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# UNIT 1 INTRODUCTION TO GROUP, FORMATION AND TYPES OF GROUP

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## Structure

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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This unit deals with groups, their definition and description. Also the unit describes how groups are formed, types of groups and their structure and theories of group formation. The unit provides information on basic aspects concerning groups and their formation.

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## 1.1 OBJECTIVES

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After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- 1 define the meaning of group;
- 1 explain the characteristics of group;
- 1 describe the formation and theories of group;
- 1 analyse the types of groups; and
- 1 explain the importance and functions of the structure of group.

## 1.2 DEFINITION AND MEANING OF GROUP

Everyone knows what a group is in general. When two persons or more come together and interact at one place it may be called a group. The group may be defined in various ways. Given below are a few important definitions of group and each of these definitions emphasises one or the other important features of the group.

- 1) R.M. Williams (1951) "A social group is a given aggregate of people playing inter-related roles and recognised by themselves or other as a unit of interaction." Here it can be said group is an aggregate of some people. The roles of the group members are inter-related. The group is considered as unit.
- 2) R.M. MacIver (1953) "By group we mean any collection of social beings who enter into distinctive social relationships with one another." It is clear that there must be social relationships between the individual members of a group.
- 3) David (1968) "A social psychological group is an organised system of two or more individuals who are interrelated so that the system performs some functions, has a standard set of the role relationship among its members and has a set of norms that regulate the function of the group and each of its members."
- 4) Kretch, Crutchfield and Ballachy (1962) defined psychological group "as two or more persons who meet the following conditions : (i) the relations among the members are independent, each member's behaviour influences the behaviour of each of the others, (ii) the members 'share on ideology' – a set of beliefs, values and norms which regulate their mutual conduct."
- 5) Paulus (1989) "A group consists 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." Here we can say that individuals interact with each other, either directly or indirectly. Besides this, the group members are interdependent in some manner, i.e., what happens to one must affect what happens to the others. Not only this, their relationship must be relatively stable. The members of the group involve to attain the goals and their interaction will be in a structured form so that, each group member performs the same or more or less similar functions each time they meet. Finally, it can be said that the individuals involved in a group must recognise that they are part of a group.

The word "group" has many meanings. Generally we use the term 'group' keeping in mind three main points:

- i) where a number of persons are sitting or working together. The essential thing is the physical proximity of a number of people being together at a given time with or without any common purpose;
- ii) where persons are classified as belonging to an association. Sometimes it is seen that people may have no relationship with each other but they have some common characteristics and we classify them as a group;
- iii) where persons belong to an organisation. This group has definite structure, and people in this group have a sense of belongingness to the given organisation

A child's social development takes place gradually as the child advances in age. To fulfill physical needs, children perform many functions. They exhibit signs of reacting to individuals who they identify as fulfilling their needs. Then they start understanding objects and individuals in their environment. As children grow older their patterns of play and other activities also change considerably. The feelings of "I" and "MINE" and then "YOU" and "YOURS" develop. Sharing things, asserting one's rights, co-operation, etc. are learnt by children in the first stage of their socialisation.

Initially they belong to a small world of children, all nearly their own age, although differences may vary with the arrangement in different groups. They are constantly assimilating many things by direct coaching, training, imitation, spontaneous reaction, repeated experience and so on. Living in a group they gradually develop the sentiments, opinion, interests, habits, desires etc. Interaction and communication plays a vital role in this regard.

To know the meaning of the group more clearly you think about all the groups to which you belong, viz., local friends, college friends, music/ dance group and so many. Generally people join in groups due to various needs and these include

- i) Satisfaction of important psychological and social needs, viz., receiving affection and attention, for attaining belongingness.
- ii) Achievement of goal in a smooth and easy way. By working with others, the person performs the task well than doing it alone.
- iii) Getting knowledge and information on various issues which are not available at one place .
- iv) Getting safety and security.

In psychology we define Group as the study of organisations and their behaviour. Psychology studies groups and explores the control of the individual within the group setting. Social, organisational and group psychology are all powerful areas of study that look at many factors that drive group behaviour and the decisions that a group makes. Depending on the group's influence, the group member's individuality is often relinquished for the greater good of the group. It is the role of social psychology to uncover why this release occurs in groups and what effects it has on society.

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### **1.3 IMPORTANT FEATURES OF GROUP**

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The important features of group are:

- i) One or more individuals come together and influence each other.
- ii) There are social interactions and relationships amongst the individual members of a group.
- iii) There exists some common motives, drives, interests, emotions etc. amongst group members.

- iv) There is communication among group members, both verbal and or non-verbal.
- v) The group members have some common object of attention and group members stimulate each other.
- vi) They have common loyalty and participate in similar activities.
- vii) There exists feeling of unity in the group. Group members treat each other with respect and regard and has a sense of comradeship that develops among them.
- viii) The action of the members is controlled by the group.
- ix) There are some customs, norms and procedures which are acceptable to everyone but if exception happens, then the particular member will be ostracised from the group.

### Self Assessment Questions

1) Define group.

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2) How do children develop and become part of a group?

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3) What are the three main points to define the group?

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4) Write the important features of a group.

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## 1.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF A GROUP

Suppose you belong to a group where you may observe some special features which you can accept or not. It may be good or bad, healthy or unhealthy,

favourable or unfavourable, but there are certain significant features say the characteristics of the group.

- i) *A sense of we-feeling:* There is a feeling of belongingness among the members of the group. The members of the group help each other in performing their duties. They work collectively against the harmful powers. They treat people who do not belong to the group as outsiders. They always try to make the group self-sufficient.
- ii) *Common interest:* Each and every member of the group has a common interest. There is similarity among the members in regard to their interest which promotes unity. The group includes those persons who are related to each other in such a way that they should be treated as one.
- iii) *A feeling of unity:* Unity is essential for every group. Each and every member of the group treats each other as their own and there develops a sense of camaraderie amongst the members of group.
- iv) *Related to each other:* It is true that members of the group are inter-related. There is a reciprocal communication among the group members. Social relations are the fundamentals of group life.
- v) *Affected by group characteristics:* Every group has some social characteristics which separate it from similar and dissimilar groups. These characteristics affect the members of the group. The nature may be different for different persons, but still all the members are affected by the group
- vi) *Common values:* There are certain values which are common among members and are traditionally respected and communicated to the succeeding generation. They are manifested in the mutual behaviours of the members. Members of the social group are bound together in terms of these common values.
- vii) *Control of group:* In each group there are some customs, norms and procedures which are acceptable to everyone. In fact, without some norms, the existence of group life is impossible. It may be stated that the reasons behind the similarity of behaviours in a group life is that the actions of the members are controlled by the group.
- viii) *Obligation:* In a group situation, all members have complementary obligations to each other. Also the relationships between the members of a group get strengthened through their mutual obligation and common social values.
- ix) *Expectations:* Not only mutual obligation, the members of the group also expects love, compassion, empathy, co-operation etc., from all other members of the group. If mutual expectation is fulfilled, the group members are maintained in tact. A group can maintain its existence only if the constituent members fulfill their responsibility by satisfying the desires among themselves.

Groups are the units of social organisation. Therefore, the integration and disintegration of social organisation are dependent upon the integration or disintegration of the groups. In group, social relationship is a very important factor. The first and foremost social relationship indicates the relationship among the family members. Thus, it can further be said that family is an important social group.

You are one of the members in your family. You interact with other family members and there is a reciprocal relationship between you and others. Certainly you have 'we feeling' where you belong. Among the family members there are relationships such as husband-wife, father-son, and brother-sister etc. and they all work together for the interests of the family in a mood of mutual co-operation. Each and every member of the family treats the other members as his own and in spite of differences of opinion they have some common ideals and values. It is mainly due to common interest of the members that the group works as a well-knit unit.

As for example we can say that "*school is a social group*". The significant characteristics of the school as a group are:

- 1 All children have a common goal.
- 1 The students and the teacher are motivated for the achievement of a common goal.
- 1 School has an organised structure.
- 1 School offers excellent opportunities for group to realise its needs.

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## 1.5 GROUP FORMATION AND RELATED THEORIES

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Group formation is concerned with the following:

- i) The manner in which the groups form
- ii) The structures and processes of the group
- iii) The functions of the group in different situations .

There are mainly five stages of group development, viz., forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning.

- i) **Forming** is a stage which is characterised by some confusion and uncertainty. Forming is actually an orientation period when members get to know one another and share expectations about the group. This is the initial stage when the group comes together and members begin to develop their relationship with one another and learn what is expected of them.
- ii) **Storming** is the stage where one can see the highest level of disagreement and conflict. Members mainly voice their concern, and criticism occurs at this stage. Actually in this stage interpersonal conflicts arise and differences of opinion about the group goals also emerge. It is important to work through the conflicts at this time and to establish clear goals.
- iii) **Norming** is characterised by the recognition of individual differences and shared expectations. Responsibilities are divided among members and the group decides how it will evaluate the progress. If the group resolves its conflicts, it can establish patterns of how to get its work done. Expectations of one another are clearly articulated and accepted by members of the group.



- iv) **Performing** occurs when the group has matured and attains a feeling of cohesiveness. In this stage, members of the group make decision through a rational process that is focused on relevant goals rather than emotional issues. Issues related to roles, expectations and norms are no longer of major importance. The group is focused on its tasks, working effectively to accomplish its goals.
- v) **Adjourning** indicates that members of the group often experience feelings of closure and sadness as they prepare to leave. It is the final stage when the group, after achieving the objectives for which it was created, starts to gradually dissolve itself.

Thus, group is a collection of individuals. Group refers to two or more persons who interact with one another, share common goals and recognise that they belong to a group. Groups help us to satisfy important psychological needs and social needs. Different persons perform different types of tasks. Group may choose a person to serve as a leader and other persons as followers. There is a link among the members. Not only this, interaction among the group members is very important for smooth running of the activities of the group.

#### Self Assessment Questions

- 1) Define common interest and common values as characteristics of a group.

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- 2) What are the five stages of group development?

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### 1.5.1 Theories of Group Formation

Theories are establishing hypothesis which explain a particular phenomenon. Many theories may explain one phenomenon, as for instances “delinquency”. There are psychological, biological and sociological themes which explain delinquency.

On the same lines as above there are many theories which explain how groups are formed and how they develop and progress. There are several theories regarding group formation and development. The theories put forward here include classic theory, social exchange and social identity theory.

- i) *Classic Theory*: A classic theory, developed by George Homans suggests that groups develop on the basis of activities, interactions and sentiments mainly. Basically, this theory indicates that when individuals share common activities they will have more interaction and will develop attitudes (either positive or

negative) toward each other. The main element is the interaction of the individuals involved.

- ii) *Social Exchange Theory*: Another important theory is the social exchange theory which offers an alternative explanation for group development. According to this theory individuals form the relationship on the basis of implicit expectation of mutually beneficial exchanges based on trust and felt obligation. It can further be said that a perception that exchange relationships will be positive if persons are to be attracted to and affiliate with a group.
- iii) *Social Identity Theory*: Besides this, another important theory is social identity theory which offers explanation for group formation. This theory suggests that individuals get a sense of identity and self-esteem based on their membership in salient groups. The group is demographically, culturally and organisationally based.

One of the most important activities that groups perform is decision-making. This is the process through which individuals or groups combine and integrate information from several possible actions. Most people believe that the group by utilising the expertise and knowledge of their members and also by avoiding extreme course of action usually reaches better decisions than what individuals can accomplish simply.

During the decision period, members convey a wide range of views. Generally, social decision take place in two phases as given below:

- i) The first phase is discussion, which mainly helps to confirm or strengthen the most popular view, which rarely gets reversed; and
- ii) The second phase is the correct situation or decision which ultimately emerges in the forefront.

