

Chapter 10



BEHAVIOR IN GROUPS

Basic features of groups

- A **group** involves multiple people who are:
 - interdependent
 - have emotional ties
 - interact on a regular basis (face to face)
 - different from a *social category*
- interdependence:
 - depend on each other to achieve group goals
 - events that affect one member affects others

Social cohesiveness

- forces that cause people to remain in groups
- “groupiness”
- people think, act, feel more like group members and less like isolated individuals
- desire to maintain membership
- more influence on members
- greater productivity

Joining groups

- two principle functions of groups:
 - accomplish instrumental tasks
 - satisfy socioemotional needs
- some groups are **task-oriented** (e.g., work groups)
- **socioemotional** groups (e.g., friends and family, neighbors)
- almost all groups engage in a degree of both

Group structure

- regular, stable patterns of behavior b/w members
- develops quickly, changes slowly

I. social norms:

- shared rules / expectations about how members should act
- norms for appearance (e.g., army), opinions (e.g., liberal views in env' l orgs), etc.

Group structure

2. social roles:

- norms that apply to people in particular positions in a group
- division of labor

3. status system:

- reflects the distribution of power among members
- position based on prestige and authority (even in informal friendship groups)

Group Influence on Individual

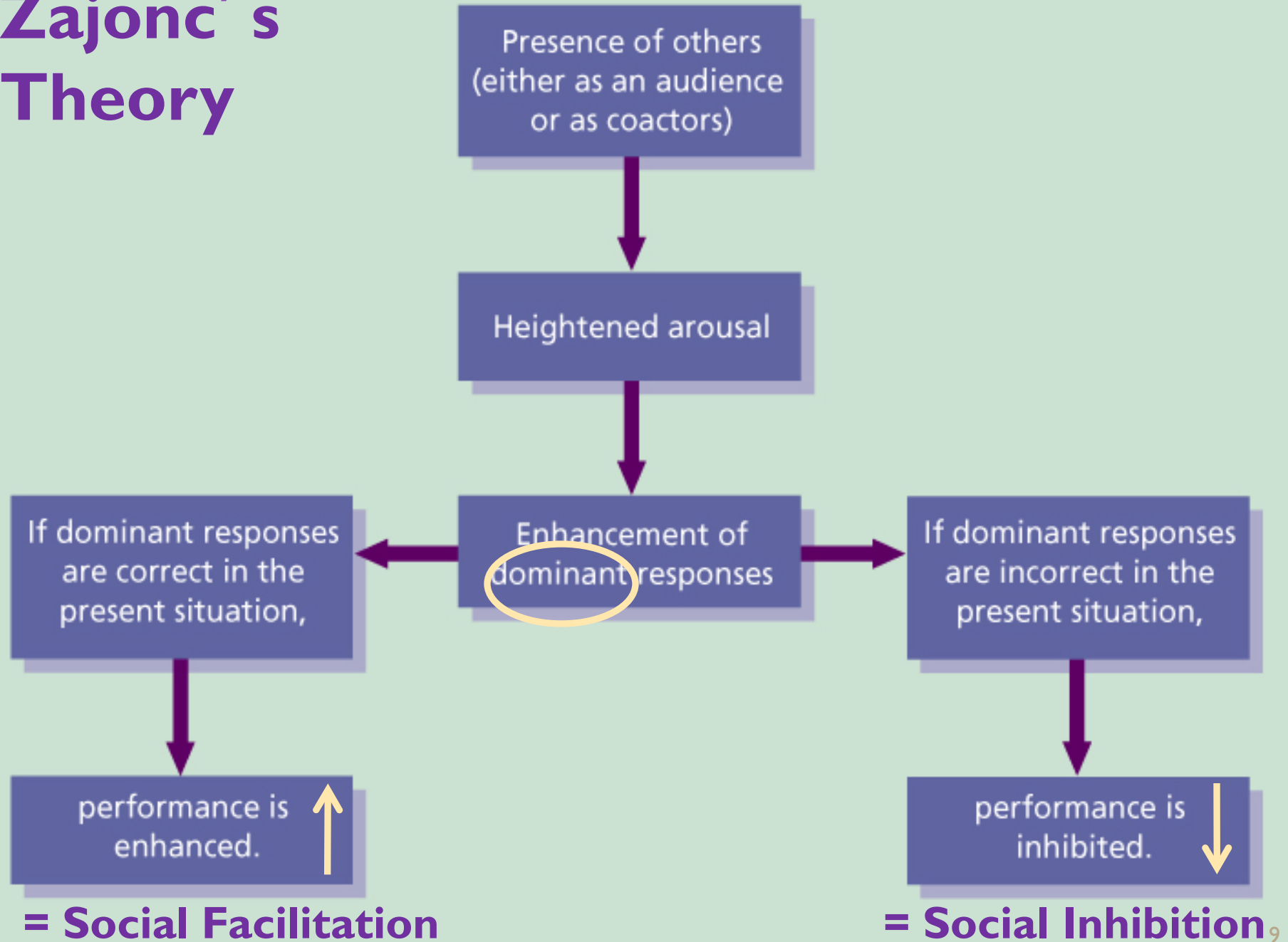
two types of influence:

