UNIT - 4 GROUP BEHAVIOUR

Introduction, Definition, Characteristics of Group, Importance of Group, Types of groups, Stage of Group Development, group decision making, Group Norms, Group Cohesiveness, Group Role.

6.1   Introduction

Teams and groups are two different things. A group is defined as consisting of two or more individuals who interact with each other and who are interdependent. They come together to achieve particular objective. A work group is one that primarily interacts for sharing information and makes decisions to help each other with the one's area of responsibility. Usually such work groups are not engaging in collective work requiring joint efforts but their performance as a group is sum total of each group's individual members contribution.

A group is defined as two or more individuals, interacting and interdependent, who come together to achieve particular objectives.

Groups can be either formal or informal. By formal, we mean defined by the organizations structure, with designated work assignments. establishing tasks and work groups. In formal groups, the behavioral that one should engage in are stipulated by and directed towards organizational goals. In contrast, informal groups are alliances that are neither structured nor organizationally determined. These groups are natural formations for the work environment, which appear in response to the need for social contact.

It is possible to further sub-classify groups as command, task, interest or friendship groups. command and task groups are dictated by the formal organization, whereas interest and friendship groups are informal alliances.

1.2   DEFINITION AND MEANING OF GROUP

Everyone knows what a group is in general. When two persons or more come together and interact at one place il may be called a group. The groupbedefined in various ways. Given below area few important definitions of group and each of these definitions emphasizes one or the other important features of the group.

1)   R.M. Williams (1951) "A social group is a given aggregate of people playing inter-related roles and recognized by themselves or other as a unit of interaction." Here it can be said group is an aggregate of some people. The roles of the group members are inter-related. The group is considered as unit.

2)   R.M. Maclver (1953) "By group we mean any collection of social beings who enter into distinctive social relationships with one another." It is clear that there must be social relationships between the individual members of a group.

3)   David (1968) " A social psychological group is an organised system of two or more individuals who are interrelated so that the system performs some functions, has a standard set of the role relationship among its members and has a set of norms that regulate the function of the group and each of its members."

The word "group" has many meanings. Generally we use the term 'group" keeping in mind three main points:

i)   where a number of persons are sitting or working together. The essential thing is the physical proximity of a number of people being together at a given time with or without any common purpose;

ii)   where persons are classified as belonging to an association. Sometimes it is seen that people may have no relationship with each other but they have some common characteristics and we classify them as a group;

iii)   where persons belong to an organization. This group has definite structure, and people in this group have a sense of belongingness to the given organization

A child's social development takes place gradually as the child advances in age. To fulfill physical needs, children perform many functions. They exhibit signs of reacting to individuals who they identify as fulfilling their needs. Then they start understanding objects and individuals in their environment. As children grow older their patterns of play and other activities also change considerably. The feelings of 'T' and "MINE" and then "YOU" and "YOURS" develop. Sharing things, asserting one's rights, co-operation, etc, are learnt by children in the first stage of their socialization.

1.4   Characteristics of Group

Suppose you belong to a group where you may observe some special features which you can accept or not. It may be good or bad, healthy or unhealthy, favorable or unfavorable, but there are certain significant features say the characteristics of the group.

i)   A sense of we-feeling: There is a feeling of belongingness among the members of the group. The members of the group help each other in performing their duties. They work

collectively against the harmful powers. They treat people who do not belong to the group as outsiders. They always try to make the group self-sufficient.

ii) **Common interest:** Each and every member of the group has a common interest. There is similarity among the members in regard to their interest which promotes unity. The group includes those persons who are related to each other in such a way that they should be treated as one,

iii) **A feeling of unity:** Unity is essential for every group. Each and every member of the group treats each other as their own and there develops a sense of camaraderie amongst the members of group.

iv) **Relatedto each other:** It is true that members of the group are interrelated. There is reciprocal communication among the group members. Social relations are the fundamentals of group life.

v) **Affected by group characteristics:**Every group has some social characteristics which separate it from similar and dissimilar groups. These characteristics affect themembers of the group. The nature may be different for different persons, but still all themembers are affected by the group.

vi) **Common values:** There are certain values which are common among members and are traditionally respected and communicated to the succeeding generation. They are manifested in the mutual behaviors of the members. Members of the social group are bound together in terms of theses common values.

vii) **Control of group:** In each group there are some customs, norms and procedures which are acceptable to everyone. In fact, without some norms, the existence of group Life is impossible. It may be slated that the reasons behind the similarity of behaviors in a group life is that the actions of the members are controlled by the group.

viii) **Obligation:** In a group situation, all members have complementary obligations to each other. Also the relationships between the members of a group get strengthened through their mutual obligation and common social values.

ix) **Expectations:** Not only mutual obligation, the members of the group also expects love, compassion, empathy, co-operation etc., from all other members of the group. If mutual expectation is fulfilled, the group members are maintained in tact. A group can maintain

its existence only if the constituent members fulfill their responsibility by satisfying the desires among themselves.

