

**PERFORMANCE AND POTENTIAL OF
GRAMASABHAS IN CROP PRODUCTION
IN ATHIYANOOR BLOCK OF
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM DISTRICT**

17194-11

BY

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THESIS
submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirement for the degree
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN AGRICULTURE
Faculty of Agriculture
Kerala Agricultural University

**Department of Agricultural Extension
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
Vellayani - Thiruvananthapuram**

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Dedicated

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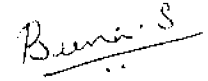
My Beloved Parents

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis entitled "**Performance and potential of gramasabhas in crop production in Athiyanoor block of Thiruvananthapuram district**" is a bonafide record of research work done by me during the course of research and that the thesis has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma, associateship, fellowship or other similar title. of any other university or society.

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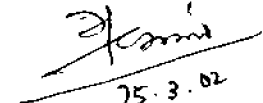
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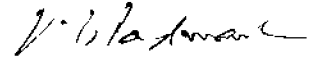

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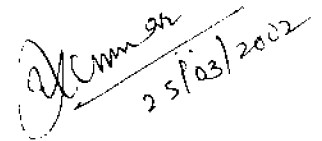
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Beena.S
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Introduction

CHAPTER – 1

INTRODUCTION

India is predominantly an agrarian country with agriculture as the main occupation of the rural people. Since Indian agriculture is diversified, care must be taken in agricultural planning and policy making. Any generalization in the policy will ignore the inter-regional differences. Without understanding the intricacies of rural life, the success of a plan is doubtful. Any plan that relates to rural India must be in harmony with the local geographical, economic and social conditions.

Rural local plans give topmost priority to agriculture and allied areas. The development dialogue that went into the reasons of the stagnation of the agricultural sector had underlined the importance of participatory decentralised planning as a way out (Isaac and Tharakan, 1995). Agriculture and allied activities were identified as areas where the decentralised alternatives have the maximum potential for improvement. If decentralization is to be meaningful resources need to be devolved to lower levels of decision making, which must have the right to allocate resources based on local priorities. This is what, that has been experimented through gramasabhas. Gramasabhas came into force in Kerala as a part of people's plan (PP) in the year 1996. People's plan is an innovation in the field of decentralised planning in the whole nation itself. While most other programmes have come up at the instance and with the support of international donors (United Nations, 1996 and Blair, 2000), the People's Campaign has very much been of local origin. The Kerala Panchayati Raj Act, 1994 provides for the

constitution of gramasabhas separately for every ward of the village. Gramasabha is a body of persons. But it can also be seen as a process or a mode ensuring people's participation. In many ways gramasabha is comparable to citizen forum – a forum of direct democracy in the ancient Greek City States (Cohen and Uphoff, 1980).

Gramasabha is the only constitutionally recognized institution where people participate directly in matters concerning their lives. Through the discussions carried out in these village assemblies, people identify local development problems, analyse the factors responsible and put forward suggestions for possible solutions. The needs assessed through gramasabhas serve as the raw material for the gramapanchayat in preparing projects for the locality. Building up of the database from the gramasabha level with required consolidation at the panchayat level and upwards set the process of information driven planning even at the lowest level (Chattopadhyay and Aniyani, 2000).

The rural people have demonstrated throughout history that they have an inherent capacity to find solutions to their own problems and development needs (Mkhize, 2000). Gramasabha acts as a statutory body where the rural people can voice their needs and concerns. Gramasabhas provide critical support by creating institutional space where they can participate, thus realising the true meaning of decentralization and ensuring sustainable development.

Need for the study

Gramasabha has been given shape to add a better dimension to the existing planning system. Since the concept of gramasabha was completely new to Kerala, it needs to give special attention to these gramasabhas. It is of prime necessity to know whether these gramasabhas perform the functions as intended or not. A systematic study analysing the effectiveness of the gramasabhas in planning and implementing agricultural development programmes has not been conducted. The present study is an attempt to fill this lacuna.

Scientific studies on the role of gramasabhas in promoting agricultural development would help to reorient the gramasabhas with regard to the development problems of the farmers. It is presumed that the result of the study will also help planners, policy makers and administrators to strengthen gramasabhas for a sustainable agricultural development.

Objectives

- 1) To analyse the effectiveness of gramasabhas in planning and implementing agricultural development programmes
- 2) To study the attitude of farmers, officials and people's representatives towards gramasabhas
- 3) To study the perception of farmers, officials and people's representatives about the functioning of gramasabhas
- 4) To identify the constraints as perceived by farmers, officials and people's representatives regarding the functioning of gramasabhas
- 5) To make suggestions for the better functioning of gramasabhas.

Limitations of the study

The study was undertaken as a part of the requirement for the post-graduate programme and hence it was not possible to cover the area in greater depth and in more comprehensive manner. However, with limited resources and time available, sincere efforts have been made to make this study more objective and systematic as possible.

Presentation of the report

The report of the study has been spread out under five chapters.

Chapter One introduces the subject of the thesis indicating its need, objectives, limitations and the way in which the study has been pursued.

Chapter Two covers the relevant literature, conceptualisation of variables and the conceptual model of the study.

Chapter Three deals with the methodology in which details regarding the locale, sampling, empirical measures used, data collection and the statistical methods used for the analysis of the data have been presented.

The results of the study in relation to the objectives and the discussion based on the results are presented in Chapter Four.

A summary of the entire study emphasizing the salient findings is given in Chapter Five followed by references and appendices.

*Theoretical
Orientation*

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

In this chapter, it is aimed to develop a theoretical frame work based on past research studies. Since the present study is a pioneering one, review of the related previous work in accordance with the objectives of the study is furnished here.

2.1 Concept of gramasabha

2.2 Effectiveness of gramasabhas in planning and implementing agricultural development programmes

2.3 Attitude towards gramasabhas

2.4 Perception about the functioning of gramasabhas

2.5. Relationship of effectiveness, attitude and perception with the selected independent variables

2.6. Problems associated with the functioning of gramasabhas

2.7 Suggestions for the better functioning of gramasabhas

2.1 Concept of gramasabha

Gramasabha is the very bedrock of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI). PRIs are looked upon as instruments of rural development. They were given constitutional status by adding 73rd Amendment Act to the Indian constitution. As per this Act, constitution of gramasabhas is mandatory but its powers and functions are to be specified by its respective state legislatures. But gramasabhas were introduced in Kerala in 1996 as a part of PP.

Gramasabha is the assembly of all the voters residing in a village. Gramasabha has been defined in 73rd Amendment Act as a body comprising all persons registered in the electoral rolls of a village falling within the jurisdiction of a village panchayat. The Kerala Panchayati Raj Act, '94 provides for the constitution of gramasabhas separately for every ward of a village. So in Kerala context gramasabha can be defined as the assembly of all the voters in the ward of the village.

State Planning Board (1999) enlists the following functions as related to local level planning and plan implementation for the gramasabhas.

- 1) Identification of felt needs and local problems
- 2) Evaluation and prioritisation of project proposals.
- 3) Selection of beneficiaries
- 4) Mobilisation of local resources and
- 5) Social audit

On 4th July 1996 Kerala Government constituted a committee on decentralisation with Dr. Satya Brata Sen as its chairman. Its recommendations on gramasabha are perhaps the first detailed exposition on the subject. Sen Committee (1997) has categorically stated that

- 1) The gramasabha should meet as frequently as possible at any rate not less than once in three months.
- 2) There should be a written invitation to every household to ensure 10 per cent quorum.
- 3) Every member should be given a copy of the government order detailing the rights and responsibilities of the gramasabhas with a covering letter by the panchayat president.

According to Mahipal (1998), some of the non-panchayat members should be authorized to look into the accounts and put their signature as a mark of the scrutiny done.

From Kerala experience it could be stated that the relationship between gramasabha and panchayats is dialectical in nature. Jagajeevan and Ramakanthan (2000) found out that the participation in gramasabha was reduced with urbanisation and increased with farming community present in the population. They also pointed out that the functioning of gramasabha was not affected by political differences.

Thus in the ultimate analysis, gramasabha is an institution to meet, discuss and criticise (Mathew, 1999).

2.2 Effectiveness of gramasabhas in planning and implementing agricultural development programmes

According to Lassen (1976) one of the key factors in influencing organisational effectiveness was the channels of communication existing in the group.

Nagendraprasad (1978) considered cultural and recreational activities as important activities for the effective functioning of youth clubs.

Clark (1991) and Hunter *et al.* (1992) observed that regularity, punctuality and attendance in all group meetings were important indicators of effective group functioning.

Aziz (1993) opined that the local governance system will not provide answers to local problems and development imperatives unless such a system is responsive to these problems, effective and efficient in its reach. He added

that the local governments appeared to have done better at implementation stage than at the plan formulation stage.

Arnaiz (1995) reported that the farmers organisations can enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of agricultural technology systems.

According to Tiwari (1997) any strategy which ignores the inter-regional differences and fails to understand the intricacies of normal life is bound to be ineffective.

FAO (1999) recommended that members of the farmers group should share the responsibility to the group decision, so as to make functioning of group more effective.

According to John and Chathukulam (1999), an effective gramasabha is possible only with the willing co-operation of the representatives of the people.

Mathew (1999) stated that the panchayats will be effective only if gramasabhas meet regularly with maximum participation of the people.

Puyalvannan (1999) found that one can plan effectively only when the quantum of money that is available is known before hand.

Singh (1999) opined that, for effective functioning of any democratic institution or people's organisation, it is necessary that the members of the organisation meet regularly, as frequently as necessary and at a place and at a time convenient to the majority of the members concerned.

According to Chattopadhyay and Aniyani (2000) local level data base were a major lacuna to take up effective planning at micro level.

Mishra and Dhaka (2000) opined that an organisation cannot operate effectively if internal boundaries become inflexible walls and sections within it start acting as if they are in competition with, or under threat from other parts of the organisation.

Patnaik (2000) observed that serious gaps in infrastructure development in a neo-liberal economy reduces the effectiveness of resource use at the lower levels.

2.3 Attitude of farmers towards gramasabhas

Allport (1935) stated that attitude is a mental and neural state of readiness organised through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individuals response to all objects and situations with which it is related.

Thurstone (1946) defined attitude as the degree of positive or negative affect associated with some psychological object towards which people can differ in varying degrees.

Krech and Crutchfield (1948) defined attitude as an enduring organisation of motivational, emotional, perceptual and cognitive process with respect to some aspect of the individual's world.

Cooper (1959) experimentally demonstrated that even when attitudes are aroused in an artificial laboratory setting, they are accompanied by relatively strong emotion.

Katz and Scotland (1959) stated that attitude is a tendency or disposition to evaluate an object or the symbol of that object in a certain way.

Sharma (1972) defined attitude as a personal disposition which impels an individual to react to some object or situation.

According to Blair (1978) attitude is a predisposition to respond to a certain set of facts.

Singh (1978) showed that high scores on attitude towards farming and continuous decision making were associated with progressive farm behaviour.

Judd *et al.* (1991) viewed attitude as evaluations of various objects that are stored in memory.

Fathimabi (1993) observed that most of the agricultural labourers had favourable attitude towards welfare schemes for agricultural labourers implemented by the Government of Kerala.

According to Rajendralal (1997) any development programme aimed at the welfare of the people, calls for maximum people's participation. To achieve this participation the beneficiaries should have a positive attitude towards the developmental programmes.

2.4 Perception about the functioning of gramasabhas

Crow and Crow (1956) defined perception as the meaningful sensation that assumes an important role in the life of an individual. It refers to the ways by which the individual receives, interprets and responds to the stimuli picked by one's sense organs.

According to Kuppaswamy (1964) perception is the process of becoming aware of objects or events or characteristics by means of sensory operations. Previous experience influences present perception. Thus perception is a mighty complex process. A person tends to identify a given

situation or object in terms of what is familiar to him. In other words perception depends not only on the pattern of the stimuli but also on the individual's past experiences and his needs.

Mitchel (1978) stated that perception is that factor which shapes and produces what we actually experience.

Taylor *et al.* (1980) refers perception as the mental process of recognizing the stimuli we receive. One has to both perceive (recognize) and interpret the sensations one receives before they become perceived messages.

Muthukrishnan (1981) found that majority of the users (93 per cent) of biogas plants had better perception towards the attributes of biogas plants.

According to Rao and Narayana (1986) avoiding perceptual distortion is one of the techniques to develop perceptual skills.

Meera (1995) found that two groups of farmers differed significantly with respect to mean utility perception scores for important agricultural practices.

Bhatia and Rajendran (1996) opined that perception becomes fuller, more accurate and more serviceable as a result of one's increasing experience. We learn to supply more details and distinguish the nature of subject when only a slight clue is given. In all cases limited sense of data provides sufficient clues for us to understand the whole object. Object also becomes more meaningful through experience.

Santhoshkumar (1999) found that 63.12 per cent of farmers perceived Agricultural Development Programmes (ADPs) implemented through PP as useful to them and 36.88 per cent perceived it as least or not useful to them.

Jaiswal and Roy (1968) stressed that a farmer does not become interested in any information if he does not perceive it as relevant to his own farming situation, his resources and his goals. The perception of farmer will depend on his values, beliefs and attitudes.

Balu (1980) stated that 75 per cent of participants of Intensive Agriculture Development Programme (IADP) perceived that method of availing benefits was more complicated.

Sudha (1987) conducted a study on Lab to Land Programme and found that about 55 per cent of the non tribals and 75 per cent of the tribals belonged to high perception group.

According to Pridhvi (1996) as the clients are involved in the planning process they perceive the idea of the programme in a better way.

Sitaram (1997) observed that the farmers perception of utility of ADPs through PP is dependent on the fact that how effective they make use of recommendations as described in the plan.

According to Mishra and Dhaka (2000), the citizens' perception of the state and its functionaries is primarily based on its role as a service provider, law enforcer and regulator.

Parvathy (2000) found that 77.5 per cent of the rural women and 82.5 per cent of the woman office bearers had medium level of perception about PP.

2.5 Relationship of the independent variables with the dependent variables under study

2.5.1 Effectiveness

Studies indicating the relationship of perceived effectiveness with the selected independent variables is presented below.

Name of the researcher	Year of study	Category of respondents	Independent variables	Relationship with effectiveness
Sundaram	1986	Farmers	Education	P & S
Sundaram	1986	Farmers	Social participation	P & S.
Sundaram	1986	Farmers	Economic motivation	P & S
Sundaram	1986	Farmers	Innovativeness	P & S

P & S – Positive and significant

The researcher observed a positively significant relation between the selected profile characteristics and perceived effectiveness.

2.5.2 Attitude and perception

Relationship of the selected independent variables with attitude and perception is given below :

2.5.2.1 Education

Name of the researcher	Year of study	Category of respondents	Relationship with dependent variables	
			Attitude	Perception
Muthukrishnan	1981	Farmers	-	-
Ranganathan	1984	Farmers	NS	P & S
Swamy	1988	Farmers	NS	-
Sajeevchandran	1989	Pepper growers	P&S	-
Thampan	1990	Farmers	P&S	-
Varma	1996	Farm-women	P&S	-
Rajendralal	1997	Farmers	P&S	P&S
Parvathy	2000	Rural women	NS	P&S

NS – Non-significant, P&S – Positive and significant

Majority of the researchers stated a positive and significant relationship between education and attitude. Regarding perception, all the researchers observed a positive and significant relationship.

