

**COURSE TITLE**  
**ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

**Chapter 6**  
**GROUP DYNAMICS AND CONFLICT  
MANAGEMENT**

**Lecture 6 (week 6)**

**Meaning and Concept of Group, Stages of Group Formation, Group Dynamics Theories, Introduction to Conflict, Levels and Types of Conflicts, Approach to Conflict Management**

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**Learning Objective**

The main objective of this lecture is to understand about:

- 6.1 Meaning and concept of group.
- 6.2 Stages of group formation.
- 6.3 Group dynamics theories.
- 6.4 Introduction to conflict.
- 6.5 Levels and types of conflict.
- 6.6 Approach to conflict management.

## 6.1 MEANING OF GROUP DYNAMICS

A group may be defined as a collection of two or more people who work with one another regularly to achieve common goals. In a true group, members are mutually dependent on one another to achieve common goals, and they interact with one another regularly to pursue those goals over a sustained period of time. [1] Thus a group could be co-workers or people example: meeting for lunch or standing at the bus stop. Unlike teams, groups do not necessarily engage in collective work that requires interdependent effort.

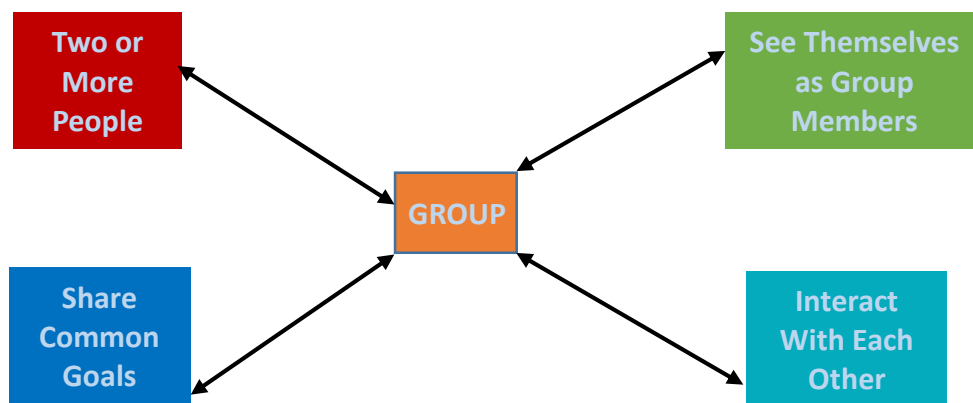
GROUP DYNAMICS contains two words:

GROUP: Basically collection of two or more persons.

DYNAMICS: comes from Greek word meaning FORCE

GROUP DYNAMICS deals with interaction of the forces among group members in a social situation. Two or more individuals, interacting and independent, who have come together to achieve particular objective. [2] Group dynamics deals with the attitudes and behavioural patterns of a group.

### FOUR DIMENSIONS OF GROUP



### Difference between Group and Team

GROUP	TEAM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When two or more individuals are classed together either by the organization or out of social needs, it is known as a group.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a team is the collection of people, who are linked together to achieve a common objective.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is only one head in group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A team can have more than one head</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The group member do not share responsibility.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Team members share the responsibility.</li> </ul>

- The group focuses on achieving the individual goals.

- The team members focus on achieving the team goal.

### Why do people join groups??

- Have a sense of security
- Have a status
- Develop self esteem
- Power
- Goal Achievement
- Empowerment through sharing of resources.
- Affiliation needs

### Reasons for Group Formation/Joining Groups

#### Employees' point of view

- Member security
- Status/identification
- Self-esteem/ego
- Affiliation/social needs
- Power/unity
- Goal achievement

#### Organizational point of view

- Socialization of new employees
- Getting the jobs done
- Decision making
- Communication

### **Principal of Group Dynamics**

- The members of group must have a strong sense of belongingness.
- The more attraction a group member is to its members, the greater influence it would exercise on its members.
- Information relating to the need for changes, plans for change and consequences of the changes must be shared by the members of the group.
- The group arise and function owing to common motives.
- The intergroup relations, group organization, member participation is essential for effectiveness of a group.
- Confidentiality is a major requirement which is achieved by mutual respect for one another.

