

Proposed extension strategies for better perception of professionalism in management of co-operative sectors

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ABSTRACT

Professionalism is essentially a function of modernization in which co-operatives have to emerge as strong business enterprises so as to emerge triumphant amidst the winds of change in the economy. As they have matured as organizations, there is a corresponding need to infuse adequate doses of professionalism in their functioning. According to the results of path analysis, some of the factors like knowledge about principles of co-operation, perceived benefits of co-operatives, group motivation, attitude towards other members of the society, herd size, group cohesiveness, attitude towards their co-operative society and faith in people had great influence on the level of the preception of professionalism.

Key words : Professionalism, Co-operative sector, Extension strategies

Professionalism is essentially a function of modernization in which co-operatives have to emerge as strong business enterprises so as to emerge triumphant amidst the winds of change in the economy. As they have matured as organizations, there is a corresponding need to infuse adequate doses of professionalism in their functioning. They will have to manage change through scientific behavioural tools and innovations. They will have to discard their old norms of functioning, imbibe a new culture and sharpen their powers of resilience so as to march ahead in this tumultuous era. In this pursuit, professionalism competence of co-operatives should come to the fore. This can only materialize if attempts are made to follow the dictates of professionalism in demonstrating certain proficiency and excellence in practices, based on a systematic body of knowledge, aiming at inculcating among its members a sense of responsibility towards each other, and at establishing norms of behaviour and clearly defined qualifications for membership. Some may consider it as an idealistic assumption, but closely following its spirit would portray a serious endeavor towards fulfillment of the objective of professionalism in a sharp break from the past.

The co-operatives in the present times represent myriad socio-economic activities with a wide range and depth. Their management has become a complex phenomenon requiring a high degree of innovation, skills

and ability to experiment with new ideas. The problems of management have become manifold requiring specialized attention in the spheres of marketing, banking, processing, consumption etc. Due to this, application of specific fields of management with their techniques and methodologies has become important in the field of co-operatives, where management at present is quite simple and elastic, portraying a disjointed and somewhat outdated outlook. The co-operatives should not show despondency by showing a lukewarm attitude to the rapid advances in the field of management. A definite spin off effect of professionalism will be rise in productivity for co-operatives, which will be an important yardstick of success for the growth of co-operative organizations.

The co-operative sector in India has emerged as one of the largest private sectors in the world with 504 thousand societies of various types with a membership of 20.91crore and working capital of Rs. 2,27,111.83 crores. The co-operatives in the present times represent myriad socio-economic activities with a wide range and depth.

METHODOLOGY

Ex-post-facto research design was used for the present study. The three co-operative sectors, viz., agricultural, sugar and dairy are spread over and functioning in all the part of South Gujarat. Later on three co-operative societies from each sector were selected randomly. Three categories of respondents, viz., office-bearers, leaders and primary members of the societies were selected randomly at the ratio of 5:5:10. Thus, the total numbers of respondents were 180. The data were collected with the help of structured schedule by personal interview method. The dependent and independent

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