1. performance in the presence of others
 2. performance as part of a larger group of performers
- presence of others sometimes enhances and sometimes impairs performance. why?

I - Presence of others

- social facilitation: perform better in the presence of others
 - not only humans (also in dogs, rats, birds, fish, even cockroaches)
- social inhibition: perform worse in the presence of others
- sounds a bit contradictory?

Zajonc's Theory





**Social facilitation
& inhibition occur
WHEN a person's
performance is
individually
identifiable**

2- Performing with others

- **Social Loafing:** working less hard in a group than individually
 - contribution to collective activity not identifiable
 - diffusion of responsibility
 - e.g., Latane et al., 1979



2- Performing with others

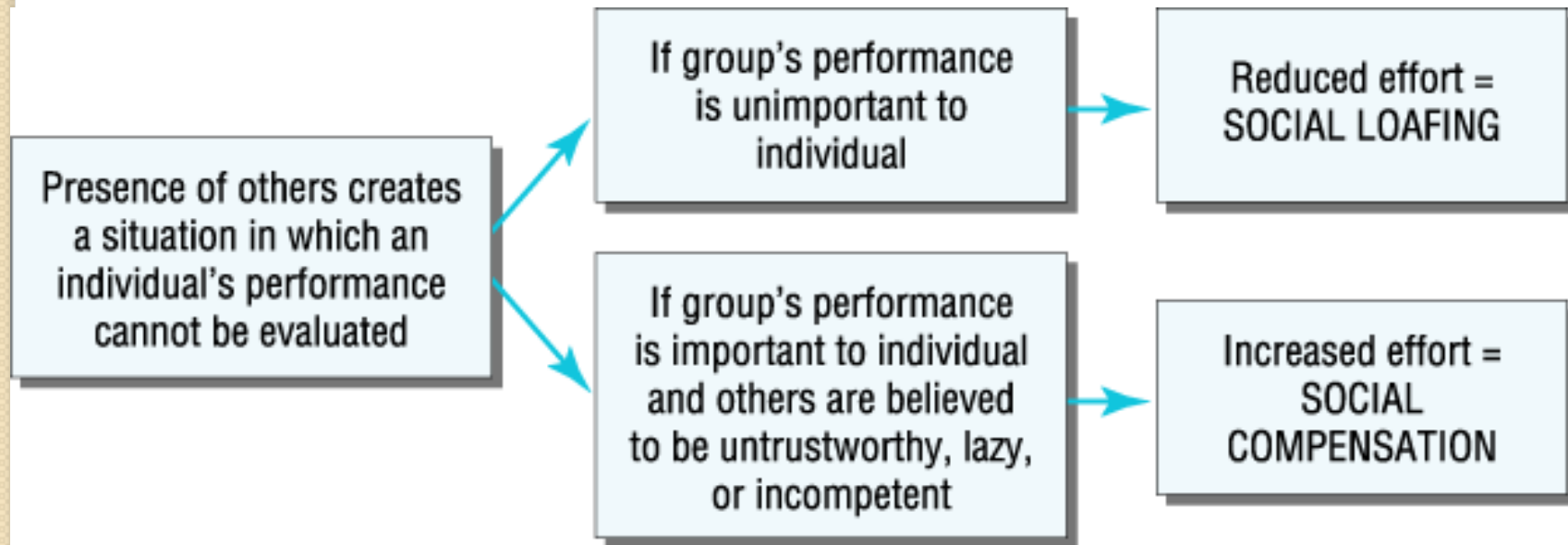
- Social loafing (cont'd)
 - both in individualistic and collectivistic cultures
 - reduced when individual effort becomes identifiable
 - *collective effort model*



2- Performing with others

- **Social Compensation:** work even harder in a group to compensate for others
 - others are performing poorly
 - person cares about the group product

