

Chapter-2

GROUP AND GROUP DYNAMICS

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INTRODUCTION

Group is a collection of individuals who have regular contact and frequent interaction, mutual influence, common feeling of belongingness and who work together to achieve a common set of goals.

According to Shaw (1971) a group is two or more persons who are interacting with one another in such a manner that each person influences and is influenced by each other. Most researchers define a small group as having at least three and no more than twelve or fifteen members. A group needs to have at least three members; otherwise it would simply be a dyad. With three members, coalitions can be formed and some kind of organization is present. Too large of a group (more than twelve or fifteen members) inhibits the group members' ability to communicate with everyone else in the group.

A group's members must be able to communicate freely and openly with all of the other members of the group. Groups will develop norms about discussion and group members will develop roles which will affect the group's interaction.

A group must have a common purpose or goal and they must work together to achieve that goal. The goal brings the group together and holds it together through conflict and tension. The groups operate on a common task and common attitudes. The group dynamics are concerned with the interaction between the group members in a social situation. This is concerned with the gaining in the knowledge of the group, how they develop and their effect on the individual members and the organization in which they function.

The group dynamics is essential to study since it helps to find how the relationships are made within a group and how the forces act within the group members in a social setting. This helps to recognize the formation of group and how a group should be organized, lead and promoted.

With the derivation of the complex and multifaceted societies, there came into being the different social groups that are largely significant for the human or individual welfare. A group is formed when there is need to pull off the requirements of the members in the course of interaction of the members who develop a group ideology, which regulates the members to develop their attitudes and actions which influence their satisfaction. The group has a specific structure in which the members interact. The group dynamics is dedicated in the advancement of the knowledge about the groups and is employed to study the organizational behavior and stress on the dynamics of members of the informal or formal groups.

The nature and the scope of groups have been discussed in this unit with more focus upon group dynamics. The social process by which people interact and behave in a group environment is called group dynamics. Group dynamics involves the influence of personality, power, and behavior on the group process. It is also called as relationship between individuals to achieving the group's goals. The group dynamics, individual's behavior in the group and teachers role in modeling behavior of the students are key topics under consideration in this unit. In order to address these topics the following objectives are formulated.

OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

1. define and understand the groups and group dynamics
2. understand and describe the formation of groups and principles of group dynamics
3. explain the types of social group.
4. be aware of individual and group behavior in school and classroom environment
5. evaluate the effects of school on formation of the students' behavior.
6. comprehend the role of teachers and school in molding individual and group behavior in classroom environment.

2.1 Meaning of Group

A group is simply a number of people who interact with each others on a regular basis it establish relationships among social beings. Groups are units of society, having all characteristics of society, except for the fact that groups are concrete entities. We live in group such as family; we belong to groups like clan and the like. Therefore, sociologists have also described sociology as science of social groups. Persons in all the societies, infect are always involved in several forms of interactions (having meaning and purpose). These appear in collectively as well as these interactions take place between persons having collectivity linked identity. These identities play an important role in the formation of groups.

A group is:

- Two or more people who share a common definition and evaluation of themselves and behave in accordance with such a definition. (Vaughan & Hogg, 2002, p. 200)
- A collection of people who interact with one another, accept rights and obligations as members and who share a common identity.

For a collection of people to be defined as a group, the members must:

- interact with one another
- be socially attracted to each other
- share goals or objectives
- have a shared identity which distinguishes them from other groups

People may underestimate the importance of society and group memberships on their lives. Whilst people sometimes undertake unaccompanied journeys on the basis of their own experiences of life involves being engaged with others and groups. The nature of these groups can be quite varied, from a family going for a walk, to the crowd at a football game, to an internet discussion group, to a group of fellow workers.

Criteria for a group include:

- formal social structure
- face-to-face interaction
- two or more persons
- common fate
- common goals
- interdependence
- self-definition as group members
- recognition by others

Societies can be seen as large groups consisting of a myriad of sub-groups.

Attributes of a Group

Benson (2001) identifies the following distinctive attributes of a group:

1. A set of people engage in frequent interactions
2. They identify with one another.
3. They are defined by others as a group.

