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WHAT ROLE DOES GROUP DYNAMICS PLAY IN ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOUR?

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Abstract

A group is a collection of individuals united by a shared purpose or objective, collaborating to accomplish a specific task or goal. Group dynamics encompasses the behavioral and attitudinal aspects that characterize the interactions within a group. Understanding and managing group dynamics is crucial for organizational success, as it directly influences how groups are established, structured, and function. In organizational contexts, the presence of diverse groups is ubiquitous, and the study of group dynamics holds significant importance within the broader field of organizational behavior. The formation of groups, the configuration of their members, and the processes they employ are all integral components of group dynamics. Moreover, the effectiveness and efficiency of an organization often hinge on how well its various groups operate. Group dynamics extend beyond the formal structures of an organization to encompass informal groups that naturally emerge among individuals with common interests or tasks. Both formal and informal groups contribute to the overall dynamics within an organization, influencing its culture, decision-making processes, and overall effectiveness. The study of group dynamics involves exploring the roles individuals assume within a group, the patterns of communication that develop, and the factors influencing group cohesion or potential conflicts. By delving into these aspects, organizations can gain valuable insights into enhancing teamwork, fostering collaboration, and ultimately achieving their goals.



1. INTRODUCTION

Group dynamics have the power to influence rational individuals to either support or oppose decisions that they might not arrive at independently. While positive outcomes can emerge, such as group members assisting each other in overcoming discrimination, the dynamics within a group often yield unfavorable consequences. Given that many organizations rely on collective decision-making in certain contexts, it becomes imperative for managers to be vigilant about group biases and their potential adverse effects.

One common manifestation of group dynamics is conformity, where individuals tend to align with the group consensus, irrespective of their personal opinions. This phenomenon underscores the tendency of people to go along with the prevailing group sentiment, potentially leading to decisions that deviate from their individual perspectives.

Another aspect is group polarization, a phenomenon illustrating that group deliberation has the capability to intensify individuals' attitudes, resulting in more extreme decisions. A study conducted in U.S. federal courts revealed a noteworthy pattern: when judges worked independently, they opted for a relatively extreme course of action only 30% of the time. However, when they collaborated in groups of three, this percentage more than doubled, reaching 65%.

The implications of these group dynamics are significant, especially in organizational settings where decisions often have far-reaching consequences. Managers need to be aware of the tendency for conformity and polarization within groups, striving to mitigate potential negative impacts on decision-making processes. Understanding these dynamics is essential for fostering a balanced and effective decision-making environment within organizations, where individual perspectives are acknowledged and collective biases are carefully managed.





Figure 1: The figure demonstrate celebration of organized activities

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Group dynamics encompasses the collaborative efforts of both formal and informal groups as they work towards specific objectives, which may align with or diverge from the organization's goals. These groups emerge based on shared interests and behaviors within the societal and organizational context. Coined by social psychologist Kurt Lewin, the term gained prominence, leading to the establishment of the Group Dynamics Research Centre in 1945 at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The interdisciplinary nature of group dynamics spans various fields such as technology, psychology, anthropology, sociology, labor law, and trade unions. Recent research in this area has applied evolutionary principles to understand group dynamics, emphasizing its adaptive role in the survival and reproductive success of human communities.

The social brain hypothesis, introduced by Dunbar in 1993, played a pivotal role in shaping the understanding of group dynamics. Comparative studies with apes and mammals revealed a positive correlation between the size of the neopallium relative to the rest of the brain and the average group size of a species, highlighting the evolutionary significance of group living.

Managing groups effectively requires a deep understanding of both group composition and individual needs to guide the group towards positive outcomes. Buijs (2007) argued that innovations seldom stem from individual creative genius but rather result from complex social interactions, emphasizing the importance of considering intervening variables in social science.

To analyze groups as cohesive units, Tuckman's model of Group Development has gained relevance. Developed by Tuckman and Jensen in 1977, this model posits that groups undergo a unique life

cycle with five stages: Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing, and Adjourning. This framework aims to map the development of a group from its inception to its conclusion.

In the realm of decision-making within groups, the concept of Groupthink, as articulated by Janis in 1972, explains flawed decision-making processes stemming from cohesive influences within a team. This phenomenon, integrated with Tuckman's model, enhances the understanding of group dynamics, offering valuable insights for effective management and decision-making within organizational settings.

3. OVERVIEW

The success of Team India in the 2023 World Cup can be attributed to a harmonious blend of diverse talents, strategic team-building, and a unified commitment to the common goal of winning the trophy. Unlike previous Indian squads that relied on individual brilliance, the 2023 team functioned as a cohesive unit, strategically combining talents to emerge as a formidable force. Led by visionary Rahul Dravid, the coaching think tank emphasized team-building skills, fostering an environment where players seamlessly integrated into a cohesive whole, leveraging each other's strengths and mitigating weaknesses.

In today's competitive cricket environment, victory demands more than individual superstars; hence, the team moved away from overdependence on solo performances. Understanding team dynamics and harnessing complementary skills became crucial in the pressure-cooker atmosphere of international cricket.

