

Friendship, Cohesion and Conflict Management in a Multi-Cultural Group

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Friendship

- ▶ Friendship is a close and mutual relationship between two or more individuals characterized by feelings of trust, affection, and support. It is an essential aspect of human social interaction and is built on a foundation of shared experiences, common interests, and emotional bonds. Friends often provide each other with emotional support, advice, and a sense of belonging (ChatGPT, 2023).
- ▶ Friendship can take many forms and can develop through various avenues such as school, work, shared hobbies or interests, and even online communities. It is a dynamic and evolving relationship that requires ongoing effort and communication to maintain. A true friendship is based on mutual respect, honesty, and trust, and is a source of comfort and joy for those involved (ChatGPT, 2023).
- ▶ Brotherhood is a close association or organization of men who share a common interest, goal, or purpose. It typically implies a strong bond of camaraderie, loyalty, and mutual support among members. The term "brotherhood" is often used to describe fraternal organizations such as college fraternities, labor unions, or military units, as well as groups that are formed around shared beliefs or values such as religious or spiritual groups. The concept of brotherhood emphasizes a sense of unity and cooperation among members, with each member expected to support and look out for one another. Brotherhood can also refer to the bond between brothers, either by blood or through adoption, as well as the concept of brotherhood as a **universal human ideal that transcends race, religion, and nationality** (ChatGPT, 2023).

Cohesion

- ▶ Cohesion refers to the degree of unity or togetherness within a group or team. It is the extent to which group members are committed to each other and share a common sense of purpose, goals, and values. Cohesion is often measured by the level of agreement and similarity in attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions among group members (ChatGPT, 2023).
- ▶ Cohesion is important for group performance and effectiveness, as it promotes cooperation, collaboration, and mutual support among group members. When group cohesion is high, members are more likely to work together towards a shared goal, communicate effectively, and feel a sense of belonging and satisfaction within the group (ChatGPT, 2023).

Conflict

- ▶ A conflict is a situation where two or more individuals or groups have opposing interests, needs, or goals that interfere with one another. Conflicts can arise in various settings, such as personal relationships, workplaces, communities, or nations (ChatGPT, 2023)
- ▶ Conflicts can range from minor disagreements to more significant and complex issues, such as power struggles, cultural clashes, or ethical dilemmas. They can be caused by a variety of factors, including differences in beliefs, values, attitudes, and interests, as well as external factors such as limited resources, competition, or misunderstandings (ChatGPT, 2023).

Conflict management

- ▶ Conflict management is the process of resolving or minimizing the negative effects of conflicts. It involves identifying the root causes of the conflict, understanding the different perspectives involved, and finding a mutually acceptable solution that meets the needs and interests of all parties. Effective conflict management often involves open communication, active listening, negotiation, and compromise (ChatGPT, 2023)
- ▶ Effective conflict management requires a willingness to listen, understand, and respect the perspectives of others. It also involves recognizing and addressing the underlying issues that are contributing to the conflict. By approaching conflicts with a positive and constructive mindset, conflicts can be resolved in a way that strengthens relationships and promotes mutual understanding (ChatGPT, 2023).

Multi-Cultural



- ▶ Multicultural refers to the coexistence and interaction of multiple cultures within a society, community, or organization. It involves recognizing and appreciating cultural diversity and promoting understanding and respect among people from different cultural backgrounds (ChatGPT, 2023).
- ▶ A multicultural society recognizes and values the differences and similarities among different groups of people and aims to create an inclusive environment where everyone can feel welcome and respected. This may involve celebrating cultural holidays and traditions, learning about different languages and customs, and fostering cross-cultural communication and understanding (ChatGPT, 2023).
- ▶ Culture refers to the beliefs, customs, practices, art, and other forms of expression that define a group or society. It encompasses the shared values, norms, and behaviors of people in a particular social or geographical context. Culture can be influenced by factors such as history, geography, religion, language, politics, and economics. It is an important aspect of identity and plays a significant role in shaping the way individuals and communities view themselves and interact with the world around them (ChatGPT, 2023).
- ▶ Culture is how a group have agreed to interreact and dominate their environment

