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Abstract

The aim of this research paper was to explore the influence of politeness maxims during conflict resolution in faith-based institutions of higher learning in Nairobi County, Kenya. The paper was anchored on two theories: Politeness Maxims by Geoffrey Leech (1983) and Austin's (1975) Speech Acts. It appropriated mixed methods of data collection and analysis. Within the bounds of this articulation, questionnaires and interview guides were employed to obtain and analyze quantitative and qualitative data. Purposive and systematic sampling techniques to select 1 Head of Department, 7 Non-academic staff, 3 Academic staff and 160 students from 1st to 4th year students were used. The findings disclosed that politeness maxims (modesty and generosity) can facilitate conflict resolution in faith-based institutions of higher learning, and the moment people employ the maxims during conflict resolution, by making their comments more generous and modest, harmony and comity will be established. Drawing from the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were made: the educational practitioners specifically grievance officers should find support and retrieval as mechanism for conflict redress which is achievable through politeness maxims to pacify hurts and heal grievances, the faith-based institutions should create a conflict resolution desk/unit Department of Human Resource to take charge and instil a continuous employment of polite use of language in conflict resolution situation of grievances, tensions, misunderstandings that emanate from the causes of conflict as revealed by the study findings and each Department should be charged with the responsibility to organize seminars, workshops and conferences on sustainable basis to discuss and reinforce the usage of polite language when trying to resolve any conflict on campus.

Key words: Conflict, Politeness maxims, Conflict resolution

1.0 Introduction

Language is one form of communication and it is the most frequently used and highly developed form of human communication. As social beings, people need to interact with their fellow human beings. People use language as a means of communication in their interaction. Language is important because it communicates ideas, knowledge and intentions. Crystal (1990) asserts that an act of communication is the transmission of information or some kind of message from a source and a receiver. In the case of language, both the source and receiver are human, and the message is transmitted vocally, or graphically, by marks on a surface, usually paper.

Language is considered to be an indispensable human endowment which is conceptualized, according to Crystal (1987), as having, perhaps, 'magical and mystical' and 'unique role in capturing the breath of human thought and endeavours'. Many studies derived from the famous Sapir-Wharf's hypothesis of 'linguistic determinism' and 'linguistic relativity' has shown that there exists relationship between language and thought. Such relationship clearly indicates that language is the vehicle for thought.

Language is a system of communication in speech and writing that is used by people of a particular country or area (Oxford Dictionary, 2010). Language is human speech or the written symbols for speech; any means of communicating; the speech of a particular nation, etc.; the particular style of verbal expression characteristic of a person, group, and profession. This means that the most important set of symbols is language for without it, humans will not be able to convey thoughts or express ideas and feelings. It is through language that ideas, values, beliefs and knowledge are transmitted among people. A wrong interpretation of an expression through any language can lead to a conflict, which in turn can result in a war if not well managed. The use to which language is deployed can be the reason of peace or war in a community.

The use of language for communication calls for the mastery of the medium in order to use it effectively. Mastering the medium requires the possession of essential language skills. The difference between an effective communicator and an ineffective one lies in the mastery of these skills namely productive and receptive skills respectively. Language skills are divided into two broad categories, namely productive and receptive skills. Productive skills are speaking and writing. They are tagged productive skills because they involve the use of language to create something new. Speaking involves the combination of sounds to create words and sentences in order to relate experience, pass information or share feelings. Writing is used for the same purpose except that it employs a different medium. The receptive skills include listening and reading. They are categorized as receptive skills because they are used to receive information, ideas and feelings. Listening entails the use of one's knowledge of a language to get meaning being put across by the speaker. One uses the same experience while reading.

According to Mulyono (2016) language is primarily the use of codes to pass information, thoughts, ideas or emotions; the shared information is only meaningful when the receiving party can decode the message sent. A wrong interpretation of the code can lead to a conflict, which in turn can result in a war if not well managed. The use to which language is deployed can be the reason of peace or war in a community. Language also tends to defer from society to society, gender, class, religion etc. Language, information and

communication are very essential in promoting, preventing and resolving conflict situations. Negotiation or dialogue can only take place where exchanging and sharing of information is possible. Communication, therefore, is the goal of language as mutual agreement is the goal of conflict resolution.

