

Group Dynamics
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Lecture – 01
Introduction of Groups: Part I

Hello friends. I am Dr. Pooja Garg Associate Professor of Psychology in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at IIT, Roorkee. I will be running a course in the field of psychology titled Group Dynamics run under NPTEL Ministry of Education. This course comprises of 8 modules run over 8 weeks. So, this course is for UG students coming from different backgrounds like engineering sciences, natural sciences, management and social science background.

This course is very useful for management professionals, industry professionals, healthcare professional and management professionals. So, before starting the discussion further I would like to give an overview of this course that what this course deals about. So, the course titled Group Dynamics deals about the group behaviour or understanding the behaviour of the members of the group.

What is the purpose that a person or an individual joins a group, how the group is structured, what are the various process that undertakes within the group or between the group that is intergroup and intragroup processes, how the conflicts can be resolved within the group, what is the process of formation of groups, how behaviour can be influenced based on various tags or techniques.

What are the leadership styles that helps a group to perform and function better and reach the common goal. So, coming to the more details of this course I will start with the first module of this course that is introduction to groups. This section will deal about that what is a group, how group can be defined, what are the process and structures of the group, different kinds of groups.

How a group is formed, what are the process that an individual goes through when a group is formed and at the same time what are the different kinds of groups that are being formed at various levels at the individual level, organizational level or even at behavioural level which

means that there are certain groups which work to help individuals to overcome their psychological problems as well. So, coming to the main point that how we can define a group. **(Refer Slide Time: 03:14)**

UNIT-I
Introduction to Groups

- Group dynamics refers to a system of behaviors and psychological processes occurring within groups (intragroup) or between groups (intergroup)
- The study of group dynamics can be useful in understanding decision-making behavior, attitudes, opinions, beliefs, interrelationships, discrimination, communication, perceptions and attributions
- *Kurt Lewin* (1930s) popularized the term “group” and stated a normative view about group dynamics which describes that how groups are formed, their structure and processes, and how they function and affect individual member, other group members and the organization
- Group dynamics emphasizes democratic leadership, member participation, and overall cooperation. It also encompasses various aspects of group process such as: interpersonal attraction, social relationships, conflict resolution, communication, conformity, deviance, and group therapy



Let us start with the first slide that is introduction to groups. So, when we talk about group dynamics definitely we are talking about groups. So, we can define “group dynamics as a system of behaviours and psychological process occurring within groups that is intragroups” and between groups that is intergroups that means when we are talking about group dynamics it is not only about within the group itself.

It is also about how to deal with the other groups that exist within an organization or society. So, group dynamics is actually is referred to a set of system that how we interact with each other and understand behaviour of the other groups at the same time. So, it can be useful in understanding decision-making procedures, attitude, opinions, beliefs, values, interrelationships, discrimination, communication, perceptions and attributions.

So, these are the different aspects of group dynamics that we are going to cover in further discussions that how group behaviour is classified or it can be understood on these various aspects of human behaviour. So, Kurt Lewin was the first person who popularize this term group dynamics and he gave a very normative view that describes that how a group is formed, what are the process of the groups.

How they function and influence other members of the groups and how members of the group try to function based on the designated common goal. So, Kurt Lewin was the first person who

popularize this term and emphasized much more on democratic leadership styles, participation of an individual based on cooperation and at the same time competition, interrelationships, conflicts and various types of process such as attraction.

Social relationships, conflict resolution, communication, conformity, deviance and most importantly group therapy. As just now I said that when we will talk about various kinds of groups then definitely we are going to talk about some different groups which not only talk about individual functioning or group functioning or organizational functioning it actually talks also about individual behaviour to deal or cope up with different kind of psychological problems.

So, coming to defining the groups. So, a very layman understanding is that when two or more than two people come together to achieve a common goal then it is formed or it is defined as a group, but the most important part to define a group is that what are the characteristics of a group, no doubt people have a common goal, but at the same time how they come together and on what basis.

So, when people tend to interact with each other they try to interact, they try to express their desires, their motives and when they reach a common goal and motives then ultimately they are motivating each other, they are stimulating each other, there is a common platform with common views, shared goals, ideas and values and beliefs and that point is a point where the exact formation of group process starts on.

So, when we are defining that what is a group it can be defined as when two or more than two people come together with common objectives who are stimulating to each other have common loyalty, participate in common activities and have a recognized structure. Just to reach the goal they have to have recognized structure and at the same time structured interaction because the goal is common.

