

Exploring Conflict Management Strategies to Gain a Cohesive Team: A Theoretical Review of Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt

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ABSTRACT: This paper seeks to review conflict management and team cohesiveness in deposit money banks in Port Harcourt. The researcher looked at the variables of the study through accommodation and cooperation strategy as dimensions with mutual trust and interdependency as measures. The study determined the relationship between the two variables and the outcome showed that: (i) conflict management strategies such as cooperation and accommodation promote team cohesiveness. (ii) The study found that conflict is a conscious act and essential as long as man interacts, however, with cooperation and accommodation strategy team members are inclined to work through their differences and develop a surprising unity of interest and purpose to validate their cohesive identity. Consequently, the study concluded that teams are different in their manner of interaction and perception that could lead to conflict but argue that individuals who make up groups are part of a dynamic living system that changes in response to their environment and people are not only affected by their own inner perception and reactions but they are also influenced by other external factors which could avert deviant behavior or aggravate it. Based on our conclusion recommendations were proffered.

Keywords: Conflict, Cooperation, Accommodation, Team Cohesiveness, Trust, Interdependence, and Diversity.

I. INTRODUCTION

In a competitive and diversity driven organization such as a bank, managers are often confronted with different challenges in handling dissimilarities that exist among stakeholders such as customers versus bank's staff, bank versus external environment, employees versus employers, top management versus subordinate, banks versus other regulatory bodies all because of its interactive capability. More so, while the marketing staff struggles with unrealistic targets of deposit mobilization, operations staff contends with irate customers in the course of service delivery which could be attributed to differences in needs, opinions, goals, personalities, etc. In assessing the above point Samiksha, (2019), opined that man's ability to interact defines him as a social animal that cannot operate in isolation but depends on other individuals to fulfill his needs. This is to say, man's pursuit of competition to satisfy his interest could conflict with the other party leading to positive or negative consequences on performance.

The generality of conflict indicates that conflict is inherent in man and of course scholars like McCauley (1990), have traced conflict to be deep-rooted in man's biology. However, Tadesse (1988), noted that a given society or individual could be peaceful and/or destructive across time and circumstances. This implies that individuals in society may change from aggressive behavior to cooperative behavior subject to time and the kind of group he identifies with. This is in line with Reich (2006), who posited that the essence of conflict management is to convert destructive conflict into constructive ones for better organizational performance.

Diversity according to Robbins, Judge, and Vohra, (2017), is the extent to which members of a group are similar to, or different from, one another. Whetten and Cameron (2012), identified these characteristics as specialization, goal differences, status differences, skills and abilities, personality differences, perceptions amongst others to be the causes of conflict in a diversity driven workforce. Robbins (2005), established conflict situations stemming from individual differences expressed in a series of behavioral patterns as participant interacts. This conflicting behavior according to Thakore (2013), is traced to diversification in values, different interpretations of information, limited resources and different personalities which result in frustration that

aggravate the conflict. Accordingly, Tamunomiebi & Wobodo (2018), opined that an organization's success and competitiveness depends on its ability to embrace diversity and realize the competitive advantages and benefits it provides. This view is supported by Tamunomiebi & Onah, (2019), who posited that with behavioral tendencies such as team cohesiveness, diversity could enhance the development and sustenance of a group.

The purpose of every organization to venture into business is to provide goods and services desirable to its customers to make a profit. However the quality of goods and services is a function of those (i.e. the employee) who occupy the different departments in the organization; their behaviors and the outcomes of those behaviors determine the level of revenue that will be generated or leakages in form of loss and these behavioral tendencies could alter the life cycle of the organization hence, the need to moderate the employee's behavior and quickly resolve conflict becomes necessary. Affirming to this assertion, Rivers (2005), posited that the hidden effect of unresolved conflict in an organization can affect productivity and performance. Accordingly, Dana (2000) asserted that an unresolved conflict could lead to economic loss which can be calculated in terms of time wasted and loss of employees. Therefore, for the organization to be efficient and effective in achieving its goals, the nature of the relationship that exists in minimizing conflict to gain a cohesive relationship becomes the solution that managers seek. This is because a dysfunctional conflict has been found to increase low productivity (Ahmed Adamu Isa 2015).

