



Conflict Management and Teachers' Pedagogy in Nigerian Universities: A Study on Collaborative Problem Solving and Open Communication

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ABSTRACT

This study examined conflict management and teachers' pedagogy within Nigerian universities, focusing on the role of collaborative problem-solving and open communication. Survey research design was employed, allowing for a comprehensive investigation through both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. The population comprised students, faculty members, and administrators across various Nigerian universities, with a sample of 200 participants selected using stratified random sampling. Structured questionnaire were administered to gather data on demographic characteristics, perceptions of conflict management strategies, experiences with collaborative problem-solving and open communication, and the impact on teachers' pedagogy. Quantitative data were analyzed using statistical methods such as descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis. Qualitative data from interviews and observations were analyzed thematically. Findings indicated moderate to strong positive correlations between collaborative problem-solving, open communication, and conflict management. Collaborative problem-solving and open communication were significant predictors of conflict management outcomes. The study contributes to evidence-based practices for effective conflict resolution and teaching pedagogy in Nigerian universities.

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INTRODUCTION

Conflict arises naturally in any relationship between people because of their diverse viewpoints, interests, and values. Conflicts among students, staff, and administrators are common and significant in educational institutions such as Nigerian universities, where varied persons come to pursue academic goals. Conflicts at higher education institutions are common and have a negative impact on teaching methods, student participation, and the overall performance of the institution (Ololube, 2021). Being a teacher myself, I know how important it is to have efficient ways for managing disagreements in the classroom so that students can learn in an atmosphere free from disruptions. There are many different kinds of conflicts that can arise at

Nigerian colleges, including student-to-student fights, disagreements between administration and students, and cultural clashes. Both the learning process and the overall academic atmosphere are undermined by these disagreements, making it harder to achieve educational goals. Akintayo and Adebakin (2023) found that students in Nigerian universities are less satisfied with their experience, do less academically, and are more likely to leave out when conflicts are not resolved. The importance of taking proactive steps to resolve disagreements and foster a healthy academic community is highlighted by these findings. When it comes to managing conflicts on university campuses in Nigeria, the conventional wisdom is that it's better to deal with issues after they've already escalated rather than try to head

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them off at the pass. Nevertheless, this reactive method has not been successful in resolving conflicts or identifying their sources. Therefore, proactive conflict management approaches that emphasize teamwork, dialogue, and mutual comprehension are gaining ground (Olaniyan, 2022). Approaches to conflict management that encourage open communication and collaborative problem-solving have recently gained popularity. These methods can lead to more fruitful conversations, better group solutions, and stronger relationships.

Collectively identifying underlying issues, exploring alternative solutions, and reaching mutually acceptable agreements are the goals of collaborative problem-solving, which entails involving all parties engaged in a conflict. Collaborative problem-solving encourages a culture of cooperation, creativity, and ownership by making everyone feel like they have a share in the outcome (Ogunyemi, 2020). As a teacher, I think that students can be better prepared for academic and professional success if they are given opportunities to work together to solve problems and build their critical thinking, collaboration, and conflict resolution skills. Similarly, since it fosters honesty, trust, and empathy, open communication is essential in conflict management. According to Ayeni (2023), an inclusive environment is fostered by open communication, which values varied opinions and proactively addresses problems. Educators can improve their pedagogy and reduce disputes by encouraging open communication in the classroom. This will allow for more possibilities for meaningful debate, shared decision-making, and constructive criticism (Aderibigbe, 2021). Keeping an open channel of communication with my kids has helped me tremendously in creating a safe classroom where they feel heard and respected, and in avoiding miscommunications overall. Collaborative problem-solving and open communication have many potential advantages, but they aren't always easy to apply in Nigerian colleges. Perpetuating a culture of avoidance and silence are institutional hurdles, cultural standards, and power dynamics that make it difficult to work together effectively (Adekunle,

2022). Efforts to emphasize conflict management inside academic institutions are further complicated by limited resources, time constraints, and competing objectives. Problems with conflict management in Nigerian colleges have a negative impact on both the pedagogy of faculty and students' ability to learn. The negative impacts of student-teacher and administration-administrator conflicts on classroom dynamics and school performance have been the subject of recent studies (Ololube, 2021). Cultural clashes, arguments between administrators and students, interpersonal issues, and student-faculty conflicts are prevalent and can hinder students' ability to learn (Akintayo & Adebakin, 2023). Resolving conflicts after they've escalated rather than preventing them proactively has been the typical approach to conflict management at Nigerian colleges, which has been punitive and reactive. Yet, this reactive method has not been effective in resolving conflicts or identifying their causes (Olaniyan, 2022). Therefore, it is critical to take proactive steps to foster cooperation, dialogue, and mutual comprehension among all parties involved (Ogunyemi, 2020).