So, the most important characteristics of any group is that the most important characteristics is that definitely group goal is common, but on top of it the members are interdependent and they share a structured interaction and at the same time they are very much interactive with each other. So, this is how a group can be defined. So, a group can be referred to as a organize system

of two or more people who have a common meaning and evaluation of themselves and come together to achieve a common goal.

The next question is that why people join groups? No doubt people have common objective, but at the same time there are some psychological insecurities, some threats a person confronts in day-to-day life and when the person tries to strive in that threatening environment the person wants to affiliate to some or the other person or group.

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Why People Join Groups?

- **Security**- by joining a group, individuals can reduce the insecurity of “standing alone”
- **Status**- inclusion in a group that is viewed as important provides recognition and status for its members
- **Self-esteem**- groups can provide people with feelings of self-worth
- **Affiliation**- groups can fulfil social needs
- **Power**- what cannot be achieved individually often becomes possible through group action There is power in numbers
- **Goal Achievement**- when it takes more than one person to accomplish a particular task-there is a need to pool talents, knowledge, or power in order to complete a job. In such cases, management will rely on formal groups



So, there are several reasons that why a person joins groups. So, some reasons have been consolidated under certain headings that the first reason that why a person joins group is security that means by joining any group an individual feel secure, he feels safe from the external threats and danger and he can reduce the insecurity of being standing alone. Definitely when the partner is there, when a co-worker is there.

A colleague is there or member is there then we feel more secured. So, security is the foremost reason that why a person joins group. The second is status that means inclusion in a group that is viewed as important provide recognition and status for its members. Definitely when any group which has high performance ratings which is functioning very well, that have achieved high targets in a very collective and organized fashion.

Then definitely the group receives lot of recognition and acknowledgement that recognition and acknowledgement becomes an attraction to the other person and has a motivation to join a particular group because that group will give that person status a standing where he or she can

affiliate. So, status is also the second reason that why a person joins group. The other third reason is self esteem that means groups can provide people with feelings of self worth.

When the person is joining any group he has certain skills, knowledge and abilities, how to unleash those knowledge, skills and abilities, how to develop some more knowledge, skill and ability and getting a platform to learn more or enhances personality and behaviour or any aptitude or ability then it enhances an individual's self esteem. This adds more weightage to an individual self worth.

So, self esteem is a major reason that why a person joins groups. The another reason is affiliation. Group can fulfill social needs. We all are human beings, every individual is a social animal, person wants to affiliate with another in exchange of affection, in exchange of companionship everybody requires this basic need. To satisfy this basic need people have a desire to affiliate with the other group or other person.

So, when group is being formed or any group that exist the person has a strong need and desire to satisfy the sense of belongingness. So, affiliation is the major reason that why a person joins groups to affiliate with one another, to satisfy the social needs of an individual. The other is power. When majority is there definitely power is there. Sometimes there are situations in life in any organization as well that people find it difficult or almost impossible to achieve a certain goal.

To achieve that goal a person joins any group where there is more power there is more support and that power gives more self esteem, worth, affiliation and belongingness and security within that group. So, power is a main reason that why a person joins group that what cannot be achieved individually often becomes possible through group action there is power in numbers.

When there is more majority, when there is more support in the group to achieve a particular goal then the person feels more secure, more safe, less threatened and he is more motivated to perform well. So, gaining power by joining any group is also a reason that why a person joins group. Next and the last is goal achievement. Not every person can achieve all the goals all alone.

But when people together to achieve a common goal and between that process the person also achieves some small, small individual goals. So, goal achievement is the main reason that when a person accomplish a particular task then there is a pool of talent that people come together and they try to complete that in a very orderly fashion and to complete that job when people are investing all their time, energy, knowledge, skills and abilities.

Then there is a formation or structure of a group that is the formal structure which helps the person to achieve a common goal. So, these are the reasons that why a person joins group that is security, status, self esteem, affiliation, power and goal achievement. Now based on these reasons only there can be a number of types of groups, it can be informal, it can be formal, it can be any social group, it can be any religious group.

It can be any psychological group or group work where the person is able, he is receiving a platform to satisfy his own needs, to develop his own abilities and more importantly to resolve his day-to-day life conflicts at the same time. So, there are several reasons that why a person joins group. Now, when we are talking about that why people join groups some theories have been propounded which gives us enough explanation that there can be several reasons that why a person joins group.

