

**THE INFLUENCE OF TEAM COHESIVENESS ON  
TEAM EFFECTIVENESS**

**BY**

**Ashika Pramlal**

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**Supervisor:**

**Mr T. A. A. Vajeth**

**Date Submitted:**

**March 2004**

## DECLARATION

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree

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### STATEMENT 1

This dissertation is being submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters in Administration

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### STATEMENT 2

This dissertation is the result of my independent work and investigation, except where otherwise stated. Sources are acknowledged by footnotes, giving explicit references. A bibliography is also appended.

Signed: ----- Date: -----  
A Pramlal (Candidate)

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**THIS DISSERTATION IS DEDICATED TO MY FAMILY**

## ABSTRACT

Teams play an important role in most organisations in today's modern economy. The use of teams has expanded dramatically in response to competitive challenges. Research indicates that teamwork can achieve outcomes that could not be achieved by the same number of individuals working in isolation. However, teams need to be cohesive and effective in order to be successful. Team building, team cohesiveness and team effectiveness are discussed in detail, outlining their importance for good teamwork. The Police Services is dependent on effective teamwork as this forms an integral part of their daily work activities. Therefore, teams in the Police Services need to be highly cohesive in order to enhance team effectiveness.

The purpose of this dissertation was to investigate the impact of team cohesiveness on team effectiveness at the police services. The key dimensions of team cohesiveness that were explored in this study are : setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations and obstacles and the extent of their influence on team effectiveness. The research was conducted at the police services in Kwa-Dukuza, Kwa-Zulu Natal. Simple random sampling was used in this study. Various statistical techniques were used to test the three hypotheses. The results were analysed and a presentation and discussion of the respondent's perceptions were presented.

From this study, it is evident that team cohesiveness with special reference to the following sub-dimensions: setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations and obstacles does impact significantly on team effectiveness. The limitations of the study and suggestions for future research are also outlined. Furthermore, a discussion of the possible causes for the findings are included, along with recommendations to improve team cohesiveness in order to enhance team effectiveness.

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# Chapter 1

## **Introduction and Overview of the Study**

### **1.1. Introduction**

This research proposes to identify the key factors that contribute to team cohesiveness and their influence on team effectiveness. The task faced by the police services is to work in partnership with the community in ensuring a safe and better life for everyone. The police services in South Africa is a public institution that offers a service to the community. The objective of the police services department are to prevent, combat and investigate crime, to protect and secure the community and to uphold and enforce the laws of the country. In order to achieve this, it is necessary for all employees in the police services to work together as one united unit. This requires that employees work together in teams that are effective in combating crime, resolving crime and ensuring the safety of citizens in the community and the country.

The key to successful teamwork is that the teams are cohesive and highly effective. In order to be a cohesive team, team members need to set goals jointly and understand them, all team members need to have equal participation in team activities, there must be good communication between team members, team members should share and exchange ideas freely, conflict needs to be effectively resolved in the team, interpersonal relations among team members needs to be good and obstacles need to be overcome and resolved together as a team. It is only through a high level of cohesiveness that these teams can be effective in carrying out daily functions. There is therefore a need to ensure that teams are highly cohesive in order to enhance team effectiveness.

This study will provide an insight into the influence of team cohesiveness on team effectiveness in the police services.

## **1.2. Motivation**

The subject of this research project was motivated by the growing importance of effective teamwork in organisations. The Police Services was chosen because effective teamwork is integral to their everyday duties in ensuring the safety of citizens in South Africa. The Stanger Police Station was chosen because accessibility was possible.

## **1.3. Focus of the Study**

This study will focus on the influence of team cohesiveness on team effectiveness at the police services department being studied with special reference to the following sub-dimensions of team cohesiveness: setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management interpersonal relations and obstacles respectively.

## **1.4. Problem Statement**

What is the impact of team cohesiveness on team effectiveness with special reference to the following sub-dimensions: Setting goals and understanding of them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations and obstacles.

## **1.5. Objectives of the Study**

- To determine the influence of team cohesiveness (determined by setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations, obstacles) on team effectiveness.
- To evaluate the impact of the biographical variables (age, gender, marital status, home language, race, education, length of service and position occupied) on the employee's perceptions of the influence of team cohesiveness on team effectiveness.

- To evaluate the extent to which each sub-dimension of team cohesiveness (setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations, obstacles) influences team effectiveness.

## **1.6. Hypotheses**

### **Hypothesis 1**

There exists significant intercorrelations amongst the key variables of the study (setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relationships and obstacles) respectively.

### **Hypothesis 2**

There is a significant difference in the perceptions of employees varying in biographical data (age, marital status, home language, ethnic group, length of service, position occupied, gender) regarding the key variables of the study (setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations and obstacles) respectively.

### **Hypothesis 3**

The sub-dimensions of team cohesiveness (setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations, obstacles) significantly account for the variance in team effectiveness.

## **1.7. Limitations of the Study**

This study was only conducted at one branch of the Police Services in Durban. The perception of employees from other branches was not included. A sample size of 61 was used out of 140 employees. This does not incorporate the opinions of the other respondents.

Some of the employees did not fill in the questionnaires as they were too busy to participate in the study. Completed questionnaires could be biased.

The literature review presented in chapter two and three presents literary perspectives from America and Britain with very little from South Africa.

Despite these limitations, it is safe to conclude that this study makes a substantial contribution to team cohesiveness and its influence on team effectiveness.

## **1.8. Summary Outline per Chapter**

Chapter 2 commences with the literature review by focusing on team building, team effectiveness and team cohesiveness.

The literature review proceeds in Chapter 3 with a detailed discussion on team cohesiveness. In this chapter, setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations and obstacles are discussed in detail.

Chapter 4 entails the research methodology that will be used in this study. The sampling technique, data collection methods and the research instruments that were used in this study are explained. This chapter also includes the various tests conducted in the statistical analysis.

The results of the study are presented in Chapter 5. The presentation of results is displayed with the aid of graphs, tables and reports.

Chapter 6 incorporates the discussion of results whereby the findings are compared and contrasted to results of previous research.

Chapter 7 deals with recommendations that can assist in solving the problems identified. A final conclusion is then given.

## **1.9. Conclusion**

This chapter highlighted the motivation for the study, focus and objective of the study, the problem statement, the hypotheses, the limitations of the study and the summary outline per chapter was also given. The literature review of chapter two proceeds by discussing team building, team effectiveness and team cohesiveness.

## CHAPTER 2

# **2. Team Building, Team Effectiveness and Team Cohesiveness**

### **2.1. Introduction**

This chapter focuses on three important areas of teamwork :

- Team building
- Team effectiveness
- Team cohesiveness

An overview is given on each of these areas of teamwork with the ultimate aim that all three are essential to making teams and teamwork successful in the twenty-first century.

How groups of people work together is an issue that is of longstanding interest in organisational and management thought. A major concern of Taylorism in the early part of this century was the breaking power that work groups were able to exercise; while for the later human relations movement the issue was how the same power could be harnessed in management's interest (Procter, 2000). A strong trend in management strategy in recent years has been re-organising the company into teams. With top executives touting teamwork as a source of employee empowerment as well as corporate competitiveness, the movement has generally been successful, particularly as a way to boost productivity (Weiss, 2002).

According to Messmer (2003) the increase in using project teams and greater reliance on the internet and teleconferencing require staff to communicate effectively and work well together. As a manager one needs to take the lead in creating a positive, team-oriented environment. This requires much more than just pulling a group of employees and

labelling them a 'team' – one needs to turn the talents, knowledge and efforts of individuals into a collective force.

Spector (2000) says, a work team has three specific properties :

- The actions of individuals must be interdependent and co-ordinated.
- Each member must have a particular, specified role.
- There must be common task goals and objectives.

Good teamwork doesn't just happen. It takes hard work to make teams work well. The best teams are those that understand why they have been brought together, what they are expected to accomplish as a whole and what each individual is expected to do (Staff Leader, 2002). Employees operate better as individuals if they consider themselves to be part of a well functioning, supportive team to which all are happy to belong. As committed participants in the group, they are more productive, communicative, trusting, motivated and loyal (New Zealand Management, 2001)

In order to get a clearer understanding of what teams and teamwork means various definitions are given below:-

## **2.2. Definition of Teams and Teamwork**

According to Spector (2000 : 274), a team is a group of people who cannot do their jobs, at least not effectively, without the other members of their teams.

Kirkman (2000 : 49) defines a work team as a group of individuals working interdependently toward common goals and whose members are mutually accountable for task accomplishment.

Work groups or teams have been described, alternatively, as interdependent collections of individuals who share responsibility for specific outcomes for their organisations (Henkin and Wanat, 1994 : 124).

According to Guzzo and Dickson (1996:308), a work group is made up of individuals who see themselves, and who are seen by others, as a social entity, who are interdependent because of the tasks they perform as members of a group, who are embedded in one or more larger social systems and who perform tasks that affect others.

Robbins (2000:258) defines a work team as a group whose individual efforts result in a performance that is greater than the sum of the individual inputs.

Sulon (1997: 3) defines a team as a set of people working together in an orderly, systematic way to form one unit.

In the next section a broad overview is given of teams and teamwork from the research of various authors.

### **2.3. Overview of Teams and Teamwork**

Hines (1980) says, in the non-sports arena, that teams may be categorised as group members reporting to the same hierarchical supervision, groups involving people with common organisational aims, temporary groups formed to do a specific, but temporary task; groups consisting of people whose work roles are interdependent; groups whose members have no formal links in the organisation but have a collective purpose to achieve tasks they cannot accomplish as individuals.

According to Spector (2000) a work team is a type of work group, but a team has three specific properties:

- The actions of individuals must be interdependent and co-ordinated.
- Each member must have a particular, specified role.
- There must be common task goals and objectives.

During the past 30 years the use of teams has become a mainstay for the organisation of work (Hamilton, Nickerson and Owan, 2003). Sessa and Bal (2000) believe that these are the six more common types of teams : production, service, management, project, action and parallel. According to Bosquez (1999) not everyone is cut out to be a team player, for example high achievers like to work in situations where they control the outcome and they get frustrated in a team environment.

The management and academic press increasingly emphasise the importance of teams for organisations success in the modern economy. Academics have increasingly selected teams and team effectiveness as important areas for research in response to the increased use of teams in organisations (Cohen and Bailey, 1997). According to Druskat (2001) study after study has shown that teams are more creative and productive when they can achieve high levels of participation, co-operation and collaboration among members . Robinson (1994) believes that in the team-based business environment, you should reward individual employees for their skills, performance, productivity and potential and doing this does not undermine teamwork.

Empirical research on functional diversity in teams has presented a complex picture. Bunderson and Sutcliffe (2002) say that researchers argue that by broadening the range of experience and expertise available to a team, functional diversity can promote team effectiveness. Bunderson and Sutcliffe (2002) agree that functionally diverse teams can be more innovative, can develop clearer strategies, can respond more aggressively to competitive threats and can be quicker to implement certain types of organisational change than functionally homogeneous teams. On the other hand, researchers have argued that because functional diversity is associated with differences of opinion and perspective, functional differences can inhibit team effectiveness and increase conflict (Bunderson and Sutcliffe, 2002).

In the next section, a broad outline will be given as to the relevance of teams and teamwork in organisations.

## **2.4. The Relevance of Teamwork**

The use of teams has expanded dramatically in response to competitive challenges. For example, 82% of companies with 100 or more employees reported that they use teams. Sixty-eight percent of Fortune 100 companies reported that they used self managing work teams and 91% reported that they used employee participation groups in 1993 compared to 28% and 70% respectively in 1987. In examining data on 56 000 U.S. production workers, Capelli and Rogovsky found that one of the most common skills required by new work practices is the ability to work as a team (Cohen and Bailey, 1997).

Groups and teams are fundamental to human existence. The increasing popularity of team-based organisational structures reflects the belief that teamwork can achieve outcomes that could not be achieved by the same number of individuals working in isolation. A recent study of 60 South African companies by Productivity Development showed that 38 percent had moved towards team-based organisations, compared to around 65 per cent in the US (Hellriegel, et al. 2001).

According to Hamilton, Nickerson and Owan (2003) many firms use teams or have implemented team-type incentive systems for a wide variety of productive activities. For example, Lazear argues that forming teams is economically desirable when they make possible gains from higher production among workers, facilitate gains from specialisation by allowing each worker to accumulate task-specific human capital, or encourage gains from knowledge transfer of information that may be valuable to other team members.

In practice, management may have different reasons and objectives for introducing groups or teams as structural and functional sets; increased productivity, enhanced product or service quality, improved morale, reduced alienation, more effective utilisation of labour, better public relations, reduced employee grievances and turnover, and weakened unions (Henkin and Wanat, 1994). Guzzo and Dickson (1996) agree with Henkin and Wanat that there is clear evidence that team based work arrangements bring

about improved organisational performance, especially in measures of efficiency and quality.

In his analysis of teams Kirkman (2000) states that what winning teams have in common is the ability of each group member to make his or her team mates better. Cotterrell (1996) states in his research that teams have, over the last decade become a popular feature of workplace design and the basis for this trend is the belief that teamwork allows individuals more of their work-based needs and should, therefore, ultimately improve performance . According to Johnson (1996) typical problems that may be successfully addressed by teams include staff apathy, a lack of cohesiveness in work groups, conflicts among the members of work groups and confusion about assignments and/or work relationships. Teams can also take on issues such as production losses, the need to improve quality or productivity, ineffective meetings and the need to create a more participative work climate.

Duek (2000) in his research on teams says both practice and research state that when appropriate, teamwork raises the quality of decisions made and actions that ultimately lower the risk of failure in groups. Nelson and Quick (2003) say that teams are very useful in performing work that is complicated, complex, inter-related, and of a greater volume than one person can handle. The ideology of team-orientated management systems is that they promote the development of more egalitarian group structures rather than developing the hierarchical structures of traditional work groups (Sulon, 1997).

The next section looks at teambuilding and the role it plays in enhancing team cohesiveness and ensuring team effectiveness.

## **2.5. Teambuilding**

### **2.5.1. Definition of Teambuilding**

Team building refers to any number of activities designed to enhance the many different aspects of the functioning of work groups or teams (Spector, 2000 : 288).

According to Robbins (2000), team building refers to high interaction among team members to increase trust and openness.

The purpose of team building is to enable work groups to more effectively get their work done, to improve their performance (Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly, 1994 : 709).

Francis states that the process of deliberately creating a team is called team building. Team building is a process of development and change. Those involved need to have a personal theory of how to accomplish change effectively (Francis and Young, 1979 : 19).

Luthans views effective team building as establishing a sense of partnership and allowing team members to see the team as a unit and as an attractive work arrangement. Team building involves rapid learning, which takes place when there is a free-flowing generation of ideas (Luthans, 2002 : 480).

According to Nelson and Quick (2003 : 628), team building is an intervention designed to improve the effectiveness of a work group.

### **2.5.2. Building a Team**

A survey of fortune 500 companies indicated that human resource managers considered team building the most successful OD technique (Nelson and Quick, 2003). Team building experts recommend answering the following questions to help teams develop common ground rules and work together effectively. The questions centre around three

key factors : shared goals, clear roles and responsibilities, and established systems and procedures (Staff Leader, 2002)

Team building needs a midwife – one person, or a small corps, who will fuel the team building process with energy and insight. The catalyst may be a manager, a team member, a company specialist, or an external change agent. One thing is clear from the outset : team building is a process of development and change. Those involved need to have a personal theory of how to accomplish change effectively. This is especially relevant for the person serving as the catalyst (Francis and Young, 1979). Johnson (1996) claims that the first step in building a team is to select and train the managers. They will need training in listening, communication and reinforcement skills, as well as the goal setting and facilitative techniques needed to run meetings.

Team building begins with the understanding that work groups require time and training before they develop into productive and cohesive units. There is a definite learning curve in building an effective team. At first, some employees may be unwilling to join or buy into the group. Only when they see success and team member satisfaction will this feeling change. As the team matures, members learn the basics of team work, understand their goals more clearly, make more effective group decisions, and pursue group goals (Luthans, 2002). According to (Weisbord, 1985) team building enables innovation to take place by maintaining open lines of communication.

The second step is to ask the team members to define how an effective team works and get them to collaborate on that definition with little or no direction from the leader. Getting a new employee started well is vital to developing an effective producer. It also makes team building easier. While building a team is done one person at a time, developing a team member is often accomplished the first day on the job. Successful team development requires that the traditional top down, competitive hierarchy be replaced with horizontal, project-oriented teamwork. Once a supervisor recognises it takes practice to work effectively as a group member, steps can be taken to avoid

problems and disruptions. By building an environment of security and approval, the supervisor can encourage more co-operative efforts (Weiss, 2002).

A successful team building strategy has many components. You must provide clear direction, leadership, support and recognition. With a balanced, customised approach, you'll create a more collaborative environment. Your employees will work together more effectively, ultimately boosting your firm's productivity and adding value to the services your company provides to its clients (Messmer, 2003)

Newly formed groups are prone to ineffectiveness. Regular meetings are essential to establish understanding about each team member's contribution to the team and the reward for that contribution. Team building interventions should include setting goals and priorities, analysing how the group does its work, examining the group's norms and processes for communicating and decision making, and assessing the interpersonal relationships within the group. Gibson claims that diagnostic meetings are important in determining each team member's problems and other member's perceptions of the problems. A plan of action should then be agreed upon to undertake a specific action to alleviate one or more problems. Although reports of team-building indicate mixed results, the evidence suggests the group processes improve through team building efforts. This record of success accounts for the increasing use of team building as an organisational development method (Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly, 1994).

According to Messmer (2003) a manager needs to take the lead in creating a positive, team-oriented environment and this is how he suggests it get done :

- Set the right example : start by assessing your own behaviour. Be enthusiastic about your job. If you are upbeat, others will be too.
- Establish a common goal : Another key to successful teambuilding is getting your employees to buy into an assigned project or mission. Explain not only what the group needs to accomplish, but also why it's important and how the objective relates to the firm and its overall priorities.

- Allow teams to develop : providing opportunities for employees to get to know each other can greatly improve collaboration within a group. It's also valuable to allow some friendly conversations before meetings. This informal dialogue helps the team develop a stronger rapport.
- Get everyone involved : when the group encounters a problem, encourage participants to work together to develop a solution. Your staff will gain from the process if they share ideas and make their own. When employees do seek your guidance, make every effort to act on what they tell you.
- Keep people motivated : one of the most valuable ways to inspire your team to achieve new goals is to celebrate accomplishments. When your group reaches a milestone – such as receiving client approval on a key aspect of a project – recognise their hard work.

Spector (2000) however argues that the positive effects of team building have been inconsistent. For example, Dov Eden conducted two team-building studies with units of the Israeli army and found positive effects for one and no effects for the other. Buller also reported that team building and positive effects on job performance for six to nine studies be reviewed. He pointed out that the wide variety of interventions that are considered team building across different studies has made it difficult to draw firm conclusions about its effectiveness. Studies on the effectiveness of team building have mixed results in that some studies found positive effects while others had no effects. According to (Pizzo, 2003) getting the right people on a team is far more important than team building itself.

### **2.5.3. Motives for Team Building**

According to Francis and Young (1979) it is important to understand the motives that people have for initiating a team building venture. A high performing team, much like a good relationship, requires communication, commitment, behaviour change and continuous feedback (Glacel, 1997). Luthans (2002) claims that effective team building establishes a sense of partnership and allows members to see the team as a unit and as an attractive work arrangement.

Typical problems that may be successfully addressed by teams include staff apathy, a lack of cohesiveness in work groups, conflicts among the members of work groups and confusion about assignments and or work relationships. Teams also can take on issues such as production losses, the need to improve quality or productivity, ineffective meetings and the need to create a more participative work climate (Johnson, 1996). The five key principles of team building according to Cebrzynski (2001) are : communication, trust, collective responsibility, care and pride which combine to turn talented individuals into a successful team.

Some team building efforts are task oriented- they attempt to help team members improve how they accomplish their team task. Other efforts are interpersonally oriented - this is concerned with how well team members communicate and interact. Team building often involves team members discussing problems and coming up with solutions (Spector, 2000). Donahue (1996) firmly believes that teamwork involves focusing on a common goal, and you must be sure everybody on the team understands the goal.

Francis and Young (1979), on the other hand, prefers to look at team building purely from the perspective of managers:

- A newly appointed manager who wants to achieve rapid acceptance in an established group.
- A pragmatic manger who wants to use team building to further an open, problem-solving approach to management.
- A manager facing problems of relationship, commitment, or lack of clarity who needs to break out of the doldrums.

The best teams are those that understand why they have been brought together, what they are expected to accomplish as a whole and what each individual is expected to do. The fundamentals of effective teamwork are fairly simple, but they don't happen without a little hard work (Staff Leader, 2002)

Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly (1994) state that team building can play an important role in overcoming certain problems, including :

- Confusion as to roles and relationships within the team.
- Members having a fairly clear understanding of short-term functional goals, but Vague understanding of long-term organisational goals.
- Individuals having technical competence, which puts them on the team, but lacking interpersonal competence, which prevents them from contributing to the team members often paying more attention to the tasks of the team than to relationship among the team members.

Robbins (2000) agrees with Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly (1994) that team building is beneficial in defining goals and priorities of the team and can also address itself to clarifying each member's role on the team. Caudron (1998) claims that the training industry has responded over the last decade with a variety of things called "team-building session", which are alleged to improve teamwork within the organisation. Robbins (2000) also believes that the objective of team building is to improve coordinative efforts of team members, which will result in increasing the team's performance. According to Kirkland (2002) training is the key to better work performance and teamwork and developing a teambuilding course can be an option for organisational success.

Spector (2002) says that individuals are trained in team building to enhance their individual team skills within their work teams. Francis and Young (1979) however believes that team building is sometimes undertaken for negative reasons, for example a manager may undertake team building with the intention of increasing his capacity to manipulate and control. According to (Mortgage Banking, 1998) the best team- building events mirror the problems and processes that the participants live with in the workplace.

## **2.5.4. Benefits of Teambuilding**

According to Luthans (2002) team building is beneficial when individuals share collective intelligence and experience a sense of empowerment. It allows members to translate skills to the workplace, and may even move employees outside of a comfort zone. Spector (2002) agrees with Luthans that individuals are trained in team building to enhance their individual team skills within their work groups.

Donahue (1996) believes that team building can be beneficial when teams :

- View attitudes and team welfare as a priority.
- Feel ownership for their jobs and team because they are allowed to help establish goals.
- Are asked to apply their unique talents and knowledge to team objectives.
- Work in a climate of trust and open, lively communication. Accept that different roles enable different perspectives and enhance problem solving.
- Are open and honest because leader is open and honest.
- Have been trained to turn conflict into an opportunity to generate new ideas and deepen relationships.
- Make good decisions on their own because coach has gradually increased team authority as their competence and experience has grown.

Francis and Young (1979) believe that team building can enhance management strategy in the following ways : management of complexity, rapid response, high quality decisions and collective strength. Galloway (2000) agrees that team building can be beneficial by bringing about : better co-ordination between individuals, greater job satisfaction, lower absenteeism and employee turnover, improved productivity, increased profit and higher social satisfaction. Allowing team members to express their views fosters the principle of collective responsibility, in which every win or loss is a result of everyone's actions (Cebzynski, 2001).

According to Robbins (2000) team building helps to increase trust and openness among team members. Cebzynski (2001) supports this by declaring that luck favours teams

that trust one another. Team building can also address itself to clarifying each member's role on the team (Robbins, 2000). Lewis (2002) believes that team building can improve business communications and have a positive effect on building working relationships.

Team building can be an essential part of an organisational development effort because many of the tasks of organisations are conducted by work teams rather than individuals. An organisation in which work teams do not work well will have a hard time being effective. Improving team functioning can go a long way toward improving an organisation. Neuman found that team building had a positive effect on job satisfaction (Spector, 2000).

The next section looks at team effectiveness in greater detail with emphasis on the criteria for team effectiveness and some of the key variables that would ensure team effectiveness.

## **2.6. Team Effectiveness**

### **2.6.1. Definition of Team Effectiveness**

According to Phillips, Stone and Phillips (2001 : 257) team effectiveness can be viewed by measuring the output and quality of work in order to reflect how well teams work.

A heuristic framework illustrating recent trends in literature depicts team effectiveness as a function of task, group and organisation design factors, environmental factors, internal processes, external processes, and group psychosocial traits (Cohen and Bailey, 1997 : 239).

According to Guzzo and Dickson (1996 : 309) effectiveness in groups is indicated by group produced outputs (quantity, quality, speed, customer satisfaction) and the consequences a group has for its members or the enhancement of a team's capability to perform effectively in the future.

Effective groups are characterised as being dependable, making reliable connections between the parts, and targeting the direction and goals of the organisation. This is accomplished when members “buy in,” achieve co-ordination, have the desired impact, and exhibit the kind of vitality that sustains the organisation over time as the environment shifts or changes (Luthans, 2002 : 471).

Team or group effectiveness may focus on output and or group orientation. Shea and Guzzo have defined effectiveness as the production of designated products the delivery of contracted services per specification (Henkin and Wanat, 1994 : 128). Hackman and Morris felt that this perspective was too narrow and proposed a broader definition which viewed team effectiveness in terms of performance, satisfaction of group member needs, and the maintenance of the group over time. Internal effectiveness focuses on the ability of the team in terms of group problem-solving, while external effectiveness is concerned with the team’s ability successfully to introduce changes into a larger organisation with an intact decision making structure (Henkin and Wanat, 1994 : 129)

George and Jones (2000) claims that effective work groups perform at the highest level possible by minimising performance difficulties or process losses. Effective work groups increase their potential performance over time by finding better ways to work.

Armstrong (1992) claims that in an effective team its purpose is clear and its members feel the task is important to them and to the organisation.

## **2.6.2 Overview of Team Effectiveness**

According to Armstrong (1992) an effective team is likely to be one in which structure, leadership and methods of operation are relevant to the requirements of the task. Research conducted by Kirkman and Rosen indicates that a sense of team empowerment is closely associated with team effectiveness. They learnt that empowered teams share

four experiences : potency, meaningfulness, autonomy and impact (Kirkman and Rosen, 2000).

