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The foundation for determining the approach to manage interpersonal conflict extends across two poles of consideration: the concern for self and the concern for others. This assumption has influenced the calculated response people would exhibit when experiencing an intense interpersonal conflict. However, recent findings within the realm of spirituality challenge these foundational assumptions. Spirituality literature contends that individuals may place substantial emphasis upon transcendent concerns rather than temporal concerns such as self and others. This study explores whether spirituality plays a role in the conflict management process through a phenomenological research investigation. The researcher interviewed 10 participants, who served as faculty members in the philosophy and religion department at a college in the Midwest. The results of the data analysis suggest that spirituality serves a crucial role in the conflict management process. When a stimulus violates the spirituality of an individual, an intense interpersonal conflict may erupt. This study offers a structural model of the conflict management process and implications of the role spirituality serves within the management of interpersonal conflicts for managers and leaders.

Social scientists have been intrigued with the outcomes associated with conflict management since the work of Follett (1919, 1924, 1926/1940). Follett (1919) considered that an individual experiences conflict when the interests of the individual disagree with the interests of the group. The assumption was that the individual had to decide whether to favor personal interests or favor the interests of others.

Therefore, a chief result from the efforts of Follett (1919, 1924) was the notion that conflict was the result of the tension between two principal concerns: (a) the concern for the interests of the individual and (b) the concern for the interests of others. These foundational assumptions have guided much of the subsequent literature and research concerning interpersonal conflicts and the management of conflict.

The emergence of spirituality literature seeks to understand the role of beliefs in social science contexts. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) postulate that beliefs influence attitudes. Therefore, spirituality would appear to serve a role in how people manage conflict because attitudes influence behavioral intentions. The consideration of spirituality seems to raise the question of limiting the motivational-inclinations of people to the aforementioned two primary concerns or dimensions. Therefore, the following research question arises: Does spirituality play a role in the conflict management process?

A REVIEW OF PERTINENT LITERATURE

Scholars attribute different shades of meaning to the word "conflict" resulting in the absence of a generally accepted operational definition (K. W. Thomas, 1992). However, most scholars emphasize how perceived differences between two or more parties produce conflict (Barki & Hartwick, 2004; Rahim, 2002). K. Thomas (1976) explicates the emergence of conflict in four phases: (a) frustration, (b) conceptualization, (c) behavior, and (d) outcome. The onset of conflict occurs when a member ostensibly frustrates the satisfaction of the other member. This frustration arises because of a difference in opinion, perspective, or value. This perceived difference produces conflict when a breach develops in the member's threshold level of intensity (i.e., the level in which conflict causes discernable discomfort within the individual or group). This threshold level varies based on personal and situational contexts (Rahim, 2002). Accordingly, conflict occurs when one or more members perceive a difference producing a level of discomfort that influences their subsequent behaviors.

Conflict management is the process of maximizing the positive effects of conflict and minimizing the negative effects of conflict so that beneficial learning transpires. The paramount goal of managing conflict is not to eliminate it; rather, the goal is to accentuate its profitable dynamics (Deutsch, 1973). To achieve this end, participants design strategies to promote open communication and understanding (Rahim, 2000). However, Lewicki, Weiss, and Lewin (1992) caution that not every conflict is manageable and produces win-win scenarios. Lewicki's et al. concern elucidates the difficulties in managing relational conflict which researchers consider one of the most destructive types of interpersonal conflict (Ayoko, Callan, & Härtel, 2008; Rahim, 2002). Researchers argue the necessity of maintaining low levels of relational conflict (i.e., conflict originating from the dissatisfaction of other members) to overt destructive outcomes (Jehn 1995; Rahim); however, increased diversity, particularly diversity in values, elevates the level of relational conflict (Jehn, Chadwick, Thatcher, 1997; Jehn & Chatman, 2000; Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999; Pelled, Eisenhardt, & Xin, 1999) making the conflict difficult to manage.

Blake and Mouton (1964) introduced five approaches to manage the various types of conflict: (a) smoothing (i.e., accommodation), (b) forcing (i.e., competition), (c)

withdrawing (i.e., avoidance), (d) sharing (i.e., compromise), and (e) problem solving (i.e., collaboration). Subsequent conflict researchers have based a portion or most of their models for managing conflict upon these five approaches proposed by Blake and Mouton (Pruitt, 1983; Rahim, 2002; K. Thomas, 1976).

