

Dimensions of Group Dynamics Effectiveness of Self Help Groups of Rural Women in Haryana

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ABSTRACT

Swaranjayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY) aims to organize rural women below poverty line into self-help groups with the perspective of bringing every assisted family above the poverty line in three years .In establishing micro-enterprises under SGSY, the emphasis is given on group and cluster approach .Group dynamics is the internal nature of the group. It becomes very important to study the group dynamics of these enterprises to look into whether the nature and functioning of the project addresses the problems and needs of rural women. Extent to which the rural women have been mobilized and organized, their size and structures, working of the group and impact of group dynamics on the effectiveness of SHGs micro-enterprises. District Gurgaon in Haryana state was selected as locale for conducting the study. Eighteen SHGs from 3 blocks with 190 members were selected for the study. The data revealed that the performance of individual member was found to be low, but the SHGs were found to be very dynamic, which indicate that they could take up all the activities to a high degree of satisfaction. On the contrary, individual member was not able to perform all the activities satisfactorily on her/his own.

Key words: Group Dynamics; Micro-enterprises; Self-help Groups

Group dynamics is concerned with the interaction forces among group members in a social situation. It is the internal nature of the group-how they are formed, what are their structures and processes, how do they function and affect individual members, other groups and the organization.

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out to ascertain group dynamics in self help groups micro-enterprises in Haryana state. District Gurgaon was selected as the locale for present investigation. It is comprised of two regions viz; Mewat and Non-Mewat region. Three blocks under Gurgaon district, one in Mewat and two in Non-Mewat region were selected as locale for proper representation of the district. The blocks selected were those which had the maximum number of self-help groups formed and also had undergone their first grading. Out of total of nine blocks, 3 blocks selected had more than 10 groups each, which had undergone the first grading. The total of 18 SHGs constituted the sample of SHGs for the present study. These groups had also undergone their second grading i.e. they had obtained finance from the Government for starting their entrepreneurial activities/micro-enterprises. The villages of the three blocks where these 18 SHGs were physically located were the sampled villages and all members of these 18 SHGs (10-14

members in each SHG) were treated as respondents. Three gram sewikas who were involved in the formation and implementation of the scheme at all levels of these SHGs also the sample of the study. Thus total of 3 blocks, 18 villages, 18 SHGs with 190 SHG members and 3 gram sewikas constituted the total sample of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Group dynamics of SHGs are categorized in to two groups as follows:

(a) *Perception of group members towards SGSY which includes group formation aspects, need satisfaction of group formation by SGSY, constraints faced by group members as being member of the group and suggestions for making group functioning more effective.*

(b) *Dimensions of group dynamics effectiveness like participation, decision-making procedures, group atmosphere, task and maintenance functions, feelings, norms, empathy, interpersonal trust, etc.*

1. The study revealed that ninety five percent of the members were motivated by Gram Sewikas for joining the self-help group. Although, in both the regions, it took 3-6 months for most of the groups to be formed, but in Mewat region, one third of the groups also took more than 6 months. Most of the members felt that the procedure of group formation was complicated though

worthwhile. While all the members of Mewat region and most of the members of Non-Mewat region felt that the size and structure of the groups to be appropriate. Most of the respondents expressed that selection of key activities was done in a systematic manner, but the procedure of sanctioning loans was complicated. The amount of credit provided was sufficient although they felt that it was considerably delayed. All the members felt that adequate training inputs were provided to them and they were able to purchase raw-materials on market rates without any subsidy, which were easily available in their own or nearby village itself. There was a market for finished products within the village itself with the products being sold of immediately. The milk venders and co-operative organizations were collecting the milk from them from the villages itself. Vast majority (96.8%) felt SGSY to be advantageous, mainly because of freedom from the clutches of money lenders and availability of credit for any emergency need. Members from both the regions ranked the increase in income due to the implementation of SGSY as foremost in importance. Proper utilization of time and resources was given the second rank and awareness about entrepreneurship was ranked at third place. Unity and co-operation among group members and increase in cosmopolitaness were ranked the lowest by the beneficiaries. Skill acquisition through trainings was ranked at fourth place by the respondents of both the regions. Similarly, increase in confidence and decision-making power and increase in managerial ability were ranked fifth and sixth by the beneficiaries of both the regions. Family responsibilities was expressed as the major constraint, followed by illiteracy, non-co-operation of family head and low economic status.