The application of collaborative problem-solving and open communication in conflict management is confronted with numerous problems in Nigerian colleges, despite their relevance being recognized. Perpetuating a culture of avoidance and silence are institutional hurdles, cultural standards, and power dynamics that make it difficult to work together effectively (Adekunle, 2022). Efforts to emphasize conflict management inside academic institutions are further complicated by limited resources, time constraints, and competing objectives. Unresolved conflicts have far-reaching effects on student happiness, faculty productivity, and the prestige of the institution in Nigerian institutions. Student engagement, retention, and teacher morale are all negatively impacted by conflicts, according to research (Akintayo & Adebakin, 2023). Universities should be providing high-quality education and preparing students for success in an increasingly globalized society; conflicts distract from this goal. There is an urgent need for studies that investigate novel methods of

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conflict management in Nigerian institutions because of the complexity and impact of these issues. To fill this knowledge gap, this study looks at how better teaching, more academic achievement, and a more positive classroom climate can be achieved through collaborative problem-solving and open communication. This research seeks to enhance the development of evidence-based practices in Nigerian universities by drawing on recent insights and personal experiences. Its goal is to help educators, administrators, and students better handle conflicts and foster a culture of cooperation and mutual respect.

Given these obstacles, studies investigating the usefulness of group problem-solving and honest dialogue in resolving conflicts in Nigerian academic institutions are urgently required. This study seeks to fill that void by exploring how these tactics can improve instructors' pedagogy, encourage academic success, and create a supportive learning environment. This research aims to help educators, administrators, and students in Nigerian universities build a culture of cooperation and mutual respect by drawing on recent insights and personal experiences to create evidence-based practices that empower them to effectively navigate conflicts.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study is to examine the role of collaborative problem-solving and open communication in conflict management within Nigerian universities, specifically aiming to:

1. Investigate the effectiveness of collaborative problem-solving in resolving conflicts among students, faculty, and administrators.
2. Assess the impact of open communication on mitigating conflicts and enhancing teachers' pedagogy in Nigerian universities.

Hypotheses:

H1: Collaborative problem-solving significantly contributes to conflict resolution within Nigerian university settings.

H2: Open communication significantly improves teachers' pedagogy and conflict management in Nigerian universities.

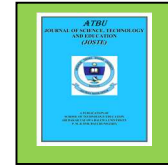
LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Review

Conflict Management

Conflict management in educational contexts has received increased attention in recent time, given its impact on teachers' pedagogy, student learning outcomes, and institutional performance. In Nigerian universities, students, faculty, and administrators engage in conflicts over an array of issues which they are not in convenient with (Ololube, 2021), such as hours of instruction, examination schedules, thesis revisions, and administrative procedures. Conflicts can be driven by personal clashes, power contestations, cultural differences, and resource distribution concerns, among others, and they could potentially disrupt an institutions learning environment and impede student academic performance (Akintayo & Adebakin, 2023). Scholars have increasingly underscored the importance of adopting a proactive approach to handling conflict in education, which requires stakeholders to cooperate, communicate, and engage in participatory decision making (Olaniyan, 2022). In contrast, reactive conflict resolution tactics within education systems, such as punishment, compromise, and the imposition of decisions, have failed to tackle the root causes of conflicts, and, in most cases, have only delayed or deepened their resolution (Ogunyemi, 2020). As a result, some scholars stress the implementation of participative and dialogic models of conflict management, which prioritise active stakeholder engagement, the search for reasonably acceptable outcomes, and a focus on resolving the dispute in the long run. Collaborative problem solving is one of these models of conflict management that is tailor-made for educational environments, based on its insistence that no one should be left out in the resolution process (Adekunle, 2022).

