

## **Advance Course in Social Psychology**

### **Lecture 35: Group Behaviour- Part II**

Hello friends, welcome back. Let us continue with our discussion based on the previous lecture that is group behavior. Today I am going to discuss about types of groups. In our previous discussion I have talked about meaning, definition, why people join groups based on some theoretical foundations and how the group develops with some important approaches. Today I will talk about types of groups based on the social perspectives and organizational perspective. When people have different perspectives to become a member of the group then definitely it becomes very much important and imperative to discuss about that people join what kind of groups.

It is not only one or two groups, there are several forms of groups that people tend to get associated and tend to satisfy their needs, their desires and lay foundation or platforms for their own personal and professional growth. So based on the discussion there are different kind of groups such as primary and secondary group, formal and informal groups, in group and out groups, interest and friendship group and dyad and triad. Every group has its own limitations, every type has its own significance based on the purpose of an individual that why he or she wants to join a particular group and every type of group has its own functions based on its significance. So let us start our discussion with the first type that is primary and secondary group.

This is the most simplest form of classification where people understanding group behavior then this becomes like very straight forward answer that there can be two types of groups, primary and secondary groups apart from different kind of groups. Now these kind of groups are something which has its own significance based on social psychology and organizational behavior. It has its implications. Charles Holston Cooley introduced this term primary and secondary groups and identified very different characteristics or the purpose of these two kind of groups. So according to Cooley primary groups are continuous groups which involve face to face interaction among the members and the ties are based on affection that means members of the group are emotionally attached to each other.

They share ties of affection or emotions with each other and there is a feeling of we. People tend to relate so much intricately to each other that there is no space for individualism rather there is a sense of we-ness among members and they form a relationship. So one member will have different kind of relationships with the other members. It can be for example a family, a child will have different relationships, multifaceted relationships in that family group, mother, father, siblings and grandparents. This is a primary group where members share each other's emotions and feelings.

They tend to interact in their day to day life and the relationship is based on affection and it is not on exchange. So this is the most important feature of any primary group where the

relationships are maintained based on emotions and not task orientation. It can be a form of family, it can be a form of play groups, it can be a community under this category. So this is primary group. The other is secondary groups.

These groups are characterized by limited face to face interaction that means people just meet each other for a purpose and they tend to disband. Whereas in primary group there is no task orientation and people tend to continue their interactions in day to day life. They will meet frequently with each other but in secondary groups people tend to meet each other only based on task orientation. There is no permanence of the membership. Members come, they meet their goals and tend to disband.

There is no permanent membership of these kind of groups and there are ties of exchange and the relationships are task oriented. Task oriented here means based on community exchange. These groups can be defined by organization structure and are directed towards organizational goals. For example, trade unions or it can be group of assembly line workers who fall under this category. It can be a form of committee, it can be in form of task group that people come together based on their expertise.

They solve the problem, they meet the objective and tend to disband. So the interaction is limited, it is face to face but limited. The relationships are completely based on exchange and the membership is not permanent like in that of primary group where members are intact and they have a desire to live with each other. So this is one kind of group that is primary and secondary group. The other is formal and informal groups.

These two groups are formed within organizations but the objective of these two groups is entirely different. When we talk about formal groups they are established under legal and formal authority to achieve the end results of the group. For instance, any task group or committee has been formed where members come together based on their expertise, knowledge, skills and abilities. They implement, they execute their knowledge skills to formulate any policy or procedure. They execute, the goal is achieved and that group is being designated or designed by any higher authority.

This is a formal group. These groups are established under legal and formal authority. Now these groups have formal and legal authority means that these groups are being formed based on some legalities, based on some rights, based on some regulations that how it will function. Apart from this, these groups are structured based on specific allocation of task and clear delegation of duties among members. For example, an airline flight crew.

We all travel in an airplane and the members of the crew have their designated roles and those roles have certain legalities. There are rights, there are constraints to perform their duty, be a

technical aspect or be it hospitality. But every crew member is doing their own duty as designated by the higher authority or it can be a task group, it can be a command group or it can be a standing committee which has been structured for some emergent resolution of any conflict and people with expertise, experience and knowledge come together to find a solution based on legalities to resolve any conflict. This is the nature of any formal group. It is structured in any organization.