Given the foregoing, Achinstein (2002); Hargreaves (2001); De Lima (2001) suggested that positive, meaningful and deep relationship is a way forward in coping with people in a diversity driven organization. This is because "relationship is basic to life". "Life is relationship and relationship is a man". This is so because every problem of man can be traced to relationship issues be it family settings, along the road, leader subordinate or the society at large. In affirmation to these assertions, Kaila (2010) and Mamta, Gaur & Narges, Ebrahimi (2013), are of the same view when they posited that relationship is essential to man. Conflicts have been known to be an indivisible part of life and viewed as disastrous (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010). However, for those that understands life as a relationship will reap conflict's exciting opportunity for growth with its thrilling benefits.

On the contrary, Schellenberg (1996), argues that conflict is neither bad nor good, but conflict is rather one of the essentials in social life. Building on his assertion, one could buttress that sociability is the true essence of society and society is the platform for social relationship hence the recognition of the human aspect of our existence seeing man as an "emotional being" could be the reason why some organizations fail irrespective of the group or team building and others succeed. What makes the difference is the "cohesiveness" as a non-cohesive team symbolizes a fertile soil to grow conflict. Man's desire for sociability can only be fulfilled if he derives a sense of belonging to a group, maintains a social relationship, enjoys a sense of intimacy and understanding, consoles and is consoled, help others in need and enjoys friendly interaction among team members. Hence the ability to work through the similarities and dissimilarities to achieve organizational goals becomes critical.

Despite a growing body of research in conflict-related issues such as Barki, and Hartwick (2001); Doucet, Weldon, Chen and Wang, (2009); Song, and Thieme, (2006); Brahnam, Margavio, Hignite, Barrier, and Chin, (2005); Leung, Liu, and Ng, (2005), little attention has been drawn to unique measures and dimensions of conflict management and team cohesiveness in deposit money banks in Port Harcourt making this study extremely relevant. Hence this study will add to the body of previous knowledge and assist bank managers to handle conflict issues in the banking industry with the application of suitable strategies aimed at team cohesiveness. Bearing this in mind, it becomes imperative to theoretically review the relationship between conflict management strategies and team cohesiveness in deposit money banks in Port Harcourt. To achieve our purpose, we have the following objectives: to appraise the relationship between cooperation conflict management strategy and team cohesiveness in deposit money banks in Port Harcourt. To determine the relationship between accommodation conflict management strategy and team cohesiveness in deposit money banks in Port Harcourt. Accordingly, this paper will be divided into three sections; the concept of conflict management, the concept of team cohesion and the relationship between the two variables. We shall further draw conclusion based on literature findings and recommend. The term "team" will be used synonymously with "group" throughout this paper.

