

Attainment of Cooperative objectives and the performance of officers in performing their Management Functions: A Case of Cooperatives in Gapan City, Nueva Ecija

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Abstract— Cooperatives have brought significant contributions to uplift the lives of many individuals and to resolve problems related to financial, marketing and production. This study was conducted to determine whether the different registered cooperatives in Gapan City, Nueva Ecija were attaining their objectives and whether the board of directors and officers were performing their duties and responsibilities by fulfilling their management functions. Furthermore, this study was conducted to determine the different constraints the cooperatives were facing that could affect their everyday operations. The researcher utilized the descriptive research design using a survey–questionnaire technique to gather the necessary information. Moreover, the researcher with the use of T–test determined whether there is a significant difference in the extent of attainment of the cooperative objectives, level of performance of the officers in performing their management functions and the constraints affecting the operations of the organizations based on the perceptions of the officials and the members of cooperatives. Findings have shown that the existing registered cooperatives in the city were able to attain their cooperative objectives to a very great extent. It has also been found out that the board of directors and officers were able to perform their management functions very satisfactory. On the other hand, the respondents perceived that the constraints affecting the operations of cooperatives were just minor problems. The two groups differ in their responses on the extent of attainment of their cooperative objectives and on the constraints affecting the operations of the cooperatives while both groups of respondents have the same perception as to the level of performance of the board of directors and officers in performing their management functions.

Keywords— cooperatives objectives, management functions, level of performance, constraints.

I. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the narrowing gap between the rich and the poor has becoming a phenomenal societal problem due to the fact that numerous number of business organizations in the community are becoming inefficient in producing products and delivering services to the community [1]. Economic problems such as high interest rates, poor quality of goods and services, high prices of commodities are motivators of people to look for other means to resolve these existing problems. Moreover, when people experienced problems in financial, production and marketing, they usually get encouraged to organize cooperatives.

Cooperatives contribute significantly to social integration, job creation and the reduction of poverty because it promotes

democratic organization and economic orientation [2]. A cooperative is a group of people who establish an enterprise on a not–for–profit basis to serve themselves [3]. Also, cooperatives are viewed as potentially important vehicles for community development since they can solve local problems by mobilizing local resources into a critical mass, and by virtue of being locally owned and controlled, cooperatives can keep profits and responsibility in the hands of local citizens [4]. In fact, cooperatives play a substantial role in improving the livelihoods of rural communities [5]. Just like any other forms of business organizations, cooperatives also have its goals and objectives and for which must be stated in general and specific statements [1]. As observed by [6], most of the farmers formed cooperatives

with the objective of generating greater profits by obtaining inputs and services at lower costs than they could obtain elsewhere. Thus, it only shows that cooperatives exist to attain its objectives for the welfare of its members. Notwithstanding the fact that most less developed countries are agrarian societies, where agriculture is considered to be the main source of livelihood, most rural communities across the country find the need to increase agricultural productivity through cooperatives [7].

As projected, cooperatives should provide maximum economic benefits to their members in a way that they must teach them the efficient ways of doing things and new ideas in business management which will allow the lower income groups to increase their ownership in the wealth of this nation [8]. In order to achieve economic viability, cooperatives should conduct their operations based on sound management principles and practices [9] including performing their corporate social responsibilities [10]. It has been emphasized that management is the primary force within the organizations for coordinating human and physical resources and that managers are the one responsible for organizational performance [11]. Management is actually considered as the link to economic progress [12]. Management exists to achieve the goals of an organization through its four functions of planning, organizing, leading and controlling while applying resources with efficiency and effectiveness[13].Therefore, it is noteworthy to know whether these management functions are being realized by the cooperatives. Actually, in other countries, some of the key factors that led to the success of different cooperatives proven on the case analysis conducted by [14] were professionalization of management, training and education programs.

This study was accomplished with the hope of determining whether the different cooperatives were attaining their objectives and whether the board of directors and officers were performing their duties and responsibilities by fulfilling their management functions. Furthermore, this study was conducted to determine the different constraints the

