IMPACT OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY AND INTERCULTURAL EXPERIENCE ON CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AMONG ACADEMIC STAFF IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: This study examines the relationship between cross-cultural dialogue and conflict management, focusing on the roles of language proficiency and intercultural experience among academic staff at Kwara State University, Nigeria. Using survey data from 272 respondents, the study found that both language proficiency and intercultural experience positively impact conflict resolution effectiveness, with intercultural experience showing a more substantial effect. The data were collected from 272 respondents through a structured questionnaire, representing a 94.77% valid response rate from the initial sample of 287 academic staff. The study was hinged on the theoretical strength of the resource-based view (RBV) which was proposed by Barney in 1991. Multiple regression analysis was used to test two null hypotheses. The findings revealed that both language proficiency and intercultural experience significantly influence resolution effectiveness. Language proficiency had a modest positive impact ($\beta = 0.134$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that increased language skills contribute to better communication and conflict resolution. Intercultural experience demonstrated a stronger positive relationship ($\beta = 0.755$, $p < 0.00$), indicating that individuals with more diverse cultural experiences are better equipped to handle conflicts effectively. The model explained approximately 69.7% of the variance in resolution effectiveness ($R^2 = 0.697$), demonstrating the substantial influence of language proficiency and intercultural experience on these outcomes. The study concluded that while language proficiency facilitates clearer communication, intercultural experience plays a more substantial role in enhancing conflict resolution capabilities. Recommendations include investing in language training programs and promoting opportunities for intercultural exposure to improve organizational conflict management strategies.

Keywords: Cross-Cultural Dialogue, Conflict Management, Language Proficiency, Intercultural Experience

INTRODUCTION

Globalization has brought people from different cultural backgrounds together, while interactions across cultures have become a necessary aspect of daily life (Zalli, 2024). These interactions although, they benefits societies and businesses, also lead to complexities and conflicts especially in regards to miscommunication and misunderstandings caused by differences in cultural norms, beliefs, and communication styles. With its ability to facilitate mutual understanding and efficient resolution of conflicts, cross-cultural dialogue becomes a vital instrument in tackling these issues. According to Ma and Liu (2023), cross-cultural

dialogue nurtures empathy and respect among distinct groups by encouraging open communication and the sharing of viewpoints, thereby bridging cultural differences. To maintain harmonious relationship in a variety of circumstances, understanding their role in conflict management is essential.

The intricacies of cross-cultural interactions stem from the profound influence of culture on individuals' perceptions and responses to conflict. Cultural dimensions such as individualism versus collectivism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance significantly shape conflict behaviours and attitudes (Guo, 2024). In collectivist cultures, conflict is often managed through avoidance or indirect communication to maintain group harmony, whereas individualistic cultures may favour direct confrontation and problem-solving approaches. These cultural differences lead to misinterpretations and escalations if not managed through culturally sensitive dialogue (Taylan & Weber, 2022).

In addition to conflict resolution, cross-cultural dialogue plays a pivotal role in conflict prevention. Engaging in open conversations about cultural differences and expectations allows individuals to preemptively address potential sources of misunderstanding (Hajar El Hassani et al., 2023). This proactive approach is particularly vital in multicultural workplaces, where team members from diverse backgrounds must collaborate effectively. The success of cross-cultural dialogue hinges on cultural intelligence, which involves recognizing and managing one's own cultural biases while being open to understanding others (Alifuddin & Widodo, 2022).

The effectiveness of cross-cultural dialogue in conflict management is further enhanced by key skills such as active listening, empathy, and adaptability (Rodríguez et al., 2023). Active listening enables individuals to fully grasp others' perspectives without rushing to judge, whereas empathy helps individuals in appreciate the emotional contexts that underlie conflicts (Aririguzoh, 2022). Adaptability allows individuals to modify their communication styles and strategies to align with the cultural norms of the parties involved. These skills are essential for navigating the complexities of cross-cultural interactions and ensuring that dialogue leads to constructive outcomes (Hossain, 2024).