Galloway (2000) states that the following characteristics of Japanese work teams ensures team effectiveness :

- Are customer focused
- Understand the mission and their work objectives
- Are well motivated
- Co-ordinate their activity in order to achieve team objectives
- Have the necessary skills and problem-solving abilities within the team to achieve their goals
- Are well balanced; respect their team leader and each other roles
- Learn quickly from their mistakes
- Set measurable milestones
- Communicate regularly in order to review their performance (Galloway, 2000, p143).

According to Druskat (2001), no one would dispute the importance of making teams work more effectively. His research reveals that individual emotional intelligence has a group analogue, and it is just as critical to groups' effectiveness. Teams can develop greater emotional intelligence and, in so doing, boost their overall performance.

Londino (2002) stipulates that team effectiveness be viewed according to seven factors :

- Thrust : common mindset about what needs to be accomplished.
- Trust : trusting others to do what is right for the team and for each other.
- Talent : the necessary collective skills to get the job done.
- Teaming skills : operating the team's business effectively and efficiently.
- Task skill : effort necessary to get the job done.
- Team support from the organisation : how well the leadership of the organisation enables the team to perform.
- Team leader fit : how well matched the team leader is with the needs of the team.

The effectiveness of teams may be measured based on the extent to which the team achieves its objectives and performs on behalf of the overall organisation (Luthans, 2002). Research by Hunsaker and Lixfield (1999) indicates that technology can play an important role in improving team effectiveness. Fidelity Investments, located in Boston, has been successful in utilising technology by emphasising the tools needed to make it work and building upon existing processes. This approach has been successful in producing measurable results in terms of direct savings, costs avoided, producing measurable results in terms of direct savings, costs avoided, improved customer satisfaction, and implemented process improvements (Hunsaker and Lixfield, 1999).

### **2.6.3. Criteria for an Effective Team**

Druskat (2001, p80) believes that the following three conditions are essential to a group's effectiveness :

- Trust among members.
- A sense of group efficacy.
- A sense of group identity.

According to Hellriegel (et al, 2001) there are several effectiveness criteria for evaluating work teams. A particular work team may be effective in some respects and ineffective in other respects. For example, a team may take longer than expected to make a decision. Thus, on speed and cost criteria, the team may seem ineffective. But the team's decision may be highly creative and make the team's primary customer feel very satisfied with the output. Thus, on creativity and customer satisfaction, the team would be viewed as effective overall depends on the relative importance of the various effectiveness criteria shown below:

**Table 2.1.**

<b>TEAM EFFECTIVENESS</b>		
<b>Task completion</b>	<b>Team development</b>	<b>Stakeholder satisfaction</b>
Accuracy	Team cohesiveness	Customer satisfaction with team's procedures and outputs
Speed	Team flexibility	Team satisfaction with team's procedures and outputs
Creativity	Team preparedness for new tasks	Satisfaction of other teams with the team's procedures and outputs
Cost		

(Hellriegel, et al, 2001 : 344)

Luthans (2002) claims that there are five areas of teams that should be monitored and measured on a continuous basis and these include : the team's mission, goal achievements, feelings of empowerment, communications and roles and norms that are positive.

Weiss (2002) recommends the following guidelines be used for effective teamwork :

- Be an effective communicator : keep your channels open.
- Criticise only in the spirit of kindness, helpfulness and tact : when you need to criticise, wait for the proper time and place.
- Prefer assertiveness to aggressiveness : you can resolve conflicts and satisfy your own needs without dominating anybody.
- Stay open and receptive : let others know you respect their opinion – even if you don't agree with it.
- Don't gossip : spreading hearsay about others business is never in your interest.

- Refrain from belittling : belittling others for no reason brings group tension. Sincere compliments promote group cohesion. Support your group and they will support you.
- Avoid arguing : not only is it a waste of time, it proves nothing and causes rifts in an entire group.
- Keep cool : if you feel a situation is getting out of control, either end the discussion or take a break.
- Be an optimist : consistently pessimistic viewpoints are bad for group cohesion. They are also a drag on group energy and productivity.

Phillips, Stone and Phillips (2001) recommends that the following measures can be taken to enhance team effectiveness.

- Co-operation : the success of a team often depends on the co-operative spirit of team members.
- Conflict : in team environments, the level of conflict is often measured. A reduction in conflict may reflect the success of the introduction of teams into the workplace.
- Decisiveness : teams make decisions, and the timing of the decision-making process often becomes an issue. Decisiveness is measured sometimes in terms of the speed at which decisions are made.
- Communication : a variety of communication instruments reflect the quality and quantity of communication within the team.
- Other measures : many other measures are available to reflect the performance and functioning of teams.

Blanchard (1993) stipulates the following criteria for high performing teams :

- Managers/team leaders must have the ability to foster teamwork, to facilitate group problem solving, and to focus the team on attaining continuous improvement.
- Performance measurement should be focused on how well a manager's/team leader's group improves in quality and productivity on a continuous basis.
- Systems should focus the team members towards accomplishing the mission of the group.
- The team must be given the freedom to control its own actions.

- Group ownership and pride in high quality accomplishments must be fostered within the group.
- Effective teams should be restricted to no more than fifteen to twenty people.

According to Henkin and Wanat (1994) the group performance model proposed by Driskell suggested that group performance is determined by individual-level, group level and environmental level factors in the group interaction process. Individual level factors encompass task characteristics, the reward structure, and the level of environmental stress. Group interaction processes, including coalition formation, polarisation, may result in a process gain or process loss which will decrease group effectiveness.

Luthans (2002) agrees that to assess team effectiveness requires careful specification of criteria. Effective groups are characterised as being dependable, making reliable connections between the parts, and targeting the direction and goals of the organisation. Teams with self leadership have been found to have varying degrees of success. Some aspects of effectiveness may be influenced by how groups form. The composition of the group has been found to be optimal when there is a mix of member types.

According to Robbins (2000) the key components making up effective teams fall into four categories , work design, team composition, contextual influences and process variables.

- **Work design** : effective teams need to work together and take collective responsibility to complete significant tasks. They must be more than “team-in-name-only.” The work design category includes variables such as freedom and autonomy, the opportunity to utilise different skills and talents, and the ability to complete a whole identifiable task or product. The evidence indicates that these characteristics enhance member motivation and increase team effectiveness.
- **Composition** : this category includes variables that relate to how teams should be staffed. Issues to be addressed include the ability and personality of team members, allocating roles and diversity, size of the team, member flexibility, and members’ preference for teamwork.

- Context : the three contextual factors that appear to be most significantly related to team performance are the presence of adequate resources, effective leadership, and a performance evaluation and rewards system that reflects team contributions.
- Process : the final category related to team effectiveness is process variables. These include member commitment to a common purpose, establishment of specific team goals, team efficacy, a managed level of conflict, and the reduction of social loafing.

According to Johnson (1996) an effective team has the following elements :

- An elevated goal.
- Respect for its leader, who is principled.
- Group goals that take precedence over individual goals.
- Candid communications and a collaborative climate.
- Competent members who give each other feedback and reinforce individual progress.
- A results-oriented milieu.
- A unified commitment.
- A standard of excellence.
- External support.

Academics have increasingly selected teams and team effectiveness as important areas for research in response to the increased use of teams in organisations (Cohen and Bailey, 1997). Druskat (2001) agrees that no one would dispute the importance of making teams work more effectively.

#### **2.6.4. Critical Variables for Team Effectiveness**

Cole and Clowney (2000) claim that the following four step process is essential for enhancing teamwork:

- Create a teamwork vision statement : do not confuse the team mission statement with the corporate one. The corporate one is the top-down statement of the company's purpose.

Team vision statements are designed to define how you want to work with each other as individuals – provide the framework for working relationships.

- Define values in behavioural terms : not only do we need vision to know where we are going, but we need to know the behaviours that will achieve the desired teamwork culture.
- Measure team social skills : measuring teamwork is the only way to know how well these behaviours are being implemented. Members of the team rate how each behaviour is being implemented. The data shows the team's strengths and weaknesses. Now each team has data reflecting how well they are working together in exactly the same manner as they have data to measure the technical characteristics of their business.
- Use the information to enhance the team's success : the team uses the data initially to identify weaknesses in the working relationships, then to define behavioural strategies to improve the team's performance. Once implemented, the impact of these strategies is also measured.

A study done of wraparound team members (Fleming, 2001) indicated that team goals, team member roles and team membership, team communication, team cohesion, team logistics and team outcomes are important in determining team effectiveness. Results indicated that items in the categories team outcomes, team goals, and team cohesion were ranked most critical to team effectiveness.

**Team outcomes** was indicated by panellists to be the most important determinant of effective team process. In this study, critical process outcomes were identified that related to reaching a decision, developing and committing to a plan, modifying the plan and reviewing the plan's impact.

**Team goals** according to this study, particularly goal setting was found to be critical to the team process. Panellists indicated that goals should be clearly stated, prioritised, and regularly reviewed. Panellists alluded to the strong connection between goals and outcomes, which is important for ongoing evaluation of team performance.

**Team cohesion** represented another critical aspect of the team process. Panellists supported previous findings by stating that trust and respect among members, as well as

outside support and recognition for their work were critical variables for effectiveness. Commitment was viewed as an important cohesive element among team members, thereby eliminating the necessity for other formal team building activities.

**Team communication** was placed fourth in the list of critical variables. Panellists focused on shared opportunities for speaking and listening and on decision making. Team communication items represented only 11% of the final list of critical variables. This finding was surprising considering the importance of preparation in communication strategies.

**Team member roles** : results in team member roles and responsibilities support the importance of having clearly defined team member roles. Roles must be clearly understood and perceived in order to be important. Member characteristics include being caring, being committed to team process, and being accountable to the team. Panellists did not regard role selection in terms of responsibilities as being important.

**Leadership** was identified as being an important variable in teaming.

**Team logistics** findings was unexpected. Panellists rated this category lowest overall. They indicated that teams should remain flexible in setting schedules and agendas for meetings.

(Fleming, 2001)

George and Jones (2000) however disagree with Fleming (2001) that assigning roles according to personal expertise or skill was not critical to the team. Role making can be an important process in self-managed work teams in which group members jointly try to find innovative ways of accomplishing group goals (George and Jones, 2000). Work team structure requires a clearly specified set of roles for the executives and managers who oversee the work of the team, for the team leaders, who exercise influence over team members, and for team members (Nelson, 2003). Bragg (2000) agrees with Nelson (2003) that not everyone on the team does the same function or does the same work and therefore it is necessary to establish appropriate roles to achieve team goals.

Armstrong (1992) states that effective teams need people who help get things done. Belbin identified eight different roles played by management team members :

Chairpersons, shapers, company workers, plants, resource investigators, monitor evaluators, team workers and completer finishers. Belbin suggests that, although the main roles of team members can be slotted into one or other of these categories, most people have an alternative, back up role which they use as necessary (Armstrong, 1992).

Robbins (2000) agrees with Fleming (2001) that goals are critical in facilitating clear communication and also helps the team maintain their focus on getting results. Bragg (2000) believes that common goals distinguish teams from groups of people. Robinson (1994) says that no one should play without goals, whether you are in the business environment or sports team. Goals drive behaviour, but they need to be clear, measurable and concrete. Measurable goals transform groups of people into teams and drive behaviour and performance. According to Weiss (2002) teamwork requires working toward defined goals. The goals need to be meaningful to team members, not only to the company.

Sulon (1997) disagrees with Fleming (2001) that communication is not that critical a variable to promote effective teamwork. Sulon firmly believes in his analysis that team communication is integral to team integration and commitment. Kanter (2001) agrees with Sulon (1997) that teams stumble when they become so internally focused on their task that they neglect communication. The solution according to Kanter (2001) is to assume nothing and to communicate everything. Naidu (2000) in his research on team communication at Telkom found that team communication is extremely important for successful teamwork . In a team environment, more than two people are involved in the communication process. When a person sends a message, he or she likely receives much unsolicited feedback from more than one person. This feedback is critical to the success of team communication; it enhances the communication process by providing information that would otherwise develop and expand from several one-on-one conversations (Weiss, 2002). According to Kanter (2001) teams stumble when they become so internally focused on their task that they neglect communication.

Nelson and Quick (2003) agree with Fleming (2001) that group cohesion is very important as it enables a group to exercise effective control over its members in relationship to behavioural norms and standards. Blau (2002) disagrees with both Nelson and Fleming. According to Blau, there is no strong evidence that team cohesion aids effectiveness. People work more effectively if they like the people they're with, but they may simply conspire to do less work, spend longer time ensuring they don't fall out, or even decide they don't like each other. George and Jones (2000) says that an important property of work groups is group cohesiveness and this affects group performance and effectiveness. Luthans (2002, p480) agrees with George and Jones that team cohesion can enhance team effectiveness in the following ways: team building, collaboration, leadership and understanding of cultural issues in global situations. Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly (1994) also claims that when groups are highly cohesive, there's a tendency to expect effective group performance.

Hellriegel (et al, 2001) agrees with Fleming (2001) that the leader plays a key role in the team. A good leader has three important leadership roles that new work team leaders find particularly difficult : empowerment, managing the external boundary of the team, and disbanding an ineffective work team. Kirkman and Rosen (2000) say that teams need supportive leaders who will trust them to make important decisions, celebrate their successes, and learn from their mistakes. According to Raines (1996) there are four factors, which play a direct role in the manager's effectiveness : his knowledge and experience, motivation, organisational framework and corporate policies. Hackman (2002) claims that the role of the leader is to create the conditions that will promote even if they cannot guarantee team effectiveness. These conditions include :

- Creating a real team rather than a team in name only.
- Setting a compelling direction for the team's work.
- Designing an enabling team structure.
- Ensuring that the team operates within a supportive organisational context.
- Providing expert coaching

According to Kimball and Eunice (1999) two leadership characteristics are particularly important for team leaders: they are masters of change and they are visionaries. Effective leaders know both how to teach and how to share the glory by acknowledging group success (Luthans, 2002)

According to (Pizzo, 2003) the team leader has to use command and control to build the team, but once it's together, he has to share that power, becoming totally non-hierarchical so that team members speak with one voice and become leaders themselves.

In a study conducted by Koehler, Lehner and Fisher (1974), team outcomes was very important in determining team effectiveness as a way to improve the everyday functions of organisational life. Londino (2002) agrees that the following five steps are necessary to ensure higher team effectiveness when reviewing team outcomes :

- Assess the current skills of the team : team members individually review 80 competencies, rating their perceptions of the team's current skills in each competency. Results are tallied and shown to the entire group. Consensus is reached and each member of the team has a clear and shared understanding of the team's areas of strength and weakness.
- Assess skills needed to be high performing : this time each team member reviews the 80 competencies and asks, "how important is this skill if we are to be high performing?" results are tallied and presented in the same manner as step1, and again consensus is reached.
- Analyse gaps : here team members visually see where their development needs lie. At the same time team members see the areas where they do not need development – competencies they are strong in today and need to be strong in for the future.
- Develop an action plan to close gaps : a team's current skill level is assessed against the skills the team needs to be high performing. A gap analysis between the current and needed state is conducted and a clear action plan is delivered.
- Determine the ongoing coaching need/desire : often a team will elect to have some ongoing team coaching.

(Londino, 2002)

The next section looks at team cohesiveness in detail and the role of team cohesiveness in ensuring and making a team more effective.

## **2.7. Team Cohesiveness**

### **2.7.1. Definition of Team Cohesiveness**

According to the New Oxford Dictionary (1998 : 356), cohesion means the action or fact of forming a united whole.

Cohesion has been constructively defined as “a dynamic process which is reflected in the tendency for a group to stick together and remain united in the pursuit of its instrumental objectives and/or for the satisfaction of member affective needs” (Eys...et al, 2003 : 66).

The ‘interpersonal glue’ that makes the members of a group stick together is group cohesion (Nelson and Quick, 2003 : 290).

When groups are very attractive to their members, individuals value their group membership. The attractiveness of a group to its members is called group cohesion (George and Jones, 2000 : 144).

Robbins (2000 : 237) defines cohesiveness as the degree to which group members are attracted to each other and are motivated to stay in the group.

“Group cohesiveness is the sum of forces attracting group members and keeping the group together. It is a group phenomenon, and for a group to be highly cohesive, most if not all members must have strong motives to remain in the group” (Spector, 2000 : 276).

Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly (1994 : 320) view cohesiveness as the strength of group members’ desires to remain in the group and their commitment to the group.

According to Luthans (2002 : 468) cohesiveness is defined as the average resultant force acting on members in a group.

### **2.7.2. Overview of Team Cohesiveness**

The concept of cohesion has been empirically linked with a number of group and individual variables. Examples of group variables include a positive relationship with team performance, collective efficacy, and group norms (Eys...et al, 2003). According to Spector (2000) a high level of group cohesiveness has important implications for group behaviour. Group cohesion was described earlier as the interpersonal attraction binding group members together. Nelson and Quick (2003) agree with Spector (2000) that it enables a group to exercise effective control over its members in relation to its behavioural norms and standards.

Cohesiveness is the feeling of unity that holds a group together voluntarily. Employees operate better as individuals if they consider themselves to be part of a well-functioning supportive team to which all are happy to belong. As committed participants in the group, they are more productive, communicative, trusting, motivated and loyal (New Zealand Management, 2001). Robbins (2000) states that groups differ in their cohesiveness, that is, the degree to which members are attracted to each other and are motivated to stay in the group.

Groups high in cohesiveness are very appealing to their members; groups low in cohesiveness are not very appealing to their members (George and Jones, 2000). Formal and informal groups seem to possess a closeness or commonness of attitude, behaviour and performance. This closeness, referred to as cohesiveness, is generally regarded as a force acting on the members to remain in a group that is greater than the forces pulling the member away from the group (Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly, 1994). Armstrong (1992) believes that if group ideology is strong and individual members identify closely with the group, it will become increasingly cohesive. The impact of group cohesion can, however, result in negative as well as positive results.

### **2.7.3. Factors that Contribute to Team Cohesiveness**

A variety of factors influence a group's level of cohesiveness. Here we examine five : group size, similarity of group members, competition with other groups, success, and exclusiveness of the group (George and Jones, 2000).

#### **2.7.3.1. Group Size**

According to George and Jones (2000), the bigger the group, their members tend to be less satisfied. For this reason, large groups do not tend to be cohesive. Luthans (2002) believes that team size should be kept small (10 members or less). Nelson and Quick (2003) agree with Luthans that smaller groups-those of five or seven members, for example are more cohesive than those of more than twenty-five, although cohesion does not decline much with size after forty or more members. Robbins (2000) and Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly (1994) state that by making the group smaller, group cohesiveness can be encouraged and the groups small size facilitates high interaction. According to Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly (1994) a group may be attractive to an individual because the group is small enough to permit members to have their opinions heard and evaluated by others. Large groups have the greatest potential for conflict, and members find it difficult to form close ties with each other. A small or medium size (between three and fifteen people) tends to promote cohesiveness (George and Jones, 2000). The most effective teams are neither very small or very large (Robbins, 2000)

#### **2.7.3.2. Similarity / Diversity of Group Members**

People generally like, get along with, and most easily communicate with others who are similar to themselves. Groups tend to be most cohesive when group members are homogeneous or share certain attitudes, values, experiences and other characteristics (George and Jones, 2000). Hamilton, Nickerson and Owan (2003) disagree with George

and Jones (2000) theory above because he believes that worker heterogeneity could shape team productivity by facilitating mutual learning or by influencing the group production norm.

According to Nelson and Quick (2003) diversity within a group may increase the uncertainty, complexity, and inherent confusion in group processes, making it more difficult for the group to achieve its full, potential productivity. Robbins (2000) agrees with Nelson and Quick that diversity is detrimental to group cohesiveness. Luthans (2002) claims that team cohesion should be built by either establishing homogeneous groups or overcoming potential problems associated with diversity. A recent study of a German-Japanese joint venture reveals that a U-shaped relationship existed between team heterogeneity and team effectiveness, where homogenous and highly heterogeneous teams outperformed moderately heterogeneous groups in the long run. Selection of group members seems to play an important role in the effectiveness of the group (Luthans, 2002).

Empirical studies have shown that functionally diverse teams can be more innovative, can develop clearer strategies, can respond more aggressively to competitive threats and can be quicker to implement certain types of organisational change than functionally homogeneous teams (Bunderson and Sutcliffe, 2002).

### **2.7.3.3. Competition with Other Groups**

Competition between groups in an organisation increases group cohesiveness when it motivates members of each group to band together to achieve group goals (George and Jones, 2000). Luthans (2002) believes that the presence of external competition and challenges tends to build greater cohesion. George and Jones (2000) however caution that although a certain level of competition across groups can help each group to be cohesive, too much competition can be dysfunctional and impair group effectiveness.

In a survey of project teams conducted by (Ammeter and Dukerich, 2002), informants reported that competition in the form of frequent comparisons with other projects was important for at least two reasons. First, a number of the project teams were being evaluated against the performance of past teams or teams running in parallel to them. Competitive comparisons thus provided a practical check as to how they were doing relative to their benchmarks. A second reason was that because the teams were generally doing well relative to their competitors, they used the competition to reaffirm that they were indeed a high performance team. Nelson and Quick (2003) believe that external pressures tend to enhance cohesion and internal competition usually decreases cohesion within the team. However, one study found that company-imposed work pressure disrupted group cohesion by increasing internal competition and reducing co-operative interpersonal activity (Nelson and Quick, 2003).

#### **2.7.3.4. Success**

When groups are successful in achieving their goals, they become especially attractive to their member, and group cohesiveness increases (George and Jones, 2000). According to Luthans (2002) team success naturally tends to build greater cohesion. Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly (1994) believe that if cohesiveness is high and the group accepts and agrees with formal organisation goals, then group behaviour will be positive from the formal organisation standpoint. Nelson and Quick (2003) agree with Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly (1994) that group cohesion can enhance job satisfaction for members and improve organisational productivity. Armstrong (1992) however feels that the impact of group cohesion can result in negative as well as positive results.

#### **2.7.3.5. Exclusiveness**

A group's exclusiveness is indicated by how difficult it is to become a member of the group, the extent to which outsiders look up to group members, the group's status in the organisation, and the special rights and privileges accorded group members (George and

Jones, 2000). Prestige or social status also influences a group's cohesion, with more prestigious groups, such as the U.S. Airforce Thunderbirds or the U.S. Navy Blue Angels, being highly cohesive (Nelson and Quick, 2003). In South Africa the exclusive Scorpions are an example of a highly exclusive and cohesive group. According to Hellriegel (et al, 2001) many organisations use experientially based , adventure training, to develop team cohesiveness.

#### **2.7.4. Features of a Cohesive Team**

According to the New Zealand Management (2001) the ideal cohesive self-supporting team displays the following features :

- The atmosphere is informal, comfortable and relaxed.
- There is lots of discussion in which everyone participates.
- Members listen to each other. Every idea is given an airing.
- The goals of the group are well understood and accepted by all.
- There is a constructive disagreement. The group seeks resolution rather than domination of the dissenter.
- Decisions are reached by consensus.
- Criticism is frequent, frank and comfortable. All members are free to express their personal feelings.
- When action is agreed upon, clear tasks are assigned and willingly accepted.
- Members share beliefs/values and seek each other's support and recognition.
- The group displays a united front.
- The leader does not dominate, nor does the group unduly defer to him/her.

#### **2.7.5. Consequences of Team Cohesiveness**

According to the Schachter study (Luthans, 2002) highly cohesive groups have very powerful dynamics, both negative and positive, for group performance. On the other hand, the low cohesive groups are not so powerful. The findings of this study indicate

that performance depends largely on how high or low cohesiveness in the group is induced (Luthans, 2002).

Consistent with increased level of participation and communication found in cohesive groups is the fact that cohesiveness sometimes results in low levels of turnover. A moderate amount of cohesiveness is functional for the group and organisation when it encourages group members to participate in the group and share information. The benefits of belonging to a cohesive group have been well documented (Eys...et al, 2003). Too much cohesiveness, however, can be dysfunctional if group members waste time chitchatting (George and Jones, 2000).

According to George and Jones (2000) a major consequence of group cohesiveness when group and organisational goals are aligned is group goal accomplishment. Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly (1994) say that a group's degree of cohesiveness can have positive or negative effects, depending on how well group goals match those of the formal organisation. If cohesiveness is high and accepts organisational goals then group behaviour will be positive. However if cohesiveness is high and group goals aren't congruent with organisational goals, then group behaviour will be negative. If cohesiveness is low and not in agreement with organisational goals, then this is negative from the organisational point of view.

According to Luthans (2002), groupthink is a dysfunction of highly cohesive groups and teams. Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly (1994) see groupthink as the deterioration of mental efficiency, reality testing, and moral judgement in the interest of group solidarity. Groupthink results from pressures on individual members to conform and reach consensus (Luthans, 2002). Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly (1994) believe that the following characteristics can be associated with groupthink : illusion of invulnerability, tendency to moralise, feeling of unanimity, pressure to conformant opposing ideas dismissed.

Studies show that the relationship of cohesiveness and productivity depends on the performance-related norms established by the group (Robbins, 2000). George and Jones (2000) agree with Robbins (2000) that a major consequence of group cohesiveness is when group and organisational goals are aligned to the level of conformity of group norms. Norms tend to be highly enforced only in groups that are highly cohesive (Spector, 2000). Both Robbins (2000) and Spector (2000) agree that if performance related norms are high, a cohesive group will be more productive than will a less cohesive group. But if cohesiveness is high and performance norms are low, productivity will be low.

Spector (2000) says that group cohesiveness is related to job satisfaction within the group. Members of highly cohesive groups tend to be more satisfied than members of less cohesive groups. According to George and Jones (2000), a moderate amount of group cohesiveness results in the most favourable group and organisational outcomes.

### **2.7.6. How to Encourage Team Cohesiveness**

An important part of forming a high quality team is shaping its spirit and heart. (Bassin, 1996) says that HR executives should use the following five steps to encourage team cohesiveness:

- Hold 'reflection' meetings at least quarterly. The sole purpose of these meetings is to have all team members face-to-face to address work and team issues.
- Ensure that the game plan is short, measurable and public. The game plan should be used as a scoreboard so all members can keep track of how well they are doing.
- Make developmental feedback a way of life. The members of successful teams give each other continuous peer coaching and developmental feedback.
- Create employee policies and programs to support and reinforce team-based performance. They provide a way for HR executives to influence team-based performance.
- Educate senior management on the need for role models of team-based behaviour.

