

**DYNAMICS OF SELF HELP GROUP FORMATION  
A CASE STUDY IN THRISSUR DISTRICT**

**By  
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**THESIS**

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis entitled "DYNAMICS OF SELF HELP GROUP FORMATION - A CASE STUDY IN THRISSUR DISTRICT" is a bonafide record of research work done by me during the course of research and that this thesis has not previously formed the basis for the award to me of any degree, diploma, associateship, fellowship or any other similar title of any other university or society.

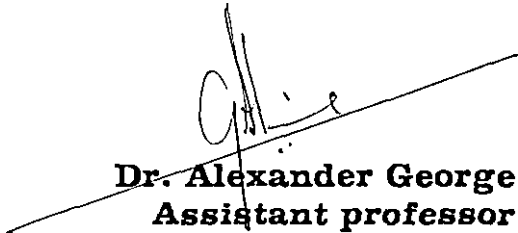
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Certified that this thesis entitled "**DYNAMICS OF SELF HELP GROUP FORMATION - A CASE STUDY IN THRISSUR DISTRICT**" is a record of research work done independently by **Sri. K.J. SHERIN** under my guidance and supervision and that it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, fellowship or associateship to him.

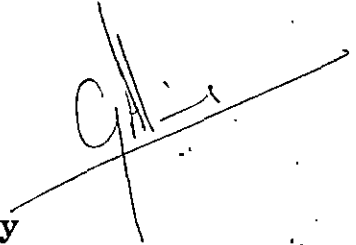


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## ABBREVIATIONS USED

SHG	: Self Help Group
SHPI	: Self Help Promoting Institution
NGO	: Non-Government Organisation
ESAF	: Evangelical Social Action Forum
CDS	: Community Development Society
KHDP	: Kerala Horticulture Development Programme

***DEDICATED TO MY BELOVED PARENTS***

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

From time immemorial people have organised themselves at the grass roots level to find innovative solutions to specific problems : a form of collective advocacy on behalf of a shared cause to direct action in the service of achieving a collective goal. Even though mobilisation of people has been viewed as a sociological phenomenon, it involves psychological elements that operate at the individual, interpersonal, intergroup and cultural levels. This is because while collective or social action may achieve sociological change, individuals experience psychological changes as a result of working in close quarters with others. They may make a personal transition in self-esteem, self-efficacy, social identity. Thus community activism can become the starting point for the transformation of norms, values and the shaping of society towards progress.

A self help group (SHG) is a homogeneous gathering of usually not more than 25 persons who join on a voluntary basis in order to undertake some common, activity through mutual trust and mutual help.

In India the concept of self help groups can be traced back to the Gandhian Grama Swaraj movement. It is mainly concerned with the poor and it is for the people and of the people.

Unlike many other countries which have implemented SHGs after the mid-seventies as a part of the formal credit delivery system, India has been experimenting with the concept for decades (Karmakar, 1998).

The cooperative credit was introduced in India as a defense mechanism against the exploitation of the rural poor. Cooperatives thus represent the earliest and widest application of the self-help approach. However, with the growth of cooperatives as formal organisations they have ceased to be thrift oriented, member led, autonomous organisations. While conceptually, the rich and the poor members can participate equally in the cooperative effort, the need of the poor has often got marginalised (Panda and Mishra, 1996).

The working group constituted by the Government of India to examine the mechanism of organising SHGs as a subsystem in the Primary Agriculture Credit Societies defined an SHG as " a group or association of individuals with common economic needs who undertake a systematic economic

activity participating directly in decision making and sharing benefits on an equitable basis." Apart from inculcating socially desirable habits and ethics amongst members, SHGs serve the purpose of a money lender, a development bank, a cooperative and a voluntary agency.

The dependence of the rural poor on money lenders especially for meeting emergent requirements is still very high. Most of the rural poor remain outside the purview of formal credit system, despite significant attempts made by the Government and the banks to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the rural credit delivery system. Under the circumstances, a non-formal agency of credit supply to the poor in the form of an SHG emerges as a promising partner of the formal agencies.

The Bangladesh model of Grameen Bank founded by Professor Mohammed Yunus of Chittagong University and established exclusively for the poor helped to erase the myth that "credit is the privilege of few fortunate people." The Grameen Bank now has 1042 branch offices serving member groups in 34243 villages with an excellent recovery performance of 99 per cent. This is due to mutual trust and accountability. The impetus of the present day SHG movement may be



attributed to the success of the Grameen Bank. (Rajagoplan, 1998).

Inspired by the success of the Grameen Bank many other developing countries including Bolivia, Colombia, Guinea, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Mali, Malawi, Nepal, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Zambia have replicated it.

The concept of SHGs for banking, finance and development was worked on by the Reserve Bank of India from 1991 onwards, while National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) started promoting SHGs from 1992 onwards (NABARD, 1995). Today this approach of reconstructing the rural credit system has assumed the form of mass movement. Harper(1996) observed that through SHGs, for the first time, savings and credit facilities are being marketed rather than being doled out according to schemes which have been designed by policy makers who believe they know what people need better than the people themselves do. There is surely no better example of empowerment than a SHG which is genuinely owned and managed by its members.

At the micro level the establishment of SHGs can be traced to the existence of one or more common problems around which the consciousness of the rural

poor is built. The group thus is normally a response to a perceived need, besides being centered around specific productive activities (Rangarajan, 1994).

SHGs emerge particularly among people with limited means. Through SHGs their limited resources could be pooled to achieve greater objectives for the member as well as the community at large. Munker (1983) suggests that SHGs are usually formed for one of the following reasons:

- a) to struggle for survival
- b) to fight against a common enemy
- c) to defend a common interest
- d) to build up countervailing power
- e) to gain access to resources or services not available for the individuals
- f) to be the contact point for information and education programmes
- g) to pool resources of the members
- h) to become a vehicle of change of mind and attitudes
- i) to work as a protective device for the individual in the process of change.

Acharya and Basu (1996) observed that the individual and collective consciousness which developed in the process of formation of SHGs not only empowered women economically but also enhanced their self

esteem. According to them, empowering poor women in rural areas enabled them to meet their credit needs for consumption and productive activities, which consequently entailed their economic independence. This strengthened their bargaining positions within the households. A definite ambience of dynamism and cohesion surfaced in the group members because of their association with the *Sangh*. This led to a greater recognition of social issues amongst them.

Mutual aid in farming or household work being a characteristic of rural community life, some SHGs are in existence spontaneously, but most are promoted with the active involvement of some self-help promoting institutions (SHPI). Some are informal, while others may be registered formal groups. Of late SHGs have come to be recognized as a pivotal means of sustainable community development. Many non-government organisations (NGOs) and even the Government are trying to promote SHGs.

What are the dynamics of the formation process of SHGs? What are the motivation patterns of SHG members? Why do they join these groups and what keeps them hanging on to these groups? How can sustainability- the successful end of the SHG formation process be ensured. What are the factors that would contribute to the sustainability of this mushrooming

7. To suggest a model for sustainable formation of SHGs.

### 1.1 Scope of the study

For a long time policy makers and planners have been attempting to reverse the top down approach adopted in development programmes. With the major surge of SHGs in the last two decades they are for the first time realising that the developmental programmes, savings and credit facilities etc., are being marketed rather than being doled out according to schemes which have been designed by policy makers who believe that they know what people need even better than the people themselves do. There seems to be no better example of empowerment than a SHG which is genuinely owned and managed by its members. If this is the panacea for the problems of top down approaches it definitely calls for serious attention in terms of research to standardise strategic methodologies. Herein lies the scope of the present study. By enhancing the body of knowledge available at the University on this subject experts of the Kerala Agriculture University would be well equipped in their role as consultants on this strategic means of sustainable community development.

The study would also help any agency interested in using SHGs as a vehicle of community

development by providing them with research validated methodologies to follow as they go about establishing SHGs. This would prevent them from the mistakes of earlier attempts of pioneering SHPIs which inadvertently backfired resulting in financial loss, loss of credibility and the lack of confidence among people and change agents.

It is therefore hoped that the results of this study would be of immense use to planners, policy makers and practitioners of community development.

## **1.2 Limitations of the study**

The concept of SHG differs from most other forms of associations. The concept shot into prominence only during the last two decades. There is a scarcity of literature especially on the long range understanding of the phenomena. This has definitely limited the present study especially in terms of providing answers to the issues on sustainability.

The case study method was adopted in the present study by choice. The advantages and limitations of this study have been detailed in chapter III. The method also makes use of limited statistical techniques (non-parametric methods). This however need not be perceived as a limitation as the use of non-parametric

statistics stands well justified in social science research.

The present study was undertaken as a part of the requirements for the post graduation programme of the student researcher. There were constraints of time and therefore some issues could not be explored in greater depth and in a more comprehensive manner.

### **1.3 Presentation of the study**

The report of the study has been spread out under six chapters as given below.

The first chapter deals with the introduction, wherein the statement of the problem, objectives, the scope and limitations of the study are discussed. The second chapter covers the review of studies related to the present study. The third chapter relates to the details of the methodology used in the process of investigation. The fourth chapter deals with results, the fifth chapter with discussions and the sixth chapter has the summary, implications and conclusions of the study. The bibliography, appendices and abstract are furnished at the end.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Any systematic scientific inquiry has its foundation built upon studies conducted in the past. The main objective of this chapter is to review the theoretical and empirical information available from similar or at least related studies. Such recapitulation could serve as a basis for delineating an ideal conceptual framework for the present project and relating its empirical findings with those of earlier investigations.

The literature is reviewed under the following broad headings.

- 2.1 Definitions of self-help groups
- 2.2 Formation stages in SHGs
- 2.3 Motivation patterns in SHGs
- 2.4 Member characteristics
- 2.5 Group characteristics
- 2.6 Change agent characteristics
- 2.7 Factors contributing to sustainability of SHGs
- 2.8 Conceptual model of the study.

## 2.1 Definitions of self help groups

According to Hagenbuch (1958) SHGs are mutual aid organisations formed by a group of people getting together to help each other and are essentially democratic in nature.

Kuhn(1985) defined SHGs as grouping of people who desire to pursue common goals through joint actions and self help.

Kuhn (1985) also defined SHGs as organisations whose members have united on the basis of common interest to improve their economic and social conditions in order to be better able to pursue their paramount long terms aims.

The Royal Tropical Institute (1987) defined SHG as a membership organisation or group which implies that its risks, costs and benefits are shared among its members on an equitable basis and that its leadership and/or managers are liable to be called to account by membership for their deeds.

Rao (1994) defined SHGs as a means of raising the claim-making capacity of the rural poor for reaching out to such agencies as they are willing to work with and which can provide them with additional



production resources. It also implies the development of their bargaining power to an extent that, such agencies cannot unilaterally impose their conditions and regulations upon the rural poor as passive recipients.

NABARD (1995) defined SHG as a homogeneous group of rural poor voluntarily formed to save whatever amount they can conveniently save out of their earnings and mutually agree to contribute to a common fund from which to lent to members for productive and emergent credit needs.

Singh (1995a) conceptualized an SHG as an informal association of individuals which comes together voluntarily for promotion of economic and/ or social objectives.

A SHG is a homogeneous gathering of person usually not more than 20-25 individuals who join on a voluntary basis in order to undertake an economic activity such as thrift and credit, or use of a common asset /tool on the basis of equality and nurturing trust (Anon, 1996).

A SHG as a homogeneous group of not more than 25 individuals who have come together to secure greater economic and financial strength through mutual help (Anon, 1996).

Dwaraki *et al.* (1996) described a self-help credit group as an unregistered body of people, preferably the disadvantaged, who willingly contribute an agreed sum of money which would be lent at a price for a short period as fixed by the group itself.

Krishnamurthy (1996) defined SHG as an organisation formed by people for pooling their resources to help each other.

Roul (1996) defined an SHG as a group where members come together with certain objectives to manage their own funds and affairs by themselves to achieve better control over their resources and to meet their credit needs.

Roul (1996) further defined an SHG as an institutional framework for individuals or households who have agreed to co-operate on a continuing basis to pursue one or more objectives.

Karmakar(1998) defined SHG as an informal groups of people where members pool their savings and re-lend within the group on rotational basis.

Thomas (1998)defined SHG as a homogeneous group of rural poor voluntarily formed to save small amounts out of their earnings which is convenient to all

the members and agreed upon by all to form a common fund corpus for the group to lend to its members for meeting their productive and emergent credit needs.

## **2.2 Formation stages in SHGs**

According to Rajasekhar (1993) the factors contributing to the formation of SHGs involved in savings and credit are many and varied. He suggested the following factors as important in the formation and sustenance of SHGs : (1) the groups should be homogenous in terms of the combined criteria of caste, economic status and sex ; (2) the rules and regulations should be discussed and decided upon by the group members themselves ; and (3) the size of the group should be small so that it would allow members to participate effectively in democratic decision making.

From the mid 1960's it was believed that groups passed through a standard sequence of five stages. The five stages are forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning as proposed by Tuckman (1965).

The first stage, forming, is characterized by a great deal of uncertainty about the group's purpose structure and leadership. Members are "testing the waters" to determine what types of behaviour are

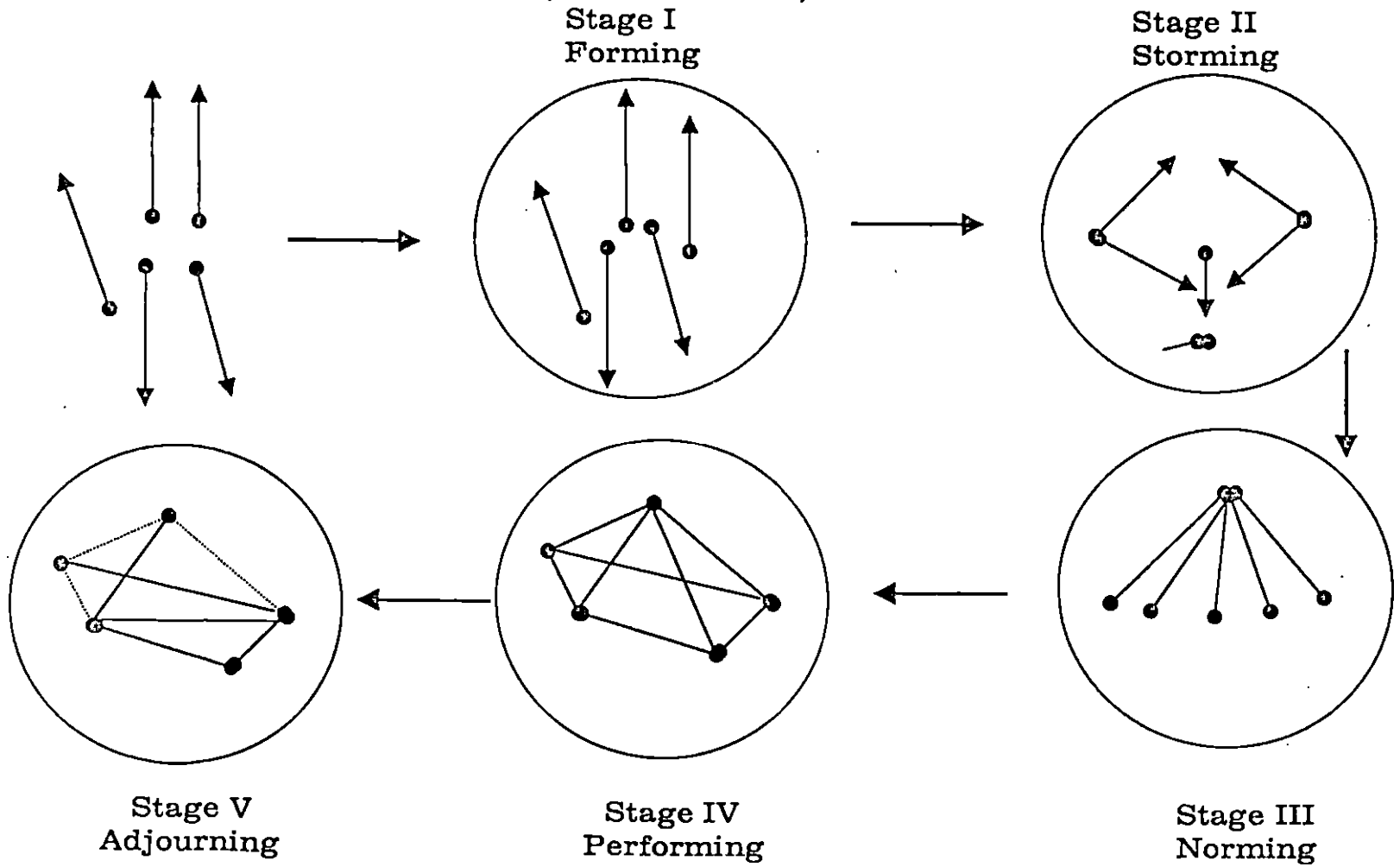
acceptable. This stages is complete when members have began to think of themselves as part of a group.

The storming stage is one of intra-group conflict. Members accept the existence of the group but there is resistance to the constraints that the group imposes on individuality. Further there is conflict over who will control the group. When this stage is complete, there will be a relatively clear hierarchy of leadership within the group.

The third stage is one in which close relationships develop and the group demonstrates cohesiveness. There is now a strong sense of group identity and camaraderie. This norming stage is complete when the group structure solidifies and the group has assimilated a common set of expectations of what defines correct member behaviour.

The fourth stage is performing. The structure at this point is fully functional and accepted. Group energy has moved from getting to know and understand each other to performing the task at hand. For permanent work groups, performing is the last stage in their development. However for temporary committees, task forces, teams and similar groups that have a limited task to perform there is an adjourning stage. In this stage the group prepares for its disbandment.

Fig. 1 Stages of Group formation (Tuckman, 1965)



KHDP (1995) in their programme guidelines had however identified only three stages:

- a. Group initiation/ formation stage
- b. Building up/ stabilization stage
- c. Self-helping stage

The Indian Bank in its guidelines (Anon, 1996) had identified two phases in the formation process:

**Phase I is the Study Phase:**

1. Village visit and interaction with people
2. Rapport building
3. Collecting information on socio-economic background of the village
4. Identification of a specific problem/issue around which a group can be organised.

**Phase II is the Action Phase.** It consists of four stages:

**A. Preparatory stage**

1. Identification of key persons.
2. Meeting the people and explaining the advantages of an SHG.
3. Repeat discussions in groups until they begin to feel that they have come together and have not been brought together.
4. Prepare them individually for the first meeting.

**B. Settling down stage**

1. The first meeting may be with a small group of 3-4 members.
2. Motivate them to talk freely and to propagate the idea of forming a group to others.
3. Insist on attending groups meeting and try to overcome the initial resistance if any.
4. Eliminate the indifferent attitudes of the spouse in organising the group.
5. Finalise the list of persons who can be the members of the group.

**C. Stabilization stage**

1. Selection of office bearers.
2. Evolving norms/bye-laws for group functioning.
3. Collection of savings.
4. Disbursement of *sangh* loans.
5. Recording the minutes.

**D. Completion stage**

The exercise of formation of the SHG is considered complete when the following are achieved :

1. A constant membership of not more than 20 persons.
2. Common understanding among members about why they have come together.
3. Common understanding about who are the members.

4. Initiative in regularly attending meetings.
5. High and shared participation in meetings.
6. Free and open communication and feedback among members.
7. Oneness in decision making.
8. Realization of the structure of the group.
9. Action on group decisions.
10. On going activity in the group.
11. Shared leadership in the group.

Anon(1997) expressed that SHG group formation is complete when there exists:

- (a) a constant membership of not more than 20 persons
- (b) a common understanding among members as to why they have come together and who are the members
- (c) an initiative in regularly attending meetings
- (d) a high and shared participation in the meetings
- (e) free and open communication with feedback among members
- (f) oneness in decision making
- (g) realization of the structure of the group
- (h) action on group decision
- (i) an ongoing activity and
- (j) a shared leadership of the group.



According to Rao and Zeller (1998) a pre-formation stage existed. This pre-formation phase included identification of the village and mobilization of the target group for functioning as a group. At this stage the potential members were provided with the sound logic on the efficacy of SHGs. Suspicion, fear and anxiety of members about the safety of their savings and the functioning of the group were discussed.

### **2.3 Motivation patterns in SHGs**

There is no single reason why individuals join groups. Since most people belong to a number of groups, it is obvious that different groups provide different benefits to their members. The most popular reasons for joining a group are related to our needs for security, status, self-esteem, affiliation, power and goal achievement. What motivates people to join groups can be explained by Maslows hierarchy of needs (Maslows, 1943). He hypothesized that within every human being there exists a hierarchy of five needs. These needs are :

1. Physiological : Includes hunger, thirst, shelter, sex, and other bodily needs.
2. Safety : Includes security and protection from physical and emotional needs.
3. Social : Includes affection, belongingness, acceptance, and friendship.

4. Esteem : Includes internal esteem factors such as self-respect, autonomy and achievement and external esteem factors such as status, recognition and attention.
5. Self-actualization : The drive to become what one is capable of becoming; includes growth, achieving one's potential and self-fulfillment.

As each of these needs becomes substantially satisfied, the next need becomes dominant. From the point of motivation the theory claims that although no need is even fully gratified a substantially satisfied need no longer motivates. Maslow separated the five needs into higher and lower orders. Physiological and safety need are described as lower order while social, esteem and self-actualization as higher order needs. The differentiation between the two orders was made on the premise that higher order needs are satisfied internally, whereas lower order needs are satisfied externally by money and job.

According to Robbins (1993) the most popular motives for joining groups are related to our needs for security, status, self-esteem, affiliation, power and goal attainment.

- (1) **Security** : There is strength in numbers. By joining a group, people reduce the insecurity of being alone. People get reassurance from interacting with others and being part of a group.
- (2) **Status** : Some people join groups for getting status. An effective group will go on attracting more and more people to its fold. Inclusion in a group which is kept at high esteem by others provides recognition and status for its members.
- (3) **Self-esteem** : Groups can provide people with a feeling of self-worth i.e., in addition to conveying status to those outside the group, membership also gives increased feelings of worth to the group members themselves. Our self-esteem is thus bolstered.
- (4) **Affiliation** : Groups can fulfill our social needs. People really enjoy the regular interaction that comes with group membership. For many people these on-the-job interactions are their primary source for fulfilling their needs for affiliation. For almost all people, work groups significantly contribute to fulfilling their needs for friendship and social relations.
- (5) **Power** : One of the appealing aspects of groups is that they represent power. What often cannot be

achieved individually becomes possible through group action. In order to protect themselves from others individuals may also align with groups. Formal groups additionally provide opportunities for individuals to exercise power over other individuals. So for people with a high power need groups can be a vehicle for fulfillment.

6. **Goal attainment:** Some difficult tasks cannot be executed with the effort of a single person. Such tasks require the pooling of talents, knowledge and power of several people for their accomplishment. Groups help the pooling of knowledge, skill, and power of different people.

