CHAPTER IV
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GROUP DYNAMICS
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GROUP DYNAMICS

Introduction:

In the previous chapter we have attempted to give an overview of family planning programme and examine the urgency to attain better results in family planning in order to reach its objective in a given time. In the present chapter we shall discuss some aspects of group dynamics. An attempt has been made to cover important component-contents of group dynamics such as communication, decision making, evaluation, its principles, functions and practical utility in health education programmes along with the presentation of theoretical framework.

Number of approaches can be devised to help people understand the process and principles underlying 'Change' and its need and importance. Each approach has its own merits and limitations and its utility will depend on social, educational, economic, cultural and such other factors. Group dynamics is only one of such approaches which focuses on the social aspects of group life and emotional quality of inter-personal relationships among group members. Likewise there can be an individual approach or a mass approach with shifted emphasis on
individual behaviour and inter-personal relationships or behaviour in a mass or community and personal-social relationships. We aim to study group dynamics in this chapter specifically in the background of Indian atmosphere and social milieu in the field of health education in general and family planning education in particular.

Informal group approach in traditional India:

In India, since time immemorial, informal group approach could be seen in various situations. The social system in India provided for existence of such group life in various segments of society. The women folk in rural India used to fetch water from the common village-well or wash the clothes at the village-tank which provides them an ample opportunities to talk freely in an informal group situations. The children in rural area used to meet informally in the out-skirt of village in a moon-lit night, talk in an informal way and play traditional games. The villagers used to meet in a compound of a village temple and important decisions after discussions were taken in such an informal group-meeting, affecting their day to day life. Even in the occasion of conflicts between husband and wife or between two brothers
the decisions of divorce or division of property, were taken by PANCH - representative of people of the village or a group of caste-fellows. Group life, thus had formed a significant component of social life in India. Present three tier Panchayati Raj System is based on principle of democratic decentralization wherein group of the representatives of the people meet together discuss, decide and execute developmental policies. Of course, the group work approach, as principally explained today was not practiced in those days. Not only the method and procedure, but sometimes the objectives themselves were unplanned. But the informal system was highly workable and suitable to the temperament of the people in those days. The underlying logic of such practice was much powerful and effective and even to-day the system has not perished totally. This is because of the effectiveness of system itself. A group is a cohesive social unit and has always an impact on individual behaviour. If the group becomes a mob, it can have an effect of permissiveness if it becomes only 'a group' it has an effect of check and control on individual behaviour. A group can bring out the inner-most characteristics of an individual.
A group can supplement what an individual is lacking and thus help him to accomplish his desired goals. Group norms help a person to approach others and form a frame of reference and define the objectives. How this behaviour pattern works in actual practice in a group setting is shown by Edwin and Raymond (1967:77) "The behaviour of a man in a wide variety of social contexts (i) to be accounted for in terms of his organised perspective. Once one has incorporated a particular outlook from his group, it becomes his orientation towards the world and he brings this frame of reference to bear on all new situation." In other words, man understands world from the viewpoint of his norms brought from his group or social environment and his reaction to any new situation will depend upon this perspective.

The need for human beings to depend on group and consequently to become a part in process of group dynamics springs from some inherent characteristics. Man is a talking animal and his need to talk is basic. He wants to express and manifest his feelings to his fellow beings. He shares his ideas with his relatives, friends and colleagues.

In India, particularly, besides this basic need to talk, people in general have quite a good time to
spare for talking. Agriculture does not provide a full time occupation and therefore, particularly in rural India we find a number of people sitting together in informal group situation and talking on many things. The topic of these talks may not be very important and useful, but it provides the opportunities for a natural and normal outlet of their feelings and thereby satisfy the social needs. In this sense of the terms, the process of such group talks is a process of socialisation. It provides an assurance that they 'belong' to the category of people who can talk, feel and live in a like-manner. This sense of belongingness is the crux of social and group life. The group is informal but important for each member; it is unplanned but it is homogenous. Not only in rural India, but also in urban India, we find people mostly youths sitting together on the entrance of Poles or standing on the open ground of colonies and spending hours together talking, discussing, making comments and passing remarks. There is no specific topic, no fixed subject and no any conclusion to be drawn. However, they satisfy their basic need to talk, to belong to a group.
This may not be a common feature everywhere. It may be in existence in different forms or structures. However, any kind of group gathering is prevalent in India as contrast to absence of such informal meetings in Western Countries where people have more or less busy life. Their way of expressing self to other may take different form as suitable to their temperament and culture. But in India, traditionally such informal groups are in existence without the formal or exact process of group dynamics. The informal groups and traditional group system can provide a better opportunity to approach people in their own natural atmosphere. In other words, there is enough scope for utilising traditional group system through introduction of deliberate and planned efforts and applying group dynamics as an additional factor for approaching people to induce desired change. No special efforts are required to collect people together. The groups are there already in existence here and there. How best this system could be better organised and taken into use depends upon the nature of programme.

Unity in diversity:

Despite diversity in cultural aspects throughout various provinces of India, there is an integrated
link of cultural unity among people of India. Some characteristics are common to Indian people in various provinces amongst different languages, different dresses, different ways of living. The peculiar 'group life' seems to be one such common factor. It has always respected the well-known cultural web of unity in diversity. This factor can be neglected only at the risk of failure in approach. Indian people are seems to be habituated to think in a group, to live in a group, to behave in a group, to move in a group and manifest in a group. In the dances of Adivasis, fairs and festivals of shepherds, Annual Upnayan Sanskar of Brahmins: This common factor is manifested in vivid way. In Gramsabhas in villages of civic bodies' meetings in cities: this factor is obviously seen. The group life seems to be an integrated aspect of human living in India. Group seems to have assumed prime importance every where. Perhaps, without codifying the procedure or without working our general principles of dealing with groups, we, in India, have developed to some extent the indigenous ways and means of inter-acting through group probably because the natural atmosphere of group life might have become an ingredient of living.
Every society lives a group life. The only distinction about the Indian society is this that it is more informal. Group life has a special bearing on individual behaviour. An individual seeking sanction of group approval perhaps behaves in a matured way. Even the worst decoit behaves in a responsible way in his own group. This internal discipline is a result of expectation of group behaviour. Probably, it is this human need which makes group inter-actions possible. According to Betty Mathews (1973:222): "Essentially, then as each person experiences, shares experiences with others and enlarges his own life space, he restructures or changes his way of thinking, feeling or acting." Thus, group has its own significance by itself. The action research studies have shown that the group leader's behaviour has an influence on the inter-actions within the group and on personality growth of its members.

