M.S.W.-8
Social Group Work : Working with Groups

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Content

SOCIAL GROUP WORK : WORKING WITH GROUPS

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INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL WORK

GROUP WORK DYNAMICS

QUESTION PAPER

June – 2023

(Solved)

SOCIAL GROUP WORK: WORKING WITH GROUPS

M.S.W.-8

Time: 3 Hours]   **[Maximum Marks: 100**

Note: *Answer all the* **five** *questions. All questions carry* **equal** *marks.*

Q. 1. Trace the development of group work in pre-independent India.

Ans. See Ref.: Chapter-3, Page No. 20, 'Development of Group Work in Pre-Independent India'.

Or

Explain the principles of social group work with examples.

Ans. See Ref.: Chapter-8, Page No. 65, 'Principles of Social Groupwork'.

Q. 2. Mention the skills specified by Tracker for social group work.

Ans. See Ref.: Chapter-10, Page No. 82, 'Skills and Techniques of Groupwork'.

Or

Discuss group work with disaster victims.

Ans. See Ref.: Chapter-14, Page No. 119, 'Groupwork with Disaster Victims'.

Q. 3. Answer the following questions:

(a) **Describe the various types of groups.**

Ans. See Ref.: Chapter-1, Page No. 3, 'Types of Groups'.

(b) **Enlist the guidelines for group formation**

Ans. See Ref.: Chapter-7, Page No. 57, 'Practice Principles: Guidelines for Group Formation'.

(c) **Mention the factors influencing programme planning.**

Ans. See Ref.: Chapter-12, Page No. 99, 'Factors Influencing Programme Planning'.

(d) **Discuss various steps for social action groups.**

Ans. See Ref.: Chapter-14, Page No. 118, 'Steps for Social Action Group'.

Q. 4. Answer the following questions:

(a) **Enlist the characteristics of groups.**

Ans. See Ref.: Chapter-1, Page No. 2, 'Characteristics'.

(b) **What criteria does a worker follow in achieving balanced membership in a group?**

Ans. See Ref.: Chapter-7, Page No. 61, Q. No. 10.

(c) **Mention the principles of recording in social group work.**

Ans. See Ref.: Chapter-12, Page No. 101, 'Principles of Recording in Social Group Work'.

(d) **What are the goals of group work in psychiatric settings given by 'Rostow'?**

Ans. See Ref.: Chapter-15, Page No. 130, Q. No. 2.

(e) **Highlight the benefits of camping.**

Ans. See Ref.: Chapter-16, Page No. 135, 'Camping and Indian Youth Organization'.

(f) **Mention the skills enhanced by a life skills education programming.**

Ans. See Ref.: Chapter-11, Page No. 94, Q. No. 3.

Q. 5. Write short notes on the following:

(a) **Group work for youth welfare**

Ans. See Ref.: Chapter-3, Page No. 22, 'Group Work for Youth Welfare'.

(b) **Disadvantages of group work**

Ans. See Ref.: Chapter-4, Page No. 29, 'Disadvantages of Group Work'.

(c) **Values of social group work**

Ans. See Ref.: Chapter-4, Page No. 27, 'Values'.

(d) **Group formation**

Ans. See Ref.: Chapter-7, Page No. 58, Q. No. 2.

(e) **Components of emotional intelligence**

Ans. See Ref.: Chapter-9, Page No. 75, 'The Five Components of Emotional Intelligence'.

(f) **Qualities of a successful leader**

Ans. See Ref.: Chapter-9, Page No. 76, 'Qualities of Successful Leader'.

(g) **Telescopic groups**

Ans. The practice of group work in school will be influenced by the dynamics of the larger social systems-the school and the society. The various use groups will be put to and its goals will be determined by the ideology and the approach of the school management. Telescopic groups are groups which meet five or six times in a short period of time. A current problem is taken up as a major issue. For example absenteeism, and group formed by members who are found to be excessively absent. The members are made aware of the reason for being part of the group. A plan is made for a group which includes activities which are gratifying and ego supportive. The students learn in groups and are therefore comfortable to be in groups. A variety of activities can be done with the group.