Just now we have just discussed in a very brief manner that these are the reasons, but apart from these reasons some psychologists have identified certain theories that there are certain factors that forces a person to join a group or automatically it becomes a natural process, sometimes it is geographical location or physical proximity that makes a person to join a group.

Sometimes it is similarity in attitudes, believes and ideas that people join group and they are attracted to each other, sometimes people join groups because there is some reward cost outcome incurred in that process of interaction and people join groups and sometimes there are other psychological reasons that why a person joins group.

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Theories Explaining Why People Join Groups?

Propinquity Theory	Exchange Theory	<p>1. Propinquity Theory: This theory emphasizes that individuals affiliate with one another because of spatial or geographical proximity. For example; in an organization employees who work in the same area of the plant or office or managers with offices close to one another would more probably form into groups than would those who are not physically located together</p> <p>2. Exchange Theory: This theory is based on <i>reward-cost outcome of interactions</i>. That is, rewards from interactions gratify needs, while costs incur anxiety, frustrations, or fatigue. Therefore, propinquity, interaction, and common attitudes all have a significant role in exchange theory</p>
Balance Theory	Homan's Theory	

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So, if we talk about the theories that explain why people join group there are four theories which we can discuss right now. The first is Propinquity theory, the second is Exchange theory. The third is Balance theory and the fourth is Homan's theory. So, let us first discuss about propinquity theory. Now, this theory emphasizes that individuals affiliate with one another because of special or geographical location.

For example, in any organization when employees are sitting next to each other within proximity or they are very close to each other then they have more chances to interact with each other. Their interactions are very frequent and then they tend to form a group. So, geographical or physical proximities is one of the main reason that why people join group. So, this theory emphasizes that individuals affiliates with one another because the special or geographical proximity.

For example, in an organization employees who work in the same area of the plant or office or managers with offices close to one another would more probably form into groups that is so natural, but yes this is a natural process, but at the same time this becomes a very strong reason that why a person joins group. It can even in small classrooms when students are sitting next to each other they are more close to each other.

They get more chances to interact with each other in day-to-day life in school life and they form a group because there is more sharing of ideas, more sharing of emotions, more sharing of values. So, propinquity theory is one theory that explains that why people join groups. The

other is exchange theory. This is completely based on reward cost outcome that when we are interacting with the other person then there is some exchange of ideas.

And at the same time there is sharing of emotions, beliefs and values. So, when we are exchanging or we are interacting with the other person then there is more sharing, there are more interactions, there is more sharing of sentiments and emotions. So, reward is that we are sharing and if we are not sharing our emotions then there is outcome can be or cost that a person incurs can be negative in form of psychological problems because when there is no sharing there is more frustration, there is more anger, there is more fatigue.

So, according to exchange theory this theory is based on reward cost outcome of interactions that when you are interacting with the other person it is not only reward then you are paying the cost of that interaction at the same time that is rewards from interactions gratify needs; gratify needs in form of social needs, in form of knowledge, skills, abilities, emotions, sentiments, values and beliefs.

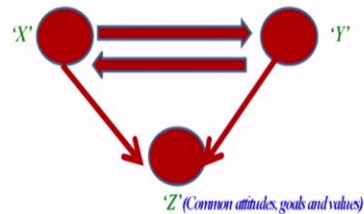
While cost incur anxiety, frustration or fatigue because when there is no sharing then there can be some psychological impact because we are isolated, we are alienated. So, to maintain that kind of psychological balance within one self then that exchange is very important. So, therefore propinquity interaction and common attitudes all have a significant role in exchange theory.

Even when two people sitting close to each other and not interacting in that case also people can pay the cost because there is no sharing, there is no gratification of needed any level whether it is individual, it is organization or psychological. So, when we talk about exchange theory it is a reward cost outcome of interactions.

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3. **Balance Theory:** This theory was developed by *Theodore Newcomb* and stated that people are attracted to one another on the basis of similar attitudes and commonly relevant objectives and goals. For example, individual 'X' will interact and establish a relationship with individual 'Y' because of common attitude, goals, and values 'Z'

Once the relationship is formed, the members strive to maintain a symmetrical balance between attraction and the common attitudes goals, and values. And if imbalance occurs, an attempt is made to restore the balance and if not, the relationship dissolves



The third is balanced theory. This theory was developed by Theodore Newcomb and stated that people are attracted to one another on the basis of similar attitude and commonly relevant objects and goals. So, that means when two people who have common attitudes, values, beliefs and ideas they are attracted to each other this is so natural and when people are attracted to each other it can be two people or more than two people and they form a group.

