

Advance Course in Social Psychology

Lecture 25: Conflicting Behavior- Part-II

Hello friends, welcome back. Let us continue with our discussion with contracting behavior. In the previous discussion, I talked about different kind of contracting behaviors based on cooperation, competition and game theory and how cooperation and competition can be further described based on dilemmas that are being experienced in any social situation. In this discussion, I am going to talk about factors influencing cooperation. What factors influence cooperation where person tries to push their selfish interest aside and they try to usually respond in a very cooperative manner or helpful manner that the other party is being benefited maximum. The first factor that influences cooperation is reciprocity.

As the term implies, it is a social norm of responding to a positive action with another positive action. If we are helping the other person, the other person also helps us. This is a very common social norm or notion that how people tend to cooperate. This is reciprocity.

It also it is probably the most significant factor in influencing cooperation and that is when one cooperates with us and push their selfish interest aside, we usually respond in the same kind. When the other person is helping us while pushing his self-interest aside, then we also respond in the same manner while pushing our own self-interest aside. This is a most basic and simplest principle of reciprocation. People tend to feel obligated and return favors after people do favors for them. So, it is not given to take, but it is a process of cooperation in form of reciprocation.

When we are talking about reciprocation, then it also involves a process of reciprocal altruism. This is a form where the person is not only helping the other person to meet his objectives or meet a shared goal, but it is more of extension of survival to the fittest or survival to the best of an individual. A very good example can be of two families where one family has surplus food and the other family is deprived of food. There is scarcity of food in one family. So, the person or the family who has surplus of food has very less value for the food and if when shared with the family who is experiencing scarcity of food, the value of food for that family is very high.

But if shared by that family to the other family who is experiencing scarcity, then the chances of survival of that family goes high that is for sure and the person can extend his sustenance and family for a longer period of time. This is cooperation. Now again when the person same family is also responding to the family with which has surplus of food, then in that case the chances of survival of that family also increases and at the same time there is reciprocation and there is altruism. Here altruism is helping the other person while not expecting anything in return. Now in both the families the idea is that since both have reciprocated, both have cooperated while not expecting any anything in return, both the families are experiencing maximum benefits in terms of extended chances of survival.

This is reciprocal altruism. This suggests that sharing resources such as food increases the chances of the survival and the likelihood that they will pass their genes on to next generation. In they tend to share in such a way that the benefits are relatively great for the recipient that is the family which is experiencing scarcity of food while the cost is relatively small or minimal for the provider that is the family who has surplus of food has less value for the food. But when they are cooperating with each other that means when their situation is also reversed for both the families, then also there is cooperation and the benefit is maximum for both the parties because the chances of survival has increased. In contrast organisms that act in a purely selfish manner do not gain maximum benefits.

Now in this case there is reciprocal altruism because the families are not expecting anything in return and at the same time they are reciprocating to each other in need. Had it been that one family was only helping the other person for their own personal interest then one family at one point of time would have experienced minimum benefits. This is the idea of reciprocation under which reciprocal altruism is the most important factor which influences cooperation. The other is personal orientation this indicates distinct three distinct orientations towards situations involving cooperation that how people cooperate it can be a selfish motive, it can be a mutual as well or it can be individualistic. Now according to social psychologists there are three orientations that why people cooperate.

Cooperative orientation in which individuals prefer to maximize joint outcome received by all the persons involved. All the group members will receive all the maximum benefits when people are cooperating with each other. In individualistic orientation people focus only on their outcomes and they are not concerned that how much benefit has been earned by the other members. Maybe they have also earned some benefit but the person who is individualistic in nature will only think about gaining maximum and not at the parity with the benefit shared by the other members. And the other is competitive orientation in which people focus primarily on defeating others and obtaining better outcomes than other persons do.

In this kind of cooperation the person has selfish motive the person can defeat at the expense of competition or at the expense of exploiting the other person in such a way that he has received maximum outcomes and the other person is bearing minimum benefits from that act of cooperation. So these three orientations that is cooperative, individualistic and competitive orientation it all involves cooperation but what are the what is the motive of an individual that depends on an individual's discretion that how the maximum benefits are being shared at individualistic level or group level this is personal orientation. The other is communication this suggests the more we communicate the more we find solution to the problems or the best option which is suitable for every member of the group and it tend to cooperate in a way that those solutions are being adopted by the members and everybody enjoys maximum benefits that is the purpose of communication. But in many situations group members do not induce cooperation even communicating with others and sometimes use communication primarily to threaten one another with the result at cooperation does not occur. Sometimes what happens

when the communication channels are open people tend to dominate the other members of the group based on their opinion or imposing their own opinion and in such circumstances the cooperation the process of cooperation is not induced and people fail to find a common solution to the problem which can also give maximum benefits.