(h) **Criticism of self-help groups**

Ans. See Ref.: Chapter-13, Page No. 112, 'Criticism of SHGs'.

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SOCIAL GROUP WORK : WORKING WITH GROUPS

Introduction to Social Work

Social Groups: Characteristics and Significance

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INTRODUCTION

All human beings interact with each other in one form or another. We are born and brought up in a group called family, then we learn in groups i.e., classrooms and then we work in groups i.e., office. Also we interact with our friends and other related people. Thus, we learn, work and play in groups. We all know that human beings are social animal which contains group to interact and learn from each other. All categories of people, businesses, the Government and the military and educators all function in a group to enhance their productivity. There are many mental illnesses which are being treated through therapeutic groups and work is being done continuously in these areas to make the procedure more effective.

In order to understand the group work practice, let us become familiar with the variety of groups in practice settings. Also let us learn to distinguish between them. In this chapter, the focus is to define and identify the key characteristics of the groups and assimilate factors the influences the affiliation and the benefits of associating with the groups and also enumerate the various types of groups relevant to social group work practice. We will also learn about the impact of groups on personality development.

CHAPTER AT A GLANCE

DEFINITION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF GROUPS

According to the definition in the Oxford dictionary, a group can be defined as "A number of persons or things regarded as forming a unit, on account of mutual or common relation, or classified together on account of a common degree of similarity". In the social sciences a **social** group has been defined as

two or more people who interact with one another, share similar characteristics, and collectively have a sense of unity. Thus society can be perceived as a large group at a macro level and the social group i.e. family, club or team can be viewed as a small group at the micro level. Thus, a group can be defined as a collection of individuals who have regular contact and frequent interaction, mutual influence, common feeling of camaraderie, and who work together to achieve a common set of goals.

Paul Hare said that the social interaction is the defining characteristics of a group and a true group has some degree of social cohesion and is much more than a simple collection or aggregate of individuals. Some of the characteristics shared by the people in a group include interests, values, ethnic or social background and kinship ties, etc. On the other hand, an aggregate is a collection of individuals who are present at the same time and same place but does not necessarily form a unit or have a common degree of similarity. For example, individuals standing at the corner of the street constitute an aggregate but not groups.

Muzafer Sherif (1916-1982) defined group as a "Social unit consisting of a number of individuals interacting with each other based upon certain elements:

- Common goals and motives
- Accepted roles
- Social rank and status
- Accepted norms and values
- If norms are violated or respected, then development of accepted sanctions i.e. praise and punishment.

On the basis of the above definition, one may consider a group with the following criteria:

- More than one person
- Interdependence
- Acceptance of roles and status
- Similar goals and motives
- Shared norms and values

Characteristics

There are a number of definitions given by the social scientists have emphasized on the various aspects of the groups in various definitions. On the basis of those definitions, one may arrive at the following characteristics of groups:

- **Interpersonal Interaction:** A collection of individuals interacting with each other form a group. If there is no interaction, then it is not a group according to Bonner, Stogdill and Homans.

- **Perceptions of Membership:** A social unit consisting of two or more persons who perceive themselves as belonging to a group may be called as a group and its members define themselves and are defined by other who belong to that group. Thus, the persons are not a group unless they perceive themselves to be part of a group as per theory of Bales and Smith.

- **Interdependency:** A group may also be defined as a collection of individuals who are interdependent. Usually, individuals are not a group unless an event that affects one of them affects them all. According to Cartright and Zander, Fiedler and Lewin, it is questionable that group could exist without its members being interdependent.

- **Goals:** A goal is a desired result that a person or a system envisions, plans and commits to achieve and a group may be defined as a collection of individuals who join together to achieve a goal. Thus, an individual is not a group unless they try to achieve a mutual goal which according to Deutsch and Freeman is a primary characteristic.

