

## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

In view of the present national policy of extending institutional credit facilities to the small farmers, a basic question often discussed is how far these farmers are aware of the facilities and how far the projects are functioning satisfactorily. By and large there is paucity of systematic and objective studies on this subject. Hence, the present study was planned with the following specific objectives :

1. To examine how far the present criteria and norms laid down by the SFDA were followed in identification of small farmers.
2. To find out the extent of awareness of the small farmers about the SFDA and its activities.
3. To assess the perception of small farmers about the role-expectation and role-performance of the SFDA.
4. To find out the nature and extent of involvement of small farmers in the SFDA and the factors associated with the same.
5. To find out the extent of participation of small farmers in the existing infrastructures.

6. To examine the impact of SFDA on small farmers.
7. To ascertain the problems faced by the small farmers in relation to SFDA and seek their suggestions to make its working more efficient.
8. To find out the relationship between the selected characteristics of small farmers and their awareness, perceived role expectation and role performance, involvement in SFDA, participation in infrastructures and impact of the SFDA.
9. To consolidate the implications of the findings of the study.

The study was conducted in the Ratnagiri-Satara SFDA, which was selected purposively for this purpose. The research design used was 'Ex-post facto' survey. A conceptual model was also developed for this study. Based on the objectives of the study and the conceptual model, certain generalizations were developed. These were tested by the corresponding empirical hypotheses.

A sample of 176 small farmers - 88 beneficiaries and 88 non-beneficiaries - was selected randomly. The data were collected through personal individual interviews, by using structured schedules, scales, and tests. Averages, percentages, t-test,  $X^2$  test, zero-order correlations and

multiple regression analysis were used to analyse the data. The results obtained were thoroughly examined, interpreted and discussed. The main findings pertaining to aforesaid objectives of the study were :

1. The criteria and norms laid down by the SFDA in the identification of small farmers were not followed strictly. All the respondents were 'small farmers' if judged against the criteria like 'ownership holding', 'engaged in farming', and 'area under fruit/plantation crops'. However, there was deviation in the identification with respect to other important criteria namely, 'farm size', 'non-farm income' and 'annual income'.
2. The farmers with larger holdings, higher non-farm income and higher annual income were more in number among the beneficiaries than the non-beneficiaries indicating that the benefits of the SFDA were derived by the relatively better-off small farmers.
3. The distribution of the respondents according to the farm size showed less deviation from the norm compared with their distribution according to annual income.
4. All the beneficiaries and only 26.32 per cent of the non-beneficiaries were aware of the existence of the

SFDA. Also, majority of the beneficiaries and few of the non-beneficiaries were aware of the basic information about the SFDA.

5. The majority of the small farmers were not aware of the different development programmes and facilities available thereunder. However, the beneficiaries had higher knowledge about these than the non-beneficiaries.
6. The beneficiaries were having varying degrees of awareness and the majority of them had inadequate awareness. However, the majority of them had reported that they were informed about the SFDA but were given some details.
7. The friends, VLWs and other farmers were the important sources for creating awareness among the beneficiaries about the SFDA, while the friends, VLWs, and neighbours for the non-beneficiaries, both in terms of number of small farmers reported and total score obtained. However, radio, and APO were the least reported sources for the beneficiaries and the non-beneficiaries respectively.
8. All the small farmers did not become aware of the SFDA at the same time. In fact, none of the small farmers became aware in the first year of its initiation, but the majority of them became aware only in the third year after its initiation.

9. The majority of the small farmers were not even aware of the correct official name of the SFDA. It was identified by the different names and the correct official name was reported only by a few (5.56 per cent) beneficiaries.
10. The general roles of the SFDA were not understood by the small farmers. However, they indicated their expectation about the specific development programmes.
11. In general, the financing roles like arranging the loan and sanctioning the subsidy as well as services to be undertaken under the different development programmes were expected by the majority of the small farmers. However, the roles related to planning and follow-up action were not expected by any small farmer.
12. The beneficiaries were having varying degrees of perceived role-expectation about the SFDA.
13. The majority of the beneficiaries opined that the method of giving the benefits was simple, while the method of distributing the subsidy was comparatively easy. However, the majority of them reported that the supervision of loan was either not followed or followed very loosely. But the majority of them had felt that procedure adopted for repayment of loan was either good or very good.