Groups are the units of social organization. Therefore, the integration and disintegration of social organization are dependent upon the integration or disintegration of the groups. In group, social relationship is a very important factor. The first and foremost social relationship indicates the relationship among the family members. Thus, it can further be said that family is an important social group.

You are one of the members in your family. You interact with other family members and there is a reciprocal relationship between you and others. Certainly you have we feeling where you belong. Among the family members there are relationships such as husband-wife, father-some, and brother-sister etc. and they all work together for the interests of the family in a mood of mutual co-operation. Each and every member of the family treats the other members as his own and in spite of differences of opinion they have some common ideals and values. It is mainly due to common interest of the members that the group works as a well-knit unit.

As for example we can say that "school is a social group". The significant characteristics of the school as a group are:

- All children have a common goal.

- The students and the teacher are motivated for the achievement of a common goal.

- School has an organized structure.

- School offers excellent opportunities for group to realize its needs.

Since most people belong to a number of groups, it is obvious that different groups provide different benefits to their members. The most popular reason for joining groups are related to our needs for security, identity, affiliation, power and engaging in common tasks.

**i.	Security**

By joining a group, we can reduce the unisexuality of 'standing alone' — We feel stronger, have fewer self- doubts and are more resistant to threats. New employees are more vulnerable to a sense of isolation and turn to the group for guidance and support. We get reassurance from interacting with others and being part of a group. This often explains the appeal of unions — if management creates an environment in which employees feel insecure, they are likely to turn to unionization to reduce their feelings of insecurity.

ii.   Identity, Self Esteem and Status

Membership in one or more groups can help us to reassure us that we are important similarly, many employees in organizations place a high value on meeting their esteem needs and look to membership in both formal and informal groups for satisfaction of these needs. Groups can also fulfill intrinsic needs. Being assigned to a task force whose purpose is to review and make recommendations for the location of the company's new corporate headquarters can fulfill one s intrinsic needs for competence and growth, as well as one's extrinsic need or status andinfluence.

iii.   Affiliation

People enjoy the regular interaction that comes with group membership. For many people these on the job interactions are their primary source for fulfilling their need for affiliation. For almost all people, work groups significantly contribute to fulfilling their needs for friend ships and social relations.

iv.   Power

One of the appealing aspects of groups is that they represent power. What cannot be achieved individually becomes possible through group action. Informal groups additionally provide opportunities for individuals to exercise power over others. For individuals who desire to influence others, groups can offer power without a formal position of authority.

v.   Group Goals

There are times when it takes more than one person to accomplish a particulartaskthere is need of people's talents, knowledge or power in order to get a jobcompleted. In such instances, management will rely on the use of a formal group.

Types of Group

1.   Formal Group

The line of authority forms the members of this group formally. They are formed for specific purpose. The purpose of forming is given by the management.

2.   Informal Group

Members of this group belong to various divisions irrespective of their jobs. These groups are formed for the purpose of solving any serious problems, or generally for sharing the ideas about any matter related or unrelated to the organization.

3.   Reference Group

The members of these group act as a comparisons or reference for other individuals. Individual outside the reference groups form their attitudes and frame their personality by referring or identifying themselves with reference groups.

4.   Small Groups

They are highly effective for short-term decision-making process. This group is restricted upto 5 members. The communications among the members of this group are fast.

5.   Friendship Group

They are a type of informal groups. These groups are basically formed to satisfy the needs of belongingness and security.

6.   Task Group

The management might from task groups in order to accomplish some of the organizational goals.

7.   Self-managed Team

A group of people working together in their own ways toward a common goal which is defined outside the team.

8   Self-directed Team

A group of people working together in their own ways toward a common goal which the team defines.

