



Group Dynamics



What is a group?

- Tajfel (1979) - Either external or internal criteria
 - External = outside designations e.g. bus driver, dental patient
 - Internal = group identification factors



Minimal group paradigm

- Tajfel, Billig, Bundy and Flament (1971)
 - Schoolboys
 - Preferences for Kandinsky or Klee
 - Task – to distribute money between pairs of recipients identified only by code number and art preference
 - Participants strongly favoured own group
 - No self-interest (not a recipient)
 - Only criteria for group was art preference
- Second task – identified only as group X and group Y members – no personal characteristics could be inferred by preferences
- Robust finding – merely being categorised as a group member = ethnocentrism and competitive intergroup behaviour





- 'A collection of two or more interacting persons who share common goals, have a stable relationship, are somehow interdependent, and perceive that they are in fact part of a group.'

(Paulus, 1989)

- Many types of group e.g.:
 - Religious groups
 - National groups
 - Racial groups
 - Gender groups
 - Organisational groups
 - Friendship groups



- Paulus - subjective definition

- Contains no objective characteristics of groups

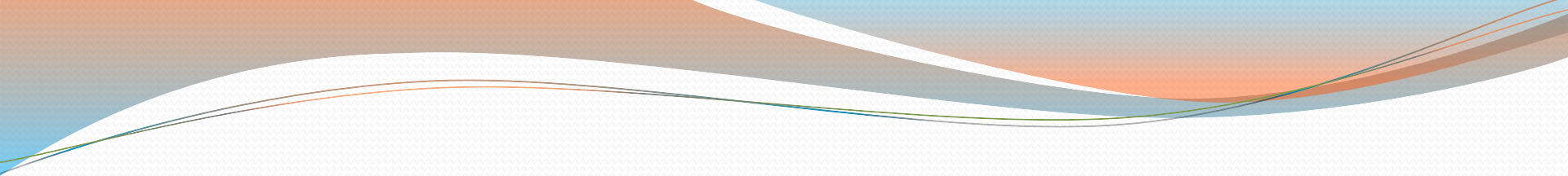
e.g. common fate (Lewin, 1948) or face-to-face interaction (Bales, 1950)

- Emphasizes common identity

- Identification of groups recognizes that

- Some people do not belong
- Some groups more cohesive than others





To be part of a group....

- Interaction
- Interdependence
- Relatively stable relationship persisting over a time period
- Sharing of some kind of common goal, or goals
- Structured interaction
- Recognition that they are part of a group

Are all collections of people 'groups'?

- **Social aggregates** – collections of unrelated people
- **Individualist** tradition – we act as individuals regardless of social context
(e.g. Latane, 1981)
- **Collectivist** tradition – groups possess unique characteristics that shape the processes, understandings and behaviours of group members
(e.g. Sherif, 1936, Tajfel and Turner, 1979, Abrams and Hogg, 2004)

- **Sociobiological perspective** (e.g. Bowlby)

- Adaptive value of forming groups
 - Protection
 - Cooperation
- The need to belong – innate and universal (Baumeister and Leary, 1995)

- **Cognitive perspective**

- e.g. social comparison theory
 - The need to hold accurate views of the world
 - Belief with no basis in physical reality (e.g. preferences)

- Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1979; Tajfel and Turner, 1986)
 - Personal identity – qualities and characteristics which are strictly individual
 - Social identity - that part of the individual's self-concept which derives from:
 - his/her knowledge of his/her membership of a social group (or groups)
 - the value and emotional significance of that membership
 - Our self-concept partly depends on how we evaluate the ingroup relative to other groups
 - The self as a group member - may result in multiple selves
- Social Categorization Theory (Turner, 1984) – size of groups/categories
- Utilitarian perspective
 - e.g. Social Exchange Theory (Thibaut and Kelley, 1959)

Also applies to group relationships/interactions

- Social relations – fulfilment of own needs
- Costs must outweigh benefits
- Opportunities for alternatives – e.g. chances of becoming a member of a more desirable group

Entitativity

- Campbell (1958)
- Property of a group that marks it as a coherent and bounded social entity in its own right
- Groups differ in entitativity (*e.g. Lickel et al, 2000*)

e.g. group size, beliefs, practices



- Lickel et al (2000)

- 40 groups
- Members of a jury, people waiting at a bus stop, family members, black people
- 8 dimensions:
 - Degree of interaction among members
 - Importance of group members to each other
 - Common goals for group members
 - Common outcomes
 - Similarity among group members
 - Duration
 - Permeability (ease of joining/leaving)
 - Size
- Entitativity
- Sorting task according to own criteria
- Some groups consistently sorted into the same categories
- Groups in same category rated similarly on the eight dimensions

Type of group (examples)

	Intimacy group	Task group	Social category	Loose association
Degree of interaction among members	High	Moderate/High	Low	Low
Importance of group members to each other	High	Moderate/High	Low	Low
Common goals for group members	High	Moderate/High	Low	Low
Common outcomes	High	Moderate/High	Low	Low
Similarity among group members	High	Moderate	Low	Low
Duration	Long	Moderate	Long	Short
Permeability	Low	Moderate	Low	High
Size	Small	Small	Large	Moderate
Entitativity	High	High	Moderate	Low