cooperatives were facing that could affect their operations. Likewise, this may help the members of cooperatives develop confidence towards the attainment of their objectives and the management would be more conscious in performing their responsibilities especially in promoting their socio-economic well-being. Therefore this study is found significant and timely.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The researcher utilized the descriptive research design using questionnaire technique to gather the necessary information. Descriptive research is devoted to the gathering of information about prevailing conditions or situations for the purpose of description and interpretation. This type of research design is not simply amassing and tabulating facts but also includes proper analyses, interpretation, comparisons, identification of trends and relationships [15] as cited by the authors in [16]. Moreover, “descriptive studies may be characterised as simply the attempt to determine, describe or identify what is, while analytical research attempts to establish why it is that way or how it came to be” [17]. In this study, descriptive research is used as a method at casting light on current issues or problems with the use of data collection that enabled the researcher to describe the situation more completely than was possible without employing this method [18]. The respondents of this study who were chosen purposively [19] were the sixty-one officials and seventy-five members of the fifteen registered cooperatives in Gapan City, Nueva Ecija. The researcher used a survey-questionnaire as the instrument in gathering data. The researcher floated and retrieved the questionnaires from the cooperative officials and members. The researcher applied the five-point Likert scale to determine the extent of attainment of the cooperative objectives, level of performance of the officers in performing their management functions and the constraints affecting the operations of the organizations. After the data were retrieved, the researcher tallied, analyzed and interpreted them. The following numerical and adjectival values were used:

Ranges	Rate	Table 1	Table 2	Table 3
4.20–5.00	5	to a very great extent	Very Satisfactory	Very serious problem
3.40–4.19	4	to a great extent	Satisfactory	Serious problem
2.60–3.39	3	to a moderate extent	Fair	Moderate problem
1.80–2.59	2	to a lesser extent	Dissatisfactory	Minor problem
1.00–1.79	1	to no extent at all	Very Dissatisfactory	Not at all a problem

Weighted mean was utilized to determine the extent of attainment of the cooperative objectives, level of performance of the officers in performing their management functions and the constraints affecting the operations of the organizations. T-test was used to determine whether there is a significant difference in the extent of attainment of the cooperative objectives, level of performance of the officers in performing their management functions and the constraints affecting the operations of the organizations based on the perceptions of the officials and the members of cooperatives.

The results were computed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This portion presents, analyses and interprets the data on the extent of attainment of the cooperative objectives, level of performance of the officers in performing their management functions and the constraints affecting the operations of the registered cooperatives in Gapan City, Nueva Ecija.

Table 1: Extent of Attainment of Cooperative Objectives

Indicators		Officials	Members	Combination	
		WM	WM	WM	Verbal Description
1	Cooperative organizations basically work to provide self-help and mutual help	4.44	4.30	4.37	To a very great extent
2	To provide support and services to the members of the society and not to earn the profit	4.13	4.26	4.19	To a great extent
3	To help each other mutually and not to have competition	4.44	4.15	4.29	To a very great extent
4	To deliver the quality goods and produce to the end customers	4.31	4.22	4.27	To a very great extent
5	To practice fair and transparent business activities	4.31	4.11	4.21	To a very great extent
6	Providing, in the best possible conditions, the financial advice and services that members need.	4.38	4.30	4.34	To a very great extent
7	Contributing to the cooperative, economic and financial education of members that is to provide them with a way to achieve independence.	4.44	4.37	4.40	To a very great extent
8	Promoting and supporting community development.	4.25	4.00	4.13	To a great extent
9	It aims to provide facilities for better business and better living as well as carry out work of common economic interest and benefit to the members.	4.31	4.19	4.25	To a very great extent
10	Provide opportunities and channels to market goods and commodities produced from amongst its members.	4.19	4.22	4.20	To a very great extent
11	To carry out activities of publicity and promotion of its members and projects etc.	4.44	4.15	4.29	To a very great extent
12	Enter in partnership or into any arrangement for mutual understanding, union of interest, joint venture, etc.	4.31	4.15	4.23	To a very great extent
13	Raise money by way of cash, loans from members or non-members, government or any other banks.	4.38	4.11	4.24	To a very great extent
14	To sell and dispose of the products or services produced by the members in the most profitable	4.13	4.52	4.32	To a great extent

	manner.				
15	Find profitable employment opportunities for its members by undertaking suitable jobs.	4.25	4.07	4.16	To a great extent
16	Obtaining contracts for execution of public or private works by the officer of tenders or otherwise.	4.38	4.11	4.24	To a very great extent
17	Apply to the members the necessities of life including consumer goods and also raw materials necessary for subsidiary and industrial occupation.	4.19	4.07	4.13	To a great extent
18	Encourage profitability	4.19	4.11	4.15	To a great extent
Overall Average Weighted Mean		4.30	4.19	4.25	To a very great extent

The table above presents the extent of attainment of cooperative objectives as described by the two groups of respondents. Both respondents answered that the objective of cooperatives in contributing to the economic and financial education of members by means of providing them a way to achieve independence (WM=4.40) were being attained to a very great extent. Cooperatives enable their members to generate income and jobs, and accumulate assets; provide affordable, quality goods and services; and develop human and social capital, as well as economic independence [20].