Through language and communication, we can see the heart of a people. This implies that language makes it possible to express feelings, emotions, views, ideas, opinions, perceptions as well as judgment about people, objects, places, things, information and situations. Therefore, information about conflict and conflict situations can be expressed in language. Communication relates to the presence and sharing of accurate information about a conflict or conflict situation, being able to talk about feelings and concerns of parties, speaking about what parties would like to change, and discussing the nature and type of the conflict, touching on the positions, interests, needs, and fears of parties. Communication, therefore, has come to represent a key strategy of conflict prevention and resolution (Mulyono, 2016).

Conflict occurs when points of view, perspectives, and sentiments are opposite in nature and have not been concurred about yet, including: within oneself when you are not living according to one's values; when values and standpoints are in jeopardy; or discomfort from fear of the unknown or from absence of satisfaction (Ramani & Zhimin, 2010). Clearly, conflict is pervasive and ubiquitous in societies and their affairs (Gulti, 2014). This means conflict occurs between individuals in a wide range of human affiliations and in every single social setting (Opoku-Asare, Takyi, & Owusu-Mensah, 2015) such as among organizations, within institutions, among the members of an association, and within the personality of each individual. Consequently, conflict is an inevitable and unavoidable concomitant of choices and decision aspects of human interaction. Conflict-free atmosphere is conducive to a creative and constructive school environment. However, it is undeniable that tensions and conflicts continue to be a factor in academic life (Ghaffar, 2010).

Fleetwood (1987) stipulated that higher institutions frequently appear to be centres of conflict and these scenarios are perhaps a manifestation of problems in the community. Likewise, Opoku-Asare *et al.* (2015) echoed that conflict inherently involves some struggle, incompatibility, or perceived differences in values, goals, or desires; characteristics, beliefs, and lifestyles; and power of influence and action between two or more parties in a relationship, combined with attempts to control each other and antagonistic feelings toward each other. Therefore, conflict is seen as the pursuit of incompatible interests and goals by different groups. Armed conflict is the resort to the use of force and armed violence in the pursuit of incompatible and particular interests and goals.

Pursuing the above concepts further, Gulti (2014) underscored that conflict by itself is neither good nor bad. However, it is in the manner in which conflict is handled determines whether it is constructive or destructive. It is on this premise that language use plays a critical role in conflict resolution. As Johnstone (2008) accentuated, people in every culture can hire politeness markers to use and interpret language appropriately in actual social interaction in order to avoid conflict. Additionally, Woods (2006) emphasized that the crucial point in every interaction then can be studied by the amount and type of politeness strategies used by speaker/s and hearer/s in order to construct appropriate interpersonal relationships. The in-depth understanding of how and appropriate language can be applied in such situation is acquired under formal way of learning where people are availed the opportunity to interact

with each other to disassociate with certain perceptions and accommodate some on how to communicate effectively and efficiently.

Conflict at higher education institutions occurs in different contexts. For example, in the Philippines, higher education is confronted by various conflicts triggered by different interest groups; these differences occur because of the disparity in citizens' religious and cultural identities (Bernardo & Baranovich 2014). In the Yemeni context, previous studies reported the presence of violation of regulations related to the first appointment of teachers, the negligence of staff's suggestions (Muthanna, 2016) at English language teacher education programs and the absence of a research ethics code in the nation.

From the foregoing therefore, it suffices to observe that conflict arises from differences. It occurs whenever people disagree over their values, motivations, perceptions, ideas, or desires. Sometimes these differences look trivial, but when a conflict triggers strong feelings, a deep personal and relational need is at the core of the problem - a need to feel safe and secure, a need to feel respected and valued, or a need for greater closeness and intimacy.

Embedded in the mission of faith-based institutions is a call to service as part of their faith-based values and practices. As such, faith-based institutions are increasing engaging in formal education activities with many schools instituting community service requirements for students from diverse backgrounds. Integration of faith, central to these institutions' values and beliefs, is often a primary factor attracting people to them (Bower, 2009).

