Group Dynamics among The Members of NABARD Farmers' Clubs

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ABSTRACT

The present study conducted at Thrissur district of Kerala state has been taken up to analyse the group dynamics among the members of farmers' clubs functioning under National Bank for Agricultural and Rural Development (NABARD). Three clubs each from Kodakara and Ollukkara blocks were identified randomly and 120 members were selected through proportionate sampling method. Group role, group motivation, group leadership, group behaviour, group cohesiveness, group conflict and intergroup dynamics have been selected as group dynamics components. Group dynamics index for clubs was found to be 0.604. Components were subjected to principle component analysis and factor analysis. Determining factors of group dynamics were named as group stimulation factor, group sustainability factor and group variance factor.

Key words : *Group dynamics, Components, Factors of group dynamics, Farmers' clubs*

Agriculture is the largest unorganized sector in India. Around 60.00 per cent of people depend on agriculture. Among these only 5.00 per cent to 10.00 per cent farmers are progressive, educated, self moving and innovative (National Statistical Council, 2010). Still the farmers never have any vibrant model to organize themselves and to link with the market. In this occasion farmers' organizations have its prime importance. Farmers organizations in India include farmers groups, Farmer Interest Groups (FIGs), Commodity Interest Groups (CIGs), cooperatives, farmers associations, federations, Self Help Groups (SHGs), farmer unions and agricultural cooperatives.

Farmers' club is a voluntary organization, organized by rural branches of bank, Non Governmental Organizations, State Agricultural Universities and Krishi Vijyan Kendras with technical support from NABARD. The programme was launched in 1983, known as Vikas Volunteer Vahini (VVV) and rechristened as farmers' club in 2005. Aim of the programme is to propagate the principles of "development through credit". According to NABARD annual report for the year 2013, the total number of clubs in the country is 1.27 lakhs, where 24,802 new farmers' clubs were formed during the last financial year.

Group dynamics of clubs could be one of the determinants for effectiveness of clubs (Sreevalsan et al., 2012). The study was concentrated on selected components of group dynamics of clubs. Based on the components determining factors of group dynamics were found out and analysed later.

METHODOLOGY

An ex post facto research design was adopted for the study. Thrissur district ranks second in number of farmers' clubs and it is the pioneer to form farmers' clubs federation in the state. Among 17 blocks of the district, Kodakara and Ollukkara blocks were purposively selected based on the availability of more number of farmers' clubs (14 clubs each). Three clubs from each block involved in diverse activities were identified randomly. One hundred and twenty members from the identified six clubs were selected in proportion to total number of members as sample of the study.

Group dynamics index (GDI)

$$GDI = \frac{(C_{1x} + C_{2x} + C_{3x} + \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots C_{7x})}{(C_{1y} + C_{2y} + C_{3y} + \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots C_{7y})}$$

Where,

GDI - Group Dynamics Index

$(C_{1x} + C_{2x} + C_{3x} + \ldots \ldots \ldots C_{7x})$ - Sum of total score obtained by 1st component to 7th component

$(C_{1y} + C_{2y} + C_{3y} + \ldots \ldots \ldots C_{7y})$ - Sum of total maximum possible score for 1st component to 7th component Principle component analysis and factor analysis (with varimax rotation) were used for statistical analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Group dynamics was operationalised as an extent to which the perceived selected components exists at a given point of time. Attempts have been made to measure the existing group dynamics among members of farmers' clubs by taking the components of group dynamics into consideration. The components were identified by reviewing the literature and through interaction with farmers' club authorities. They were group role, group motivation, group leadership, group cohesiveness, group behaviour, group conflict and inter-group dynamics. Group dynamics responses for the identified seven components were obtained from members of farmers' clubs on five point continuum (most prevalent, more prevalent, moderately prevalent, less prevalent and least prevalent). Component wise indexes worked out from the obtained scores have been presented in Table 1.

Group cohesiveness index contributes highly (0.71) towards the group dynamics of members. During the survey, it could be observed that members

Table 1
Component-wise group-dynamics index

S.No.	Group–dynamics components	Index score
1.	Group role index	0.52
2.	Group motivation index	0.62
3.	Group leadership index	0.70
4.	Group behaviour index	0.59
5.	Group cohesiveness index	0.71
6.	Group conflict index	0.64
7.	Inter-group dynamics index	0.45
	Overall mean score	**0.604**

felt trustfulness and friendship among the groups. Members mutually helped each other for taking decisions on various activities. Transparency in dealings and feeling to be in group would have increased their cohesiveness index.

It could be further inferred that members of farmers' club exhibited more leadership behaviour (0.70). The leaders of clubs are found to be motivating the members. Efficiency of leader is witnessed during the survey through participating in one of the club meetings. In most of the clubs leader is elected democratically by the members. Further, the leaders take decision by involving all members of clubs.

Group had a group conflict index of 0.64. Conflict sources, nature and management techniques were taken into account for group conflict analysis. Difference in opinion and variation in profile would be the reason for internal struggles. Irregular record maintenance was found to be the source of conflict. Members conducted group meetings and discussed their problems. Officials were involved to some extent to solve the issues. Farmers' club federation also identified the conflicts in groups and used to take efforts to overcome them.