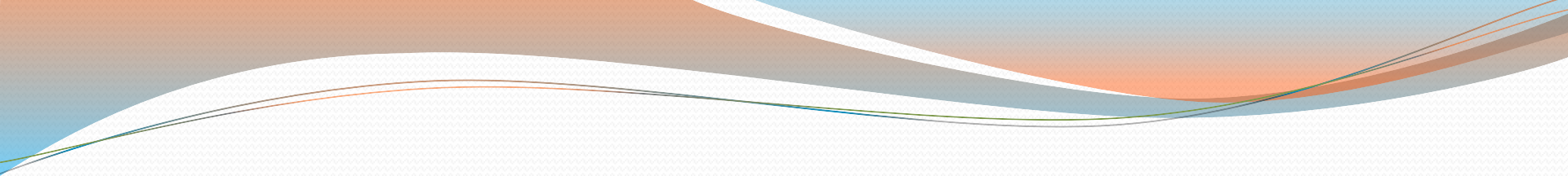
(Lickel et al, 2000)

Entitativity

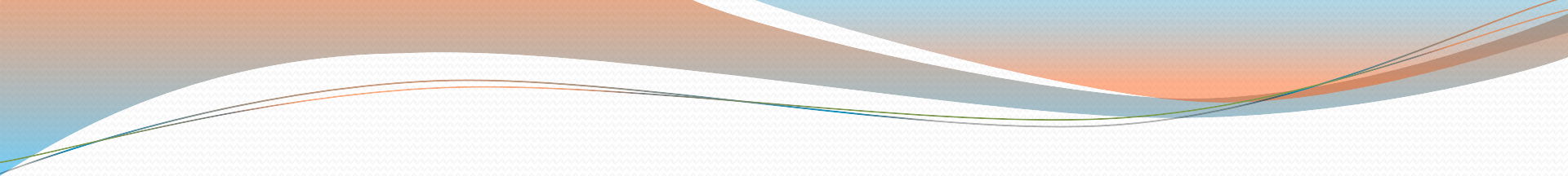
- Single most important predictor = Interaction among group members
- Positive correlation between entitativity and:
 - Importance of group members
 - Common goals
 - Common outcomes
 - Group member similarity
 - Duration

Link to common fate (Lewin, 1948); face-to-face interaction (Bales, 1950))

- Weak negative correlation:
 - Group size
 - Permeability
- Johnson et al (2006) – Different group types – different functions for members
e.g. affiliation (need to belong), achievement-based needs and;
social identity (Hogg et al., 2007)



BREAK
10 MINUTES



Levels of Analysis

- Individual level
 - Individual awareness of own and others' group membership
- Group/Interpersonal level
 - Similarity of behaviour that is not due to individual personalities
- Wider context
 - Behaviours only shown due to the current social context (e.g. at a football match, a music concert, at work, school etc...)

Individual level of analysis

- **Group socialization** – efforts of existing members to assimilate new members to group norms and practices
- Moreland and Levine (1982) - 5 stages of group membership
 - Investigation
 - Socialization
 - Maintenance
 - Re-socialisation (level of dissatisfaction with group leading to exit)
 - Remembrance (evaluation by ex-member and group)
- Stages - differences in degree of group commitment
- Movement between stages involves role transition
- Role transitions – mutual evaluation (individual and group)
[Link to cost-benefit models]

Group level of analysis

Group development

- Challenges and goals of groups change over time
- Impacts upon:
 - Member interaction
 - Group performance
 - 'Rewardingness' of group to members
- Five-stage model of group development – groups formed for a purpose
(Tuckman, 1965; Tuckman and Jensen, 1977)
 - Forming
 - Storming
 - Norming
 - Performing
 - Adjourning
- Different stages of the group's life are characterised by changing within-group interaction patterns



(adapted from Tuckman, 1965; Tuckman and Jensen, 1977)

• Similarity - Group Norms

- **Prescriptive** norms – how to feel, think, behave
- **Proscriptive** norms – how not to feel, think, behave
- Implicit or explicit norms
- Tendency for conformity - internalization of belief and value system

(Turner, 1991)

Group norms = belief system that enables the smooth functioning of the group

- Regulates group interaction
- Predicts member behaviour
- Possibility of deviant behaviour

(Schachter, 1951)



Socially-shared cognition and affect

- Shared understandings of aspects of group life – tasks, roles, skills and abilities
- Coordination, Communication, Cooperation
(Van Ginkel and Van Knippenberg, 2008)
- Example (cognition) - **transactive memory** – knowing who to ask for a specific piece of information. No need for one person to know it all
(Wegner, 1987)
- Example (affect) – **emotional contagion** – transfer of moods and emotions among group members
(George, 1990; Barside, 2002)

Cohesiveness

Binds members to the group *(Festinger, 1950)*

- Liking for each other (interpersonal cohesion)
- Sharing of same goals (task cohesion)
- Feeling that the group satisfies their needs more than another could