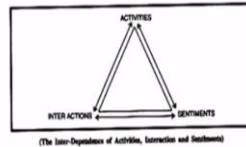
Now, in this theory the formation of group based on similarity is not the end thing. This theory extends further that once the group is formed based on similarities then it becomes a foremost responsibility of all the group members to maintain that balance based on similarities and if the group fails to maintain that balance then again members make an effort to restore that balance so that the group can function effectively.

But there are instances sometimes the conflicts get increased or aggravates and people tend to maintain that balance and in that case the group sometimes ceases to exist. So, when we talk about balance theory maintaining balance is the most important thing. Coming together is easy, but maintaining that balance based on similarity is more of a responsible action that every member has to execute when the group is functional.

Else the group either can lose that balance and become imbalanced, restore it and sometimes the group fails to restore that balance and the group ceases to exist.

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4.Homan's Theory: This theory was developed by *George C. Homan*. According to Homan, a more comprehensive theory of group formation comes from the theory based on *activities, interactions, and sentiments*. These three elements are related to one another. The more activities a person share, the more will be interactions and stronger will be their sentiments. Thus, the major element is interaction, as persons in a group interact with one another not just in physical propinquity, but also to accomplish group goals, such as cooperation and problem-solving



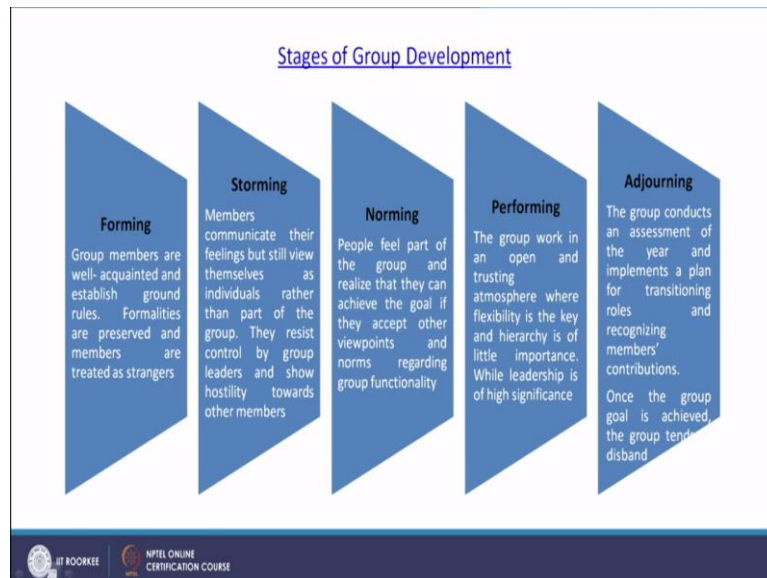
And the last is Homan's theory. This theory was developed by George C Homan. According to Homan a more comprehensive theory of group formation comes from the theory based on activities, interactions and sentiments. These three elements are related to one another why because when there are more activities within the group then there is more interaction, then there is more sharing of knowledge, there is more sharing of information sharing.

There is more sharing of abilities or developing abilities and skills and when the activities become more focused or more dominant then the person become attached to that activity, to that task and the members and the sentiments also get affected. So, according to Homan when the three factors activities, interaction and sentiments come together then the group is being formed.

And other members also get attracted to each other because there is more activity, there is more result oriented task that has been performed by the group members and there is more interaction. So, thus the main element to interaction as person in the group interact with one another not just in physical propinquity, but also to accomplish group goals such as cooperation.

And problem solving because when sentiments are involved in any group functioning then definitely problems can arise and at the same time problem has to be resolved and there has to be more cooperation because there can be conflict and that conflict can only be erased when there is more cooperation.

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Next comes stages of group development. This is the most important part of group dynamics when we talk about that how group is being formed. It is not a very immediate process that people come together with a common purpose and they start functioning. No, every member or members when come together for a common purpose or common objective then every group.