However, cross-cultural dialogue faces challenges, particularly when power dynamics, historical grievances, and entrenched stereotypes come into play (Garrick et al., 2024). In such situations, a neutral mediator or facilitator can be invaluable in guiding the dialogue and ensuring that all voices are heard. Effective mediation in cross-cultural conflicts requires a nuanced understanding of the cultural contexts at play, as well as the ability to navigate the emotional and psychological dimensions of the conflict (Krueger et al., 2022).

Moreover, the global context in which cross-cultural dialogue takes place adds another layer of complexity. In our globalized world, cross-cultural conflicts extend beyond interpersonal or organizational settings to include international relations and community disputes (Mayhand, 2020). Addressing these conflicts demands a deep understanding of cultural diplomacy and the role of intercultural communication in fostering peace and cooperation between nations (Enaim & Amine, 2023). Therefore, cross-cultural dialogue is central not only to conflict resolution but also to the promotion of global harmony.

Despite the growing emphasis on cross-cultural interactions, organizations continue to face significant challenges in managing conflicts effectively. One critical issue is the varying

levels of language proficiency among team members, which lead to miscommunication, misunderstanding of key messages, and frustration during conflict resolution processes. These communication barriers often diminish the effectiveness of conflict resolution efforts, leading to unresolved disputes and diminished organizational harmony. Furthermore, the varying levels of intercultural experience within teams contribute to the denial of the effectiveness of conflict resolution. Team members with limited intercultural experience struggle to understand cultural nuances, fail to build trust with culturally diverse colleagues, and inadvertently contribute to the formation of subgroups, all of which undermine team unity and collaboration. Addressing these problems is essential for enhancing cross-cultural dialogue and ensuring effective conflict management in diverse organizational settings. Hence, this study investigates how language proficiency and intercultural experiences affect conflict resolution effectiveness among academic staff of Kwara State University, Malete.

Research Questions

The following questions were answered:

i. How does language proficiency influence the effective resolution of conflict among academic staff at KWASU?
ii. How does intercultural experience influence the effective resolution of conflict among academic staff at KWASU?

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the relationship between cross-cultural dialogue and conflict management. Specifically, the study:

i. Assessed the influence of language proficiency on resolution effectiveness of academic staff at KWASU;
ii. Determined the impact of intercultural experiences on the effective resolution of conflict among academic staff at KWASU.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Cross-Cultural Dialogue

Cross-cultural refers to the comparison of two or more cultural groups, whether international, interethnic or interracial. Thus cross-cultural dialogue is the study of how members of different cultural groups perceive and/or engage in dialogue. Omar (2023) defines cross-cultural dialogue as the sharing of ideas and values across cultural boundaries that encourage an appreciation of diverse perspectives as well as an awareness of cultural differences. This type of dialogue goes beyond simple conversation, necessitating participants to immerse themselves fully in the cultural values, beliefs, and practices of others. It is an essential component of breaking down cultural barriers because it pushes people to step outside of their cultural comfort zones and interact with others who have different perspectives. When diverse cultural backgrounds come together to work toward common goals, cross-cultural dialogue becomes even more important. To be effective, cross-cultural dialogue requires participants to be deeply sensitive to and aware of their own cultural biases as well as actively work to understand and accommodate the cultural norms of others (Yousaf et al., 2022). This

process calls for sympathetic listening as well as a sincere effort to understand the cultural contexts that shape other people's behaviours and attitudes. When cross-cultural dialogue is performed well, it can become a potent tool for overcoming differences and fostering mutual respect.

Cross-cultural dialogue can, however, be hampered by issues such as language hurdles and disparate communication styles. According to Sharma and Makhija (2024), these barriers may cause miscommunication and impede the efficacy of the conversation. The development of cultural competence abilities, which are necessary for successfully navigating cultural differences, must be prioritized by individuals and organizations to overcome these obstacles. Although it can be developed via exposure, education, and intentional cross-cultural contact, cultural competency is not intrinsic. Globally, international diplomacy and conflict resolution depend heavily on cross-cultural communication. Furthermore, Lima Paniago et al. (2020) stress that cultural misunderstandings in diplomatic settings might intensify disputes that could be settled by communication. Therefore, encouraging cross-cultural communication is essential for maintaining world peace and stability as well as for maintaining interpersonal and organizational relationships. To promote a more peaceful global community, cultural variety must be incorporated into daily interactions through a coordinated effort at all societal levels.