What is group?

Before explaining about group dynamics, it is essential to see the sociological definition of a group. A group is not merely a collection of individuals. A collection of people can become a group only when they fulfill basic conditions. According
to Smith, "A social group is a unit consisting of plural number of separate organisations who have a collective perception of their unity and who have the ability or tendency to act and/or are acting in a unitary manner towards the environment." Thus, the sociological concept of a group refers to a number of people who interact with one another in accord with established patterns having established characteristics of social relations.

A group is made of individuals, but it is not only a sum total of individual members. Besides having a collective perception and tendency to act in a particular manner, a group has its own individuality peculiarity, characteristics and a quality. Each group is a separate entity.

A group is a collection of few individuals who share something in common. The group is defined as: "the face to face interaction of two or more persons in such a way that members are able to recall the characteristics of the other members accurately." (Burgoon, Heston, McCroskey, 1974:2). According to Marvin E. Shaw (1971) a group is defined as "two or more persons who are interacting with one-another in such a manner that each person influences and is
influenced by each other person."

Thus, in a group there is proximity among members. Moreover, there is interaction between the members of the group. A group possesses an identity of its own.

Besides, a group is a social entity. It is a socio-oriented structure possessing some basic properties which give it a 'groupness'. So let us see what are the properties of a group.

Properties of a group:

The group, as understood in sociological concept tends to have different types and patterns, but certain basic properties of the group can be identified.

(i) Each group has its own background. The background explains the purpose of a group and its basic framework for which it stands.

(ii) Mutual understanding among its member and a network of communications systems, formal or informal is another property of a group. The values, ideas and feelings are to be communicated. In fact, this is a process of
interaction that makes group a lively body.
The communication may be verbal or non-verbal.
It may also incorporate a specialised pattern of communication. In Indian culture, the caste panchayats have indicated vivid pattern of communication system.

(iii) The emotional sense of belonging and cohesiveness among group members is another property of a group. This property gives group a team spirit and indicates its morale. Lack of it indicates conflict in a group. According to Cart Write and Lipptt (1961), symptoms of low cohesion include 'sub rosa' conversion between pairs of members outside the main flow of group's discussion, the emergence of cliques, factious and such sub-groupings as the 'old-timers' versus the 'new comers' the 'conservatives' versus 'liberals' and so on."

(iv) The sociometric pattern is another important property of a group. In a group, the members tend to begin to identify certain individuals that they like more, and others that they like less. This subtle relationship of likes and dislikes has an important influence on group's activities. In fact, this is a very vital factor
for those who deal with group dynamics. One must realize and note that "people tend to agree with people they like and to disagree with people they dislike, even though both express the same ideas" (Cart Wright and Dorwin, 1968).

These properties of a group are important to remember for a proper understanding of group approach and its application.

The properties of the group determine the group behaviour. The process of interaction of group behaviour is termed as group dynamics. So, now let us first know the meaning of group dynamics and then we shall examine the process of interaction.

**What is group dynamics?**

The quality of group determines group behaviour, but some general principles of group behaviour can be summarised as under (Cart Wright Dorwin and Zander Advin, 1968).

A group tends to be attractive to an individual and to command his loyalty to the extent that:
(a) It satisfies his needs and helps him achieve goals that are compelling to him.
(b) It provides him with a feeling of acceptance and security.
(c) It's membership is congenial to him.
(d) It is highly valued by outsiders (Malcolm and Linde Knowles, 1961).

It is evident that the behaviour of the group is determined by the needs of the individuals and it can effectively function if it can provide security to its individual members. The needs of each individual being different at different times, the group behaviour is dynamic, changing and moving. It is always interacting to various forces of interplay, and it has a great impact on individual thinking. Cart Writeõ and Lipttt (1961) write:

"Groups exist, they are inevitable and ubiquitous, they mobilise powerful forces having profound effects upon individuals; these effects may be good or bad; and through a knowledge of group dynamics there lies the possibility of maximising their good value."
The interactions of various factors are responsible for the dynamic character of group. This dynamic characteristic of a group makes the group lively. The nature of group life is different from individual life. The knowledge about the nature of group life is required to be acquired if the interactions of various forces are to be studied and interpreted. The field of inquiry for such knowledge can be termed as 'Group Dynamics'. In this sense, it becomes a branch of knowledge concerned with human behaviour and social relationship with distinguished characteristics of interpersonal and intergroup relationships.

Misconceptions about group dynamics:

Group dynamics is sometimes misunderstood or confused with a social action programme. Group dynamics, in fact, can be considered as an approach a way of dealing with people, while social action programme can be undertaken with the help of group dynamics, both the terms are not synonymous. Sometimes, it is also argued that in group dynamics, 'Group' is given more attention that the 'individual'. This argument is misleading. In group dynamics, the focus of attention is the individual in a group and not the group at the cost of an individual. Thus, in group dynamics
an individual is not neglected, but is always kept in the limelight so that the group can become a conducive factor or a catalytic agent and whose existence and presence can be helpful in dealing with individuals in group. In other words, group dynamics is not an approach to deal with a 'group', but dealing with 'individuals in a group.'