14. The majority of the beneficiaries indicated that the technical guidance was either not given or given to the limited extent. Also, the majority of them had felt that the necessary services and supplies were not arranged or if arranged they were late.
15. The beneficiaries were having varying degrees of perception about the performance of the SFDA and majority of them had low perception score.
16. The majority of the small farmers were not aware of the existence of higher extension personnel or their names. However, the beneficiaries who knew them were more in numbers than their counterparts. Also, the beneficiaries were having some interaction with AEO, BDO, and APO.
17. The beneficiaries differed in their preference in accepting the development programmes. However, the majority of the beneficiaries (70.18 per cent) had preferred only one development programme, though some of them had accepted four development programmes.
18. The majority of the beneficiaries (77.19 per cent) had accepted the animal husbandry programmes, while 54.39 and 12.28 per cent of the beneficiaries had accepted the crop husbandry and minor irrigation programmes respectively.

19. In fact, the dairy development and the land improvement work were the most accepted programmes of the SFDA. But none of the beneficiaries had accepted the digging of new well programme and 92.98 per cent of the beneficiaries had not accepted any programme of the minor irrigation.
20. The beneficiaries themselves differed in their degrees of involvement in the activities of the SFDA.
21. The most important reasons reported by the beneficiaries for their involvement in the activities of SFDA were : subsidy motivated to involve, interested in milch cattle, friends/neighbours motivated to accept the programmes as well as applied for loan as few others did it. However, the most frequently reported reasons for non-acceptance of the development programmes were unawareness of or inadequate knowledge about the programme. The other reported reasons were in relation to the policies of the SFDA and limitations in the infrastructures.
22. The small farmers had varying degrees of participation in the infrastructures. Also, the beneficiaries and the non-beneficiaries differed significantly in their degrees of participation.
23. The majority of the small farmers still had no contact with the various infrastructures namely, co-operative

dairy society, central co-operative bank, LDB, nationalised banks, taluka sale-purchase union and custom service centres. However, all the beneficiaries had contacted the village co-operative society either once or twice and 64.91 per cent of them had more than one contact. However, 61.84 per cent of the non-beneficiaries had no contact with the village co-operative society.

24. Almost all the non-beneficiaries did not derive any benefit from these institutions. The beneficiaries, however, had derived some benefits from the village co-operative society but the majority of them too, had not taken advantage of other infrastructures. Only 17.54 per cent of the beneficiaries and 2.63 per cent of the non-beneficiaries had derived the benefits from the nationalised banks.

25. The beneficiaries and the non-beneficiaries were alike with respect to their age, main and secondary occupations, education, education status of family, type and size of family, tenure status and number of enterprises. However, they were significantly different in other characteristics, namely, overall modernity, risk preference, achievement motivation, knowledge about nationalised bank, attitude towards

(a) co-operative society, (b) nationalised bank and (c) extension personnel, information source use pattern, availability of agricultural inputs, adoption level, and indebtedness.

26. The majority of the beneficiaries reported that their income had increased with the assistance of the SFDA. Also, the monoprogramme and the multiprogramme beneficiaries differed significantly from each other with respect to their annual income.
27. The majority of the multiprogramme beneficiaries (88.24 per cent) and 35.00 per cent of the monoprogramme beneficiaries opined that they had more employment opportunities due to the SFDA assistance.
28. Acceptance of the crop husbandry and the animal husbandry programmes by the beneficiaries were dependent on each other. However, their adoption level was independent with their acceptance of the crop husbandry programmes.
29. Main occupation, education, risk preference, knowledge about co-operatives, attitude towards extension personnel, farm size, annual income, and credit behaviour of the beneficiaries had influence on their awareness about the SFDA and they accounted for about 41 per cent of variation in it. However,