2.5.2.2 Occupation

Name of the researcher	Year of study	Category of respondents	Relationship with dependent variables	
			Attitude	Perception
Ravichandran	1980	Sugarcane growers	NS	-
Varma	1996	Farm women	P&NS	-
Rajendralal	1997	Farmers	N&S	NS
Parvathy	2000	Rural women	NS	P&S
Somasundram and Sekhar	2000	Farmers		NS

NS – Non-significant, P&S – Positive and significant, P&NS – Positive and non-significant, N&S – Negative and significant

2.5.2.3 Annual income

Name of the researcher	Year of study	Category of respondents	Relationship with dependent variables	
			Attitude	Perception
Sushama	1978	Tribals	P & S	-
Kamarudeen	1981	Farmers	N & S	-
Varma	1996	Farm women	P&S	-
Rajendralal	1997	Farmers	N&S	NS
Parvathy	2000	Rural women	P&S	P&S

NS – Non-significant, P&S – Positive and significant, N&S – Negative and significant

Majority of the researchers revealed that attitude had a positive and significant correlation with annual income.

2.5.2.4 Political orientation

Name of the researcher	Year of study	Category of respondents	Relationship with dependent variables	
			Attitude	Perception
Santhoshkumar	1999	Farmers	-	NS
Parvathy	2000	Rural women	NS	NS

NS – Non-significant

The studies pointed out a non-significant relationship of political orientation with both attitude and perception.

2.5.2.5 Cosmopolitaness

Name of the researcher	Year of study	Category of respondents	Relationship with dependent variables	
			Attitude	Perception
Kamarudeen	1981	Farmers	P&NS	-
Vijayakumar	1983	Farmers	P&S	-
Swamy	1988	Farmers	P&S	-
Syamkumar	1999	Farmers	P&NS	-

P&S – Positive and significant, P&NS – Positive and non-significant

All these researchers observed a positive relationship with cosmopolitaness and attitude of farmers.

2.5.2.6 Social participation

Name of the researcher	Year of study	Category of respondents	Relationship with dependent variables	
			Attitude	Perception
Pillai	1978	Farmers	-	NS
Muthukrishnan	1981	Biogas users	-	NS
Ranganathan	1984	Farmers	NS	-
Cherian	1984	Farmers	P&S	-
Varma	1996	Farm women	P&S	-
Rajendaralal	1997	Farmers	-	P&S
Parvathy	2000	Rural women	NS	P&S

NS – Non-significant, P&S – Positive and significant

Majority of the researchers observed positive relationship with social participation and attitude.

2.5.2.7 Information source utilisation

The researcher could not find any study indicating the relationship of information source utilisation with the dependent variables, attitude and perception.

2.5.2.8. Extension participation

Studies related to extension participation and the variables viz., attitude and perception could not be found out.

2.5.2.9. Leadership propensity

Name of the researcher	Year of study	Category of respondents	Relationship with dependent variables	
			Attitude	Perception
Parvathy	2000	Rural women	NS	P&S

NS – Non-significant, P&S – Positive and significant

2.5.2.10 Attitude towards people's plan

Studies indicating the relationship of attitude towards people's plan and the variables viz., attitude and perception could not be found out.

2.5.2.11 Economic motivation

Name of the researcher	Year of study	Category of respondents	Relationship with dependent variables	
			Attitude	Perception
Sajeevchandran	1989	Pepper growers	P&S	-
Nelson	1992	Farmers	NS	-
Varma	1996	Farm women	P&S	-
Rajendralal	1997	Farmers	-	P&S
Padmaiah <i>et al</i>	1998	Farmers	-	P&S
Syamkumar	1999	Farmers	P&NS	-
Parvathy	2000	Rural women	P&S	P&S

NS – Non-significant, P&S – Positive and significant, P&NS – Positive and non-significant

Majority of the researchers observed a positively significant correlation between economic motivation and attitude.

All the researchers reported that economic motivation had positive and significant relationship with perception.

2.5.2.12 Training

Name of the researcher	Year of study	Category of respondents	Relationship with dependent variables	
			Attitude	Perception
Cherian	1984	Farmers	P&S	-
Thomas	1998	Farm women	-	P&S
Parvathy	2000	Rural women	P&S	P&S

P&S – Positive and significant

All these researchers observed positive and significant relationship of training with both attitude and perception.

2.5.2.13 Innovativeness

Name of the researcher	Year of study	Category of respondents	Relationship with dependent variables	
			Attitude	Perception
Ravichandran	1980	Farmers	N&S	-
Nelson	1992	Farmers	P&S	-
Varma	1996	Farm women	P&S	-
Padmaiah <i>et al</i>	1998	Farmers	-	NS
Syamkumar	1999	Farmers	P&NS	-
Parvathy	2000	Rural women	P&S	-

NS – Non-significant, P&S – Positive and significant, P&NS – Positive and non-significant, N&S – Negative and significant

Majority of the researchers pointed out a positive relationship between innovativeness and attitude.

2.5.2.14 Orientation towards incentives:

Studies related to orientation towards incentives and attitude and perception could not be found out.

2.6. Problems associated with the functioning of gramasabhas

Ramalingam (1984) stated that non-availability of village officials in time, difficulty to get information regarding the scheme and non co-operative attitude of rural work officers were the constraints faced by IRDP beneficiaries.

Rannorey (1994) listed out the problems related to people's participation as religion, caste, pattern of education, ignorance of people, lack of information among people, lack of initiative and lack of ability to execute.

Dhillion and Hansra (1995) identified the following problems pertinent to participation such as low level of awareness, village factionalism, illiteracy, poverty of the people and non-involvement of the community.

Saini and Singh (2000) reported that political factionalism was a great hindrance to the working of the gramapanchayat.

According to Chattopadhyay and Aniyani (2000), the various rural development programmes introduced from time to time suffer from certain inadequacies during the course of their implementation. These are :

- 1) Problems of co-ordination and integration
- 2) Problems of organisation and
- 3) Problems related to planning techniques and planning machinery.

2.7 Suggestions for the better functioning of grama sabhas

Sengupta (1966) listed the following suggestions for the effective working of youth organisations.

- 1) Projects should provide vocational training, satisfy needs and aspirations, foster confidence and co-operative spirit.
- 2) Club should be self managed so that the youth can participate in democratically run groups.
- 3) Volunteer club counsellor should be the adult friend and advisor

- 4) Parents, the community of official bodies and the local school has to play an important role in the development of the youth.
- 5) There should be technical guidance and follow-up for voluntary leaders and extension workers in addition to the club members.

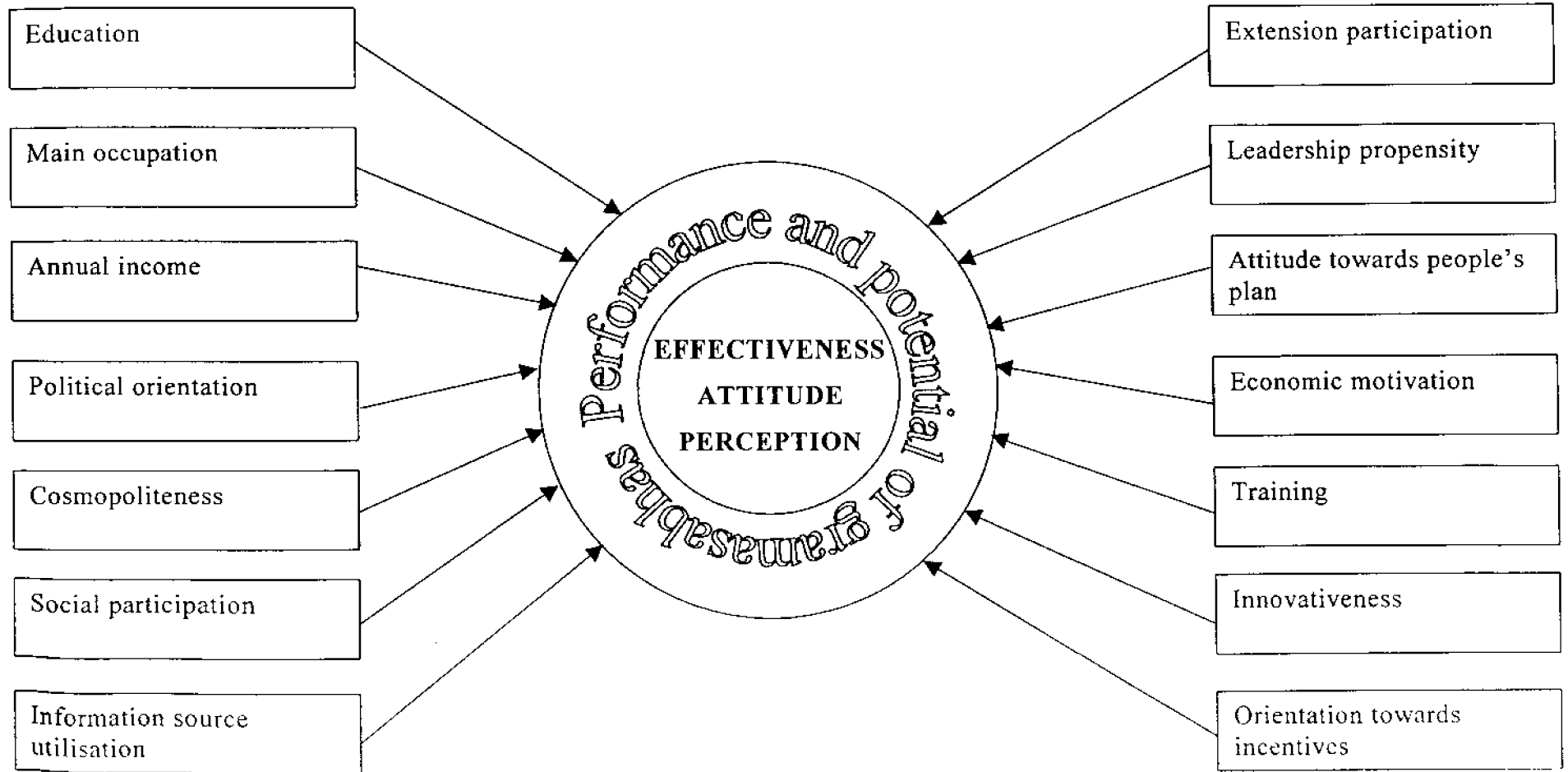
Chowbey (1973) reported that more governmental help, guidance from extension workers, more help from village panchayats, more co-operation amongst members, more encouragement and training to members, parental co-operation and proper organisation and supervision as important measures to tone up the functioning of youth clubs.

According to Saini and Singh (2000), following are the suggestions to get a better deal from the village panchayats.

- 1) Grama panchayat leaders should be adequately trained.
- 2) They should be made accountable for their responsibilities.
- 3) Internal resource mobilization should be made mandatory.
- 4) Politics at the grass root level should be discouraged.
- 5) The whole network of gramapanchayat should be fully transparent
- 6) Sanction of grants should be regular and fixed in relation to village population.

Conceptual model of the study is shown in Fig. 1.

Fig. 1 Conceptual model of the study



Methodology

CHAPTER – 3

METHODOLOGY

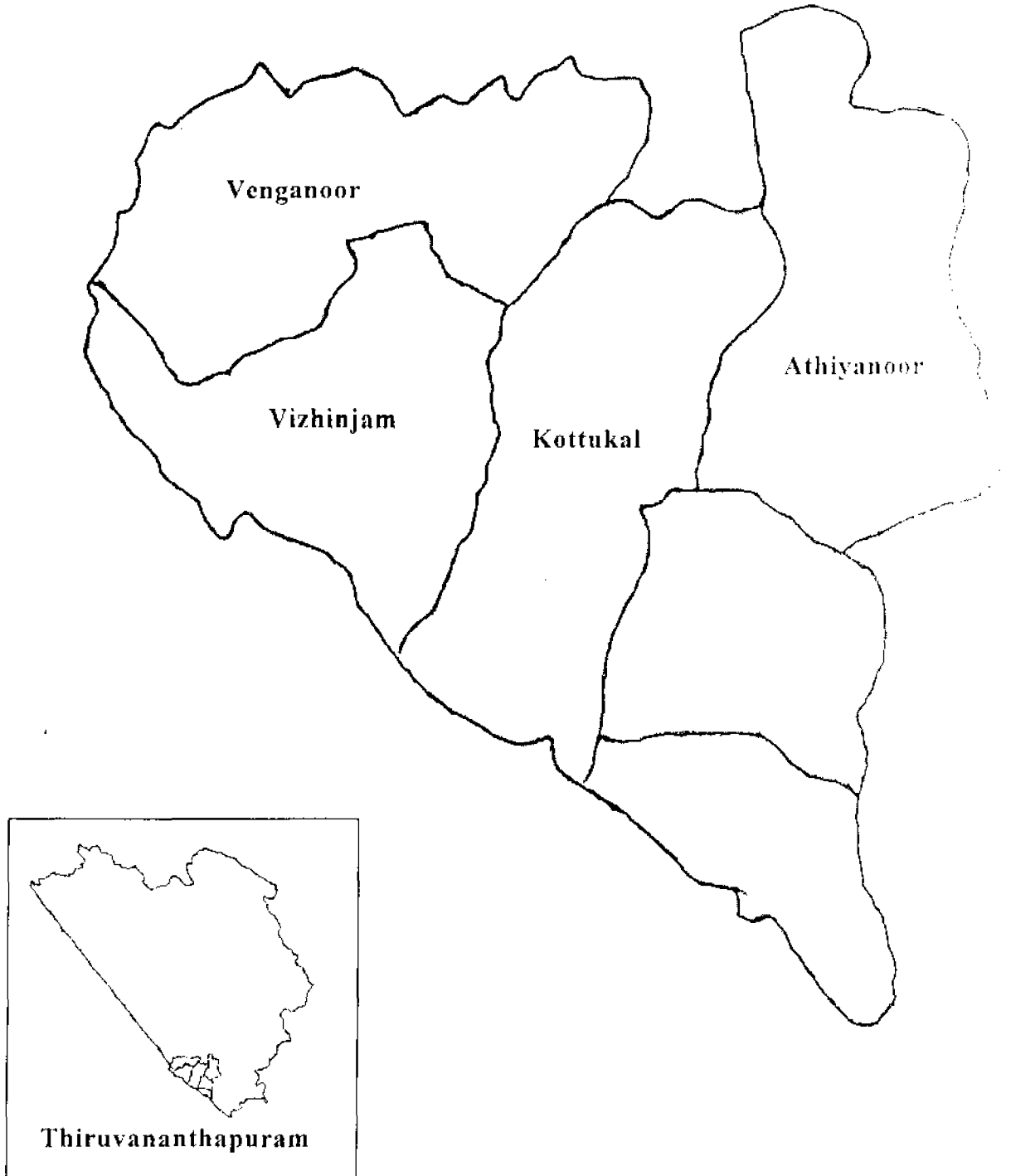
This chapter deals with the methods and procedures followed in the study, which are presented under the following subheadings.