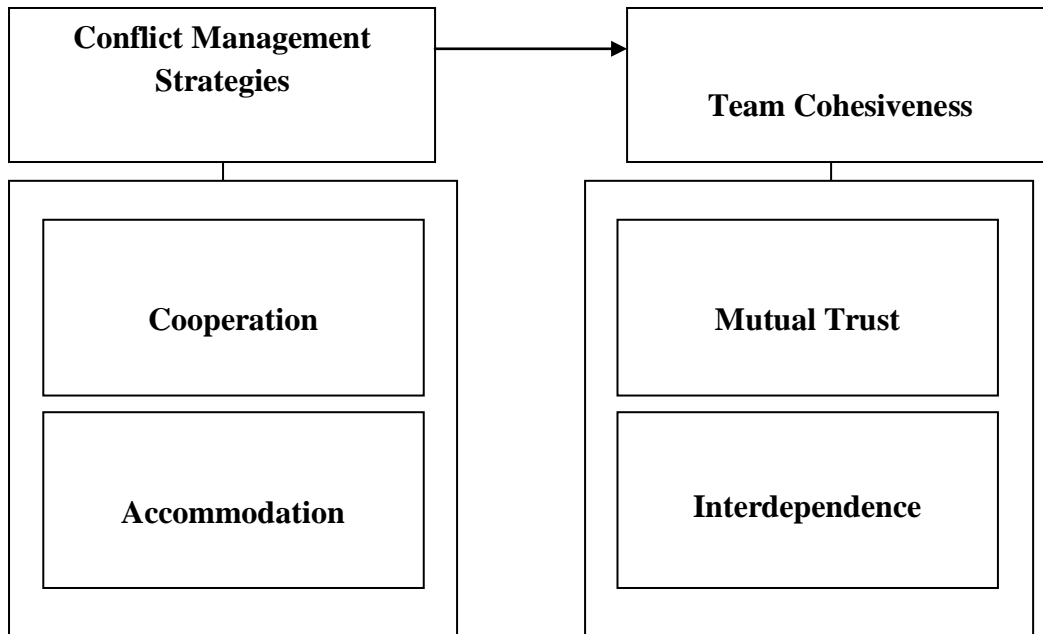


Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework of the Study
Source: Conceptualized by the Author, 2019

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Social identity theory evolved to address the way individuals view themselves and how they view others in the course of their interactions. Hence Social identity theory could be described as the bedrock of cohesion and intergroup differences. Literature reveals that in the past discourse, team cohesion has been considered the most important variable in the study of workgroups (Carron & Brawley, 2000). The generality of group theories is based on the relative importance that members attach to being a member of a group. Social identity theory (SIT) is centered on group interaction and assumed that one part of the self-concept is defined by belonging to a group (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). This is to say, SIT is a theory that considers the relationship between individual self-concept and group membership, implying that our perceived group memberships affect our identity, and in turn change the way we interact with others (Hogg & Terry, 2000). In social identity theory, individuals in a group become conscious that they belong to a group, adapt their attitudes and values to that of the group and share a common culture, goals, and identity. Social identity theory was propounded by Tajfel (1979) with the notion that all group behavior is a part of the social identity process to achieve positive self-esteem and self-enhancement (Abrams & Hogg, 1988).

Social identity scholars believed that individuals who identify with a particular group feel a strong attraction to such a group (Hogg & Hardie 1992). This could mean that the basis for social attraction is particularly to the group and not individuals. Social identification, therefore, could be the prime basis for participation in social activities. This position is supported by Hogg, et al., (1992), who argued that team members are rather attracted to the group and independent of individual connection within the group. Therefore attraction to the group in this instance is a function of individual discrete participation and reciprocal interdependence that may strengthen the relationship among team members and thus make the team desirable to identify with. The key driver that draws team member's awareness to be a part of group ranges from their knowledge of collective contribution towards the team, the friendship and bond they explore, the value placed on task achievement, the respect they gain from each other for collective relevance, the satisfaction, support, protection and a feeling of security they have in the team. Hence, cohesion is the shared bond and attraction that drives team members to stay together and want to work together as a socially identified group (Beal, Cohen, Burke, & McLendon, 2003). The relevance of social identity theory as it has to do with conflict management and team cohesion is relative to Korte's position when he posited that individuals alter their behavior and submerge to group identity and this transition from individual identity to group identity overrides their habits for the interest and goals of the group (Korte, 2017).

