

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT- A CATALYST TO FUNCTIONAL ADMINISTRATION IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract: The administrator situates the center of a web of interactional relationships within the institution's social system. He is responsible for the generation of most orders (communication) in the organization (institution) to the subjects. These orders are dynamic and capable of generating different variants of conflict or disagreements arising from cultural differences, communication barriers, personal biases, and work-related stress from the personnel within and outside the institutional environment, hence the need for conflict management. Effective conflict management will not only improve the functionality of the academic and non academic personnel but will also ensure a sound and functional academic environment for the students. This work therefore emphasizes the role of the administrator in managing and resolving conflicts to make for a functional institutional climate. The work brings to fore the various types of conflict within the tertiary institution: its sources and strategies that can be employed to resolve conflicts. The efficacy of each strategy was also considered and concluded that no single conflict management strategy was all-embracing hence administrators should have a deep grip of factors that contribute to conflict resolution. It was recommended that administrator's in tertiary institutions should be trained and retrained on the use of modern conflict management strategies to improve the overall school performance. Furthermore, concerted not rigid effort should be implied in resolving conflict.

Keywords: Conflict, Conflict management, conflict resolutions, Tertiary Institutions, Administrators.

Introduction

Education has not only been widely accepted as the most veritable tool for national development in Nigeria but also adopted by the Federal Government of Nigeria as an instrument per excellence for national development. (Akpan, Udofia & Thomas, 2016). This notion emanates from the fact that with education, an individual will develop a positive capacity to develop the nation. Tertiary institutions in Nigeria is one of the three- tiers of the education system in Nigeria and this comprises of the Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Institutions. (Ozurumba & Asuquo-Thomas, 2014). As stated in the National Policy on Education (2014), tertiary institutions serve as the primary driver of national, technological and socio-economic development by providing high-level training, research, and community service. They are also expected to:

- i. Contribute to national development through high level relevant manpower training.

- ii. Develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and society.
- iii. Develop the intellectual capability of individuals to understand their local and external environment.
- iv. Acquire both physical and intellectual skills to enable individuals be self-reliant and useful members of the society.
- v. Promote and encourage scholarship and community service.
- vi. Forge and cement national unity.
- vii. Promote national and international understanding and interaction (NPE, 2014).

The Nigerian tertiary education sector is categorized into three primary sectors alongside specialized and vocational institutions, to wit: universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education (Thomas & Thomas, 2016). Universities are degree-awarding institutions in Nigeria, their main focus is on research, teaching, and broad academic development. They offer undergraduate and

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postgraduate programs. Universities are categorized into Federal, State, and Private and are regulated and funded through the National Universities Commission (NUC). The Polytechnics on the other hand are institutions focused on technical, vocational, and practical skill acquisition, bridging the gap between theoretical education and practical education required in the labour market. They award the National Diploma (ND) and Higher National Diploma (HND) certificates and the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) oversees the accreditation and curriculum development for these institutions. The Colleges of Education are dedicated to teacher education and pedagogy. They are responsible for producing the foundational teaching manpower for primary and secondary schools. They award the Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE) to their graduates and are regulated by the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE). Tertiary education in Nigeria includes other specialized centers and vocational frameworks designed to train on specific skill shortages such as the National Institute of Nigerian Languages (Anyanwu, 2021).

Tertiary institutions in Nigeria represent a multi-dimensional and dynamic network of social relationships with diverse interactional patterns for specific and diverse goal achievements (Adekile, 2019). The administrators (management staff), academic and non-academic staff, and students all departmentalized and faculty or school compartmentalized, bear different characteristics (interests, values, habits, expectations) (Sunday, 2025). Thus, the day-to-day administration of the university, polytechnic, and college systems constitute a very complex system wielded by many hands and shaped by many behavioural dynamics. It is also influenced by various challenges, constraints and pressures from the outer environment. The combination of external pressures and internal pressures within the school environment make administration very volatile and gives rise to conflicts (Mba, 2026, Thomas & Thomas, 2026, & Iloakasia, 2022).

