

Assessment of Conflict Resolution Mechanisms and Staff Productivity in Public Administration: A Study of Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi, Edo State

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed conflict resolution mechanisms and staff productivity in public administration, using Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi, Edo State as a case study. The study was motivated by persistent workplace conflicts in public tertiary institutions and the need to determine how conflict management practices influence staff productivity. The study adopted a survey research design. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire administered to 84 respondents comprising only academic staff of Auchi Polytechnic. The data collected were analyzed using frequency distribution, percentages, mean scores, standard deviation, and rank order. The study is anchored on the Human Relations Theory. Findings revealed among others that negotiation, mediation, and formal grievance procedures are commonly used conflict resolution mechanisms in Auchi Polytechnic. The study also identified challenges such as poor communication between staff and management and perceived lack of impartiality in handling disputes. The study concluded that effective conflict resolution mechanisms play a significant role in enhancing staff productivity in Auchi Polytechnic. The study recommended among others; improved communication channels and increased staff participation in decision-making processes to strengthen conflict management and improve productivity.

Keywords: Conflict resolution, staff productivity, public administration, mediation, negotiation, Auchi Polytechnic, grievance handling.

Introduction

Organizations are established to achieve specific goals through the coordinated efforts of individuals and groups. In the process of pursuing organizational objectives, conflicts often emerge due to differences in opinions, values, interests, perceptions, and expectations among organizational members. Such conflicts are particularly common in public organizations where diverse stakeholders interact within complex administrative structures. Conflict is an inevitable phenomenon in every organization because individuals and groups often possess differing interests, values, goals, and expectations. In public institutions, workplace conflict may arise from communication breakdowns, competition for scarce resources, role ambiguity, administrative decisions, interpersonal disagreements, and perceived inequities in organizational processes. While conflict is often

viewed negatively, contemporary management scholars argue that when properly managed, conflict can stimulate innovation, improve decision-making, and strengthen organizational effectiveness. However, unresolved conflict can adversely affect employee morale, job satisfaction, commitment, and productivity (Sindu Bharathi & Sujatha, 2024). The concept of conflict resolution refers to the various strategies, mechanisms, and institutional arrangements employed to address disputes and disagreements within organizations. Such mechanisms include negotiation, mediation, arbitration, dialogue, grievance procedures, collective bargaining, and collaborative problem-solving approaches. Effective conflict resolution mechanisms create a conducive work environment that promotes trust, cooperation, and organizational harmony. Al Hussaini, (2024) demonstrated that organizations with effective conflict management

systems experience higher employee productivity, reduced absenteeism, improved teamwork, and enhanced organizational performance.

In the context of public administration, staff productivity is a critical determinant of organizational effectiveness. Public institutions rely heavily on human resources to implement policies, deliver services, and achieve developmental goals. Therefore, any factor that affects employee performance and productivity deserves serious attention from administrators and policymakers. Higher educational institutions in Nigeria operate within a dynamic environment characterized by diverse interests among academic staff, non-academic staff, administrators, students, and government agencies. Conflicts relating to working conditions, remuneration, promotion policies, leadership styles, and resource allocation frequently occur in these institutions. The manner in which such conflicts are managed often determines the level of staff commitment and institutional performance.

Auchi Polytechnic, located in Auchi, Edo State, is one of the earliest polytechnics established in Nigeria. Founded in 1963 as a technical college and later upgraded to a polytechnic in 1973, the institution has grown into a major federal tertiary institution with thousands of students and staff across diverse academic and administrative units. The institution was established to produce skilled manpower in engineering, science, environmental studies, management, and arts disciplines (Auchi Polytechnic, 2025)

As a large and complex organization comprising academic and non-academic staff, students, unions, and administrators, Auchi Polytechnic is susceptible to workplace conflicts arising from divergent interests and organizational dynamics. The effectiveness of the mechanisms employed by the institution to resolve such conflicts may significantly influence staff productivity and the overall achievement of institutional goals. Understanding the relationship between conflict resolution mechanisms and staff productivity is therefore essential for improving administrative efficiency and organizational performance within

the institution. Against this background, this study seeks to assess the effectiveness of conflict resolution mechanisms and their influence on staff productivity in Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi, Edo State.