Blake and Mouton (1964), in their renowned managerial grid, generated these five approaches from the intersections of two primal concerns: concern for self and concern for others. The member experiences a tension between two apparent temporal concerns when deciding how to respond to interpersonal conflict. The member may favor one concern at the expense of the other concern (e.g., accommodation or competition), or may decide to have a blend of concerns (e.g., compromise or collaboration), or may decide to not appear to have a concern (i.e., avoidance).

However, a consideration absent from preceding conflict management models (e.g., Blake & Mouton, 1964; Pruitt, 1983; Rahim, 2002; K. Thomas, 1976) is the role that a member's spirituality serves in the conflict management process. Miller (2004) defined spirituality as the "prosocial beliefs about the world, humanity, and nature, and one's higher being" (p. 427). Duchon and Plowman (2005) argued spirituality, in part, is the satisfying of the inner life of the individual. Vaill (1998) describes inner life as "the feeling individuals have about the fundamental meaning of who they are, what they are doing, and the contributions they are making (p. 218). Therefore, spirituality seems to relate to transcendent values beyond the workplace and temporal contexts to provide a member with meaning, purpose, and inner nourishment. Wolf (2008) attests that spirituality guides "individuals to thinking less about their immediate wants and desires, and to encouraging more of a focus on their obligations to society, humanity and other issues larger than themselves" (p. 63).

Fry (2003) qualified spirituality as "the presence of a relationship with a higher power or being that affects the way in which one operates in the world" (p 705). The findings of Milliman and Ferguson (2008) in their case study supported the salient components that Fry proposed in his definition of spirituality. Accordingly, Milliman and Ferguson suggested the inclusion of Fry's explanation of spirituality because the description of spirituality by Fry captures a comprehensive view of spirituality and because it has empirical support (Fry & Matherly, 2006; Malone & Fry, 2003).

This suggestion by Milliman and Ferguson (2008) is not surprising considering that the majority of researchers show a loose relationship between spirituality and faith (Dent et al., 2005). Furthermore, Goertzen and Barbuto (2001) offered that three descriptive features comprise spirituality: (a) belief in the sacred, (b) belief in the Unity, and (c) belief in transformation. Strack, Fottler, Wheatley, and Sodomka (2002) agreed with the emphasis on transformation because they posited that spirituality leads to an awareness of a relationship with a transcendent power. The relationship

with a transcendent power is to create a sense of direction, meaning, connectedness, energy, and creativity within the individual (Gibbons, 2000). These descriptions of spirituality further support the fundamental aspects of the definition of spirituality articulated by Fry (2003).

Dent et al. (2005) echoed the support of ingesting the salient components of the definition of spirituality offered by Fry (2003). These researchers surveyed numerous articles exploring the role of spirituality and concluded that the terminology of Fry was one of the most comprehensive explanations of the vital components comprising spirituality. Accordingly, this paper adopts the nexus of spirituality as described by Fry to explore the role between spirituality and the management of conflict. Therefore, spirituality provides meaning and purpose that transcends the individual and temporal situation so that the individual finds nourishment for one's inner being beyond the temporal concerns for self and others. This definition of spirituality differs from the definition of values because values reveal the level of attraction to a given stimulus. In contrast, spirituality appears to entail an inner drive that transcends temporal desires.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study explored some of the nuances of this question through a qualitative approach: phenomenology. Phenomenology is a research methodology (Moustakas, 1994) and a form of interpretivism (Patton, 2002) that seeks to explore what makes a specific phenomenon what it is; that is, its very nature or meaning (Van Manen, 1990).

This study explores whether spirituality serves a role concerning how people manage conflicts because spirituality seems to influence the attitudes, which influence the behavioral intent of individuals (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). The intent to perform behavior influences the enacted behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen), which, in this context, is the course of action an individual takes when facing conflict. Therefore, a phenomenological approach seems appropriate to explore the question of whether spirituality plays a role in the conflict management process because it solicits the participants to describe "the what" and "the how" of their perspectives (Moghaddam, Walker, & Harré, 2003).