Besides the above two, there are several aspects of the group's procedure, which includes: (i) following of procedures (ii) addressing its managing interactions among members and so on. Some persons, knowing about the opinions, especially the influential members, incline to join the majority and thereby tilt the decision in the required direction.

### **1.5.2 Ten (10) Rules that Govern Groups**

Much of our lives are spent in groups with other people. We form groups to socialise, earn money, play sport, make music, even to change the world. But although groups are diverse, many of the psychological processes involved are remarkably similar.

Here are 10 insightful rules that give indication of what has been discovered about the dynamics of group psychology.

#### **Rule1. Groups can arise from almost nothing**

The desire to form and join social groups is extremely powerful and built into our nature. Amongst other things groups give us a very valuable gift that is our social identity, which contributes to our sense of who we are.



Just how readily people form and join groups is demonstrated by Tajfel et al. (1971) in the so-called '*minimal groups paradigm*'. In their study boys who were strangers to each other were given only the slightest hint that they were being split into two groups. Even without knowing or seeing who else was in their group they favoured members of their own group over the others. Group behaviour, then, can arise from almost nothing.

### **Rule 2. Initiation rites improve group evaluations**

Existing groups do not let others join for free: the cost is sometimes monetary, sometimes intellectual, and sometimes physical—but usually there is an initiation rite, even if it's well disguised.

Aronson and Mills (1959) tested the effect of initiation rites by making one group of women read passages from sexually explicit novels. Afterwards they rated the group they had joined much more positively than those who had not had to undergo the humiliating initiation. So, not only do groups want to test you, but they want you to value your membership.

### **Rule 3. Groups breed conformity**

After joining a group and being initiated, we have to get a feel for the group norms, the rules of behaviour in that group. Group norms can be extremely powerful, bending our behaviours in ways we would never expect.

One of the most famous experiments showing how easily we conform to unwritten group rules was conducted by Asch (1951). He had participants sit amongst a group of other people, who were judging the length of a line. The trick was that all the other members of the group were confederates of the experimenter who had been told to lie about which line was longer. Incredibly 76% of participants denied the evidence from their own senses at least once, just to conform with the group. Afterwards people made up all kinds of excuses for their behaviour. Most popular was a variation on: "that many people can not be wrong".

### **Rule 4. Learn the ropes or be ostracised**

Group norms are extremely pervasive. This becomes all the more obvious when we start breaking them. Garfinkel (1967) had adolescents return to their families and behave totally out of character, that is, speaking only when spoken to, being polite, acting formally, etc. But all this was to be only for 15 minutes at a time. Rather than being delighted their parents were shocked and angry, accusing their children of being selfish and rude. Break the group's rules and you'll know about it soon enough.

### **Rule 5. You become your job**

Although groups have norms and it is known that rules apply to everyone in the group. People have roles within groups and corresponding rules that apply to justify their position. The most well known demonstrations of the power of roles is the *Stanford Prison Experiment*. Let us see what this experiment was .

Psychologists put young men into a simulated prison environment, making some of them as prisoners and some others as guards (Zimbardo, 1972). After only 6 of its planned 14 days, the experiment had to be stopped because participants conformed all too well to their roles as submissive prisoners or domineering

guards. Some were emotionally disturbed by the experience. Even the experimenters were succumbing to their 'roles' as prison superintendents before the whole experiment was suspended.

### **Rule 6. Leaders gain trust by conforming**

A high-profile, high-status role in any group is that of its leader, but where do leaders come from? In some groups, they are appointed or imposed from outside, but in many groups leaders emerge slowly and subtly from the ranks.

A study that has much to teach was carried out by Merei (1949) who observed children at a Hungarian nursery school. He noticed that successful leaders were those who initially fitted in with the group then slowly began to suggest new activities adapted from the old. Children did not follow potential leaders who jumped straight in with new ideas. Leaders first conform, then only later, when trust has been gained, can they be confident that others will follow. This has been confirmed in later studies (with grown-ups!).

### **Rule 7. Groups can improve performance**

The mere presence of others can make us perform better. Norman Triplett, the pioneer of Social psychology noticed that racing cyclists with a pacemaker covered each mile about 5 seconds quicker than those without (Triplett, 1898). Later research found this was not *all* about the effects of competition. The presence of other people seems to facilitate our own performance, but more so when the task is relatively separate from that of others and can be judged on its own merits.

### **Rule 8. People will loaf**

In other circumstances, though, people in groups demonstrate a tremendous capacity for loafing, it was found in the 1890s by a researcher that participants in a tug of war only put in half as much effort when they were in a team of 8 than when they were on their own. It seems that hiding in the group is easy, for example when tasks are additive and each person's contribution is difficult to judge, people will slack off to a considerable extent.

### **Rule 9. The grapevine is 80% accurate**

Intelligence, rumour, gossip and tittle-tattle is the lifeblood of many groups. It travels at a tremendous pace in big organisations because people love a good bit of gossip, but what are 'they' talking about and can you believe what 'they' say? Simmons (1985) analysed workplace communication and found that about 80% of the time people are talking about work and a surprising 80% of the information was accurate.

### **Rule 10. Groups breed competition**

While co-operation *within* group members is generally not so much of a problem, co-operation *between* groups can be problematic. People may be individually cooperative, but once put in a 'them-and-us' situation, these rapidly become remarkably adversarial.

### Self Assessment Questions

1) What are the basic characteristics of feeling of unity and control of group?

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2) What are the five stages of group development?

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3) Elucidate group formation theory.

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4) Elucidate the rules of the group.

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## 1.6 TYPES OF GROUP

We can classify groups in different ways. First, it can be divided into two main parts considering the degree of intimacy as the basis of classification.

- 1 **Primary group:** There is an intimate face-to-face relationship among the members and the members are having 'we feeling' to the maximum. Family, play groups and village community come under this category.
- 1 **Secondary group:** Here the relationships are more or less casual and marked by common interest. Clubs, trade unions etc. are under this category.
- 1 **In-group/ we group:** Here we identify ourselves with that group which has a common object and common interest. They have a sense of 'we' feeling. The members of the in groups treat others as outsiders. These groups can be formed on the basis of relationship, same country, similar political interests and economic interests etc.
- 1 **Out-group:** It is the group in which the members are considered as outsiders by us. Groups other than the in-group are generally called out-groups.

On the basis of norms and rules, groups can be categorised into the following types:

- 1 **Formal group:** It is generally formed on the basis of specific norms, rules and values. The group of students in a classroom comes under the category of formal group. So, school is one of the formal group settings.
- 1 **Informal group:** The nature of the group is not formed at all. The rules are usually flexible. Play groups, peer group and social clubs etc. are examples of informal groups.

Besides the above two, group can also classified into various categories as given below:

- 1 **Organised groups:** The groups which are formed for specific purpose and are carefully planned is called organised groups. The family, the school etc. are also called organised groups.
- 1 **Spontaneous groups:** The groups are formed without any careful planning. Audience may be considered as spontaneous group after listening to the speech by a renowned speaker.
- 1 **Command groups:** Command groups are specified by the organisational chart. It consists of a supervisor and the subordinates that report to the supervisor.
- 1 **Task groups:** A group of people work together to achieve a common task. In many situations there is a specified time period. This can be referred to as task forces.
- 1 **Functional groups:** Functional group is generally created by the organisation to accomplish specific goals within an unspecified time frame. Functional group generally exists after achievement of current goals and objects.
- 1 **Interest groups:** It usually continues over time and may last longer than general informal groups. It is seen that the interest of the member may not be part of the same organisational department but they are bound by some common interest.
- 1 **Friendship groups:** It may be of different types. These groups are formed by the members who enjoy similar social activities, political beliefs, religious values and other common bonds.
- 1 **Reference groups:** This is the group where the people evaluate themselves. Reference groups have a strong influence on members' behaviour.

**Temporary Group:** Studies indicate that temporary groups come together for a certain purpose and disburse after the task is over. These groups have their own unique sequencing of actions. *The salient features are:*

- i) Their first meeting sets the group's direction.
- ii) The first phase of group activity is one of inertia.
- iii) A transition takes place at the end of this first phase, which occurs exactly when the group has used up half its allotted time.
- iv) A transition initiates major changes.

- v) A second phase of inertia follows the transition.
- vi) The group's last meeting is characterised by markedly accelerated activity.

There are other types of groups, a few of which are listed below:

*Clique:* An informal, tight-knit group, usually in a High School/College setting, that shares common interests. There is an established yet shifty power structure in most *Cliques*. The effects of *Cliques* are varied.

*Club:* A club is a group, which usually requires one to apply to become a member. Such clubs may be dedicated to particular activities, such as sports clubs.

*Community:* A community is a group of people with a commonality or sometimes a complex net of overlapping commonalities, often, but not always, in proximity with one another with some degree of continuity over time. They often have some organisation and leaders.

*Franchise:* This is an organisation which runs several instances of a business in many locations.

*Gang:* A gang is usually an urban group that gathers in a particular area. It is a group of people that often hang around each other. They can be like some clubs, but much less formal.

*Group:* A group is a basic term for a number of people that associate themselves with each other. This is a basic term which has many uses.

*Mob:* A mob is usually a group of people that has taken the law into their own hands. Mobs are usually a group which gathers temporarily for a particular reason.

*Posse:* A posse was initially an American term for a group of citizens that had banded together to enforce the law. However, it can also refer to a street group.

*Squad:* This is usually a small group, of around 3-8 people, that would work as a team to accomplish a certain goal.

*Team:* This is similar to a squad, though a team may contain many more members. A team works in a similar way as a squad.

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## 1.7 GROUP STRUCTURE

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It refers to the pattern of interrelationship that exists among group members and makes the group's functioning orderly. The important aspects of group structure are:

- i) **Role:** Role or the typical part played by an individual group member in accordance with the expectations of other members from him.
- ii) **Norms:** Norms are the rules and mutual expectations that develop within the group. Norms have profound effect on members' behaviour as it ensures conformity among them.
- iii) **Status:** Status is the relative prestige or social position given to groups or individuals by others.

- iv) **Group cohesiveness:** It refers to the degree of attraction to the group members for each other and the “we feeling” among the members. Without proper group structure, group can not function properly in any situation.

#### Self Assessment Questions

- 1) What are the important aspects of group structure?

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- 2) Define norms and status as an aspect of group structure.

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- 3) What do we call the groups formed on the basis of norms and rules?

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- 4) Enumerate the different types of groups.

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## 1.8 GROUP CONFLICT

Group conflicts, also called group intrigues, is where social behaviour causes groups of individuals to conflict with each other. It can also refer to a conflict within these groups. This conflict is often caused by differences in social norms, values, and religion.

Both constructive and destructive conflict occurs in most small groups. It is very important to accentuate the constructive conflict and minimise the destructive conflict. Conflict is bound to happen, but if we use it constructively then it need not be a bad thing.

When destructive conflict is used in small groups, it is counterproductive to the long term goal. It is much like poisoning the goose that lays the golden eggs. In the case of small group communication, destructive conflict creates hostility between



the members. This poisons group synergy and the results, the golden eggs if you will, either cease being produced or are at least inferior in quality.

Using constructive conflict within small groups has the opposite effect. It is much like nourishing the goose so that it continues to produce the golden eggs, golden eggs which may be even better than what the unnourished goose could have produced. In this sense, bringing up problems and alternative solutions while still valuing others in small groups allows the group to work forward. (Engleberg & Wynn, 2007)

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## 1.9 GROUP BEHAVIOUR AND GROUP ACTION

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*Group behaviour* refers to the situations where people interact in large or small groups. The field of group dynamics deals with small groups that may reach consensus and act in a coordinated way.

Groups of a large number of people in a given area may act simultaneously (herd behaviour) to achieve a goal that differs from what individuals would do acting alone. A large group (a crowd or mob) is likely to show examples of group behaviour when people gathered in a given place and time act in a similar way—for example, joining a protest or march, participating in a fight or acting patriotically.

