# Evaluating the Effectiveness of Managing Workplace Conflict Management in Nigerian Universities: A Case Study of Kogi State University, Anyigba, Nigeria

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## Abstract

This study assesses the effectiveness of managing workplace conflicts in Kogi State University, Anyigba, Nigeria. A mixed-methods approach and survey design was employed, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods. The main objective of the study is to assess the effect of collective bargaining on workplace conflict management in Nigeria Universities, focusing on Kogi State University Anyigba The population considered for this study is the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) members, the Non-academic staff union (NASU), and the Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities (SSANU) from the Kogi State University Anyigba. Summing them up therefore the total number of these individuals is 4013. Hence 4013 constituted the total population of this study. This study employed the "Modern Management Theory," theory propounded by Mary Parker Follet who believed that management was "the art of getting things done through people. The result of the hypothesis one shows that the p-value is 0.000 at 5% significance level; this means that Null Hypothesis is rejected and the study conclude that Collective bargaining has significant effect on conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba. The result of the hypothesis two shows that the p-value is 0.000 at 5% significance level this means that Null Hypothesis is accepted and the study conclude that Collective bargaining strategy is not effective in workplace conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba. The study recommends that the University should re-evaluate its current collective bargaining strategies to ensure they are more effective in managing workplace conflicts. This might include involving more diverse stakeholder groups in the bargaining process to improve effectiveness. The University should implement conflict resolution training programs for both academic and non-academic staff to enhance their capacity to engage in constructive bargaining and negotiations.

**Keywords:** Collective Bargaining, Conflicts Resolution, Nigerian Universities Staff, Conflict Management, Effectiveness, Kogi State University, Anyigba.

## Introduction

Collective bargaining serves as the primary mechanism via which labour representatives and employers address employee requests and resolve issues to achieve organisational goals (Armstrong, 2021). Numerous scholars have addressed the significance of collective bargaining. Kaufman (2020) noted that the concept of collective bargaining, originally

defined by Sidney and Beatrice Webb, involves agreements between groups of workers and employers, as opposed to individual negotiations. Budd and Colvin (2019) asserted that collective bargaining fulfils three essential functions: it serves as a mechanism for negotiating labour sales (marketing concept), functions as a form of workplace governance (governmental theory), and operates as a managerial tool (workplace management concept). Their explanation demonstrated that collective bargaining serves as a mechanism for securing labour through employment contracts and establishes a framework for rule-making that governs the interactions between trade unions and management, particularly regarding decision-making on matters of mutual interest.

Recent studies demonstrate that collective bargaining is essential in alleviating workplace conflicts by establishing working conditions and employment terms through negotiations between employers and workforce representatives (Wilkinson et al., 2021; Gomez & Gunderson, 2022; Kaufman, 2020). Collective bargaining plays a vital role in resolving workplace disputes by enabling cooperative decision-making between employee and employer representatives on issues such as remuneration, working hours, and conditions through collective agreements (Budd & Colvin, 2019; Armstrong, 2021). According to Anyim et al. (2011), the practice of workplace relations and collective bargaining initially emerged in the private sector before evolving into the public sector.

In Nigeria, the scenario diverges significantly, as the practice of collective bargaining emerged mostly inside the public sector, largely attributable to the absence of a private sector at the century's onset. In response to this innovative endeavour by the public sector, Anyim et al. (2011) posed relevant questions concerning the effectiveness of collective bargaining in the Nigerian public sector. Workplace conflict is a prevalent issue across industries and sectors globally. Studies have shown that unresolved conflicts can lead to decreased productivity, poor employee morale, and a high turnover rate (Gelfand et al., 2012). In educational institutions, these issues can disrupt academic programs, hamper research, and diminish organizational performance (De Dreu, 2008). Conflict management strategies, such as negotiation, mediation, and arbitration, are universally employed to maintain harmony. A study by Rahim (2011) highlights that the effectiveness of conflict management systems is often measured by the ability to resolve disputes efficiently, sustain workplace relationships, and mitigate recurring issues. Globally, universities have embraced both formal (grievance procedures) and informal (mediation programs) methods to address conflicts. However, gaps in consistent application, transparency, and capacity building often diminish these efforts (Tjosvold, 2008).In Africa, workplace conflicts in universities often arise from resource allocation, hierarchical disputes, and interpersonal tensions among faculty members. African universities, similar to their global counterparts, face challenges like the lack of standardized conflict resolution mechanisms, resource scarcity, and a high demand for services relative to capacity (Oni-Ojo et al., 2014). These issues are exacerbated by sociocultural differences, political interference, and organizational structure. For instance, a study in South African universities highlighted how conflict between academic and administrative staff led to disruptions in academic activities

(Mayer, 2012). The study suggested that inclusive conflict management practices, sensitive to the diverse cultural and social contexts, improve workplace relations and institutional performance. However, many African universities still struggle with the adequate implementation of conflict management policies, as highlighted by Okorie (2015), who emphasized the need for training staff in effective conflict resolution methods and improving communication channels to ensure smoother conflict resolution. In Nigeria, universities have frequently been affected by workplace conflicts, often leading to strikes, institutional disruptions, and overall inefficiency in academic delivery. The causes of workplace conflicts in Nigerian universities range from poor communication, management inefficiencies, and limited resources to interpersonal rivalries between academic and non-academic staff (Adewumi & Adenugba, 2010). Many studies suggest that while formal conflict management systems exist, they are rarely enforced, often leading to lingering disputes and recurrent strikes (Adebayo, 2012). The National Universities Commission (NUC) has proposed frameworks to improve conflict resolution in universities, but implementation at the institutional level remains inconsistent. Studies, such as one by Fapohunda (2013), indicate that management's inability to proactively address grievances contributes to frequent industrial actions and erodes trust between faculty members and university administrators.