2. The findings revealed that all the members had good level of participation in group meetings/discussions in both the regions. Majority of the respondents reported that members were able to influence each other in a desirable way. Sampled respondents were highly satisfied with decision-making procedures in both the regions. The procedure followed for task-functions by most of the members enabled them to achieve the targets set. Maintenance functions were highly taken care of by all in both the regions. All the beneficiaries reported that group atmosphere was highly congenial. Majority of the members felt themselves as a part of the group and had a high level of concern for the feelings of other members. Nearly all the members in both the regions were found following the norms for participation and standards that control the behaviour of group members. The members were empathetic towards other group members. Almost all (95.8%) the members in both the regions reported having high level of interpersonal trust. As far as

performance of SHGs on the whole was concerned, all the members expressed high performance level. The high performance level of groups might be because of cohesiveness and trust between the members, which are highly required for the groups to be effective. Whereas, performance of members at individual level was not reported to be satisfactory. Nearly sixty four percent members of Non-Mewat region and 49% members of Mewat region expressed performance at a low level, 36% from Mewat and 26% from Non-Mewat region could perform at moderate level and only 12% could perform at high level. It may be inferred from the data that performance of the individual member was low, but achievement of SHGs on the whole was high, which indicates that they could take up all the activities to a high degree of satisfaction. On the contrary, individual member was not able to perform all the activities satisfactorily on his/her own. This might be due to the reasons that in every SHG, there were 2-3 active members, who were reported to perform all outside activities of the SHG, such as banking transactions, marketing and attending training etc. at BDO/DRDA office. All other group members being only the passive members performed their tasks at village level only. This indicated that SHGs of women can be an effective tool for the promotion of economic activities in rural areas.

Dimensions of group dynamics effectiveness: Since, effectiveness of the group is affected by number of factors, therefore, an attempt was made to study the correlation of some variables like, participation, influence, decision-making procedures, task-functions, maintenance functions, group atmosphere, membership, feelings, norms, empathy, interpersonal trust with achievement in SHGs. These were studied by using Pearson's correlation coefficient. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Dimensions of group dynamics effectiveness (N=190)

Dimensions of Group dynamics	Achievement in SHGs	
	Performance of SHG	Performance of member
Participation	.134 .066	.468** .000
Influence	.023 .758	.462** .000
Decision-making procedure	.159* .028	.232** .001
Task functions	.036 .618	.582** .000
Maintenance functions	.109 .135	.440** .000
Group atmosphere	.262** .000	.157* .031
Membership	.289** .000	.331** .000
Feelings	.140 .054	.543** .000
Norms	.188** .009	.272** .000
Empathy	.081 .264	.562** .000
Interpersonal trust	.028 .705	.629** .000

** $p < 0.01$

Although the performance at individual level was low for 59% members at both the regions, still about 30 percent

members were performing at moderate level and 12 percent members even were able to perform the activities independently at high level. Results of correlation coefficient show that all the dimensions of group dynamics effectiveness were significantly correlated with performance of the individual member. Further, with respect to performance of the members in the group, the better decision-making procedures, congenial group atmosphere, high membership and following the norms in the groups only were found to be positively and significantly correlated. This indicates the importance of these four factors in the effectiveness of the group dynamics.