- 3.1 Locale of the study
- 3.2 Selection of respondents
- 3.3 Selection of variables
- 3.4 Operationalisation and measurement of dependent variables
- 3.5 Operationalisation and measurement of independent variables
- 3.6 Identification of problems associated with the functioning of gramasabhas
- 3.7 Identification of suggestions for the better functioning of gramasabhas
- 3.8 Techniques of data collection
- 3.9 Statistical tools used for the study

3.1 Locale of the study

The study was conducted in Athiyanoor block of Thiruvananthapuram district. Athiyanoor block was selected for the study, since it was in Athiyanoor block that Community Development Programme was started for the first time in Kerala. Athiyanoor block consists of six panchayats and gramasabhas were functioning in all these six panchayats. Map of Athiyanoor block is given in Fig. 2.

Fig. 2 Map of Athiyanoor block



3.2 Selection of respondents

Multistage random sampling technique was followed for the selection of respondents.

Stage I

From Athiyanoor block, 4 panchayats were randomly selected. The selected panchayats were Venganoor, Vizhinjam, Athiyanoor and Kottukal.

Stage II

From each of these selected panchayats three wards were selected at random. Thus 12 wards were selected from the four panchayats.

Stage III

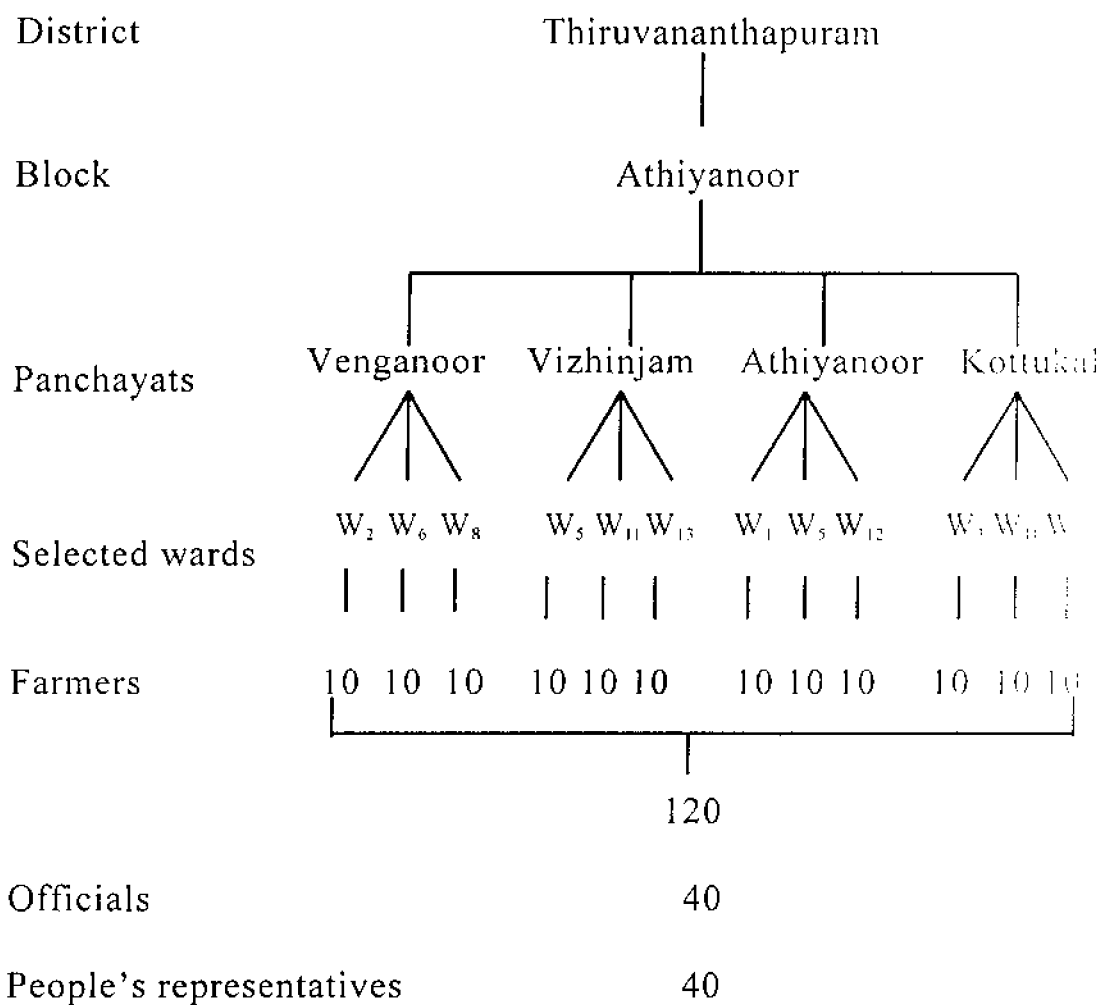
From each of these 12 wards, 10 farmers were randomly selected, 40 extension personnel and 40 people's representatives associated with the functioning of gramasabhas were also selected, thus making a total of 200 respondents for the study (Fig. 3).

3.3 Selection of variables

The dependent variables of the study, based on the objectives are effectiveness, attitude and perception.

After a thorough review of literature and discussion with experts, 25 profile characteristics were identified and sent to judges for eliciting their relevancy on a three point continuum viz., 'most relevant', 'relevant' and 'least relevant' (Appendix-I). The following scores were assigned.

Fig. 3 Selection of respondents for the study



Response	Score
Most relevant	3
Relevant	2
Least relevant	1

The total score for each variable and the mean score were calculated and those items with scores equal to and above mean were selected. Thus 14 independent variables were included in the final schedule.

3.4 Operationalisation and measurement of dependent variables

3.4.1 Effectiveness

Effectiveness is operationalised as the perceived effectiveness of the gramasabhas in planning and implementing agricultural development programmes. Based on the review of literature and discussion with experts, the items were included in the schedule. The schedule consisted of 15 statements and the responses were collected on a 2 point continuum viz., 'yes' and 'no' with scores 1 and 0, respectively. The maximum possible score was 15 and minimum score was 0.

3.4.2 Attitude

The term attitude refers to the degree of positive or negative affect towards a psychological object. In the present study, attitude scale is developed using the method of summated rating suggested by Likert (1932).

Collection of items

Based on the review of literature and discussion with experts associated with functioning of the gramasabhas, the statements were prepared, so as to make the respondents reflect their attitude through their responses.

Then the statements were edited in accordance with the criteria suggested by Edwards and Kilpatrick (1948), so as to indicate both favourable and unfavourable attitude towards gramasabhas. In order to know the relevance of each of the statement, the statements thus selected were subjected to judges rating. The responses were obtained in a five point continuum viz., 'very much relevant', 'much relevant', 'somewhat relevant', 'not relevant' and 'not at all relevant' with weightages of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1, respectively. The relevance of each of these statements was analysed and only those statements considered relevant by more than 50 per cent of the judges were included for the study. For the selection of statements to the final attitude scale item analysis was done.

For the purpose of item analysis, the statements were first administered in a group of 60 non-sample respondents and they were requested to respond to each statement in terms of their own agreement or disagreement with the statement on a five point continuum namely, 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'undecided', 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree'.

The responses were assigned numerical weight for positive statements, 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'undecided', 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' with scores of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1. The scoring pattern was reversed for negative statements. The sum of weightage for all the statements were worked out to get the attitude score of an individual respondent. The respondent's scores were arranged in descending order. Twenty five per cent of the respondents with higher total score and 25 per cent of the respondents with lower total score were selected from among the respondents. These two groups formed the criterion group in terms of which evaluation of individual statements was made.

The discrimination index 't' was computed for all the statements using the formula

$$t = \frac{\bar{X}_H - \bar{X}_L}{\sqrt{\frac{S_H^2}{n_H} + \frac{S_L^2}{n_L}}}$$

\bar{X}_H – the mean score on a given statement for the high group

\bar{X}_L – the mean score on the same statement for the low group

S_H^2 – the variance of the distribution of responses of the high group, to the statement

S_L^2 – the variance of the distribution of responses of the low group to the statement

n_H – the number of subjects in the high group

n_L – the number of subjects in the low group

Those statements with 't' values above 1.75 were selected. Finally 15 statements with both positive and negative statements were included in the schedule (Appendix –II).

Reliability of the scale

A scale is said to be reliable only when it will consistently produce the same or similar results, when applied to the same sample at different time. Here the reliability was tested by means of split-half method.

The scale was administered to 30 non-sample respondents and was divided into two halves, based on odd and even number of statements.

The summation of scores obtained by odd numbered items and the summation of scores obtained by even numbered items of the scale for each

respondent was correlated by using Pearson's Product moment correlation coefficient. The coefficient of internal consistency 'ρ' was worked out using the formula.

$$\rho = \frac{P_{xy}}{\sigma_x \cdot \sigma_y} \quad \text{where,}$$

ρ = the correlation coefficient between sum of scores on odd and even numbered items in the scale

P_{xy} = the product moment of scores on odd and even numbered items.

σ_x = The standard deviation of the distribution of scores on odd numbered items

σ_y = The standard deviation of the distribution of scores on even numbered items.

The 'ρ' value obtained gives half test reliability. Therefore it was corrected using Spearman Brown's prophecy formula and thus the reliability coefficient, r_{tt} , for the total length of the scale was obtained as given below:

$$r_{tt} = \frac{2 \rho}{1 + \rho}$$

The reliability coefficient (r_{tt}) between the two scores was found to be highly significant (0.8). Hence it was concluded that the scale was reliable.

Validity of the scale

The developed scale was tested for content validity. The main criteria of content validity of the scale represent the subject matter under study.

Since the items selected were from the universe of contents, it was ensured that, the items covered all aspects of gramasabhas.

Administering the scale

The final scale with negative and positive statements under study was administered to respondents and the responses were collected on a five point continuum namely, 'strongly agree' (SA), 'agree' (A), 'undecided' (UD), 'disagree'(DA) and 'strongly disagree' (SDA) with weightage of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1, respectively. The scoring was reversed in the case of negative statements. The weightages on responses of all the statements were summed-up to get the attitude score of each individual.

The maximum possible score was 75 and minimum score was 15.

3.4.3 Perception

Perception in this study is operationalised as the meaningful sensation of the respondents about the functioning of gramasabhas.

Perception of respondents was measured by using the schedule developed for the study. Items were prepared after reviewing literature and discussing with personnel associated with gramasabhas. The schedule thus prepared consisted of 15 statements. The respondents were asked to give their responses in a five point continuum ranging from SA, A, UD, DA and SDA with scores 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1, respectively.

The scores thus obtained by each respondent for each statement were added over all the items to arrive at the total perception score of the respondent.

The total score ranged between 15 and 75.

3.5 Operationalisation and measurement of independent variable

3.5.1 Education

Education refers to the ability of the farmer to read and write and the extent of the formal education possessed. Education was measured with the help of the scoring procedure followed by Trivedi (1963). The different educational levels of the respondents were scored as follows.

Level of education	Score
Illiterate	0
Can read only	1
Can read and write	2
Primary school	3
Middle school	4
High school	5
College and above	6

3.5.2 Main occupation

Main occupation refers to the main vocation from which the farmer derives his major share of income. Scoring procedure is as follows.

Agriculture as primary occupation	-	2
Agriculture as secondary occupation	-	1

3.5.3 Annual income

Annual income is operationalised as the total income obtained from both agricultural and other subsidiary occupation for a period of one year.

Scoring technique used by Thomas (1998) was adopted to measure annual income.

Income (Rs.)	Score
Below 5,000	1
5,000-10,000	2
10,000-15,000	3
>15,000	4

3.5.4 Political Orientation

Political orientation refers to how far a farmer feels that involvement of politics is there in the functioning of the gramasabhas. Political orientation was measured by using the schedule developed for the study. The schedule consisted of five statements. Responses were collected on a two point continuum of 'agree' and 'disagree' with scores of 1 and 0, respectively for positive statements. The scoring was just reversed in the case of negative statements.

3.5.5 Cosmopolitaness

Cosmopolitaness is operationalised as the farmers extent of contact with outside village in terms of frequency and purpose of visits. It was measured by using the scoring procedure developed by Desai (1981).

Sl. No.	a) Frequency of visit to nearest town
1.	Twice or more in a week (5)
2.	Once in a week (4)
3.	Once in a fortnight (3)
4.	Once in a month (2)
5.	Seldom (4)
6.	Never (0)

Sl. No.	b) Purpose of visit
1.	All visits relating to agriculture (5)
2.	Some visits relating to agriculture (4)
3.	Personal / domestic matters (3)
4.	Entertainment (2)
5.	Other purposes (1)
6.	No purpose (0)

The scores thus obtained were summed-up to get the total score of cosmopolitanism of the respondent. The total score ranged between 0 and 10.

3.5.6 Social participation

Social participation is operationalised as degree of involvement of a farmer in formal organisations either as member or as office bearer. Social participation was measured by using the scale developed by Kamarudeen (1981). The scoring procedure is as follows :

Organisation	Nature of participation			Frequency of participation in meetings/activities		
	(0)	(1)	(2)	(2)	(1)	(0)
Panchayat						
Co-operative society						
Youth club						
Socio-cultural Organisation						
Any other (specify)						

To obtain the final score of the respondent, the scores given as the member or office bearer were multiplied with scores given for attendance in the activities and added-up for all the organisations. The total possible score ranged between 0 and 16.

3.5.7 Information source utilization

Information source utilization refers to a farmer's contact with various sources of information. It was measured by using the scale developed by Sajeevchandran (1989).

1) Impersonal source	Regularly (2)	Sometimes (1)	Never (0)
a) Radio			
b) Newspaper			
c) TV			
d) Farm Magazine			
f) Farm articles in popular magazines			

<p>2) Formal personal source</p> <p>a) Agricultural Assistant</p> <p>b) Agricultural Officer</p> <p>c) Agricultural Scientist</p> <p>3) Informal personal source</p> <p>a) Friends and relatives</p> <p>b) Neighbours and fellow farmers</p> <p>c) Family members</p> <p>d) Progressive farmers</p> <p>e) Local leaders</p> <p>4) Commercial source</p> <p>a) Fertilizer dealers</p> <p>b) Pesticide dealers</p> <p>c) Co-operative officials</p> <p>d) Bank personnel</p> <p>5) Other sources</p> <p>a) Exhibitions/Melas/Festivals</p> <p>b) Group meetings</p> <p>c) Training</p> <p>d) Demonstrations</p> <p>e) Seminar</p>			
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Each respondent was asked how often he got information on improved agriculture from each of the listed sources. Scores of 2, 1 and 0 were given for the responses 'regularly', 'sometimes' and 'never', respectively. The scores were summed-up across each item to form the score of use of information source. Total score ranged between 0 and 44.

3.5.8 Extension participation

Extension participation is operationalised as the extent of involvement of farmer in different extension activities. Extension participation was

measured by using the scoring procedure developed by John (1991). The scoring procedure is as follows :

Extension activity	Attended whenever conducted (2)	Sometimes attended (1)	Never attended (0)
Campaigns			
Seminars			
Fairs/Melas			
Group discussions			
Demonstrations			
Any other (specify)			

3.5.9 Leadership propensity

Leadership propensity refers to the ability of the respondent to influence others in the attainment of goals. Leadership propensity was measured by using the procedure developed by Surendran (2000). The schedule consisted of five statements. The responses were obtained in a three point continuum viz., 'always', 'sometimes' and 'never'. The scoring pattern was 2, 1 and 0 for positive statements and 0, 1 and 2 for negative statements.

