CHAPTER 9

Foundations of Group Behavior

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter, students should be able to:

1. Define *group* and differentiate between different types of groups.
2. Identify the five stages of group development.
3. Show how role requirements change in different situations.
4. Demonstrate how norms and status exert influence on an individual's behavior.
5. Show how group size affects group performance.
6. Contrast the benefits and disadvantages of cohesive groups.
7. Contrast the strengths and weaknesses of group decision making.

I.   DEFINING AND CLASSIFYING GROUPS

- A group is defined as two or more individuals, interacting and interdependent, who have come together to achieve particular objectives.
- Groups can be either formal or informal.
  o *Formal groups*—those defined by the organization's structure, with designated work assignments establishing tasks.
  o *Informal groups*—alliances that are neither formally structured nor organizationally determined

SUB-CLASSIFICATIONS OF GROUPS

Formal Groups

➤ **Command Group**
- A group composed of the individuals who report directly to a given manager

➤ **Task Group**
- Those working together to complete a job or task in an organization but not limited by hierarchical boundaries

Informal Groups

➤ **Interest Group**
- Members work together to attain a specific objective with which each is concerned

➤ **Friendship Group**
- Those brought together because they share one or more common characteristics

WHY PEOPLE JOIN GROUPS

- ➤ Security
- ➤ Status
- ➤ Self-esteem
- ➤ Affiliation
- ➤ Power
- ➤ Goal Achievement

II. STAGES OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT
    A. The Five-Stage Model
- *Forming:*
  - o Characterized by a great deal of uncertainty about the group's purpose, structure, and leadership.
  - o Members are trying to determine what types of behavior are acceptable.

- o   Stage is complete when members have begun to think of themselves as part of a group.
- *Storming:*
  - o   One of intragroup conflict. Members accept the existence of the group, but there is resistance to constraints on individuality.
  - o   Conflict over who will control the group.
  - o   When complete, there will be a relatively clear hierarchy of leadership within the group.
- *Norming*:
  - o   One in which close relationships develop and the group demonstrates cohesiveness.
  - o   There is now a strong sense of group identity and camaraderie.
  - o   Stage is complete when the group structure solidifies and the group has assimilated a common set of expectations of what defines correct member behavior.
- *Performing:*
  - o   The structure at this point is fully functional and accepted.
  - o   Group energy has moved from getting to know and understand each other to performing.
  - o   For permanent work groups, performing is the last stage in their development.
- *Adjourning:*
  - o   For temporary committees, teams, task forces, and similar groups that have a limited task to perform, there is an adjourning stage.
  - o   In this stage, the group prepares for its disbandment. Attention is directed toward wrapping up activities.
  - o   Responses of group members vary in this stage. Some are upbeat, basking in the group's

accomplishments. Others may be depressed over the loss of camaraderie and friendships.

III. GROUP PROPERTIES: ROLES, NORMS, STATUS, SIZE, AND COHESIVENESS

A- **Roles:** A set of expected behavior patterns attributed to someone occupying a given position in a social unit. Different groups impose different role requirements on individuals.

➤ **Role Identity:** Certain attitudes and behaviors consistent with a role.

➤ **Role Perception**: An individual's view of how he or she is supposed to act in a given situation – received by external stimuli

➤ **Role Expectations:** How others believe a person should act in a given situation
▪ *Psychological Contract*: an unwritten agreement that sets out mutual expectations of management and employees

➤ **Role Conflict**: A situation in which an individual is confronted by divergent role expectations

صراع داخل الدور (متطلبات مختلفة للأطراف المختلفة- رئيس قسم وطلاب)، صراع بين الأدوار(مخالفات وحقوق طلابية)، صراع بين الفرد والدور (اختلاف الشخصية والاتجاهات مع متطلبات الدور).

