

GROUP COHESIVENESS AMONG THE MEMBERS OF CO-OPERATIVE SECTORS IN NORTH GUJARAT

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ABSTRACT

The co-operatives in the present times represent myriad socio-economic activities with a wide range and depth. Their management has become a complex phenomenon requiring a high degree of innovation, skills and ability to experiment with new ideas. The problems of management have become manifold requiring specialized attention in the spheres of marketing, banking, processing, consumption, etc. Due to this, application of specific fields of management with their techniques and methodologies has become important in the field of co-operatives. The list of co-operative societies of agricultural sector was obtained from the District Registrar, Palanpur of Banaskantha district. Two talukas having highest co-operative societies viz., Palanpur and Vadgam were selected purposively. Ten co-operative societies having highest turn-over were selected purposively from each taluka. The pooled results showed that majority of the respondents (52.50 %) had moderate level of group cohesiveness followed by low level (37.50 %) and high level (10.00 %) of group cohesiveness. The coefficient of correlation (0.264) between group cohesiveness and perception was found highly positive and significant.

KEY WORDS: Cohesiveness, Co-operative, Correlation coefficient

INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is the lifeblood of our national economy. The livelihood and economic well being of the majority of our people depends on agriculture. The key to their prosperity and the prosperity of the entire nation depend critically on transforming and rejuvenating agriculture.

The co-operatives have been playing an important role in our agricultural and rural economy. They are engaged in several economic activities such as disbursement of credit, distribution of agricultural inputs like seeds, fertilizers, and agro-chemicals for plant protection, and arranging storage,

processing and marketing of farm produce. Co-operatives enable farmers in getting good quality inputs at a reasonable price as well as in getting remunerative returns for their farm produce when marketed through them.

Jaitly (1994) reported that through co-operatives, women in Kerala were able to significantly increase their income and bargaining power in the local market. She observed that in co-operatives, the chances of keeping alive a wide range of ecologically sustainable, small scale, employment generation and skill preserving crafts and industries.

METHODOLOGY

Selection of co-operative sectors

The agricultural economy of the farmers of North Gujarat generally depends on agricultural and animal husbandry. The agricultural and dairy co-operative sectors are dominated in the North Gujarat. Of these two sectors, agricultural sector was selected purposively for the study for the reason that agricultural co-operatives provides the inputs as well as credit services.

Selection of co-operative societies

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Selection of respondents

Three categories of respondents from all the twenty societies were selected for the study. The first category was of the primary members of the selected co-operative societies. The second category was the leaders of the selected co-operatives, who are the elected members and act as members of the Board of Directors. The third category of respondents was of the executives/managers or secretary, who are the paid employees of the selected societies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Group cohesiveness was operationalized as "we feeling" and sense of belongingness developed by the members in the co-operative structure.

Group cohesiveness among the members

The respondents according to their group cohesiveness were categorized in to three categories and are presented in Table 1. The pooled data showed that majority of the respondents (52.50 %) had moderate level of group cohesiveness followed by low

level (37.50 %) and high level (10.00 %) of group cohesiveness. Any co-operative can get success, if its members unite together and can develop the "we feeling" and therefore, maximum members were found having medium to high group cohesiveness. The findings are in accordance with the findings of Carron *et al.* (2002), who also found that group cohesiveness had a moderate relationship with performance.

Relationship between group cohesiveness and perception

The coefficient of correlation (0.264) between group cohesiveness and perception was found to be positive and highly significant. Thus, it can be concluded that there is positive and significant relationship between group cohesiveness and perception. This result implies that in cooperative movement, the higher the group cohesiveness the higher the organizational performance and it is supported by the findings of Mohd. Zainal and Rosli (2012).

CONCLUSION

More than half respondents (52.50 %) had moderate level of group cohesiveness. Positive and highly significant relationship was observed between group cohesiveness and perception.

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Table 1: Distribution of the respondents according to their group Cohesiveness among the members

n = 200

Sr. No.	Level of Group Cohesiveness	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low level (score up to 42)	75	37.50
2.	Moderate level (score from 43 to 56)	105	52.50
3.	High level (score above 56)	20	10.00
Total		200	100.00

Table 2: Coefficient of correlation between group cohesiveness and perception

Sr. No.	Variable	Coefficient of Correlation
1.	Group cohesiveness	0.264**

**** Significant at 1 per cent level of significance**