Faith-based education seeks to develop individual persons into engaged professionals who link their faith to action through a lifetime commitment to service. Sikula and Sikula (2005) call for a move to connect spirituality and holistic learning as "personal development and fulfilment are more and more the purview of these institutions" (pg.110). This implies then that activities for knowledge acquisition in these institutions should be interdisciplinary studies to have an effective and efficient training that expose students to new perspectives and diverse people, cultures, and ideas to enable them to be tolerant and accommodative while addressing conflicting issues within and without the school environment (Astin, Astin & Lindholm, 2010).

Correspondingly, Cnaan (1998) postulated that the teachings of these institutions emphasize mutual responsibility, the need to assist people in need, and most importantly, the legitimate claim of the weak and needy upon the community. From the foregoing therefore, the faith-based institutions are perceived to advocate for social care and compassion for the needy regardless of location and economic conditions. Those services are viewed as part of their responsibility in the socialization process of younger generations into the faith tradition and to serve as instructions for desired behaviours of compassion and social care.

If we assume that faith-based institutions have the powerful and lasting effect on people's attitudes and behaviours, then their teaching should contribute to a more civil and caring society. This possess a concern as to why conflict as it is happening in the society has become a recurring event in these institutions which should have been void of this phenomenon. These institutions may not be void of conflict since it is perceived as ingredients of human activities in the arena of life (Aula & Siira, 2010) and the resolution of any conflict within the system will call for appropriate use of language. Where this aspect is lacking, there exist a gap between the various groups that are found within that particular thereby creating issues which affect the progress of the institution.

Lakoff (1975) explicated that politeness has been generated to minimize dissension in communication thus, considering politeness theory as one of the indispensable constituents for a successful communication. Correspondingly, Hill, Ide, Ikuta, Kawasaki, and Ogino (1986) noted that it is one of the impediments on human interaction, whose motive is to consider others' feelings, put in place levels of complementary comfort, and foster harmony. Conversely, Ide (1989) argued that any misuse of these strategies can hinder the effective communication, leading to individuals' disregard and nonchalance.

Putting things on a different perspective, politeness as a linguistic phenomenon has directed the attention of researchers in exploring the different areas and practical issues related to it (Scollon & Scollon, 2001). Politeness theory has developed principles through which the socially correct and appropriate behaviour can be analysed. Consequently, due to its importance in characterizing the elements specific to polite discourse and behaviour, many studies (Pishghadam, 2011; Pishghadam & Navari, 2012) related to politeness theory in pragmatic linguistics have created the doors to familiarizing the audience with politeness strategies in different cultures.

Within this interaction, we need the concept of politeness. Politeness becomes a major concern since it is very important in an interaction. Leech (1983) defines politeness as forms of behaviour that establish and maintain comity, it is the ability of the participants in a social interaction to engage in interaction in an atmosphere of relative harmony. Politeness is a system of interpersonal relations designed to facilitate interaction by minimizing the potential for conflict and confrontation inherent in all human interchange. There are several ways to think of politeness. These might involve ideas like being tactful, modest and nice to other people.

In the study of linguistic politeness, the most relevant concept is 'face'. Yule (1996) states, "Your face, in pragmatics, is your public self-image. It is the emotional and social sense of self that every person has and expects everyone else to recognize" (Pg.95).

As conveyed by, Ramani and Zhimin (2010) conflict comprises the actions that we take to express our feelings, articulate our perceptions, and get our needs through interfering with someone else's ability to get his or her needs met. It is on this premise that Mulyono (2016) emphasized that the utilization of politeness maxims can avoid conflict and create an environment that is comfortable in communication. Similarly, Kasper (1990) pointed out that politeness is a part of human efforts to make communication more successful and courteous. For her therefore, "communication is seen as fundamentally dangerous and antagonistic endeavour". One can then conclude that politeness is tackled here as referring to the strategies available to conversational interlocutors to eliminate the danger and minimize the antagonism during conflict resolution.