Multiple Regression Analysis of Group Formation Aspects, Need Satisfaction of SGSY and Constraints

(Independent Variables) with Dimensions of Group Dynamics Effectiveness (Dependent Variables) : The 29 independent variables entered in multiple regression analysis were -motivation, time taken and procedure of group formation, size and structure of group, selection of key activities, procedure of sanctioning loans, leadership pattern, timely first and second grading of the group, need satisfaction and constraints faced in being member of the SHG under SGSY. The 12 dependent variables in this set were dimensions of group dynamics effectiveness viz; participation, influence, decision-making, procedures, task-functions, maintenance functions, group atmosphere, membership, feelings, norms, empathy, interpersonal trust, performance of SHGs and performance of member alone. The relevant results have been presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Multiple regression analysis of group formation aspects, need satisfaction by SGSY and constraints (independent variables) with dimensions of group dynamics effectiveness (dependent variables) (N=190)

S.No	Dependent Variables	Independent Variables	T-Value	Signi. Level	F-ratio	R ²
1.	Participation	* Family responsibilities	2.267	0.046	1.525	0.063
		* Very low economic status	2.373	0.019		
2.	Influence	* None	-	-	-	-
3.	Decision-making procedures	* None	-	-	-	-
4.	Task-functions	* Family responsibilities	3.108	0.002	1.775	0.205
5.	Maintenance functions	* None	-	-	-	-
6.	Group-atmosphere	* None	-	-	-	-
7.	Membership	* None	-	-	-	-
8.	Feelings	* Procedure of group formation	2.441	0.016	1.104	0.138
9.	Norms	* First grading of the group	2.111	0.036	1.686	0.197
		* Advantages of scheme (even in delayed gradings)	2.547	0.012	-	-
10.	Empathy	* Advantages of scheme (even in delayed gradings)	2.077	0.039	1.877	0.214
11.	Interpersonal trust	* Procedure of group formation	2.706	0.008	1.913	0.216
		* Family responsibilities	1.976	0.05	-	-
12 (a)	Performance of SHG	* Section of key activities	2.856	0.005	2.496	0.266
		* Unity & co-operation among group members	2.996	0.023	-	-
		* Very low economic status	2.75	0.007	-	-
(b)	Performance of member	* Time taken for group formation	2.458	0.015	2.223	0.244
		* Procedure of group formation	2.118	0.036	-	-
		* Advantages of scheme	2.052	0.042	-	-
		* Managerial ability	2.066	0.04	-	-
		* Cosmopolitaness	2.016	0.045	-	-
		* Family responsibilities	2.618	0.01	-	-

Significant at $p < 0.05$ level of significance

Table 2 indicates that out of a set of 29 independent variables, greater family responsibilities and very low economic status had adverse negative significant effect towards participation in SHGs. None of the variables contributed significantly to the influence and decision-making procedures of SHGs. Family responsibilities also had a significant negative association to the performance of task-functions i.e. the members having more family responsibilities performed task-functions poorly. None of the variables contributed significantly in the maintenance functions of SHGs, group atmosphere as well as membership of group members. Procedure of group

formation alone accounted for 13.8 percent significant contribution towards feelings of group members. Correct procedure of group-formation helped in better understanding of other group members. Timely first grading of group, perceived advantages of the scheme even in case of delayed second grading altogether contributed significantly to 19.7 percent for the adherence of norms by group members. Perceived advantages of scheme even in case of delayed second grading also positively and significantly contributed to the empathy in group members. Procedure of group formation and family responsibilities significantly accounted for 21.8 percent

variation in the interpersonal trust of group members. Worthwhile procedure of group formation caused high interpersonal trust among members, inspite of numerous family responsibilities. Systematic and proper selection of key activities, unity and co-operation among group members had positively and significantly contributed and very low economic status had a negative significant association with performance of SHGs on the whole. These accounted for 26.6 percent variation. This indicates that systematic selection of key activities, unity and co-operation among group members helped in better performance in SHGs, whereas very low economic status hindered the performance. Correct procedure of group formation and perceived advantages of scheme to members significantly positively contributed, whereas, short time taken for group formation, less family

responsibilities, good managerial abilities, cosmopolitness, all significantly and positively affected the performance. They altogether accounted for 24.4 percent variation towards the performance of the members at individual level.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that high motivation for group formation, less time taken for group formation, right procedure of group formation, proper selection of key activities, timely first grading of the groups, perceived advantages of scheme even in case of delayed second grading, and need satisfaction by SGSY contributed significantly and positively. Whereas, some constraints affected the dimensions of group dynamics effectiveness negatively.

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