- **Motivation:** A group can be defined as a collection of individuals who try to satisfy their personal needs through their joint association. According to Bass and Cattell, an individual is not a group unless they are motivated by some personal reason to be part of a group.

- **Structured Relationships:** There are defined and structures set of roles and norms in a group consisting of individuals who interact and share common interest and participate in a system of interlocking roles. Thus, according to McDavid and Harari and Shel and Sherif, individuals are not a group unless there are interactions and structured by a set of role definitions and norms.

- **Mutual Influence:** A group is collection of individual that influence each other. Thus, an individual is not a group unless they affected and get affected by each other, according to Shaw.

We cannot say that which of the above mentioned characteristic is important and which is not. But on the basis of these characteristics we may define a group for the purpose of group work as a group of two or more individuals who interact with each other and each is aware of his or her membership in the group and their positive interdependence and they strive to achieve a mutual goal.

FACTORS INFLUENCING GROUP FORMATION

There are four major factors that influence the decision of the formation of group. These are:

- Attraction to members of the group
- The activities, goals or task of the group
- Belongingness of the people in the group
- The meeting needs and the goals outside the group.

The proximity with the individual determines the formation of the group. The interaction or proximity with the individual determines our neighbourhood, classmate and roommates and friends. There are many other factors that are considered when actually establishing a relationship. One such important factor is the similarity between the individuals which helps in interpersonal attraction and in group formation. Some of these are as follows:

- The prestige of the group i.e. people of higher positions and higher authority and aristocracy and eliteness.
- The cooperativeness in the relationship and joint rewards also helps in group formation.
- The positive interaction among the members and the meeting of the personal and social needs.
- The size of the group is another important factor as the smaller group offers higher possibility for interaction and for sharing similarities and for meeting the needs of the individual.

The task of a group, as experienced in its activities and goals is often an important reason for joining. The application of social exchange theory to group formation predicts that we join and remain in groups when the rewards for doing so outweigh the costs, thus yielding profits.

Another factor is our desire to affiliate with the people in the group by interacting with them. This is because a group is a powerful forum for meeting the basic social needs thus affecting our behaviour. Also outside the group, one important factor that influences the group formation is group membership which helps in achieving an external goal.

PLAUSIBLE EXPLANATIONS ABOUT GROUP FORMATION

Some hypothesis on the basis of factors that influences the group formation is as follows:

- An individual joins a group to satisfy the individual needs.
- The needs can be satisfied by proximity, contact and frequent interaction.
- Some similarities in individuals like attitude, personality, economic, ethnicity, shared goals, etc.
- Group is joined if the group activities are attractive or rewarding.

TYPES OF GROUPS

Every individual is a member of some type of group like family, friendship group, workers in an organization or fan club or religious group members. The various types of groups by some of the sociologists are as follows:

Voluntary *vs*. Involuntary Groups

The groups that we join on our own and with our effort is a voluntary group but if we are forced to join or are automatically incorporated as a member of a group without our choice, then it is an involuntary group.

Open *vs*. Closed groups

The group that is characterized by changing membership is an open group. The members leave and the new members are admitted to the group. Also there are some groups that maintain exclusiveness by restricting the membership and make it difficult to join. There are few that qualify and join the group. The closed groups have restricted membership and some time limitation. The members are expected to remain in the group until it ends and also new members are not added in the group.

The open group allows the incorporation of new members who interact with each other but the disadvantage is the frequent change of members that results in lack of cohesion. Hence, only one new members should be introduced at once when opening occurs.

Vertical Vs. Horizontal Groups

There are few groups whose membership consists of individuals from the various walks of life, such groups are termed as vertical groups. And in contrast the horizontal group mainly consists predominantly of members from one social class.

Primary *vs*. Secondary Groups

The primary group is the most simple and universal form of association. It is nucleus of all social organisation. It is a small group in which a small number of persons come into direct contact with one another. They meet "face to face" for mutual help, companionships and discussion of common questions. They live in the presence and thought of one another. The primary group is a small group in which the members live together.