And every member within that group has to undergo a process which helps a group to stabilize based on their efficiency, effectiveness and at the same time based on the functionality of that group. So, when we are talking about that how the group is developed then we have to talk about the stages of group development that every group undergoes five stages of development which makes a group extremely stable and functional.

So, this process is divided into five steps forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning. So, forming is the first stage where members are well acquainted, they know the members superficially, but at the same time they will not accept the other member as a member of the group and they are very much considering themselves as an individual not as a complete group.

So, when we are talking about the first stage of the group development forming the group members are well acquainted and established ground rules, formalities are preserved and members are treated as strangers. Group rules are also there that this is how we will function because we have a common objective, but still people are very rigid in their own way because they are not flexible.

They have a common objective in the mind, but they have a lot of inflexibility in their behaviour that how to accommodate the other member and how to adjust within that group itself. So, forming is a first stage which is very much formal in its own way when people are acquainted, but at the same time they are not connected to each other, but they are establishing the ground rules that how the group will function.

So, it takes a lot of time for all the group members to accept each other as a member and at the same time understand the ground rules that how the group will function. Now, once this stage is over that is the forming stage is over the members reach a second stage that is the storming because ground rules have been set, people have a lot of identity crisis at the same time because they want to establish their own identity.

And at the same time the members have to accommodate within the group members also. So, at this stage members communicate their feelings, but still view themselves as individuals rather than part of the group. They resist the control by group leader and show hostility towards other members. Ground rules are there, but who will monitor the functioning of the group, who will monitor the ground rules that whether.

And how the ground rules have to be established and followed there has to be a group leader. Now, group leader is there, but the other members sometimes exhibit a lot of hostility and aggression to accept the leadership. So, in this stage there are conflicts, in this stage there are clashes, the group leader is being resisted by the other members because every member is striving to establish their own identity.

And at the same time they also go through a sort of pressure that they have to accommodate within the group itself. So, there is a lot of turmoil in the second stage of group development that is storming, but there is a point when members tend to understand that if they have to reach the common goal then they have to accept the leader, they have to accept the ground rules.

And they have to accept that accommodation is required to become a part of the group rather than individual. So, after forming once storming is also being crossed the group reaches the third stage of norming. This is the stage when people accept the ground rules that how they will be followed, they establish the norms, they establish the roles, they establish the duties and responsibilities that who will perform what.

And based on those rules and regulations the group tend to reach a stage when they are accepting everything along with the leadership style and they are functioning at that stage. So, norming is a stage where people feel part of the group, they realize that they can achieve the goal if they accept other viewpoints and norms regarding group functionality that means how the group will process based on norms, rules, responsibilities and duties.

Once the norms are being established the group reaches the stage of performing. This is the stage which is very important when we talk about group process because once the ground rules norms have been established the only thing that is more important at this stage is to what extent members are trusting each other, to what extent a members are following the leaders.

So, there has to be more flexibility in the atmosphere, in the environment and hierarchy is of little importance. So, when we are talking about the performing stage of group development the group works in an open and trusting atmosphere where flexibility is the key and hierarchy is of little importance and leadership is of high significance because the leader plays a major role because the leader assigns roles, duties, responsibilities and establish the norms that what is to be done and what not ought to be done.

So, performing is the stage where the group becomes highly functional, but this stage can only be reached when members are flexible, they accept themselves as part of the group, not as an individual and work coherently to reach the common goal. Now, once the group performs in a very effective and efficient manner the group tends to reach the goal and once the group reaches the goal it reaches a stage of adjourning.

That means the group conducts an assessment of the year and implements a plan for transacting roles and recognizing members contribution and once the group goal is achieved, the group tends to disband that means once the objective is achieved by the group members the performance of every member is assessed, members are being rewarded for their performance.

The group also being assessed based on their performance and to what extent they have received or reached a status and have received the recognition and acknowledgement for their performance and once the group reaches the stage of group succession or reaches the stage of

completion then the members tend to disband and they have another desire to join another group.

So, this stage of group development that is forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning these five stages play a major role when we are establishing a group because group members need to shape their or modify their behaviour to a larger extent because lot of flexibility, lot of modification is required, lot of shaping of behaviour is required to form a group and to function within the group itself.

So, these are the stages of group development which every group goes to each and every stage and helps the group to be more successful in their performance. So, I will stop here and we will continue this discussion in the second lecture. Thank you.