Group dynamics as an approach is widely used in the field of industry as well as health in developing countries. Recently, it has also become a subject of interest for the researchers and implementors working in health field, especially for bringing about a change in health behaviour. As discussed, scientific understanding of group dynamics can have in bringing out the desired change in the behaviour of the people in respect of family planning. Therefore, some it will be appropriate to know/application of group dynamics theory for bringing about desired changes amongst people.

Important characteristics of group dynamics:

The members in group have mutual attraction and need to meet one another. This inter-personal
need of group members has an incentive value for membership. Though this incentive they (group members) come in closer relationships and this innate relationship makes them to interact to various situations.

The process of interaction is cumulative and in turn it affects the personal evaluation of one another and evaluation of role played by individual in relation to the group. The evaluation and the attitudes formed make them interact cumulatively. Moreover, with increase in the frequency of meeting one another, the chances to develop sense of belongingness to a group also increase. This point has been best described in the following words:

"If the frequency of interaction between two or more persons increases the degree of their liking for one another will increase and vice versa." (Cartwright and Zander, 1968:99).

It is a well known proverb that 'Birds of the same feather flock together.' In a group also there is some sort of like mindedness among its members. This does not mean that members have identical thinking. There may be differences, which are
very common, but despite the differences there shall be a common link keeping them together. This aspect of group is very important in group dynamics. This characteristic of a group makes it possible to discuss a common topic in a group. However, the group of likeminded people does not necessarily, think alike. Their interactions are likely to be different though they have a common interest. The understanding of this factor is useful in group dynamics as it makes it possible to note even the minutes difference of manifestation or expression to a given situation. The process going on in a group has been explained as follows:

"Individual ideas are altered in the process of 'psycho-social synthesis' that goes on in groups and thus a group product emerges that cannot be explained in terms of individual mental processes" (Malcolm and Knowles, 1968:17).

The third important characteristics of a group is the interdependence of its members. The goal for each member may be common and each one is benefit from the contribution of other members. This benefit from other members is an incentive for other members
to co-operate in a group activity or programme. This co-operation brings cohesiveness in a group. The utility of such interdependence is aptly pointed out by well known Social Psychologists "Group attractiveness is better when members are co-operatively interdependent than when they are in competition" (Cartwright and Zander, 1968:100).

An approach based on group dynamics takes into account these aspects and accordingly a programme is planned to achieve better results.

The results can be achieved effectively from the process of group dynamics, when there is a thorough understanding of the principles of group dynamics. It would be interesting to focus on some of the important principles of group dynamics.

Principles of group dynamics:

Cartwright in summing up research on techniques of achieving change in people, has developed eight principles that provide a good summary of the goals to be considered in working with groups. The principles are:
1. "If the group is to be used effectively, as a medium of change, those people who are to be changed and those who are to exert influence for change must have strong sense of belonging to the same group.

2. The more attractive the group is to its members the greater is the influence that the group can exert on its members.

3. In attempts to change attitude, values or behaviour, the more relevant they are to the basis of attraction to the group, the greater will be the influence that the group can exert upon them.

4. The greater the prestige of the group member in the eyes of the other members, the greater the influence he can exert.

5. Efforts to change individuals or sub-parts of a group which, if successful, would have the result of making them deviate from the norms of the group will encounter strong resistance.

6. Strong pressure for changes in the group can be established by creating a shared perception by members of the need for change; thus, making the source of pressure for change lies
7. Information relating to the need for change, plans for change and consequences of change must be shared by all relevant people in the group.

8. Changes in one part of a group produce strain in other related parts by eliminating the change or by bringing about readjustments in the related parts. (1961:160)

Importance of these principles is immense as the very group approach is based upon them and success or failure of it will much depend upon a proper understanding and intelligent use of the same in the field.

These principles of group dynamics, highlight the nature, role and function of group dynamics in the process of change. Therefore, the principles are not only useful for conceptual understanding but also help in carrying out group work more effectively as well as purposively.

The abstract principles are useful only if their effectiveness is examined analytically on the basis of field studies. Efforts have been made to measure the effectiveness in various fields. Some such studies have been made in the field of industry.
But these are not being covered as they are not very relevant for the purpose of our present study.

The experiences have shown that the success of a group approach complimented with the scientific knowledge of group dynamics also depends upon the physical environment. In fact, it can be considered as a prerequisite for the success of group approach.

**Importance of physical environment:**

In group dynamics, the physical environment is also important. This provides the situation for conducive atmosphere. The physical environment has a great impact on environment process. The lay out of a building, the sitting arrangement in a room, the physical facilities etc. determine the participation or otherwise of a group. An informal physical setting helps participants to feel free and comfortable. If the sitting arrangement is around a round table, all the members of the group feel that they are equal and better participation in such a setting can be ensured. It also minimises the status confusion because no one in the group is on a front chair or a back chair. The very setting provides a psychological feeling that there is no artificial distinction resulting into suppression of feelings and ideas. It, therefore, provides a conducive atmosphere
for free expression. The participation can be increased by providing such physical facilities in terms of total environment.

If the total physical environment is not conducive, the participation is likely to be affected adversely. For example, if a meeting near the Railway Station is arranged in an open ground, even if other physical facilities are provided, the members will not feel comfortable to participate with people coming in and going out and with so much of noise all around. Thus, the total physical environment is very important for active participation of maximum number of members of a group and for effective communication process.