The Secondary groups are of special significance in modern industrial society. They have become almost inevitable today. Their appearance is mainly due to the growing cultural complexity. Secondary groups may be defined as those associations which are characterized by impersonal or secondary relations and specialization of functions. According to Fairs, "Secondary groups are characterised by contractual relationships and communication on indirect media?"

Natural *vs*. Formed Groups

As the name indicates, in natural group the members come together in a spontaneous manner and on the basis of naturally occurring events and interpersonal interaction or the mutually perceived needs of the members eg, family, peer groups and street gangs fall in this category whereas formed group is a group that is constituted by any influence or intervention external to the group. These groups are formed for a particular purpose e.g., encounter groups, committees and teams.

Formal *vs*. Informal Groups

Formal groups require someone to determine a task that needs to be accomplished and require some kind of organizational system which is made up of various job roles for which the recruitment is done. The main task is the roles occupied by an individual which may be changed. In informal groups, the roles occupied are informal depending upon the preference of the individual. The collection of the roles make the system possible and undertake the task together like organizing the trip or a night out or a party.

Treatment *vs*. Task Groups

The treatment group signifies that the purpose of the group formation is to meet the socio-emotional needs of the group members. The aim of the group is to meet the members for support, education, therapy, growth and socialization. These groups include the growth groups and the therapy groups and socialization group. The task group, on the other hand come in existence with the purpose of accomplishing a goal that is neither intrinsically but are not linked to the needs of the group members. One example in social work practice setting is medical team and treatment conferences convened to monitor the treatment and the Staff development Programmes. Some of the major differences between the two groups include the following:

- In treatment group the members are bonded to their common needs and in a task group the members work towards accomplishing a common task.
- In treatment groups the roles develop through interaction whereas in task the roles are defined on the basis of competencies.
- In treatment groups the communication is open whereas in task group the communication is focused around a particular task.
- In treatment group the procedure is flexible whereas in task group it is formal.
- In treatment group, the self-disclosure is high but it does not happen at all in task group.
- In treatment group, the proceedings are confidential and kept within the context of the treatment group whereas in task group it is open to public scrutiny.
- In treatment group the success is evaluated on the basis of the group meeting the members' treatment goals whereas in task group it is based on the achievement of the task or the mandate.

Some other types of groups include the following:

- **Reference Group:** In these groups the individual relate him/herself and adopts the goals and tries to inculcate in his/her own identity.
- **Peer Group:** This group contains individuals of approximately same age, social status and interests. In terms of power they are equal when interacting with peers.

- **Clique:** This group shares common interest and is informal, tight-knit group.
- **Club:** In this group, one has to apply to become its member and are mainly dedicated to a particular activity like sports club.
- **Household:** Contains the individuals living in the same house.
- **Community:** This group contains people with a commonality who are in proximity with one another. There is an organization and leaders.
- **Franchise:** The group is an organization that runs several instances of business in many locations.
- **Gang:** A gang is an urban group that often hand around with each other like in clubs but it is less formal in nature.
- **Mob:** A group of people that takes the law in their hand is a mob who gathers temporarily for a particular reason.
- **Posse:** It is an American term for a group of citizens that had banded together to enforce the law. It can also refer to a street group.
- **Squad:** It is a small group of around 3-8 people that work as a team to accomplish a particular goal.
- **Team:** This group is similar to squad but contains more members and work in the same way as squad.
- **Learning (Groups):** Under this category are three types of groups that can promote collaborative learning(according to Mrs David and Roger Johnson):
- **Informal Learning Groups:** These groups can be formed quickly and are ad hoc, transient and short-term groups.
- **Formal Learning Groups:** These groups are used to work on a larger collaborative project and are more structured and requires more planning. The group includes multiple opportunities for reflection on the group's progress.
- **Base Groups (Study Group):** These groups are self selected groups of students who work together independently of specified class time or assignments.

Logistics Regarding Groups

Group Composition

The composition of the group is dependent upon its goal. A group is mainly dependent upon the similar characteristics shared by the members of the group.