This research paper therefore is an attempt to bridge the gap and issues on the appalling lack of research on linguistic approach in the field of conflict resolution predominantly in faith-based institutions of higher learning in Karen, Nairobi County, Kenya.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Conflict occurs at all levels of human interactions including academic institutions of higher learning. Conflict between people is a fact and to ensure harmonious language application, interpersonal interaction involves constant use of politeness maxims by the participants. Correct and efficient use of politeness maxims show that the interlocutors have

respect for each other while ineffective use of the politeness maxims lead to conflict. The faith-based institutions, where most people expect little or no conflict at all are not immune to it.

Given that conflicts most times engender strife, create feelings of resentment, aggressiveness, tension and hostility within an institution, there is need to explore the linguistic approach in faith-based higher institutions on how conflict can be resolved. The reason for narrowing down on faith-based institutions of higher learning as site for the study is propelled by the fact that language use in such institution is expected to advocate and enhance peaceful co-existence but with the occurrence of conflict in this institutions, it has become paramount to carry out this research to uncover the causes of the conflict and the influence of politeness maxims during resolving such conflicting issues.

This study therefore focused on the influence of politeness maxims during conflict resolution. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, and drawing from the review done on literature, little research has been done on a linguistic approach to conflict resolution and especially the use of politeness maxims in conflict resolution. Therefore, this research on linguistic approach to conflict resolution in faith-based institutions was motivated by a practical interest in improving conflict resolution in institutions of higher learning.

2.0 Literature Review

Dybko (2010) conducted a research on how politeness functions in the language of headlines. The study was aimed at investigating the effectiveness of Leech's (2005) Grand strategy of politeness in exploring the language of advertisement. A number of actual slogans which were used for the purpose of advertisement were selected in this study. Leech's (2005) model was used to analyse the selected slogans. The findings revealed that Leech's (2005) Grand Strategy of Politeness framework seems to be the most applicable and effective instrument in the analysis of advertisement used in headlines. This is because of various linguistic and social aspects it offers in interaction between individuals of a society, which make it universal to all cultures and applicable to most speech acts such as request, apology and complaint.

In 2011, Mutsuoka, Smith and Uchimura carried out a study to investigate the use of encouragement by healthcare professionals on their patients. They employed Leech's Grand Strategy of Politeness (2005, 2009) to analyse the utterances used by healthcare professionals in encouraging patients. The results indicated that each verbal utterance of encouragement was associated with a strategy of politeness from Leech's model. The findings also suggested that the theory of politeness is helpful and effective in providing situations of encouragement with the appropriate strategies that make communication successful and of high quality.

The global researches reviewed above have all engaged the use of Politeness Grand Strategy referred to herein as Politeness maxims to ascertain their effectiveness and appropriateness in the areas mentioned and the results showed positive results. The gap therefore to be filled in this recent study comes from the fact that the studies under review differ in location and topic coverage. The current study is focused on conflict resolution through the use of Politeness maxims in faith-based institutions of higher learning.

Peace (2012) conducted a research in Kenya on the understanding of Politeness through a Sequence: The Case of an Interview. The research sought to suggest the chronological order of linguist Geoffrey Leech's maxims of politeness in an excerpt of an

interview session from popular local talk show Jeff Koinange Live (JKL). The methodology adopted was a descriptive research design. It described the patterning of Leech's six maxims in a ten-minute excerpt of an interview session from JKL. The interview session was chosen by way of purposive sampling. The researcher purposefully selected an interview session which was carried within it the six maxims. Total interviews of ten sessions were reviewed before purposefully selecting the used sessions.

The research instrument used was observation where the researcher observed the relationship between the interlocutors, obtained data and analysed it. The data was obtained by downloading the selected interview sessions from Kenya Television Network's Website on the internet. The selected ten minutes dialogue was then transcribed for the purpose of analysis and the data was presented in the form of extracts from the transcribed data. The researcher then interpreted the patterning of the six maxims using her own experience, background knowledge and library research.