Collaborative problem-solving requires that students and key stakeholders take ownership of their actions and joint responsibilities



for the restoration of peace in conflict situations. Collaborative problem-solving provides an opportunity for stakeholders to identify root causes of a dispute, express divergent perspectives, and develop creative solutions to the problem at hand (Ayeni, 2023). One of the positive aspects of collaborative problem-solving is that it should not only focus on resolving the immediate issue, it also should concentrate on building trust, enhancing communication, and maintaining relationships among the members of the academic community. Open communication is a critical aspect of an effective conflict management strategy because it allows individuals to state their reservations, preferences, and expectations in a clear, honest, and open manner (Ololube, 2021). By making channels of communication open and accessible, the situation can be drastically accepted and avoided. Consequently, a culture of open communication minimizes the chances of conflict escalations due to misunderstandings. Moreover, open communication provides opportunities for reflection, dialogue, decision-making, and relationship development, which help foster a culture of positive reinforcement and respect within educational institutions (Olaniyan, 2022). Literature on the management of conflicts within Nigerian universities highlights the need to institute proactive and collaborative strategies that champion cooperation, communication, and problem-solving. By incorporating these strategies into university policies, procedures, and systems, the institutions can help mitigate conflict and create an optimal framework for pursuing academic excellence, student permanency, and institutional growth.

Collaborative Problem Solving

Managing conflicts and creating a positive learning environment in Nigerian institutions can be achieved through collaborative problem-solving. New studies show that it helps students, teachers, and administrators work together better and think critically and creatively about problems (Adekunle, 2022). When people with different backgrounds and experiences work together to solve problems, they are able to better

understand and tackle difficult problems (Ayeni, 2023).

According to Akintayo and Adebakin (2023), collaborative problem-solving provides a proactive way to resolve disagreements and avoid future conflicts within the framework of conflict management. This method improves communication, establishes trust, and cultivates a feeling of ownership and responsibility by urging stakeholders to collaborate towards common objectives and answers (Ololube, 2021). In addition, when parties involved in a conflict work together to find a solution, it opens the door for a better understanding of each other's perspectives and interests (Ogunyemi, 2020).

Research conducted recently at Nigerian universities has shown that collaborative problem-solving improves teaching methods. Educators can foster active engagement, knowledge creation, and engagement in the learning process by incorporating collaborative problem-solving activities into their teaching practices (Olaniyan, 2022). Pedagogical practices that aim to foster collaborative learning and improve student learning outcomes often involve group projects, case studies, and problem-based learning activities (Ayeni, 2023).

The importance of critical thinking, communication, and cooperation in today's worldwide workforce is growing, and collaborative problem-solving is a great way to cultivate these abilities (Akintayo & Adebakin, 2023). Teachers can better equip their pupils for the challenges of the real world and foster in them the habits of mind necessary to succeed: by having them work together to solve problems (Adekunle, 2022).

Despite the many advantages, faculty resistance, limited resources, and institutional culture all work against collaborative problem-solving at Nigerian universities (Ololube, 2021). Hence, stakeholders should be encouraged to work together through enabling legislation, avenues for professional growth, and organizational frameworks (Ogunyemi, 2020). To further understand how to best apply collaborative problem-solving in varied educational settings, more study is required to determine what aspects impact its success in these contexts (Olaniyan,

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2022). Managing conflicts and improving education in Nigerian institutions can be achieved through collaborative problem-solving. Collaborative problem-solving equips administrators, students, and teachers to build inclusive and supportive classrooms by encouraging teamwork, open dialogue, and analytical thinking. Improved academic performance, student outcomes, and school growth can result from ongoing initiatives to foster teamwork in solving problems in the classroom.

Open Communication

To effectively handle conflicts and implement effective pedagogy at Nigerian colleges, open communication is essential. This promotes openness, trust, and collaboration among all parties involved (Ayeni, 2023). Open communication has the power to create a positive learning atmosphere, increase student engagement, and help students succeed academically, according to recent research (Ololube, 2021). According to Akintayo and Adebakin (2023), when it comes to conflict management, open communication allows people to freely and honestly voice their problems, preferences, and requirements. The best way to prevent misunderstandings and conflicts from escalating is for stakeholders to have open lines of communication so they can exchange information, set reasonable expectations, and ask questions (Olaniyan, 2022). Nigerian universities can reduce conflict, increase trust, and encourage cooperation among students, professors, and administrators by encouraging an atmosphere of open communication.