Language Proficiency

Language refers to the ability of an individual to use language with a level of accuracy, which transfers meaning in production and comprehension. According to Szkudlarek et al. (2020) language proficiency is a key determinant of success in cross-cultural communication. It extends beyond the ability to speak a language fluently; it involves a nuanced understanding of the cultural context in which the language is used. In multicultural settings, language proficiency is critical as it directly influences an individual's ability to articulate ideas, interpret messages, and avoid misunderstandings, thus enabling effective cross-cultural dialogue and collaboration. The impact of language proficiency on cross-cultural communication cannot be overstated. Those who are proficient in a shared language are more likely to engage in meaningful and productive exchanges, where they can fully express their ideas and comprehend others' perspectives (Moser & Deichmann, 2020). Conversely, limited language proficiency can lead to communication difficulties, frustration, and even conflict. This highlights the importance of language education and training in preparing individuals for successful cross-cultural interactions.

Language proficiency also plays a crucial role in shaping power dynamics and inclusion within multicultural teams. Park (2023) stated that individuals fluent in the dominant language often exert more influence in team discussions, potentially marginalizing those with limited proficiency. This imbalance can undermine team cohesiveness and productivity. To address this, organizations should invest in language training and resources that bridge linguistic gaps, ensuring that all team members can contribute effectively. Enhancing language proficiency often involves comprehensive training programs that go beyond language skills to include cultural education (Budiman et al., 2023). These programs help individuals grasp the cultural nuances influencing language use, thus facilitating smoother communication, reducing misunderstandings, and fostering a more inclusive and collaborative work environment.

Intercultural Experience

An experience can be termed intercultural only when it involves direct engagement with people from a cultural group or subcultural group that is significantly different from the participant's own background. According to Abugre and Debrah (2019) intercultural experience is a critical factor in developing the skills necessary for effective cross-cultural communication. These experiences, ranging from brief cultural exchanges to prolonged immersion in foreign cultures, significantly enhance an individual's ability to understand and navigate cultural differences. The depth of one's intercultural experience profoundly shapes cultural awareness, sensitivity, and adaptability which are essential for successful interactions in diverse environments. Individuals with extensive intercultural experience are often more adept at interpreting cultural cues and adjusting their behaviour accordingly. This adaptability is crucial when navigating cultural norms that differ significantly from one's own (East et al., 2022). For example, long-term cultural immersion can lead to a deeper understanding of the values, communication styles, and social norms of another culture, enhancing one's cultural competence. This competence is vital for meaningful cross-cultural dialogue and resolving conflicts arising from cultural misunderstandings.

Intercultural experience also fosters cognitive flexibility, the ability to shift between cultural frameworks depending on the context. Kadam et al. (2021) posit that this flexibility is particularly valuable in conflict resolution, where appreciating multiple cultural perspectives can lead to more creative and effective solutions. Individuals with rich intercultural experience are better equipped to mediate conflicts and facilitate cooperation among parties from diverse cultural backgrounds. Moreover, intercultural experience is invaluable for developing global leadership skills. Keizer-Remmers et al. (2021) argued that leaders with substantial intercultural experience are better prepared to manage and inspire diverse teams, as they possess the cultural sensitivity needed to create an inclusive work environment. These leaders are more likely to promote cross-cultural dialogue, leading to greater team cohesiveness and effective collaboration. In today's globalized business environment, intercultural experience is not just a personal asset but also a strategic advantage for organizations (Li & Tang, 2022).