9   Command Group

It is relatively permanent and is specified by the organization chart It comprises of managers or superiors and subordinates, who meet regularly to discuss general and specific ideas to improve product or service.

10.   Vertical Clique

This group consists of people working in the same department drawing membership regardless of ranks.
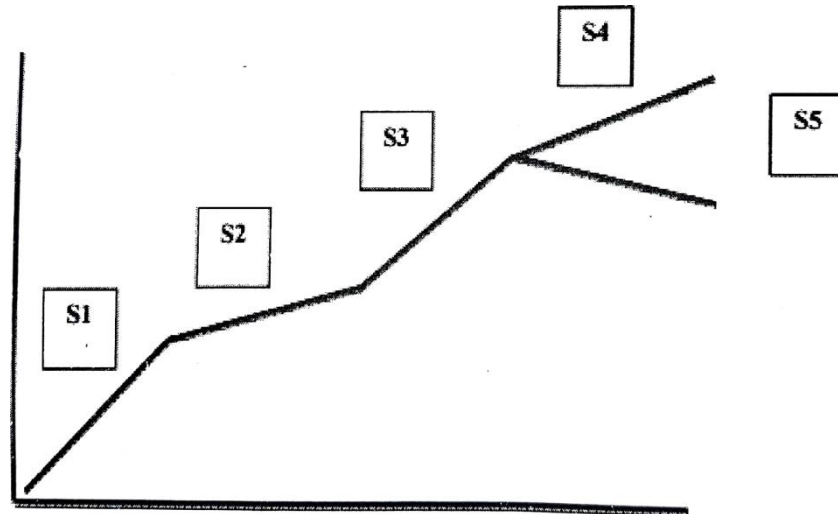
11.   Horizontal Clique

This group consists of people of more or less the same rank and working more or less in the same area.

STAGES OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT

- GROUP FORMATION/FORMATION OF GROUP

The process of group formation can be depicted by five stages:-

• **STAGE1:- FORMING**

This is the first stage of group formation. This first stage is characterized by a sense of uncertainty and awkwardness and perhaps anxiety. In this stage, group norms and standards are defined. This phase often shows as tentativeness or even some anxiety on the part of participants. Leaders need to "set the tone" for group behavior, activities and interactions.

• **STAGE2:- STORMING**

This stage is characterized by individual assertive behavior, which may result m some group instability. In this stage each person wants to feel a sense of individual importance and influence on the group "finding a niche"

• **STAGE3:-NORMING**

This phase is known as "becoming personal" Norming is the stage where the group is formed and structured completely. A growth of affection and establishment of personal relationships characterize this phase.

• **STAGE 4:-PERFORMING**

This phase is termed as"Working together". This phases characterized byharmony among group members. At this stage the group is mature enough to attend to its own needs both in terms of task and relationship matters.

- **STAGE5:-ADJOURNING**

This stage is also known as Transference. In this stage, the group disperses after the group activity is completed.

GROUP DECISION MAKING

Group decision- making commonly known as collaborative decision- making is a situation faced when individuals collectively make a choice from the alternatives before them.

The decision is then no longer attributable to any individual group member as all the individuals and social group processes like social influence contribute to the decision outcome.

The decisions made by groups are mostly different from those made by individuals. For example, groups tend to make decisions that are more extreme than those made by individual members, as individuals tend to be biased

Advantages of Group Decision Making

Group decision making has two advantages over individual decision making.

Synergy

It is the idea that the whole is greater than the aggregate of its parts. When a group makes a decision collectively, its judgment can be powerful than that of any of its members. Through discussing, questioning, and collaborative approach group members can identify more complete and robust collusions and recommendations.

Sharing of information

Group decisions take into account a wider scope of information as each group member may contribute distinct information and expertise. Sharing information increases understanding, clarifies issues, and facilitates movement towards a collective decision.

Disadvantages of Group Decision Making

The major disadvantages of group decision making are as follows -

Diffusion of Responsibility

Group decision making results in distribution of responsibly that results in lack accountability for outcomes. In this way, everyone is responsible for a decision really is. Moreover, group decisions can make it easier for membersresponsibilities and blame others for bad decisions.

Lower Efficiency

Group decisions can sometimes be less efficient than individual decisions. It takes additional time because there is a need of active participation, discussion, and coordination amonggroup members. Without good facilitation and structure, meetings can get eliminated in trivial that may matter a lot to one person but not to the others.