**Importance of communication in group dynamics:**

Communication is a process for conveying a thought or an idea or a feeling to or among one another through any medium of information. It can be verbal or non-verbal. The communication effort can be evaluated in terms of quantitative output as how many persons attended a meeting or visited an exhibition or have been distributed the publicity literature etc., However, the better way of evaluating the communication effort is how best the information is conveyed to persons who needed it, is understood in its proper
perspective and has been useful in achieving the envisaged goal. Darwin and Alwin observe: "It is necessary to evaluate the impact of communication in terms of the nature and the extent of change initiated by such communication inputs." If this is the criteria of effectiveness of communication, it can easily be concluded that communication is more effective when it is transmitted through the use of group dynamics. Communication to an individual is rather diffused and undivided initiative is rarely forthcoming for a social change. On the other hand, mass communication may be useful for conveying information to masses but its effectiveness is often poor. A noted research scholar, describing the limitation of mass communication, observed: "While mass communication increases awareness it may also generate apprehensions and misconceptions." If a proper use of group dynamism is made, these shortcomings can be averted. Group is a cohesive unit. It is small enough to be within the range of appeal and large enough to be within the range of approach. Thus, all the disadvantages of individual and mass approach can be averted. Group members have an emotional tie up with one another and consequently any appeal made to a group is echoed and reechoed in terms of mutual exchange of thoughts and feelings. Group,
thus, is an effective medium for achieving immediate results. Experts on Group Dynamics pointed out this process in these words: "An opinion, a belief, an attitude is 'Correct', 'Valid' and 'proper' to the extent that it is anchored in a group of people with similar beliefs, opinion and attitudes...... It is clearly not necessary for the validity of some one's opinion that every one in the world think the way he does. It is only necessary that the members of that group to which he refers this opinion or attitude think the way he does."

This is more clearly explained in a WHO study group Report (1971) in these words: "Traditionally, various community groups have served as a means of disseminating information, exchanging views and challenging attitudes and beliefs."

Credibility of communication:

The very purpose of communication in any form, at least a related to the Health Education Programme, is to inform the target group of new ideas and bare relevant facts. This can be effectively done if the target group is convinced of the credibility of communication. This necessitates that all concerned people feel that the information is reliable, trust-
worthy and believable. Credibility, in simple terms refers to persons' believability (Burgoon/Heston/McCroskey 1974). But credibility has many dimensions viz., competence of communicator, his character, his sociability, composure (i.e. whether he is relaxed, calm and composed), extroversion (i.e. whether he is bold, aggressive, outgoing etc.) and his trustworthiness. A new term 'ethos' is also coined to explain credibility. The person with high ethos is respected and his word is accepted. But the credibility of a person is based on the perception and impression of people on various attributes or multidimension qualities of communicator (McCroskey), (Jenner and Valencia, 1973). The varying levels of all these elements contribute to judgement of people on a communicator's credibility. Thus, the initial attitude of the group members affects how they react to persuasive appeals.

This theoretical discussion on communication system, pattern, function and its credibility is useful only if it has specific relevance with cultural and social milieu in our country. Group approach seems to be advantageous in Indian social frame work. Decision making process under group setting is closely linked with interactions and social frame work.
It is the general experience that smaller the group, better is the communication for effective group work. Even groups are formed of sub-groups within themselves. Therefore, it is basic to study small groups with special reference to social interactions as a process of communication.

**Small group communication:**

Burgoon, Heston and McCroskey (1974) emphasise more on small group communication. According to them small groups are unique for communication context because of following reasons:

(i) There are frequent interaction between members. In larger groups, the members do not get enough opportunity to interact, and therefore, their communication is necessarily limited. In small groups, there is always a high degree of interaction because there are least restrictions.

(ii) There is greater scope for development of group personality in a small group. Its identity as a group having a separate entity in itself is more feasible when the size of a group is small.
(iii) In small groups, group norms and the value system can be easily established. This is more obvious when we consider the group formed of street boys. It is usually seen that they develop their own normative behaviour. Such behaviour is practiced by members in their individual life. That is, individual wants to be like the group.

(iv) In small groups, group develops coping behaviour. They develop a pattern to cope up with outside threats or any unusual situation.

(v) Role differentiation is also an uniqueness of small groups. Individuals tend to specialize in certain roles. These roles are either necessary for completion of a task or are necessary to maintain satisfactory social and environmental atmosphere. As individual members undertake specialized roles, the division of labour make it easier to meet the situation or finish the task.

(vi) In small groups, the goals are interdependent. In other words, the goals of some members overlap with those of others. These overlapping goals become shared goals of a group.
achievement will depend on performance of other members. This interdependence results in better communication and sustained relationship.

(vii) Small groups also ensure increased productivity or "assembly effect bonus". The total output of efforts of individual members bring more results when they are performed as members of a small group. This extra productivity results from the division of labour and co-ordination of efforts that takes place in a group.

These seven unique characteristics make the small group a proper medium of communication.

Functional approach to small group communication:

Burgoon and others (1974) opined that groups including the small groups are multifunctional. Effective communication is one of the most essential function of a group. The element of small group process as related to one another determine the functional process of a group. There are usually two basic links called control link and feedback link. If one element directly influences the status of another element there exists the control link. If one element transmits information to another, a feedback link exists.
Both these links operate at several levels within a small group. Members control and give feedback to each other through communication within the group.

The framework of communication is determined by input in a small group. It serves as the foundation. Input can be divided into 3 categories of variables viz., individual characteristic, group characteristic, and external factors. These are variables because they are not constant. The interrelationship of the relevant elements explain the outcomes of the group.

The individual characteristics of each member in terms of his thinking and behaviour is the first category of variables. Individual goals and expectation from group for attainment of these goals form another group of individual variables.

Group characteristics form another category of structural variables. It incorporates demographic features of the group. The size of the group is the determining factor; groups of different size function differently. The type of group is also another factor. The primary group functions differently than social group. Communication, thus, differ according to size/type of group.
The third category of variables is external factors. There are certain externally imposed restrictions or laws by powers not within the group. Such restriction qualify the external factor and affect the communication within the group.

The various category of variables affecting small group communication is illustrated in the enclosed figure 4.1.