Conflict Management

Conflict management refers to the processes, tools and skills that are created and utilized for resolving and minimizing conflicts and disagreements or disputes within societies and particularly within the industrial relation system. Conflict management also includes the ability to resolve conflict collaboratively through effective communication skills, such as active listening and assertive speaking. According to Yousaf et al. (2022) conflict management is a critical component of organizational success, particularly in culturally diverse settings. Effective conflict management involves identifying, addressing, and resolving conflicts in a manner that is respectful, fair, and conducive to long-term harmony. In multicultural environments, conflict management requires a nuanced understanding of cultural differences and the ability to navigate these differences with sensitivity and skill. Cultural differences often influence how conflicts arise and how they are perceived by the parties involved. Kadam et al. (2021) argued that individuals from different cultural backgrounds may have varying expectations regarding conflict resolution processes. For example, some cultures may prioritize direct confrontation and open dialogue, whereas others may prefer more indirect approaches, such as mediation or avoiding open conflict.

Recognizing and adapting to these cultural preferences is crucial for effective conflict management in diverse teams.

A key strategy in conflict management is the development of intercultural competence within teams and organizations. Krueger et al. (2022) state that intercultural competence allows individuals to understand and respect different cultural perspectives, reducing the likelihood of misunderstandings that can escalate into conflicts. This competence can be cultivated through training, education, and experience, enabling team members to communicate more effectively and resolve conflicts amicably. Leadership plays a pivotal role in conflict management, particularly in multicultural settings. East et al. (2022) argued that leaders who are culturally aware and sensitive can set the tone for how conflicts are managed within their teams. By promoting an inclusive environment where all voices are heard and respected, leaders can prevent conflicts from escalating and ensure that any disputes are resolved in a manner that strengthens, rather than weakens, team cohesion. Effective leaders also model conflict resolution behaviours, such as active listening, empathy, and fairness, which can encourage team members to adopt similar approaches in their interactions (Sahadevan & Sumangala, 2021).

Effective Resolution

Effective resolution refers to skills and activities that are incorporated in resolving conflict which results in positive outcomes in conflict resolution. According to Akanji et al. (2021) resolution effectiveness in cross-cultural contexts is profoundly influenced by the cultural norms and values shaping conflict management approaches. These cultural differences can either facilitate or obstruct the resolution process, depending on how well they are understood and managed. Effective conflict resolution, therefore, requires a deep comprehension of the cultural dynamics at play and the ability to communicate respectfully and appropriately within those dynamics. Clear and open communication is essential for successful conflict resolution in cross-cultural settings. However, as Isong and Willie (2019) emphasize language barriers and differing communication styles can complicate this process, leading to misunderstandings and prolonged conflicts. To enhance resolution effectiveness, it is crucial to address these challenges directly, employing strategies such as active listening, cultural mediation, and using neutral language bridges cultural gaps.

The role of a culturally aware mediator is critical in enhancing resolution effectiveness. Lima Paniago et al. (2022) emphasized that such mediators can significantly facilitate dialogue between conflicting parties, helping them find common ground and mutually acceptable solutions. Mediators bridge cultural divides and manage power dynamics, ensuring that all voices are represented and considered during the resolution process. This balanced approach is essential for achieving outcomes perceived as fair and just by all parties involved. Trust and openness are also fundamental to successful conflict resolution in multicultural settings. Jones (2021) asserts that when parties engage in the resolution process with an open mind and a willingness to understand each other's cultural perspectives, the likelihood of a successful resolution increases significantly. Building this trust requires time, patience, and a commitment to maintaining ongoing dialogue despite cultural differences. By fostering an environment of trust and mutual respect, organizations can improve the effectiveness of their conflict resolution efforts, creating more harmonious and productive work environments (Kumra et al., 2020).

Empirical reviews

This section provides the results and findings on conflict management strategies and effects. Madubuegwu et al. (2022) examined conflicts and conflict management in custom services in Nigeria: an insight. The research design is a descriptive survey study and analysis where questionnaire instruments are administered to a 430-sample size and responses calculated in terms of the statistical mean rating score in credence to the four research questions, which reflects the factors and effects of conflict and conflict management measures and their assessment. Interestingly, the findings of this study revealed that conflict management measures deployed recorded an abysmal grand mean score of 2.4, which was below the established the calculation decision rule of 2.5. This indicates that conflict management procedures in the Nigerian Custom Service are not viable, which therefore highlight the need for reform.