4. They share beliefs, values, and norms about areas of common interest.
5. They define themselves as a group.
6. They come together to work on common tasks and for agreed purposes.

2.2 Group Dynamics

The study of Groups, groups' structure, groups' functions and groups' behavior is simply called group dynamics.

The group dynamics is that division of social psychology that investigates the formation and change in the structure and functions of the psychological grouping of people into self-directing wholes.

2.2.1 Concept of Group Dynamics:

The group dynamics refers to changes which take place within groups and is concerned with the interaction and forces obtained between group members in social settings. It is a study of forces operating within a group. A group doesn't simply mean individuals possessing same identical features. For instance, a collection of students doesn't form a group. These are class. A group is formed when the "Two or More individuals, interacting and interdependent, who have come together to achieve particular objectives.

2.2.2 Why We Study Groups: Importance of Group Dynamics

Groups are significant in many ways and conduct. Different sort of considerations are triggered when we analyze the groups. So, the study of groups becomes more promising and workable when we discuss groups in different aspects, that are, scientifically, sociologically, psychologically, practically and personally.

1. Psychological Aspects

Groups are important psychologically, for individuals' actions, thoughts and emotions cannot be understood without taking into considerations the groups they belong to, and the groups which surround them. Human behavior is more often than not group behavior, so people can't be understood when cut apart from their groups (including their families, work groups, peers). Groups also have a profound impact on individuals; group shape actions, thoughts and actions.

2. Scientific Aspects

Scientists study so many aspects of the world, and it is ironic that they only begun to turn their attention to themselves after they studied things like rocks, mountains, distant planets and germs. Groups are more interesting than these natural phenomena, and more complicated. Groups are also more interesting than individuals: more powerful, more dynamic, more puzzling, and more challenging to study.

3. Sociological Aspects

The dictionary that defines the society as "an organized system of individuals as member of a community" is mistaken. A society is more than individuals; rather society is an organization of groups. Individuals are recognized by the characteristics of the groups they are comprised of. Societal forces such as

traditions, values and norms don't reach directly to the individuals, but instead these work through the groups to which each individual belongs to.

4. Practical Aspects

Groups are also important for the practical reasons. Much of the world's work is done by groups, so by understanding them we move toward making them more efficient. If we want to improve the productivity in a factory, problem-solving is a boardroom, or learning in the classroom, we must understand groups. Groups are the building blocks of society, and any attempt to change the society will succeed only if the groups within the society change.

5. Personal Aspects

Groups are personally important. We spend our entire life surrounded and embedded in groups. Through membership in groups, we define and confirm our values and beliefs and take on or refine a social identity. When we face uncertain situations, in groups we gain reassuring information about our problems and security in companionship. In groups, we learn about relations with others, the type of impressions we make on others, and the way we can relate with others more efficiently and effectively. Groups influence us in consequential ways, so we ignore their influence at our own risk.

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| Activity-1 |
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| Think about your personal life and list at least five groups in which you are/have playing/ played an active role. |
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2.3 Types of Groups

There are numerous types of groups. But for their in depth understanding the comparison is presented. This may help to grasp the meanings of different types of groups more easily.

1. Psychological vs. Social Groups:

A psychological group may be defined as one in which the two or more persons who are interdependent as each members nature influences every other person, members share an ideology and have common tasks. These include families, friendship circles, political clubs, work, educational, religious, neighborhood, and recreational groups.

The social groups may be defined as integrated system of interrelated psychological groups formed to accomplish a defined function or objective. Political parties with its many local political clubs, friendship circles form the social organizations.

2. Formal vs. Informal Groups:

Formal groups refer to those which are established under the legal or formal authority with the view to achieve a particular end result and group is named after on the basis of its organizational structure, having work assignments establishing tasks. For example, teachers union.

Informal groups refer to the aggregate of the personal contacts and interaction and the network of relationships among individuals obtained in an informal way. These groups may take the form of the interest or friendship groups for example players associations etc.