Srinivasan (1996) observed six reasons for the rural poor to join such groups. They are: access to credit, reduction in transaction costs of borrowing, freedom to the borrower, equality, basic consumption loans, confidence in ones own abilities.

### **2.3 Member characteristics**

#### **2.4.1 Gender**

According to Thundiyil (1995) women's SHGs are being promoted more actively as they form the major population under poverty.

According to Roul (1996) women were found to be the dominant gender in most of the groups that were functioning very well. It may take a long time for men and women joining hands as equal partners in an SHG, to become the order of the day in rural India. It is therefore necessary to allow the gender-based distinctions in promoting SHGs. Interestingly but not surprisingly the NGOs under study which have promoted such gender distinct SHGs express a greater degree of satisfaction working with women's group rather than men's groups.

Women members were found to be more sincere in their regularity and discipline. Most of the SHGs formed were women dominated and mainly emphasized women's upliftment and empowerment as reported by Dwaraki *et al.* (1996).

Srilatha *et al.* (1997) observed that a major gain of making the programme of self help groups women centered was that the transition of power from the bureaucracy to the people was made easier.

Based on the above findings gender was postulated to have an relationship with the sustainability of SHG and hence it was selected as a variable for of the study.

#### 2.4.2 Promptness and regularity in attending meetings

The Kerala Horticulture Development Project found that as the group enters the performing stage, the attendance of the farmers is more than 70 per cent (KHDP, 1995).

Acharya and Basu (1996) reported that attendance of monthly meetings of the *sangh* was compulsory. A penalty of Rs. 10/- was charged in any case of absenteeism.

Dwaraki *et al.* (1996) observed that in SHGs periodic meetings attendance was by definition declared as compulsory. To acquire eligibility for financial assistance an attendance pre-requisite was fixed. In attending the periodical group meeting, remittance of savings amount or repayment of loan amount, the member was to be regular.

Panda and Mishra (1996) opined that SHG members need to meet at regular intervals. This besides helping in creation of a group bondage will ensure participation of members and democratic functioning of the group. It will help in group planning, proper management of funds, enable the members to resolve conflicts and exchange ideas as also ensure participation in decision making processes. Non-

attendance should lead to cancellation of membership automatically.

Only one SHG in the study conducted by Roul (1996) had 100 per cent attendance. In other SHGs attendance is about 50 per cent.

Hundred per cent attendance was recorded among SHGs in Andhra Pradesh as reported by Rao and Padmaja (1998).

In view of the above revelations it was decided to include promptness and regularity in attending meetings as a variable in this study in order to verify its relationship the sustainability of SHG.

### **2.4.3 Self-Reliance**

Rao and Mehta (1978) enlisted need for independence as one of the psychological factors that influences entrepreneurship.

Prasad (1983) had reported a high and significant relationship between self-reliance and achievement motivation in the case of rice farmers.

Significant relationship of self-reliance of farmers with their management orientation was reported by Sreekumar (1985).

According to Chawla and Patel (1987). In their study on SHGs. Kishan Baburao Hazarues' self help programme in his home village Ralegaon Shindi was a contribution of peoples participation to developmental activities mostly through self reliance i.e., mainly by local labour and use of local material was reported by Chawla and Patel (1987) in their study on SHGs.

Pramod (1990) noted that self reliant development in a poor family should emphasize motivation and incentive to save continuously with a flexible credit arrangement to meet the production needs investment needs and possibly consumption needs.

Groups should be formed with those members who had self-reliance as the clear motive. Where groups were formed with the sole objective of receiving government grants or bank loans, they generally disintegrated once their limited purpose was served (Fernandez, 1992).



Porchezian (1992) pointed out significant correlation between self-reliance and entrepreneurial behaviour of farmers.

According to Dwaraki *et al* (1996) the goal of SHG is to pool together the strengths of the weaker sections and gear them towards developing a self-reliant community.

Groups formed with the genuine purpose of self-help had much better chance of success (Srinivasan and Rao, 1996).

High self-reliance attributed to high entrepreneurship behaviour as reported by Vinayagam (1998).

These findings indicate self-reliance is an important factor, in the present study.

#### **2.4.4 Accountability**

Coward (1976) reported that small scale, water users associations in irrigation foster direct linkages with indigenous leadership roles and accountability for water usage. Most studies in Asia and Africa conclude that responsibility for water use and system maintenance at the local level will lead to

greater accountability for performance thus decreasing failure due to poor preventative maintenance. (Tschannerl, 1976).

The Kerala Horticultural Development Programme insists that the ideas for the refinement, improvement and problem solving of various activities being undertaken by the group shall be the responsibility of master farmers. (KHDP, 1995).

The literature available however is not sufficient to draw meaningful inference on this variable with respect to the sustainability of SHGs. Hence it was decided to include it in the present study.

#### **2.4.5 Empowerment**

Pathak (1992) observed that the SHG, being comprised of group of persons, gets empowered to solve most of their problems of non-financial nature e.g. raw materials and input supply, marketing, better adoption of technology, education and training for realizing the human potential for development as observed by Pathak (1992).

Any empowering experience must ensure the development of certain characteristics among the

individual either in the personal capacity or as group or community. (Barner, 1994).

Srinivasan (1996) found that SHGs offer means by which the poor could have access to resources in their own right, without waiting for anyone and not by another person's mercy. This makes the people confident that by saving small amount over a period of time they could master resources to help each other in a big way. This gives them a feeling of being also in charge of their own lives. They feel emboldened to conduct themselves and take a share of resources as a matter of right. This is perhaps what empowerment means.

Sengupta (1998) observed that empowerment gives the people of a community the ability and opportunity to take part in decision making process with regard to socio-economic and political issues affecting their existence. Empowerment of the deprived begins with their ability to voice their opinion through the process of consensual politics and dialogue.

According to Ahmed (1999) empowerment also enables women's groups to shape themselves as social activists by trying to check malpractice and discrimination in the implementation of different schemes in the system.

Jayasri (1999) opined that empowerment by exercising one's own rights is the only way by which the society can sustain itself.

Based on the above review it was hypothesized that there exists a positive and significant relationship between empowerment and sustainability of SHGs.

#### **2.4.6 Affiliation motive**

DuBrin (1988) stated that a person with a strong affiliation motive finds compatible working relationships more important than high level accomplishment and exercising power.

Robbins (1993) noted that affiliation motive has received the least attention from researchers. Individuals with a high affiliation motive strive for friendship, prefer co-operative situations rather than competitive ones, and desire relationships involving a high degree of mutual understanding.

George (1996) reported that people with a high affiliation motive usually derive pleasure from being loved and tend to avoid the pain of being rejected by a social group. As individuals, they are likely to be concerned with maintaining pleasant social

relationships, to enjoy a sense of intimacy and understanding, to be ready to console and help others in trouble and to enjoy friendly interaction with others.

According to Thomas(1998)groups can fulfil our social needs. People enjoy the regular interaction that comes with group membership. For many people these on-the-job interactions are their primary source for fulfilling their need for affiliation. Work groups significantly contribute to fulfilling the need for friends and social relations.

Based on this review it was considered worthwhile to include affiliation motive as a variable and test its association with the sustainability of SHGs.

## **2.5 Group characteristics**

### **2.5.1 Group size**

Bales *et al.* (1951) reported that a few members tend to dominate the discussion with others participation relatively less as the group size increases.

Gibb (1951) reported that group members often felt greater threat and greater inhibition of impulses to participate in larger groups than in smaller groups.

Thomas and Fink (1963) found that increase in group size creates anxiety among members: they feel threatened and inhibited to express their personal feelings particularly disagreement or dissatisfaction and hence the participation decreases, as group size increases the interpersonal communication also decreases.

According to Rao *et al.*(1987)the size of a group would have profound implication on how the group behaved internally and with regard to other groups. It was an important factor in determining the number of interactions in a group. In a smaller group, face to face interaction is quite easy and uncomplicated. He found that seven was the ideal maximum for a decision making group and fourteen was the maximum for a fact-finding group.

John (1991) reported that as group size increased subgroups are more likely to form and the potential for conflicts is correspondingly greater, so also, the amount of time available for each member to participate in the activities of the group decreased.

Ramesha (1996) found a close relationship between size and performance of a group. The evidence indicates that smaller groups are faster at completing tasks than larger ones. Smaller groups are better at

doing something productive and larger groups are effective at problem solving.

The findings indicate the possibility of group size being associated with sustainability. Hence it was decided to verify the same in the present context.

### **2.5.2 Groups norms**

Roul (1996) observed that all the SHGs have their own rules and regulations which govern their functioning. All groups have provisions to advance loan to its members, ceiling on loan size, criteria for availing loan facility from the group and penalty for default in savings or loan repayment.

However, Karmakar (1998) noted that the rules and regulations formulated and adopted by the SHGs for smooth operations varied from SHG to SHG. There was a plethora of guidelines regarding group discipline, savings discipline and credit discipline among the groups.

Sabu (1998) confirmed that all groups have established norms i.e., acceptable standards of behaviour that are shared by the group members. Norms tell members what they ought and ought not to do under certain circumstances. Norms once agreed

upon by the group act as a means of influencing the behaviour of group members with a minimum external control. Formalized norms are written in organisational manuals setting the rules and procedures for members to follow. However the majority of norms in groups are informal. Norms all made to facilitate the groups' survival and to increase the predictability of group members behaviour.

Based on the above review it was hypothesized that there must exist an association between group norms and the sustainability of SHG.

### **2.5.3 Group homogeneity**

According to Rajasekhar (1993) the members should be homogenous in terms of the combined criteria of caste, economic status and sex for effective formation of an SHG.

Panda and Mishra (1996) reported that by and large people in the village belonged to the same socio-economic strata. This could help in group formation amongst people who shared common ethos and culture. The clear message that has emanated from the break down of the formal co-operative societies was the need to ensure socio-economic homogeneity of the group members for effective functioning. The cooperatives



consisted of small, large and marginal farmers, people from different occupations and social strata. Homogenous socio-economic status ensures homogenous interest and thus contributed to strengthening the common cause and the creation of group unity.

Studies conducted by NABARD reveal that the perceived socio-economic homogeneity was an important factor in the success of SHG formation. (NABARD 1997).

Dwaraki *et al.* (1996). Also opined that homogeneity as a pragmatic precondition is positively related to the success of an SHG.

In view of the above revelations it was decided to include this variable in the study in order to verify its association with the sustainability of the SHG.

#### **2.5.4 Involvement in decision making**

Maier (1967) listed group decision making as having the following advantages : (i) more complete information and knowledge (ii) increased diversity of views (iii) increased acceptance of a solution and (iv) increased legitimacy.

According to Miner (1984) group decisions have been found to be better than those that would be reached by the average individual in the group. However, they are seldom better than the performance of the best individual.

In terms of accuracy, group decisions will tend to be more accurate. The evidence by Cooke and Kernaghan (1987) indicates that on the average, groups make better quality decisions than individuals.

According to Rangarajan (1994) the poor are most knowledgeable on their own living conditions. Involving these people at the initial stage is the key for success. This ensured that the "felt need" of the group members was met.

Krishnamurthi (1996) observed that in any effort to organise people within a cooperative framework, it is essential to initiate the process from day one through peoples participation. The readiness on the part of members to comply with the decisions taken is likely to be much greater if decision making becomes an open affair.

The findings of Roul (1996) reported that most of the decisions in an SHGs' operational matters are taken by executives members office bearers in the

absence of other members. Thus decision making became the voice of a few dominating members rather than participatory.

Based on the above review involvement in decision making was deemed to have an influence on the sustainability of the SHG.

### **2.5.5 Group leadership**

Leadership has been considered important here for reasons that it can influence the SHG members towards proper functioning. Leadership it can help, guide and support the members in solving their problems. (Pathak,1992).

The Kerala Horticulture Development Programme insists that master farmers must be selected by the farmers themselves. They serve as trend-setters and clearly know their role and responsibilities. (KHDP,1995).

Thomas (1998) noted that all groups need a formal leader. This leader can play an important role in the group's success. In terms of achieving high group satisfaction, participative leadership seems to be more effective an than autocratic style. But participation as such does not guarantee higher performance. In certain

situations a group guided by a directive autocratic leader will out-perform its participative counterpart.

Based on this review it was considered worthwhile to include group leadership as a variable and test its association with the sustainability of the SHG.

### **2.5.6 Transparency**

Khan (1995) observed that the success of the Bangladesh model Grameen Bank, was greatly determined by transparency of activities.

That open and transparent dealings and the ability to resolve conflicts contributed to the success of SHG as was also revealed in the studies conducted by NABARD (1997).

Shreedharan (1997) maintained that transparency in business operations and the overall conduct of group activities should be ensured.

Transparency of activities have resulted in proper utilization of loans and monthly repayment of loans as observed Srilatha *et al.* (1997).

The literature available however is not sufficient to draw a meaningful inference on the

variables association with sustainability of the SHGs. Hence it was decided to include it in the present study.

### 2.5.7 Interpersonal trust

Vraa (1974) opined that warmth and hostility were emotional climates in a group that affect the interpersonal trust between members in a group.

According to Gulley and Leathers (1977) interpersonal trust is that relationship that exists when the interactants base their behaviour on the expectation and prediction that each will act in a mutually beneficial way as they strive to achieve objectives that involve some degree of risk.

The Kerala Horticulture Development Programme observed that the SHG members were willing to abide by group decisions without breaking bonds and they expressed confidence and trust in one another (KHDP, 1995).

Dwaraki *et al.* (1996) stated that the cooperative philosophy of self-help through mutual help, which mostly remained on paper can be seen operating in a more or less full-fledged manner in SHGs.

Roul (1996) concluded that demand based lending through peer decision on the basis of mutual trust, reinforced by borrower orientation together form the soul of the SHG concept. The SHGs have helped to develop mutual trust amongst the members.

Based on the above research findings a positive relation between interpersonal trust and the sustainability of the SHG was anticipated and hence incorporated in the present study.

#### **2.5.8 Group interaction**

Israel (1965) opined that interaction facilitates goal achievement.

Norman *et al.* (1988) stated that groups can be effective in increasing and improving the pattern of farmer participation. Groups keep farmers in the foreground, provide a means of using social dynamics constructively and creates a multiplier effect which assists farmer to farmer spread of relevant technology.

Studies by NABARD (1997) reveal that as people spent more time together on a regular basis, they became friendly. These interactions typically lead to discovery of common interest and increased attractions.

It was decided to include group interaction this component in the study in order to verify its association with the sustainability of the SHG.

### **2.5.9 Autonomy**

Studies by Duncan (1979) reveal that delegation of some decision making powers to farmers facilitated by decentralized organisation helped farmers to carry out various activities better and faster.

It has been KHDP's policy to provide information support and organisational support whereas the actual transactions within the SHG remained the responsibility of the farmers themselves (KHDP, 1995).

Singh (1995) reported that SHGs should be allowed to implement its own activities. In the Indian context participation in government sponsored programmes will distort the autonomy of SHGs. He also suggested that government programmes should be implemented selectively and such programmes should not interfere with SHG programmes. The SHGs should be left to implement and maintain their on activities.

Based on the above findings autonomy was expected to some association with the sustainability of

SHGs and hence was selected as a variable for the study.

## **2.6 Change agent characteristics**

### **2.6.1 Perceived change agent credibility**

Rogers and Svenning (1969) observed the relative credibility that peasants placed on extension agents was highest when compared to other sources of information about agricultural innovations. This was confirmed by Herzog's (1976) studies on peasants.

According to Menon (1993) NGOs have a high level of credibility due to the sincerity and honesty of their purpose and their dedication to their cause. The NGOs have their own objectives, and within the framework of discipline a stable programme can be designed.

On the other hand, Panda and Mishra (1996) noted that lack of confidence in NGOs by bankers and vice versa was perhaps the most important bottle neck in implementation of the SHG linkage programme.

Based on the above findings perceived change agent credibility was expected to have an association with the sustainability of the SHG, and hence it was selected as a variable for the study.



### **2.5.2 Perceived change agent homophily**

Rahudkar (1961) reported that village level workers or change agents with only elementary education were more effective in reaching illiterate Indian villages than were change agents with high school or University education.

Effective communication occurs when the change agent and the client are homophilous. As they share common meanings and interests, they are better able to empathize with each other. If heterophily exists between the change agent and the clients, to work through opinion leaders would be the best way to bridge the gap (Rogers and Shoemaker, 1971).

In view of the above review it was decided to include this variable in the study in order to verify its association the sustainability of SHGs.

### **2.6.3 Change agent orientation**

Preiss (1954) studied role conflicts among Michigan extension agents, and concluded that their success was associated with a disregard for the expectations of the extension service bureaucracy in favour of their local clients expectations.

Studies by Wilkening (1957) in Wisconsin and by Bible and Nolan (1960) in Pennsylvania indicate there is considerable disagreement between the role expectations by local clients for their country extension agent and the agents' self-definition of their role.

These findings indicate that change agent orientation is an important factor, hence it was decided to verify its association in the present study.

#### **2.6.4 Change agent effort**

Ross (1952) found the rate of adoption of driver training programmes by high schools was much more rapid than for other educational innovations. He attributed this rapid rate of adoption to the promotional effort of car dealers, insurance companies and other commercial agents.

In a diffusion campaign, the adoption of the innovation roughly paralleled the amount of change agent's efforts as measured by the number of agent days a year devoted to the innovation (Stone, 1952).

Deutschmann and Fals (1962) found that two farm innovations promoted by a change agent were adopted much more quickly than were two other farm

ideas which the change agent had not emphasized as part of his programme of directed social change.

Niehoff (1964) concluded from his analysis of several hundred case studies, each dealing with a change agent's attempt to transfer an innovation cross-culturally, that one of the most fundamental factors in success is the extent of change agent effort and client contact.

According to Fliegel (1967), Whiting (1968), and Hursh (1969) the most important predictor of the success of village programmes for agricultural change is the extent of change agent effort.

According to Sengupta (1998) formation of SHGs is the main task of the promoters be they SHPI or banks. Motivation and training is essential for success. NGOs/Bank field staff travel to remote areas to reach the poorest of the poor and play a vital role in mobilizing the people. In fact the promoters mix with the people and much more so with the SHG members. This calls for tremendous effort on the part of the change agent.

Based on the above review it was hypothesized that there must exist a relationship

between change agent effort and the sustainability of the SHGs.

### **2.6.5 Perceived compatibility with client needs**

Mead (1955) stated : "Experience has taught us that change can be best introduced not through centralized planning, but after study of local needs."

That change agent success is positively related to the degree to which his programme is compatible with client needs is well substantiated by Allahabad Agricultural Institute (1957), Erasmus (1961), and Niehoff(1964).

Based on the available literature perceived compatibility with client needs was hypothesized to have a positive relationship with the sustainability of the SHG and hence was included as a component in the study.

### **2.6.6 Perceived change agent empathy**

Duncan (1979) observed that initial empathy with clients is most effectively continued by being feedback-minded and receiver-oriented. In turn the change agents capacity to obtain feed back from his

clients depends in part upon the closeness of his rapport with them.

In a study conducted by Rao and Padmaja (1998) most of the SHG members expressed that the programme staff were kind enough and they are cooperating very well to run their groups.

The literature available however is not sufficient to draw a meaningful inference on this variable. Hence it was decided to include it in the present study.

## **2.7 Factors contributing to sustainability of SHGs**

Moreno (1934) investigated the bonds which joined the members of a group together and observed the group cohesion was based upon interpersonal attraction.

Festinger (1950) described the resultant of all the forces acting on the members to remain in the group as cohesiveness.

He also stated that cohesion was equated with an emotional binding of members to their group or with the degree of attraction the group has.

According to Berkowitz (1954) highly cohesive groups are more effective than those with less cohesiveness were in high cohesiveness.

Thomas and Fink (1963) reported that group cohesiveness tends to increase with the time members are able to spend together. It seems logical that cohesiveness should decrease as group size increases since it becomes more difficult for a member to interact with all the other members.

Summers *et al.* (1988) identified group size, severity of initiation, time spent together, gender, and external threat as the determinants of cohesiveness for working groups.

Jyothibha (1990) observed a positive association between emergence/success of entrepreneurship and external support system.

Rajasekhar (1993) observed that if savings and credit activity has to become sustainable, it should depend on internal finance at least until the members are able to learn the advantage of the activity and are capable of exercising social control. The repayment to the group is facilitated only in groups where collective social control is exercised by the group members effectively. Hence matching grants need not be

obtained from external agencies until groups are capable to exercise social control mechanisms.

Ramalingam (1995) opined that the sustainability problem itself is genuine because after all there is no guarantee that the group will survive. But the NGOs have a way of training SHG members and making them a cohesive group. One way of making SHGs sustainable is to ensure that withdrawal by the NGOs is preceded by a formation of a federation of SHGs.

Singh (1995 b) reported that if the groups have to be sustainable they would have to be self-dependent and staying away from other institutions.

Roul (1996) conducted a study on the SHGs promoted by NGO's in Orissa and found that frequent and periodic meeting of the members was a key to the success of SHGs.

According to Shreedharan (1997), the guiding principles for SHGs to be sustainable are :

1. SHG membership should be resident in the same area, be homogenous and its number should be at least five persons.
2. SHGs should promote savings mobilization.

3. Saving should be linked to credit savings first, credit next.
4. The development of financial discipline and systems should be encouraged.
5. SHGs should hold regular meetings, once a week if possible.
6. SHGs should begin with a simple book keeping system.
7. They should have basic rules or bylaws.
8. Groups leaders should be elected by the members with group functions or positions being rotated among the members.
9. Transparency in business operations and the overall conduct of group activities should be maintained at all times.
10. Basic training and guidance should be provided to members of SHGs.
11. Autonomy of SHGs should be respected.
12. Group liability and peer pressure should be the substitutes for collateral.
13. Loans should be kept small initially and repayments made frequently and regularly.
14. Transaction costs should be kept to a minimum through simplified group procedures and control.
15. Commercial banks should be asked to provide appropriate advances or lines of credit to supplement the groups financial resources and to enable it to lend for productive purposes.



According to Srilatha, Gopinathan and Bakshi (1997) reasons for the sustainability of SHGs under the Community Development Society (CDS) are:

1. The CDS being a formally registered society has institutionalized the empowerment process.
2. The CDS Bye-laws empower the society to approach and receive funds and resources directly from any source.
3. The CDS is linked to the formal government and local body system at the local and state levels and to national organisations such as NABARD.
4. By being people centered and women centered, the CDS has generated a remarkable level of enthusiasm, energy and determination that clearly indicates the potential for sustainability.
5. The CDS has an in-built mechanism for beneficiary contribution to activities. The initial and annual membership fees, savings under the thrift and credit society, revolving fund and the stipulation of beneficiary share for income generation schemes result in the sizeable self-generated fund for the CDS that can also ensure sustainability.
6. A great emphasis has been placed on training the CDS office bearers and members to develop financial, managerial, technical and leadership skills for sustainability of the programme.

