

# Groupism :-A Common Behaviour/A Strength



**Renu Kumari**

Assistant Professor,  
Deptt. of Psychology,  
S.S. Memorial College,  
Kanke Road,  
Ranchi University,  
Ranchi.

## Abstract

In normal words Group means that when two or more individuals, interacting and Interdependent, who have come together to achieve particular objectives, where as Behavior means the way in which one acts or conducts oneself, especially towards others and when a good/ bad behavior comes in a group than it gives positive/ negative strength to a group.

As groups function and interact with other groups, they develop their own unique set of characteristics including structure, cohesiveness, roles, norms and processes. As a result, groups may cooperate or compete with other groups, and intergroup competition can lead to conflict. A common individual join a group because of strength or power. It's a common thought that a single stick can easily be break but a bunch of stick can't be break. A well defined group can only be praised or rise high only due to well defined behavior of each & every member of a particular group. It's well said a rotten fish can spoil whole pond so a bad behavior can spoil the whole group. In common day to day life we all experience a group & it depend on us that how we behave. The structure of a group helps the management predict individual behaviour within the group and the performance of the group itself. Some of the structural variables are formal leadership, roles, norms, group status, group size and the composition of the group. The processes that go on within a group - the communication within the group, behaviour of the leader, power dynamics and conflict within the group - are crucial for understanding group behaviour. The effectiveness of group performance is to a great extent, affected by the level of conflict among group members and the quality of their communication. So in one word Groupism can be a common behaviour & can be strength to a group.

**Keywords:** Cohesiveness, Intergroup Competition, Power Dynamics, Group Performance,

## Introduction of Group Behaviour

Groups = Two or more individuals, interacting and Interdependent, who have come together to achieve particular objectives.

Group behavior emanates from the causes that contribute to the group's effectiveness.

1. The well structured, well defined role and status hierarchy, able leadership, well developed norms and strong cohesiveness a group has, the greater is the groupthink.
2. Groupthink is defined as "the deterioration of mental efficiency, reality testing, and moral judgment in the interest of group solidarity."

As groups function and interact with other groups, they develop their own unique set of characteristics including structure, cohesiveness, roles, norms and processes. As a result, groups may cooperate or compete with other groups, and intergroup competition can lead to conflict.

## Why Do People Join Group?

### Security

By joining a group, individuals can reduce the insecurity of "standing alone." People feel stronger, have fewer self-doubts, and are more resistant to threats when they are part of a group.

### Status

Inclusion in a group that is viewed as important by others provides recognition and status for its members.

### Self-Esteem

Groups can provide people with feelings of self-worth. That is, in addition to conveying status to those outside the group, membership can also give increased feelings of worth to the group members themselves.

### Power

What cannot be achieved individually often becomes possible

through group action. There is power in numbers.

**Goal Achievement**

There are times 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

**The Nature of groups**

**Three views**

1. Normative views describes how a group is to be organized and how its activities are to be carried out.
2. Group dynamics consists of a set of techniques.
3. Regarding internal nature of groups

**Characteristics of Groups**

Currently there is not a universal definition of what constitutes a group. Groups can have varying numbers of members, communication styles, and structures. Research has identified a few common requirements contributing to the recognition of individuals working in a collaborative environment to be considered a "group":

**Interdependence**

In order for an individual of the collective to accomplish their part in the assigned task they depend, to some degree, on the outputs of other members of the collective.

**Social Interaction**

In order to accomplish the goal some form of verbal or nonverbal communication is required to take place amongst the members of the collective.

**Perception of A Group**

All members of the collective must agree they are, in fact, part of a group.

**Commonality of Purpose**

All the members of the collective come together to serve or attain a common goal.

**Dynamics of Group Formation**

**Theory of Propinquity**

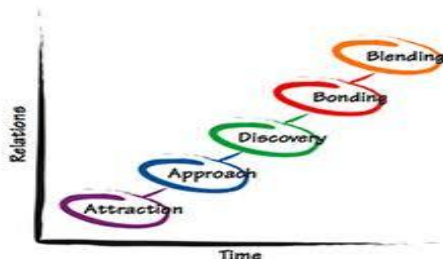
People associate with one another due to geographical proximity.