Kogi State University (KSU), Anyigba, is no exception to the conflict issues that characterize Nigerian universities. Conflicts in KSU have been attributed to disagreements over resource allocation, the structure of management, and staff promotions. These disputes often manifest in strikes and administrative challenges, which disrupt academic calendars and diminish institutional efficiency. A study by Usman (2016) at KSU revealed that there is a lack of proper conflict resolution training among university staff, leading to poorly managed disputes and workplace tension. Furthermore, the absence of effective mediation structures exacerbates the conflicts, contributing to low staff morale and a tense working environment. The study on *Evaluating the Effectiveness of Managing Workplace Conflict Management in Nigerian Universities: Kogi State University, Anyigba* is crucial because it provides insights into the existing conflict resolution mechanisms within KSU, highlights their effectiveness or shortcomings, and offers potential solutions. Given the importance of stable academic environments for research, teaching, and learning, it becomes imperative to examine how conflicts are managed in a university setting. The study's relevance lies in its potential to contribute to improved conflict management practices, reducing the frequency of disputes, and creating a more harmonious work environment that will ultimately benefit both staff and students.

**Statement of the Problem**

Workplace conflicts are an inevitable part of any organization, especially in higher education institutions where diverse academic and administrative staff interact. Kogi State University, Anyigba, Nigeria, like many public universities in Nigeria, faces challenges in managing conflicts arising from divergent interests, scarce resources, job roles, and

interpersonal relations. Ineffective management of these conflicts can lead to reduced employee morale, decreased productivity, high turnover rates, and overall organizational inefficiency. Studies between 2017 and 2022 reveal that conflicts, if left unmanaged, can create a toxic work environment, impede teamwork, and lower institutional performance (Anifowose & Abiona, 2019; Ibrahim, 2020).

One of the core issues in managing conflicts in public universities like Kogi State University is the lack of proper conflict resolution mechanisms and leadership training. There is often a reliance on hierarchical approaches that overlook the need for mediation and collaborative problem-solving. Studies have shown that universities in Nigeria face challenges in implementing policies that foster open communication and trust among staff members, thus exacerbating workplace conflicts (Ibrahim & Mohammed, 2021). Furthermore, leadership styles that lean toward authoritarianism rather than participatory approaches have been identified as a root cause of persistent workplace conflicts (Ogunleye et al., 2020).

Another key challenge is the lack of training in conflict management techniques for university administrators and staff. Empirical research points out that many Nigerian universities do not invest in professional development related to conflict resolution, which hinders the effective handling of disputes (Akpan & James, 2018). This gap in training contributes to an escalation of conflicts, often leading to severe workplace stress, job dissatisfaction, and the eventual decline in institutional performance.

The need for this study is grounded in addressing the specific gaps within the conflict management framework of Kogi State University. Previous studies have explored conflict in Nigerian universities, but limited research has focused on evaluating the effectiveness of specific management strategies in addressing these conflicts (Anifowose & Abiona, 2019; Ibrahim, 2020). This study aims to assess whether current conflict management techniques, such as negotiation, mediation, and collective bargaining, are effective in reducing workplace conflicts and improving employee satisfaction. Furthermore, it will examine the role of university leadership in managing conflicts and provide recommendations for better conflict resolution strategies.

The rationale for this study is to bridge the gap between theoretical conflict management strategies and their practical application within the context of Nigerian universities. By focusing on Kogi State University, this research aims to provide empirical evidence on the effectiveness of conflict management practices, which can serve as a model for other public universities in Nigeria facing similar challenges.

Therefore, the problem this research aims to solve is the ineffective management of workplace conflicts at Kogi State University, which negatively impacts staff performance, institutional productivity, and employee relations. By evaluating current conflict resolution strategies and proposing solutions for improvement, this study addresses the need for better conflict management mechanisms to enhance organizational effectiveness.

## Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to assess the effect of collective bargaining on workplace conflict management in Nigeria Universities, focusing on Kogi State University Anyigba. While the specific objectives to:

i. Ascertain the effect of collective bargaining on workplace conflict management in Nigeria Universities, focusing on Kogi State University Anyigba.

ii. Examine the effect of collective bargaining strategies on workplace conflicts management in Kogi State University Anyigba

## Research Questions

This research questions drawn to guide the study:

i. What is the effect of collective bargaining on workplace conflict management in Nigeria Universities, focusing on Kogi State University Anyigba?

ii. Do collective bargaining strategies have significance effect on workplace conflicts management in Kogi State University Anyigba?

## Statement of Hypotheses

$H_0$: Collective bargaining has no significant effect on conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba.

$H_1$: Collective bargaining has significant effect on conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba.

$H_0$: Collective bargaining strategy is effective in workplace conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba

$H_1$: Collective bargaining strategy is not effective in workplace conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba

## Concept of Collective Bargaining

Armstrong (2021) defines collective bargaining as a process involving discussion and negotiation, either formal or informal, between employers and worker representatives, aimed at reaching a mutual agreement or understanding concerning the overall employment relationship. This process is defined as the negotiation of working conditions and employment terms between employers, a consortium of employers, or one or more employer organisations, aimed at reaching an agreement (International Labour Organisation [ILO], 2022). Negotiations can be considered bargaining only upon reaching an agreement; if negotiations continue indefinitely without a conclusive resolution, substantial bargaining has not taken place.