Robbins (2000) suggests the following :

- Make the group smaller.
- Encourage agreement with group goals.
- Increase the time members spend with each other.
- Increase the status of the group and the perceived difficulty of attaining membership in the group.
- Stimulate competition with other groups.
- Give rewards to the group rather than to individual members.
- Physically isolate the group.

New Zealand Management (2001) makes the following recommendations :

- Promote interaction between staff members : effective teamwork occurs when group members feel positive about each other.
- Clarify and negotiate roles : have team members share information with others in the group. Where disagreement exists among members regarding their role, discuss it so the situation can be resolved. This understanding creates a strong sense of unity and loyalty within the team.
- Stress teamwork and ownership : Show your commitment to the team principles at all times. Talk about 'we', 'our company', 'what we hope to achieve' – positive suggestions that reflect a cohesive unit.
- Provide leadership support : as team leader you must foster the trust and confidence of all members of the team. This may take time but without this rapport group cohesion may fail to materialise.
- Facilitate task accomplishment : ensure that team members are provided with the equipment, facilities, work methods and timetable for accomplishing group goals. Focus on solving problems that interfere with goal attainment and building team identity.
- Acknowledge good work : recognition and appreciation of every member's contribution are vitally important.
- Management memo : managers will play a crucial role in building the team and in maintaining its effectiveness.

Team cohesiveness can be encouraged in many ways but this will be discussed in greater detail in chapter three.

## **2.8. Conclusion**

The above analysis gives the reader a broad overview of what team building , team effectiveness and team cohesiveness entail. It also illustrates why team building and team cohesiveness are critical in ensuring an effective team.

Hamilton, Nickerson and Owan (2003) in their analysis of teams found that firms use teams to increase productivity. The evidence suggests that teams outperform individuals when the tasks being done require multiple skills, judgement and experience. Teams have the capability to quickly assemble, deploy, refocus and disband (Robbins, 1997).

Team building can be beneficial by bringing about better co-operation, greater job satisfaction, improved productivity, increased profit and higher social satisfaction (Galloway, 2000). According to Porter, Lawler and Hackman (1975), team building activities helps team members to learn new ways of relating to one another in the organisational context which are likely to be helpful in increasing team effectiveness.

Research by Fleming (2001) indicates that items in the categories team outcomes, team goals and team cohesion were ranked most critical to team effectiveness. Effective teams can challenge the whole way an organisation achieves results (Leigh and Maynard 1995). Effectiveness is the ultimate aim of group activities and is assessed on the basis of three important criteria : production output, member satisfaction and capacity for continued co-operation.

Hellriegel...et al. (1998) believe that low cohesiveness is usually associated with low conformity. Wagner and Hollenbeck (1992) say that in a cohesive group, members feel attracted to one another and to the group as a whole.

However, high cohesiveness doesn't exist only in the presence of high conformity. High performing teams would depend on a number of key factors such as Setting goals and understanding of them, Extent of participation, Communication, Idea generation, Conflict management, Interpersonal relations and Obstacles. In the next chapter the above sub-dimensions of team cohesiveness and their impact on team effectiveness will be discussed in greater detail.

## CHAPTER 3

### Team Cohesiveness

#### 3.1. Introduction

Teams are in. The idea is that many heads are better than one and that teams are an effective way to neutralise organisational politics (Keenan, 1994). Today's workplace is increasingly diverse. Mature workers, baby boomers, generation X and now emerging generation Y are working side by side. This means companies need to foster a sense of camaraderie and teamwork within a work force (Farren, 1999).

A multidisciplinary team consists of people whose backgrounds are, by definition quite diverse and who often have significant differences in how they think, communicate, problem solve and work. When diverse teams effectively leverage their differences, they make higher-quality decisions because their synergism allows realism, increased complexity, and the ability to better recognise an outsider's view (Thoman, 2000).

Each person brings to a team their talents. Good team players bring something else as well: the ability to blend their talents with those of other team members. Each person brings to a team their own ideas and preferences. Good team players balance interest in what they advocate with interest in what other people say. In short, team players see themselves and others as resources, part of the team's pool of knowledge, skills and ideas. The whole is truly greater than the sum of the parts. Working together, the team is sure to win (Silberman, 2001).

Blanchard (et al, 1993) emphasises that all teams are unique, each having their own behaviour patterns, characteristics and methods. This is easy to understand if considering that groups of people, much like individuals, are dynamic, complex and changing living systems. They are not only affected by their own unique inner characteristics but they are also influenced by external forces, which in turn, have a unique effect on groups as well.

Most team development activities seek to help group members learn new ways of relating to one another in the organisational context which are likely to be helpful in increasing group effectiveness. That is, it is not sufficient merely to remove barriers and identify problems – in addition any individuals need to learn how to be effective group members. This often involves, for example, learning how to express disagreement without getting into a win-lose argument with the other person; or how to express negative feelings without seeming to condemn; or how to provide leadership without controlling others; or how to tolerate and learn from tensions which exist in the group rather immediately seeking for ways to eliminate the tensions as quickly as possible; and so on (Porter, Lawler and Hackman, 1975).

In order to measure the impact of team cohesiveness on team effectiveness a number of sub-dimensions were used. The following sub-dimensions of team cohesiveness will be used in this study : setting goals and understanding of them; extent of participation; communication; idea generation; conflict management; interpersonal relations; and obstacles. Each of these variables is examined in detail and analysed to see the extent of team cohesiveness and whether it would make a team more effective or reduce team effectiveness.

In the next section each of the sub-dimensions of team cohesiveness will be looked at more closely.

## **3.2. Setting goals and Understanding of Them**

### **3.2.1. Having a Common Purpose**

Robinson (1994) feels that many business teams are playing the game without goals, and as a result they don't know if they are winning or losing. According to Spector (2000) a work team must have common task goals and objectives. Robbins (2000) agrees with Spector (2000) that successful teams translate their common purpose into specific, measurable, and realistic performance goals. Lemke (2003) suggests that one must be precise in setting team goals and

empowering the team to set attainable personal goals and team goals. Weiss (2002) says that teamwork requires working toward defined goals.

According to Robbins (2000) goals lead individuals to higher performance, goals also energise teams. These specific goals facilitate clear communication. They also help teams maintain their focus on getting results. Being productive is the key to reaching company goals, not years of service (Robinson, 1994).

George and Jones (2000, p128) believe it is important to note at the outset that although group members may have one or more goals in common, this does not mean that all their goals are identical. For example, when a person from each of four different departments in an organisation (research and development, sales, manufacturing, and engineering) is assigned to a cross-functional team to work on developing a new product, all members of the team may share the common goal of developing the best product that they can devise. But research and development might define best product as the one that has the most innovative features, sales as the one that most appeals to price-conscious customers, manufacturing as one that can be produced the most inexpensively, and engineering as the one that will be the most reliable. Although they agree on the common goal – giving the customer the best product they can devise – deciding what best product means can be a difficult task. Regular team meetings, along with plenty of one-on-ones, help ensure that short-term objectives support long-term goals (Michelman, 2003).

Robbins (2000) says that team goals should be challenging. Difficult goals have been found to raise team performance on those criteria for which they're set. For instance, goals for quantity tend to raise quantity, goals for speed tend to raise speed, and goals for accuracy raise accuracy, and so on.

Identifying group goals is not always possible. The assumption that formal organisational groups have clear goals must be tempered by the understanding that perception, attitudes, personality, and learning can distort goals. For example, a new employee may never be formally told the goals of the unit that he's joined. By observing the behaviour and attitude of others, individuals

may conclude what they believe the goals to be. These perceptions may or may not be accurate. The same can be said about the goals of informal groups (Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly, 1994).

### **3.2.2. Setting Goals Jointly**

These goals should be the handiwork of everyone in the team, and should be written down. Marchand (1994) agrees that good teams put the performance of the group before individual goals. A group goal is one that all or most members of a group can agree on as a common goal. If staff has no input into goals they're a group, not a team (Donahue, 1996). Clear goals are necessary if all team members are to be committed to the project. From top to down, if goals are not clarified from the beginning, no one will know what he or she is working toward. And when people don't know what you're doing or why, they certainly can't make a commitment to doing it well (Leadership for the Front lines, 2000).

Research conducted by Fleming (2001), in a Delphi study of wraparound team members revealed that the team goals category was rated second highest. The highest rated item related to the team having a clear purpose. Other items that were ranked high included goals that were understood by all members, established by the team, modifiable, and regularly reviewed. Researchers found aspects of team goals, to be critical to the team process. Panellists indicated that goals should be clearly stated, prioritised and regularly reviewed (Fleming, 2001). According to Yeatts and Barnes (1996), previous research on team performance and evaluation of self-managed teams show that it is extremely important that the goals or objectives of the team be very clear. Otherwise, team members will spend their time doing things that do not contribute to the team's goals and will make team decisions without considering the subsequent effects on team goals.

According to Johnson (1996) an effective team has the following elements :

- An elevated goal.
- Group goals that take precedence over individual goals.

Teams always have common goals that team member's work together to achieve. In some organisations, individual goals pit people against each other. Then managers in the organisation wonder why people don't co-operate and work together (Bragg, 2000, p26).

Luthans (2002) believes that effective groups are characterised as being dependable, making reliable connections between the parts, and targeting the direction and goals of the organisation. Members of a group perceive that there is the potential for mutual goal accomplishment – that is, group members perceive that by belonging to the group they will be able to accomplish certain goals or meet certain needs (George and Jones, 2000).

In order for any group to accomplish its goals, the group must control – that is influence and regulate its members' behaviour. Effective groups are groups that control their members' behaviour and channel it in the direction of high performance and the attainment of group and organisational goals (George and Jones, 2000). Weiss (2002) says that goals need to be meaningful to the team members, not only to the company.

Teller Vision (2000) suggests the following steps be undertaken in order to meet goals the team way :

- Ask your supervisor to add team building to your staff meeting agenda. Your team needs a forum in which to discuss team-related issues.
- Celebrate the milestones and accomplishments of your team. For example, do something special to pat one another on the back.
- Ask your supervisor to schedule team planning sessions. These meetings can bring out issues that the team needs to consider.

### **3.2.3. Measuring Team Goals**

Luthans (2002) says that one of the five key areas that teams should be monitored and measured against include goal achievements. Robinson (1994) agrees with Luthans (2002) that goals drive behaviour, but they need to be measurable. An example of a measurable goal for a staffing team

might be to decrease cost per hire by 35 percent. This goal is specific and drives behaviour and productivity.

According to research undertaken by Yeatts and Barnes (1996), they found that one team called, the Section 8 Team, showed that team members had clear, specific goals and measures of these which took the form of monthly reports displaying, for example, the number and accuracy of verifications completed. These reports helped the team to maintain its focus on what was important, and to make team decisions that would enhance the team's ability to heighten its performance. Weekly meetings showed that the meetings were an excellent vehicle for establishing and clarifying team goals.

In contrast to this, Yeatts and Barnes (1996) found that the second team which was, the Sales Team, revealed that the team did not have measurable goals that it was attempting to achieve. Consequently, team members were sometimes unsure of what they could do to help the team perform at a high level and spent their time doing things that were not focused on a team goal.

Nelson and Quick (2003) believe that stating the purpose and mission in the form of specific goals enhances productivity over and above any performance benefits achieved through individual goal setting. Kirkman (2000) agrees that teams with a sense of meaningfulness have a strong collective commitment to mission. They see their goals as valuable and worthwhile. Measurable goals transform groups of people into teams and drive behaviour and performance (Robinson, 1994).

### **3.2.4. Understanding Team Goals**

According to Hellriegel (et al, 2001), a cohesive team can work effectively for or against organisational goals. For example, a cohesive team with negative feelings towards the organisation may promote performance standards that limit productivity and pressure individual members to conform to them. In contrast, a cohesive team with positive feelings towards the organisation may support and reinforce high quality and productivity. According to New Zealand

Management (2001) one of the important features of a cohesive team is that the goals of the group are well understood and accepted by all.

A group's goals, if clearly understood, can be reasons why an individual is attracted to it. For example, an individual may join a group that meets after work to become familiar with new production methods to be implemented in the organisation over the next year. The person who voluntarily joins the after-hours group believes that learning the new system is a necessary and important goal for employees (Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly, 1994). Teamwork involves focusing on a common goal, and you must be sure everybody on the team understands the goal, whether it's a sports team, industry or golf shop (Donahue, 1996).

Leadership for The Front Lines (2000) suggests that there are three steps to clarifying team goals:

- Step one : know your goals

Know the goals your boss has for you as a team leader. The fact that you were chosen as the team leader/project manager means that your boss has confidence in you to get a potentially tough job done.

- Step two : understand expectations

Understand what your boss expects you and your team to accomplish. Listen carefully to all your boss tells you about this project, and ask questions if you're not sure about why something needs to be done.

- Step three : explain the goals

It's the manager's responsibility to make sure that the team fully understands the importance of reaching its goals. Clear and positive communication, therefore, is a key issue. Projects usually fail when team members do not have a solid understanding of what is expected of them. The manager's thorough explanation of goals will ensure the team's commitment to the project.

Michelman (2003) feels that ultimately one can't determine which goals rate as must-do's entirely one's own. People must learn to be open and to listen to others. Team building experts

recommend answering the following questions about shared goals to help teams develop common ground rules and work together effectively :

- What is our purpose or main activity?
- What specific end products or output will we produce?
- What are our success measurements? (Staff leader, 2002)

### **3.2.5. Feedback and Evaluation of Team Progress**

According to Robbins (2000) people will do better when they get feedback on how well they are progressing toward their goals because feedback helps to identify discrepancies between what they have done and what they want to do. Feedback acts to guide behaviour. Achieving goals and objectives is the reason for creating teams. A team is a means to an end, not an end in itself. Make sure that work teams have clear goals and standards for knowing if they achieve those goals (Bragg, 2000). In a Delphi study of wraparound teams, panellists alluded to the strong connection between goals and outcomes, which is particularly important for ongoing evaluation of team performance (Fleming, 2001).

### **3.2.6. Rewarding Accomplishments**

After setting goals, many companies set aside pay resources to reward teams for reaching measurable goals. Managers need to act like the management of a professional sports team and not pay out unless the goals have been attained. This will preserve the integrity of the reward system (Robinson, 1994). Donahue (1996) agrees with Robinson that taking time to help – simple recognition – goes a long way toward motivating employees. A pat on the back is an effective motivator, as are employee-of-the-month contests, pizza parties, monthly selling contests and staff bonuses for reaching team goals. A common mistake in organisations is to expect people to work together as a team without setting common goals and establishing common rewards for the team as a whole (Bragg, 2000). Weiss (2002, p21) says that one should set milestone goals for the team and be sure to celebrate small successes. Celebration generates

involvement. Messmer (2003) agrees with Weiss that one of the most valuable ways to inspire your team to achieve new goals is to celebrate accomplishments.

There are many factors that would determine how cohesive the team is. The extent to which members of a team participate in team activities will be discussed in greater detail in the next section.

### **3.3. Extent of Participation**

#### **3.3.1. Equal Participation**

Participation takes place when management and employees are jointly involved in making decisions on matters of mutual interest, where the aim is to produce solutions to the problems which will benefit all concerned (Armstrong, 1992). Delbridge and Whitfield (2001) say that participation is a process which allows employees to exert some influence over their work and the conditions under which they work. Groups within organisations frequently make decisions ranging from the relatively unimportant to those that significantly affect the lives and well being of thousands. Even in the most autocratic organisations, however, it is common for individuals to make decisions only after consultation with a group or committee (Spector, 2000).

Teams make many structural and operational decisions that previously were made by line supervisors, including compensation and rewards, scheduling, maintenance, inventory control, data management, training and others. But the greatest challenge may lie in setting and enforcing new behavioural expectations, made necessary by the absence of a traditional supervisor and the presence of new employee rights and responsibilities (Yandrick, 2001). Weiss (2002) suggests that people should share in the making of decisions. They will begin to think of the company's goals as their goals. This will lead them to pool their abilities and skills to benefit everyone.

### **3.3.2. Consensus Decision Making**

According to Yeatts and Barnes (1996), one advantage of self-managed team is that all team members are involved in decision-making so that a variety of ideas can be applied to a problem and those team members most experienced with the problem can have the most input prior to a solution being selected. No single person dominates the decision-making process and all decisions are made by consensus or by majority vote. This results in team members feeling responsible for and committed to the decisions they have made. Sulon (1997), says the effectiveness of group decision making processes have become an increasingly important organisational concern as decisions made by teams with diverse expertise are of greater quality than those made by individuals with homogenous backgrounds.

Weiss (2002) agrees that more can be accomplished and there will be greater harmony. When people know they play an active role in the department, they can get more satisfaction from a job well done. Robbins (2000) agrees with Yeatts that to perform well as team members, individuals must be able to communicate openly and honestly, to confront differences and resolve conflicts, and to sublimate personal goals for the good of the team.

In a study undertaken by Aquino, Townsend and Scott (2001), on the effects of surface and deep level dissimilarity on individual work attitudes and cognition's in self-directed work teams, found that participation in the setting of group goals will decrease the importance of surface level dissimilarity. Participation also minimises the effect of age dissimilarity, but not ethnic dissimilarity. Weiss (2002) agrees that teamwork requires working toward defined goals. The goals need to be meaningful to the team members, not only to the company. Set milestone goals for the team and be sure to celebrate small successes. Celebration generates involvement.

Yeatts and Barnes(1996) did an evaluation of two self-managed teams (Section 8 Team and Sales Team) and these were the findings :-

Observations of team meetings and in-person interviews found that no one team member dominated decision-making and that in general the most knowledgeable team members had the

most input. Further, it was reported that team members were sensitive to one another when making decisions that disagreements among team members did not cause long term resentment, and that team members were generally able to come to a consensus even though some might be less than enthusiastic about the decision made. Section 8's decision making process appeared to be effective. New Zealand Management (2001) clearly agrees with Yeatts and Barnes findings, that in a cohesive team there is constructive disagreement, decisions are reached by consensus and that the group displays a unified front.

(Yeatts and Barnes, 1996) also found that all members of the Sales Team also had input into team decisions. Team members did not appear to be afraid of their opinions nor to disagree with others when a difference of opinion existed. The past supervisor, who was now a team member, did attempt to dominate decision-making but team members resisted this. This resistance had the positive effective of gaining everyone's input but sometimes had a large negative effect by de-emphasising input from the past supervisor, whom everyone agreed was the most knowledgeable person on the team. Further, disagreements between persons on the team and the past supervisor were often taken personally. Another problem occurred where certain team members typically voted as a block, effectively out voting others on the team, and at times making decisions that were completely unacceptable to one or a few persons on the team (Yeatts and Barnes, 1996). Groupthink is a phenomenon that can occur when groups make decisions that individual members know are poor ones (Spector, 2000). Yandrick (2001) agrees with Yeatts and Barnes that teams wont work when employees work independently much more than interdependently.

### **3.2.4.1. Participation and Job Satisfaction**

According to a study conducted by Elloy, Terpening and Kohls (2001) among self-managed work team members, they found that with high participation, worker support, and autonomy, job workload is perceived more as a challenge than a burden, and is invigorating rather than oppressing. Allowing team members to express their views fosters the principle of collective responsibility, in which every win or loss is a result of everyone's actions (Cebzynski 2001). Teams are more popular in the United States workplace, and employee involvement leads to better business performance. Moving decision-making power downward in organisations is at the

core of what employee involvement is all about. Teams are a potentially powerful way to move power downward (Lawler, 1999).

A number of recent studies, however, have suggested the assumed effects for workers of high involvement work organisations (i.e., quality circles and teams) may not be found (Delbridge and Whitfield, 2001). In a study amongst Japanese employees (Delbridge and Whitfield, 2001) found that there was limited formal involvement of operators in decision making of any kind and workers refused to engage in any improvement activities. Similarly, a study of a car assembly plant in Canada found that only two thirds of workers reported being actively involved in making decisions at work and that it was limited to small scale adjustments to one's immediate work area or to perform a job in one's own way (Delbridge and Whitfield, 2001). Spector (2000) however, disagrees with Delbridge, because he believes that quality circles have benefits for both employees and organisations. They allow individual employees to enjoy greater participation, which many find stimulating and enjoyable.

According to Elloy, Terpening and Kohls (2001) researchers have suggested that self-managed work teams can improve employee job satisfaction and task involvement, productivity, role clarity and attendance. Hamilton, Nickerson and Owan (2003) in his analysis as to why workers join and participate in teams found that high ability workers may acquire a higher status, receive appreciation, additional decision making authority and this increases worker satisfaction. Employee satisfaction and job involvement are part of the core values that drive organisational development (Elloy, Terpening and Kohls, 2001).

### **3.2.4.2. Problem Solving and Sharing Ideas**

When the group encounters a problem, encourage participants to work together to develop a solution. Staff will gain more from the process if they share ideas and make their own recommendations (Messmer, 2003). Spector (2000) believes that for the organisation, it should mean better production procedures because people who do the work are often the most knowledgeable about what the problems are and how they can be solved. Sulon (1997) found that problem solving tended to enhance effectiveness. That is, improved problem solving

capabilities tend to have a positive effect on the mutual relationships of team members and the effectiveness of joint outcomes. Weiss (2002) believes that one should develop accountability by involving every member in team discussions and wrap up each meeting with a recap including the making of individual assignments for the next meeting.

Most team development activities seek to help group members learn new ways of relating to one another in the organisational context which are likely to be helpful in increasing group effectiveness. That is, it is not sufficient merely to remove barriers and identify problems – in addition, many individuals need to learn how to be efficient group members. This often involves, for example, learning how to express disagreement without getting into a win-lose argument with the other person; or how to express negative feelings without seeming to condemn; or how to provide leadership without controlling others; or how to tolerate and learn from tensions which exist in the group – rather than immediately seeking for ways to eliminate the tensions as quickly as possible (Porter, Lawler and Hackman, 1975).

Information pooling by the members of a team is regarded as one of the key elements of effective problem solving (Gruenfeld, 1996). According to Weiss (2002) new teams often jump into solving problems before they clearly understand the problems. Help them by giving them information on how the business operates, train them on work processes so they can appreciate the magnitude of problems. Furthermore, the more familiar members are with others, the more effective the pooling of information and the integration of alternative perspectives becomes. Familiarity with members refers to the amount of knowledge that each member has about the others' skills, knowledge, capabilities, and weaknesses (Gruenfeld, 1996).

Team members have a lot to offer the organisation, if given the opportunity, combined with the resources, to improve productivity, stability and profitability. This also requires the encouraging of the free flow of ideas and the fostering of a spirit of innovation (Simoncelli, 1994).

The ability to communicate effectively with other team members is very important and this will be discussed next.

## **3.4. Communication**

### **3.4.1. Importance of Team Communication**

According to Kolb, Osland and Rubin (1995) communication is the process by which information is exchanged between sender and receiver with the goal of achieving mutual understanding. Communication should involve a process whereby people learn to think together, not just in the sense of analysing a common problem or developing new aspects of shared knowledge, but in the sense of occupying a collective sensibility (Fenton, 1995). In a team environment, more than two people are involved in the communication process (Weiss, 2002). Lievens (2000) has identified communication as one of the underlying organisational dimensions influencing new service success.

Phillips, Stone and Phillips (2001) say that communicating results is a critical issue in human resource programs. Constant communication ensures that information is flowing so adjustments can be made and so that all stakeholders are aware of the success and issues surrounding them. Kanter (2001) says involve your supporters. Nurture your team. Communicate and over communicate. Expect obstacles on the road to success, and celebrate each milestone. Weiss (2002) agrees that the communication and decision making processes used by teams are quite different than those used by individuals. Team success requires working with first-rate individual skills and modifying them to fit the needs of the team.

According to Phillips, Stone and Phillips (2001), there are five key reasons for being concerned about communication in an HR program :

- Measurement and evaluation mean nothing without communication.
- Communication is necessary to make improvements.
- Communication is necessary to explain contributions.
- Communication is a sensitive issue.
- A variety of target audiences need different information.

No group can exist without communication: the transference of meaning among its members. It is only through transmitting meaning from one person to another that information and ideas can be conveyed. Communication, however is more than merely imparting meaning. It must also be understood. Therefore, communication must include both the transference and the understanding of meaning (Robbins, 2000).

### **3.4.2.1. Effective Team Communication**

Young and Post (1993) believe that the following pointers would lead to more effective team communication :

- Leaders and team members must match their actions with their words.
- All members must be committed to a two-way communication process.
- The emphasis by team members must be on face-to-face communication.
- All parties must share the responsibility for effective communication.

Teams however offer unique differences from individuals when referring to the effectiveness of communication and Robbins (1991) describes these differences as follows :

- Teams offer more complete information by bringing together the resources of individuals.
- Teams offer the consideration of more diverse views, approaches and alternatives to problems though their heterogeneity.
- Teams offer increased acceptance and support for solutions.
- Teams also offer legitimacy of the decision-making process as a society tends to value the democratic methods that are applied.
- Team actions may also be biased if members are under pressure to conform, or if a few individuals dominate the team.

In teams members share responsibility for performance and, because of this, responsibility for the final outcome can become confused. Studies of work teams have revealed that teams are inhibited when team members have poor levels of communication (McCowen, 1989). Relationships break down due to factors associated with the balance of control or through the misinterpretation of communicative information (Fogel, 1995). Kanter (2001) agrees with both McCowen and Fogel that teams stumble when they become so internally focused on their task that they neglect communication. His solution is to assume nothing and to communicate everything. Weiss (2002) however feels that a unique concept derives from team communication in that team members are able to monitor messages. When inaccuracies or false conceptions occur, monitoring and the subsequent feedback can help to reveal errors before they cause problems.

According to Fenton (1995) developing communication towards improved performance entails the following :

- Talking about competence with team members in an open and honest way.
- Reducing anxiety in communications.
- Facing up to questions which surface underlying assumptions about performance.
- Teams should explore questions that provoke debate.
- Promoting mutual exploration through discussion until there is consensus on method, standard, or knowledge that is required.

