

**POSITIVE VERBAL ENCOURAGEMENTS AND DIRECTIVE COUNSELING AS  
PRINCIPALS' STRATEGIES FOR CHECKMATING CONFLICTS IN  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ENUGU STATE**

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**Abstract**

*The main purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which principals adopt Using Positive Verbal Encouragements (UPE) and Directive Counseling (DC) Strategies for conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu state. Design adopted for the study was descriptive survey design. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. This study was carried out in Enugu State. The population for the study consisted of all the 295 public secondary school principals in Enugu state as at the time of the study. Due to the manageable size of the population for this study, the entire population, 295 public secondary school principals was used as sample for the study. Categorized by principal's gender, the sample was made up of 170 male and 125 female principals. Instrument for data collection was a 23-item structured questionnaire. The instrument was constructed by the researchers and validated by three research experts. Reliability coefficients obtained for the various parts of the instrument were; Cluster I = .69; Cluster II = .70; Cluster III = .76 Cluster IV=.71; Cluster V=.73 and Cluster VI = .70. The overall reliability coefficient value was .71, (Appendix D) obtained through Cronbach's Alpha Method. Copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents by the researchers and three briefed research assistants. Direct delivery and retrieval system was used. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while ANOVA was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 significant level. Major findings of the study revealed among other things, that Enugu state secondary school principals sampled in this study had good ACE, USR, Paraphrasing, URC, UPE*

*and DC counselling strategies. The counselling strategies of male and female secondary school principals in Enugu state did not differ significantly. Recommendations made in the study included that Relevant boards, agencies, parastatals and Ministry of Education should institute awards for secondary school principals adopting any of the Using Positive Verbal Encouragements (UPE) and Directive Counseling (DC) strategies for conflict management in their schools.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The place of secondary education in national development cannot be overemphasized. Mostly because education in general and secondary education in particular fosters the worth and development of the recipients for each recipients' sake and for the general development of society. The success of secondary education should, therefore, be of concern to all and sundry. Lawal (2017) posited that one of the challenges of secondary education in Nigeria is the ability of the principals to manage effectively all conflicts arising in the system. Conflict is a serious disagreement or argument, typically a protracted one. In attempt to further clarify what conflict is all about, Nezera (2017) described it as synonymous with clash, incompatibility, inconsistency, incongruous, opposition, be at variance, vary, odds, diverge, differ, disagree, contrast, collide, contradictory, contrary, opposing, antithetical, discrepant, contrasting divergent, oppugn-ant and disagreeing.

Conflicts in effect involve a struggle or quarrel usually between individuals or groups in the process of competing for a reward. It could, therefore, be regarded as a form of disagreement in an establishment between two individuals or groups who have cause to interact formally or informally. When two or more people who work together in an organization are not in good terms especially in matters that relate directly or indirectly to their work schedule, conflict may occur, (Smith, 2016). Pinto (2017) referred to conflict as a struggle or misunderstanding when

workers and management have incompatible, conflicting or irreconcilable views, on issues. Pinto maintained that it is unthinkable to find any industrial society without industrial conflict.

Management of conflict is, undoubtedly, a major task of a secondary school principal. The term principal according to Amusan (2012) is used in Nigeria to describe a person who is in charge of a secondary school. As Ikechi (2011) stated, it is from high-ranking teachers in secondary schools that principals are selected. Ikechi then defined a principal as a teacher promoted to a management position and given the task of being in charge of a secondary school. Udoh (2012) held that the principal is the administrative head of a secondary school. He leads the management team of a secondary school. The principal should be regarded as an administrator and by extension the school administrator can be regarded as a leader. Udoh explained that this is because the administrator (principal) performs certain functions that make the school to be effective. Such functions involve planning, organizing, directing and controlling. Amusan (2012), hinted that principalship involves identification of the vision, mission, strategies and objectives of secondary school well in advance and provision of means of accomplishing them.

A principal must be grounded sufficiently in management of conflict because the range, magnitude, shapes and dimensions which conflicts have taken in contemporary Nigerian society is very worrisome. Also, good conflict management skill will enable the principal maintain a good labour relation. Conflict deals with everything that affects the relationship between workers and employers, from the time an employee joins the work organization until he leaves the job. Consequently, excellent industrial peace in an organization would ensure increased production and high level of productivity among workers. This also applies to secondary schools. King (2016) defined conflict management as a process of combing and utilizing of or allocating

*Positive Verbal Encouragements and Directive Counseling as Principals' Strategies for Checkmating Conflicts in Secondary Schools*

organization's output (men material and money) by planning, organizing, directing and controlling for the purpose of maintaining peace and tranquility in the organization.