Conflicts may arise from a variety of sources: from systemic challenges, operational inefficiencies, incongruent personality, communication breakdown, role conflict, inadequate funding, poor remuneration, infrastructural deficits, amongst others which ultimately result in industrial actions, power struggles amongst administrators, disagreements amongst staff, staff and students, staff and school administrators, staff and government etc. (Uboh, Thomas, Sunday, Ekanem & Utibe, 2026). In Folgers and Shubert's (1995) opinion, colleges and universities are no longer the quiet enclaves, free from conflicts that arise in all hierarchical organization. Contemporarily, differences obtain in goals or plans for the allotment of resources, conflicting application of institutional regulations obtains, breaches of formal or informal contracts obtains, power struggles and personal antagonisms also obtains. To Denga (1982), conflict is the greatest enemy to group unity and

stability, it could create strife and disloyalty and consequently a dysfunctional administration. Indeed, while conflict is primarily viewed as anti-progressive/counter-productive of the institution's goals which if not properly and effectively managed, is capable of escalating or generating counter-productive behavior, which could consequently lead to a dysfunctional administration, it can also be the necessary drive/catalyst for the advancement and attainment of the institutions creative and innovative goal (Sunday, 2025). It therefore calls on the school administrator to effectively manage conflict to continually strike the needed balance in the institution.

In Nwafors' (1988) opinion, an administrator is an individual who directs the affairs of an organization to achieve its primary goals and objectives. The administration of tertiary institutions is decentralized to smaller academic units such as colleges, schools, faculties and departments or units with varying degrees of autonomy. Administrators consist of the university's employees responsible for the daily running and supervision of the institution as distinct from their academic responsibilities. These responsibilities devolve on them, either by statute or regulation or the institution's by-laws. Thus, other than the Vice-Chancellor or Rectors or Provosts and the management, Deans and Heads of Departments are administrators and are bound by administrative rules, regulations and procedures. Hence, an institution's administrator (at all levels) must properly understand what conflicts are and the strategies needed to develop cordial and cooperative working relationships with all players in the institution for effective productivity (Thomas & Thomas, 2025). Approaches such as collaborative problem-solving, policy formulation, negotiation, mediation, arbitration and sometimes compromise may be employed. Employing these approaches will minimize disagreements and wield a climate of mutual respect, dialogue and sustainable institutional growth, which will in turn result in a functional work environment (Thomas & Thomas, 2026).

This work therefore seeks to examine the concept of conflict in tertiary institutions, theories of conflict management, causes and consequences of conflict in Nigeria tertiary institutions and the role of administrators in conflict management in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Conceptualization of conflict

To Robbins (2001), conflict is a process that begins with one's negative effect on the other. Robin passionately conceptualized conflict into three views, namely: the traditional view, the natural view and the neither wholly good nor wholly bad view. The traditional view sees conflict as evil and therefore must be avoided by all means. The second view, which is the natural view sees conflict as something natural which cannot be avoided especially when people are in group bounded by social relationships. The third view sees conflict as not wholly good or wholly bad,

but the resultant effect of the outcome of the conflict. While to Carpenter and Kennedy (1988), conflict is a struggle over values and claims to scarce resources, status, authority, differences in attitudes, beliefs and needs which could also originate from past rivalries and personality differences.

To Szilagyi (1981), conflict is a disagreement between two or more institutions in achieving certain goals. He observed that it could be a violent collision, a friction or a struggle which may involve threats, war or contest, a mental struggle or a fight. Mbipom (2000) and Thomas (2016) aligns with Robbin's third view which sees conflict as not necessarily a wasteful outburst of differences but a process by which socially valuable differences occur for the betterment of all concerned. Consequently, the convergence point in all the conflict conceptualizations is that conflict represent disagreements stemming from differences in needs, perceptions, power, status, wealth, emotions and feelings between and among people. It could therefore be concluded that conflict is a social phenomenon that results from human interactions for the struggle over those things that are held in high value which include resources, power, wealth, prestige etc. Conflict is therefore a very critical part of an institution's life.