B- *Norms:* Acceptable standards of behavior within a group that are shared by the group's members

➤ *Classes of Norms*
▪ Performance norms - level of acceptable work
▪ Appearance norms - what to wear
▪ Social arrangement norms - friendships and the like
▪ Allocation of resources norms - distribution and assignments of jobs and material

Norms and Behavior:

➢ **Conformity:** Gaining acceptance by adjusting one's behavior to align with the norms of the group**.**

➢ **Reference Groups:** Important groups to which individuals belong or hope to belong and with whose norms individuals are likely to conform**.**

C- **Status:** A socially defined position or rank given to groups or group members by others – it differentiates group members.

➢ **Status Characteristics Theory**: Status derived from one of three sources:
  - Power a person has over others
  - Ability to contribute to group goals
  - Personal characteristics

Status Effects:
➢ **On Norms and Conformity**
  – High-status members are less restrained by norms and pressure to conform
  – Some level of deviance is allowed to high-status members so long as it doesn't affect group goal achievement
➢ **On Group Interaction**
  – High-status members are more assertive
  – Large status differences limit diversity of ideas and creativity

➢ **On Equity**
  – If status is perceived to be inequitable, it will result in various forms of corrective behavior.

D-**Size:** The size of a group affects the group's overall behavior, but the effect depends on the dependent variables: Smaller groups are faster at completing tasks than are larger ones.

➢ **Best use of a group:**

Attribute	Small	Large
Speed	X	
Individual Performance	X	
Problem Solving		X
Diverse Input		X
Fact-finding Goals		X
Overall Performance	X	

Issues with Group Size:

➢ **Social Loafing**
- The tendency for individuals to expend less effort when working collectively than when working individually

➢ **Managerial Implications**
- ▪ Build in individual accountability
- ▪ Prevent social loafing by:
    - ❖ Setting group goals
    - ❖ Increase intergroup competition
    - ❖ Use peer evaluation

❖ Distribute group rewards based on individual effort

E- **Cohesiveness**: Degree to which group members are attracted to each other and are motivated to stay in the group.

➢ **Managerial Implication**
   – To increase cohesiveness:
     • Make the group smaller.
     • Encourage agreement with group goals.
     • Increase time members spend together.
     • Increase group status and admission difficulty.
     • Stimulate competition with other groups.
     • Give rewards to the group, not individuals.
     • Physically isolate the group.

Group Decision Making vs. Individual Choice

➢ **Group Strengths:**
   – Generate more complete information and knowledge
   – Offer increased diversity of views and greater creativity
   – Increased acceptance of decisions
   – Generally more accurate (but not as accurate as the most accurate group member)

➢ **Group Weaknesses:**
   – Time-consuming activity
   – Conformity pressures in the group
   – Discussions can be dominated by a few members
   – A situation of ambiguous responsibility

Shorts Questions

Chapter 9:

1. **Differentiate between formal and informal groups?**

Formal Groups

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2. **Differentiate between role identity, role perception, role expectations and Role Conflict?**

➤ **Role Identity:** Certain attitudes and behaviors consistent with a role.
➤ **Role Perception**: An individual's view of how he or she is supposed to act in a given situation – received by external stimuli
➤ **Role Expectations:** How others believe a person should act in a given situation
➤ **Role Conflict**: A situation in which an individual is confronted by divergent role expectations

3. **Define norms and identify its main kinds?**

➤ Performance norms - level of acceptable work
➤ Appearance norms - what to wear
➤ Social arrangement norms - friendships and the like
➤ Allocation of resources norms - distribution and assignments of jobs and material.

4. How can we prevent social loafing?

➢ Setting group goals
➢ Increase intergroup competition
➢ Use peer evaluation
➢ Distribute group rewards based on individual effort

5. How can we increase group cohesiveness?

➢ Make the group smaller.
➢ Encourage agreement with group goals.
➢ Increase time members spend together.
➢ Increase group status and admission difficulty.
➢ Stimulate competition with other groups.
➢ Give rewards to the group, not individuals.
➢ Physically isolate the group.

6. What are the main strengths and weaknesses of group decisions?

Strengths:

➢ Generate more complete information and knowledge
➢ Offer increased diversity of views and greater creativity
➢ Increased acceptance of decisions

Weaknesses:

➢ Time-consuming activity
➢ Conformity pressures in the group
➢ Discussions can be dominated by a few members