Karmakar (1998) reported a few successful instances of conflict resolution and role of peer pressure in practical operations. In many instance members forced repayment of SHG dues from recalcitrant members while in some cases SHGs expelled persons who were of doubtful integrity, and or could not be relied on to repay loans.

Studies by NABARD (1998) indicate that cohesion among members of the SHGs is essential for sustainability.

Jayasri (1999) stressed that regularity in savings is an important discipline which needs to be cultivated for sustainability. A consortium of SHGs to cover a large geographical area with a long - term goal of the consortium taking over from the NGOs should be envisaged. Smarter NGOs will work for even smarter self-sustaining SHGs in order that withdrawal is both smooth as well as a systematic process.

Based on the above review, the dimensions of sustainability delineated were : the ability of an SHG to continue to meet regularly, resolve conflicts successfully, maintain a high degree of cohesiveness among its members without substantial external support, while still fulfilling the objectives for which it came into existence.

## 2.8 Conceptual model of the study

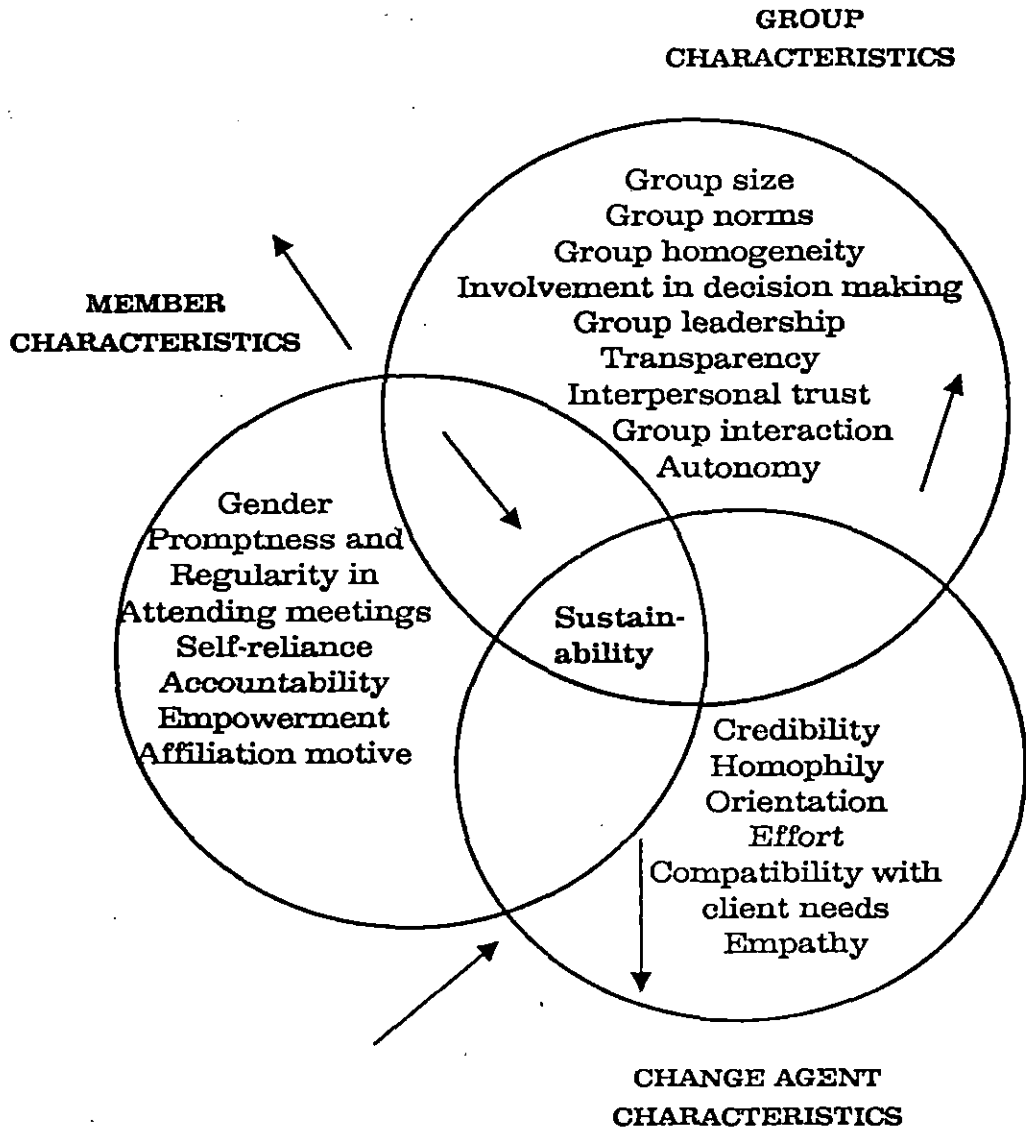
A central purpose of any model is to organize in a meaningful fashion the major sets of variables associated with the topic under study. In fact, one test of the usefulness of a model is the degree to which it can account for a wide diversity of variables while simultaneously integrating them into a cohesive and succinct unifying frame work. Unfortunately such a totally unifying model on SHG dynamics does not exist. What existed are a set of different research findings and SHG reports that addressed themselves to one or more variables involved but none of which were completely and thoroughly comprehensive. The conceptual model proposed here is represented in Figure 2 and its highlights are described below.

1. The model assumes that SHG sustainability the ultimate goal of the formation process is a complex phenomenon that can best be understood only within a multivariate frame work: that is, several important and often quite distinct factors must be taken into account when explaining the SHG sustainability, the envisaged end of the formation process. However these several factors can be classified into three mega-variables: members characteristics, group characteristics and change agent characteristics (represented by the three

circles in Fig. 2). Each mega-variable consists of a number of variables listed within each circle. These lists are not intended to be exhaustive, they are meant to indicate some of the more important variables influencing SHG sustainability as inferred from the literature reviewed.

2. Instead of viewing these mega-variables as a static list of items, the present model argues that SHG sustainability must be viewed with a systems framework. The mega-variables have interactive effects as represented by the overlapping nature of the circles in Fig. 2.
3. In each situation the mega-variables are of different strength as depicted by the different diameters of the three circles.
4. Not only are the mega-variables of different strengths, they are also to be conceived as being potentially capable of changing strength over time in response to circumstances.
5. These three circles are not only of different and varying strengths, but are also to be perceived as constantly in motion as indicated by the arrows in various directions.

**FIG. 2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY**



## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

The present investigation was undertaken with the main objective of analyzing the dynamics of SHG formation and its associated parameters in selected SHGs in Thrissur District. A general description of the methods and procedures followed in conducting this research is furnished in this chapter under the following subheadings:

- 3.1 Research Design
- 3.2 Locale of the study : Thrissur District
- 3.3 Selection of the sample for the study
- 3.4 Description of the SHPIs selected
- 3.5 Selection of variables for the study
- 3.6 Selection of the dimensions to measure the dependent variable, sustainability of SHG and operationalization of the concept
- 3.7 Operationalization and measurement of formation stages in SHGs.
- 3.8 Operationalization and measurement of motivational patterns in SHGs.
- 3.9 Operationalization and measurement of the independent variables.
- 3.10 Data collection procedure.
- 3.11 Statistical tools employed for analysis of data.
- 3.12 Hypotheses set for the study.

### 3.1 Research Design

Most of the variables are *ex post facto* in nature and offer little scope to be controlled by the researcher. Therefore *ex post facto* research design was used for the present study. According to Kerlinger (1973) *ex post facto* research is "systematic empirical inquiry in which the scientist does not have control of independent variables because they are inherently not manipulable. Inference about relations among variables are made, without direct intervention from concomitant variations of independent and dependent variables."

Keeping in view the objectives of the study the case study method was adopted.

Young (1949) defined case study as a method of exploring and analyzing the life of a social unit be that a person, family, an institution, cultural group or even entire community.

Goode and Hatt (1952) defined case study as a way of organising social data so as to preserve the unitary character of the social object being studied. Expressed some what differently it is an approach which views any social unit as a whole.

Bajpai(1960) described the case study as a narrative type description of life situations. It takes into consideration comparatively fewer cases and aims at a more intensive study, with coverage on a wide range of issues pertaining to the unit. Selection of cases is not necessarily based on sampling. The study of cases is so prolonged and through that conveniences of study becomes a major factor in deciding what will be studied. Case study generalizations are based upon commonsense inferences. They are not subjected to rigid statistical treatment.

### **3.1.1. Advantages of a case study**

The case study method attempts to study a social unit in its totality and not in a piece meal fashion. Complexity of social phenomena makes this approach more valid in social sciences. When the problem under study forms a process, in this case, the formation process of SHGs rather than an incident, the case study method is more suitable. It enlarges the range of information for the researcher to make more valid conclusions.

### **3.1.2. Limitations of a case study**

As generalisations are drawn from only a few cases, there is chance for inaccurate observation, faulty



inference and repression of unpleasant facts. The researcher may develop a tendency towards adhoc theorising of case situations which are seldom comparable.

In the present study some amount of order was incorporated into the case study method with a minimum statistical component so as to satisfy the academic requirements called for from a student researcher.

### **3.2 Locale of the study : Thrissur District**

As the case study method adopted in this study requires the researcher to be a non-participant observer at various stages in the formation process of various SHGs, the researcher would be required to attend SHG meetings at a short notice over a considerable period of time. To facilitate this it was decided to limit the study to Thrissur District.

As on 30<sup>th</sup> September 1998, there were 624 SHGs in Thrissur District under various NGOs as detailed in Appendix I.

In the government sector there were SHGs in every ward in varying numbers and in the quasi-government sector there were 262 SHGs in Thrissur

District as on 8<sup>th</sup> November 1988, the detailed list of which is given in Appendix II.

### **3.3 Selection of sample for the study**

A list of all organisations promoting SHGs in Thrissur District was made (as given in Appendix I and II) and purposive selection was made such that a non-government, a government and a quasi-government SHPI were represented. Care was also taken to ensure that SHPIs working in different areas of specialization viz., agriculture, upliftment of women, savings and credit etc., are duly represented.

To satisfy the above specifications the purposive sample selected from among the various SHPIs in Thrissur District were:

1. **Evangelical Social Action Forum (ESAF)** which was the NGO promoting the upliftment of women.
2. **Community Development Society (CDS)** which was a government programme concentrating on poverty eradication.
3. **Kerala Horticulture Development Programme (KHDP)** which was a quasi-government organisation promoting the upliftment of farmers.

Based on judges rating one functional SHG and one non-functional SHG were selected from each organisation for comparative study.

A functional group was operationalized as one that continues to meet on a regular basis and continues to perform the task for which it exists.

A non-functional group was operationalised as one that continues to meet for name sake with many members not attending the weekly meetings and the group not being able to perform the task for which it came into existence.

Table 1. Details of the SHGs selected for the study

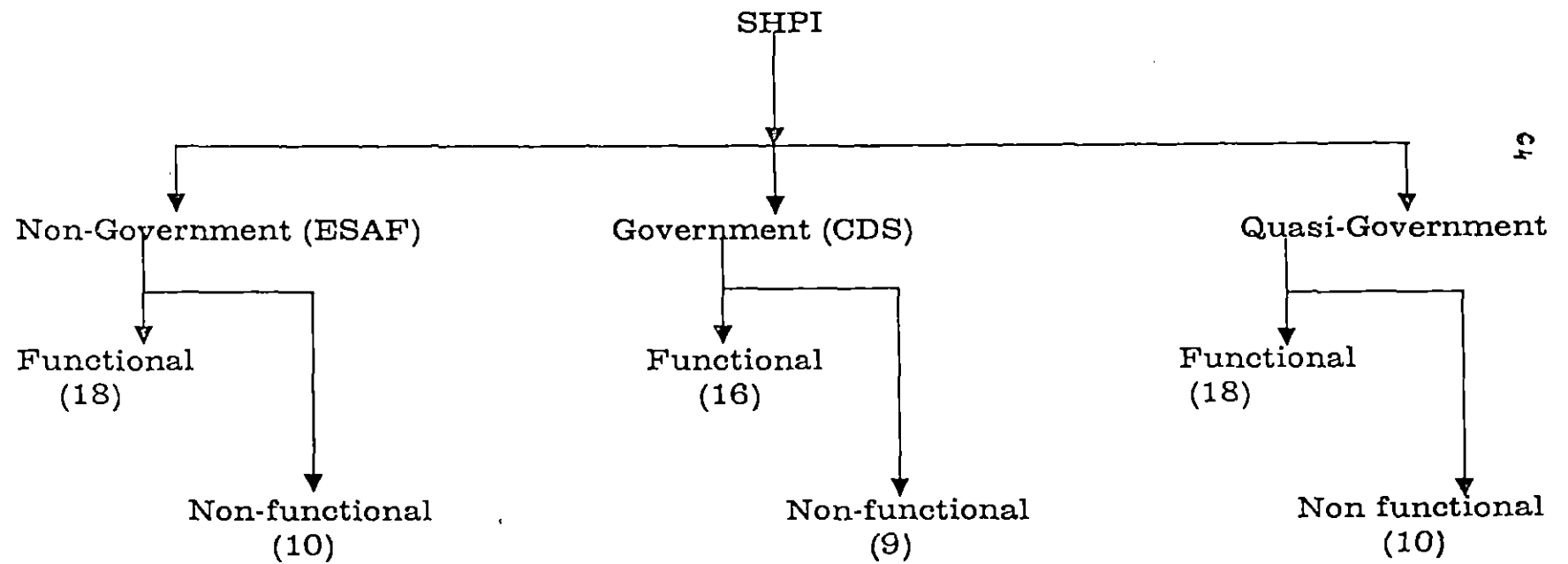
Sl No	SHPI	Functional / non-functional	Name of SHG and year of commencement	Number of members in the SHG
1	Non-government (ESAF)	Functional SHG	St. Jude, Mulayam (1997)	18
		Non-functional SHG	Damien, Mulayam (1998)	10
2	Government (CDS)	Functional SHG	Mahatma, Valyamparambu (1997)	16
		Non-functional SHG	Pulari, Peringavu (1998)	9
3	Quasi-government (KHDP)	Functional SHG	Yacobite Church Group, Marotichal (1997)	18
		Non-functional SHG	Mulloorkara group, Mulloorkara (1997)	10
			Total	81



 STUDY AREA

FIG 3 MAP OF KERALA  
SHOWING THE LOCALE OF STUDY

Fig. 4. Chart of the SHGs selected



Thus the total number of respondents interviewed for this study totaled to 81. Change agents, programme coordinators of various SHPIs and experts were also interviewed with open ended questions as part of the case study method. The study was conducted during the months of May and June 1999.

### **3.4 Description of the SHPIs selected**

#### **3.4.1 Evangelical Social Action Forum (ESAF)**

The NGO selected for the study, ESAF is a registered charitable society born out of deep conviction that teaching and preaching should go hand-in-hand with social action. Launched in 1992 under the patronage of the Kerala Evangelical Graduates Fellowship, ESAF has at present has five departments :

1. Human Resource Development Department
2. Micro Enterprise Development Department
  - a) Grameen Replication Programme (GRP)
  - b) Self Help Groups (SHG)
  - c) Training and Consultancy
  - d) Housing Schemes
3. Community Development Department
4. Community Health Department
5. Department for Promotion of Wholistic mission

The organisation has its head office at Mannuthy. At the time of this study the organisation had already established over 64 SHGs in Thrissur and Palakkad districts.

Table 2. Number of SHGs established by ESAF

Sl.No	District/ Block	No. of SHGs	No. of members
1	Thrissur District		
	Ollukkara Block	25	400
2	Kodungallur Block	24	120
	Palakkad District		
	Alathur Block	15	274

The primary objective of these SHGs was the upliftment of women. Women were given training for pappad making, bakery, tailoring, mat weaving, phenol preparation, mushroom cultivation and poultry management. Awareness programmes on legal rights, women rights, panchayat raj, counseling etc., were also conducted. Recent efforts were on to federate at least ten groups under a single "Swasrya Mahila Vanitha Sangam".

The change agent of ESAF in charge of the SHGs selected for the present study was Sri. George K. John. He had a Masters in Social Work from the Karve

Institute of Social Work, Pune with training on SHGs from various organisations in India.

### **3.4.2 Community Development Society (CDS)**

The Kerala State Government has of late undertaken a major poverty eradication programme with its decentralized SHGs called the Community Development Society (CDS) which are formally registered under Societies Act within the jurisdiction of the Nagarpalika/ Panchayat.

Poverty eradication is the goal of CDS and the beneficiaries are selected if they fall under any of the following categories:

1. Family belonging to schedule caste or tribe.
2. Family with children under five years old.
3. Family having one illiterate adult.
4. Family with only one or no adult employed.
5. Family living in Kutcha house.
6. Family without a household latrine.
7. Family with no access to safe drinking water.
8. Family consuming only two or less meals per day.
9. Family with an alcoholic or drug addict.

The CDS was established as per the Model Byelaws approved by the Government of Kerala. Funds



are mobilized from donors such as United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), banks, the NABARD, the poor families themselves through beneficiary contribution, in addition to the pooling of resources under various existing antipoverty programmes such as Nehru Rozgar Yojana(NRY), Environmental Improvement of Urban Slums (EIUS), Urban Basic Service for the Poor (UBSP), and Low Cost Sanitation (LCS) Project, etc.

The basic unit is the self help group consisting of about 20 women. The SHG is represented at the central committee of the panchayat by an elected five member committee including the President, Secretary and Treasurer.

The change agent of the SHGs selected for this study under CDS were the *Mukiya Sevika* of the Ollukkara Block (Smt. Leela Nair) and *Grama Sevikas*, (Smt. Beena Kumari, Valiparambu village, Kollazhi panchayat and Smt. Saraswathi of Vilvattam panchayat).

### **3.4.3 Kerala Horticulture Development Programme (KHDP)**

The Kerala Horticulture Development Programme, jointly funded by the European Union and the Government of Kerala aims at promoting the

cultivation of high value horticultural crops in Kerala. The Rs. 160 crore programme was initiated in 1992-93 with eight pilot projects located in selected areas of the state. The programme seeks to involve 35,000 farmers covering an area of 8000 hectares. Vegetable production was to be based on multiple cropping pattern for two or three seasons a year, thus raising the effective area of cultivation to around 12,000 hectares. At the field level, the programme functions on a network of farmers SHGs. These SHGs have been established as focal points for project implementation. Over 1543 SHGs were functioning at the end of 1998 December. Delivery of the technical packages is through a team of trained extension staff and about 4800 trained Master Farmers. Training is being given to the farmers as well as the extension staff on scientific lines using multimedia training material. Extension work is backed up by 30 demonstration plots, telecast messages and technical bulletins.

SHGs under the KHDP serve the following purposes:

- a) Forum for interaction to discuss problems and finding solutions.
- b) Sharing managerial responsibilities.
- c) Undertaking production planning.
- d) Procure inputs.

- e) Arrange for group marketing.
- f) Organise need based training to improve production and technology.
- g) Transparent decision making leading to mutual trust.
- h) Human resource development.
- i) Peer pressure within the groups leading to effective functioning.
- j) Synergy effect.
- k) Enhanced bargaining power.

Change agents of the selected KHDP SHGs were Sri. Shibu Kumar and Sri. Prasad Zacharias, Technical Assistants, both graduates in Agriculture.

### **3.5 Selection of variables for the study**

The very objective of the study necessitated the selection of the dependent variable-sustainability: the goal of successful formation.

With regard to the independent variables a list of 30 variables seemingly related to dynamics of SHG formation and its sustainability were prepared based on the review of literature. This list of variables was sent to 50 judges, comprising mostly of extension scientists and extension workers of agencies involved with SHGs. They were asked to examine the variables

critically and to rate the relevancy of each variable on a five point continuum ranging from most relevant, more relevant, undecided, less relevant and least relevant with weightage of 5,4,3,2 and 1 respectively. Out of the 50 judges only 30 responded.

The final variables were selected based on the mean relevancy score, which was obtained by summing up the weightage obtained by a variable and dividing it by the number of judges who responded. The variables with their mean relevancy score are presented in Appendix III. The variables having mean relevancy scores above the average mean relevancy score were selected for the study. In this process 21 independent variable were finally included for the study. They were member characteristics viz., gender, regularity and promptness in attending meeting, self-reliance, accountability, empowerment and affiliation motive; group characteristics viz., group size, group norms, group homogeneity, involvement in decision making, group leadership, transparency, interpersonal trust, group interaction and autonomy; change agent characteristics viz., perceived change agent credibility, perceived change agent homophily, change agent orientation, change agent effort, perceived compatibility with client needs and perceived change agent empathy.

### **3.6 Selection of dimensions to measure the dependent variable and operationalization of the concept**

Delving into the available literature on sustainability and after extensive discussion with resource persons in this field of specialization, a comprehensive and exhaustive list of dimensions associated with measuring sustainability of SHGs was prepared. This list was then subjected to a thorough sifting and sieving based on discussions with experts. The list consisting of 10 items was sent to 50 judges comprising experts and workers. They were asked to examine the dimensions critically and also to include additional items if found necessary. The judges were requested to rate the relevancy of each dimension on a five-point continuum ranging from most relevant, more relevant undecided, less relevant, least relevant. Out of the 50 judges only 30 responded. The selection of the final dimensions to measure sustainability of SHGs was based on the mean relevancy score which was obtained by summing up the weigthages obtained by the dimensions and dividing it by the number of judges who responded. The attributes with their mean relevancy scores are presented in Appendix IV.

The dimensions having mean relevancy score above the average mean relevancy score were selected for the index to measure sustainability of SHGs. They were:

1. Frequency of meetings
2. Group cohesion
3. Conflict resolution
4. External support
5. Fulfillment of objectives.

Thus sustainability of SHGs was operationally defined as the ability of an SHG to continue to meet regularly, resolve conflicts successfully, maintain a high degree of cohesiveness among its member without substantial external support, while still fulfilling the objectives for which it came into existence.

The five dimensions of the sustainability index were operationalized as follows:

1. Frequency of meetings

Frequency of meetings was operationalized as to how often group meetings were conducted, and was categorized as below on a four point continuum.

Category	Score
Weekly	4
Fortnightly	3
Monthly	2
Half yearly	1

## 2. Group cohesion

Group cohesion was operationalized as the degree to which group members were attracted or drawn towards each other and motivated to remain in the group. A scale was developed arbitrarily consisting of a single statement rated on a four point continuum.

Category	Score
Very much	4
Moderately	3
To some extent	2
Very little	1

## 3. Conflict resolution

Conflict resolution was operationalized as the ability of the groups to overcome disagreements, disputes, clashes and quarrels or differences of opinion regarding group activities.

A scale was developed arbitrarily containing a single statement rated on a five point continuum.

Category	Score
Able to resolve fully	4
To some extent only	3
Not always	2
Not at all	1

#### 4. External support

External support was operationlized as the extent of financial and/or moral support an SHG received from the SHPI.

A scale was developed arbitrarily containing a single statement rated on a three point continuum.

Category	Score
Substantial	1
Partial	2
No support	3

#### 5. Fulfillment of objectives

Fulfillment of objectives was operationalized as the extent to which the group has been able to fulfil



the purpose of its existence. A scale was developed arbitrarily rated on a four point continuum.