3.5.10 Attitude towards PP

Positive or negative affect of the farmer towards PP. Attitude towards PP was measured by using the schedule developed by Parvathy (2000). The schedule consisted of five statements. The responses were collected in a five point continuum of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1. The scoring pattern was reversed for negative statements.

3.5.11 Economic motivation

Economic motivation refers to farmer's orientation towards achievement of maximum economic ends. Economic motivation was measured by using the scale developed by Nanjaiyan (1984). The responses were collected on a five point continuum ranging from SA, A, UD, DA and SDA with scores 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1, respectively. The scoring pattern was reversed for negative statements. Five statements were included in the schedule and the total possible score of the respondent ranged between 6 and 30.

3.5.12 Training

Training in this study refers to type and duration of training received by a farmer related to agriculture for the past three years. It was measured by using the scoring procedure adopted by Ponmani (1993).

Trainings undergone in production

Activities	Score
No training	0
One training	1
Two trainings	2
Two or more trainings	3

3.5.13 Innovativeness

Innovativeness is operationalised as the desire expressed by a farmer to do something new for the sake of their own rather than to gain power, recognition or profit. Innovativeness was measured by adopting the scoring procedure developed by Lekshmi (2000). Responses were collected on a three

point continuum of 'Yes', 'Undecided' and 'No' with scores 2, 1 and 0, respectively. The schedule consisted of five statements. The score ranged between 0 and 10.

3.5.14 Orientation towards incentives

Orientation towards incentives is operationalised as the orientation of the farmer towards subsidies and assistance provided by the Government and other sponsoring agencies to motivate the farmer to follow the farming practices. Scoring technique developed by Surendran (2000) was adopted in this study to measure orientation towards incentives. It was measured on a five point continuum ranging from SA, A, UD, DA and SDA with scores 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1, respectively. The scoring was reversed for negative statements. Five statements were included in the schedule and the total possible score ranged between 4 and 20.

3.6 Problems

One of the objectives of the study was to identify the problems associated with the functioning of gramasabhas. Based on review of literature, discussion with personnel associated with gramasabhas and the pilot study conducted by the researcher, a few constraints regarding the functioning of gramasabhas were listed out. The farmers were asked to record their agreement or disagreement regarding the relevancy of these constraints as hindering the functioning of gramasabhas. 'Agreement' was given a score of '1' and disagreement '0'. The total frequency of agreement for each constraint was worked out and its percentage was found out. Based on the percentage, the constraints were ranked.

The farmers were also asked to record other problems which they felt important other than those listed. The problem with the first rank number was considered as the most serious one followed by others in the increasing order.

3.7 Suggestions

Open ended questions were included in the schedule for farmers, officials and people's representatives in order to indicate the suggestions for the better functioning of gramasabhas.

3.8 Techniques of data collection

The data were collected with the help of structured and pretested interview schedule. The interview schedule was prepared in English and translated to Malayalam for collecting the data from the respondents.

All the 200 respondents were directly interviewed by the researcher.

3.9 Statistical tools used in the study

- 1) Percentage analysis : Respondents were categorised into low group and high group on the basis of mean.

Low group < Mean

High group ≥ Mean

Percentage distribution of respondents on all variables were worked out by dividing the frequency in each category with the total number of respondents and multiplying by 100. It was done to make simple comparison whenever necessary.

- 2) Simple correlation analysis : To study the relationship between each independent variable with the dependent variable, Karl Pearson's correlation analysis was done.
- 3) ANOVA : Analysis of variance (ANOVA) is a powerful test of significance when comparisons across two or more categories are involved. In this study ANOVA was utilized to make comparisons across the four panchayats (Venganoor, Vizhinjam, Athiyanoor and Kottukal), officials and people's representatives with the dependent variables.

*Results and
Discussion*

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study are presented in this chapter under the following sub-headings.

- 4.1 Effectiveness of gramasabhas in planning and implementing agricultural development programmes
- 4.2 Attitude towards gramasabhas
- 4.3 Perception about the functioning of gramasabhas
- 4.4 Distribution of respondents on the basis of personal socio-psychological variables
- 4.5 Relationship of the selected personal socio-psychological variables with the dependent variables
- 4.6 Comparison of Venganoor, Vizhinjam, Athiyanoor and Kottukal panchayats with respect to personal socio-psychological variables
- 4.7 Comparison of Venganoor, Vizhinjam, Athiyanoor and Kottukal panchayats with respect to the dependent variables
- 4.8 Comparison of officials and people's representatives with respect to the dependent variables
- 4.9 Identification of the important constraints perceived by the respondents regarding the functioning of the gramasabhas
- 4.10 Suggestions for the better functioning of gramasabhas

4.1 Effectiveness of gramasabhas in planning and implementing agricultural development programmes

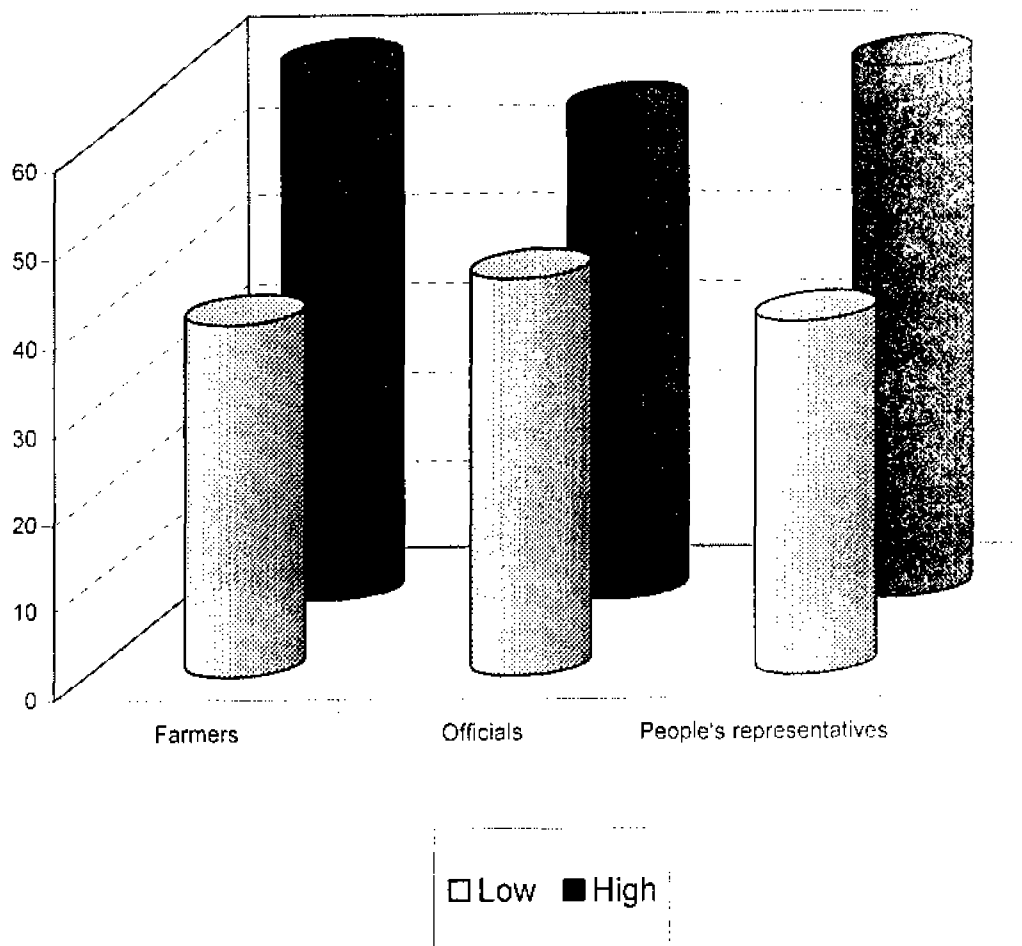
The distribution of respondents based on their perceived effectiveness regarding the gramasabhas is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Distribution of farmers, officials and people's representatives with respect to perceived effectiveness

Sl. No.	Obtained score range	Category	Farmers (n = 120)			Officials (n = 40)			People's representatives (n = 40)		
			Score	Frequency	%	Score	Frequency	%	Score	Frequency	%
1.	0-15	Low	<8.27	48	40	<10.6	18	45	<9.98	16	40
2.		High	≥8.27	72	60	≥10.6	22	55	≥9.98	24	60
Total				120	100		40	100		40	100

The data furnished in Table 1 revealed that for more than half of the farmers (60 %), the effectiveness of the gramasabhas in planning and implementing the agricultural development programmes was high. Only 40 per cent of the farmers were in the low group. Regarding the officials, 55 per cent believed that the gramasabhas were effective. As far as people's representatives are concerned, 60 per cent fell in the high group and the remaining 40 per cent in the low group. It is revealed that the farmers, officials and people's representatives equally perceive the gramasabhas as effective in planning and implementing agricultural development programmes. This might be due to the top most priority given to agriculture in the gramasabhas.

Fig. 4 Perceived effectiveness of gramasabhas by the farmers, officials and people's representatives



4.2 Attitude towards gramasabhas

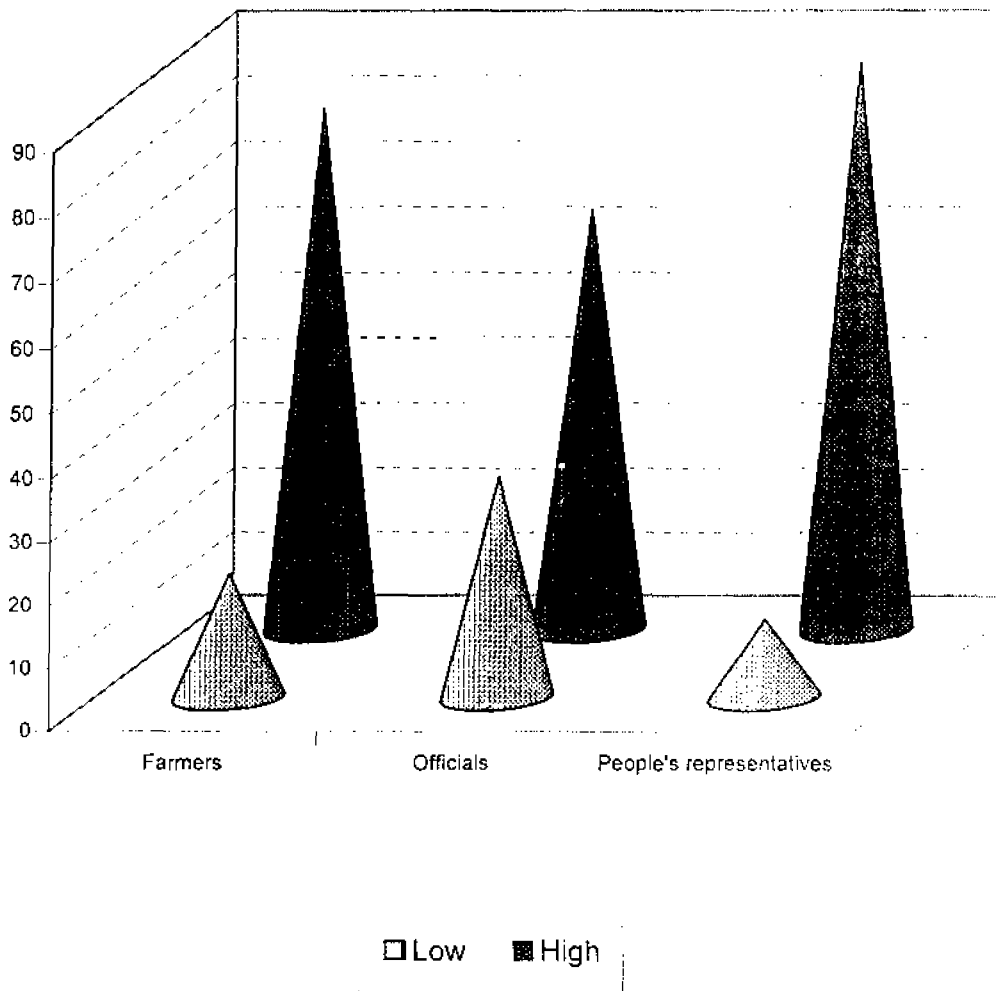
Farmers, officials and people's representatives on the basis of their attitude towards gramasabhas is presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Distribution of farmers, officials and people's representatives with respect to their attitude towards gramasabhas

Sl. No.	Obtained score range	Category	Farmers (n = 120)			Officials (n = 40)			People's representatives (n = 40)		
			Score	Frequency	%	Score	Frequency	%	Score	Frequency	%
1.	16-74	Low	<56.5	50	41.57	<51.95	14	35	<64.45	5	12.5
2.		High	≥56.5	70	58.43	≥51.95	26	65	≥64.45	35	87.5
Total				120	100		40	100		40	100

Table 2 revealed that a majority of the farmers (58.43 per cent) had a favourable attitude towards gramasabhas. Only 41.57 per cent of the farmers expressed an unfavourable attitude. More than half of the officials (65 per cent) were favourable towards gramasabhas. As far as people's representatives are concerned, a vast majority (87.5 per cent) possessed a very favourable attitude towards gramasabhas. Thus it could be inferred that people's representatives possessed very favourable attitude towards gramasabhas as compared to farmers and officials. Political initiative is required for the effective functioning of gramasabhas. This might have developed a favourable attitude in people's representatives towards gramasabhas.