Statement of the Problem

Conflict is a recurring feature of organizational life and is particularly prevalent in public institutions where multiple stakeholders pursue different interests and objectives. Although conflict is inevitable, its management determines whether it contributes positively or negatively to organizational performance. In Nigerian tertiary institutions, workplace conflicts have become increasingly common due to issues such as inadequate communication, leadership challenges, promotion disputes, workload distribution, staff welfare concerns, and resource constraints. When such conflicts remain unresolved or are poorly managed, they can create tension among employees, reduce morale, increase absenteeism, weaken teamwork, and ultimately lower staff productivity. Despite the existence of various conflict resolution mechanisms in public institutions, many organizations continue to experience persistent disputes that affect service delivery and organizational effectiveness. In some cases, employees may perceive existing conflict resolution procedures as ineffective, biased, or inaccessible, thereby reducing their willingness to cooperate with management.

At Auchi Polytechnic, the effectiveness of conflict resolution mechanisms and their influence on staff productivity remain insufficiently documented. While the institution has established administrative structures for addressing workplace disputes, there is limited empirical evidence regarding how these mechanisms affect employee performance and productivity. Consequently, the problem of this study is to determine whether the conflict resolution mechanisms adopted in Auchi Polytechnic are effective and whether they significantly influence staff productivity.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to assess the conflict resolution mechanisms and staff productivity in Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi, Edo State. The specific objectives are to:

1. examine the conflict resolution mechanisms adopted in Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi.
2. determine the extent to which conflict resolution mechanisms influence staff productivity in Auchi Polytechnic.
3. identify the challenges affecting the effectiveness of conflict resolution mechanisms in Auchi Polytechnic.

Research Questions

The following research questions will guide the study:

1. What conflict resolution mechanisms are adopted in Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi?
2. To what extent do conflict resolution mechanisms influence staff productivity in Auchi Polytechnic?
3. What challenges affect the effectiveness of conflict resolution mechanisms in Auchi Polytechnic?

Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the assessment of conflict resolution mechanisms and staff productivity in public administration, using Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi, Edo State, as a case study. The study specifically examines the various conflict resolution mechanisms utilized within the institution and evaluates their influence on staff productivity. The study covers only academic staff of Auchi Polytechnic.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey design. The total population is the total number of academic staff in the polytechnic, which is 836 (Haruna, Momoh, Ismail, 2023). However, 10% which is Eighty four (84) of the total population was used in this study. Purposive sampling technique was adopted for this study. The researchers used the questionnaire as instrument for data collection. The collected data were analyzed using statistical

package for the social sciences (SPSS) to determine the frequency, percentage, mean score and standard deviation.

Conceptual Literature

Conflict

Conflict is an inevitable aspect of organizational life because individuals and groups often have different goals, interests, values, perceptions, and expectations. It occurs whenever one party perceives that another party has negatively affected or is about to negatively affect something that the first party values (Robbins & Judge, 2019). Conflict is common in organizations because employees interact regularly in pursuit of organizational objectives, thereby creating opportunities for disagreements and misunderstandings.

According to Pembi et al. (2023), organizational conflict arises from differences in opinions, communication barriers, competition for resources, role ambiguity, and incompatible goals among organizational members. In public institutions, conflict may emerge between employees, departments, labour unions, and management. Although conflict is often viewed negatively, contemporary organizational scholars argue that moderate levels of conflict can stimulate creativity, innovation, and improved decision-making when properly managed (George & Jones, 2021). However, unmanaged conflict may result in low employee morale, stress, absenteeism, poor communication, reduced cooperation, and declining productivity (Iyamabhor et al., 2024).

Conflict Resolution Mechanisms

Conflict resolution mechanisms refer to the various strategies, procedures, and institutional arrangements adopted by organizations to address disputes and disagreements among employees and other stakeholders. These mechanisms are designed to reduce tensions, restore harmonious relationships, and promote organizational effectiveness (Nordby, 2018).