Motivation index among group members (0.62) have been influenced by the motivation of the friends and NABARD officials in the earlier periods. The success stories of clubs do attract and motivate new members.

Absenteeism of members in meetings due to lack of time and inactive participation in trainings could be the cause for low group behavior index (0.59). Group role index was also found to be low than the overall mean index. Members reported that the role clarity was low among them. During the survey it could be observed that programmes were planned and maintained by few members in the groups. The roles and responsibilities were not specified for all the members as they felt.

Group had a very low inter-group dynamics index (0.45) due to low participation and initiation of programmes with other groups. No programmes were initiated with other groups. Federation conducted meetings and training programs but joint ventures were

very rare. Members could exchange resources with other groups. Information seeking and sharing were observed within the groups but rarely between the groups. The leaders of different groups could also discuss the activities and planned programmes on regular basis. Achievements and success stories of one club should motivate other clubs. The findings are in accordance to findings of Mary (2012)

Principle component analysis of components towards group dynamics

Principle component analysis carried out with all the components are given in the Table 2. Eigen value and percentage of variance by all the components were found out and components which have more than one Eigen value were selected for further analysis.

Table 2
Eigen values for group dynamics indicators

S.No	Factor	Eigen values	Percentage of variance	Cumulative per cent of variance
1.	I	2.180	31.139	31.139
2.	II	1.620	23.147	54.285
3.	III	1.244	17.777	72.062
4.	IV	0.800	11.429	83.492
5.	V	0.546	7.800	91.291
6.	VI	0.404	5.773	97.065
7.	VII	0.205	2.935	100.00

From the seven components, first three factors which have more than one Eigen value were extracted as these three together explained a total variance of 72.062 per cent towards group-dynamics.

Rotated factor (Varimax) matrix of indicators

The results of principle component analysis clearly indicated that there were three factors that explained the maximum variation (72.062 %) in group-dynamics. Further, factor loading of each component under three factors was analysed through rotated factor matrix (Varimax) and furnished in Table 3.

Each factor column was scanned for identifying the components which are more significantly correlated with the particular factor. Thus, from each factor column, the components having a factor loading of more than 0.70 were selected and grouped.

Factor I has been identified as 'Prime factor' as it explained 31.139 per cent of variation in group-dynamics (Table 3). Under factor 1, group motivation and cohesiveness influenced the group-dynamics to greater extent with the highest factor loading of 0.824 for group motivation followed by group cohesiveness (0.790). Since, these factors primarily deal with trustfulness and inspiration of the individuals, it has been named as 'Group stimulation factor'.

Among the total variation of 72.062 per cent, the second factor alone explained the group-dynamics variation to the extent of 23.147 per cent. Thus, factors

Table 3
Rotated factor (Varimax) matrix of each component

S. No	Group-dynamics components	Factors		
		1	2	3
1	Group role	-.132	.739	-.303
2	Group motivation	.824	-.020	.128
3	Group leadership	.426	.503	-.611
4	Group behaviour	.543	.746	.262
5	Group cohesiveness	.790	-.073	-.109
6	Inter-group dynamics	-.062	.753	.099
7	Group conflict	.130	.077	.928
	Eigen values	2.180	1.620	1.244
	% of variation explained	31.139	23.147	17.777
	Cumulative % variation explained	31.139	54.285	72.062

Table 4
Factors-wise components with factor loading

Factors	Components	Factor loadings
Factor 1	Group motivation	0.824
	Group cohesiveness	0.790
Factor 2	Inter-group dynamics	0.753
	Group role	0.739
	Group behaviour	0.746
Factor 3	Group conflict	0.928

one and two together contributed 54.285 per cent variation in group-dynamics (Table 2). From the results, it could be concluded that three components in factor II viz., Inter-group dynamics, group role and behaviour have been found to manipulate the group dynamics. The sustainability of a group is influenced by behavioural pattern of members, role performed and relation with other groups. Thus, it has been named as 'Group sustainability factor'.

Factor III was explained by only one variable, group conflict with a factor loading of 0.928. Group conflict among the members and its management are essential components for the effective functioning of group. The variations among groups have been observed because of presence and absence of conflict factors. Thus the factor accounted for 17.777 per cent of variance and the factor has been labelled as 'Group variance factor'.

CONCLUSION

Group dynamics of farmers' club could influence its functioning and level of performance. Each identified component of group dynamics was analysed through index scores. Contribution of component towards the group was determined and grouped into factors. Group stimulation, group sustainability and group variance could be the determining factors of dynamics. Group motivation and cohesiveness emerged as the prime factors for group dynamics. Appropriate activities should be planned to motivate the group and to remain trustworthy towards group action till its existence. Low index score of inter group dynamics implied the poor interaction between different groups. Suitable programmes could be restructured to involve different groups in a location. Since the members of farmers' club exhibited strong group dynamics pattern the officials of NABARD, credit institutions, KVKs and farmers federation would give more importance to group contact strategies. This would strengthen the operations of clubs.

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