**Balance Theory**

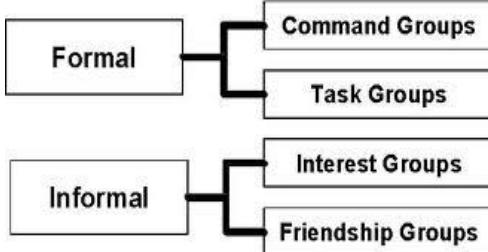
People who have similar attitudes toward certain objects and goals tend to form a group.

**Exchange Theory**

The reward-cost outcomes of interactions serve as the basis for group formation.



Types of Groups



1. Small groups
2. Large groups
3. Primary groups
4. Secondary groups
5. Coalitions
6. Membership groups
7. Reference groups

**Formal Groups**

These groups are formed by the organization to carry out specific tasks.

It includes two types

- a) Command group
- b) Task groups

**Command Group**

Represented in the organization chart. Permanent in nature.

Members report to common supervisors. Functional reporting relationship exists.

**Task Groups**

Formed to carry out specific tasks. Temporary in nature.

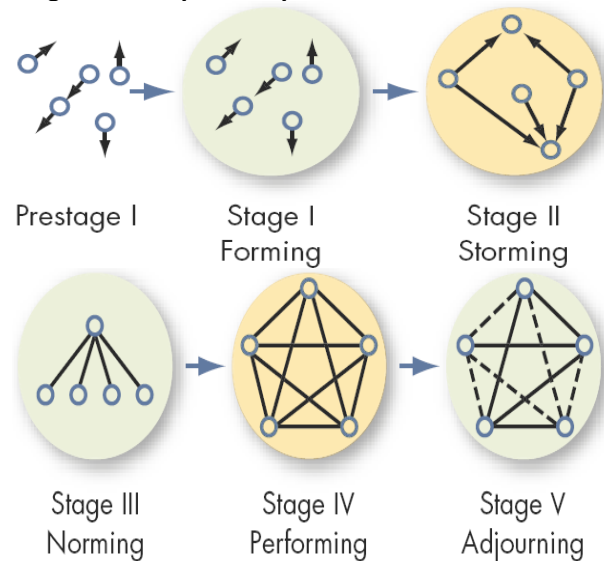
**Informal Groups**

Informal groups are formed by the employees themselves. Hence they are not formally structured.

They are of two types

- a) Friendship groups
- b) Interest groups

**Stages of Group Development**



**Forming**

1. The first stage in group development, characterized by much uncertainty. Characterized by a great deal of uncertainty about the group's purpose, structure, and leadership.
2. Members are trying to determine what types of behavior are acceptable.
3. Stage is complete when members have begun to think of themselves as part of a group

**Storming**

1. The second stage in group development, characterized by intergroup conflict.
2. One of intra group conflict. Members accept the existence of the group, but there is resistance to constraints on individuality.
3. Conflict over who will control the group.

4. When complete, there will be a relatively clear hierarchy of leadership within the group.

#### **Norming**

1. The third stage in group development, characterized by close relationships and cohesiveness. One in which close relationships develop and the group demonstrates cohesiveness.
2. There is now a strong sense of group identity and camaraderie.
3. Stage is complete when the group structure solidifies and the group has assimilated a common set of expectations of what defines correct member behavior.

#### **Performing**

1. The fourth stage in group development. The structure at this point is fully functional and accepted.
2. Group energy has moved from getting to know and understand each other to performing.
3. For permanent work groups, performing is the last stage in their development.

#### **Adjourning**

1. The final stage in group development for temporary groups, characterized by concern with wrapping up activities rather than task performance. For temporary committees, teams, task forces, and similar groups that have a limited task to perform, there is an adjourning stage.
2. In this stage, the group prepares for its disbandment. Attention is directed toward wrapping up activities.
3. Responses of group members vary in this stage. Some are upbeat, basking in the group's accomplishments. Others may be depressed over the loss of camaraderie and friendships.