Conflict resolution mechanisms involve systematic efforts aimed at identifying the root causes of disputes and facilitating mutually acceptable

solutions. Effective conflict resolution ensures that disagreements are settled constructively without disrupting organizational activities (Daft, 2022). According to Robbins, Coulter, and DeCenzo (2021), organizations that establish effective conflict management systems are more likely to achieve improved employee commitment, job satisfaction, and productivity than organizations that ignore workplace disputes.

Negotiation as a Conflict Resolution Mechanism

Negotiation is a process through which conflicting parties engage in direct discussions to reach a mutually acceptable agreement without involving a third party. It is one of the most frequently used conflict resolution mechanisms in organizations because it allows disputing parties to communicate their interests and work collaboratively toward a solution (Kinicki & Fugate, 2020). Negotiation promotes participation, understanding, and compromise among organizational members. When effectively utilized, it reduces hostility and strengthens interpersonal relationships. Ojikutu and Meadows (2023) argue that negotiation contributes significantly to organizational effectiveness because it encourages employees and management to resolve disputes through dialogue rather than confrontation.

Mediation as a Conflict Resolution Mechanism

Mediation involves the intervention of a neutral third party who assists disputing parties in reaching a voluntary settlement. Unlike arbitration, the mediator does not impose a decision but facilitates communication and guides parties toward consensus (Nordby, 2018). Mediation is particularly useful when direct negotiations have failed or when relationships between disputing parties have become strained. According to Ebhote and Akpaida (2023), mediation enhances workplace harmony by providing an impartial platform through which conflicts can be discussed and resolved peacefully.

Arbitration as a Conflict Resolution Mechanism

Arbitration is a formal process in which a neutral third party hears arguments from conflicting parties

and makes a binding decision. It is commonly used in labour-management disputes and situations where negotiation and mediation fail to produce satisfactory outcomes (Robbins & Judge, 2019). Arbitration provides a structured approach to conflict resolution and helps organizations avoid prolonged disputes that may negatively affect productivity and service delivery (Daft, 2022).

Grievance Handling Procedure

A grievance procedure is a formal mechanism through which employees communicate complaints and seek redress regarding perceived injustices in the workplace. Such complaints may relate to promotion, remuneration, working conditions, disciplinary actions, or organizational policies (Robbins et al., 2021). An effective grievance handling system promotes transparency, fairness, and accountability. According to Iyamabhor et al. (2024), organizations that maintain effective grievance procedures experience fewer workplace disputes because employees have legitimate channels through which their concerns can be addressed.

Dialogue and Communication

Communication is an essential component of conflict resolution. Effective communication enables employees and management to exchange information, clarify misunderstandings, and address issues before they escalate into major conflicts (George & Jones, 2021). Dialogue promotes mutual understanding, trust, and cooperation among organizational members. Kinicki and Fugate (2020) maintain that organizations with open communication systems are better positioned to prevent and resolve workplace conflicts than organizations characterized by poor information flow.

Collective Bargaining

Collective bargaining refers to negotiations between management and employee representatives, particularly labour unions, concerning conditions of employment, wages, benefits, and workplace policies. It is widely used in public sector

organizations and educational institutions (Ebhote & Akpaida, 2023). Collective bargaining promotes industrial harmony by providing employees with opportunities to participate in decisions affecting their welfare. Effective collective bargaining reduces industrial disputes and contributes to organizational stability and productivity (Robbins et al., 2021).

Staff Productivity

Staff productivity refers to the efficiency and effectiveness with which employees utilize available resources, skills, knowledge, and time to achieve organizational goals. Productivity is often measured by the quantity and quality of output produced within a specified period (George & Jones, 2021). In public institutions, staff productivity is a crucial determinant of organizational performance because the effectiveness of public service delivery depends largely on employee performance. According to Wahua et al. (2024), productive employees demonstrate commitment, efficiency, innovation, and the ability to meet organizational expectations. Within tertiary institutions such as Auchi Polytechnic, staff productivity may be reflected through effective teaching, quality research output, efficient administrative services, timely completion of tasks, and positive interactions with students and stakeholders.