Researchers in the field of qualitative studies have proposed they can excavate the perspectives of the participant through detailed interviewing techniques more effectively than utilizing quantitative methods because quantitative methods utilize more remote and inferential techniques to collect the perspectives of the participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Therefore, the primary means of collecting phenomenological data is using interviewing techniques (Morse, 2003; Van Manen, 1990). The narrative interview is a common methodology in phenomenological research because it captures the essence of the phenomenon by having participants recollect events and emotions surrounding their experiences of the phenomenon.

Experiential familiarity of the phenomenon is a central component for selecting participants in phenomenological research (Flick, 2006; Moustakas, 1994). Accordingly, this study utilized a purpose sample of 10 instructors who were randomly selected from a pool of 21 full-time and part-time faculty members. Each member appeared equally qualified to serve as a participant in this study because of the fields of instruction they provided; therefore, any 10 participants from this pool were deemed adequate. The instructors were affiliated with the philosophy and religion department at a college in the Midwest. The researcher did not have prior personal or professional interaction with any of the participants. The rationale supporting the selection of 10 participants stemmed from the suggestion that in complete phenomenological studies that sample sizes of five to seven participants commonly generate the full spectrum of experiences (Polkinghorne, 1989).

The instrument used in this investigation contained an initial set of questions which solicited background information from the participants, and 12 standardized open-ended or forced-choice questions. Predetermining the primary interview questions increases comparison capability and increases the reliability of the data (Flick, 2006). Specifically, the inclusion of the second question, which solicits participants to operationalize the term spirituality, agrees with the advice of Moustakas (1994) and Flick to inform the participants of the topic under examination and to allow the participants an opportunity to provide their own definition of key terms. The goal is not to bias the participants; rather, the goal is to inform the participants of what phenomenon and relationship is under examination. Furthermore, when the participants provide a conceptual scheme of their perception of a phenomenon, the language the participants employ when describing the phenomenon is more clearly understood. The interview questions follow:

1. Background:
   a. What is your age?
   b. What is your gender?
   c. What is your ethnicity?
   d. What, if any, is your religious affiliation—not pertaining to spirituality?
   e. Are you actively involved in a religious-based organization?
   f. How would you describe your general style of managing interpersonal conflicts?
2. Would you describe yourself as spiritual?
3. How would you define spirituality?
4. Have you experienced an intense conflict with another person?
5. Please recount a recent and an intense conflict with another person.
6. How did you manage or resolve the conflict?
7. Reflecting on this conflict you just recounted, what personal values or considerations guided your responses during this conflict?
8. Which of these values or considerations was the most significant in guiding how you managed the conflict?
9. Please rank these values or considerations from the most important to the least important.
10. Please explain this order?
11. What other situational factors may influence the values or considerations you just discussed?
12. Would you please summarize the values or considerations that influenced how you managed this intense conflict?
13. These are all of the questions I have. Do you wish to add or to clarify any thoughts?

Collecting background information such as the information solicited by the six background questions allowed each participant to be accurately profiled and then allowed the results of the participants to be compared (Merriam, 1998). These six background questions followed similar phenomenological research (Garmon, 2008; Krider & Ross, 1997). The remaining 12 questions (a) originated from the literature, (b) were germane to the research question, and (c) met suggested requirements of phenomenological interview question design.

In general, analyzing phenomenological data requires the data to be reduced into significant statements and themes, and then these statements and themes are structured through a textual description to explicate the phenomenon (Cresswell et al., 2007). The reduction of themes is captioned in key quotations and is the shared thoughts of the participants (Peräkylä, 2004). Oftentimes, the statements of the participants are sifted through to identify the descriptive accounts, which are nonjudgmental and nondeceptive, so that the actual experience and the motives of the participants are explored rather than exploring the descriptions of the motives of other individuals whom the participants are describing (Churchill, 2000).

Specifically, this study employed the five-step phenomenological method of analysis recommended by Giorgi (1997). The five steps are: (a) collect the verbal data, (b) read the data, (c) divide the data into parts, (d) organize and express the data in a disciplinary vernacular, and (e) summarize the data to communicate its meaning to the scholarly community. This process respects the contributions of Husserl (1962/1977) as the founder of the phenomenological process. This analysis process approaches phenomenology from the stance that a person experiences a phenomenon through an act of intentionality. This intentionality is the motivation that incites a person to perceive a given phenomenon as a specific reality (Giorgi).