3. Primary vs. Secondary Groups:

The primary groups are characterized by small size, face to face interactions and intimacy among the members of the group. The examples are family groups, and neighborhood groups.

The secondary groups are characterized by large size and individuals' identification with the values and beliefs prevailing in them rather than actual interactions. The examples are occupational associations and ethnic groups.

4. Membership vs. Reference Groups:

The membership group is those where the individual actually belongs and reference group is one in which they would like to belong.

5. Command vs. Task Groups:

The command groups are formed by subordinates reporting directly to the particular manager and are determined by the formal organizational chart. For example an assistant regional transport officer and his two transport supervisors form a command group.

The task groups are composed of people who work together to perform a task but involve a cross- command relationship. Its boundaries are not located within its immediate hierarchical superior, e.g. for finding out who was responsible for causing wrong medication order would require liaison between ward in charge, senior sisters and head nurse.

6. Interest vs. Friendship Groups:

The interest group involves people who come together to accomplish a particular goal with which they are concerned .Office employees joining hands to go to vacation or get vacation schedule changed form an interest group .

The friendship groups are formed by people having one or more common features. The people coming from a particular area or having same language to speak belong to a friendship group.

2.3.1 Group Structure and Size

Effective group performance depends to a large extent, on the size and composition of the group. A group may consist of as few as two people (giving credibility to the statement that "two heads are better than one"), or as many as three or four hundred. In order to be effective, group size should be kept to a minimum without jeopardizing workload and goal achievement. Larger groups increase the possibility of conflict due to the variety of viewpoints, few opportunities for the development of social relationships, a decrease in participation levels, and lack of opportunity for individual recognition. Individual skills and performance must be a consideration in forming a group.

Diversification is a factor in both group development and skill requirement. A more diverse group may take longer to reach peak performance due to the number of cultures, language differences, and interpretation of the task to be completed, but once they do develop, diverse groups are equally productive and may even be more creative in problem-solving because members have access to a broader base of ideas for solutions.

2.3.2 Group Development

The appointment of individuals to a group based on their compatibility, diversity, or expertise does not assure effectiveness in achieving group goals. A group is initially a collection of personalities with different characteristics, needs, and influences. To be effective, these individuals must spend time acclimatizing themselves to their environment, the task, and to each other. Organizational experts and practitioners have observed that new groups go through a number of stages before they achieve maximum performance. Each stage presents the members with different challenges that must be overcome before they can move on to the next stage. These stages have been identified as forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning.

1. Forming:

At this first stage of development, members are preoccupied with familiarizing themselves with the task and to other members of the group. This is sometimes referred to as the dependent stage, as members tend to depend on outside expertise for guidance, job definition, and task analysis.

2. Storming:

At this stage, the group encounters conflict as members confront and criticize each other and the approach the group is taking to their task. Issues that arise include identification of roles and responsibilities, operational rules and procedures, and the individual need for recognition of his or her skills and abilities. This stage is also referred to as the *counter-dependent stage* where members tend to “flex their muscles” in search of identity. In some cases, the group may have problems getting through this stage. This may occur if the group encounters difficulty clarifying their task, agreeing on their mission or mandate, or deciding how they will proceed. Lack of skills, ability or aptitude can also contribute to their inability to get beyond this stage.

3. Norming:

At this point, members start to resolve the issues that are creating the conflict and begin to develop their social agreements. The members begin to recognize their interdependence, develop cohesion, and agree on the group norms that will help them function effectively in the future.

4. Performing:

When the group has sorted out its social structure and understands its goals and individual roles, it will move toward accomplishing its task. Mutual assistance and

creativity become prominent themes at this stage. The group, sensing its growth and maturity, becomes independent, relying on its own resources.

5. Adjourning:

During this phase, the group will resort to some form of closure that includes rites and rituals suitable to the event. These may include socials and parties, or ceremonies that exhibit emotional support or celebration of their success.

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| Activity-2 |
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| Identify different groups prevailing in the society and name them as per types of groups discussed earlier. |
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2.3.3 Group Functions

Three functions that influence the effectiveness and productivity of groups are task functions, maintenance functions, and self-interest functions.