Special forms of large group behaviour are:

- 1) Crowd “hysteria”
- 2) Spectators: when a group of people gathered together on purpose to participate in an event like theatre, play, cinema, movie, football, match, a concert, etc.
- 3) Public: exception to the rule that the group must occupy the same physical place. People watching same channel on television may react in the same way, as they are occupying the same type of place in front of television although they may physically be doing this all over the world.

Group behaviour differs from mass actions which refers to people behaving similarly on a more global scale (for example, shoppers in different shops), while group behaviour refers usually to people in one place. If the group behaviour is coordinated, then it is called group action. Swarm intelligence is a special case of group behaviour, referring to the interaction between a group of agents in order to fulfil a given task. This type of group dynamics has received much attention by the soft computing community in the form of the particle swarm optimisation family of algorithms.

*Group action* is a situation in which a large number of agents take action simultaneously in order to achieve a common goal; their actions are usually coordinated. Group action will often take place when social agents realise they are more likely to achieve their goal when acting together rather than individually. Group action differs from group behaviours, which are uncoordinated, and also from mass actions, which are more limited in place.

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## 1.10 LET US SUM UP

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Group is a collection of individuals. Group refers to two or more persons who interact with one another, share common goals and they recognise themselves that they belong to a group. They interact with each other, either directly or indirectly and their relationship is relatively stable. Their interaction should be structured in some manner so that they perform the same and similar function when they meet.

Generally group members help to satisfy both psychological and social needs, such as towards giving attention and receiving attention. Groups help us to fulfill our need for security. In contrast, we can think about a mere collection of individuals, who are not part of a group, as for example, members of a crowd, as in the case of disorganised group. In a nutshell it can be said that the group has some kind of structure to hold it together and attain the goals effectively. The structure is hierarchical where the functions and powers are distributed. Group may be of different types, viz., primary and secondary group, formal and informal group, organised and spontaneous group, command group, task group, functional group, interest group, friendship group, reference group etc. Group structure is a pattern of relationships among members that hold the group together. It can be interpreted in various ways depending on group size, group roles, group norms and group cohesiveness.

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## 1.11 UNIT END QUESTIONS

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- 1) Define group and discuss the importance of the group.
- 2) Enumerate the characteristics of a group.
- 3) Elucidate the different types of groups, their roles and functions.
- 4) Differentiate between formal and informal group with examples.

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## 1.12 GLOSSARY

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<b>Attitude</b>	: An enduring system of evaluations or feelings in favour of or against a person or group.
<b>Belief</b>	: Acceptance of a statement about an object, event, person or group.
<b>Cohesiveness</b>	: The social force which keeps the group together.
<b>Group</b>	: A collection of individuals who are in interdependent relationship with one another sharing common norm of behaviour and attitude.
<b>Informal group</b>	: A group which is not organised.
<b>Group structure</b>	: The differences of roles and status relations within a group.
<b>Group dynamics</b>	: The way in which changes take place in the behaviour of other members of the group. Groups can mobilise powerful force which may be constructive or destructive.

- Peer group** : A primary group composed of persons who are closely alike in age and interests.
- Value** : Values are ideas about desirable states of affairs shared by the members of a group or culture.

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## **1.13 SUGGESTED READINGS**

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# UNIT 2 GROUP DYNAMICS

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## Structure

- 2.0 Introduction
- 2.1 Objectives
- 2.2 Groups Dynamics: Definition
  - 2.2.1 Meaning, Concept and Importance of Group Dynamics
  - 2.2.2 Role of Communication in Group Dynamics
  - 2.2.3 Interpersonal Attraction and Cohesion in Group Dynamics
  - 2.2.4 Group Dynamics and Social Integration
- 2.3 Culture and Group
- 2.4 Measurement of Group Dynamics
- 2.5 Group Development
- 2.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 2.7 Unit End Questions
- 2.8 Glossary
- 2.9 Suggested Readings

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## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

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Group dynamics is the scientific approach to the understanding of the dynamics of group. It implies an interactive psychological relationship in which members of a group develop a common perception based on feelings and emotions. Group dynamics refer to the changes that take place within the group. It also refers to forces operating within the groups. Group dynamics is related to the field theory of Lewin which assumes man's behaviour to be a function of the field existing at the time of the occurrence of behaviour. We can further say that it is the study of group processes, their objective analysis and measurement and the effect of group membership on individual members.

Our behaviour is not static. It means that the change of behaviour is through interaction in the group. According to Segal, group dynamics is a process by which one considers other individuals and a problem in a group at the same time. It not only tends to increase understanding of the problem, but also creates a solution which the individual practices in bringing about emotional balance. We can also say that group dynamics is influenced by sympathy, suggestion and imitation. Sympathy enables the members of a group to perceive the psychological state of the other members. Suggestion plays a big role in influencing group behaviour. The suggestions put forward by leader of a group are implemented by the members of the group.

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## 2.1 OBJECTIVES

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After reading this unit you, will be able to:

- 1 explain about the group interaction process;

- 1 define about the meaning of group dynamics;
- 1 elucidate the concept of group dynamics;
- 1 express the importance of group dynamics process; and
- 1 find out the group dynamics vis-à-vis different processes and patterns.

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## 2.2 GROUP DYNAMIC: DEFINITION

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A group includes only persons who share some norms and values about something. We can say that group contains people with interrelated social roles. An aggregate of people may form themselves into a group as a result of interaction. Thus, we can say that groups are the products of interaction. Group interaction is a two way process whereby each individual or group stimulates the other and also in varying degrees that modify the behaviour of the participants. The behaviour and personality characteristics of individual members of a group affect the behaviour of others and make a significant impact over the functioning of a group as a whole.

In this context we can consider two types of groups, viz., formal and informal groups. Formal groups are formed on the basis of specific norms, values etc. School is an example of formal group. On the other hand, play group, peer group and social clubs are examples of informal groups. In informal groups, rules are usually flexible. An individual may belong to many groups. The behaviour of an individual is different from the group behaviour. In the group a person has to act according to the norms of the group and generally, a few individuals may guide the behaviour of the group.

In this context, we can say that group interaction is a two-way process whereby each individual or group stimulates the behaviour of the participants. We can further say that the behaviour and personality characteristics of individual members of a group affect the behaviour of others and ultimately it makes a significant impact over the functioning of a group as a whole. As for example, we can say that the school is a social institution set up by the society to serve its ends. School is primarily a social institution. Group activities should be encouraged to provide opportunities to the students to participate in the affairs of the group.

One of the important functions of the school is social interaction. Not only are the teachers and pupils continually interacting in the class-room system, but the pupils are also interacting among themselves through special pre determined code or signs or looks, and there are many common stereotypes and values that they share with each other. Like any other social system, the class-room group shows a variety of interactions continuously. Formal structure is not only factor in group functioning. Within this formal structure, there is informal relationship. Communication within the group may flow more through informal channels than through formal ones. The informal sub-groups are typically more homogenous than the classroom group. Not only this, peer group pressures exert a powerful impact in many cases.

### 2.2.1 Meaning, Concept and Importance of Group Dynamics

In 1944, Kurt Lewin, set up the Research Centre for Group Dynamics to meet the need of a scientific approach to the understanding of the dynamics of group.



Group dynamics can be defined as a field of enquiry dedicated to the advancing knowledge about the nature of groups, the laws of their development and their interrelations with individuals, other groups and larger institutions. Actually, it implies that the interactive psychological relationship in which members of a group develop a common perception based on feelings and emotions. It is not easy to define the important area of group dynamics. We can say that it represents a field of enquiry, a series of inter-related problems, a set of techniques and interaction process.

Group dynamics consists of two words – (i) group and (ii) dynamics. A group is a unit of two or more individuals who share a set of beliefs and values. The members of the group share a common purpose, task or goals. The relations among the members are interdependent. Not only this, there is a feeling of belongingness or we feeling among the members of the group. The members of the group generally prescribe a set of norms of behaviour for themselves. The members want to attain the goal effectively. The structure is hierarchical where the functions and powers are distributed.

On the other hand, the word dynamics means force. Group dynamics refers to forces operating with in the groups. Group dynamics is related to field theory of Lewin, which assumes man's behaviour to be a function of the field existing at the time of the occurrence of behaviour. We can also say that the group dynamics is the study of group processes, their objective analysis and measurement and the effect of group membership on individual members. When a group of people is formed with a common goal, a kind of social force is created. Our behaviour is not static. Thus, group dynamics means the change of behaviour through interaction in the group.

### Concept of group dynamics

The social psychologists seek to explain group behaviour on the basis of social interaction and cultural transmission through social interaction. The interactive psychological relationship is termed as “group dynamics”. The important two variables we can say in this context are “group cohesiveness” and “group locomotion”. Cohesiveness plays a vital role in determining the influence of the group on the members. On the other hand, locomotion indicates the movement towards the desired goal. Personality of the individual and character of the social situation both takes an important role for group dynamics. All the psychological effects take place within the individual members who compose the group. According to Cartwright and Zander (1968), the basic assumptions are:

- i) the groups are inevitable (even the hermits / Sanyasis and the Hippies),
- ii) that groups mobilise powerful forces that produce effects of utmost importance to individuals,
- iii) that groups can produce constructive as well as destructive consequences and
- iv) that it is the correct understanding of group dynamics based on empirical studies that helps in enhancing the constructive aspects of group life and group achievements.

It can also be said that group cohesiveness indicates the degree to which the members stick together so that there is unity in the group. Actually the basis of attraction to the group may lie in the interaction itself because of the mutual



satisfaction of needs. The group may be teen-age group or a political group or a religious group. Three important things one can consider for group cohesiveness, i.e., task direction, personal attraction and group prestige. The strength of the cohesiveness may vary on the basis of the situation. Thus, when we study the group as a whole we are aware of studying changes which occur in the behaviour of the individuals and how these changes are transmitted to all the individuals to the total field, so that the behaviour of the group is altered. On the other hand, when the group itself shows a readiness to change by active participation then actual social change becomes possible. The change will occur when the group actually takes the decision to change. Thus the concept of group dynamics is helpful in understanding social changes which involve not only the introduction of an innovation, but also in overcoming of resistance.

Group dynamics is also influenced by sympathy, suggestion and imitation. Sympathy enables the members of a group to perceive the psychological state of the other members. Actually the members begin to feel as others feel. On the other hand, suggestion plays a big role in influencing the group behaviour. The suggestions put forward by the leader of the group are readily accepted. The behaviour of the leader of the group is initiated by the members of the group. Besides this, some specific group techniques which could be utilised for improvement of the group process, viz., buzz sessions, role playing, brain storming and recreational experiences.

In buzz sessions, in which five or six members participate and is organised for purposes of stimulating discussion. In role playing, problems are handling in such a manner so that it comes for the benefit of the group. Brain storming in which group is organised for stimulating discussion. Recreational experiences where opportunities are provided to the group members to participate in group discussion.

### Self Assessment Questions

1) What do you mean by Group dynamics?

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2) According to Cartwright and Zander (1968) what are the basic assumptions of group dynamics?

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3) Group dynamics is influenced by (i).....,(ii).....and (iii).....

### Importance of group dynamics

The importances of group dynamics are given below:

- i) It is essential for effective practice with any type of task.
- ii) It promotes out the unproductive meetings.
- iii) Individual members or group as a whole benefit in a number of ways.
- iv) Underlying group dynamic is the multicultural diversification of the society.
- v) The future functioning of the group is influence by group dynamic.
- vi) Facilitates the participation of the members.
- vii) Helps to achieve the goals of the group in connection with the participation and satisfaction of the group.
- viii) It increases the interpersonal attraction.
- ix) It increases the communication processes and interaction patterns.
- x) It increases the power and control of the group.
- xi) It creates impact on racial, ethnic and cultural background.

