

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
- '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)

- Paulus - subjective definition

- Contains no objective characteristics of groups

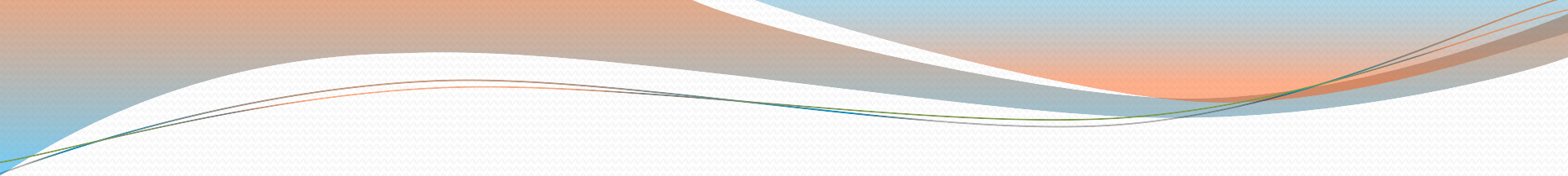
e.g. common fate (Lewin, 1948) or face-to-face interaction (Bales, 1950)

- 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

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



- **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)

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

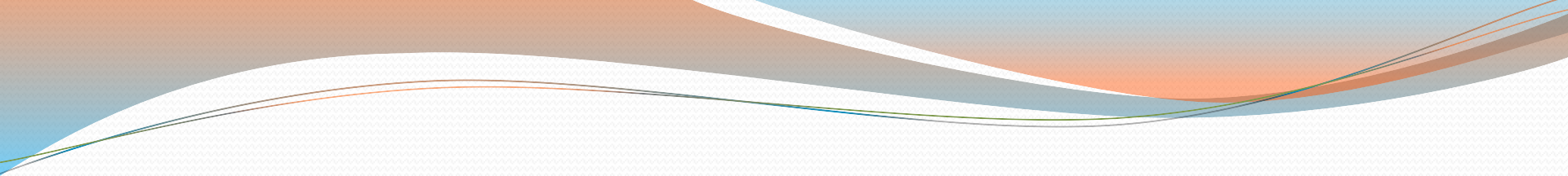


Entitativity

- 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
- 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)

- **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

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- **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
- Benefits must outweigh costs
- Opportunities for alternatives – e.g. chances of becoming a member of a more desirable group

• 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

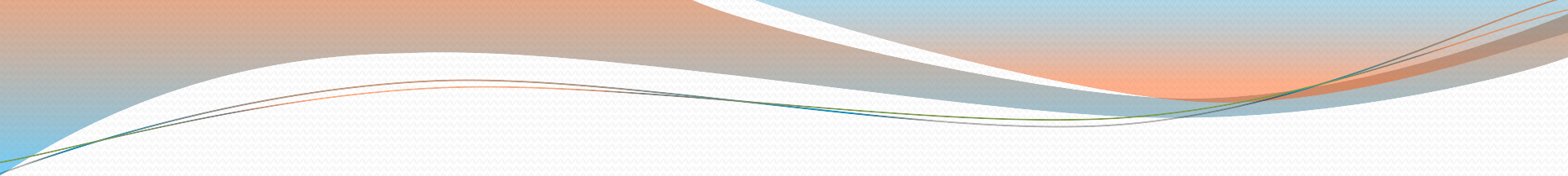
(Cota et al, 1995)

- **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

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)



BREAK: 15 MINUTES

Group Performance/Decision Making and Leadership



Decision Making

Most important decisions are made by groups. Even the most powerful people will usually consult groups of experts before making a final decision

The belief behind this is that groups are less likely to make serious errors – to rush into rash decisions



Group Positioning

Adoption of extreme positions in groups

Tendency to shift towards a more extreme position than it actually started out with
(e.g. Burnstein, 1983).

This is called **group polarisation**



Main effects of group polarisation

Initial leaning or preference of the group - strengthened during group deliberations

Also individual members also show such a shift to group's extreme views



1. Social comparison

Everyone wants to hold 'better' views than the others

Group members might shift to more extreme views to achieve a favourable social comparison

(Goethals and Zanna, 1979)

2. During a group discussion....

Most arguments presented are those favouring the group's original position

Members shift towards the majority view with increasing strength

‘Groupthink’ (Janis, 1982)

Assumption that the group cannot be wrong

- Convinced most extreme views are correct
- Assume all members support decision strongly - any contrary information can be rejected

Collective state of mind - groups unwilling/unable to change course of action - even when external information suggests decision was poor

Norms actively prevent members from considering alternative courses of action

Why does groupthink occur?