Fig. 5 Attitude of farmers officials and people's representatives towards gramasabhas



4.3 Perception about the functioning of gramasabhas

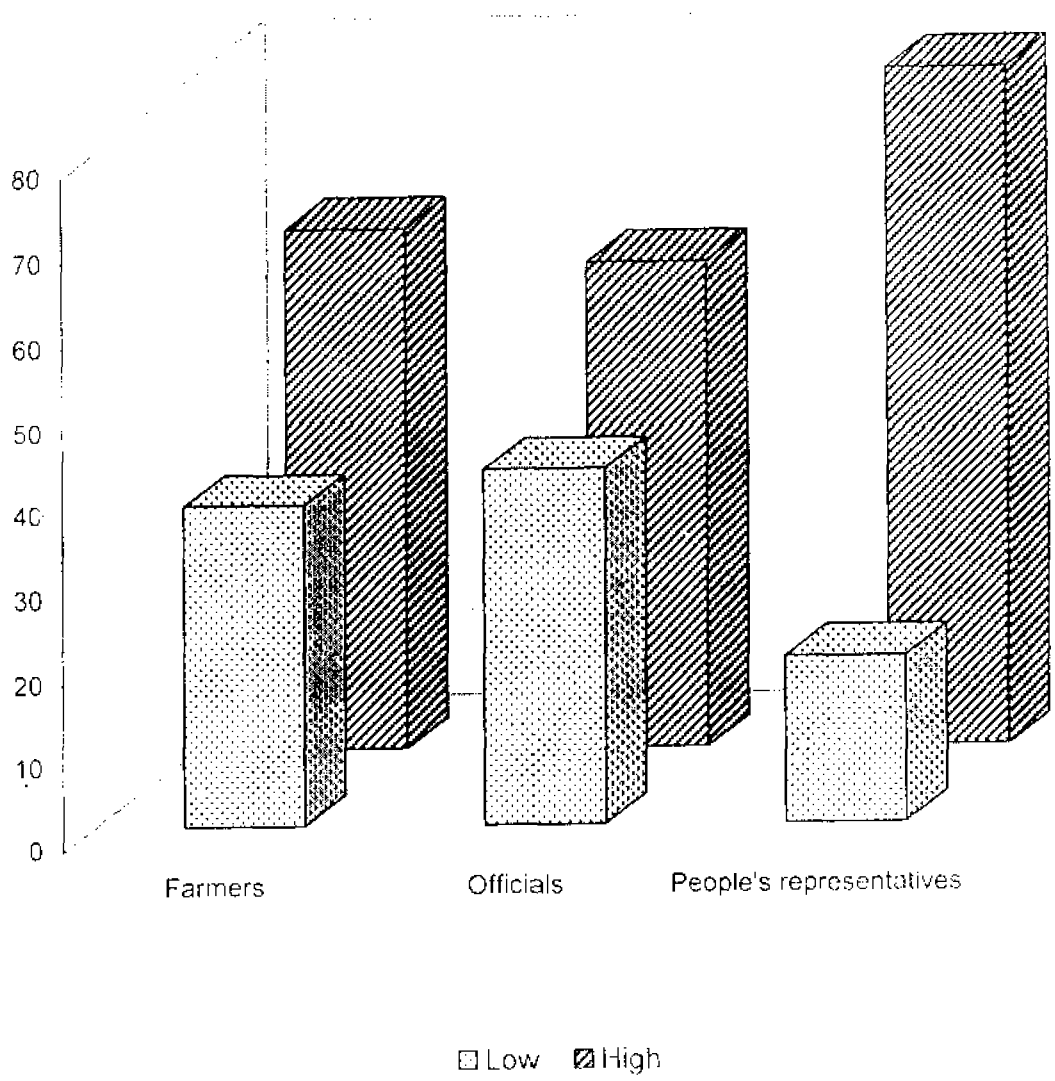
The respondents are distributed in Table 3 based on their perception.

Table 3 Distribution of farmers, officials and people's representatives with respect to their perception about the functioning of gramasabhas

Sl. No.	Obtained score range	Category	Farmers (n = 120)			Officials (n = 40)			People's representatives (n = 40)		
			Score	Frequency	%	Score	Frequency	%	Score	Frequency	%
1.	16-74	Low	<55.58	46	38.33	<53.3	17	42.5	<66.95	8	20
2.		High	≥55.58	74	61.67	≥53.3	23	57.5	≥66.95	32	80
Total				120	100		40	100		40	100

It is revealed that 61.67 per cent of the farmers had high level of perception about the functioning of gramasabhas. Among the officials, 57.5 per cent belonged to the high group and 42.5 per cent belonged to the low group. Eighty per cent of the people's representatives had very good perception about the functioning of gramasabhas. Thus it could be inferred from Table 3 that, there was not much difference in the perception of the farmers and officials about the functioning of gramasabhas. Since the people's representatives possessed a very favourable attitude towards gramasabhas, their perception regarding the functioning of gramasabhas was also good.

Fig. 6 Perception of farmers, officials and people's representatives about the functioning of gramasabhas



4.4 Distribution of respondents on the basis of personal socio-psychological variables

4.4.1 Education

Table 4 Distribution of respondents with respect to education

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Illiterate	2	1.67
Can read and write	9	7.50
Primary school	23	19.16
Middle school	20	16.67
High school	54	45.00
College and above	12	10.00

The respondents are distributed in Table 4 based on their education. Forty five per cent of the respondents had education upto high school level, 19.16 per cent of the respondents studied upto primary level and 10 per cent of the respondents had education upto college level. Only 1.67 per cent of the respondents were illiterates. The high literacy rate and educational level of Kerala speak for this.

4.4.2 Main occupation

Table 5 Percentage distribution of farmers with respect to main occupation

Variables	Obtained score range	Category	Score	Frequency	Percentage
Main occupation	1-2	Low	<1.69	8	6.67
		High	≥1.69	112	93.33

A glance at the Table 5 reveals that, a vast majority of the respondents (93.33 per cent) had farming as main occupation. Only 6.67 per cent were having farming as secondary occupation.

4.4.3 Annual income

Table 6 Percentage distribution of farmers with respect to annual income

Variables	Obtained score range	Category	Score	Frequency	Percentage
Annual income	1-4	Low	<3.03	75	62.50
		High	≥3.03	45	37.50

Table 6 revealed that 62.50 per cent of the respondents belonged to low annual income group and 37.50 per cent of the respondents were in the high group. Income obtained from farming is generally found to be less as compared to that obtained from business and most other occupations. Majority of the respondents had farming as main occupation. This is the reason for low annual income for most of the respondents.

4.4.4 Political orientation

Table 7 Percentage distribution of farmers with respect to political orientation

Variables	Obtained score range	Category	Score	Frequency	Percentage
Political orientation	0-5	Low	<3.16	51	42.47
		High	≥3.16	69	57.53

It was observed that 57.53 per cent of the farmers were highly oriented towards politics. The remaining 42.47 per cent had a low level of political

orientation. This is explained by the fact that, Kerala has a very high degree of political consciousness as compared to many other states.

4.4.5 Cosmopolitaness

Table 8 Percentage distribution of farmers with respect to cosmopolitaness

Variables	Obtained score range	Category	Score	Frequency	Percentage
Cosmopolitaness	3-9	Low	<5.48	28	23.33
		High	≥5.48	92	76.67

Majority of the farmers (76.67 per cent) exhibited high level of cosmopolitaness. Only 23.33 per cent of the respondents had low cosmopolitaness. Since most of the farmers had agriculture as the main occupation, they had to visit the neighbouring towns for agricultural purposes. Moreover, exposure to both print and electronic media, which is a unique feature of the villages of Kerala, keeps them abreast of the changing trends of the times. This might have resulted in a high degree of cosmopolitaness.

4.4.6 Social participation

Table 9 Percentage distribution of farmers with respect to social participation

Variables	Obtained score range	Category	Score	Frequency	Percentage
Social participation	3-14	Low	<7.59	23	19.17
		High	≥7.59	97	80.33

It depicts that the majority of the respondents (80.33 per cent) had high level of social participation. Only 19.17 per cent belonged to low group of social participation. A moderately high education possessed by the farmers

and their high cosmopolitanness might be the reason for a high social participation by the respondents.

4.4.7 Information source utilisation

Table 10 Percentage distribution of farmers with respect to information source utilisation

Variables	Obtained score range	Category	Score	Frequency	Percentage
Information source utilisation	10-32	Low	<21.73	14	11.67
		High	≥21.73	106	88.33

Information source utilisation was found to be high for majority of the respondents (88.33 per cent). Only 11.67 per cent had high level of information source utilisation. Since majority of the farmers belonged to low annual income group, they will try to utilise all sorts of information regarding agricultural development programmes from various sources. This might be the reason for high information source utilisation by the respondents.

4.4.8 Extension participation

Table 11 Percentage distribution of farmers with respect to extension participation

Variables	Obtained score range	Category	Score	Frequency	Percentage
Extension participation	2-9	Low	<5.00	44	36.67
		High	≥5.00	76	63.33

More than half of the respondents (63.33 per cent) had high extension participation and 36.67 per cent showed low participation in extension activities. A high social participation might have attributed to a high level extension participation.

4.4.9 Leadership propensity

Table 12 Percentage distribution of farmers with respect to leadership propensity

Variables	Obtained score range	Category	Score	Frequency	Percentage
Leadership propensity	2-8	Low	<4.75	96	80.00
		High	≥4.75	24	20.00

It was observed that the majority of the respondents (80 per cent) had a low level of leadership propensity. Only 20 per cent of the respondents were in the high group.

4.4.10 Attitude towards people's plan

Table 13 Percentage distribution of farmers with respect to attitude towards people's plan

Variables	Score range	Category	Score	Frequency	Percentage
Attitude towards people's plan	6-22	Low	<13.63	42	35.00
		High	≥13.63	78	65.00

Table 13 revealed that most of the respondents (65 per cent) had favourable attitude towards PP. Only 35 per cent of the respondents expressed a less favourable attitude. Since majority of the farmers were highly oriented towards politics, they had favourable attitude towards PP also.

4.4.11 Economic motivation

Table 14 Percentage distribution of farmers with respect to economic motivation

Variables	Score range	Category	Score	Frequency	Percentage
Economic motivation	6-26	Low	<15.86	58	48.33
		High	≥15.86	62	51.67

As far as economic motivation is concerned, 51.67 per cent exhibited high level of economic motivation. Nearly half of the respondents (48.33 per cent) were in the low group. Most of the farmers were having low annual income. So they will try to utilise all the available opportunities to make the two ends meet. This is the reason for high economic motivation for the farmers.

4.4.12 Training

Table 15 Percentage distribution of farmers with respect to training

Variables	Score range	Category	Score	Frequency	Percentage
Training	0-3	Low	<1.88	32	26.67
		High	≥1.88	88	73.33

Majority of the respondents (73.33 per cent) were in the high group of training and only 26.67 per cent were in the low group. It was observed that, most of the respondents belonged to low annual income. They may try to make use of all the available opportunities to increase their income from farming. This might have prompted them to attend the trainings regularly.

4.4.13 Innovativeness

Table 16 Percentage distribution of farmers with respect to innovativeness

Variables	Score range	Category	Score	Frequency	Percentage
Innovativeness	2-8	Low	<4.68	43	35.83
		High	≥4.68	77	64.17

High level of innovativeness was expressed by 64.17 per cent, of the respondents and 35.83 per cent of the respondents showed low innovativeness. Moderately high educational status and familiarity with improved techniques of farm production will create a positive atmosphere to experiment with the new technology in farming. The low annual income level also might have propelled them to act in this direction. This may be the reason for high innovativeness.

4.4.14 Orientation towards incentives

Table 17 Percentage distribution of farmers with respect to orientation towards incentives

Variables	Score range	Category	Score	Frequency	Percentage
Orientation towards incentives	6-15	Low	<11.03	50	41.67
		High	≥11.03	70	58.33

It was revealed that 58.33 per cent of the respondents had high orientation towards incentives. 41.67 per cent of the respondents were in the low group. Most of the respondents belonged to low annual income group. So they will have a tendency to explore all the incentives for a better living.

A number of incentives are given through the gramasabhas. This may be the reason for high orientation of the respondents towards incentives.

4.5 Relationship of the selected personal, socio-psychological variables with the dependent variables

Relationship of the personal socio-psychological variables with the dependent variables viz., effectiveness, attitude and perception is shown in Table 18.

4.5.1 Effectiveness

To find out the relationship of the selected personal 'socio-psychological variables with the dependent variables under study, simple correlation coefficients were worked out and the results are presented in Table 18. Of the 14 variables studied, seven variables were found to be significantly related with effectiveness at one per cent probability level. They were education, annual income, political orientation, social participation, information source utilisation, attitude towards people's plan and orientation towards incentives. Out of these, annual income was negatively correlated with effectiveness.

Cosmopoliteness and leadership propensity showed significant relationship at five per cent level.

Education had shown a positive and significant relationship with effectiveness. Educated farmers will be more exposed to the outer world. Their power to predict the effectiveness of a programme might have been favourably influenced by the educational status and hence resulted in a positively significant relationship.

Table 18 Relationship of the personal socio-psychological variables with the dependent variables viz., effectiveness, attitude and perception

Sl. No.	Independent variables	Dependent variables		
		Effectiveness	Attitude	Perception
1	Education	0.3204**	0.2538**	0.2717**
2	Main occupation	0.1560	0.2295*	0.2898**
3	Annual income	-0.6225**	-0.4514**	-0.5763**
4	Political orientation	0.9278**	0.8229**	0.8899**
5	Cosmopolitaness	0.2106*	0.1587	0.1411
6	Social participation	0.3158**	0.2822**	0.2184*
7	Information source utilisation	0.2692**	0.1743	0.1473
8	Extension participation	0.0348	0.0277	0.0134
9	Leadership propensity	0.2106*	0.0377	0.1555
10	Attitude towards people's plan	0.5277**	0.4843**	0.4609**
11	Economic motivation	0.1886	0.2421*	0.2817**
12	Training	0.1967	0.0872	0.1765
13	Innovativeness	0.1643	0.1568	0.1349
14	Orientation towards incentives	0.3637**	0.2583**	0.2858**

*Significant at 5% level, ** Significant at 1% level

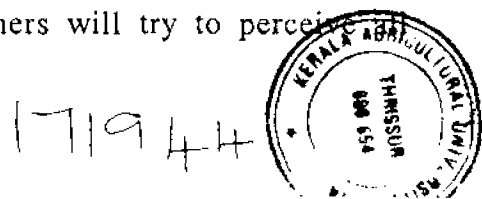
Annual income showed a negative and significant relationship with effectiveness. Most of the farmers come under low annual income group. Naturally they will have a tendency to explore all the possibilities for a better living. Priorities given in gramasabha to low income group for being selected as beneficiaries might have influenced their opinion regarding the effectiveness of gramasabhas resulting in a negative correlation.

Political orientation was positively and significantly related to effectiveness. Gramasabha, being a part of people's plan, requires political initiative for its effective functioning. A person who is politically oriented will be more inclined towards gramasabhas. This may be the reason for a positive relationship.

Cosmopolitaness was positively and significantly related to effectiveness. A highly cosmopolite person will possess extensive contact with world outside his own social system. Such a wide contact might have been useful for him to know more about other social systems enabling him to compare them in a better way. This could be the reason which made him to perceive the gramasabhas as effective and hence a positive correlation.

Social participation showed a positive and significant relationship with effectiveness. Participation in rural institutions helps to interact with various sections of rural society. This will enable him to know more about various aspects of gramasabhas. This might be the reason for a positive correlation with effectiveness.

Information source utilisation was found to be positively and significantly related to effectiveness. The farmers will try to perceive



sorts of information regarding the agricultural development programmes from various sources. Since gramasabhas plan and implement agricultural development programmes, the farmers perceive the gramasabhas as effective in this regard. This might have resulted in a positive correlation.

Leadership propensity was positively and significantly related to effectiveness. A leader wants to influence and guide others and will not miss any such opportunity. Persons with leadership qualities will lead the group discussions carried out in gramasabhas in a fruitful manner and it will give them satisfaction. This may be the reason for considering the gramasabhas as effective by the respondents, leading to positive correlation.

Attitude towards PP had a positive and significant correlation with effectiveness. Gramasabha is an integral part of PP. So a person having a favourable attitude towards PP will conceive the gramasabha as an effective means of planning and implementing agricultural development programmes. Thus a positive and significant relationship was obtained.

Orientation towards incentives showed a positive and significant relationship with effectiveness. The respondents will have a tendency to explore all the incentives for a better living. A number of incentives are given through the gramasabhas. This might be the factor which prompted the respondents to think that the gramasabhas are effective. Thus a positive and significant relationship was obtained.