### **2.2.2 Role of Communication in Group Dynamics**

Communication involves the transmission of a message from a sender to a receiver. According to Toseland and Rivas (2001) communication includes:

- i) encoding of perception, thoughts and feelings into language and other symbols by a sender;
- ii) transmission of language and symbols verbally, non-verbally or virtually; and
- iii) decoding of the message by the receiver.

Face-to-face group members experience both verbal and non-verbal communication, whereas members of telephone groups experience only verbal communication and members of computer groups experience only virtual communication. Interaction patterns are also fundamental to group dynamics. According to David (1980) some of the significant points in this regard include:

- i) Leader is the central figure, and communication occurs from member to leader and leader to member.
- ii) Group members take turns talking.
- iii) Indication of extension between leader and the member.
- iv) All members freely communicate.
- v) Interaction pattern focuses on the degree of centralisation of communication.
- vi) Group-centered interaction pattern is more valued than leader-centered interaction pattern.
- vii) Indication of full participation among the members.

- viii) The status and power relationship within the group affect the interaction pattern.
- ix) Interpersonal attraction and the emotional bonds that form between members influence the interaction pattern.
- x) Size of the group affect the interaction pattern. In general, there is more chance to communicate if the group size is small.
- xi) Selective attention, clues and reinforcement may take important role to change the interaction patterns.
- xii) If members do not interact with equal valence, there seems to be indication of sub-group formation.
- xiii) Interpersonal attraction, emotional bonds and interest may create impact on the group members.
- ix) Physical arrangement in some situation may affect interaction patterns.

Thus, we can say the communication processes and interaction patterns are important factors for group dynamics.

### 2.2.3 Interpersonal Attraction and Cohesion in Group Dynamics

We can say that sub-group formation depends on interpersonal attraction among the group members and the level of cohesion depends on this. There are some important features that can be mentioned here:

- i) Proximity increases interaction among people and ultimately it increases attraction.
- ii) Similarity tend to make people attract toward each other.
- iii) The important contributing factors are acceptance and approval.
- iv) Members are attracted to those who engage in group interactions that meet their expectations.
- v) Interpersonal attraction is just one of the building blocks of group cohesion.
- vi) Compatibility tends to promote interpersonal attraction.
- vii) Group cohesion is the sum of all the forces that are exerted on members to remain in a group.
- viii) Cohesion means satisfaction of group members' need for affiliation, recognition and security.
- ix) Participation of the group members increases the prestige and resources.
- x) Cohesion reveals the positive relationship among the group members.
- xi) Cohesion can lead to a level of conformity that detracts from the work of the group.

According to Toseland and Rivas (2001) high levels of cohesion have been associated with beneficial group member behaviours. These include the following:

- i) greater perseverance towards group goals;
- ii) willingness to take responsibilities for group functioning;
- iii) willingness to express feelings;
- iv) willingness to listen; and
- v) ability to use feedback and evaluations.

High levels of group cohesion are generally associated with positive outcomes. We can also say in this regard that

- 1 Great satisfaction with the group experience,
- 1 Higher levels of goal attainment by group members and group members and group as a whole,
- 1 Great commitment by group members,
- 1 Increased feelings of self-confidence, self-esteem and personal adjustment, amongst members of the group.

Sometimes it happens that high levels of cohesion may lead to dependence on the group. Some members remain silent. In this context we can say that there is a relationship between group dynamics and interpersonal attraction as well as cohesion.

### Self Assessment Questions

- 1) Write five importances of group dynamics.

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- 2) Write two features of group dynamics.

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### 2.2.4 Group Dynamics and Social Integration

Social integration means how group members fit together and are accepted in the group. In each and every group there are norms, roles and status. These are the group dynamics that promote social integration by influencing how members behave. The norm, status and roles help the groups to avoid conflict and unpredictability

which may create chaos. It is true that group can not function effectively without a fairly high level of social integration among group members. Social integration helps to build unanimity about the purposes and goals of the group.

Deutsch and Gerard (1955) postulated two forms of social influence: normative influence and informational influence. Normative influence is the desire to meet other people's expectations and to be accepted by others. Informational influence is accepting and being persuaded by information provided by others. It is undoubtedly true that certain amount of predictability, conformity and compliance is necessary for the group members to work together to achieve the goals of the group. Actually norms develop slowly in the group, as members experience what is valued and what is preferred behaviour through group interaction.

On the other hand, roles are shared expectations about the functioning of individual members of the group. Members may take different roles. Besides this, status refers to the ranking of importance of members of the group relative to each other. Status is determined by the prestige, power, position and expertise. Because a group member's status is measured in relationship to other members, it may change when other members join or leave the group. Status is also determined by the situation. Status hierarchies have a good deal of influence on social integration within groups. Thus, norms, roles and status are important components of the social influence that groups have on members.

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## 2.3 CULTURE AND GROUP

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Culture as is well known is a combination of values, beliefs and traditions of the society. Every individual born in that culture and it influence his overall personality. Values, beliefs, customs, traditions etc. are important factors for culture and these are shared by group members. When group members meet, they explore their value system and interpersonal styles, searching for a common ground on which to relate to each other. The culture of a group is determined by the communality and also the larger society. The system depends on the nature and extent of their interaction with the group. Multicultural differences are salient interpersonal factors that have significance for the group culture. Group processes have reflected the European and American values of individualism, independence, competitiveness and achievement. Besides this, cultural experiences of group survival, social hierarchy, inclusiveness and also ethnic identification influence the way members interact with one another in the group. Member's expectations and goals in a multicultural group vary widely. They significantly influence the dynamics of the group (Hopps and Pinderhughes, 1991; Matsukawa, 2001). According to Davis et al (1995), the group leader should be sensitive to racial /ethnic and socio-economic differences, should understand the effect of these differences on group dynamics and should translate this knowledge into culturally sensitive modes of program development and service delivery. Many factors affect group development. Structural characteristic is one of the important impacts on development.

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## 2.4 MEASUREMENT OF GROUP DYNAMICS

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Measurement of group dynamics is essential to understand the behaviour of a group as a whole as well as individuals who make up the group. There are many scales to measure group dynamics, viz., Group Climate Questionnaire (Mackenzie, 1983), Group Cohesiveness Scale (Budman, 1993), Group Work Engagement

Measure (Macgowan, 2000) and Group Member Interpersonal Process Scale (Soldz, 1993). Task groups, such as committees, teams, board 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. We have to pay attention to group dynamics because group dynamics facilitate member participation and satisfaction to achieve the group goal.

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## 2.5 GROUP DEVELOPMENT

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As groups develop over time, group dynamic processes evolve. In this context, we can mention a well-known model by Tuckman (1963), which is known as stage model (as mentioned in unit 1). The stages are:

- i) forming,
- ii) storming,
- iii) norming and
- iv) performing.

There is also the widely used model by Garland, Jones and Kolody (1976) Here the five significant stages are:

- i) Pre-affiliation: Should be affected to the group.
- ii) Power and control: Should be able to have some influences over the other members.
- iii) Intimacy: There must be certain closeness and intimacy.
- iv) Differentiation: The group members should be able to differentiate their personal goals from group goals
- vi) Separation: This refers to each influence having a separate identity despite being part of the group.

Beginning stages of group development are characterised by the formation of group dynamics. Members interact tentatively, establishing norms, roles and status hierarchies and ultimately a group culture slowly emerges through interaction. At first, interaction is tentative and cautious and there exists little conflict. After that members become more comfortable resistance can develop. After that members want to become a part of the group but at the same time group members maintain their own identity and independence. Many factors affect group development. Structural characteristics have an important impact on group development.

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## 2.6 LET US SUM UP

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Like individuals, groups are also entities that pose characteristics and properties which can be observed, measured, classified and predicted. There are certain conditions which predetermine certain kinds of behaviour on the part of members of the group and the group as a whole. The term “group processes” is sometimes applied to the formulations or explanations of such tendencies. “Group dynamics” is a term introduced by Kurt Lewin. Both “group processes” and “group dynamics” carry the implication that groups are to be considered as entities characterised by



change and on-going activity. Groups may be formed in different ways. Once groups have been formed, they tend to take on certain characteristics. They are likely to develop a structure, whereby members have positions that stand in relationship to one another. Reciprocal role patterns, positions, expectations and certain predetermined attitudes and percepts constitute the structure that gives groups a degree of stability and predictability. The willingness of people to join, remain with, or leave a group may be explained in terms of the rewards they receive and the costs that they incur.

Existence of any group depends on the participation and satisfaction of the individuals comprising the group. Social approval as far as the individual is concerned is expressed in terms of his being accepted by other members. As far as the group is concerned, it is expressed in terms of the individual's conformity to its norms. The group's willingness to accept is thus exchanged for the member's willingness to conform. It is fundamental to group life. This type of exchange is so fundamental in group life that it is difficult to imagine ourselves particularly in any other way. There is an intimate relationship between group acceptance and individual conformity. Group may be formed voluntarily and spontaneously because of a felt need to socialise or to accomplish some practical aim or they may be converted by external authority. The attractiveness of group that develops for its members is termed as its cohesiveness. Compatibility generally facilitates cohesiveness but cohesiveness and compatibility are not necessarily conducive to group effectiveness in some kinds of tasks. Generally, group cohesiveness depends on the extent to which members recognise and adhere to its norms. Small, intimate, face-to-face groups are the ones that demand and receive the highest degree of personal involvement. Group may be inclusive or exclusive depending on their functions and goals. In traditional societies exclusiveness is more likely to be based on social status than in more equalitarian societies. Our behaviour is not static. Interaction is an important part in this regard. Group dynamics is essential for effective practice with any type of task or treatment group.

Group dynamics mainly depends on:

- i) communication process and interaction patterns;
- ii) interpersonal attraction and cohesion;
- iii) social integration and influence;
- iv) power control and
- v) culture.

Although an 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. We can say that culture, ethnicity and race affect the dynamic processes that develop and evolve in groups.

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## 2.7 UNIT END QUESTIONS

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- 1) What do you mean by the term “group dynamics”?
- 2) Write in brief about the importance of group dynamics.

- 3) What is group development?
- 4) Is there any relationship between interpersonal attraction and cohesion with group dynamics? – Discuss.
- 5) Write in brief about culture and group.

## 2.8 GLOSSARY

<b>Attitude</b>	: An enduring system of evaluations or feelings in favour of or against a person or group.
<b>Belief</b>	: Acceptance of a statement about an object, event, person or group.
<b>Cognition</b>	: Sensation, perception, thoughts, ideas and such processes.
<b>Cohesiveness</b>	: The social force which keeps the group together. It is the product of attractiveness of the interaction with group members.
<b>Communication</b>	: The exchange of meaning and mutual influence.
<b>Cooperation</b>	: It arises when groups work together in the pursuit of common interest.
<b>Culture</b>	: The pattern of all arrangements, material or behavioural, which have been adopted by a society.
<b>Dependence</b>	: The condition in which a person or a group relies on another for its need satisfaction and outcomes.
<b>Group</b>	: A collection of individuals who are in interdependent relationship with one another sharing common norms of behaviour and attitude.
<b>Group dynamics</b>	: The way in which changes which take place in the behaviour of some members of the group lead to changes in behaviour of other members of the group. This is why groups can mobilise powerful force which may be constructive or destructive.
<b>Group structure</b>	: The differentiation of roles and status relations within a group.
<b>Informal group</b>	: A group that is not organised.
<b>Power</b>	: Ability of an individual or a group to control the process of decision making even against resistance.
<b>Social change</b>	: Alteration in the structure of a society.
<b>Social cohesion</b>	: Degree to which group members share common beliefs, practices and values.
<b>Social control</b>	: Application of positive and negative sanctions (rewards

and punishments) by a group to encourage its members to abide by the group norms, perform the required roles.