Wilkinson et al. (2021) define collective bargaining as a primary method utilised by trade unions to achieve their core goal of maintaining or improving the working conditions of their members. Trade unions advocate for their members in negotiations with employers, seeking favourable laws and conditions. As employees consolidate and appoint representatives for collective negotiation, the dynamics change. Instead of the employer

entering into multiple individual contracts, they engage with a collective entity to create a single agreement that outlines the employment terms for all workers within that group. Wilkinson et al. (2021) describe collective bargaining as a process whereby trade unions or workers' organisations negotiate with employers to define employment terms and conditions comprehensively. This procedure, known as the 'common norm', allows employees to collaboratively establish fundamental criteria for compensation and working conditions. In contrast, individual bargaining occurs when an employee negotiates their employment terms and working conditions directly with the employer. Any agreement formed in this context is legally binding exclusively between the individual employee and employer, without legal implications for other employees.

## Concept of Workplace Conflict

Workplace conflicts often manifest as strikes, which are considered a significant and critical aspect of these conflicts, although they represent only a subset of the broader issue (Armstrong, 2021). Strikes constitute a distinct form of workplace conflict, alongside various behaviours and attitudes that indicate opposition and differing perspectives between employers and managers, and employees and their organisations (Wilkinson et al., 2021). This definition indicates that workplace conflict generally occurs at the collective level, involving opposing groups, such as owners or managers and employees along with their respective organisations. Conflicts can occur within management, among employee groups, or within organisations, highlighting the complexity and multifaceted nature of workplace conflicts (Dundon & Dobbins, 2019).

Workplace conflict can be classified into two main categories: organised and unorganised. Structured conflicts often function as a strategic method to reduce dissatisfaction and modify unfavourable circumstances. Conflicts in organisations often emerge when management and employees seek to achieve their distinct objectives, leading to strikes, demonstrations, and general discontent, which can negatively affect organisational goodwill and commitment (Wilkinson et al., 2021). Rahim (2017) conducted a study that indicates managers dedicate a significant portion of their time, around 25%, to managing conflict situations. In this discussion, "managers" refers to both organisational leaders and individuals in positions of authority within political and public institutions, including government officials.

Workplace conflicts in Nigeria, involving ethnic, religious, community, and organisational factors, have become a persistent issue, with strikes often acting as a method of protest in public organisations (Budd & Colvin, 2019). Conflict is inherent in all human organisations, including the university system. Opposition, disagreement, or friction among multiple parties can take various forms, such as arguments, protests, demonstrations, aggression, and other destructive behaviours (Mullins, 2019; Robbins & Judge, 2020). The prevalence of conflict in human organisations requires effective management strategies, which are a critical concern for individuals, groups, and scholars (National Open University of Nigeria, 2019).

Jones et al. (2021) examined conflict management strategies, identifying problem-solving, appeal to higher organisational goals, prevention and avoidance, and compromise as effective methods for conflict resolution within organisations. Additionally, the researchers emphasise the importance of restructuring organisational frameworks and employing negotiation and mediation to effectively address conflicts (Brown & Harvey, 2021). Adeoye and Elegbeleye (2019) identified dialogue, strategic decision-making, and timely intervention as essential strategies for conflict resolution within academic institutions.

Effective conflict resolution in universities requires the participation of all stakeholders. Armstrong (2021) suggested that the primary approach to conflict resolution should entail a dedication to effective conflict management, thereby averting its escalation into destructive outcomes. He supported the advancement of the rule of law, safeguarding fundamental human rights, and ensuring equitable resource distribution and justice, all of which are crucial for minimising conflict within organisations.

Divergences among personnel and management regarding aims, requirements, talents, knowledge, hierarchy, competencies, perspectives, and other varied attributes make conflict inside companies inevitable (Dundon & Dobbins, 2019; Wilkinson et al., 2021). This study is initiated to address significant inconsistencies and obstacles that arise during conflicts between employers and employees, since both parties primarily seek to maximise their own profitability and benefits (Gomez & Gunderson, 2022; Kaufman, 2020). This study is initiated to address significant inconsistencies and obstacles that arise during conflicts between employers and employees, since both sides primarily seek to maximise their own profitability and benefits (Gomez & Gunderson, 2022; Kaufman, 2020). Multiple discrepancies and abnormalities were noted throughout the period of conflict between employers and employees, with each party primarily concentrated on maximising its revenue and advantages. As this difference intensifies, both parties endeavour to establish a mutual foundation for commonality and consensus. Per the labour regulations set forth by the International Labour Organisation, adherence to best practices is crucial for achieving a mutually advantageous result. Notwithstanding these consultations and reliance on international law, workplace disputes, especially inside higher education institutions such as Kogi State University Anyigba, have persistently posed substantial issues for students, staff, and the general academic stability both within the state and beyond. This study seeks to elucidate the use of collective bargaining as a mechanism for resolving workplace problems at Kogi State University Anyigba.

**Forms of Workplace Conflicts**

The two employers and employees have various approaches to expressing a conflict situation. Brown and Green (2021) identify various manifestations of workplace conflicts, including strikes, work-to-rule actions, overtime regulations, lock-ins or lock-outs, intimidation, and sit-down demonstrations or picketing.