- only three variables, namely, education, risk preference and annual income contributed significantly.
30. Main occupation, knowledge about co-operatives, attitude towards (a) SFDA and (b) extension personnel, mass media source use, farm size, annual income and awareness about the SFDA had influence on their perceived role expectation about the SFDA. These variables accounted for about 79 per cent of variation in it. However, only two variables, namely, awareness about the SFDA and mass media source use contributed significantly.
31. Main occupation, education status of the family, knowledge about co-operatives, attitude towards (a) SFDA, (b) co-operative society, and (c) extension personnel, farm size, annual income, awareness about the SFDA and perceived role-expectation had significant positive association with the perceived role performance, whereas, personal localite source use had negative and significant relationship with the perceived role-performance. All these variables accounted for 67.50 per cent of variation in it. However, awareness about the SFDA alone contributed significantly.

32. Main occupation, education, risk preference, credit behaviour, awareness about the SFDA, perceived role-expectation and role performance had influence on involvement in the SFDA activities. They accounted for about 78 per cent of variation in it. However, awareness about the SFDA alone contributed significantly.
33. Main occupation, knowledge about co-operatives, attitude towards (a) co-operative society, (b) SFDA and (c) extension personnel, farm size, annual income, awareness about the SFDA, perceived role expectation, perceived role performance, and involvement in the SFDA activities had significant positive association with the participation in the infrastructures, whereas, personal localite source use had significantly negative relationship. All these accounted for 48.51 per cent of variation in participation. However, attitudes towards co-operatives and perceived role expectation contributed significantly.
34. Main occupation, risk preference, attitude towards extension personnel, credit behaviour, awareness about SFDA, perceived role expectation, perceived role performance, involvement in the SFDA and participation

in the infra-structures had positive and significant association with the impact of the SFDA and these accounted for about 85 per cent of variation in it. However, any variable had not contributed significantly.

35. Less frequent visits by the VLWs, their discriminatory treatment and inadequate information were the important problems under technical guidance. As regards credit, lack of sufficient guidance in obtaining and utilization of credit, time consuming and complex borrowing procedure as well as requirement of a number of documents were the most frequently reported problems.
36. Dominance of rich affluent people, high cost of inputs and non-availability of the inputs in time were the important problems of supplies and services. Besides, there were general problems like bad experience of other farmers discouraged involvement, lack of adequate knowledge and lack of guidance by the officials.
37. Under land improvement work, the important suggestions were : suggesting suitable cropping pattern, prompt replies to the farmers' queries and quick scrutiny of loan application. However, supply of inputs at concessional rates, every farmer should get some

quantity of HYV seeds, fertilizers, etc. and frequent visits by the VLEs on the farms were the important suggestions given under intensive cultivation programme.

38. For dairy development, the important suggestions were : appointment of qualified veterinary officer, concession should be given if dairy animal is a poor yielder, increase in loan amount and farmers' choice while purchasing the animals should be given first preference. However, supply of cattle feed at the concessional rates and supply of bullock-cart on subsidy were the most frequently reported suggestions.
39. As regards the general suggestions, information about the government schemes to every farmer, emphasis on income increasing programmes, credit with technical services and advance notice for repayment were the most important ones.

### Implications of the Study and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, an empirical model was developed (Fig. 3). This model portrays the predictors of small farmers' behaviour. The significant independent variables (dominant variables) are also showed in the model seperately.