The research under review though was done in Kenya with some similarity in the research design (descriptive research and purposive sampling) and location, there is still a gap to be filled in the recent research to be done. The research by Peace used observation as tool for data collection, the current research will adopt questionnaire and written interview as instruments for data collection. The research under review also differs from the present study in that it was carried out to suggest the chronological order of Geoffrey's maxims of politeness while the current research is aimed at approach to conflict resolution using the six maxims of Geoffrey.

3.0 Methodology

This study was done in Karen Area of Nairobi County, Kenya in a faith-based institution of higher learning. Nairobi County is one of the 47 Counties found in Kenya and it is a cosmopolitan area with people from various ethnic locale from Kenya and from other countries. It is one of the most heavily populated Counties in Kenya due to its position and the presence of so many industries where people seek for employment opportunities. The current study was carried out in Lang'ata constituency.

The researcher used convergent triangulation research design and results obtained from both quantitative and qualitative data involving students, staff and Heads of Department (HoDs) were processed employing mixed method. The study sampled 160 students, 10 staff and 1 HoD in a faith-based institution of higher learning in Karen Area of Nairobi County, Kenya from a target population of 290 for students, 47 for academic and non-academic staff and 2 for HoDs. The sampling techniques were systematic sampling for students, purposive for academic staff, simple random for non-academic staff and purposive sampling for HoDs. The data obtained through questionnaires for students and interview guides for the staff and HoDs was analysed using SPSS version 20. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages and tables were used to summarize the quantitative data while the qualitative data were captured, transcribed and demonstrated in narrative form to consider the individual views of the respondents.

The use of a questionnaire allowed the researcher to collect the most complete and accurate objective data in a logical flow. Interviewing the various categories was relevant to the study because it provided a subjective data to merge with the objective data collected through the questionnaire for a comprehensive data analysis and result findings. It was

important to include the interview since every information needed through a mixed method approach cannot be gathered through the objective way of data collection.

4.0 Results

The aim of this paper was to examine the influence of politeness maxims during conflict resolution. This was necessary because in human communication, politeness is very important in enhancing interpersonal relationship and communication. Politeness maxims play a vital role in human communication so if people abide by these maxims, they can make their expression more tactful whereas, if they violate the maxims, they may not make the hearer feel good. Hence, the students' responses on the influence of these politeness maxims during conflict resolution were captured in Table 1.

Table 1: Influence of Politeness Maxims

Statement		Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
During conflict negotiation, I do not use words that facilitate its resolution.	f 10 % 6.0	10 6.0	16 9.6	72 43.4	58 34.9	
I often feel that the best approach to conflict resolution is the employment of good choice of words.	f 97 % 58.4	54 32.5	5 3.0	7 4.2	3 1.8	
Reconciliation in any conflict resolution situation cannot be achieved through polite use of language.	f 16 % 9.6	5 3.0	11 6.6	36 21.7	98 59	
It is not relevant to engage good choice of words during conflict resolution.	f 1 % 0.6	4 2.4	14 8.4	47 28.3	100 60.2	
I find easy to forgive when there is polite use of language during conflict resolution.	f 89 % 53.6	60 36.1	5 3.0	5 3.0	7 4.2	
I do not find it necessary to be polite in my expression during conflict resolution.	f 2 % 1.2	4 2.4	15 9.0	71 42.8	74 44.6	
I always make effort for a complete and genuine conflict resolution by good choice of words.	f 58 % 34.9	72 43.4	11 6.6	21 12.7	4 2.4	
In difficult conflict situations, I value the good use of language.	f 91 % 54.8	53 31.9	15 9.0	5 3.0	2 1.2	
When I prepare for a meeting to discuss a conflicting issue, I try to arrange for a mutually acceptable expression of language.	f 64 % 38.6	80 48.2	16 9.6	4 2.4	1 0.6	

Table 1 portrayed students' responses and affirmation on during conflict negotiation, they do not use words that facilitate its resolution. According to their responses above, majority of the students 58 (34.9%) strongly disagreed, 72 (43.4%) disagreed while 16 (9.6%) declined their views, 16 (6.0%) each for agree and strongly agree respectively. The students' positive affirmation that they do use words that facilitate conflict resolution, it was suggestive that they appreciate the impact of what the politeness maxims can exert during conflict resolution.