Conflict management according to Nuhu (2016) is the process by which managers create, direct, maintain and operate organizations through coordinated, cooperative human efforts such that squabbles and disagreement are eradicated or at worst, brought under control. In the secondary school system, conflicts take diverse dimensions ranging from staff-staff, staff-students, staff-school management, students-school management, staff-proprietor, student-proprietor, school-community, proprietor-community, student-community to staff-community conflicts. There may be, however, other dimensions such as inter and intra classes, inter and intra students' clubs, school-school clashes, in fact, the list is endless. Principals overtime have adopted various strategies for managing these conflicts. However, it does seem as if principal's efforts are not good enough as the level of peace witnessed in most secondary schools are far from being satisfactory, (Lawal, 2017).

Consequently, the search for new strategies is still ongoing. Strategies according to Smith (2016) refer to techniques, approaches, methods and interventions adopted to solve problems. King (2016) added that a strategy is a plan of action intended to accomplish a specific goal. Research evidences such as King (2016), Lawal (2017) and Nezera (2017) have recommended the use of counseling interventions as an effective strategy for managing conflict in secondary schools. According to King (2016) counseling is a psychological process through which the client is given all the assistance he needs to develop an improved ability of solving personal adjustment problems as well as the ability to achieve positive growth and the actualization of his personality. Lawal (2017) added that counseling involves giving advice, especially professional advice or recommendation to a client.

In specific term, Nezera (2017) recommended six counseling strategies that could be used to manage conflicts in secondary schools effectively. These include;

1. *Allow the Client to Explore (ACE Strategy)*
2. *Using Silences in the Relationship (USR Strategy)*
3. *Paraphrasing Strategy*
4. *Using REBT Challenges (URC Strategy)*
5. *Using Positive Verbal Encouragements (UPE Strategy) and*
6. *Directive Counseling (DC Strategy)*

Nezera hinted further that Using Positive Verbal Encouragement (UPE) and Directive Counseling (DC) strategies are more effective in developing countries. Hence, those two were adopted for this study.

The Using Positive Verbal Encouragements (UPE Strategy) is a strategy in which the counselor uses positive verbal encouragements such as “yes” and “ok” during the counseling process which can make the client believe that the counselor believes in his or her ability to succeed in handling with their current condition and in progressing in the rehabilitation process. Using positive verbal encouragement can also create a positive environment, in which the counselor expresses his support and behaviour on the client through his trust and utmost confidentiality.

The Directive Counseling (DC Strategy) involves varied directive approaches such as Interpersonal Therapy and the Gestalt approach and non-directive approaches such as Roger’s theory which were developed based on different concepts and assumptions. Interpersonal Therapy has focused on the interpersonal relationships of the client, assuming that psychological problems can be treated by changing and improving patterns of relationships and communication. The significant aspect of the interrelationship of the individual with the

environment has also played a central role in the Gestalt approach, emphasizing the individual's perception of reality.

As interesting as the above six counseling strategies may sound, research evidence, are varied in their findings on the efficacy of the strategies in managing conflicts in secondary school. King (2016), Lawal (2017) and Nezera (2017) in their separate studies found the six counseling strategies to be very effective for managing conflicts in secondary schools. Contrarily, Karl (2016) and Awofes (2016) in other separate studies found that the strategies are not very effective for managing conflicts in secondary schools. Still on conflicting findings, Abiodun (2016) and Kitz (2018) reported that the above six counseling strategies neither enhanced nor inhibited effective conflict management in secondary schools. It is therefore obvious that more studies are needed to determine how effective these strategies are in secondary school conflict management, at least, to fill the gap of no definitive conclusive status reported in the conflicting findings of past research evidences.