Sulon (1997, p46) states that effective communication in teams requires the following :

- Communication should be open and honest, yet in a way that reduces anxiety.
- Communication should be encouraged through the exploration of concerns and alternative actions.
- All members must match their actions with their words.
- All members must accept responsibility for the communication processes.

### **3.4.3. Communication Structures**

Korman (1971) believes that one area of great concern to psychologists interested in the performance of groups has been the implication for performance differential of different kinds of communication structures. Many of the conclusions that have been drawn from group communication structure research are highly similar to those that have been reached by Costello and Zalkind which indicates that highly centralised communications networks tend to :

- Facilitate efficient performance of routine problem solving.
- Strengthen the leadership position of the member most central in the network.
- Result in a quickly stabilised set of interactions among members.

Communication networks define the channels by which information flows. These channels are one of two varieties – either formal or informal. Formal networks are typically vertical, follow the authority chain, and are limited to task-related communications. In contrast, the informal network – usually better known as the grapevine – is free to move in any direction, skip authority levels, and is likely to satisfy group members social needs as it is to facilitate task accomplishment (Robbins, 2000).

### **3.4.4. Open Communication and Mutual Acceptance**

Robbins (1991) lists the most critical communication skills as :

- Active listening – that is making sense of what is heard; and
- Feedback – returning information back on performance.

New Zealand Management (2001) agrees that team members listen to each other. Every idea is given an airing. There is lots of discussion in which everyone participates. Clear communication and knowing how to get answers to questions are essential to helping teams work effectively (Staff Leader, 2002). When a person sends a message, he or she likely receives much unsolicited feedback from more than one person. This feedback is critical to the success of team communication; it enhances the communication process by

providing information that would otherwise develop and expand from several one-on-one conversations (Weiss, 2002).

According to Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly (1994), after a group reaches the point of mutual acceptance, its members begin to communicate openly with one another. This communication results in increased confidence and even more interaction within the group. Discussions begin to focus more specifically on problem-solving tasks and on developing alternative strategies to accomplish the tasks. Messmer (2003) agrees that providing opportunities for employees to get to know each other can greatly improve collaboration within a group. It's also valuable to allow some friendly conversation before meetings. This internal dialogue helps the team develop a stronger rapport.

Kolb (1995) believes that interpersonal communication is important in several ways. Thoughts, facts, and opinions that go unheard or are misunderstood may seriously reduce the logical soundness of a decision. Effective interpersonal communication is also very important in ensuring the acceptance of certain decisions in another way. Weiss (2002) however feels that the best way to come to a team decision is to use consensus decision making. When an individual selects criteria for a decision, they are based solely on facts he or she knows. But when a team makes a decision, it is built upon facts every team member supplies.

When teams use these facts to make a decision by consensus, they succeed in two ways :

- The decision is the best possible because each team member considered all the facts before reaching a conclusion.
- This decision has the most team support because each member contributed to it (Weiss, 2002).

How organisations learn – how they come to read changes in the marketplace, share knowledge within the workforce, transform the ways work is done, even reinvent the business has become a subject of growing interest to companies trying to sustain or grow competitive advantage. What is not so well understood is how communication within the

organisation contributes to learning, and supports the efforts of a learning organisation (Mai, 1998).

### **3.4.5. Role of team leaders**

Fisher (1993) says that one of the most important skills for team leaders to strengthen is increased communication effectiveness. If team leaders build this skill early, it serves them well throughout their careers in self-directed work team settings. Effective team leaders close the gap between their intentions to communicate and the perceptions of team members about the effectiveness of business communication. This requires patience and tenacity. One particularly important communication forum is the team meeting.

Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly (1994) assert that in the global environment managers will need to be able to communicate with diverse groups of people. The communication task would be easier if managers possessed multilingual skills and high levels of cross-cultural awareness and sensitivity. Robbins (2000) believes that cross-cultural factors clearly create the potential for increased communication problems. Nemiro (2002) disagrees with Robbins because he believes that virtual teams can eradicate cross-cultural problems and ensure more effective communication.

### **3.4.6. Team Communication in the New Millennium**

Virtual teams are groups of geographically dispersed organisational members who communicate and carry out their activities through technology (Nemiro, 2002). A major focus of Nemiro's study was to investigate how virtual team members communicate with one another during each of the possible stages in their creative process. Interview data revealed that the degree of face-to-face communication used within the teams varied from none to a few times a week. Results of no face-to-face communication methods teams used to communicate are as follows : videoconferencing, teleconferencing, telephone,

voice mail, remote screen sharing, computer conferencing, shared database, BBS/Listservs, e-mail, fax, mail (express/regular) (Nemiro, 2002).

Creativity and idea generation are important to any team that has to be effective. This will be discussed next in more detail.

## **3.5. Idea Generation / Creativity**

### **3.5.1. Teamwork and Idea Generation**

Robbins (2000) defines creativity as the ability to produce novel and useful ideas. These are ideas that are different from what's been done before but that are also appropriate to the problem or opportunity presented. Because groups are better suited than individuals to making non-programmed decisions, an atmosphere fostering creativity should be developed (Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly, 1994). According to Miner (1992) a major issue in the use of groups for decision making relates to the matter of creativity.

Teams bring together experts with a variety of knowledge and backgrounds to generate ideas for new products and services (Hellriegel, et al, 2001). Group creativity can thus be defined as divergent thinking in groups as reflected in ideational fluency. Group innovation is the actual implementation of a creative idea or product by the group (Paulus, 2000). Organisational theorists consider creativity the cornerstone of competitive advantage, defining it as the production of novel and useful products that enhance a firm's ability to respond to environmental opportunities (Johar, Holbrook and Stern, 2001).

### **3.5.2. Ways of Stimulating Team Creativity**

Robbins (2000) suggests that the following three-component model be used to stimulate creativity :

- Expertise is the foundation for all creative work. The potential for creativity is enhanced when individuals have abilities, knowledge, proficiencies, and similar expertise in their fields of endeavour.
- The second component is creative-thinking skills. This encompasses personality characteristics associated with creativity, the ability to use analogies, as well as the talent to see the familiar in a different light.
- The final component is intrinsic task motivation. This is the desire to work on something because it's interesting, involving, exciting, satisfying, or personally challenging.

Research conducted by Paulus (2000) reveals that the use of challenging goals, structured group interaction, autonomy, and a supportive environment are some factors that seem to facilitate creativity and innovation in groups. Motivational techniques such as goal setting and increasing accountability improve performance for both interactive and nominal groups but do not change the relative degree of production loss experienced by groups. According to Sethi, Smith and Park (2002) the strength of interpersonal ties among team members also influences innovation and teams encouraged by management to be venturesome came up with the most innovative products. A group's potential level of performance depends to a large extent, on the resources that its members individually bring to the group. The two resources that have received the greatest amount of attention are : knowledge, skills, and abilities; and personality characteristics, according to Robbins (2000).

- Knowledge, skills and abilities : part of a group's performance can be predicted by assessing the knowledge, skills and abilities of its individual members (Robbins, 2000). Straw (1995) agrees with Robbins that a group is most likely to bring sufficient talent and expertise to bear on its task when : the group has an appropriate number of

members with a good mix of skills; the education system of the organisation offers training or consultation as needed to supplement members' existing knowledge and group interaction avoids inappropriate weighing of members' contributions and instead fosters sharing of expertise and collective learning. According to Robbins (1997) to perform effectively, a team requires three types of skills : technical expertise, problem solving and decision-making skills and listening, feedback, conflict-resolution, and other interpersonal skills:-

- Personality characteristics : attributes that tend to have a positive connotation in our culture tend to be positively related to group productivity, morale and cohesiveness. Personality traits affect group performance by strongly influencing how the individual will interact with other group members. Robbins (1997) says that creator innovators are imaginative and good at initiating ideas or concepts. They are typically very independent and prefer to work at their own pace in their own way. According to Johar (2001) prior research has examined personal characteristics such as general creative ability, domain-relevant skills and intrinsic motivation , as well as organisational factors, such as job complexity and supervision style that facilitate creative performance.

The expression of strong emotions and opinions by group members tends to have a counterproductive effect on the generation of ideas according to Miner (1992). Therefore, decisions requiring creativity – such as those involving product development, a new advertising campaign, or top level strategy formulation should be made in an atmosphere that is free of group constraints. (Paulus, 2000) however disagrees with Miner because he feels that one of the benefits of teamwork is enhanced creativity. Paulus (2000) believes that when ideas or information are exchanged, it is important to emphasise the need to attend carefully to the ideas presented by others. In most cases groups can do the job of idea evaluation better than individuals (Miner 1992).

### **3.5.3. Brainstorming, Delphi process and Nominal Group Technique**

Both Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly (1994) and Miner (1992) agree that when properly utilised, three techniques – brainstorming, the Delphi process and the nominal group technique have been extremely useful in increasing the group's creative capability in generating ideas, understanding problems, and reaching better decisions :

- **Brainstorming** : a technique that promotes creativity by encouraging idea generation through non-critical discussion (Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly 1994). According to Miner (1992) this kind of approach tends to produce more creative output than the usual give-and- take of group discussion.
- **Delphi Process** : a technique that promotes creativity by using anonymous judgement of ideas to reach a consensus decision (Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly, 1994). According to Thompson and Brajkovich (2003) this technique is a good alternative for teams who are physically separated but nevertheless need to make decisions. However one problem associated with this technique is that it can be quite time-consuming. Miner (1992) feels that Delphi serves to generate many useful ideas, although the lack of social contact inherent in the approach tends to undermine both commitment to the decision making processes and group cohesiveness in implementing the decision.
- **Nominal Group technique** : a technique that promotes creativity by bringing people together in a very structured meeting that allows little verbal communication. Group decision is the mathematically pooled outcome of individual votes (Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly, 1994). According to Thompson and Brajkovich (2003), this variation creates greater acceptance of others' ideas because ideas are semi-anonymous and prevents individual members from championing only their own ideas. In terms of idea generation, the nominal group approaches often facilitate the process whereby a decision is actually implemented (Miner, 1992).

### **3.5.3.1. Brainstorming**

Spector (2000) agrees with Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly and Miner that groups are said to be superior to individuals in generating ideas or solutions to problems. The theory is that group members inspire one another to generate ideas that they would not have thought of alone. Brainstorming is a group technique that is supposed to result in improved performance with this type of task. A group is given instructions to generate ideas without being critical or judgmental in any way. Ideas will be evaluated and modified later. Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly (1994) agree that brainstorming often enhances the creative output of the group.

In a study of creativity in virtual teams Nemiro (2002) found that face-to-face brainstorming groups have been shown to be highly creative, generating a wealth of ideas, synergy and enthusiasm. According to (Paulus, 2000) the majority of people believe they would generate more ideas in groups than if they were alone. This factor may be partly responsible for the continuing popularity of brainstorming techniques. Thompson and Brajkovich (2003) however disagree with the above viewpoints, because they believe that group brainstorming leads to the generation of fewer ideas compared to solitary brainstormers. The following four major problems stifle the effectiveness of brainstorming in teams, according to Thompson and Brajkovich (2003) : social loafing, conformity, production blocking and downward norm setting.

Electronic brainstorming has been shown to enhance performance in an idea-generation task with the use of computers. This technique was found to produce equal or better performance than that of nominal groups (the combined output of individuals who worked alone) and better performance than groups of individuals who shared their ideas (Spector, 2000). Paulus (2000) agrees that computer-based or electronic brainstorming can perform as well or better than nominal groups. With electronic technology, group members can share ideas simultaneously, be anonymous to other group members and be accountable for their individual performance on their station. Insuring individual accountability can enhance performance in groups. Thompson and Brajkovich (2003)

agree that because members don't have to compete for floor time, production blocking is virtually eliminated and because ideas are anonymously posted, conformity is virtually eliminated.

### **3.5.4. Virtual Teams and Idea Generation**

According to Nemiro (2002) global competition has not only created a dire need for organisational creative and innovative efforts. It has forced companies to get products out faster. Marketing (2003) however emphasises that it is important that the team's thinking and creativity not be constrained by existing parameters, including being part of a big organisation. Teamwork in the virtual corporation is essential to tap into the best talent to create the highest quality and fastest response to customer needs. The nature of the work for all these teams involved the generation of novel products – organisation wide interventions designed to serve clients' unique needs; developed each year with a unique focus; innovative activities designed for use in an educational virtual community (Nemiro, 2002).

In a study of the creative process in virtual teams Nemiro, (2002) found that that two distinguishing factors of the creative process in virtual teams emerged, and they are :

- Archival capability, the ability to record and track the creative process.
- The widening of the creative pool through electronic links to peripheral team members and individuals outside the team.

Nemiro (2002) however compared the results of teams using face-to-face encounters in the idea generation stage and those using electronic forms of communication and he found the conclusion intriguing. Although several of the teams were able to effectively generate ideas electronically, members of other teams strongly felt idea generation could not be effectively accomplished without face-to-face interaction. However, these virtual teams did generate ideas whether they communicated face-to-face or electronically. Each individual virtual team in the investigation appeared to have found their own optimal way to generate ideas (Nemiro, 2002).

The virtual teams in Nemiro's study however felt that although they infrequently generated ideas face-to-face, admitted that idea generations in person were more fun and enjoyable. Perhaps, there is no one optimal way to generate ideas in a virtual team. Rather, the most effective way may be tailored to each team and may depend on a variety of factors (Nemiro, 2002).

### **3.5.5. Diversity**

Those who champion teamwork typically emphasise the importance of diversity both at the individual and group level. Although the team members share similar goals, there is often a need for diverse expertise and knowledge. Groups that contain people with diverse but overlapping knowledge domains and skills are most creative (Paulus, 2000). Thompson and Brajkovich (2003) agree that the more heterogeneous a team is, the more likely that the team will excel in all measures of creativity.

Teams in which members are diverse with regard to background and perspective outperform teams with homogeneous members on tasks requiring creative problem solving and innovation (Thompson and Brajkovich, 2003). Although there are benefits to such diversity there are limitations as well. Individual creativity may be inhibited as one becomes more knowledgeable in one particular area to the exclusion of others. Team members with different types of knowledge and expertise often speak a different language, which may make full or useful exchange of knowledge difficult (Paulus, 2000).

In the next section conflict management in teams will be discussed, with emphasis as to how team members identify and effectively resolve team conflict.

## **3.6. Conflict Management**

### **3.6.1. Functional Versus Dysfunctional Conflict**

Robbins (2000) defines conflict as a process that begins when one party perceives that another party has negatively affected, or is about to negatively affect, something that the first party cares about. Team conflict, from a global perspective, is the tension between team members due to real or perceived differences (Dixon, 2002). Capozzoli (1999) views conflict as, a situation of competition in which the parties are aware of the incompatibility of potential future positions and in which each party wishes to occupy a position which is incompatible with the wishes of the other.

Early conflict causes a group to explore more options and develop better solutions. When a group suppresses this conflict, it takes longer to become cohesive, and the group risks that it may never gel. Without disagreement it's difficult to get commitment and cohesion. Conflict is a sign of a healthy group if it occurs at the right time. It indicates that the group is processing through important and emotionally charged issues instead of avoiding them (Reinertsen, 2000,). Alper, Tjosvold and Law (2000) state that although developing conflict management capabilities would then appear to be useful for all organisational teams, they may be particularly critical for employees in empowered and self-managing work teams.

According to Robbins (2000) conflict can be functional when it supports the goals of the group and improves its performance and dysfunctional when that conflict hinders group performance. Conflict management is an appropriate goal because maintaining conflict at a manageable level is a desirable way to encourage a work team's growth and development (Hellriegel et al., 2001). Robbins (2000, p385) suggests that group leaders must maintain an ongoing minimum level of conflict – enough to keep the group viable, self-critical, and creative. With low levels of conflict efficacy, teams become demoralised because they doubt that they will combine their ideas and pool their resources to solve problems. They are then unable to perform effectively (Alper, Tjosvold and Law, 2000).

Alper, Tjosvold and Law (2000) found that empowered organisational teams can be effective but they have a great many issues and conflicts to manage. The results of this study indicate that how team members manage their conflicts can affect not only their sense of efficacy in dealing with conflicts but their overall team performance. Teams that relied on competitive conflict were found to exhibit low levels of efficacy and reduced group performance. However, productive conflict resolution involves learning how to disagree over issues and situations and coming up with a solution that can benefit the entire team. To engage in productive resolution, people have to learn and practice the skills of resolving conflict (Capozzoli, 1999).

### **3.6.2. Identifying and Resolving Team Conflict**

Unresolved conflict cost organisations millions of pounds every year. Brooks (2001) therefore suggests that the following eighth key steps will help identify and bring resolution to conflict :

- Assess the symptoms : assess whether conflict is being approached positively or is becoming unhealthy.
- Choose expert facilitators : these should work with the group to resolve the conflict. They should be people from outside the teams involved, no bias or vested interests other than to achieve a positive outcome.
- Involve people at the top : the facilitators will be unable to influence fundamental issues that only top managers have the power to change.
- Set the scene for impartiality : meet the team members and set the context for the work to come. This involves making it clear that the facilitator's role exists first to address the breakdowns in relationship that are preventing progress, and second to help create working methods that promote co-operation.
- Explore individual issues : arrange for facilitators to meet each individual in a private setting, to discuss how the situation affects them personally. This will help build trust between team members and facilitators, which is vital when dealing with emotional issues.

- Clear the air : bring the whole group together to clear the air and explore the conflict from different perspectives. Each situation is unique and people's reactions are unpredictable. It is important to generate shared understanding, not to focus on who is right or wrong.
- Declare an amnesty : this involves gaining an emotional commitment to ditching the "old baggage" and working together to move forward. It also involves a practical commitment to creating : a common vision and goal, agreement on how differences will be dealt with in the future and new working practices.
- Approach the problems : deal with the outstanding practical problems that started or worsened during the period when relationships were deteriorating. Some people will want more support than others, but it is important not to create dependency. But don't leave too many loose ends for the team to tie up.

Conflict response is the individual behaviour in which an individual engages as a reaction to conflict. To effectively resolve conflict, focal individuals must respond to a conflict in such a manner that an altered understanding of the situation occurs, making their perception of team outcomes consistent with their goals and values and the goals and values of the team (Dixon, 2002). According to Alper, Tjosvold and Law (2000) mutually beneficial conflict management processes strengthen the efficacy among group members so that they can handle their conflicts effectively.

Porter, Lawler and Hackman (1975) say that the three major approaches to conflict resolution that can be used are : process consultation, laboratory exercises and structural change.

The Harvard Management Communications Letter (2000) offers a more radical alternative to effectively managing conflict in teams :

- Avoid ‘tit for tat’ reactions : one of the most common mistakes managers make is to respond in kind to disruptive behaviour in teams.
- Look for the underlying message : if one member of your team misbehaves, explore the possibility that she is signalling deeper problems within the team.
- Use the team to heal the team : use the teams need to achieve its common goals as a way of pointing it toward a solution.
- Lose the battle; win the war : it may be wise to accept some short term pain in order to build long-term strength and trust. For example, how to satisfy the show-off; how to calm the eager beaver; how to silence the heckler; how to sound out the sotto voce; how to move the mule and how to realign the right but irrelevant ringer.

### **3.6.3. Conflict Resolution Techniques**

Robbins (2000) suggests that the following conflict resolution techniques can be used to effectively manage conflict in teams:

- Problem solving : face-to-face meeting of the conflicting parties for the purpose of identifying the problem and resolving it through open discussion.
- Super ordinate goals : creating a shared goal that cannot be attained without the co-operation of each of the conflicting parties.
- Expansion of resources : when conflict is caused by the scarcity of a resource – say money, promotion opportunities, office space – expansion of the resource can create a win-win solution.
- Avoidance : withdrawal from, or suppression of the conflict.
- Smoothing : playing down differences while emphasising common interests between the conflicting parties.
- Compromise : each party to the conflict gives up something of value.
- Authoritative command : management uses its formal authority to resolve the conflict and then communicates its desires to the parties involved.

- Altering the human variable : using behavioural change techniques such as human relations training to alter attitudes and behaviours that cause conflict.
- Altering the structural variables : changing the formal organisation structure and the interaction patterns of conflicting parties through job redesign, creation of co-ordinating positions and the like (Robbins).

Research in the Conflict Management Conference Paper Abstracts (2002) indicates that the conflict resolution procedures developed in leaderless groups are an essential input variable for predicting group performance. In the absence of a formal leader to resolve conflicts and determine specific conflict resolution procedures, the resolution strategies that evolve in a group determine how proactive or reactive the group process will be as conflict emerges. According to Capozzoli (1999) appropriate skills in dealing with conflict can help teams and anyone else in the organisation to deal with effective disagreements which will ultimately lead to an overall more productive organisation as a whole.

The following presents techniques for resolving inter-group conflict that has reached levels dysfunctional to the organisation, according to Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly (1994) :

- Problem solving : the confrontation method of problem solving seeks to reduce tensions through face-to-face meetings of the conflicting groups. The purpose of the meeting is to identify conflicts and resolve them.
- Super ordinate goals : in the resolution of conflicts between groups, the superordinate goals technique involves developing a common set of goals and objectives that can't be attained without the co-operation of the groups involved.
- Expansion of resources : expanding resources is potentially a successful technique for solving conflicts in many cases, since this technique may enable almost everyone to be satisfied.
- Avoidance : frequently managers can find some way to avoid conflict. Eventually the conflict has to be faced. But, in some circumstances, avoidance may be the best temporary alternative.

- Smoothing : smoothing emphasises the common interests of the conflicting parties and de-emphasises their differences. Stressing shared viewpoints on certain issues facilitates movement toward a common goal.
- Compromise : with compromise, there's no distinct winner or loser, and the decision reached is probably not ideal for either group.
- Authoritative command : using this method, management simply resolves the conflict as it sees fit and communicates its desires to the groups involved.
- Altering the human variable : this involves trying to change group members' behaviour.
- Altering the structural variables : this involves changing the formal structure of the organisation and the design of the jobs and departments.
- Identifying a common enemy : groups in conflict may temporarily resolve Their differences and unite them to combat a common enemy. The common Enemy may be a competitor that has introduced a superior product.
- Group negotiations : group negotiations take place whenever one group's work depends on the co-operation and actions of another group over which the first group's manager has no control, for example negotiations between marketing and production functions (Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly, 1994).

What is important about these styles is being able to differentiate between the circumstances in which particular styles are the most suitable for achieving the most desired outcome. That is being able to apply the appropriate conflict style as applicable. Conflict resolution with win/win outcomes is possible (Sulon, 1997). Managers hate it, but its inevitable in today's time-stressed, under-peopled companies : interpersonal conflicts happen, and they must be dealt with (Harvard Management Communication Letter, 2000).

Kraybill (1990) suggests that the following steps be followed to ensure effective conflict management :

- Ensure that all relevant parties influenced by the problem are part of the conflict resolution process.
- Identify with and understand the basic needs of others.
- Avoid setting demands or positions as a starting point, rather put effort into grasping the dimensions of the problem requiring resolution.
- Clearly define the present situation and reach agreement with other parties on this.
- Thoughtfully and rationally examine the perceptions and concerns that each side brings with them through joint activities.
- Regularly clarify understanding.
- Commit each party to striving towards the attainment of mutually acceptable agreement.
- Work jointly in attaining alternatives and solutions to the problem.
- Agree on the final decision or actions to be taken on resolving the conflict.

The conflict response process in the team environment plays a critical role in ensuring that the team achieves the team's objectives, has positive intra-team interactions, and builds long-term customer relationships (Dixon, 2002). According to the Conflict Management Conference Paper Abstracts (2002), conflict resolution procedures are important substitutes for leadership that predict the effectiveness of group process and outcomes. The studies we have looked at thus far suggest how and by what approach managing conflict can contribute to effective organisational teams.

Good interpersonal relations is very important to teams. Some of the more important and common aspects of what relations are essential to good teamwork will be discussed in the next section.

## **3.7. Interpersonal Relations**

### **3.7.1. Problem Solving**

It's not enough to be productive. Teamwork demands consideration for the feelings, styles, and sensibilities of others. That's the greatest challenge, the emotional component. You can't humiliate, insult, or castigate team members (Kennedy, 2001). Francis and Young (1979) believe that a conscious effort should be made to develop intergroup relations and work through overall objectives and routine contact. The characteristics that affect interpersonal relations in teams are detailed below.

Groups within organisations frequently make decisions ranging from the relatively unimportant to those that significantly affect the lives and well-being of thousands. Evaluating the quality of a decision is not always an easy or straightforward undertaking (Spector, 2000). According to Sulon (1997, p46), problem solving tended to enhance effectiveness. A problem solving work team usually consists of five to twenty employees from different areas of a department who consider how something can be done better. Such a team may meet one or two hours a week on a continuous basis to discuss ways to improve quality, safety, productivity or morale.

Task forces are perhaps the most common type of problem solving work team (Hellriegel, et al., 2001). Team members are responsible for generating ideas; they aren't necessarily charged with implementing the suggested actions (Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly, 1994). Improved problem solving capabilities tend to have a positive effect on the mutual relationships of team members and the effectiveness of joint outcomes (Sulon, 1997). When members of a group interact in ways that help them learn from one another, they can increase the total pool of talent available for task work (Straw, 1995).

### **3.7.2. Diversity**

Diversity plays an important role in interpersonal relations. Straw (1995), says the aspiration in composing a group is to strike just the right balance between homogeneity and heterogeneity : members should have a variety of talents perspective, yet be similar enough that they can understand and co-ordinate with one another. According to Gruenfeld (1996) the effectiveness of group decision processes have become an increasingly important organisational concern as decisions made by teams with diverse expertise are of greater quality than those made by individuals with homogeneous backgrounds. The advantages of culturally diverse groups include the generation of more and better ideas while limiting the risk of groupthink (Nelson and Quick, 2003).

### **3.7.3. Trust**

Trust is a positive expectation that another will not – through words, actions or decisions act opportunistically. The two most important elements implied in our definition are familiarity and risk (Robbins, 2000). Trust has a direct effect on an organisation's ability to cope with change and crisis. Employee job satisfaction, productivity and team building are affected by trust (Communication World, 2003). According to Drexler and Forrester (1998) some individuals are more disposed than others, and some individuals conduct themselves in ways that elicit trust more than do others.

Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly (1994) state that, managers who can develop a climate a climate of trust find that following up on each communication is less critical. Because they've fostered high source credibility among subordinates, no loss in understanding results from a failure to follow up on each communication. Some organisations initiate formal programs designed to encourage mutual trust. Robbins (1997) believes that in terms of trust among team members, it has been found that the relative importance of these five dimensions is fairly constant : integrity, competence, loyalty, consistency and openness.

Robbins (1997) suggests the following ways to build team trust :

- Demonstrate that you're working for other's interests as well as your own.
- Be a team player : support your work team through both words and actions.
- Practice openness : openness leads to confidence and trust.
- Be fair : before making decisions, consider how others will perceive them in terms of objectivity and fairness.
- Speak your feelings : if you share your feelings, others will see you as real and human.
- Show consistency in the basic values that guide your decision making :
- Maintain confidences : you trust those you can confide in and rely on.
- Demonstrate competence : pay particular attention to developing and displaying your communication, team building and other interpersonal skills.

### **3.7.4. Mutual acceptance**

Mutual acceptance is the first stage in a group's development, according to Nelson and Quick, (2003). In this stage, the focus is on interpersonal relations among the members. Members assess one another with regard to trustworthiness, emotional comfort, and evaluative acceptance. In teams, trust is one of the early issues to be worked through. Robbins (1997) agrees that high-performance teams are characterised by high mutual trust among members. That is, members believe in the integrity, character, and ability of each other. The best way to achieve this is to create teams that work together with the belief that, by doing the best for the team, one is also doing the best for oneself.

Teams are the way to build strong and effective organisations for the next century. The synergy chain process will help organisations to build top-flight teams (Nelson and Quick, 2003). Hellriegel...et al, (2001) call this the performing stage, members have usually come to trust and accept each other. Cultivating a culture of trust can help organisations cultivate trust among team members. The power, influence, and authority issues may also emerge at this point if strong personalities attempt to dominate other

group members or dictate the groups agenda. Once team members establish a comfortable level of mutual trust and acceptance, they can focus their attention on the work of the group (Nelson and Quick, 2003).

### **3.7.5. Commitment**

Some group's show great 'spirit' : everyone is committed to the team, proud of it and willing to work hard to make it one of the best. When individuals value their membership in the group and find it rewarding to work collaboratively with their team-mates, they may work considerably harder than they would otherwise (Straw, 1995). Hellriegel (et al, 2001, p 340) calls this the norming stage, team members become increasingly positive about the team as a whole, the other members as individuals, and what the team is doing. Thus the team members may begin to develop a sense of belonging and commitment.

According to Straw (1995, p406) commitment to a team sometimes can result in high effort even when objective performance conditions are highly unfavourable. Committed team members value the contributions of the other members and express their good feelings openly (Francis and Young, 1979). According to Robbins (1997) effective teams have a common purpose that provides direction, momentum and commitment for members.

### **3.7.6. Co-operation**

A recent model by Jones and George indicates that when involved in quality relationships with team peers, individuals are more inclined to expand their role boundaries, enhance their level of behavioural involvement, and subjugate their needs for those of the group. Thus, these members may be more apt to engage in behaviours entailing a certain amount of calculated risk deviation, if it were for the welfare of the team (Tierney, 1999). In this mode group members recognise the need for give-and-take, negotiation and passing of information (Mumford, 1994).

Task-related and role behaviours of members are increasingly resolved through co-operation, open communication, and the acceptance of mutual influence. Tierney (1999) agrees that another hallmark of co-operative team member relations is enhanced levels of mutual trust and interpersonal support. It is likely that the strong supportive nature of such teams will provide a safety net for employees allowing them to engage in change behaviours within their jobs ((Tierney, 1999).

### **3.7.7. Relationship conflict**

Relationship conflict focuses on conflict based on interpersonal relations. People thrive on interpersonal relations in every aspect of life – professional, personal, etc. How individuals communicate, solve problems, and deal with conflict usually dictated by their personalities, both innate and evolved. Understanding a person's own personality tendencies and those of fellow team members will help to work more effectively through conflicts. It will also allow individual's to emphasise each other's strengths in order to facilitate more synergy toward a common mission (Perkins, 2003). Conflict and disagreement exist amongst members of the team, however, this conflict is constructive being centred on ideas and methods of accomplishing the task. Conflict of personalities is avoided (Sulon, 1997).

Capozzoli (1999) believes that conflict can be considered constructive if :

- People change and grow personally from the conflict.
- The conflict results in a solution to a problem.
- It increases the involvement of everyone affected by the conflict.
- It builds cohesiveness among members of a team.

Conflict can be considered destructive if (Capozzoli, 1999) :

- No decision is reached and the problem still exists
- It diverts energy from more important activities or issues.
- It destroys the morale of teams or individual team members.

- It polarises or divided teams or groups of people.

Hellriegel (et al, 2001) calls this the storming stage when competitive or strained behaviours emerge. This may involve resistance and impatience with the lack of progress. A few dominant members may begin to force an agenda without regard for the needs of other team members. Team members may challenge the leader, or they may isolate themselves from team discussion. Capozzoli (1999) believes that only when people are allowed to draw out and value different points of view and discuss them in an open atmosphere will conflict become a successful ingredient.

It has to be at the right time, channelled correctly, and for a specific cause (Reinertsen, 2000). Alper, Tjosvold and Law (2000) say that conflict management is a central task for members of teams. Understanding how each relationship functions is crucial to creating a baseline for improving and strengthening those relationships (Perkins, 2003). According to the Harvard Management Communication Letter (2000), interpersonal conflicts happen, and they must be dealt with.

Teamwork does not occur simply by mandate. Nor does it occur overnight. It requires a supportive corporate culture, certain management and interpersonal skills and practice (Wetlaufer et al, 1994).

Working together as a team is not always easy. The team may encounter many obstacles and some of the obstacles that hamper effective teamwork will be looked at next.

## **3.8. Obstacles**

### **3.8.1. Employee Resistance to Teamwork**

Conflict and resistance on the part of employees assigned to teams have accompanied the recent increase in the use of work teams in organisations (Kirkman, 2000). Govindarajan and Gupta (2001) say that, domestic teams and global teams are plagued by many of the same problems – misalignment of individual team member goals, a dearth of the necessary knowledge and skills, lack of clarity regarding team objectives, cultivate trust among their members and have formidable communication barriers. However, recognising such barriers and enabling factors is but a first step. Executives need to determine which barriers are likely to prove most intractable in their own organisations, what tools are available to help, how effective these are and where best to direct scarce resources and precious time (Drew and Coulson-Thomas, 1996).

Kirkman (2000) in his research found that there were three areas of employee resistance to team work :

- Team member's perception of trust.
- Team member's cultural values.
- Team member's tolerance for change.

#### **3.8.1.1. Trust**

According to Govindarajan and Gupta (2001), trust is critical to the success of teams in that it encourages cooperation and minimises unproductive conflict. The absence of trust is likely to turn a team's diversity into a liability rather than an asset. Change management scholars include trust as an important facilitator of change and a necessary precursor to reducing employee resistance to change (Kirkman, 2000). Research shows that people trust one another more when they share similarities, communicate frequently and operate in a common cultural context that imposes tough sanctions for behaving in an untrustworthy manner (Govindarajan and Gupta, 2001).

### **3.8.1.2. Language and Culture**

Govindarajan and Gupta (2001) believe that communication barriers such as language and culture can sabotage teams. If language barriers are not adequately addressed, the likelihood of creating, an atmosphere conducive to candid sharing of different viewpoints – and hence conducive to achieving creative solutions is greatly diminished (Govindarajan and Gupta, 2001). Kirkman and Shapiro theorised that employees cultural values might influence the extent to which they resist the team aspect and/or the self-management aspect of self managed work teams (Kirkman, 2000). Teams that typically come from diverse cultures may bring different values, norms assumptions and patterns of behaviour to the group, according to Govindarajan and Gupta. Unless the differences in assumptions and beliefs inherent in that diversity are explicitly addressed, the cohesiveness of the group is likely to suffer and impede effectiveness (Govindarajan and Gupta, 2001).

### **3.8.2. Groupthink**

Spector (2000) says groupthink is a phenomenon that can occur when groups make decisions that individual members know are poor ones. Groupthink can be defined as, a deterioration of mental efficiency, reality testing, and moral judgement that results from in-group pressures, according to Luthans (2002). Closely tied to high levels of group cohesion, groupthink is a way in which people think when deeply involved in a cohesive in-group, when the member's desire for consensus overrides their motivation to evaluate alternatives realistically (Miner, 1992).

Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly (1994) lists the following as characteristics associated with groupthink : illusion of invulnerability, tendency to moralise, feeling of unanimity, pressure to conform and opposing ideas dismissed. All of the above authors agree that groupthink is an obstacle to group effectiveness and measures should be taken to prevent and resolve groupthink. Spector (2000) suggests that groupthink can be avoided in the following ways :

- Group leaders should serve as impartial moderators in group meetings rather than attempting to control the decision alternatives that are recommended.

- Group members at every stage of the decision-making process should critically evaluate decision alternatives and continually seek information that might support or refute the wisdom of a decision.

### **3.8.3. Social Loafing**

Another more recently recognised dysfunction associated with groups and teams is called social loafing (Luthans, 2002). According to Nelson and Quick (2003) social loafing occurs when one or more group members rely on the efforts of other group members and fail to contribute their own time, effort, thoughts, or other resources to a group. They can engage in ‘social loafing’ and coast on the group’s effort because their individual contributions can’t be identified (Robbins, 1997).

Robbins (2000) says that there will be a reduction in efficiency when individuals think that their contribution cannot be measured. A number of methods for countering social loafing exist such as having identifiable contributions to the group product and member self evaluation systems (Nelson and Quick 2003). Luthans (2002) suggests that that the team be kept smaller in size, specialise tasks so that individual member contributions are identifiable, measure individual performance, and select only motivated employees when building teams.

### **3.8.4. Unclear Mission**

Some experts in the field of team dynamics point to an unclear team mission as the single largest reason for a team's failure to perform at optimal levels. A team's mission may seem obvious, but it is vital that each member understands the team's purpose, vision, and goals in the same way (Thoman, 2000). Keenan (1994) states that a team has to start with a clearly articulated purpose. Longenecker and Neubert (2000) agree that in the absence of a common vision, decisions and behaviours can be short-sighted and self-serving. According to (Farren, 1999) clear focus allows a team to assess its strengths and weaknesses. Every member of the team needs to know the team's goals, his or her place in the team, as well as the team's operating principles.

### **3.8.5. Failure to Communicate as a Team**

Failure to communicate as a team is according to Thoman (2000), yet another obstacle. Most team communication occurs during meetings. Ineffective meetings can be a tremendous drain on team productivity because of the number of team members at the meeting multiplies any wasted time. Periodic status meetings that provide face-to-face communication are a must. Effective meetings provide read-ahead information including an agenda, data to be discussed, and the meeting objective (Thoman, 2000).

### **3.8.6. Gender Differences**

Unrecognised gender differences is another roadblock to team effectiveness, according to Thoman (2000). If left unchecked, these differences can lead to misunderstandings, reduced morale, and ultimately poor team performance. Some of the common sources for differences between men and women include differences in listening behaviour, interaction skills and linguistic styles. When listening, men and women often exhibit different behaviours that can, at times, be misunderstood by the other gender. Men and women also have different linguistic styles. These gender differences can add to confusion and misinterpretation (Thoman, 2000).

### **3.8.7. Lack of Recognition**

Insufficient team recognition is a road-block that keeps a high performing team from sustaining long-term performance (Drew and Coulson-Thomas, 1996). Studies of work teams have revealed that teams are inhibited when team members lack recognition for their skills and achievements (Sulon, 1997). Team leaders / managers must place emphasis on the importance of team accomplishments and should take every opportunity to celebrate team accomplishments. In addition, a reward system must be generated to provide rewards to teams (Drew and Coulson-Thomas, 1996). Although feedback related to teamwork can and should be included in the performance appraisal process for individuals, an equal or greater amount should also be directed toward teams. A written thank you, the presentation of a plaque or certificate, or a free dinner are simple, inexpensive, and meaningful ways to recognise and reward teams (Longenecker and Neubert, 2000).

### **3.8.8. Common Obstacles to Teamwork**

According to Drew and Coulson-Thomas (1996), widely recognised barriers to effective team work are :

- Lack of sufficient senior management support and commitment.
- Lack of clear vision, goals and objectives.
- Insufficient release time from other duties for team members.
- Failure to recognise and reward group efforts.
- Inadequate training and skills development.
- Unwillingness to allow teams necessary autonomy and decision-making powers.
- Lack of project management skills.
- Political meddling and power politics.
- Individuals unwilling to participate, lack of team spirit.

Mckee (1993) in a study of 4 500 teams in 500 companies found that the most common obstacles to collaborative teamwork were :

- Compensation and rewards that consider individual performance only, with no incentive to improve teamwork.
- Performance appraisals that don't recognise team efforts.
- Information systems that do not deliver strategic data to teams.
- Top management lacking faith in the staff's teamwork.
- Organisational setups that breed negative internal competition

The obstacles identified so far are the main reasons teams fail to reach and sustain a high performance level. Kirkman (2000) suggests in his research that employee resistance to either teams or self-management will likely result in lower overall individual and team effectiveness. Despite these obstacles, it is possible to create smart teams. By inspiring individuals to contribute their best efforts and reinforcing their personal value to the company, organisations create smart teams that help organisations achieve their missions (Farren, 1999).

### **3.9. Conclusion**

The development of a cohesive team involves a complex set of factors as shown in the literature above. The extent to which team cohesiveness impacts on team effectiveness will be measured against these sub-dimensions. This is a summary of the findings :

- Setting goals and understanding of them : The team must have a clearly defined and challenging purpose. Teamwork requires understanding the team's goals and working towards defined goals. The goals need to be meaningful to all team members.
- Extent of participation : All team members should have equal opportunity for participation in team decision making. Team members should share knowledge and information with each other on a regular basis.

- Communication : Communication must be regular, open and honest. Members of the team must listen to each other. All members must be free to express their personal feelings.
- Idea generation : Team creativity should be encouraged. Ideas should be shared, exchanged and developed. Every idea should be considered.
- Conflict management : Teams and their members should be able to recognise the different conflict handling methods and use them when appropriate. The team must be skilled at handling conflict and effectively resolving it. The group seeks resolution rather than domination of the dissenter.
- Interpersonal relations: Sound interpersonal relationships promoting honesty, respect, trust and mutual acceptance must exist amongst all team members. Members share beliefs/values and seek each other's support and recognition.
- Obstacles : Obstacles should first be identified and then measures should be taken to effectively deal with them.

It was found from analysing the literature according to the above sub-dimensions that the more cohesive a team is, the more effective that team tends to be. However, less cohesive teams were found to be less effective.

## CHAPTER 4

### **Research Methodology**

#### **4.1. Introduction**

Leedy (1980) defines research as an attempt to solve problems in a systematic way to push back the frontiers of human ignorance or to confirm the validity of the solutions to problems others have presumably resolved. According to Sekaran (2000), research is simply the process of finding solutions to a problem after a thorough study and analysis of the situational factors.

This chapter incorporates the main objectives of the study, sampling technique and description, and finally the statistical analysis of the questionnaire.

#### **4.2. Focus of the Study**

The purpose of the research should be clearly defined and sharply delineated in terms as unambiguous as possible (Cooper and Schindler, 2001). The primary objective of the study is to determine the impact of team cohesiveness on team effectiveness. The following sub-dimensions of team cohesiveness were used : setting goals and the understanding of them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation / creativity, conflict management, interpersonal relations and obstacles.

### **4.3. Objective of the Study**

This study focuses on the following objectives:

- To determine the influence of team cohesiveness (determined by setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations, obstacles) on team effectiveness.
- To evaluate the impact of the biographical variables (age, gender, marital status, home language, race, education, length of service and position occupied) on the employee's perceptions of the influence of team cohesiveness on team effectiveness.
- To evaluate the extent to which each sub-dimension of team cohesiveness (setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations, obstacles) influences team effectiveness.

### **4.4. Hypotheses**

Black and Champion define a hypothesis as, “a tentative statement about something, the validity of which is usually unknown” (Kumar, 1996 : 65).

In this study, the hypotheses were as follows:

#### **Hypothesis 1**

There exists significant intercorrelations amongst the key variables of the study (setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relationships and obstacles) respectively.

### **Hypothesis 2**

There is a significant difference in the perceptions of employees varying in biographical data (age, marital status, home language, ethnic group, length of service, position occupied, gender) regarding the key variables of the study (setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations and obstacles) respectively.

### **Hypothesis 3**

The sub-dimensions of team cohesiveness (setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations, obstacles) significantly account for the variance in team effectiveness.

## **4.5. Problem Statement**

According to Kumar (1996), any question that you want answered and any assumption or assertion that you want to challenge or investigate can become a research problem or a research topic for your study. In the identification of a research problem three steps can be distinguished: the selection of a topic area, the selection of a general problem to one or more specific, precise and well-delimited questions (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995). Problem statements too broadly defined cannot be addressed adequately in one study. It is important for the problem statement to be clear without the use of idioms or clichés (Cooper and Schindler, 2001).

### **The problem statement in this study is the following:**

What is the impact of team cohesiveness on team effectiveness with special reference to the following sub-dimensions: Setting goals and understanding of them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations and obstacles.

## **4.6. Sampling Technique and Description of Sample**

Ideally we would like to study the entire population, however we are unable to study the entire population and must settle for a sample. We can define sample as a subset or portion of the total population (Bailey, 1994). The use of samples may result in more accurate information that might have been obtained if one had studied the entire population (De Vos, 1998). McNeill (1990) stresses the importance of sampling in the research process. It is crucial for researchers to understand the rationale behind sampling, thereby, ensuring that the results are reliable and valid.

Various aspects of sample design such as population, sample, sample size, and sampling technique are used in research design.

### **4.6.1. Defining the Population**

Sekaran (2000) refers to population as the entire group of people, or things of interest that the researcher wishes to investigate. A population is the totality of persons, events, organisation units, case records or other sampling units with which our research problem is concerned (De Vos, 1998).

Bless & Higson-Smith (1995) make the following suggestions to ensure a well-defined target population:

- Describe the target population accurately by clearly defining properties to be analysed.
- Compile a list of all elements of this population to determine whether or not an element belongs to the population under investigation.
- A sample should then be selected from the population.

For the purpose of this study the target population is chosen from employees of the Stanger Police Station. This station was chosen because it represented the services of the Police in South Africa in providing a quality service to the community and the country. In order to maintain a high level of efficiency and effectiveness, employees in the Police Force need to work together in teams to combat crime.

### **4.6.2. Defining the Sample**

Sampling is defined as the selection of a fraction of the total amount of units of interest, for the ultimate purpose of being able to draw general conclusions about the entire body (Sharma and Sharma, 1996). Cooper and Schindler (2001) say that validity of a sample depends on two considerations: accuracy and precision.

According to Kumar (1996), the various sampling strategies could be categorised in three different categories:

- Random / probability sampling designs
- Non-random / probability sampling designs
- Mixed sampling designs

Simple random sampling is a sampling procedure which provides equal opportunity of selection for each element in a population (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995). Samples are usually drawn using a random number selection process (Emory and Cooper, 1991).

Simple random sampling does have its limitations and drawbacks but in this instance it is believed to be the simplest and least time-consuming method.

### **4.6.3. Sample Size**

A very important issue in sampling is to determine the most adequate size of the sample (Bless & Higson Smith, 1995). The size of the sample depends on the size of the population to be sampled (Bailey, 1994). The size of a sample is a function of the variation in the population parameters under study and the estimation precision needed by the researcher (Emory and Cooper, 1991). The estimated sample size of 61 subjects will be used in this study. A sample size of 61 subjects is sufficient to get a feel for the data and to test preformulated statements or hypothesis.

The composition of the sample is reflected in the following tables:

**Table 4.1: Age**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Age:</b>		
21 – 30	20	32.8
31 – 40	24	39.3
41 – 50	16	26.2
51 – 60	1	1.6
<b>Total</b>	61	100.0

**Table 4.2: Gender**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Gender:</b>		
Male	48	78.7
Female	13	21.3
<b>Total</b>	61	100.0

**Table 4.3: Marital Status**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Marital Status:</b>		
Married	40	65.6
Single	19	31.1
Divorced	2	3.3
<b>Total</b>	61	100.0

**Table 4.4: Home Language**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Home Language:</b>		
English	31	50.8
Afrikaans	2	3.3
Zulu	27	44.3
Xhosa	1	1.6
<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Total</b>	61	100.0

**Table 4.5: Ethnic Group**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Ethnic Group:</b>		
White	4	6.6
Black	28	45.9
Indian	28	45.9
Coloured	1	1.6
<b>Total</b>	61	100.0

**Table 4.6: Highest Education Level**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Highest Education Level:</b>		
Below Matric	7	11.5
Matric	38	62.3
Diploma	15	24.6
Degree	1	1.6
<b>Total</b>	61	100.0

**Table 4.7: Length of Service**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Length of Service (years):</b>		
1-5	20	32.8
6-10	1	1.6
11-15	19	31.1
16-20	10	16.4
21-25	10	16.4
26 and above	1	1.6
<b>Total</b>	61	100.0

**Table 4.8: Position Occupied**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Position Occupied</b>		
Supervisor	12	19.7
Management	8	13.1
Clerical	11	18.0
Other	30	49.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 4.9: Do you work in teams**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Do you work in teams?</b>		
Yes	61	100.0
No	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The following figures give a description of the composition of the sample:

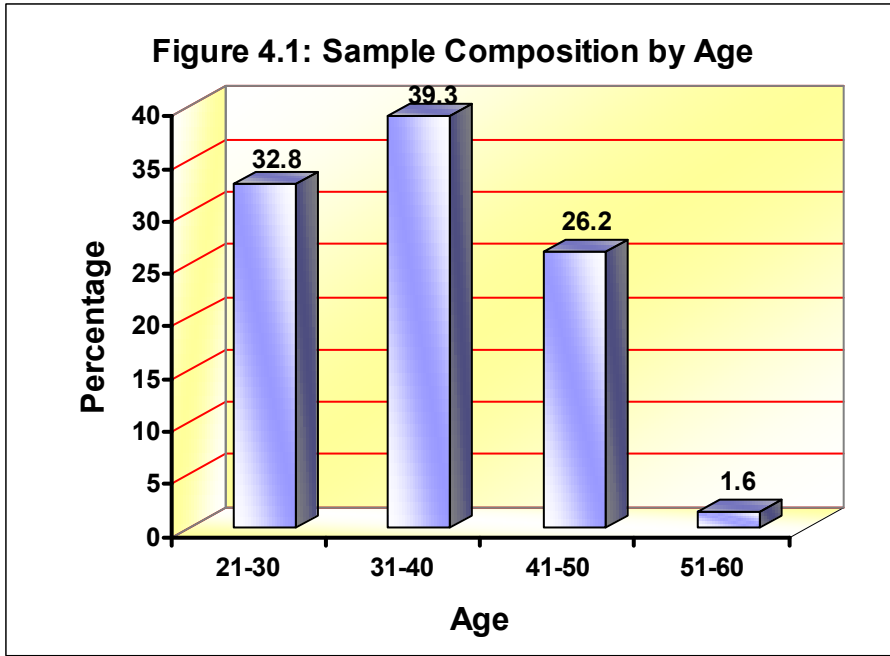


Figure 4.1. illustrates the composition of the sample in terms of age. The highest percentage of respondents (39.3%) were from the 31- 40 years bracket, followed by the 21-30 years bracket (32.8%), followed by the 41-50 years bracket (26.2%) and then by the 51- 60 years bracket (1.6%) respectively. It is clear that the majority of employees are between the ages of 31- 40 years, thereby representing a younger composition of staff.

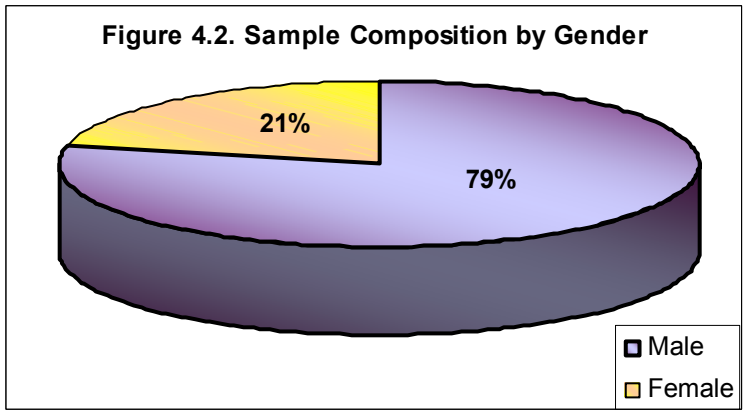


Figure 4.2. illustrates the composition of the sample in terms of gender. It is evident that 78.7% of the respondents are male and 21.3% are female. There is an imbalance in gender because the sample population composed predominantly of males.

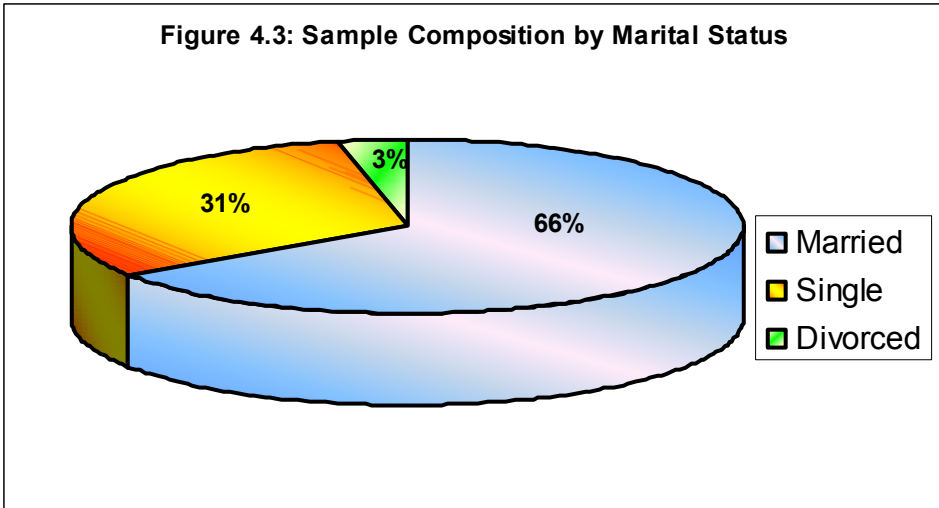


Figure 4.3. illustrates the composition of the sample according to marital status. It is evident that 65.6% of the respondents are married, 31.1% are single and 3.3% are divorced.