- **Depersonalised attraction**

Group members embody/represent important or desirable features

- Personal characteristics of individual group members play a small role in this type of attraction

(Hogg and Hains, 1996)



- Cohesiveness - multidimensional – factors can vary independently of one another
(Zaccaro and McCoy, 1988)

- Two primary dimensions involved in cohesiveness

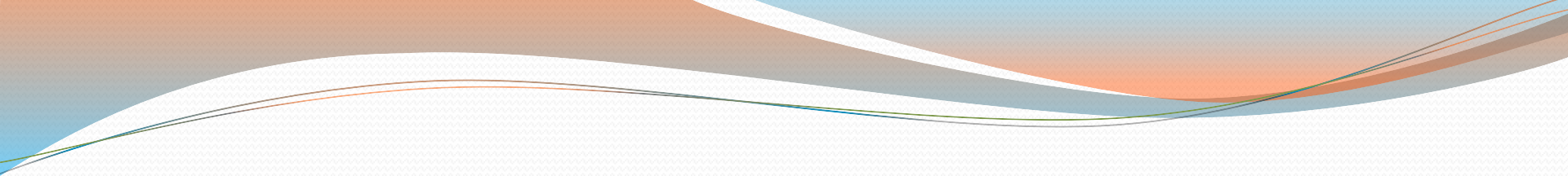
(Cota et al, 1995)

- **Task-social** dimension

- Extent to which members are interested in the goals of the group or in social relationships within it
- Cohesion – related to improved performance only if performance goals accepted

- **Individual-group** dimension

- Whether members are committed to the group as a whole or to individual members



Additional factors influencing cohesiveness

- **Effort required to become a member**
 - the greater the cost of joining the more attractive we need to feel it to be
- **External threats or severe competition**
 - groups close ranks when threatened –if one member can be threatened this could suggest that the group is weak and any of its members be threatened also
- **Group Size**
 - small groups tend to be more cohesive than large groups

Difference – Roles and Statuses

Roles

- Norms encourage similarity
- Roles differentiate between group members
 - e.g. task-oriented and relationship-oriented
 - = informal role differentiation
 - Task-oriented – most influential, but liked less
- Other factors including personality and abilities

- **Internalization** of roles
- **Role conflict** - can result in high levels of stress
(Williams et al, 1991)



- **Status differences**

e.g. Speaking hierarchy (Bales, 1953)

8-person group: person who talked most = 20% time
person who talked least = 2% time

- Evaluation of appropriateness of treatment (Tyler, 1994)

- Expectation States Theory
(Berger, Rosenholtz and Zelditch, 1980)

Different roles associated with different levels of status based on expectations of other members

- Confer or withhold status - influences behaviour of members



Intergroup level of analysis

- Intergroup context elicits salience of group membership
- Salience of self-categorization as a group member needed for group membership to influence thought and behaviour
- Explicit and implicit forms of competition (e.g. football match; House of Commons; social status (e.g. group of school friends))
- James and Greenberg (1989) – manipulated salience of university membership
Found: performance was enhanced when membership made salient

Active contribution towards favourable comparison (e.g. Tajfel and Turner SIT)

In-groups and Out-groups

- Groups can only exist because some people are members and others are not
 - inclusion and exclusion criteria

- Group comparison:
Essential for determining characteristics
of own group e.g. funny, intelligent

May change resulting in adjusted views of
own group

e.g. Turkey – EU membership – Christianity/Islam
Salience of European, largely Christian identity



Robber's Cave experiment

- Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood and Sherif (1961)
- Eleven-year-old boys
 - teams Rattlers and Eagles
- Series of competitions (winning team to receive a trophy and prizes)
 - Verbal taunts, then attacks on property of other team members
 - Abuse to outgroup members/praise to in group members
- Superordinate goals (Needed to work together to achieve desired goals)
 - Cooperation
 - Decrease in tension
 - Friendships



Level of Identification with the group

- Low and high identifiers - e.g. Ellemers, Spears and Doosje (1997)
- Low identifiers
 - perceive group as less homogeneous
 - less committed to their group
 - more strongly desire individual mobility to a higher status group
- Member's dissatisfaction with own lower status group likely to be increased as a result of limited/no opportunity to transfer to higher status group
- Relatively high status group – members have the means to protect from perceived threat from lower status group/s - e.g. Intergroup Threat Theory (Stephen and Renfro (2002)

Summary

- What is a group? - Definitions, minimal group paradigm, characteristics of groups, types of groups
- Sociobiological, cognitive and utilitarian perspectives
- Entitativity
- Individual level of analysis – group socialization, levels of identification with groups
- Group level of analysis – group development, norms, cohesion, roles and statuses
- Intergroup level of analysis – in-groups, out-groups, performance, Robber's Cave experiment

Reading

Hogg, M. A., & Vaughan, G. M. (2008). *Social Psychology*. Harlow, Essex: Pearson Prentice Hall. (Chapter 8)

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