Groupthink

One of the biggest disadvantage of effective group decision making is groupthink. It is a psychological phenomenon that occurs within a group of people in which the wish tor harmony or conformity results in an illogical or dysfunctional decision-making outcome.

By refraining themselves from outside influences and actively suppressing opposing viewpoints in the interest of minimizing conflict, group members reach a consensus decision without critical evaluation of substitute viewpoints.

Groupthink sometimes produces dehumanizing actions against the out-group.

GROUP DECISION-MAKING TECHNIQUES

In order to eliminate group think and group shift from a group, we can use four different techniques that will help us make a collaborative decision that is best for the group. Thesetechniques are -

• Brainstorming
• Nominal group thinking
• Didactic technique
• Delphi technique

Brainstorming

This technique includes a group of people, mostly between five and ten in number, siting around-a table, producing ideas in the form of free association. The main focus is on gen of ideas and not on evaluation of these ideas.

If more ideas can be originated, then it is likely that there will be a unique and creative idea among them. All these ideas are written on the blackboard with a piece of chalk so that all the team members can see every idea and try to improvise these ideas.

Brainstorming technique is very effective when the problem is comparatively precise and can be simply defined. A complex problem can be divided into parts and each part can be dealt with separately at a time.

Nominal Group Thinking

This technique is similar to brainstorming except that this approach is more structured. It motivates individual creativity. Members form the group for namesake and operateindependently, originate ideas for solving the problem on their own, in silence and in writing. Members do not communicate well with each other so that strong personality domination is evaded.

The group coordinator either collects the written ideas or writes them on a large blackboard so that each member of the group can see what the ideas are. These ideas are further discussed one by one in turn and cache participant is motivated to comment on these ideas in order to clarify and improve them. After all these ideas have been discussed, they are evaluated for their merits and drawbacks and each actively participating member is needed to vote on each idea and allot it a rank on the basis of priority of each alternative solution.

The idea with the highest cumulative ranking is selected as the final solution to the problem.

Didactic Interaction

This technique is applicable only in certain situations, but is an excellent method when a situation actually demands it. The type of problem should be such that it generates output in the form of yes or no. Say for example a decision is to be made whether to buy or not to buy a product, to merge or not to merge, to expand or not to expand and so on. These types of decision require an extensive and exhaustive discussion and investigation since a wrong decision can have serious consequences.

There are many advantages as well as disadvantages of this type of situation. The group that makes the decision is divided into two sub-groups, one in favor of the "go" decision and the opposing in favor of "no go" decision.

The first group enlists all the "pros" of the problem solution and the second group lists all the "cons". These group meet and discuss their discoveries and their reasons.

After training discussions, the groups switch sides and try to find weakness in their own original standpoints. This interchange of ideas and understanding of various view points results in mutual acceptance of the facts as they exist so that a solution can be put log -ultimately a final decision is reached.

Delphi Technique

This technique is the improvised version of the nominal group technique, except that it involves obtaining the opinions of experts physically distant from each other and unknown to each other.

This isolates group members from the undue influence of others. Basically, the types of problems sorted by this technique are not specific in nature or related to a particular situation at a given time.

For example, the technique could be used to explain the problems that could be created in event of a war. The Delphi technique includes the following steps -

• The problem is first identified and a panel of experts is selected. These experts are asked to provide potential solutions through a series of thoughtfully designed questionnaires.

• Each expert concludes and returns the initial questionnaire.

• The results of the questionnaire are composed at a central location and the central coordinator prepares a second set of questionnaire based on the previous answers.

• Each member receives a copy of the results accompanied by the second questionnaire.

• Members are required to review the results and respond to the second questionnaire. The results typically trigger new solutions or motivate changes in the original ideas.

• The process is repeated until a general agreement is obtained.

1.7   GROUP STRUCTURE

It refers to the pattern of interrelationship that exists among group members makes the group's functioning orderly. The important aspects of group structure are:

i)   **Role:** Role or the typical part played by an individual group member m accordance with the expectations of other members from hi m.

ii)   **Norms:** Norms are the rules and mutual expectations that develop within the group. Norms have profound effect on members' behavior as it entries conformity among them.

iii)   **Status:** Status is the relative prestige or social position given to groups or individuals by others.

iv)   **Croup collusiveness:** It refers to the degree of attraction to the group members for each other and the "we feeling" among the members. Without proper group structure, group cannot function properly in any situation.