**Social facilitation** : The process by which a person works faster and turns out more when he is working with others than when he is working alone.

**Social movements** : Collective activity aimed at correcting some perceived inadequacy in the existing social arrangements.

**Society** : The most complex type of human group composed of many subgroups.

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## 2.9 SUGGESTED READINGS

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Baron, R.A. and Byrne, D.(2000). *Social Psychology*, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition, Prentice Hall of India Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi.

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## UNIT 3 SOCIAL IDENTITY, CROWDING AND CROWD BEHAVIOUR

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### Structure

- 3.0 Introduction
- 3.1 Objectives
- 3.2 Social Identity Theory
- 3.3 Definition of Crowd
  - 3.3.1 Active Crowd
  - 3.3.2 Inactive Crowd
- 3.4 Crowd Psychology
- 3.5 Crowd Behaviour
- 3.6 Theories of Crowd Behaviour
  - 3.6.1 Classical Theory
  - 3.6.2 Convergence Theory
  - 3.6.3 Group Mind Theory
- 3.7 Collective Behaviour
  - 3.7.1 Mass Society
  - 3.7.2 Audience
  - 3.7.3 Mob
  - 3.7.4 Fashion
- 3.8 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.9 Unit End Questions
- 3.10 Glossary
- 3.11 Suggested Readings

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### 3.0 INTRODUCTION

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Individuals are not self-contained units of psychological analysis. Social identity theory states that people think, feel and act as members of groups, institutions and cultures. The social identity approach reinforces the idea of the individuals' social cognitions which are socially constructed depending on their group or collective frames of reference. Social identity is mainly composed of four elements, viz., categorisation, identification, comparison and psychological distinctiveness. Actually social identity refers to the membership or associations of an individual with a primary group ranging from nuclear to extended based on factors as the individual's capacities, experiences, mobility and location. Ethnicity is a powerful social identity with many components, viz., common biological origins, customs, habits, norms etc. Personal identification with a specific group and the development of an in group mentality is involved in social identity theory.

## 3.1 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you, will be able to:

- 1 define social identity;
- 1 describe crowd;
- 1 elucidate the crowd behaviour theory;
- 1 describe audience, mob, public, mass society, fashion; and
- 1 explain collective behaviour.

## 3.2 SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY

We, the human being spend a lot of time thinking about ourselves. We can also say that self is the centre of each person's social universe. Our self-concept is mainly acquired through the interaction with the immediate family and also with the other people with whom we meet throughout our life. Actually self-concept is one's self-identity which consists of an organised collection of beliefs and feelings about oneself. We can further say that we develop our social identity which includes how we conceptualise ourselves, including how we evaluate ourselves.

Self- concept also includes all of the information and feelings relevant to our past, present and future selves. We use the term self-concept which influences how we process information about the social world around us along with information about ourselves – such as our motives, emotional status, abilities, self-evaluation etc. All these important things influence how we process social and personal information that is relevant to our own identities. People want to know about others' beliefs, affiliations and intentions in order to interpret their words and actions and to predict their future behaviour.

Social identity theory explains how people develop a sense of membership and belonging in particular group. There are many interconnected mechanisms in this theory. People generally seek out group membership as an affirmation of self-esteem, but that membership as an affirmation of self-esteem, but that membership in a group alone is not enough to build an affirm self-esteem. To feel more self-esteem, people have to believe that they are in the right group, which creates the need for a positive distinction from other groups.

People want to know about others' beliefs, affiliations and intentions in order to interpret their future behaviour. These qualities we are unable to observe directly. We do not build up our impression of another trait by trait. Interpretation of identity is subjective. Social identity Theory was developed by Tajfel and Turner in 1979. In this theory, it was highlighted that a person has not one "personal Self" but rather several selves that corresponds to widening circles of group membership. An individual has multiple "social identities". It is the individual's self-concept derived from perceived membership of social groups (Hogg and Vaughan, 2002). Tajfel and Turner (1979) identified three variables which has contribution to the in-group favouritism is particularly important.

- 1 the extent to which individuals identify with an in-group to internalise that group membership as an aspect of their self-concept;

- 1 the extent to which the prevailing context provides ground for comparison between groups;
- 1 the perceived relevance of the comparison group, which itself will be shaped by the relative and absolute status of the in-group.

Social identity theory has a considerable impact on social psychology. It is tested in a wide range of fields and settings and includes prejudice, stereotyping, negotiation and language use. The social identity theory has implication on the way people deal with social and organisational change.

Besides this, we can also say that social identity is mainly composed of

- i) categorisation,
- ii) identification,
- iii) comparison, and
- iv) psychological distinctiveness.

Generally social identities are associated with normative rights, obligations and sanctions which within specific collectivities form roles. Social identity refers to the membership or association of an individual with “primary” and other human beings. The significant factors which we can mention here are mainly individual’s capacity, experiences mobility and location.

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### 3.3 DEFINITION OF CROWD

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Crowd is a physically compact organisation of human beings brought into direct, temporary and unorganised contact with one another. If some people stand together for a short time at any place, then it may be called crowd. The crowd is the most transitory and unstable of all the social groups. Actually crowd exhibits no patterns, no characteristic expressions. The collection of human beings in the market or in the open space is also designated as crowd.

MacIver defines crowd as “A physically compact aggregation of human beings brought into direct, temporary and unorganised contact with one another”. According to Kimball Young, “A crowd is a gathering of a considerable number of persons around a centre or point of common attraction”. According to Majumder, “A crowd is an aggregation of individuals drawn together by an interest without premeditation on the part of any of them and without even tentative provision of what to expect”.

Crowd behaviour involves three aspects:

- i) psychological continuity
- ii) polarisation of interest and attention and
- iii) transition and temporary character.

A crowd collects because of some curiosity, interest and other temporary causes and dissolves as many as its cause vanishes. If two people start fighting on the road, a crowd will collect and when they stop their struggle, it will break up.



### 3.3.1 Active Crowd

Crowd can be divided into two classes: (a) Active and (b) Inactive.

Active crowd can be further classified into four classes:

- a) **Aggressive crowd:** It is a crowd of people in an aggressive and destructive frame of mind, capable of any and every act of destruction and irrationality, brutality and inhumanity. This kind of crowd exhibits a tremendous excitement.
- b) **Panicky crowd:** Panicky crowd is the panicky or fear-stricken crowd whose constituent members are almost crazed with fear to a point where they can no longer think and find reason. They are almost frightened out of their units, so that thinking is for the time being a task beyond their power. They are concerned with the prime quest of saving their lives.
- c) **Acquisitive crowd:** The aim and objective of each of its members is to obtain or acquire something. Acquisitive crowd is composed almost entirely of individuals whose objectives is to gain or obtain something, be it a cinema ticket, kerosene oil etc.
- d) **Expressive crowd:** In this kind of crowd some people gathered to give expression or to manifest their demands or sentiments. Desire of violence is relatively less pronounced and dominant in the members of an expressive crowd.

### 3.3.2 Inactive Crowd

No crowd is completely inactive. The difference between an active and inactive crowd is only relative. The inactive crowd even resembles an audience.

You may join in a crowd, where you can find some special characteristics:

- 1 Crowd has no predetermined aim.
- 1 There is no definite time and place for crowd.
- 1 It is a congregate group of individuals who have temporarily identified themselves with common interest.
- 1 It seems that members are motivated by emotions and soon become uncontrollable.
- 1 The behaviour of crowd is not certain.
- 1 People within the crowd stimulate each other.
- 1 Members of the crowd are generally uncontrolled, unorganised and disordered.
- 1 Members are motivated by emotions and soon become uncontrollable.
- 1 The curiosity, values and emotions are temporarily identical and which arises because of common interest.
- 1 Immersed in the crowd, the individual loses self-control and may engage in different types of activities. Crowd behaviour arises as a result of the three mechanisms of anonymity, contagion and suggestibility (Le Bon, 1895).

- 1 Dollard (1939) used the frustration-aggression hypothesis to explain the violent behaviour of crowds.
- 1 Turner (1964) explained crowd behaviour in terms of “emergent norms”. The contagion, the spread of the feelings and actions is facilitated by the process of mixing, the close proximity, the jostling like the sheep in the herd.
- 1 Generally in crowd people of varying interests and abilities convergence because they share some common quality like hostility, aggressiveness etc.

#### Self Assessment Questions

- 1) Self- concept also includes all of the ..... and .....relevant to our past, present and future.
- 2) What does social identity explain?  
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- 3) Social identity composed of four elements i.e i).....  
ii).....iii).....iv).....
- 4) Define what is crowd?  
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- 5) What are the two classes of crowd?  
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### 3.4 CROWD PSYCHOLOGY

Crowd psychology mainly refers to the studies and theories regarding the behaviour of the crowd and also the psychological causes and effects of crowd participation. In a study entitled, “The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind (1895)”, Le Bon suggested that when people become part of a crowd they lose almost all of their individuality, autonomy and personal judgment and morality. According to Carl Jung, it is called “collective unconscious”. Convergence theory emerged during the twentieth century, thinking that acts of the crowd is in unified way, not because of the collective ‘mind’ of the crowd but because they tend to be composed of like-minded people who are attracted into the crowd situation because of a shared interest or objective.

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## 3.5 CROWD BEHAVIOUR

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Neither the socio-psychological processes that take place within the crowd nor the techniques employed by the crowd, lead to understanding of crowd behaviour. However the leader provides an adequate understanding of the peculiarities of crowd behaviour. Some of them are as given below:

- 1 In the crowd, with the loss of individuality, a form of group consciousness develops a fusion of mind with mind, a sympathetic participation on emotional level which is common to all the participants. Appeals, slogans are the common features.
- 1 Crowd behaviour is the release of repressed drives. The suggestibility, the exaltation, the lack of self-consciousness, the egoistic expansion and spontaneity, exhibited by the members of the crowd are phenomena susceptible to this kind of explanation.
- 1 We may think of the crowd as a temporary collectivity within which thwarted impulses are afforded an outlet. The close connection between the underlying characteristics of the cultural conditions and the types of crowd those are apt to mark the community life.
- 1 The manifestations of crowd feeling deserve study not only because they reveal the significance of this transitory form of aggregation, but also because they throw light on other social phenomena.

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## 3.6 THEORIES OF CROWD BEHAVIOUR

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### 3.6.1 Classical Theory

The minds of the group would merge to form a way of thinking. Le Bon's idea is that crowd foster anonymity and sometimes generate emotion. Different individuals in a group do not think individually but they think experience and act through the group mind. When individuals collect in a crowd, their individual mind becomes a part of the collective mind. The collective mind thinks in its own way and formulates its own ideas and thoughts, which the individual minds do not formulate in their individual capacities. Emphasis was given on unconscious motives. According to him, in a crowd these unconscious motives get more active. The individual is influenced by these unconscious motives and his own conscious motivation sinks into the background. The person become uninhibited and shows even the lowliest behaviour in the crowd.

### 3.6.2 Convergence Theory

Crowd behaviour is not a product of the crowd itself, but is carried into the crowd by particular individuals. According to the convergence theory people who wish to act in a certain way come together to form crowds. There is no homogenous activity within a repetitive practice. This theory states that crowd itself does not generate racial hatred or violence. Actually, crowd arises from convergence of people who oppose the presence of particular group of neighbours. Generally people in crowd express existing beliefs and values so that mob reaction is the rational product of widespread popular feeling.

### 3.6.3 Group Mind Theory

The Group mind theory has been advocated by Lebon, Espinas, Trotter, Durkheim, Mc. Dougall and Allport. According to this theory, the individual in the crowd loses his individuality and becomes a part of the crowd which comes to develop its own crowd consciousness. The mentality of the individual member becomes de-individualised and the person begins to act on an emotional level which is common to all the participants.