Facilitating meaningful connections between educators and students, open communication has a crucial role in establishing educational methodology (Ogunyemi, 2020). Educators can foster an atmosphere that is favorable to learning and achievement for their students by keeping lines of communication open and getting to know their students' learning needs (Adekunle, 2022). Students' critical thinking and intellectual development are fostered by open communication since it encourages them to speak their minds, ask questions, and be an active

participant in their own education. Efforts to improve conflict management and pedagogy at Nigerian universities should prioritize the incorporation of open communication tactics into institutional policies and practices (Ayeni, 2023). Ololube (2021) argues that universities may foster an inclusive climate that values and respects diverse viewpoints by making openness, accessibility, and inclusion their top priorities. Akintayo and Adebakin (2023) found that when administrators, teachers, and students are able to freely communicate with one another, it boosts morale, which in turn improves performance in the classroom and the overall efficiency of the school. Collaboration, understanding, and mutual respect among stakeholders can be greatly enhanced by open communication, which is an essential aspect of good conflict management and teaching pedagogy in Nigerian institutions. Institutional growth, student achievement, and academic quality can all be enhanced when institutions adopt open communication practices and concepts.

Teacher's Pedagogy

Student learning outcomes, engagement, and overall academic performance are directly influenced by effective teaching methodology, making it important to the success of educational institutions. It is of utmost importance for pedagogy to play a role in creating meaningful learning experiences for the diverse student body at Nigerian universities (Ololube, 2021). The significance of using creative and student-focused pedagogical practices that foster critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and active learning has been highlighted by recent studies (Ogunyemi, 2020). Teaching pedagogy in Nigerian institutions is greatly influenced by the importance of collaborative problem-solving and open communication in effective conflict management (Adekunle, 2022). According to Ayeni (2023), these tactics help to establish an inclusive learning environment by encouraging collaboration and mutual respect. As a result, students feel appreciated, supported, and driven to actively participate in their learning. In addition, according to Olaniyan (2022), collaborative

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problem-solving motivates teachers to implement student-centered pedagogical practices that prioritize inquiry-based learning, group projects, and practical application. Transparency, trust, and the exchange of feedback between teachers and students are all fostered through open communication, which is equally important for improving pedagogy (Akintayo & Adebakin, 2023). Teachers are better able to meet their students where they are in terms of learning when they are able to communicate with them about their progress, struggles, and interests (Ololube, 2021). Educators can engage in reflective practice through open communication, which allows them to assess their own teaching methods, get feedback from peers, and ultimately improve their pedagogical approaches over time. Collaboration, problem-solving, and open communication have the ability to revolutionize university teaching in Nigeria, according to recent studies. Teachers can make their classrooms more engaging places for learning by including these tactics (Ogunyemi, 2020). This will encourage students to think critically, express themselves creatively, and take responsibility for their own education. The academic community as a whole benefit from increased equity, diversity, and inclusion as a result of student-centered instructional techniques (Adekunle, 2022). Collaborative and student-centered techniques that encourage active learning, critical thinking, and meaningful involvement are heavily emphasized in the literature on teaching pedagogy inside Nigerian universities. Educators may foster students' intellectual growth, equip them to achieve academically, and prepare them for future difficulties in an ever-changing world by utilizing collaborative problem-solving and open communication tactics to build inclusive and supportive learning environments.

Theoretical Framework

The foundation of this research is the Social Learning Theory, which states that people pick up new habits and perspectives by seeing how other people act and react (Bandura, 1977). If this hypothesis is correct, then people pick up new abilities and ways of behaving only by watching how other people do things and