Also, the two groups responded that cooperative organizations basically work to provide self-help and mutual help were achieved to a very great extent (WM=4.37). The author in [21] mentioned that a cooperative society is a voluntary association of persons brought together on the basis of mutual help and equality to promote their economic interest. Moreover, the objective of cooperative that is concerned in providing, in the best possible conditions, the financial advice and services that their members need (WM=4.34) were realized to a very great extent too. The Cooperative Development Authority is on its track to provide technical, financial and institutional development assistances to micro and small cooperatives to transform them into medium and large cooperatives, thus making them profitable, sustainable and competitive in the market[22]. This finding

clearly shows that the existing registered cooperatives in Gapan City were able to attain their cooperative objectives to a very great extent as stipulated in the overall average weighted mean of 4.25.

However, the cooperative objectives such as providing support and services to the members of the society and not to earn the profit; promoting and supporting community development; selling and disposing of the products or services produced by the members in the most profitable manner; finding profitable employment opportunities for its members by undertaking suitable jobs; and applying to the members the necessities of life including consumer goods and also raw materials necessary for subsidiary and industrial occupation were only attained to a great extent. Some officers missed the need for harmonious relationship within the organization as they have objectives not aligned with organizational goals and purpose. One of the solutions to address this concern is to motivate and encourage officials to attend trainings and seminars. In order for the officers to be familiar with their functions and be well-equipped with the needed attitude, skills and knowledge that would allow them to conceptualize and implement measures to improve the delivery of quality of services of their respective organizations, the need for relevant seminars to address the prevailing issues must be undertaken by stakeholders [23].

Table 2: Cooperatives Level of Performance

Indicators		Officials	Members	Combination	
		WM	WM	WM	Verbal Description
1	Assisting in developing the overall vision, mission, goals and objectives of the business	4.19	4.30	4.74	Very Satisfactory
2	They are an essential part of the decision making process.	2.94	4.30	4.62	Very Satisfactory

3	Managers set goals and objectives for day-to-day operations, design operating procedures and methods, and make financial projections.	4.00	4.19	4.09	Satisfactory
4	They plan and implement the tasks that accomplish the goals and objectives established by the board	4.31	4.33	4.32	Very Satisfactory
5	Managers also make annual projections of balance sheets and operating and cash flow statements.	4.19	4.04	4.11	Satisfactory
6	The supervisory function assures satisfactory performance in all phases of business.	4.88	4.269	4.07	Satisfactory
7	Measuring and evaluating the results of employee performance, executing board policies, and overseeing physical assets are critical to accomplishing the cooperative's goals and objectives.	4.00	4.41	4.20	Very Satisfactory
8	Managers are responsible for grouping operational processes, assets, and personnel and establishing their relationships for efficient day-to-day business operations.	4.06	4.22	4.14	Satisfactory
9	Developing personnel organization charts which show employee relationships, writing job descriptions, and establishing acceptable levels of performance are manager responsibilities.	4.13	4.63	4.38	Very Satisfactory
10	Coaching and leading the cooperative's employees, members, and customers are essential functions of the manager	4.13	4.67	4.40	Very Satisfactory
11	The manager must create positive employee working conditions and act as a liaison and spokesperson for the business, its owners, and other stakeholders	4.19	4.63	4.41	Very Satisfactory
12	Managers are responsible for staffing, training, and mobilizing the personnel under their supervision.	5.00	4.15	4.57	Very Satisfactory
13	Responsibility for internal and external interpersonal relationships places a heavy time demand on managers.	4.19	4.19	4.19	Satisfactory
14	Acknowledge how the same function relates to separate groups in the cooperative structure,	4.19	4.41	4.30	Very Satisfactory
15	Trains employees and orient new staff	4.13	4.11	4.12	Satisfactory
Overall Average Weighted Mean		4.17	4.32	4.24	Very Satisfactory

The table above presents the level of performance of the officials in performing their management functions. Both respondents agreed that the officials were very satisfactory in assisting in developing the overall vision, mission, goals and objectives of the business (WM=4.74). While a considerable number of cooperatives in the country were unable to meet sustainability for lack of continuing proper cooperative education, majority of the duly registered cooperatives have

displayed themselves as exemplars of putting their vision into reality despite of the inadequate assistance extended to them by several government agencies and funding institutions, both foreign and local[9]. Similarly, the two groups also perceived that the officers are an essential part of the decision making process as they have rated them very satisfactory (WM=4.62). A clear direction and a timely process of decision-making are key ingredients for any

successful business [24]. While directors and officers often differ on many issues, they usually make a concerted effort for consensus, if not unanimous, decisions in the cooperatives [25]. It only means that strong leadership encouraged unity and teamwork among the members and officers [26].

