Impact of Group Dynamics on Team

R.V. Naveenan[1] & B. Ravi Kumar[2]

[1]Department of Management Studies, Vivekananda Institute of Management, India

[2]Dept. of MBA, Amrita Sai Institute of Science and Technology, India

Correspondence: Dr. R.V. Naveenan, Associate Professor, Department of Management Studies, Vivekananda Institute of Management, Bangalore, India. E-mail: naveenan.08mba@gmail.com

Abstract

After a brief review of integrative small group learning models that have appeared in the educational psychology literature, this article then looks into the group dynamics literature and describes one of that field's most well-documented findings: that interactions among group members change somewhat predictably over time. How theorists from various traditions within educational psychology might explain and explore the phenomenon of "group development" is proposed, followed by a description of the theoretical and practical features of an increasingly popular post-secondary instructional strategy designed to stimulate group development and leverage it to instructional ends. So group dynamics can be called as a life base of a team. So in this study the researcher has conducted a study on various aspects of group dynamics. The researcher has collected data using collection techniques and has used various tools to analyze the outcomes to get considerable results.

Keywords: Group Dynamics, Team, India.

1. Introduction

 The term group dynamics usually refers to the study of individuals interacting in small groups and this thumbnail definition gives rise to a number of questions related to groups. What is a group? Is the concept group needed? If group exist, how do they function? Are there principles or laws governing group behavior? As a point of reference, I would like to suggest that a group is a living system, self-regulating through shared perception, interaction, sensing, feedback and through interchange with its environment. Each group has unique wholeness qualities that become patterned, by way of members' thinking, feeling and communicating into structured sub systems. The group finds some way to maintain balance while moving through progressive changes, creating its own guidelines & rules and seeking its own goals through recurring cycles of interdependent behavior. We are all familiar with another usage of group.

We may define a group of people who lack motivation, or designate a group of people who succeed. In all these cases the groups of individuals are not interacting together, but separately as individuals and are being used for statistical or comparative purposes. By looking at the dynamics we will quickly see how our focus is better defined as which implies forces that are complex and interdependent in a common reference or setting.

1.1 Why look at group dynamics

Understand that much of our lives are spent with one group or another. Therefore, a better comprehension could make our time more productive and fulfilling. If we make an assessment of our time, our contributions, our productivity, and the usefulness of our interactions or return on our investment, we will more demanding of all group activities. If you have goals for your life the only way you will ever see them become reality is to stay

focused and guard your time and energy closely. The last thing any of us needs is someone else achieving their goals at our expense! "know thyself".

2 Review of Literature

(Galinsky & Schopler, 1977; Smokowski, Rose, & Bacallao, 2001; Smokowski, Rose, Todar, & Reardon, 1999), an understanding of group dynamics is essential for effective practice with any type of task or treatment group. Failure to pay careful attention to group dynamics can lead to unproductive meetings and dissatisfied members. In extreme cases, such as the mass suicide at Jonestown, group dynamics gone awry can have serious consequences for individual members or the group as a whole.

(Bales, 1950; Bales, Cohen, & Williamson, 1979), Cartwright and Zander (1968), Forsyth (1999), Hare, Blumberg, Davies, and Kent (1995, 1996), Lewin (1951), McGrath (1984), Nixon (1979), Olmstead (1959), and Parsons(1951), Group dynamics can be conceptualized as falling within the following five domains: (1) communication processes and interaction patterns, (2) interpersonal attraction and cohesion,

(3) social integration and influence, (4) power and control, and (5) culture. A conceptual framework of group dynamics is an important heuristic device for workers seeking to assess and understand how any group works. A conceptual framework enables workers to identify and understand group dynamics as they emerge during interaction. Since the 1940s, many scholars have attempted to conceptualize and categorize group dynamics. Some of the most notable include Bales and colleagues.

According to Toseland and Rivas (2001), communication includes (1) the encoding of perceptions, thoughts, and feelings into language and other symbols by a sender; (2) the transmission of language and symbols verbally, nonverbally, or virtually; and (3) the decoding of the message by the receiver.