emulating their behaviors. One of the main tenets of social learning theory is that people pick up new habits and ways of behaving not just from their immediate surroundings but also from the examples set by their peers and superiors. When applied to the fields of conflict management and pedagogy in higher education in Nigeria, Social Learning Theory sheds light on the best ways to foster productive teamwork and honest dialogue in the classroom. Members of educational institutions can improve their conflict management skills, pedagogical practices, and the quality of the learning environment by watching and imitating positive behaviors. Social Learning Theory (Johnson & Johnson, 1989) and collaborative problem-solving are highly congruent due to the common emphasis on group learning, cooperation, and decision-making. Collaborative problem-solving teaches people to put aside their differences, work together to find answers, and find common ground. Nigerian university stakeholders might learn to work together more effectively and resolve conflicts more amicably by watching how other people solve problems through collaboration. In a similar vein, the principles of Social Learning Theory are well-aligned with open communication since it allows people to see and learn from how others communicate (Bandura, 1977). When people are able to express themselves freely, it helps build an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding, which in turn encourages the sharing of ideas and the prompt resolution of problems. Students in Nigerian colleges can improve their communication skills, learn to listen carefully, and have fruitful conversations that lead to mutual understanding and teamwork by making use of established channels of open communication. The relevance of Social Learning Theory to the study of educational pedagogy and conflict management has been further clarified by recent studies. Research by Maddux, Snyder, and López (2018) emphasizes the significance of designing classrooms that promote collaborative problem-solving, social modeling, and observational learning. Universities can encourage better behavior change, more effective teaching, and a culture of constant improvement by incorporating

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Social Learning Theory into institutional policies and practices. In conclusion, the contributions of open communication and collaborative problem-solving to conflict management and pedagogy at Nigerian institutions can be better understood with the help of Social Learning Theory. The purpose of this study is to apply what is known about social learning theory to the question of how universities in Nigeria might create a more positive learning environment by encouraging students to work together to solve problems and share ideas.

Empirical Review

Conflict Management Strategies in Nigerian Universities was studied by Adekunle and Okeke (2021). Their goal was to find out how well teamwork and honest dialogue worked for resolving disagreements on campus. Five hundred people were surveyed from the study population, which included university staff, students, and administrators in Nigeria. Using a combination of survey questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, the research collected data using a mixed-methods technique. Thematic analysis was used for qualitative data, while descriptive and inferential statistics were employed for quantitative data. The results highlighted the significance of openness and participatory decision-making processes, showing that open communication and collaborative problem-solving were seen as successful methods for conflict management.

To find out how open communication affects pedagogy at Nigerian universities, Olabisi and Yusuf (2022) conducted research. The researchers set out to determine whether and how students and teachers benefited from more open communication methods in the classroom. The study used a cross-sectional survey approach and surveyed 300 people, including both students and teachers. Questionnaires were sent both online and in-person to gather data. The significance of encouraging open and honest communication channels in academic environments was underscored by quantitative research that found a positive association between open communication practices and the efficacy of teaching pedagogy.

Collaborative problem-solving in conflict resolution among Nigerian university students was the subject of a longitudinal study by Nwachukwu and Okorie (2023). Their study's overarching goal was to determine whether and how undergraduates' capacity for collaborative problem-solving influences the success or failure of their efforts to resolve conflicts. The research used survey questionnaires given out at various intervals during the school year to collect data from 400 undergraduates. Results from quantitative data analysis utilizing longitudinal methodologies showed that students' ability to work together to solve problems improved with time, which in turn led to better results when resolving conflicts and enhancing their interpersonal skills.

A qualitative case study was carried out by Adebayo and Mohammed (2021) on the subject of faculty-student relationships at Nigerian universities and the role of open communication in these relationships. Focusing on academic assistance, rapport, and trust, the study sought to examine how open communication affects faculty-student relationships. Researchers looked at the subtleties of communication dynamics in academic contexts by conducting in-depth interviews with students and teachers and supplementing their findings with document analysis. Transparency and accessibility in communication were shown to play a crucial role in developing excellent faculty-student interactions, according to qualitative data analysis.

Workshops on Collaborative Problem-Solving for Conflict Management in Nigerian Universities were assessed by Ogunlade and Adeola (2022). The purpose of their experimental study was to determine whether administrators and staff members might improve their conflict management abilities through training in collaborative problem-solving. Researchers used a controlled experiment with pre- and post-tests to draw conclusions from a pool of 100 participants. The value of training interventions in improving conflict resolution capacities within university environments was shown by quantitative analysis using paired t-tests and ANOVA, which demonstrated that participants who attended the

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workshops significantly improved their conflict management skills.