Its working is based on emotions, slogans, appeals and suggestions. Its actions are less rational and more emotional. It becomes easily excited and acts in a hypnotic way. Lebon was the first writer to put forward the theory of group mind in 1892. According to him, the sentiments and ideas of all the persons in the gathering take one and the same direction and their conscious personality vanishes.

Different individuals in a group do not think individually but think, experience and act through the group mind. When individuals collect in a crowd, their individual minds become a part of the collective mind. Lebon has laid great emphasis on the unconscious motives. The individual is influenced by the unconscious motives and his own conscious motivation sinks into the background.

Espinas calls group mind as social consciousness. According to him, there is a sort of self-consciousness in every group. Collective consciousness is formed out of the collection of many individuals consciousness taken together.

According to Trotter, everyman is possessed of the instinct of gregariousness. Man's gregariousness activates his mental system as a result of which he accepts the command of the group without any argument and acts according to the command given.

Durkheim has sought to explain group behaviour in terms of collective consciousness. According to him, when people collect in a group, a collective consciousness is created by the mutual exchange of ideas and notions. Actually mind is another name for the flow of consciousness. Social consciousness is a compound of several individual consciousness but its qualities are different from the qualities of the consciousness of the individual.

According to Mc.Dougall, every group has a mind of its own. The group mind is not a mere collection of the minds of all the individual members of group. The group-mind has the power of influencing the mind of the individuals. It is because of this power of the group mind that the thinking of the individual changes when he becomes a member of the group.

According to Allport, the behaviour of the individual in the crowd is influenced by two processes of social facilitation and inter-stimulation. Members of the group motivate each other. Social facilitation and inter-stimulation curb the reasoning capacity of the individuals and increase their suggestibility.

Sometimes crowd behaviour may be the expression of impulses repressed or thwarted by the conditions and social controls of everyday life, but it may not be true of all the crowds. In a crowd all the differences of high and low, rich and poor are submerged and all act as one man. We can say that crowd behaviour is learned. In a crowd the individual responsibility is blotted out. De-individualisation of the individuals in the group leads to reduction of inner restraint and to move expressive behaviour.

**Public and Crowd:** The public and the crowd while have some factors common, they differ a great deal. While both crowd and public are collectivities of people and are generally organised, one of the important differences is that there is physical contact among the members of a crowd, where as public is scattered at several places. Secondly, public is much bigger group than the crowd and thirdly, the stimulus in the crowd is simultaneous whereas stimulus in the public is diffused. The crowd is more suggestible than the public. Thus, we can say that the crowd and public differ in many ways.

### **Self Assessment Questions**

1) Explain crowd behaviour.

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2) What is classical theory?

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3) Explain convergence theory.

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4) The group-mind theory has been advocated by.....

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5) Differentiate between public and crowd in your own words.

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## **3.7 COLLECTIVE BEHAVIOUR**

All social interactions fall under the category of collective behaviour. When two or more persons behave in the same way, it may be termed as 'collective behaviour'. Any religious congregation may be called collective behaviour. Collective behaviour brings people into contact with others in situations where conventional

guidelines and formal authority fail to afford direction and supply channels for action. Social unrest may be both the cause and effect of collective behaviour. It may sometimes lead to the emergence of new norms and generally accepted policies. The agitated crowds can develop into disciplined association. Collective behaviour may act as an agent of flexibility and as a forerunner of social change. Some special features of collective behaviour are the following

- 1 It takes place in occasional episodes rather than regularly or routinely.
- 1 It is not regulated by any particular set of rules or procedures.
- 1 It is generally guided by unreasoning beliefs, hopes, fears or hatreds.
- 1 It is unpredictable.

Generally we can say that social life is a system of well-structured and stable relationships. It is characterised by change rather than stability, uncertainty rather than predictability, disorganisation rather than equilibrium.

Collective behaviour entails a crisis or a break in regular routines. Collective behaviour may be an agent of flexibility and social movements and revolutions fall under the category of collective behaviour. A crowd may be said to be more stable than a mob. Under conditions of stress or danger, a crowd may quickly turn into a mob. Crowd may include mob behaviour as well as audience behaviour.

Casual crowd is short in time, loosely organised collectivity that may be motivated by the attraction of the movement. A group of people may collect together when there is an accident on the road. On the other hand, there is conventional crowd which are directed by conventional rules like collection of people in religious festivals.

### 3.7.1 Mass Society

Mass society is characterised by rationality, impersonal relations, extreme specialisation of roles and loneliness for the individual in spite of concentration of sheer numbers and loss of sense of intimacy and security. In such society's suggestion, persuasion, propaganda and other aspects of crowd behaviour are common (Young, 1948). The modern cities are changing rapidly. It consists of millions of human beings. Personal contacts among the people are reducing day by day. The loss of personal relationship creates a sense of insecurity, loneliness and incompleteness. To overcome these problems, they engage in voluntary organisation, associations and clubs etc. and also affiliate themselves with one or the other of the ashrams. Another significant feature of mass society, with its desire for crowd contacts, is irrationality, susceptibility to propaganda and advertisement. Technological progress and impersonality are based on rational grounds. The sense of insecurity and sense of loneliness makes the individual irrational. In the mass society there is a mixture of rational and irrational thing.

### 3.7.2 Audience

Audience is a polarised crowd which assembles in one place. It is an index of mental unity. There may be two types of audience

- i) casual audience and



- ii) scheduled audience. A number of people may congregate and become polarised by seeing a street quarrel and it is called casual audience. On the other hand, the crowd which assembles in a lecture hall or cinema hall may be called scheduled audience.

In the audience situation several psychological processes are involved in the interaction of people. This interaction may be of two types, viz.,

- i) between audience and speaker or actor and
- ii) among the member of the audience themselves. The aim of audience is of many types. One is to get facts and interpretations. We can also observe some emotional appeals among audience. Sometimes it may be conversational. As for example we can say that the dramatic troupe or the musician will have to build up rapport with the audience so that the audience appreciates and enjoys the music or the program. If it is unfavourable, then it becomes aggressive one. Group singing breaks down the individual isolation, removes differences in social status and helps to build up common emotions and feelings.

### **3.7.3 Mob**

Generally, the members of a mob tend to show a similarity in feelings, thoughts and actions irrespective of the variation in education, occupation and intelligence. The members of the mob are attending to and reacting to some common object in a common way. Sometimes heightened emotionality is a characteristic feature of mob behaviour. The significant features are anger, fear, joy etc. Sometimes they become unreasonable, intolerant and fickle-minded. Most common characteristic of mob behaviour is the diminished sense of responsibility. They are generally irresponsible. An aggressive mob may indulge in some unfortunate behaviour like destroying music, property attacking the. Not only their sense of autonomy may also be reduced and may become part of mob behaviour. Suggestion, imitation and sympathy – are the three mechanisms of interaction which we can observe in the mob behaviour. It can further be said that mob behaviour is due to the operation of a number of factors, some of which depend upon the predisposition of the individuals and some upon the characteristics of the situation in which the collectivity finds itself. Mob behaviour is conditioned by so many factors – past as well as present, social as well as individual.

### **3.7.4 Fashion**

Fashion is an important example of collective action and it is common with crowd behaviour. Fashion is a variation that is permissible within limits of custom. Fashion as well as fads and crases are based on the desire for change, the desire for something new. There is a psychological reaction and it is outgrowth of emotional and irrational tendencies. It can further be said that fashion sometimes furnishes the desire of conformity, security and social solidarity. Social movements are collective efforts to change the society. Some movements are local, some are national and others are international. The term ‘collective behaviour’ is now used as ‘audience behaviour’, ‘mob behaviour’, ‘social movement’ etc.

#### **Self Assessment Questions**

- 1) All ..... called under the category of collected behaviour.

2) Write features of collective behaviour.

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3) Two types of audience are (i) .....(ii).....

4) Mob behaviour is conditioned by three factors i).....  
ii).....iii).....

### 3.8 LET US SUM UP

Generally people want to know about others' beliefs, affiliations and intentions in order to interpret their words and actions and to predict their future behaviour. The premise of the social identity concept is that individuals partially derive their self-concepts from membership in social groups. Social identity concept provides a robust framework for psychologists to understand issues of labeling, self-esteem, discrimination, conformity and in-group or out-group perspectives. Individuals are not self-contained units of psychological analysis. Social identity theory states that people think, feel and act as members of collective groups, institutions and cultures. This approach reinforces the idea that individual's social cognitions are socially construed depending on their group or collective frames of reference. This theory incorporates three main points:

- i) people are motivated to maintain a positive self-concept;
- ii) the self-concept derives largely from group identification ;and
- iii) people establish positive social identities by favorably comparing their in-group against an out- group.

It is true that group often exerts powerful effects upon their members. In this context three important aspects are role, status and norms. Different persons perform different tasks and they expected to accomplish different things for the group. They fulfill different roles. Generally roles are assigned in a formal manner. Groups may choose a person as leader and others as follower. Roles are acquired and people internalise them. They link their roles to key aspects to their self-concept and self-perception. A role may exert profound effects on a person's behaviour. Besides role, another important factor in functioning of group is status. It is social standing or rank within a group. Different roles or position in a group is linked with wide range of desirable outcomes. Groups often confer or withhold status, as a means of influencing the behaviour of their members. Another powerful factor which has significant impact on group is the 'norm'. The rules may be implicit or explicit, established by groups to regulate the behaviour of their members. In many situations, norms tell group members how to behave or how not to behave. Generally group insists upon adherence to their norms as a basic requirement for membership. Groups influence their members through roles, i.e., members' assigned functions in the group; status, i.e., their relative standing in the group and norms, i.e., rules concerning appropriate behaviour for members, and lastly, cohesiveness, i.e., all the factors that cause members to remain in the group.

In this context another important term we can use, i.e., “crowd”. A crowd is a gathering of a considerable number of persons around a centre or point of common attraction. Crowd is a temporary, direct and unorganised group of individuals whose curiosity, values and emotions are temporarily identical and which arise because of common interest or common stimuli. According to the “group-mind theory”, the individual in the crowd loses his individuality and becomes a part of the crowd which comes to develop its own crowd consciousness. Like-minded people, who are attracted into the crowd situation, have a shared interest or object, which is based on convergence theory. The other type of groups we can mention here are mob, audience, mass society etc.

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## 3.9 UNIT END QUESTIONS

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- 1) What is identity?
- 2) What do you mean by the term “social identity”?
- 3) Write in brief about “social identity theory”.
- 4) What is crowd? Briefly discuss about the crowd behavior.
- 5) What do you mean by the term mob, audience and mass society?
- 6) Describe mass society and audience.
- 7) Describe mob and fashion

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## 3.10 GLOSSARY

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<b>Communication</b>	: The exchange of meaning and mutual influence.
<b>Cohesiveness</b>	: With respect to conformity, the degree of attraction felt by an individual toward an influencing group.
<b>Crowd</b>	: Aggregation of people in close proximity who share some common interest
<b>Crowd psychology</b>	: Crowd psychology mainly refers to the studies and theories regarding the behaviour of the crowd and also the psychological causes and effects of crowd participation.
<b>Group</b>	: A collection of individuals who are in interdependent relationship with one another sharing common norm of behaviour and attitude.
<b>Group structure</b>	: The difference of roles and status relations within a group.
<b>Group decision process</b>	: A procedure in which a group is presented with a problem and communication giving the various alternatives, followed by a discussion and decision regarding the solution of the problem.
<b>Roles</b>	: The sets of behaviour that individuals occupying specific position within a group are expected to perform.

**Role expectations** : Anticipations that is associated with a role category.

**Role strain** : Difficulties in attempting to enact a role.

**Social norm** : An expectation shared by group members which specifies behaviour considered appropriate for a given situation.