**Strike**

When the tension between a workgroup and an employer exceeds a certain threshold, conflict arises, often resulting in a strike. A strike can be regarded as the conclusive outcome of a conflict. The strike represents a collective halt of labour by the entire workforce. The wildcat strike is a common type characterised by the lack of prior notice or justification given to the employer prior to its commencement. This constitutes a breach of contract and is often unauthorised by the union secretariat. A sympathy strike refers to a collective action initiated by workers who are not directly involved in the ongoing conflict. The agreement typically specifies the timeline for workers to commence a strike and may require the conduct of a strike ballot. Constitutional strikes are not bound by the terms of collective agreements or relevant public policies. Brown and Green (2021) An official strike is generally authorised by union leadership, while an unofficial strike takes place without their                                                                                       approval.

**Compliance with established regulations**

This aims to restrict output by deliberately reducing productivity in the workplace. Work-to-rule, often referred to as 'go slow' actions, have been a significant aspect of labor-management relations for a considerable duration, emerging as a standard tactic in union negotiation strategies after the implementation of no-strike provisions in wartime legislation. This represents the primary mode of workplace action in Nigeria. Brown and Green (2021).

**The Overtime Statute**

The overtime ban serves as a union strategy aimed at imposing additional costs on the business during periods of heightened productivity demands. This method effectively secures the employer's concession. This method is frequently utilised in the banking sector, where standard operations generally continue for several hours after the conclusion of public banking services. By abstaining from overtime, employees forfeit take-home compensation in exchange for greater work availability. Brown and Green (2021).

**Lock-in/out**

This action involves employees physically occupying the organisational premises, either by confining or excluding management personnel, thereby restricting their access to and from the premises. This behaviour often indicates poor labour relations and may suggest an excessive use of union authority.

**Coercion**

This aims to position the employer unfavourably by undertaking actions that violate established workplace norms. This form of workplace action represents a recent trend and is being utilised with increasing frequency in public-oriented organisations.

### The Lockout

This document represents the employers' response to the strike. The organization's gates are secured, thereby restricting employee access to the premises. Lockouts occur rarely in labor-management relations within Nigeria. In certain situations, when employees commence a strike and management or third-party intervention is ineffective, the employer may find it essential to enforce a lockout, either to reduce operational costs or to safeguard life and property.

### Sit-Down Strike

the workers remain on the organisational premises during the strike without performing any work duties.

### Demonstration or Picketing

This represents a refusal of commercial interaction with an organisation. During a strike against an organisation, union officers are likely to advocate for union members, along with their families, friends, and neighbours, to engage in a boycott of the organisation. Union members may use placards or alternative advertising methods to request that the public withdraw support for the organisation. The company's operations will be considerably affected if more unions participate in the boycott. Brown and Green (2021).

### Collective Bargaining Process and Workplace Relations Environment

The structure of the National Public Service Negotiating Councils (NPSNCs) facilitates three interconnected tiers of collective bargaining within the public sector. The National Public Service Negotiating Council comprises three distinct councils. The initial council is utilised by the management sector, represented by federal and state establishment departments. The Association of Senior Civil Servants of Nigeria (ASCSN) represents members of the Nigerian federal and state civil service within grades 07–14. The ASCSN functions similarly to a senior staff association within the private sector, albeit on a smaller scale. Council 11: The management's official side utilises this council, which is organised in the same manner as the previously discussed council. The Nigerian Civil Service Union (NCSU) and the Nigerian Union of Civil Service Typists, Stenographic and Allied Staff (NUCSTSS) represent the staff group. This council includes representatives from clerical, secretariat, executive, and non-workplace categories, typically encompassing grades 01–06. The management teams utilise council 111 similarly to councils 1 and 2 previously referenced. There are five staff side unions, including the Civil Service Technical Workers Union of Nigeria (CSTWUN), Union of Printing and Publishing Workers (PPWU), The Nigerian Nurses and Midwives Association. Union that represents healthcare professionals and medical services. case prohibited in 1988 concerning the Customs, Excise, and Immigration Staff Union.

## Functions of Collective Bargaining

Bargaining holds significant value for each participant within the industry, both collectively and individually. Johnson and Roberts (2022) highlight the considerable importance of collective bargaining functions for workers, employers, and the state. i. For the workers, collective bargaining serves as a superior alternative and a replacement for the individual, often feeble, attempts at negotiation. The stipulations and regulations are articulated within a collective agreement, and the provisions are binding on both current and prospective employees, unless subject to subsequent review. Collective bargaining provides employees with a means to engage in the managerial processes of their organisations. The lack of collective bargaining suggests that managerial authority would prevail in the majority of labour issues. Moreover, collective bargaining constitutes the mechanism through which regulations that dictate workplace dynamics are established. The substantive and procedural aspects are collaboratively established by both union and management, often in conjunction with governmental input. Substantive regulations are related to matters of finance. Procedural rules pertain to the mechanisms governing the review of collective agreements, the frequency of meetings, and the methodologies employed for the resolution of disputes. For the employer, collective bargaining holds significant value as it reduces the expenses associated with negotiating individually with each employee. It streamlines the management of salary administration. It fosters overall workplace harmony, thereby mitigating the expenses associated with strikes as previously outlined.

Rules that are collaboratively developed are often adhered to with greater ease. It establishes a grievance procedure that ensures uniformity in management's approach to addressing indiscipline, thereby mitigating potential compatibility issues that could arise from individual bargaining by workers.

The significance of collective bargaining to the state is partially contingent upon its importance to the other two parties, given their direct connection to the dynamics of workplace relations. Harmonious interactions within the workplace can thus be ascribed to the collaborative efforts of labour and management, as they are likely to negotiate agreements that are satisfactory to both parties. The elimination of the necessity for state intervention, which could be regarded as favouring labour management and, as a result, deemed inadequate, and the state will expend fewer efforts and resources in its attempts to assist labour and management in resolving their differences. Johnson and Roberts (2022) assert that the roles of collective bargaining hold considerable importance for workers, employers, and the state.