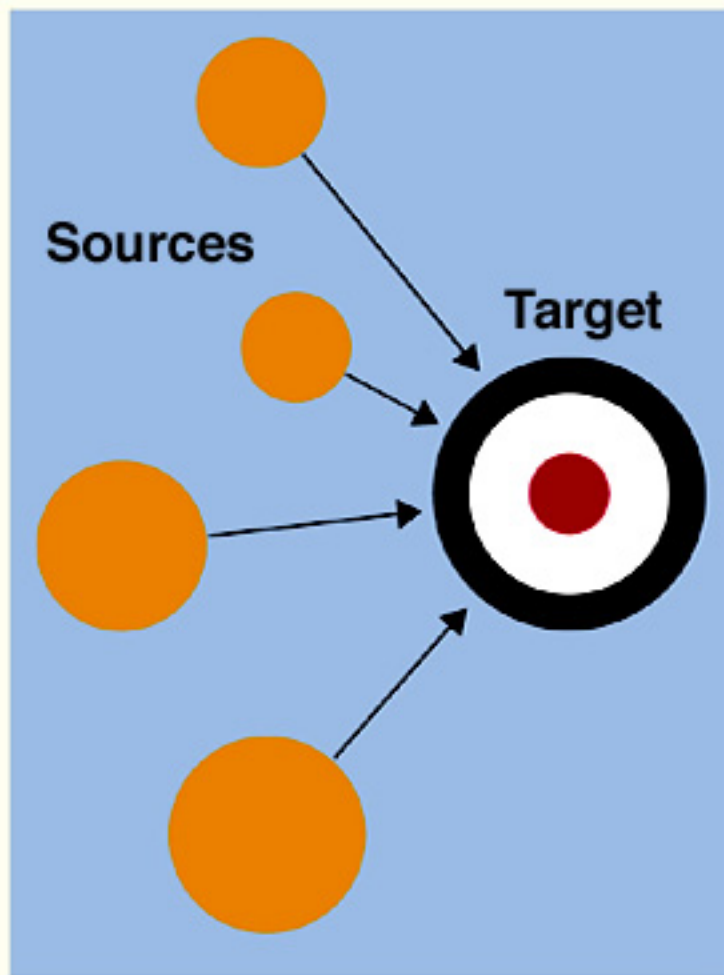
Social Loafing vs. Compensation



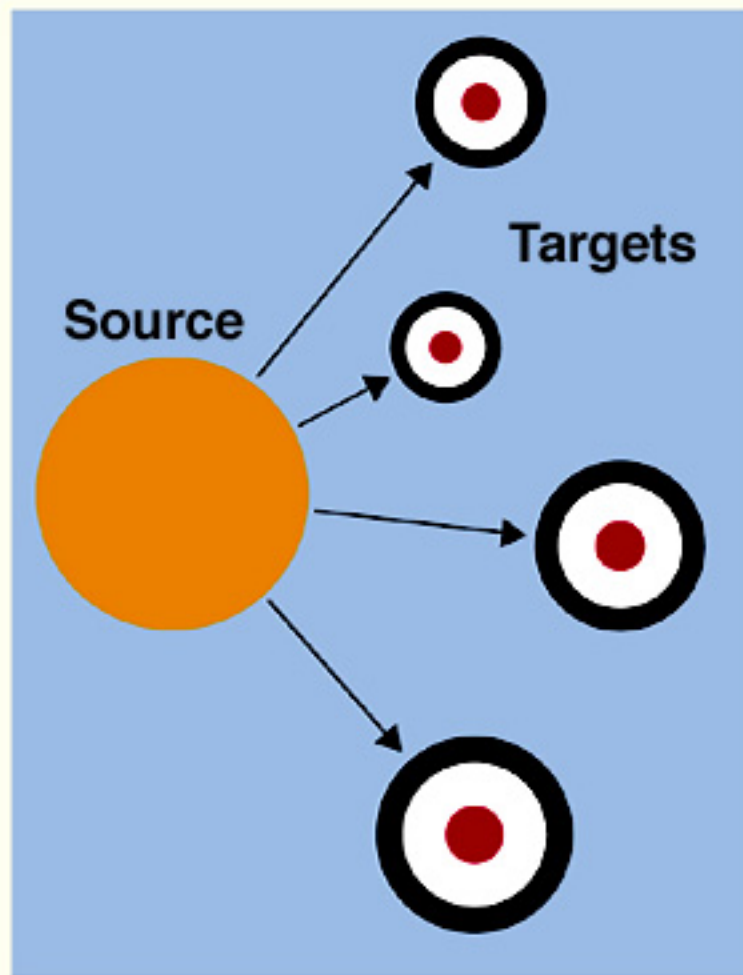
Social Impact Theory

- amount of influence others have in a given situation is a function of:
 - number of people present
 - strength or importance of these people
 - immediacy (nearness) to the target person