Category	Score
Very much	4
Moderately	3
To some extent	2
Very little	1

Sustainability index as perceived by each respondent was finally calculated as the ratio of the total score obtained by the individual respondent for the above five dimensions to the highest cumulative score

Sustainability

$$\text{Index(SI)} = \frac{\text{Total score obtained}}{\text{Highest cumulative score}} \times 100$$

The sustainability index of each SHG was worked out similarly using the cumulative total score obtained by all the respondents in the SHG.

### **3.7 Operationalization and measurement of formation stages in SHGs**

Having scanned the literature available on formation of groups it was finally decided to adopt the Tuckman (1965) categorization of formation stages. The

five stage were described to the respondents as detailed below.

- I) Formation stage : Group development is characterized by high uncertainty about group behaviour, purpose, structure and leadership.
- II) Storming stage : Group development is characterized by intragroup conflict and leadership in the group becomes clear.
- III) Norming stage : Group development is characterized by close relationship and cohesiveness.
- IV) Performing stage : Group development is characterized by the group becoming fully functional.
- V) Adjourning stage : Group development is characterized by wrapping up of group activities rather than task performance.

Having ensured a correct understanding of the above stages the respondents were then asked two questions:

- 1) Which stages did your SHGs go through?
- 2) How many weeks did each stage take to pass through?

### **3.8 Operationalization and measurement of motivational patterns in SHGs.**

The literature reviewed led to the choice of six primary motives as described by Robbins (1993), that could explain why people joined groups and why they continue to remain a member of groups. These primary motives were security, status, self esteem, affiliation motive, power and goal attainment. The respondents were asked to rank three from among the above six in their order of preference as to what was their initial motive in joining the SHG and what motivated them to remain a member of the SHG.

### **3.9 Operationlization and measurement of the independent variables**

#### **3.9.1 Member characteristics**

##### **3.9.1.1 Gender**

The respondents were categorised as (1) male and (2) female.

##### **3.9.1.2 Promptness and regularity in attending meetings**

Promptness and regularity in attending meetings was operationlized as the frequency,

punctuality and readiness of the group members in attending group meetings.

An arbitrary scale was developed which contained three statements rated on a four point continuum. The mean score was computed, and frequencies obtained were presented in categories of poor, medium and high.

#### **3.9.1.3 Self-reliance**

Self-reliance was operationalized as the extent to which a person relies on self for his future.

The scale consisted of a statement and response was rated on a four point scale weighted as 4,3,2 and 1. The frequencies obtained was presented in categories viz., 'always', 'sometimes', 'rarely' and 'never' self-reliant.

#### **3.9.1.4. Accountability**

Accountability was operationalized as the extent to which the member feels answerable on the performance and achievement of group goals.

The scale consisted of a single statement rated on a three point continuum.

Category	Score
Fully answerable	3
Partially answerable	2
Not answerable	1

### **3.9.1.5 Empowerment**

Empowerment was operationalized as the extent to which the group members have authority to get involved in decision making and in implementing the programmes.

Empowerment was measured using a scale consisting of four items each rated on a three point continuum ranging from full authority, moderate authority and very little authority with weights 3,2 and 1 respectively. The mean scores obtained was taken as the measure of empowerment. The frequencies were presented in categories viz., full empowerment, moderate empowerment and very little empowerment.

### **3.9.1.6 Affiliation motive**

Affiliation motive was operationalized as the desire for friendly and close interpersonal relationships.

Affiliation motive was measured by modifying the Steers and Braunstein scale developed in 1976. The scale consisted of five items each rated on a five point continuum ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree and the mean score represented the affiliation motive. The frequencies were presented in categories viz., as low, medium and high - the limits of these classes being determined by Delinious-Hodges cumulative  $\sqrt{F}$  method as suggested by Delinious and Gurney (1951). The class limits were:

Low	Below 15.3
Medium	Above 15.3
High	Above 20.7

### **3.9.2 Group characteristic**

#### **3.9.2.1 Group Size**

Group size was operationlized as the number of members in the group at the time of study.

A scale was developed arbitrarily consisting of a single statement rated on a four point continuum.

The groups were divided into small, medium large and very large as shown below:

Number of members	Category
1 — 10	Small
11 — 20	Medium
21 — 30	Large
31 — 40	Very Large

### 3.9.2.2 Group Norms

Groups norms was operationalized as the extent of clarity respondents had about rules, regulations and procedures for the various SHG operations.

Group norms was measured using a three point continuum.

Category	Score
Very clear	3
Some what clear	2
Not clear	1

### 3.9.2.3 Group Homogeneity

Group homogeneity was operationalized as the similarity of the members of a group with respect to

needs, motives and socioeconomic status. It was measured on a three point continuum.

Category	Score
Very similar	3
Some what similar	2
Not similar	1

#### **3.9.2.4 Involvement in decision making**

Involvement in decision making was operationalized as the frequency with which group members were involved in generation of ideas, evaluation of options and making a choice from among options.

The frequency was rated on a four point continuum as always, sometimes, rarely and never with scores 4,3,2 and 1 respectively and presented accordingly.

#### **3.9.2.5 Group leadership**

Group leadership was operationalized as the effectiveness of the leaders in promoting the stability and success of the group. A scale was developed



arbitrarily consisting of a single statement rated on a three point continuum.

Category	Score
Very effectively	3
Moderately effective	2
Not effective	1

### **3.9.2.6 Transparency**

Transparency was operationalized as the extent to which the activities of the group are open and clear to the members of the group. A scale was developed arbitrarily consisting of a single statement rated on a three point continuum.

Category	Score
Only to the leader	1
Only to the dominant	2
To all the members	3

### **3.9.2.7 Interpersonal Trust**

Interpersonal trust was operationalized as the extent to which the members of the group view each other in terms of faith or confidence. It was measured on a three point continuum.

Category	Score
Full faith in other members	3
Some faith in other members	2
Very little faith in other members	1

### 3.9.2.8 Group Interaction

Group interaction was operationalized as the frequency with which members get in touch with other members of the group and mix freely with them without formality or inhibition. The frequency was rated on a three point continuum: always (3), some times (2) and rarely (1) and classification done accordingly.

### 3.9.2.9 Autonomy

Autonomy was operationalized as the degree to which the group has freedom and independence in the direction and scheduling of its activity. A scale was developed consisting of single statement rated on a three point continuum.

Category	Score
Full authority	3
Partial authority	2
No authority	1

### **3.9.3 Change agent characteristics**

#### **3.9.3.1 Perceived change agent credibility**

Perceived change agent credibility was operationalized as the degree to which the change agent was perceived as trustworthy and reliable by the members of the SHG. A scale was developed arbitrarily consisting of a single statement rated on a three point continuum.

Category	Score
Yes	3
Some what	2
No	1

#### **3.9.3.2 Perceived change agent homophily**

Change agent homophily was operationalized as the degree to which the change agent and the members of the SHGs are similar in certain attributes. It was measured by a scale developed arbitrarily containing a single statement rated on a three point continuum.

Category	Score
Change agent is similar in most attributes	3
Change agent has some similarity	2
Change agent is in no way similar	1

### 3.9.3.4 Change agent orientation

Change agent orientation was operationalized as to whether the change agent is oriented to fulfilling the expectations of the SHG members rather than the expectations of the SHPI. The respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed on a statement and their response obtained on a four point continuum as given below.

Category	Score
Strongly agree	4
Agree	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

### 3.9.3.5 Change agent effort

Change agent effort was operationalized as the extent of effort the change agent expends in change activities with the members of the SHG. A scale was developed arbitrarily consisting of a single statement rated on a four point continuum.

Category	Score
Very high	4
High	3
Low	2
Very low	1

### 3.9.3.5 Perceived compatibility with client needs

Perceived compatibility with client needs was operationalized as the extent to which the change agents programmes is compatible with the needs of the SHG members.

A scale was developed arbitrarily containing a statement rated on a three point continuum.

Category	Score
Very much compatible	3
Moderately compatible	2
Very little compatibility	1

### 3.9.3.6 Perceived change agent empathy

Perceived change agent empathy was operationalized as the degree to which change agent is able to empathize with the members of the SHG. A scale was developed arbitrarily containing a single statement rated on a three point continuum.

Category	Score
Very much	3
Some what	2
Not at all	1

### **3.10 Data collection procedure**

Primary data in the study has emerged from the following sources: founder promoters of the SHGs, middle and grass roots level personnel and members of the SHGs. Data from the first and second groups listed above was gathered through open ended questions justifiable in the case study research design. While the third category i.e. SHG members were interviewed with the help of a semi- structured interview schedule.

This interview schedule was pre-tested by a pilot study conducted on thirty non-sample respondents. Based on the experience gained during pre-testing, necessary corrections and modifications were done especially to ensure that the instructions and questions were clear and unambiguous. The final questionnaire is given in Appendix V.

Data collected from the SHG group members was compiled and analysed using non-parametric methods.

### **3.11 Statistical tools employed in the study**

#### **Percentage**

After the respondents were categorized into different groups based on appropriate criteria the

percentage distribution of respondents under each group was computed.

#### Kolmogorov- Smirnov test

Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to test the significance of the difference in gender based perception of group, member and change agent characteristics among the SHG members.

#### Correlation analysis

Correlation coefficient is a measure of the association between two variables. The correlation coefficient was worked out to measure the relationship between the dependent variable and each of the member, group and change agent characteristics . The method used was Spearman's rank correlation coefficient computed using the formula

$$r = 1 - 6 \frac{\sum d^2}{n(n^2 - 1)}$$

r = Correlation coefficient

d = difference in ranks

n = number of pairs of observation

In order to test the significance of the observed correlation coefficient the students 't' test at (n-2) degrees of freedom was used.

### Chi-square test

Disparity between the groups under government, quasi-government and non-government agencies with respect to member, group and change agent characteristics were analysed using the Chi square statistic.

### Coefficient of mean square contingency

The degree of influence of the various section was assessed and tested by the coefficient of mean square contingency.

$$\text{Coefficient of mean square contingency} = \sqrt{\frac{X^2}{X^2 + N}}$$

### Kruskal-Wallis One Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks

This test assumes that the variable under study has an underlying continuity. Here the N observations are replaced with ranks. Then the sum of the ranks ( $R_j$ ) is found out. The Kruskal-Wallis test determines whether these sums of ranks are so disparate that they are not likely to have come from samples which were all drawn from the same population. The test is defined by the formula.



$$H = \frac{12}{N(N+1)} \sum_{j=1}^k \frac{R_j^2}{n_j} - 3(N+1)$$

**K** = number of samples

**n<sub>j</sub>** = number of cases in jth sample

**N** =  $\sum n_j$  the number of cases in all samples

**C** combined

$\sum_{j=1}^k$  = directs one to sum once the K samples

The computed values of 'H' were tested for their significance by using chi-square with k-1 degrees of freedom.

#### Kendall Coefficient of Concordance

Kendall Coefficient of Concordance test was used to measure the relation among several rankings of N observations of the dependent variable among the non-government, government and quasi-government respondents. The Kendall Coefficient of Concordance is calculated by the formula:

$$W = \frac{S}{1/12 K^2 (N^3 - N)}$$

**S** = sum of squares of the observed deviations from the mean of R<sub>j</sub>

$$S = \frac{\sum R_j^2 - (\sum R_j)^2}{N}$$

**K** = number of sets of ranking

**N** = number of individuals or object ranked

$\frac{1}{12} K^2(N^2-N)$  = maximum possible sum of the squared deviations the sum **S** which would occur with perfect agreement among **K** rankings

The computed value of 'W' was tested for its significance by using  $X^2 = K(n-1)W$  with  $N-1$  degrees of freedom.

### 3.12 Hypotheses set for the study

Keeping in view the objectives, review of literature and conceptual orientation of the study, the following null hypotheses were framed for the present investigation:

1. There is no consistent formation process discernible among the SHGs selected for study.
2. There are no primary motives discernible among SHG members as to why they joined the SHG and why they continue to remain a member of it.
3. There is no significant difference in the sustainability index of functional SHGs promoted

by non-government, government and quasi-government agencies.

4. There is no significant difference between the sustainability index of functional and non-functional groups.
5. There is no significant difference in the gender based perception of independent variables that are purportedly related with the sustainability index of SHGs.
6. There is no significant relationship between independent variables chosen and the sustainability index of an SHG.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

Keeping the objectives of the study in view, the results are presented under the following headings.

4.1 Observations on the various stages of group formation with respect to non-government, government and quasi-government groups.

4.2 Distribution of respondents with respect to motivational patterns.

4.3 Distribution of respondents, with respect to member characteristics, group characteristics and change agent characteristics. Gender wise differences and correlation with the sustainability index.

4.4 Sustainability index of SHGs

4.1 Observations on the various stages of group formation with respect to non-government, government and quasi-government SHGs.

As is evident from Table 3, the non-government sector, the SHGs took one week for

forming and one week for norming for both functional and non-functional groups.

Table 3. Time taken for various stages of SHG formation among non-government, government and quasi-government SHGS (in weeks)

Sl No	Stages of group formation	Non Government SHG		Government SHG		Quasi-government	
		F	NF	F	NF	F	NF
1.	Forming	1	1	4	2	6	1
2.	Storming	-	-	-	-	-	-
3.	Norming	1	1	6	4	3	2
4.	Performing	F	NR	F	NR	F	NR
5.	Adjourning	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR

Note : F – Functionally continuing till date

NF – Non-functional

NR – Not yet reached

In the government sector the forming of the functional SHG took four weeks while norming extended for over six weeks. In the non-functional government SHG forming took two weeks and norming four weeks.

In the quasi-government functional SHG formation took six weeks, while norming three weeks. In the quasi-government non-functional SHG it took one week for forming and two weeks for norming as depicted in Table 3. None of the groups studied reported

a storming stage. While all non-functional groups became disfunctional in performing stage none had reached the adjourning stage.

#### **4.2. Distribution of respondents with respect to motivational patterns.**

The results of the study relating to the distribution of the respondents with respect to the initial motive in joining and their present motive for remaining in the group are given in Table 4 and Table 5 respectively.

The primary motives as ranked by the respondents for joining the SHGs were security (86.41 %), goal attainment (44.44 %) and self-esteem (20.98 %). In the case of non-government SHGs : security (96.42 %), goal attainment (53.57 %) and self-esteem (46.42 %); in the case of government SHGs : security (60 %), goal attainment (24 %) and self-esteem (24 %); and in the case quasi-government SHGs : security (100%) and goal attainment (100%).

The motives as ranked by the respondents for still remaining in the SHGs were security (80.24 %) and goal attainment (46.91%); in the case of non-government SHG security (92.85%) and goal attainment (21.42%) ranked it second and (42.85 %) ranked it third; in the case of government SHGs :

Table 4. Distribution of respondents with respect to initial motivation in percentage  
(n = 81)

Sl. No	Motivation factors	Rank	Non-government			Government			Quasi-government			Grand total		
			F	NF	T	F	NF	T	F	NF	T	F	NF	T
1	Security	I	100	90	96.42	100	46.15	60	100	100	100	80.76	96.55	86.41
		II	-	-	-	-	46.10	24	-	-	-	11.53	-	7.40
		III	-	-	-	-	15.3	8	-	-	-	3.84	-	2.46
2	Status	I	-	-	-	-	7.60	4	-	-	-	1.92	-	1.23
		II	-	30	10.71	11.11	7.69	8	-	-	-	1.92	13.79	6.17
		III	-	10	3.57	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.44	1.23
3	Self-Esteem	I	-	-	-	-	15.38	8	-	-	-	3.84	-	2.46
		II	81.25	-	46.42	11.11	23.07	16	-	-	-	30.76	3.44	20.98
		III	14.28	10	17.85	-	15.38	8	-	-	-	11.53	3.44	8.64
4	Affiliation motive	I	-	-	-	-	30.76	16	-	-	-	7.69	-	4.93
		II	6.25	10	7.14	22.23	30.76	24	-	-	-	9.61	10.34	9.87
		III	-	-	3.57	-	38.46	20	-	-	-	9.61	3.44	7.4
5	Power	I	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		II	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		III	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	Goal Attainment	I	-	10	3.57	-	23.07	12	-	-	-	5.76	3.44	4.93
		II	22.22	-	14.28	15.38	22.22	16	100	100	100	46.15	41.37	44.44
		III	77.77	100	53.57	11.11	38.46	24	-	-	-	36.53	6.89	25.92

Note : F – Functional  
NF – Non-functional  
T – Total

Table 5. Distribution of respondents with respect to present motivation in percentage

(n = 81)

Sl. No	Motivation factors	Rank	Non-government			Government			Quasi-government			Grand total		
			F	NF	T	F	NF	T	F	NF	T	F	NF	T
1	Security	I	100	80	92.85	55.55	61.23	52	100	100	100	80.76	79.31	80.24
		II	-	-	-	-	38.46	20	-	-	-	9.61	-	6.17
		III	-	-	-	-	15.38	8	-	-	-	3.84	-	2.46
2	Status	I	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		II	-	20	7.14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6.89	2.46
		III	-	10	3.57	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.44	1.23
3	Self- Esteem	I	-	-	-	-	15.38	8	-	-	-	3.84	-	2.46
		II	66.66	-	-	-	23.33	12	-	-	-	28.84	-	18.51
		III	33.33	100	25	-	15.38	8	-	-	-	15.38	3.44	11.11
4	Affiliation motive	I	-	-	-	-	23.33	12	-	-	-	5.76	-	3.73
		II	5.55	-	3.57	-	23.33	12	-	-	-	7.69	-	4.93
		III	-	-	-	-	30.76	16	-	-	-	7.69	-	4.93
5	Power	I	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		II	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		III	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	Goal Attainment	I	-	20	7.14	11.11	23.33	16	-	-	-	9.6	3.44	7.4
		II	27.77	100	21.42	-	30.76	16	100	100	100	51.92	37.93	46.91
		III	66.66	-	42.85	-	38.46	20	-	-	-	32.69	-	39.5

Note : F - Functional  
 NF - Non functional  
 T - Total



security (52%) and goal attainment (16%); in the case of quasi-government SHGs : security (100%) and goal attainment (100%).

#### **4.3 Distribution of respondents with respect to member characteristics, group characteristics, change agent characteristics and their correlation with the sustainability index.**

##### **4.3.1 Member characteristics**

###### **4.3.1.1 Gender**

It is evident from the Table 6 that 100 per cent of the non-government SHG respondents and 100 per cent of the government SHG respondents were women, where as most of the quasi-government SHG respondents were men : 88.89 per cent under the functional category and 100 per cent under the non-functional category.

Correlation of gender with sustainability index could not be undertaken as gender could be measured only on a nominal scale. However a detailed analysis of perceptual difference between the gender with regard to all other independent variables was worked out and is depicted in Table 7.

Table 6. Distribution of respondents with respect to gender

(n = 81)

Sl No	Description	Organisation	Male		Female	
			F	P	F	P
1.	Functional	Non-government	-	-	18	100
		Government	-	-	16	100
		Quasi-government	16	88.89	2	11.11
		<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>30.77</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>69.23</b>
2	Non-functional	Non-government	-	-	10	100
		Government	-	-	9	100
		Quasi-government	10	100	-	-
		<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>34.48</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>65.52</b>

Note : F – Frequency  
P – Percentage

Table 7. Gender based perceptual differences with respect to member characteristics, group characteristics and change agent characteristics.

(n = 81)

Sl. No	Variables	Mean value		D	't' Value
		Female	Male		
I	Member characteristics				
1.	Promptness and regularity in attending meetings	3.1145	2.8231	+0.2914	2.2363*
2.	Self-reliance	3.4000	3.8462	-0.4462	3.4159**
3.	Accountability	2.5455	2.9231	-0.3776	3.8842**
4.	Empowerment	2.4000	2.6846	-0.2846	1.8970 <sup>NS</sup>
5.	Affiliation motive	20.021	16.730	+3.2910	5.7990**
II	Group Characteristics				
1.	Group norms	2.3455	2.9615	-0.6160	5.3881**
2.	Group homogeneity	2.8000	1.5385	+1.2615	9.0232**
3.	Involvement in decision making	3.2364	2.2692	-0.9672	6.3711**
4.	Group Leadership	2.5636	2.7308	-0.1672	1.0925 <sup>NS</sup>
5.	Transparency	2.5634	2.7306	+0.1672	1.0922 <sup>NS</sup>
6.	Interpersonal trust	2.7272	2.3462	+0.3810	2.1129*
7.	Group interaction	2.2909	1.9605	+0.3294	1.7008 <sup>NS</sup>
8.	Autonomy	2.4900	2.7700	-0.2800	1.9518 <sup>NS</sup>

Sl. No	Variables	Mean value		D	't' Value
		Female	Male		
III	Change agent characteristics				
1.	Perceived change agent credibility	2.6520	2.8121	-0.1601	1.2744 <sup>NS</sup>
2.	Perceived change agent homophily	2.2040	1.7708	+0.4332	2.6300*
3.	Change agent orientation	3.0201	2.9222	+0.0990	0.5811 <sup>NS</sup>
4.	Change agent effort	3.1814	2.9211	+0.2603	1.6324 <sup>NS</sup>
5.	Perceived compatibility with client needs	2.5666	2.7766	-0.2100	1.5447 <sup>NS</sup>
6.	Perceived change agent empathy	2.6234	2.8111	-0.1876	1.5322 <sup>NS</sup>

\*\* - significant at one per cent level

\* - significant at five per cent level

NS - Not significant.

#### 4.3.1.2 Promptness and regularity in attending meetings

Distribution of respondents with respect to promptness and regularity in attending SHG meetings is shown in Table 8.

Table 8 Distribution of respondents with respect to promptness and regularity in attending meetings.

(n = 81)

Sl No	Description	Organis- -ation	Poor		Medium		High	
			F	P	F	P	F	P
1.	Functional	Non-govern- -ment	-	-	2	11.11	16	88.89
		Gover- -nment	5	31.25	8	50	3	18.75
		Quasi-govern- -ment	1	5.5	16	88.89	1	5.5
		<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11.53</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>38.4</b>
2.	Non- -functional	Non govern- -ment	9	90	1	10	-	-
		Gover- -nment	8	88.89	1	11.11	-	-
		Quasi-govern- -ment	6	60	4	40	-	-
		<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>79.31</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>20.68</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

Coefficient of mean square contingency = 0.5473\*\*

Note : F - Frequency

P - Percentage

Promptness and regularity of attendance was high (88.99 per cent) in the functional non-government SHG and medium in quasi-government and government SHGs 88.89 and 50 per cent respectively. Promptness and regularity of attendance was low in all non-

functional SHGs studied. This factor had a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index as is evident from Table 28. The female respondents expressed significantly greater promptness and regularity in attending SHG meetings as is evident from Table 7.