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DATA RESULTS

Prior to interviewing the participants, the researcher engaged in a bracketing interview. An outsourced researcher performed the interview utilizing the same interview guide and soliciting several follow-up questions for clarification and summation purpose so that the researcher could experience the same interview process as the participants. The transcription from the bracketing interview was placed under the same level of scrutiny and analysis processes as the subsequent interviews of the 10 participants. The goal of the bracketing interview was to assist the researcher in identifying personal bias so that this awareness could reduce bias in the analysis of subsequent transcriptions.

The participants shared narrative responses to the standardized six background questions at the beginning of the interview guide. The results of these responses indicate seven of the participants were male and three of the participants were female. The average age of the participants was 53.9 ranging from 35 to 59. The median was 51 years of age and the mode was 58 years of age. Six of the participants described themselves as Caucasian or white. Four of the participants described themselves as a different ethnicity or ethnic mix, or chose not to disclose their ethnicity. Eight of the participants acknowledged that they were involved in one or more religious-based institutions. The remaining two participants stated that they were not involved with a religious-based institution. However, all of the participants described themselves as spiritual regardless of religious involvement. Finally, eight of the participants characterized their general manner of managing conflict as directive or intentional. Two of the participants described their conflict management style as principally avoidance. Both of these participants were female.

Lens of Conflict Management

In accordance to the five-step process of Giorgi (1997), the results of the analysis when viewing the data through the lens of conflict management yielded five themes. The theme with the highest frequency of coded lines was mandates with 473 narrative lines of coding. This theme captures the various internal and external motivational forces that emphasize compliance to a standard, which the participants did not clearly communicate as a component of their spiritual code of conduct.

The saliency of the concern of some of the participants for adhering to established roles, territories, and control cannot be overstated. For some of the participants, the violation of established understandings of conduct triggered very intense interpersonal conflicts. Some participants provided illustrations to create a clear understanding that adhering to established roles and expected behaviors are crucial for agreement with others. Some participants considered freedom to make unencumbered choices as paramount and a right to being human. On occasions,

participants deemed the growth and progress of others as an imperative component to life.

The concern for the treatment of self (i.e., the participant) emerged as the theme with the third highest frequency of coded lines when analyzing the narratives through the lens of conflict management. This theme captures the personally protective motivational aspect of the interpersonal conflict management process. The key delineator between this theme and the mandates theme is the personal component affixed to the treatment of self. Each of the 10 participants indicated one or more sets of codes included within the theme treatment of self, which suggests this theme is ubiquitous with all of the participants. There were 337 narrative lines of coding.

The participants cited the code entitled well-being of self as the most referenced code within the theme treatment of self. Participants sought to satisfy one of their basic human needs, specifically, personal safety and security (Maslow, 1954), when in midst of an intense interpersonal conflict. The manner in which other people treated the participants with dignity and respect was important regardless of the emotional climate. Fifty percent of the participants referenced their personal credibility as a central concern when managing interpersonal conflicts. Participants occasionally referenced that they wanted others to honor the personal freedoms of the participants.

The search for peace emerged as the theme with the fourth highest frequency of coded lines when analyzing the narratives through the lens of conflict management. This theme captures the motivation people express toward achieving peaceful relationships when managing an intense interpersonal conflict. This theme is different from the aforementioned harmony theme because the participants did not directly reference spirituality when disclosing their search for peace in the narrative accounts included in this theme. There were 261 narrative lines of coding.

Seeking unity served as a common identifying code within the theme of the search for peace. Many of the participants expressed the pursuit of peace as a major driving force in how they managed the conflict. Some participants reflected on how peace resides at the center of each human and how this core element of peace is why the participants gravitated toward peace during interpersonal conflicts. During the interview, some participants began crying because they believed so strongly in peaceful exchanges despite experiencing interpersonal conflicts. Along a similar thread, the need for communion served a role in guiding how to manage intense interpersonal conflicts. Seeking reconciliation surfaced a desire to heal the relationship and bring closure.

The concern for the treatment of others emerged as the theme with 238 narrative lines of coding support when analyzing the narratives through the lens of conflict management. The data discloses that each of the 10 participants indicated one or more sets of codes included within the theme treatment of others, which suggests this

theme is ubiquitous with all of the participants. This theme captures the motivational concern to support the other member involved in the interpersonal conflict.