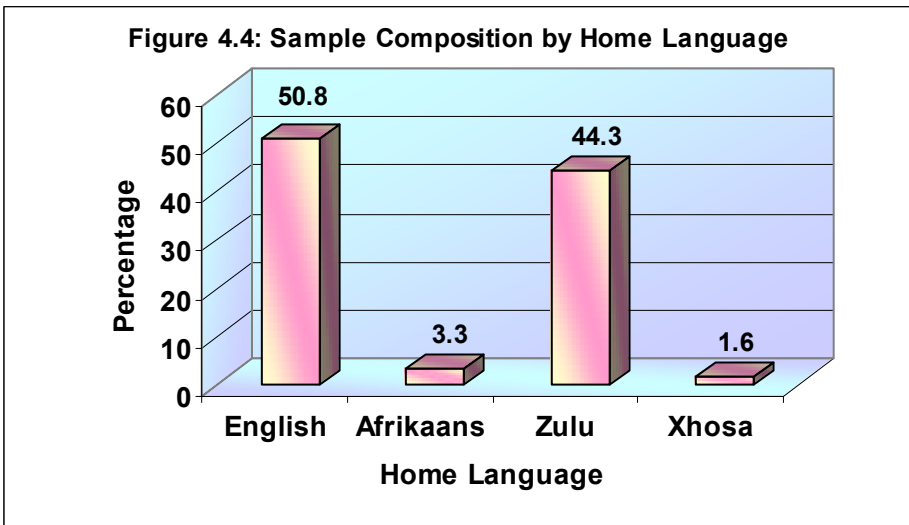


Figure 4.4. illustrates the composition of the sample in terms of home language. It is evident that 50.8% of the respondents are English speaking, 44.3% are Zulu speaking, 3.3% are Afrikaans speaking and 1.6% are Xhosa speaking respectively.

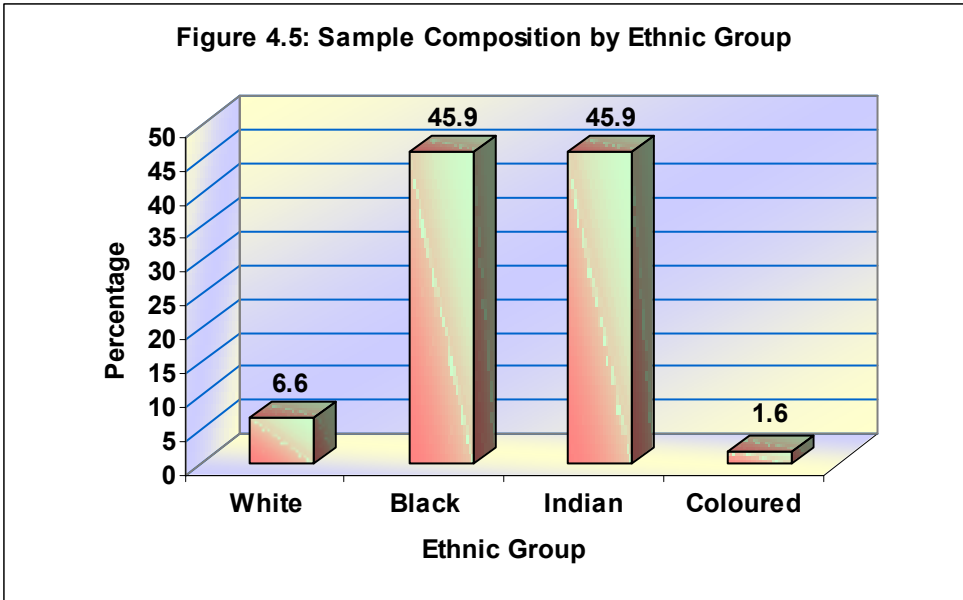


Figure 4.5. illustrates the composition of the sample according to ethnic group. It is evident that 45.9% of the respondents are Black, 45.9% are Indian, 6.6% are White and 1.6% are Coloured. It is evident that there are an equal number of Black and Indian employees who are in the majority compared to very few White and Coloured employees.

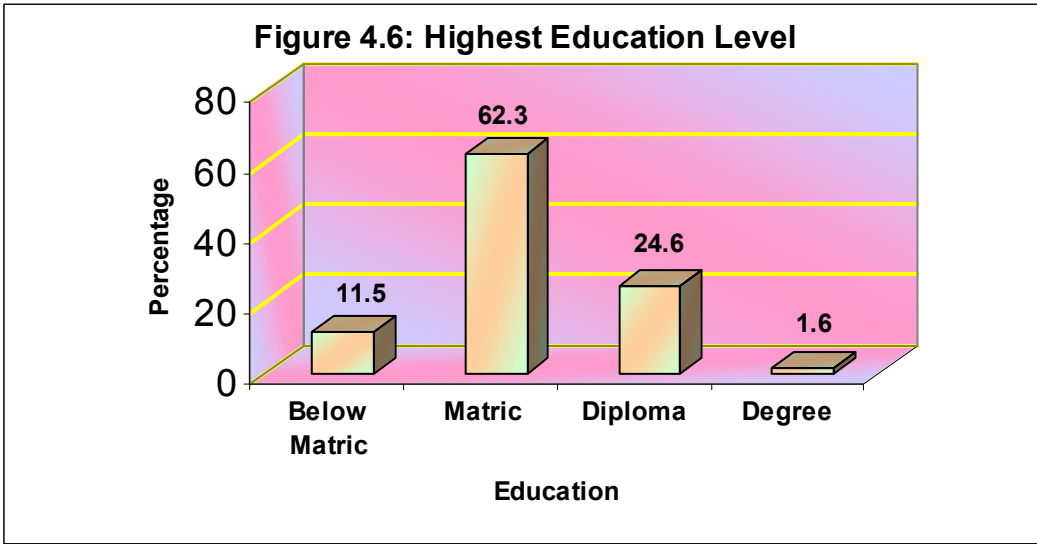


Figure 4.6. illustrates the composition of the sample according to education. It is indicated that 62.3% of the respondents are matriculants, 24.6% of the respondents have diplomas, 11.5% have below matric and 1.6% have degrees.

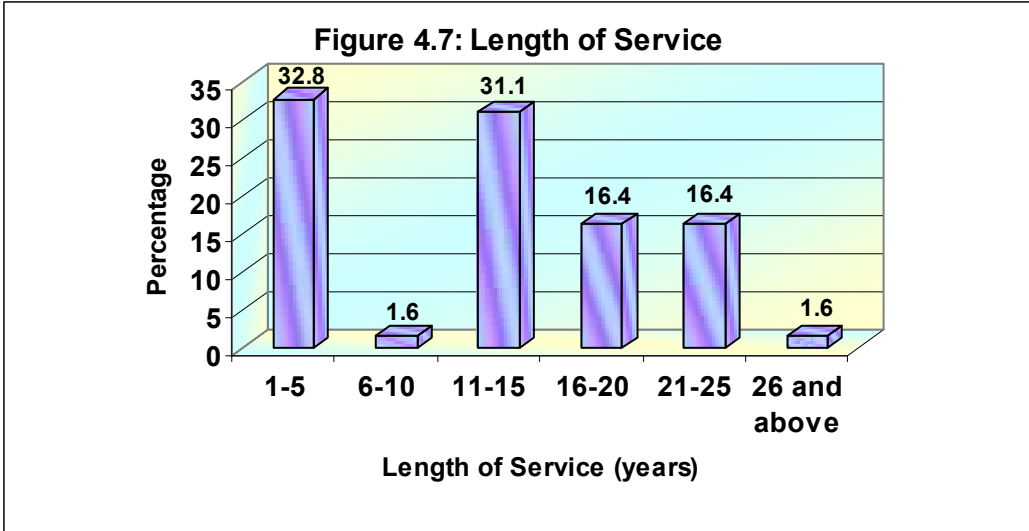


Figure 4.7. illustrates the composition of the sample according to length of service. It is clear that the highest percentage of respondents (32.8%) are in the 1-5 years bracket, 31.1% are in the 11-15 years bracket, followed by 16.4% in the 16-20 years bracket , 16.4% are from the 21-25 years bracket and the 26 and above years bracket is 1.6%. it is evident that the majority of respondents have more than 6 years of service, indicating that many of the respondents have a number of years of experience in the workplace.

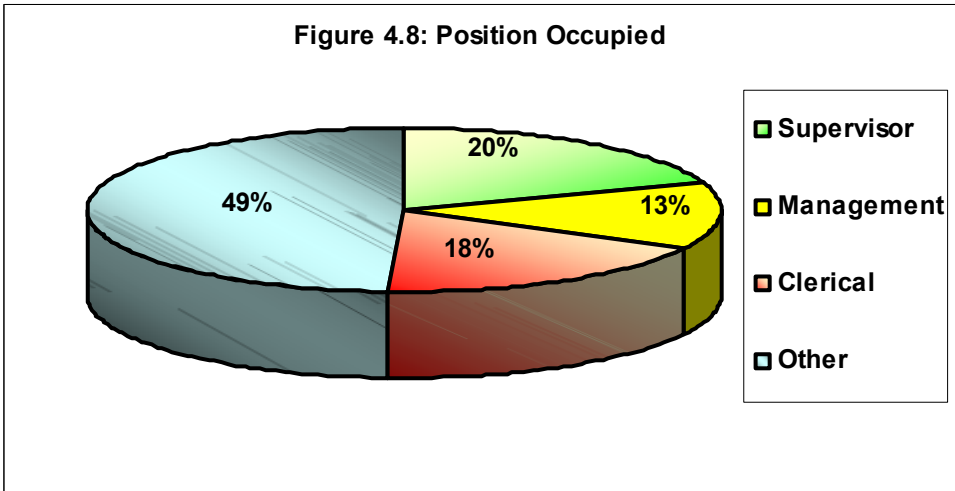


Figure 4.8. illustrates the composition of the sample according to the position occupied. It is clear that the highest percentage of respondents (49.2%) occupy positions other than what is listed, 19.7% are supervisors, 18.0% perform clerical duties and 13.1% have management positions.

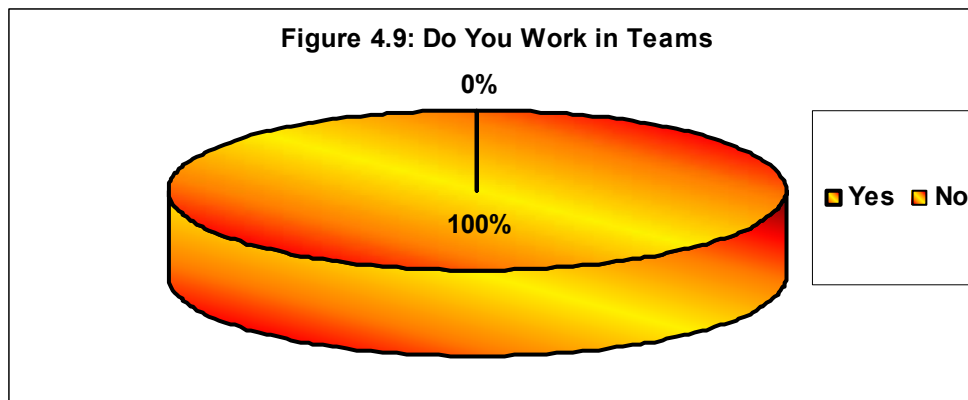


Figure 4.9. illustrates the composition of the sample in terms of working in teams. The data indicates that all respondents (100%) work as part of a team. This indicates that teamwork is an integral part of the respondent’s everyday duties.

## 4.7. Data Collection

Several methods can be used to collect primary data (Kumar, 1996). Data collection methods include interviews – face-face interviews, telephone interviews, computer-assisted interviews, and through the electronic media; questionnaires are either personally administered, sent through the mail, or electronically administered; observation of individuals and events with or without videotaping or audio recording; and a variety of other motivational techniques such as projective tests (Sekaran, 2000). A survey method has been selected, the completion of questionnaires, to conduct this research for the sake of simplicity and for convenience.

### 4.7.1. Questionnaire

In the case of a questionnaire, as there is no one to explain the meaning of questions to respondents, it is important that questions are clear and easy to understand (Kumar, 1996). The advantages of using a questionnaire are, firstly, that it is the least expensive means of gathering data. Secondly, the questionnaire offers the respondents a greater sense of anonymity and, at the same time, the opportunity to collect their thoughts and facts and to give greater consideration to

their replies (Sulon, 1997). Thirdly, with the questionnaire there is less pressure for immediate response on the subject (Judd, Smith and Kidder, 1991). However, there are also disadvantages when using the questionnaire method. Firstly, organisations often are not able or willing to take up company time to complete questionnaires (Sekaran, 2000). Secondly, the least educated respondents will be unable to respond to questionnaires because of difficulties in reading and writing. Thirdly, questionnaires do not allow the researcher to correct misunderstanding or answer questions that the respondents may have (Judd, Smith and Kidder, 1991).

### **4.7.2. Definition**

De Vos (1998) defines a questionnaire as a set of questions on a form which is completed by the respondent in respect of a research project. “A questionnaire is a preformulated written set of questions to which respondents record their answers, usually within rather closely defined alternatives” (Sekaran, 2000 : 233).

### **4.7.3. Description and Purpose**

Parasuraman (1991) describes a questionnaire as a set of questions designed to generate the data necessary for accomplishing research objectives. In a questionnaire respondents read the questions, interpret what is expected and then write down the answers (Kumar, 1996). According to Sulon (1997), the questionnaire is used because it facilitates the examination process and is more versatile and economical.

The main aim of the study is to achieve the research objectives. Therefore, the questionnaire should comply with the design specifications to ensure all relevant data are systematically collected and analysed to realise the research objectives.

A copy of the questionnaire has been presented as appendix A. The researcher gave a brief presentation regarding the questionnaire, how it works, its purpose, definition of terms, etc., prior to requesting the respondents to complete the questionnaires. The Likert scale used in the questionnaire utilises the anchor of strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neither agree nor disagree

(3), agree (4), strongly agree (5). The respondents indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree to a variety of statements by ringing the appropriate answer. The questionnaire is divided into two sections. Part one of the questionnaire gives the demographic profiles of respondents. Part two of the questionnaire looks at how cohesiveness in a team impacts on its effectiveness. The questionnaire comprises of 35 questions in part 2.

The questionnaire looks at the following sub-dimensions of team cohesiveness, which would determine the extent of team effectiveness :

- Setting goals and understanding them : this involves finding out if all team members are involved in setting team goals and whether there is clear understanding by everyone as to what the goals of the team are. Five questions pertaining to this category was set according to the literature review in chapter 3. This appears as questions 1 to 5 of the questionnaire.
- Extent of team member participation: the objective here is to identify the extent of equal participation in the team and to determine whether all team members are treated equally. Five questions pertaining to this category was set according to the literature review in chapter 3. This appears as questions 6 to 10 of the questionnaire.
- Communication: the aim here is to determine whether team members communicate openly and honestly with each other and if good communication prevails at all times. Five questions pertaining to this category was set according to the literature review in chapter 3. This appears as questions 11 to 15 of the questionnaire.
- Idea generation: this determines whether team members are focused and energetic and are able to build on each others ideas. Five questions pertaining to this category was set according to the literature review in chapter 3. This appears as questions 16 to 20 of the questionnaire.
- Conflict management: the idea here is to identify how conflict is managed in the team. Five questions pertaining to this category was set according to the literature review in chapter 3. This appears as questions 20 to 25 of the questionnaire.
- Interpersonal relations: the idea here is to determine whether good interpersonal relations exist among team members. Five questions pertaining to this category was set according to the literature review in chapter 3. This appears as questions 26 to 30 of the questionnaire.

- Obstacles: the objective is to identify obstacles that the teams encounters and measures the team could take to overcome these obstacles. Five questions pertaining to this category was set according to the literature review in chapter 3. This appears as questions 31 to 35 of the questionnaire.

#### **4.7.4. Administration of Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was distributed personally to individuals. Each questionnaire was accompanied by a covering letter describing the nature and objective of the study and assuring respondents the utmost confidentiality. According to Sekaran (2000), administering questionnaires personally to individuals helps to establish rapport with the respondents. It also enables the researcher to introduce the questionnaire, provide clarification sought by respondents on the spot and allows for immediate collection of the questionnaire. Questionnaires were randomly handed out and then collected from participants. Completed questionnaires were then statistically analysed.

#### **4.7.5. Pilot Testing and In-House Pre-testing**

Pre-testing involves the use of a small number of respondents to test the appropriateness of the questions and their understandability (Sekaran, 2000). Field pre-tests involve distributing the test instrument exactly as the actual instrument will be distributed (De Vos, 1998). In this study, pilot testing was carried out using 16 subjects from the Stanger Police Station. The advantages of using pilot testing is to help detect possible flaws in the measurement procedures, to identify unclear or ambiguously formulated items and the process allows researchers to notice non-verbal behaviour in respondents, that is, discomfort or embarrassment about the content or wording of questions (Welman and Kruger, 1999). In this study, the questionnaire was pre-tested by asking people working in teams to comment on the appropriateness of the questionnaire in terms of relevance and construction. The feedback from the in-house pre-testing led to the inclusion of a cover page.

#### **4.7.6. Psychometric Properties of the Questionnaire**

“Validity is defined as the degree to which the researcher has measured what he has set out to measure” (Kumar, 1996 : 137). Bailey (1994) says that the measuring instrument is actually measuring the concept in question and that the concept is being measured accurately. Construct validity is the ability of the questionnaire to measure the theories and concepts it was designed to assess (Perumal, 1999).

According to Cooper and Schindler (2001) reliability is concerned with estimates of the degree to which a measurement is free of random or unstable error. Reliability is concerned with the consistency of measures (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995). This means that, if the same experiment is carried out under the same conditions, the same measurements will be obtained (Melville and Goddard, 1996).

#### **4.8. Analysis of Data**

The data from the completed questionnaires was captured onto computer a diskette using Microsoft Excel and processed using the symstat v3.5. software. Data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics enables the presentation of results by means of frequency measures of central tendency and dispersion. Results will be presented in tabular format. Inferential statistics using correlation, T-test, Anova, Cronbach’s co-efficient of alpha and multiple regression were used to evaluate the hypotheses.

### **4.8.1. Descriptive Statistics**

Descriptive Statistics refer to the collection of methods for classifying and summarising numerical data. The objective of descriptive statistics “is to provide summary measures of the data contained in all the elements of a sample” (Kinnear & Taylor, 1991:546). Therefore, an analysis of the data incorporates frequencies, measures of central tendency and measures of dispersion. It also involves the explanation and summarization of the data acquired for a group of individual unit analysis (Welman & Kruger, 1999). In this study descriptive statistics was done for each of the following sub-dimensions:

- Setting goals and understanding of them
- Extent of participation
- Communication
- Idea generation / creativity
- Conflict
- Interpersonal relations
- obstacles

#### **4.8.1.1. Frequencies & Percentages**

According to Sekaran (2000:396) “frequencies refer to the number of times various sub categories of a certain phenomenon occur, from which the percentage and cumulative of their occurrence can easily be calculated”. Frequencies are used in the current study to obtain a profile of the sample.

Percentages serve two purposes in data presentation. They simplify by reducing all numbers to a range from 0 to 100. Secondly, they translate the data into standard form, with a base for relative comparisons (Cooper & Emory, 1995).

#### **4.8.1.2. Measures of Central Tendency and Dispersion**

Central tendency is the common measure of location. The arithmetic mean (known as the mean) is what is commonly known as the average (Silver, 1992). It is the sum of the observed values in the distribution divided by the number of observations. It is the location measure most frequently used for interval ratio data but can be misleading when the distribution contains extreme values, large or small (Cooper & Emory, 1995).

The standard deviation (SD) is also a measure of dispersion. It is a statistical measure that expresses the average deviation about the mean in the original units of the random variable. This is unlike the squared units of measure used in the variance (Wegner, 1995). According to Huysamen (1998), the measures of central tendency and dispersion enable one to describe and compare distributions more concisely and objectively. The data was analysed using the following measures of central tendency and dispersion :

- **Mean:** The mean is the average value of the variable, computed across all cases (Judd, Smith and Kidder, 1991).
- **Median:** The median refers to the score which has one half of the scores on either side of it when the scores have been arranged in ascending and descending order (Huysamen, 1998).
- **Mode:** The mode can be described by the most frequently occurring phenomenon (Sekaran, 2000).
- **Variance:** The variance can be referred to as the sum of the squared deviations from the mean (Huysamen, 1998).
- **Standard deviation:** The standard deviation is a commonly used measure of dispersion, and is simply the square root of the variance (Sekaran, 2000).

## **4.8.2. Inferential Statistics**

Hinkle, Wiersma & Jurs (1979:10) define inferential statistics as “ a collection of methods for making inferences about the characteristics of the population from the knowledge of the corresponding characteristics of the sample.” In this study the following methods were used:

### **4.8.2.1. Correlation**

Correlation analysis examines the strength of the identified association between variables (Wegner, 1995). Pearson’s correlation matrix indicates the direction, strength and significance of the bivariate relationship among the variables in the study (Cooper & Emory, 1995). In this study, inter-correlations were done for each of the variables that make up the team cohesiveness scores dimension (namely, setting goals and understanding of them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation / creativity, conflict management, interpersonal relations, obstacles) in contrast to team effectiveness.

### **4.8.2.2. T-Test**

The t-Test is used to see if there are any significant differences in the means for two groups in the variable of interest (Sekaran, 2000). In this study, the t-Test was used to determine whether there is significant difference between gender and each of the seven dimensions (setting goals and understanding of them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation / creativity, conflict management, interpersonal relations, obstacles).

### **4.8.2.3. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)**

The technique of analysis of variance (ANOVA) is used to test hypotheses that the means of the two or more groups are equal (Silver, 1992). “ANOVA is a statistical procedure that assesses the likelihood that the means of groups are equal to a common population mean by comparing an estimate of the population variance determined between groups with an estimate of the same population variance determined within groups” (McCall,

1994 : 432). In this study, ANOVA was used to determine whether employees varying in each of the biographical variables (age, gender, marital status, home language, race, education, length of service, position) differ in their perceptions of setting goals and understanding of them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation / creativity, conflict management, interpersonal relations and obstacles respectively when working together as a team.

#### **4.8.2.4. Multiple Regression**

Regression analysis is concerned with quantifying the underlying structural relationships between variables (Wegner, 1995). The dependant variable is often related to a number of independent variables . Multiple regression is where these two or more independent variables are used to predict values of the dependant variable (Silver, 1992). In this study, multiple regression was used to determine whether the variables that make up the team cohesiveness scores (namely, setting goals and understanding of them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation / creativity, conflict management, interpersonal relations and obstacles) significantly account for the variance in team effectiveness.

### **4.9. Statistical Analysis of Questionnaire**

Statistical analysis of the questionnaire was undertaken to establish the reliability and validity of the questionnaire.

#### **4.9.1. Validity : Factor Analysis**

In this study factor analysis was used to determine the validity of the questionnaire. Factor analysis is a “general description for several specific computational techniques. All have the objective of reducing many variables to a more manageable number that belongs together and have overlapping measurement characteristics” (Cooper and Emroy, 1995: 538). According to Sekaran (2000), the results of the factor analysis will confirm whether or not the theorised dimensions emerge. It would reveal whether the theorised dimensions are indeed tapped by the items in the measure.

### **4.9.2. Reliability: Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha**

It is vital to ensure that the measuring instrument measures with reliability what it is supposed to measure. It is concerned with estimates of the degree to which a measurement is free of random or unstable error. An aspect of reliability is interval consistency, the degree to which instrument items are homogeneous and reflect the same underlying constructs. Cronbach's coefficient alpha has the most utility for multi item scales at the interval level of measurement (i.e. items which may be assigned, more than two values, as in rating scales) (Cooper & Emory, 1995). In this study reliability was determined using Cronbach's Co-efficient Alpha. According to Judd, Smith and Kidder (1991), Cronbach's Co-efficient Alpha measure is derived from the correlation's of one item with each other item. This measure ranges from 0 to 1, with 0 meaning complete unreliability and 1 meaning perfect reliability.

### **4.10. Conclusion**

This chapter explored the research methodology and statistical methods used to analyse the data obtained from the questionnaire. A statistical analysis of the data will identify key areas of the study that require improvement for further research.

# CHAPTER 5

## Presentation of Results

### 5.1. Introduction

This chapter deals with the presentation of results and provides an analysis of the findings. In this study, inferential and descriptive statistics were carried out. Inferential statistics was analysed at the 5% level of significance.

### 5.2. Presentation of Results

The results of the study will be presented by means of tables, graphs and reports.

#### 5.2.1. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics provide a description and summarisation of the data collected from a group of individuals (Huysamen, 1998). The data obtained, using a Likert scale, was analysed using mean, standard deviations and range. Descriptive analysis was undertaken on the key variables of the study and the results are presented in table 5.1.