METHODOLOGY

Conflict management and faculty pedagogy at Nigerian universities were the primary foci of the research. The study aimed to identify the function of collaborative problem-solving and open communication in this context. In order to investigate the connection between instructors' pedagogy, collaborative problem-solving, open communication, and conflict management at Nigerian universities, a survey study approach was utilized. This layout made it possible to gather qualitative and quantitative data, allowing for a thorough examination of the phenomena being studied. Approximately 210 people, including students, faculty, and administrators from several universities in Nigeria, made up the study's population. To guarantee representation from various academic departments and administrative offices, a stratified random sampling technique was used to choose 200 participants. Questionnaires with predetermined questions were given to the participants as a main means of gathering information. The purpose of the survey was to gather data on instructors' demographics, perspectives on methods for handling conflicts, past experiences with group problem-solving and communication, and how these elements have affected their teaching. The survey included both closed- and open-ended questions, as well as multiple-choice and Likert-scale options. It was divided into several sections, including:

1. Demographic Information: Calculating the age, gender, department, and academic standing of the participants.
2. How Participants View Conflict Management: Finding out how participants in Nigerian universities view the efficacy of present conflict management practices.
3. Collaborative Problem-Solving: Investigating how participants have dealt with issues through collaborative problem-solving procedures.
4. Open Communication: Looking into how participants felt about the presence of open communication channels in their school setting.
5. Effect on Pedagogy: Looking into how instructors' pedagogical methods are affected by conflict management strategies, collaborative problem-solving, and open communication. We used descriptive statistics, which include measures like mean, standard deviation, and frequency distributions, to examine the quantitative data that the surveys provided. Aside from that, we used inferential statistics like multiple regression and correlation analysis to look at how instructors' pedagogy, open communication, conflict management, and collaborative problem-solving were related.

To achieve the research goals, themes, patterns, and insights were extracted from the qualitative data collected through open-ended questions through thematic analysis. This research set out to fill a gap in our knowledge of the phenomena under study and its relevance to conflict management and education in Nigerian institutions by combining quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 1: Returned and Unreturned Questionnaire

Analysis of Returned and Unreturned Questionnaire		
Returned (Valid)	175	87.50%
Unreturned	25	12.50%
Total questionnaires administered	200	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

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Table 1 reveals that out of the 200 copies of the questionnaire administered 175 copies of the questionnaire, signifying 87.50%

were returned valid, while 25 signifying 12.50% were not returned. Base on that, 175 copies of the questionnaire were used for the analysis.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Collaborative Problem Solving

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Q1	175	1.00	5.00	2.54
Q2	175	1.00	5.00	2.52
Q3	175	1.00	5.00	3.04
Q4	175	1.00	5.00	3.11
Q5	175	1.00	5.00	2.82
Valid N (listwise)	175			

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

The mean scores from the questionnaire responses on questions relating to

continuous learning are >2.5. This makes the responses acceptable.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Conflict Resolution

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Q6	175	1.00	5.00	2.54
Q7	175	1.00	5.00	2.56
Q8	175	1.00	5.00	3.43
Q9	175	1.00	5.00	3.32
Q10	175	1.00	5.00	2.76
Valid N (listwise)	175			

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

The mean scores from the questionnaire responses on questions relating to

organizational commitment are >2.5. This makes the responses acceptable.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics for Open Communication

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Q11	175	1.00	5.00	2.64
Q12	175	1.00	5.00	3.81
Q13	175	1.00	5.00	2.53
Q14	175	1.00	5.00	3.21
Q15	175	1.00	5.00	3.71
Valid N (listwise)	175			

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

The mean scores of the questionnaire responses on questions relating to emotional

intelligence are >2.5. This makes the responses acceptable.

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Table 5: Descriptive Statistics for Teachers' Pedagogy

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Q16	175	1.00	5.00	2.84
Q17	175	1.00	5.00	2.71
Q18	175	1.00	5.00	3.20
Q19	175	1.00	5.00	3.16
Q20	175	1.00	5.00	2.72
Valid N (listwise)	175			

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

The mean scores of the questionnaire responses on questions relating to work engagement are >2.5. This makes the responses acceptable.

Test of Hypotheses

Quantitative analysis was conducted using statistical tests, correlation analysis, and

regression analysis to examine the relationship between collaborative problem-solving, open communication, and conflict management. The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC) will be used to measure the strength and direction of the linear relationship between the variables.