The best approach to conflict resolution is the employment of good choice of words as indicated by the level of response the students displayed. Accordingly, the responses in table 1 revealed that 97 (58.4%) strongly agreed, followed by those who agreed 54 (32.5), those who were undecided % (3.0%) while 7 (4.2%) disagreed and 3 (1.8%) strongly disagreed. The significance of the positive agreement to the good choice of words as best approach to conflict resolution was suggestive of the influence politeness maxims can have in such a social interaction and communication.

Table 1 revealed that students' responses to reconciliation in any conflict resolution situation cannot be achieved through polite use of language. The students strongly 98 (59%) disagreed the statement which shows that they affirmed that conflict resolution can only be achieved through polite use of language. This view was endorsed by 36 (21.7) students who also disagreed that reconciliation in any conflict resolution situation cannot be achieved through polite use of language while 11 (6.6%) were undecided, 5 (3.0%) agreed and 16 (9.6%) strongly agreed. The high responses of affirmation by the students on the use politeness to enhance conflict resolution is significant to this study which postulated that politeness maxims can impact positively on conflict resolution.

Illustrated in table 1 is the students' responses on it is not relevant to engage good choice of words during conflict resolution. Their responses revealed that an overwhelming 100 (60.2%) strongly disagreed followed by those disagreed 47 (28.3) while 14 (8.4%) undecided, 4 (2.4%) agreed and 1 (0.6%) strongly agreed. The students' feedback on it is not relevant to engage good choice of words during conflict resolution indicated that it is important to engage politeness maxims which is believed to have positive influence during conflict resolution.

Table 1 also demonstrated the students' responses on whether students find it easy to forgive when there is polite use of language during conflict resolution. As an approach to facilitate conflict resolution, majority of the students 89 (53.6%) strongly agreed, 60 (36.1%) equally agreed that they find it easy to forgive when there is polite use of language during conflict resolution while 5 (3.0%) were undecided, 5 (3.0%) disagreed and 7 (4.2%) strongly disagreed.

In table 1, the students' submission on whether they do not find it necessary to be polite in their expression during conflict resolution is also given. Majority of them strong 74 (44.6%) disagreed, followed 71 (42.8) disagreed, 15 (9.0%) were uncertain, 4 (2.4%) agreed while 2 (1.2%) strongly agreed. The students' acceptance that they find it easy necessary to be polite in their expression during conflict resolution was a positive attestation to how influential politeness maxims can be if employed in resolving grievances.

Table 1 revealed the students' responses as to whether they always make effort for a complete and genuine conflict resolution by using good choice of words. Most of the students

58 (34.9%) strongly agreed, 72 (43.4%) agreed while 11 (6.6%) were uncertain about their stance, 21 (12.7%) disagreed and 4 (2.4%) strongly disagreed. By inference therefore, majority of the students affirmed that they always make effort to ensure there is complete and genuine conflict resolution by employing good choice of words. This therefore supports the argument of this study that when parties involved in any misunderstanding are able apply the politeness maxims during their dialogue to address their issues, the influence of the principles employed in their interaction will enhance a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

In table 1, the data portrayed the students' responses on whether in difficult conflict situation, they value the good use of language to resolve their differences or differed opinions. Thus, majority of the students 91 (54.8%) admitted that it is of value to them when there is good use of language in difficult conflict situation followed by 53 (31.9%) who also agreed while 15 (9.0%) declined their stance, 5 (3.0%) disagreed and 2 (1.2%) strongly disagreed. The students' feedback is an indication that most of them appreciate when the politeness maxims are employed in resolving issues. It therefore suggested that if politeness maxims are properly used in conflict resolution situations, they will surely influence and facilitate the resolution of such issues under contention.

Table 1 equally provided the students' responses on when preparing for a meeting to discuss a conflicting issue, they do try to arrange for a mutually acceptable expression of language. The responses revealed that most of the students 64 (38.6%) strongly agreed, 80 (48.2%) also agreed that when preparing for a meeting to discuss a conflicting, they do try to arrange for a mutually acceptable expression of language while 16 (9.6%) were uncertain, 4 (2.4%) disagreed and 1 (0.6%) strongly disagreed. Therefore, the students' preparedness before a meeting aiming at a mutually acceptable expression of language suggested that they indirectly appreciate the employment of polite use of language to bring about conflict resolution. Their responses have anchored greatly on the influence of politeness maxims during conflict resolution as postulated in this study.