After knowing about small group communication, now, we shall discuss about the group approach as an important method of Health Education for changing Health behaviour of the people.

Group dynamics in the field of health education:

Group dynamics as an approach to any social problem has its own merits. The process of group dynamics is functionally related to some activities which have to deal with ideas, feelings and experiences of people. It is essentially linked with the process of health education and has to deal with human behaviour.

The very process of group dynamics associates individual emotionally. Individual has the frame of reference based on his past experiences and social
Figure 4.1

SOURCE: BURGOON / HESTON / McCROSKEY: SMALL GROUP COMMUNICATION, A FUNCTIONAL APPROACH, HOLT RINEHART AND WINSTON, INC. 1974. P. 11,
values. This has been well explained as follows:

"Erickson, Allport, Lewin and many others have told us that all we bring to any situation is the sum of our own limited life experiences our inner world of ideas, values and attitudes. When new experiences occur, when our ideas are challenged something unfamiliar and not yet a part of our life's experiences - we go through a period of tension and disequilibrium "(Mathews, 1973:222).

The process of change, in order to be 'education'-oriented, has to be planned in such a way that the reacted feeling of suspicion, fear and insecurity is minimised. Experiences have proved that group dynamics can be more effective to introduce such changes. The findings of Malcolm and Knowles (1968) support this view. "In adding up the accomplishments of group dynamics to date, it seems clear that the record is impressive. It has opened up new vistas of human potentiality that give promise of bringing about a social technology that will produce even greater miracles than those brought by the material technology developed over the last century". The same view is supported by a report of WHO study group (1971:30):
In some cultures, studies have shown that group approach is more likely to lead to personal and group action than approach on person-to-person basis. Thus, group approach seems to be more effective than the individual (person-to-person) approach.

Experiments measuring effect of group approach:

Studies and experiments have been carried out to test applicability of the theory and to prove the effectiveness of the theory in the field.

Now, we shall discuss some experiments in the field of Health Education measuring effect of group approach. Some studies undertaken in the field of applied socio-psychological framework of agencies, have suggested positive results of group dynamics. Lorge and Solomon (1955) in their mathematical model experienced that group surpasses the individual members in various problems. Tuckman and Lorge (1962), in comparative experiment of solving problems by groups and by individuals, concluded: "This study, suggests that groups are superior to individuals...on account of the greater probability of getting a good solution from a group of five than from any other individual."
Davis and Restle (1963) also report that a greater proportion of group reached a correct solution within a time limit than did individual members working alone. Yukur (1955), too has remarked that the group recall was superior to the average initial individual recall, even when the individuals were persons with the best memories.

Thus, an analytical examination, in the light of various studies, has revealed that the use of group dynamics has shown positive and better results.

Lewin has conducted several experiments to measure effectiveness of group approach in the field of public health. His two experiments were mainly aimed at measuring the changes pertaining to food habits.

Lewin's experiment; (Effectiveness of group approach)

The effect of the group on the behaviour of the individual was demonstrated by Lewin's experiment in changing people's food habits. During World War II, when meat for civilian consumption was scarce, Lewin and his collaborators were able, by means of group
self decisions, to induce people to eat meats which are usually rejected by American housewives. The investigators used six groups, consisting of thirteen to seventeen persons, in the experiment. Three groups were encouraged, by means of lectures, demonstrations, and patriotic appeals, to eat kidneys, sweetbreads, and beef hearts. The other three groups were given the same lectures, but they were also given opportunities to discuss the subject freely and at length. The results were clear cut. Among women who listened to the lectures without participating in any discussion, only 3 per cent served any of the recommended foods. However, 38 per cent of the women who attended the lectures and also discussed the problem and arrived at their own decisions regarding the use of these meals, served them to their families (Bonner, 1959:4).

From this experiment Lewin concluded what subsequent researches and experiments have been confirming. When members of a group themselves have an opportunity to get the facts in a problem situation they will solve it together and accept the solution because it is a product of their own deliberations. In other words, people will believe facts, because they themselves have discovered them.
In another study, farm mothers who had had a first baby at the university, hospitals in Iowa were instructed individually, or involved in discussion in small groups, in the use of codliver oil and orange juice for their babies. After two weeks had elapsed, a study showed that 20 per cent of the mothers who had been individually instructed were giving codliver oil to their babies, whereas 35 per cent of those who had taken part in discussion groups were doing so. After four weeks, the figures were 50 per cent of those individually instructed and 90 per cent of those who had participated in group discussion.

Studies in work situations have been shown results similar to those indicated above. People have been found to work more readily and continue new practices, to give better performance, and to show higher moral when they talked over proposals, discussed the problems involved in implementing them, and participated in or made the decisions which were to affect them.

Kurt Lewin (1949) on the basis of the Iowa and earlier experiments, suggested an useful approach to thinking about change and the process of including new practices modifying the old. He proposed that
any given level of behaviour is a situation of a quasi-stationary equilibrium in a field of forces (Lewis, 1949:125-141). It exists because the driving forces which exert pressure toward changing are balanced by restraining forces which exert influence against changing. The field of forces is illustrated in the diagram below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of behaviour</th>
<th>Forces Exercising</th>
<th>Restraining</th>
<th>Influencing</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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Reflection upon the force-field approach and the experiment including housewives to serve new kinds of meat and dishes suggests some of the reasons why group discussion may have been more successful than lectures. Information about the low cost and nutritional value of the meats and appeals to patriotic sentiment increased the forces driving toward a use of them. Information about preparing the meats with which the housewives were unfamiliar, reassurance in relation to the problems of colour, and discussing the possibilities of the husband's disliking the meats reduced the strength of restraining forces. The discussion approach, however, had significant advantages following a lecture by an authority figure. Another
factor was the emergence of a new driving force for during the discussions it was apparent that a new group attitude was emerging. Where one housewife, alone might not be willing to commit her self to the use of meats, she would be more favourable disposed toward doing so if it were apparent that others would do likewise.