The Psychology of Social Impact



Box A



Box B

Deindividuation

- crowded, anonymous situations
- loss of individual identity & responsibility for actions
- loosening of normal inhibitions
- engaging in behavior inconsistent with personal standards
- expression of aggressive / sexual impulses (violent, immoral acts)
- lack of self-awareness crucial

Crowding

- subjective feeling of having too little space
- **social density**: objective number of people in a given space
- Why?
 - sensory overload
 - loss of control
 - attributions
 - culture

QUESTION:

- When & Why do groups perform better (or worse) than the sum of its members?

Group Performance

- Comparing **potential** group performance to **actual**
- Types of group tasks:
 - additive: brainstorming, pulling a rope...
 - disjunctive: problem solving, decision making, math...
 - conjunctive: mountain climbing, keeping stg confidential, precision work...
- How would group size influence potential performance?

Group Decision Rules

- number of people required for the whole group to adapt a position:
 - majority rules
 - truth wins (i.e., unanimity)
- Issues of opinion vs. issues of fact
- consequential for group functioning

Group Decision Biases

- advantage of groups: pooled sharing of information of members to arrive at better decisions
- do groups engage in this systematic information sharing?
- e.g., 3 job applicants to a department
- “**common knowledge effect**” occurs
 - easier social interaction
 - regarded more competent and knowledgeable
- **confirmation bias:**
 - seek out / prefer information that supports initial beliefs

Brainstorming

- group members work together to generate many new ideas or solutions to a problem
- very popular
- “What should be our slogan for our campaign to encourage drivers to wear seatbelts?”
- people **ACTUALLY** produce more and better ideas working **ALONE** than in groups.

Group Polarization

- Do groups make more conservative or riskier decisions than individuals?
 - typical finding: the risky shift
 - but also found more cautious decisions
- group discussion leads to more extreme decisions, enhancing the attitudes of people who initially agree
 - “**group polarization**”
- especially on important rather than trivial issues

Groupthink

- poor group decision making based on inadequate consideration of alternatives.
- A drop in:
 - mental efficiency
 - reality testing
 - moral judgment
- because of an excessive desire to reach consensus
- pleasant social atmosphere becomes more important than making the best decision

Groupthink: 3 Factors

1. High group cohesiveness:

- increased conformity
- accept influence of others

2. Threatening context:

- stress / threat – choose speed over accuracy
- stress – ppl more dependent upon others

Groupthink: 3 Factors

3. Structural and procedural faults:
 - no sympathetic procedures for making and reviewing decisions
 - isolation of group from others / reality
 - strong directive leader



**GROUP VS. INDIVIDUAL
COMPETITION VS.
COOPERATION**

**SHORT TERM VS. LONG-
TERM GOALS**

Social Dilemmas

- any situation in which the most rewarding short term choice for individual will ultimately cause negative consequences for the group as a whole.
- resource dilemmas
- free-rider problem
- prisoner's dilemma

Social Dilemmas

- In order to solve social dilemmas, cooperation is necessary:
 - sanction cooperative behavior
 - education
 - group identification (“a sense of community” rather than competitors)
 - promote a *cooperative* orientation (as a value) as opposed to an *individualist* or *competitive* orientation
 - promote group discussion

Group Interaction

- the reward structure influences:
 - competitive interdependence
 - cooperative interdependence
 - Individualistic reward structure
- increasing communication helps
- norm of reciprocity

Leadership

- **Social influence is the central attribute**
- the person with the most impact on group behavior and beliefs
- could be appointed or elected; or gradually emerge within time.
- **task leadership**: about accomplishing goals
- **social leadership**: attention to interpersonal aspects of groups

Leader oriented approaches

- focuses on the personality characteristics and behaviors of leaders
- “leader as a hero” view
- focus on leader traits
- *task*: efficiency, directiveness, knowledge about task
- *social*: friendliness, empathy, conflict mediation skills

Contingency approaches

- leadership as a quality attributed to ppl as a result of their interrelations with others
- rather than possession of certain qualities, it is a match between task, circumstances, and person

Transformational Leaders

- **transactional leaders** focus on the proper exchange of resources
 - i.e., give followers stg in exchange for the thing they want
- **transformational or charismatic leaders** go beyond meeting needs and inspire hope and new possibilities
 - provide a vision of a better future and inspire