Another variable of interest to the researcher in this study is influence of gender of secondary school principals on the choice of counseling strategy they adopt for managing conflicts in their schools. Akan (2014) asserted that gender refers to the socially, culturally constructed characteristics and roles which are ascribed to males and females in any society. According to Okeke (2018), gender or sex refers to those characteristics of males and females which are biologically determined such as possession of different genital organs. Okeke further gave a broad analytical concept which draws out female role responsibilities in relation to those of male describing the male attributes as bold, aggressive, tactful, economical use of words, while females are fearful, timid, gentle, dull, submissive and talkative. Okeke's view as stated above, no doubt, is very controversial.

Interestingly, many people, educators inclusive believe the thoughts of Okeke while many others disagree with such views about male and female folks. For instance, Uyi (2014) alleged that in schools, males are more likely to take difficult subjects areas like sciences, while the females take to careers that will not conflict with marriage chances, marriage responsibilities and mother hood. On the other hand, Udida (2015) posited that female administrators are better focused, firm, strict and authoritative while their male counterparts are fraudulent, biased, vindictive and easily compromised. Obviously, the argument is endless with everyone articulating and advancing reasons to support their claims. It is therefore a study such as this present one that can strike a balance and close the gap by ascertaining whether or not gender of principals influence their choice of counseling strategies for managing conflicts in their schools.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which principals adopt Using Positive Verbal Encouragements (UPE) and Directive Counseling (DC) Strategies for conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu state. In specific terms, the study sought to determine;

1. the extent to which principals adopt Using Positive Verbal Encouragements (UPE) Strategy for conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu state
2. the extent to which principals adopt Directive Counseling (DC) Strategy for conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu state

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study;

Ite	What is the extent to	Male	Female	Overall
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1. To what extent do principals adopt Using Positive Verbal Encouragements (UPE) Strategy for conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu state?
2. What is the extent to which principals adopt Directive Counseling (DC) Strategy for conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu state?



m	which you manage conflict in your secondary schools through;	Mean	SD	Remark	Mean	SD	Remark	Mean	SD	Remark
1	Showing clients that you are paying attention to what they are saying	2.92	0.19	GE	3.14	0.06	GE	3.04	0.13	GE
2	Acknowledging clients' stories	3.11	0.14	GE	3.25	0.06	GE	3.05	0.12	GE
3	Showing clients that you understand their plight	2.73	0.06	GE	3.16	0.15	GE	3.01	0.28	GE
4	Repeating (echoing) clients' sentences when they pause to confirm understanding	3.06	0.14	GE	3.22	0.12	GE	3.15	0.25	GE
5	Repeating your own world to emphasize important points	2.69	0.19	GE	2.93	0.25	GE	2.80	0.13	GE
6	Assuring clients that you believe in their ability to succeed in handling their current condition	2.93	0.15	GE	2.18	0.13	GE	2.79	0.13	GE
7	Creating a positive environment in which clients trusts confidently your supportive expressions and behaviour	3.21	0.13	GE	3.16	0.13	GE	3.11	0.12	GE
8	Adopting strategies that boost clients self-confidence	3.14	0.14	GE	3.22	0.12	GE	3.08	0.25	GE
9	Amplifying clients abilities	2.93	0.19	GE	2.75	0.25	GE	2.82	0.13	GE
10	Avoiding overemphasis of clients incompetence's	2.96	0.15	GE	3.15	0.13	GE	3.04	0.13	GE

11	Discouraging clients from magnifying their failures	2.69	0.13	GE	2.93	0.13	GE	2.80	0.12	GE
12	Convincing clients that failures provide useful lessons for future successes	2.93	0.14	<b>GE</b>	2.18	0.12	GE	2.79	0.25	GE
<b>GRAND</b>		<b>2.94</b>	<b>0.14</b>	<b>GE</b>	<b>2.93</b>	<b>0.14</b>	<b>GE</b>	<b>2.95</b>	<b>0.17</b>	<b>GE</b>

### Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance

1. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent to which they adopt Using Positive Verbal Encouragements (UPE) strategy for conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu state.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent to which they adopt Directive Counseling (DC) strategy for conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu state.