A force-field analysis can be useful when one is concerned with bringing about change in individual and group behaviour. The systematic study results in a fuller exploration of the various aspects of the situation and better understanding of the influence which causes the behaviour to be as it is. It also helps one to identify forces which may be altered and which may thereby influence behaviour in desired directions.

There are additional points to the approach which Lewin proposed and which have been outlined here only in a broad way. One of these deals with selecting the forces on which we need to expand our efforts. One can try to increase the strength of or add to the number of driving forces. One can try to reduce the strength of the restraining forces. Though planning for change may involve trying to influence both types of forces, it is in principle preferable to attempt
to reduce the strength of restraining forces.
Direct application of force tends to elicit or strengthen resistive forces. Reduction of restraining forces, on the other hand, does not have such an effect.

The restraining forces can positively be reduced through the process of group involvement. In order to involve the group in such a process, it is necessary that people feel that it is their own project. Moreover, in order to restrain the forces, people must be helped to realise that the desired change aims at their own benefit. The group dynamism aims at making people feel that their own values and ideals which they have long been acknowledging and cherishing are put forth for acceptance. It is only through approach of group dynamics that the autonomy and security of people is not threatened and challenged.

In group dynamics, only the desired results are brought lighted and the process of reaching them is planned by participating groups. So they agree to the basic problem and they resist less to change. It provides for feed-back, a two way process of communication. Hence, all the doubts and queries can be identified and classified. This also makes people to resist
Thus, group dynamics does not merely accelerate the process of change; it also provides for a conducive atmosphere of informal environment where there is less resistance and restraining forces are nullified through constructive and contributive discussion with the help of effective change agent.

Now let us examine the various elements involved in the decision making function of a group and identify some of the important barriers to rational problem solving and decision making.

**Decision making function of a group:**

The group is confronted with some issue on which decision is to be taken. The group thus, becomes 'task oriented.' It should try to find out a solution and make a decision on the basis of reasons rather than emotion. The rational approach necessitates following of a systematic pattern for decision making. The group, while making a decision should address itself regarding the existence, form nature and cause of the problem and consider the possible formulae as problem solving and examine respective merit/demerit of these formulae and then arrive at the decision. "Intelligent decision
making depends on full exposure of all possible advantages and disadvantages associated with any proposed solution;" observe Burgoon/Heston and McCroskey (1974). The groups as compared to individuals are in better position to reach better, rational and useful decisions. However, there are pitfalls for both individuals and groups which prove to be barriers in the process of making rational decisions (Burgoon, Heston and McCroskey, 1974:124-127). Important barriers to rational problem solving and decision making mentioned by Burgoon and others have been summarised and given below:

(i) If generalisation is made hastily or if it is unrepresentative, the decision is likely to be affected adversely.

(ii) If conclusions are drawn on faulty casual premises the decision is likely to be fallacious.

(iii) When 'Post Hoc' reasoning is used, i.e., when conclusions are drawn on the basis of temporal order alone, the decision is likely to be fallacious.

(iv) The use of emotional language also affects the process of decision making, because 'language colors our thoughts'.
(v) 'Appeal to tradition' also affects the rationality of decision making. We have always done it this way before, so we should do it this way again is the common tendency but it does not help to come to a rational decision.

(vi) To hold as support an opinion which is followed by a large majority is also an irrational approach in the process of decision making. Many people can hold bad opinions or do bad things. The decision has to be evaluated on its own merit.

(vii) One of the biggest barriers to intelligent or rational decision making is the irrational call for perfection. Probably no solution is totally perfect or positive. To reject solutions only because they are not perfect will often cause a group to fail to accept any solution at all.

Structuring the decision making process:

Usually decision making follows problem solving by generating alternative solutions to the given problem. In some circumstances group may move from problem solving process to decision making process through the interaction process amongst the members.
Figure 4.2 is a model of the decision making process (Burgoon/Heston/McCroskey, 1974: 136-140). It indicates various steps in the process. The steps are briefly explained as below:

(i) The first step is recognizing alternative decision. The group while making the decision should consider all possible alternatives. Without awareness of all alternatives, the decision is likely to be inadequate or incomplete.

(ii) The next step is determining criteria for acceptable decision. This is a pre-requisite for evaluation of all possible alternatives. The criteria may be based on economic implications or possible impact on the group etc.

(iii) The third step is rejection or elimination of various alternatives. On the basis of evaluation criteria, various alternatives are to be eliminated. Ineffective, irrelevant and inappropriate alternatives can be rejected.

(iv) The fourth step is evaluation of alternative decisions. It includes intensive analysis of probable impacts. In this, each alternative decision is examined not only in terms of whether or not it will solve the problem but also in terms of whether or not it might create new problems.
The next step is the selection of best alternative decision. This is self explanatory. The various alternatives are compared in terms of their gains and losses and that alternative is selected which gives greater gains.

The task is not complete after best alternative is selected. The group must find our ways and means for its implementation. The merits and demerits of the decision are not the within the focal length here. The group has now to think how to carry out the decision which is already taken.

This step is only a corollary or precious step. It is for selection and authorisation of people to implement the decision. This is only a step to the final step.

The final step is action. All the previous steps become meaningless or superfluous if the decision is not translated into action. The decision is now carried out by the people properly authorised in a manner decided by a group.