Various forms of conflict

Anja & Bassey (2006) identified the variations of conflict in the school system to include structural, line and staff, role and institutionalized conflict, while the studies of Adeyemi and Ademilua (2012), Olaleye and Arogundade (2013) revealed that the occurrence of conflict in Nigerian tertiary institutions were at a very frequent level due to very high communication gap or breakdown between the management (leaders) and their subordinates (subjects). Their studies highlighted these causes as the leading cause of conflict in the university community.

i) Line - staff conflict:

To Ukeje, Okorie and Wagbara (1992), line officers take decision that are directly linked to organizational goal achievement while staff offer expert advice and support needed for organizational goal achievement. The conflict between line and staff due to their interactions could bring serious setbacks to an organization's smooth running. For instance, a more educated academic staff who is a specialist in a particular field may not condescend to the advice from the administrator, hence conflict. Conflict could also breed when corrective action is taken against the administrator. The laboratory assistant may also refuse to prepare reagents for practical lessons as instructed by a science lecturer. Thus, Ibingha (2002) reiterating on the effect of line and staff conflicts in schools reveal that such conflict is capable of lowering the attainment of school goals.

ii) Role conflict

Role is defined in terms of the expectations of a staff position. Whenever a role incumbent is simultaneously required to conform to a number of expectations which are mutually exclusive and contradictory, making it impossible or at least difficult to adjust to the requirements of both, the conflicts that occur are generally referred to as role conflict (Ukeje, Okorie and Wagbara, 1992). Ibingha, also revealed that role conflicts dominate the tensions, quarrels and confrontations within the school system. Different specialists have functions to perform, some by delegation which could overlap. These over lapping delegations are capable of creating role conflict as it becomes difficult to locate the beginning and ending of duties. Some of these demands usually create situations of difficulties to the administrator and or subject as his decision making could be beclouded by tensions and frustrations. Role conflicts also occur when administrator and or subject assume one or more roles covering different situations that do not align with one another.

iii) Structural conflict

To Anja & Bassey (2006), conflict can occur within organizational settings; structural conflicts could exist between superiors and subordinates, it can also occur between units, teams and even among subjects or between experts based on technical lines. The basic sources of structural conflicts include work dependencies, differences in performance criteria and reward system. The interdependence of tasks between conflicting units remain the central element in this type of conflicts, and are basically lateral in nature. The pressure from a different unit compelling another to yield could create conflict. This is because different units have their preferences for goal achievement for same set of goals hence, conditions are created for functionally interdependent units with different goals to conflict (Williams-Ilemobola, Adetayo, Asiru and Ajayi, 2021). Time schedules on the time table could create conflict between lecturers who may probably want morning periods and other subject teachers who may not want to give more prominence to other subjects. There could also be a perceived disagreement in the use of work tools between departments in the school. Schools with mutual dependence or limited resources, competitive reward system and differences in individual goals are always accosted with conflicts and could be destructive to performance.

Olaleye and Arogundade (2013) revealed that the occurrence of conflict in Nigerian tertiary institutions were at a frequent level. Their studies also highlighted that communication gap between management and subjects were the leading cause of conflict in the institutions.

iv) Institutionalized conflict

Institutionalized conflict is a condition in which a social system substantially creates the conditions under

which conflict may occur, regulates the conduct and gravity of the conflict, legitimizes the methods by which conflict is carried out and prescribes its role, rituals and ceremonies (Dubrin, 1992). Such conflicts result in a wide range of institutionalized negative processes: such as: strikes actions, bargaining, grievances, debates, boycotts, sabotage, absenteeism and the restriction of output. These actions could have severe consequences on school effectiveness. In schools, lecturers may refuse to teach students and are capable of instigating them against the school authority which could lead to unrest. Furthermore, the identification of those involved in the process for sanctions by the administrator as a mark of exercising his authority if not tactically done could result in series of conflicts, animosity and antagonism as the school becomes divided.

Theoretical Framework

a) Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument:

In Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument, individuals have five distinct conflict-handling styles - competing, collaborating, compromising, avoiding, and accommodating. These styles can be classified based on their level of assertiveness and cooperativeness. The competing style is characterized by high assertiveness and low cooperativeness, where individuals pursue their own interests at the expense of others. On the other hand, the collaborating style is characterized by high assertiveness and high cooperativeness, where individuals seek mutually beneficial solutions that satisfy everyone's needs. The compromising style is characterized by a moderate level of both assertiveness and cooperativeness, aiming to strike a balance between conflicting interests by giving and taking concessions. The avoiding style is characterized by low assertiveness and low cooperativeness, seeking to delay or completely avoid conflict by withdrawing from the situation. Finally, the accommodating style is characterized by low assertiveness and high cooperativeness, putting the interests of others first, even if it means sacrificing one's own needs (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974).