Said (2024) investigated the impact of cultural diversity and intercultural competence on conflict management styles in Egypt. This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This essentially involves collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low-cost advantage compared over field research. The study looked into already published studies and reports, as the data were easily accessed through online journals and libraries. Research shows that power dynamics and organizational justice significantly impact conflict outcomes and satisfaction. Power imbalances exacerbate conflicts, leading to dissatisfaction. Unequal power distribution can escalate conflicts due to perceived unfairness. Conversely, organizational justice fosters positive outcomes and higher satisfaction levels. Fostering equitable power dynamics and promoting justice mitigate conflict and enhance satisfaction.

Eassa (2024) examined the influence of cultural diversity on team conflict and performance in multinational corporations in Sudan. This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This essentially involves the basic collection data from existing resources preferably because of its low-cost advantage as over field research. The study looked into already published studies and reports as the data were easily accessed through online journals and libraries. Cultural diversity within teams can lead to both positive and negative outcomes. On the one hand, diversity can enhance creativity, innovation, and problem-solving abilities, as team members bring varied perspectives and ideas. This diversity of thought is particularly beneficial in dynamic and complex environments where multifaceted solutions are needed. On the other hand, cultural differences can also result in misunderstandings, communication barriers, and conflicts, which can negatively impact team cohesion and performance. Effective management of culturally diverse teams involves fostering an inclusive environment where differences are respected and leveraged. This includes implementing strategies for effective communication, conflict resolution, and leadership that are sensitive to cultural nuances. Training and development programs aimed at enhancing cultural competence among team members are also crucial.

Erfan (2024) investigated the impact of cross-cultural management on global collaboration and performance. Data were collected through surveys and interviews with employees and leaders from various MNCs. Quantitative analysis was performed on survey responses to identify correlations between cross-cultural management practices and organizational performance metrics. Qualitative insights from interviews provided additional context and

depth. The findings indicate that cross-cultural management significantly enhances team cohesion and communication efficiency. Employees who underwent cross-cultural training reported higher levels of collaboration and fewer misunderstandings. Leadership adaptability emerged as a crucial factor, with culturally intelligent leaders effectively managing diverse teams. The study also revealed that cross-cultural management contributes to greater innovation and organizational performance.

Mitu (2024) examined cross-cultural negotiation strategies in international business: a case study of Shimizu Corporation on the negotiation process and strategies. This research is conducted following a qualitative research approach, and the quantitative method of data collection used is secondary. These data and information were analysed by performing a subsequent analysis. In this analysis, specific themes were designed on the basis objectives of the study. The findings of this research claim that cross-cultural negotiation is essential for a business to expand in the international market. There are four determinants of the cross-cultural negotiation process: building relationships, exchanging information related to the task, persuasion, and agreement. Completing these four phases of the cross-cultural negotiation process is crucial for international businesses to enter a new foreign market.

Theoretical Underpinning

The study was anchored on the theoretical strength of the resource-based view (RBV) which was proposed by Barney in 1991. Barney (1991) posits that an organization's internal resources and capabilities are fundamental to achieving a sustainable competitive advantage. This theory emphasizes that resources must be valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (VRIN criteria) to contribute effectively to an organization's strategy. In the realm of cross-cultural dialogue and conflict management, resources such as diverse cultural perspectives, language skills, and intercultural competencies play crucial roles. For example, organizations that actively nurture and value cultural competencies are better equipped to manage conflicts, as they can leverage the varied insights and problem-solving approaches that emerge from diverse teams (Babatunde et al., 2023). These environments not only facilitate effective collaboration but also enhance overall team performance by fostering a sense of belonging and engagement among employees.