There are several other similar models but this model seems to be the best. It gives eight important steps to be followed one by one as discussed and also depicted in figure 4:2.
Model for Decision - Making Process (Structuring the Decision - Making Process)

1. Recognition of Alternative Decision
2. Determination of criteria for Accepting Decisions
3. Rejection of alternative Decisions that do not meet criteria
4. Evaluation of Probable Gains and Losses from Acceptable Decisions or return to problem solving
5. Selection of Best Alternative Decision or Return to Problem solving
6. Determination of How Decision is to be implemented
7. Selection and Authorisation of People to implement Decision
8. Action

The whole process of decision making under frame of reference of group interacting forms the baseline for learning of group members within the group and amongst intergroups and society as a whole. This may help the individuals to accept the desired behaviour on voluntary basis.

**Intensive education is a must for voluntary acceptance:**

Several Knowledge Attitude and Practice (KAP) studies in different parts of the country have indicated the big gap between knowledge and practice. This can be bridged only by intensive education as acceptance of family planning has to be purely on a voluntary basis. The job of educating couples for family planning is not only time consuming but for more difficult in practice than can be imagined. This is particularly true when the workers and administrators are harressed with targets to be achieved within a prescribed time limit. Due to time-bound and target oriented nature of the programme, there was a tendency to find out short cuts for achieving the targets such as offering of higher incentives in cash and kind and other similar inducements. Lastly, the use of administrative pressures, coercion and compulsion in some parts of the country during emer-
gency era brought intangible results but adversely affected the programme. Thus, we have learnt from our long and varied experience that there is no short cut for achieving family planning targets and that there is no substitute for intensive education for voluntary acceptance of family planning on a long term basis. Higher incentives and community incentives help the individuals in accelerating the process of decision making but can in no way substitute the basic requirement of family planning education and motivation. This is particularly true in the case of family planning as it deals with personal and private lives of individuals and is related to the most sensitive issue of sex. The family planning educators (change agents) are thus facing a real challenge of bringing about the desired change in the attitude and behaviour of the people in a stipulated time. For this reason, there is a great need to explore possibilities and adopt newer or revised effective approaches for family planning education.

Whether one argues for a policy of population control or not, the fact remains that it is the individual family concern that ultimately decides
whether it must or must not limit its size, whether it can or cannot expand. A Government programme regarding population policy helps to create the social atmosphere for responsible parenthood. No one can deny that the final right and responsibility of regulating the size of the family must rest with the individual family. The decision is to be made by each married couple taking into consideration the social conditions in which they live and the resources at their command. This can be called the family centered approach, which emphasises the importance and the responsibility of the individual family. Even the ideal family size cannot be calculated in mere statistical averages of 4 or 6. Likewise no general answer can be given to questions, such as, "How many children?" and "At what intervals?" It is the right and responsibility of each family to decide by keeping in view the available resources and the social conditions in which the couple lives.

Any attempt at controlling family size should come ideally from individual families themselves, through their own desire, understanding and
voluntary decisions and by means acceptable to them. The promotion of 'Voluntary Family Limitation' has been accepted as a state policy in India. In the recent past, spirited debates in the Lo-k Sabha has highlighted the need for emphasising 'Voluntary' acceptance of family planning methods by the individual family. In a pluralistic society and democratic country like India, any Government pressure for any particular method of population control would be an infringement of human rights especially in a matter so very personal and intimate like sex. However, grave the situation may be, solutions must be found by keeping in mind man's dignity as a free and responsible human being. What is necessary in India to-day is not only an integrated Maternity, Child Health and Nutrition programme but an integrated programme of economic development, socio-cultural reform and education for late marriage and responsible parenthood. It is neither antichild in approach nor is it a matter of blind instinct. It has to be based upon mutual love, respect and harmony between husband and wife as well as parents and children.

Now it will be worth discussing advantages of group approach considering the cost benefit ratio,
coverage of many persons in short time enabling decision making.

Advantages of Group Approach:

Any approach requires the conducive atmosphere for its growth. If the approach of group dynamics has assumed any significance during recent years, it has some background for it. After independence, we have undertaken various developmental plans for implementation. It has necessitated people's participation and co-operations. The motivation required for such participation caused some approach.

It is sometime wise to appeal through group approach which touches the individuals of a group through inner appeal. It has been proved by experience that the power inherent in a group itself due to group dynamics is of high level. This high level power of influence of the group to bring about change in deep rooted practices among the group members is greater than the influence of individual instruction by an outsider. (Family Planning Programme Report, 1962-63:85).
In practical field also there are certain advantages or approach through group dynamics. In terms of cost benefit ratio, group approach is cheaper than individual approach. A number of people are covered simultaneously, so the per capita expenditure comes lower. From view point of time factor too, this approach is beneficial. Numbers of persons are covered in less time. A wide coverage in a shorter span of time - is assured in group approach.

The individual feels differently when he is a member of a group. He has a moral support along with emotional security in a group. This enables the process of decision making. Each member of a group has unique identity and entity and each one of them has a bond of solidarity as a group member. He has a common interest and concern for other members. As a member of the group he feels responsible for helping the group to achieve the goal set by the group. This might be due to cohesiveness of the group which ultimately accelerates the most important process of decision making. In the words of Brad Ford and Lipptt, (1961 : 28): "In the democratic group process, in
which all members of the group share in making decisions the individual cannot but feel responsible and involved in those decisions. Man being a social animal, he has a natural tendency to follow others. This tendency is used positively when the persons are approached in group to take decision concerning their ideas, thoughts or belief. People do not change their mind easily especially if their beliefs are customary or traditionally approved. If however, some one takes a lead, others follow the suit.

**Importance of group approach**

Vast amount of social scientific study has shown that while the mass media is an effective and economical instrument to spread or diffuse information, they are of little effectiveness when it comes to attempt at changing peoples' attitude and heaviour, except for the trivial consumption habit (e.g. switching from one toothpaste to another etc.). For such fundamental cultural norms such as age at marriage and family size, most villages presumably would either follow the tradition, or refer to the opinion of their peers, religious teaching (as they understand it), consult community leaders and so on. As the studies of group dynamics
have shown, lectures or other similar abstract methods are effective in transmitting knowledge and information, they are of little value in changing an individual's subsequent attitude or conduct.