#### **4.3.1.3 Self-reliance**

The Table 9 shows that 76.92 percent of the respondents were highly self-reliant in the functional SHGs whereas only 48.27 per cent of the respondents expressed high self-reliance in the non-functional SHGs. In the functional non-government and in the quasi-government SHG 83.34 per cent expressed high self-reliance. This factor however was found to have no significant relationship with the sustainability index as is evident from Table 28. The male respondents perceived significantly greater self-reliance than women as is observed from Table 7.

Table 9. Distribution of respondents with respect to self-reliance.

(n = 81)

Sl. No	Description	Organisation	Always		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
			F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P
1.	Functional	Non-government	15	83.34	3	16.66	-	-	-	-
		Government	10	62.5	3	18.75	2	12.5	1	6.25
		Quasi- government	15	83.34	3	16.66	-	-	-	-
		<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>76.92</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>17.30</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3.84</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.93</b>
2.	Non- functional	Non-government	3	30	4	40	3	30	-	-
		Government	2	22.23	4	44.44	3	33.33	-	-
		Quasi- government	9	90	1	10	-	-	-	-
		<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>48.27</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>31.03</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>20.68</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

Coefficient of mean square contingency = 0.4387\*\*

Note : F – Frequency  
P – Percentage

#### 4.3.1.4 Accountability

About 86.53 per cent of the functional SHGs respondents claimed full accountability for their group activities while only 55.17 per cent claimed full accountability and 34.48 per cent partial accountability among respondents of non-functional SHGs.

Table 10. Distribution of respondents with respect to accountability.

(n = 81)

Sl No	Description	Organi sation	Fully answerable		Partially answerable		Not answerable	
			F	P	F	P	F	P
1.	Functional	Non-govern-ment	18	100	-	-	-	-
		Govern-ment	9	56.25	7	43.75	-	-
		Quasi-govern-ment	18	100	-	-	-	-
		<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>86.53</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13.47</b>	-	-
2.	Non-functional	Non-govern-ment	7	17	3	30	-	-
		Govern-ment	1	11.11	5	55.55	3	33.34
		Quasi-govern-ment	8	80	2	20	-	-
		<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>55.17</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>34.48</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10.35</b>

Coefficient of mean square contingency = 0.4276\*\*

Note : F – Frequency

P – Percentage



In the functional non-government and quasi-government SHGs 100 per cent of respondents expressed that they felt fully answerable on the performance and achievement of group goals. This factor had a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index as is obvious from Table 28. The male respondents evidenced significantly greater accountability as observed from Table 7.

#### **4.3.1.5 Empowerment**

Under the functional SHGs 82.69 per cent of the respondents had expressed empowerment in terms of authority in planning, decision making, implementation and evaluation of the SHGs programmes while only 55.17 per cent of the respondents of the non-functional SHGs claimed that they had been similarly empowered.

In the functional category 100 per cent of the non-government SHG respondents and 94.44 per cent of the quasi-government SHG respondents expressed that they had full authority in planning, decision making, implementation and evaluation of its programmes. Empowerment had a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index as evident from Table 28. From the Table 7 it is clear that there

was no significant difference in the empowerment of man and women.

Table 11. Distribution of respondents with respect to empowerment.

(n = 81)

Sl. No	Description	Organis-ation	Full empowerment		Moderate empowerment		Very little empowerment	
			F	P	F	P	F	P
1.	Functional	Non-government	18	100	-	-	-	-
		Government	8	50	7	43.75	1	6.25
		Quasi-government	17	94.44	-	-	1	5.56
		<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>82.69</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13.46</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3.85</b>
2.	Non-functional	Non-government	8	18	-	-	2	20
		Government	3	33.33	6	66.67	-	-
		Quasi-government	5	50	4	40	1	10
		<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>55.17</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>34.48</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10.35</b>

Coefficient of mean square contingency = 0.1796<sup>NS</sup>

Note : F – Frequency

P – Percentage

#### 4.3.1.6 Affiliation Motive

From the Table 12 it is clear that 55.76 per cent of the respondents in the functional SHGs had moderate affiliation motive. High affiliation motive was expressed by 88.89 per cent of the non-government SHG

Table 12. Distribution of respondents with respect to affiliation motive.

(n = 81)

Sl. No	Description	Organis- -ation	Low		Moderate		High	
			F	P	F	P	F	P
1.	Functional	Non-govern- -ment	-	-	2	11.11	16	88.89
		Govern- -ment	1	6.25	10	62.5	5	31.25
		Quasi-govern- -ment	1	5.55	17	94.45	-	-
		<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3.84</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>55.76</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>40.38</b>
2.	Non- -functional	Non-govern- -ment	1	10	9	90	-	-
		Govern- -ment	6	66.66	3	33.34	-	-
		Quasi-govern- -ment	1	10	9	90	-	-
		<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>27.58</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>72.42</b>	-	-

Coefficient of mean square contingency = 0.4850\*\*

Note : F – Frequency

P – Percentage

respondents, while 94.45 per cent of the quasi-government SHG respondents and 62.5 per cent of the government SHG respondents had moderate affiliation motive. Affiliation motive had a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index (Table 28). The women respondents expressed significantly greater affiliation motive (Table 7).

### 4.3.2 Group characteristics

#### 4.3.2.1 Group size

From the Table 13 it is evident that all the functional groups came under medium category with respect to size with a mean of 17.3, while all the non-functional groups were small with a mean of 9.6.

Table 13. Distribution of respondents with respect to group size. (n = 81)

Sl. No	Description	Organisation	No of members	Category
1.	Functional	Non-government	18	Medium
		Government	16	Medium
		Quasi-government	18	Medium
		Mean	17.3	
2.	Non-functional	Non-government	10	Small
		Government	9	Small
		Quasi-government	10	Small
		Mean	9.6	

### 4.3.2.2 Group Norms

Table 14. Distribution of respondents with respect to group norms.

(n = 81)

Sl. No	Description	Organis- ation	Very clear		Some what clear		Not clear	
			F	P	F	P	F	P
1.	Functional	Non- govern- ment	18	100	-	-	-	-
		Govern ment	9	56.25	5	31.25	2	12.5
		Quasi- govern- ment	17	94.45	1	5.55	-	-
		<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>84.61</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11.54</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3.85</b>
2.	Non- functional	Non- govern- ment	6	60	2	20	2	20
		Govern ment	-	-	2	22.23	7	77.77
		Quasi- govern- ment	10	100	-	-	-	-
		<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>55.17</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>13.79</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>31.04</b>

Coefficient of mean square contingency = 0.5544\*\*

Note : F - Frequency

P - Percentage

In the functional category of SHGs 84.61 per cent of the respondents were very clear about the rules, regulations and procedures for various group operations while in the non-functional SHGs only 55.17

per cent were very clear and 31.04 per cent were not sure of the group norms. Among the functional SHGs 100 per cent of the non-government SHG respondents and 94.45 per cent of the quasi-government SHG respondents expressed that they were very clear about the rules, regulations and procedures for the various group operations. This factor had a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index as is evident from Table 28. Male respondents expressed significantly greater awareness and clarity of group norms as is evident from Table 7.

#### **4.3.2.3 Group Homogeneity**

About 65.38 per cent of respondents of the functional SHGs were homogeneous, whereas in the non-functional SHGs only 27.58 per cent of the respondents claimed homogeneity. In the non-functional SHGs 44.83 per cent of the respondents expressed that there was no similarity among the members. Among the functional SHGs 100 per cent of the non-government SHG respondents and 87.5 per cent of the government SHG respondents claimed similarity among the members of the group in respect to needs, motives and socioeconomic status while 55.55 per cent of the quasi-government SHG respondents expressed that there was no such similarity among group members.

Table 15. Distribution of respondents with respect to group homogeneity.

(n = 81)

Sl. No	Description	Organis- ation	Very similar		Some what similar		Not similar	
			F	P	F	P	F	P
1.	Functional	Non-govern- ment	18	100	-	-	-	-
		Govern- ment	14	87.5	2	12.5	-	-
		Quasi-govern- ment	2	11.11	6	33.33	10	55.55
		<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>65.38</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>15.38</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>19.24</b>
2.	Non- functional	Non-govern- ment	1	10	4	40	5	50
		Govern- ment	6	66.67	1	11.11	2	22.23
		Quasi-govern- ment	1	10	3	30	6	60
		<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>27.58</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>27.58</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>44.83</b>

Coefficient of mean square contingency = 0.5777\*\*

Note : F - Frequency

P - Percentage

This factor was found to have positive significant relationship with the sustainability index as is evident from Table 28. Female respondents evidenced significantly greater group homogeneity as observed from Table 7.

#### 4.3.2.4 Involvement in decision making

The Table 16 shows that 84.61 per cent of the respondents were always involved in generation of ideas, evaluation of options and making a choice in the functional SHGs, while over 48 per cent had very little involvement in decision making in the non-functional SHGs. Among the functional SHG 100 per cent of non-government SHG respondents and 83.34 per cent of quasi-government SHG respondents were always involved in decision making. This factor had a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index as is clear from Table 28. From Table 7 it is evident that female respondents evidenced significantly greater involvement in generation of ideas, evaluation of options and making a choice from among options.



Table 16. Distribution of respondents with respect to involvement in decision making.  
(n = 81)

Sl. No	Description	Organisation	Always		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
			F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P
1.	Functional	Non-government	18	100	.	.	.	.	.	.
		Government	11	68.75	5	31.25	.	.	.	.
		Quasi-government	15	83.34	2	11.11	.	.	1	5.55
		<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>84.61</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13.45</b>	.	.	<b>1</b>	<b>1.93</b>
2.	Non-functional	Non-government	5	50	4	40	1	10	.	.
		Government	2	22.23	2	22.23	4	44.44	1	11.11
		Quasi-government	.	.	.	.	9	90	1	10
		<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>24.13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>20.68</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>48.27</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6.89</b>

Coefficient of mean square contingency = 0.3647\*

Note : F - Frequency  
P - Percentage

### 4.3.2.5 Group Leadership

Table 17. Distribution of respondents with respect to group leadership.

(n = 81)

Sl. No	Description	Organis- ation	Very effective		Moderately effective		Not effective	
			F	P	F	P	F	P
1.	Functional	Non-Govern- ment	16	88.89	2	11.11	-	-
		Govern- ment	12	75	4	25	-	-
		Quasi-govern- ment	18	100	-	-	-	-
		<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>88.46</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11.54</b>	-	-
2.	Non-functional	Non-Govern- ment	2	20	8	80	-	-
		Govern- ment	-	-	9	100	-	-
		Quasi-govern- ment	6	80	4	40	-	-
		<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>27.58</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>72.42</b>	-	-

Coefficient of mean square contingency = 0.3795\*

Note : F – Frequency  
P – Percentage

It is evident from the Table 17 that majority (88.4 per cent) of the respondents of functional SHGs rated the effectiveness of their leader in promoting the

stability and success of the group as high, whereas in non-functional SHGs majority (72.42 per cent) of the respondents rated group leadership as only moderately effective. This factor had a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index as in evident from Table 28. From Table 7 it is clear that there was no significant difference among male and female members pertaining to the effectiveness of group leadership.

#### 4.3.2.6 Transparency

In the functional SHGs 92.31 per cent of the respondents said that all group transactions were open and clear to all group members, while in the non-functional SHGs 44.82 per cent of the respondents said that all transactions were open only to dominant members. Among the functional SHGs studied transparency of transactions was expressed as 100 per cent in non-government and quasi-government SHGs while it was 75 per cent in the government SHGs.

This factor had a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index as in observed from Table 28. From the Table 7 it is evident that transparency had no significant difference with respect to gender.

Table 18. Distribution of respondents with respect to transparency.

(n = 81)

Sl. No	Description	Organis- ation	Only to the leader		To dominant members only		To all the members	
			F	P	F	P	F	P
1.	Functional	Non- govern- ment	-	-	-	-	18	100
		Govern- ment	-	-	4	25	12	75
		Quasi- govern- ment	-	-	-	-	18	100
		<b>Total</b>	-	-	<b>4</b>	<b>7.69</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>92.31</b>
2.	Non- functional	Non- govern- ment	1	10	7	70	2	20
		Govern- ment	3	33.34	5	55.55	1	11.11
		Quasi govern- ment	3	30	1	10	6	60
		<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>24.13</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>44.82</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>31.05</b>

Coefficient of mean square contingency = 0.2289<sup>NS</sup>

Note : F - Frequency

P - Percentage

### 4.3.2.7 Interpersonal trust

Table 19. Distribution of respondents with respect to interpersonal trust.

(n = 81)

Sl No	Description	Organis- ation	Full faith in other members		Some faith in other members		Very little faith other members	
			F	P	F	P	F	P
1.	Functional	Non- govern- ment	18	100	-	-	-	-
		Govern- ment	15	93.75	1	6.25	-	-
		Quasi- govern- ment	17	94.44	1	5.56	-	-
		<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>96.15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3.85</b>	-	-
2.	Non- functional	Non- govern- ment	7	70	3	30	-	-
		Govern- ment	-	-	7	77.77	2	22.23
		Quasi- govern- ment	-	-	2	20	8	80
		<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>24.13</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>41.37</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>34.44</b>

Coefficient of mean square contingency = 0.5387\*\*

Note : F – Frequency

P – Percentage

In the functional SHG about 96.15 per cent of the respondents had full faith or confidence in other members, while in the non-functional SHGs only 24.13

per cent of the respondents said that they had full faith or confidence in fellow members. In the functional non-government SHGs 100 per cent of the respondents had full faith or confidence in the other members of the group as given in Table 19. This factor was found to have positive and significant relationship with the sustainability index as is evident from Table 28. From Table 7 it is obvious that female respondents evidenced significantly greater interpersonal trust.

#### **4.3.2.8 Group Interaction**

The Table 20 shows that 75 per cent of the functional SHG members had high group interaction, while in the non-functional SHGs over 68 per cent said they rarely interacted with other members of the group. In the functional SHGs 100 per cent of the non-government SHG respondents, 68.75 per cent of the government SHG respondents and 55.56 per cent of the quasi-government SHG respondents always had the tendency to get in touch with members of the group and mix freely with them without formality or inhibition. However group interaction had a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index as is evident from Table 28. The Table 7 shows that there was no significant difference in group interaction with respect to gender.

Table 20. Distribution of respondents with respect to group interaction.

(n = 81)

Sl. No	Description	Organis- ation	Always		Sometimes		Rarely	
			F	P	F	P	F	P
1.	Functional	Non-govern- ment	18	100	-	-	-	-
		Govern- ment	11	68.75	5	31.25	-	-
		Quasi-govern- ment	10	55.56	7	38.89	1	5.55
		<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>23.08</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.92</b>
2.	Non- functional	Non-govern- ment	-	-	7	70	3	30
		Govern- ment	-	-	-	-	9	100
		Quasi-govern- ment	-	-	2	20	8	80
		<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>31.03</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>68.97</b>

Coefficient of mean square contingency = 0.3196\*

Note : F – Frequency

P – Percentage

#### 4.3.2.9 Autonomy

Autonomy or the perceived freedom and independence the group has in direction and scheduling of its activity in the functional SHGs was full as claimed by 82.61 per cent of the respondents.

Table 21. Distribution of respondents with respect to autonomy.

(n = 81)

Sl. No	Description	Organis -ation	Full authority		Partial authority		No authority	
			F	P	F	P	F	P
1.	Functional	Non-government	18	100	-	-	-	-
		Government	9	56.25	7	43.75	-	-
		Quasi-government	16	88.89	1	5.55	1	5.55
		<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>82.61</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>15.37</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.92</b>
2.	Non-functional	Non-government	1	10	9	90	-	-
		Government	1	11.11	4	44.44	4	44.44
		Quasi-government	7	70	3	30	-	-
		<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>31.03</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>55.17</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>13.93</b>

Coefficient of mean square contingency = 0.4023\*\*

Note : F – Frequency

P – Percentage

However only 31.03 per cent of the non-functional SHG members claimed full autonomy for group activities. Hundred per cent of the non-government SHG respondents expressed full freedom and independence in the direction and scheduling of group activities but only 56.25 per cent of the



government SHG respondents expressed similar such autonomy. This factor was found to have a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index as is evident from Table 28. The difference among gender with respect to autonomy was not significant as is evident from Table 7.

#### **4.3.3 Change agent characteristics**

##### **4.3.3.1 Perceived change agent credibility**

Ninety two per cent of the respondents in the functional SHGs felt that the change agent was highly credible while only 51.72 per cent of the respondents in the non-functional SHGs opined that the change agent was being credible. In the non-government SHG 100 per cent of the respondents and 93.75 per cent of the government SHG respondents perceived the change agent as being always trustworthy and reliable. Perceived change agent credibility was found to have positive and highly significant relationship with respect to the sustainability index (Table 28.). However there was no significant difference in the perception of change agent credibility among men and women as is evident from Table 7.

Table 22. Distribution of respondents with respect to perceived change agent credibility.

(n = 81)

Sl. No	Description	Organis- ation	Yes		Sometimes		No	
			F	P	F	P	F	P
1.	Functional	Non-government	18	100	-	-	-	-
		Government	15	93.75	1	6.25	-	-
		Quasi-government	15	83.33	3	16.67	-	-
		<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>92.31</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7.69</b>	-	-
2.	Non-functional	Non-government	8	80	2	20	-	-
		Government	-	-	2	22.23	7	77.77
		Quasi-government	7	70	3	30	-	-
		<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>51.72</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>24.14</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>24.14</b>

Coefficient of mean square contingency = 0.2706\*

Note : F – Frequency

P – Percentage

#### 4.3.3.2 Perceived change agent homophily

It is evident from the Table 23 that among the functional SHGs studied 53.84 per cent of the respondents said that there was partial homophily and 34.81 per cent claimed high homophily.

Eighty three per cent of the non-government SHG respondents in the functional category claimed partial homophily with the change agent. Change agent homophily had a positive and significant relationship with the sustainability index as is evident from Table 28. The female respondents expressed significantly greater change agent homophily as is observed from Table 7.

#### **4.3.3.3 Change agent orientation**

Over 90 per cent of the respondents interviewed from among the functional SHGs either agreed or strongly agreed that the change agent was oriented fulfilling the expectations of the SHG members rather than the expectations of the SHPI. While in the non-functional SHGs only 3.44 per cent of the respondents strongly agreed to this client orientation of the change agent. Change agent orientation had a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index as is obvious from Table 28. There was however no significant difference between genders pertaining to change agent orientation (Table 7).

Table 24. Distribution of respondents with respect to change agent orientation.

(n = 81)

Sl. No	Description	Organisation	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
			F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P
1.	Functional	Non-government	18	100	-	-	-	-	-	-
		Government	5	31.25	7	43.75	-	-	4	25
		Quasi-government	3	16.67	14	77.77	1	5.55	-	-
		<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>40.38</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.92</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7.69</b>
2.	Non-functional	Non-government	1	10	8	80	1	10	-	-
		Government	-	-	-	-	6	66.66	3	33.34
		Quasi-government	-	-	9	90	1	10	-	-
		<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3.44</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>58.62</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>27.58</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10.34</b>

Coefficient of mean square contingency = 0.4598\*\*

Note : F - Frequency  
P - Percentage

#### **4.3.3.4 Change agent effort**

From Table 25 it is evident that the functional SHGs 55.76 per cent of the respondents felt that the change agent effort was very high, while only 3.44 per cent of the respondents of the non-functional SHGs felt that the change agent effort as being very high. All the respondents in the non-government SHG and quasi-government SHG claimed that the effort change agent expends in change activities with the members of the SHG was either very high or high. Change agent effort had a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index as is obvious from Table 28. Table 7 reveals that the difference in perception of the change agent effort among the gender was not significant.

Table 25. Distribution of respondents with respect to change agent effort.

(n = 81)

Sl. No	Description	Organisation	Very high		High		Low		Very low	
			F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P
1.	Functional	Non-government	18	100	-	-	-	-	-	-
		Government	11	68.75	4	25	1	6.25	-	-
		Quasi-government	-	-	18	100	-	-	-	-
		<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>55.76</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>42.3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.92</b>	-	-
2.	Non-functional	Non-government	1	10	8	80	1	10	-	-
		Government	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	100
		Quasi-government	-	-	8	80	2	20	-	-
		<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3.44</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>55.17</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10.34</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>31.03</b>

Coefficient of mean square contingency = 0.6097\*\*

Note : F - Frequency  
P - Percentage

#### 4.3.3.5 Perceived compatibility with client needs

Table 26. Distribution of respondents with respect to perceived compatibility with client needs.

(n = 81)

Sl. No	Description	Organis- -ation	Very much compati- -able		Moderately compatible		Very little compat- -ibility	
			F	P	F	P	F	P
1.	Functional	Non-govern- -ment	17	94.45	1	5.55	-	-
		Govern- -ment	14	87.5	2	12.5	-	-
		Quasi-govern- -ment	18	100	-	-	-	-
		<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>94.23</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5.77</b>	-	-
2.	Non-functional	Non-govern- -ment	7	70	3	30	-	-
		Govern- -ment	-	-	-	-	9	100
		Quasi-govern- -ment	4	40	6	60	-	-
		<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>37.94</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>31.03</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>31.03</b>

Coefficient of mean square contingency = 0.2729\*

Note : F – Frequency

P – Percentage

The Table 26 shows that 94.23 per cent of the functional SHGs respondents perceived that the change agent activities was very much compatibility with their

needs. While only 37.94 per cent of the respondents of the non-functional SHGs felt that the change agent activities were compatible with their needs. Very high change agent compatibility with the needs of the SHG members was expressed by 100 per cent of the quasi-government respondents and 94.45 per cent of the non-government SHG respondents. This factor had a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index as is observed from Table 28.

#### **4.3.3.6 Perceived change agent empathy**

About 94.23 per cent of the functional SHG respondents claimed that the change agent was very much empathetic, while only 44.83 per cent of the non-functional SHG respondents felt that the change agent was empathetic as is evident from Table 27. In the non-functional SHGs surveyed, 77.78 per cent of the respondents from government SHG felt the change agent was not at all able to empathize with them and 50 per cent of the respondents from quasi-government SHG felt that the change agent was only somewhat able to empathize with them. Change agent effort had a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index as observed from Table 28. The perceptual difference between male and female respondents was not significant as revealed from Table 7.



Table 27. Distribution of respondents with respect to perceived change agent empathy.

(n = 81)

Sl. No	Description	Organis- ation	Very much		Some what		Not at all	
			F	P	F	P	F	P
1.	Functional	Non-govern- ment	18	100	-	-	-	-
		Govern- ment	14	87.5	2	12.5	-	-
		Quasi-govern- ment	17	94.45	1	5.5	-	-
		<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>94.24</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5.76</b>	-	-
2.	Non- functional	Non-govern- ment	8	80	2	20	-	-
		Govern- ment	-	-	2	22.22	7	77.78
		Quasi-govern- ment	5	50	5	50	-	-
		<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>44.83</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>31.04</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>24.13</b>

Coefficient of mean square contingency

Note : F – Frequency

P – Percentage

#### 4.3.4. Correlation analysis between member, group and change agent characteristics with the sustainability index.

From the Table 28 it is evident that the member characteristics such as promptness and

regularity in attending meetings, accountability, empowerment and affiliation motive had a highly significant and positive relationship with sustainability of the SHGs.