## Cases of Conflicts in Nigerian Universities

Bargaining possesses considerable importance for every member in the sector, both collectively and individually. Johnson and Roberts (2022) emphasise the significant role of collective bargaining for workers, companies, and the state. i. For workers, collective bargaining functions as a more effective substitute for the typically inadequate individual

negotiation efforts. The terms and regulations are specified in a collective agreement, and the requirements are obligatory for both existing and future employees, unless reviewed later. Collective bargaining enables employees to participate in the managerial processes of their organisations. The absence of collective bargaining indicates that administrative authority would dominate most labour matters. Furthermore, collective bargaining serves as the process by which legislation governing workplace dynamics are developed. The substantive and procedural elements are jointly determined by both the union and management, frequently with governmental involvement. Substantive regulations pertain to financial matters. Procedural norms relate to the procedures overseeing the examination of collective agreements, the regularity of meetings, and the methods utilised for conflict resolution.

ii. For the business, collective bargaining is advantageous as it minimises the costs related to negotiating with each employee individually.

It optimises the administration of wage management.

It promotes overall workplace harmony, therefore reducing the costs related to strikes as previously detailed.

Collaboratively formed rules are typically followed with greater ease.

It implements a grievance mechanism that guarantees consistency in management's response to indiscipline, therefore alleviating potential compatibility concerns stemming from individual negotiations by employees.

The significance of collective bargaining to the state is partially dependent on its relevance to the other two parties, due to their direct relationship with workplace dynamics. Cooperative relations in the workplace can be attributed to the joint endeavours of labour and management, since they are inclined to reach mutually satisfying agreements. The removal of the requirement for state action, which may be perceived as preferential towards labour management and hence considered insufficient, will result in the state exerting diminished efforts and resources in facilitating the resolution of disputes between labour and management. Johnson and Roberts (2022) contend that the functions of collective bargaining are significantly vital for workers, businesses, and the government.

**Theoretical Framework**

This study employed the principles of "Modern Management Theory" as articulated by Mary Parker Follett, who asserted that management is fundamentally "the art of getting things done through people." This research is based on the hypothesis put forth by Mary Parker Follett (1868-1933), as cited in Ngu (1994). The theory suggests that conflict is an inherent aspect of any organisation or society where multiple individuals come together to achieve a specific goal. She clarifies that conflict is simply an expression of differing ideas or viewpoints concerning particular circumstances. Conflict may also signify a divergence in approaches to the analysis of occurrences. Conflict arises from differing approaches to tackling challenges or from the variety of strategies employed to resolve ongoing disputes. She posited that conflict can be advantageous, harmful, or indifferent, depending on the

specific context. Conflict produces either beneficial or detrimental results depending on how it is perceived, comprehended, and addressed by those engaged. In an article entitled "Constructive Conflict," she delineated three distinct methodologies for conflict resolution: domination, compromise, and integration.

Mary Parker Follett's contributions to Modern Management Theory, particularly regarding collective bargaining and conflict management, hold significant relevance for Nigerian universities. Follett emphasized the importance of collaboration, integration, and collective problem-solving, ideas that are crucial when addressing workplace conflict and management in academic institutions. Her theory focuses on resolving conflicts through constructive dialogue and mutual understanding rather than domination or compromise, which aligns well with the context of Nigerian universities where employee and administrative tensions can be prevalent.

In Nigerian universities, collective bargaining often involves discussions between university administrations and academic staff unions (such as ASUU) over issues like salaries, working conditions, and other benefits. Follett's approach suggests moving away from adversarial negotiation styles to integrative bargaining, where both parties seek a solution that satisfies the interests of all involved. This method advocates for dialogue that moves beyond traditional power struggles to a form of collaboration that benefits both university management and staff.

For Nigerian universities, Follett's ideas encourage:

Participation in Decision-Making: Engaging staff in governance structures fosters trust and transparency, minimizing conflict potential.

Constructive Dialogue: Rather than a "win-lose" mentality, both parties should work toward joint solutions, ensuring long-term stability in academic settings.

Power with, not Power Over: Follett's concept of "power with" emphasizes cooperation rather than domination, relevant to resolving disputes between university administration and unions.

Conflict Management in Nigerian Universities: Follett's approach to conflict resolution—what she called "integration"—aims to find solutions where both conflicting parties' benefit. In the university context, conflicts could arise over issues such as promotion, staff recruitment, and resource allocation. According to Follett, conflicts should be viewed not as destructive but as opportunities for improvement through dialogue and innovation.

Key practices for applying Follett's conflict management theory include:

Encouraging Dialogue: Nigerian universities can implement regular forums where staff and management collaboratively discuss and address concerns before they escalate into major conflicts.

Open Communication Channels: Ensuring that communication between faculty and administration remains open and transparent helps to preempt misunderstandings and tensions.

Training in Conflict Resolution: Universities could benefit from equipping their leadership with training on collaborative conflict resolution, as this would help in diffusing workplace tensions and building a more inclusive work environment.

Practical Applications in Nigeria: Joint Committees: Establishing committees involving both staff and university management to regularly review work conditions, which would resonate with Follett's idea of "integrating" the needs of all parties.

Employee Participation in Policy: Empowering staff unions to have a say in strategic university decisions, particularly in areas like budgeting, research, and workload management.

Mediation Processes: Creating independent mediation bodies within universities to handle conflicts before they escalate into full-blown strikes or administrative deadlocks.

