED ACCORDING TO SEX, AGE, AND TYPE OF SCHOOL?

Ranks				
	sex	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Positive reappraisal	female	18	16.94	305.00
	male	18	20.06	361.00
	Total	36		
Planful problem solving	female	18	18.50	333.00
	male	18	18.50	333.00
	Total	36		
Confrontive coping	female	18	19.72	355.00
	male	18	17.28	311.00
	Total	36		
Seeking social support	female	18	17.83	321.00
	male	18	19.17	345.00
	Total	36		
Self- controlling	female	18	18.17	327.00
	male	18	18.83	339.00
	Total	36		
Accepting responsibility	female	18	18.42	331.50
	male	18	18.58	334.50
	Total	36		
Distancing	female	18	16.44	299.00
	male	18	20.56	367.00
	Total	36		
Escape avoidance	female	18	16.61	296.00
	male	18	20.39	370.00
	Total	36		

Table 3.0 presents the administrators' resolution strategies by sex

ADMINISTRATORS' RESOLUTION STRATEGIES BY SEX

Table 3.0 shows that distancing for male respondents has a mean rank of 20.56 which is the highest, escape avoidance for male has 20.39, the second highest mean rank. Distancing for female has the lowest mean rank of 16.44. This implies that male respondents used distancing and escape avoidance more than female respondents.

Table 3.0.1 Difference In Administrators' Resolution Strategies By Sex (Mann-Whitney Test)

	positive	planful	Confrontive	seeking	self	Accepting	escape	distancing
Mann-Whitney U	134.000	162.000	140.000	150.000	156.000	160.500	128.000	125.000
Wilcoxon W	305.000	333.000	311.000	321.000	327.000	331.500	299.000	296.000
Z	-1.009	.000	-.816	-.440	-.203	-.054	-1.255	-1.284
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.313	1.000	.415	.660	.839	.957	.210	.199
Interpretation	NS	NS	NS.	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS

a. Grouping Variable: sex

b. Not corrected for ties.

Table 3.0.1 shows the difference of administrators' resolutions strategies by sex

Table 3.0.1. reveals that the p-values of .313 for positive reappraisal, 1.000 for planful problem solving, .415 for confrontive coping, .660 for seeking social support, .839 for self-controlling, .957 for accepting social responsibility, .210 for escape avoidance and .199 for distancing are all greater than alpha .05 level, hence *not significant*. This implies that there is no significant difference as to the respondents

resolution strategies as to sex. This implies further that male or female administrators employed similar resolution strategies in handling conflict in the workplace

This finding affirms a 2004 study, which revealed that there was no gender differences in coping occupational stress as explained by Torkelson and Muhonen (2004) that the reason for the inconsistent research findings may be the direct result of differences in the type of job, power, or status held by both genders. An important development on the literature on gender and coping, is that "different strategies may be more or less effective for men and women" (Lengua & Stormshak, 2000, Nelson and Burke (2002) reported that the reason for the different effects of the coping strategies involves the existence of a strong relationship between the gender of the person doing the coping and the gender role of the coping itself.

More studies have also focused on the coping differences between men and women. As previously mentioned, women are more emotion-based copers while men are more problem-focused copers (Matud, 2004). Ashton and Fuehrer (1993) reported that men do not request and receive more social support than women. In addition, women are more influenced by the social context and their coping involves forming relationships that are emotional in nature. According to Ptacek, Smith, and Dodge (1994) for problem-solving coping, there exist inconsistent findings that suggest no gender differences while other studies point to the fact that men are more problem-focused individuals.

Table 3.1 Administrators' Resolution Strategies By Age

Ranks			
	age	N	Mean Rank
positive	25-35	6	23.83
	36-45	15	17.43
	46-55	15	17.43
	Total	36	
planful	25-35	6	21.50
	36-45	15	17.30
	46-55	15	18.50
	Total	36	
confrontive	25-35	6	18.17
	36-45	15	19.03
	46-55	15	18.10
	Total	36	
seeking	25-35	6	20.75
	36-45	15	19.00
	46-55	15	17.10
	Total	36	
self	25-35	6	15.50
	36-45	15	20.80
	46-55	15	17.40
	Total	36	
accepting	25-35	6	17.50
	36-45	15	16.80
	46-55	15	20.60
	Total	36	
Distancing	25-35	6	12.17
	36-45	15	23.40
	46-55	15	16.13
	Total	36	
Escape avoidance	25-35	6	12.17
	36-45	15	21.70
	46-55	15	17.83
	Total	36	