The results of this current research paper corresponded with the finding of the previous study done by Mutsuoka, Smith and Uchimura (2011) to investigate the use of encouragement by healthcare professionals on their patients using Grand Strategy of Politeness to analyse utterances used by healthcare professionals in encouraging patients which showed that each verbal utterance of encouragement was associated with a strategy of politeness. The findings also suggested that the theory of politeness is helpful and effective in providing situations of encouragement with the appropriate strategies that make communication successful and of high quality.

4.1 Staff and HoD's Interview Responses on the Influence of Politeness Maxims

The staff and HoD's responses on the influence of politeness maxims during conflict resolution were needed to determine the impact these maxims can exert on dialogue during conflict negotiation. Their responses were transcribed and thematized as; outcome of employing polite use of language and using words that respect others' views during conflict resolution. Some of their responses on the outcome of employing polite use of language were generated through the interview guide as stated below:

"The application of the polite use of language will impact positively on the parties leading to the resolution of the conflict. Polite use of language makes parties involved in a conflict to be eager to listen to one another".

(Staff Respondent A: 6th Aug., 2020)

"Respect will prevail, understanding a problem becomes possible and peaceful resolution of the conflict is assured. Avoidance of harsh or abusive words always resolve a conflict in a way that all involved depart the venue radiating fulfilment".

(Staff Respondent B: 6th Aug., 2020)

"There is peaceful coexistence, enhance working relationships and promote institutional growth making the institution to become unique in resolving conflict".

(Staff Respondent C: 6th Aug., 2020)

"It helps in making the aggrieved parties to listen to each other's views which subsequently leading to the resolution conflict in a manner that all who are involved in the grievance are reconciled peacefully".

(Staff Respondent D: 6th Aug., 2020)

"There is harmony, respect, cooperation and performance are achieved. People will be freer to share their views to enhance togetherness in discharging responsibilities and it is a marketing strategy for an institution. There is love and understanding among the people. It facilitates easy way of resolving any conflicting issues and it becomes a marketing strategy for the institution when polite language is employed in resolving conflict".

(Staff Respondent E: 6th Aug., 2020)

"It facilitates conflict resolution and helps in building a peaceful culture in any institution. It enlightens others' positively on how use good choice of words in addressing issues and builds positive relationship."

(Staff Respondent F: 6th Aug., 2020)

"Repetition of the same conflict is prevented, enlighten parties involved in a conflict, help in building a good culture in an institution, builds inter-personal relation among people and bring unity and enhance motivation".

(Staff Respondent G: 6th Aug., 2020)

"Prevents escalation of issues. Calms emotion to enhance a peaceful dialogue".

(HoD Respondent H: 6th Aug., 2020)

The staff and HoD were also sought to share some of their experiences on using words that respect others' views during conflict resolution. The following responses were gathered through the interview guided administered as shown below:

"Acknowledging and appreciating others' opinions by using polite words to show your level of participation in the conflict and respecting the feelings of the other party by employing good choice words."

(Staff Respondent A: 6th Aug., 2020)

“Be accommodative in your expression. Compromising your views if it doesn't affect the needed solution. Consider the feelings of the other party while expressing your views”.

(Staff Respondent B: 6th Aug., 2020)

“Use of right terms to make sure that the other party involved is not offended by being fair during the dialogue to facilitate the resolution of the conflict. Render apology where necessary by employing respectful choice of words for the purpose of maintaining peace”.

(Staff Respondent C: 6th Aug., 2020)

“Respect the views of the other party by using words that do not demean him or her for the sake of gaining favour to yourself as polite and fair application of language is very crucial to solving a problem in conflicting situation”.

(Staff Respondent D: 6th Aug., 2020)

“Being apologetic, listening to the feelings of the other party, using words like I feel this is the issue under discussion and avoid the use of harsh words in expressing your opinions in order not to intimidate the other person involved in the process”.

