

## **IMPORTANCE OF INFORMAL GROUPS IN AN ORGANIZATION FOR TEAM COHESIVENESS – A CASE STUDY APPROACH**

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### **Abstract**

The author has got composite experience of more than 23 years and during this period he has experienced incidences where informal groups in an organization played vital role while working in teams. The author has cited some incidences here, where reader will go through the situations in which due to informal groups, really cohesive; could perform well and one will understand the importance of existence of informal groups in any organization at any given point of time. Based on the review of incidences mentioned in this research paper, one can easily understand the importance of existence of informal groups in an organization.

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### ***Keywords:***

***Formal, Informal  
Groups, Team  
Cohesiveness,  
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## **1.INTRODUCTION:-**

In any organization, we can observe that, there are formal and informal groups in existence. Firstly, let us understand what is the meaning of a group? '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. By formal groups, we mean those defined by the organization's structure, with designated work assignments establishing tasks. In formal groups the behaviours that team members should engage in are stipulated by and directed toward organizational goals. Whereas, informal groups are alliances which are neither, formally structured nor organizationally determined. These groups are natural formations in the work environment that appear in response to the need for social contact. Three employees from different departments who regularly eat lunch or have tea or coffee together are an example of an informal group. These types of interactions among individuals, even though informal, deeply affect their behaviour and performance. In other words, formal groups are those which are formed out of compulsion, whereas informal groups are created by colleagues out of their choice. These informal groups are very important for a team's cohesiveness. Somebody has stated long form of **TEAM**; reproduced here, it is **Together Everyone Achieves More**. It simply means that, everyone in the team is going to get benefitted because of the different skill-sets possessed by the team members. Each team member has got expertise in a particular task and he / she performs the task to complete the assignment given. Everyone in the team is assigned with separate task and hence entire team excels at any given point of time. The basic requirement for such situation in any organization is nothing but the existence of informal groups. Teams are basically formed on the basis that, everyone should be helped and supported while working on a specific task or job. This kind of situation can be observed in an organization only because of environment created and space provided to promote such informal teams in an organization. Author has narrated two incidences in this research paper to understand the importance of informal groups and how far these informal groups help in completing task assigned to a team, successfully in the organization?

## **2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:-**

The research methodology used here for writing this research paper is as mentioned below:-

1. This research paper is completely based on primary data.
2. The author has narrated two incidences based on his observations in industries while working in the past some years.
3. Author has formed his opinion appropriately at the end.

### **2.1. Objective:-**

- a) To study and understand what is informal group in an organization?
- b) To study and understand the importance of existence of informal groups in an organization.

### **2.2. Sources of Data:-**

Based on personal observation, the author has collected information which is primary in nature and hence '*Observation*' is the source of data for this research paper.

## **3. ILLUSTRATIONS:-**

Here, we will be going through the incidences for understanding the informal groups and its importance in an organization for making team cohesive.

### **3.1. Incident No. 1:-**

In one of the manufacturing company at Pune, named 'Anand Steel Manufacturing Co. Ltd.', Mr. Ravindra Bhosle was working as 'Shift Engineer' since very long; in fact he was the most experienced employee in the company. He had very good friendship with some of the colleagues i.e. engineers and workers of the production department. In other words we can say that he had excellent informal relationship with them. They used to meet after the working hours are over, have tea and snacks together; enjoy picnics and meet for other social gatherings also very often. One day, Ravindra was supposed to attend funeral of one of his neighbour and that was a very busy day for production department. His colleagues assured him that the production targets will be achieved without any disturbance and without compromising the quality. He went out for attending the funeral procession and returned after three hours of absence. It was reported by the production manager that the second shift, in which Ravindra was working on that day has

achieved the highest target. After enquiry it revealed that, due to informal relationship and group formed was crucial and important aspect in this incident.

### **3.2. Incident No. 2:-**

Mr. Anil Kaspate, was working as a ‘Supervisor’ with ‘Bright Housekeeping Agency’ of Mumbai. He also had very good relations with the employees working under him. More than seventy percent of employees were well – connected due to informal relations which they had with Mr. Anil Kaspate. Mr. Anil was seriously ill for more than five days in the month of April, 2010. His employees working under him were actually directionless for that period. Representative from the client company, enquired about Mr. Anil and his work of supervision to the employees working under him. All of them said that they will manage everything properly during the absence of Anil. When Anil resumed his duties after his illness, to his surprise the representative of Client Company appreciated Mr. Anil for the performance of his employees during his absence, because all of the employees worked nicely effectively and without any complaint. When Anil tried to find out the reason, it was the informal relations shared by each one of them and formation of informal group.

### **4.FINDING :-**

After going through these two incidences, we understood that in both the incidences there were informal relations shared by team members and due to which informal groups were formed. When there was a need to support the colleague or superior they gave wholehearted support and worked effectively in that crucial period. In both the incidences, one thing was common that, employees were having good relations with each other and they have formed informal groups in an organization. This kind of situation gets created in the organization because of everyone’s efforts towards team cohesiveness.

### **5.CONCLUSION:-**

Based on these incidences mentioned above, and objectives mentioned for the study, we may conclude that, the objectives are achieved as mentioned below:-

1. While going through the concept of informal groups and these incidences thoroughly, we have understood the concept of ‘Informal Groups’.

2. Also we have understood that ‘Informal Groups’ are very important for any organisation. In order to create cohesive teams in an organization, all members should take such efforts, which will in turn give birth to informal groups. We have seen that, though superiors were not present physically at the place of working, all employees worked effectively and responsibly. This is nothing but the result of informal groups created due to informal relations shared by the members. In the incident number I, even superior went out for attending funeral procession and came back after three hours of absenteeism; during this period employees never complaint to head of the department and carried out their responsibility smoothly and effectively. If we look at incident number II, we can observe that, though the supervisor was not feeling well and away from the workplace, all employees worked effectively and efficeiantly so that, top management from Client Company appreciated their work.

#### **6. SUGGESTION:-**

Author would like to provide some suggestions here that, if you really want to have cohesive teams in your organizations then, you need to creat an environment where informal relations will be shared by team members in the organization, where lot of sharing will take place and employees will form their informal groups. Subsequently, such groups will become more efficient, effective and will be helpful to each other and a big support to all team members. Here even management also need to be more supportive for establishing of such environment where informal relations will be shared by team members and because of which informal groups will come in existence. This will really help an organization to flourish and become ‘Employer of Choice’.

#### **7. RESEARCH PAPER LIM ITATIONS:-**

In this research paper, all inferences drawn are purely based on personal views and pinion. Hence, readers may not be in agreement with all the views and opinions expressed here and it is also not expected.

#### **8. SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH:-**

While writing this research paper, author has realised that, there is a scope for future research on the following topics:-

1. A Study should be carried out on factors which are having an impact on ‘Informal Groups’ in an organization?
2. How far can we create an environment where informal groups will flourish in an organization?

**FOOT NOTES:-**

1. These incidences are real in nature.
2. Names of the individual and organizations are fictitious in nature for maintaining confidentiality.

**REFERENCES:-**

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