Conflict Resolution Mechanisms and Staff Productivity

Conflict resolution mechanisms and staff productivity are closely related because workplace harmony significantly influences employee performance. Effective conflict resolution creates a conducive work environment characterized by trust, cooperation, and job satisfaction, all of which contribute to higher productivity (Ebhote & Akpaida, 2023). Conversely, unresolved conflicts often result in stress, reduced morale, poor communication, absenteeism, and declining organizational performance (Iyamabor et al., 2024). Ojikutu and Meadows (2023) found that organizations with effective conflict management

practices experience higher levels of employee commitment and productivity than organizations where workplace disputes are poorly managed.

In tertiary institutions, mechanisms such as negotiation, mediation, grievance handling procedures, communication systems, and collective bargaining help strengthen staff-management relationships and promote institutional effectiveness. Therefore, the effectiveness of conflict resolution mechanisms is a significant determinant of staff productivity in public administration organizations such as Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi, Edo State.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Human Relations Theory, developed through the works of Elton Mayo and his associates based on findings from the Hawthorne Studies conducted at the Western Electric Company between 1924 and 1932. The theory emerged as a reaction against the Classical School of Management, which emphasized structure, task efficiency, and formal authority while neglecting human and social factors in the workplace. Human Relations Theory, on the other hand, emphasizes that employees are social beings whose productivity is strongly influenced by interpersonal relationships, communication patterns, leadership style, and psychological satisfaction (Mayo, 1933; Roethlisberger & Dickson, 1939).

According to Mayo (1933), workers are more productive when they feel valued, involved in decision-making, and integrated into the social system of the organization. The theory argues that informal group relations, communication flow, and management attention to employee welfare significantly influence productivity levels. Modern interpretations of the theory further emphasize that workplace conflict is inevitable in organizations due to differences in interests, perceptions, and goals (Robbins & Judge, 2019; Daft, 2022).

In the context of Auchi Polytechnic, the theory is highly relevant because the institution consists of diverse categories of staff (academic and non-academic) who interact daily in the course of their

duties. Conflicts arising from promotion, workload, welfare, and administrative decisions can negatively affect productivity if not properly managed. The Human Relations Theory therefore provides a strong explanation of how effective conflict resolution mechanisms can improve staff productivity by strengthening interpersonal relationships and enhancing organizational climate. The Human Relations Theory is relevant to this study in the following ways:

1. It explains the importance of human interaction and social relations in determining employee productivity.
2. It supports the idea that unresolved workplace conflict negatively affects staff morale and performance.
3. It provides a theoretical basis for conflict resolution mechanisms such as mediation, negotiation, and grievance handling.
4. It establishes a relationship between employee satisfaction, workplace harmony, and productivity.
5. It aligns directly with the objective of assessing how conflict resolution mechanisms influence staff productivity in Auchi Polytechnic.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 1: Responses on Conflict Resolution Mechanisms Adopted in Auchi Polytechnic (n = 84)

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank
1	I am aware that negotiation is commonly used to resolve workplace conflicts in Auchi Polytechnic.	38 (45.2%)	30 (35.7%)	10 (11.9%)	6 (7.1%)	3.19	0.92	2nd
2	I have observed that mediation is frequently employed by management in resolving staff disputes.	42 (50.0%)	28 (33.3%)	8 (9.5%)	6 (7.1%)	3.26	0.91	1st
3	I believe that formal grievance procedures are available and utilized in addressing workplace conflicts in the institution.	35 (41.7%)	32 (38.1%)	11 (13.1%)	6 (7.1%)	3.14	0.91	3rd
	Grand Mean					3.20	0.91	

Decision Rule: Mean $\geq$ 2.50 = Agree

Table 1 presents respondents' views on the conflict resolution mechanisms adopted in Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi. The table reveals that 38 respondents representing 45.2% strongly agreed and 30 respondents representing 35.7% agreed that negotiation is commonly used to resolve workplace conflicts in the institution. Meanwhile, 10 respondents representing 11.9% disagreed, while 6 respondents representing 7.1% strongly disagreed. The item recorded a mean score of 3.19 and a standard deviation of 0.92, ranking second among the items assessed. The mean score exceeds the

criterion mean of 2.50, indicating that respondents generally agreed that negotiation is a commonly adopted conflict resolution mechanism within the institution.