Going by these conflict-management styles, tertiary institutions can promote effective communication within their institutions. The TKI model can be used integrated into the administrator's training to aid in conflict resolution. The institutional community can also be trained in negotiation skills, emotional intelligence, cultural sensitivity, conflict resolution policies and procedures, mediation and conflict coaching techniques, stress management training, communication skills training, conflict prevention strategies, amongst others. By incorporating conflict management strategies into administrators' training, tertiary institutions can foster a positive work environment by enhancing communication skills and promoting effective conflict resolution (Mossanen, Johnston, Green & Joyner, 2014). Furthermore, by identifying an administrator's preferred approach, administrators can learn to adapt their attitude to

different conflict situations, leading to more effective conflict management. It can help staff recognize their own preferred style and develop the ability to adapt to different conflict situations, promoting a consistent and transparent approach to conflict management.

b) The Dual Concern Model:

This model emphasizes the importance of balancing two key elements - assertiveness and cooperativeness - to reach mutually beneficial solutions that benefit all parties involved (Plummer, 2021). By focusing on assertiveness, administrators can communicate their needs and expectations clearly and effectively without being overly aggressive or confrontational. At the same time, by prioritizing cooperativeness, administrators can work collaboratively with their colleagues to identify common ground, explore different perspectives, and find mutually beneficial solutions that address everyone's concerns. Training administrators in this model, can help them develop negotiation skills and find win-win solutions, leading to improved crew dynamics and onboard operations.

Dual Concern Model is an essential tool for administrators who seek to become effective communicators and negotiators, build strong relationships with their colleagues and achieve greater success in their academic careers. In tertiary institutions, the Dual Concern Model can be applied in a wide range of situations, from resolving interpersonal conflicts amongst members of the institution to negotiating with government authorities or other stakeholders. By using this approach, administrators can build and maintain positive relationships, minimize disruptions and maximize operational efficiency (Uboh, Thomas, Sunday & Itaketo, 2026).

c) Social Identity Theory:

The Social Identity Theory developed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner in the 1970s is a well-established psychological concept that can aid an administrator to assure efficacy. It explains how people's sense of belonging to a specific group can influence their attitudes towards other groups (Hogg, 2016). The framework relies on three main cognitive stages: social categorization, social identification, and social comparison. For example, cultural differences can lead to conflicts that may disrupt staff cohesion and performance, but by administrators' fostering of shared identity and promoting teamwork, they can overcome conflicts arising from cultural differences, enhance staff cohesion and improve work performance (Rodriguez, 2014).

To create this shared identity, administrators and their subordinate should engage in various activities to foster the sense of community, such as celebrating cultural festivals, and establishing common goals. By embracing these activities, administrators and their subject can build a more cohesive and productive team, resulting in a more positive work environment. (Konstantinos, 2024).

Impact of Conflicts in Tertiary Institutions

When conflicts are not effectively handled, its impact on staff morale, job satisfaction, and productivity can be devastating. Staff and students' anxiety, frustration and isolation may dwindle affecting their performance and productivity. Moreover, unresolved conflicts may escalate and result in severe crisis, endangering not just the staff and student, but also the institution health (Thomas & Inyang, 2021).

Principles of Effective Conflict Management

One of the goals and objectives of tertiary institutions the world over according to Denga, (1982) is institutional stability; a way out of persistent institutional conflict and a means of restoring and sustaining tranquility within the institution. He suggested that devising strategies for coping with such conflict should be seen as a basic operating principle. Part of this search for stability in the institution would be the proper exposition of administrators to appreciating and understanding the procedures and principles to follow in arriving at informed choices for action that could enhance effectiveness. Swinton (2006), in agreement with other organizational theorists put forward the following principles for administrators' consideration for effective conflict management:

1. Think before reacting: There is the natural tendency to react immediately in a conflict situation. The administrator should think first, consider options, weigh the possibilities as different conflict situations may not require the same reaction.
2. Listen attentively: Listening is the most important aspect of communication. The administrator cannot solve conflicts if he does not hear the parties. Active listening does not only involve hearing what the parties are saying, but also involves what is said by body language. Active listening on the part of the administrator requires letting the parties in a conflict situation know that they have been heard and understood.
3. Assure a fair process: The process of resolving conflict is often as critical as the conflict itself. The administrator should ensure that the method chosen to resolve the conflict as well as the method employed is fair to all parties to the conflict. The perception of unfairness can deter or hamper the resolution.
4. Attack the problem: Conflict evokes high emotions which makes it easier to attack the cause instead of the symptoms. An administrator should seek to know what lies behind the emotions.
5. Accept responsibility: There are many sides to a conflict with responsibility for everyone involved. An attempt to trade blames only creates resentment and anger that may heighten existing conflicts. The administrator requires skill to lead conflicting parties into accepting responsibility.

6. Use direct communication: The administrator is required to speak clearly and mean what he says. The administrator should express clearly his expectations or concerns to the parties.
7. Look for interest: sides to a conflict is easy to understand when one can easily verbalize what he wants. The administrator's role is to look for the real interests of the parties to the conflict.
8. Focus on the future: Understanding the conflict means it is important to understand the dynamics of the relationship including its history. Focus should be on the future. Always remember "what do parties want to do differently tomorrow"?
9. Options for mutual gain: An administrator must find ways to ensure that parties are better off tomorrow than they are presently.

Strategies for managing conflict in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

Several approaches can be employed in the management of organizational conflicts. Owens (1987) had identified the contingency approach as an effective approach to conflict management. This approach takes into consideration the proper diagnosis of the situation as a necessary input for action. Owens consideration of the contingency view is premised on the fact that there is no one best way under all conditions for managing conflict, but there are optimal ways of managing it under certain conditions. Thomas (1976) analyzed five major perspectives to conceptualizing conflict management. The perspectives are avoidance, compromise, force, accommodation and collaboration.

- i. **Avoidance Strategy:** the administrator is advised to suggest indifference, evasion, withdrawal or isolation and should generally adopt "a delay tactic". It is both unassertive and uncooperative. Its use results from a low concern for group interest coupled with low concern for the interest of others. However, the strategy could be employed when the issue is trivial and the cost over weighs the benefits of resolution, when there is need to let the situation simmer and when others can solve the problem more effectively. The advantage of this strategy includes keeping the administrator(s) away from situations where his involvement will only result in negative outcome and may give the administrator more opportunity to assess more information in addressing the conflict (Swinton, 2006). While the disadvantage may create a snowball effect as conflict grows, setting the stage for bigger explosion later, keeps any solution from being found; causes others to perceive that the administrator does not care and reinforces the notion that conflicts are bad.
- ii. **Force Strategy:** This strategy involves the administrator's use of formal authority to satisfy/protect his interests without regard to the concerns of others.

The fundamental premise in the use of this strategy is to be in control. The strategy could be used by the administrator when quick decisive action is required. It can also be used when critical issues require unpopular action; when issues are vital to the welfare of the organization against individuals who take unfair advantage over others (Anja&Bassey, 2006). The advantages include the making of quick decisions. This strategy is focused on the goals and objectives of the school and demonstrates the administrators' commitment to the school. The disadvantages are that it reduces creativity and may harm the relationship between conflicting parties as well as defines a winner and the loser. It is a lose-win approach, assertive and non-cooperative, with high level of aggression (Weeks, 1992). It places little respect for the opinion and interests of subordinates (Anja&Bassey, 2006).

iii. Compromise Strategy: This strategy involves giving something to get something by the institutions' administrator (Hanson, 1991). It involves some degree of assertiveness and some degree of cooperation (Alabi, 2002). This strategy is generally regarded as lose-lose strategy (Weeks, 1992). The administrator in applying this strategy should have a moderated desire to satisfy the concerns of conflicting parties. It involves no direct confrontation of the issues and goals and neither party is completely satisfied with the resolution. The solution is not the best or most effective choice as it is directed towards achieving temporary solutions to avoid destructive struggle or when time pressures exist (Carpenter & Kennedy, 1988). The advantages include the possibility of quick decisions; it demonstrates equal power balance; solutions appear reasonable to outside parties; and can be used as a last resort when other methods fail. (Swinton, 2006). The disadvantages of its use are that the solution may not fit the demands of the situation and can be seen as a loss to both parties rather than a win for either.