Studies have also shown that establishment of an 'in-group' i.e., a group in which the members feel a strong belongingness is an effective way of achieving reeducation involving the relinquishment of standards that are either deeply entrenched or contrary to that of the society at large. An individual anchors his values and valence on the group, he accepts the new system of value and beliefs by accepting membership in the group. If an individual really desires to belong and be accepted by the group, he cannot withstand this kind of pressure. In other words, social change is brought about by having individuals accept the new systems of value and beliefs as member of the group that as a whole accepts the change. It is this kind of insight that has led the Chinese to utilize the small group as a mechanism to bring about planned social change and increasingly to solve their population problems via "community planning of births".
Group approach - demand of the day:

Today, the family planning programme is at the juncture where services for family planning could be made available to millions through a vast infra-structure built in and extensive service organisation under health and medical department. But biggest problem is of motivation - that is how to educate or motivate millions of eligible couples for accepting family planning. For this, mainly three methods are employed viz., Individual, Group and Mass approach. In the individual approach, emphasis is placed on motivating people by person to person contact. This approach has been followed since the inception of the programme. Whole mass approach was introduced at a later stage. In mass approach we may include several activities such as mass communication, distribution of Nirodh, Organisation of vasectomy camps and celebration of family planning Weeks/Fort-nights/Months.

So far group approach is concerned, adequate and systematic efforts are very much required to educate and motivate the members of existing or
formulated groups by an informal communication, through discussions on family planning. This approach, somehow, is not employed to the extent it should have been employed in the National Family Planning Programme. Relatively, it is difficult to employ group work method on functional basis as it requires a special training to the family planning workers if it is to be used effectively and efficiently by them.

For influencing the minds of millions of people we have employed a big army of workers to convince people for family planning. They mostly follow individual approach. We also use the modern as well as indigenous media at our control in family planning. Effective mass media like the Radio, Films, Exhibitions and to a very limited extent, Television (particularly with the new satellite technology) are used. Audio-visual means, are very important media especially in our country where about 65% people are illiterate. No medium of communication however, sophisticated, is as effective as one human being communicating to another. Therefore, in addition to individual and mass approaches, we need to use group approach more intensively and extensively.
An understanding of the group dynamics is likely to enhance the effectiveness of group approach, which by and large has so far remained very limited in the field of family planning education and motivation. It is also hoped that the knowledge of group dynamics could ensure better acceptance of family planning methods through voluntary efforts.

Use of group dynamics in the field of family planning:

Family planning programme aims at bringing about fundamental changes in people's outlook for a better social structure and family welfare. Though basically the importance of change is acceptable, it is very difficult to change the minds of people in a short time. It is a stage wherein people understand but do not act, accept but do not practice, know but do not participate, welcome but do not take a lead and contemplate but do not come forward. It is a peculiar stage when the things are anvil and desired shapes are to be formed. A well planned, systematic, scientific and comprehensive effort is required to motivate people for bringing the desired change in them. The strategy will not only require...
the best tools and techniques but also need to employ plausible, practical and pragmatic approach. If the masses have to participate in a programme of prime national importance, they must be approached through a way they feel better.

Therefore, people are to be motivated in this direction employing all available skills and techniques of persuasion and communication. The efforts so far made in this direction have been useful in making people realise the gravity of problem; but there are number of social, religious, cultural and other factors which act as barriers to the acceptance of family planning.

In India, the number of children in the family is considered to be a private and personal matter and this aspect has never been seen by them in wider context of national interest. Besides, it is considered to be a delicate matter and even the educated and cultured people feel shy in talking about it in public. The cultural and religious taboos regarding sex make people uncomfortable while talking about it. In contrast, however, people do talk about this topic in their inner-most circle in their groups. These double standards not only indicate the peculiar tendency of people but they work as barriers in
communication. Keeping this contradiction in view, if the group approach is taken avail of, there are better chances of motivating people to change their attitude and educate their opinions. K. Madh-van (1968) correctly observed: "In the decision making process of family planning, others are also actively concerned, particularly the subjects' 'decision making set'.....educating the eligible couples alone will not solve the problem in promoting family planning programme as the present motivational effort is not comprehensive. It is desirable to take into account the cultural factor kinship structure and the influence of the decision group besides the personality of the adopter for motivation". Thus, group has a great impact and influence on decision making of an individual and the workers in the field of family planning and health education have to take into account this vital factor while popularising the norm for small family. Their approach, to be effective, has to be group oriented and their appeal needs to touch the group, which in due course will spread to its individual members.

Group dynamics has immense scope in the field of family planning education and motivation. The desired change can be brought through the process
of planned change. The traditional group feeling of people can be used in a planned way through the approach of group dynamics. A trained person and/or skillful leader can use the technique of group work and make use of the process of group dynamics and can envisage to bring fruitful results in bringing desired change in the beliefs and behaviour of people. What is required is an integrated approach keeping in mind all the concerned factors - sociological, cultural, economic and psychological. If such an integrated approach is made, the envisaged results can be achieved. In group dynamics all these factors can be vividly woven together.

The behaviour of the group depends upon the different forces in a group. This has been well explained as follows: "Essentially, group dynamics is an area in the social sciences that relates to an examination of the 'how' and 'why' of group behaviour.... the dynamics of the group, the forces in a group situation which determine the behaviour of the group and its members "(Lippitt, 1961:31). Group process may be used for desired changes. By providing the proper opportunities for interactions among the eligible (target) group members, it is expected that
their knowledge and attitudes will be changed which will ultimately lead to common decisions and towards the desired behaviour.

After having theoretical framework on group dynamics and its utility in the field of family planning education, now we shall discuss about our research problem in the next chapter.