The second item examined whether mediation is frequently employed by management in resolving staff disputes. The results show that 42 respondents representing 50.0% strongly agreed and 28 respondents representing 33.3% agreed with the statement. However, 8 respondents representing 9.5% disagreed, while 6 respondents representing 7.1% strongly disagreed. The item recorded the

highest mean score of 3.26 with a standard deviation of 0.91, ranking first among all the items in the table. This finding suggests that mediation is widely utilized by management in resolving conflicts among staff members.

Furthermore, the third item sought respondents' opinions on whether formal grievance procedures are available and utilized in addressing workplace conflicts. The results indicate that 35 respondents representing 41.7% strongly agreed and 32 respondents representing 38.1% agreed with the statement. Conversely, 11 respondents representing 13.1% disagreed and 6 respondents representing 7.1% strongly disagreed. The item obtained a mean score of 3.14 and a standard deviation of 0.91, ranking third. Since the mean score is above the

benchmark of 2.50, respondents generally agreed that formal grievance procedures exist and are utilized in addressing workplace conflicts.

The grand mean score of 3.20 and standard deviation of 0.91 indicate a high level of agreement among respondents regarding the availability and utilization of conflict resolution mechanisms in Auchi Polytechnic. The findings imply that negotiation, mediation, and grievance handling procedures are actively employed by the institution in managing workplace conflicts. This suggests that the institution has established mechanisms aimed at promoting harmonious working relationships and preventing disputes from escalating into serious organizational crises.

Table 2: Responses on the Influence of Conflict Resolution Mechanisms on Staff Productivity (n = 84)

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank
4	I perform my duties more effectively when workplace conflicts are resolved promptly.	46 (54.8%)	25 (29.8%)	8 (9.5%)	5 (6.0%)	3.33	0.89	2nd
5	I feel more committed to my work when conflict resolution mechanisms are effectively implemented.	48 (57.1%)	24 (28.6%)	7 (8.3%)	5 (6.0%)	3.37	0.88	1st
6	I believe that effective conflict resolution contributes significantly to my productivity at work.	44 (52.4%)	27 (32.1%)	8 (9.5%)	5 (6.0%)	3.31	0.89	3rd
	Grand Mean					3.34	0.89	

Decision Rule: Mean $\geq$ 2.50 = Agree

Table 2 presents respondents' perceptions regarding the influence of conflict resolution mechanisms on staff productivity in Auchi Polytechnic. The first item examined whether respondents perform their duties more effectively when workplace conflicts are resolved promptly. The results reveal that 46 respondents representing 54.8% strongly agreed and 25 respondents representing 29.8% agreed with the statement. On the other hand, 8 respondents representing 9.5% disagreed and 5 respondents representing 6.0% strongly disagreed. The item

recorded a mean score of 3.33 and a standard deviation of 0.89, ranking second among the items. The mean score above the criterion value of 2.50 indicates that prompt conflict resolution positively influences employees' effectiveness in performing their duties.

The second item assessed whether effective conflict resolution mechanisms enhance staff commitment to work. The findings show that 48 respondents representing 57.1% strongly agreed and 24 respondents representing 28.6% agreed with the

statement. In contrast, 7 respondents representing 8.3% disagreed while 5 respondents representing 6.0% strongly disagreed. This item obtained the highest mean score of 3.37 with a standard deviation of 0.88, ranking first in the table. This finding suggests that effective conflict management significantly improves employees' commitment and dedication to organizational goals.

The third item sought respondents' views on whether effective conflict resolution contributes significantly to staff productivity. The result shows that 44 respondents representing 52.4% strongly agreed and 27 respondents representing 32.1% agreed with the statement. Meanwhile, 8 respondents representing 9.5% disagreed and 5 respondents representing 6.0% strongly disagreed. The item recorded a mean score of 3.31 and a

standard deviation of 0.89, ranking third. The mean score above the acceptance level indicates that respondents perceive effective conflict resolution as a major factor contributing to increased staff productivity.