Table 28. Correlation of member, group and change agent characteristics with sustainability index (n = 81)

Sl. No	Variables	Correlation coefficient (r)
<b>A</b>	<b>MEMBER CHARACTERISTICS</b>	
1.	Promptness and regularity in attending meetings	0.749**
2.	Self-reliance	0.194 <sup>NS</sup>
3.	Accountability	0.436**
4.	Empowerment	0.478**
5.	Affiliation motive	0.573**
<b>B</b>	<b>GROUP CHARACTERISTICS</b>	
1.	Group norms	0.393**
2.	Group homogeneity	0.263*
3.	Involvement in decision making	0.642**
4.	Group Leadership	0.492**
5.	Transparency	0.492**
6.	Interpersonal trust	0.790**
7.	Group interaction	0.819**
8.	Autonomy	0.490**
<b>C</b>	<b>CHANGE AGENT CHARACTERISTICS</b>	
1.	Perceived change agent credibility	0.486**
2.	Perceived change agent homophily	0.291*
3.	Change agent orientation	0.657**
4.	Change agent effort	0.776**
5.	Perceived compatibility with client needs	0.690**
6.	Perceived change agent empathy	0.675**

\*\* Significant at one per cent level

\* Significant at five per cent level

NS Not significant

Self-reliance was the only variable which was non-significant with respect to sustainability.

All the group characteristics such as group norms, involvement in decision making, group homogeneity, group leadership, transparency, interpersonal trust, group interaction, autonomy and change agent characteristics such as perceived change agent credibility, perceived change agent homophily, change agent orientation, change agent effort perceived compatibility with client needs, perceived change agent empathy had a significant and positive relationship with the sustainability of the SHGs.

#### **4.5 Factors contributing to the sustainability of SHGs**

##### **4.4.1.1 Frequency of meetings**

Weekly meetings were conducted in all the non-government SHGs while monthly meetings were conducted in the government and quasi-government SHGs. However in non-functional SHG there was a low turn out of group member whenever the meetings were held.

##### **4.4.1.2 Group cohesion**

Among the functional SHGs 94.22 per cent of the respondents expressed either very much or moderate group cohesion where as 55.17 per cent of the respondents in the non-functional SHGs expressed very little group cohesion which can be observed from Table 29.

Table 29. Distribution of respondents with respect to group cohesion.

(n = 81)

Sl. No	Description	Organisation	Very much		Moderately		To some extent		Very little	
			F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P
1.	Functional	Non-government	18	100	-	-	-	-	-	-
		Government	3	18.75	11	68.75	2	12	-	-
		Quasi-government	3	16.67	14	77.78	1	5.55	-	-
		<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>48.15</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>48.07</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5.76</b>	-	-
2.	Non-functional	Non-government	6	60	2	20	2	20	-	-
		Government	-	-	-	-	2	22.23	7	77.77
		Quasi-government	-	-	-	-	1	10	9	90
		<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>20.68</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6.89</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>17.24</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>55.17</b>

Note : F - Frequency  
P - Percentage

#### **4.4.1.3 Conflict resolution**

The results given in Table 30 show that 67.30 per cent of the respondents in the functional SHGs were able to resolve conflicts in the group itself while 55.17 per cent of the non-functional SHGs respondents were not at all able to resolve conflicts amicably.

Hundred per cent of the non-government SHG respondents and 87.5 per cent of the government SHG respondents claimed that they were fully able to resolve all the disagreements, disputes, clashes, quarrels or difference of opinion in group activities, however 72.22 per cent of the quasi-government SHG respondents opined that they could only resolve their conflicts to some extent.

Table 30. Distribution of respondents with respect to conflict resolution.

(n = 81)

Sl. No	Description	Organisation	Able to resolve fully		To some extent only		Not always		Not at all	
			F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P
1.	Functional	Non-government	18	100	-	-	-	-	-	-
		Government	14	87.5	2	12.5	-	-	-	-
		Quasi-government	3	16.66	13	72.22	-	-	2	11.11
		<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>67.3</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>28.84</b>	-	-	<b>2</b>	<b>3.84</b>
2.	Non-functional	Non-government	6	60	2	20	2	20	-	-
		Government	-	-	-	-	2	22.23	7	77.77
		Quasi-government	-	-	-	-	1	10	9	90
		<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>20.68</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6.89</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>17.24</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>55.17</b>

Note : F – Frequency  
P – Percentage

#### 4.4.1.4 External support

Table 31 reveals that over 80 per cent of the functional non-government SHG respondents received substantial external support while 90 per cent of the non-functional non-government SHG respondents received partial external support.

Table 31. Distribution of respondents with respect to external support. (n = 81)

Sl. No	Description	Organis- -ation	Substan- -tial support		Partial support		No support	
			F	P	F	P	F	P
1.	Functional	Non- government	15	83.33	3	16.66	-	-
		Government	1	6.25	15	93.75	-	-
		Quasi- government	-	-	15	83.33	3	16.66
		<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>30.76</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>63.46</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5.76</b>
2.	Non- functional	Non- government	-	-	9	90	1	10
		Government	-	-	-	-	9	100
		Quasi- government	-	-	-	-	10	100
		<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>31.03</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>68.96</b>

Note : F – Frequency

P – Percentage

In the functional government SHG 93.75 per cent of the respondents and 83.33 per cent of functional quasi-government SHG respondents received partial external support. While 100 per cent of the non-functional SHG respondents in government and quasi-government sector received no external support at all.

#### **4.4.1.5 Perceived fulfillment of objectives**

Over 80 per cent of the respondents of the functional SHGs perceived that during the period of the groups existence the SHG was very much able to fulfil the objectives for which it was initiated, whereas in the non-functional SHGs, 51.72 per cent of the respondents expressed very little fulfillment of group objectives as is observed from Table 32.



Table 32. Distribution of respondents with respect to perceived fulfillment of objectives.  
(n = 81)

Sl. No	Description	Organisation	Very much		Moderately		To some extent		Very little	
			F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P
1.	Functional	Non-government	18	100	-	-	-	-	-	-
		Government	13	81.25	2	12.5	1	6.25	-	-
		Quasi-government	13	72.22	3	16.66	-	-	2	11.11
		<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>84.61</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9.62</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.92</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3.84</b>
2.	Non-functional	Non-government	5	50	3	30	1	10	1	100
		Government	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	100
		Quasi-government	-	-	-	-	5	50	5	50
		<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>17.24</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10.34</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>20.68</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>51.72</b>

Note : F – Frequency  
P – Percentage

#### 4.4.2. Sustainability index of SHGs

Sustainability index was tested using Kruskal- Wallis test and it was found that the sustainability index significantly differed among non-government, government and quasi-government SHGs. The test criterion obtained (37.0375) was found significant at 1 per cent level. The sustainability index for the functional non-government SHG was 99.56 followed by government SHG with a sustainability index of 73.01 and the quasi-government SHG with a sustainability index of 67.10.

Table 33. Sustainability index of SHGs

Sl. No	Description	Organisation	Mean Sustainability index
1.	Functional	Non-government	99.56
		Government	73.01
		Quasi-government	67.10
2.	Non-functional	Non-government	73.68
		Government	32.68
		Quasi-government	36.83

Test Criterion among the non-government, government and quasi-government SHGs was 37.0375

Test criterion among the functional and non-functional SHGs was 66.5587

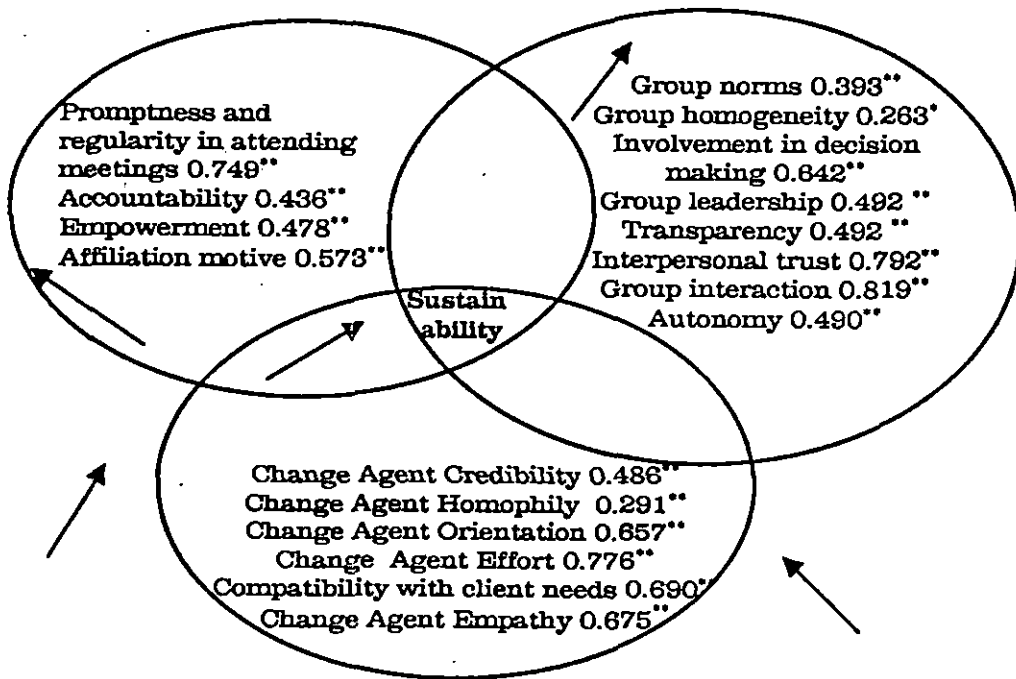
Both were significant at 1 per cent level.

The difference in the sustainability index for the non-functional and functional groups was also found to be significant at 1 per cent level. The test criterion obtained (66.5587) was found to be highly significant at 1 per cent level, with the functional SHGs having substantially higher mean sustainability indices than the non-functional groups as is evident from Table 33.

**FIG.5. SUSTAINABLE MODEL FOR SELF HELP GROUP FORMATION**

**MEMBER CHARACTERISTICS**

**GROUP CHARACTERISTICS**



**CHANGE AGENT CHARACTERISTICS**

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION**

The salient results of the present study are interpreted and discussed in this chapter under the following headings:

- 5.1 Discussion on the various stages of group formation.
- 5.2 Discussion on the distribution of respondents with respect to motivational patterns.
- 5.3 Discussion on the distribution of respondents, gender wise difference in perception and correlation of member, group and change agent characteristics with the sustainability index.
- 5.4 Discussion on the sustainability index of SHGs.

#### **5.1 Discussion on the various stages of group formation.**

Table 3 provides insight into the various stages of group formation. In the non-government SHGs the formation stage took only about a week. The main reason which may be attributed to this is the high credibility of the SHPI in having already established viable SHGs in that locality previously and the members

of the new SHG being already aware of the benefits of an SHG from their colleagues in already existing SHGs.

The government functional SHG took four weeks for the formation stage. This SHG was the first to be formed in the given area, as a part of the women empowerment programme. Initially there were only a few members to form the SHG and they were not convinced about the viability of the SHG. This being one of the first programmes for women's upliftment in that area, there was a general shyness on the part of the women members to join the group, and the men folk where not interested in sending their women folk. The long drawn and concrete effort of the change agents (Mukiya sevika and Grama sevika) contributed to group formation.

The quasi-government functional group took six weeks to form. This too may be attributed to the reason that it was one of the first groups in the area, the farmers were apprehensive about the programme. The SHPI was a relatively new organisation and to establish credibility was a difficult task for the change agent. The enthusiasm of a few farmers and the legitimization by the local parish priest finally helped in formation of the group.

The absence of the storming stage in all SHGs studied may be attributed to the following reasons.

1. The leader was selected and appointed by the SHPI based on his/her qualities and capabilities.
2. The group members did not want their conflicts to be known to others.

The norming stage took one week in the non-government functional SHG, six weeks in the government functional SHG and three weeks in the quasi-government functional SHG. The relatively short norming stage for the non-government functional SHG may be attributed to the same reason for the short forming stage. i.e. the members of the newly formed SHG were already aware of the functioning and norms of the SHG and had sufficient trust in the credibility of the SHPI as there were already successfully functioning SHGs in their neighbourhood. The government SHPI and the quasi-government SHPI did not have this advantage and hence the longer norming stage observed in their SHGs.

All the functional SHGs studied are continuing in the performing stage, fulfilling the objectives for which they were formed and hence

adjourning stage has not even been thought about by the group members.

All the non-functional SHGs studied could not proceed into the performing stage for the reasons given below : some of the members were labourers who reached home late and too exhausted to attend the SHG meeting late in the evening; the members were scattered over a large area not in the proximity of the venue for the weekly meeting; the area had water shortage problem and the women folk, soon after their arrival from work had to go to fetch water from far off. These reasons had reduced promptness and regularity of attending meetings. There was also a general lack of interest and enthusiasm among the members. Some had unrealistic expectation of overnight changes. Some had joined the group out of compulsion. In some cases there were differences among the farmers on marketing and purchase of inputs collectively. They lacked interpersonal trust, and the farmers were not homogeneous.

Analysis of the non-functional SHGs reveals that the groups came into existence on a war footing to achieve assigned targets and/or due to political pressures, and as a result they were not able to handle the group nor make the members understand the concept of SHG. The change agent was active till the norming stage and helped some members to obtain some



assistance from the group savings and there after reduced his involvement in group activities. As the change agent was only interested in fulfilling the SHPI's interest, once that was achieved, the group was left to itself.

These reasons explain why the groups had over a period of time become non-functional. Usually such groups adjourn, but none of the non-functional SHGs studied adjourned because the loan received from the group savings had not been repaid by the members. There was pressure from the SHPI to repay the meagre loans taken by a few members from the group savings and pressure from those who had contributed towards group savings.

The formation stages in SHGs as conceptualized by KHDP (1995) are in agreement with results of the present study : a) group initiation or formation stage; b) building up or stabilization stage; c) self helping stage or performing stage.

## **5.2 Discussion on the distribution of respondents with respect to motivational patterns.**

It can be noted from Table 4 that security was the most important motive expressed by functional and non-functional SHG respondents for joining the SHG.

In the case of non-government and government SHGs where all the respondents were women they felt highly secure when they were able to save and have some money of their own. They did not have to depend on their men folk anymore. Furthermore, they were able to satisfy their own basic needs and also take care of their children's needs. An indirect consequence of enhanced security among the women folk was that their self-esteem had increased substantially. Men and children treated them better. They also felt that they were needed members of the society.

In the case of the quasi-government SHGs the respondents were mostly farmers who had joined the group primarily for security in order to avail crop insurance and get better profit for their produce by way of input subsidies, marketing facilities, etc.

The second important motive for joining SHGs was goal attainment. The respondents wanted to become independent self-sufficient individuals and they wanted to do something worthwhile, such as start an enterprise.

The motives for still remaining in the group were also security and goal attainment. In the long run most of the members understood that they could get

loans in small amounts whenever they required and the rate of interest was minimal. The possibility malpractice's in this system was minimal as transactions were transparent. The quasi-government respondents also expressed security as the most important motive for remaining in the SHG, as getting subsidies on inputs, security for crop losses, increased profit through collective marketing/ elimination of middle men were high on their agenda.

The findings of the present study are in perfect agreement with motives described by Robbins (1993).

### **5.3 Discussion on the distribution of respondents, gender wise differences in perception and correlation of member, group and change agent characteristics with the sustainability index.**

To make the discussion more meaningful it was decide to club the discussion on distribution, gender wise difference and correlation analysis. Tables referred to in this section of the discussion are Table 6 to Table 28.

### 5.3.1 Member characteristics

#### 5.3.1.1 Gender

The Table 6 reveals that women gender form more than 65 percent of the respondents in both the functional and non-functional groups. The government SHG respondents and non-government SHG respondents were wholly women by design as they focussed on women's development. On the other hand the selected quasi-government organisation KHDP concentrated on upliftment of farmers and was not gender specific and so there were respondents from both genders in the quasi-government SHGs.

The empirical studies conducted by Dwaraki *et al.* (1996) observed the dominance of women in SHGs. It may take a long for men and women joining hands, as equal partners in an SHG to become the order of the day in rural India. It is therefore necessary to allow the gender based distinctions in promoting SHGs. Interestingly but not suprisingly the non-government organisation under study have promoted such gender distinct SHGs and claim a greater degree of effectiveness by working in such a manner.

Correlation of gender with sustainability index could not be undertaken as gender could be measured only in the nominal scale. However a detailed

analysis of perceptual differences between the genders with regard to all other independent variables was worked out, depicted in Table 7 and is discussed along with each variable.

#### **5.3.1.2. Promptness and regularity in attending meetings**

Based on the data depicted in the Table 8, the higher promptness and regularity in attending meetings observed in the non-government and government SHGs can be attributed to the interest and enthusiasm of the members for self-improvement coupled with the sincere and earnest effort of the change agent. In the government SHG the effort on the part of the change agent was comparatively less when compared to the non-government and quasi-government change agents.

Panda and Mishra (1996) had observed that the group members need to meet at regular intervals. This besides creating group bondage, will also ensure participation of members and democratic functioning of the group. It will help in group planning, proper management of funds, enable the members to resolve conflicts and exchange ideas as also ensure participation in decision making. Non-attendance should lead to cancellation of membership.

### **5.3.1.3 Self-reliance**

Table 9 reveals a high percentage of self-reliance among members of the functional SHGs. This may be attributed to the fact that they were labourers on daily wages.

Dawaraki, *et al.* (1996) had pointed out that self-reliance should be viewed as the goal of SHGs rather than a casual factor for SHGs sustainability.

### **5.3.1.4 Accountability**

The Table 10 reveals that majority of the respondents in functional SHGs felt answerable for the performance and achievement of group goals. The percentage of respondents who felt so in the non-functional groups was less and this probably accounts to some degree, the cause of non-functional SHGs. The cent percent sense of accountability expressed by members of functional SHGs in the non-government and quasi-government sectors may be attributed to the design of the programme being implemented the SHPI.

Studies but Tschannerl (1976) in Asia and Africa concluded that responsibility for water use and system maintenance at the local level will lead to

greater accountability for performance thus decreasing failure due to preventive maintenance.

#### **5.3.1.5 Empowerment**

Table 11 reveals that the non-government and quasi-government SHG respondents claimed full empowerment. This may be attributed to the SHG programme being client oriented. While the lesser empowerment seen in the government SHG may be because the SHPI was bound to implement government decisions, plans and programmes without being flexible enough to provide for peoples empowerment, whereas in the non-government and quasi-government SHGs, the SHPI could afford to allow greater involvement of the member in planning, decision making, implementation and evaluation of the SHG's programme.

#### **5.3.1.6 Affiliation motive**

Majority of the respondents in the non-government functional SHGs had expressed high levels of affiliation motive whereas majority of the respondents from the quasi-government and government functional SHGs had expressed moderate levels of affiliation motive. The importance of affiliation motive in group activities is well documented according to Thomas (1998). People really enjoy their regular

interaction that comes with group membership. It fulfils their need for affiliation. The moderate affiliation motive in government and quasi-government SHGs which were functional may be explained by the delicate balance involved in maintaining high levels of accomplishment with compatible working relationships. According to Robbins (1993) individuals with high affiliation motive strive for friendship, prefer co-operative situations rather than a competitive one, and desire relationships involving a high degree of mutual understanding. The findings of the present study are in agreement with those of Pathak (1992), Barner (1994), Sengupta (1998), Ahmed (1999) and Jayasri (1999).

### **5.3.2 Group characteristics**

#### **5.3.2.1 Group size**

The lower group size in the non-functional SHGs (Table 13) may be attributed to the fact that many members who joined the group initially left for various reasons. Some left due to their change in residence, some were not willing to save money as per group norms and others lacked interest. Those who thus left the SHG were not included in the study for various practical reasons like not being locally available for interaction, or not being aware of the issues on which this researcher had sought information. The smaller group size in non-functional SHGs consisted of only



those who had already taken an initial loan and were coming for the SHG meetings merely due to pressure from the SHPI.

The findings indicate that groups with membership between 11 and 20 were functional whereas groups with membership less than 11 were non-functional.

The findings of the present study contradict the observations of Kunju (1972) who had reported that in smaller groups of 9-10 members, there was comparatively high communication and a high degree of group cohesiveness. He had concluded that it is desirable to limit the number of farmers in the case of organizing Charcha mandals (farmer discussion groups) to about 10 members.

According to Shaw (1977), the number of persons in a group has several important consequences for group processes. The range of abilities, knowledge and skill that are available to the group increases with increase in group size. The advantage of these added resources for effective performance are obvious. Larger groups also provide greater opportunity to meet interesting people and attract others with whom interaction may be rewarding.

The findings of the present study validate the observation of Panda and Mishra (1996) that groups should be small enough to be functionally viable so that the members work together smoothly. Larger groups exceeding 20 persons do not provide a conducive atmosphere and situation for each member to participate and they tend to develop into a representative pattern of functioning which leads to mortgaging their rights and representatives.

#### **5.3.2.2 Group Norms**

High clarity of group norms among non-government and quasi-government respondents can be attributed to the stress the non-government and quasi-government SHPI had given for this aspect during group formation. On the other hand the government SHPI seemed to have been keen only on increasing the number of SHGs and the amount of credit given.

According to Sabu (1998) norms facilitate the groups survival and increase the predictability of group member behaviour. Each group is unique and each has to evolve their own norms and by-laws. That is why the groups should be allowed to evolve.

However, as Vasimalai (1995) observed norms also act as a means of influencing the behaviour of group members with a minimum of external control.

Thus, this study reveals beyond doubt the need for SHPI and change agents to give sufficient emphasis on ensuring clarity about rules, regulations and procedures for the various operations.

#### **5.3.2.3. Group homogeneity**

The Table 15 reveals that the respondents in the non-government and government SHGs claimed that members within their group were similar with respect to needs, motives and socio-economic status. The respondents in both these categories were women and mostly labourers working on a daily wage to support their family.

Only half the respondents in the quasi-government sector perceived the members in the group as being homogeneous. This may be attributed to the reasons that some of the respondents in the quasi-government SHGs, were marginal farmers and others farmers with some non-farm profit making enterprises.

Panda and Mishra (1996) had observed that the clear message which had emanated from the

breakdown of cooperative societies was the need to ensure socio-economic homogeneity of the group members for effective functioning. The cooperative consisted of small, marginal, large farmers and people from different occupations and social strata.

Homogeneous socio-economic status ensures homogeneous interest and this contributes to strengthening of the common cause and creation of group unity.

#### **5.3.2.4 Involvement in decision making**

The Table 16 reveals that the percentage of non-government and quasi-government respondents involved in generation of ideas, evaluation of options and making a choice from among options was much higher than those in government SHGs. On enquiry by this researcher the reasons attributed for this difference were: high awareness and clarity of group norms due to high change agent effort in non-government and quasi-government SHGs and political interference in government SHGs.