4.5.2 Attitude

Of the 14 variables studied, six variables were significantly related to attitude of farmers towards gramasabhas at five per cent probability level.

They were education, annual income, political orientation, social participation, attitude towards PP and orientation towards incentives. Out of these variables, annual income was negatively correlated with attitude. Main occupation and economic motivation were found to be positively and significantly related to attitude at five per cent level.

Education showed a positive and significant relationship with attitude of farmers. Formal education helps the individual to know the world better. This might have favourably influenced his attitude towards gramasabhas, resulting in a positively significant relationship.

Main occupation had a positive and significant relationship with attitude of farmers towards gramasabhas. The respondents with main occupation as farming, will be more keen to know about agricultural development programmes as compared to others. Since topmost priority is given to agriculture in gramasabhas, the respondents will naturally have a positive attitude towards gramasabhas. Thus main occupation was positively correlated with attitude towards gramasabhas.

Annual income was negatively and significantly related to attitude towards gramasabhas. Majority of the farmers belong to low annual income group. They will try to utilize all the available opportunities to make the two ends meet. Priority is given to low income group for being selected as beneficiaries in gramasabhas. So the farmers will be having a positive attitude towards gramasabhas. This might have resulted in negative correlation with attitude.

Political orientation showed a high positive and significant relationship with attitude. Gramasabha requires political initiative for its smooth functioning. So a person who is politically orientated will be inclined more towards gramasabhas. This might have favourably influenced their attitude towards gramasabhas and thus resulted in a positive correlation.

Social participation was positively significant with attitude. Participation in rural institutions helps to interact with various sections of rural society. This will enable him to know more about various aspects of gramasabhas. This might have resulted in a favourable attitude towards gramasabhas and hence a positive correlation.

Attitude towards PP showed a positive and significant relationship with attitude. Gramasabha being an essential component of PP, a person who has a favourable attitude towards PP will have a similar attitude towards gramasabha also. This might have resulted in a positive correlation.

Economic motivation was found to be positively and significantly related to attitude of farmers towards gramasabhas. The farmers who are economically motivated will try to explore all the possibilities for a better living. A number of components are supplied to the beneficiaries free of cost in gramasabhas. This might have favourably influenced the attitude of the farmers towards gramasabhas and hence a positive correlation.

Orientation towards incentives showed a positive and significant relationship with attitude. A number of components are supplied to the beneficiaries in gramasabhas. So a person who is oriented towards incentives

will develop a favourable attitude towards gramasabhas. This might be the reason for a positive correlation with attitude.

4.5.3 Perception

Of the 14 variables studied, eight variables were found to be significantly related to perception of farmers about the functioning of gramasabhas. Out of these, seven variables had a significant relationship at one per cent level. They were education, main occupation, annual income, political orientation, attitude towards PP, economic motivation and orientation towards incentives. Out of these annual income was negatively correlated with perception. Social participation had shown a positive and significant relationship with perception at five per cent level.

Education had shown a positive and significant relationship with perception. Educational status of the farmer might have raised his contact with the outer world. It would help him to know the world better. His power of perception might have been favourably influenced by the educational status and hence resulted in a positively significant relationship.

Main occupation was found to be positively and significantly related to perception of farmers about the functioning of gramasabhas. The respondents with main occupation as farming will be more interested in agricultural operations than the other respondents. They will be keen to know more about agricultural development programmes. Of the various sectors dealt in gramasabhas, topmost priority is given to agricultural sector. This might have favourably affected their perception regarding the functioning of gramasabhas. Hence a positive correlation.

Annual income showed a negative and significant relationship with perception. Most of the respondents come under low annual income group. They will explore all the opportunities to raise their income for a better living. Low income group is given priority in gramasabhas for the selection of beneficiaries. So the farmers will be having a favourable attitude towards gramasabhas and hence a better perception about the gramasabhas. This might have resulted in a negatively significant relationship.

Political orientation showed a highly significant relation with perception. Political initiative is very essential for the effective functioning of gramasabhas. So a politically oriented person will be more inclined towards gramasabhas. This might have resulted in better perception and hence a positive correlation.

Attitude towards PP showed a positive and significant relationship with perception. Gramasabhas were introduced as a part of PP. A person having a favourable attitude towards PP will have favourable attitude towards gramasabhas also. This might have favourably affected his perception regarding the functioning of gramasabhas leading to a positive correlation.

Economic motivation showed a positive and significant relationship with perception. A number of components are supplied to the beneficiaries free of cost in gramasabhas. Since most of the respondents belong to low annual income group, they will try to explore all the opportunities for a better living. Thus the respondents may have a better perception about the gramasabhas and hence a positive correlation.

Orientation towards incentives was positively and significantly related to perception. The respondents will try to utilize all the incentives since most of them belonged to low-income group. A number of persons are selected as beneficiaries for receiving incentives in gramasabhas. So they will perceive the gramasabha better in its functions. This might have resulted in a positive correlation.

Social participation showed a positive and significant relationship with perception. Participation in rural institutions helps the respondent to interact with various sections of rural society. This will enable him to know more about various aspects of gramasabhas. This might have developed a favourable attitude in the respondent towards gramasabhas resulting in a better perception about its functions. Thus a positive correlation was obtained.

It could be inferred from Table 18 that out of the 14 variables studied, education, political orientation, attitude towards people's plan and orientation towards incentives had positively significant relationship with effectiveness, attitude and perception. Annual income was found to be negatively significant with the above three dependent variables. While extension participation, training and innovativeness exhibited non-significant relationship with the three dependent variables, viz., effectiveness, attitude and perception. Out of the 14 variables studied, highest correlation was observed for political orientation with the three dependent variables.

Fig. 7 Empirical model of the study

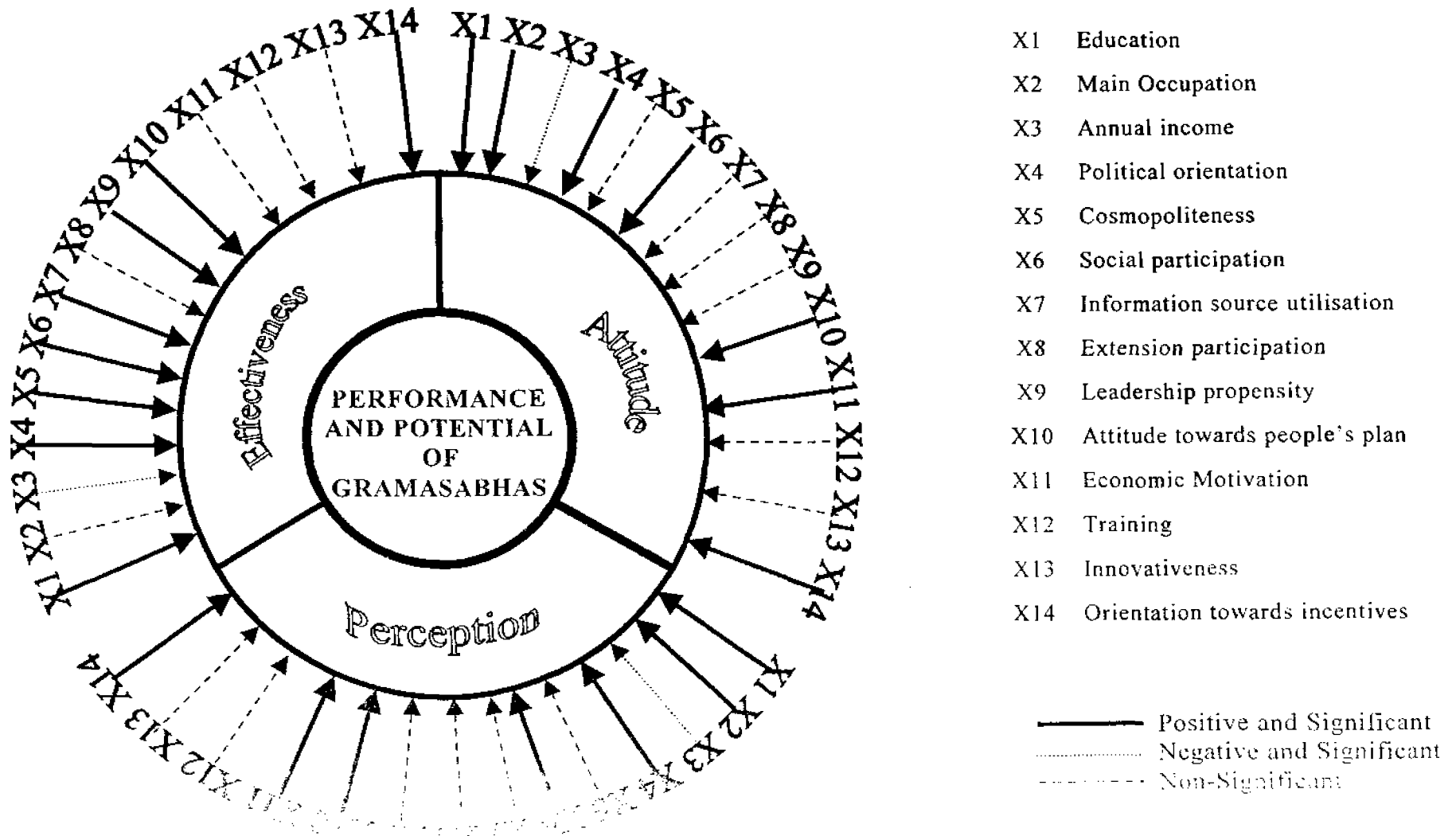


Table 19 Comparison of Venganoor, Vizhinjam, Athiyanoor and Kottukal panchayats with respect to personal socio- psychological variables

Sl. No.	Personal Socio psychological variables	Group mean				F	CD
		Venganoor (1)	Vizhinjam (2)	Athiyanoor (3)	Kottukal (4)		
1	Education	4.07	3.17	3.97	3.07	1.31	NS
2	Main Occupation	1.63	1.70	1.67	1.77	<1	NS
3	Annual income	2.87	3.07	3.00	3.20	<1	NS
4	Political orientation	3.53	3.00	3.10	3.00	1.52	NS
5	Cosmopoliteness	5.53	5.63	5.60	5.17	<1	NS
6	Social participation	7.13	8.00	7.43	7.80	<1	NS
7	Information source utilisation	21.03	21.13	22.53	22.23	<1	NS
8	Extension participation	4.77	5.13	4.97	5.13	<1	NS
9	Leadership propensity	5.37	4.73	4.73	4.17	3.93	0.69
10	Attitude towards peoples plan	13.37	13.83	13.63	13.67	<1	NS
11	Economic Motivation	15.57	16.07	15.07	16.73	<1	NS
12	Training	1.70	1.97	1.80	2.07	1.24	NS
13	Innovativeness	4.60	4.63	4.67	4.83	<1	NS
14	Orientation towards incentives	11.33	10.20	11.53	11.03	<1	NS

4.6 Comparison of Venganoor, Vizhinjam, Athiyanoor and Kottukal Panchayats with respect to the personal socio-psychological variables

Venganoor, Vizhinjam, Athiyanoor and Kottukal Panchayats are compared in Table 19 with respect to personal socio- psychological variables. It could be inferred from Table 19 that, for the variable leadership propensity, significant difference was observed between Venganoor and Kottukal panchayats. The results in Table 19 indicated that Venganoor panchayat scored the highest mean score (5.37) and Kottukal panchayat scored the lowest mean score (4.17). It depicts that high level of leadership propensity was exhibited by the respondents of Venganoor panchayat.

4.7 Comparison of Venganoor, Vizhinjam, Athiyanoor and Kottukal Panchayats with respect to the dependent variables

Venganoor, Vizhinjam, Athiyanoor and Kottukal Panchayats are compared on the dependent variables in Table 20.

Table 20 Comparison of Venganoor, Vizhinjam, Athiyanoor and Kottukal Panchayats on effectiveness, attitude and perception

Sl. No.	Dependent variables	Group mean				F	CD
		Venganoor (1)	Vizhinjam (2)	Athiyanoor (3)	Kottukal (4)		
1	Effectiveness	9.17	8.03	8.60	7.27	1.73	1.73
2	Attitude	58.13	56.77	55.07	56.03	<1	NS
3	Perception	57.3	56.7	53.27	55.07	<1	NS

Table 20 revealed that there was significant difference between the panchayats with respect to effectiveness. Significant difference was observed between Venganoor and Kottukal panchayat. The respondents in Venganoor panchayat perceived the gramasabhas as highly effective in planning and implementing agricultural development programmes.

The panchayats exhibited no significant difference with respect to attitude and perception.

4.8 Comparison of officials and peoples representatives with respect to the dependent variables

Officials and people's representatives are compared on the dependent variables in Table 21.

Table 21 Comparison of officials and people's representatives on effectiveness, attitude and perception

Sl. No.	Dependent variables	Group mean		F	CD
		Officials (1)	People's representatives (2)		
1	Effectiveness	10.60	9.98	1.16	NS
2	Attitude	51.95	64.45	26.59	4.85
3	Perception	53.3	66.95	45.95	4.03

Table 21 revealed that there was no significant difference between the officials and people's representatives regarding the perceived effectiveness of gramasabhas in planning and implementing agricultural development programmes.

It could be inferred from Table 21 that officials and people's representatives differed significantly in their attitude towards gramasabhas. The results indicated that the people's representatives had a more favourable attitude towards gramasabhas than the officials.

Perception of the officials and people's representatives about the functioning of gramasabhas differed significantly. It was observed that the people's representatives had a better perception about the functioning of gramasabhas as compared to officials.

4.9 Identification of important problems as perceived by the respondents regarding the functioning of gramasabhas

Percentage of farmers, officials and people's representatives agreeing with the problems identified regarding the functioning of gramasabhas is given in Table 22.

4.9.1 Farmers

For majority of the respondents (78 per cent), wastage of funds was the major problem regarding the functioning of gramasabhas. A large proportion of the investments made in the production sector was found to be unproductive. The panchayats were not having adequate expertise to utilize these funds within the time frame. They were under pressure to spend as much as possible on whatever schemes became handy, resulting in wastage of funds.

The second important problem regarding the gramasabhas was, lack of active group discussions. Since the members of the gramasabha are ordinary local people, they keep away from active group discussions. They are not

used to speaking in meetings and are not well versed in presenting the matter clearly.

The next important problem was that the prioritisation of project proposals was not based on the felt needs of the people. There were difficulties regarding the finalisation of project proposals due to shortage of experienced resource persons. Most of the gramasabhas had little expertise to evaluate the various proposals and select the most suitable ones based on felt needs.

Inadequate social auditing was a problem regarding the functioning of gramasabhas. Though social auditing is one of the functions assigned to gramasabhas, it has not been made an integral part of it. Most of the gramasabhas fail to carry out social audit. It acts as a hindrance in the effective functioning of gramasabhas.

Corruptions in the selection of beneficiaries was another problem perceived by the farmers. The farmers were aware of specific instances of violating the norms and selecting the wrong beneficiaries.

4.9.2 Officials

Table 22 depicts that the most important problem as perceived by the officials regarding the functioning of gramasabhas was, lack of active group discussions. The members were not actively participating in the group discussions. According to officials, active participation was observed in meetings held for selection of beneficiaries as compared to those held for discussing plan proposals.