1. Task Functions:

The purpose of formation of the group is to accomplish the task. To achieve the task, they must have members that fulfill some or all of the following roles:

- a) **Initiating:** refers to identification of goals and specification of tasks, defining problems and suggesting procedures for a solution.
- b) **Information seeking:** refers to collection of relevant information or data and asking the ideas or suggestions.
- c) **Information giving:** refers to offering facts, providing information, stating beliefs, and giving suggestions or idea.
- d) **Clarifying ideas:** refers to interpreting and clarifying input, indicating alternatives and giving examples.
- e) **Bringing closure:** refers to summarizing, restating, and offering solutions.
- f) **Consensus testing:** refers to checking for agreements and sending up 'trial balloons'.

2. Maintenance Behavior

Each group needs social-emotional support to be effective. Some members of the group will take the lead in providing this support which consists of the following:

- a) **Encouraging:** refers to showing regard for other members and providing positive response to their contributions and works.
- b) **Improving group:** refers to expressing group feelings, sensing moods and relationships, atmosphere and sharing feelings.
- c) **Harmonizing:** refers to reconciling differences and reducing group tension.
- d) **Compromising:** refers to admitting errors and looking for alternatives.
- e) **Gate-keeping:** refers to attempting to keep communications flowing, facilitating the participation of others, and suggesting procedures for sharing discussion.
- f) **Standard setting:** refers to reminding members of group norms, rules, and roles.

3. Self-Interest Behavior

This third function displayed by some individuals, members generally takes away from group performance and affects task achievement at the expense of the group.

Activities that identify self-interest behavior are as follows:

- a) ***Dominating and controlling:*** refers to displaying lack of respect for others, cutting them off, not listening, and restating other members' suggestions with a different meaning.
- b) ***Blocking:*** refers to stifling a line of thought, and changing the topic either away from the point of view or back to his/her own interest.
- c) ***Manipulating:*** refers to providing self-serving information, or a single point of view designed to achieve a decision that is consistent with their position.
- d) ***Belittling:*** refers to sneering at other's point of view, or making jokes about another member's contribution.
- e) ***Splitting hairs:*** refers to searching for insignificant details that delay a solution, or undermining another person's point of view.

2.3.4 Group Norms

Development of the group is time taking activity that starts with the developments of standards and acceptable behaviors named as norms. Sometimes these are in written form or verbal understanding and these may be formal or informal. Norms are not individual behaviors, but are collectively held expectations of how a group will function. For example, a new member who joins a group may initially search for clues about what type of behavior is acceptable. What are the dress codes? How do I address my supervisors? What is proper etiquette? What topics or discussions are acceptable or avoided?

Recognition of these norms is important, since they provide regularity and predictability to individual and group behavior. Bosses are more likely to insist on norms regarding work performance or attendance, whereas other norms might address the acceptability of rearranging personal space or assisting co-workers. Group norms can be named as:

- **Loyalty norms** such as the belief that managers have to work on weekends and holidays or accept transfers to prove their loyalty to the company.
- **Dress norms** may include anything from uniforms to shirt and ties to bikinis, depending on the establishment or business.
- **Reward norms** include perks or benefits that come as a result of individual or group performance. Criteria may include productivity levels, loyalty, equality (everyone gets the same reward), or social responsibility (those who need it most).

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| Activity-3 |
| Develop norms for the group that you want to develop to accomplish any task assigned to you. List also the task functions for the group. |

2.3.5 Principles of the Group Dynamics:

1. The members of the group must have a strong sense of belonging to the group. The barrier between the leaders and to be led must be broken down.