III. CONCEPT OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Scholars have different views about the term conflict, however; they have the same opinion about the "inevitability" of conflict as far as human interaction is concerned (Robins, 2003; Kinicki & Kreitner, 2010). A common assumption of conflict connotes a negative expression however; some believe that conflict is sometimes beneficial to the organization. This is in line with Schein (2010), who acknowledged that there are various interpretations of the word conflict and its connotations however, the dominating opinion of conflict in a globalized world is that conflict is a necessary part of a team in that conflict is a prerequisite to change which is integral to all forms of business improvement and/or development; implying that conflict is both productive and positive (Kinicki & Kreitner, 2010). According to Thomas (2009), conflict as a disagreement in opinion between people or groups due to differences in attitude, belief, values or needs. In the same line, Schein (2010) believed conflict to be a necessary and unavoidable disposition in the interaction of man. In this view, Anderson & Polkinghorne (2008) considered conflict to be some form of incompatibility between individuals or groups when the belief or action of one or more members are resisted or declined by the other party.

Conflict refers to an opposing idea and actions of different individuals or group leading to a rivalry state (Tschannen-Moran, 2001; Ellis & Abbott, 2011; and, Marquis & Huston, 2014). Building on the various scholars we interpret conflict to mean a "conscious" attempt to oppose, resist or compel the will of others to accomplish self "interest". Now, to be conscious of fulfilling one's interest, one needs to engage the mind and first be mindful of one's concern and second, tend to disagree with or impede the concern of the other. Hence engagement in constructive or destructive conflict is a matter of choice because it is a conscious act in satisfying self-interest. However, when team members have a mutual interest they will support, assist and accept the will of team members to fulfill their collective interest or goal. Having said this, the concept of conflict will be appreciated in understanding its theories.

Conflict Theories

Robbins (2005), identified three schools of thought that have emerged namely; traditional school of thought, the human relation or contemporary view and the interactionist view. Traditional theory: This school of thought views conflict as a negative force full of destruction, violence, war, threat, pain, and hopelessness, and must be avoided. According to this view, all conflict should be avoided. The Human Relations view or Contemporary view: View conflict as a natural occurrence in all groups and focus should be on trust and goodwill to create an enabling atmosphere to minimize conflict. The Interactionist View: The interactionist interprets conflict in an entirely different way from traditionalists and people with a contemporary view. They assume that Conflict is natural, good, necessary and is based on real differences. They further view conflict as necessary for group performance and effectiveness hence; functional conflict should be encouraged as it could lead to changes and innovations with potentials to build the organization while dysfunctional conflict should be resolved as the undesired level of conflict can be harmful a to the organization (Robbins, 2005).

Types of Conflict

Functional Conflict is a form of conflict that supports organizational goals, improves performance and relationship among members (Kinicki & Kreitner, 2008). Elaborating on this view we could say functional conflict tend towards positive interactions that team members display towards each other for the solidarity and mutual benefit of the teams which includes cooperative behavior, accommodative behavior, and adaptive capability. More so, Song, Dyer, and Thieme, (2006), suggested the positive outcome of a functional conflict to include continuous improvement, creativeness, acquisition of new skills and high cohesiveness (Song et al., 2006).

Dysfunctional conflict is believed to be a destructive conflict that hinders organizational performance and leads to negative results. This conflict orientation is characterized by placing individual interests over the business's overall interest (Kinicki & Kreitner, 2008). Accordingly, Marquis and Huston, (2014) identified the effect of dysfunctional conflict to include tension, ill -health, low job fulfillment, poor communication, distrust, and low morale. In the same view, Englund and Bucero, (2012) identified the negative outcomes of dysfunctional conflict to include disputes, strained relationships, low morale, inefficiency, low productivity, and less-cohesiveness

The difference between the two types of conflict is not in their sources but rather in the orientation that induced their responses. In functional conflict, instead of showing aggression by attacking each other, they rather take part in unselfish conversation leading to a mutually beneficial outcome. Whereas in dysfunctional conflict both parties retort tending towards competition leading to a win-loss situation with unfavorable outcomes (Whetten, David, & Cameron, Kim, 2012)