### **Advantages of Group Dynamics**

- Achievement of objectives.
- Increase productivity

- Work efficiently
- Collaborative effort
- Better decisions
- Improve job satisfaction and team spirit
- Attitude, perception and ideas of members depend on group dynamism
- Reduce the absenteeism and labour turnover
- Helps to meet individual needs.

### **Disadvantages of Group Dynamics**

- Group conflicts
- Conflict of objectives
- Hampers relation due to inequity in contribution
- Group with similar opinions will produce routine decision.
- Varied opinions will lead to indecisions.

### **Types of Groups**

#### **1. Formal Group**

A formal group is a group created for the purpose of doing productive work. It may be called a team, a committee, or simply a work group. In a formal group, rules and regulation guides the behavior of group. It is deliberately created to perform specific task and a hierarchy of authority exists. A formal group is usually formed for the purpose of contributing to the success of a larger organization. The head of a formal group is responsible for the group's performance accomplishments, but all members contribute the required work. Formal group can be further divided into:

#### Command group:

Specified by organization chart and includes supervisor and his subordinates. Consist of subordinates who have common boss.

#### Task group:

Employees work together to complete a particular task or job. Specific time period is allotted for completion of tasks.

#### Characteristics of Formal group

- Organizational structure by top management.
- Structure based on division of labour and efficiency in operation.
- Organization concentrates more on performance of job.
- Authority responsibility hierarchy
- Coordination and control are well specified through process, procedures and rules.

## 2. Informal Group

Informal groups emerge without being officially designated by the organization. They form spontaneously and are based on personal relationships or special interests, and not on any specific organizational endorsement. [1] These are not formed under company rules and policies. They form a consequential part of company by easing out any kind of stress and tension. Effective communication is ensured from the top to the bottom without the line of authority.

Characteristics of Informal group

- Natural outcome: not designed and planned.
- Created on the basis of some similarities among members.
- Voluntary membership: can become member to several informal groups at the same time.
- Behaviour of members formed and controlled by group norms.

### 6.2 STAGES OF GROUP FORMATION



SOURCE: [3]

#### 1. Forming

Forming is characterized by a great deal of uncertainty about the group's purpose, structure, and leadership. Leaders should provide clear direction, establish goals, and create an environment where team members feel safe to express themselves and ask questions. [3] In this stage, membership is increased till group is established and also communication pattern is developed. Evaluation of resources is carried out for achievement of group goals.

#### 2. Storming

This stage is characterized by conflict and confrontation. There may be considerable disagreement and conflict among the members about the roles and duties. Member of the group storm their views and hierarchy of leadership emerges. In this stage team members work to

establish their roles and responsibilities within the project. The team functions more as individual members than as a cohesive unit.

### **3. Norming**

In the norming stage of group development, the team has effectively resolved most, if not all, conflicts and can productively work on the project or towards the end goal. In this stage situation of chaos is settled and members begin to settle into cooperation and collaboration. “I” feeling is replaced by “we” feeling with high cohesion, group identity etc. Group norms is developed to guide the individual behavior. Increase positive behaviour and strong feeling of development.

### **4. Performing**

This stage is where the group is fully functioning and devoted to effectively accomplishing the tasks agreed upon in the norming stage. The emphasis is on cooperation, problem solving, and achieving group goals. In the performing stage, productivity and efficiency are typically high. Group members are not only comfortable with one another, but they're also comfortable with their work and expectations.