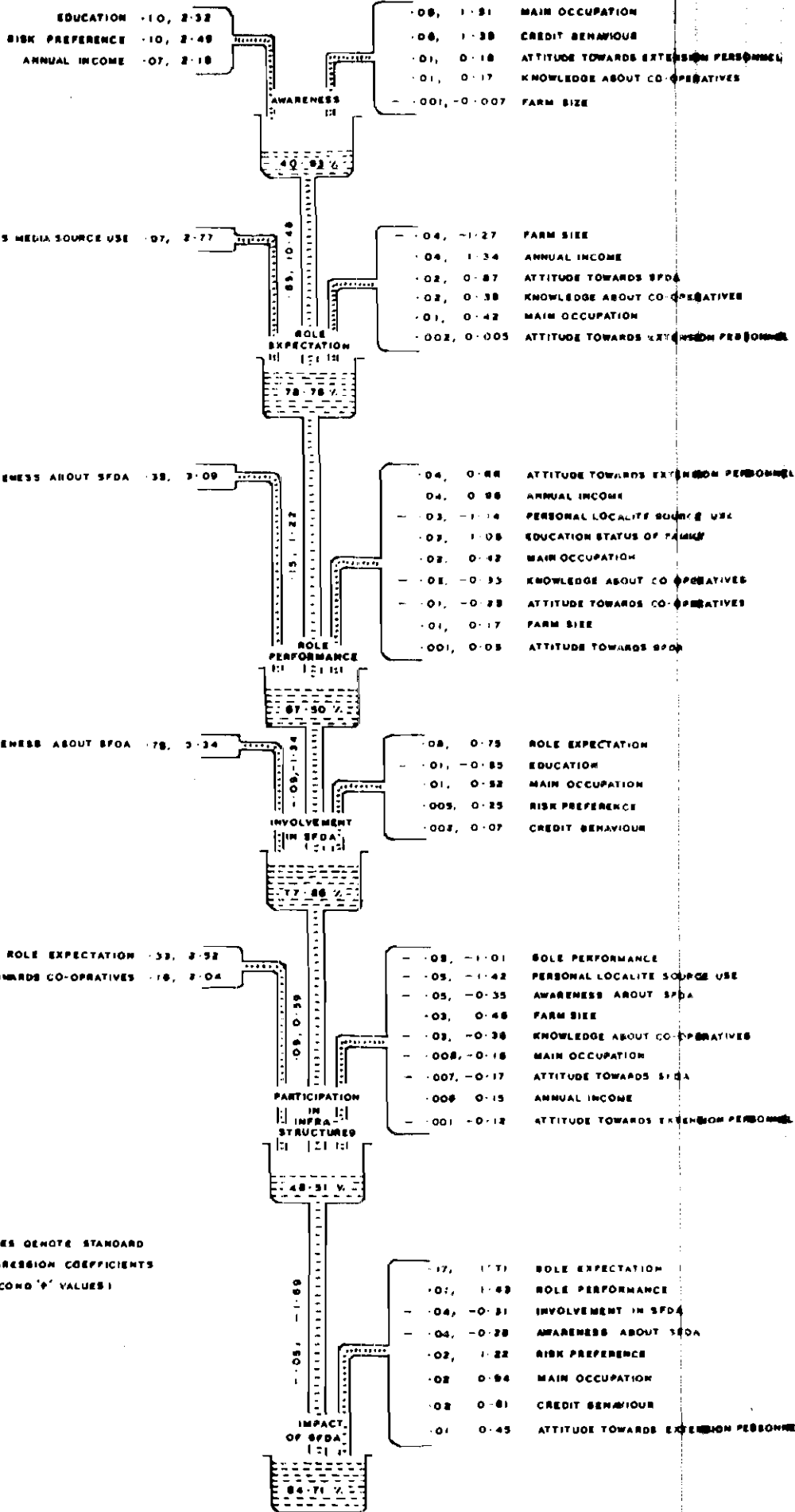


FIG. 3. EMPIRICAL MODEL

The findings of the study have a number of major implications for the small farmers' development strategy. An ideal strategy is one which accelerates the pace of behavioural changes through a commitment on the part of the farmers to involve in the SFDA activities, removes or reduces constraints and enhances supportive activities. Such a system presupposes the existence of the SFDA. Sinnarkar (1973) observed that even though all the resources existed in the situation, development could not take place until the organization brought them into proper relationship with each other. Hence, the role of the SFDA is a crucial to the success of small farmers development.