Table 3.1 presents the administrators' resolution strategies as to age

Table 3.1 shows that in positive reappraisal the highest mean rank of 23.83 falls in the age of 25- 35, while the lowest mean rank of 12.17 falls in escape avoidance and distancing in ages 25-35 . This implies that the young administrators employed mostly positive reappraisal and rarely used escape avoidance and distancing. However, at age bracket 36-45, the next highest mean rank in escape avoidance and distancing are found, which implies that the middle age administrators mostly employed these resolution strategies.

	positi ve	planf ul	confronti ve	seekin g	self	acceptin g	distanci ng	Escape avoidance
Chi-Square	2.396	1.021	.091	.770	1.559	1.361	7.428	4.913
df	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.302	.600	.956	.680	.459	.506	.024	.086
interpretation	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	S	NS
a. Kruskal Wallis Test								
b. Grouping Variable: age								

Table 3.1.1. presents the difference in administrators' resolution strategies by age

Table 3.1.1 reveal that positive reappraisal has the p= value of .302, planful problem solving p= value of .600, confrontive coping p= value of .956, seeking social support p= value of .680, self-controlling p= value of .459, accepting responsibility p= value of .506, and escape avoidance p= value of .086, which are all greater than alpha .05 level, hence, *not significant*. This implies that there is no significant difference in these resolution strategies as to age. But in distancing the p= value of .024 is lower than alpha .05 hence *significant*. This implies that as to distancing, this resolution strategy has significant influence as to age. This further implies that the young, middle or old administrators differ in using distancing as their strategy in resolving conflict in the workplace. As shown in table 8.1, the young administrators got the lowest mean rank of 6 while the two age brackets of the middle and older administrators got equal mean ranks of 15. This implies that the middle and the older administrators mostly used distancing such as in item no.21 (*I just tried to forget it*) as coping strategy while the younger ones, occasionally used distancing and settled the conflict using other strategies, like positive reappraisal, planful problem solving or seeking social support.

In the study of Tumkaya (2006) , it investigated if a relationship existed between university faculty members based on their age, gender, academic position, and the work environment related to their levels of job burnout. In addition, they investigated if the faculty members coped with burnout using humor as a coping strategy. The main effect of age was found to statistically significant for emotional exhaustion. In addition, the higher the age, the less exhaustion experienced by the faculty. Elderly faculty members experienced less emotional exhaustion than their young colleagues. One reason for this difference was that older faculty members have been able to cope with stress because of the confidence they have gained from years of experience on the job. The study also pointed out that humor was used mostly by older faculty members because they felt less threatened by competition with their younger colleagues. Since older faculty members had a sense of personal accomplishment and did not have to prove

themselves to anyone quite often, they were less emotionally exhausted than their younger colleagues who had to constantly prove themselves in every situation.

Other relevant research on age differences and coping focused on religious prayer as a means to combat a stressor experienced by older people (Becker, 2005).

Ranks				
	school	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
positive	public	19	16.39	311.50
	private	17	20.85	354.50
	Total	36		
planful	public	19	17.24	327.50
	private	17	19.91	338.50
	Total	36		
confrontive	public	19	16.55	314.50
	private	17	20.68	351.50
	Total	36		
seeking	public	19	15.11	287.00
	private	17	22.29	379.00
	Total	36		
self	public	19	18.11	344.00
	private	17	18.94	322.00
	Total	36		
accepting	public	19	17.08	324.50
	private	17	20.09	341.50
	Total	36		
Distancing	public	19	18.11	344.00
	private	17	18.94	322.00
	Total	36		
Escape avoidance	public	19	17.87	339.50
	private	17	19.21	326.50
	Total	36		

Table 3.2 presents the administrators' resolution strategies as to type of schools.

Table 3.2 shows that in seeking social support the highest mean of 22. 29 falls in private tertiary schools, while the lowest mean of 16.39 in positive reappraisal falls in public tertiary schools. This implies that seeking social support is mostly used by administrators in private tertiary schools, while positive reappraisal is seldom used in public tertiary schools, but self-control and distancing.

	positive	planful	confrontive	seeking	self	accepting	distancing	Escape avoidance
Mann-Whitney U	121.500	137.500	124.500	97.000	154.000	134.500	154.000	149.500
Wilcoxon W	311.500	327.500	314.500	287.000	344.000	324.500	339.500	344.000
Z	-1.444	-.931	-1.374	-2.371	-.254	-.979	-.261	-.443
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.149	.352	.169	.018	.800	.328	.794	.657
Interpretation	NS	NS	NS	S	NS	NS	NS	NS
a. Grouping Variable: school								
b. Not corrected for ties.								