1. A high level of cohesiveness among group members



2. The emergence of group norms

(Kameda and Sugimori, 1993; Tetlock et al, 1992)

Groupthink is closely connected to another pitfall in decision making -
collective entrapment

(Kameda and Sugimori, 1993)

Tendency for groups to cling to unsuccessful decisions/policies
- against overwhelming evidence of poor decisions

The longer they stick with a bad decision, the harder it is to do something
about it

Challenging groupthink

1. Promoting open enquiry and scepticism among members

- Careful questioning of each alternative or policy
- Members should be willing to play the part of devil's advocate

2. Continuing discussion following decision

3. Different groups could be asked whether the original course of action should be continued

Information sampling model

(Stasser and Titus, 1985)

Pooling knowledge happens a lot less often than we think
(e.g. Gigone and Hastie, 1993; Stasser, 1992)

Information shared by many members is more likely to be mentioned during a group discussion than information held by only a single member

The more members that hold a piece of information, the more likely it is that it will get mentioned by one of them

When members told of a correct solution or decision and need to find it -
tendency to discuss shared information is increased

(Stasser and Stewart, 1992)

Common knowledge effect

(Gigone and Hastie, 1993)

Information held by most members exerts a stronger impact on the
group's final decision than information held by a minority

Such information

- shapes views prior to group discussion
 - continues to get talked about during deliberations
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Social Loafing

aka The Ringelmann Effect (Ringelmann, 1913)

Motivation to make an effort when collaborating with others is less than it would be when working alone or independently from others (*Karau and Williams, 1993*)

Additive tasks

Clapping and cheering – *Latane, Williams and Harkins (1979)*

Males, females, adults and children (*Williams and Williams, 1981*)

Different cultures (*Yamaguchi, Okamoto and Oka, 1985*)

Wide variety of work conditions (*e.g. Harkins, 1987*)

- Cognitive tasks as well as those involving physical effort
(*Williams and Karau, 1991*)
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Social impact theory (Latane, 1981)

- As group size increases, each member feels less responsible for the task being performed
 - Each exerts decreasing effort as group size increases
 - Link – Diffusion of Responsibility (Darley and Latane, 1968)
 - **Expectancy**
 - Increased effort might not yield better results, as in groups there are other factors in play
 - **Instrumentality**
 - We won't necessarily be rewarded for our personal efforts – we're likely to share any praise or reward
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Collective Effort Model (Karau and Williams, 1993)

- Motivation decreases because people realise their contributions can not be evaluated on an individual basis
 - **Expectancy Valence Theory** - individuals will only work hard on a task if certain conditions exist:
 - Person believes that working hard will lead to better performance (*expectancy*)
 - Believes that better performance will be recognised and rewarded (*instrumentality*)
 - The rewards available are rewards they value and desire (*valence*)
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Reduction of social loafing

- Limit the scope of the project – break projects into smaller components
- Keep groups small
- Increase peer evaluations

(Aggarwal and O'Brien, 2008)

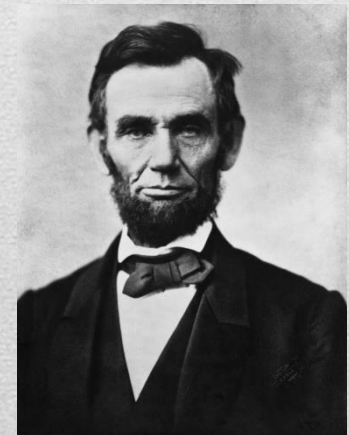
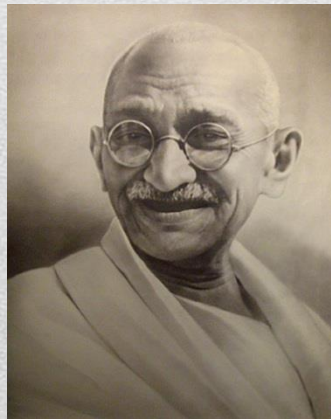
Social loafing is weakest when individuals:

- Work in small groups
 - Work on tasks which they are personally interested in or those that are important to them
 - Work with others they respect
 - Believe their contributions to the group effort are unique, rather than redundant
 - Expect their co-workers to perform poorly
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Leadership

Great person theory

- Great leaders possess traits that set them apart from other people
- Traits remain stable over time and across different cultures



It has been argued that leaders tend to differ from other persons in several important respects