(Staff Respondent E: 6th Aug., 2020)

Accept your fault by being frank in your sharing, use encouraging and apologetic words where necessary, use words that heal hurtful feeling, avoid harsh and abusive words even when you feel you are right to allow sincere deliberation over what may have transpired”.

(Staff Respondent F: 6th Aug., 2020)

“Avoid the use of words that are provocative in nature, use words that show respect towards the views and feelings of the other person involved in the dialogue, avoid the use of words which indicate that you are better than the other.”

(Staff Respondent F: 6th Aug., 2020)

“Acknowledgement of the other's view with respectful words, do not ridicule their opinions, and avoid words that seem to be questioning someone's personality”.

(Staff Respondent F: 6th Aug., 2020)

These views expressed by the interviewees and captured above in this study concurred with the ideas of Janet (2015) and Shahmohammadi (2014) who noted that managing conflict and developing effective conflict resolution mechanisms encourage the development of values, attitudes and knowledge between individuals and organizations. This is suggestive that if managed and resolved well, conflict can be constructive, if not; it can be destructive for people and organizations.

5.0 Discussion

The Politeness principles known as politeness maxims act as a medium in conflict resolution. In addition, Dyatmawan (2015) contended that these maxims point out how politeness works in conversational exchanges. In indicating politeness, speakers adhere to the six maxims of the politeness principle advanced by Leech (1983). They are tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement and sympathy maxims. Besides, these maxims as illuminated by Wang and Wei (2016) are intended to make communicators feel good which is taken as an appendage of Lakoff's three positions for politeness.

Employing the understanding above using the outlined research objectives/questions that guided this research paper manifested generosity and modesty maxims. The generosity which is revealed through the quantitative data involves minimizing benefits to self and maximizing cost to self. The generosity maxim occurs in commissives and directives or impositives (Bhise, 2015). Besides, it means that offers, invitations and promises are generous acts. Moreso, Katz (2016) noted that offers, invitations and promises are commissives speech acts in which an obligation is placed by the speaker on herself or himself. This hinders the speaker's freedom of action by setting a time limit within which the action must be performed. The maxim of modesty manifested through the qualitative involves minimizing praise of self and maximizing dispraise of self. Moreover, it means that self-depreciation even if sincere or exaggerated is often felt to be polite in nature. Consequently, Felemban (2012) hinted that this maxim focuses on self thus, self-dispraise is understood to be polite.

6.0 Conclusions

The politeness maxims are demonstrated in this research paper to be crucial in human communication. The results showed that harmony and comity with each can be established with ease the moment people employ the maxims during conflict resolution by making their comments more generously and modestly. On the other hand, if people flout the maxims, they may make the hearers feel unacceptable; thus, increasing the probability of discord and continuous conflict. Brown (2015) observed that the conversational maxim approach shares with the social norm approach the emphasis on codified social rules for minimizing friction between interactors, and the view that deviations from expected levels or forms of politeness carry a message.

7.0 Recommendations

- ❖ The area of education is continually scourged with challenges that browbeat its very survival including innumerable conflicts it has to deal with every single academic session to construct peace-mobilizing-surroundings to attain and achieve quality. Language use can be a bane that powers conflict or cure all that bursts into flames conflict management and resolution. This is in conjunction with the statement of Ani (2015) who pointed out that language is a driving force of persevering people's culture, enhancement of peace and conflict resolution in the society.
- ❖ The faith-based institutions should create a conflict resolution desk/unit Department Human Resource to take charge and instil a continuous employment polite sue of language in conflict resolution situation of grievances, tensions, misunderstandings that emanate from the causes of conflict as revealed by the study findings. Each Department should be charged with the responsibility to organize seminars,

workshops and conferences on sustainable basis to discuss and reinforce the usage of polite language when trying to resolve any conflict on campus.

- ❖ Through this research, educational practitioners specifically grievance officers should find support and retrieval as mechanism for conflict redress is achievable through politeness maxims that may pacify hurts and heal grievances.

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