Table 3.2.1 presents difference in administrators' resolution strategies by type of schools

Table 3.2.1. revealed that positive reappraisal has p -value of .149, planful problem solving p -value of .352, confrontive coping has p -value of .169, self-controlling has p -value of .800, accepting responsibility has p -value of .328, escape avoidance has p -value of .657, and distancing has p -value of .794, which are all greater than α .05 hence *not significant*. This implies that there is no significant difference as to these resolution strategies when data are grouped according to type of schools. However, in seeking social support the p -value of .018 is lower than α .05 level hence *significant*. This implies that there is significant difference as to seeking social support as a resolution strategy in terms of public and private tertiary schools. The private tertiary school administrators sought social support more than public administrators.

This can be attributed to the fact that man is a social being by nature, and one way of coping with emotional stress like work related conflict, the person usually seeks support from friends and close relatives or members of the immediate family. Seeking social support also came out to be the common or most often used resolution strategies among middle level administrators both in public and private tertiary schools based on the interview conducted.

IV. FINDINGS

ON THE RESOLUTION STRATEGY OF THE MIDDLE LEVEL ADMINISTRATORS

Administrators employed any of the 8 resolution strategies such as, positive reappraisal, planful problem solving, confrontive coping, seeking social support, self-controlling, accepting responsibility, escape avoidance, and distancing, since all of them got an overall mode of 2, with a description of *SOMETIMES*.

ON WHETHER THE CONFLICT WAS RESOLVED AND WHY?

Most of them answered in the affirmative. They were able to resolve the job-related conflict, and the reasons were as follows: conflicts must be resolved or else they have to leave their post; conflicts are normal in the job, they may come and go; and, it has to be resolved since the person concerned is part of the organization, and for them to move on is to resolve the conflict.

ON THE SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES OF RESOLUTION STRATEGIES AMONG THE MIDDLE LEVEL ADMINISTRATORS BY SEX, AGE, AND TYPE OF RESPONDENTS

There is no significant difference as to the respondents' resolution strategies as to sex.

As to age, There is no significant difference in the following resolution strategies: Positive reappraisal, planful problem solving, confrontive coping, seeking social support, self-controlling, accepting responsibility, and escape avoidance as to age. But in distancing the p -value of .024 is lower than

α .05 hence *significant*. This implies that as to distancing, this resolution strategy has significant influence as to age. This further implies that the young, middle or old administrators differ in using distancing as their strategy in resolving conflict in the workplace.

As to type of school, There is a significant difference in the following resolution strategies as to type of schools: Positive reappraisal, planful problem solving, confrontive coping, self-controlling, accepting responsibility, escape avoidance and distancing. But there is a significant difference in seeking social support as to type of schools.

V. CONCLUSION

To solve their sources of conflict, they used or employed any of the following resolution strategies such as: Positive reappraisal, planful problem solving, confrontive coping, seeking social support, self-controlling, accepting responsibility, distancing and escape avoidance. Moreover, there was also significant influence of the source of conflict to the level of stress and the resolution strategy of the respondents. Likewise, there was also a significant influence of the level of stress and the resolution strategy of the respondent administrators. This was so, since the level of stress and the resolution strategy used to solve the conflict sprung from that same source of conflict, where the stress and the coping strategy originated.

VI. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the above findings and conclusions, the following recommendations were formulated:

TO THE TOP MANAGERS

To provide trainings to the middle level administrators on conflict management, and resolution strategies capitalizing on dealing with individual differences among subordinates, like the faculty, and office staff, once every semester since change in designations happens every semester, so to accommodate the new deans, or associate deans and to conduct stress assessment test to the middle-level administrators twice or at least once a year in order to minimize health problems among administrators caused by work-related stress or the so-called occupational stress.

TO THE DEAN/ PROGRAM ADVISER/DEPARTMENT HEAD

To be more sensitive to the strengths and weaknesses of each faculty member and to "listen" to them to avoid miscommunication. To adopt the "culture of professionalism" among the faculty and staff by treating each member as a colleague and a "person", rather than making them as "slaves".

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