Wolves at play

- ▶ Two Wolves fighting in each of us (Coleman, 2021)
 - ▶ Wolf 1 - Fear, anger, envy, greed, arrogance, and ego
 - ▶ Wolf 2 - Joy, peace, love, hope, kindness, generosity, and faith
- ▶ Who wins the fight?
 - ▶ The one you feed!
- ▶ “In the end we may need both wolves to survive, our humanity, our decency, and our sense of community and solidarity depends on the capacities of our kinder ones to thrive (Coleman, 2021)”



Feeding the Wolves



► Polarization of Nigeria

- President Buhari - Tribalism, Nepotism, Divisiveness, Misrule, Absenteeism, Insecurity, Highhandedness, Compassionless, Oil theft, wanton corruption, etc.
- Poor Economic performance
- Increased poverty and sufferings
 - According to the John Hopkins University economist, who analysed 156 countries by calculating their unemployment rates, inflation, prevailing lending rates and GDP growths, Nigeria went from 15th among the most miserable countries in the world's ranking in 2020 to 11th in 2021 (Punch Newspaper website, 2023).
 - Nigeria's misery index has soared by 11.9 percentage points to 73.05, The PUNCH's findings have shown as at 10th March 2023
- Alignment and Man-no-man syndrome
- Government Policies
 - Naira redesign
 - No FX
- Social Media Influences - remember, they are designed to polarize!
- Increasingly polarized Media

Feeding the Wolves (cont.)



- ▶ National Psychosis - Loss of contact with reality and creating alternative realities!
 - ▶ Self help Security arrangements - Amotekun
 - ▶ Agitations for self determination - Yoruba Nation, Biafra, etc.
 - ▶ Terrorist & Nationalist takeover, of genuine agitations
 - ▶ Boko Haram
 - ▶ IPOB
 - ▶ OPC
 - ▶ Fulani Tribesmen
 - ▶ Tribal distrust
 - ▶ JAPA
 - ▶ Abroadians proxy war

Feeding the Wolves (cont.)

- ▶ Current Politics
 - ▶ Amplifying divisiveness
 - ▶ Youths vs Elderly
 - ▶ Elites vs Poor
 - ▶ Entrenched Interest vs Common Wealth
 - ▶ Political Grandstanding - protecting the status quo
 - ▶ The BATist - continuity or renewed Hope? Emilokan! Arrogance
 - ▶ The Atikulate - Another Northerner - Selfishness/Life ambition
 - ▶ The OBIdience - Movement or Opportunist?
 - ▶ EndSARS
 - ▶ The Youths demanding space - Sorosoke vs Gbenu Dake!
 - ▶ While the Gen Y and Gen X are at war, Baby Boomers are running away with the Loot!
 - ▶ INEC - Biased or Unbiased Umpire?
 - ▶ Great expectations to Great disappointment
 - ▶ Failed Processes
 - ▶ National Psychosis has greatly impaired our sense of right and wrong - we now argue, fight, quarrel, insult one another over it, hence CONFLICT!
 - ▶ Our BFL is simply a reflection of Society!



The Way Out



- ▶ **Conflict Management (ChatGPT, 2023)**
 - ▶ Collaborative approach: This approach involves working together to find a mutually acceptable solution that meets the needs of all parties involved. It requires open communication, active listening, and a willingness to compromise.
 - ▶ Compromising approach: This approach involves finding a middle ground that satisfies the needs of all parties to some extent. It requires negotiation and a willingness to make concessions.
 - ▶ Competing approach: This approach involves taking a firm stance and using power or authority to resolve the conflict in favor of one party. This approach is appropriate when quick decisions are needed, but it can also lead to hostility and resentment.
 - ▶ Accommodating approach: This approach involves sacrificing one's own needs and interests to satisfy the needs of the other party. It requires empathy, understanding, and a willingness to put others first.
 - ▶ Avoiding approach: This approach involves avoiding the conflict altogether or postponing it until a later time. While this approach may be appropriate in some situations, it can also lead to unresolved issues and ongoing tension.

