

Case Study #3
The Local Bombing

806

Contemporary Issues in Leadership II

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Case Study #3 The Local Bombing

The conflict in the case study of the Local Bombing reflected differences in the two religious cultures, the Muslim and the Christian. The Muslims and the Christian teachers worked together for years at the Christian school whose mission was to serve the poor. The Muslims were in the majority. The school administrators were all Christians. The Christian administrators did not see any problems related to religious differences. Religious differences were not recognized. Christian and Muslims honored each holiday. The administration could have used the holiday opportunity for the cultures to gain an understanding of the significance of each other holiday. Also, there were no formal policies or procedures related to religious differences in the school. When the bombing occurred, outside forces, bombed the other Christian churches in the area, and one group speculated governmental agencies were responsible.

In contrast, the other group believed that extremist groups were responsible. From then on, the teachers lost their focus. The leadership failed to address a critical incident that could be divisive in any organization.

The Muslim and Christian religious culture promoted peace and harmony. The teachers were in a collectivist/communal relationship. They valued their communal relationship for many years until the bombing of several Christian churches. This unfortunate situation created an "equality of affect." (Hannum 2010) In the affect, each group felt down about the bombs. As a result, a divisive environment in the school emerged among the teachers. Research shows that when two groups conflict, the people with the interdependent self-concept would have more power than the other parties tend to be generous in solving disputes. In this case study, both groups are interconnected and neither solve the problem. In a group situation where interdependent self-concept and independent self-concept are working together, conflict can

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arise. Idiocentrics in a collectivistic culture will tend to strive for their individual goals and may feel repressed by the culture and desire to break away from it. It was evident to me that the Christian and Muslim teachers displayed idiocentrism. They began to feel the differences between them and harbor ill feelings toward one other. Some teachers began to feel alienated, and some resigned from their positions.

Effective leadership requires understanding differences in motivation and adapting different approaches to motivate people from different cultural groups. (Hannum, 2010)

Leadership is about communication and relationship, and understanding the relationship between self-concept and how we relate to and communicate with each other will shape the leadership process. In any organization, Administrators and leaders must keep the focus on the vision; in this case, it was serving the poor—a very noble mission. Likewise, leaders and administrators must always address cultural diversity in all organizations.

(Hannum et al. 2010)

References

Hannum, K. McFeeters, B. B. & Booyesen L. (2010). Leading across differences. San Francisco:

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