Communication can be verbal, nonverbal, or virtual. Face-to-face group members' experience both verbal and nonverbal communications, whereas members of telephone groups experience only verbal communications, and members of computer groups experience only virtual communication. Communication can also be synchronous (i.e., back and forth in real time) or asynchronous. Asynchronous communications occur in computer groups when members may respond to messages long after they are posted.

(Schopler, Abell, & Galinsky, 1998; Smokowski, Galinsky, & Harlow, 2001), Whenever group members are communicating, they are sending messages that have meanings. Effective leaders listen hard for the meaning in messages. In face-to-face groups, members are always communicating, because even if they are not communicating verbally, their nonverbal behaviour is observable and communicating something. In telephone and computer groups, nonverbal communication is absent. The greater anonymity due to the lack of face-to-face contact in telephone and computer groups has important implications 14 THEORETICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS for the way members communicate in these groups. For example, it has been pointed out that salience of race and socioeconomic issues is reduced and greater privacy is afforded to stigmatized individuals.

(Cartwright, 1968), Interpersonal attraction is just one of the building blocks of group cohesion. In addition to interpersonal attraction, other factors contributing to cohesion include (1) satisfaction of members' needs for affiliation, recognition, and security; (2) resources and prestige that members believe will be garnered through group participation; (3) expectations about the beneficial consequences of the work of the group; and (4) positive comparison of the group with previous group experiences .

Benne and Sheats (1948), developed a typology of group roles that included (1) task roles, such as the coordinator and the information seeker; (2) socioemotional roles, such as the encourager and the harmonizer; and (3) individual roles, such as the aggressor and the help seeker.

Forsyth (1999) has pointed out that those with minority opinions are more likely to be heard if they (1) offer compelling and consistent arguments, (2) are assertive about the importance of listening to their opinion, (3) appear confident rather than rigid or close minded, (4) are flexible and able to grant small concessions to the majority, and (5) confront majorities that are not certain about their positions. Therefore, members with minority opinions can have an important voice when their arguments are well reasoned and persuasive, especially in groups in which open-mindedness is a valued norm.

Toseland and Rivas (2001) suggest that this can be done by (1) encouraging member-to-member rather than member-to-leader communications, (2) insuring that members have input into the agenda for group meetings and the direction the group will go in future meetings, (3) supporting indigenous group leaders as their attempts at leadership emerge during group interaction, and (4) encouraging attempts at mutual sharing and mutual aid among group members. Members can also be empowered by encouraging them to take on leadership roles in subgroups that work on specific tasks between meetings, by recognizing their special skills and talents, and by praising and rewarding them for their active involvement in the work of the group.

Levi (2001) views culture as having three levels of depth. On the surface level are symbols and rituals that display the culture of the group. At a deeper level, culture is displayed in the styles and approaches that group members use when interacting with each other. For example, the way conflict or competition is handled in a group says much about its culture. The deepest level of culture consists of core ideologies, values, and beliefs held in common by members of the group.

The measurement of group dynamics is essential in understanding the behaviour of individuals and of the group as a whole. Over the past two decades, several reviews have critically examined group process and outcome instruments (Delucia-Waack, 1997; Fuhriman & Barlow, 1994; Fuhriman & Packard, 1986). These instruments have been described as useful in analyzing group therapy processes, group climate and therapeutic dimensions, and interactions among group members. In this section, we present a brief sample of group dynamics measures to acquaint group leaders and researchers with currently available standardized procedures for understanding group process. Our selected descriptions are intended to be introductory, thus permitting readers to choose measures, review them in further detail, and apply the most suitable instrument for their group work needs.

3 Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The type of research conducted is descriptive research. A descriptive research is under taken in order to ascertain and to describe the characteristics of the variables of interest in a situation. It can be performed through literature search surveying certain people about their experience and focus group.

3.2 Method or Instruments of data collecting

Questionnaire is the instrument used for data collection.

3.3 Source of data

Primary data is the source of data.
The method adopted for collecting primary data is questionnaire.

3.4 Sampling Technique

The sampling technique adapted in convenient sampling.
Convenient Sampling: Convenience or opportunistic is the crudest type of non-random sampling. This involves selecting the most convenient group available.

3.5 Population Size

The size of the population is 500.