(Kirkpatrick and Locke, 1991)

Drive

Honesty and Integrity

Leadership motivation

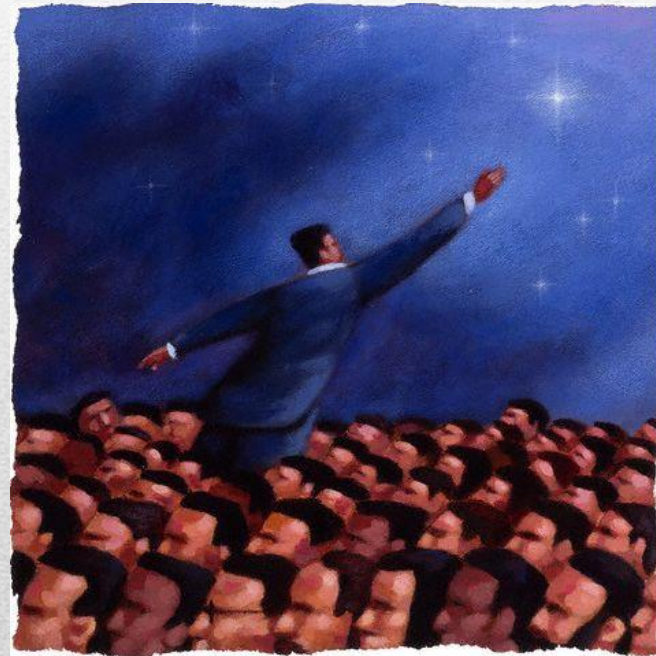
Self-confidence

Cognitive ability

Creativity

Flexibility

Expertise



Different Leadership Styles

Democratic-autocratic dimension

(Lewin et al, 1939)

Directive-permissive dimension

(Muczyk and Reimann, 1987)

Task orientation – how much leader focuses on getting task done

Person orientation – leader's interest in maintaining friendly relations

Noted among thousands of different leaders in various contexts and in several different countries

(Bass, 1990)

Gender differences in leadership

Powell (1990)

- male and female leaders differ in only a few respects

Eagly and Johnson (1990)

- female leaders tend to be slightly more democratic than male leaders - but not more person-oriented



Eagly, Makhijani and Klonsky (1992)



Female leaders might receive lower ratings even when performance is identical to that of male leaders

- Ratings of male evaluators would be particularly low
 - Ratings would be low in situations where the employees were male
 - Ratings would be low when the female leader adopted an autocratic style – a traditional ‘masculine’ approach
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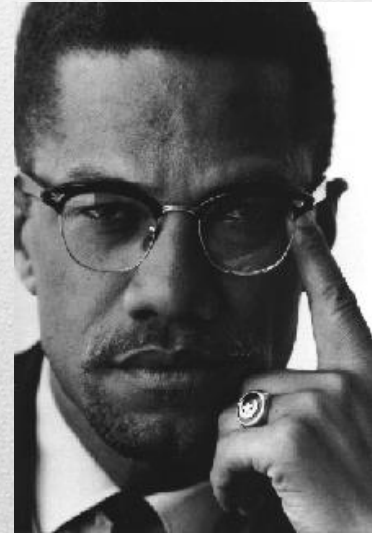


Transformational Leadership

- Leads to changes in those who follow
- Specific types of reactions by followers
(House (1977))



- High levels of devotion, loyalty and reverence towards leader
- Enthusiasm for leader and leader's ideas
- A willingness by followers to sacrifice own personal interests
for the sake of the larger group goal
- Levels of performance beyond those that would normally be
expected of followers



- Hackman and Wageman (2007): **Both leaders and followers are essential parts of the leadership relationship**
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A vision - vivid, emotion-provoking terms (Howell and Frost (1989)

Tell how to achieve the dream

Framing (Conger, 1991) - gives a strong meaning/purpose

High levels of self-confidence and confidence in followers

High degree of concern for followers needs

Excellent communication skills

Stirring personal style

(House, Spangler and Woyke, 1991)



Bass and Avolio (1990) - **Characteristics of transformational leaders**

Charisma:

Has a vision, gains respect, trust and confidence. Promotes a strong identification of followers

Inspiration:

Gives pep talks. Increases optimism and enthusiasm. Arouses emotions in communications

Intellectual stimulation:

Actively encourages a re-examination of existing values and assumptions. Fosters creativity and the uses of intelligence

Individualised consideration:

Gives personal attention to all members. Acts as advisor and gives feedback in ways that are easy to accept, understand, and use for personal development