#### **5.3.2.5 Group leadership**

The Table 17 reveals that functional government, non-government and quasi-government

respondents expressed high effectiveness of group leadership. This may be attributed to the training group leaders are being given by the change agents. The level of group leadership in non-functional groups was evidently less than that in the functional groups. This is on par with the studies conducted by Pathak (1992) who reported that leadership was important in influencing the SHG member for proper functioning. It can help guide and support the members in solving their problems.

Chawla and Patel (1987) observed that leaders should possess a high level of ethics and integrity, high level of confidence to do community work, have good communication with the group members, be competent and hard working, manage people and funds well, ensure group discipline, have highest concern for the poorest member, and be able to keep away from political interference and other pressures.

#### **5.3.2.6 Transparency**

The Table 18 reveals higher levels of transparency of group activity in functional SHGs and transparency of group activity only among dominant members in the non-functional SHGs. This is well supported in studies by NABARD (1997) on different SHGs promoted by various SHPI's. They observed that

transparent dealings and the ability to resolve conflicts contributed greatly to the success of SHGs. Rao and Zeller (1998) reported good maintenance of books and records ensured transparency of group activities.

Transparency is one of the effective ways to ensure fair and equitable delivery of goods and services to the people. Transparency is also the most potent weapon against corruption and ensures a responsive administration reflecting the true will and aspiration of the people. SHIPs should promote minimum secrecy and maximum transparency. Openness and accessibility of people to information should be a vital component of SHG governance.

#### **5.3.2.7 Interpersonal trust**

The Table 19 reveals that trust among the functional SHG respondents was very high, whereas most of the respondents in the non-functional SHGs had very little faith in the others.

For the success and smooth functioning of an SHG, the member should have faith or confidence in the other members of the group. Empirical studies conducted on interpersonal trust brought to limelight the fact that agreement in activity, preference, attitudes and values ensure that the persons involved would be

able to carry out the activities without much friction as reported by Werner and Parmelie, (1972).

Pearce (1974) points out that to talk about interpersonal trust with any understanding is to consider the interdependence involved in the situation, the attitudes and expectations of all participants and the mutuality and reciprocity of those attitudes and expectations, as well as behaviour and reciprocated behaviours during human communication.

Jhamtami and Singh (1987) observed that in any group environment, developing interpersonal trust was the most important factor contributing to productivity.

#### **5.3.2.8 Group interaction**

Group interaction i.e. the frequency with which members of the group got in touch with each other and mixed freely without formality or inhibition was 100 percent among non-government SHG respondents, while in the quasi-government SHG only half the respondents interacted regularly. In the non-functional SHGs the level of interaction was low.

Hare (1976) pointed out that when members of the group are in interaction with one another, they

share a common goal and a set of norms, which give direction and limits to their activity. They also develop a set of roles and a network by interpersonal attraction, which serves to differentiate them from other groups.

Khan (1995) emphasized the need to create an atmosphere wherein there exist open relationships between members, ensure that they don't compete with others but collaborate by producing as per market demand and their capabilities. Such an atmosphere grows stronger by sharing different view points and gains from debate.

#### **5.3.2.9 Autonomy**

The Table 21 reveals that non-government and quasi-government respondents expressed greater freedom and independence in direction and scheduling of group activities, while this much level of autonomy was not seen in government SHGs. This may be attributed to political process and the government machinery being forced to implement a top-down agenda.

Singh (1995a) observed that political interference in government programmes reduced the viability of SHGs. SHGs are to be controlled by the members. If they enter into agreement with



government or any other organisation for group necessities, they do so freely with group's consensus. Group's should continue to be autonomous not withstanding the fact that they function in a rather complex village socioeconomic system. (Panda and Mishra, 1996).

Roul (1996) stated that the prerequisites of successful functioning of an SHG are operational autonomy, managerial autonomy and financial autonomy.

### **5.3.3 Change agent characteristics.**

#### **5.3.3.1 Perceived change agent credibility**

In all the functional and most non-functional SHGs majority of the members expressed that the change agent was a highly trustworthy and reliable person but in the non-functional government SHG majority of the respondents attributed no credibility to the change agent. This should be a matter of concern.

According to Mukherjee (1979), voluntary organisations are potentially superior to official agencies as their workers are more sincerely devoted to the task of reducing the sufferings of poor than the government staff since they are not bound by a rigid bureaucratic set up.

Empirical studies of Chawla and Patel (1987) support the findings of the present study. They reported that the governmental programmes and their field level workers were more concerned about personal gains. This was detrimental to their credibility.

According to Kothari (1995), small voluntary organisations can take bottom-up approach and adapt to the role which is required of it in a particular area for particular section of the society.

#### **5.3.3.2 Perceived change agent homophily**

In the functional SHGs, 53.84 per cent of the respondents said there was partial homophily and 34.81 per cent claimed high homophily, while 51.72 per cent of the respondents in the non-functional category said that there was some similarity of attributers among the members of the SHG and the change agent, 83 per cent of the non-government SHG respondents in the functional category claimed partial homophily with change agents.

Weller (1965) highlighted the importance of change agent homophily with clientele when he said : "a change agent faces difficulties in communicating effectively with heterophilous clients. The people that I work with seemed very eager for help and guidance, but

their response to my suggestions were sullen and some times even resentful. The people and I seemed to be living on two different levels of thinking we spoke the same language but we didn't communicate".

#### **5.3.3.4 Change agent orientation**

The non-government, government and quasi-government respondents agreed that the change agent was highly oriented to fulfilling the needs of the respondents. The positive significance of change agency orientation can be attributed to the change agent being feedback minded, and to base their programmes of change on clients needs as observed by Rogers and Shoemaker(1971).

Dhillon and Hansra (1998) also had noted that a major reason for the success of the change agent was commitment to present alternatives and advice to his clients and leave the ultimate decision making to them.

#### **5.3.3.4 Change agent effort**

Results reported in Table 25 reveal the high or very high effort expended by the change agents of the non-government SHPI and quasi-government SHPI. This reflects their commitment to their work, sincerity of motives and empathy for the people. The difference

in perception of change agent effort among the gender was not significant (Table 7). Fliegel (1967) had reported that the most important predictor of the success of village programme of agricultural change is the extent of change agent effort.

#### **5.3.3.5 Perceived compatibility with client needs**

High change agent compatibility as perceived by the non-government and government respondents can be attributed to the economic and social security that women were receiving and the self-sufficiency that they were attaining. The quasi-government respondents who were facing grave problems in marketing their products were now able to obtain higher profits and eliminate the middlemen.

Change agents must be aware of their clients felt needs and adapt their role so as to benefit the clients, welfare in the long run. To assess his clients need a change agent must be able to empathize with his clients, to see these problem through his eyes (Rogers and Shoemaker, 1971).

#### **5.3.3.6 Perceived change agent empathy**

About 94.23 per cent of the functional SHG respondents claimed that the change agent was very

empathetic, while only 44.83 per cent of the non-functional SHG respondents felt that the change agent was empathetic.

In the non-functional SHGs surveyed 77.75 per cent of the respondents from government SHG felt the change agent not at all able to empathize with them and 50 per cent of the respondents from quasi-government SHG felt that the change agent was only somewhat able to empathize with them.

While the perceptual difference between male and female respondents was not significant, change agent effort had a positive and highly significant relationship with sustainability index. Although this holds for most situations, it is possible that an exception occurs when the change agent is so empathic that he completely takes the role of his clients and does not wish to change them. Such over empathy probably rarely occurs, but it is possible (Rogers and Shoemaker, 1971).

#### **5.4 Discussion on the sustainability index of SHGs**

The Table 34 reveals the sustainability index for the different SHG groups. The sustainability index for the functional non-government SHG was 99.56 per

cent which is highly justifiable for the following reasons:

The non-government organisations aim was to foster self-help initiatives among the poor. As they were better equipped to access and deal with government and other agencies, they are able to act as a conduit between the SHGs on one hand and other organisations and the government on the other side.

By adopting a consortium approach of SHGs to cover a large geographical area with the long term perspective of the consortium taking over from the non-government organisations, the non-government organisation was ensuring smooth and systematic withdrawal.

By ploughing back earnings from different sources the non-government organisation was building financial sustainability into the SHGs.

Training was given on maintenance of accounts, book keeping, leadership, etc. to ensure development of administrative capability.

The non-government organisation was adopting a flexible mechanism sensitive to the needs and conditions of the people. Moreover addressing the

social needs of the people was high on the agenda in non-government SHGs.

Chowdhary (1978) pointed out that voluntary agencies have the advantages of freedom of work, nearness to the people, flexibility in approach, human touch, dedication and pioneering effort.

The sustainability index for the functional government SHG was 73.01 per cent. This was indeed appreciable. Various government projects in the past which were started in order to improve social and economic conditions of the poor had failed to fulfil the objective for which they were initiated. Usually most of these programmes ended up benefiting the rich, powerful and the corrupt. But the Peoples Plan Campaign initiated at the grass root level in Kerala had been instrumental in transforming the Kerala *ruralis* and had created a great awareness of peoples empowerment, their role in development activity and the viability of peoples organisations or groups.

The comparatively lower sustainability index (67.01 per cent) in the quasi-government functional SHG can be attributed primarily to the following reasons:

Marketing of farm products had not been sufficiently addressed. High profits is what farmers

expected and if that was offered from an outsider, group marketing failed, resulting in mistrust and disinterest among group members.

In concluding the discussion on sustainability it must be point out that test criterion among the functional and non-functional SHGs being significant vindicates the sustainability index developed in the present study and the variables selected.

One of the major objectives of the present study was to identify the factors contributing to sustainability and to suggest a model for sustainable formation of SHGs. As is evident from Table 28 all the independent variable selected for the present study had a significant and positive relationship with sustainability except for the member characteristic: self - reliance which was non-significant and group size and gender for which correlation could not be worked out due to the nominal scale adapted. Not withstanding these exceptions the conceptual model conceived at the beginning of the study stands validated.



## CHAPTER 6

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Mankind has practiced self-help since time immemorial in innumerable ways. Even today it is one of the main characteristics of the productive behaviour of the poor in rural and urban areas. Self-help has emerged as a new paradigm for combating poverty and self help promotion has become one of the major developmental strategies in India.

The underlying intention of the present study was to investigate the dynamics of SHG formation and its sustainability. The specific objectives of the study were:

1. To study the dynamics of the formation process of selected SHGs
2. To analyse the motivation patterns of SHG members.
3. To compare non-government, government and quasi-government promoted SHGs in terms of perceived member, group, change agent characteristics and to find out whether there was any significant difference in sustainability.

4. To validate the sustainability index developed herein by comparing the sustainability of functional and non-functional groups.
5. To compare the differences in gender based perception of factors related to sustainability
6. To identify factors related to sustainability of SHGs
7. To suggest a model for sustainable formation of SHGs.

The study was conducted during the months of May-July 1999 in Thrissur district. The study used the case study method. A list of all organisations promoting SHGs in Thrissur district was made and purposive selection was made such that a non-government, government and quasi-government SHPI were represented. Care was also taken to ensure different areas of specialization such as credit and savings, upliftment of women and agriculture were represented. Based on judges rating one functional and one non-functional SHG was selected from each organisation for comparative study. The number of respondents interviewed was 81.

By reviewing the available literature and discussion with experts a comprehensive list of the dimensions associated with SHG sustainability was prepared. The list of variables was subjected to

relevancy rating and variables were finally categorized into:

- a) Member characteristics : gender, promptness and regularity in attending meetings, self-reliance, accountability, empowerment and affiliation motive.
- b) Group characteristics : group size, group norms, group homogeneity involvement in decision making, group leadership, transparency, interpersonal trust, group interaction and autonomy.
- c) Change agent characteristics : perceived change agent credibility, perceived change agent homophily, change agent orientation, change agent effort, perceived compatibility with client needs and perceived change agent empathy.

The variables were quantified using arbitrary rating scales which were developed to suit the purpose of the study.

Sustainability of the SHG was measured using an index developed for the purpose.

The statistical tools used for the study were percentage analysis, arithmetic mean, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, Chi-square test, Kruskal- Wallis test, Correlation analysis and Kendall coefficient correlation.

The salient findings of the study are summarized furnished below:

1. Under the non-government, the SHG took one week for formation and one week for norming. It was the same in the case of non-functional groups also. In the government sector the forming of the functional SHG took four weeks while norming extended for over six weeks. In the non-functional government SHG forming took two weeks and norming four weeks. In the quasi-government functional SHG formation took about six weeks, while norming three weeks. In the quasi-government non-functional SHG it took one week for formation and two weeks norming.
2. The primary motives as ranked by the respondents for joining the SHGs were security (86.41 %), goal attainment (44.44 %) and self esteem (20.98 %). In the case of non-government SHGs: security (96.42 %), goal attainment (53.57 %) and self esteem (46.42 %); in the case of government SHGs : security (60 %), goal attainment (24 %) and self esteem (24 %); and in the case quasi-government SHGs : security (100 %)and goal attainment (100%). The motives as ranked by the respondents for still remaining in the SHGs were security (80.24 %) and goal attainment (46.91%); in the case of non-

government SHG : security (90.85%) and goal attainment (21.42%); in the case of government SHGs : security (52%) and goal attainment (16%); and in the case of quasi-government SHGs : security (100%) and goal attainment (100%).

3. Hundred per cent of the non-government SHG respondents and 100 per cent of the government SHG respondents were women, whereas most of the quasi-government SHG respondents were men. Correlation of gender with sustainability index could not be undertaken as gender could be measured only on a nominal scale. However a detailed analysis of perceptual differences between the genders with regard to all other independent variables was worked out.
4. Promptness and regularity of attendance was high in the functional non-government SHG (88.89 per cent), medium in quasi-government and government SHGs (88.89 and 50 per cent respectively). Promptness and regularity of attendance was low in all non-functional SHGs studied. This factor had a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index. The female respondents expressed significantly greater promptness and regularity in attending SHG meetings.

5. Seventy six percent of the respondents were highly self reliant in the functional SHGs whereas only 48.27 per cent of the respondents expressed high self reliance in the non-functional SHGs. Among the functional non-government SHG, 83.34 per cent and in the quasi-government SHG 83.34 per cent expressed high self reliance. This factor, however, was found to have no significant relationship with the sustainability index. The male respondents was significantly greater in self reliance.
  
6. About 86.53 per cent of the functional SHGs respondents claimed full accountability for their group activities while only 55.17 per cent claimed full accountability and 34.48 per cent partial accountability among respondents of non-functional SHGs. In the functional non-government SHG, and quasi-government SHG, 100 per cent of respondents expressed that they felt fully answerable on the performance and achievement of group goals. This factor had a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index. The male respondents expressed significantly greater accountability.
  
7. Under the functional SHGs 82.69 per cent of the respondents had expressed empowerment in terms of authority in planning, decision making,

implementation and evaluation of the SHGs programmes while only 55.17 per cent of the respondents of the non-functional SHGs claimed that they had been similarly empowered. In the functional category 100 per cent of the non-government SHG respondents and 94.44 per cent of the quasi-government SHG respondents expressed that they had full authority in planning, decision making, implementation and evaluation of its programmes. Empowerment had a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index. There was no significant difference in the empowerment among males and females.

8. More than half (55.76 per cent) of the respondents in the functional SHGs had moderate affiliation motive. High affiliation motive was expressed by 88.89 per cent of the non-government SHG respondents, while 94.45 per cent of the quasi-government SHG respondents and 62.5 per cent of the government SHG respondents had moderate affiliation motive. Affiliation motive had a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index. The female respondents expressed significantly greater affiliation motive.
9. All the functional groups came under medium category with respect to size with a mean of 17.3,

while all the non-functional groups were small with a mean of 9.6.

10. In the functional category of SHGs, 84.61 per cent of the respondents were very clear about the rules, regulations and procedures for various group operations while in the non-functional SHGs only 55.17 per cent were very clear and 31.04 per cent were not sure of the group norms. Among the functional SHGs 100 per cent of the non-government SHG respondents and 94.45 per cent of the quasi-government SHG respondents expressed that they were very clear about the rules and regulations and procedures for the various group operations. This factor had a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index. Male respondents expressed significantly greater awareness and clarity of group norms.
11. About 65.38 per cent of respondents of the functional SHGs were homogeneous, whereas in the non-functional SHGs only 27.58 per cent of the respondents claimed, homogeneity. In the non-functional SHGs 44.83 per cent of the respondents expressed that there was no similarity among the members. Among the functional SHGs, 100 per cent of the non-government SHG respondents and 87.5 per cent of the government SHG respondents claimed



similarity among the members of the group in respect to needs, motives and socioeconomic status while 55.55 per cent of the quasi-government SHG respondents expressed that there was no such similarity among group members. This factor was found to have positive significant relationship with the sustainability index.. Female respondents expressed significantly greater group homogeneity.

12. Eighty four per cent of the respondents were always involved in generation of ideas, evaluation of options and making a choice in the functional SHGs, while over 48 percent had very little involvement in decision making in the non-functional SHGs. Among the functional SHG 100 per cent of non-government SHG respondents and 83.34 per cent of quasi-government SHG respondents were always involved in decision making. This factor had a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index. Female respondents evidenced significantly greater involvement in generation of ideas, evaluation of options and making a choice from among options.

13. Majority (88.4 percent) of the respondents of functional SHGs rated the effectiveness of their leader in promoting the stability and success of the group as high, whereas in non-functional SHGs

majority (72.42 per cent) of the respondents rated group leadership as only moderately effective. This factor had a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index. There was no significant difference among male and female members pertaining to the effectiveness of group leadership.

14. In the functional SHGs 92.31 per cent of the respondents said that all group transactions were open and clear to all group members, while in the non-functional SHGs, 44.82 per cent of the respondents said that group transactions were open and clear only to dominant members. Among the functional SHGs studied transparency of transactions was expressed as 100 per cent in non-government and quasi-government SHGs while it was 75 per cent in the government SHG. This factor had a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index. Transparency had no significant difference with respect to gender.

15. In the functional SHG about 96.15 per cent of the respondents had full faith or confidence in other members, while in the non-functional SHGs only 24.13 per cent of the respondents said that they had full faith or confidence in fellow members. In the functional non-government SHGs 100 per cent of the

respondents had full faith or confidence in the other members. This factor was found to have positive and significant relationship with the sustainability index. Female respondents evidenced significantly greater interpersonal trust.

16. Seventy five per cent of the functional SHG members had high group interaction, while in the non-functional SHGs over 68 per cent said they rarely interacted with other members of the group. In the functional SHGs 100 per cent of the non-government SHG respondents, 68.75 per cent of the government SHG respondents and 55.56 per cent of the quasi-government SHG respondents always had the tendency to get in touch with members of the group and mix freely with them without formality or inhibition. However group interaction had a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index. There was no significant difference in group interaction with respect to gender.

17. Autonomy or the perceived freedom and independence the group has in direction and scheduling of its activity in the functional SHGs was full as claimed by 82.61 per cent of the respondents. However only 31.03 per cent of the non-functional SHG members claimed full autonomy for group

activities. 100 per cent of the non-government SHG respondents expressed full freedom and independence in the direction and scheduling of group activities but only 56.25 per cent of the government SHG respondents expressed similar such autonomy. This factor was found to have a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index. The difference in perception among genders with respect to autonomy was not significant.

18. Ninety two per cent of the respondent in the functional SHGs felt that the change agent was highly credible while only 51.72 per cent of the respondents in the non-functional SHGs opined that the change as being credible. In the non-government SHG 100 per cent of the respondents and 93.75 per cent of the government SHG respondents perceived the change agent as being always trustworthy and reliable. Perceived change agent credibility was found to have positive and highly significant relationship with respect to the sustainability index. However there was no significant difference in the perception of change agent credibility among men and women.

19. In the functional SHGs studied, 53.84 per cent of the respondents said that there was partial homophily

and 34.81 per cent claimed high homophily. In the non-functional category 51.72 per cent of the respondents said that there was some similarity of attributes among the members of the SHG and the change agent. Eighty three per cent of the non-government SHG respondents in the functional category claimed partial homophily with the change agent. Change agent homophily had a positive and significant relationship with the sustainability index. The female respondents expressed significantly greater change agent homophily.

20. Over 90 per cent of the respondents interviewed from among the functional SHGs either agreed or strongly agreed that the change agent was oriented in fulfilling the expectations of the SHG members rather than the expectations of the SHPI. While in the non-functional SHGs only 3.44 per cent of the respondents strongly agreed to this client orientation of the change agent. Change agent orientation had a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index. There was however no significant difference between genders pertaining to change agent orientation.

21. In the functional SHGs, 55.76 per cent of the respondents felt that the change agent effort was very high, while only 3.44 per cent of the

respondents of the non-functional SHGs felt that the change agent effort as being very high. All the respondents in the non-government SHG and quasi-government SHG claimed that the effort the change agent expends in change activities with the members of the SHG was either very high or high. Change agent effort had a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index. The difference in perception of the change agent effort among the genders was not significant.

22. Ninety four per cent of the functional SHGs respondents perceived that the change agent activities was very much compatible with their needs. While only 37.94 per cent of the respondents of the non-functional SHGs felt that the change agent activities were compatible with their needs. Very high change agent compatibility with the needs of the SHG members was expressed by 100 per cent of the quasi-government respondents and 94.45 per cent of the non-government SHG respondents. This factor had a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index.

23. About 94.23 per cent of the functional SHG respondents claimed that the change agent was very much empathetic, while only 44.83 per cent of the non-functional SHG respondents felt that the change

agent was empathetic. In the non-functional SHGs surveyed, 77.78 per cent of the respondents from government SHG felt the change agent was not at all able to empathize with them and 50 per cent of the respondents from quasi-government SHG felt that the change agent was only somewhat able to empathize with them. Change agent effort had a positive and highly significant relationship with the sustainability index. The perceptual difference between male and female respondents was not significant.

24. Weekly meetings were conducted in all the non-government SHGs while monthly meetings were conducted in the government and quasi-government SHGs. However in non-functional SHG there was a low turn out of group member whenever the meetings were held.
25. Among the functional SHGs 94.22 per cent of the respondents expressed either very much or moderate group cohesion whereas 55.17 per cent of the respondents in the non-functional SHGs expressed very little group cohesion.
26. Sixty seven per cent of the respondents in the functional SHGs were able to resolve conflicts in the group itself while 55.17 per cent of the non-

functional SHGs respondents were not at all able to resolve conflicts amicably. Hundred per cent of the non-government SHG respondents and 87.5 per cent of the government SHG respondents claimed that they were fully able to resolve all the disagreements, disputes, clashes, quarrels or difference of opinion in group activities, however 72.22 per cent of the quasi-government SHG respondents opined that they could only resolve their conflicts to some extent.

27. Over 80 per cent of the functional non-government SHG respondents received substantial external support while 90 per cent of the non-functional non-government SHG respondents received partial external support. 93.75 per cent of the functional government SHG respondents and 83.33 per cent of functional quasi-government SHG respondents received partial external support. While 100 per cent of the non-functional SHG respondents in government and quasi-government sector received no external support at all.