The term "team dynamics," coined by psychologist Kurt Lewin in the 1940s, signifies an ideal scenario where team members collaboratively make decisions to achieve organizational goals. Positive dynamics are marked by creativity and effective decision-making, while poor dynamics may disrupt the team's work.

The Google AI Research Team serves as an exemplary illustration of positive group dynamics. Comprising experts worldwide in AI and machine learning, they collaboratively develop cutting-edge technologies. Their success stems from a collaborative approach, where members work together, share ideas, and inspire innovation.

Various theories explain why groups develop. George Homans' classic theory suggests that group development is rooted in shared activities, interactions, and feelings. Social exchange theory proposes that individuals form relationships based on mutual benefit, trust, and felt obligation. Social

identity theory, developed by Henri Tajfel, asserts that individuals derive identity and self-esteem from membership in outstanding groups, motivating them to contribute to the group's goals.

The achievement of India's Chandrayaan-3 mission exemplifies the power of teamwork and collaboration. Scientists, engineers, staff, and industrial partners from ISRO centers and external collaborators played integral roles. The U.R. Rao Satellite Centre (URSC) engineered and tested the spacecraft, contributing crucial subsystems. URSC and Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) collaborated on electronic subsystems powered by solar panels, showcasing the collaborative expertise that led to the mission's success.

4. TUCKMAN'S THEORY OF FIVE STAGES

The study of group dynamics, pioneered by Bruce Tuckman in the 1960s, asserts that groups typically do not reach their maximum effectiveness immediately upon formation. Instead, they navigate through several developmental stages, encountering challenges and conflicts as they strive to become productive and efficient. Tuckman's influential theory outlines five key stages of group development: forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning. Throughout these stages, group members grapple with various issues, and the manner in which these challenges are addressed plays a crucial role in determining the group's success in accomplishing its tasks or potential dissolution.

4.1 Forming:

The initial stage of group development is known as "forming." During this phase, many groups form on a temporary basis, marked by a sense of puzzlement and uncertainty. Key goals of the group are unclear, making leadership crucial. Forming represents a period of orientation where members acquaint themselves with one another and share expectations. Understanding the purpose and rules of the group is essential. Rushing through this stage can hinder the development of trust and openness. Ambiguity in roles and weak leadership can contribute to confusion, hindering the group's formation.

4.2 Storming:

The "storming" stage is aptly named, as it encompasses the highest level of incongruity and conflicts within the group. Members challenge group goals and vie for power, often competing for leadership positions. While this stage can be positive if conflicts are addressed and resolved, failure to do so may result in group dissolution or stagnation. Concerns and criticisms are voiced during this stage, and the inability to resolve conflicts may lead to unproductive outcomes.



4.3 Norming:

The "norming" stage is characterized by recognizing individual differences and shared expectations. Group members begin to develop a sense of unity and identity, strengthening the group's existence. Cooperative efforts yield results, and responsibilities are typically divided among members. Progress is evaluated, and roles and responsibilities are assigned during the norming stage.

4.4 Performance:

Group performance occurs when the group matures and achieves cohesiveness. In this stage, individuals accept one another, and conflicts are resolved through constructive group discussions. Decision-making shifts towards a rational process focused on relevant goals, rather than emotional issues.

4.5 Adjourning:

The final stage, "adjourning," is not experienced by all groups. It is characterized by the group's disbandment, which can happen for various reasons, ranging from task completion to members choosing different paths. Some groups remain relatively permanent. Members may experience feelings of conclusion and sorrow as they prepare to leave the group, and the reasons for disbandment can be rational or irrational.

Human decision-making is influenced by factors beyond rational judgment, including emotions, biases, and personal feelings such as conceit and egos. Understanding why individuals behave in certain ways or make incorrect decisions can be challenging. The impact of group dynamics on decision-making is significant, as decisions involving a group often face challenges related to interpersonal dynamics, biases, and emotional influences.

5. CONCLUSION

The experience of like-minded individuals coming together in a group is not only delightful but also exhilarating. Witnessing a team of dedicated people convene to discuss and decide on a course of action that benefits each member is a gratifying spectacle. Granting a group the freedom to choose its members fosters positive performance. The synergy that arises when individuals share common perspectives and goals is powerful and often leads to well-executed outcomes.

The joy of forming groups with like-minded people becomes evident as they collaborate, leveraging their diverse backgrounds and levels of experience. Despite these differences, a shared intellectual capacity for problem-solving unites them. The ability of individuals with similar viewpoints to



complement and reinforce each other's perspectives is instrumental in achieving organizational goals and objectives.

Margaret Mead's insightful quote, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has," beautifully encapsulates the essence of group dynamics. It underscores the transformative potential inherent in the unity of individuals driven by shared values and commitment. This sentiment highlights the profound impact that cohesive and purpose-driven groups can have in effecting positive change, aligning with the fundamental principles of group dynamics.

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