In conclusion, Follett's principles of collective bargaining and conflict management, when applied to the context of Nigerian universities, promote a cooperative framework that can improve staff-management relationships and help mitigate recurring disputes, especially those centered around working conditions and academic governance.

**Empirical Review**

Budd and Colvin (2017) examine the breadth of contemporary workplace relations and the necessary paradigm shift in practice to enhance organisational productivity and competitiveness. Research design that is non-experimental, along with evaluative techniques for analysis, has been utilised. The research promotes the implementation of a contemporary workplace relations framework that incorporates employee engagement and participation in the decision-making process. It advocates for the establishment of trust and confidence between employees and managers, as well as fostering social dialogue at the enterprise, organisational, and national levels.

Odhong and Omolo (2014) articulated and examined numerous facets of human resource management, workplace relations, and pertinent legal frameworks related to the resolution of workplace disputes and potential enhancements. Their study's findings are anticipated to be significantly beneficial in addressing and resolving the critical issues pertaining to human resources development.

Khola and Yadav (2012) conducted an examination of the influence of workplace conflict management on the performance of an organisation within a Nigerian manufacturing context. The study involved a cohort of 250 employees, meticulously chosen via a stratified random sampling method. The empirical tests yielded results indicating a notably positive correlation between conflict management and organisational performance. The application of non-integrative conflict management strategies demonstrated a statistically significant adverse impact on organisational performance. The results of the regression analysis revealed that the collective bargaining strategy exhibited the most substantial significant positive correlation with organisational performance.

Olukayode (2015) conducted an analysis of the burdensome and inefficient nature of the dispute settlement mechanisms (DSM) present in Nigeria. The authors employed a

theoretical framework and proposed recommendations for the efficient and effective resolution of trade disputes in Nigeria, including mechanisms such as alternative dispute resolution (ADR) and the implementation of social dialogue, among others. The research conducted by Osabuohien and Ogunrinola (2010) aimed to elucidate workplace relations and to scrutinise the various mechanisms available for the resolution of workplace disputes, if they exist, with a particular emphasis on the involvement of workers in management processes. The study also encompassed workplace undertakings in the Thane district of Mumbai. The principal discovery indicated a congenial and cooperative atmosphere in workplace relations, which subsequently contributed to enhanced productivity and profitability. The education, training, and development of employees are essential components of meaningful engagement in the decision-making process.

The primary objective of the research conducted by Nanda and Panda (2013) was to examine the dynamics of workplace relations and the satisfaction levels of employees, as well as to analyse the various welfare schemes offered by the industry. The authors contended that the efficacy of any organisation is contingent upon the performance of its Human Resource department. The paramount challenge facing any organisation is the recruitment of the appropriate individuals for the suitable positions. Human resources constitute the essential elements. Both the employee and the employer hold significant importance. They represent dual aspects of a singular entity. Each entity is fundamentally reliant on the functions provided by the other.

The identified gaps in the studies mentioned:

1. **Budd and Colvin (2017)**: The study provides valuable insights into workplace relations but lacks empirical testing of its proposed framework for contemporary workplace relations. Additionally, there is no specific focus on conflict management mechanisms, which could have enriched the study by integrating practical examples of conflict resolution in organisations.

2. **Odhong and Omolo (2014)**: While the study offers an examination of human resource management and legal frameworks for workplace disputes, it is limited by a lack of empirical data from Nigerian organisations. The study could benefit from further research into specific sectors or geographical contexts to evaluate how these frameworks apply to Nigerian workplace relations.

3. **Khola and Yadav (2012)**: The study examines conflict management in a manufacturing context and identifies a positive relationship between conflict management and performance. However, it does not address how different types of conflict (e.g., interpersonal vs. task conflict) may affect this relationship. The study also focuses only on manufacturing, leaving a gap for research on other sectors such as education or service industries.

4. **Olukayode (2015)**: The theoretical nature of this study limits its applicability. Although the author proposes recommendations for dispute settlement mechanisms in Nigeria, the lack of empirical validation of these mechanisms

weakens the argument. More real-world case studies or quantitative data would strengthen the findings.

5. **Osabuohien and Ogunrinola (2010)**: This study focuses on workplace relations and the mechanisms for resolving workplace disputes but overlooks the potential differences between sectors. The emphasis on Mumbai workplaces without considering Nigerian workplace contexts leaves a gap in understanding how these mechanisms could be adapted or applied in Nigeria.

6. **Nanda and Panda (2013)**: While the study examines workplace relations and employee welfare schemes, it does not fully explore the impact of conflict management strategies on employee satisfaction. Additionally, the research is limited by its focus on welfare schemes, leaving out how these schemes can interact with conflict resolution processes to influence organisational outcomes.

In relation to our study on workplace conflict management at Kogi State University, these gaps provide opportunities for investigating how conflict management strategies specifically tailored to educational institutions might influence employee performance and workplace satisfaction in a Nigerian university context.

## Research Methodology

The study adopts a mixed-methods design, combining both descriptive survey and documentary designs. The descriptive survey design is appropriate because it allows for the collection of data from a large population to identify patterns, relationships, and overall effectiveness of conflict management practices. It is particularly useful in examining participants' perceptions, behaviors, and experiences in conflict management, making it an effective approach to evaluate how workplace conflicts are managed in Nigerian universities. The documentary design allows for the review of relevant documents, such as conflict management policies, university reports, and other institutional data, which are critical to understanding existing frameworks and historical records. The choice of these designs is justified by the need to gather both firsthand information from stakeholders and secondary data to provide a comprehensive evaluation of conflict management.