Moreover, the RBV emphasizes the importance of dynamic capabilities and organizations' ability to adapt their resource base to meet changing environmental demands (Capaldo, 2007). In culturally diverse contexts, the ability to tailor conflict management strategies to align with different cultural norms is essential for effective resolution. Organizations that prioritize ongoing training in cultural sensitivity and conflict resolution create an inclusive atmosphere that mitigates misunderstandings and promotes effective dialogue (Rahim, 2023). For example, companies that implement targeted training programs see improved team cohesiveness and enhanced conflict resolution outcomes. Ultimately, the RBV framework illustrates that by recognizing and leveraging their unique resources and dynamic capabilities, organizations can successfully navigate cross-cultural challenges, resulting in a more harmonious and effective workplace in an increasingly globalized world.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a cross-sectional survey method to investigate the relationship between cross-cultural dialogue and conflict management among academic staff at Kwara State

University, Malete, Nigeria. Out of a population of 1,015 academic and administrative staff members at the University, a sample size of 287 academic staff was selected calculated via Taro Yamane's formula from 1967, with participants selected through simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques. Primary data were generated via a structured questionnaire that utilized a 5-point Likert scale, focusing on aspects of cross-cultural dialogue (language proficiency and intercultural experience) as well as conflict management (resolution effectiveness). Among the 287 questionnaires distributed, 279 were returned, yielding a response rate of 97.21%. Among these, 272 responses were considered valid, resulting in a valid response rate of 94.77%. Seven questionnaires were returned but deemed unusable, whereas eight were not returned, representing 2.51% and 2.79%, respectively. Field professionals evaluated the validity and reliability of the instrument. The data collected were analysed via multiple regression analysis, with hypotheses tested at a significance level of 5%. The study adhered to ethical principles, including voluntary participation, informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality.

DATA ANALYSIS

Respondents' demographic characteristics

Table 1: Respondents' demographic characteristics

Variable	Respondent Profile	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	145	53.31
	Female	127	46.69
	Total	**272**	**100**
Age	18-30	31	11.40
	31-40	70	25.74
	41 and above	171	62.87
	Total	**272**	**100**
Years of Experience	Less than 5yrs	89	32.72
	6 -15 yrs	139	51.10
	16 yrs and above	44	16.18
	Total	**272**	**100**
Educational Background	OND, NCE	35	13.01
	HND, BSc	69	25.65
	MBA, MSc	132	49.07
	PhD	26	9.67
	Others	7	2.60
	Total	**272**	**100**

Field Survey (2024)

Table 1 shows the demographic summary of the respondents. There were 272 respondents to the study, of whom 53.31% (145) were men and 46.69% (127) were women. The distribution of respondents' ages shows that 11.40% (31) are between the ages of 18 and 30, 25.74% (70) are between the ages of 31 and 40, and 62.87% (171) are 41 years of age and above. This suggests that elderly people were well represented in the poll. In terms of professional experience, 32.72% (89) of the participants had five years of experience, 51.10% (139) had experience ranging from six to fifteen years, and 16.18% (44) had experience beyond sixteen

years. There is a good balance between experienced and early-career individuals in these data. The interviewees' backgrounds in schooling varied. A total of 13.01% (35) of the total have an OND or NCE, 25.65% (69) have an HND or BSc, and 49.07% (132) have an MBA or MSc. Furthermore, 26 people (9.67%) had PhDs, while 7 people (2.60%) were classified as "Others." The respondents' diverse range of educational attainment suggests a wide range of academic accomplishments. In summary, this profile provides an overview of the survey respondents by emphasizing their age, gender, years of experience, and educational background.

Test of hypotheses

Research Hypotheses

The null hypotheses below were formulated to guide the study:

Ho$_1$: Language proficiency does not significantly affect the resolution effectiveness of academic staff at KWASU.

Ho$_2$:- Intercultural experience does not significantly influence the resolution effectiveness of academic staff at KWASU.

Table 2A: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.837[a]	.701	.697	3.589

a. Predictors: (Constant), Language proficiency and intercultural experience

Source: Survey, 2024

The R-squared value of 0.701 in the model summary table suggests that the independent variables, namely, language proficiency and intercultural experience, account for 69.7% of the variance in the resolution effectiveness. Factors not included in the model account for the remaining 30.3% of the variation.