Four of the participants communicated the desire to serve others while engaged in the interpersonal conflict. In some instances, the participants placed the desire to serve others above the desire to care for their own well-being. Occasionally, feelings of incompleteness disturbed the participants when they perceived that they were unable to adequately serve the other person. Some participants emphasized the importance of respecting the dignity of the other person as a central factor in navigating through the conflict. The concern for the success of the other person also served a role in the treatment of others.

Contextual framework of the conflict management process (CFCMP) emerged as the theme with the second highest frequency of coded lines through the lens of conflict management. However, this theme is dissimilar to the previous four themes which surfaced when employing the conflict management lens. The CFCMP theme indicates the explanations of the participants concerning the contextual framework of their interpersonal conflict experiences in contrast to the principal concerns of the participants. There were 362 narrative lines of coding under this theme.

This framework served as descriptive background information to assist the listener in understanding the nature of the conflict event. Participants occasionally used colorful language to generate a clear context of the interpersonal conflict. Some participants used background information to temper the remainder of their narrative account. Occasionally, a participant used language to describe a reframing or negotiation episode as the participant managed the interpersonal conflict. The exclusive motivational code included within this theme is the trigger, which indicates the event that precipitated the interpersonal conflict. The trigger was unique in each narrative account. However, the relationship of the trigger to the spirituality of the participant produces some extraordinary results pertinent to assessing the research question. These results are explored when integrating the spirituality and conflict management lenses.

Coding the narrative accounts through the lens of conflict management produced five central themes explicating the structure of the conflict management process. Because each of the 10 participants exhibited these five central themes in some capacity, this observation suggests that one descriptive structural model is adequate to capture the essence of this portion of the process (Giorgi, 1997). Utilizing the results of the narrative accounts as interpreted through the lens of conflict management suggests the following structural model (Figure 1).

The results of the CFCMP theme reveal that each participant described a triggering mechanism in their narrative accounts. The triggering mechanism indicated the point when the participant became cognitively aware of the discomfort associated with the conflict in their cognitive processes. Next, the narrative accounts indicate that the participants resorted to assessing the interpersonal conflict through four principal motivators: (a) mandates, (b) search for peace, (c) treatment of self, and (d) treatment of others. The participants used their self-regulatory processes to assess the level of influence these four motivators would have upon their reactions to experiencing the interpersonal conflict. Finally, the participants decided to exhibit a reaction to the interpersonal conflict based on their assessment of these four principal motivators.

Probing the Research Question

The research question seeks whether spirituality serves a role in the conflict management process. The data strongly suggest spirituality serves a foundational role in the conflict management process. This conclusion surfaces because in every instance, the triggering mechanism of the interpersonal conflict violated the spirituality of the participant. This finding was surprising because every participant exhibited the same pattern of behavior, specifically, the triggering mechanism directly violated the spirituality of the participant. A brief analysis summarizing the particular spirituality of each participant and the particular triggering mechanism follows.

Participant 1:
  a. Described spirituality as a disciplined lifestyle that utilized the role of deity as a pattern for mimicking.
  b. Described the trigger mechanism as a failure of the other person to live a disciplined lifestyle and use deity as a pattern for mimicking.