The grand mean score of 3.34 and standard deviation of 0.89 demonstrate strong agreement among respondents that conflict resolution mechanisms positively influence staff productivity. The findings imply that when workplace conflicts are resolved effectively, employees become more committed, motivated, and productive. The result further suggests that effective conflict management promotes a conducive working environment that enhances job performance and organizational effectiveness in Auchi Polytechnic.

Table 3: Responses on Challenges Affecting the Effectiveness of Conflict Resolution Mechanisms (n = 84)

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank
7	I believe that poor communication between staff and management hinders effective conflict resolution in the institution.	43 (51.2%)	26 (31.0%)	9 (10.7%)	6 (7.1%)	3.26	0.93	2nd
8	I have observed that delays in addressing staff grievances affect the effectiveness of conflict resolution mechanisms.	47 (56.0%)	24 (28.6%)	8 (9.5%)	5 (6.0%)	3.35	0.89	1st
9	I believe that lack of impartiality in handling workplace disputes reduces confidence in the institution's conflict resolution mechanisms.	40 (47.6%)	28 (33.3%)	10 (11.9%)	6 (7.1%)	3.21	0.92	3rd
	Grand Mean					3.27	0.91	

Decision Rule: Mean $\geq$ 2.50 = Agree

Table 3 presents respondents' opinions regarding the challenges affecting the effectiveness of conflict resolution mechanisms in Auchi Polytechnic. The first item examined whether poor communication between staff and management hinders effective conflict resolution. The results indicate that 43

respondents representing 51.2% strongly agreed and 26 respondents representing 31.0% agreed with the statement. However, 9 respondents representing 10.7% disagreed while 6 respondents representing 7.1% strongly disagreed. The item recorded a mean score of 3.26 and a standard deviation of 0.93,

ranking second among the items. The mean score above the criterion value indicates that poor communication constitutes a major challenge to effective conflict management within the institution.

The second item assessed whether delays in addressing staff grievances affect the effectiveness of conflict resolution mechanisms. The findings reveal that 47 respondents representing 56.0% strongly agreed and 24 respondents representing 28.6% agreed with the statement. Conversely, 8 respondents representing 9.5% disagreed and 5 respondents representing 6.0% strongly disagreed. The item obtained the highest mean score of 3.35 and a standard deviation of 0.89, ranking first. This indicates that delayed responses to staff complaints and grievances significantly undermine the effectiveness of conflict resolution efforts within the institution.

The third item investigated whether lack of impartiality in handling workplace disputes reduces confidence in the institution's conflict resolution mechanisms. The results show that 40 respondents representing 47.6% strongly agreed and 28 respondents representing 33.3% agreed with the statement. Meanwhile, 10 respondents representing 11.9% disagreed and 6 respondents representing 7.1% strongly disagreed. The item recorded a mean score of 3.21 and a standard deviation of 0.92, ranking third. This suggests that perceived bias or favoritism in conflict resolution processes can weaken employees' trust and confidence in organizational conflict management systems.

The grand mean score of 3.27 and standard deviation of 0.91 indicate that respondents generally agreed that poor communication, delays in grievance handling, and lack of impartiality are major challenges affecting the effectiveness of conflict resolution mechanisms in Auchi Polytechnic. The findings imply that although conflict resolution mechanisms exist within the institution, their effectiveness may be constrained by communication gaps, bureaucratic delays, and concerns about fairness. Addressing these challenges could strengthen the institution's conflict

management framework and further enhance staff productivity and organizational harmony.

Discussion of Findings

The findings in Table 1 revealed that respondents generally agreed that negotiation, mediation, and grievance handling procedures are commonly adopted conflict resolution mechanisms in Auchi Polytechnic, with a grand mean of 3.20. This indicates that the institution has established formal and informal structures for managing workplace conflict. This finding is consistent with the study of Ojikutu and Meadows (2023), who emphasized that negotiation and mediation are widely used in organizations to reduce tension and promote organizational effectiveness. Similarly, Robbins and Coulter (2021) noted that grievance procedures are essential formal mechanisms for addressing employee dissatisfaction and preventing escalation of conflicts.