Though the implications suggested have direct relevance to the area of the study or similar areas elsewhere. They cannot be generalized beyond this without further studies and confirmation of these findings.

1. The study has clearly brought to focus that many of the "identified" small farmers were really not small farmers. Therefore, there is a paramount need for proper identification of the small farmers who need institutional support so that the benefits of the programmes go to them. Also, extension personnel should be vigilant to check any flow of funds towards the large farmer. Thus, the SFDA could serve better

by reducing the involvement of non-eligible small farmers by personal verification by the SFDA officials regarding their genuineness.

2. The small farmers had inadequate awareness about the SFDA and also low levels of information source utilization. There is, therefore, need for a better communication strategy. Efforts should be made to communicate information to the small farmers through appropriate extension methods and technique, without distortions. It is also necessary to ensure that extension staff should make frequent visits to the small farmers, as suggested by them. Also, unawareness of such important programmes initiated for the poor and needy small farmers will give scope for exploiting the situation by other farmers and get the benefits of the programmes as has already happened in a number of cases. Thus, dissemination of authentic knowledge is essential for the success of the SFDA which would lead to encouraging responses.
3. The study had indicated that the small farmers had relied much on personal localite sources. The obvious implication is that local functionaries should try to identify and utilise these sources more effectively. There is also need to impart systematic

training to these localite sources which can generally be identified in the village communities.

4. General roles of the SFDA were not understood by the small farmers. Hence, efforts should be made to educate them about the same, so that they could contact the SFDA and get the benefits from the same.
5. The small farmers had different perception about the role-expectation of the SFDA and its role-performance. The variations in perception seem to be due to their differential knowledge. This brings out the need for improvement in the knowledge dissemination system.
6. As revealed by characteristics analyses, the small farmers were low in attitudes scores. However, attitudes of beneficiaries were significantly related to other dependent variables. Hence, efforts should be made to develop better attitudes among small farmers towards the SFDA and the extension personnel. Similarly, knowledge test indicated that they had inadequate knowledge about the financing institutions. Hence, training for the small farmers should be organised so as to develop better attitudes and increase knowledge. The farmers' training activities should be organised through farmers training centres.

7. Similarly, extension personnel should be given adequate training in principles and practices of human relations for improving their behaviour towards the small farmers. Also, profile of the small farmers should be given to them, which will enable them to understand their target audience in a better manner and hence, client oriented approach could be cultivated among them.
8. Since the development programmes are the vital means for effecting economic improvement of the weaker sections, the means to be adopted to maximise their involvement deserve special attention. For this, it is necessary that the small farmers must accept these programmes which in turn requires frequent contacts by the VLWs. Efforts, therefore, should be made to encourage the VLWs to develop positive attitude towards small farmers and increase the frequency of their contacts.
9. The study has shown that the small farmers were not averse to change if they get proper incentives to do so. But the complicated borrowing procedures, lack of adequate knowledge, etc., have acted as forces of resistance to change. Hence, there is a need to remove or reduce these forces which are coming in the way of their development.

10. An interesting finding of the study was that small farmers had accepted or were keen to take up the subsidiary occupations like dairying, sheep/goat rearing, etc. But the SFDA support for these programmes needs strengthening and streamlining along with the crop husbandry programmes.
11. It was revealed in this study that the SFDA had not given priority to minor irrigation as well as intensive cultivation programmes. In fact, irrigation should have been given the highest priority, as intensity of cropping cannot be increased without assured irrigation. There is, therefore, the paramount need of a massive irrigation programmes, wherever potential for the same exists. This will go a long way in strengthening the production base as also of stabilizing farm income and productivity over a period of time.
12. Majority of the small farmers were not benefited from the various infrastructures. This indicated that there was lack of coordination between the SFDA authorities and these institutions. There is, therefore, need for bringing about the effective coordination and integration of their programmes and activities.