2. The more attraction a group is to its members, the greater influence it would exercise on its members.
3. The greater the prestige of the group member in the eyes of the member the greater influence he would exercise on the theme.
4. The successful efforts to change individuals sub parts of the group would result in making them confirm to the norms of the group.
5. The pressures for change when strong can be established in the group by creating a shared perception by the members for the need for the change.
6. Information relating to the need for change, plans for change and the consequence of the changes must be shared by the members of the group.
7. The changes in one part of the groups may produce stress in the other parts, which can be reduced only by eliminating the change or by bringing about readjustments in the related parts.
8. The groups arise and function owing to common motives.
9. The groups survive by pacing the members into functional hierarchy and facilitating the action towards the goal.
10. The intergroup relations, group organization, member participation is essential for effectiveness of a group.

These principles may not apply for some environment but an individual can adapt these as per requirement and the situation.

2.3.6 Features of Group Dynamics:

Group dynamics is concerned with group .Wherever a group exists the individuals interact and members are continuously changing and adjusting relationship with respect to each other. The members of the group may interact , may be in state of tension , may be attracted or repelled to each other, may seek the resolution of these tensions and return to equilibrium after the resolution.

Changes go on occurring like introduction of the new members, changes in leadership, presence of old and new members and the rate of change – fast or slow. The groups may dissolve if the members are not enthusiastic about the goals; they have no faith in the ideology and don't identify themselves with the group. This means that the cohesiveness in the group has decreased.

There may be rigidity or flexibility (cohesiveness or conflict) that influence a group dynamics. If the members get along well there is smooth sailing for the group and if there is conflict it leads to problems. A rigid group may not change and lacks adaptability to change. But the members if are able to solves the problems, the equilibrium can be maintained. The conflict and tension if increases within the group, this can cause an open flare up and strong measures are urgently.

The group organization is essential. It leads to greater group effectiveness, participation, cooperation and a constructive morale. The leader will be effective only if the group is

organized and stable. Some degree of organization is essential for effective functioning of the group and depends on the proportion of the well-defined roles for the members in the group. The organized group; is one with every member having specific roles and acting towards other members in the prescribed manner.

Dynamic group always is in continuous process of restructuring, adjusting and readjusting members to one another for the purpose of reducing the tensions, eliminating the conflicts and solving the problems which its members have in common. The changes may take within a group and it is interesting to study the way the change do occur. The frequent changes indicate the capacity of the group to change and adapt.

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| Activity-4 |
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| Discuss the implementation of principles of the group dynamics with any senior teacher and report findings. |
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2.4 Individual Behavior and Group Behavior

People in groups behave differently than they do individually. Group expectations influence individual behavior, and individual behavior affects the group. Teachers need to be aware of the characteristic traits of group behavior.

Characteristics of Group Behavior

1. Groups create their own psychological forces that influence individual behavior teacher awareness of group dynamics is important to effective classroom control.
2. Group behavior in the classroom is influenced by how students perceive the teacher. Students see teachers as filling many psychological roles.
3. Dealing with classroom conflict requires diagnostic thinking by the teacher. This thinking involves:
 - a) forming a first idea;
 - b) gathering facts about the idea;
 - c) applying hidden factors to draw conclusions;
 - d) taking action; and
 - e) being flexible.
4. Teachers maintain group control through various influence techniques. These techniques include:
 - a) supporting self control,
 - b) offering situational assistance,
 - c) appraising reality, and
 - d) Invoking pleasure and pain.

The important aspect to control behavior is to locate the reason behind particular behavior. Students exhibiting certain behavior must have some objective, focus that objective and try to satisfy the needs of the students or of the group.

- A) **Supporting Self-Control** techniques are used at the initial stage. They address the problem before it becomes serious. They include eye contact, moving closer, humor, encouragement, and ignoring.
- B) **Situational Assistance** techniques are necessary when students cannot regain control without assistance from the teacher. Techniques to provide assistance include:
 - a) helping students over a hurdle;
 - b) restructuring the schedule;
 - c) establishing routines;
 - d) removing the student from a situation;
 - e) removing seductive objects; and
 - f) physical restraint.
- C) **Appraising Reality** techniques involve helping students understand underlying causes for misbehavior and foresee probable consequences. Teachers 'tell it like it is', offer encouragement, set limits, and clarify situations with post - situational follow-up.
- D) **Rewarding** good behavior and punishing bad behavior is an important characteristics, punishment should be used only as a last resort because it is too often less productive.