Correspondingly, the two groups of respondents also observed that managers as responsible for staffing, training, and mobilizing the personnel under their supervision were able to perform their duties very satisfactory (WM=4.57). In the study of [27], they recommended that the government and the banking sector render financial support to cooperatives in rural communities to allow them to expand and diversify their business operations; constant training on leadership and management skills is provided to cooperatives' members.

This finding clearly shows that the board of directors and officers of the existing registered cooperatives in Gapan City

were able to perform their management functions very satisfactory with an overall average weighted mean of 4.24.

Although the responsibilities of managers in setting goals and objectives for day-to-day operations, designing operating procedures and methods, and making financial projections; preparing annual projections of balance sheets and operating cash flow statements; performing the supervisory function that assures satisfactory performance in all phases of business; their responsibility for grouping operational processes, assets, and personnel and establishing their relationships for efficient day-to-day business operations; their responsibility for internal and external interpersonal relationships places a heavy time demand on managers; and training employees and orienting new staff were rated satisfactory by both groups of respondents. Elected representatives, managers and their employees need to be educated and trained often in order for them to contribute effectively to the development of the cooperatives[28].

Table 3: Constraints Affecting the Operations of Cooperatives

Indicators		Officials	Members	Combination	
		WM	WM	WM	Verbal Description
1	Lack of business penetration	2.44	2.44	2.44	Minor problem
2	Absence of mutual interest	2.56	2.33	2.45	Minor problem
3	Lack of interest	2.13	2.37	2.25	Minor problem
4	Lack of coordination	2.19	2.56	2.37	Minor problem
5	Corruption	1.75	2.11	1.93	Minor problem
6	Lack of secrecy	2.56	2.67	2.61	Minor problem
7	Insufficient motivation	2.31	2.81	2.56	Minor problem
8	Due to lack of funds, it is difficult to promote the business operation and sales promotion	3.13	2.41	2.77	Moderate problem
9	Lack of management skills to control and monitor the members	2.06	2.85	2.46	Minor problem
10	Management has to depend on honesty, integrity, and loyalty to the members	1.94	2.56	2.25	Minor problem
11	Inadequate public awareness	2.31	2.26	2.29	Minor problem
12	Lack of market or community support	2.44	2.30	2.37	Minor problem
13	Over reliance on government funds	2.38	2.11	2.24	Minor problem
14	The co-operative movement was initiated and established by the government	1.94	2.44	2.19	Minor problem
15	Inadequate rural credit	1.75	2.26	2.00	Minor problem
16	Co-operative societies are subject to excessive government regulation which affects their autonomy and flexibility.	2.19	2.19	2.19	Minor problem

17	Many cooperative societies have faced financial troubles and closed down because of corruption and misuse of funds.	2.13	2.37	2.25	Minor problem
18	Co-operative societies cannot be introduced in all industries.	2.06	2.37	2.22	Minor problem
19	Lack of accountability	1.81	2.30	2.05	Minor problem
20	Inexperience staff	2.00	2.59	2.30	Minor problem
Overall AverageWeighted Mean		2.20	2.41	2.31	Minor problem

The table above presents the constraints affecting the operations of the registered cooperatives in Gapan City, Nueva Ecija. Both groups of respondents answered that the number one problem of the cooperatives is difficulty to promote the business operation and sales promotion due to lack of funds (WM=2.77) which is considered as a moderate problem of the cooperatives in Gapan City. The unavailability of reserve funds for most of the rural

cooperatives is also one of the challenges for most rural cooperatives [27]. The above results concurred with the study by [29], who found out that many cooperatives in rural areas may not prosper because of lack of working capital. On the other hand, the constraints affecting the operations of cooperative only got an overall average weighted mean of 2.31 which mean that they only viewed their constraints minor problems.

Table 4. Significant Difference in the Extent of Attainment of the Cooperative Objectives

Attainment of Objectives	Officials	Members
Mean	4.30	4.19
Variance	0.0116	0.0157
N	18	18
t Stat	2.94**	
p-value (two-tailed)	0.006	

**difference is significant @ 0.01 level

The table above reveals that there is a significant difference in the responses of officials (WM=4.30; Variance=0.0116) and members (WM=4.19; Variance=0.0157) as to extent of attainment of the cooperative objectives using t-test. This means that the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the responses of the two groups is rejected.

The two groups differ in their responses on the extent of attainment of their cooperative objectives. In their evaluation, the officials have higher evaluation on the extent of attainment of their cooperative objectives as compared to their members. Ideally, the mentors who are the officials should help their members match their individual objectives with the organizational objectives[30].