IV. CLASSIFICATION OF CONFLICT

Drawing from Robbins (2000), he classified conflict into four categories: (i) interpersonal conflict (ii) intragroup conflict (iii) Intergroup conflict and (iv) inter-organizational conflict. Interpersonal conflict relates to the conflict between two or more people due to individual difference, perception, personality difference and lots more (Robbins, 2000). The intra-group conflict has to do with a disagreement between two or more people within a group who share the same organizational goals. This could happen as a result of competition and rivalry

in resources (George & Jones 2000). Intra-group conflict is further divided into three; (i) Relationship conflict stems from interpersonal incompatibilities (ii) task conflict is related to clash of views and opinion about a particular task and (iii) process conflict has to do with disparity in group's pattern to task and the technicality to achieve their goals (Jehn & Mannix 2001). Intergroup conflict: This level of conflict occurs between different groups, teams, and departments and could arise as a result of the fight for superiority (Robbins, 2000). Inter-organizational conflict: This level of conflict takes place between different organizations as a result of status and superiority in products and services (George & Jones 2000). There are three types of inter-organizational conflict (i) Substantive conflict appears when a basic disagreement arises between the two organizations at a fundamental level (ii) Emotional conflict takes place when people from different organizations react on an emotional level out of fear, jealousy, envy or stubbornness (iii) Cultural conflict is based on cultural needs and desires (Morgan, 2012).

V. CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

There are no particular ways to conflict resolution but understanding the source and origin of conflicts forms the bases of a suitable strategy to apply (Hudson, Grisham, Srinivasan, & Moussa, 2005). In line with this, Darling & Walker, (2001) suggested that effective conflict management behaviors are those behaviors that reduce the conflict issue as well as the potential for conflict escalation and improve the relationship between conflict parties. Literature exploration reveals a variety of conflict management strategies but for this paper, we shall adopt the five conflict management strategies proposed by De Dreu & Weingart, (2003) namely; Avoidance, Competing, Compromise, Cooperation, and Accommodation after which we shall justify our bases for adopting cooperation and accommodation strategy.

Avoidance: This is a delayed tactic where the parties involved ignore the conflict than resolving it leading to a lose-lose situation for both parties and this kind of conflict could be viewed as a dysfunctional conflict (Song et al., 2006). Analyzing the implication of delay tactics could give room for the negative perception that could create anger which will further aggravate further conflict. Even though avoidance can temporarily fix the conflict however it is not a permanent solution as the conflict remains unresolved. In affirmation of the above suggestions Brahmam, Margavio, Hignite, Barrier & Chin, (2005) opined that avoidance is the most disruptive conflict management approach as it reduces group unity, innovation and performance and as such not suitable to predict team cohesion.

Competition: This is a dysfunctional conflict strategy driven by distrust, threat, and fear where one party attempts to acquire complete dominance over the other leading to a win-loss situation (Lam, Chan, & Pun, 2007). Accordingly, Pierce, Gardner, & Dunham, (2007) posited research has revealed competing to be destructive and less effective strategies potentially harmful to team relationships.

Compromise: Compromise is a conflict management technique that offers each party the willingness to give up something for the benefit of their shared aspiration (Victor, 2012). In this strategy, one party ignores their own goals and resolve the conflict by giving in to others to protect their relationship and could be considered as an unassertive and cooperative behavior leading to a win/lose situation. Following this argument Montoya-Weiss, Messey, & Song (2001); and Thakore (2013), posited that a healthy relationship requires some level of reciprocity. Hence the possibility of one party to take advantage is visible which could someday negatively affect team performance.

Cooperation: is a functional conflict management strategy involving two or more parties working together to gain a mutual benefit and satisfaction leading to a win-win situation (Davis, Kraus, & Capobianco, 2009). According to Samiksha (2019), cooperation is fundamental to every society's existence. This could mean that cooperation is a necessary factor for a person's wellbeing as well as the societal survival at large. The body system, for instance, is made in parts hence for the whole body to function appropriately all the other parts must cooperate. The hands need to cooperate with the mouth to have a taste of food and of course, other parts of the body must have a good relationship with the other to function well otherwise the individual remains unsatisfied. Samiksha (2019) further buttressed that the advancement of any society can be linked to its cooperation with other sectors and the absence of cooperation is reflected in a nation's level of development and growth. This makes cooperation a critical need for a contemporary world as it provides a solution to many problems that comes with diversity.