3.6 Sample Size

The sample size for this research is 140.

3.7 Sample Unit

The sample unit for this research is ETA Star Property Developers Ltd at Chennai.

3.8 Tools used for interpretation

- Percentage Analysis
- Chi-square

2. Statement of Problem

The group decision making without team mate's co-operation is difficult. Employee's co-operation in team is influenced by group dynamics. So the researcher aims to study the group dynamics so as to help the organization to enhance team's performance and to improve decision making in the group.

3. Research Objectives

- To study the relation between type of group and level of team spirit.
- To study the relation between type of group and communication patterns.
- To study the relation between level of team spirit and leadership style in group.

4. Significance of the study

- Group Dynamics plays a important role in leadership, so this project helps the organization to identify the role and impact of leadership.
- It helps the organization to know about group member's behavior. Group member's feelings, opinion, views and their act and react.
- It aids the organization to take decision related to group.
- It helps to prevent the conflict.

5. Scope of the Study

- Helps to improve team's performance and thereby improving organization performance.

- Aids in knowing the employee's behavior.
- Assist the organization in decision making.
- Helps in conflict handling.
- Helps the leader or manager in his roles and assists in better performance.

6. Period of the study

Duration of the project study is three months i.e., from 9.1.2013 to 9.4. 2013

7. Area of the study

I have done my project on Group Dynamics with special reference to ETA Star Property Developers Ltd, Chennai.

8. Limitations of Study

Every research has its own technical and managerial limitations. Time was one of the main limitations of the study. Because of the lack of time analysis is based on data collected from 140 employees only. So it also one of the drawbacks for this study.

9. Data Analysis and Interpretation

9.1 Relationship between Types of Group and Level of Team Spirit

Hypothesis:

Null Hypothesis: There is no relation between type of group and level of team spirit.

Alterative hypothesis: There exist a relation between type of group and level of team spirit.

Table 1.Observed Frequency

Level of team spirit	Friendly Relationship	Formal Relationship	Total
High	20	20	40
Neutral	30	30	60
Low	15	25	40
Total	65	75	140

Oi	Expected Frequency	Oi–Ei	$(Oi-Ei)^2$	$\dfrac{(Oi - Ei)^2}{Ei}$
20	18.5	1.5	2.25	0.122
20	21.4	-1.4	1.96	0.092
30	27.8	2.2	4.84	0.174
30	32.14	-2.14	4.58	0.143
15	18.5	-3.5	12.25	0.662
25	21.42	3.58	12.82	0.599
	Total			1.792

Degrees of freedom = (R - 1)(C - 1)

$$= (2 - 1) (3 - 1) = 1*2 = 2$$

Calculated Value   = 1.792

Using degrees of freedom = 2

5% level of significance, then the table value = 5.991(1.792< 5.991)   Accepted.

Inference:

Null hypothesis is accepted. So there is no relationship between type of group and level of team spirit.

9.2 Relationship between Types of Group and Communication Patterns.

Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis: There is no relation between type of group and communication patterns.

Alterative hypothesis: There exists a relation between type of group and communication patterns.

Table 2. Observed Frequency

Communication Patterns	Friendly Relationship	Formal Relationship	Total
Chain Network	20	20	40
Wheel Network	20	30	50
Circle Network	25	25	50
All Channel Network	0	0	0
Total	65	75	140

Oi	Expected Frequency	Oi–Ei	$(Oi-Ei)^2$	$\dfrac{(Oi - Ei)^2}{Ei}$
20	18.5	1.5	2.25	0.122
20	21.4	-1.4	1.96	0.092
20	23.21	3.21	10.31	0.444
30	26.78	3.22	10.37	0.387
25	23.21	1.79	3.204	0.138
25	26.78	-1.78	3.17	0.118
	Total			1.301

Degrees of freedom   = (R - 1)(C - 1)

= (2 - 1) (4 -1) = 1*3 = 3

Calculated Value   = 1.301

Using degrees of freedom = 3

5% level of significance, then the table value = 7.815(1.301< 7.85) Accepted.

Inference:

Null hypothesis is accepted. So there is no relationship between type of group and communication Pattern.