Many assume that a group becomes more effective as it progresses through the first four stages. While generally true, what makes a group effective is more complex. Under some conditions, high levels of conflict are conducive to high group performance.

#### **Group structure**

A group's structure is the internal framework that defines members' relations to one another over time. The most important elements of group structure are roles, norms, values, communication patterns, and status differentials.

A role can be defined as a tendency to behave, contribute and interrelate with others in a particular way. Roles may be assigned formally, but more often are defined through the process of role differentiation. Role differentiation is the degree to which different members of a group have specialized functions. Functional (task) roles are generally defined in relation to the tasks the team is expected to perform. Other types of roles are the socio-emotional role which helps maintain the social fabric of the group, the individual role and the leader role.

Group norms are the informal rules that groups adopt to regulate members' behaviour. Norms refer to what should be done and represent value judgments about appropriate behaviour in social situations. Although they are infrequently written down or even discussed, norms have powerful influence on group behaviour.

Group values are goals or ideas that serve as guiding principles for the group. Like norms, values may

be communicated either explicitly or on an ad hoc basis. Values can serve as a rallying point for the team. However, some values (such as conformity) can also be dysfunction and lead to poor decisions by the team.

#### **Intergroup Dynamics and Behavior**

Intergroup behavior, or the way groups interact with other groups, is best examined in terms of the frequency and interaction type the groups engage in. Thomas (1976) elaborated on this concept by noting the nature of intergroup interactions depends largely on the degree to which groups must interact in order to achieve their goals, and the degree of compatibility between the goals of different groups.

#### **Intergroup Conflict**

Intergroup conflict may be caused by competition for resources, goal incompatibility, time incompatibility, and contentious influence tactics. There are activities that organizations can participate in to reduce or prevent competition between groups.

#### **Resources**

Resources (e.g., budgets, personnel, physical space) are generally limited within organizations so that competition for resources between groups is often unavoidable.

#### **Goal Incompatibility**

Goal incompatibility occurs when the goals of two or more groups are in direct opposition such that one group will achieve its goal while the other group(s) will be unable to meet the goal. Goal incompatibility may be distinguished between real goal incompatibility and perceived goal incompatibility.

#### **Time Incompatibility**

Work groups perform different tasks, have different goals, and interact with different customers such that groups will have different time frames or deadlines in which they operate.

#### **Contentious Influence Tactics**

Contentious influence tactics (e.g., threats, demands, and other negative behaviours) may be used to attempt to influence others from another group creating cycles of retaliation and influencing the opinions of those within their own group (e.g., creating bad reputations)

#### **Consequences of Intergroup Conflict**

Effects related to conflict between groups may be either negative or positive.

1. Group members' perceptions of one another change in a negative manner where a distinction is made between "in-group" and "out-group".
2. Members of groups in conflict develop an "us versus them" mentality and view members of the other group as fundamentally different from themselves but similar to each other.
3. Group members become more cohesive to compete against a "common enemy".
4. Quality of intergroup interactions (e.g., communication) may decline among groups in conflict, which in turn may decrease the quality of work.
5. Negative perceptions of the other group may be transferred to incoming group members.
6. Conflict may create discrepancies between the goals of the group and the goals of the organization.

#### **Case Study on Group Behaviour**

Hindustan Lever Research Centre (HLRC) was set up in the year 1967 at Mumbai. At that time the

primary challenge was to find suitable alternatives to the edible oils and fats that were being used as raw materials for soaps. Later, import substitution and export obligations directed the focus towards non-edible oil seeds, infant foods, perfumery chemicals, fine chemicals, polymers and nickel catalyst. This facilitated creation of new brands which helped build new businesses.

HUL believes in meritocracy and has a comprehensive performance management system, which ensures that people are rewarded according to their performance and abilities. Almost 47% of the entire managerial cadres are people who have joined us through lateral recruitment.