### Methodology

Design adopted for the study was descriptive survey design. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. This study was carried out in Enugu State. The population for the study consisted of all the 295 public secondary school principals in Enugu state as at the time of the study. Due to the manageable size of the population for this study, the entire population, 295 public secondary school principals was used as sample for the study. Categorized by principal's gender, the sample was made up of 170 male and 125 female principals. Instrument for data collection was a 23-item structured questionnaire. The instrument was constructed by the researchers and validated by three research experts. Reliability coefficients obtained for the various parts of the instrument

Item	What is the extent to	Male	Female	Overall
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were; Cluster I = .69; Cluster II = .70; Cluster III =.76 Cluster IV=.71; Cluster V=.73 and Cluster VI = .70. The overall reliability coefficient value was .71, (Appendix D) obtained through Cronbach’s Alpha Method. Copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents by the researchers and three briefed research assistants. Direct delivery and retrieval system was used. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while ANOVA was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 significant level.

**Results**

**Research Question 1**

To what extent do principals adopt Using Positive Verbal Encouragements (UPE) Strategy for conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu state?

**Table 1:** mean ratings and standard deviation scores of the respondents on research question 1 items

From table 1 the grand mean value for male and female were 2.94 and 2.93 respectively. while the overall grand mean value was 2.95. This result indicates that the principals adopt Using Positive Verbal Encouragements (UPE) Strategy for conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu state to a Great Extent.

Also, the standard deviation value for the overall (0.17) is small, indicating that there were little or no extreme values. Hence, the mean values so obtained represent the actual views of the respondents.

**Research Question 2**

What is the extent to which principals adopt Directive Counseling (DC) Strategy for conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu state?

		Mean	SD	Remark	Mean	SD	Remark	Mean	SD	Remark
13	Changing clients' behaviour through improved patterns of relationship	2.93	0.13	GE	2.75	0.91	GE	2.82	0.15	VGE
14	Treating clients psychological problems through interpersonal therapy	2.93	0.25	GE	2.18	0.04	GE	2.79	0.98	VGE
15	Resolving clients conflict through improved patterns of communications	3.06	0.23	GE	3.22	0.44	GE	3.15	0.85	VGE
16	Encouraging clients to acknowledge individual differences among their peers	2.69	0.11	GE	2.93	0.35	GE	2.80	0.99	VGE
17	Influencing clients' perceptions of reality positively	2.93	0.25	GE	2.18	0.35	GE	2.79	0.26	VGE
18	Emphasizing the significance of clients interrelationship with their environment	3.21	0.05	GE	3.16	0.14	GE	3.11	0.95	VGE
19	focusing attention upon a particular problem during the Counseling session	3.14	0.29	GE	3.22	0.09	GE	3.08	0.14	VGE
20	playing a more active role than the client during the interview	3.61	0.11	GE	3.58	0.43	GE	3.62	0.75	VGE
21	Doing all that you can to get the counselee or client make a decision in keeping with your diagnosis	3.55	0.21	GE	3.59	0.13	GE	3.58	0.35	VGE

22	trying to direct the thinking of the counselee or client by advising him.	3.62	0.04	GE	3.57	0.95	GE	3.59	0.14	VGE
23	Issuing injunctions and prohibitions, or urge the client to take a particular action, such as facing an anxiety-provoking situation directly.	3.54	0.34	GE	3.61	0.93	GE	3.62	0.09	VGE
<b>GRAND</b>		<b>3.20</b>	<b>0.20</b>	<b>GE</b>	<b>3.09</b>	<b>0.42</b>	<b>GE</b>	<b>3.17</b>	<b>0.45</b>	<b>GE</b>

**Table 2:** mean ratings and standard deviation scores of the respondents on research question 2 items

From table 2 the grand mean value for male and female were 3.20 and 3.09 respectively while the overall grand mean value was 3.17. This result indicates that the principals adopt Directive Counseling (DC) Strategy for conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu state to a Great Extent.

Also, the standard deviation value for the overall (0.45) is small, indicating that there were little or no extreme values. Hence, the mean values so obtained represent the actual views of the respondents.

**Hypothesis one**

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent to which they adopt Using Positive Verbal Encouragements (UPE) strategy for conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu state.