28. Over 80 per cent of the respondents of the functional SHGs perceived that during the period of the groups existence the SHG was very much able to fulfil the objectives for which it was initiated, whereas in the non-functional SHGs, 51.72 per cent of the



respondents expressed very little fulfillment of group objectives.

29. Sustainability index was tested using Kruskal-Wallis test and it was found that the sustainability index significantly differed among non-government, government and quasi-government SHGs. The test criterion obtained (37.0375) was found significant at 1 per cent level. The sustainability index for the functional non-government SHG was 99.56 followed by the government SHG with a sustainability index of 73.01 and lastly the quasi-government SHG with a sustainability index of 67.10. The difference in the sustainability index for the non-functional and functional groups was also found to be significant at 1 per cent level. The test criterion obtained (66.5587) was found to be highly significant at 1 per cent level, with the functional SHGs having substantially higher mean sustainability indices than the non-functional groups.

## **IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY**

- 1) A major objective of the present research work was to study the dynamics of the formation process of SHGs. Based on the findings and discussions that this researcher had with SHG members, SHPI change agents and experts in the field the following

model emerges. There seemed to be four stages for SHG formation:

**Stage I – Preformation stage :-** This study involves a reconnaissance mission by the SHPI interested in promoting SHGs in a particular area. This should involve pilot studies using rapid rural appraisal techniques, discussions with opinion leaders and power holders of religious and political institutions and an assessment of the relevance or need for SHGs in the particular area. It also involves feeding the local communities grapevine with the proposed intentions of the SHPI. Promotional activities should proceed to the next stage only after the feedback obtained during preformation stage is thoroughly analysed.

**Stage II – Group Initiation or Formation stage :-** At this stage potential members are introduced to the concept of self help and the efficacy of the SHG. While this stage is likely to be characterized by a great deal of uncertainty about the groups purpose, structure and leadership, all issues must be thoroughly debated and members allowed to test the waters so that suspicion, fear and concerns could be taken care off. This stage is likely to include the dynamics of storming propounded by Robbins (1993) where by conflicts are resolved. Finally agreement

is reached on group objectives, group norms, group leadership and discipline. A minimum level of confidence in the SHPI or the change agent and mutual trust among the members and their chosen leaders has to be reached before the group can proceed to the next stage.

**Stage III – Group stabilization/performing stage :-** Here the group has started functioning, group structure solidifies, close relationships develop and the group demonstrates cohesiveness. A common set of expectations as to what defines correct member behaviour is assimilated and a strong sense of group identity develops. Overtime the group energy moves from getting to know and understand each other to performing the task at hand.

**Stage IV – Withdrawal :-** To ensure that SHGs created are truly self-sustainable the present researcher proposes a fourth stage. During this period the support of the SHPI should decrease. This should be attempted only after the SHG members have acquired sufficient skills to conduct meetings, resolve conflicts, maintain records and only when they are confident to act in public life, they are able to relate to other institutions and approach banks for loans as a group. SHPIs should integrate withdrawal in their strategy from the very

beginning and all interventions should be targeted to ensure that withdrawal becomes tangible over time. As withdrawal and SHPI involvement tappers off, the SHPI should then take a different role of monitoring feed back and occasional analysis of the financial management of the SHGs.

- 2) The findings of the present study delineated security, self esteem and goal attainment as the primary motives that governed members in joining the group and in their continuance in the group. The SHGs provided security, because there is strength in numbers, by joining a group people reduce their insecurity of being alone. People get reassurance from interacting with others and being a part of a group.

The SHGs also provided members with the feeling of self worth. In addition to conveying status to those outside the group, membership also gave increased feeling of worth to the group members themselves.

Most difficult tasks cannot be executed with the effort of a single person. Such tasks require the pooling of talents, knowledge and power of several people for their accomplishment. Groups help the

pooling of knowledge, skill and power of different people and hence enhance goal attainment.

SHPIs would do well if they harp on these primary motives while they go about promoting SHGs.

- 3) While it may be expedient to allow the gender based distinctions to promoting SHGs, the present study could not prove that sustainability of SHGs was gender related. Interestingly the non-government organisations studied herein had hitherto concentrated on women SHGs, but has, of late, started men exclusive SHGs with equal success.
- 4) As promptness and regularity in attendance of meetings had a positive and significant relationship with sustainability of SHGs this aspect must be declared as a compulsory eligibility to any assistance based on a prerequisite of minimum attendance clubbed with the discipline of promptness.
- 5) Another implication of the present study is that in trying to establish sustainable SHGs the SHPIs need not seek out already self-reliant people, but may strive to pool together the less self-reliant of a community and then gear them towards self reliance through SHG activity.

- 6) The design of SHG programme should be such that the members themselves are accountable i.e., answerable for performance and achievement of group goals.
- 7) This study implies that allowing SHG members full authority in planning, decision making, implementation and evaluation of the SHG programme will be more conducive for its success and sustainability.
- 8) As affiliation motivation has a positive and significant relationship with sustainability of SHGs the SHPIs should ensure that the group dynamics in SHG meeting remain friendly and pleasant and more so in woman exclusive groups as this study shows that they have a greater affiliation need.
- 9) Based on the findings of the present study it is possible to recommend that a functional SHG should consist of 11 to 20 members while groups smaller than that may tend to become non-functional.
- 10) The SHPIs must ensure clarity of rules, regulations and procedures for various SHG operations. Such norms once agreed to and accepted by the SHG members act as a means of influencing their behaviour with a minimum of external control.

- 11) The present study reinforces earlier findings that homogeneity among SHG group members with respect to needs, motives and socioeconomic status should be ensured during group formation to facilitate sustainability.
- 12) Change agents should foster greater involvement of members in the decision making process. This would lead to desirable changes in attitude, increased commitment, better performance and in turn enhance the sustainability of the SHG.
- 13) As group leadership was positively associated with sustainability, the SHPIs should therefore ensure incorporating leadership development programmes as an integral part of their strategy.
- 14) The SHPIs should insist on good maintenance of books and records to ensure transparency of group activity.
- 15) In order to foster interpersonal trust, change agents and SHG leaders should be given training on subjects like self concept, self esteem, sharing and ethics in communication.
- 16) If the SHG members spent more time together on a regular basis and mix freely without formality or

inhibition, group cohesion enhances, common interests are discovered, needs are spelt out and concerns vented. This type of group interaction should be fostered by any organisation attempting to promote SHGs.

- 17) SHGs should be by the members, for the members and of the members. If they ever enter into a contract with the government or some other organisation they should do so freely, based on group consensus and still continue to retain their autonomous identity. A group that possess such autonomy will give its members a sense of personal accountability.
- 18) The basic proposition substantiated in the present study is that an individuals' attitude change is positively related to the credibility with which he perceives the source (or channel) of persuasive messages. If a client perceives that a change agent possess relatively higher credibility than various other sources and channels the client will be more receptive to messages from that change agent.
- 19) Having found that the homophily of the change agent with client is an important factor, the present researcher proposes selection of change agents who are homophilous with their clients, raising the



technical competence levels of the heterophilous clients and/or working through opinion leader to halve the social distance between the change agents and the clientele. Interestingly this last option has already been adopted by the SHPIs studied here.

- 20) To ensure the correct change agent orientation SHPIs should permit their change agents to base their programmes of change on client needs and monitor feedback by close rapport with the clients.
- 21) The present study delineates one of the success factors as the extent of effort that change agent expends in change activities with his clients. It is also important to recognize that it could be possible that promotional efforts by the change agents increased in groups were there was rapid rate of adoption of the ideas the change agent wanted to promote. Whether change agent effort resulted in rapid adoption or rapid adoption resulted greater promotional efforts by the change agent is a subject proposed herein for future research.
- 22) Compatibility of change agents programmes with clients needs was found to be very important but diagnosing clients needs is not easy. The diagnosis of needs is facilitated by client participation in planning change programmes. Change agents tend

to be more authoritarian in their dealings with more laggardly and with lower status clients. As a result change programmes are less likely to be adopted.

23) As change agent empathy was found to be so important, how can it be increased? One method lies in the selection of change agents; those who have once been in the clients role are probably better able to empathize with it. Another method would be for novice change agents to be given empathy training by living with a client family for some weeks or a month, so that they are able to see the world through the eyes of their clients.

24) Based on the detailed discussions of the results undertaken earlier it is possible to postulate that the sustainable SHG would be one (1) with 11 to 20 members, (2) meeting regularly and punctually, (3) with members being fully answerable for the performance and achievement of group goals, (4) where members have full authority in planning, decision making implementation and evaluation of group's programmes, (5) where members have high affiliation motive, (6) where members have substantial clarity about the rules, regulations and procedures for various operations, (7) where members are similar to each other with respect to needs, motives and socioeconomic status, (8) where

members are always involved in generation of ideas, evaluation of options and making a choice from among options, (9) where the group leader is very effective in promoting the stability and success of the group, (10) where group transactions are transparent, (11) where group members have full faith and confidence in each other, (12) where group members are often in touch with each other and freely mix without formality or inhibition, (13) where the group has freedom and independence in the direction and scheduling of group activities, (14) where the change agent is a trustworthy and reliable person, (15) where the change agent is similar in attributes with the members of the SHG, (16) where the change agent is more oriented to fulfil the expectations of the SHG members rather than the expectations of the SHPI, (17) where the change agent expends much effort in change activities with the members of the SHG, (18) where the change agent programme is very much compatible with the needs of the SHG members and (19) where the change agent is able to empathize with the SHG members.

In concluding this study, it is appropriate to stress that the main challenge before a developing nation is to foster sustainable growth and self help is one of the most fascinating yet frustrating aspects of

sustainable development, theory and practice. It is a dynamic process that transcends the narrow boundaries of any given development discipline. The purported benefits of self help are multifarious. They extend to virtually every aspect of development, in every country, at every point of time. Self help is a fundamental tenet of recent strategies for self-reliance. Self Help Groups have come to stay. They represent a pro-people developmental strategy with the potential for becoming a mass movement by national level replication.

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## APPENDIX I

### NGO wise status of SHGs in Trichur District as on 30 September 1998

Sl.No.	SHG promoting Agency	No. of SHGs
1.	AVARD, Chalakudy	89
2.	Sisters of Diocese, Varadium	7
3.	Farmers Club, Marottichal	40
4.	ESAF, Mannuthy	25
5.	KIDS, Kodungallur	228
6.	Farmers Club, Varanthrapally	22
7.	ROW, Pariyaram	20
8.	FROWK, Kodassery	31
9.	ADDS, Chalakudy	30
10.	SBI, Vallachira	5
11.	KESS, Mannuthy	45
12.	MRs. DDM	2
13.	Indian Bank, Kunnamkulam	1
14.	PNB, Vaniyampara	1
15.	SBT, Venkitangu	2
16.	Canara Bank, Chelakkara	2
17.	Costford, Trichur	15
18.	Slum Service Centre, Kuriachira	6
19.	Kasturba Trust, Ponnukkara	20
20.	Sevashram, Angamaly	25
21.	Viswakarma Society	1
22.	Ex servicemen Society	7
	Total	624

## APPENDIX II

Quasi- government (KHDP) SHGs as on  
8<sup>th</sup> November 1998

Sl.No.	Panchayat	No. of SHGs
1.	ALAGAPPA NAGAR	5
2.	ARIMBOOR	2
3.	CHALAKUDY	2
4.	CHELAKKARA	9
5.	ERUMAPETTY	5
6.	KARALAM	2
7.	KODAKARA	11
8.	KODASSERY	17
9.	KORATTI	5
10.	KUZHUR	10
11.	MADAKATHARA	4
12.	MATTATHOOR	13
13.	MELOOR	18
14.	MULLOOKKARA	4
15.	NADATHARA	5
16.	NENMANIKKARA	4
17.	PANACHERY	17
18.	PARAPPUKKARA	8
19.	PARIYARAM	15
20.	PAZHAYANNOOR	19
21.	PORATHSSERY	2
22.	PUTHUKKAD	5
23.	PUTHOOR	21
24.	THEKKUMKARA	9
25.	THRIKKUR	16
26.	VADAKKANCHERY	4
27.	VALLACHIRA	5
28.	VARANTHARAPALLY	23
29.	VARAVOOR	2
	TOTAL	262

### APPENDIX III

#### List of independent variables and their mean relevancy score

Sl. No.	Variable	Mean relevancy score obtained on judges rating
1.	Gender	4.2
2.	Indebtedness	3.9
3.	Empowerment	4.5
4.	Self-reliance	4.3
5.	Credit orientation	4.0
6.	Promptness and regularity in attending meetings	4.6
7.	Discipline	4.0
8.	Accountability	4.3
9.	Deferred gratification	3.6
10.	Affiliation motive	4.4
11.	Group norms	4.5
12.	Group leadership	4.7
13.	Involvement in decision making	4.6
14.	Autonomy	4.5
15.	Transparency	4.6
16.	Group homogeneity	4.5
17.	Interpersonal trust	4.6
18.	Group size	4.4
19.	Severity of initiation	3.9
20.	Group interaction	4.3

21.	Change agent effort	4.8
22.	Perceived change agent homophily	4.4
23.	Change agent orientation	4.4
24.	Perceived change agent credibility	4.6
25.	Perceived compatibility with client needs	4.5
26.	Evaluative input	3.9
27.	Influence channel	3.7
28.	Dependence termination	3.4
29.	Change agent availability	3.7
30.	Perceived change agent empathy	4.5

$$\Sigma X = 170.6$$

$$\bar{X} = 4.2$$

$\bar{X}$  = average mean relevancy score

## APPENDIX IV

### List of variables contributing to sustainability index and their mean relevancy score

1.	Group cohesion	4.6
2.	Frequency of meeting	4.5
3.	Age of group	4.1
4.	Conflict resolution	4.6
5.	External support	4.3
6.	Fulfillment of objectives	4.7
7.	Inter group linkage	3.9
8.	Sustained benefit	3.9
9.	Political determinism	3.1
10.	Voluntarism	3.9

$$\Sigma X = 42$$

$$\bar{X} = 4.2$$

$\bar{X}$  = average mean relevancy score

## APPENDIX V

### Interview schedule

#### 1. GENERAL DETAILS

- 1.1 Respondent No. :  
1.2 Name :  
1.3 Address :  
1.4 Name of the SHG :  
1.5 Type of SHG : NGO/Quasi- Govt./Govt.

1 2 3

#### 2. MEMBER CHARACTERISTICS

- 2.1 Gender : Male (1) Female(2)

- 2.2 Promptness and regularity in attending meetings:

What is the frequency, punctuality and readiness with which your attend group meetings

- | a) Frequency                           | Score |
|--|-------|
| Always attend all SHG meetings         | 4     |
| Rarely do I miss an SHG meeting        | 3     |
| I attend as many as I can              | 2     |
| I am unable to attend many SHG meeting | 1     |
- 
- | b) I am punctual | Score |
|------------------|-------|
| Always           | 4     |
| Almost always    | 3     |
| Sometimes        | 2     |
| Rarely           | 1     |



c) My readiness/eagerness to attend SHG meetings is

	Score
Very high	4
High	3
Low	2
Very low	1

### 2.3 Self- Reliance

How often do you rely on yourself for your future

	Score
Always	4
Sometimes	3
Rarely	2
Never	1

### 2.4 Accountability

To what extent do you feel answerable for the performance and achievement of group goals?

	Score
Fully answerable	3
Partially answerable	2
Not answerable	1

## 2.5 Empowerment

To what extent do you have authority in planning, decision making, implementation and evaluation of the SHG's programmes?

	Full authority (3)	Moderate authority (2)	Very little authority (1)
Planning			
Decision making			
Implementation			
Evaluation			

## 2.6 Affiliation motive

Give the extent of your agreement/disagreement to the following statements

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I want to be liked by others					
I often talk about personal matters to those in the group to find solutions					
I enjoy being a part of the group					
I build close relations with group members					
I feel like I belong to a big united family					

### **3. GROUP CHARACTERISTICS**

#### **3.1 Group size**

How many members are there in your SHG?

Size	Score
1-10	1
11-20	2
21-30	3
31-40	4

#### **3.2 Group Norms**

What extent of clarity do you have about the rules, regulations, and procedures for the various operations?

	Score
Very clear	3
Somewhat clear	2
Not clear	1

#### **3.3 Group homogeneity**

Are the group members similar in respect to needs, motives and socio-economic status?

	Score
Very similar	3
Somewhat similar	2
Not similar	1

### 3.4 Involvement in decision making

To what extent are group members involved in generation of ideas, evaluation of options and making a choice from among options?

	Score
Always	4
Sometimes	3
Rarely	2
Never	1

### 3.5 Group leadership

How do you rate the effectiveness of the leader in promoting the stability and success of the group?

	Score
Very effectively	3
Moderately effective	2
Not effective	1

### 3.6 Transparency

Rate the extent to which the activities of the group are open and clear to the members of the group?

	Score
Only to the leader	3
Only to the dominant members	2
To all the members	1

### 3.7 Inter personnel trust

To what extent do you have faith or confidence in the other members of the group?

	Score
Full faith in other members	3
Some faith in other members	2
Very little faith in other members	1

### 3.8 Group Interaction

How often do members of the group get in touch with each other and mix freely without formality or inhibition

	Score
Always	3
Sometimes	2
Rarely	1

### 3.9 Autonomy

To what extent does the group have freedom and independence in direction and scheduling of group activities?

	Score
Full authority	3
Partial authority	2
No authority	1

#### **4. CHANGE AGENT CHARACTERISTICS**

##### **4.1 Perceived change agent credibility**

Is the change agent a trustworthy and reliable person?

	Score
Yes	3
Somewhat	2
No	1

##### **4.2 Perceived change agent homophily**

To what extent is the change agent similar in attributes to the members of the SHG?

	Score
Change agent is similar in most attributes	3
Change agent has some similarity	2
Change agent is in no way similar	1

##### **4.3 Change agent orientation**

The change agent is oriented to fulfilling the expectations of the SHG members rather than the expectations of the SHPI

	Score
Strongly agree	4
Agree	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

#### 4.4 Change agent effort

How would you rate the extent of effort the change agent expends in change activities with the members of the SHG?

	Score
Very high	4
High	3
Low	2
Very low	1

#### 4.5 Perceived compatibility with client needs

Express the extent to which the change agents programme is compatible with your need

	Score
Very much compatible	3
Moderately compatible	2
Very little compatibility	1

#### 4.6 Perceived change agent empathy

To what extent is the change agent able to empathize with you?

	Score
Very much	3
Somewhat	2
Not at all	1

## **5. DIMENSIONS OF SUSTAINABILITY**

### **5.1 Frequency of meeting**

**How frequently are your meetings conducted?**

	<b>Score</b>
<b>Weekly</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Fortnightly</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Monthly</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Half yearly</b>	<b>1</b>

### **5.2 Group Cohesion**

**To what extent are the members of your group attracted to each other and motivated to remain in the group**

	<b>Score</b>
<b>Very much</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Moderately</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>To some extent</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Very little</b>	<b>1</b>

### **5.3 Conflict resolution**

**To what extent are the SHG members able to overcome disagreements, disputes, clashes and quarrels or differences of opinion regarding group activities?**

	<b>Score</b>
<b>Able to resolve fully</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>To some extent only</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Not always</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Not at all</b>	<b>1</b>



#### 5.4 External support

What is the quantum of external support you are receiving as a group?

	Substantial support (1)	Partial support (2)	No support (3)
Financial support			
Moral support			

#### 5.5 Perceived fulfillment of objectives

During the period of the group's existence, how far has the SHG been able to fulfill the objectives for which it was initiated.

	Score
Very much	4
Moderately	3
To some extent	2
Very little	1

### 6. MOTIVATION

6.1 What was your initial motive in joining the SHG?

Rank any three of the following in the order of your preference?

- a) Security
- b) Status
- c) Self- esteem
- d) Affiliation
- e) Power
- f) Goal attainment

6.2 What motivates you to remain a member of this SHG?

Rank any three of the following in the order of your preference?

- a) Security
- b) Status
- c) Self- esteem
- d) Affiliation
- e) Power
- f) Goal Attainment

## **7. GROUP FORMATION STAGES**

The following stages were described to each respondent

### **I. Forming stage**

Group development is characterised by high uncertainty, about group behaviour, purpose, structure and leadership

### **II. Storming stage**

Group development is characterised by intragroup conflict and leadership in the group becomes clear.

### **III. Norming stage**

Group development is characterised by close relationship and cohesiveness.

### **IV. Performing stage**

Group development is characterised as the group becomes fully functional.

## V. Adjourning stage

Group development is characterised by wrapping up of group activities rather than task performance.

Respondents were then asked :

### 7.1 Which stages did your SHG go through?

1. Forming stage
2. Storming stage
3. Norming stage
4. Performing stage
5. Adjourning stage

### 7.2 How many weeks did each stage take to pass through

No of weeks

1. Forming stage
2. Storming stage
3. Norming stage
4. Performing stage
5. Adjourning stage

## **OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR SHPI AGENTS**

1. Does SHG success depend on gender?
2. Why do most SHPIs give more thrust to women?
3. Is there any particular stage in the group formation process which determines the success of the group?
4. What are the main constraints in SHG group formation?

5. What are the factors that contribute to sustainability of SHGs?
6. Can an SHG become fully independent after a certain period and if so when and what are the chances of its effective functioning?
7. What are you actually doing to withdraw assistance?
8. Are not SHPIs developing of dependency culture among SHGs which are supposed to be self-help based?
9. Are SHGs merely a by word for NGO's enrichment?
10. Does not the SHPI agent work only to satisfy the organisation which employs him?
11. Should SHG's be federated for the SHG's to become more effective?
12. Are not federated SHG's merely a new name for registered co-operatives?

**DYNAMICS OF SELF HELP GROUP FORMATION  
A CASE STUDY IN THRISSUR DISTRICT**

By  
**K. J. SHERIN**

**ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS**

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the  
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## ABSTRACT

A self help group (SHG) is a homogeneous gathering of usually not more than 20 persons who join on a voluntary basis in order to undertake some common activity through mutual thrust and mutual help. Sustainability of SHGs was conceptualized as the ultimate goal of the SHG formation process and thus the dependent variable. It was operationalized as the ability of an SHG to continue to meet regularly, resolve conflicts successfully, maintain a high degree of cohesiveness among its member without substantial external support, while still fulfilling the objectives for which it came into existence. Eighty one respondents from functional and non-functional SHGs promoted by non-government, government and quasi-government agencies in Thrissur district were interviewed and data subjected to non-parametric methods of statistical analysis. Stages in the formation process were identified and the primary motives for joining and remaining in SHGs delineated. Gender based difference in perception were observed. Comparison of SHGs promoted by non-government, government and quasi-government agencies was done and the sustainability index validated in that it was found to be significantly different for functional and non-functional SHGs. The association of

member, group and change agent characteristics with the sustainability of SHGs was determined and a model for sustainable SHG formation proposed.