Over the years many break through innovations have taken place. Hindustan Lever Research gained eminence within Unilever Global R & D and became recognized as one of the six global R & D Centers of Unilever with the creation of Unilever Research India in Bangalore in 1997.

At Bangalore R&D center, a team of 10 scientists were appointed for a project on 'shampoo' line. Suranjan Sircar heading the team as Principal Research Scientist with the support of Vikas Pawar, Aparna Damle, Jaideep Chatterjee, Amitava Pramanik as Research Scientists. Suresh Jayaraman & Punam Bandyopadhyay was Research Associates.

Vikas Pawar came up with an idea of pet shampoos during brainstorming with the team. "Hey, why don't we target the pet care segment because in India, pet industry is being seriously looked at as a growing industry. I had been working on this concept for a few weeks & have done some initial research as well", said Vikas. "I think we should just focus on the dog segment & bring out a range of shampoos that are breed specific", contributed by Aparna Damle, who was a new unmarried scientist in the company. "Oh that's a really great idea, a breakthrough" said Jaideep & Amitava appreciating Aparna. The idea given by Aparna got support from both colleagues & head.

Vikas was although not comfortable with his credit being taken away. He also felt that creating brand specific shampoos would not be a profitable innovation thus, no point concentrating efforts on that. With this in mind he put his point forward but couldn't gather consensus.

After the discussion, Jaideep & Amitava being friends to Vikas, consoled him & showed confidence in his plan & thoughts. "We understand what you are going through. The idea was yours & Aparna took all your credit. Don't worry we are with you & be careful from next time."

Nevertheless, in the meeting Aparna presented her proposal for the idea mentioning requirements & chemical details. The meeting began with motivational speech & plan of action by the head of the team. A lot was discussed in detail & tasks were allotted along with deadlines.

Immediately after the presentation Jaideep & Amitava approached Aparna & eulogized her research & proposal reiterating the importance of breed specific range of shampoos.

Vikas lay aside his ego & went ahead with full dedication & commitment, however during the tenure of the research he noticed poor attitude of team members. Punam was not regular with deadlines; she submitted

her research on breeds four days after deadline. Suresh was asked to coordinate with members looking into chemical research but Vikas observed him most of the times in the recreation room, so he asked him "Hi, so what's the progress in chemical research so far?" Suresh replied that he had done whatever he was asked to do by senior scientist.

He reported this lack of commitment & proactive attitude to Suranjan Sircar & asked for an action against them. "Hmm... I know what's happening in the team. I have worked for 20 years in this industry & from my experience I know what to do & when to do", he retorted back

Finally the project got completed 4 months after deadline. Vikas went back to the lab, sitting & wondering at the flaws in the group.

### Conclusion

Although most humans are by nature social creatures, cooperative group work is not something that comes without effort. Such group activities require that a sense of trust be built between members, as well as a feeling of shared responsibility. This means a responsibility to carry your own weight in the group, as well as a responsibility to all of the other members of the group.

### References

1. Thomas, Organizational Psychology: A Scientist-Practitioner Approach (Second ed.). Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2008, Inc. pp. 341-365.
2. Sundstrom, Work Groups: From the Hawthorne Studies to Work Teams of the 1990's and Beyond, 2000
3. Hackman. Groups that work (and those that don't : Creating conditions for effective teamwork,
4. Schutz, w. FIRO: A Three Dimensional Theory of Interpersonal Behaviour, New York, NY: Rinehart. (1985)
5. Irvin D. Yalom, The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy, Basic Book, 1985, pp.194-196
6. Aronson, Elliot, The jigsaw classroom. New York: Longman, 1997
7. Jackson, Lynne M. The Psychology of Prejudice: From Attitude to Social Action. Washington, DC: American Psychology Association, 2011, pp.110-112
8. Trangney, J.P., Stuewing, J., & Mashek, D.J. Moral emotion and moral behavior. Annual Review of Psychology, 2007, pp.345