**Table 3:** ANOVA analyses for hypothesis 1  
*International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research, 1(1)*

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Squares	F-ratio	Sig (.05)	Remark
Between counselling strategies	251.11	1	251.11	1.1958	.1003	Not Significant do not Reject Hypothesis
Between Gender	301.62	1	301.62	1.4363	.1112	Not Significant do not Reject Hypothesis
Interaction (counselling strategies*Gender)	214.31	1	214.31	1.0205	.1101	Not Significant do not Reject Hypothesis
Within samples (Error)	61302.00	292	210.00			
Total	62087.04	295				

From table 3 above, counselling strategies as main effect yielded an f-value of 1.1958 This is significant at .1003 level. Since .1003 is greater than .05 level set for this study, we conclude that the f-ratio (1.1958) is not significant at .05 level of significance. Gender as main effect gave an f-value of 1.4363 This is significant at .1112 level. Since .1112 is greater than .05 level set for this study, we conclude that the f-ratio (1.4363) is not significant at .05 level of significance.

The interaction effect (counselling strategies\*Gender) yielded an f-value of 1.0205 This is significant at .1101 level. Since .1101 is greater than .05 level set for this study, we conclude that the f-ratio (1.0205) is not significant at .05 level of significance. From the foregoing, hypothesis 1 is not rejected as stated because male and female principals in secondary schools in Enugu state did not differ significantly on the extent to which they adopt Using Positive Verbal Encouragements (UPE) strategy for conflict management in their schools.

**Hypothesis two**

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent to which they adopt Directive Counseling (DC) strategy for conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu state.

**Table 2:** ANOVA analyses for hypothesis 2

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Squares	F-ratio	Sig (.05)	Remark
Between counselling strategies	199.20	1	199.20	1.3280	.1331	Not Significant do not Reject Hypothesis
Between Gender	188.71	1	188.71	1.2581	.1012	Not Significant do not Reject Hypothesis
Interaction (counselling strategies*Gender)	209.43	1	209.43	1.3962	.1212	Not Significant do not Reject Hypothesis
Within samples (Error)	43800.00	292	150.00			
Total	44397.34	295				

From table 2 above, counselling strategies as main effect yielded an f-value of 1.3280. This is significant at .1331 level. Since .1331 is greater than .05 level set for this study, we conclude that the f-ratio (1.3280) is not significant at .05 level of significance. Gender as main effect gave an f-value of 1.2581 This is significant at .1012 level. Since .1012 is greater than .05 level set for this study, we conclude that the f-ratio (1.2581) is not significant at .05 level of significance.

The interaction effect (counselling strategies\*Gender) yielded an f-value of 1.3962 This is significant at .1212 level. Since .1212 is greater than .05 level set for this study, we conclude that the f-ratio (1.3962) is not significant at .05 level of significance. From the foregoing, hypothesis 2 is not rejected as stated because male and female principals in secondary schools in Enugu

state did not differ significantly on the extent to which they adopt Directive Counseling (DC) strategy for conflict management in their schools.

### **Summary of Findings**

Findings made in this study can be summarized thus;

1. Principals adopt Using Positive Verbal Encouragements (UPE) Strategy for conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu state to a Great Extent.
2. Principals adopt Directive Counseling (DC) Strategy for conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu state to a Great Extent.
3. Male and female principals did not differ significantly on the extent to which they adopt Using Positive Verbal Encouragements (UPE) and Directive Counseling (DC) strategies for conflict management in their schools.

### **Discussion of Findings**

On the extent of principals' adoption of Using Positive Verbal Encouragements (UPE) as a strategy for conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu state, it was found in this study that the principals adopt Positive Verbal Encouragements (UPE) strategy for conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu state to a great Extent. The finding agrees with the findings of El-Amin (2012) and Smith (2016) who found in their separate studies that principals adopt UPE strategy to a great Extent. However, the finding is in disagreement with the finding of Nezera (2017) who found that principals adopt UPE strategy to a low extent.

On influence of principals' gender, it was found in this study that male and female principals did not differ significantly on the extent to which they adopt UPE strategy conflict management in their schools. This finding contradicts the findings of El-Amin (2012) and Nezera (2017). El-Amin found male principals adopting UPE strategy more than their female



counterpart. Nezera found female principals adopting UPE strategy more than their male counterpart. But like this study, Smith (2016) found no significant difference on the extent to which male and female principals adopt UPE strategy. It was also found in this study that school location had no significant influence on the extent to which principals adopt UPE strategy for conflict management. This finding disagrees with the findings of El-Amin (2012) and Smith (2016). El-Amin found urban schools' principals adopting UPE strategy more than their rural schools' counterparts while Smith found the reverse, that is, rural schools' principals adopting UPE strategy more than their urban schools' counterpart.