Table 22 Identification of important problems as perceived by farmers, officials and people's representatives regarding the functioning of gramasabhas

Sl. No.	Problems	Farmers		Officials		People's representatives	
		%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank
1	Wastage of funds	78	I	38	VII	10	VIII
2	Lacks active group discussions	70	II	88	I	74	I
3	Prioritization of project proposals not based on felt needs	67	III	6	IX	14	VII
4	Lacks adequate social auditing	58	IV	63	IV	26	VI
5	Corruption in the selection of beneficiaries	53	V	47	VI	0	X
6	Non co-operation of officials	46	VI	0	X	61	III
7	Lack of periodic monitoring of ongoing projects	39	VII	50	V	63	II
8	Gramasabha meetings ending in conflicts	27	VIII	17	VIII	3	IX
9	Inadequate mobilisation of local resources	23	IX	76	II	45	V
10	Misutilisation of benefits	5	X	71	III	53	IV

The officials perceived inadequate mobilization of local resources as an important problem regarding the gramasabhas. Mobilization of resources through public donations and voluntary services was found to be far from satisfactory.

Misutilisation of benefits was another important problem as perceived by the officials. They opined that many of the respondents misutilised the benefits. The amount received under the schemes was not spent for the purpose they were given.

Social auditing was not carried out effectively in gramasabhas. This was a major problem regarding its functioning.

Periodic monitoring of ongoing projects could not be carried out due to inadequate expertise.

4.9.3 People's representatives

According to people's representatives, the most important factor hindering the effective functioning of gramasabhas was lack of active group discussions.

Lack of periodic monitoring of ongoing projects was another important problem as perceived by the people's representatives. Periodic monitoring was not possible due to shortage of expertise.

The people's representatives complained about the non co-operation of the officials with the gramasabhas. According to them, many times officials kept away from the duties in gramasabhas.

Misutilisation of benefits by the beneficiaries was an important problem regarding the gramasabhas. Most of the beneficiaries were not spending the amounts for the purpose they were given.

Mobilization of resources through public donations and voluntary services by the gramasabhas was not upto the expectations. This was indeed a major problem for the gramasabhas while implementing various development programmes.

Among the various problems identified as hindering the functioning of gramasabhas, lack of active group discussions assumes much significance. It was observed that, for majority of the farmers, officials and people's representatives, lack of active group discussions was a major constraint regarding the gramasabhas.

4.10 Suggestions for the better functioning of gramasabhas

Based on the observation made by the researcher and discussions with farmers, officials and people's representatives the following suggestions are given for the better functioning of gramasabhas.

1. Group discussion in gramasabhas should be so organised that the members participate actively in the group discussions. Every group should have at least one trained facilitator to guide the discussions in a fruitful manner. He should encourage the people to list and analyse the problems based upon their real life situations.
2. There should be adequate expertise for preparing projects, prioritising the project proposals based on the felt needs of the people and for periodic monitoring of the ongoing projects.

3. Social audit must be made an integral part of the gramasabhas.
4. As per the recommendations of Sen committee, the gramasabhas should meet at least once in three months. But in practice, at many places gramasabhas were found to be convened only twice in a year. So for the effective functioning of gramasabhas, they should meet once in three months.
5. A vast majority of the people are not aware of the functions and responsibilities of the gramasabhas. So awareness generation about the various aspects of gramasabhas is very essential for the successful functioning of gramasabhas.
6. Gramasabhas should meet at a place and at a time convenient to the majority of the members concerned.
7. In order to make the gramasabhas effective local governing institutions, the relationship existing between the officials and the people's representatives should be improved.
8. Training should be given to the officials and people's representatives associated with the gramasabhas.
9. Shortfalls observed during the implementation of the projects should be made use of while formulating projects for the next year.
10. Beneficiaries should be selected strictly according to the criteria
11. Grama panchayat should be equipped with sufficient data regarding the locality and should be made available to the gramasabhas for the planning process.

12. Problems that need immediate attention and significant to majority of members should be given priority in gramasabhas while preparing the projects.
13. The grama panchayat should be fully transparent.
14. Resource mobilisation should be made adequate.
15. Gramasabha needs to be empowered through specific statutory and policy measures. Now the gramasabha has only an advisory role. It should be provided with legal authority giving a better control over the grama panchayat.

Summary

CHAPTER – 5

SUMMARY

The gramasabhas have been introduced in Kerala in the year 1996. The introduction of gramasabhas has added a new dimension to agricultural planning by involving the rural people in the planning process, for the first time in the history of Kerala. In this study an attempt is made to throw some light on the effectiveness of gramasabhas in crop production.

The specific objectives of the study were :

- 1) To analyse the effectiveness of gramasabhas in planning and implementing agricultural development programmes.
- 2) To study the attitude of farmers, officials and people's representatives towards gramasabhas.
- 3) To study the perception of farmers, officials and people's representatives about the functioning of gramasabhas.
- 4) To identify the constraints as perceived by farmers, officials and people's representatives regarding the functioning of gramasabhas.
- 5) To make suggestions for the better functioning of gramasabhas.

The study was carried out in Athiyanoor block of Thiruvananthapuram district. From Athiyanoor block four panchayats were selected at random. From each selected panchayat three wards were randomly selected. Thus twelve wards were selected from the four panchayats. From each of these twelve wards, 10 farmers were randomly selected. Forty extension personnel

and 40 people's representatives associated with the functioning of gramasabhas were also selected, thus making a total of 200 respondents for the study.

Effectiveness of gramasabhas in planning and implementing agricultural development programmes, attitude of farmers towards gramasabhas and their perception about the functioning of gramasabhas were the dependent variables. Following personal socio-psychological variables viz., education, main occupation, annual income, political orientation, cosmopolitaness, social participation, information source utilization, extension participation, leadership propensity, attitude towards people's plan, economic motivation, training, innovativeness and orientation towards incentives were selected as independent variables for the study.

A structured and pretested interview schedule was used for data collection. The data collected were statistically analysed using simple correlation and analysis of variance.

The salient findings of the study are summarised below :

1. Sixty per cent of farmers, fifty five per cent of officials and sixty per cent of people's representatives perceive the gramasabhas as effective in planning and implementing agricultural development programmes.
2. Regarding attitude towards gramasabhas, 58.43 per cent of the farmers and 87.50 per cent of the people's representatives possessed a very favourable attitude towards gramasabhas. Among the officials, 65 per cent were favourable towards gramasabhas.

3. Eighty per cent of people's representatives had very good perception about the functioning of gramasabhas. It was revealed that 57.50 per cent of officials and 61.67 per cent of farmers belonged to high group with respect to perception.
4. As far as education is concerned, nearly half of the respondents (45 per cent) had education upto high school level and 19.16 per cent studied upto primary level. Only 1.67 per cent of the respondents under the study were illiterates.
5. It was observed that 93.33 per cent of farmers were having agriculture as main occupation and 6.67 per cent had agriculture as secondary occupation.
6. Majority of the respondents (62.50 per cent) belonged to low annual income group and 37.50 per cent constituted the high group.
7. More than half of the farmers (57.53 per cent) were highly oriented towards politics and the remaining 42.47 per cent had a low level of political orientation.
8. Majority of the farmers (76.67 per cent) exhibited high level of cosmopolitaness. Only 23.33 per cent of the respondents had low cosmopolitaness.
9. Majority of the respondents (80.33 per cent) had high social participation and 19.17 per cent belonged to low group.
10. Information source utilisation was found to be high for the vast majority (88.33 per cent) of the respondents. Only 11.67 per cent of the respondents belonged to low group.

11. As far as extension participation is concerned, 63.33 per cent of the respondents belonged to high group and 36.67 per cent belonged to low group.
12. It was revealed that 80 per cent of the respondents had low level of leadership propensity and only 20 per cent had high level of leadership propensity.
13. Regarding the attitude towards people's plan, 65 per cent of the respondents possessed a favourable attitude and the remaining 35 per cent of the respondents expressed a less favourable attitude towards people's plan.
14. Nearly half of the respondents (48.33 per cent) exhibited high economic motivation.
15. As far as training is concerned, 73.33 per cent respondents belonged to high group and 26.67 per cent belonged to low group.
16. Low level of innovativeness was expressed only by 35.83 per cent of the farmers and the majority of the respondents (64.17 per cent) constituted high group.
17. More than half of the respondents (58.33 per cent) possessed high orientation towards incentives and the remaining 41.67 per cent of the respondents belonged to low group.
18. Correlation studies revealed that education, political orientation, cosmopolitanism, social participation, information source utilisation, leadership propensity, attitude towards people's plan and orientation towards incentives had significant positive relationship and annual income had significant negative relationship with perceived effectiveness.

19. Education, main occupation, political orientation, social participation, attitude towards people's plan, economic motivation and orientation towards incentives had significant positive relationship with attitude towards gramasabhas. Annual income was found to be negatively correlated with attitude.
20. Perception about the functioning of gramasabhas was positively correlated with education, main occupation, political orientation, social participation, attitude towards people's plan, economic motivation and orientation towards incentives. Annual income had significant negative correlation with perception.
21. Non-significant relationship was observed for the personal socio-psychological variables viz., extension participation, training and innovativeness with the three dependent variables viz., effectiveness, attitude and perception.
22. Out of the 14 socio-psychological variables studied, only with respect to leadership propensity, Venganoor and Kottukal panchayats differed significantly. High level of leadership propensity was exhibited by the respondents of Venganoor panchayat.
23. Venganoor and Kottukal panchayats differed significantly with respect to perceived effectiveness regarding the gramasabhas. The respondents in Venganoor panchayat perceived the gramasabhas as highly effective in planning and implementing ADPs. There was no significant difference among Venganoor, Vizhinjam, Athiyanoor and Kottukal panchayats with respect to attitude and perception about the gramasabhas.

24. There was no significant difference between the officials and the people's representatives regarding the perceived effectiveness of gramasabhas in planning and implementing ADPs.
25. As far as attitude towards gramasabhas is concerned, the officials and the people's representatives differed significantly. It was observed that the people's representatives had a more favourable attitude towards gramasabhas than the officials.
26. Significant difference was observed between the officials and the people's representatives regarding the perception about the functioning of gramasabhas. It was revealed that the people's representatives had a better perception about the functioning of gramasabhas as compared to officials.

Lack of active group discussions was perceived as the most important constraint by the farmers, officials and people's representatives regarding the functioning of gramasabhas. Wastage of funds, prioritization of project proposals not based on felt needs, lack of adequate social auditing and corruption in the selection of beneficiaries were the major constraints as perceived by farmers. As far as officials and people's representatives are concerned, inadequate mobilization of local resources, misutilisation of benefits and lack of periodic monitoring of ongoing projects were the important constraints in the functioning of gramasabhas.

Implications of the study

The study brings to focus the effectiveness, attitude and perception regarding the gramasabhas, which will help the planners in devising a suitable strategy for the better functioning of gramasabhas. Besides, the perceived effectiveness of gramasabhas by the farmers, officials and people's representatives in planning and implementing ADPs could identify the drawbacks in the performance of the gramasabhas in crop production. This would help to rectify the drawbacks in a better and co-ordinated manner ensuring sustainable development in crop production. The constraints identified by the respondents regarding the functioning of gramasabhas should be given due consideration and necessary action should be taken.

Suggestions for future research

- 1) Gramasabhas perform well with the co-operation of officials and people's representatives. So studies on performance assessment of officials and people's representatives may be conducted.
- 2) Comparative studies between neighbourhood groups and gramasabhas may be conducted.

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Appendices

APPENDIX –I

KERALA AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY

DR. A.K. SHERIEF,
Assistant Professor.

Dept. of Agrl. Extension,
College of Agriculture,
Vellayani P.O.,
Thiruvananthapuram –695522

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Ms. Beena, S., Postgraduate student of this department has taken up a research study on 'Performance and potential of gramasabhas in crop production in Athiyanoor block of Thiruvananthapuram district'.

The main objective of the study is to analyse the effectiveness of the gramasabhas in planning and implementing development programme in agriculture sector, attitude of farmers officials and people's representatives towards gramasabhas, perception of officials and people's representatives about the functioning of gramasabhas and to make suggestions for the better functioning of gramasabhas.

The independent variables related to the study have been identified based on review of literature and discussion with experts. These are listed in the Annexure along with their operational definition.

Considering your vast experience in the field of extension research, you are selected as judge to rate the relevancy of the variables on a 3 point continuum ranging from most relevant to least relevant. Please put a tick mark (✓) against each of the variables to indicate your judgment on the degree of relevance of the variables to the present study. You are free to add more number of variables.

Kindly return the judgment sheet to the researcher.

Thanking you,

Yours Sincerely,

(A.K. Sherief)

Sl. No.	Independent variables	Most relevant (3)	Relevant (2)	Least relevant (1)
1.	<u>Age</u> :- Refers to the number of years completed by the respondent at the time of enquiry.			
2.	<u>Education</u> :- Ability of the respondent to read and write or the extent of the formal education possessed.			
3.	<u>Main occupation</u> :- Refers to whether agriculture is the respondent's primary occupation or not.			
4.	<u>Farm size</u> :- The total area of the land possessed by the farmer at the time of conducting the survey.			
5.	<u>Farming experience</u> :- Number of years since the farmer has been involved in the cultivation of crops.			
6.	<u>Annual income</u> :- Refers to the total income obtained from both agriculture and other subsidiary occupations for a period of one year.			
7.	<u>Family type</u> :- Whether nuclear or joint family.			
8.	<u>Political orientation</u> :- Affiliation of the farmer with politics.			
9.	<u>Mass media exposure</u> :- Degree to which different mass media sources were utilized by the youth for getting information.			
10.	<u>Cosmopolitaness</u> :- Refers to the farmer's extent of contact with the outside village in terms of frequency and purpose of visits and membership in organisations.			

11.	<u>Social participation:-</u> Degree of involvement of a farmer in formal organisations either as member or as office bearer.			
12.	<u>Scientific orientation:-</u> Degree to which a farmer is orientated to the use of scientific methods in decision making in farming.			
13.	<u>Information source utilization:-</u> An individual's contact with various sources of information ie one's exposure to various sources of information and not influence or internalization of the message from these sources.			
14.	<u>Extension Participation:-</u> Extent of involvement of youth in different extension activities.			
15.	<u>Level of aspiration:-</u> Refers to the farmer's over all assessment of his concern for wishes and hopes for the future in his own reality world.			
16.	<u>Innovativeness:-</u> Desire expressed by a farmer to do something new for the sake of their own rather than to gain power, recognition or profit.			
17.	<u>Self concept:-</u> Set of cognition and feelings that a farmer has about him as a farmer.			
18.	<u>Gender bias:-</u> Whether the male members have influence on the women in encouraging or dominating decision making.			
19.	<u>Orientation towards incentives:-</u> Orientation of farmers towards subsidies and assistance provided by the govt. and other sponsoring agencies to motivate farmers to follow the farming practices.			