Cooperation is a management strategy with high self- and other-concern and aspiration to satisfy both conflict parties that end up in a win-win solution with both parties reaching their goals (Victor, 2012). According to Davis et al., (2009) cooperation is a strategy that encompasses overt behaviors that directly tackle the problem and are considered active constructive strategies potentially beneficial to the relationship amongst teams. Cooperation is a conflict resolution strategy where teams adjust to their environment to have a sense of harmony (Gross & Guerrero, 2000). Cooperation is the understanding between two or more conflicting elements in identifying and resolving their differences with a favorable attitude like kindness, sympathy, and concern for others, mutual understanding and some amount of willingness to lend a helping hand to others as they strive to reach mutual satisfaction leading to a win-win situation. Drawing from the authorities above we could interpret

cooperation to a blend of two previously distinct behaviors transformed through group interaction where team members work together to overcome diverse negative behaviors to establish a positive relationship aimed at goal achievement. Cooperation is a problem-solving strategy with lots of benefits ranging from increased trust, respect, and harmony amongst team members, creates positive emotions in the team and enhances team performance hence the most valued conflict management strategy (Montoya-Weiss et al., 2001; Thomas, 2009). Similarly, Samiksha (2019) and Nair (2008) asserted that cooperation creates positive emotions in the team, leading to constructive conflict suitable for team cohesion.

Accommodation: This is a conflict management strategy where the parties involved adjust their behavior to gain a cohesive relationship and overcome their differences (Du et al., 2011). The reason for conflict resolution in an accommodative strategy is to ensure a balance between adjusting one's behavior and other's behavior for harmonious interaction. It is the acquisition of behavior patterns, habits, and attitudes that are transmitted to him through interaction with teammates to determine the successful harmony amongst previously conflicting parties (Darling Walker, 2001).

VI. CONCEPT OF TEAM COHESIVENESS

Teams refer to groups of individuals who interact as a single unit with a specific task and clear goals (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006). A team is a small cohesive group that works effectively as a single unit through being focused on a common task (Cole & Kelly, 2011). A team is a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, set of performance goals and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable (Heinz Wehrich, Mark Cannice & Harold Koontz, 2010). A cohesive team, on the other hand, is the extent to which individual members are drawn together as a team to work and achieve team goals (Cole & Kelly, 2011). Team cohesion is vital to any organization's success because of its numerous benefits. According to Lee & Park (2006), team cohesion in the workplace can lead to satisfaction and commitment of employees, high output, high level of goal attainment, increased positive feelings about the organization, and desire to stay longer with the organization. This could mean that teams are the bedrock of every organization considering their active role in carrying out a task. A contemporary business world is faced with numerous challenges therefore, it is necessary to build a strong team to promote cohesiveness which has a direct bearing on team's productivity and ultimately organizational goal achievement (Robbins et al, 2017).

Lack of cohesiveness has been observed to be a major reason why organizations have had a reduced marginal contribution of employees to organizational objectives where personal goals supersede the overall goal of the team with selfish motivation (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006). Stenberg (1999), supported this view when he opined that while some individuals in a team strive and are motivated towards their interests others want to meet their objective as a team striving as a cohesive entity sharing in both successes and failures of the team (Stenberg 1999). In other words, the more team members work collaboratively with mutual trust the more cohesive they will be. Accordingly, Beal et al (2003), team cohesiveness to a large extent contributes to team performance. This is to say that the contributions of ideas and skills of team members are recognized in a cohesive team which increases their bond and relationship. Team cohesion is a tipping point where newly formed workgroups finally make the transition to an effective team - indicative of a shared culture; cohesion has historically been considered the most important variable in the study of working groups (Carron & Brawley 2000). The rapid growth of team-based organizational is the reflection of the benefits organizations gains with teamwork which could not be achieved by the same number of individuals working in isolation which has prompted academia on the importance of research in this area as a response to make known its importance.