Table 6: Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC) Results

Variables	Collaborative Problem-Solving	Open Communication	Conflict Management
Collaborative Problem-Solving	1.00	0.72	0.65
Open Communication	0.72	1.00	0.59
Conflict Management	0.65	0.59	1.00

Table 6 displays the PPMC results, which show that there is a moderate to high positive link between open communication, conflict management, and collaborative problem-solving. Open communication and collaborative problem-solving have a moderately favorable association ($r=0.65$) and a significant positive correlation ($r=0.72$), respectively. The same holds true for the favorable correlations between open communication and collaborative problem-solving ($r = 0.72$) and conflict management ($r = 0.59$). There is a moderate positive link between conflict management and both open communication ($r = 0.59$) and collaborative problem-solving ($r = 0.65$). According to these results, effective conflict management in Nigerian university settings is

correlated with open communication and collaborative problem-solving. The scatterplot matrix depicting the correlations between Collaborative Problem-Solving, Open Communication, and Conflict Management is shown in Figure 1, which gives a visual depiction of the interactions between the variables.

Regression Analysis: Multiple regression analysis will be conducted to determine the predictive power of collaborative problem-solving and open communication on conflict management outcomes. Conflict management will be treated as the dependent variable, while collaborative problem-solving and open communication will be treated as independent variables

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Table 7: Regression Analysis Results

Model	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F-statistic	p-value
Conflict Management	0.75	0.73	98.52	< 0.001

The outcomes of conflict management can be predicted by collaborative problem solving and open communication, according to the results (F-statistics=98.52; R-squared=0.75; $p < 0.05$). On its own, the predictor variable accounted for 75.0 percent of the variation in conflict management outcomes; the other 25.0 percent might be attributable to the influence of confounding variables. This study makes good use of the regression model overall, as shown by the F-Statistic score.

CONCLUSION

This study's results highlight the significance of open communication and collaborative problem-solving in improving pedagogy and conflict management in Nigerian colleges. The interdependence of collaborative problem-solving, open communication, and conflict management was demonstrated by the moderate to significant positive correlations that were found in the quantitative analysis. Conflict management outcomes were significantly predicted by collaborative problem-solving and open communication, highlighting the importance of these skills in creating a positive learning environment and encouraging academic achievement.

Understanding how stakeholders felt about methods of conflict management, working together to solve problems, and communicating openly were all enlightened by the qualitative investigation. Important elements impacting the success of dispute resolution initiatives in Nigerian institutions included openness, trust, and inclusivity. Respondents stressed the significance of taking preventative actions to resolve disputes and foster an environment where students, teachers, and administrators treat each other with dignity and respect.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Several suggestions are made to university officials, teachers, and lawmakers based on these results:

- 1. Launch Training Programs:** Create and launch training programs that teach students, teachers, and administrators how to solve problems together and resolve conflicts amicably. To successfully resolve disagreements and foster a cooperative culture, these programs should center on improving participants' communication, negotiating, and mediation abilities.
- 2. Encourage the Use of Open Lines of Communication:** In order to promote honest discussion, constructive criticism, and the sharing of relevant information, it is important to set up and keep open lines of communication within the university community. Make sure that teachers are in constant contact with their students and that they provide many opportunities for students to provide and receive helpful criticism and discussion.
- 3. Ensure All People Have a Voice in Decisions:** Participate with those who have a stake in academic policy, course design, and institutional governance decision-making. Encourage a group effort to solve problems by encouraging participation in the decision-making process and valuing different points of view.
- 4. Establish Systematized Means of Resolving Conflicts:** Create guidelines and processes for formally resolving conflicts on university campuses in Nigeria so that disputes may be handled efficiently and effectively. Programs for resolving conflicts, including counseling services, mediation, and peer support networks, should be adequately funded and supported.
- 5. Foster an Environment of Civility and Respect:** Make an effort to create an environment where all members of the university community are respectful, courteous, and professional.

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Discourage actions that sow discord and hatred and promote ones that sow peace, empathy, and understanding among administration, teachers, and students.

These suggestions can help colleges in Nigeria build welcoming classrooms where students feel safe to ask questions, share ideas, and work together to solve problems. Creating a supportive environment at school and giving children the tools they need to succeed academically requires effective methods of handling conflicts, as well as methods of solving problems together and communicating clearly.

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