From the Human Relations Theory perspective, the result supports the view that organizations function more effectively when interpersonal issues are addressed through participatory and communicative processes rather than authoritarian control. Therefore, the presence of these mechanisms in Auchi Polytechnic reflects an attempt to maintain organizational harmony, which is essential for effective public administration.

The findings in Table 2 showed a strong agreement that effective conflict resolution improves staff productivity, with a grand mean of 3.34. Respondents indicated that prompt resolution of conflict enhances job performance, increases commitment, and improves overall productivity. This finding aligns with Daft (2022), who stated that effective management of interpersonal issues improves organizational efficiency and employee performance. It also supports the findings of Kinicki and Fugate (2020), who emphasized that employees are more productive when they work in a supportive and conflict-free environment.

Empirical studies such as those by Iyamabhor et al. (2024) and Ebhote and Akpaida (2023) also confirm that effective conflict resolution strategies significantly enhance productivity in tertiary

institutions by improving morale, reducing tension, and increasing organizational commitment.

The findings in Table 3 revealed that poor communication, delays in grievance handling, and lack of impartiality are major challenges affecting conflict resolution mechanisms in Auchi Polytechnic, with a grand mean of 3.27. This finding is supported by George and Jones (2021), who observed that communication breakdown is a major source of workplace conflict and a barrier to effective resolution. Similarly, Robbins et al. (2021) noted that delays in addressing employee grievances often escalate dissatisfaction and reduce trust in management systems.

The issue of perceived bias or lack of impartiality aligns with the findings of Ebhote and Akpaída (2023), who reported that unfair handling of disputes reduces employee confidence in institutional conflict resolution structures, particularly in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it is concluded that Auchi Polytechnic employs several conflict resolution mechanisms such as negotiation, mediation, and formal grievance procedures. These mechanisms are generally perceived by staff as active and functional within the institution, indicating that management has put in place structures aimed at addressing workplace disagreements and maintaining industrial harmony.

The study further concludes that effective conflict resolution mechanisms have a significant positive influence on staff productivity. When conflicts are promptly and fairly resolved, staff members tend to demonstrate higher levels of commitment, improved job performance, and greater efficiency in the discharge of their duties. This confirms that a peaceful and well-managed work environment enhances employee morale and supports institutional effectiveness.

However, the study also concludes that the effectiveness of conflict resolution mechanisms in Auchi Polytechnic is constrained by several challenges. These include poor communication between management and staff, delays in addressing

grievances, and perceived lack of impartiality in handling disputes. These challenges weaken trust in the system and may reduce the overall effectiveness of conflict management practices within the institution.

In line with the Human Relations Theory, the study concludes that interpersonal relationships, communication, and employee involvement are central to achieving organizational productivity. Therefore, the productivity of staff in Auchi Polytechnic is closely tied to the quality of conflict resolution mechanisms and the extent to which employees feel fairly treated and adequately heard. The study concludes that while conflict resolution mechanisms exist and are moderately effective in Auchi Polytechnic, there is still room for improvement to ensure faster, fairer, and more transparent handling of workplace conflicts in order to further enhance staff productivity and institutional performance.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The management of Auchi Polytechnic should improve internal communication systems between staff and management. Regular meetings, circulars, feedback platforms, and open-door policies should be encouraged to reduce misunderstandings and prevent avoidable workplace conflicts.
2. The institution should ensure that staff grievances are addressed promptly and systematically. Delays in conflict resolution should be minimized through clear timelines and efficient administrative procedures, as timely intervention helps prevent escalation of disputes.
3. Conflict resolution processes should be transparent, fair, and free from bias. Management should ensure that disciplinary actions and dispute resolutions are handled objectively to build trust and confidence among staff.
4. Training and retraining programs should be organized for heads of departments, unit

leaders, and administrative officers on modern conflict management techniques such as negotiation, mediation, and emotional intelligence in leadership.

5. Staff should be more involved in decision-making processes that affect their welfare and working conditions. Participatory management will reduce resistance, improve cooperation, and enhance organizational commitment.

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