VII. MEASURES OF TEAM COHESION

Mutual Trust

Trust is based on the probability calculus where the emphasis is on the advantage and disadvantages of an interaction. Alper, Tjosvold, & Law (2000) distinguishes three sources of trust, the calculative form of trust via assessment of cost and benefits, familiarity through continuous interaction and values /norms that cultivate trustworthy behavior. Trust gives team members the willingness to accept and influence one another's behaviors toward common objectives (Bergman, Rentsch, Small, Davenport, 2012).

Rothstein (2000) also argues that mutual trust provides the team with the opportunity to know one another better, develop a strong rapport and serves as a mechanism for overcoming social problems. This could mean that trust is the foundation of good relationships and could avert workplace conflict or miscommunication. Trust can also be viewed as the confidence that turns up in complicated circumstances. Accordingly, Robbins views trust in different ways. To him, team members must trust to enable them to find a mutually acceptable solution that satisfies all parties. Trust is the mechanism where team members engage in informal communication and exchange information interactively and freely because of the trust they have built in the course of interaction (Robbins, 2000). He also describes trust as an optimistic anticipation that one party will not take advantage. The

author maintains that high-performance teams are characterized by high mutual trust among members. This is to say that team members believe in the reliability, personality, and the ability of each other which makes them identifiable. Hence when team members trust one another they are convinced that whatever actions or decisions taken in the group is free from individual benefit rather, it is for the good of all team members. According to Govindarajan and Gupta (2001), mutual trust is critical to the success of teams in that it encourages cooperation and minimizes unproductive conflict. Sharing a common goal or similarity can enhance trust (Govindarajan, et al., 2001). Ring and Van de Ven, (1992) defined trust as confidence in another's goodwill. While Coleman (1990) view trust as a commitment shown or given before the certainty of how the trusted people will act.

VIII. INTERDEPENDENCE

Bishop (2004), defined interdependence as the degree to which team members depend on their interactions and support from others to perform tasks. Interdependence has become a vital variable to team cohesiveness following Pearce and Gregersen, (1991), suggestion a high level of task interdependence enhance team cohesion. Task interdependence involves team participation in a different segment of work and the degree to which team members interact and rely on one another to accomplish work (Campion, Medsker, Catherine & Higgs, 1993). Accordingly, Pearce and Gregerson (1991) asserted that reciprocal task interdependence shows a positive relationship amongst the individual's responsibility to work. Weiss, (2002) added that employee's interdependency to accomplish a set goal creates harmony and lessen unconstructive conflict. This is to say teams and the society at large is interconnected and so need each other for survival. The transition of man from birth to death needs a gap to be filled by another. "Even if a man thinks he is so content that he does not need the help of another man, he sure cannot burry himself when he dies" and "the head cannot say I do not need the neck". We all need each other to survive. In affirmation to the above assertion, Bolmqvist (2002) and Luthans (2002) stated that effective teams are characterized as being dependable, making reliable connections between the parts, targeting the direction and goals of the organization. Correspondingly Robbins (2000), concluded that interdependency creates transparency which aids open to communicate, honesty to resolve differences and substitute personal goals for collective goals. Interdependence provides a source of backup and assistance for overworked or under-skilled team members and can be a source of positive impact on increased morale with a high tendency to reduce conflict (Salas, Sims, & Burke, 2005).