9.3 Relationship between Level of Team Spirit and Leadership Style.
Hypothesis
 *Null Hypothesis***:** There is no relation between level of team spirit and leadership style in group.
 *Alterative hypothesis***:** There is exist a relation between level of team spirit and leadership style in group.

Table 3.Observed Frequency

Leadership style	High	Neutral	Low	Total
Autocratic Style	10	20	10	40
Democratic Style	15	20	15	50
Human Relation Style	15	20	15	50
Laissez Fair Style	0	0	0	0
Total	40	60	40	140

Oi	Expected Frequency	Oi – Ei	$(Oi-Ei)^2$	$\dfrac{(Oi - Ei)^2}{Ei}$
10	11.42	-1.42	2.016	0.177
20	17.14	2.86	8.180	0.477
10	11.42	1.42	2.016	0.177
15	14.28	0.72	0.518	0.036

20	21.42	-1.42	2.016	0.094
15	14.28	0.72	0.518	0.036
15	14.28	0.72	0.518	0.036
20	21.42	-1.42	2.016	0.094
15	14.28	0.72	0.518	0.036
	Total			1.163

Degrees of freedom $= (R - 1)(C - 1)$

$= (3 - 1) (4 - 1) = 2 * 3 = 6$

Calculated Value $= 1.163$

Using degrees of freedom $= 6$

5% level of significance, then the table value $= 12.592$ ($1.163 < 12.592$)Accepted.

Inference:

Null hypothesis is accepted. So there is no relationship between level of team spirit and leadership style.

10. Findings

- The most of the respondents are work as a team.
- The employees are most interested to be a team player.
- Most of the individual maintain a formal relationship in the work.
- The employees are mostly comfortable within the group.
- Team spirit level in employee's neutral.
- It is found that employees with skills and experience prove to be a better team performes.
- Most of the employees participate in team activity.
- There in mutual understanding within a group but an equal majority gives an opposite answer.
- The study says that there is normally less personal association between team members.
- Employees mostly help their co-workers during the work. But nearly equal majority say that team mates do not help each other.
- Employees feel that their social status has not improved after being associated with a present team.
- Team members do their assigned roles effectively.
- Employees concentrate on the organization goals. But study says an almost equal majority do not concentrate on the organizational goals.
- Communication is good within the team.
- Wheel and circle network of communication are followed in the team.
- Employees say that they have difficulty in contracting the leader of the team .
- There is no domination within the team.
- Majority of the respondents say that there is freedom to share opinion within the team. But other huge majority says that there is no freedom.
- Democratic and human relation leadership style is followed in the group.
- Majority of the decision making within the group is by voting method or decision making tools.
- Half the majority say that there are considered during decision making. But the other half gives negative opinion.
- Majority of the respondents say that there is decision making within their team.
- There is less conflict within the team.
- The frequently of conflict is low within the group.
- The study says that lack of clarity in ideas and communication gap are the major reason for conflict within the group.

- Null hypothesis is accepted. So there is no relationship between type of group and level of team spirit.
- Null hypothesis is accepted. So there is no relationship between type of group and communication Pattern.
- Null hypothesis is accepted. So there is no relationship between level of team spirit and leadership style.

11. Suggestions

- Measures such as motivational program can be adopted so as to increase team spirit.
- Skilled and experienced employee can be used to educate new entrance about the advantages and importance of being a team player.
- Skilled and experienced employee can be used to educate entrants about the advantages and importance of being a team player.
- Team games and team gathering can be arranged during leisure timings so as to provide better room for understanding and so as to improve personal associate.
- Team leaders should educate their team about the improvement of being a team and the need of the helping their team mates in need.
- Team members have to give equal importance to organizational goal.
- Team members should be encouraged to share their opinions in case need, so as to improve team participation.

12. Conclusion

Understanding of group dynamics is essential for effective practice with individuals and communities, it is our belief that focused attention to the dynamic processes that occur in groups is what distinguishes group work from other forms of social work practice. In the case of treatment groups, it is also important to remain cognizant that group work is not just working with a collection of individuals within a group context.