A group creates conditions such as its members will behave in certain ways because they belong to it; at the same time the manner in which the parts function affects the whole. In other words, group expectations strongly influence individual behavior, and individual behavior in turn affects the group.

2.4.1 Roles of Individuals within the Classroom

Several roles are available to individuals in groups. The following are some of the roles that can cause trouble in the classroom:

1. Leader

A leadership role is available in almost every group. The role varies according to the group's purpose, makeup, and activities. Within the same group, different people may act as leaders in different activities. For example, a student who is a leader in one activity may be assigned different role in the other activity, it creates problem when a person is exhibiting different roles he/she may not restrain him/herself from the other role. Group leaders tend to share certain qualities. They are above average in most respects (intellect, social skills, responsibility, and socio-economic status). They generally have a highly developed understanding of others, and they embody group ideals. Teachers must be aware that the leaders they appoint are not necessarily the group's natural leader. Such mismatches often lead to conflict within the group.

2. Clowns

Clowns are individuals who take the position of entertainer of the group. Students sometimes take this role in order to mask feelings of inferiority, thinking it best to make

fun of their own before others have a chance. Clowns sometimes help the group and sometimes hinder it. Clowning can be beneficial to both teacher and the group, especially when students are anxious, frustrated, or in need of relief from tension. At times, however, group members may support the disruptive antics of the clown as a way of expressing hostility to the teacher.

3. Fall Guys

A fall guy is an individual who takes blame and punishment in order to gain favor with the group. Members of the group feel free to misbehave knowing that they can set up the fall guy to suffer the penalties. Teachers need to be aware of this kind of manipulation and be sure to focus their corrective actions on the instigator of misbehavior

4. Instigators

Instigators are individuals who cause trouble, but appear not to be involved. They often solve their inner conflicts by getting others to act them out. They may even feel that they are benefiting the victim in some way. Teachers need to look into recurring conflicts carefully to see if there is an unnoticed instigator. It may be necessary to point out this role to the group, as it is often undetected by them. The group may need help in recognizing and discouraging this role.

2.4.2 Teachers Role to Optimize the Functioning of Group:

All of the roles described here are played by individuals in groups either because the role fills a strong personal need or because the group expects or enjoys it. By playing a role, an individual finds a place within the group one of the main desires of almost all students and becomes a functioning part of the group.

1. Psychological Roles of Teachers:

The ways in which groups and individuals behave in the classroom are greatly influenced by how they perceive the teacher. Like it or not, teachers fill many different roles and present many different images. Some of these roles and images are:

2. Representatives of society:

Teachers reflect and develop values, moral attitudes, and thinking patterns typical of the community. Teachers also judge students' behavior, character, work, and progress.

3. Source of knowledge:

Teachers are the primary source of knowledge, a resource from which to obtain information. Teachers' help students learn by giving directions, furnishing information, requiring that work be done, removing obstacles to learning, and facilitating problem solving.

4. Role of Director

Teachers arbitrate and make decisions when disputes arise. They maintain security in the classroom; discover wrongdoing, and handout consequences. They are

responsible to model customs, manners, values, and beliefs that students are to imitate. This all ultimately help to anxiety by maintaining standards of behavior, consistent environments, regular schedules, and freedom from danger or threat.

As you can see, teachers are assigned many roles by students. Sometimes they have little choice about those roles, but they can usually decide in part on the roles and on how and when to assume them. They may assume some roles wholeheartedly and avoid others completely, depending on how they wish to relate to students. Sometimes they may adopt or avoid certain roles, if they are aware of a strong group need. In any event, teachers need to be sure that they are steady and consistent in the roles they do assume.

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| Activity-5 |
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| Conduct interviews of five teachers about their roles in the classrooms and make the list of roles identified, compare that list with the roles described in the sections 2.6.1 and 2.6.2 above. |
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2.5 Role of School and Teacher in Modeling the Individual and Group Behavior

Group dynamics, both positive and negative, occur whether school personnel recognize them or not. Some examples of school dynamics are as follows.