iv. Accommodation Strategy: The basic philosophy of this strategy is the protection of relationships. The administrator using this strategy understands that one party must be made to set aside their goals in order to satisfy the goals of the other party. (Aldag&Kuzuhara,2002). In employing this strategy, the administrator must work to preserve harmonious relationships at all cost (Thomas, 1976). The advantages of this strategy needs the administrator to be reasonable when one party is wrong; be flexible and minimize losses when one party is sure to lose; advances harmony and displays trust of the other party's judgment. The disadvantages in the use of this strategy include; the reduction of creativity. Also, the conflict may escalate in the future as the solution may cause more trouble than a resolution. It may demonstrate lack of commitment on the part of the administrator.

v. Collaboration strategy: In the use of this strategy, the administrator must make efforts to actively involve parties to a disagreement in finding solutions that will satisfy them. According to Anja&Bassey, collaboration strategy involves a process where offers are exchanged and concessions made in a bid to arriving at agreement through representation. Communication must be made open and direct between the conflicting groups, and the use of sarcastic language and threats should be seriously avoided. To Baily (1971), Owens (1987), Weeks (1992), Anja&Bassey (2006), collaboration is a very useful conflict engagement approach when the issues are important to all parties. The conflicting parties need to be committed to the resolve of the conflict. The involvement of those concerned in deciding issues that affect them gives them a sense of belongingness, recognition, fulfillment and self-actualization. Thomas (1976) proposed that the appropriate situations to match with this strategy include when both sets of concerns are so important that only an integrative solution is acceptable.

The advantages of this strategy include; the satisfaction of all parties to the conflict; it promotes creativity; its use by an administrator demonstrates importance and respect for relationships and builds trust. Also, its use demonstrates commitment to finding a good solution and ensures commitment to solutions from all side to the conflict. It also promotes the idea that conflicts can be productive. The disadvantages include the consumption of time and energy.

Conclusion and recommendations

A tertiary institution is a collection of people with different cultural differences, class, perception, intelligence, communication issues and work-related disagreements governed by a line of authority (administrators) to promote efficiency and discipline. These people are saddled with consciously coordinated efforts to pursue and contribute to the attainment of the institution's common purpose. Poor institutional structure is often a major cause of inefficiency and indecision in an institution. A functional institution establishes clear lines of responsibility and communication with limited span of authority and command, so that no one person takes responsibility for more than he can adequately supervise. Alabi (2002) claims that nearly all institutions exist for the following reason: efficiency, continuity, identification, satisfaction of personal needs, communication and predictability. Thus, any administration that is short of these vices is bound to generate conflicts amongst its subject. These conflicts can have negative impacts on staff and student's welfare and happiness, resulting in low morale, decreased productivity and dissatisfaction. To maintain a harmonious and inclusive working environment, it is important for an administrator to identify the root cause(s) of the conflicts and address them constructively by applying the needed conflict management strategies.

It is therefore recommended that:

1. The administrator requires an in-depth knowledge of what conflict is as well as the principles and approaches to effective conflict resolution.
2. The administrator should engage in proper conflict management training practices like clear communication channels and team-building activities to control and prevent conflicts.
3. The Constitution, laws, regulations of various tertiary institutions, as well as an active complaint channel should be made available to institutional administrators, staff and students to avoid communication gaps.
4. Administrators should be trained and continuously retrained in line with globally accepted standards of conflict management skills to create a positive work environment, encourage collaboration, and address conflicts before they escalate.
5. Training programs for leaders can enhance their conflict resolution abilities positively impacting crew management and onboard operations.
6. Training programs for leaders can enhance their conflict resolution abilities, providing them with the necessary tools and techniques to manage even the most challenging conflicts. These programs may cover topics such as conflict resolution strategies, effective communication, negotiation techniques, and emotional intelligence. By improving their skills, leaders can better understand the root causes of conflicts and take appropriate measures to handle them effectively.
7. Offering conflict resolution training and resources workshops, guidelines, or access to academic and non-academic staff as mediation services to resolve conflicts constructively can contribute to conflict management practices.

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