The target population consists of 3,243 individuals, encompassing key stakeholders at Kogi State University, Anyigba. This includes administrative staff, academic staff, union leaders, and students. The choice of this population is because these groups are directly involved in or affected by conflict situations within the university, and their perspectives are crucial for assessing the effectiveness of conflict management strategies. By including a diverse range of stakeholders, the study can capture a comprehensive view of the conflict management processes in place.

A simple random sampling technique was employed to ensure that every member of the population had an equal chance of being selected, thereby reducing bias in the selection process. The stratified sampling technique was used to further divide the population into relevant strata, such as academic staff, non-academic staff, students, and administrative personnel, ensuring representation across various stakeholder groups. This is crucial for

capturing different perspectives from each subgroup involved in conflict scenarios. A sample size of 400 respondents was determined using Taro Yamane's formula, which provides a statistically valid sample size for a population of 3,243, ensuring that the findings can be generalized to the wider population with a reasonable margin of error.

**Data Collection Methods**
Both primary and secondary data sources were employed to collect the necessary information for this study. Primary data was gathered through interviews, questionnaires, and observations. A structured questionnaire was designed, consisting of both open and closed-ended questions, to elicit information on participants' experiences and perceptions of conflict management strategies. The questionnaire was administered both physically and electronically, depending on respondents' availability and preference. Interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, including union leaders and university administrators, to gain deeper insights into the policies and practices surrounding conflict resolution.

Observations were carried out to assess how conflict situations were handled in real-time within the university environment. Secondary data sources, such as official reports, conflict management policies, and records from the university, were reviewed to complement the primary data.

The collected data were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative techniques. Statistical analysis was performed using regression analysis to identify the relationships between conflict management practices and their effectiveness in reducing workplace conflict. Descriptive statistics, such as frequency distribution and percentages, were used to summarize the survey data.

For the qualitative data, thematic analysis was employed. This involved coding the responses from interviews and observations, identifying recurring themes, and interpreting these findings in the context of workplace conflict management theories. Content analysis of documentary sources was also performed to assess the alignment between existing policies and the practical conflict resolution outcomes.

The combination of these analytical techniques provides a robust framework to evaluate the effectiveness of conflict management practices at Kogi State University, highlighting areas of success and opportunities for improvement.

Taro Yamane's formula, represented by:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+ N(e)^2}$$

Where:
n represents the sample size
N represents the total population of the study
e represents the error term which is usually 0.10``
Applying the formulae therefore gives thus:

$$n = \frac{4013}{1+ 4013(10.10)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{4013}{4014(10.01)}$$

$$n = \frac{4013}{40.14}$$

n = 400

Approximately n = 400

Therefore, the study would produce and distribute 100 questionnaires to the target respondents in the university involving academic and nonacademic staff of the university.

## Data Presentation and Analysis

**Data Presentation**

The data can be presented after being collected, collated from the questionnaire and tabulated as follows:

| S/N | Research Question | Strongly Agreed % | Agreed % | Undecided % | Disagreed % | Strongly Disagreed % | Total |
|-----|-------------------|----|----|----|----|----|------|
| 1 | Workplace conflicts affect Kogi State University Anyigba | 12 | 32 | 2 | 22 | 32 | **100** |
| | There is Poor job performance due to workplace conflict. | 45 | 23 | 1 | 17 | 14 | **100** |
| | There is Disharmony amongst staff in the university due to workplace conflict | 19 | 26 | 14 | 23 | 18 | **100** |
| | Workplace conflict causes distraction on the job | 35 | 27 | 3 | 14 | 21 | **100** |
| | There is distrust amongst staff in Kogi State University Anyigba due to workplace conflict | 41 | 29 | 1 | 12 | 18 | **100** |
| 2 | Collective bargaining affects workplace conflicts management in Kogi State University Anyigba | 40 | 17 | 7 | 23 | 13 | **100** |
| | Collective bargaining eases tension between University management and Union. | 37 | 28 | 4 | 22 | 11 | **100** |
| | Collective bargaining solves majority of the problems arising from workplace conflict in Kogi State University Anyigba | 36 | 12 | 6 | 38 | 8 | **100** |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Collective bargaining can be a veritable tool in resolving workplace conflict in Kogi State University Anyigba | 34 | 14 | 7 | 29 | 16 | **100** |
| | There is a record of failed attempt to employ collective bargaining in resolving workplace conflict in Kogi State University Anyigba | 24 | 31 | 4 | 12 | 29 | **100** |
| 3 | There exists effective collective bargaining in conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba | 23 | 26 | 12 | 21 | 18 | **100** |
| | Collective bargaining merely solve the peripheral part of the workplace conflict in Kogi State University Anyigba | 18 | 20 | 23 | 38 | 01 | **100** |
| | Collective bargaining is not an effective tool for resolving workplace conflict in Kogi State University Anyigba | 19 | 23 | 4 | 43 | 11 | **100** |
| | Collective bargaining has failed to resolve workplace conflict in Kogi State University Anyigba | 45 | 12 | 5 | 18 | 20 | **100** |
| | Collective bargaining has lead to unity between university management and the union | 41 | 16 | 4 | 21 | 18 | **100** |
| 4 | Collective bargaining as a strategy affects the time period of workplace conflicts in Kogi State University Anyigba | 12 | 6 | 32 | 21 | 29 | **100** |
| | Collective bargaining delays solutions to workplace conflict in Kogi State University Anyigba | 23 | 16 | 21 | 31 | 9 | **100** |
| | Collective bargaining involves many processes before committing on the peace process | 34 | 22 | 2 | 18 | 24 | **100** |
| | Other strategies are more useful than collective bargaining | 23 | 34 | 8 | 23 | 12 | **100** |
| | There was no workplace conflict resolved with collective bargaining in Kogi State University Anyigba | 12 | 13 | 10 | 39 | 26 | **100** |

**Source:** Research Questionnaire

## Data Analysis

**Test of Hypotheses**

$H_0$: Collective bargaining has no significant effect on conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba.