- A teacher who continually points out the bad behavior of a particular child is possibly setting up non-conducive environment that will allow the students and the teacher to produce their anger and aggression.
- A teacher who openly criticizes particular manual/rules that he/she is required to use is, without realizing it, encouraging the children to resist the work associated with that manual. One of the reasons for the children's so-called negativity may be their identification with the teacher. If she does not like the manual, they won't like it or want to use it. So, although the pupils' behavior is reflecting their alliance with the teacher, their negative behavior may be interpreted as disobedience. If the teacher goes on this assumption, without checking with her students, he/she may feel justified to scolding the students. Unconsciously, the children's behavior gives the teacher the excuse to scold them, rationalizing that they were not doing their work properly. He/she feels justified in showing anger toward bad kids rather than acknowledging her/his own anger and frustration.

Often teachers and class, or the whole school, staff and pupils, "the group as a whole," struggle with such problems as severe anxiety, fear of other attacks, discomfort within the school itself, and diversity of ethnicity, and language. The enormous psychological power of many individuals in a group situation may create behavioral reactions that would not occur in a one-to-one situation. The group-as-a-whole produces an entirely different personality than that of the individuals from whom the character emerged. In other words, the characteristics of the class group are broader and more encompassing than that of one individual student. "Class as a whole" issues also lead to role-taking by individual members or role assignment to members via group pressure. For example, if a lesson is boring, some student will invariably become "time keeper," letting the teacher know that

the class has had enough, or the “class clown” will distract the lesson with jokes and funny behavior.

Children’s methods of developing a sense of safety within the class setting are understandably weak and often regressive. The methods they use will be determined by ego and superego development, as well as control over impulsive behavior. This developmental process will determine how much psychic energy is available to focus on the subject at hand.

There are many other dynamic conditions that emerge in school settings without the knowledge of the participants. For example, teachers may use punitive disciplinary tactics because of their own overly strict upbringing, or they may encourage raucous acting out because of their desire to be rebellious. Most teachers would agree that class order or class control is an important challenge. In order to address the issues of class order and to create an environment most conducive to classroom learning, it is helpful to understand the causes of class management difficulties.

2.5.1 Causes of Class Management Difficulties

1. Transference:

Transference refers to the patient perceiving and acting as if the therapist is some other significant person in his or her life. The concept is similar in group therapy, only more complex as the transferences may involve members of the group and the group leader. There is a similar structure for counter-transference in which the therapist experiences reactions that are either induced by the patient(s) or a result of the therapist’s unresolved conflicts. These same dynamics occur in classroom groups, although unknown to the participants. Although many teachers intuitively understand the importance of relationships in facilitating learning, teachers generally have no training in the ways that both students and teachers bring a whole history of past relationships into classroom interactions. Training in this area could help teachers react less defensively with difficult students. The problem is more severe when the students knowingly tease the teachers and have command on that.

We may consider that the mother acts as a holder for feelings that threaten to overcome the immature child. If the children feel safe, they will eventually be able to manage difficult feelings such as rage, despair, hostility, and suspicion. In schools and classrooms, the teachers and administrators are also affected by their feelings of safety or lack of safety. Teaching adults to provide containment would enhance the climate of the class and help students to manage a “nameless dread” that often accompanies learning.

Studies have implied that teachers who were critical and punitive tended to create an unsafe holding environment that led to the children behaving with counter-aggression or passivity. When the teacher focuses on the pupils’ needs, academic, social, and emotional, the children are able to respond to the rules and regulations stipulated by the school.

2. Group-as-a-Whole:

This is a complex concept with many consequences. One key aspect is that through projection and projective identification, individuals in groups feel, speak, and act not only on their own behalf but also on behalf of others who have disowned or split-off corresponding pieces of themselves. For example, a child who is repeatedly confused about assignments, who is always the one to ask annoying obvious questions about the homework, is likely to be expressing confusion on behalf of others in the group, who need not feel so stupid or confused if someone else can feel it for them. There are many instances when attending to the problems of an individual child isn't effective since the problem lies with the group as a whole. If the teacher sends a disruptive child to the principal, a second disruptive child may spring up and take the first child's place. This is a signal that it is not an individual problem and that the class problem has not been effectively addressed.