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### 3.11 SUGGESTED READINGS

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Baron, R.A. and Byrne, D (2000). *Social Psychology*, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition, Prentice Hall of India Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi.

Kuppuswamy, B (1980), *An Introduction to Social Psychology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Revised edition, (reprinted, 2004), Asia Publishing House, Mumbai.

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# UNIT 4 COOPERATION, COMPETITION AND CONFLICTS

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## Structure

- 4.0 Introduction
- 4.1 Objectives
- 4.2 Social Interaction and Social Process
  - 4.2.1 Social Contact
  - 4.2.2 Communication
- 4.3 Cooperation
  - 4.3.1 Types of Cooperation
  - 4.3.2 Role of Cooperation
- 4.4 Competition
  - 4.4.1 Characteristics of Competition
  - 4.4.2 Value of Competition
- 4.5 Conflict
  - 4.5.1 Causes of Conflict
  - 4.5.2 Characteristics of Conflict
  - 4.5.3 Effects of Conflict
  - 4.5.4 Types of Conflict
  - 4.5.5 Distinction between Conflict and Competition
- 4.6 Accommodation
- 4.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 4.8 Unit End Questions
- 4.9 Glossary
- 4.10 Suggested Readings and References

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## 4.0 INTRODUCTION

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This unit focuses on three important aspects of management of individuals in a society. Every individual interacts with other individuals in order to survive. In the beginning the interaction is with parent or caretaker, later on with other individuals in the society. As interaction takes place there are cooperation, competition and conflicts emerging in these relationships. The present unit deals with all these three aspects and points out their importance and functions and how individuals work through their conflict, competition and cooperation, so as to achieve their stipulated goals.

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## 4.1 OBJECTIVES

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After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- 1 explain social interaction and process;
- 1 define and explain cooperation;
- 1 explain about competition;
- 1 identify conflict situation;
- 1 differentiate between conflict and competition; and
- 1 describe accommodation.

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## 4.2 SOCIAL INTERACTION AND SOCIAL PROCESS

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Each and every person is a social and cultural being. It is very difficult for people to live in isolation. Human beings always live in various groups and associations. They act and behave in a certain manner. In each and every moment, the behaviour of each individual is affected by the behaviour of others. This interaction is the essence of social life. Green defines social interaction as “the mutual influences that affects groups. Also these groups affect one another in their attempts to solve problems and in their striving towards goals”. According to Dawson and Gettys, “Social interaction is a process whereby men interpenetrate the minds of each other.” Gish defined social interaction as, “it is the reciprocal influence in which human beings exert on each other through inter stimulation and response.” Thus we can say that social interaction refers to the entire range of social relationships, wherein there is reciprocal stimulation and response between individuals.

Social interaction produces some definite influence upon social relations that exists among human beings. Two essential conditions of social interaction are:

- i) social contact
- ii) communication

### 4.2.1 Social Contact

Social contact can be established through the medium of radio, letters, telephones and other media of communication. Social contact is the first and important phase of interaction. It may be positive or negative. If it is positive, they lead to cooperation, mutual understanding and assimilation. If it is negative, they create hatred, jealousy and conflict. The above forms of social interaction are termed as social processes. MacIver observes, “social process is the manner in which the relations of the members of a group, are brought together to acquire a certain distinctive character. According to Gillin and Gillin, “by social processes we mean those ways of interacting by which we can establish system of relationships or find out what happens when changes of relationships occur or what happens when changes disturb already existing modes of life.” In this context we can use three important terms, viz., cooperation, competition and conflict.



Social interaction requires essential communication. Besides this, communications are essential adjuncts of social contact. Language, gestures, symbols, radio, telephone, television, newspaper etc. are the media for communication. Human interaction is undoubtedly a communicative interaction. In this context, we can further say that social interaction usually takes place in the form of co-operation, competition, conflict, accommodation and assimilation.

Cooperation means working together in the pursuit of a common interest. It is a joint activity. It is the conscious form of social interaction where two or more persons work together to gain a common end. Cooperation may be of different types. Cooperation for human beings is both a psychological and social necessity. On the other hand, competition is an unconscious, impersonal and continuous struggle between individuals and groups for satisfaction. It is a contest to obtain something which does not exist in a quantity sufficient to meet the demand.

Competition, like co-operation, is indispensable in social life. Competition performs many useful functions in society. At different levels, competition occurs. It may be economic, cultural, social, and political. There is no society which is exclusively competitive or exclusively cooperative. Besides competition and cooperation, conflict is another important process in human relations.

Conflict is a conscious action as well as personal activity. It lacks continuity but it is a universal phenomena. Causes of conflict are mainly individual differences, cultural differences, clash of interest, social change etc. Besides this, conflict serves constructive and positive ends. Conflict has both integrative and disintegrative effects.

Interaction is a two-way process whereby each individual or group stimulates the other and in varying degrees modifies the behaviour of the participants. The behaviour and personality characteristics of individual members of a group affect the behaviour of others and make a significant impact over the functioning of a group as a whole. The behaviour of each individual is affected by the behaviour of other individual. This is known as interaction process and it is the essence of social life. According to Eldredge and Merrill, "social interaction is the general process whereby two or more persons are in meaningful contact as a result of which their behaviour is modified, however slightly." Social interaction refers to the entire range of social relationship, wherein there is reciprocal stimulation and response between individuals. Social interaction is of a dual nature, of persons with persons and of groups with groups. The main forms of social interaction are cooperation, competition, conflict, accommodation and assimilation. Combinations of these are called social processes. Social interaction and social process are:

- 1) sequence of events
- 2) repetition of events
- 3) relationship between events
- 4) continuity of events
- 5) special results.

Actually society is an arena where there is expression of different social processes. Social processes are fundamental to the life of a community. Society exists wherever several individuals are in reciprocal relationships. It constitutes an aggregation of individuals in a society. So we can say that there are two forms of social interaction i.e.

- i) conjunctive
- ii) disjunctive.

Social contact initiates interaction. Social process is a variety of view-points. Social behaviour can be classified on the basis of - (a) their intrinsic nature, (b) the inherent drives, instincts, interests, desires etc. and (c) the observable behaviours upon which observers can agree. We are concerned with the fundamental types, i.e., cooperating, competition, conflict, accommodation and assimilation. Actually interaction occurs in the form of the above mentioned processes.

#### Self Assessment Questions

- 1) According to Dawan and Gettys social interaction is a .....  
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- 2) The two essential conditions of social interaction are:  
i) ..... and ii).....
- 3) Cooperation means .....
- 4) What are the main forms of social interaction?  
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### 4.3 COOPERATION

Cooperation is an integrating activity and is believed to be the opposite of competition. The word “cooperation” is derived from the two Latin words “co” meaning together and “operari” meaning to work. It is thus a joint activity in pursuit of common goals or shared rewards. It is goal oriented and conscious form of social interaction. Actually it involves two elements – (i) common end and (ii) organised effort. It is the process by which individuals or groups combine their effort, in a more or less organised way for the attainment of common objective. Generally co-operation means working together for a common objective. In many festivals, volunteers work together to collect money from different parts and want to organise the program successfully and everybody want to stretch forward their hands to celebrate the occasion successfully. Among the members of the group, there seems to be indication of good interaction process. All of them behave in co-operative manner. Co-operation is brought about by several factors which includes the following:

- 1 desire for individual benefits
- 1 desire to give and share
- 1 total decision on common purposes
- 1 situational necessity and
- 1 desire to achieve larger goals.

### 4.3.1 Types of Cooperation

We can classify cooperation into five categories, viz.

- i) Direct cooperation
  - ii) Indirect cooperation
  - iii) Primary cooperation
  - iv) Secondary cooperation and
  - v) Tertiary cooperation
- i) **Direct cooperation:** The essential characteristics of this kind of cooperation are that people do in company the thing which can also do separately. In this category cooperating individuals do things of common interest together and perform identical functions. Playing together, worshipping together are the examples of direct co-operation.
  - ii) **Indirect cooperation:** In this type of cooperation individual work towards a common end each has his own specialised functions. Thus, we can say that indirect cooperation is obtained when people perform dissimilar tasks towards a common end, i.e., each has its specialised role to play. In the modern society it is the indirect cooperation which is more in play than the direct cooperation because technological changes require specialisation of skills and functions.
  - iii) **Primary cooperation:** There is an identity of interest between the individual and the group. It is the cooperation which is found in primary groups such as family. Not only family but also peer groups is also called primary cooperation where people have to choose face-to-face relations. We can also say that interest of the individual merge with the interest of the primary group.
  - iv) **Secondary cooperation:** This type of cooperation is generally found in the secondary group, viz., government, industry, church and trade union etc.
  - v) **Tertiary cooperation:** This is the interaction between various big and small group to meet a particular situation. Here the individual or group who wants to compete with one another, come together and cooperate with each other for a specific purpose. In such type of cooperation the attitudes of the cooperating parties are purely opportunistic.

### 4.3.2 Role of Cooperation

It is a universal phenomenon. Cooperation for human beings is both a psychological and social necessity. Individual as well as collective goals can not be achieved without cooperation. Cooperation is essential for maintenance of social order. We

can not do anything without cooperation, if we are to live as members of the society. Family members cooperate with each other in terms of sharing economic, emotional and social requirements of one another. All the activity in each and every family is done in a cooperative way. People learn their first lesson in cooperation as members of the family. The physical, mental and even the spiritual needs of the individual remain unsatisfied if he does not agree to cooperate with his fellow members.

#### Self Assessment Questions

- 1) What are the types of cooperation? Give name only.

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- 2) Define direct and indirect cooperation.

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- 3) Explain tertiary cooperation in your own words.

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- 4) What is the role of cooperation?

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### 4.4 COMPETITION

Competition is the most important form of social struggle. According to Anderson and Parker, "Competition is that form of social action in which we strive against each other for the possession of or use of some limited material and non-material goods." According to Sutherland, Woodward and Maxwell, "Competition is an impersonal, unconscious continuous struggle which, because of their limited supply, all may not have." Competition is a form of interaction. It is the struggle for position to gain economic status. It occurs whenever there is an insufficient supply of anything that human being desire - insufficient in the sense that all cannot have as much of it as they wish. Sometimes competition happens because of limited supply and also difficult for equal distribution.

#### 4.4.1 Characteristics of Competition

The characteristics of competition are:

- 1 Competition is impersonal struggle. Park and Burgess defined competition as “interaction without social contact.” We can say it is inter-individual struggle that is impersonal. It is usually not directed against any individual or group in particular.
- 1 Competition is universal. There is no society which is devoid of competition. Not only this, degree of competition may vary from society to society. It is very common for society as well as culture.
- 1 Competition is considered as conducive to progress. Competition provides the individuals better opportunities to satisfy their desires for new experiences and recognitions.
- 1 Both associative and non-associative dimensions of social processes indicate competition.
- 1 Competition is mainly an unconscious activity but personal competition or rivalry is a conscious activity.
- 1 Competition may create emotional disturbances.
- 1 Competition is an innate tendency.
- 1 Competition is a social phenomenon.
- 1 Degree of competition is determined by social values and social structure.

#### 4.4.2 Value of Competition

Competition is indispensable in social life. Competition performs many powerful functions in society. Sometimes competition is extremely dynamic. It performs five positive functions.

- 1 It helps to determine the status and location of individual members in a system of hierarchy.
- 1 It tends to stimulate economy, efficiency and inventiveness.
- 1 It tends to enhance one's ego.
- 1 It prevents undue concentration of power in an individual or group of individuals.
- 1 It creates respect for the rules of the same group.