Participant 2:
  a. Described spirituality as a disciplined lifestyle of proper conduct and procedures, and this discipline must integrate throughout one's life endeavors.
  b. Described the trigger mechanism as a failure of the other person to allow the participant to perform his or her job the right way (i.e., not cutting corners and producing an inferior product), therefore demonstrating a lack of discipline.
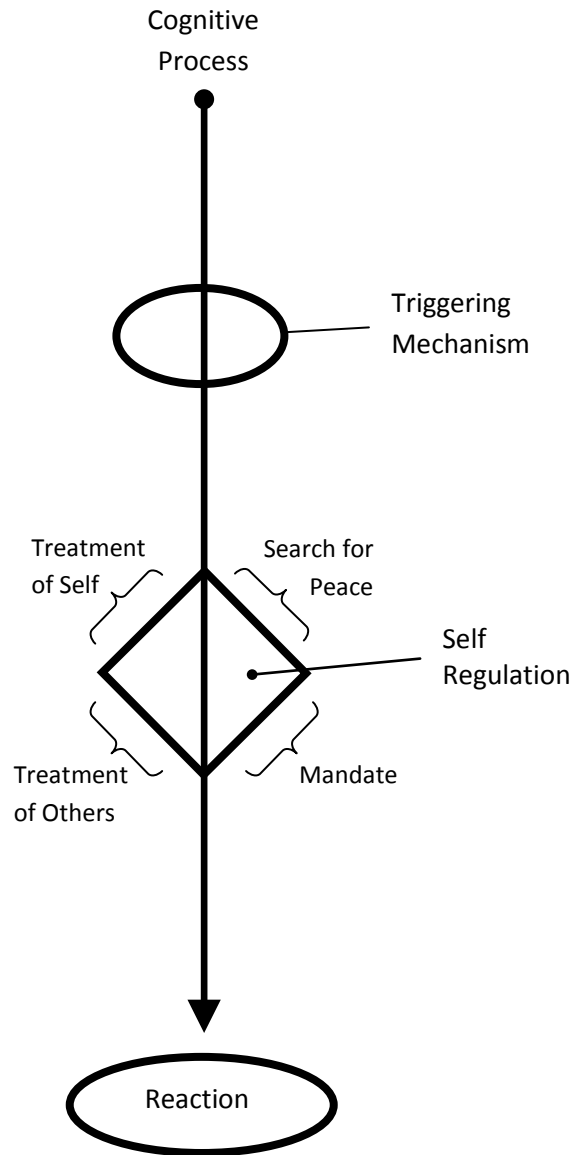
Participant 3:
  a. Described spirituality as a state of transcendent harmony where peace prevails because people honor rules of conduct. The participant added that disagreement is fine as long as it occurs in a peaceable manner so that harmony emanates and permeates the entire situation.
  b. Described the trigger mechanism as a serious disruption to the peace of the entire environment. The other person was very disruptive by yelling and overtly instigating friction, thus, ignoring rules of conduct.

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Participant 4:
  a. Described spirituality as maintaining high levels of integrity so that one's lifestyle is consistent in every situation.

b. Described the trigger mechanism as the failure of the other person to integrate the knowledge of a professional into the decision-making process. The

Figure 1: Structural Model of Conflict Management Absent of Spirituality

participant viewed the reluctance of the other member as a failure to be consistent in the decision-making process when exposed to authoritative information.

Participant 5:
  a. Described spirituality as rules of conduct to include honesty and mimicking qualities of deity.
  b. Described the trigger mechanism as the deceit and telling of falsehoods by the other person, which contradicts with the participant's view of deity.

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Participant 6:
a. Described spirituality as rules of conduct that promote a metaphysical and subjective interpretation of spirituality. This approach advocates differing viewpoints and opinions to experiences or to interpret a divine encounters.
b. Described the trigger mechanism as the refusal of the other person to allow for freedom of divergent thought and expression in settings that promoted ideological dialogue.

Participant 7:
a. Described spirituality as providing one with the meaning of life and unity with esteemed others.
b. Described the trigger mechanism as an authority figure who wished to tell the participant what the role of the participant was in life (i.e., meaning of life). The actions and words of the other person made the participant feel disrespected and disconnected, thus out of harmony.

Participant 8:
a. Described spirituality as highly relational and unifying, and is evidenced by deep and meaningful relationships with others and all of living things.
b. Described the trigger mechanism as the hateful words spoken by the other person, who was a family member, to the participant. These acts created separation between the participant and the

other person, which jeopardized the quality of a highly valued relationship.

Participant 9:
a. Described spirituality as a code of conduct, particularly as it relates to truthfulness and respectfulness toward others.
b. Described the trigger mechanism as the disrespectful comments of the other person. The participant described these comments as "petty" because the participant viewed the comments as disrespectful and nonsensical.

Participant 10:
a. Described spirituality as providing a divine purpose for life, and the purpose for the participant was to serve as an educator and help others learn.
b. Described the triggering mechanism as the other person commenting that she could not learn from the participant in an educational setting.