3. Group Roles:

As in group therapy, individual students may adopt particular roles that in some way influence the direction of the learning process. These roles may include the instigator, the self-righteous judge, the caretaker, the clown, and many others. It would be helpful for educators to understand what is motivating these roles, including the ways in which individuals enact these roles on the behalf of others in an interconnected system. Teachers could help students learn how to adapt these roles in order to enhance the academic learning process.

4. A Systems Approach:

A systems view of group dynamics draws attention to the impact of different layers of a system on each other in an interconnected web. Just as individuals in groups take on roles on behalf of others, groups take on roles within institutions, as do institutions within society. As an example, the practice of tracking may allow those who are on the top rung to feel smarter and more accomplished by comparison with those who are on the bottom rung. Success in this structure depends upon the failure of others.

Such a structure defends teachers from the anxiety that a more personal, intimate relationship with students might arouse. In addition, if schools were structured to better support real learning and were no longer cemented in the convenient role of societal scapegoat, others of society's institutions would be forced to examine their own roles and might be forced to change as well.

5. Parallel Process:

One aspect of systems thinking is parallel process. This refers to dynamics on one level of a system being played out in other levels of the system. A teacher who is made to feel like an infant by an administrator, for example, may be more likely to make her own students feel like infants. Following is an example of parallel process in action. Children perceive the teachers role as good, if he/she gives everything they want, and remain uncritical of their wrong doings. When this fantasy is not realized, the teacher becomes the bad who punishes and denies. This dilemma occurs frequently in classroom groups.

Most teaching and learning takes place in groups; however, school personnel have little understanding of either the anxiety that group membership arouses or the learning opportunities afforded by the power of a group. The quality of the relationships and the level of safety that is present in the group in which children learn will determine the extent to which they can explore the unknown and take risks, both of which are necessary for learning. An understanding of the covert processes of groups will help teachers to understand the group's enabling as well as destructive power. It will also help them to allow students greater access to the full range of their own feelings and behaviors, and use them more positively in the work of learning.

2.6 Summary

Group is a collection of individuals who have regular contact and frequent interaction, mutual influence, common feeling of camaraderie, and who work together to achieve a common set of goals. The study of Groups, groups' structure, groups' functions and groups' behavior is simply called group dynamics. The group dynamics is that division of social psychology that investigates the formation and change in the structure and functions of the psychological grouping of people into self-directing wholes. The study of groups becomes more promising and workable when we discuss groups in different aspects, that are, scientifically, sociologically, psychologically, practically and personally. In short, group dynamics occur consciously and unconsciously in classrooms and schools. The list of ongoing dynamics is of course not complete. More research and observation is needed. There is a need that the teachers and the administrators understand the students grouping in the classrooms so that they may be able to use these group dynamics for the enhancement of learning.

But this particular unit may serve the basis for the understanding of group and group dynamics.

2.7 Self Assessment Questions

- Q.No.1 Define group and group dynamics. Discuss major characteristics and functions of the groups.
- Q.No.2 Why techniques for managing group dynamics necessary? How do techniques for managing group dynamics help in learning group behavior? Give examples with your answer.
- Q.No.3 Discuss types of social groups. Also describe why do people join group?
- Q.No.4 Groups are developed for specific purposes under varied circumstances. Explain different models of group development. Which model describes the developmental process more accurately in your point of view?
- Q.No.5 Analyze the individual behavior and group behavior. Would you consider individual behavior influences the group behavior in the classroom? How?

- Q.No.6 Why we need to improve group behavior? How do the different factors affect the group behavior? Discuss.
- Q.No.7 Critically examine the model of dealing with group?
- Q.No.8 Discuss the role of individuals within the classroom. Give a detailed note of teachers' role to manage the group behavior.
- Q.No.9 Describe the impact of school and classroom rules on the change of behavior.

2.8 Suggested Readings

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