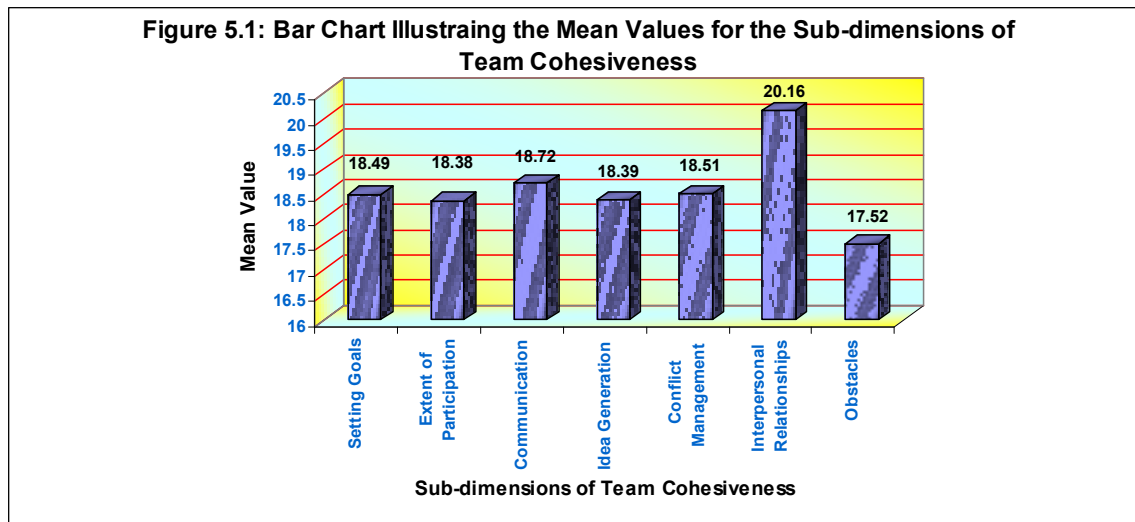
**Table 5.1.**

#### **Descriptive Statistics : Key Variables of Team cohesiveness Impacting on Team Effectiveness**

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Setting goals	61	18	7	25	18.49	3.249	10.554
Extent of participation	61	15	10	25	18.38	3.402	11.572
Communication	61	14	11	25	18.72	2.995	8.971
Idea Generation	61	15	10	25	18.39	3.062	9.376
Conflict Management	61	15	10	25	18.51	3.123	9.754
Interpersonal Relations	61	12	13	25	20.16	2.464	6.073
Obstacles	61	11	11	22	17.52	2.936	8.620

Table 5.1. indicates that the initial factors of team cohesiveness that impact on team effectiveness in descending level of importance are :-

- Interpersonal relations (mean = 20.16)
- Communication (mean = 18.72)
- Conflict management (mean = 18.51)
- Setting goals (mean = 18.49)
- Idea generation (mean = 18.39)
- Extent of participation (mean = 18.38)
- Obstacles (mean = 17.52)



In terms of the impact of interpersonal relations on team effectiveness 63.9% of employees and a further 23% indicated that trust is an essential ingredient for team effectiveness. Furthermore, 57.4% agreed and a further 36.1% strongly agreed that co-operation amongst team members will lead to team effectiveness. 57.4% of employees agreed and a further 34.4% strongly agreed that commitment to team tasks is essential for team effectiveness. Openness and honesty 57.4% of employees agreed and a further 34.4% strongly agreed is imperative for team effectiveness.

In terms of the impact of communication on team effectiveness 60.7% of employees and a further 21.3 % indicated that good communication between themselves and team members is an essential ingredient for team effectiveness. Furthermore, 57.4% of

employees agreed and a further 26.2% strongly agreed that regular team meetings is essential for team effectiveness. 57.4% of employees agreed and a further 24.6% strongly agreed that mutual acceptance and regular feedback will lead to team effectiveness.

In terms of the impact of conflict management on team effectiveness 54.1% of employees and a further 27.9% indicated that open discussion among team members is an essential ingredient for team effectiveness.

In terms of the impact of setting goals and understanding them on team effectiveness 68.9% of employees and a further 23.0% indicated that regular feedback to team members is an essential ingredient for team effectiveness.

In terms of the impact of the extent of participation on team effectiveness 60.7% of employees and a further 23.0% indicated that knowing their personal tasks and objectives is an essential ingredient for team effectiveness.

In terms of the impact of obstacles on team effectiveness 57.4% of employees and a further 23.0% indicated that knowing the team's mission is an essential ingredient for team effectiveness.

## **5.2.2. Relationship Amongst the Key Variables of the Study (Correlation)**

### **Hypothesis 1**

There exists significant intercorrelations amongst the key variables of the study (setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relationships and obstacles) respectively.

**Table 5.2. Inter-correlations of the Key Variables of the Study**

	Setting Goals	Extent of Participation	Communication	Idea Generation	Conflict Management	Interpersonal Relations	Obstacles
Setting Goals	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N						
Extent of Participation	.592** .000 61						
Communication	.379** .003 61	.382 .002 61					
Idea Generation	.493** .000 61	.603** .000 61	.559** .000 61				
Conflict Management	.093 .475 61	.198 .126 61	.464** .000 61	.570** .000 61			
Interpersonal Relations	.113 .388 61	.100 .444 61	.521** .000 61	.378** .003 61	.654** .000 61		
Obstacles	-.040 .761 61	-.135 .299 61	-.002 .987 61	-.088 .499 61	.154 .236 61	.193 .136 61	

Table 5.2. indicates that there is a significant relationship between setting goals and extent of participation, communication and idea generation respectively. However, no significant relationship exists between setting goals and conflict management, interpersonal relations and obstacles respectively.

Table 5.2. indicates that there is a significant relationship between extent of participation and communication and idea generation respectively. However, no significant relationship exists between extent of participation and conflict management, interpersonal relations and obstacles respectively.

Table 5.2. indicates that there is a significant relationship between communication and idea generation, conflict management and interpersonal relations respectively. However, no significant relationship exists between communication and obstacles respectively.

Table 5.2. indicates that there is a significant relationship between idea generation and conflict management and interpersonal relations respectively. However, no significant relationship exists between idea generation obstacles respectively.

Table 5.2. indicates that there is a significant relationship between conflict management and interpersonal relations respectively. However, no significant relationship exists between conflict management and obstacles respectively.

Table 5.2. indicates that there is no significant relationship between interpersonal relations and obstacles.

According to Table 5.2. the following pairs of relationships exist :

11 : significant

10 : not significant

Therefore Hypothesis 1 is partially accepted.

### **5.2.3. Impact of Biographical Variables on the Key Variables of the Study**

#### **Hypothesis 2**

There is a significant difference in the perceptions of employees varying in biographical data (age, marital status, home language, ethnic group, length of service, position occupied, gender) regarding the key variables of the study (setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations and obstacles) respectively.

**Table 5.3. ANOVA: Age**

**One Way ANOVA : Age group**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Setting goals	Between Groups	18.788	3	6.263	.581	.630
	Within Groups	614.458	57	10.780		
	Total	633.246	60			
Extent of participation	Between Groups	16.965	3	5.655	.476	.700
	Within Groups	677.363	57	11.884		
	Total	694.328	60			
Communication	Between Groups	25.729	3	8.576	.954	.421
	Within Groups	512.533	57	8.992		
	Total	538.262	60			
Idea Generation	Between Groups	4.432	3	1.477	.151	.929
	Within Groups	558.125	57	9.792		
	Total	562.557	60			
Conflict Management	Between Groups	25.733	3	8.578	.874	.460
	Within Groups	559.513	57	9.816		
	Total	585.246	60			
Interpersonal Relations	Between Groups	15.977	3	5.326	.871	.461
	Within Groups	348.383	57	6.112		
	Total	364.361	60			
Obstacles	Between Groups	8.226	3	2.742	.307	.820
	Within Groups	508.987	57	8.930		
	Total	517.213	60			

**Key:** Df – difference, F – frequency, Sig - significance

Table 5.3. indicates that employees in the various age groups do not differ significantly in their views regarding the influence of team cohesiveness (determined by setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations and obstacles) on team effectiveness.

**Table 5.4. ANOVA : Marital Status**

**One Way ANOVA : Marital Status**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Setting goals	Between Groups	5.824	2	2.912	.269	.765
	Within Groups	627.422	58	10.818		
	Total	633.246	60			
Extent of participation	Between Groups	.848	2	.424	.035	.965
	Within Groups	693.480	58	11.957		
	Total	694.328	60			
Communication	Between Groups	10.961	2	5.480	.603	.551
	Within Groups	527.301	58	9.091		
	Total	538.262	60			
Idea Generation	Between Groups	4.161	2	2.081	.216	.806
	Within Groups	558.396	58	9.628		
	Total	562.557	60			
Conflict Management	Between Groups	52.399	2	26.199	2.852	.066
	Within Groups	532.847	58	9.187		
	Total	585.246	60			
Interpersonal Relations	Between Groups	21.329	2	10.665	1.803	.174
	Within Groups	343.032	58	5.914		
	Total	364.361	60			
Obstacles	Between Groups	5.733	2	2.866	.325	.724
	Within Groups	511.480	58	8.819		
	Total	517.213	60			

Table 5.4. indicates that employees differing in marital status do not differ significantly in their views regarding the influence of team cohesiveness (determined by setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations and obstacles) on team effectiveness.

**Table 5.5. ANOVA : Home Language**

**One Way ANOVA : Home Language**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Setting goals	Between Groups	69.050	3	23.017	2.325	.084
	Within Groups	564.196	57	9.898		
	Total	633.246	60			
Extent of participation	Between Groups	20.227	3	6.742	.570	.637
	Within Groups	674.101	57	11.826		
	Total	694.328	60			
Communication	Between Groups	7.466	3	2.489	.267	.849
	Within Groups	530.796	57	9.312		
	Total	538.262	60			
Idea Generation	Between Groups	6.794	3	2.265	.232	.874
	Within Groups	555.763	57	9.750		
	Total	562.557	60			
Conflict Management	Between Groups	72.579	3	24.193	2.690	.055
	Within Groups	512.667	57	8.994		
	Total	585.246	60			
Interpersonal Relations	Between Groups	18.955	3	6.318	1.043	.381
	Within Groups	345.406	57	6.060		
	Total	364.361	60			
Obstacles	Between Groups	15.585	3	5.195	.590	.624
	Within Groups	501.628	57	8.800		
	Total	517.213	60			

Table 5.5. indicates that employees differing in home language do not differ significantly in their views regarding the influence of team cohesiveness (determined by setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations and obstacles) on team effectiveness.

**Table 5.6. ANOVA : Ethnic Group**

**One Way ANOVA : Ethnic Group**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Setting goals	Between Groups	102.460	3	34.153	3.668	.017
	Within Groups	530.786	57	9.312		
	Total	633.246	60			
Extent of participation	Between Groups	71.185	3	23.728	2.170	.101
	Within Groups	623.143	57	10.932		
	Total	694.328	60			
Communication	Between Groups	5.727	3	1.909	.204	.893
	Within Groups	532.536	57	9.343		
	Total	538.262	60			
Idea Generation	Between Groups	3.879	3	1.293	.132	.941
	Within Groups	558.679	57	9.801		
	Total	562.557	60			
Conflict Management	Between Groups	34.960	3	11.653	1.207	.315
	Within Groups	550.286	57	9.654		
	Total	585.246	60			
Interpersonal Relations	Between Groups	18.968	3	6.323	1.043	.380
	Within Groups	345.393	57	6.060		
	Total	364.361	60			
Obstacles	Between Groups	4.785	3	1.595	.177	.911
	Within Groups	512.429	57	8.990		
	Total	517.213	60			

Table 5.6. indicates that employees varying in race differ significantly in their view of the extent to which setting goals impacts on team effectiveness. However, table 5.6. also indicates that employees from the various race groups do not differ significantly in their views regarding the influence of team cohesiveness (determined by setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations and obstacles) on team effectiveness.

**Table 5.7: ANOVA: Length of Service**

**One Way ANOVA : Length of Service**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Setting goals	Between Groups	35.738	5	7.148	.658	.657
	Within Groups	597.508	55	10.864		
	Total	633.246	60			
Extent of participation	Between Groups	65.191	5	13.038	1.140	.351
	Within Groups	629.137	55	11.439		
	Total	694.328	60			
Communication	Between Groups	59.441	5	11.888	1.366	.251
	Within Groups	478.821	55	8.706		
	Total	538.262	60			
Idea Generation	Between Groups	34.771	5	6.954	.725	.608
	Within Groups	527.787	55	9.596		
	Total	562.557	60			
Conflict Management	Between Groups	12.806	5	2.561	.246	.940
	Within Groups	572.439	55	10.408		
	Total	585.246	60			
Interpersonal Relations	Between Groups	17.074	5	3.415	.541	.744
	Within Groups	347.287	55	6.314		
	Total	364.361	60			
Obstacles	Between Groups	19.742	5	3.948	.437	.821
	Within Groups	497.471	55	9.045		
	Total	517.213	60			

Table 5.7. indicates that employees differing in length of service do not differ significantly in their views regarding the influence of team cohesiveness (determined by setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations and obstacles) on team effectiveness.

**Table 5.8: ANOVA: Position Occupied**

**One Way ANOVA : Position occupied**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Setting goals	Between Groups	2.859	3	.953	.086	.967
	Within Groups	630.387	57	11.059		
	Total	633.246	60			
Extent of participation	Between Groups	10.908	3	3.636	.303	.823
	Within Groups	683.420	57	11.990		
	Total	694.328	60			
Communication	Between Groups	25.701	3	8.567	.953	.421
	Within Groups	512.561	57	8.992		
	Total	538.262	60			
Idea Generation	Between Groups	22.079	3	7.360	.776	.512
	Within Groups	540.478	57	9.482		
	Total	562.557	60			
Conflict Management	Between Groups	109.826	3	36.609	4.389	.008
	Within Groups	475.420	57	8.341		
	Total	585.246	60			
Interpersonal Relations	Between Groups	78.857	3	26.286	5.248	.003
	Within Groups	285.504	57	5.009		
	Total	364.361	60			
Obstacles	Between Groups	7.330	3	2.443	.273	.845
	Within Groups	509.883	57	8.945		
	Total	517.213	60			

Table 5.8. indicates that employees occupying different positions differ significantly in their views of the extent to which conflict management and interpersonal relations influence team effectiveness. However, Table 5.8. also indicates that employees occupying different positions do not differ significantly in their views of the extent to which conflict management and interpersonal relations influence team effectiveness.

**Table 5.9: ANOVA: Education****ANOVA : Education**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Setting goals	Between Groups	4.146	3	1.382	.125	.945
	Within Groups	629.100	57	11.037		
	Total	633.246	60			
Extent of participation	Between Groups	15.064	3	5.021	.421	.738
	Within Groups	679.264	57	11.917		
	Total	694.328	60			
Communication	Between Groups	30.604	3	10.201	1.145	.339
	Within Groups	507.658	57	8.906		
	Total	538.262	60			
Idea Generation	Between Groups	45.651	3	15.217	1.678	.182
	Within Groups	516.906	57	9.069		
	Total	562.557	60			
Conflict Management	Between Groups	37.682	3	12.561	1.308	.281
	Within Groups	547.564	57	9.606		
	Total	585.246	60			
Interpersonal Relations	Between Groups	61.693	3	20.564	3.873	.014
	Within Groups	302.668	57	5.310		
	Total	364.361	60			
Obstacles	Between Groups	15.950	3	5.317	.605	.615
	Within Groups	501.263	57	8.794		
	Total	517.213	60			

Table 5.9. indicates that employees with varying levels of education differ significantly in their views of the extent to which interpersonal relations influence team effectiveness. However, education does not impact on employee's views regarding the influence of setting goals, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management and obstacles on team effectiveness.

**Table 5.10: T-Test: Gender**

		<b>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</b>	
		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Setting Goals	Equal variances assumed Equal variances not assumed	.823	.368
Extent of Participation	Equal variances assumed Equal variances not assumed	9.060	.004*
Communication	Equal variances assumed Equal variances not assumed	3.663	.060
Idea Generation	Equal variances assumed Equal variances not assumed	4.229	.044*
Conflict Management	Equal variances assumed Equal variances not assumed	.118	.733
Interpersonal Relations	Equal variances assumed Equal variances not assumed	3.922	.052
Obstacles	Equal variances assumed Equal variances not assumed	.025	.874

Table 5.10. indicates that there is a significant difference in the perceptions of males and females regarding the impact of extent of participation and idea generation on team effectiveness. However, there is no significant difference in the perceptions of males and females regarding the impact of setting goals and understanding them, communication, conflict management, interpersonal relations and obstacles on team effectiveness respectively.

### **Hypothesis 3**

The sub-dimensions of team cohesiveness (setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations, obstacles) significantly account for the variance in team effectiveness.

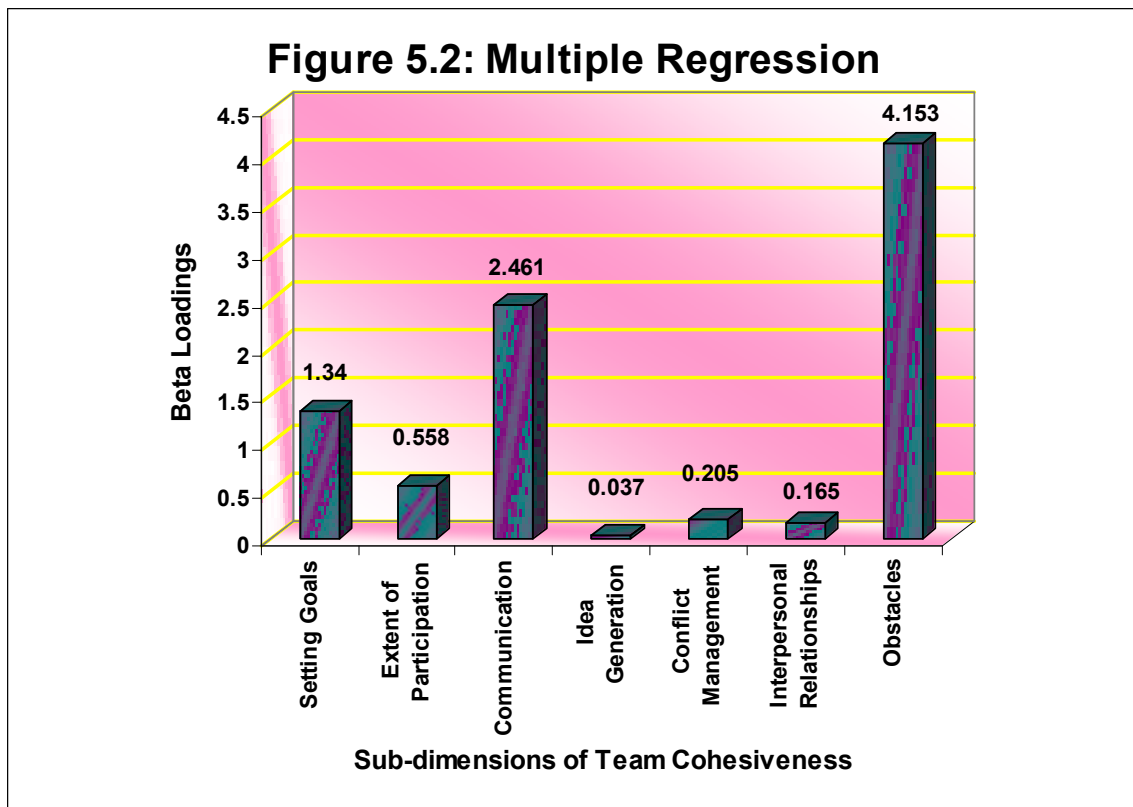
**Table 5.11: Multiple Regression: Sub-dimensions of Team Cohesiveness and its Influence on Team Effectiveness**

<b>Model Summary</b>									
Model	R	R Square <sup>a</sup>	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F. Change
1	.983 <sup>b</sup>	.966	.961	.721	.966	216.301	7	55	.000
<b>Anova</b>									
Model	Sum of Squares		df	Mean Square	F	Sig.			
1 Regression	786.934		7	112.419	216.301	.000 <sup>a</sup>			
Residual	28.066		54	.520					
Total	815.000		61						
<b>Coefficients<sup>a,b</sup></b>									
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients			Standardized Coefficients	F	Sig.			
	B	Std. Error	Beta						
1 Setting goals	-.050	.037	-.256	-1.304	.186				
Extent of participation	.021	.038	.107	.558	.579				
Communication	.103	.042	.536	2.461	.017				
Idea Generation	.002	.050	.010	.037	.970				
Conflict management	-.010	.046	-.049	-.205	.838				
Interpersonal Relations	.008	.050	.045	.165	.870				
Obstacles	.122	.029	.594	4.153	.000				

The dimensions of team cohesiveness (setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations, obstacles) significantly account for 96.1% of the variants in team effectiveness. The remaining 3.9% may be due to factors that fall beyond the jurisdiction of the study. The dimensions of team cohesiveness impact on team effectiveness although at varying degrees.

The impact of these sub-dimensions on team effectiveness, based on beta analysis, in descending level of influence are as follows:

- Obstacles
- Communication
- Setting goals
- Extent of participation
- Conflict management
- Interpersonal relations
- Idea generation



### 5.3. Statistical Analysis of the Questionnaire

#### 5.3.1. Validity: Factor Analysis

The validity of the questionnaire was statistically evaluated using factor analysis.

**Table 5.12: Factor Analysis**

**Rotated Component Matrix**

	Component						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Q1	.883						
Q2	.857						
Q3	.697						
Q4							
Q5	.567						
Q6	.748						
Q7	.722						
Q8	.662						
Q9					.754		
Q10					.780		
Q11	.609						
Q12						-.543	
Q13		.752					
Q14		.799					
Q15		.624					
Q16	.539						
Q17	.775						
Q18		.712					
Q19				.747			
Q20		.512					
Q21				.714			
Q22							
Q23		.557					
Q24							
Q25		.696					

**Table 5.12: Factor Analysis**

	<b>Component</b>						
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Q26</b>				.615			
<b>Q27</b>		.676					
<b>Q28</b>			.813				
<b>Q29</b>			.785				
<b>Q30</b>			.830				
<b>Q31</b>							
<b>Q32</b>						.531	
<b>Q33</b>						.659	
<b>Q34</b>							.705
<b>Q35</b>							.757
<b>Eigenvalue</b>	5.704	4.863	3.619	2.783	2.327	2.039	1.950
<b>% of total variance</b>	16.296	13.895	10.340	7.951	6.648	5.826	5.570

Table 5.12 indicates that 10 items load significantly on factor 1 and account for 16.296% of the total variants. 4 items relate to setting goals and understanding them, 3 items relate to extent of participation, 1 relates to communication and 2 relate to idea generation. Based on the highest loadings on this factor, factor 1 is therefore called setting goals and understanding of them.

Table 5.12. indicates that 8 items load significantly on factor 2 and account for 13.895% of the total variants. 3 items relate to communication, 2 items relate to idea generation, 2 items relate to conflict management and 1 relates to interpersonal relations. Based on the highest loadings on this factor, factor 2 is therefore called extent of participation.

Table 5.12. indicates that 3 items load significantly on factor 3 and account for 10.340% of the total variants. 3 items relate to interpersonal relations. Based on the highest loadings on this factor, factor 3 is therefore called communication.

Table 5.12. indicates that 3 items load significantly on factor 4 and account for 7.951% of the total variants. 1 item relates to idea generation, 1 relates to conflict management and 1 relates to interpersonal relations. Based on the highest loadings on this factor, factor 4 is therefore called idea generation.

Table 5.12. indicates that 2 items load significantly on factor 5 and account for 6.648% of the total variants. 2 items relate to extent of participation. Based on the highest loadings on this factor, factor 5 is therefore called conflict management.

Table 5.12. indicates that 3 items load significantly on factor 6 and account for 5.826% of the total variants. 1 item relates to communication and 2 items relate to obstacles. Based on the highest loadings on this factor, factor 6 is therefore called interpersonal relations.

Table 5.12. indicates that 2 items load significantly on factor 7 and account for 5.570% of the total variants. 2 items relate to obstacles. Based on the highest loadings on this factor, factor 7 is therefore called obstacles.

### **5.3.2. Reliability : Cronbach’s Coefficient Alpha**

The reliability of the questionnaire was statistically evaluated using Cronbach’s Coefficient Alpha.

**Table 5.13: Cronbach’s Coefficient Alpha**

Number of Cases	61.0
Number of Items	35
Reliability Coefficients	Alpha = 0.8633

Table 5.13. indicates that the questionnaire has a high degree of reliability and that the items in the questionnaire have a high level of inter-item consistency.

## **5.4. Conclusion**

This chapter presented the results of the study using both descriptive and inferential statistics. These statistics provided a description and interpretation of results using various methods. The results identify significant relationships and differences between the variables of the study and also points out areas that require improvement.

## **Chapter 6**

# **Discussion of Results**

### **6.1. Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the results obtained from the study. It will present and explain the findings of the research which will be compared to the findings of previous research.

### **6.2. Discussion of the Results on the Key Variables**

The key variables will be compared and contrasted with the results of previous studies to achieve a more meaningful analysis.

#### **6.2.1. The Influence of the Dimensions of Team**

##### **Cohesiveness on Team Effectiveness**

In this study, sub-dimensions of team cohesiveness (setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations and obstacles) and their impact on team effectiveness will be compared and contrasted to previous studies.

In this study, it was found that all 7 variables impact on team effectiveness, but to varying degrees. In descending level of impact on team effectiveness, the dimensions of team cohesiveness are as follows:-

- Interpersonal relations (mean = 20.16)
- Communication (mean = 18.72)
- Conflict management (mean = 18.51)
- Setting goals and understanding them (mean = 18.49)
- Idea generation (mean = 18.39)
- Extent of participation (mean = 18.38)
- Obstacles (mean = 17.52)

### **6.2.1.1. Setting Goals and Understanding Them**

The setting of goals ranks 4<sup>th</sup> out of the 7 variables in impacting on team effectiveness. The mean score (18.49) out of a maximum attainable score of 25 indicates that 68.9% of the subjects perceive that when employees in a group set goals together and understand them collectively, then team effectiveness is enhanced. 23% of the subjects indicated that regular feedback enhances team effectiveness. Similarly, a study taken by Fleming (2001) indicates team goals need to be understood by all team members, established by the team, modified and regularly reviewed and this would enhance team effectiveness. George (2000) agrees that effective groups are groups that control their member's behaviour and channel it in the direction of group and organisational goals. According to New Zealand Management (2001), one of the important features of a cohesive team is that the goals of the group are well understood and accepted by all. However, Leadership for the Front Lines (2000) found that if team members are not committed to common goals and don't have clarity about team goals, then this would hamper team effectiveness, even though they may be involved in setting goals and understanding them. According to research undertaken by Yeatts (1996), goals need to be clear, specific and measurable in order to promote team effectiveness.