The Way Out

► Feeding the good Wolf

- Moving from Debate/Criticism to Dialogue - open and reflective speaking, hearing, learning and discovery (Coleman, 2021, p.17)
- Respect -- respect is a fundamental aspect of human interactions.
 - Respect is a way of showing consideration, admiration, and honor to others, regardless of their background, beliefs, or opinions.
 - It involves treating others the way you would want to be treated and acknowledging their inherent worth as human beings.
 - Respect can be shown in various ways, such as listening attentively to others, using polite language, showing appreciation for others' contributions, and valuing their time and opinions.
 - Ultimately, respect is essential for building positive relationships and fostering a harmonious society. (ChatGPT, 2023)

► Love

- Romans 12:10 AMP - Be devoted to one another with [authentic] brotherly affection [as members of one family], give preference to one another in honor
- I Cor 13:4 - 7 -- Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

The Way Out

- ▶ Feeding the good Wolf
 - ▶ Agreement - “Agree to agree vs Agree to disagree”
 - ▶ Amos 3:3 NIV -- Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?
 - ▶ Agreement is a state where two or more parties come to a shared understanding or mutual consensus about a particular topic, idea, or decision. Agreement can be achieved through various means such as negotiation, **compromise**, discussion, or debate. It is an essential aspect of human communication and collaboration as it allows people to work together towards common goals and objectives.
 - ▶ In an agreement, all parties involved should be willing to compromise and find **common ground**. It requires active listening, **respect for others'** opinions, and the ability to consider different perspectives. Agreement is not just about one party getting their way but finding a solution that benefits everyone involved.
 - ▶ “You can disagree without being disagreeable. -- Ruth Bader Ginsburg”
 - ▶ Patience and Selflessness
 - ▶ Seek to see the full picture, it may just be different from where you are standing!
 - ▶ Seek the good of the Brotherhood
 - ▶ You may be right, but not expedient -
 - ▶ 1 Corinthians 10:23 KJV - All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.
 - ▶ 1 Corinthians 10:23 NLT - You say, “I am allowed to do anything”—but not everything is good for you. You say, “I am allowed to do anything”—but not everything is beneficial.

What can we do?

- ▶ “We share much more than we differ (Coleman, 2021, p.12)”
- ▶ EXCO
 - ▶ Our Constitution remains supreme!
 - ▶ Promote Diversity
 - ▶ Collaborative approach: This approach involves working together to find a mutually acceptable solution that meets the needs of all parties involved. It requires open communication, active listening, and a willingness to compromise.
 - ▶ Perhaps we create Optional Special Interest Chat Groups.
 - ▶ Most important RESPECT & TOLERANCE
 - ▶ Should be met by agreed Sanctions:
 - ▶ No room for Bigotry, in any shape!
 - ▶ No personal attacks/Insults
- ▶ Individuals
 - ▶ Love
 - ▶ Checkup on each other - virtual & physical
 - ▶ Increase Social activities

What can we do (as suggested by ChatGPT in resolving conflicts)?

1. **Encourage open communication:** Encourage all members of the group to express their thoughts and opinions openly and respectfully. Create a safe space where everyone feels comfortable sharing their ideas.
2. **Foster cultural understanding:** Take time to learn about the different cultures represented in the group. Encourage members to share their cultural traditions, beliefs, and values. This will help to promote understanding and respect among the members.
3. **Create opportunities for socializing:** Organize social events that allow members to interact in a relaxed and informal setting. This can include potlucks, cultural celebrations, or other activities that allow members to connect on a personal level.
4. **Set clear expectations:** Establish clear guidelines for behavior and communication within the group. Make sure that all members understand the expectations and consequences for violating the guidelines.
5. **Address conflicts quickly:** When conflicts arise, address them promptly and impartially. Encourage members to work through their differences constructively and seek to find common ground.
6. **Foster a sense of belonging:** Create a sense of belonging by acknowledging and celebrating the contributions of each member. Encourage members to participate in decision-making and take ownership of the group's goals and objectives.

Works cited

Coleman, P. T. (2021). The way out. In The Way Out. Columbia University Press.

King James Bible

New Living Translation Bible

New International Bible

ChatGPT website