So the functions of formal groups are the accomplishment of goals in a less haphazardly state when a legal system has been followed to structure any group. Then some legalities, constraints, rules are being followed to structure that formal group. There is coordination of activities based on the assignment of roles among members of the group. There are logical relationships that means there is a structure, there is a hierarchy that which person or member will report to which kind of authority. This makes the whole process channelized and less haphazard and moreover there is group cohesiveness as a result of common objectives.

For instance any ad hoc committee which is constituted for some emergent resolution of any conflict then all the members come together with some cohesiveness to resolve the conflict not to increase the conflict. This is the hidden agenda or desire of the group members that the conflict should be resolved. It can be any commanding groups, it can be any task group when members come together to provide some feedback to the performance of the employees or to resolve any conflict then they have a common objective that is cohesiveness and they confirm to the norms of that groups that under what circumstances the group has been formed and how the members who are coming together have to function to resolve any issue or form any policy or procedure. So the functions of formal groups are accomplishment of groups, coordination of activities, logical relationships, group cohesiveness and conformity. Next comes the informal groups.

These groups are formed naturally among people and the management do not have any control on the formation of these kind of informal groups because members come together, they interact, members interact with each other irrespective of their designation of designation in their departments or across the departments and they tend to maintain interrelationships based on physical or spatial or geographical proximity and based on common interest. So the idea of understanding informal group is that even at workplaces people come together to fulfill their social or psychological needs and it helps a person to vent out their frustrations and share their emotional feelings or problems that they encounter at workplaces. Now these groups can be in form of play groups, it can be in form of peer groups or any social club where people tend to unleash their talents, they unleash their creativity and they finally fulfill their social needs. So these are the informal groups in any organization, types of informal groups. Now it is not only about types of formal groups, informal groups in organizations also have different forms.

How people tend to interact informally with each other? So members tend to interact with each other at different levels. They are horizontal clicks, vertical clicks and random groups.

Now click here means a small group which is formed within a group itself. Maybe there is a group of or any specific department in any company or organization it has 20 members. Within those 20 members, 3 or 4 members will be very close to each other and they will not allow other members of their department to come and join that group.

That group of 2 or 3 people within those group of 20 people that is known as a click. The horizontal, vertical and random groups are form of informal groups. So this classification was given by Delton in 1951 which are horizontal clicks. These encompass members who operate at the same level within the same area. For instance, may be at the first floor in a particular office members would interact informally within that area itself.

There is physical proximity at the same time they are in the same department or in same organization and they tend to interact with each other at the same level. Maybe even the designation is same, maybe the middle level managers. This is a horizontal click. The other is the vertical click. This in them pass individuals from different levels within a given area or department.

Maybe people come together informally in a similar department from different hierarchies. Even the vice president can also meet and interact informally with the middle level managers or vice versa. So this is vertical click. The members may be superior or subordinate but they maintain an informal relationship they interact with each another to meet their goals and at the same time to look for some new opportunities. It is not only that members can only look for any opportunity while being in the formalized system.

When we interact we tend to share so many information with each other that opens different areas of knowledge and people can be become aware of about their own potentials, about their own capacities and competencies and try to learn and unleash more and more. This is the idea of vertical and horizontal click. The other is random groups. This group comprises of members coming from different areas of the department and they tend to interact in a very different form because people come from different departments and get the task done. So any project that has been assigned to a group of members may be they will come from different areas of the organization.

They come together, they meet informally, they share their ideas and goals and tend to achieve the task. But this kind of interaction is absolutely informal in nature where there is no authority or hierarchy. There is only simple interaction. The third type of group is in-group and out-group. This term was popularized by William Sumner in 1908 and this type of group was classified by Sumner based on the feelings a person experiences when they are being part of any group or not being part of any group.

If they are part of any group and they are close to each other then it develops a different kind of feeling in form of we because we tend to affiliate with the other members of the group. If we tend to identify ourselves different from the other group then that other group is they. That means we develop a feeling to identify those groups as different from us and call them as they what feeling we have. So according to William Sumner in-group and out-group attempts to describe the feelings of we and they generated through group membership. When we are member of any group then we have this feeling that we are here and they are different from us because they are not part of our group.

So the notion of in-group can be defined as a circle of people in which people feels at home they are typified by families, friendship, cliques, any social or religious group or any community and they have common interest. It can be any religious group where people come and meet together and interact who are coming from similar religious backgrounds. They tend to identify themselves differently from other religious backgrounds or it can be about any clique that within group itself three or four members have literally common interest and they are completely finding different from other members of the group. That gives them a feeling of they that is a notion of in-group. It can be any family as well and they have a sense of togetherness and represent power structure.