13. As participation of the small farmers was positively and significantly related with the impact of the SFDA, there is need for infrastructural support for small farmers development. The working of these institutions need to be improved and should have bias towards the small farmers. The SFDA authorities should try to involve these institutions actively in the small farmers development process.
14. As participation of small farmers in the infrastructures was low, the extension personnel must encourage all the small farmers to actively participate in the infrastructures. The persons incharge of the organisations must launch "member-education programme" so as to bring as many small farmers as possible into their folds.
15. The small farmers were afraid of indebtedness and were reluctant to approach for the institutional credit. Hence, the financing institutions must take them into confidence and educate them about the procedures for obtaining the loan and also for repayment. This might remove their fear and misapprehension about institutional loan.
16. The small farmers felt that the procedure for getting credit was time consuming, complex and a number of

documents were needed. Hence, there must be a change in loaning policies of the institutions, so as to provide flexibility. The terms and conditions should be liberalised and procedures simplified.

17. In getting the agricultural inputs by the small farmers, the dominance of rich affluent people was one of the important problems. This was also supported by their suggestion that every farmer should get some quantity of HYV seeds, fertilizers, etc. It is, therefore, necessary to see that these farmers get their share of essential inputs. For this, it might be necessary to earmark certain quantities of these inputs for the small farmers.
18. Inputs were either not available or if available, were inadequate and not in time. There is, therefore, need for improving the supply of these inputs and also strengthening the distributing agencies.
19. For meeting the credit needs of the small farmers, there is a need to ensure that a sizeable number of small farmers are covered by the financing institutions annually. However, care should be taken to see that the same group of small farmers are not financed.
20. Looking into the background and economic conditions of these farmers and need for subsidy as revealed by this

study, it is necessary that costly farm inputs should be subsidized, so that they can make use of the same. But care should be taken to see that the procedure for this is kept simple.

21. As suggested in the guidelines of Government of India, the extension staff in the SFDA area should conform to the IADP pattern or at least IAAP pattern. But this guideline was not followed in the blocks studied. Hence, immediate attention is required in this matter to raise the number of extension personnel at least at par with IAAP pattern.

#### Suggestions for Future Research

This study was carried out under severe limitations of time and lack of preceding empirical studies on working of the SFDA. In spite of the investigator's awareness of the need for a deeper probe into certain aspects such as the motivations and strength of commitment of the small farmers in accepting the development programmes, the management and organizational aspects required of a successful implementation of such programmes, etc., could not be studied due to limitation of time.

It is obvious that the findings of a single study are not adequate to make any generalizations. It is necessary to replicate the study in other parts of the country, wherever the

SFDAs are operating. Such investigations will necessarily be "Ex-post-facto" with the inherent limitations of this design. As "Ex-post-facto" studies have limitations of accuracy of data, there is need for experimental studies with more refined designs. An experimental design will be more appropriate for such studies. The other suggestions are :

1. Diagnostic studies particularly in the nature of case studies on the personal and social behaviour of the small farmers need to be undertaken so that the bottlenecks in the acceptance of the SFDA programmes can be corrected and desirable changes injected into the SFDA. This will enable the policy makers to come to grip with the basic malady of small farmers.
2. Studies on procedures and criteria followed in the identification of small farmers need to be studied in greater details which will highlights the defects in the prevailing identification process.
3. The time lag, if any, between knowledge acquisition and acceptance of the programme and the factors responsible for such time lag, if studied, would be interesting and useful.
4. Studies relating to interests, potentialities, etc., of the small farmers should be planned which could be effectively utilized by the extension personnel.

5. There is need to study the extension system along with the small farmers which will help in understanding the problems of both, and will be helpful in future development efforts.
6. The training needs of extension personnel who work with the small farmers need to be studied so that they are adequately trained to meet the challenges of their task.
7. The methods of analysis used in this study for prediction were multiple regression and multiple correlation which have their own limitations in social research due to multi-collinearity effects between several variables. Hence, it is suggested that more refined techniques like cluster analysis, factor analysis, and path analysis could be used to isolate the important variables or to establish the direct or indirect effects of the variables.