### **6.2.1.2. Extent of Participation**

The extent of participation ranks 6<sup>th</sup> out of the 7 variables in impacting on team effectiveness. The mean score (18.38) out of a maximum attainable score of 25 indicates that 60.7% of the subjects perceive that the extent to which they participate in team activities and decision-making enhances team effectiveness. 23.0% of the subjects felt that knowing their personal tasks and objectives was essential in ensuring team effectiveness. Similarly, a study undertaken by Elloy (2001), among self-managed work team members found that with high participation, worker support, and autonomy, job workload is perceived more as a challenge than a burden, and is invigorating rather than oppressing and then team effectiveness is enhanced. However, Yandrick (2001) believes that teams won't work when employees work independently much more than interdependently and this would impact negatively and make the team less effective.

### **6.2.1.3. Communication**

Communication ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> out of 7 variables in impacting on team effectiveness. The mean score (18.72) out of a maximum attainable score of 25 indicates that 60.7% of the subjects felt that good communication between team members is perceived as an essential ingredient to enhance team effectiveness. 57.4 % of respondents indicated a need for team meetings as well as mutual acceptance and regular feedback. Similarly, Staff Leader (2002) found that clear communication is essential to helping teams work effectively. McCowen (1989) believes that teams are inhibited when team members have poor levels of communication. Kanter (2001) agrees that teams stumble when they become so internally focused on their task that they neglect communication. However, Fogel (1995) found that relationships break down due to factors associated with the balance of control or through the misinterpretation of communicative information and this could hamper team effectiveness

### **6.2.1.4. Idea Generation**

Idea generation ranks 5<sup>th</sup> out of 7 variables impacting on team effectiveness. The mean score (18.39) out of a maximum attainable score of 25 indicates that subjects perceive that sharing and exchanging of ideas among team members enhances team effectiveness. Similarly, Spector (2000) believes that groups are superior to individuals in generating ideas or solutions to problems and group ideas therefore enhance team effectiveness.

Contrary to this, a study undertaken by Paulus (2000) revealed that sharing and exchanging ideas does not change the relative degree of production loss experienced by the group and this would render the team to be less effective. Nemiro (2002) also found that idea generation could not be effectively accomplished without face-to-face interaction and this would make a team less effective if teams were far apart from each other.

### **6.2.1.5. Conflict Management**

Conflict ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> out of 7 variables impacting on team effectiveness. The mean score (18.51) out of a maximum attainable score of 25 indicates that 54.1% of the subjects perceive that conflict can be managed together constructively, while 27.9% of employees in a team believe that open discussions enhances team effectiveness. Similarly, a study undertaken by Capozzoli (1999) reveals that productive conflict resolution involves learning how to disagree over issues and situations and coming up with a solution that can benefit the entire team and enhance team effectiveness. However, Alper (2000) found that how team members manage their conflict can affect not only their sense of efficacy in dealing with conflicts, but their overall team performance. Teams that relied on competitive conflict were found to exhibit low levels of efficacy and reduced group performance making the teams less effective.

### **6.2.1.6. Interpersonal Relations**

Interpersonal relations ranked the highest, 1<sup>st</sup> out of 7 variables impacting on team effectiveness. The mean score (20.16) out of a maximum attainable score of 25 indicates that 63.9% of the subjects perceive that good interpersonal relations enhances team effectiveness. 57.4% of the subjects also indicated that trust, co-operation, commitment and openness and honesty are essential for team effectiveness. Similarly, a study undertaken by Nelson (2003) reveals that once team members establish a comfortable level of mutual trust and acceptance, they can focus their attention on the work of the group, thereby enhancing team effectiveness. Research by Tierney (1999) indicates that when involved in quality relationships with team peers, individuals are more inclined to expand their role boundaries, enhance their level of behavioural involvement, and subjugate their needs for those of the group and hence enhance interpersonal relations through team effectiveness. However, according to the Harvard Management Communication Letter (2000), interpersonal conflicts happen, and they must be dealt with. Capozzoli (1999), team members may challenge the leader, or they may isolate themselves from team discussions and this would hamper team effectiveness.

### **6.2.1.7. Obstacles**

Obstacles had the lowest ranking, 7<sup>th</sup> out of 7 variables impacting on team effectiveness. The mean score (17.52) out of a maximum attainable score of 22 indicates that 57.4% of the subjects perceive that when employees in a team work together to overcome obstacles, then team effectiveness is enhanced. 23.0% of respondents indicated that it is essential to know the team's mission. Similarly, a study undertaken by Thoman (2000) found that when teams effectively leverage their differences and overcome obstacles, hence team effectiveness is enhanced. However, Govindarajan and Gupta (2001) found that unless obstacles such as differences in assumptions and beliefs in diversity are addressed, the cohesiveness of the group is likely to suffer and impede effectiveness.

### **6.2.2. Interrelationships Amongst the Dimensions of Team Cohesiveness and its Influence on Team Effectiveness**

- In this study, it was found that setting goals and understanding them correlates significantly with extent of participation, communication and idea generation respectively. Similarly, Robbins (2000) believes that specific goals facilitate clear communication and this helps teams maintain their focus on getting results, hence encouraging communication and enhancing team effectiveness. Marchand (1994) agrees that goals should be the handiwork of everyone in the team in order to encourage everyone in the team to participate in setting goals and thereby enhance team effectiveness. However, Hellriegel et al, (2001) believe that a cohesive team with negative feelings towards the organisation can promote performance standards that limit productivity and pressure individual members to conform to them. This can occur due to not understanding team goals and poor communication and thus render the team to be less effective.

- This study found that extent of participation correlates significantly with communication and idea generation respectively. Similarly, Weiss (2002) suggests that people should share in the making of decisions and this will lead them to pool their abilities and skills to benefit everyone. Consequently, this will involve communicating with everyone in the team and sharing ideas with each other, hence enhancing team effectiveness. However, Delbridge (2001) found that in a car assembly plant in Canada, only two thirds of workers reported being actively involved in making decisions at work and that it was limited to one's own work area or to perform a job in one's own way thus limiting the sharing of ideas and thus hindering team effectiveness.
- It was found in this study, that communication correlates significantly with idea generation, conflict management and interpersonal relations respectively. Similarly, Messmer (2003) agrees that providing opportunities for employees to get to know each other can greatly improve collaboration within a group by enhancing interpersonal relations and through team effectiveness. However, Robbins (2000) believes that cross-cultural factors clearly create the potential for increased communication problems, which could lead to poor interpersonal relations among team members and impede team effectiveness.
- This study indicates that idea generation correlates significantly with conflict management and interpersonal relations respectively. Similarly, Sethi (2002) found that the strength of interpersonal ties among team members influences innovation and encourages the teams to come up with innovative products. Therefore good interpersonal relations between team members enhances team effectiveness through sharing ideas with other team members and effectively managing team conflict. However, Miner (1992) found that the expression of strong emotions and opinions by group members tends to have a counterproductive effect on the generation of ideas due to inadequate conflict management and poor interpersonal relations among team members, hence making the team less effective.

- In this study, it was found that conflict management correlates with interpersonal relations respectively. Similarly, a study undertaken by Reinertsen (2000) found that conflict is a sign of a healthy group if it occurs at the right time and promotes healthy interpersonal relations thereby enhancing team effectiveness. The Harvard Management Communication Letter (2000) states that interpersonal conflicts happen, and they must be dealt with to promote better interpersonal relations with team members and hence ensuring team effectiveness. Contrary to this, Alper (2000), in his study found conflict can be detrimental to team cohesiveness in that teams can become demoralised and are unable to perform effectively due to strained interpersonal relations and this will make the team less effective.

The results thus suggest that hypothesis 1 will be accepted. These findings suggest that there are significant intercorrelations among the key variables of the study.

In this study it was found that all 7 variables impact on team effectiveness, but to varying degrees. In descending level of impact on team effectiveness, the sub-dimensions of team cohesiveness, based on beta analysis are as follows :-

- Obstacles
- Communication
- Setting goals and understanding them
- Extent of participation
- Conflict management
- Interpersonal relations
- Idea generation

Results of this study found that obstacles was placed 1<sup>st</sup> (beta = .594) in terms of variance as impacting on team effectiveness. A study undertaken by Kirkman (2000) found that trust, cultural values and tolerance for change are obstacles that hinder team effectiveness. However, Farren (1999) believes that by inspiring individuals to contribute

their best efforts and reinforce their personal value to the company, smart teamwork can be enhanced.

This found study that communication was placed 2<sup>nd</sup> (beta = .536) in terms of variance as impacting on team effectiveness. A study undertaken by Sulon (1997) found that teams are inhibited when team members have poor levels of communication, hence having a negative impact on team effectiveness. However, Robbins (2000) believes that communication must include both the transference and understanding of meaning.

This study indicates that setting goals and understanding them was placed 3<sup>rd</sup> (beta = .256) in terms of variance as impacting on team effectiveness. A study undertaken by Fleming (2001) found that the team goals category was rated 2<sup>nd</sup> among subjects as impacting on team effectiveness. A study undertaken by Messmer (2003) found that by establishing a common goal team effectiveness was enhanced. However, research by Guzzo and Dickson (1996) indicate that when group and individual goals conflict, dysfunction's can result.

In this study, extent of participation was placed 4<sup>th</sup> (beta = .107) in terms of variance as impacting on team effectiveness. A study undertaken by Elloy (2001) found that participation and involvement create a better fit between the needs of the individual and those of the individual, and hence enhances team effectiveness. However, Delbridge and Whitfield (2001) found that in establishments with teams with responsibility for specific products or services, employees perceive that they have lesser influence over all aspects of jobs examined, and this lessens team effectiveness.

It was found in this study that conflict management among team members was placed 5<sup>th</sup> (.049) in terms of variance as impacting on team effectiveness. A study undertaken by Alper (2000) found that groups that rely on co-operative approaches to managing conflict develop efficacy that they can deal with their conflicts. This efficacy in turn results in effective team performance. However, Thoman (2000), believes that team conflict becomes unhealthy if not managed appropriately.

This research indicates that interpersonal relations was placed 6<sup>th</sup> (beta = 0.45) in terms of variance as impacting on team effectiveness. Similarly, a study undertaken by New Zealand Management (2001) found that when management promotes regular interaction between employees, team members feel positive about each other and effective teamwork occurs. However, Armstrong (1992) feels that the impact of group cohesion can result in negative as well as positive results.

It was found that, idea generation was placed 7<sup>th</sup> (beta = 0.10) in terms of variance as impacting on team effectiveness. A study undertaken by Thompson (2003) found that teams from diverse backgrounds excel in all measures of creativity, and hence enhances team effectiveness. However, Paulus (2000) believes that groups that have heterogeneous knowledge sets may not fully explore their full range of ideas.

The results thus suggest that hypothesis 3 will be accepted. These findings suggest that the sub-dimensions of team cohesiveness significantly account for the variance in team effectiveness.

### **6.2.3. The Influence of Biographical Variables on Team Effectiveness**

- In this study, it was found that age, marital status, home language and length of service do not impact on the perceptions of employees regarding the influence of the dimensions of team cohesiveness (setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations and obstacles) on team effectiveness. Similarly, a study by Sulon (1997) found that age does not impact on team effectiveness. However, Aquino (2001) found that age and length of service impact on team effectiveness in terms of extent of employee participation in teams.

The results thus suggest that hypothesis 2 will not be accepted. These findings suggest that there is no significant difference in the perceptions of employees varying in age, marital status, home language and length of services regarding the key variables of the study.

- It was found in this study that ethnic group, position and education impact on the perceptions of employees regarding the influence of the dimensions of team cohesiveness (setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations and obstacles) on team effectiveness. Similarly, Aquino (2001) found ethnic dissimilarities between white and African-American groups in teams in terms of setting goals and this impacts on team effectiveness. However, Sulon (1997) found that education and occupation does not impact on team effectiveness.

The results thus suggest that hypothesis 2 will be partly accepted. These findings suggest that there is a significant difference in the perceptions of employees varying in ethnic group, position and education regarding the key variables of the study.

- This study indicates that gender impacts on the perceptions of employees regarding the influence of the dimensions of team cohesiveness (extent of participation and idea generation) on team effectiveness. Similarly, Janssen (1999) found that gender affects the extent of participation in teams and hence impacts on team effectiveness. Due to a paucity of research relating to gender contrary findings were not found.

The results thus suggest that hypothesis 2 will be partly accepted. These findings suggest there is a significant difference in the perceptions of employees varying in gender regarding extent of participation and idea generation.

- This research indicates that gender does not impact on the perceptions of employees regarding the influence of the dimensions of team cohesiveness (setting goals and understanding them, communication, conflict management, interpersonal relations and obstacles) on team effectiveness. Similarly, Sulon (1997) found that gender does not impact on team effectiveness. Due to a paucity of research relating to gender contrary findings were not found.

The results suggest that hypothesis 2 will not be accepted. These findings suggest that there is no significant difference in the perceptions of employees varying in gender regarding setting goals and understanding them, communication, conflict management, interpersonal relations and obstacles.

### **6.3. Conclusion**

This chapter discussed the results of the study, which was then compared and contrasted to previous research. The results of the research indicated the more cohesive a team is, then team effectiveness is enhanced. The following sub-dimensions of team cohesiveness (setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations and obstacles) enhance team effectiveness.

## Chapter 7

# Recommendations and Conclusion

### 7.1. Introduction

This chapter deals with suggestions that can be implemented to enhance team effectiveness in the Police Services.

### 7.2. Recommendations

Recommendations based on research design and findings will be presented to enable teams to be more cohesive in terms of setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations and obstacles in order to improve team effectiveness.

#### 7.2.1. Recommendations based on Research Design

- **Sample – Geographical Region**

In this study, respondents were selected from only the Stanger Police station in Stanger. It will be beneficial to extend the study to other branches of the Police Services in Kwa-Zulu Natal and also in the other provinces in order to assess the perceptions of these respondents in further studies. The opinions of employees in other branches and provinces will enable the researcher to compare and contrast the results between branches and provinces.

- **Sample Size**

In this research, a sample size of only 61 was used. It would be appropriate to use a larger sample size in future studies. This will enable the researcher to assess the perceptions of other respondents in the police station and also incorporate other branches of the police services in the study, thereby increasing the validity and reliability of the results.

- **Sampling Technique**

In this study, simple random sampling was used. It would be advisable to use the stratified sampling technique. This will allow the researcher to compare results across provinces. This sampling technique, which is the most efficient probability design, is a good choice when differentiated information is needed regarding various strata (provinces) within the population known to differ in their parameters. It also ensures homogeneity within each stratum, that is, there will be very few differences on the variable of interest within each stratum.

### **7.2.2. Recommendations Based on Findings**

Recommendations with regards to the sub-dimensions (setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations, obstacles) of team cohesiveness and their influence on team effectiveness are as follows:

- **Setting Goals and Understanding Them**

According to the results, an average number of the respondents felt that team members were able to set goals and understand them jointly. It would be advisable to ensure that employees are continually involved in setting goals and understanding them. However, there appears to be a need for more consultation in terms of ensuring that team members are given regular feedback on their progress. Regular feedback is essential in ensuring that employees measure themselves continuously in terms of individual, team and organisational goals and adjust their behaviour accordingly. The following can be done to ensure that team members understand goals and are given regular feedback on their progress:-

- Clear and positive communication is the key to ensuring that the team fully understands the team's goals.

- Regular team meetings can ensure that there is regular feedback and can help to identify discrepancies between what the individual has achieved and what they would like to achieve.
- Evaluation sessions can be arranged to ensure that all team members have the same understanding of team goals and objectives.
- Goals set must be specific, measurable, attainable and relevant.
- Encourage agreement with team goals.

- **Extent of Participation**

In this study, an average number of respondents indicated that they were given the opportunity to participate in team activities. There is a need to ensure that this continues because involvement enhances team effectiveness. However, many respondents indicated it was important for them to know what their personal tasks and objectives are in order to perform well together as a team. It is imperative that all team members understand their role in the team. The following can be done to ensure that all team members participate in team activities and know their personal tasks and objectives:-

- Everyone should be involved in team activities and decisions so that they will think of the company's goals as their own.
- Equal participation and joint decision making should be encouraged.
- Each team member should be assigned personal tasks and objectives that are in line with team goals and objectives. These should be evaluated on a regular basis in order to ensure that team members understand their role in the team.
- Develop a clear understanding of the importance of the task and its contribution to the team and the organisation.
- Increase the time members spend with each other.

- **Communication**

In this study, a large number of respondents indicated that communication is good between themselves and other team members. It is important that team members continue to communicate openly and honestly with each other in order to ensure team effectiveness. However, many respondents believe that there is a need for regular meetings, mutual acceptance and regular feedback in order to ensure effective communication among team members. Constant communication is essential in ensuring that the team is effective in attaining its goals and objectives. The following can be done to ensure that there is regular communication among team members:-

- Meetings should be arranged on a regular basis to encourage face-to-face communication.
- Develop ways in which team members get to know each other better.
- All team members should be encouraged to accept responsibility for the communication process.
- Feedback on performance must be regular, timely, clear and objective.
- An open door policy should be established to encourage employees to speak to superiors or team leaders in order to reduce stress and improve trust.
- Quarterly feedback sessions should be held with team members to discuss problems and exchange relevant information.
- Ensure that team members give each other continuous peer coaching and developmental feedback.
- Have team members share information with others in the team.

- **Idea Generation**

In this research, there was consensus amongst respondents that team members shared ideas with each other. However, idea generation should be sustained and encouraged in order to stimulate team creativity. The following should be done in order to encourage idea generation:-

- Brainstorming sessions should be arranged so that ideas are encouraged and problems solved.

- Exchanging of ideas with people from other branches and other provinces.
- Having a diverse team with different levels of expertise and knowledge.
- Acknowledge that all people are different and that they all have inherent skills, which when combined with the skills of others can be beneficial to the team.
- Encourage the sharing and pooling of information and knowledge within the team on a regular basis.
- Team members should be provided with challenging tasks and objectives that will encourage their creativity.
- Team members that provide outstanding ideas and have valuable input should be recognised by praising them at team meetings, rewarding them with a special dinner invitation with top management or by offering them some token of appreciation.

- **Conflict Management**

In this study a fairly large number of respondents indicated that conflict was well managed. However, a fair number of respondents indicated that conflict can be effectively resolved through open discussion among team members. Conflict can be functional or dysfunctional, therefore effective conflict management is imperative for team success. The following should be undertaken in order to ensure effective conflict management in teams :-

- Develop conflict handling skills of each and every member of the team along with a policy for the handling of conflict.
- There should be open and honest discussion among team members on a regular basis through team meetings.
- Clear the air as a team and explore the conflict from different perspectives.
- Assess the symptoms and choose expert facilitators and managers to assist in resolving the issues.
- Team members can be sent for stress management and conflict resolution workshops to assist them in handling conflict and coping with stress.

## • **Interpersonal Relations**

In this study, the majority of the respondents indicated that interpersonal relations between team members was good. However, a large number of respondents indicated that, trust, co-operation, commitment and openness and honesty are critical in ensuring that teams remain effective. The following will assist in the development of good interpersonal relations among team members:-

- Develop an atmosphere of trust by displaying integrity, competence, loyalty, consistency and openness.
- Match actions with words and explore concerns and alternative actions.
- Team members should work together to understand each other needs and problems.
- Team members should develop a sense of belonging and commitment to the team and to each other.
- Nurture and encourage open and honest communication among team members.
- Team members should work closely together allowing them the opportunity to get to know each other better.

## • **Obstacles**

In this research, an average number of respondents indicated that there was a fair number of obstacles that impacted on team effectiveness. However, a number of respondents indicated that they are able to only work well in a team if they knew what the team's mission was. The following will assist in overcoming obstacles to team effectiveness:-

- Provide opportunities for education, training and integration of new practices in the workplace.
- Create a climate within which team members can challenge long-standing practices.
- Give rewards to groups and individuals and ensure that rewards are consistent with performance and that they are equitable.
- Develop clarity on the nature and purpose of the tasks and reinforce this regularly with the team.

- Develop a sense of pride among team members, through giving them challenging tasks, recognition for performance, feedback, guidance and responsibility for their own decision-making.
- Hold regular team building exercises so that male and female team members get to know and respect one another.

### **7.3. Recommendations for Future Research**

- The direction for future research in this area of study is abundant. The Police Services relies heavily on teamwork in order to carry out their everyday functions, so this topic can be further researched and the results of such a study would be beneficial.
- It would also be important to look at other key sub-dimensions of team cohesiveness other than those used in this study and to determine how it impacts on team effectiveness.
- Teams could also be identified, observed and members interviewed to provide more insight into team cohesiveness and its influence on team effectiveness.
- Because it is reasonable to assume that teams will continue to serve important functions in the Police Services, employees, management, researchers and citizens of this country would benefit from various aspects of effective teamwork. Team cohesiveness may be the most important factor in team effectiveness.

## **7.4. Conclusion**

It is clear that team cohesiveness impacts significantly on team effectiveness. Team cohesiveness forms an integral part of all team functioning. It enables interaction amongst different types of people and motivates individuals towards achieving personal and team goals. Effective teamwork is the key factor in ensuring that teams are successful and that employees are able to work well together. This project has highlighted some of the key elements that contribute to team cohesiveness and how it enhances team effectiveness.

The survival and success of the Police Services is dependent on effective teamwork. Effective teamwork should be an ongoing process as teamwork forms an integral part of the Police Services. Furthermore, the Police services effectiveness depends highly on effective teams to combat crime and ensure the safety of citizens in this country. Therefore, these sub-dimensions of team cohesiveness need special attention, setting goals and understanding them, extent of participation, communication, idea generation, conflict management, interpersonal relations and obstacles, in order to enhance team effectiveness. This research has identified that team cohesiveness does impact on team effectiveness. The more cohesive a team is, hence team effectiveness is enhanced. Thus this study has provided inconclusive evidence that team cohesiveness does influence team effectiveness significantly.

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# *Annexure 1*

Dear Participant

This questionnaire is designed to assess the impact of team cohesiveness on team effectiveness in the workplace. The information you provide will enable us to better understand the relationship between you and other members in your team. It will help you to realise the extent of team cohesiveness in your workplace and the extent to which this affects your teams effectiveness.

I request you to please answer as honestly as possible. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential. In order to ensure the utmost privacy, no names will be requested during this study.

Your time and co-operation is highly appreciated.

Thank You

-----

A Pramlal

Appendix A

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Please place a cross (x) in the appropriate block

1. AGE

Under 20	
21-30	
31-40	
41-50	
51-60	
61 & above	

2. GENDER

Male	
Female	

3. MARITAL STATUS

Married	
Single	
Divorced	

4. HOME LANGUAGE

English	
Afrikaans	
Zulu	
Xhosa	
Sotho	
Other (Specify)	

5. RACE

White	
Black	
Indian	
Coloured	
Other (Specify)	

6. HIGHEST EDUCATION LEVEL

Below Matric	
Matric	
Diploma	
Degree	
Other (Specify)	

7. LENGTH OF SERVICE IN YEARS

1-5	
6-10	
11-15	
16-20	
21-25	
26 & above	

8. POSITION OCCUPIED

Supervisor	
Management	
Clerical	
Other (Specify)	

9. Do you work in teams

Yes	
No	

If you are working in teams please specify which team you belong to.

**The following statements relates to how teamwork affects your job. There are no right or wrong answers. Respond to the statement, indicating the extent you agree or disagree with each statement by placing a cross (X) in the appropriate column using the following scales:**

1	Strongly Disagree	SD
2	Disagree	D
3	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	NA / ND
4	Agree	A
5	Strongly Agree	SA

1. Team members set the goals of the team jointly.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
----	---	--------	---	----

2. All team members ensure that they have the same understanding of the team's goals.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
----	---	--------	---	----

3. The goals of the team are clear, specific and measurable.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
----	---	--------	---	----

4. The team can only attain its goals when team members are given regular feedback on their progress.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
----	---	--------	---	----

5. Common team goals take precedence over individual goals.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
----	---	--------	---	----

6. All team members have equal opportunity for participation.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
----	---	--------	---	----

7. When the team encounters a problem, all team members work together to develop solutions.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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8. No single person dominates the decision-making process and all decisions are made by consensus or by majority vote.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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9. It is crucial for every member in a team to know exactly what their personal tasks and objectives are in order for the team to perform well together.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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10. Team members enjoy greater job satisfaction and job involvement when they participate in teams.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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11. Team members communicate openly and honestly with one another.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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12. Team members listen to each other and every idea is considered.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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13. I can only achieve results when communication between myself and other team members is good.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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14. Regular meetings are a good way of encouraging face-to-face communication and fostering a climate of dialogue.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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15. Mutual acceptance and regular feedback enhances communication amongst team members.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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16. Team members are encouraged to generate additional ideas.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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17. The team is focused and energetic because members of the team build on each other's ideas.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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18. Brainstorming is an effective way of generating many ideas from all team members.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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19. Team members find common ground among the ideas expressed in the team and are motivated to work on something because it is interesting, involving, exciting, satisfying or personally challenging.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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20. Diverse teams result in more and better ideas because team members have different abilities, expertise and knowledge.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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21. Team members are able to accept and handle their conflict effectively.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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22. Team conflict is healthy because it allows members to explore more options and develop better solutions.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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23. It is important to bring the whole group together to clear the air and explore conflict from different perspectives.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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24. Conflict destroys the morale of teams or individual team members.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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25. Conflict can be effectively resolved through open discussion among team members.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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26. Team members are conscious of each other's needs.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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27. Being able to trust each other is essential for good relationships with others.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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28. A team will always work better when its members co-operate with each other.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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29. I believe that our team can only perform well if every member is committed to the task that the team must fulfill.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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30. Team members must be comfortable with discussing matters and concerns openly and honestly with each other for the team to be effective.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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31. Communication barriers such as language and culture have a negative impact on the team.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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32. I can only work well in a team if I know exactly what the team's mission is.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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33. An obstacle to team effectiveness occurs when teams make collective decisions that individuals know are poor ones.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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34. Gender differences in teams often lead to misunderstandings, reduced morale and ultimately poor performance.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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35. Most teams are effective only when given prompt recognition or rewards.

SD	D	NA /ND	A	SA
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