### **5. Adjourning**

This represents the end of group. For a project team or task force with specific objective is accomplished, the group will disband or have new composition. Signs of adjourning stage is:

- Sadness at the project's ending
- Feeling excited about what might come next
- Uncertainty about the future

## **6.3 GROUP DYNAMICS THEORIES**

### **1. Propinquity theory**

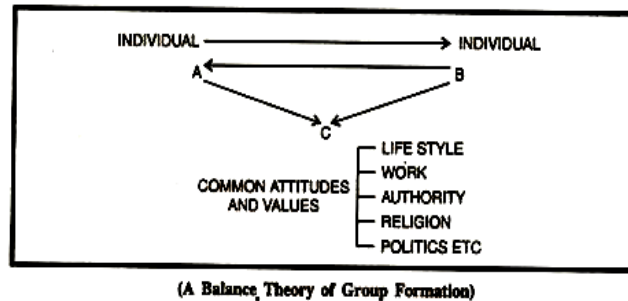
The meaning of propinquity means nearness. This theory tries to explain why people affiliate with one another? According to this theory, nearness is only the facilitating factor for group formation and cannot be a reason for group formation. [4] When two persons work in same environment repeatedly, they develop a sense of belongingness and they gradually develop communication which in turn leads to sharing of thought, feeling and discussions. It is not analytical and does not explain some of the complexities of group formation.

### **2. Classic Theory of George Homans**

This theory is based on three elements: activities, interaction and sentiments and are directly related to each other. George C. Homans states that more the individuals share their activities, the more they will interact with each other, and stronger their sentiments for each other and vice versa. [4] The major element is interaction. People in a group interact not just physical propinquity sense, but also to accomplish many group goals.

### 3. Balance Theory

According to this theory developed by Theodore Newcomb, “People are attracted to one another on the basis of similar/common attitudes towards common commonly relevant objects and goals”. [5] Once a relationship is formed balance between attraction and common attitude is tried to maintained or stored.



### 4. Exchange Theory

This theory is based on Reward- Cost Outcomes of interaction. A minimum positive level (rewards greater than costs) of an outcome must exist in order for attraction or affiliation to take place. [6] Here Reward is Satisfaction and Cost is Sacrifice. Rewards from interactions gratify needs, while costs incurs anxiety, frustration, embarrassment or fatigue. Propinquity, interaction and common attitudes all have roles in exchange theory.

## 6.4 INTRODUCTION TO CONFLICT

Conflict is defined as a disagreement through which the parties involved perceive a threat to their needs, interests or concerns. Conflict can be defined “as a disagreement between two or more individuals or groups, with each individual or group trying to gain acceptance of its views or objective over others.”[7] Conflict is an inevitable or unavoidable part of our everyday professional and personal lives. Conflict is any situation in which two or more parties feel themselves in opposition.

### WHY DOES CONFLICT OCCUR???

- Personality Clashes
- Competition of Resources
- Authority issue
- Lack of Cooperation
- Differences over methods and styles
- Low performance
- Values of goal differences

## SYMPTOMS OF CONFLICT

### INDIVIDUAL

1. Avoidance
  - Absenteeism, hiding out,
  - Self centeredness
  - hiding behind the rules
2. Repression
  - Ill health, escapist drinking, irregular productivity, low satisfaction, irritability.
3. Reactive
  - flashes of anger, noncooperation, rumours, destruction, strikes.

### INTER GROUP

- Competition
- Appeals to superior for decision
- Decreased rate of interaction
- Low trust

### Assumptions about Causes and Values of Conflict

Causes of Conflict	What does it means?
Misunderstanding	When individuals do not hear what is being said?
Personality Clashes	When individuals do not value “people just like me”
Competition for Resources	When employees believe they are better off competing for resources rather than cooperating
Authority Issues	When employees lack confidence in their leaders or perceive overuse of authority
Lack of Cooperation	When one person does not share information with the whole group
Low performance	When individuals are not working to their potential
Values or goal difference	When individuals value different objectives or outcomes.
Difference over methods or style	When agreement does not exists on standard ways of completing tasks.