The more the objectives are common more people tend to interact and they generate more power within themselves to identify themselves as one identity. The other is out-group. It is a circle of people to which a person feels he or she does not belong. We tend to differentiate ourselves from the other group members. The group members are the other group members are not part of a group but we also tend to identify ourselves different by having a feeling of we and they.

For instance to rich the out-group is the middle class because based on the financial standing of the rich people and middle class people they tend to discriminate themselves classify themselves and more superior than the middle class and there is a feeling of we and they. It can be about any religious group also. It can be about any social group or any community where people identify themselves as one based on common traits and we and they as based on differentiating them with based on different common traits. This is the difference between in-group and out-group.

The other is dyad and triad. As the term implies dyad means two and triad is three or more than three. This classification of group is based on the size of the group based on the membership of the groups or members of the group any group has. If you are talking about dyad it talks about a two person group not three not four only two person group and triad is three or more than three persons group. So, the very existence of a dyad depends on the participation of members and if one member withdraws definitely the group tends to disband. This is so obvious and it has its own limitations that there is no mediator if two people in a dyad are experiencing conflict with each other then there is no mediator because there is no

third member who can act as a mediator and there is no mediator who can reconcile the conflicts between the two.

At the same time the group tends to disband but at the same time only if there is no mediator then there is also an advantage of a dyad is that they do not have to deal with the problem of any intruder. No third person or third party would intervene in the functionality of the dyad and they are more comfortable in working all together. These are the advantages and disadvantages of a dyad and a triad. In dyad there is no problem of intruders whereas, it is a problem of mediator that who will resolve or reconcile the conflict. Whereas, triad is a group which survives with the loss of member if there are three or more than three members in a group even one member who withdraws from the membership of the triad two people or members can make the group functional to a larger extent.

But at the same time there is possibility of majority, minority and even coalitions. Coalitions means people tend to collaborate at different levels. So, there can be majority, there can be a minority and there can be coalitions and prevent triad from becoming non-functional because one or two members are there who will make the group functional not like in dyad that if one member withdraws the group becomes absolutely non-functional. But in triad even if one member leaves the group the other members can make the group highly function, form new relationships and maintain the solidarity among the members. So, this is the advantages and disadvantages of dyad and triad.

If any conflict arises then definitely in any triad the conflict can be reconciled while the third or the fourth member can be the mediator. The other is interest and friendship group. These are also form of informal groups. But people in form of employees band together to attain a specific objective or for a better employee evaluation process for example, a labour union. Now this is the difference between friendship and interest group.

Any employee will join any group of his interest while not satisfying his own personal interest at work places but also contributing to the organization. For example, any trade union for implementation of any specific policy employees can come together and form union because it is better meant for the employees and it forms a interest group or assembly line workers can come together and comes before the management for improving the working conditions. Now this is a interest group where members come together for the betterment of their working environment or for the better evaluation of the working environment and that is of interest in not of the management but for the interest of the assembly line workers. This is the major characteristics of any interest group. Whereas a friendship group is a group of people who have come together because they share common ideas, interest, they have similarities and see each other outside the organization.

It is not only restricted to interest group but friendship groups are the one irrespective any member coming from any department or any hierarchy but people tend to meet together because they share some common opinions, views and ideas and they share that opinion or idea

outside the department. It has no relation with any formal structure but how they share their opinion that makes two people friends in any organization. So these are the characteristics of interest and friendship groups. The functions of informal groups are that it gratifies the need for affiliation that is people tend to solicit more support and companionship from each other irrespective that they are coming from any department or hierarchy. Informal groups are means of developing, enhancing or confirming a sense of identity and maintaining self-esteem.

The more we identify ourselves with the other members having common attitudes and beliefs and interests the more our self-esteem enhances because we tend to identify themselves and it gains confidence that people have the same interest the way I have and it makes some meaning or essence to what you tend to think about the whole world. It is also means of increasing security and sense of power for coping external threats and dangers because standing all alone is not possible to face will not enable a person to face all the threats and dangers. Every person requires some kind of psychological support to face all these threats and dangers and most importantly informal groups are a strong means of communication between superordinates and subordinates so as to maintain communication and share ideas, beliefs, opinions and emotions. So, these are the different kinds of groups that I have discussed with you. Next I will talk about the structural properties of the groups that how the group functions based on roles, norms and other functions that is conformity or cohesiveness.

I will discuss in the next lecture. Thank you so much. Thank you.