Table 2B: ANOVAa

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4235.802	2	2117.901	444.937	.000[b]
	Residual	1804.045	270	4.760		
	Total	6039.846	272			

Dependent Variable: Resolution effectiveness
b. Predictors: (Constant), Language proficiency and intercultural experience

Source: Survey, 2024.

The variation analysis displayed in the ANOVA table suggests that the model explains differences in resolution effectiveness. With a significance level of .000 and an F-value of 444.937, the p-value threshold of 0.05 ($p < 0.05$) is significantly exceeded. This indicates that the resolution effectiveness is significantly impacted by both language proficiency and intercultural experience.

Table 2C: Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	7.530	1.676		4.493	.000
	Language proficiency	.134	.101	.604	4.507	.014
	Intercultural experience	.755	.107	.702	7.060	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Resolution effectiveness

Source: Survey, 2024

The coefficient for language proficiency is 0.134, indicating a positive relationship between language proficiency and resolution effectiveness. This reveals that as language proficiency increases, the effectiveness of resolving issues improves slightly. These findings align with those of Alifuddin and Widodo (2022), who reported that enhanced language skills contribute to better communication outcomes in multicultural settings. Similarly, the findings resonate with the findings of Akanji et al. (2021) that language proficiency reduces misunderstandings in conflict resolution processes, fostering clearer dialogue. Moreover, the findings agree with Budiman et al. (2023) who reported that teams with high language proficiency experience fewer communication barriers, leading to improved conflict resolution. Additionally, Erfan (2024) reported that language competency is essential for accurately conveying intentions and mitigating conflict misinterpretations in diverse environments.

The coefficient for intercultural experience is 0.755, indicating a stronger positive relationship between intercultural experience and resolution effectiveness. This shows that individuals with more intercultural experience are better equipped to handle and resolve conflicts effectively. These findings are consistent with those of Keizer-Remmers et al. (2021), who highlighted that intercultural experience enhances an individual's ability to understand diverse perspectives, thereby improving conflict management. In a similar vein, the findings of Kadam et al. (2021) supports that intercultural experience increases empathy, allowing for more effective resolution strategies. Additionally, the findings support Omar (2023) findings that people with extensive intercultural experience can navigate cultural nuances more effectively, leading to better conflict resolution outcomes. Accordingly, Sahadevan and Sumangala (2021) asserted that individuals with higher levels of intercultural experience are adept at employing culturally appropriate negotiation tactics, which enhance resolution effectiveness.

Conclusion

The analysis reveals that both language proficiency and intercultural experience significantly contribute to resolution effectiveness. Language proficiency, although it has a modest impact, plays a crucial role in facilitating clearer communication, which is essential in resolving conflicts. Individuals who possess greater language proficiency are better equipped to navigate conversations, reduce misunderstandings and foster smoother resolution processes.

Intercultural experience, on the other hand, has a more substantial influence on resolution effectiveness. This shows that individuals with greater exposure to diverse cultures are better positioned to understand different perspectives, adapt their communication styles, and employ appropriate conflict resolution strategies. The ability to manage cultural differences is crucial for enhancing the overall effectiveness of conflict resolution, especially in multicultural or diverse environments.

In summary, it up, both language proficiency and intercultural experience are critical in shaping the success of resolution efforts. While language proficiency improves communication clarity, intercultural experience increases one's capacity to handle diverse viewpoints, making both integral components in conflict resolution strategies.

Recommendations

On the basis of the findings from this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

i.   Organisations should invest in language training programmes for employees, especially in multicultural settings, to improve their communication skills. By enhancing their language proficiency, individuals will be better equipped to articulate ideas, reduce misunderstandings, and contribute to more effective conflict resolution processes.

ii.   Organisations should encourage and provide opportunities for employees to gain intercultural experience. This can be achieved through exchange programs, cross-cultural workshops, and international collaboration. Exposure to different cultures will allow individuals to develop a broader perspective, improving their ability to manage conflicts and resolve issues more effectively in diverse environments.

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