So these this is a most common way to maximize or induce cooperation but under circumstances when cooperation is not induced then members or group fail to enjoy maximum benefits. Communication although communication can only lead to cooperation which provides certain conditions to be made that is to follow norms that induce commitment and cooperation. Another way to quote is that when people are more adamant and insisting to impose their own attitude on to others or own decision on to others then cooperation is not induced. But if any decision is has to be imposed while following the norms of their group structures then cooperation and commitment can be induced. So cooperation is the most important factor that influences as communication is the most important factor which induces cooperation.

This is another factor that induces or influences cooperation and the other is discontinuity effect the most complex and crucial factor which induces cooperation. In general what happens two groups are competing with each other to have maximum benefits but under certain social situations there are situations or cases when two groups are competing but may be the members of the group are more willing to cooperate with each other while understanding their constraints by understanding their limits by understanding the scarcity of the resources and how they can win maximum benefits if they cooperate. Now here may be the leaders of the group are in conflicting situation but the members are willing to cooperate with each other. This actually creates a type of discontinuity effect where the greater competitiveness displayed between different or interacting groups relative to the competitiveness displayed when individuals interact with individuals. That means group members are more willing to cooperate and the leaders are more explicitly competing with each other that competition is distinctive.

So given the group competition over scarce resources it is believed to lead to group level conflict definitely when two groups are fighting or competing for scarcity scarce resources then it leads to a conflict situation that who will win those resources. It has been asserted that the link between competition and conflict also considerably is more powerful between groups than between individuals. As I mentioned earlier just now that when the scarcity of resources is been experienced by two groups there is a conflicting situation but the members do understand that this scarcity of resources can only be overcome when they are more into cooperative orientation. And once they join together to make a collective unit then individual orientation favoring cooperation tend to be overshadowed by competitive orientations of the group. That means the more members are willing to cooperate the more competitive orientation can be reduced.

So, this is a discontinuity effect. So, it is suggested that it emerges due to a number of causes such as greed, competition, anonymity, fear, in-group favoritism and diffusion of responsibility. Scarcity of resources is one reason but at the other side some other factors also evolve which leads to conflicting situations in any group. It can be favoritism, it can be greed, it can be anonymity, it can be fear or it can be diffusion of responsibility that is social loafing or facilitation. So, under such circumstances to overcome this kind of conflicting situations groups tend to collaborate, cooperate, come as a one unit or a collective unit and they try to choose to cooperate rather than compete.

For example, any business would form a consortium in association with the members of the other group members because it is difficult for any business to overcome all the sectors in the market rather than forming a consortium. A very good example can be of any hospitality management where hospitals cooperate while creating a consortium. Consortium so that one specializes in heart surgery, another in reconstructive surgery and so on. Since one practitioner medical practitioner cannot offer all the different kind of medical services to the public. So, different doctors with different specialization will form consortium.

They tend to cooperate under one heading that is consortium and then create different departments under that consortium. So, that medical facilities can reach out to the public. These facilities for each of these specialties are to experience that makes are so expensive that it makes more sense for the hospitals to divide rather than to compete by offering services. So, one hospital cannot compete with the other hospital because to both the hospitals cannot offer all the expensive medical facilities. But they if they tend to cooperate with each other form a consortium and bring all the medical facilities or specializations under one roof then there is reduced competition and more of competition.

So, under such such situation what happens that may be the members are willing to form consortium may be not the leaders. But as soon as the cooperation is reduced within the group members then the leaders can also come together to form a consortium and cooperate. So, with these increase interaction between groups they they will become less competitive and influence cooperation and they tend to form a consortium and association whose members cooperate with one another and become more identifiable. Such intergroup cooperation is difficult to achieve, but at the same time this tendency is known as the discontinuity effect. The discontinuity effect is a greater tendency of groups than individuals to compete in a mixed motive situation.

The more you compete the more you bear the losses, the more you cooperate the more you bear the benefits you reap the benefits. So, mixed motive here is that the may be the leaders of the two competing groups are not ready to cooperate, but members are willing to cooperate. This is a mixed motive situation, but as soon as members show their willingness in a very explicit manner then it reduces the tendency of competition and induce cooperation and this tendency is known as the discontinuity effect. The discontinuity of competition so, this is

discontinuity effect. A very good example here in form of consortium is the example of hospital which I discussed just now this is a pictorial example of discontinuity effect that how cardiologist ENT, pediatrician, orthopedic, gynecologist, general physician, dermatologist and oncologist are under one roof and how the cooperation is leading the consortium of hospitals to offer medical services to common people in a more smooth and lucid manner.

So, this is how we can say that factors influences cooperation in form of reciprocation, in form of cooperative orientations, in form of discontinuity effect. So, we are through with this discussion. Thank you so much. Thank you