We hope that this chapter has highlighted the power that group dynamics have to change the lives of people. Neglecting the therapeutic power of group dynamics greatly diminishes the ability of the worker to help members achieve their goals. Similarly, task groups, such as committees, teams, and boards of directors, are not merely collections of individuals. The synergy that is created when people come together to work in these groups transcends the collection of individual efforts. The group takes on a life of its own, and the group dynamic processes that result have an impact far beyond what the collection of individuals working alone could accomplish by themselves.

Looking to the future, we believe that more attention will be paid to group dynamics in virtual groups. It is becoming easier and less costly for people to meet over the telephone using teleconferencing capabilities and through chat rooms, bulletin boards, and other forms of computer-mediated groups. (See Meier, Chapter 28, this volume, for detailed information on this subject.) Because there are no visual cues in telephone or computer groups, and because communication may be asynchronous in computer groups, dynamic processes are Group Dynamics somewhat different in these groups than in face-to-face groups. Although some work has already been done to elucidate the dynamic processes in virtual groups, more work is needed as these groups continue to become more popular in our culture.

It is clear that culture, ethnicity, and race affect the dynamic processes that develop and evolve in groups. In this increasingly multicultural society, it is imperative to examine in greater depth the impact of culture, ethnicity, and race on the groups in which we all participate.

This priority is in keeping with a long and rich tradition within social group work practice of bringing together and fostering understanding and mutual respect among people from different backgrounds.

References

Bales, R. (1950). *Interaction process analysis: A method for the study of small groups*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Bales, R., Cohen, S., & Williamson, S. (1979). SYMLOG: *A system for the multiple level observations of groups*. New York: Free Press.

Benne, K. D., & Sheats, P. (1948). Functional roles of group members. *Journal of Social Issues*, 4(2), 41–49.

Cartwright, D. (1968). *The nature of group cohesiveness*. In D. Cartwright & A. Zander (Eds.), Group dynamics: Research and theory (3rd ed., pp. 91–109). New York: Harper & Row.

Cartwright, D., & Zander, A. (Eds.). (1968). Group dynamics: Research and theory (3rd ed.). New York: Harper & Row.

Delucia-Waack, J. (1997). Measuring the effectiveness of group work: A review and analysis of process and outcome measures. Journal for Specialists in Group Work, 22(4), 277–293.

Forsyth, D. (1999). Group dynamics (3rd ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole-Wadsworth.

Fuhriman, A., & Barlow, S. (1994). Interaction analysis: Instrumentation and issues. In A. Fuhriman & G. Burlingame (Eds.), Handbook of group psychotherapy: An empirical and clinical synthesis (pp. 191–222). New York: Wiley.

Fuhriman, A., & Packard, T. (1986). Group process instruments: Therapeutic themes and issues.*International Journal of Group Psychotherapy*, 36(3), 399–425.

Galinsky, M., & Schopler, J. (1977). *Warning: Groups may be dangerous. Social Work*, 22(2), 89– 94.

Hare, A. P., Blumberg, H. H., Davies, M. F., & Kent, M. V. (1995*). Small group research: A handbook*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Hare, A. P., Blumberg, H. H., Davies, M. F., & Kent, M. V. (1996). *Small groups: An introduction*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

Lewin, K. (1951). *Field theory in social science*. New York: Harper.

Levi, D. (2001). *Group dynamics for teams*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

McGrath, J. E. (1984). *Groups: Interaction and performance*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Nixon, H. (1979). *The small group*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Olmsted, M. (1959). *The small group*. New York: Random House.

Parsons, T. (1951). *The social system*. New York: Free Press.

Schopler, J., Abell, M., & Galinsky, M. (1998). Technology-based groups: A review and conceptual framework for practice. *Social Work*, 43(3), 254–267.

Smokowski, P. R., Galinsky, M., & Harlow, K. (2001). *Using technologies in group work*: Computer- based groups. Group Work, 13(1), 98–115.

Smokowski, P., Rose, S., Todar, K., & Reardon, K. (1999). Post-group casualty-status, group events and leader behaviour: An early look into the dynamics of damaging group experiences. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 9(5), 555–574.

Toseland, R. W., & Rivas, R. F. (2001). *An introduction to group work practice* (4th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.