### Changing view (Transition) of Conflict

#### Traditional View

It assumes conflict is bad and views negatively and considered as early approach to conflict. It uses conflict as synonymous to violence irrational and destruction. The view held that the conflict arose due to poor communication, lack of openness, lack of trust and failure of managers to be responsive to the needs and aspirations of their employees. [8]

### Human Relations View

It argues that conflict is a natural occurrence. Conflict should be accepted because it is inevitable and cannot be eliminated. Minimum level of conflict between the groups would increase competitiveness that will lend itself to higher productivity and increased job satisfaction. What is required today is innovation, creativity and an ability of the group to meet the social obligations. Hence there is a need for maintaining minimal level of conflict within the group. [8]

### The Interactionism View

Views conflict necessary element for the progress of the organization. It advocates that harmonious, peaceful, and cooperative group is prone to becoming static, apathetic, and non-responsive to need for change and innovation.

## **6.5 LEVELS AND TYPES OF CONFLICT**

### **INDIVIDUAL LEVEL CONFLICT**

#### 1. Intra Individual Conflict

It is the conflict that involves single person and arises inside the individual person. It is internal to the person and is probably most difficult type of conflict. Sources of intra-individual conflict are:

- Goal conflict: it is the conflict that arises

(a) When an individual attempts to achieve a goal that has both positive and negative features

(b) When two or more competing goals exist.

- Role conflict: it occurs when roles are conflicting in nature.

#### 2. Inter-personal Conflict

This is the type of conflict in which two or more individuals are involved. It occurs when there is the differences between the choices made by different people. Sources of inter-individual conflicts are:

- Personality differences
- Perceptions
- Clashes of values and interests
- Power and status differences

### **GROUP LEVEL CONFLICT**

Conflict within and between group and groups are common phenomenon. The common contributing factors to give rise the group level conflict are:

- Heterogeneity members
- Communication distortions
- Decision making
- Unclear roles and responsibility

### 1. Intra- group Conflict

It arises when differences over an issue appear between the members of the same group. Sources of intra-group conflicts are new problem, new value system, role differences etc.

### 2. Inter-group Conflict

This type of conflict arises between two or more groups. The factors contributing to this type of conflict include authority, jurisdiction and resources. Sources of inter-group conflicts are

- Differences in goals
- Task interdependence
- Resource allocation
- Competitive reward system

## **ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL CONFLICT**

### 1. Intra-organizational Conflict

This type of conflict is similar to intra-group conflict

### 2. Inter-organizational Conflict

This type of conflict arises between two or more organizations.

- Management –government
- Inter-management
- Inter-union
- Union-government
- Union-management

## **6.6 APPROACH TO CONFLICT MANAGEMENT**

Conflict management is defined as “the opportunity to improve situations and strengthen relationships”. Conflict between parties can be resolved by five different modes.

### **1. Accommodating**

In accommodating mode a person sacrifices his own interest for accommodating other person’s interest. This mode is usually adopted when other person’s view is stronger, you want to achieve goodwill and indicate that you are reasonable. This strategy of conflict resolution is

important when you want other person to give at a later date when it favours you. The use of accommodation often occurs when one of the parties wishes to keep the peace or perceives the issue as minor.

## **2. Avoiding**

This style is associated with behaviors such as withdrawal, indifference, side step. By delaying or ignoring the conflict, the avoider hopes the problem resolves itself without a confrontation. Those who actively avoid conflict frequently have low esteem or hold a position of low power. This strategy is useful when issues involved in conflict are of a very minor nature or when more important issues deserve attention

## **3. Collaborating**

Both parties try to satisfy the needs of both parties. Collaboration works by integrating ideas set out by multiple people. The object is to find a creative solution acceptable to everyone. Collaboration, though useful, calls for a significant time commitment not appropriate to all conflicts.

## **4. Compromising**

This technique generally appeals to those living in a democracy. It advocates of compromise say everyone wins because compromise is based on negotiation, on give-and-take. [9] This strategy prevails most often in conflicts where the parties hold approximately equivalent power.

## **5. Competing**

One party tries to meet its goal at another party's expense. Competing is also useful in emergencies where quick decisions are required. In this strategy power must be used unilaterally as a weapon when unpopular decisions like termination, pay cuts, layoffs, cost cutting and enforcing discipline are required to be taken.

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