We can say that competition determines who is to perform what function. According to Ross, “Competition performs that broad function of assigning to each individual in his social world. Competition is a progressive force which fulfils and does not necessarily destroy.” We can further say that fair competition is conducive to economic as well as social progress. Competition provides the individuals better opportunities to satisfy their desires for new experiences and recognition. It believes in achieved status. Sometimes competition has some negative function. It may lead to frustration. It may lead to monopoly. It may lead to conflict. It may create emotional disturbances. It may develop unfriendly and unfavourable attitudes among the persons or groups toward one another. It is true that unfair competition has the most disintegrating effects. Sometimes unlimited competition leads to monopoly.

Competition and cooperation differ in many respects. No society is exclusively competitive or exclusively cooperative. Actually, social system is a balance between competitive and cooperative force. But some competition is healthy and fair.

### Self Assessment Questions

1) Explain competition in our own words.

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2) Write three characteristics of competition.

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3.) Explain the value of competition in the society.

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## 4.5 CONFLICT

Conflict is a conscious action. It is a deliberate intent to oppose. We can say that conflict is universal. Not only this, conflict lacks continuity. Besides this, it is a personal activity. According to Gillin and Gillin, "Conflict is the social process in which individuals or groups seek their ends up directly challenging the antagonist by violence or threat of violence." Green defined, "Conflict is the deliberate attempt to oppose, resist and coerce the will of another or others." Conflict is a competition in its more occasional, personal and hostile forms. It is a process of seeking to obtain rewards by eliminating or weakening the competitors. It is inherent in every society or social system. Conflict is apparently noted when an individual or a group seeks to attain its own end. Conflict is the opposite of cooperation. Conflict may lead to antagonism, violence or threat to peace. Conflict is also regarded as non-associative social process.

### 4.5.1 Causes of Conflict

According to Freud and some other psychologists, the innate instinct for aggression in man is the main cause of conflicts. Generally it arises from a clash of interest within groups and societies and between groups and societies. The significant causes are:

1 **Individual difference** – It is true that, we, the human being, are not alike by nature, attributes, interests, personalities etc. These differences may lead to conflict among the human being.

1 **Cultural differences** – The culture of a group differs from the culture of the



other group. The cultural differences among the groups sometimes cause tension and lead to conflict.

- 1 **Differences of opinion regarding interest** – In fact, the interests of different people or groups occasionally clash. For example we can say that interests of the employers and employees vary in many respect which may ultimately leads to conflict among them.
- 1 **Social change** – Social changes occur off and on in each and every society. Conflict is an expression of social disequilibrium. Social change is the cultural log which leads to conflict.

#### 4.5.2 Characteristics of Conflict

The characteristics of conflicts are:

- 1 Although conflict is universal but it's nature vary from society to society. No society is characterised exclusively by conflict.
- 1 Conflict is a conscious action. To achieve the respective goals the members oppose one another.
- 1 Conflict leads to social change. It is mainly an expression of disequilibrium.
- 1 It primarily remains personal activity. Sometimes it acquires greater intensity and involves many people. At first, it is manifested at the level of a particular group but ultimately it involves the entire society.
- 1 Asymmetrical social, political and economic relations coupled with the sense of relative deprivation as the root cause of social conflict.
- 1 Sometimes conflict is the life of society and progress emerges from a struggle in which each individual, class or institution seeks to realise its own idea of good.
- 1 We the people are organised into groups to seek a common goal, the probability of conflict increases.
- 1 All conflicts are not the same.
- 1 We face conflicts on all levels as we have disagreements with family, friends and co-workers.
- 1 Conflict is an ever-present process in human relations.
- 1 Unmanaged conflict is a threat to the survival of the group and ultimately tends to make the group less effective.
- 1 Conflict can occur within groups (intra-group conflict) and among groups (inter-group conflict).

#### 4.5.3 Effects of Conflict

Conflict sometimes creates positive and sometimes creates negative impact. The effects of conflict are many and manifold. It is varied as well as unpredictable. We can say that the conflict may have the following effects:

- 1 Increases tension within or between the groups

- 1 Disrupt normal activities
- 1 Weaken group activities
- 1 Harmful to individuals
- 1 Help to restructure the group
- 1 Help to form new groups
- 1 Gives positive result
- 1 Improves decision-making process
- 1 Increase bitterness
- 1 Increase alienation
- 1 Become violent
- 1 Help to gain recognition
- 1 Increase unity and cohesion
- 1 Strengthen group boundaries
- 1 Help to form new group.

Thus, we can say that conflict has both positive and negative effects. It is true that conflict happens in any set-up and it creates impact on group members.

#### 4.5.4 Types of Conflict

Conflict may be of various types, viz,

- 1) Overt and covert: Overt conflict has some manifestation but covert conflict or latent conflict primarily remains invisible.
- 2) Personal and corporate: Personal conflict occurs within the group due to hostility, jealousy etc., on the other hand, corporate conflict occurs among the groups within a society or between two societies.
- 3) Temporary and perpetual: When conflict occurs among the individuals in the bus or in the shop or in the road are called temporary conflict, on the other hand when conflict occurs between two rival groups, then it is called perpetual conflict.

Conflict is not a continuous process. It may stretch for sometime. In each and every conflict there is intermittent period of peace and social harmony.

According to Gillin and Gillin, conflict can be divided into five types, viz.,

- 1 Personal conflict – It is the conflict between two persons within the same group.
- 1 Racial conflict – It is the result of the feeling or racial superiority or inferiority.
- 1 Class conflict – It is the conflict between two classes.
- 1 Political conflict – It is the conflict between parties of political power.
- 1 International conflict – It is the conflict between two nations.

### Self Assessment Questions

1) Explain conflict.

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2) What are the causes of conflict?

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3) Write five characteristics of conflict.

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4) Write negative effects of conflicts.

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### 4.5.5 Distinction between Conflict and Competition

The salient points are:

- 1 Conflict takes place on a conscious level, competition is unconscious.
- 1 Competition is non-violent, but conflict may create violence.
- 1 Conflict involves contact, competition does not.
- 1 Competition is a continuous process, but conflict is an intermittent process.
- 1 Conflict disregards social norms but competition does care social norms.
- 1 Conflict takes place on a conscious level but competition is unconscious.

Besides this, we can say that conflict and competition have a common root because in each case individuals and groups are generally striving towards incompatible goals. Conflict may lead to alliances with other groups, creating bonds between loosely structured groups or bringing together different individuals and groups in a community as they unite to fight a common threat. The structure

of the group and its degree of tolerance of conflict will affect the results of intra-group dissatisfaction. Actually conflict is a fundamental human and social trait. Cooperation is a condition of conflict. Internal harmony and external conflict are the opposite sides of the same shield.

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## 4.6 ACCOMMODATION

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Conflict is a continuous intermittent-societal process. Accommodation is resolution of conflicts which means adjusting oneself to the new environment. Accommodation denotes acquired changes in the behaviour of their environment. According to MacIver, “the term accommodation refers particularly to the process on which man attains a sense of harmony with his environments. Besides this, as a process, accommodation is the sequence of steps by which persons are reconciled to changed conditions of life through the formation of the changed conditions themselves. Accommodation is a term used by the sociologists to describe the adjustment of hostile individuals or groups. Accommodation is the process by which the individuals and groups make the necessary internal adjustments to social situation which have been created by competition and conflict. Accommodation is associated with the social order that is fixed and established in custom and the mores. Assimilation implies a more thorough going transformation of the personality – transformation which takes place gradually under the influence of social contacts of the most concrete and intimate sort.

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## 4.7 LET US SUM UP

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The interactions – cooperation, competition and conflict are elementary, universal and fundamental form. Generally, social contact initiates interaction. Interaction refers to an action done in response to another action, but when this interaction through repetition leads to a result, then it is called a social process. The essential elements of social process are:

- i) sequence of events,
- ii) repetition of events,
- iii) relationship between events,
- iv) continuity of events; and
- v) Special result.

Not only this, there are some classification which classify social behaviour on the basis of (a) their intrinsic nature, (b) inherent drives, instincts, interests, drives and (c) the observable behaviour upon which observers can agree. In this context we are concerned with the fundamental types, i.e., cooperation, competition, conflict, accommodation and assimilation. People come together in groups to socialise to get things done, or because they require to do so. Much of what we accomplish as individuals and as groups depends on our ability to get others to work with us on common tasks and fort mutually acceptable goals.

Group functions may be centralised or decentralised, may be simple or complex. But what we are referring to is the process known as cooperation – working

together for mutually acceptable goals. Cooperation may involve merely our participation in a set of mutually understood role behaviours. The kind of cooperation that takes place between individuals occupying positions of unequal power and status actually amounts obedience or compliance. Cooperation at a more advanced level may take place in problem-solving situations – situations that have a relatively high degree of ambiguity and a low degree of structural or predictability. Cooperation involves mutual goals, but competition is concerned with personal goals. In competition, individual try to secure a greater-than-equal share of the rewards available to members of the group.

Common-sense attitudes towards competition are based on the traditional idea that there is only a fixed quantity available for use or distribution of the “good things in life” – economic advantages, comfort, fame, happiness and the like. In as much as people are attracted in order to satisfy social need, how members feel about the groups in which they participate in an important consideration. Traditional societies are likely to be less competitive than urban, industrialised societies. Life in urbanised societies offers many opportunities, large or small, to prove oneself competitively. Today we are much concerned about involving people throughout the world in large-scale problem-solving. The problems of the world – health, education, peace and war, preservation of the ecology, allocation of scarce resources – can not be solved by individual people or individual nations. They can be solved only by cooperation and collaboration. Besides this, social contact, which inevitably initiates conflict, accommodation, or assimilation invariably, creates sympathies, prejudices, personal and moral relations, which modify, complicate and control competition.

Conflict, assimilation and accommodation are all intimately related to control. Competition is universal in the world of living things. The cumulative effects of innovations, technological revolution, environmental crisis, generation gap, new value orientation, break-up of the normative structure etc are the factors which create conflicts. Social interaction is the reciprocal influences which human being exert on each other through inter stimulation and response. Social interaction and social process are interrelated factors. Society is an expression of different social processes and there are variety forms of social processes. Among the various processes, cooperation, conflict and competition are the important one.

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## **4.8 UNIT END QUESTIONS**

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- 1) What is social interaction?
- 2) What do you mean by the term social process?
- 3) Is there any relationship between competition and conflict? – Discuss.
- 4) Write in brief about the causes and characteristics of conflict.
- 5) Elucidate briefly about cooperation.
- 6) What are the general types of conflicts?
- 7) Elucidate briefly about accommodation.

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## 4.9 GLOSSARY

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<b>Attitude</b>	: An enduring system of evaluations or feelings in favor of or against a person or group.
<b>Communication</b>	: The exchange of meaning and mutual influence.
<b>Competition</b>	: Competition is impersonal, unconscious, continuous struggle between individuals or groups for satisfaction which, because of their limited supply, all may not have. Competition is that form of social action in which we strive against each other for the possession of or use of some limited material or non-material good.
<b>Conflict</b>	: Conflict is the social process in which individuals or groups seek their ends by directly challenging the antagonist by violence or threat of violence.
<b>Cooperation</b>	: Cooperation is a form of social interaction wherein two or more persons work together to gain a common end. It is the process by which individuals or groups combine their effort, in a more or less organised way for the attainment of common objective.
<b>Group</b>	: Two or more people who interact and influence one another.
<b>Group dynamics</b>	: The way in which changes take in the behaviour of other members of the group. Groups can mobilise powerful force which may be constructive or destructive.
<b>Interaction</b>	: Interaction is a two-way process whereby each individual or group stimulates the other and in varying degrees which modifies the behaviour of the participants.
<b>Social cohesion</b>	: Degree to which group members share common beliefs, practices and values and thus act together.
<b>Social distance</b>	: Degree to which individuals are willing to interact with people from different social background.

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