$H_1$: Collective bargaining has significant effect on conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba.

$H_0$: Collective bargaining strategy is effective in workplace conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba

$H_1$: Collective bargaining strategy is not effective in workplace conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba

| Model Summary | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
| 1 | .252[a] | .063 | .055 | 1.24951 |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), Collective bargaining strategy is not effective in workplace conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba, Collective bargaining has significant effect on conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba | | | | |

**Source:** SPSS 25.0

| ANOVA[a] | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
| 1 | Regression | 23.749 | 2 | 11.874 | 7.606 | .001[b] |
| | Residual | 351.286 | 225 | 1.561 | | |
| | Total | 375.035 | 227 | | | |
| a. Dependent Variable: Collective bargaining and workplace conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba | | | | | | |
| b. Predictors: (Constant), Collective bargaining strategy is not effective in workplace conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba, Collective bargaining has significant effect on conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba | | | | | | |

**Source: SPSS 25.0**

| Coefficients[a] | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 2.927 | .248 | | 11.814 | .000 |
| | Collective bargaining has significant effect on conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba | -.057 | .068 | -.055 | -.838 | .403 |
| | Collective bargaining strategy is not effective in workplace conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba | -.241 | .066 | -.239 | -3.665 | .000 |
| a. Dependent Variable: Collective bargaining and workplace conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba | | | | | | |

**Source:** SPSS 25.0

## Result and Discussion

| Model Summary | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
| 1 | .252[a] | .063 | .055 | 1.24951 |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), Collective bargaining strategy is not effective in workplace conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba, Collective bargaining has significant effect on conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba | | | | |

**Model Summary:**

The value of R (0.252) indicates a weak positive correlation between the predictors (collective bargaining strategies) and the dependent variable (workplace conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba).

The R Square (0.063) shows that only 6.3% of the variance in workplace conflict management can be explained by the predictors, meaning that 93.7% of the variation is due to other factors not captured in the model.

The Adjusted R Square (0.055) suggests that after adjusting for the number of predictors, the model's explanatory power remains limited.

The standard error of the estimate (1.24951) indicates the level of accuracy in predicting conflict management outcomes; lower values suggest better accuracy, but this value is relatively high, pointing to a certain degree of error in the predictions.

| ANOVAª | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
| 1 | Regression | 23.749 | 2 | 11.874 | 7.606 | .001ᵇ |
| | Residual | 351.286 | 225 | 1.561 | | |
| | Total | 375.035 | 227 | | | |
| a. Dependent Variable: Collective bargaining and workplace conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba | | | | | | |
| b. Predictors: (Constant), Collective bargaining strategy is not effective in workplace conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba, Collective bargaining has significant effect on conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba | | | | | | |

**ANOVA:**

The regression F-statistic (7.606) and its significance value (p = 0.001) indicate that the overall model is statistically significant. This suggests that at least one of the predictors (collective bargaining strategies) significantly contributes to explaining the variation in workplace conflict management.

The ANOVA table shows that the regression model explains a significant part of the variation in conflict management at Kogi State University, though the explained variance is limited (as reflected in the R Square).

| Coefficientsª | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 2.927 | .248 | | 11.814 | .000 |
| | Collective bargaining has significant effect on conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba | -.057 | .068 | -.055 | -.838 | .403 |
| | Collective bargaining strategy is not effective in workplace conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba | -.241 | .066 | -.239 | -3.665 | .000 |
| a. Dependent Variable: Collective bargaining and workplace conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba | | | | | | |

**Interpretation of Results**

**Coefficients:**

The constant (B = 2.927, p < 0.001) indicates the baseline level of conflict management when all predictors are zero.

The two independent variables are:

i. **Collective bargaining has a significant effect on conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba**: The unstandardized coefficient (B) is -0.057, with a p-value (Sig.) of 0.403. This suggests that this variable does not significantly affect workplace conflict management since the p-value is greater than 0.05, indicating the result is not statistically significant.

ii. **Collective bargaining strategy is not effective in workplace conflict management in Kogi State University Anyigba**: The unstandardized coefficient (B) is -0.241, and the p-value is 0.000. This indicates a statistically significant negative effect of this variable on workplace conflict management, as the p-value is below 0.05. The negative B value suggests that the more this perception exists, the less effective the workplace conflict management becomes.

## Conclusion

The regression analysis indicates that the perception of collective bargaining strategies not being effective has a significant negative impact on workplace conflict management at Kogi State University Anyigba. On the other hand, the perception that collective bargaining has a significant effect on conflict management does not show a statistically significant impact.

**Recommendations**

**Reassess Collective Bargaining Strategies**: The University should re-evaluate its current collective bargaining strategies to ensure they are more effective in managing workplace conflicts. This might include involving more diverse stakeholder groups in the bargaining process to improve effectiveness.

**Conflict Resolution Training for Stakeholders**: The University should implement conflict resolution training programs for both academic and non-academic staff to enhance their capacity to engage in constructive bargaining and negotiations.

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