Table 5. Significant Difference in the Level of Performance of the Officers in Performing their Management Functions

Level of Performance	Officials	Members
Mean	4.17	4.32
Variance	0.2002	0.0378
N	15	15
t Stat	-1.23 Ns	
p-value (two-tailed)	0.2299	

Ns = no significant difference

The table above shows that there is no significant difference in the responses officials (WM=4.17; Variance=0.2002) and members (WM=4.32; Variance=0.0378) as to the level of

performance of the officials in performing their management functions using t-test. This means that the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the responses of the two

groups is accepted. This implies that both the officers and members are aware of the importance of management functions in terms of planning, organizing, directing and

controlling in the attainment of the cooperatives purposes because they share the common view that the management practices must be carried out effectively and efficiently [9].

Table 6. Significant Difference in the Constraints affecting the Operations of Cooperatives

Constraints	Officials	Members
Mean	2.20	2.42
Variance	0.1093	0.0426
N	20	20
t Stat	-2.42*	
p-value (two-tailed)	0.0203	

*difference is significant @ 0.05 level

The table above reveals that there is a significant difference in the responses of officials (WM=2.20; Variance=0.1093) and members (WM=2.42; Variance=0.0426) as to the constraints affecting the operations of the registered cooperatives in Gapan City, Nueva Ecija using t-test. This means that the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the responses of the two groups is rejected.

The two groups differ in their responses on the constraints affecting the operations of the registered cooperatives in Gapan City, Nueva Ecija. In their evaluation, the members have higher evaluation on the constraints encountered by the cooperatives that affects the organization.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The extent of attainment of the cooperative objectives as perceived by both groups is being attained to a very great extent by the registered cooperatives in Gapan City, Nueva Ecija. As what [21] emphasized in his study, the cooperatives must recover costs and satisfy the basic economic objectives of every business organization which are the essence of their existence. Likewise, both the officials and the members agreed that the officers are performing their management functions very satisfactory. This only shows that they share the common view that the management practices must be carried out effectively and efficiently [9]. On the other hand, both groups have answered that the constraints affecting the operations of cooperatives are just distinguished as minor problems. In this way, cooperatives are real enterprises which help their members to cooperate in solving social problems they share[27].

As found in the study, the two groups differ in their responses on the extent of attainment of their cooperative objectives. In their evaluation, the officials have higher evaluation on the extent of attainment of their cooperative

objectives as compared to their members. Contrary to that, the two groups of respondents have no significant difference in their answers as to the level of performance of the officials in performing their management functions. Correspondingly, the two groups differ in their responses on the constraints affecting the operations of the registered cooperatives in Gapan City, Nueva Ecija. In their evaluation, the members have higher evaluation on the constraints encountered by the cooperatives that affects the organization.

Based on the results of the study, the researcher would like to recommend to the different cooperatives to revisit their agreed cooperative objectives and spot those objectives that are not being attained by the cooperatives in order for them to take corrective actions. This can be done through careful evaluation by the board of directors together with the officers plus the help of their members. Furthermore, the cooperatives should continue to send their officers to different seminars and management trainings that could retool their officers especially in performing their management functions. The cooperatives may also include in their calendar of activities the conduct of planning for the development of their programs aimed at achieving the essence of cooperation. It is also essential that officials are getting feedback from their members and to all their stakeholders as to what areas in their performance can still be improved that would benefit the whole organization. It is further recommended that each officer must be provided with clear definitions of their duties and responsibilities to avoid overlapping of works and to lessen conflicts within the group. It is also suggested that they apply some management tools for their scheduling to avoid too much workload and to ensure synchronization among the officers and members in performing their various activities. The cooperatives should also endure all the constraints that could affect their

organizations by making accurate decisions given available information [31]. Lastly, they should focus on those aspects that could contribute to the attainment of their objectives and have valuable financial contributions [32], particularly to their members.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This study is a proof of hard work, perseverance, determination and experience that will be etched in the life of the researcher as she moved forward into another puzzling yet valuable endeavour in her career. The researcher would like to acknowledge with deepest appreciation, sincerest and profoundest gratitude those individuals for their full support, constructive criticisms, and valued suggestions, which one way or another helped her make this work possible and successful at the same time. Special mention and recognition is made to the Engr. Gener S. Subia, Ph.D., for his continuous guidance to the researcher in doing all her endeavors related to conducting researches. The researcher would also like to thank Mr. Romeo B. Campos Jr., Mr. Rowell A. Diaz and Mrs. Pascuala T. Barlis, her co-faculty in the institution where she is currently connected, for being always there to give their valuable suggestions and moral support along her journey in the academe.

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