Relationship between Conflict Management Strategies and Team Cohesiveness

Literature exploration revealed that functional conflict management strategies such as cooperation and accommodation have a high tendency in enhancing team cohesiveness (Thomas, 2009; Samiksha 2019; Sutterfield, Friday-Stroud, & Shivers-Blackwell 2007; Vokić & Sontor, 2009; Song et al., 2006; Isa, 2015 & Nair, 2008). This corresponds with Druskat, (2001) view that cohesive teams are defined by their willingness to cooperate and accommodate different parties to be resourceful and productive. Approaching conflict with accommodative and cooperative strategies helps team members to have a better understanding of the problem, support change, intensify unity, deepen the relationship and increase team cohesion (Song et al., 2006).

Cooperation and accommodation have been found to minimize deviant behavior and enhance team cohesiveness (Beal, Cohen, Burke, & McLendon, 2003). Similarly, Kinicki & Kreitner, (2008) opined that conflict management strategies like cooperation and accommodation were found to be connected with increased team cohesiveness. Research further demonstrated that the synergy team members' display towards each other by contributions of different skills through cooperation and accommodation promotes goal achievement and enhance team cohesiveness (Greer, Jehn, & Mannix, 2008). And Peterson & Behfar, (2003) asserted that cooperation and accommodation do not only promote team cohesion but tag teams as champions in goal attainment. According to Robbins (2017), diversity exposes team members to conflict however, cooperation and accommodation capability tend to bring into display their similarities which subject them to set aside their differences, take advantage of workplace diversity and strengthens relations. Streams of research revealed cooperative work approach to positively influence team cohesion, with tendency towards trust and willingness to achieve set goal harmoniously (Ensley & Hmieleski, 2005; Ensley, Pearson, & Sardeshmukh, 2007; Greer, Jehn & Mannix, 2008; Leslie, 2007; Liang, Liu, Lin, & Lin, 2007; Matsuo, 2006; Olson, Parayitam & Dooley, 2007; Van der Vegt & Bunderson, 2005 & Weiss, 2002). Drawing from literature exploration the outcome of this paper is evident. a) Conflict management strategies such as cooperation and accommodation promote team cohesiveness. b) A conflict is a conscious act and essential as long as man interacts, however, a cooperative and accommodative strategy is the bridge to blend differences and develop a surprising unity of interest and purpose to validate their cohesive identity.

IX. CONCLUSION

Having extensively reviewed empirical and theoretical literature on the variables of this study it became apparent from this study's findings that conflict management strategies like cooperation and accommodation

improve team cohesiveness. It is plausible that teams are different in their manner of interaction and perception that could lead to conflict but the findings suggest that the individuals who make up the group are part of a dynamic living system that changes in response to the surrounding environment. Furthermore, people are not only affected by their inner perception and reactions but also influenced by other external factors that could avert deviant behavior or aggravate it. This conforms to the theoretical foundation of this study which considers the relationship between individual self-concept and group membership, viewing group perception to influence the bases to identify with and induce their judgment in interacting with others. Diversity was earlier identified to trigger conflict, however, effective leverage on the differences in diverse teams could melt away the initial visible differences (surface-level diversity) and tend to identify, appreciate and share similar attitudes, values and goals (deep-level diversity) that automatically override their initial differences. Accommodation and cooperation is an indispensable attribute to check conflict in a complex contemporary society and as such groups, organizations and society at large can hardly progress effectively without accommodation and cooperation; fundamentally these two factors enable the parties involved to alter their behavior and adjust to a new environment. Social identity theory does make provision for how to handle the implication of multiplicity of identity with the tendency to instigate unnecessary social struggle.

X. RECOMMENDATIONS

i) The essence of conflict management is to convert destructive conflict into constructive ones hence managers in deposit money banks should train their staff to alter attitude and behaviors with tendencies to destructive conflict. ii) Deposit money banks should embrace diversity and leverage on the overwhelming benefit of diversity such as new ideas, new perspectives, new interpretations and a variety of problem-solving skills.iii) Deposit money banks should motivate team members for accomplished goals. iv) An empirical review should be further carried out to validate this theoretical piece.

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