The above finding on extent of adoption of UPE strategy is encouraging and heart-warming Positive verbal encouragement helps the administrators to show clients that they are paying attention to what they are saying. Nothing can turn off or discourage clients like giving them the impression that you do not care or understand their plights. Smith (2016) submitted that the major function of a counsellor, administrator or a leader is to acknowledge clients, their story and their feelings, and let clients know that you are listening, without interrupting the flow of their speech. Smith suggested that Positive verbal encouragement can be utilized through two techniques. These techniques are repeating (or echoing) and maintenance of constant eye contact. Repeating (or echoing) according to Smith entails resounding the last few words of client's sentences. According to Smith maintenance of constant eye contact assures clients that you are attentive and you care for them. Hence, it is a good thing that UPE strategy is well adopted by the principals.

On the extent of principals' adoption of Directive Counseling (DC) as a strategy for conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu state, it was found in this study that the principals adopt DC Strategy for conflict management in secondary schools in Enugu state to a

*International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research, 1(1)*

Great Extent. This finding is consistent with the findings of Udoh (2012) and Awofes (2016) who found in their separate studies that principals adopt DC strategy to a Great Extent. Contrarily, Okeke (2018) and Kitz (2018) found in their separate studies that principals adopt DC strategy to a low extent thereby disagreeing with the finding of this study. Result on influence of principals' gender, showed that male and female principals did not differ significantly on the extent to which they adopt DC strategy for conflict management in their schools. This finding disagrees with the findings of Awofes (2016) and Kitz (2018). Awofes found that male principals adopt DC strategy more than their female counterpart. Kitz found that female principals adopt DC strategy more than their male counterpart.

On the other hand, Okeke (2018) also found no significant difference on the extent to which male and female principals adopt DC strategy, hence, supporting the finding made in this study in this regard. On influence of school location, it was found in this study that school location had no significant influence on the extent to which principals adopt DC strategy for conflict management. This finding, agrees with that of Okeke (2018) who found that principals in schools did not differ significantly on the extent to which they adopt DC strategy. But the finding of this study on school location disagrees with those of Udoh (2012) and Awofes (2016). Awofes found that urban schools' principals adopt DC strategy more than their rural schools' counterparts. Udoh found that rural schools' principals adopt DC strategy more than their urban schools' counterparts.

Benefits of DC strategy cannot be overstressed, more so as in DC strategy the therapeutic process is directed along lines considered relevant by the counsellor or therapist, (Awofes, 2016). Okeke (2018) added that Directive Counseling is based on the assumption that the professional training and experience of the counsellor or therapist equip him or her to manage the therapeutic process and to guide the client's behaviour. Directive Counseling is also called directive therapy.

Udoh (2012) described directive Counseling as any form of psychotherapy in which the therapist assumes an active, directive role. According to Udoh in direct Counseling the therapist may express opinions, offer interpretations, make suggestions and recommendations, give advice about the client's actions and decisions, issue injunctions and prohibitions, or urge the client to take a particular action, such as facing an anxiety-provoking situation directly.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were made;

1. secondary school principals in Enugu state adopt Using Positive Verbal Encouragements (UPE) Strategy for conflict management to a Great Extent.
2. secondary school principals in Enugu state adopt Directive Counseling (DC) Strategy for conflict management to a Great Extent.
3. Male and female principals did not differ significantly on the extent to which they adopt Using Positive Verbal Encouragements (UPE) and Directive Counseling (DC) strategies for conflict management in their schools.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the researcher made the following recommendations:

1. Relevant boards, agencies, parastatals and Ministry of Education should institute awards for secondary school principals adopting Using Positive Verbal Encouragements (UPE) and Directive Counseling (DC) strategies for conflict management.
2. Relevant boards, agencies, parastatals and Ministry of Education should be organizing yearly seminars, conferences and workshops for principals with emphasis on adoption of Using Positive Verbal Encouragements (UPE) and Directive Counseling (DC) strategies for conflict management.

3. Good Knowledge and capacity to adopt Using Positive Verbal Encouragements (UPE) and Directive Counseling (DC) strategies for conflict management should form measurable aspects of screening for principals before appointment.
4. Curriculum planners should develop conflict management through Using Positive Verbal Encouragements (UPE) and Directive Counseling (DC) strategies as area of specialization at post graduate levels for counsellors.

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