20.	<u>Achievement motivation</u> :- Desire for excellence in order to attain a sense of personal accomplishment.			
21.	<u>Socio- political participation</u> :- Degree to which an agricultural labourer is involved in formal socio-political organisation either as member or as an office bearer.			
22.	<u>Self confidence</u> : Extent of feeling about one's own powers, abilities and resourcefulness to perform any activity which the farmer desires to undertake.			
23.	<u>Leadership propensity</u> :- Refers to the ability of the respondent to influence others in the attainment of goals.			
24.	<u>Economic motivation</u> :- An individual's orientation towards achievement of maximum economic ends.			
25	<u>Credit Orientation</u> :- Refers to the favourable and positive attitude of a farmer towards obtaining credit from institutional sources.			

APPENDIX- II

Attitude statements with their respective 't' values

The statements selected for measuring the attitude with their respective 't' values.

Sl. No.	Statements	't' value
1	Gramasabha helps to identify the common problems of the local people	2.04
2	The criteria followed by gramasabhas in selecting the beneficiaries is not satisfactory.	3.16
3	Gramasabha helps to criticize the corruptions of the panchayat.	6.32
4	Gramasabha meetings end in disputes	2.46
5	Gramasabha is a boon to farmers	2.15
6	People's participation is not necessary for the effective functioning of gramasabhas	5.87
7	Gramasabha helps to create we feeling in the rural people	4.92
8	Local problems can be best solved through bodies like gramasabhas	5.95
9	Gramasabhas are not ideal for Kerala conditions	3.62
10	Gramasabha successfully mobilises voluntary labour for the implementation of the projects	4.83
11	Powers vested with gramasabhas are not adequate for solving the prevailing problems.	3.71
12	Gramasabha is an ideal forum for undertaking social audit	6.21
13	Matters of political interests are given emphasis in group discussions in gramasabhas.	4.73
14	Gramasabha helps to increase the faith of the villagers in the panchayat	5.32
15	Gramasabha creates problems rather than solving problems.	3.78

APPENDIX – III

Interview schedule

Performance and potential of gramasabhas in crop production in Athiyanoor block of Thiruvananthapuram district

Serial No.

1. Name of the respondent :

2. Name of the ward :

3. Name of the panchayat :

4. Education

Sl. No.	Level of education
1	Illiterate (0)
2	Can read only (1)
3	Can read and write (2)
4	Primary school (3)
5	Middle school (4)
6	High school (5)
7	College and above (6)

5. Main occupation

Agriculture as primary occupation – (2)

Agriculture as secondary occupation - (1)

6. Annual income

Below 5,000 (1)

5,000- 10,000 (2)

10,000- 15,000 (3)

>15,000 (4)

7. Political orientation

Sl. No.	Statements	Agree (1)	Disagree (0)
1	Group discussions in gramasabhas are carried out effectively without any political intervention		
2	Political interests are given emphasis while prioritising the project proposals		
3	Local resources are mobilised with the co-operation of all political parties.		
4	Beneficiaries are selected strictly according to the criteria without political interference.		
5	Social audit in gramasabhas is not carried out effectively due to political interventions.		

8. Cosmopolitaness

Sl. No.	a) Frequency of visit to nearest town	
1	Twice or more in a week (5)	
2	Once in a week (4)	
3	Once in a fortnight (3)	
4	Once in a month (2)	
5	Seldom (1)	
6	Never (0)	
b) Purpose of visit		
1	All visits relating to agriculture (5)	
2	Some visits relating to agriculture (4)	
3	Personal/ domestic matters (3)	
4	Entertainment (2)	
5	Other purposes (1)	
6	No response (0)	

9. Social participation

Please indicate whether you are a member or office bearer in any of the following organisations. If so, indicate the frequency of participation.

Sl. No.	Organisation	Nature of participation			Frequency of participation in meetings/ activities		
		No membership	Member	Office bearer	Regularly	Sometimes	Never
		(0)	(1)	(2)	(2)	(1)	(0)
1.	Panchayat						
2.	Co-operative society						
3.	Youth club						
4.	Socio-cultural organisation						
5.	Any other (specify)						

10. Information source utilization

		Regularly (2)	Sometimes (1)	Never (0)
1)	Impersonal source			
a)	Radio			
b)	Newspaper			
c)	TV			
d)	Farm magazine			
e)	Farm articles in popular magazines			
2)	Formal personal source			
a)	Agricultural assistants			
b)	Agricultural officer			
c)	Agricultural scientists			
3)	Informal personal source			
a)	Friends and relatives			
b)	Neighbours and fellow farmers			

c)	Family members			
d)	Progressive farmers			
e)	Local leaders			
4)	Commercial source			
a)	Fertilizer dealers			
b)	Pesticide dealers			
c)	Co-operative officials			
d)	Bank personnels			
5)	Other source			
a)	Exhibitions /Melas/ Festivals			
b)	Group meetings			
c)	Training			
d)	Demonstrations			
e)	Seminars			

11. Extension participation

Please indicate your frequency of participation in the following extension activities.

Sl. No.	Extension activity	Attended whenever conducted (2)	Sometimes attended (1)	Never attended (0)
1	Campaigns			
2	Seminars			
3	Fairs/ Melas			
4	Group discussions			
5	Demonstrations			
6	Any other (specify)			

12. Leadership Propensity

Sl. No.	Statements	Always (2)	Sometimes (1)	Never (0)
1	Do you lead meetings and discussions			
2	Are you available to others at any time to extend necessary help to them.			
3	Do you guide and influence others in taking decisions			
4	Do you feel others are convinced by you.			
5	Do you think that you can change the attitude of others			

13. Attitude towards people's plan

Sl. No.	Statements	SA (5)	A (4)	UD (3)	DA (2)	SDA (1)
1.	The benefits of people's plan meant for the people are not reaching them.					
2	People's plan has helped to identify the backwardness of the society and thereby helping to overcome the difficulties out of that					
3.	People's plan has not helped in solving the problems confronted by rural people in general.					
4	Participation of people in the social sector has improved through implementation of people's plan					
5.	People's plan is no way helping the development of people.					

14. Economic motivation

Sl. No.	Statements	SA (5)	A (4)	UD (3)	DA (2)	SDA (1)
1	Prestige is more important than profit in judging the success of a farm					
2	Money alone does not give satisfaction in a farmers life.					
3	A farmer should always aim at social recognition than recognition on monetary grounds.					
4	A farmer should adopt an innovation which helps him to make money.					
5.	A farmer requires only money to achieve most of the goals in life.					
6	Community respects rich farmers more than poor farmers.					

15. Training

Sl. No.	Training undergone	Score
1	No training	0
2	One training	1
3	Two trainings	2
4	Two or more trainings	3

16. Innovativeness

Sl. No.	Statements	Yes (2)	UD (1)	No (0)
1	A good farmer experiments with new ideas in farming			
2	Though it takes time for a farmer to learn new methods it is worth taking the efforts			
3	As soon as you get information regarding a new agricultural practice, will you take immediate decision to put it into practice.			
4	If the govt. would help you to establish a farm elsewhere, would you move.			
5	Do you think a farmer experimenting with his own new ideas but maintaining his farm enterprise without loss could be called innovative.			

17. Orientation towards incentives

Please indicate your extent of agreement or disagreement to the following statements.

Sl. No.	Statements	SA (5)	A (4)	UD (3)	DA (2)	SDA (1)
1	Subsidies/ assistance provided by sponsoring agency motivated farmers to follow improved agricultural practices.					
2	Subsidies/ assistance provided by sponsoring agency are not adequate when compared to the expenditure in carrying out improved agricultural practices.					
3	Subsidised supply of inputs like seeds, seedlings, fertilizers reduced the hardship faced by farmers in following improved agricultural practices.					
4	Free electricity provided by Government for farming is a boon for farmers to reduce cost of cultivation.					

18. Effectiveness of gramasabhas in planning and implementing agricultural development programmes

Sl. No.	Statements	Yes (1)	No (0)
1	Gramasabhas are convened at a time convenient to majority of its members		
2	In group discussions everyone gets an equal chance to express his problems		
3	The criteria for beneficiary selection are widely publicised in the wards		
4	Gramasabhas are not convened regularly once in three months		
5	Discussions regarding the availability of local resources and the efficient utilization of these resources are carried out effectively in gramasabhas		
6	The Planning exercise was often centered on a single issue		
7	The gramasabha fails to pinpoint the short falls in the implementation of projects in a healthy manner		
8	Problems that need immediate attention and are significant to majority of members are given priority in gramasabhas		
9	Non- eligible beneficiaries are included since it is possible to make adjustments in selection norms unofficially		
10	Short falls observed during the implementation of the projects is made use of while formulating projects for the next year		
11	Sometimes gramasabhas are convened without meeting the prescribed quorum and false information is recorded		

12	Agricultural development programmes formulated through gramasabhas best suit the local conditions than those formulated earlier		
13	Political interventions in gramasabhas adversely affect the potential of officials		
14	Periodic monitoring and evaluation on the implementation of various projects are done by gramasabhas		
15	Gramasabha fails to identify the felt needs of the people		

19) Attitude

Sl. No.	Statements	SA (5)	A (4)	UD (3)	DA (2)	SDA (1)
1	Gramasabha helps to identify the common problems of the local people					
2	The criteria followed by gramasabhas in selecting the beneficiaries is not satisfactory.					
3	Gramasabha helps to criticise the corruptions of the panchayat.					
4	Gramasabha meetings end in disputes.					
5	Gramasabha is a boom to farmers.					
6	People's participation is not necessary for the effective functioning of gramasabhas.					
7	Gramasabhas help to create we feeling in the rural people.					
8	Local problems can be best solved through bodies like gramasabhas					
9	Gramasabhas are not ideal for Kerala conditions.					
10	Gramasabha successfully mobilises voluntary labour for the implementation of the projects.					

11	Powers vested with gramasabhas are not adequate for solving the prevailing problems.					
12	Gramasabha is an ideal forum for undertaking social audit.					
13	Matters of political interests are given emphasis in group discussions in gramasabhas.					
14	Gramasabhas helps to increase the faith of the villagers in the panchayat					
15	Gramasabha creates problems rather than solving problems					

20) Perception

Sl. No.	Statements	SA (5)	A (4)	UD (3)	DA (2)	SDA (1)
1	Gramasabhas are convened regularly					
2	Gramasabhas perform better with political initiation					
3	Farmers are encouraged to express their needs in group discussions					
4	Many times beneficiaries are not selected according to the stipulated criteria					
5	While prioritising the project proposals due importance is given to the felt needs of the farmers					
6	Gramasabha fails to mobilise local resources satisfactorily					
7	Group discussions in gramasabhas are capable of solving the problems of the farmers					
8	Social audit has not been made an integral part of the gramasabha					
9	Group discussions carried out in gramasabhas create awareness in the villages regarding the local problems					

10	Project proposals formulated through gramasabhas satisfy the felt needs of the farmers					
11	Gramasabha fails to represent all categories of people in the village					
12	Gramasabha enhances meaningful participation of people in matters concerning their lives					
13	Gramasabhas are successful in making the panchayat accountable to the public					
14	Project proposals are formulated based on the discussions carried out in gramasabhas					
15	Without any prejudice, ruling and opposition party members actively participate in the dimensions regarding the developmental problems of the region					

PART – B

Constraints

In your opinion what are the constraints for the effective functioning of gramasabhas ? Indicate your agreement or disagreement to the constraints listed below. Add any other constraints which you find hindering the performance of gramasabhas.

Sl. No.	Statements	Agree	Disagree
1.	Wastage of funds		
2.	Lacks active group discussions		
3.	Prioritisation of project proposals not based on felt needs		
4.	Lacks adequate social auditing		
5.	Corruptions in the selection of beneficiaries		
6.	Non co-operation of officials		
7.	Lack of periodic monitoring of ongoing projects		
8.	Gramasabha meetings ending in conflicts		
9.	Inadequate mobilization of local resources		
10.	Misutilisation of benefits		

What are your suggestions for the better functioning of gramasabhas ?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

**PERFORMANCE AND POTENTIAL OF
GRAMASABHAS IN CROP PRODUCTION
IN ATHIYANOOR BLOCK OF
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM DISTRICT**

BY

BEENA. S.

**ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS
submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirement for the degree
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN AGRICULTURE
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**Department of Agricultural Extension
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ABSTRACT

The study entitled 'Performance and potential of gramasabhas in crop production in Athiyanoor block of Thiruvananthapuram district was undertaken to study the effectiveness, attitude and perception and to identify the constraints as perceived by the farmers, officials and people's representatives regarding the functioning of gramasabhas.

The study was conducted in Venganoor, Vizhinjam, Athiyanoor and Kottukal panchayats of Athiyanoor block. A sample of 200 respondents were selected using multistage random sampling technique. Data were collected through well structured and pre-tested interview schedule.

Sixty per cent of the farmers, fifty five per cent of the officials and sixty per cent of the people's representatives perceive the gramasabhas as effective in planning and implanting agricultural development programmes.

Regarding the attitude towards gramasabhas, 58.43 per cent of the farmers and 87.50 per cent of the people's representatives possessed a very favourable attitude. Among the officials, 65 per cent were favourable towards gramasabhas.

Eighty per cent of the people's representatives had very good perception about the functioning of gramasabhas. The study revealed that 57.50 per cent of the officials and 61.67 per cent of the farmers belonged to high group with respect to perception.

Majority of the farmers had education upto high school level with farming as the main occupation. Most of the farmers expressed a high level

of political orientation, cosmopolitaness, social participation and extension participation. Information source utilisation and orientation of the farmers towards incentives were also found to be high for majority of the respondents.

Personal, socio-psychological variables viz., education, political orientation, cosmopolitaness, social participation, information source utilisation, leadership propensity, attitude towards people's plan and orientation towards incentives had shown a positive and significant relationship with effectiveness. Annual income had negatively significant relationship with effectiveness.

Education, main occupation, political orientation, social participation, attitude towards people's plan, economic motivation and orientation towards incentives had shown a positive and significant relation with attitude of the farmers towards gramasabhas. Annual income was found to be negatively correlated with attitude.

Education, main occupation, political orientation, social participation, attitude towards people's plan, economic motivation and orientation towards incentives had shown a positively significant relationship with perception of the farmers about the functioning of gramasabhas. Annual income had negatively significant relation with perception.

Venganoor and Kottukal panchayats differed significantly with respect to leadership propensity. The respondents of Venganoor panchayat had high level of leadership propensity as compared to those in Kottukal panchayat.

Venganoor and Kottukal panchayats differed significantly with respect to perceived effectiveness. The respondents in Venganoor panchayat

perceived the gramasabhas as highly effective in planning and implementing agricultural development programmes.

There was no significant difference among Venganoor, Vizhinjam, Athiyanoor and Kottukal panchayats with respect to attitude and perception about the gramasabhas.

The officials and the people's representatives exhibited non-significant relationship regarding the perceived effectiveness of gramasabhas in planning and implementing agricultural development programmes.

As far as attitude towards gramasabhas is concerned, the officials and the people's representatives differed significantly. It was observed that the people's representatives had a more favourable attitude towards gramasabhas than the officials.

Significant difference was observed between the officials and the people's representatives regarding the perception about the functioning of gramasabhas. As compared to officials, people's representatives possessed a better perception about the functioning of gramasabhas.

Lack of active group discussions was perceived as the most important constraint by the farmers, officials and people's representatives.