Structural Model

The comments from the 10 participants suggest that they may have identified the behaviors or attitudes of the other parties as triggering mechanisms because these beahaviors or attitudes violated the spirituality of the participants. Therefore, spirtuality may serve as the core element in the cognitive process with respect to managing interpersonal conflicts (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Partial structural model of conflict management integrating spirituality.
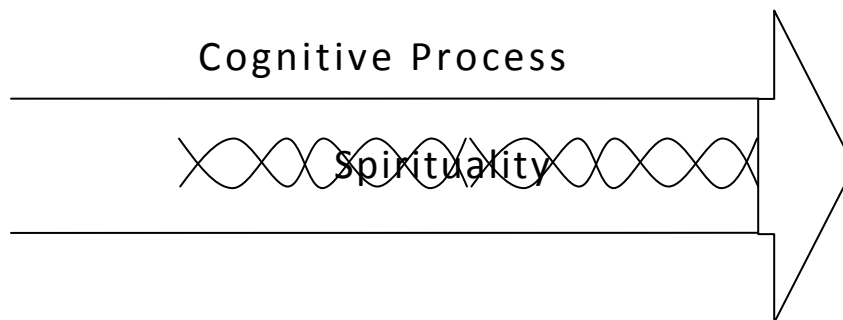
Accordingly, spirituality may serve as the continuous thread throughout the conflict management process. The four motivators of (a) mandates, (b) search for peace, (c) treatment of self, and (d) treatment of others appear to serve as four individual mediating constructs in the self-regulation process as they mediate the cognitive process, in which spirituality serves as the core, concluding in a reaction by the participant to the interpersonal conflict.

The comments of the participants support the apparent mediating relationship between the cognitive process and the

four mediating constructs. Three of the participants used language such as "braiding," "under the same umbrella," and "using practical wisdom" to describe the complexity of separating and weighting the many motivational factors comprising the self-regulatory process.

LEADERSHIP IMPLICATIONS

The emergence of globalization has birthed the pursuit of designing organizations with low levels of centrality

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because flatter organizational structures have the inherent ability to respond rapidly to change and to demonstrate agility in ambiguous environments (Burton & Obel, 2004). Creating teams is frequently the preferred approach to addressing this demand for flatter structures because of their flexibiltiy and their potential for substantial productivity (Joshi, 2006; Stewart, Manz, & Sims, 1999). Commonly the composition of the members within these teams is increasing in heterogeneity because of the influence of globalization (Grensing-Pophal, 2002). Increasing team heterogenity has the potential to increase the innovation and creativity of the outputs from the team (De Dreu, 2006; Pelled et al., 1999); however, destructive forms of interpersonal conflict are linked to specific types of heterogenity, such as perceived differences in values and beliefs (Jehn et al., 1999; Lankau, Ward, Amason, Ng, Sonnenfeld, & Agle, 2007). These differences require group and organizational leaders to be prepared to respond with skill and caution when managing their human capital so that leaders can accomplish their mission (Rittle, 2007), particularly if leaders understand leadership as a volitional relationship with followers rather than a relationship based upon coercion (Rittle & Carr, 2008).

The results of this study suggest that assessing the spirituality of human capital within organizations may be an advisable course of action so that leaders assemble teams with members who share similar levels of spirituality. This process requires tact and prudence to preserve civil rights but encourage harmonic exchanges within the teams because the results of this study suggest that interpersonal conflicts are not rooted in the wants of the conflicting members as argued by Marx (1848/1932) and Simmel (1908/1956); rather, propriety serves as the root to germinate intense interpersonal conflicts. Therefore, the assumption that unfulfilled wants trigger intense interpersonal conflicts is not tenable. Rather, people seek responses that embody the ideals of appropriateness (i.e., spirituality). When a party violates the other party's spirituality an interpersonal conflict erupts.

FURTHER RESEARCH

The impetus of violations of personal spirituality as a trigger to the eruption of interpersonal conflicts suggests that organizations may wish to measure the spirituality of key leaders and managers to maintain an acceptable alignment of spirituality within teams and workgroups. Research assessing spirituality dissimilarity and the frequency of destructive interpersonal conflicts seem to be fertile grounds for beneficial exploration.

Because this study examined the essence of intense interpersonal conflicts, future studies exploring whether routine interpersonal conflicts produce similar themes elucidating the conflict management process appear tenable. Perhaps the reason an individual labels an interpersonal

conflict as intense is because the trigger violated the spirituality of individual.

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